

## KAREN E. NELSON

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### **SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS**

- Proven history in costume shop and inventory management including management of budgets and purchasing.
- Mentored, reviewed and planned career succession of personnel with numbers ranging from 8-30+ leads, developers, craftspeople and stitchers.
- Specialized in training a diverse collection of international personnel in the fitting, handling, repair of costumes and running of performances at theme parks, events, national and international tours. Countries include: China, Spain, Mexico, Japan, Australia, Great Britain and USA.
- Instrumental in development and production of costume characters for new tour productions working with Designers, Management, Directors/Choreographers, Producers, Performers, Staff and Corporate Partners.

### **SHOP MANAGEMENT AND SUPERVISION**

- **Senior Costume Supervisor** July 1991- July 2020  
VStar Entertainment Group/Costumes & Creatures Fridley, MN  
- *Supervised all aspects of costume development and construction for VStar touring properties, as well as the development of new designs for all other costume projects.*
- **Costume Shop Supervisor** 1985-1987  
American Players Theater Spring Green, WI  
- *Managed shop and wardrobe staff costume production, budgets and purchasing. Assisted Designers.*
- **Costume Shop Manager** 1984-1985  
Mankato State University Mankato, MN  
- *Constructed Faculty/Student designed Costumes as well as Supervised and trained Student workers. Costume Designer for *The Rainmaker*.*
- **Assistant Costumer** 1983-1986  
Actors Theatre of St. Paul St. Paul, MN  
- *Constructed Costumes and soft props. Costume Designer for *Joyous Noel* and *Careless Love*.*

### **OTHER EMPLOYMENT AND EXPERIENCE**

- **Upholsterer and Sewing Technician** January 2021- Present  
Center for Lost Objects St. Paul, MN  
- *Up-cycling furniture, accessories and apparel for Designer/Shop Owner Amy Buchanan*
- **Seasonal Stitcher** November-December 2020  
GoldPaw Series Hopkins, MN  
- *Stitched 250+ "Winter Paw" Dog Coats*
- **Assistant Head Election Judge** Primary/General Election 2002-2020  
City of Minneapolis Minneapolis, MN  
- *Oversaw City of Minneapolis Precinct Primaries, Special Elections and General Elections.*
- **Election Assistant - Deputy Auditor-Treasurer** October-November 2020  
Hennepin County Minneapolis, MN  
- *2020 General Election —Counted and documented Absentee Ballots*

• <b>Stitcher</b>		
Guthrie Theatre		Minneapolis, MN
- <i>Stitcher for the Tailor on Hamlet.</i>		
• <b>Company Member</b>		
Figures of Speech Theatre		Freeport, ME
- <i>Performed, designed and constructed puppets, props and costumes for all productions.</i>		
• <b>Design/Construction</b>		
Ben & Jerry's New Vaudeville Light Circus		US Bus Tour
- <i>Designed and constructed performer's costumes and Ben &amp; Jerry look-alike puppets.</i>		
• <b>Design/Construction</b>		
Ram Island Dance		Portland, ME
- <i>Costumes for Professional Dance Troupe. Sets for Children's Division Production.</i>		
• <b>Design/Construction</b>		
Camden Shakespeare Festival		Camden, ME
- <i>Costumes for Romeo and Juliet and As You Like it.</i>		

#### **EDUCATION**

• <i>Master of Fine Arts: Theatrical Design</i>		
University of California Irvine		Irvine, CA
• <i>Master of Fine Arts: Puppetry</i>		
Connecticut College/ Eugene O'Neill Theater Center		Waterford, CT
• <i>Bachelors of Arts: Studio Art</i>		
Carleton College		Northfield, MN

#### **VSTAR IMAGINATION AWARD 2016**

\*A Quarterly award presented to a single employee who contributed exceptional work to the company. The following is the nominating statement by Costumes & Creatures Director Susan Walter:

*Karen has been the creative force behind Costumes & Creatures for the last 25 years. As a master of Puppets, she is training a generation of costume and puppet builders. She has left her mark on all the properties we have worked on: she has developed Dragons, Care Bears, My Little Ponies, Barney, Curious George, Sanrio, and Sesame Street characters. And this doesn't even scratch the surface of the countless other client projects she has developed throughout her career.*

*When we started to work on Paw Patrol, none of us could quite envision how this style of costume would work out. But if anyone was going to figure out how to make it happen, it was going to be with Karen's vision and the amazing team she has developed under her guidance. As the supervisor of these projects, she encourages ideas from the whole team and teaches them how to develop, finesse, and execute their ideas.*

*It is very easy to take for granted the talent and skill of an employee who has been with a company for as long as 25 years, so today I would like to take time to acknowledge how much of the success of Costumes & Creatures needs to be attributed to Karen Nelson.*