

STORYLINE

Die-hard fans at Toronto Comicon

[VOICEOVER] The Metro Toronto Convention Centre transformed into an anime, comic and sci-fi lover's utopia this weekend as it filled up with fans dressed in their favourite characters, from the popular ones like Batman and Stormtroopers to the more obscure anime characters.

[VOICEOVER] What started as a small gathering of comic fans decades ago has morphed into a global phenomenon that celebrates not only comics, but anything related to pop culture and entertainment. Toronto's Comicon this year is expected to attract close to 15,000 die-hard fans, and organizers say this year's event is bigger than ever.

[SOUNDBITE] 02: 29: 05 - 02: 17: 14, JAMES ARMSTRONG, EVENT COORDINATOR, TORONTO COMICON.

"We initially started eight years ago with just an anime-based event. So it only appealed to people that were into Japanese animation. But this year we've added so much more so that it has a much broader appeal, especially for younger kids."

[VOICEOVER] Throughout the weekend, there will be exhibitors, cartoonists, writers and celebrity guests like part of the Star Trek cast Robert Picardo and Nicole de Boer, Eddie McClintock and many others on hand to sign autographs and mingle with fans. There will also be workshops and celebrity Q&A sessions with stars like Tia Carrere who was also a voice actress in Lilo & Stitch, a popular Walt Disney animation.

[VOICEOVER] The event attracts a varying age group. But Armstrong says one thing they all have in common is their passion and enthusiasm.

[SOUNDBITE] 05: 17: 22 - 05: 31: 07, JAMES ARMSTRONG, EVENT COORDINATOR, TORONTO COMICON.

"They're fans and that's short for fanatic. What fans like to do is socialize. They come to these events, meet up with their friends and family, enjoy the event together and sometimes go out afterwards and have some catch up time."

[VOICEOVER] Nineteen-year old Kelsey Cunningham has been attending the convention for five years already and is dressed as one of her favourite anime characters this weekend.

[SOUNDBITE] 05: 55: 02 - 06: 12: 01, CNC correspondent Jack Cheng talking with attendee KELSEY CUNNINGHAM

KELSEY CUNNINGHAM: "It's called Clair from Umineko which is an anime and manga."

JACK CHENG: "What do you love so much about comics and anime?"

KELSEY CUNNINGHAM: "It's just really good stories, there's really good character development and that's just something that always really draws me in."

JACK CHENG: "Can you describe your experience so far?"

KELSEY CUNNINGHAM: "It's a lot of fun."

[VOICEOVER] Twenty-seven-year-old Billy Calder even created his own extravagant costume for the weekend.

[SOUNDBITE] 06: 29: 11 - 06: 44: 02, BILLY CALDER, ATTENDEE.

"I figured I might as well go big or go home."

"I love to go to Toronto conventions, it can be a little something for everybody, like if you're a fan of horror, if you're a fan of anime like I am. There's just all kinds of people here."