



TAS members folding origami at Terrakoti. From left to right Heidi Viljanen, Mika Viinanen, Eemeli Kulo and Kari Tuoriniemi.

TUTKA AND TAS – LITERATURE AND MOVIES WITH A TWIST

Under the watchful eye of a huge portrait of Darth Vader, conversation wanders where no man has gone before, and winds up in tentacles. It's already morning, and a very drunk student from a neighbouring office comes to ask, "Are you like, NERDS or something?"

Tutka, or the Science Fiction Culture Cabinet at the University of Turku, is an organisation for the enthusiasts of Science Fiction and fantasy; Turku Anime Society (TAS), on the other hand, is meant for those interested in Japanese manga and anime. Together they share an office called Terrakoti, "Terrahome", along with two other societies of speculative fiction.

Despite being student associations, Tutka and TAS have members of nearly every age and occupation, from grizzled enthusiasts to youngsters still in school. International students, too, are always warmly welcomed.

Sitting down with Tutka

Tutka is an active organisation for all

fans of Science Fiction and fantasy – particularly movies, TV series and literature.

"We have tried to create a non-threatening environment so even shyest of fans would find it easy to join", says a long-time member **Pasi Karppanen**.

The approach seems to be working, and new members like **Emma Engblom** find nothing negative to say.

"I've enjoyed the conversations, the people and pretty much everything there."

There are regular meetings every Thursday that constitute the backbone to all Tutka activity. On the first Thursday of every month, a number of Science Fiction and fantasy fans gather to chat in a pub – these meetings are called "mafia". All other Thursdays Tutka members and other fans hang out at Terrakoti in what they call "shadow mafia".

Also in the schedule are regular Star Trek sessions, movie nights with the lights on to enable knitting, and even an excursion to a bowling hall.

On the 22nd the Planet of the Apes drinking game movie night continues a well-loved tradition of drinking games à la Tutka. Generally the games

are played with soft drinks or low-alcohol beverages, since the films chosen tend to be repetitive and give way for a lot of gulps.

TAS and tomodachi

Since 2000 Terrakoti has also been the office of TAS, a club for anime and manga fans.

Membership at TAS gives a chance for like-minded people to spend time together, and as an added bonus, members get reductions on manga and other items in many stores. Because there are also minors among the members, most of the events held by TAS are alcohol-free.

TAS arranges anime viewings every other Friday by theme or as mini-marathons. Every Monday TAS members gather at Terrakoti to hang out or try new things, like a cool board game or origami.

Every now and then there are other kinds of activities, like meetings for cosplay outfit makers or theme parties. On the 8th was the Bartender

night, where the adult members raised a glass all dressed up in the spirit of the anime "Bartender".

Terrakoti celebrates

Even though TAS and Tutka organise many activities separately, they share not only an office but also a good number of their members, and this makes it easy to collaborate. Along with the other Terrakoti organisations they arrange theme parties and other soirées throughout the year. Coming up is a two-day celebration of Halloween, with games and films on Friday and food, drink, music and Twister on Saturday.

Joining TAS or Tutka is easy: show up at one of their events and pay the annual membership fee, which is 5 euro for TAS and 2 euro for Tutka. Most of the events are held at Terrakoti office, and you can find it at Rehtorinpellonkatu 4, building A (right next to the Assarin ullakko student restaurant), second floor.

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