

# Ursula:

the Sea Witch



Cosplay by Kristy Podelnyk

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Emerald City Comicon



Fanart by Evelina Zelenskaya

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## Overview

Hours of work: 300+ hours

Raw Materials:

Sewing	Fabrication	Electronics
Chiffon	EVA Foam	Servo Motors
Black Knit	Polystyrene Foam	Arduino Board
Polyester Lining	OOMOO Silicone	Pan/Tilt Mount
Interfacing	Epoxy Resin	12V, 9V, 3V batteries
Mesh Fabric	FreeForm Air ©	EL Wire
Sequins, Lace, & Embellishments	Worbla	LED Tape
Misc. Fabrics	PVC Pipe	

Techniques:

Sewing	Fabrication	Electronics
Patterning	Foam Fabrication	Electrical Engineering
Sewing	Worbla Fabrication	C++ Programming
Embroidery	Molding & Casting	Animatronics
Tailoring	Sculpting	
	Painting	





## From Concept to Creation

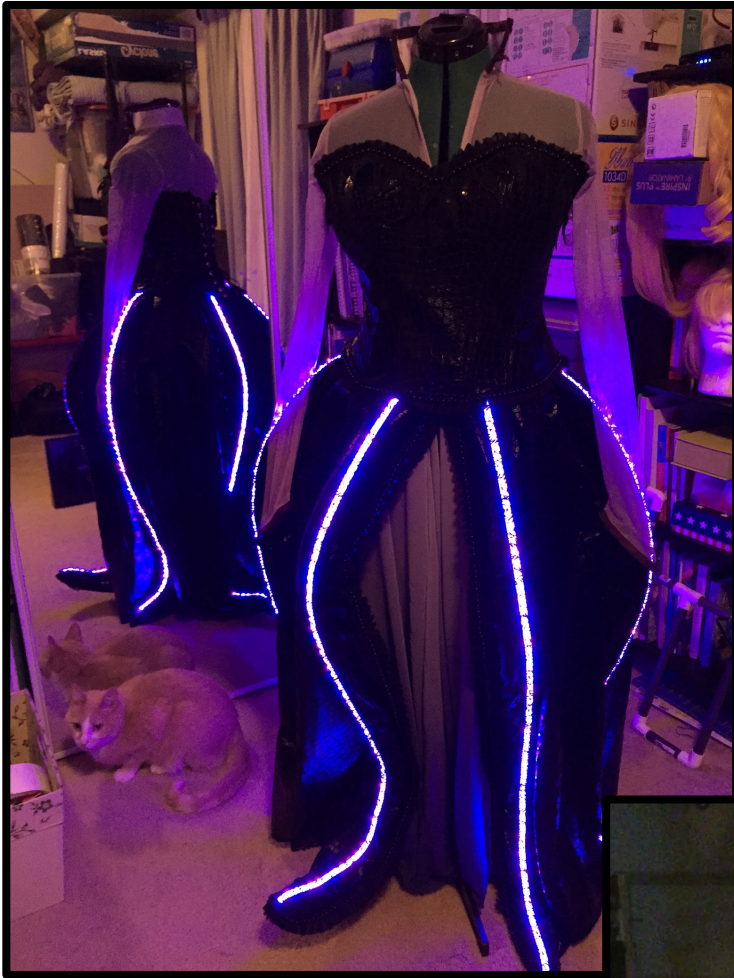
Meet Ursula, the glorious and powerful witch of the sea. Ursula hails from the world of Ariel: The Little Mermaid. In the film, Ursula tricks Ariel to trade her voice for three days living as a human. Working with her familiars, Flotsam and Jetsam, Ursula then competes with Ariel for the affection of Prince Eric, eventually bewitching him to marry her. After a failed wedding attempt, Ursula returns to the sea and uses Ariel as leverage to seize King Triton's crown and trident.

To me, Ursula is a misrepresented character. She is portrayed as scheming, corpulent and devious. I believe Ursula is actually brilliant in her own way - she, like many misunderstood women of history, is exiled from the community and labeled as a witch and a miscreant. In actuality, she is clever and resourceful. Despite being outcast, she creates her own brand and company. She consistently rocks her own look with confidence. And, she creates her own home and community despite being generally disregarded by the mermaid kingdom.

The concept behind my character design can be summed up in one word: sultry. Contrary to the popular villain depiction, Ursula wears an air of confidence. She is dark and intimidating, but not because she is evil, it's because she embodies her own will to thrive. She carries a trident and wears King Triton's crown because she is the queen of her own domain. She is a wise-woman, a CEO of her own company and a force unto herself. Flotsam and Jetsam, her faithful familiars, are as much a part of her as her own bioluminescence, which sparkle along the length of her tentacles.

This cosplay was a particularly ambitious project. It required patterning, sewing, fabrication, casting, painting, soldering and computer programming to finish. And no costume is complete without makeup - the most complicated I have ever attempted. Despite the challenge, Ursula is a character that absolutely deserves to be brought to life. She is a fearless, ambitious, driven person who caters to no will but her own. I only wish I could embody these traits as vibrantly in my own life as Ursula does in Ariel: The Little Mermaid.

-Kristy Podelnyk



## Sew Little Fabric, Sew Little Time

Ursula's sewn costume is composed of five separate pieces:

- Bodysuit

Adapted from McCall's pattern 7217, this bodysuit is made of thin mesh fabric. All edges are lined with purple double sided bias tape and hand-stitched sequin strands.

- Ruffle Skirt

Hand patterned, this circle skirt is made from two layers of purple ombre chiffon fabric. Both skirt layers are finished with a lettuce edge technique and are ruffled around an elastic waistband.

- Corset

Adapted from Simplicity pattern 1345, this corset is both boned and lined. Grommets along the back provide flexible sizing. Details, such as sequins, lace and pearls are hand-stitched along all edges. Finally, the back of the corset has been specially engineered to support the animatronic Flotsam and Jetsam puppets.

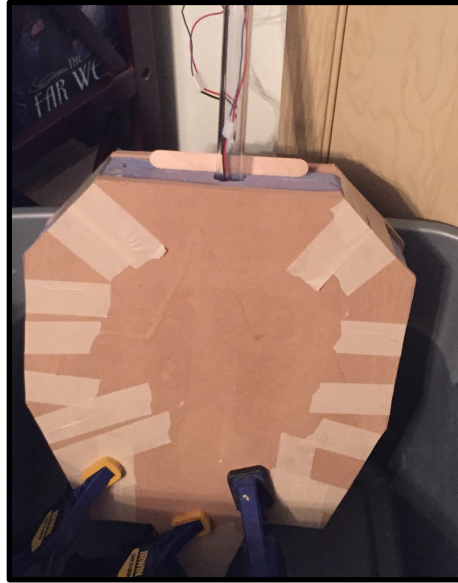
- Hoop Skirt

Hand patterned, this hoop skirt was specially designed to support the weight of the tentacles in the overskirt AND create lift throughout the entire costume. Shark tubing was used in lieu of boning for the actual hoop.

- Overskirt

Hand patterned, this overskirt was originally adapted from a circle skirt pattern. Pleats were added along the waist of the skirt to create more volume. Casings for each tentacle were sew onto the skirt and hand stitched at the base of each tentacle. Lace casings were added to each tentacle to hold LED strands. Along the waistband, special pockets were added to hold 12V battery packs. Additional grommets were added along the waistband so props (such as chains and seaweed) could be suspended at the hip

## The Trident



## The Crown and Jewelry



## Accessories, Accessories, Accessories!

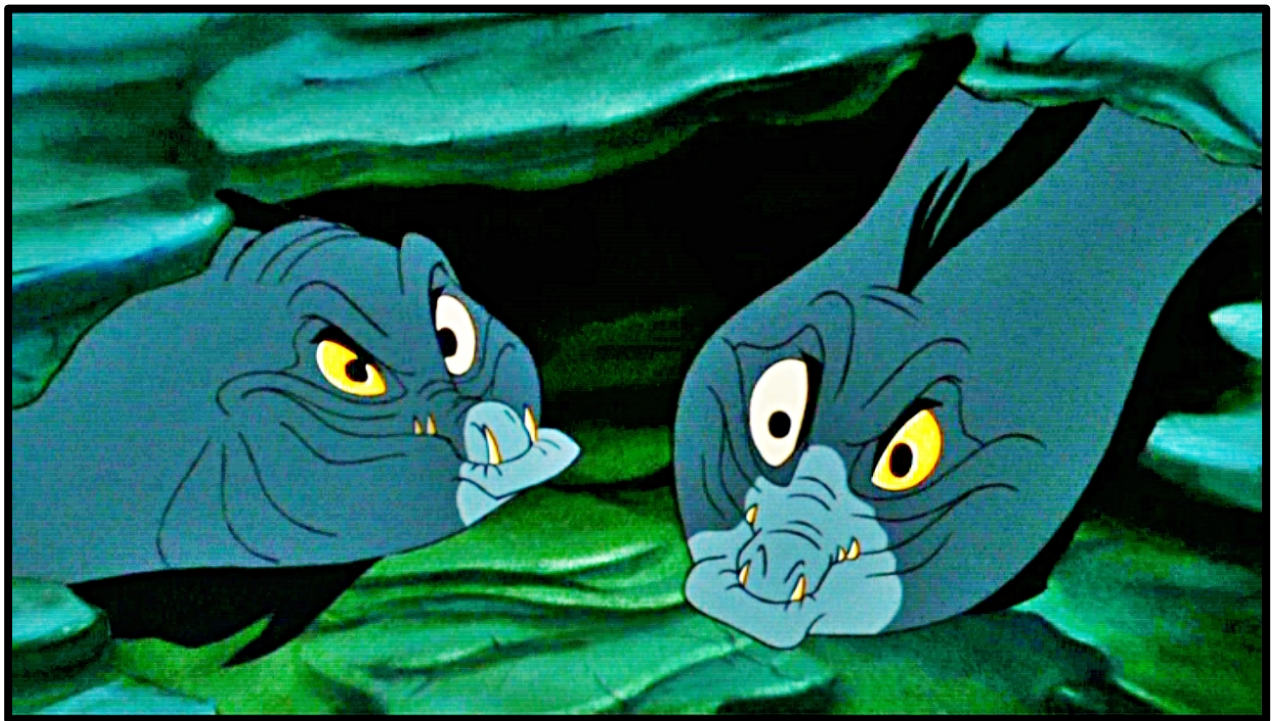
Ursula's accessories are both numerous and fabulous. Her two main accessories include:

- Trident

The trident was fabricated using PVC pipe, EVA foam, epoxy resin and LED tape. EVA foam was layered, glued and painted on a five foot PVC pole. The trident head was fabricated separately and then installed onto the staff. First, the trident head was patterned and sculpted from FreeForm Air ©. After sanding, sealing and priming the trident head, a two-part silicon cast was made. LED tape was applied to foam board, then added to the silicon mold. A clear epoxy resin cast was poured, sanded and sealed with gold-dust modpodge. The trident head was attached to the staff and all LED circuits were soldered to a switch and 9V battery. Finishing touches were created with craft foam, paint and clear coat sealant.

- Crown and Jewelry

The crown was sculpted using FreeForm Air © and then sanded before being sealed in modpodge. Each spire was hand painted and detailed before being wrapped in yellow EL wire. The necklace (not shown) was sculpted using FreeForm Air © and painted using a modpodge/gold dusting paint technique. Details were hand applied before the necklace was finished with a gloss clear coat. The purple earrings were hand sculpted using Sculpey III and then baked. Each earring was painted with metallic purple acrylic paint before being sealed in a clear sculpey sealant.





## Flotsam and Jetsam

Ursula's familiars, Flotsam and Jetsam, are lifelong companions and, ultimately, Ursula's minions. Each animatronic eel is mounted on a PVC skeleton that attaches directly to Ursula's corset. The bodies of Flotsam and Jetsam are made from fabric and filled with packing peanuts - and each body runs the length of the PVC tube support. The animatronic heads were sculpted from pink polystyrene insulation foam and then covered with fabric. Pan/tilt mounted servo motors were attached to the mouths of Flotsam and Jetsam with popsicle sticks and installed onto the PVC skeleton. A single Arduino board and phone battery run the animatronic eels. Programming for Flotsam and Jetsam was written using C++ coding language.







## All in the Details

Ursula spends her days working diligently to build her business. As an entrepreneur, Ursula always carries important part of her craft with her:

- Seaweed

These strands of green/gold and pink seaweed are hand patterned, ruffled and detailed with three different types of fabric. Each strand has a grommet to attach to the waistband of the overskirt.

- Ingredients

Each bottle contains unique ingredients essential to Ursula's spell casting. From crocheted mini's to feathers to flowers, a plethora of hand crafted goods are suspended in bubbles or bottles and attached to the silver chain hanging from the waistband of the overskirt.

- Clients

The three clients (including King Triton) wrapped in Ursula's chains were sculpted from blue polystyrene insulation foam. To add stability, each creature was covered in black worbla and sealed with modpodge before being painted and detailed with acrylic paint. Several layers of clear coat and worbla attachments add finishing touches.

