

Nordic Opera 2: Romantic Boogaloo

by Zander Noxquill

As the Meiji Era reaches its climax, cherry blossoms tangle with the towering chimneys of newly-minted industry. The sweet scents of perfumed gardens battle for dominance with the smoke of the endless steam packets that ferry exotic cargo to and from the heaving ports of Tokyo, once heavily closed off, now gaping wide open.

Silk robes now rub shoulders with wing collars and frock coats, and sandals dodge patent leather shoes on crowded pavements.

Japan is changing, and some are not pleased with the way the 20th century is going.

Whilst the Chrysanthemum Empire is still adapting to the growing pains of rapid modernisation, into this melting pot steps our hero Sharpless, the American Ambassador, who is in the process of wooing the fair maiden Butterfly. He is met by opposition on all sides: his friends, his ambitions, her sisters, his wallet. Can he succeed or will heads roll? (As he is also Lord High Executioner, that is more than possible!)

With their stupendous success still rousing in our ears from last year, we are once again delighted to report that NordicFuzzCon is graced with another Furry Opera!

Instead of 2024's raging apocalyptic inferno, we are instead whisked away to the delights of Meiji Japan, where Edwardian values are breathing heavily down tradition's neck.

Starring the stirring singing talents of our very own Chester the Geroo, Sanji, Dan the Singing Tiger, Beeton Nukicoon and Sheera, this production could charm the birds from the cherry trees on vocals alone; but our golden voices are accompanied by a melodious masterpiece of an orchestra led by the virtuoso Vozzy.

With a delightfully quirky mix of songs from such varied bodies as Giacomo Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, music from *Final Fantasy VI* composed by Nobuo Uematsu, and Gilbert & Sullivan's legendary *The Mikado*; our very own Madama Fluttershy will make you live, laugh, love, cry and keep you humming for days!

Performed today, Thursday the 20th of February at 13:30 in the main stage, this is one performance you don't want to miss!

BREAKING NEWS! I write with regret that most unfortunately, one of our original vocalists, Sanji, is unable to join us at the last minute due to an illness keeping her confined at home. We send her our love and wish her a speedy recovery.

We are delighted to welcome Kine who has most kindly stepped into the breach at the 11th hour.



We're gonna need a bigger board by Dook

Bored-game? Clearly not. If this year's interest is any indication, next year the event is going to need a bigger room. Ideally one with better acoustics. The turnout of board game enthusiasts in Valhalla could have easily filled a room twice the size and it would have still been crowded, and the noise level was, unfortunately, as you would expect from that. From what I could glimpse over shoulders and between backs there were mostly tabletop RPGs and war games, although most tables were empty which undoubtedly led to the populated ones being that more crowded.

I managed to elbow my way over to one of the tables where the furry

fantasy pen and paper role playing game "Ironclaw" was being exhibited by a team of role playing veterans. Although the more streamlined second edition was on display, it turned out that they as well as I had started our Ironclaw adventures in the first edition, and we ended up screaming sentimental memories of characters and adventures we had had at the top of our lungs at each other until I ran out of oxygen and had to be carried outside by friendly bystanders.

I considered fighting my way back in to find someone else to interview, but the pressure on the poor souls already inside from the people still trying to get in made me reconsider. The medics had had enough work with me already.

If this reporter may give a few suggestions for next year, a larger room and more exhibitors would be on top of my wishlist. There was also plenty of room for more traditional board games. The furry community is after all quite spoiled for choice these days and I would have loved seeing more enthusiasts displaying their favourite games of choice. The interest was, as was plainly gleaned from the crushing amount of visitors, clearly there. In case you didn't manage to wedge yourself in, I can strongly recommend the Arcade which was located across the hall, next to the zen garden. A sizable selection of board games are available for the curious. What could possibly be more zen?

Zen on the Sea by Jacy



It was a clear and sunny morning when the ship *M/S Tilda* headed out for an expedition into Öresund, the strait outside of Malmö that forms the border between Sweden and Denmark. The mission of the expedition? To find zen at sea. The beautiful view out there on the sea and the gentle rockings of the boat made it an excellent place to relax and find the inner peace of just being.

But play is also important for relaxing. Our fuzzy fursuiter friends had a blast recreating a certain scene from a romantic movie in the stern, visiting the bridge of the ship and just enjoying the cool breeze through their fur.

The ship was well stocked with provisions for the expedition members. A delicious tapas meal was served. With full bellies we could go back to watching the scenery.

On the route we could see both the new and the old in energy production. The ship went by the *Lillgrund* wind and we got to see it up close. In the distance we could also see the decommissioned

nuclear power plant *Barsebäck*.

The main star of the scenery was of course the Öresund Bridge. This engineering marvel snakes across the strait like a sea serpent (*Jörmungandr* maybe?) made of concrete and steel. It was opened on July 1st 2000 and has since then bound Malmö and Copenhagen much closer. It is now not uncommon for people to live in one of the cities and work in the other, each day performing a cross-border commute.

But work is not the objective of this expedition, it is zen. And as we steam back to port we feel refreshed and reflecting on all that will come during the days of NordicFuzzCon 2025. There will be lots of activities, parties, meeting friends, all kinds of jollies. But in all the merry bustle we should all find time to pause for a minute and just take in the moment as it is. Just savor that we are all here together.

May the zen be with you.

Photo Sproxxxy



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"You are so important, you make us happy in this crazy world right now." -Local elderly woman in Malmö 🤗🤗

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