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zeit

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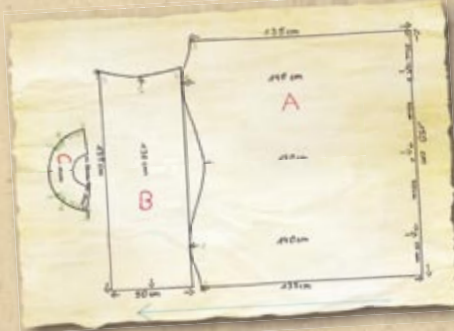
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CONQUEST 2010

More than 1500 NPCs ...

In the south of Mythodea, at the borders of the dark Kingdom of the Undead, the towers of Doerchgardt loom threateningly. No mortal army has ever succeeded in taking the walls of this dark fortress. Nevertheless, two years after the last failed attempt, a massive force of the Army of the Elements sets off to break open the gates of Doerchgardt in order to free the imprisoned elemental force of Terra.

For the seventh time, the Brokeloh Manor near Hanover in Germany was the scene of a spectacular live action role-playing event from August 4th to 8th 2010. Some 7,000 participants from all over the world slipped into the roles of brave heroes, skilled mages, cunning rogues, dangerous monsters and other fantasy characters. They got together over five days and brought a fictional game world to life: the mysterious continent Mythodea. They solved complex puzzles, explored the mysteries of Mythodea and waged battles with thousands of other players. The main attraction was a siege against a mighty fortress occupied by an

undead army which the organisers had set up as backdrop.

For the player characters, the ConQuest 2010 was meant to be the year of revenge. Two years earlier the fighters of the Elements had for the first time tried to break through the walls of Doerchgardt, the fortress of the Undead, with the intention to penetrate further into the land of the Forsaken. But they failed and the undead spawn used ancient magic to imprison the mighty avatar of Terra under a seal of stone. This year, the players were back on the walls, hoping to finally break through the gates



and open the seal. They were expected by some 1,500 fighters who had vowed to keep the fortress at all costs. At all costs? Well, only within the reality of the game ...

The real aim for the NPCs at the ConQuest was of course to play for the player characters – which, most of the time, means losing. This year their task was not only to provide them with epic battles but also to enhance the great game atmosphere. For example the NPCs had built some plot locations in the courtyard of the fortress in which encounters with the different peoples of the Forsaken and their culture were possible.

The NPCs were quite happy about this new opportunity. This way they were able to communicate stories and plot lines to the players and also prove that they were more than simple sword fodder – a word that most of them aren't exactly fond of. Many

of them have been playing NPCs since the first ConQuest and invested a lot of effort into their roles. In weeks (sometimes even months) of work, they prepared everything to revive the fortress. This enabled the player (voluntarily or involuntarily) to visit a prison, a chapel and the throne room of the Undead Flesh, or the garden of the Pestilence. The result was a new kind of in-game depth at the ConQuest and a lot of fun for the NPCs. The fortress was captured and taken back several times until Saturday afternoon, when the warriors of the Elements finally managed to win the last battle and freed Terra. At the end of this great battle, both sides gave each other a well-deserved applause.

Text: Heiko von Ditzfurth,
Karsten Dombrowski
Pictures: Nabil Hanano,
Lucas Ebersberger



ConQuest 2011

The ConQuest 2011 is a 5-day, self-catering & tent larp-event, taking place from August 4th to 8th 2011 on the premises of the Rittergut Brokeloh/Hannover. For further information visit www.live-adventure.de

The Undead of Mythodea

Grausome, but also fascinating in a morbid way, are the creatures of the Undead Flesh. Where one falls, two will rise from the dust of old graves. Death itself feeds this endless army, and war constantly provides new flesh. But they are more than mindless puppets; they have a mind of their own. Despite their unnatural existence they somehow possess a perverted form of intellectual creativity.

Whether it's noblemen, priests, warriors or simple folk – the NPCs of the Undead Flesh have elaborate, individual characters. A lot of these NPCs work for weeks (or even months) with great passion on their props and costumes. But they are not just sword fodder. Of course they fight against the players in fierce battles, but they also try to engage them in other interactions (like diplomacy).



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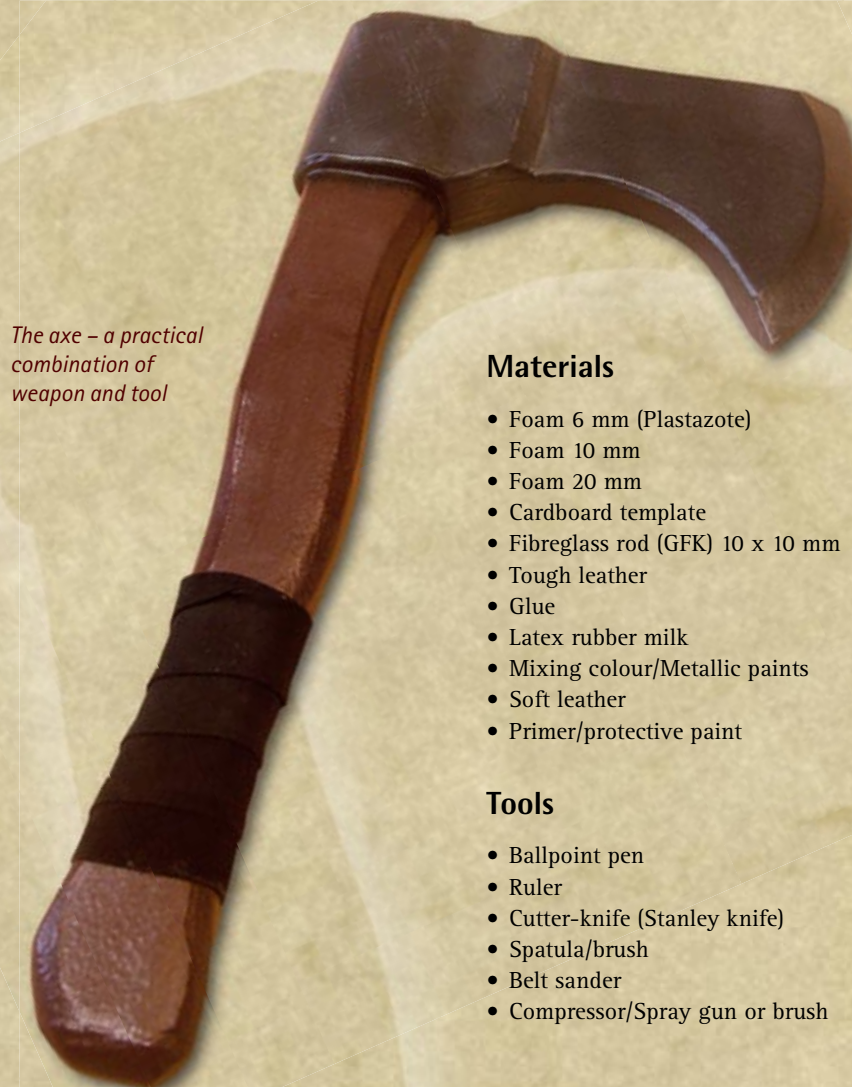
An axe in the house...

Weapon and tool

As early as the Stone Age, axes and hatchets were well established as a practical combination of weapon and tool. In the following guide we provide you with step by step instructions for a simple, practical variant which craftsmen,

peasants, charcoal burners or rangers might use. This manual can also serve as a template for other axe styles, namely coarse ork weapons or axes adorned with runes for dwarves or Vikings.

The axe – a practical combination of weapon and tool



Materials

- Foam 6 mm (Plastazote)
- Foam 10 mm
- Foam 20 mm
- Cardboard template
- Fibreglass rod (GFK) 10 x 10 mm
- Tough leather
- Glue
- Latex rubber milk
- Mixing colour/Metallic paints
- Soft leather
- Primer/protective paint

Tools

- Ballpoint pen
- Ruler
- Cutter-knife (Stanley knife)
- Spatula/brush
- Belt sander
- Compressor/Spray gun or brush

The Haft

PICTURE 1: To start off with, you need a glass fibre rod cut to the desired length. Its length determines the overall length of the axe. We take 55 cm for our example. You then take two strips of the 10 mm foam (2.5 cm wide and a little longer than the core rod).



PICTURE 2: On two opposing sides you now coat the core rod with glue. Also apply glue to one of the edges of the two 10 mm foam strips. Let the glue sit for a while before (enough to handle it) pressing both foam strips from left to the right onto the core rod. It's best to have the strips stick out a little at both ends – it's always easier to cut off something at the end than to add a piece.

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PICTURE 3: Now you can prepare the upper and lower side of the haft. For this you will need two more foam strips. As both of these will be fitted from each side to our recently glued core rod, we need the same length of 55 cm and width 6 cm. Again, just to be on the safe side, add a little bit for the length. I'd recommend taking a fitting piece of sheet, gluing the core rod piece to it, then cutting around it and gluing the other side onto it, etc. That way the core rod is getting glued in a straight block and we avoid having to cut the edges. When gluing, take care not to miss a piece and don't use any more glue than absolutely necessary. After everything has dried, carefully trim the overlapping bits of the sheet at the two short ends to the length of the core rod.

PICTURE 4: Now take two pieces of tough leather and glue them onto our "block" at the ends where you can see the core rod. Again it's advisable to glue an overlapping piece to the rod and then to carefully cut around it, as to make sure the leather really covers everything.

PICTURE 5: Next, pick an end and attach a piece of 10 mm sheet. This will later become the lower end of the axe.

Axe head

PICTURE 6: For this you should start out by making a cardboard template which you hold against the glued haft in order to decide whether you like its shape or not. In our case the blade is 17 cm long and 14 cm wide at the cutting edge. As soon as you have decided on a design, use the template to cut a fitting piece out of a 20 mm sheet. If you don't have a 20 mm sheet to hand you can make a thick sheet by simply gluing thinner layers together. However, if doing that you should make sure your glue line is right in the middle of your cutting edge.

PICTURE 7: In the next step you add an "edge" to the blade. You can trace an outline to help you get as perfect a cut as possible. Draw a wide line along the middle of the cutting surface. This will demarcate our cutting edge. Now draw the end of the "edge" onto the blade (on both sides). Depending on personal taste, you can vary the width of your "edge". Ours will be 2.5 cm wide.



PICTURE 8: After having drawn out your lines you can now carefully carve out the "cutting edge" along these. Put the cutter to the foam in such a way that your blade vertically traces a line from the marks towards the middle line and repeat on the other side.

Cutting the haft

PICTURE 9: Now we're giving the axe its shape. It's pretty much down to your own preference whether you make the haft straight or whether you give it more of a curve. In order to get a better idea of what the finished thing is going to look like, place the cut out of your axe head next to it and transfer its shape onto the haft.



PICTURE 10-12: You can now proceed to cut out the haft using a sharp cutter and then carefully "break off" the edges, except for the top end. This means that you carefully reduce the edges (except for the top end) by about 1 cm all the way around. That way you can flatten and round them at the same time. Finally you sand the edges down with a band sander until they are smooth and the haft is nicely rounded.



Gluing the axe head to the haft

PICTURE 13: Now that the haft is done, we can glue the axe head to it. In order to do this you take the top end of the haft, place the axe head exact to the top edge and trace around it with a pen. If you now tip the axe head to one side you can carefully cut off the marked part from the haft. Here you should take extra care in order to make as straight and even a cut as possible. This is necessary in order to glue the blade neatly to the now even surface.

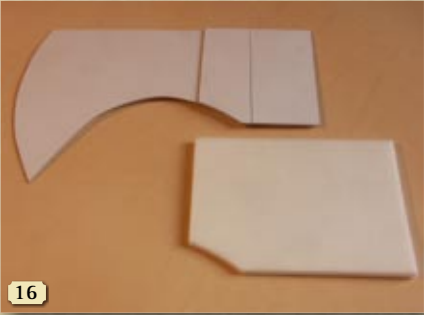


Strengthening the axe head

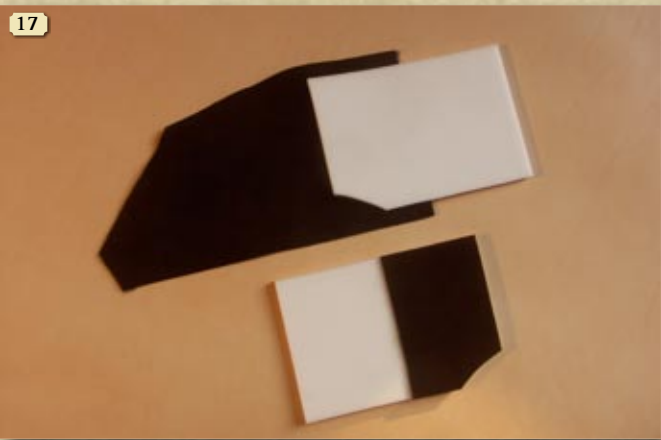
PICTURE 15: When having little experience in making weapons or if it's your first time, it's always a good idea to begin by making a template to avoid possible mistakes. This next step is about creating a transition piece to wrap around the haft and blade. This will perfectly finish off the axe-look as it will give the impression that the blade was stuck onto the haft. The template should be as wide as the shaft plus 4 cm added for the blade. Here, it's important to stick to the exact shape of the blade.



PICTURE 16: Using the template, cut out two 6 mm pieces of foam sheet. As the whole thing needs to be wrapped around the haft, we make the piece to be a little longer than our template.



PICTURE 17: As shown in the picture, we glue the pieces roughly halfway onto a piece of tough leather. This will result in a good enforcement of the transition from blade to haft and will prevent the blade from being ripped off during heavy use. The same principle applies: first, glue it on and then cut around it.

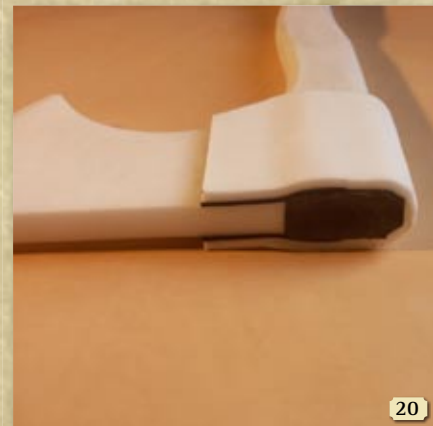




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PICTURE 18-20: Apply glue to the blade, to the respective parts of the haft, and to the enforcement pieces on the leather side. Having carefully placed the first piece onto the blade side, slowly press it around the haft. It's important that you take particular care applying proper pressure to the transition piece to make sure to get rid of any air pockets underneath. As soon as you arrive at the other side during the wrapping process, stop and vertically cut off the 6 mm piece of sheet. Once both pieces overlap, also cut off the second piece.

PICTURE 21: To give the appearance of a seamless transition, smooth it out a little using your band sander. Even though you have to be careful to only take off a little bit at a time, make sure you repeat it until the transition is perfectly smooth.

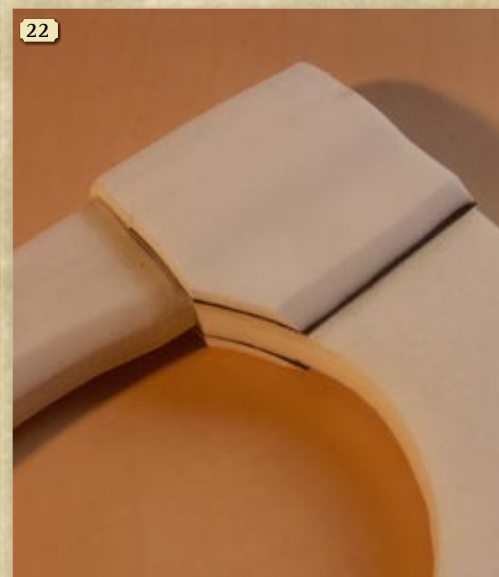
PICTURE 22: Lastly, carefully smooth out the transition between the axe head enforcement to the blade. This will get rid of much of the axe's coarseness and give it a more elegant appearance.

The haft tip

PICTURE 23-24: We round off the whole thing by cutting a piece of 10 mm sheet into an oval shape which roughly corresponds to the shape of the top of the haft. Apply a little glue and stick it onto the axe head. It imitates the piece of haft which would stick out after having stuck the blade onto it.



21



22



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PICTURE 25: Last but not least you should break off all the edges. This gives the weapon a slimmer and more beautiful appearance. Make sure to cut around the sheet edges of the blade and stuck-on the haft tip in particular. We're really just talking a millimetre or two here. Now the axe is ready for latexing.

Latexing/ Priming

PICTURE 26: We start off by using a mixture of latex and black mixing colour for the three base coats. In this case, a ratio of 1:5, one part paint and five parts latex, should be sufficient.

After having applied the three coats, paint the haft with brown latex paint. Again, we're using mixing colour for our purposes. The blade will be silver. When using metallic paints, you can mostly get away with a mixing ratio with lower colour content/pigment content – 1:7 will get you nice results. Depending on the colour of your choice (manufacturer) the mixing ration might vary. Try using a little bit of test mixture on a piece of paper first. Regardless of whether I use a brush or a spray gun: There need to be enough to ensure that all pores are properly sealed and that the paint has the necessary coverage.

Should you own an airbrush you can add some effects now. It is particularly useful for adding a little shading to the transition from "wood" to steel. This is not strictly necessary and purely for visual effect.

Once the paint coats on the weapon have sufficiently dried, we can apply the primer. The airbrush paint should no longer rub off at this stage and the latex should have dried completely. In order to now prime the weapon, take a brush and apply the primer over the whole of the surface. Depending on the quality of the brush you should take care not to leave any stray bristles on the weapon. Should you have applied a little too much primer, simply wipe it off.

Wrapping the haft

Following the priming, cut a leather strip and apply some glue to both the leather and the haft. Next, wrap the leather around the haft until you have created a proper handle. Now your axe is done.

David Hughes

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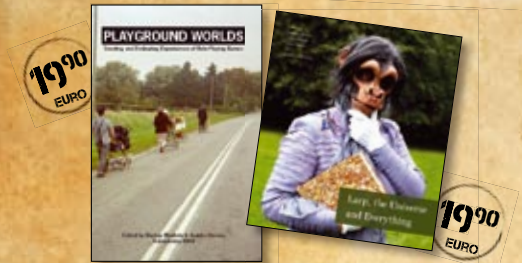
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MYTHOLON

Real stuff for fantastic people



Mytholon, a branch of the *Spieleland Ltd.* Company in Hamburg, has been supplying the larp scene with a wide range of equipment for more than ten years.

Started as just a small by-product of its mother company (specialising in miniatures and tabletop games), it is today a well known brand on its own, specialized in larp and medieval supplies. For the LARPzeit Karsten Dombrowski talked to Kai Schulz, who is responsible for the development and production of new equipment, about design approach, cultural habits and late night working.

LARPzeit: How is Mytholon connected with the larping community?

Kai Schulz: We have a lot of employees here at Mytholon, who themselves participate in larp. I, myself, started some 15 years ago and made my hobby my daily job. We want to create good equipment we would use ourselves.

Personally, I like equipping entire groups for fantasy battles. This is why I'm up until late at night, working in my costumes workshop. Also, this means I can optimize any product whenever there are some minor weaknesses

showing up in everyday/-larp use. That's why Mytholons' products have improved in quality a great deal over the last couple of years.

LZ: What in your opinion is the most important thing about your products? What makes them "special"?

Kai: I have an entire team, with which I constantly work on new products. All of our stock is exclusively designed for use in larp and medieval-related hobbies. We offer fantasy costumes and gear which are specially designed for the users' needs and demands. We produce a complete range of goods, necessary for these hobbies, reasonable in price, hard-wearing and stylish on all occasions.

The cost-effectiveness we are constantly working on allows single larpers and entire groups of players to have a uniform look, just as well as individual outfits.



Mytholon offers their customers a big range of goods for the larp scene: costumes, leather armour, chain mail, plate armour made from sheet steel, belts and bags, exhibition fighting-gear, tents, camp equipment and much more. All products can be bought in an international online-webshop, at the "master shop" in Hamburg, at several conventions and at many trading partners all across Europe.

www.MYTHOLON.com

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATIVE LARP STUDY



LZ: How did your product range and the way you manufacture it (for example materials and design) change during the last years?

Kai: I spent a lot of time procuring materials we could work with. Eventually, the final product depends on good raw materials. For the last years, we have been following an integral concept concerning our range planning: we create lots of different products which can be combined in order to make various costume ideas reality. You can get a good overview on our websites' costume-gallery.

Ever since I started working with, and for, the larp community I tried to combine extravagant design with comfort and function.

LZ: You produce a lot of your products abroad. Could you tell us in which countries? And what are your experiences with suppliers from other countries?

Kai: Most of our larp and medieval costumes are crafted by hand, which we can produce the best in countries that have a non-industrialized focus, like Pakistan and India. Working on the "other side" of the world with people from that region for me was hard at first, but I got used to that very quickly.

I was forced to reconsider some of my own working habits to be of any help to my co-workers in Central Asia. For example, it took me a while to accept that working on the floor was not a reflection of bad working conditions but presented a cultural habit. When I started working there I constructed some work desks for the armoury. Those have long since been deconstructed, now serving as floor covers the workers sit on ...

It is important to make clear and simple calls on how to produce goods over there. It is also necessary that you help them understand our special needs and conditions in order to have a reasonable outcome in the end. Summing up Mytholons' positive development, I see it as a group effort of my colleagues from Pakistan and India!

LZ: Last but not least ... what are your goals for the future?

Kai: We are planning to extend our international service this year. Our design department encourages our customers to more creativity when arranging their costumes more individually. The online gallery in our new web shop offers some great costume ideas already. Mytholon puts its' efforts into catering for all branches of the larp and medieval hobbies and into finding solutions for all our customers' needs.

We consequently work on meeting those demands with all our energy!

What do we know about larp in China? What exactly do they play in Mexico? When have they started to larp in Croatia? Is fantasy the most popular larp genre worldwide? Are there more male or female larpers in the world? *The International Comparative Larp Study* is a research project that aims to answer these questions.

The project is initiated by Taisia Kann, who holds a diploma in public relations and a Bachelor of Arts in retail management. She works in marketing research and is experienced in project management, surveys design and data analysis.

The study's main objective is to collect the systematic knowledge on live action role-playing around the world. The goals of the project are to encourage the international connections between different larp scenes and to contribute to the understanding of the larp phenomenon as well as to show the variety of different larp styles worldwide in order to give larpers new ideas and to inspire innovative larp projects. The project is supposed to provide information for future larp researchers and promote the documentation of larp history.

With the help of a comprehensive online-based survey the project aspires to collect quantitative data on larp and larpers worldwide. The questionnaire is going to feature questions on the origin and history of larp in different countries, on larp styles, e.g. popular genres, locations and larp design methods, as well as on local larp scenes and general understanding of what larp is. The survey is designed to provide findings which allow the comparison of local larp styles according to a number of criteria using statistical and analytical methods.

The project is now in its developmental stage, and the researchers are looking for contacts to larpers around the world who would like to take part in the survey or to contribute to the project. So if you are a larper from Canada, Paraguay or Malaysia etc. they need you as a contact!

Learn more about the International Comparative Larp Study online at www.larp-research.net

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LARP in POLAND

Excellent locations waiting for larpers to claim them...



In the early '80s fantasy and SF became a popular literary genre in Poland, with an exceptionally large and devoted audience, calling itself *the fandom*. For us it is less interesting that the causes of that phenomenon were largely political – SF stories were often written as political metaphors to sneak around the Communist censorship of these years. More relevantly, *the fandom* started a tradition of fantasy/SF conventions, cons. This tradition is largely going on to this day, and such cons gather up to a few thousand people, attending meetings with authors, lectures on fantasy/SF themes, playing tabletop games and socializing.

You may ask, what does this have to do with larping? Two things, as far as our topic is concerned. Firstly, it was during one of such conventions, back in 1988,

that the first larp in the country was played. Secondly, such conventions are still more popular than larp conventions. So for instance, in 2009, Poland's largest fantasy/SF convention had almost 2800 participants! This reflects the fact that while fantasy, RPG, CRPG and so on are quite popular in Poland, larping is still a niche activity that not even all RPG fans have heard of.

This impacts where and how larp is played. There are three different types of events that make up the scene. First, small larps for some 20-40 players often take place during the fantasy/SF conventions. Usually these take place indoors, last for no longer than a few hours and use very little costumes and props, if any. Their strength, however, is often a focus on the

theatrical quality – emotions, riddles and so on. Secondly, and more interestingly, a number of outdoor events devoted to larping have developed, with all you might want in a proper larp: costumes, weapons, interesting locations and so on. We will have a closer look at a few of those below. Thirdly, a number of indoor larps unrelated to conventions are being run, often as a series of meetings, e.g. every two weeks. Taking place in pubs or youth clubs these most often are World of Darkness or 1920s gangster games.

Games

Poland's three most established fantasy larps are *Orkon*, *Flamberg* and *Fantazjada*, with some 200-350 players each. The previous two are held in the rocky Jurassic

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Games and Gamers

hills near Cz stochowa in south-central Poland. The conditions are camping-type: PCs living in off-game tents providing their own food.

Orkon, dating back to 1991, is a 10-day long larp convention with a rather relaxed atmosphere, during which several separate larps of various genres are run. It culminates in a three-day game in a proprietary setting, a fantasy world with the usual races and magic, but featuring some quirks, such as elven war crimes or orkish industry and diplomacy. The overall feel has evolved over the years, but in recent years, faeries, demons and high politics are the prominent themes.

Orkon has a complex set of rules, with point-based character creation, structured magic, supernatural skills etc. A relic from before the introduction of boffer weapons, adhesive strips on PCs' chests are still used to represent hit points. There are no NPCs: players are free to create their own characters, as long as these are accepted by the organisers, who try to weave all those into the scenario.

Quite differently so at the neighbouring Flamberg, where a clear distinction between NPCs and PCs' teams exists. Another peculiarity of Flamberg is its setting, which is fantasy, but with Asiatic-Indian inspirations such as caste divisions.

Let us now move south-west, closer to the German border, to the province of Dolny l sk. The Fantazjada larp, dating back to 1994, takes place at the 250-year-old Fortress Srebrna Góra in the Owl Mountains (Polish: Góry Sowie), a breathtaking location. For many years Fantazjada was a small event for some 30 players, but the word has spread and as of 2009, over 220 participants took part in the larp, which lasted four days in a terrain of some 30 ha.

Fantazjada is focusing on ambience, with realistic locations, simple rules and mostly low-fantasy plots in a self created fantasy setting. Dubbed *The Known World*, it has the usual races and a fair share of magic and religion,



but the larp itself focuses on simulating some micro-setting. For instance, in 2009, *Fantazjada XIV* had a living town arranged in one of the forts, with an Academy of Magic, an inn, a prison, a City Council and so on

– and several temples in the surrounding woods and ruins, a dwarven mine (with actual hard coal...) and other such locations were set up, providing the players with a small, but complete universe to explore.

Apart from the three large events with tradition dating to early 90's, a growing number of new outdoor larps have been launched in recent years. Various settings are represented, from generic fantasy to Warhammer, to Middle-Earth and post-apocalyptic. One well-known event in



the latter genre is *Oldtown*, held at an abandoned Soviet airbase in north-western Poland, featuring both boffer and airsoft weapons. The game stretches over three days and 24h/day, which is rather unique among Polish larps. Most other games are suspended for the night, which PCs spend resting or having OT activities in off-time camps. *Oldtown* and a Warhammer-based larp called *Sorontar* are rare exceptions.

Of course this overview is far from complete: many local larp communities

exist and run their events, some of them with more than a hundred PCs, which counts as relatively large. However, the scene is rather fragmented and only recently some attempts at integrating it have started, such as the first informal meeting of larp organizers, which was held last March. Some countrywide platforms exist, trying to connect the various communities, such as the *Larp.pl* website or *Kurier Kemocki* fanzine, but they are still far less popular than various local forums.

Trends in the Polish larp scene

Finally let us point to some peculiarities of the Polish larp scene. One is a growing connection with the ASG community, which by itself is very well organized and numerous. On the one hand, ASG weapons are widely used in post-apo and techno-fantasy games. On the other hand, a number of larps are being organized by the airsoft groups themselves. Usually with focus on action, dynamic ambience and sometimes humour rather than on deep characters, these are nevertheless often interesting events. They usually fall into two categories: either variations on the current events from Iraq and Afghanistan (mostly comedy-style, satirising the stereotypical NATO soldiers and their Taliban opponents), or World War II episodes.

Another point is the question of funding: traditionally, a Polish larper would expect to pay a small fee, say 10 to 20 EUR at the most, to the organisers (who would be a few friends acting informally) covering the cost of the camping ground and little more than that. Food would be their own, camping-style, and costume and weapons all DIY. This is only slowly beginning to change; as players become older and



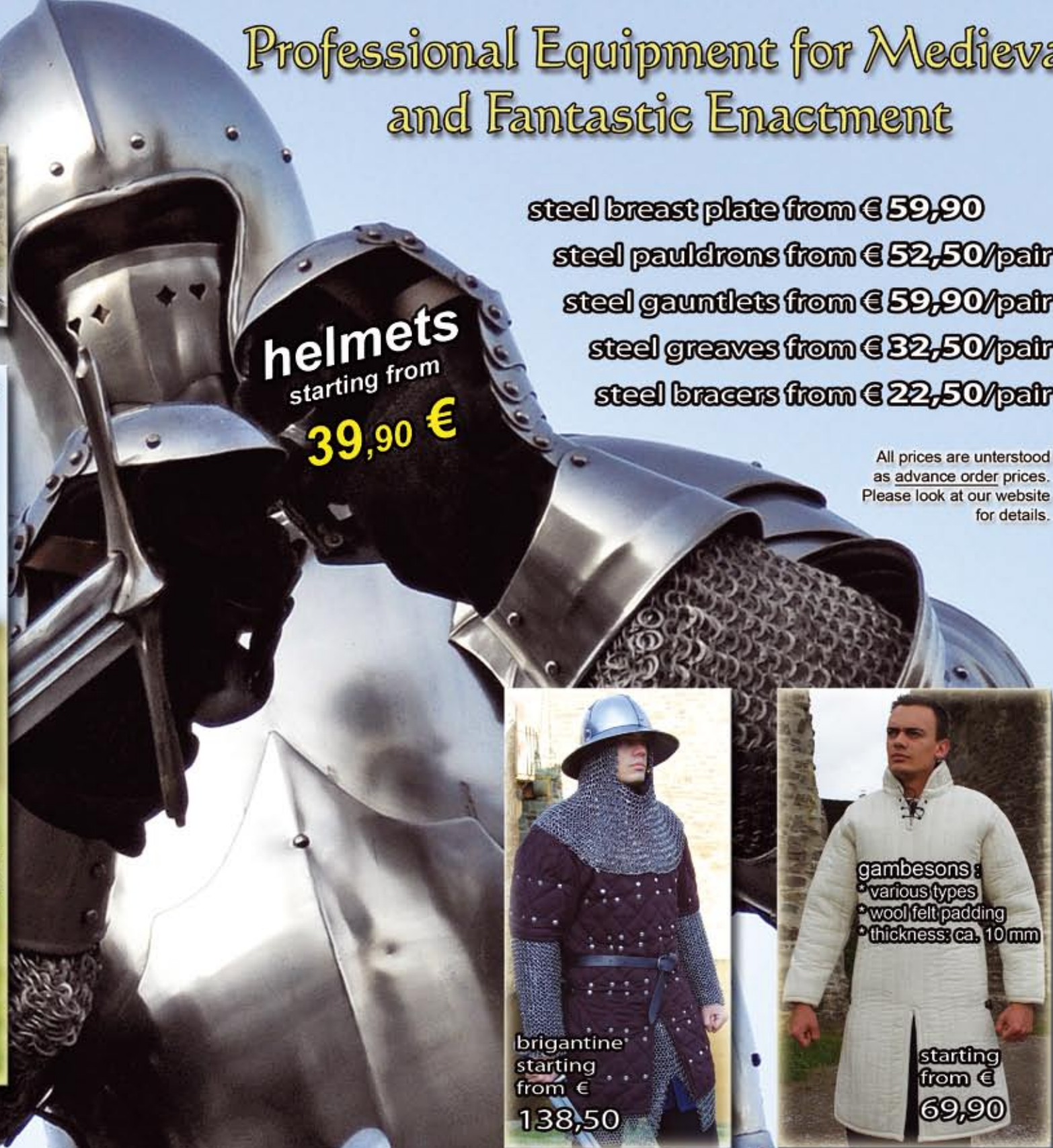
wealthier, some are more willing to buy latex swords and order their costumes. A few Orgas have also registered themselves as associations, which has proven very useful. For instance, the Fantazjada team has obtained large grants from NGOs and the *Ministry of Social Policy*, enabling them to buy better props, food etc.

Overall the trend towards better organization of games is very promising, especially when one realises how many excellent locations there are in the country that could be used for larping, but which are not being used at present. Ruins of Russian, Prussian and Austrian fortresses, Soviet military bases, Teutonic Knights' castles and much more all wait for larpers to claim them... Better organization also means cooperating with local communities and cultural institutions, and that is only the beginning; for instance, the Ethnographic Museum in Warsaw has introduced larps as events accompanying exhibitions (starting with a vampire larp for an exhibition about Romanian funeral rites).

All in all, we believe that the next years will be full of developments for Poland's larp scene. The potential is great, and more and more players are joining. And why wouldn't you join sometime in the coming season? Many Polish larpers would be glad to see guests from abroad!

Text and pictures: Piotr Labenz





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THINK, DO AND TALK LARP

For this year's Knudepunkt in Denmark, the annual larp conference of the Nordic countries, not only one but three books have been published, each with a different approach to cast light on the larp phenomenon.

Why is there no larp in Japan? An answer to this question is found in *Think Larp – Academic Writings from KP2011*, the first (and most scientific) of the books. The authors, larp interested academics, were asked to write their articles from the viewpoint "What if larp was not an academic discipline of its own" (which illustrates very nicely that the average Larp-theorist in the Nordic countries naturally of course considers research about LARP an academic discipline of its own) and analyze it from the perspective of their field of expertise. The result is impressive in any case, the spectrum of the ten essays ranging from gender issues in LARP to Nietzsche. For the introduction, there is also a detailed overview of the development of the scientific approach to LARP in Scandinavia and Finland over the past years. This should be especially helpful and interesting for readers that are not familiar with the tradition of the Nordic larp conference and the multitude of previously published books. But be warned: Those who do not enjoy reading complex papers, should consider skipping the read ...

... and go straight away to *Do Larp – Documentary Writings from KP2011*, the second book. On these 220 pages, the

editors gathered a selection of thirteen documents (blueprints as they call them) about very different larps made by people from many different places in the world. It includes for example the weird Finnish art larp *The coffee cup* (where the players are bound to break several hundred porcelain mugs), the gender focused larp *Mad about the boy* (set in a world where all males but one have died, and the society consists of women only) or the Israeli chamber larp *Salem 1906 – The Secret Sauce* (inspired by the 1692 witch-trials in Salem, New England and aiming to confront players with the grain of morals). Although this might not enable the reader to fully reconstruct and replay the larps from the documents, they are certainly a great way to inspire new ideas and can assist in the knowledge transfer of game mechanics and tools.

This brings us to the last of the three books, *Talk Larp – Provocative Writings from KP2011*, which aims to inspire new thinking on different aspects of larp. It consists of 16 short but powerful rants about our hobby, the larp community and everything. Some of them manage to point the reader to important or controversial issues in a polemical, sarcastic or (self-) ironic way, others seem to be more pathetic whinings of larp dinosaurs or strange political statements. But well, as the title indicates, the articles are meant to provoke people. The editor Claus Raasted clearly achieved his aim of having a book that is *Short. Fun. Worth debating.*

More information on the books and the free download can be found at <http://rollespilsakademiet.dk/kpbooks>.

Think Larp

Thomas Duus Henriksen, Christian Bierlich, Kasper Friis Hansen, Valdemar Kølbe (eds)
Rollespilsakademiet 2011
240 pages. 17 x 24 cm.
Hardcover. Black/White.
30,- EUR



Do Larp

Lars Andresen, Charles Bo Nielsen, Luisa Carbonelli, Jesper Heebøll-Christensen, Marie Oscilowski (eds)
Rollespilsakademiet
220 pages. 17 x 24 cm.
Hardcover. Full Colour.
30,- EUR



Talk Larp

Claus Raasted (ed.)
Rollespilsakademiet
140 pages. 15 x 15 cm.
Hardcover. Black/White.
20,- EUR



Nordic Larp Steampunk starships! Animatronic dragons! Cancer patients!



In the Nordic countries, live-action role-playing has developed into a unique and powerful form of expression. Nordic larps range from entertaining flights of

fancy to the exploration of the intimate, the collective and the political. This incredible tradition combines influences from theatre and performance art with gamer cultures in order to push the boundaries of role-playing.

On 320 pages, *Nordic Larp* presents a critical cross section of this culture through 30 outstanding larps, combining stories told by designers, players and researchers with over 250 photographs of play and

preparations. In addition to that, the book contains two essays on the history and rhetorics of Nordic larp, and contextualizes larp in relation to theatre, art and games.

More information about the book, where you can get it and the people who made it can be found at <http://nordiclarp.wordpress.com>.



How to transform into the Lord of Darkness

Make-up guide by Gregor Knappe (www.maskworld.com)

Large Latex Prosthetic Pieces

In the old days, you had to put on a full mask if your transformation included having the face of a hideous fantasy creature. Nowadays, half masks and large latex prosthetic pieces are popular alternatives to sweating beneath "rubber helmets". It takes some time to apply make-up to latex prosthetic pieces that have to be glued on first – but this method allows people in disguise to breathe, hear, and see freely. And above all, you have direct contact to all the people you want to interact with. Your facial expressions and speech are much more refined when you are wearing appliances: they simply would get lost behind a stifling mask. And it's fun to make yourself up!

For all make-up and special effects work, you need a clean work area and a mirror. Good light and warm water also contribute to excellent results. I used the *Devil DLX Make-Up Kit* from maskworld.com to transform the model into the *Lord of Darkness*. The kit contains everything you need to create this face, but you can, of course, buy the materials separately. In addition to the appliances, spirit gum, and spirit gum remover, you will need make-up, powder, and liquid latex. And from your stock of handy supplies: small scissors (nail scissors), a variety of make-up brushes and sponges (although you can also use your fingers), a kitchen roll or some make-up towels, and a few cotton buds.

If you plan to wear contact lenses, remember to put them in before applying the half mask!





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PICTURE 1: First, cut the eyes out of your new half mask. It will normally have an obvious rim that marks the place where you can cut out the eyes. If you are unsure, cut small openings first and make them bigger – step by step – until they fit perfectly. The half mask should fit around your eyes without putting pressure on them or disturbing you when you blink. But no two faces are alike, which is why the half mask may not fit perfectly when you apply it in one piece. No problem! You can cut the mask into pieces: cut from the corners of the eyes to the temples and/or in the furrow that runs from eye to eye to professionally adjust the half mask to fit your face. The cuts will be invisible after you apply your make-up.

PICTURE 2: Carefully cut out the nostrils. The place to cut them is also marked. The nostril holes should be large enough to allow you to breathe easily. If your own nose peeks out through the nostril holes of the mask, don't worry – you can hide it with make-up later.

PICTURE 3: You may want to pre-paint your latex prosthetic pieces. This gives you much more time (you can do it up to a few days before you actually glue the pieces on) and makes them easier to apply color to. If you use water-based make-up, you can leave the make-up on for a couple of days without any problem. But please clean the pieces before storing them away for weeks or longer. If you use acrylic paints to paint your latex prosthetic pieces, you do not have to remove the paint before storing them.

PICTURE 4: Put your latex ears on to check their fit. Now you can use scissors to trim the gluing edges of your latex ears if you need to.

PICTURE 5: Hold the half mask or mask parts to your face so you can feel where the latex has contact with your face. These are the places you need to apply spirit gum to.

PICTURE 6: Spread the spirit gum thinly with a brush and wait a bit. You can remove any excess spirit gum with a cotton bud. To check if the spirit gum has reached its optimal gripping strength, carefully touch it with a cotton bud: the bud should stick firmly to the spirit gum.



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PICTURE 7: It is easier to apply the whole mask first and then take care of the edges. Make sure that all of the edges are completely fixed in place.

PICTURE 8: Open your mouth a little when you are pressing the pieces onto your face, especially when they are located near your mouth area. This will prevent them from lifting up when you talk or scream while wearing your appliances.

PICTURE 9: Remove all of the excess spirit gum from your skin with a cotton bud and some spirit gum remover so that it does not ruin the make-up's effect. For an even better transformation, conceal the edges completely with some cosmetic-grade liquid latex, such as *Horror Skin* from maskworld.com. Do not use standard latex from your DIY shop or the latex you cover foam weapons with – they contain much more ammonia than the cosmetic-grade latex and may be harmful to your skin.

PICTURE 10: Make sure that the entire surface of the half mask is dry before you begin applying the make-up! If you want to save time, use a hair drier to dry it. Latex rubber turns transparent yellow when it is completely dry.

PICTURE 11: Use some standard make-up powder to set the slightly sticky latex. It will be much easier to put make-up on that way.

PICTURE 12: Start by using a good quality make-up for your base skin color. Many people prefer using water-based make-up to greasepaint, especially because it is easier to remove. However, water-based make-up tends to run very easily when you sweat, which is inevitable when you are wearing latex prosthetic pieces. Experiment with a good, oil-based make-up and some setting powder – this combination is more likely to stay where you put it! If you are using make-up that contains an emulsifier such as the *Devil Make-up* included in the Make-up Kit, you can wash it off with warm water and soap – which is what you would probably do with water-based make-up anyway. Be sure to start at the prosthetic piece when applying the make-up. Work toward your skin to prevent the thin latex edges from rolling up.



11



12

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PICTURE 13: Now your pre-painted latex prosthetic pieces should already blend in very well with the base color. To give your whole face more depth and detail, use a light highlight color and apply it to the highest parts of your prosthetic pieces (tip of nose or chin, middle of forehead, etc.) only. If you continue the highlighting onto your own face (chin tip to chin edge, etc.) the latex pieces will blend in even better.



PICTURE 14: Use dark brown for the shadows. Black is a very intense color and can be easily mistaken for clefts or furrows – even though you only wanted a shadow. With a dramatic fantasy face like this one, you can create very strong shadows as a balance to the lively highlights. But be sure not to make heavy strokes – at least one side of any shadow should be smoothed into the base color.

PICTURE 15: Use black to emphasize the deepest parts of the face only, like your nostrils and the very deep lines next to your nose and around your eyes.



PICTURE 16: A very easy trick for getting a perfect hairline: apply water-based make-up to your own hair. Be sure not to use oil-based make-up here as it is very difficult to remove. Add a lot of water to the make-up to give your hair a tint and hide your scalp just behind the hairline at the same time.

Removing the latex pieces

Moisten a cotton bud with some spirit gum remover. Rub one corner of the latex prosthetic piece until it detaches from your skin. Push the cotton bud into the resulting space and carefully lift the edges with it while pulling it off with your other hand. If some spirit gum remains on your skin, you can remove it with a facial tissue dipped in spirit gum remover. Let it soak into your skin for a few seconds and then gently rub on the remaining spirit gum.

Removing Horror Skin

If you have used Horror Skin to blend the edges of your appliance, you can remove it easily, without any tools or remover. Make sure that you do not stretch the latex piece too far. The best way to remove large areas of Horror Skin is to brush the area beneath the latex skin with warm water

and to carefully pull it up at the same time. This procedure will take more than a few minutes. Do not use remover or soap because they could dry out your skin.

Removing the make up

If you have used the cream make-up from maskworld.com, you can simply wash it off with warm water and mild soap. Continue washing until you are satisfied with the results. Make sure only to rub gently. Use eye make-up remover if you have sensitive eyes. If you have used another brand of make-up, remove your make-up according to the manufacturer's instructions.

After Gregor Knappe graduated as a certified make-up artist in 2000 he has worked both freelance and contracted on international movie and TV productions as well as on numerous stages all over Europe. Since 2004 he has been a product designer for www.maskworld.com and has designed latex pieces, dental prosthetics, wigs, beards and masks for larp and the stage.

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DRACHENFEST

Once again and with feeling



Not only does Drachenfest attract thousands of German fans, but it draws participants from all over Europe (and even beyond). But what is the fascination with this event that people put up with such long journeys in order to play for only a few days in a foreign country. The Latvian larper Agnese Dygervite relates her impressions and experiences of Drachenfest 2010 for us.

Coming back to Drachenfest is like returning to an old friend who knows just the right way to entertain you, even if you only see them once a year. Even though this was only my second time around, I felt this sense of reunion quite clearly.

For me, Drachenfest is a world in itself, one that springs to life for only a week and then stays dormant, it's impressions lasting through the year. It is filled with countless smaller continents to discover and uncountable adventures await just around the next tent. The three main reasons why I come here are – numbers, versatility and visuals.

First of all the event would be nothing if not for the sheer amount of people working in some mysterious, chaotic way to make a fantasy world come alive. The sight of all the tents stretching as far as the eye can see and hundreds of fires burning bright during the brilliant nights is inspirational in itself. If you stand up on one of the palisades to watch the final fight it looks as if you are seeing thousands of ants in a multitude of colors warring for the greenest slice of the field.

Secondly the intricacy of plot that can be found within this one event cannot be matched by any other role-playing

experience. It is true what some say – Drachenfest isn't one larp, it is many small larps in one spot. What I enjoy about the PvP atmosphere here is that the plot is created by the interaction of individual players or groups rather than the GMs. Something that always appeals to me in role-playing is discovering stories and here among the numerous camps or the city you can stop any character





and simply be entertained by their tales of adventures from sailing the high seas to wandering deep forests, searching for treasure or fighting for pleasure – it's all there for you to hear if you just buy a drink for the person sitting next to you at the tavern.

The third big difference to back home is the influence of consumerism and the attention to detail that comes with an industry to support the hobby of larp. It was very interesting for me to be one of the first to arrive at the site and see how all the others come in cars and trailers piled high with artifacts and props – chairs, benches, tables, beds, wardrobes, furs, chests and trunks full of dishes, weapons and armor, orc heads and potted plants, beads, seeds and indescribable gadgets. Most of these might not be necessary for the role-playing experience, but they are a pleasure to behold and add to the opulence of the scenery, making the festival a world more real than the one at home.



For my first year round I was part of the City – traveling the camps during the day to sell newspapers, while in the evenings experiencing the bustling city nightlife. This time round I was a full NPC, though also fortunate enough to be unofficially part of the Triumvirat & Gold camp.

During my NPC play I had an incredible chance to interact with the Avatars and scores of PC players. I enjoyed it because it showed me a much more versatile side of the game than staying in one character would ever have. Still, I was grateful for the chance to also experience life in a camp where you truly get the sense that war is really outside your gate. Every morning a battle cry wakes you to start another day of military rivalry. While the men go off to practice sword skills or wage war, women stay home at their tents to cook, clean, heal and pray. Of course plenty of



females are also among the ranks with sword in hand or a bow strung, yet there is always somebody left behind to await the tired, wounded and hungry. The sense of camaraderie is just as strong if you're fighting in the frontlines or just cheering from the battlements.



The Game

Drachenfest is based on one easy principle: The players form groups in separate camps that fight each other (lead into battle by mighty avatars) to honour dragons and other gods. This simple concept is perfectly suited for the player versus player focus of the event. Whilst there are skirmishes between the camps and sieges, it also allows for cunning diplomacy and crafty traps. On Saturday evening, the game culminates in an epic battle with thousands of participants. In addition to the quarrels between the camps, there is also a plot: an epic story which deals with the beginning of the war between the gods as well as with current threats – threats with the potential to shake the foundations of the Dragonworld.

There is something for everyone at Drachenfest, yet there are so many options within this one larp that I personally have difficulty choosing. I want to try it all – be it a pirate of the Blues, a savage from the Tribes, an archer of the Triumvirat, a shaman of the Greens, a scholar of the Greys or even an orc. The good thing is that Drachenfest only just seems to be developing and there is always next year to try out something new.

*Text: Agnese Dzervite
Pictures: Nabil Hanano*

Drachenfest 2011

Dates: July 26th to 31st 2011 (an early arrival is also possible)

Place: Diemelstadt, about 50 km west of Kassel, centrally located in Germany.

More information: www.drachenfest.info



LEARNING BY PLAYING



The Danish larp-boarding school Østerskov Efterskole

What pupil doesn't envy Harry Potter? After all he's allowed to learn arcane spells and recipes instead of having to study for boring lessons. Even though you may not learn how to work magic in the *Østerskov Efterskole*, a small Danish boarding school of about 100 pupils, situated on the outskirts of the Danish town of Hobro, the school is every role-player's dream.

From the outside, the school doesn't look like much: a rather run-down concrete building, with plaster flaking in places. The inside quickly confirms the general impression that the school building has indeed seen better times. And yet, the outward appearances of the school strongly contrast the sparkling eyes of its pupils when telling about their school day.

In this boarding school, things are very different compared to the average school. There are no class rooms, and subjects like math and English are not taught following a class schedule. The whole curriculum is conveyed through live-role-playing.



But how does it work? Instead of giving lessons, the teachers create new game scenarios, cleverly motivating the pupils to acquire knowledge. These scenarios can range from an adventure trip to the Victorian Age during which the pupils get to play lords and ladies, to space scenarios, in which they take on the role of astronauts on a space ship or any other setting. The school's founders, Mads Lunau and Malik Hyltoft used the occasional role-playing-games as pedagogical methods as early as 1990, mostly on behalf of youth organisations. During these events they observed that, not only did the participants deal with the respective topics in an effective manner but they were also more motivated. So they started pondering the idea of using

larp more effectively in education. Thus, in 2006, the idea of Østerskov Efterskole was born.

Physics and Chemistry as a Spy game

The trick is to assign the pupils characters that are interested in learning specific things, says Malik. A great method to motivate pupils to learn something is to assign them the role of experts. These experts could be medieval scholars, 19th century politicians or (in the style of the well-known series) CSI agents. A role like this spurs the pupils' curiosity and encourages them to look into the subject that is linked to it – also in order to be more convincing as the respective character.

It is hard to motivate pupils to show any interest in chemistry or physics just because they are on the syllabus. If, however, they are placed in a situation in which they can take on the role of English agents towards the end of World War II, memorising formulas in order to *break through enemy lines*, suddenly becomes an easy task. And according to the heads of the school, this playfully acquired specialist knowledge sticks better than if the pupils had only learned it to pass their exams.

Sometimes the subject matter is introduced into the scenario in the form of little games. In one of them, the pupils were competing with one another

in order to acquire as much money as possible at the New York stock market to finance a fast passage to Europe. It was through solving mathematical equations that they were able to influence the stock market.

Another instance: The pupils played the crew of a spaceship in a science fiction scenario. The computer had failed, and they were facing collision with an asteroid. The only way to get the computer back online was to “feed” it with mathematical equations. One of the main principles of these games is that there is a reason for the pupils to actively use their knowledge of the relevant subject matter.



Theme Week

Most of the time, day-to-day school life is structured according to theme weeks during which several game scenarios are either linked to one another or build on each other. Thus, a scenario around Christopher Columbus could take place on the first day during an “America”-themed week. Later on, more games lead them into the American War of Independence and the American Civil War and finally



into the 20th century, with topics like WWII, the Cold War, and the most recent political developments. Not only do the pupils learn a lot about American History in a week like this, but they also improve their knowledge of the English language by perusing relevant primary literature, gain practical experience with physics, chemistry and math (for instance

as artillerists in the American Civil War who have to make calculations in order to destroy the enemy's positions). Finally, there is also physical education, when they all re-enact the Battle of Gettysburg together by the sweat of their brows. An important part of the school method, Malik stresses, is the feedback round at the end of each theme week. Teachers use this opportunity to talk to the pupils about their performance but also in order to get feedback from the pupils concerning the respective games.



in *Slaying Dragons* and *Spy games* might neither impress a future employer nor the university. Hence, the pupils receive regular grades in regular subjects. Usually, the pupils have to hand in reports within the framework of their roles or solutions for exercises which are then graded by the teachers of the respective subjects. In addition to that, all pupils have to take the usual exams at the end of each school year and write normal final theses supervised by external examiners. But, after having had to fight KGB-agents, orcs, and space monsters, this isn't much of a challenge.

Attention, larp-pedagogues: It is part of the school's philosophy to involve guest lecturers in the organisation of tuition and leisure time. Thus, interested pedagogues from Sweden, Finland, the USA, Israel and Germany have already given classes at the Østerskov Efterskole. If you are interested in experiencing the boarding school's day-to-day life yourself, make sure to contact head of the school Mads Lunau at mads@osterskov.dk.



Nevertheless, it's still a school

The school covers grades 9 and 10 and the lessons are usually organised in ever changing mixed-grade groups. Østerskov Efterskole is a Danish, officially recognised private boarding school which is financed through public funds to a large degree (the rest of the budget is raised privately by the pupils' parents in the form of school fees). Nevertheless, the school is not overly restricted and can continue developing its own teaching methods.

Yet, the pupils cannot fully escape the realities of everyday school life. After all, a report card with grades



More information about the school is available (in Danish) at www.osterskov.dk.

Text: Karsten Dombrowski
Images: Larson Kasper



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Wound set



large assortment of ultra realistic teeth



Even though pedagogical larp exists in other countries, a school like Østerskov Efterskole is probably not possible outside Denmark. Here, live-role-playing has a high significance as a leisure activity. An estimated 100.000 children and teenagers regularly take part in larps. From schools to the scouts and even church communities, almost all of the facilities involved in youth work also have larp in their program. Even in the supermarket one can find the occasional larp beginner's kit. With *Barda*, a larp-game show, the hobby has in the meantime even made the jump into national children's TV.



LARP ... like a MOVIE

Not only does Court of Moravia from the Czech Republic organise the international festival Larpweekend, they also co-founded the larp conference Odraj and propagate the Czech larp scene in foreign countries. In addition to that, they have also been creating games since 2004. The group aims especially to provide exclusive larp experiences for small groups of players. Here is some information on their games and ideas.

You decide to go to the cinema to see a movie. Let's say it is about detectives that are driving the nightly streets in a limousine, hushing seductive women and solving the case with a finger on the trigger. Or maybe it could be an epic Orwellian film about totalitarianism which deals with a selected few people in a small town trying to do something for a better life and more freedom.

The entertaining thing about those movies is that they create the impression of reality – but are at the same time much more interesting. For a couple of hours, it is a ticket to a fantastic world where everything is exciting. We make larps like these movies ...

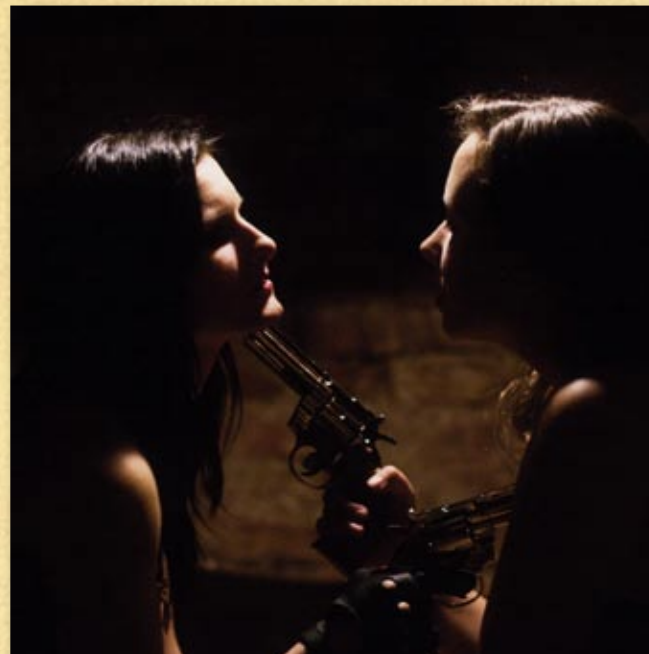


Noir

A hot woman, luxurious limousine and an unsolved detective case. That is how the story of *Noir* begins, an experiential larp for five men. During one evening, the players take the roles of two private detectives, a rich man who hired them, his bodyguard and a famous Egyptologist. In their roles they set off to explore a stunning story of a detective investigation, unexpected revelations, betrayals and excitement.

The players have a limousine at their disposal and it can take them anywhere they like. As they follow the trail of the case, it will lead them into darkening bars, criminals' lairs and luxurious hotels. Every scene the five men visit will attack all their senses. *Noir* is a game of sights, tastes, scents and touch.

The players will be accompanied by several trained actors who will ensure that nothing spoils the intense experience of *Noir*. Everything is prepared so that the players will feel like actually living in the world of crime, beautiful women and excitement – for one night.



Project System

System is a vast intensive game that takes 40 players into a totalitarian world for one weekend. In a dystopian vision it introduces a small town that appears happy from the outside, but is in fact full of human malice, suspicion and loathing.

The game takes place in a closed recreational site from the times of deep socialism, the structure of which resembles an actual village. The players are faced with all aspects of life under a totalitarian regime. The fight for happiness and job opportunities for your children, police repression, mistrust and the necessity of political involvement – but also comfort, safety and stability. *System* is anything but black and white.

System is no campaign against any regime, nor an attempt of parody. It is a game of human characters, set to make very difficult life decisions. And this is may be the aspect that moves some players to tears.

The aim of *System* is to encourage the critical thinking of players, to have them think about their own value ladders and the meaning of free decisions. In the end, it's up to them what they take from the game – and how that influences their real lives.

Larpweekend

Larpweekend is an international festival of chamber larp. If anyone is interested in getting to know Czech larp and does not feel like jumping in straight away, *Larpweekend* is the ideal opportunity. For this weekend, Brno, hometown of *Court of Moravia*, becomes the scene of many chamber larps. Several specific locations – clubs, cafés, cellars, halls – will accommodate larps that anyone can play, provided they have four hours of free time. Some of the games are played in Czech, some in English, which creates a platform for meeting people from various parts of Europe. The chamber games by *Court of Moravia* presented on *Larpweekend* are inspired by various genres which makes it easy for everyone to find what suits them best. Would you prefer a black gangster larp just like from a Tarantino movie, political drama about oil crisis, a real spiritistic séance with ghosts of the deceased, a Hollywood party or a game from the times of the French revolution? Every year in November, the gates of *Larpweekend* are opened and all those worlds come to life.



You are invited

Our dream has always been to see Czech larp in with popular and common leisure activities. We would like for everyone to decide whether they want to go to the cinema, to a pub with some friends or to play a larp. To achieve this goal, we are trying to make games that resemble the film reality in story and production. And we go beyond. Through scent, touch and by pulling the hidden strings we provide the players with an experience that can hardly be compared to anything else.

We would be happy for this larp alternative to be accessible for everybody and not just for players from our own country. You are therefore invited to a trip to Czechia. All you have to do is open the website www.courtofmoravia.com/en and experience it for yourself.

*Text: Pavel Gotthard and Veronika Frankovská (both Court of Moravia)
Pictures: Court of Moravia*

Weather protection for travellers

Difficulty:
skilled amateurs

A cloak for bards and jugglers

A juggler's or bard's garments should be colourful and attract immediate attention to the wearer and arouse the audience's interest right from the first performance. In addition to that they should allow for plenty of movement and leave arms and hands free to gesticulate or play instruments. To also help you battle cold nights, here are some sewing instructions for a cloak suitable for bards that has been modelled on images from the medieval *Codex Manesse*. The cloak doesn't restrict your arms and the front can be closed to keep your chest and stomach area warm.



Materials

Material requirements

- 2.20 m loden or felted wool (fabric width 1.40 m)
- 25 cm brocade

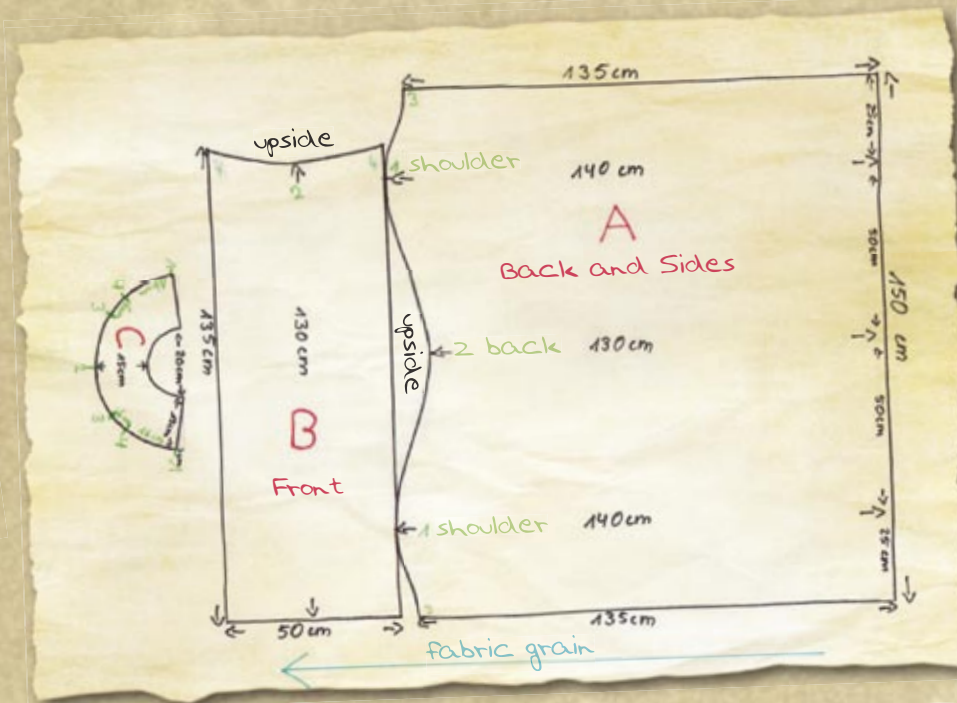
Pattern

Copy the pattern for the three parts onto a paper table cloth (it's best to use a table cloth with a geometric pattern) or brown paper.

The finished cloak has a total back length of 1.35 meters. Should you want to lengthen or shorten it, just add or subtract the missing centimetres at the lower end of cut pieces A and B.

The most important part of cut pieces A and B is the upper curved line. You should measure the distance to the hemline as to arrive at the above-mentioned total length. Then pin the paper strip to the upper end of the fabric.

The pattern already includes a seam allowance of 1 cm.



Cutting

Spread the fabric evenly. Cut both pieces A and B each once out of the woollen fabric.

ATTENTION: Side piece A of the back is cut in direction of the fabric grain whereas front piece B is cut 90 degree against the grain. The term fabric grain refers to the direction in which the threads are arranged in a piece of fabric. With very few exceptions fabrics are usually cut in direction of the grain. In these instructions we deviate from this as woollen fabrics are expensive and cutting against the grain drastically reduces the fabric waste. Also, using loden or felted wool, the grain of the fabric is not that visible as they have been milled. Mind you, having cut the front in a different direction compared to the back would be more noticeable when for example using a fishbone design fabric. If you want to use something else than smooth loden, you can cut front piece B in direction of the fabric grain. In this event you need to allow for about 85cm more fabric.

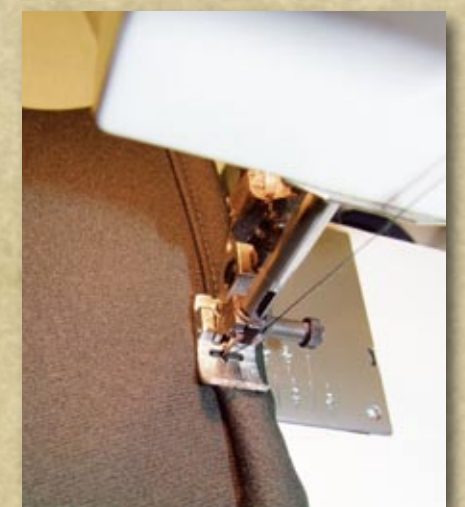
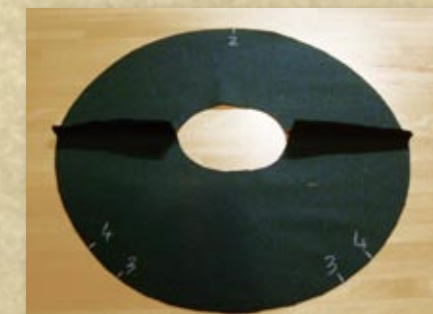
You will need to cut piece C four times. In our example we cut two pieces from the brocade fabric and two pieces from the woollen fabric. Copy the numbers of cut piece C onto the left side (which will later become the inside) of the fabric. This is where you will place cut pieces A and B later.

Sewing Instructions

PICTURE 1 + 2: Sew the two shoulder pieces together at the shoulder seams of either side.

PICTURE 3: Now you have two "loops". Place the right sides of these (later the outside) on top of each other and pin them together at the shoulder seams and the front and back parts of the middle. Now, sew the two loops together at the inner circle, about 1 cm from the edge. In several places you now cut the inner circle down to the seam, to open the smaller edge to be turned inside out. Turn the shoulder piece over and pin the two layers of fabric to each other.

PICTURE 4: Mark the places you previously wrote numbers onto the fabric with pins. The right sides of the fabric are on the outside now and it is harder to see the numbers. Sew the two parts together at the middle circle about 0.5 cm from the middle edge. Even though it's not strictly necessary, this will ensure a better fit around the shoulders.





PICTURE 5: Now, hem the side seams of the front and back piece. To make a hem you want to fold over the edges of the sides twice and stitch them in place.

PICTURE 6: Next, pleat the upper edge of the back piece. Try it on a piece of left-over loden first. Usually, there is a presser foot pressure dial above the needle arm. Turn the pressure dial to zero. Choose a rather long stitch length. Sew a couple of stitches on the loden. The seam should now frill a little on the reverse side. You should be able to see the knots down there. If you are getting loops, adjust the presser foot pressure until they get smaller or vanish. Attention: Each time you continue sewing after you have changed the pressure, you need to raise and lower the presser foot first. Otherwise the machine will not recognise the presser foot pressure change. Try whether you can easily pull the lower thread. Little pleats should appear.

PICTURE 7: If you're happy with the presser foot pressure, stitch two seams about 1.5cm apart onto the upper end of the back piece to be pleated. When you're done return the presser foot pressure into the normal position! Now tie the loose lower threads of the back piece into a knot.

PICTURE 8: Pull the two threads at the front at the same time in order to evenly pleat the fabric.

PICTURE 9: Pin the front piece at the respective marks to cut piece C (of the shoulder piece) right side onto right side. Then also pin on the pleated end of the back. The front and back piece should now overlap at the front. Sew the three pieces together.



Remove the visible pleating threads. Turn over the cloak onto its right side and try it on. If you like the length and both pieces are of the same length at the bottom, you can hem the lower edges in the same way you've done the side edges.

Your attire wouldn't be complete without some headwear. A cap with a peacock feather goes particularly well with the outfit.

Carola Adler



Carola Adler has been designing and producing clothes for more than 25 years. A couple of years ago she founded *AdelundVolk*, where she offers individual costumes (fantasy and historic) for her customers

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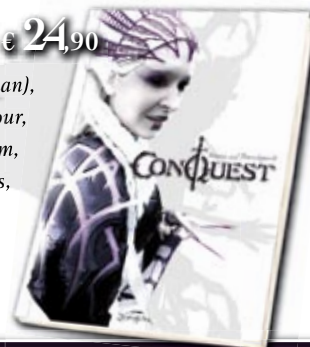


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