

A detailed digital painting of a female elf character. She has light skin, large red eyes, and pointed ears. Her hair is white and styled in a braid. She wears a dark red turtleneck. Her face is adorned with orange and yellow tribal-style markings. The background is a dark, textured green.

ATLANTA GAMER LIFE MAGAZINE



Lost and Found

Sometimes in life you never know what it brings you, what you lose and eventually what you will find.

Atlanta Gamer Life Magazine is a reflection of the community, culture, and a glimpse of the experiences to those who given their time and resources in order to eventually inherit these bits and pieces to their lifestyle.

-Kimberly "Kimmiko" Ware



Cover Artist: Renee Clarke
Editor-In-Chief: Kimberly Ware
Production Editor: Aaron Perry



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ALKALINE BLA[C] WATER

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In short, it fuels mind and reflexes, keeping you sharp when milliseconds matter. Fitness, Work, and Everyday Life.

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-*Professionals:* Stay hydrated through long meetings or busy shifts without relying on caffeine overload.

-*Young Family Members to Seniors:* Proper hydration helps fight fatigue, supports joint health, and aids concentration.

The Taste of Bold Refreshment

Beyond its benefits, BLA[C] Water is clean, crisp, and refreshing. It delivers hydration with a purpose—crafted for people who demand more from their water. Each drop is engineered to power your day, sharpen your mind, and energize your body.



OUR SIDE OF THE TABLE

BUILT ON F.A.M.E

A Haven for Nerds—Built on F.A.M.E.

On the crowded dial of pop-culture chatter, Our Side of the Table stands out by staking a claim where nerds don't just participate, they set the agenda. Built on F.A.M.E. (Fashion, Art, Music, Entertainment), the show treats geek culture like the living, breathing ecosystem it is, where a sneaker drop can sit beside manga canon, and a film score can be dissected with the same care as a game patch.

The trio at the helm : Jay Gervara, The Run Away Vagabondo, & Robot Ocelot: bring distinct lanes to the same highway. Gervara's world-building mind bridges comics and cinema; Vagabondo drifts through global subcultures with a traveler's curiosity; and Robot Ocelot offers the precision take, the engineer's logic applied to lore. Together, they create a conversational chemistry that feels like the smartest table at your



New Episodes Sunday @ 10 a.m. on [YouTube.com/OurSideOfTheTable](https://www.youtube.com/OurSideOfTheTable).

OUR SIDE OF THE TABLE

BUILT ON F.A.M.E

Why It Works

- **Fashion meets fandom:** Streetwear, cosplay, and character design aren't accessories, they're text.
- **Art with receipts:** From panel layouts to concept art, the show treats visuals like the spine of storytelling.
- **Music is canon:** Themes, samples, OSTs—sonic worlds get the same respect as scripts.
- **Entertainment without borders:** Anime, comics, gaming, film, and TV are discussed as one interconnected universe.

The Vibe

Expect spirited debates, deep dives, and the occasional glorious tangent, the kind that reminds you fandom is supposed to be fun. Episodes feel part roundtable, part roaming gallery tour, with a pace that rewards both longtime devotees and curious newcomers. "On our side of the table, nerds aren't just welcome,...we run the show." Tune In Our Side of the Table Podcast drops new episodes every Sunday at 10 a.m. Catch it on [YouTube.com/OurSideOfTheTable](https://www.youtube.com/OurSideOfTheTable) and pull up a chair. The conversation's better from our side of the table.

RANGERSTOP & POP

Love to the Fandom

There are certain moments in life that stick with you, and you can't help but share them with anyone who will listen. This convention was definitely one of those moments. Growing up in the 80s, Power Rangers played a significant role in shaping who I am. I vividly remember racing home to catch the latest episodes and eager to try out the new moves the very next day. I collected all the toys and held onto them for years. The idea of meeting the cast behind the show was something I never even considered. Ranger Stop and Pop gave me, along with many others, the opportunity to express our gratitude for the impact they had on our lives. The fact that the event was organized by Rangers made it feel even more special for the fans. The cast and the behind-the-scenes staff were incredibly down-to-earth. Every fan had the chance to chat and spend quality time with them. No one felt rushed or like they were in the way of others in line or the guests. The parties allowed everyone to relax and have a good time. Watching your favorite Ranger take the lead on the dance floor brings out the kid in everyone. The panels, often led by the cast, provided fantastic insights into the behind-the-scenes workings of the show.



One of my favorites is the game show-style panel called "Who's That Red Ranger?" The audience interaction is fantastic and encourages even the shyest individuals to join in. I took the opportunity to talk to other fans about how much the show influenced us. I recorded their responses and created a video to showcase it all. When they announced that this year might be the last, it broke everyone's heart. They surprised us with a last-minute buyer and assured us that it wouldn't drastically change the convention. I'm really looking forward to next year to keep the fun and excitement alive, not just for me but for everyone who wanted to be a Ranger. I truly hope that everyone gets to experience this in the years to come while it's still around.



Check Out My Interview With Fans:
<https://youtu.be/rJt0q9pGc3c?feature=shared>



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PRESENTS

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THURS SEPT 6TH - EXHIBITION SHOW/CASE

FRI SEPT 5TH - MELTY MYSTERY ONLINE TOURNAMENT



?

?



SAT SEPT 6TH - 9/11 MEMORIAL 5TH ANNIVERSARY TOURNAMENT



MomoCon



Moana Nui Podcast DRAGON CON PANELS

Thursday, August 28

7:00pm - Diversity in Speculative Fiction Kick Off
Hyatt, Hanover AB (Joy Stephens)

8:30pm - Cosplay Panel: Unleash Your Inner Hero
Hyatt, Hanover AB (Joy Stephens)

Saturday, August 30

10:00am - Welcome to Voice Acting in a Digital World
Hilton, Galleria 7 (Dana Morgan)

Sunday, August 31

10:00am - Building Synergies with Your Personal & Professional Brand
Hilton, Galleria 7 (Dana Morgan)

2:30pm - Using Social Media for Real Life Success
Hilton, Galleria 6 (Alan Z)



AN IMMERSIVE
ART-WORLD DRAMA

URBAN CANVAS CROWNED

TAG, YOU'RE IT



Graffiti and Urban Art, Luxury, and the Battle to Redefine Art

In a city painted with contradictions, where luxury towers overlook hidden murals, a new feature film dares to confront the boundaries of art, culture, and identity. *Urban Canvas Crowned* is a cinematic collision of immersive art-world drama, urban heist thriller, and culture-crashing romance—a bold vision that fuses the raw pulse of street graffiti with the elegance of fine art. Through its pioneering integration of AR-enabled experiences, audiences can step deeper into the world of the film. With a mobile app or AR glasses, viewers will unlock alternate visual layers, graffiti and Urban art details, and extended scenes—blurring the line between spectator and participant.

The Story

At the center is Avan St. Claire, a high-middle-class Atlanta native who has been obsessed with art since childhood. Avan is not just another graffiti or Urban artist—he's a cultural architect determined to rewrite the rules. His ambition: to merge the prestige of luxury branding with the unapologetic grit of urban street culture. Told through the perspective of his evolving spray can pendant, *Urban Canvas Crowned* charts Avan's rise from ambitious outsider to disruptive visionary. From gallery installations to sprawling underground murals, his journey is one of defiance, danger, and desire. Narrated with poetic detail and grounded in the historical lineage of graffiti legends, the film explores what happens when authenticity collides with commodification. Avan is not a vandal—he is a visionary determined to crown urban art with the recognition it deserves.

Why This Film, Why Now?

At a moment when society is wrestling with questions of authenticity, cultural appropriation, and systemic disruption, *Urban Canvas Crowned* arrives as a cultural intervention. This is not a story about escapism—it's about redefining value. It speaks to a generation that refuses to be boxed in, one reclaiming narratives, monetizing creativity, and forging hybrid identities. Just as streetwear forced its way into haute couture, Avan's graffiti and Urban art empire demands acknowledgment from the highest levels of the art world. The film is both timely and timeless—a statement that urban art belongs not in the margins, but in the spotlight.

Avan St. Claire: The Man Behind the Paint

- Background: Privileged yet deeply tied to the rhythm of street culture.
- Voice: Witty, stylish, poetic, carrying shades of Donald Glover and the spirit of Basquiat.
- Dream: To build a graffiti empire that wears luxury as comfortably as sneakers.
- Obstacles: Romantic entanglements, legal peril, identity crises, and artistic rivals.
- Flaws: Pride, manipulation, and fear of vulnerability.

Avan embodies contradiction—moving between black-tie galleries and back-alley murals with equal magnetism. His story mirrors the larger cultural struggle: the fight for urban art to be seen, valued, and crowned as fine art.



Crowning the Canvas

With its immersive storytelling, cinematic ambition, and cultural urgency, *Urban Canvas Crowned* promises to be more than just a film. Like Avan's graffiti, it is a declaration: urban art is not secondary—it is the crown.



The Creator Behind the Crown

The film is the creation of Kenyvtv El'Beyvh, a multifaceted storyteller with a two-decade career across music, television, and film. He began in 2000 as a music artist before moving into production and brand management with Dare 2 Struggle Productions, founded by the late Dr. Mutulu Shakur, father of Tupac Shakur.

Rising to Vice President of Operations, he oversaw projects from conception through post-production, building marketing and promotional strategies that amplified voices on the margins.

From there, El'Beyvh's career stretched across Black Hand Entertainment (2003–2011), where he served as Executive Assistant to CEO Chaz Williams and contributed to projects including *Crime Partners* (2001/2003), *Gangsta Chronicles: Black Gangstaz* Chaz Williams (2007), BET's *American Gangster* (Season 2, Episode 8), and Damon Dash's *Ultimate Hustler* (2007). In 2012, he co-founded 4Ever Young Music Group, shaping music videos and co-producing visuals for its roster of artists. His later credits span stage and screen, from the play *Bound And Gagged* (2014) to television projects like *BAD NEWS BALTIMORE* (2017), *Currency Sense* (2022), *Dare 2 Struggle (Reloaded): The Tales* (2023), and *The Live Kulture Show* (2024). Most recently, he wrote, directed, and produced the upcoming feature *Black Velvet* (2025). With *Urban Canvas Crowned*, El'Beyvh extends his commitment to creating work that challenges, provokes, and elevates. The film is not simply entertainment—it is a manifesto on art, ownership, and cultural power.

HISTORIC
4th Ward Park
MIDTOWN ATL
SAT-SUN AUG 30 - 31 2025

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16TH ANNUAL
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2025

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2025

DIVERSITY
IN SPECULATIVE FICTION & LITERATURE

**LOCATION:
DRAGON CON // HYATT REGENCY ATL // HANOVER AB HYATT**

What does Blerdography and Dragon Con have in common? The answer is everything. As we gear up for yet another season of Atlanta's nerdiest gathering of like-minded adults, I find myself yet again deep in contemplation of what's to come and where I've been since I first attended Dragon Con almost 20 years ago. Back in 2006 I was an inexperienced college kid with a few dollars in my pocket and the urge to geek out with friends at the time Atlanta's biggest nerd fest, and now I'm an accomplished Cosplay Photographer/Content Creator/ Podcaster types on the rise.



Blerdography | Marc Leary

DRAGON IN THE ATL



"The one thing no one says about the Dragon is its also a place where one can not only be their true self but a place where you can also find oneself at the same time."



Dragon Con is a massive pop culture fan run event that covers nearly every fan base and genre of nerdism from tabletop gaming, anime, cosplay, video games, sci-fi and so much more. Every Labor Day weekend Downtown Atlanta is fool of freaks and geeks and as a native ATLien myself I love this time of year. The one thing no one says about the Dragon is its also a place where one can not only be their true self but a place where you can also find oneself at the same time.

That was me, or more correctly that is me. Since I first attended my first Dragon Con, I've done the most from sneaking in to sleeping underneath the tables in the basement of the Marriott, to running massive cosplay shoots to being a panelist and now covering the con a press. Yes, I use to sleep under the tables just to stay in the city and not take MARTA home in fear of missing out. I wouldn't be the person I am today without these, and many more experiences had at Dragon Con.



Back In 2012 I had the honor of meeting the legendary Stan Lee in the Sky Bridge and yes everybody gets 1. This moment stands out to me as one of the greatest things to ever happen to me, or so I thought.

"I've done the most from sneaking in to sleeping underneath the tables in the basement of the Marriott, to running massive cosplay shoots to being a panelist and now covering the con a press."

BARR FOXK

Panels



FRIDAY 8/29

@11:30am - Cosplay For Advocacy
Hilton 302-304

@7:00pm - The Gauntlet / Heatwave
Hanover AB Hyatt

@8:30pm - Be Awesome Together! Rock Your Niche
Galleria 6 Hilton

SATURDAY 8/30

@5:30pm - Being A Blerd
Crystal Ballroom Hilton

SUNDAY 8/31

@8:30pm - Unleash your inner hero!
Hanover AB Hyatt

@10:00pm - Cosplay Your Way Party
Hanover AB Hyatt

MONDAY 9/1

@2:30pm - Avoiding Costuming Burnout
Hilton 302-304



EXPRESS YOUR STYLE

FIND MORE INFORMATION AT

WWW.DRAGONCON.COM

Fast forward a few years I'm at the first annual Black Geeks of Dragon Con Cosplay Shoot taking blurry pictures of Power Ranger Cosplayers having the time of my life not realizing that I have finally found my calling even though it would be ten more years from that point before I even realized it. Jump to 2017 when I officially started my cosplay photographer journey while at Dragon Con making a ton of *cough cough* connections further thrusting me forward to success and pseudo popularity. Now its 2019 and the Black Geeks of Dragon Con shoot is bigger than ever. While Dr Law's Photo Lab, Danique Cosplay & Royalty Cosplay are on the main stage running the show, I am underneath the steps shooting solo shots of whom ever will have me, and I run into a cosplayer named Marcus Vann or UWU Papi cosplaying as M'baku from Black Panther looking like Winston Duke's clone. Little did I know that 1 photo would change everything for me and my future because that shot went viral. Let's just say I learned a valuable lesson on watermarking your work and having the metadata of your business info and copyrights embedded in the file.



"Little did I know that 1 photo would change everything for me and my future because that shot went viral."



As we know 2020 was the year of so much pain and loss for the world, with everything that was happening and the world being on lockdown; a lot of conventions and other public events were canceled due to public safety. During this time things slowed up for me and I lost a lot of momentum from the previous year. Luckily all was not lost as I had time to practice my photography and finally getting around to seeing what that video feature on my camera was all about, causing me to unlock a new and valuable skill that transcended me to the next level. In February of 2021 I launched my YouTube channel Blerdography and things got even more interesting for me. 2021 was a year of tremendous growth and opportunities for me.

The channel connected me to so many new nerds and geeks whom all felt underrepresented by the media they consumed, and I saw something then that opened so many more doors for me. Dragon Con in 2021 was a diminished con for those who attended, Because of this the founders of Black Geeks of Dragon Con reached out to me to offer the lead photographers role for that year's shoot and obviously I accepted without a second thought as this was one of the many things on my DragonCon bucket list. Now I will be honest when I say this, I was not the biggest fan of the Yearbook photo-shoot that was planned due to social distancing, but it ended up being the best thing for me with this group shoot.



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A little birdy told me I should apply for press passes for an upcoming convention back in 2022 and well I didn't believe her at the time, so I hesitated to do so, but eventually that little birdy convinced me after months of trying, and that con ended up being MomoCon 2022. This was the first year I applied as press for any con and I got in. Sometimes its not about the numbers on your videos but the content you create and who's watching your growth. Now I'm interviewing Phil Lamar and Steven Downs. Now I'm getting backstage access and learning about the inner workings of cons and networking with other creators and celebrities' alike. Doing press for MOMO lead to doing press for Anime Weekend Atlanta, then BlerdCon and so many others until that fateful day during MomoCon 2024.

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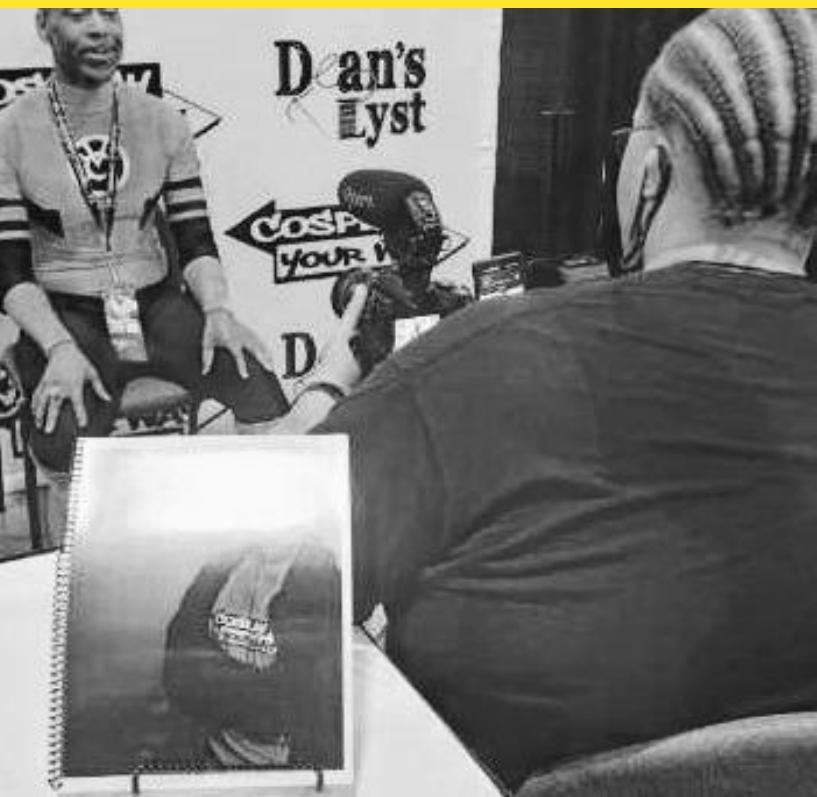
"If you think all this came easy or that I didn't struggle along the way you'd be dead wrong. I had to learn how to fail forward and find success when all seems lost"



After grinding and covering different cons as press, I was finally approached by the Director of media Relations for Dragon Con and offered press passes for the upcoming con. Achievement unlocked!!! As of the writing of this article its Saturday morning and we are only a few days away from Dragon Con 2025 where I'll be doing press for the second year in a row with other cons looming over the horizon. Right now, I am frantically running around finishing up my last-minute cosplays. (Yes, I cosplay now.) And getting all the gear, batteries, shot list and questions in order. If you think all this came easy or that I didn't struggle along the way you'd be dead wrong. I had to learn how to fail forward and find success when all seems lost. In 2023 I again was the lead photographer for the Black Geeks shoot and well simply put I failed that shoot. It is more than possible to put too much pressure on yourself by achieving so much so fast

During Dragon Con 2023 I was honored by the Black geeks organization by being asked to sit on the Black Geeks panel as a panelist, where I finally opened up and told my story of how Dragon Con and Black Geeks of Dragon Con helped me find myself and who I am as a person. The crowd erupted in applause. Long story short I didn't know it at the time, but I was flying too close to the sun, that experience that Saturday night among all the other positive things that were going on caused me to have an inflated ego and little did I know I was burning myself out trying to do everything I wanted to do that year.

I made judgment errors like scheduling my two biggest shoots back-to-back, big mistake on my part when I wasn't fully equipped to handle that kind of workload. I learned that year that I take failure too personally. I let the little things get to me and the helpful advice others were giving me I took the wrong way causing me to crash out but in a weird public way. Everything has a cause and effect. Sometimes you must slow down and just be in the moment. Breathe, think about it then relax I had to tell myself on repeat. Sometimes failure is the only option, how else will you learn from your mistakes. I say all that to say this, stop beating yourself up.



"Everything has a cause and effect. Sometimes you must slow down and just be in the moment."



Dragon Con 2025 is yet another big year for my team and I. I'll be on two panels this year, as well as doing my usual cosplay shoots and press interviews. I hope to cross off more things on my Con bucket list and grow even more as a creative turning filmmaker. Dragon Con hands down is my favorite convention of them all for so many different reasons and I hope I get to continue this great adventure of my own creation. As of now I am unsure if I'll be here for Dragon Con 2026, I have other goals and dreams but if they come calling I'll always pick it up. If you're planning on attending these festivities, I'll be doing several things over the 5 days at DragonCon.

Thursday:

2:30PM Badges and Brew

Friday:

1PM Blerdy Professionals Panel
3PM Power Rangers Cosplay Shoot
5:30PM The Beat Goes on Panel

Saturday:

3:30PM Avatar the Last Airbender/Legend of Korra Cosplay Shoot.
5:30PM Being a Blerd Panel
10:30PM "Is your favorite anime character going to jail!"

Sunday:

2PM Black Geeks of Dragon Con Cosplay Shoot
4PM Princess Diaries Cosplay Shoot





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GREG BURNHAM

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Panels

Black Comics Blaze
Fri 10am
Hyatt/Hanover AB

The Beat Goes On
Fri 5:30pm
Hyatt/Hanover AB

They Actually Did That?
Sat 10pm
Hyatt/Hanover C-E



THE SUPER ABRIDGED INTERVIEW

Due to time constraints we are going to publish the full interview of Greg Burnham in our next issue. But we decided to fast forward and give you a little of what he had to say about the upcoming Dragon Con Convention!





THE SUPER ABRIDGED INTERVIEW

Greg

Um, so last year, I got yelled at by a lot of people because I didn't have a lot of new stuff because I was concerned with, you know, other things that were happening in the world. So this year, I'm going to have like 4 new titles. I have Bridges, The Fumes, I got Robin Peters, and then I'm supposed to have the Newest Noir is the New Black as well so they can't yell at me this year.

Kimmiko

Okay. So you're going to have a whole bunch of nice new products for people to consume.

Greg

Correct.

Kimmiko

And out of all of your newer products, what's your favorite character that you created?

Greg

I don't know man because I got some new stuff I'm working on, like all my characters are my favorites. The news stuff so Robin Peters is fun.

Greg

It's just A. It's a short, it's a smaller book, because we're uh and engaged in some pitching, hmm for TV and for you know, publishers, but it's a really fun story, and she might be my new favorite character, but I don't want to say that. Because then like, these young ladies here, are you a little like I like them all.

Kimmiko

Yeah, I did notice that you have a lot of female heroes. Is there a reasoning behind that?

Greg

Sometimes yeah, sometimes I just like uh, It's just weird, like, so the Search for Sadiqah, which is, you know, kinda cemented in the Zeitgeist, that story, it just came where the main character was supposed to be a girl, I'm not doing it like I'm going like, you know, for like business purposes. It's kind of like where the story leads with Fumes. This was a short story that was written by M'Shai Dash. She reached out to me and she was like, "Hey, can you read this story and tell me if it would make a good comic?" and so I read it, and I was like. "Yeah, it'll um... not make a good comic, it'll make a good, you know, 4 or 5 comics!", uh cause that's how much I like the story, so that character was already set in stone. With Bridges, my guys, Leo Stevens and Jamie Rochelle reached out to me and they were like, Hey, you want to do a superhero comic book with an all girl team and so, you know, that's how that one happened... with Robin Peters. So this the title is, you know, is named after Robin, but like all the characters have their own story, she's not the main character. I mean, she is the main character, but she's not so much of a main character that everybody else is dwarfed. You're gonna get to learn about all the different people and see their perspectives and stuff. So it's really fun.





THE SUPER ABRIDGED INTERVIEW

Stay open to learning; like the best writers that I see; people that I look up to. They're all really, really humble people, because they understand how hard this is. It's usually the people that aren't so good that are the ones that are super arrogant, cocky and brash, and you can read their works and be like How? you know, because it's difficult, it's not good. You can have like, you can do a great job, you know, your story might not resonate with others, you know what, I mean, it's like you have to just kind of keep chipping away and plugging away.

WHAT WILL BE THE ADVICE FOR ANY
ASPIRING BOOK
WRITERS AND ARTISTS?

If you're going especially from the writing standpoint, if you're going into comics, to make money; do something else. Not to say you can't, but don't make writing what comics be your end, go to right away. It takes a while for you to get to a point where the pay scale is in your favor I know a lot of people that write for a living where they're working, you know, like with the major you know, the big companies, and it's like they're, they're writing, like 4 or 5 books a month to make that money work for them. So it's like You know, have some other stuff. As great as it is like I would love to do more stuff with DC Comics.

I'm working with some other publishers on some stuff as great as it is to work with publishers, it's also a different game having your own property that you don't have to share money with other people.

So learn that stuff learned the business side of things like I've seen people like now to fresh out of school, and people will hit them up to be like, Hey, how much would you charge me to do a like what's your page rate to do a comic? and they'd be like, oh it's like \$400 a page. It's like You need to understand what comics is that's Rockstar money for like, you know, what I'm saying, cemented legends, you know, like coming off the street, you're not gonna get that right away, you know, so it's like learn to business learn to the basics of it.

At the very least, and really, just like when you're humble, you stay humble. Then you can leave room to grow. So if I look at something I wrote from 9 years ago or something, and I'll be like, hmm geez... people might love it. But me, I'm looking at it like, oh God, no. But that's because I look at this like it is hard and in order for you to actually keep growing and learning, you've got to be able to critique yourself.

And so it's like, okay, I would never do that again, I would never do this again, but you know, I found a sweet spot so it's like I don't hate any of the older stuff, but I do see where I could do better. And I'm able to look at stuff I do now and be like, oh yeah, you are way more efficient with your words.

- *Greg Burnham*



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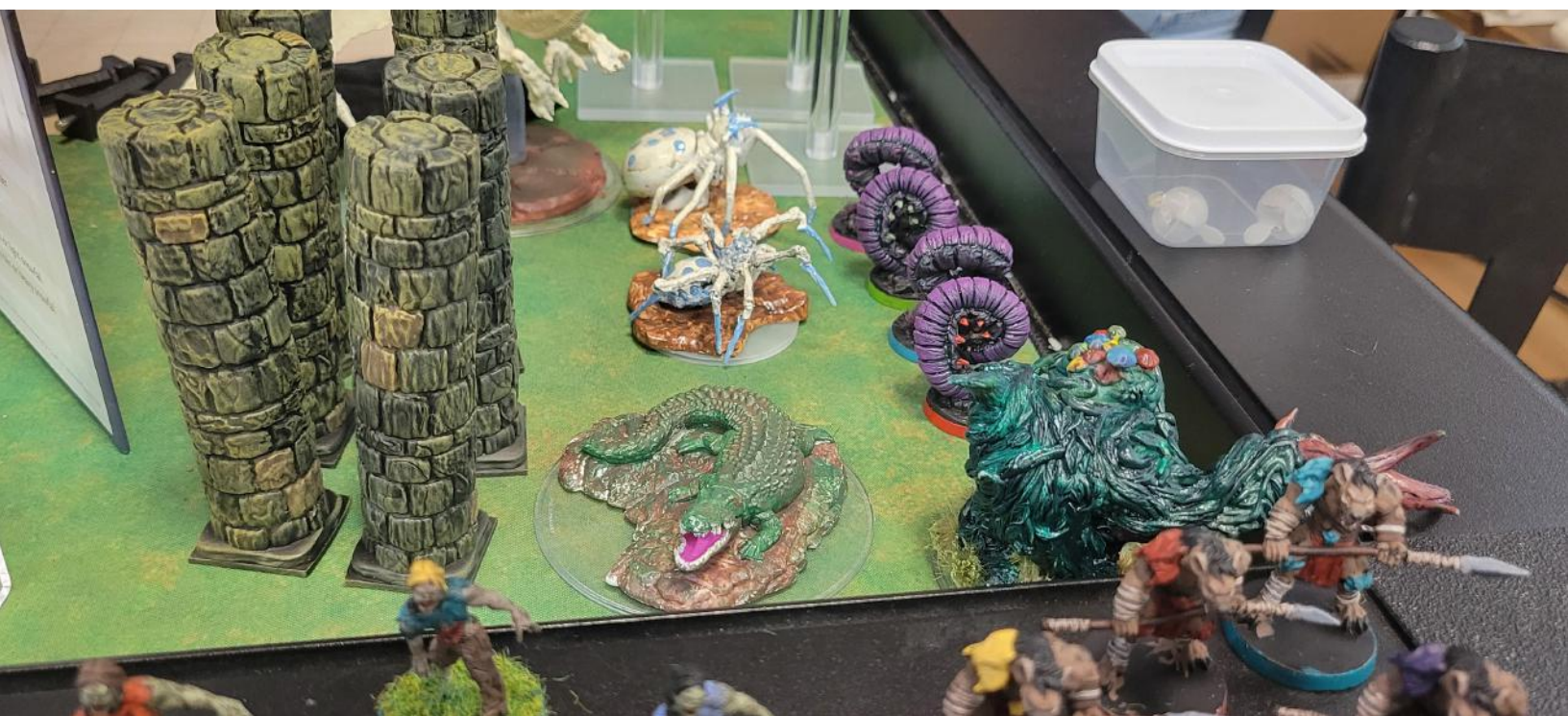


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D&D TIPS

Hello! My name is Henry Walsh, I'm a professional novelist and avid Dungeon Master. (DM) Every Sunday, myself and five friends gather around a large gaming table in a quiet back room in Challenges Games and Comics, at the Northlake Mall in Tucker Georgia, and spend four hours pretending to be elves, orcs, dwarves, and other fantasy creatures. They are the players and I am the DM that lead them through epic adventures.





I'm an old DM. Though I'm only 44 years old, I've been DM'ing for the last 36 years. I've been a college professor, written fantasy novels, won awards, and have spent my life working in the gaming industry. Everything I've done, I owe to a small boxed set of D&D books I bought at a used book stand in a flea market on my 8th birthday for two dollars.

D&D is a game of infinite possibilities that is only bound by the limits of the imagination. For a poor kid living in the tiny rural town of Douglas Georgia, it was my escape. I learned how to create worlds, tell stories, and bring groups of total strangers together to form friendships that will last a lifetime.

In addition to running D&D, I also spend time teaching other people ways that they can improve the games that they run. Today, in this article, I intend to give you some of the tips and tricks that I've figured out over my decades of playing and running this game. Hopefully my advice will help you and your players connect better and have more fun.

TIP # 1

The first tip, and this one is aimed at people who want to DM a game, but are afraid they'll mess it up, is this:

Real talk: DMing takes practice. It's a skill, like any other. You will always be your own worst critic. Every DM that I've ever met, up to and including myself, thinks that their first game was bad. You're not going to be good at it right out of the gate.

Does that sound harsh? Well, keep reading, as I'm not finished.

Even if you think it sucked, and you felt it was the worst game ever, chances are that your players didn't notice and they had fun anyway. Some of the most fun and memorable games I ever ran were absolute chaotic train wrecks. Most of the fun of D&D comes from hanging out, laughing with your friends, and escaping from the world for a few hours. Don't sweat not being perfect, keep at it and you'll improve. Never give up. If you fall down, get back up and try again.

"Your first game will suck, you will make mistakes, and that's okay"





TIP #2

"That brings us to our second tip: You are not Matt Mercer and this is not Critical Role."

This should be self-explanatory, but I'm going to say it anyway: I love Critical Role and the Legend of Vox Machina. It, however, isn't something you should stress yourself out trying to emulate. It is not a valid representation of a typical D&D group.

First, Matt Mercer is a DM with decades of experience. He is a professional voice actor and he has a net worth of over \$4,000,000. Simply put, he is not someone that anyone can reasonably compare themselves to, especially if you are just starting out.

Second, Matt's players are all professional voice actors. While the show is unscripted, these players all have extensive resumes pretending to be people other than themselves. You cannot expect your players to behave like they do.

A wiser man than I once said, "If it's not fun, why do it?" That man was Ben, from Ben & Jerry's.

He is completely right. DMing should never feel like boring work. It should be fun. If you want to spend hours each week painting miniatures for your game, then do it. If that doesn't sound fun, you don't have to. I spend a lot of time on prep, because I find it makes my game better, and I enjoy it, you don't need to force yourself to do something you don't want to do.

Never force yourself to DM. I know a lot of people who only DMed because nobody else was willing to do it and they didn't enjoy it, but felt obligated to keep doing it because they started it. Don't do that. Ever. Especially if you really only wanted to play D&D.

That leads to you eventually resenting the players, the game, and the hobby. It causes DM burn out and can hurt friendships. If you find it isn't fun, don't keep doing it. No D&D is better than bad D&D, believe me.

Those are my tips for this installment. I'll be back soon with more advice and tricks of the trade. If you liked this column, let us know, maybe I can answer some questions for you.

In any case, happy adventuring!

~Henry Walsh



*"My last
tip, for
today, is
simple:
Have fun."*





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Georgia Game Developers Association

EVENT SCHEDULE

SEPT 9	GAME DEV LIGHTNING TALKS AT TRIPWIRE 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM Tripwire Interactive: 1775 Woodstock St. STE 100 Roswell, GA 30075
SEPT 20	SIEGE FALL INDIE GAMES FESTIVAL 12:00 PM - 6:00 PM Doraville Digital Studios 5999 New Peachtree Rd., Atlanta, GA 30341
OCT 14	GGDA MEETING AT KSU 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM KSU Marietta Campus
OCT 29	SIEGE2025@ESPORTS SUMMIT 8:00 AM - 8:30 PM 2470 Lindbergh Dr. NE Atlanta, GA 30324
OCT 31 - NOV 2	SIEGE2025@ DREAMHACK WORLD CONGRESS CENTER 285 Andrew Young International Blvd. NW., Atlanta, GA 30313

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