

FanCon - the Cape Town Comic Con descends on the CTICC

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It's all about comic books, superheroes, superheroines and dastardly villains at the second annual FanCon: Cape Town Comic Con taking place at the CTICC from Saturday, 29 April to Monday, 1 May.

According to FanCon's organiser, Nizar Abrahams, the event is modelled on overseas comic conventions, or so-called comic cons, where fans of comic books come together to meet writers, artists, producers and fellow buffs in celebration of their favourite comic book worlds.

Abrahams says the growing interest in the genre can be directly attributed to *"the blockbuster superhero movies"* that have generated a greater awareness of the comic book medium and *"created a resurgent interest in comic book characters"*.

"Comic and geek conventions are a rapidly growing worldwide trend, with comic cons happening in every major city in the world, and we felt it was the right time to bring the concept to South Africa. The aim is to introduce South African fans to comics and pop culture in general. There is a substantial and constantly growing comic fan base as well as an expanding interest and appeal from a more mainstream audience," explains Abrahams.

This year, FanCon's theme is Wonder Woman, a warrior princess and character created by the massive DC Comics group. The superheroine is celebrating her 75th anniversary and will have a special exhibition dedicated to her at the convention.

This is the first time the CTICC will host an event dedicated to enthusiasts and fans of comic books.

With cosplay (where players wear costumes in the guise of their favourite characters), competitions, interviews, panel discussions and comic book launches, the event promises to be an in-depth showcase of pop culture.

"Comic cons have become mega events internationally and the CTICC is very proud to host this inaugural event which we believe will grow from strength to strength. The creative community in Cape Town, the attractiveness of the city as well as the flexibility of the venue have played a key role in attracting this event to the Western Cape. We are also particular pleased to see women playing a key role in this year's event," says Chief Executive Officer at the CTICC, Julie-May Ellingson.

Visitors can expect to interact with award-winning international writers and artists such as veteran comic book writer Ron Marz, known for his work on titles such as Batman/Aliens, Green Lantern and Silver Surfer and Eric Powell of The Goon comic book fame. Laura Braga, comic book artist of cult favourite, DC Bombshells, will be a panellist during a discussion on the "Representation of women in comics".

Locally, author and comic book writer Lauren Beukes will discuss her partnership with Dale Halvorsen and their creative processes. And renowned fine artist, Loyiso Mkize, creator of South Africa's only black superhero series, Kwezi, will also share his insights in discussions on comic books in SA and why there are so few black superhero characters.

"This is a unique opportunity for visitors to directly interact with artists, have items signed by them and to buy and commission original artwork," promises Abrahams.

For more information on FanCon: Cape Town Comic Con, visit our website at www.cticc.co.za.

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