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Dragon Con 2017

The Daily Dragon

The Walk of a Thousand Characters

by Brandilyn Carpenter and Ralph Gallagher

Crowds began filling the sidewalks along Peachtree Street by 8AM on Saturday for one of the weekend's most popular events: the Dragon Con Parade. The oldest and youngest fans alike eagerly awaited seeing their favorite costumes and characters.

The parade kicked off with a bagpipe player, Janny Wurts, leading a contingent of dragons escorting the Dragon Con banner. Following close behind were the color guard and Colonial Marines.

This year's Grand Marshal was the legendary Stan Lee, joined by Ms. Pepper Potts as Mary Jane Watson and Ginger Oh Snap! as Gwen Stacy. Following closely behind was Angry Plain Jane as Mysterio, with the S.H.I.E.L.D. truck keeping a close eye on things.

The parade attracted cosplayers of all types and fandoms. Everything from traditional sci-fi such as *Stargate* and *Star Wars* to classic and modern comics, and even interesting mash-ups like a Deadpool Spartan made appearances. Special guests included the Literary Track Guest of Honor Jane Yolen, Ricky "The Dragon" Steamboat, and Kane were also seen riding through the parade.

The parade also featured Dragon Con classics like the 501st Legion, the Spartans, and the Periodic Table. Also seen were characters from current favorites such as *Game of Thrones*, *Doctor Who*, and *The Handmaid's Tale*. For the gamer in all of us there were contingents from hits such as *League of Legends*, *Borderlands*, and *Overwatch*.



The Marvelous Matt Smith

by Amanda Faith and Kelly McCorkendale

Matt Smith is a lanky, lean man with deep eyes full of excitement, joy, and kindness, which is no surprise to his fans and *Doctor Who* loyalists, who felt no fear taking his hand for five insane fun years aboard the TARDIS. His incarnation, the 11th, of the eternal Time Lord may have been in the body of a young man—the youngest ever to wield the sonic screwdriver—but he had the gravitas of a seasoned alien unafraid to take the wheel, something that was clear in his first Dragon Con appearance on Saturday afternoon in the Marriott Atrium Ballroom, which greeted him with a standing ovation.

"It's mad," Smith said of the Con, "I love it.... It even has 'Dragon' in the name." He described it as having the energy and spirit of



lawlessness—and even complimented the costume contest at one point.

Smith took Tennant's advice when developing his version of the Doctor, which he knew he wanted to be clumsy and professorial. The advice was simple: Listen to no one. Also, "Don't break *Doctor Who*." Smith elaborated that he

didn't want to tarnish the image of who the Doctor was and ruin that for fans later down the road. "Everyone has an opinion, but it has to be really singular," he again stressed. He passed this advice to his successor, Peter Capaldi, who will step away this winter from his role as the 12th Doctor, making way for Jodi Whittaker—who will be the first female version of the intrepid Time Lord.

"You're in for a ride, mate," Smith told the audience of Whittaker's upcoming tenure, later joking that finally some hot dudes will be traveling in the TARDIS though, as he said, he "had Rory Pond." Rory, played by Arthur Darvill, was Smith's companion, along with Amy Pond (Karen Gillan), for whom the Doctor had a strong, non-romantic affinity.

'Shhh ... I'm an Actor': John Cusack

by Jessica Clary

Saturday's John Cusack session, 2:30PM in the Hyatt, covered nearly the entire Cusack filmography, reaching way back to the early '80s. Alongside longtime friend and co-star Ned Bellamy and moderator Rob Levy, Cusack charmed the crowd with stories of his wide-ranging characters and films.

"I got spoiled early," he said, responding to Levy's first question about his early films with Rob Reiner, John Hughes, and Cameron Crowe. "I was fifteen. Instead of going to study hall, I got to go to a movie set."

After those teenage roles, Cusack has remained steadily employed ever since, playing everything from deep dark villains to rom-com guys who get the girls. Bellamy explained that actors are "just looking for the magic of the moment."

Cusack agreed. "Sometimes you can take how you're perceived, or how you were perceived, and use it like a jiu jitsu move."

Fans quickly steered the conversation to their favorites, with Levy leading the way to *High Fidelity*. Levy explained that as a music lover and former record store employee, *High Fidelity* had a profound and lasting effect on him. Plenty of the crowd agreed, and Cusack explained that adapting that film was easy. Moving the novel's setting from London to the movie's Chicago wasn't a problem, he said, because while the Brits were obsessed with American soul music, Americans were digging the British punk scene. "But if you swap those, and take away the cockney accents, it's the same guys. When you have a great

book, you just have to make sure you don't f*ck it up."

An audience member asked about sibling rivalry in the Cusack family, garnering support for John to bring Joan with him on his next Dragon Con visit. He said they aren't rivals. "Joanie, she's sort of the most talented one of the family. I just try to get steamrolled in the most pleasurable way." He explained that so many of the great scenes in *Grosse Pointe Blank* were off-the-cuff. "With Dan Aykroyd and my sister, you just get out of the way."

Another audience member expressed his confusion at reading that Danny Trejo calls John Cusack one of the toughest guys he's ever worked with. "So, when did you become so amazingly badass?" "Shh," Cusack said. "I'm an actor."

Schedule Changes

Hy = Hyatt S = Sheraton
 M = Marriott W = Westin
 Hil = Hilton
 AM1/2 = AmericasMart Bldg 1/2

The following previously confirmed presenters will not be able to attend Dragon Con 2017: **Taylor Anderson, Kate Baker, Paul Blackthorne, Nick Blood, Amanda Conner, Ric Flair, Lena Headey, Jon Heder, Joe Granato, D. Alan Lewis, KJ McCormick, E.C. Myers, Bobby Nash, Corvis Nocturnum, Jimmy Palmiotti, Rekha Sharma, R. Alan Siler, Gail Simone, Joonas Suotamo, Karl Urban, Toni Weisskopf, Caleph B. Wilson (@HeyDrWilson).**

ADDITIONS

James Callis will be on "Battlestar Galactica: Operation Cylon Supremacy" Sun 11:30AM, Centennial II-III (Hy); "Battlestar Galactica: Operation Cylon Resurrection" Mon 10AM, Centennial II-III (Hy).

Arthur Darvill will be on "An Hour with the Ponds: Amy, Rory and River United" Sun 5:30PM, Atrium Ballroom (M).

Tamsin Silver will be on "The Growing World of Harry Potter: Old Canon and New Canon" Sun 2:30PM, A707 (M).

"Sunday Sunrise with Steven Universe" Sun 10AM, Galleria 4 (Hil).

Ken Feinberg will be on "Filmmaking Essentials: Directing" Sun 11:30AM, Spring (Hy).

Mark Gagliardi will be on "Booze & Phasers LIVE!" Sun 10PM, Galleria 6 (Hil).

David Boop will be on "Dark Matter: Zairon or Bust!" Sun 1PM, M302-303 (M).

Van Jensen will be on "State of the Comics Industry 2017 & Beyond" Mon 1PM, Chastain I-J (W).

CANCELLATIONS

Rekha Sharma will not be on "Battlestar Galactica: Operation Cylon Supremacy" Sun 11:30AM, Centennial II-III (Hy); "Battlestar Galactica: Operation Cylon Resurrection" Mon 10AM, Centennial II-III (Hy).

KJ McCormick will not be on "Ghost Hunters: Fave & Odd Cases" Sun 10AM, Grand Ballroom A-F (S); "Safe Journeys: Kindred Spirits & Ghost Hunters" Mon 10AM, Grand West (Hil).

Joe Granato will not be on "Screening: The New 8-Bit Heroes" Sun 10PM, August E-G (W).

Caleph B. Wilson (@HeyDrWilson) will not be on "Chemical Warfare in Wonder Woman" Sun 5:30PM, Grand East (Hil).

Jacqueline Goehner will not be on "Masquerade" Sun 8:30PM, Centennial I-III (Hy).

Nick Blood will not be on "Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D. Season 5: Um, Asteroids?" Sun 2:30PM, Grand Salon (Hil); "Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D. (or Is That Hydra?)" Mon 1PM, Grand Salon (Hil).

Jimmy Palmiotti will not be on "State of the Comics Industry 2017 & Beyond" Mon 1PM, Chastain I-J (W).

Paul Blackthorne will not be on "Arrow: An Eye for an Eye" Sun 10AM, Centennial II-III (Hy); "Arrow & Legends of Tomorrow" Mon 10AM, Grand Salon (Hil).

Gail Simone will not be on "Women in Comics" Mon 11:30AM, Chastain I-J (W).

R. Alan Siler will not be on "Doctor Who: Goodbye, Moffatt...Hello, Chibnall!" Sun 11:30AM, Crystal Ballroom (Hil); "Classic Series Doctor Who" Sun 1PM, Galleria 5 (Hil); "Class" Sun 7PM, Galleria 5 (Hil); "Doctor Who Extended Universe" Sun 8:30PM, Galleria 5 (Hil); "Ask the Experts: Everything Doctor Who" Mon 1PM, Galleria 5 (Hil).

"Karl Urban" Sun 11:30AM, Atrium Ballroom (M).

Reading: Lou Antonelli, Sun 1PM, Vinnings (Hy).

Mike Horner will not be on "So You Want to Build a Puppet" Mon 11:30AM, A707 (M).

Daily Dragon Tweets

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Eugie Award Winner

The winner of the 2017 Eugie Award was presented Saturday night during the Dragon Con Guest of Honor banquet. The winning story was "The City Born Great" by N.K. Jemisin.



Shout-Out

To the girl with pink sandals from the Alternates writing seminar: it's the guy in the blue suit with Einstein hair. Sorry I didn't get your name! Would love to talk about writing more. I'll be at the 1PM seminar Sunday if you want to meet up again. Name's Jonathan Halper, I'm on Facebook.



Check the mobile app, the Pocket Program, or the Daily Dragon website for more information.

Gunn, Guardians, and Gilmores

by Kelly McCorkendale

Sean Gunn sat down with the press Saturday morning and reflected not just on *Gilmore Girls* and the *Guardians of the Galaxy* franchise, which is a part of the larger Marvel Universe driven by *The Avengers* series of films, but also on how Dragon Con helped initiate him into the world of fandom and convention culture.

"You know what's interesting about this convention, is that, it's the first one that I ever did, and it just seemed like such a madhouse." That, as he noted, was three years ago, and he's since attended about 33 conventions. "Now I'm back here with the perspective of somebody who's now on the con circuit... and I see... what makes [Dragon Con] really, really different from all these other conventions. And it's kinda a trip."

When asked about *Gilmore* fans versus *Guardian* or comic fans, Gunn said, "I think the most interesting thing is that they're more similar than they are different." He described *Gilmore* fans as being very rabid, yet it is his work in *Guardians* that get him in the door at conventions as it fits the mold of what promoters are looking for. Still, ardent fandom is not just for sci-fi or fantasy anymore. "Theirs is a unique brand of fan," he said of *Gilmore* loyalists. "I think it's really... it's pretty interesting now to sort of guess what it is that makes any particular show the type of show that would spark this intense fan base."

'Spoilers, Sweetie': Alex Kingston by Brynna Owens

Alex Kingston has a new convention game, and she kicked off her Q&A panel with it on Saturday. It's called "How well do you know River?" and involves having people in the audience imitate her famous *Doctor Who* greeting, "Hello, Sweetie." This also required a "sweetie-off," which involved the two ultimate co-winners imitating her catch-phrase "Spoilers!" The winner? Got a banana (a long-running *Who* in-joke).

This was what greeted the capacity crowd in the Hilton Grand Salon Sat afternoon at 4PM, before we settled into the actual question and answer part of the panel.

The very first, and possibly most



important to *Whovians*, question posed to Kingston was about she feels regarding the casting of a woman *Doctor* for the first time. "There has always been a very obvious desire for women and girls to feel connected to the *Doctor*,"

she explained, while pointing out that going back to the early years of *Who*, it was seen as a "guy's show," and she wasn't sure that men could take the change. However, in every incarnation of the *Doctor*, it's been about the character's essence, no matter the human form. She also praised both Jodi Whitaker, the recently-cast 13th *Doctor*, and Chris Chibnall and their abilities to take this different track with the *Doctor*.

If she has a chance for River to interact with 13, how would it be different from the male predecessors? "As long as the first thing River says ... is 'hello, Sweetie,' it's all good from there."

Art Show Award Winners

The winners of the 2017 Dragon Con Art Show were announced Saturday night. Awards were given in three categories—attendee awards, voted on by convention attendees, "Fantastic Beasts!!", and juried awards, as well as best in show.

Attendee Awards

Best Alien: Stan Morrison, *The Magician*

Best Amazon: Bernard Lee, *Coronation*

Best Dragon: Naomi Vandoren, *The Albino Fox Dragon*

Best Horror: Paul Bielaczyc, *Just Your Imagination*

Best Fairy: Joseph Corsentino, *Nyx*

Best Spaceship or Spacescene:

Amanda Makepeace, *War for Jupiter*

Best Warrior: Stan Morrison, *St. George and the Dragon*

Most Humorous: Lisa Sell, "And You Think Your Cat was Bad!"

"Fantastic Beasts!!"

Third Place: Brenda Lyons, *Suitcase of Wonders*

Second Place: David Lee Pancake, *Failed Mimic—Do I look like a suitcase now?*

First Place: Valerie McGreevy, *Fantastic Box*

Juried Awards

Best 2-D: Erika Taguchi-Newton, *Shallow Waters*

Best 3-D: Joseph Gubocki, *Piece #30*

Best Black & White: Julie Wilmore, *Hone Claws*

Best Jewelry Art: Helen Rule, *Niobium Victorian Collar*

Best Mixed Media: Aedan C. Roberts, *TinterTanter*

Best Photography: Joseph Corsentino, *Nyx*

Best Textile or Fiber: Daniel French, *Tooled Leather Backpack*

Best Doll: Sarah B. Seiter, *Wonderling—BJD*

Third Place: Amanda Coronado, *Giant Flower*

Second Place: Tran Nguyen, *Traveling to a Distance Day*

First Place: Mark Roland, *The Tower*

Best In Show: Cory Godbey, *Whence*