

Nordic roleplaying conference brings the best in the business to Finland

Solmukohta, the Nordic live-roleplaying conference brings 460 roleplaying professionals to Finland in March. The conference is organized yearly, rotating the Nordic countries (discounting Iceland). Finland is hosting the conference for the fifth time.

This year Solmukohta celebrates 20 years of organizing by hosting a four-day conference on the M/S Silja Symphony, embracing the true Nordic spirit by cruising between Helsinki and Stockholm. The dates of the conference are 9.-13.3.2016.

Nordic Larp, Nordic live-roleplaying, is a style of larping born here in the North, based on immersion, creating experiences and often following a strong artistic vision. The style has spread around the world like wildfire, and is catching the researchers' interest from USA to Palestine.

The pre-event "A Week in Finland" (4.-9.3.2016) gathers a hundred-strong crowd to Helsinki for six days. During the week before Solmukohta several events, such as the publishing of the English version of the roleplaying game "Myrskyn Sankarit" by Finnish Mike Pohjola, and the upcoming staging of the internationally awaited White Wolf-publishing house live-roleplaying game "End of the Line".

The pre-event also gathers domestic and foreign professionals who use roleplaying in teaching and education together: on the Tuesday 8th of March 2016, a day-long Edularp Conference Helsinki will be hosted at the Aalto University premises in Arabia.

The conference hosts a wide array of program, from lectures and presentations to larps. Claus Raasted will be talking about his sensational larp "College of Wizardry" which garnered a lot of fans online, where the players get to immerse themselves in a Harry Potter-esque wizarding school in a real castle. Raasted will also be appearing as a guest of honor at the Finnish role-playing festival Ropecon, which is the largest role-playing conference in Northern Europe. Ropecon ry is also one of the co-operators in organising Solmukohta 2016.

Norwegians Magnar Grønvik Müller and Martin Nielsen will play out their popular larp "Fallen Stars – Falne stjerner" to the conference goers. In the game the players play as items forsaken at a flea market, worrying over tomorrow and yearning for the past when they still had worth and value. The game uses black box-techniques, common in stage theater, that utilizes light, sound and ordinary objects to create graspable experiences for the players, used to channel the feelings conjured by the immersion.

Niina Niskanen and Simo Järvelä, designers of popular Nordic Larps like Neohämärä and Tonnin Stiflat, explain and open the world of city larps, very popular and trendy in Finland, where larpers bring the game world to life on the streets, bars and cafes of cities, amidst people unaware of the larp at all. People living their lives normally acting as the backdrop to a live-roleplaying game creates its' own challenges to game design.

Link to a publishable picture: <http://solmukohta.org/uploads/Contact/picturecreditTuomasPuikkonen.jpg>

Picture credit: Tuomas Puikkonen, Neohämärä larp designed by Nina Niskanen and Simo Järvelä, alternative world took over a tram in Helsinki

Link to a publishable picture 2: <http://solmukohta.org/uploads/Contact/picturecreditChristinaMolbech.jpg>

Picture credit: Christina Molbech, College of Wizardry

Solmukohta webpages: <http://solmukohta.org/>

A Week in Finland: <http://solmukohta.org/index.php/AWiF/>

Edularp Conference Helsinki: <http://solmukohta.org/index.php/Edularp/>

J. Koljonen, Introduction to Nordic Larp: <http://nordiclarptalks.org/introduction-to-nordic-larp/>

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