BECOMING A QUALITY PANELIST

dj Date Masamune

DISCLAIMERS

Panel will be available online as well as a list of all my resources!

On my blog (see handout)

Also, check out my articles that I wrote about this topic

Contact info./handouts

My resources, related links, etc. are listed

Don't have to take notes!

Take a business card/handout before you leave

Even if you leave mid-way, feel free to get one before you go
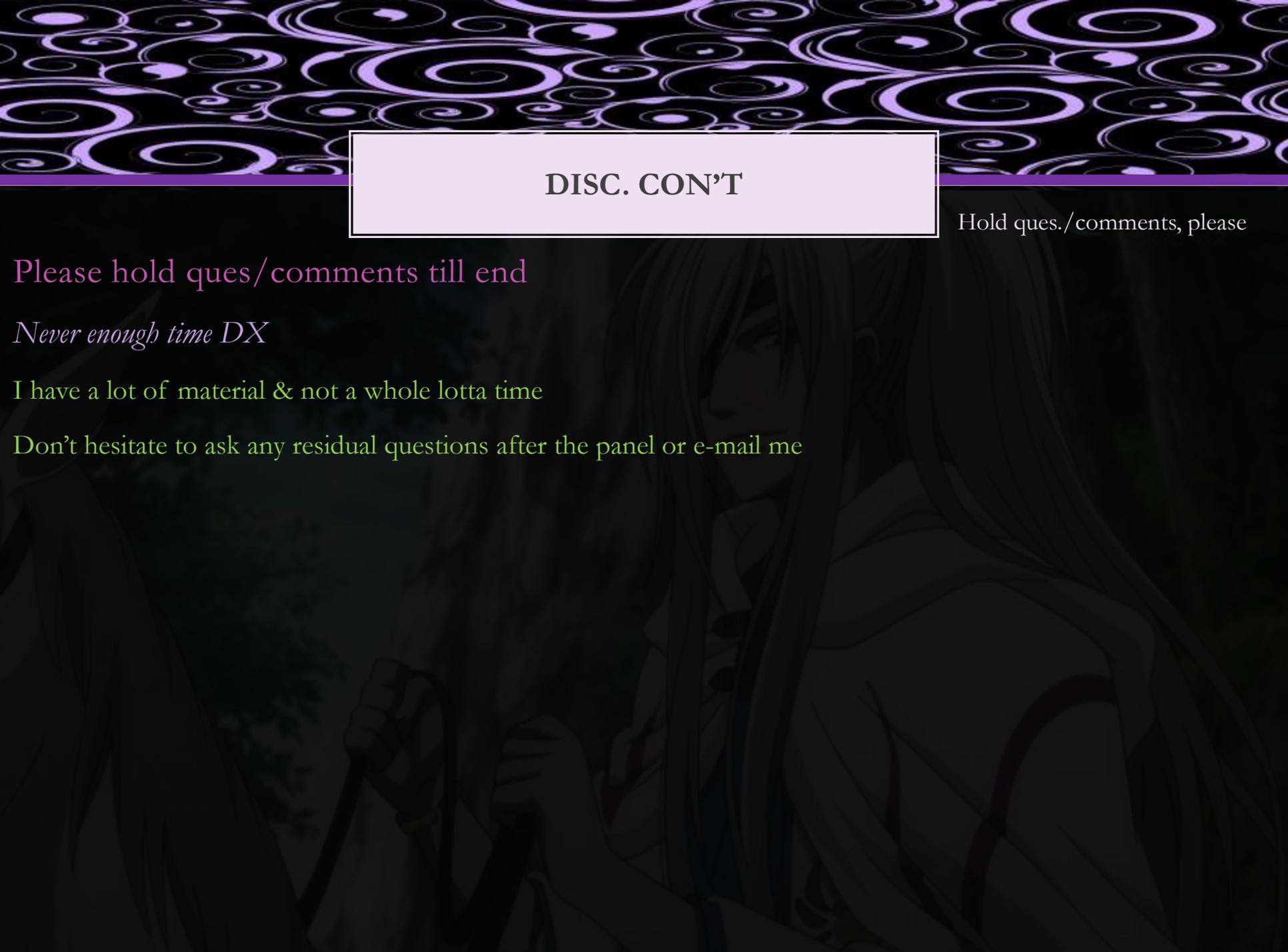
DISC. CON'T

Please hold ques/comments till end

Never enough time DX

I have a lot of material & not a whole lotta time

Don't hesitate to ask any residual questions after the panel or e-mail me
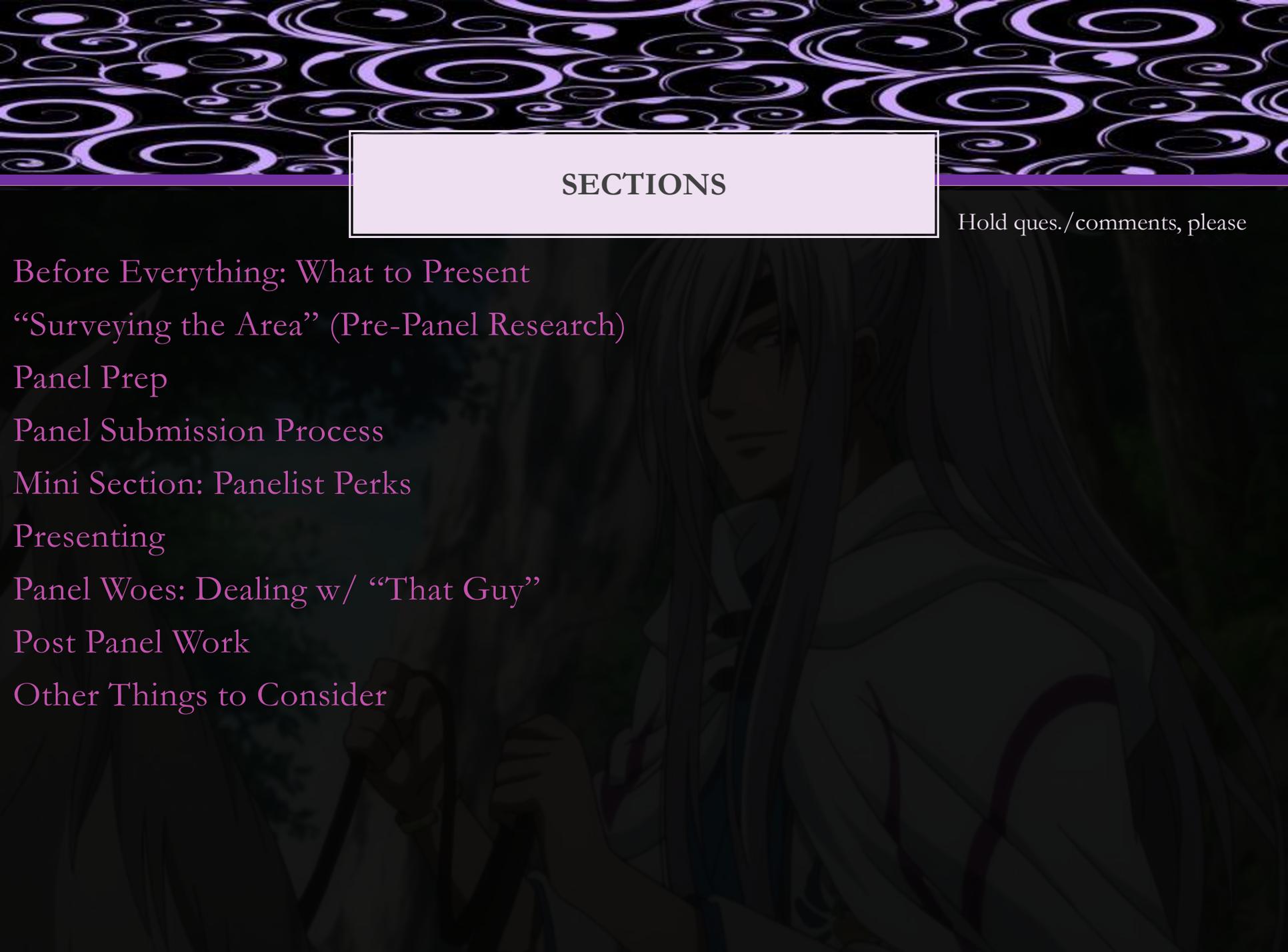
SECTIONS

Before Everything: What to Present

"Surveying the Area" (Pre-Panel Research)

Panel Prep

Panel Submission Process

Mini Section: Panelist Perks

Presenting

Panel Woes: Dealing w/ "That Guy"

Post Panel Work

Other Things to Consider

BEFORE EVERYTHING

What to Present
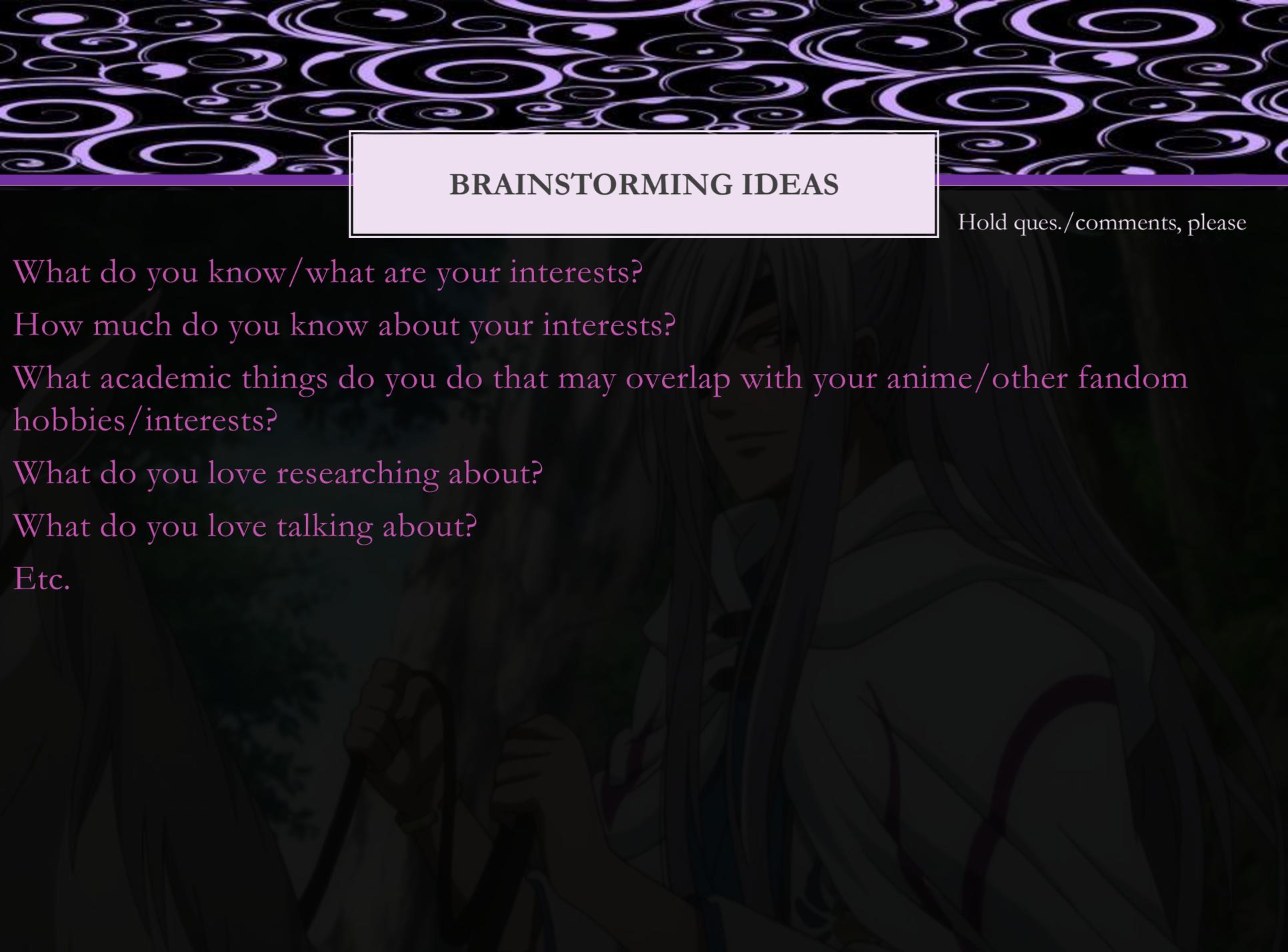
BRAINSTORMING IDEAS

What do you know/what are your interests?

How much do you know about your interests?

What academic things do you do that may overlap with your anime/other fandom hobbies/interests?

What do you love researching about?

What do you love talking about?

Etc.

ALSO KEEP IN MIND…

Some ideas can get you farther in the process (but nothing's guaranteed):

Academic, aspects about Japanese, culture, panels about industries relating to the con type, panels coinciding w/ the them

Only do panels on things you genuinely want to talk about

Don't blindly submit

Likewise, don't submit just b/c you want a free badge

When you have ques. about panels, panel dept. or live programming dept.

"SURVEYING THE AREA"

Pre-Panel Research

RESEARCHING POTENTIAL CONS

AnimeCons.com

Great source/list of various conventions

Check panels/programming @ the con at least 2+ yrs. back

Also, what featured panelists have presented & tendencies of particular con

"family friendly" con, con theme (do they stick to their theme), featured panelists, panelists reimbursement policy, size/costs/how long has it been occurring/etc., age of ppl. who can present (esp. for 18+), category (anime, sci-fi, comic, etc.)
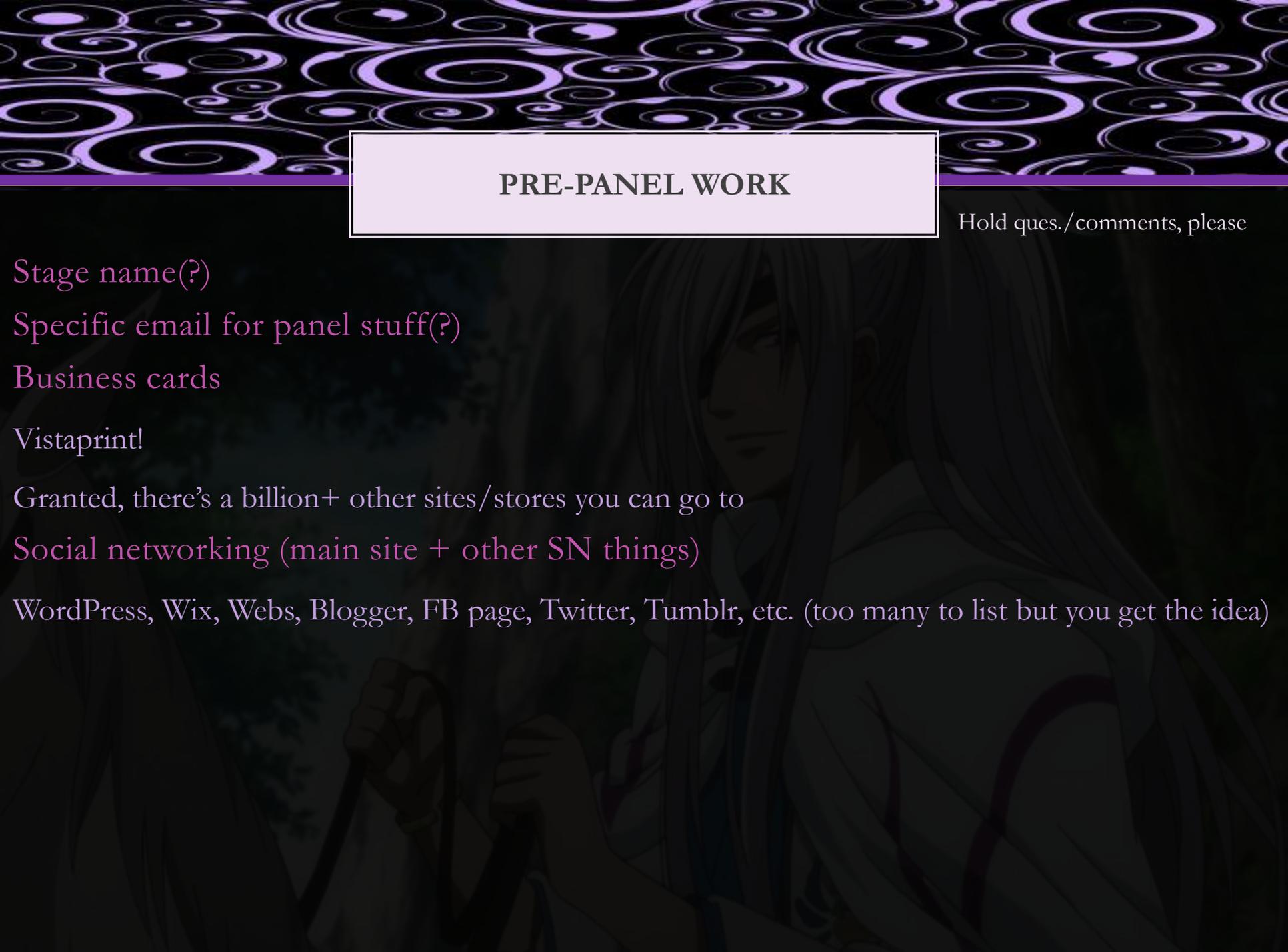
PRE-PANEL WORK

Hold ques./comments, please

Stage name(?)

Specific email for panel stuff(?)

Business cards

Vistaprint!

Granted, there's a billion+ other sites/stores you can go to

Social networking (main site + other SN things)

WordPress, Wix, Webs, Blogger, FB page, Twitter, Tumblr, etc. (too many to list but you get the idea)

PANEL PREP

Copious notes

Can *never* have too many, same goes for research

Likewise, document *everything*

Panels submitted, list of accepted panels, panels descriptions, panel ideas, cons you plan to submit to + what panels

Practice if you feel you need to

Practicing can't prepare you for everything you may encounter while presenting

Know your panel inside & out

Solo vs. group
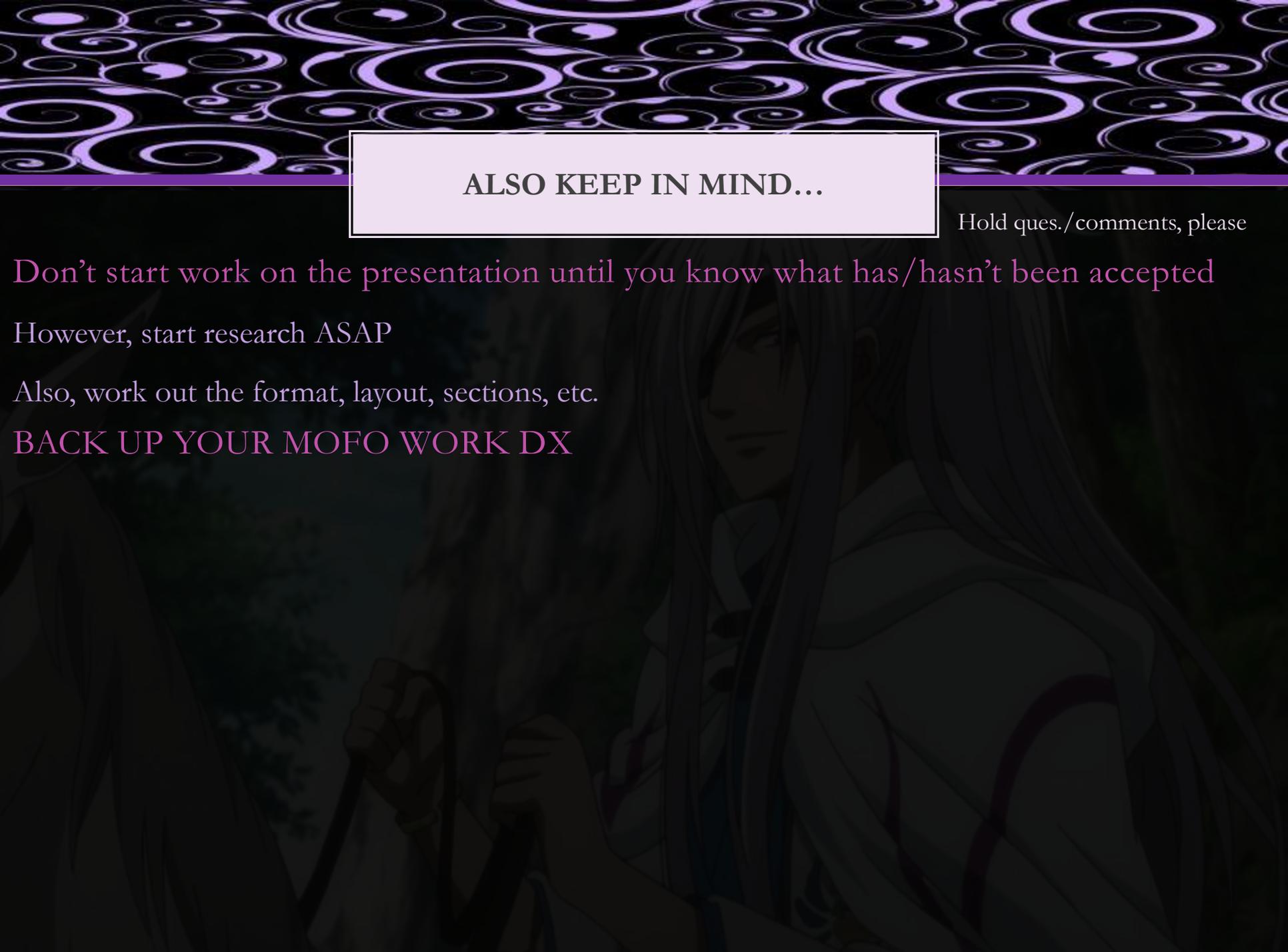
ALSO KEEP IN MIND…

Hold ques./comments, please

Don't start work on the presentation until you know what has/hasn't been accepted

However, start research ASAP

Also, work out the format, layout, sections, etc.

BACK UP YOUR MOFO WORK DX

PANEL SUBMISSION PROCESS

FYI ABOUT PANEL FORMS

Hold ques./comments, please

No 2 are the same

Always read the policies for panels for any given con every year

Always a deadline to submit, be cognizant of it; once it passes, the form will be closed

Some cons are more stringent on their deadline than others

A form submission for a panel

Some cons form will email you a copy of the submission, some won't

Hold ques./comments, please

General biographical info.

Name (stage name), etc.

Primary contact…

Address, e-mail, phone number, etc.

FYI: Whoever's info. is entered as the primary contact will be the one being contacted & receiving emails

Additional panel members & their contact info.

However, panels aren't an excuse to get you & 20 of your friends free badges; generally a limit

Did you pre-register

(Occasionally) Group affiliations

Example: MAGfest

Panel name

Can be creative but should always be obvious

Example: if your panel's about BlazBlue, a title like "*Ride Teh Ice Carz!*: A Panel About BlazBlue" is going to be easier to ascertain the subject than "The Best Game EVAR!"

Short explanation

What's in the program book; also, should be obvious as to what you're panel is doing

What type of event

Panel, workshop, game show, etc.

How much time/preferred amount of time

Have fun trying to divine this one ~.~

Again, practicing can't help out w/ this issue completely

Also, some cons ask, some don't; some let you input; & some ask for a rough estimate (30, 90, 120)

Some ask what time of day (morning, afternoon, evening, etc.)

Preferred day

What times can't you do

Sometimes a checklist for certain types of events, others fill-in

Esp. important if your transportation situation will effect what times you're available, etc.

Sometimes you may have to contact the panel's department upon finding out acceptances to let them know

18+ event

Could just be b/c panelist wants a more 'mature' audience, not b/c of some level of graphicness

Have to be 18+ by the time of the con to do these events

When in doubt, assume 18+

If you know your topic should be 18+ & you're under 18, don't try to submit it as a regular panel; i.e., non-18+ hentai panel *face palm*

Co-panelists also have to be 18+

Usually scheduled later in the night

Limited slots

However, if you have a non-18+ panel, they will shut you down if you have a nip-slip or such in the panel; could mess up you getting a reimbursement or getting panels again

Tech needs

Projector, sound system, microphones, DVD player, nothing, etc.

Prior panel experience

Part of staff

Etc., etc.

ACCEPTANCES/REJECTIONS

Hold ques./comments, please

Hope you can handle rejection

Inherent part of the process (as well as getting things accepted)

Generally, the smaller the con, the easier it is to get something accepted; the bigger the con, the harder it is (more or less)

A lot factors into accepting/rejecting a panel

Cons generally will not tell you why something's been rejected or wait-listed (unless you get lucky)

No time to detail the reason why every single submission was rejected

Some cons don't even tell you if you've been wait-listed X/

Granted, if an idea's been rejected multiple times @ mult. cons, may need to fine-tune submission/idea

Also, don't be the d*uche that whines & complains if you don't get anything accepted

Ultimately, if your panel was good enough, it would have been accepted (if you're going to be a d*uche about it)

ALSO KEEP IN MIND…

It's better to have more time than less

The more days/times you're available, the better your chances of getting something accepted (not guaranteed)

Saturdays can be the best day to present, Fridays being in-between, & Sundays being the "worst" in comparison (*usually*)

As far as the amount of ppl. attending the com

In general, 18+ programming is relatively competitive

Always request a mic; makes it easy to overpower annoying ppl. in your panels

But if the room's small enough, use your natural voice…unless it's really soft

Waiting's the name of the game ~.~

Besides the 2+ months the submission form is open, takes an additional 1+ month(s) to hear back

You will hear back one way or the other

Usually the con will have some sort of timeline for panel acceptances/rejections listed, if not, can email

Sometimes using con's SN sites can be better to reach them than email

FB, forums, Twitter, etc.

Generally, the earlier you submit the better, but no guarantee of acceptance

Can submit as many panels as you want; realistically, not all of them are going to be accepted, but…

Be realistic; only submit the amount you're willing to present

Or do what I like to call "playing the lotto"

If you have a panel(s) accepted, the panel/LP dept. will send an email detailing badge pick-up info. as well as anything else
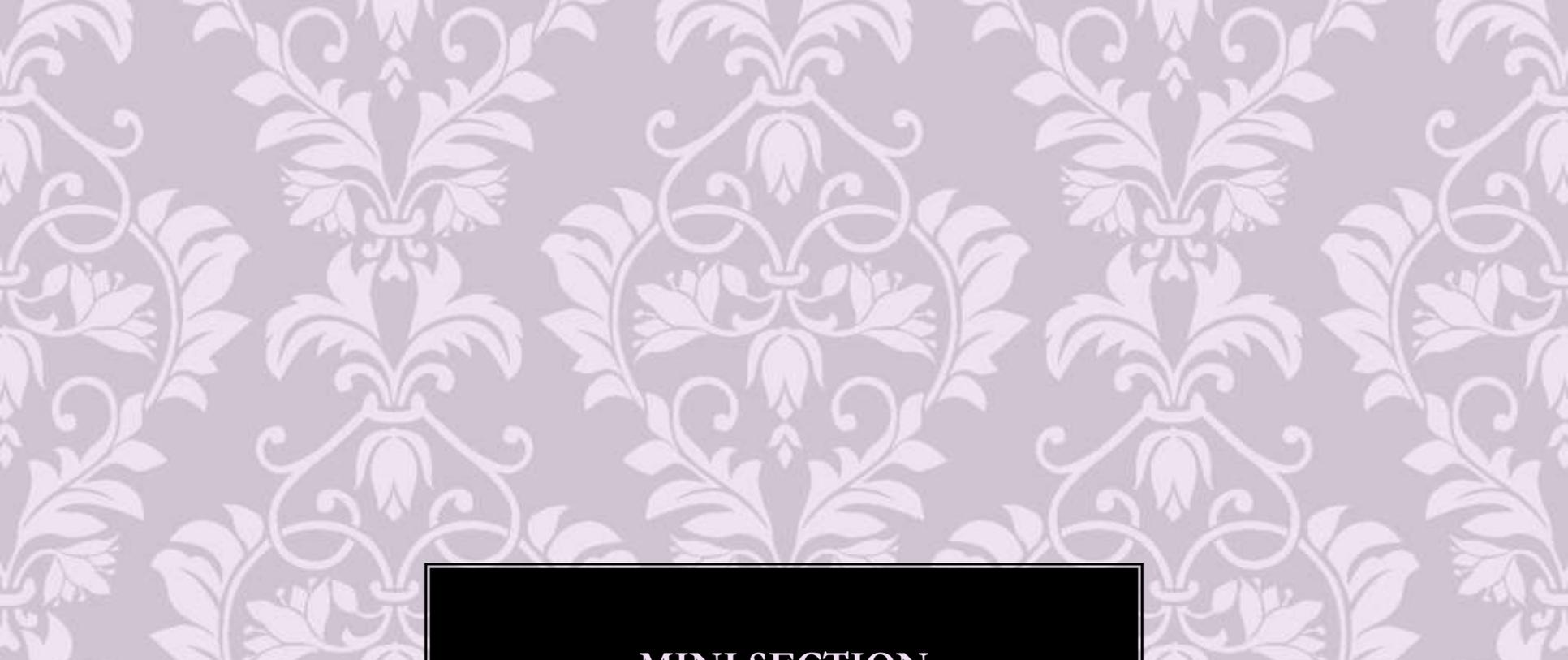
MINI SECTION

Panelist Perks
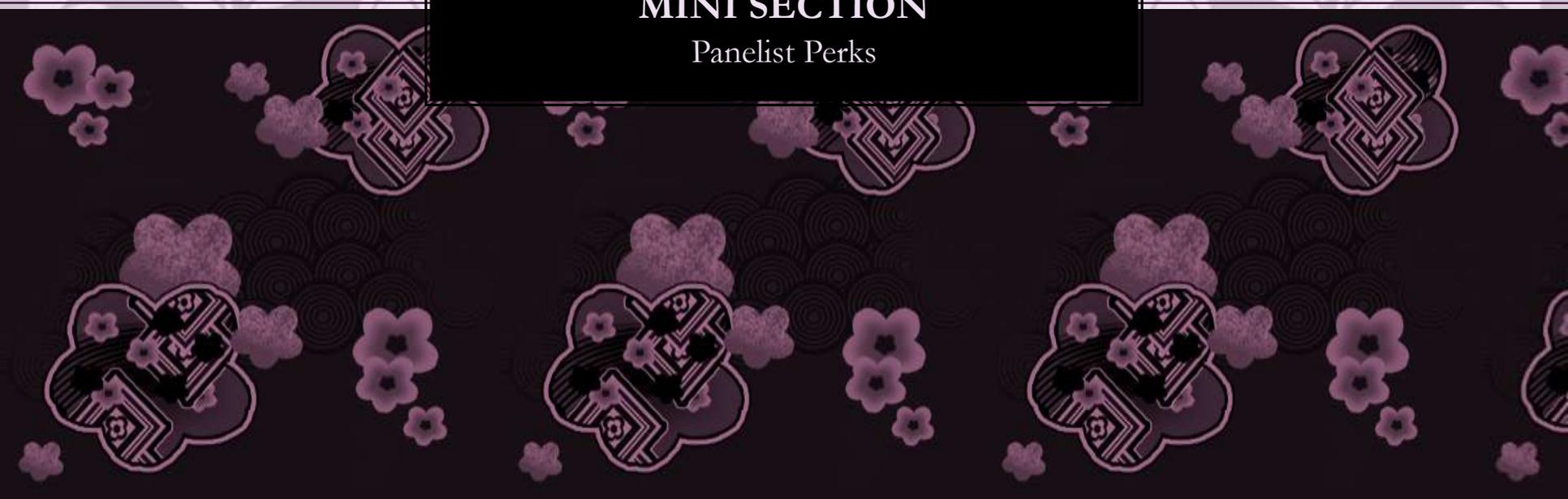
Pre-Registration partial/full reimbursement or free badge

Depends on hour/panel requirement

Also, badge pick-up is usually it's own separate line; so, if you were a panelist @ this year's Otakon, got to skip the whole thing

The panel/LP dept. will let you know where/when

Sometimes there's a panelist lounge @ the con (Otakon, Katsucon, etc.)

ULTIMATE GOAL

For those whom are interested in doing this regularly; featured panelist/guest

Can negotiate (more)

"See your name in lights!"

However, something to potentially look forward to down the road

Can be a slow process getting your name out there (in a good way)

May be able to potentially skip the slow growth if you have some marketable skills/knowledge

Live Martial Arts demonstration, field of expertise (anthropology, Asian Studies, etc.), writer, singer, etc.

Also, panel vs. event

Hold ques./comments, please

AUSA (updated this year)

2+ hours programming accepted for full reimbursement

Katsucon (updated this year)

Lead panelist: 3+ hours of programming accepted + pre-reg for full reimbursement **or (lead panelist)** less than 3 hours for 50% + pre-reg **or** 30% if a co-panelist for any # of hours

Zenkaikon

1+ panel(s) accepted for free registration/full reimbursement

AMA (Anime Mid-Atlantic)

3+ panels accepted for full reimbursement/free registration

Otakon

Full reimbursement upon successful completion of at least 1 panel + pre-reg **or** free registration if a returning panelist

MAGfest

Same as Zenkaikon

PRESENTING

MAKING THE PRESENTATION

Hold ques./comments, please

Again, research everything & take copious notes

In general, you don't need to be an expert on your topic before you submit, but by the time you present/know more than your audience >.>

Don't build in tangents

Same goes for notes

Subjectivity vs. objectivity

Is it a panel about your opinion on something or a panel about factual info.?

"I feel/I think…" vs. "it is/it was…"

Presentation style

Lecture vs. workshop vs. Q&A vs. game show vs. ???

Won't necessarily need a visual aide for a Q&A, highly recommended for the other 2 (but still not necessary)

Constantly check for typos & other errors

Also, make sure the files work

Bibliography/reference list

Using reputable resources

Try to get more than just Wikipedia/TvTropes

Can use Google Scholar to find more of these

Depends on type of panel

Definitely for academic panels

Great for references, not for serious academic styled panels
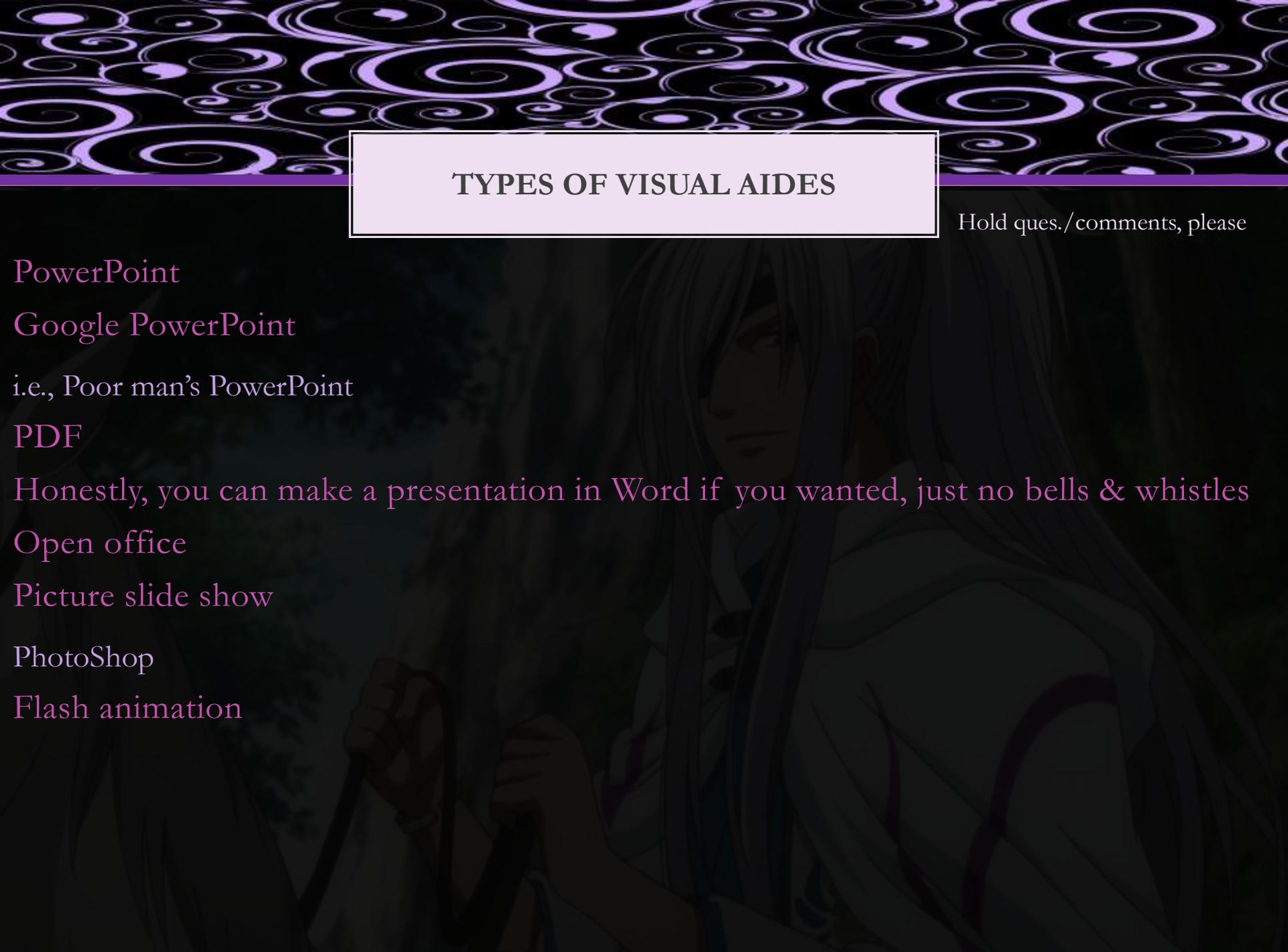
TYPES OF VISUAL AIDES

Hold ques./comments, please

PowerPoint

Google PowerPoint

i.e., Poor man's PowerPoint

PDF

Honestly, you can make a presentation in Word if you wanted, just no bells & whistles

Open office

Picture slide show

PhotoShop

Flash animation

Movie/video

Collection of video clips

Prezi

Only when you have enough time + mostly pictures

Pro tip: DL the desktop app & install on your USB drive, so you don't have to worry about whether a computer has this software or not

However, this option costs

Graphs

The list goes on!

There isn't just PowerPoint, folks, you have options

For PowerPoint presentations, helps to use the 'Presenter View' (Slide show-Monitors-check 'Presenter View')

Look may differ depending on PP version
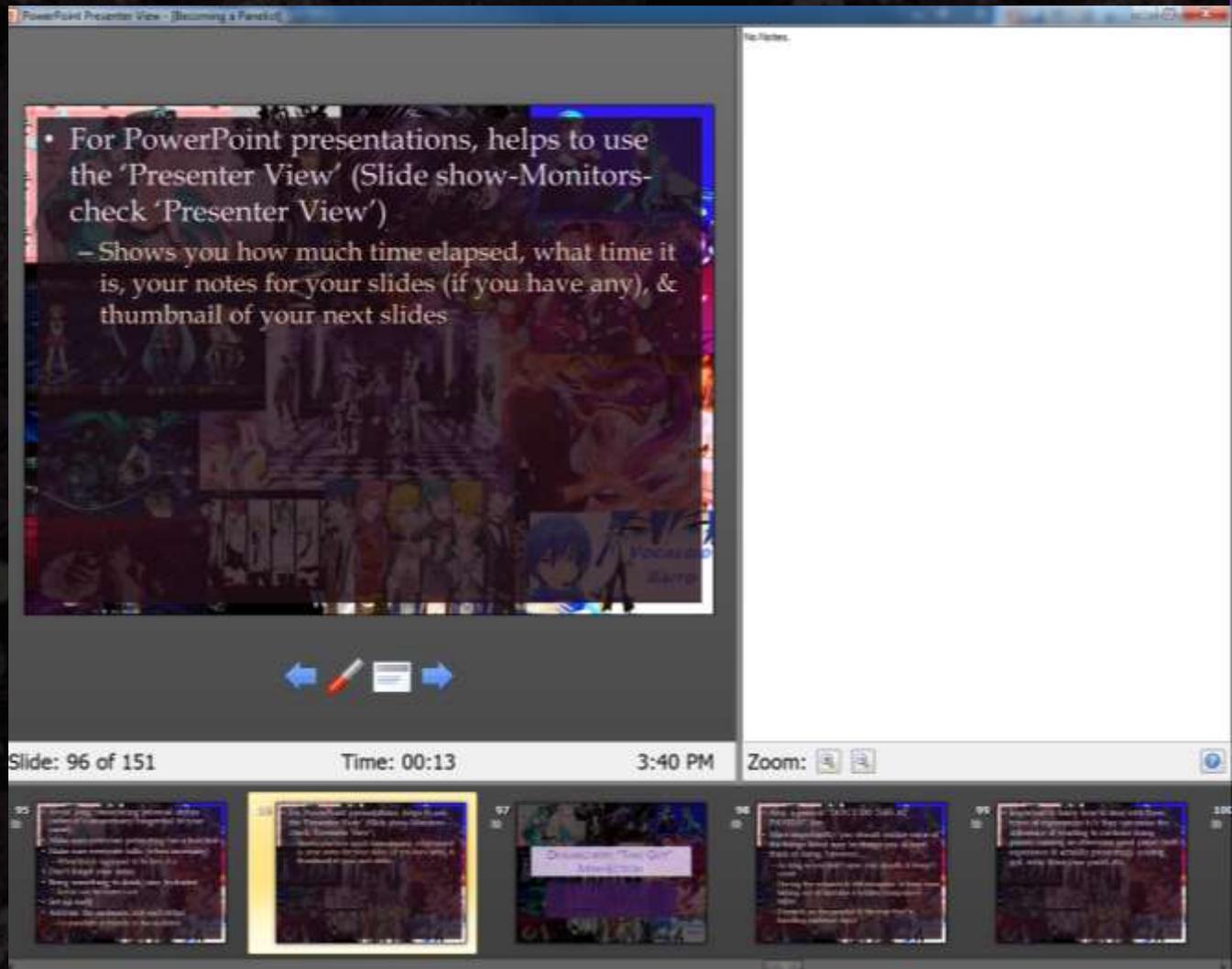
WHEN PRESENTING…

Hold ques./comments, please

Don't hesitate to briefly explain what your panel will be covering @ the beginning if you feel it's needed/the title or desc. Isn't that forthcoming

In general, give a brief intro: who you are, what you hope to achieve w/ your panel, etc.

Mention at the beginning/end (sometimes middle) if there are things to take away from your panel

Business cards, candy, handouts, etc.

Have your notes & back-up drive/whatever in case things go awry

Have a Q/A @ some point

At the end, ques/comments throughout, specific sections; remember, you can also adjust on the fly

Make sure you finish with enough time to break down/pack up your stuff

Usually a staffer will let you know how much time you have left (15 min, 10 min., 5 min.) but always keep track (easy to do w/ PowerPoint & Presenter's View)

Don't want to be rude to the next panelist

If Q&A session is beginning to run over time, move it to outside the panel room

Likewise, make sure you're in the room @ least 15 minutes before yours starts to make sure you can set-up on time

Sit near the front so you can let the panelist know if they're running over time (if need be); also, don't be a d'bag when doing this ~.~

Make sure to decide one way or the other beforehand on whether you make the panel available post-panel or not

Could post your bibliography/list of resources on your blog/whatever & give the link out @ the panel

Tell your audience upfront so they can either prepare to take notes or know they have access to this info. post-con
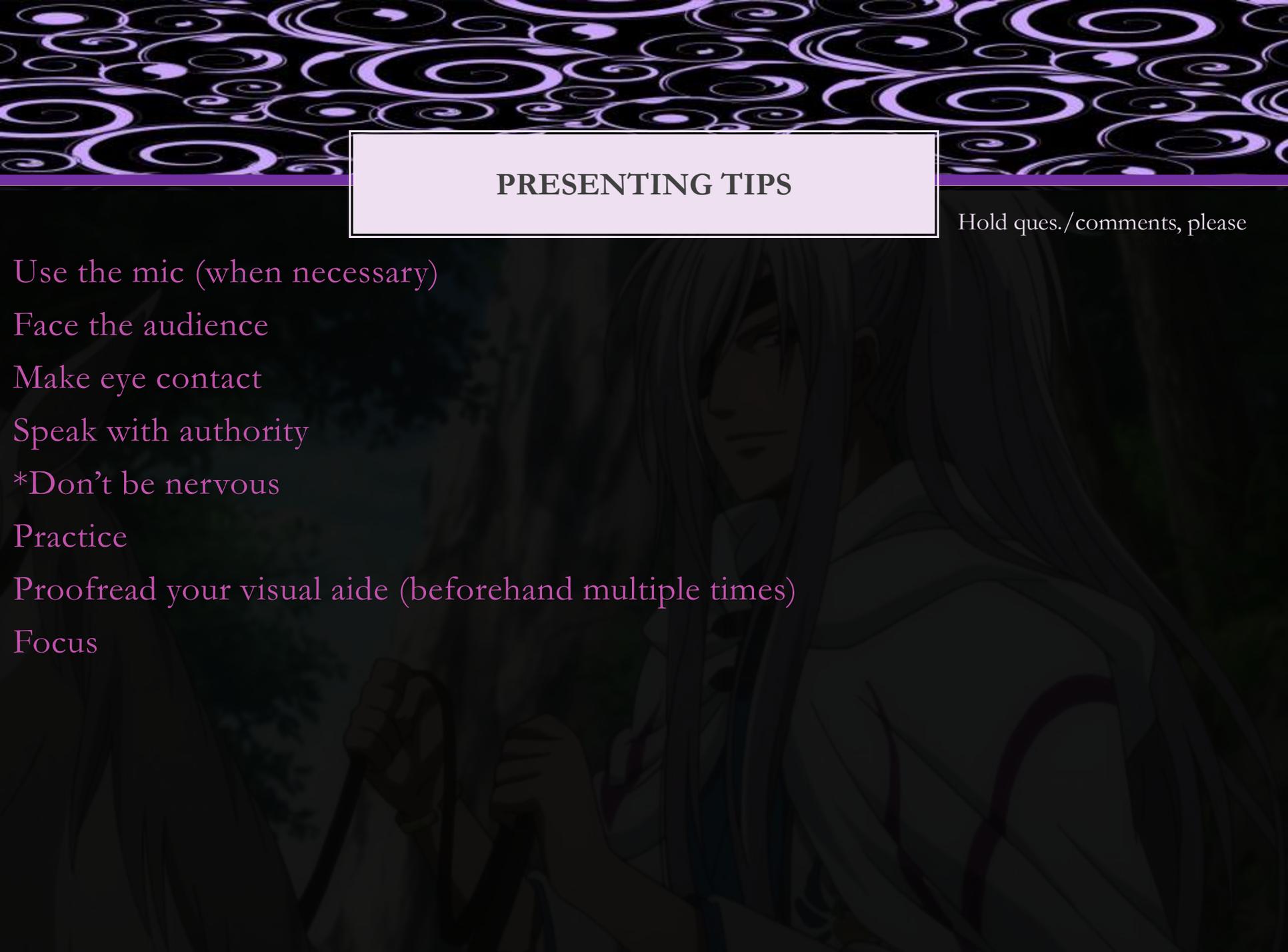
PRESENTING TIPS

Hold ques./comments, please

Use the mic (when necessary)

Face the audience

Make eye contact

Speak with authority

*Don't be nervous

Practice

Proofread your visual aide (beforehand multiple times)

Focus

Avoid long, meandering personal stories (when it's unnecessary/tangential to your panel)

Make sure everyone presenting has a function

Make sure everyone talks (when necessary)

When this is supposed to be how it is

Don't forget your notes

Bring something to drink/stay hydrated

Just in case the water's out

Set-up early

Address the audience, not each other

Co-panelists or friends in the audience

Avoid constantly going back & forth between slides

It's unprofessional & can annoy your audience

If it means having extra slides, so be it

If you're running short on time, let your audience know

ALSO KEEP IN MIND…

Generally, you're providing everything

Laptop/whatever you're presenting w/, USB drive, VGA adaptor for Macs, etc.

Sometimes you can borrow at least a laptop from someone in the audience or staff if things go to heck, but don't count on it

Also applies to VGA adaptors; some cons provide this though

Don't use the visual aide as a crutch

Know your topic well enough you can talk w/o looking at it constantly

Have back up copies of visual aide (esp. w/ Prezis, PowerPoints, etc.)

Go ahead & download videos, esp. if on YouTube

Check your tech!

Laptop/whatever, USB drive/whatever, etc.

Other things to keep in mind when giving your panel intro & when writing the short desc. of the panel

Is it info heavy so you don't have time for a lot of questions/comments? Are you just skimming the surface of a series? Are you giving detailed explanations about everything EVAR for that series? Is it meant for n00bs, intermediates, experts of that series? Will there be Q & A afterwards/during/sometime soon?

Ask for ppl. to put in a good word for your panel @ the feedback session/on the forums/FB page/where ever
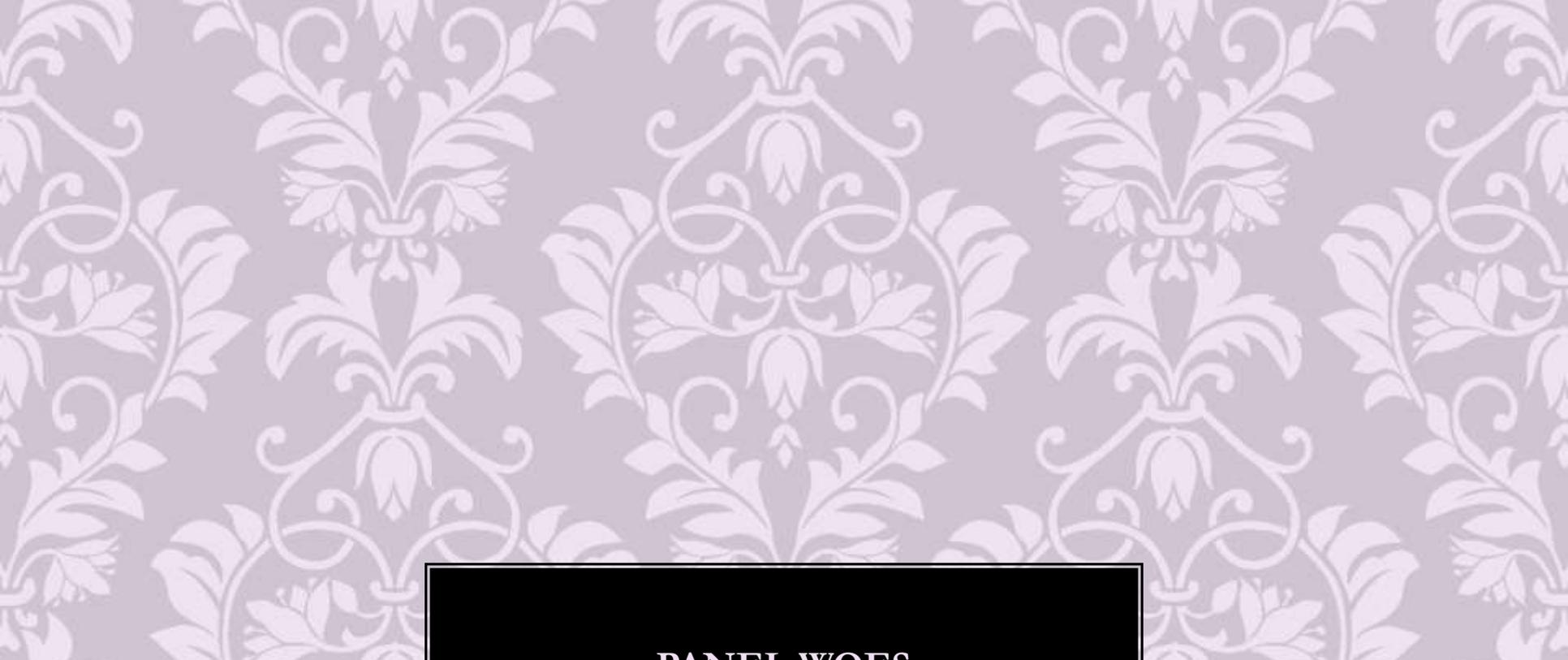
PANEL WOES

Dealing w/ "That Guy"
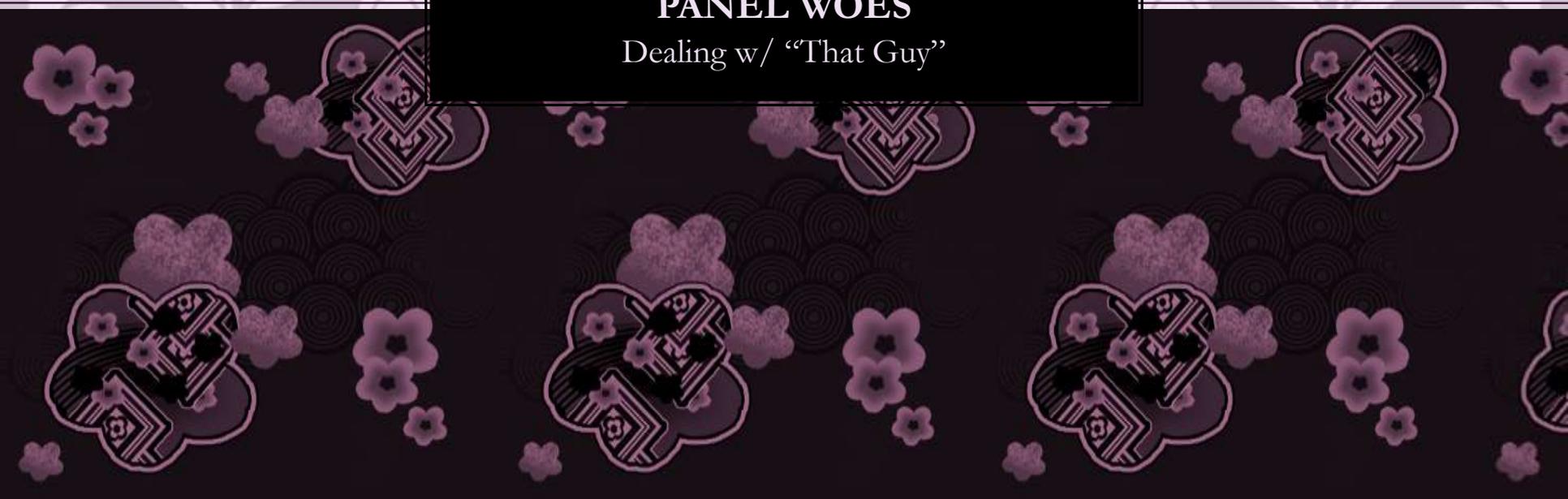
Also, a general "DON'T DO THIS AT PANELS!" list

More importantly: you should realize some of the things listed may be things you at least think of doing; however…

As long as you don't open your mouth, it doesn't count

Having the restraint & self-discipline to keep from talking out of turn like a toddler/compulsive talker

Depends on the panelist & the way they're handling audience input

To a certain degree, you as the panelist are responsible for your audience

Why it's important to set boundaries & enforce them

Some of these types can/will result due to you losing control of your panel

You *need* to be prepared to deal w/ this b/c you will

Never let your experiences w/ any of these types ruin panels for you

Some ppl. are literally looking for reasons to hate you/your panel; however, for every one person that hates there will be another that absolutely loves it

"THAT GUY" TYPES

"Anime expert"

2 types: one who actually knows what they're talking about & is a d*uche & the more common they *think* they know what they're talking about but not really/at all (may challenge you every time you say something)

The challenger

Just 'cause or pissing contest; sometimes may be special needs

Banshee/wild child

Remember: it's due to lack of parenting & not the kid's fault

Compulsive talker/million & 1 ques.

They don't know when to STFU; typically, ignore the fact others may have ques./you have lots to cover & they just want to talk

Trolls

Tries to start stupid debates: "Sub's better than dub", "glorious Nippon is the best country EVAR", etc.

Can be of the challenger type

Know-it-all

You differ from what they believe by 1% & they lose it (& usually leave)

Usually, ppl. that "had the education"/recently *briefly* covered it in their high school/college class & get upset when someone says anything that contradicts that (limited) knowledge base

Usually says things like "I know more than the panelist" but at no point corrected the panelist if they "made a mistake"

Weeaboos/Japanophiles/rigid a$$holes

Selective hearing

You might say you think one work from an author sucks, but what they heard is that you think *everything* from that author sucks

Weeaboos/Japanophiles/A$$holes

If you mispronounce one thing (& it's the only mistake you made in the entire presentation), they have an attitude as if you messed up the whole presentation

Similarly, if you kinda get one piece of minor info. wrong, they denounce the entire panel as sucking/you don't know anything

Annoying tweenagers *or* Manchild/womanchild (not all but it happens)

Can't approach mature topics maturely, can completely derail your panel (for general childishness), make inappropriate comments throughout the whole thing, etc.

Brats used to being the center of attention 24/7

w/ manchild types, potentially drank too much

Random ques. dude

You have a panel about Digimon, this person asks what you think about the recent Pokemon episodes..?

Unfunny comedian

Nobody likes unfunny "jokes"

Special case

Autistic, ADHD, bipolar, etc.; Also, any of these + not on meds

Basically, someone that has a legitimate excuse for poor behaviour

Most of these can also double as 'panel hijackers'

HOW TO DEAL (GENERAL)

Hold ques./comments, please

Don't bite off people's heads when dealing with "that guy" instances, keep it professional

I feel most times it's relatively harmless, so you never really need to go full-b***h

However, if you see an opportunity (& the person's a total jerk), seize it

Assuming you're absolutely sure this isn't a "special" case

Some types of "that guy" need to be shut down ASAP before they ruin everything/panel hijack

Need to know how to crowd control

IN GENERAL

All of these types are more or less cases of the general inability to distinguish between a person's opinion (subjectivity) & someone stating a fact (objectivity)

Also, that ppl. have differing opinions

Don't have to agree with what the panelist is saying, but realize the panelist is stating their opinions, not yours **or** that something's a fact whether you like it or not

Pro tip: acceptance is different from agreeing with someone

Can have ppl. removed from the room by staff

Only do this if they're being super rambunctious/you fear for your safety & the audience's & they're being super disruptive (like the drunk at an 18+ panel)

Do this sparingly & only when absolutely necessary; don't do this every time someone disagrees with you
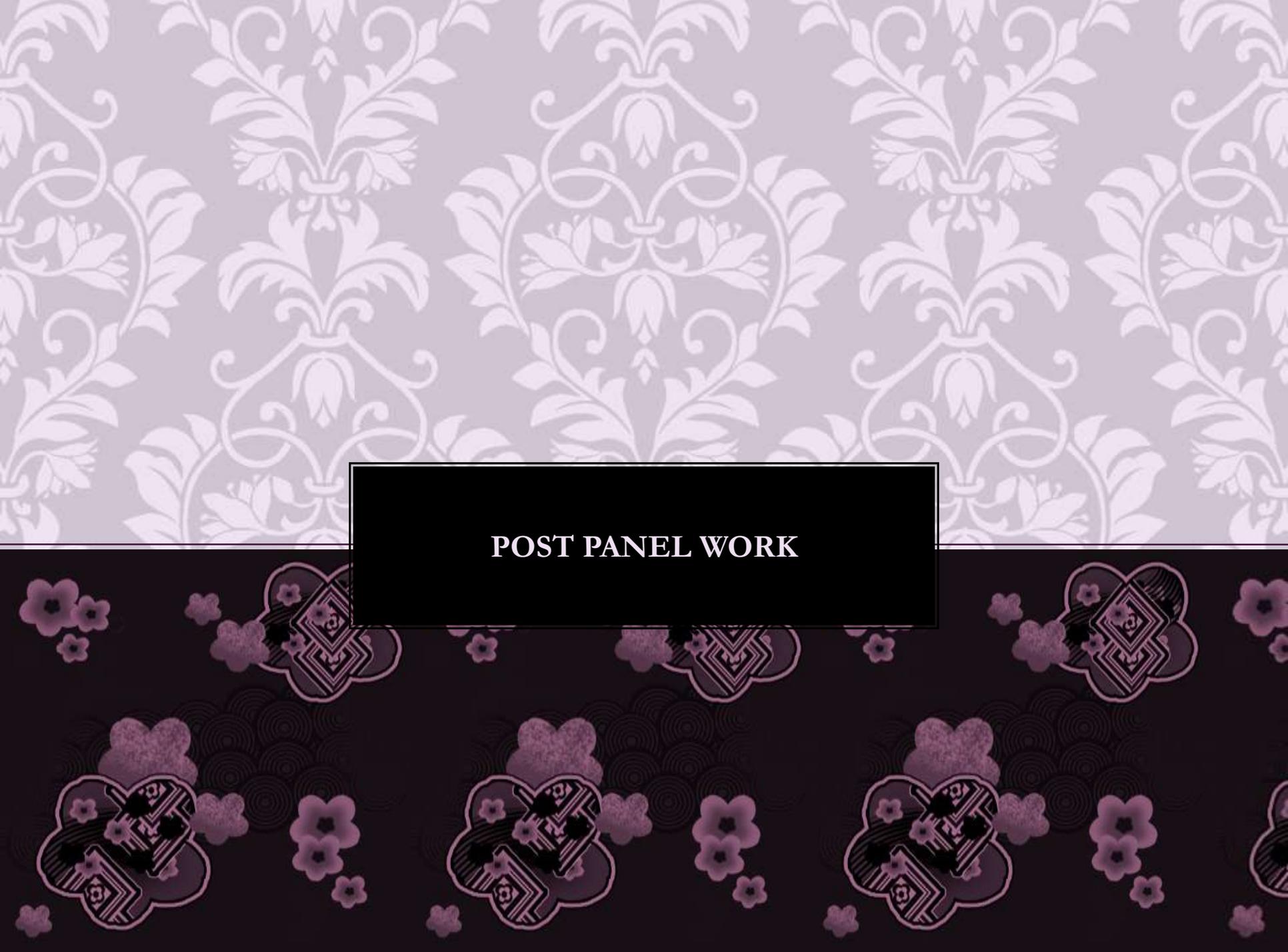
POST PANEL WORK

Receiving feedback

Using forums

Either to ask for it or to see if anybody said anything

Facebook page

Your own blog

Con staffer/volunteer present for the entire panel

Workshopping your panel

Working out kinks, fixing typos/errors, etc.

Depending, preparing for the next con

OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

Check the room(s) you're presenting in ahead of time

Also, try to catch @ least 1 panel in that room

Giveaways

Unless it's a surprise or to kill time, should say so in the panel desc.

Start things ASAP

Even if you don't work on the physical presentation until confirmation, once received tart immediately

For cosplayers: if you're at a con specifically for panels, now's not the time to break out the most exquisite & grand cosplay

Can take away focus/time spent on making your panels & effect their overall quality

It's not fun when you have a costume you can't sit in for a 1.5+ hour panel ~.~

Of course, this is all on you but I personally find this to be a bad idea

Panel tours~! (if you can afford it)

Makes it easier to build up experience both presenting & w/ any individual panel

Make & grow connections

More cons XD

Don't get too caught up on Otakon (@ least don't make it your first & only place to do panels)

75% rejection rate

Better to start smaller; increases likelihood of being able to do something

Smaller cons give you a chance to fine-tune your panels

Again, *my opinion,* so feel free to try to defy the odds & submit, but don't get your hopes up

You want to avoid when trying to convey info. about your panel via the title

If you have a panel that's formatted 'academic topic (typically WGS) + yaoi', don't put 'yaoi' in the title; Instead, try something like "Homosexuals' Portrayal in Anime" in which you'll cover yaoi & you can mention yaoi in the description

Be open to feedback & constructive criticism but don't change your entire panel to appease 1 person

If there's a Guidebook app or equivalent, check it to make sure your panels are listed

Sometimes they mess up/servers crash & your panel(s) are left out

Also, mark them

May want to bring a notepad to take notes from audience members, especially when they suggest shows/games/whatever in relation to your panel

More often than not, they forget to e-mail you about suggestions, so you might as well have something to take this down at the panel

Try to see as many panels as possible before your own so you can get a feel for how others present/their presentation style

Filming your presentation

Don't fret when ppl start leaving your panel midway

There's a plethora of reasons why ppl. leave, don't worry about it & keep presenting like nothing happened

The whole "I know more than the panelist" game

If you didn't say anything during the panel or to the panelist afterwards, it doesn't count

Room sizes are determined by the con staff, not the panelist

Interesting issues: smaller room for a more intimate setting, bigger room for ego stroke (if you're able to fill it) >.>

Don't use panels as little more than a soap box

Don't insult your audience

You might have the issue of saying something "controversial" w/o realizing it, don't purposely do things that will anger & antagonize your audience

Or use certain words/phrases: retard, that's gay, etc. (unless you mean it literally)

It doesn't matter how you feel about it, just your audience

Don't use the fear of having your panel 'plagiarized' be why you don't post any info./resources online

Most likely someone out there has already done the same topic but w/ their own style before you, chillax

However, don't copy word for word, format for format from someone else; that's just wrong X/
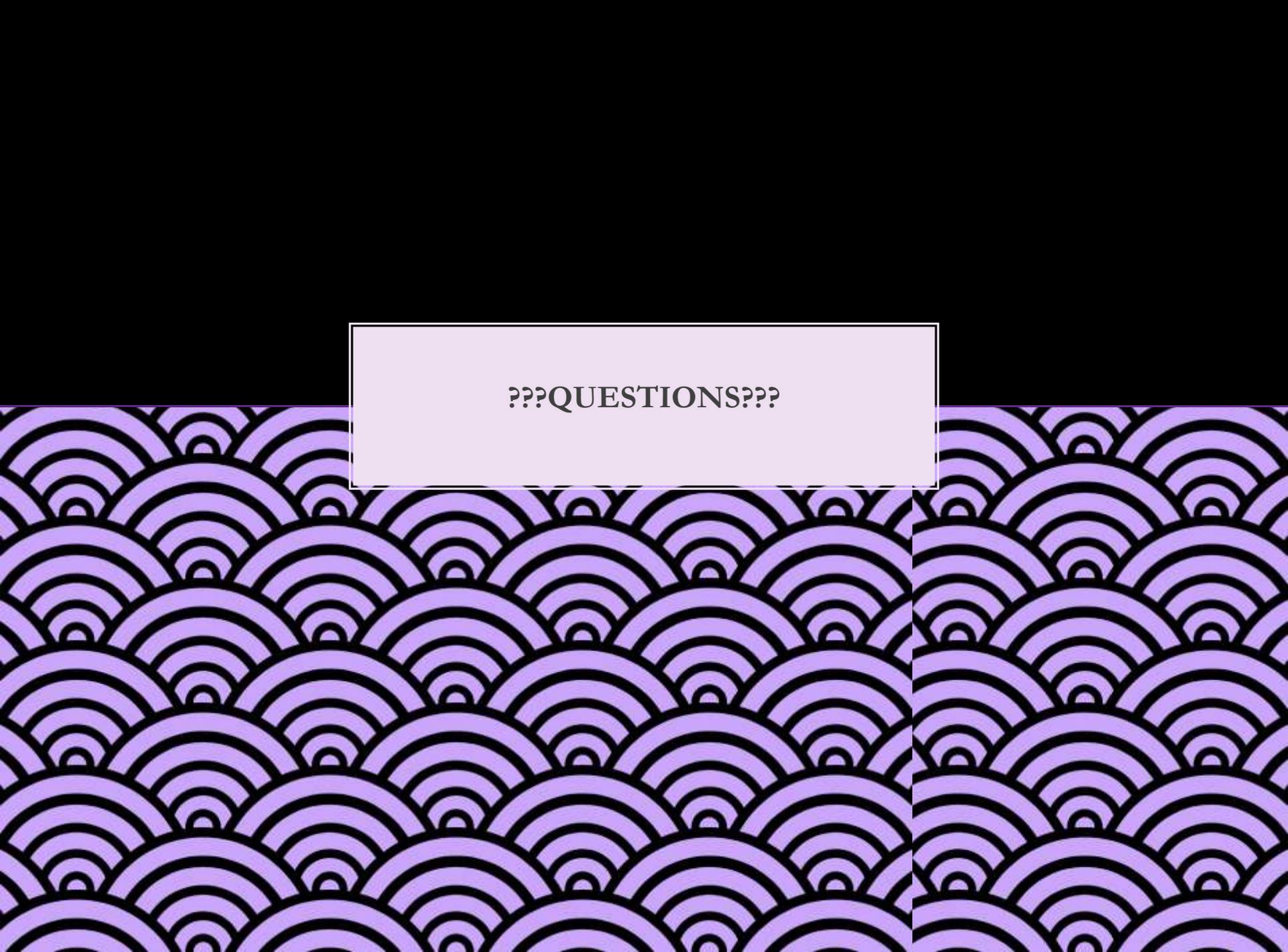
???QUESTIONS???

HANDOUTS & JUNK

Hold ques./comments, please

Help yourself to my business cards & handouts with appropriate links

Includes links to my blog, my e-mail address, & list of resources

If you have any questions, comments, feedback, etc., contact me however

E-mail form on my blog, e-mail, comment on a relating blog post, smoke signals, carrier pigeons, whatever tickles your fancy

If you really enjoyed this panel, would super appreciate if you mention so at any of the feedback sessions or on the forums post-con

It's not like I care or anything >.>

Don't hesitate to come up to me after the panel to talk

OTHER PANELS

Final Fantasy: Love It or Hate It, They Still Have All Your $$$

Friday, 12:30PM - 2PM, Panel 1

Figures to the Max!

Friday, 5PM - 6PM, Panel 4

Valkyria Chronicles: A Love Story, A War & Some Snipers

Friday, 6PM – 7:30PM, Panel 3

Defaming the Sacred: Critical Looks at Popular & Classic Anime

Friday, 9PM - 10:30PM, Panel 4

CON'T

Bleach: Shunpou Edition

Saturday, 12AM - 1AM, Cosplay Track Room

Yaoi & Bara Tropes & Trends 3 - Bigger, Longer and Harder, MOTTO!!

Saturday, 1:30AM - 2:30AM, Cosplay Track Room

~~*How to Become a Quality Panelist*~~

~~*Sunday, 12PM - 1PM, Panel 1*~~

Let's Go to "The World": A Panel About the .hack// Games

Sunday, 2PM - 3:30PM, Panel 3

THANKS FOR COMING~!!

∼^.^∼