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OTAFEST

Calgary's largest Costume Party is back at the Calgary TELUS Convention Centre

It's that time a year when Stephen Avenue comes alive with colorful characters from all walks of life. Otafest is back at the Calgary TELUS Convention Centre (CTCC) for the second year bringing together an energetic community of anime enthusiasts and cosplay. What is cosplay? Cosplay is when people dress up as characters from movies, books or video games, especially from the Japanese genres of manga and anime.

Otafest acts as a creative outlet for fans, an occasion where they can show their passion and appreciation for the hobby. Fans can show off the costumes they have made, the music videos they have created, and the art they have painted and drawn. Otafest is also, a forum for discussion and education.

Educational panels are hosted introducing attendees to the basics of the Japanese language and tips on how to use computer programs to enhance music videos and CG art. For those of you not familiar with the term CG it is the development and production of 3D or 2 D worlds and models to video games.

Last year, Otafest moved to the CTCC because the convention out grew their original home. "We needed a bigger space for vendors and artists to showcase exhibits and products," says Jenny Chan, chair of the 2017 Otafest organizing committee. "And we wanted a better main events room for our attendees."

Having it at the CTCC not only gave them more space but also planted them right in the heart of downtown. The conference runs from June 30-July 2, falling at the same time we celebrate Canada 150 bringing another vibrant layer to the event and the downtown core. To celebrate, Otafest is hosting a Canada Day Fireworks party from 9:00-11:00 PM on July 1 on the Marriott Roof Top Patio giving attendees a very exclusive view of the fireworks. In honor of Canada 150, Otafest is featuring local talent including cosplayer Gladzy Kei, artist Randy Crisologo aka Birdy, and musician Zach Ulaszonek aka WTCHDCTR, all right from Calgary.

Another new addition to the conference this year is a 24/7 gaming room. As long as attendees have an Otafest wristband and stay awake, they have access to overnight programming until 6 AM!



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Since its inception in 1991 Otafest has raised money for charities and since 2009, they have raised over \$90,000. This year, their goal is to raise \$10,000 to break the \$100,000 milestone. One of the most successful charity initiatives is the Maid & Butler café. It is an opportunity to experience unique Japanese service including delicious café food and drinks. Moving to the CTCC, Otafest was able to expand the initiative allowing more attendees to participate the unique experience and the opportunity to contribute to their charity! The Otafest is a close community that promotes an inclusive, safe and accepting environment. The CTCC is proud to provide a space that fosters this kind of community.

To get a sneak peek on what to expect, [watch our 2016 video](#) following a cosplayer through the convention.