

Costume Commissions 101

Panelists:

Carie Bockerstette, Lydia Barnes,
Catherine Wei, and Cassi Kento.

Overview of Panelists

- **Carie Bockerstette**
 - Carizard Cosplay
 - Fox Prop Shop
 - Props and Armor
- **Cassi Kento**
 - Jewelry-maker
- **Lydia Barnes**
 - Seamstress
- **Catherine Wei**
 - Coffee-Cat Cosplay
 - Seamstress

Carie Bockerstette (Carizard Cosplay)

- Co-owner of Fox Prop Shop
 - Props and armor
 - Conducts all customer interaction, advertising, and halves the work with co-owner/fiance Clint.
- Full-time student
 - Georgia State University
 - Major: Studio Art;
Concentration: Sculpture
- Attending cons for 10 years;
cosplaying for 3 years.



Lydia Barnes

- LyddiDesign



Catherine Wei

- Coffee-Cat Cosplay



Cassi Kento

- Cassi's Creations
- <https://www.facebook.com/CassiCosplay>



What is “commissioning”?

- What is a "commission"?
- Who is the typical commissioner?

Is a cosplay less significant if commissioned?

- Does it make your costume experience more or less significant if you commission your costume?
- NO!
- The goal of cosplaying is to have fun. Cosplaying is all about making friends, sharing interests with other people, etc.

Act 1: For the Client

- 1) How to find the commissioner that's right for you. Portfolio, social media account, reputation, former client references, how to approach one, FB groups for commissioners to meet clients.
- 2) Are they legit? Are they on the BTS RPF Blacklist or reported by the BBB?
- 3) How to become a knowledgeable client. Research!
- 4) Having realistic expectations for the commission. Such as "Fast-Cheap-Good" myth here and PRICING!!!!

Act 1: Continued

- 5) Give accurate measurements and never do a weight-loss plan while having a commission made.
- 6) General etiquette for clients. Don't bombard your commissioner with messages, give firm due date, get everything in writing, don't file disputes or insurance claims without communicating first, ect.
- 7) Why you should never outsource to Asia.
- 8) When and how you should file a dispute.
- 9) What you can and cannot compete in while wearing a commission.

Act 2: For the Commissioner

- 1) How to get it all started. Branding, portfolio creation, website hosting, building a client base, networking, how to advertise yourself.
- 2) How to build a work-space plus how to keep it organized and what pieces of equipment should you REALLY invest in (for example, serger, dressform, sturdy workbench, better quality sculpting materials, ect)
- 3) How to price commissions (time plus materials plus availability plus taxes plus shipping)
- 4) How to handle drama and communication issues
- 5) Why you should handle all transactions via legal and binding contract and PP invoices. I've included my own contract for reference.
- 6) How to successfully build your business via promotion of others and through others, maintaining a humble persona, and reputation.
- 7) Self Employment need-to-knows: paying taxes, understanding tax brackets, how to keep your workflow and payments organized via Office, Mint, PayPal ect.

~The End~

Feel free to come to the front in order to:

- Ask questions to panelists
- Discuss potential commissions for panelist
- Check out the panelists' portfolio
- Ask for a business card
- Networking
- Etc.