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Dragon Con 2024

The Daily Dragon

Once and Always of the Shadows by Kelly McCorkendale

Kayvan Novak stormed the stage in the Westin Peachtree Ballroom on Friday at 1PM, arms raised, and vampire fangs bared. Behind him, Harvey Guillen slinked past, sat, and waited for the applause to end. Guillen quietly deadpanned: "Anywhere he goes, I go." Applause erupted again, because if you know *What We Do in the Shadows*, you know this entrance captures the award-winning show's sweet core: the relationship between Novak's Nandor the Relentless and his long-suffering human familiar, Guillermo, played by Guillen.

Created by Jermaine Clement and Taika Waititi and based on their 2014 film of the same name, *Shadows* follows the lives of a several old vampires residing on Staten Island as they navigate a modern world. Emmy nominated in 2020, 2022, and 2024 for Outstanding Comedy Series, it's funny, campy, and often gross, but as Guillen said, it's a "comedy with heart." Novak said he was "delighted every time" he opened a new script. The writers spoiled them with twists and turns and kept the humor central. So did the actors. Novak and Guillen's chemistry, comradery, and genuine friendship color an electric rapport, and they effortlessly jumped in and out of character. When Novak's name card fell, he nicely told the moderator—Sammi Doneff—that he would get it, then handed it to Guillen because once a familiar, always a familiar.

Novak and Guillen discussed stunts, guest stars, the set, and of course, a vampire's appetite for virgins. Guillen, whose character descends from Van Helsing, recounted being tested on whether he could do his own stunts, which started with showcasing his nor-



mal walking skills, and Novak called Haley Joel Osment, who guest starred as Topher, a great actor.

Across the board, Guillen said they had a "cool set, cool clothes." He especially loved his original coffin and Nandor's room, from he which kept a lamp alongside Guillermo's signature glasses, some sweaters, and his original Cassio watch. He can now cosplay as his character, though people have called him out for doing a half-ass job while not realizing he was the actual Guillermo. Novak obviously loves his fangs, and, slipping into Nandor's Eastern-European inspired voice and staring out at the audience, said he "might get peckish."

"It's hard to have a bad day on our set,"

Novak said, but noted that the last they shared was a sad one.

Guillen called it a "very happy, fun, bouncy" set and found it great that fans not only see that, but take comfort in the show. He talked about finding that same type of comfort from Novak when doing takes while sick.

Novak said, "Nandor has been such a gift for me as an actor," and Guillen praised his skills as an impressionist. While he didn't do any for the audience, he did play human beat box to Guillen, who said he would want to be a merman, and they joked about luring sailors with song.

Read the full article on the Daily Dragon website!

Actor, Potter, Father, and Frequent Dragon Con Guest, Anson Mount by Max Caraccappa



Whether you know Anson Mount from *Hell on Wheels* or *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds* or one of his many other credits, getting to see him in person at Dragon Con is always a treat. This is his third consecutive Dragon Con, fourth overall, and he was kind enough to sit down with the *Daily Dragon* for an interview.

Daily Dragon (DD): *What have you come to like about Dragon Con?*

Anson Mount (AM): It's, as I said earlier, it's the Mardis Gras of cons. It's the

biggest party I think I've ever been to other than maybe Mardis Gras itself. It's just, you've got to pace yourself because it's just balls to the wall. And I love any excuse to come to the South. I just have a special affinity for this con, for whatever reason.

DD: *I think you said in an interview that it was your mom that introduced you to Star Trek: The Original Series. Mine did the same for me. What is it that you hope to get to introduce your child to?*

AM: Definitely *Star Trek*. I've already introduced her to *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*. That's a real point of enjoyment between the two of us. She took to movies quite early. We took her to see her first full-length feature animated film when she'd just turned two. And she sat through the whole thing and ate popcorn the entire time, and then we walked out into the lobby and she projectile vomited the entire contents of her stomach onto the lobby carpet. And I thought that was a great first

movie experience for my daughter, to make no mention of the movie itself. It was fun.

DD: *What have you learned about yourself now that you're a father?*

AM: Mm, that I have to police myself around technology. That I need to work on my presence in general. That I can be far more patient than I ever thought possible. And just you know, you rediscover the little things.

DD: *When you are doing Star Trek, is it still something that you can't quite believe it's you in the chair?*

AM: Oh, completely. Every day. It's the longest a job has remained surreal to me. Without a doubt. I like that. I like being reminded of how lucky I am every time I look around, I can't believe that I'm on *Star Trek*, much less the captain of the *Enterprise*.

Read the full interview on the Daily Dragon website!

Neurospicy folks and their companions gathered together in the Hilton Crystal Ballroom on Thursday at 7PM for “Surviving Con with Social Anxiety and Neurodiversity.” Sitting on the panel were Catioosaurus, Crash (aka Heather Croas) and Andy “Duckman” Benicasa, with Jodi Capps moderating. They created a safe space for open conversation, where everyone had the chance to ask questions (with the bonus of not having to stand at a mic to do so).

Our conversation started with our panelists introducing themselves, and their flavor of neurospicy, before opening for questions, which covered a wide variety of aspects of being at Con. Here are some of the tips that came up on how to survive:

What should I do if I get overwhelmed in a crowd?

If you feel panic setting in, find your way out as soon as you can. If you're really stuck, move backwards; Catioosaurus demonstrated an excellent technique of dancing your way backwards that will split the sea of people if needed. If you're not able to leave easily, find a safe person such as a volunteer, security, one of your group, or a stranger with a kind face who'll be able to guide you to a safe zone.

How should I prep for the massive crowds?

The only real answer is to either not go, to get there early, or to tough it out and know that you always have a safe person in reach who'll be able to assist if needed. If you sit out a day, there's absolutely no shame (and don't forget

that the host hotels have DragonCon-TV streaming big panels). If you arrive to your location early, you'll be able to scope out the area, make a game plan for navigating once the crowd grows, and finish your intended activity sooner.

What should I do once I get to a crowded area?

First thing you should do is eyeball safe places to escape to if needed; find a stairwell, dark corner, empty hallway, or even a restroom and then just stay where you can see your safe place. If you have a companion with you, make sure you're checking in with them so they know when it's starting to be too much and can help you find your way out. Stay on the edges and you'll still be a part of the energy having a great time with easy escape if needed.

Where can I find social support?

Track rooms, fan meet ups, and Cults are your answer! If you haven't joined a Cult (super fan groups), search Facebook for “Dragon Con cults,” and find the one that interests you. In any of these options you'll find like-minded individuals who'll welcome you in with grace. Also, a special shout out to the Dragon Con Social Anxiety Group and Dragon Con With Disabilities (official) groups on Facebook.

What should I do if I'm getting a ton of attention in my cosplay but am starting to panic?

If you have a handler or safe person, let them know you need them to run interference for a bit so you can have a breather. If you're alone, take off a piece of your cosplay until you're ready for at-

tention (could be as simple as taking off the hat or mask), and don't be afraid to tell those admiring your cosplays that you need a break. If anyone gets upset that you won't take a picture with them, that's a them problem. It can be hard, but try not to take it personally. And if all else fails, escape to one of the safe places mentioned earlier.

SATURDAY????

Yeah, we know. Saturday is going to be wild. Downtown Atlanta has a ton of big events happening at the same time and, oh yeah, there might be a small parade or something that's happening in the morning? The advice from the panelists is to pick a track and stay there. You won't have to deal with the crowds in the hotels or worry about getting stuck in a Sky Bridge and will likely learn something really cool and meet some new friends/safe people. The parade will be broadcast on DragonConTV (and covered by the Daily Dragon) but if you absolutely must be outside for it, start mentally preparing for the fact that you will likely be outside from 8AM to noon or even longer.

There will be another Surviving Con panel on Saturday at 11:30AM – make sure to check it out to meet some cool folks and learn more tips for surviving con. If you're not able to make it, please know that you're surrounded by friends you haven't met yet no matter where you're at in Con so don't be afraid to ask for help whenever you need it. We've all been there, neurospicy or not, and Con is only great when we're great to each other.

Daily Dragon Tweets

Don't miss the latest Dragon Con news and announcements. Follow @daily_dragon on Twitter... er, X!



Coffee & Coloring

Ease into another day of Dragon Con with the Video Gaming track. Coloring pages and art supplies are available if you don't have your own. Bring Your Own Coffee or visit the coffee bar outside the panel room. Saturday/Sunday 8:30-11AM, Augusta E-H (Westin).



Headless Lounge

A chill place to take off your character head and cool down away from prying public eyes, ruining the illusion. Fans, water, quiet time...whether a member of the 501st, cartoon character, or furry, all head-wearing costumers w/ one handler are welcome. Made possible with the help of Furry Weekend Atlanta. Friday-Sunday 2:30-11PM, 308 (Hilton).



Coloring for Charity

Chill out while you color to the lo-fi nerdy beats, and raise money for this year's charity, CURE Childhood Cancer. Thursday-Sunday, 7PM-12AM, The Learning Center (Hyatt).



Check out the Parties and Events pages on the *Daily Dragon* website!

Saturday Parties & Events

Group Sing—The Muppets

YOU got to help us choose on social media what the theme would be for this year's Themed Tribute Show. We're happy to present 'The Muppets' as our Group Sing for this year! Join an all-star group of our performers for a two-hour block of fun-filled songs and sing-alongs. Saturday 5:30-7:30PM, Hanover C-E (Hyatt).



Spectrum: The Rainbow Flag Party

This party welcomes all of our LGBTQI+ attendees to enjoy a party just for you. DJ Neon the Glowgo Bear spins the beats and our go-go grrlz n boyz dance for you in 'FantaSea,' an underwater odyssey-themed festivity. 18+ to party, 21+ to drink. Must have valid photo ID & Dragon Con badge to enter. Saturday 10PM-2AM, Regency VI-VII (Hyatt).



The Dragon Con Cotillion: Crowning the Dragon of the Con

We've transformed the Con into a slice of Regency life where you can mingle,

dance, and compete to be crowned the most remarkable attendee and be our Dragon of the Con! Learn historical dance steps, take a turn on the floor, and show off your period look or fanciest Cosplay. Saturday 4-6:30PM, Capitol Ballroom N/C, (Courtland Grand)



The Heroes and Villains Ball

The Video Gaming Track invites you to Dragon Con's biggest ball of all. The Heroes & Villains are back again! Enjoy the musical stylings of DJ Limit Break while you dance the night away under our mind controlling dance lights of doom. You won't even need your super suit. Saturday 10PM-2AM, Peachtree Ballroom (Westin).



The Last Party on Alderaan

THE ULTIMATE STAR WARS PARTY at DRAGON CON!! Experience an epic night with house, EDM, and pop music, featuring NEMESIS and electrifying visuals by Darkshift. Dance like it's the end of the world, because tonight, it is. Get there early – Alderaan needs you! Lightsabers welcome and encouraged! Saturday 10PM-2AM, Salon (Hilton).

The Cults of Dragon Con Costume Contest

Marriott carpet attire! Dancing T-Rexes! Googly eyes galore! Badge ribbons, flaming speakers, and more! Paying tribute and adulation to the Dragon Con cults in this one wacky evening of clever costuming. Hosted by Crispy & friends. Saturday 7:30-10PM, Grand Ballroom A-F (Courtland Grand). Contest registration 5:30-6:30PM, Valdosta (Courtland Grand).



Karaoke—Digital Media Style

Whether you love singing karaoke or can't carry a tune in a bucket, you're sure to have fun at this party. Everyone gets involved. This modern experience does away with three-ring binders and slips of paper and puts the power of karaoke on your phone. Mature Audiences. Saturday 10PM-12:30AM, Galleria 7 (Hilton).

Schedule Changes

The following previously confirmed guests are unfortunately not able to attend Dragon Con 2024: **Freema Agyeman, Chloe Bennet, Jack Coleman, Emilie de Ravin, Dan Jeanotte, Terry Matalas, Melissa Navia**

ADDITIONS

Dr. Hans House will be on "Honey, Honey" Sat 2:30PM, 204-207 (Hil).

Arthritis Foundation

Dragon Con's Official 2024 Charity

