

Making Fantasy a Reality - An Interview with Sisu Cosplay

Sitting in a busy coffee shop by the Excel in south east London, all attention is on Veera of Sisu Cosplay as she makes her entrance. Her impressive Monster Hunter armour, while quite the spectacle, took a bit of a wiggle to squeeze through the door, which clearly wasn't made with cosplayers in mind.

As she waddles over in her masterpiece I run up to help carry her prop, she gratefully says "Thank you, carrying this at a convention all day really takes it out of you". After I complimented Veera on her craftsmanship she modestly shook her head and whispered "it's fine as long as you don't look too closely". We both laughed at this playful remark and sat down. While this was easy for me, Veera began to take apart the skirt of her blue and white spiked armour. Each part came away with ease and impressively slotted into one another, creating a neat pile under the table.

Once she was sitting comfortably, in her safety shorts and top half of armour, I asked her about the cosplay. Veera then took off a gauntlet and handed the polished foam piece over. It was perfectly painted with cleverly placed highlights and shadows. There were a few scratches but she said that's to be expected once you've been wearing it for a few days at a con – this being the last day of London MCM. She explained that foam is her favourite material "I prefer to use EVA foam on armour projects as it's reasonably cheap and quick to use. You can also get some really interesting shapes and textures with it. It gives me opportunities to experiment with tools like dremels, wood burners and sanding belts."

The sheer scale and detail of the cosplay was so impressive, I couldn't help but wonder how much it must have cost. However Veera casually laughed off the remark saying, "if only I had that much to spend on cosplay! Each of my costumes costs under £100". While that might seem a lot to be spending on a hobby, Veera is certain it's worth every penny, replying "Absolutely" with a definite nod when I questioned her.

Keeping on the subject of cosplay as a hobby, I wondered if Veera had ever considered taking it on as a profession. She let out an airy laugh and shook her head with a surprised expression, "never! When I started back in 2013, I just saw it as a fun, nerdy, expressive hobby. I still do now. I know some of my friends are running small businesses through cosplay, but for me that would take the fun out of it." It's admirable that although cosplay is such an expensive hobby, Veera is sticking to her guns and paying for expenses out of her own pocket.

However one particular cost is not too much of a concern for her. While getting a hotel is an extra expense for most cons around the world, in England it isn't such a vital aspect of the convention experience. For London MCM Veera travelled in each day from her home, wearing the cosplay for the 40 minute train journey. This, however, does mean that she has to endure the public's reactions but this doesn't faze her – "I usually get positive reactions. I mean, you get the odd teenager who gives you a dirty look but I think they're just frustrated they can't express themselves like we do! [laughs] But there's always a few people who come up to you and ask about what you're doing. It's always fun to see how people react though!".

Veera's straight forward and fun loving attitude really demonstrates how much the cosplay community has grown in recent years. She's so honest and not afraid to show she's not perfection but just another geek having fun making these glorious creations.