

Mattachine Tower

The Urth list — 6 messages, 5 voices, 01 Mar 2003

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Jeff Wilson — 01 Mar 2003, 17:18

According to the History Channel, the Mattachines were an Italian tradition of court jesters who were indulged to "speak the truth" when appearing masked and hooded. Not to doubt the veracity of the Hitler Channel, but has anyone else heard of this, or suspect that it folds into the torturers' tower?

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
< <http://www.io.com/~jwilson/gurps/> >

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Alice K. Turner — 02 Mar 2003, 00:32 · follows Jeff Wilson

Back in the 60s, before the Stonewall Rebellion, before gay liberation of any note, the Mattachine Society on the East Coast (and for all I know on the West) was a coded name for a quite sizeable male homosexual club or group here; I expect the historical note is an ironic nod to being "closeted." I doubt that Wolfe knew that!

-alga

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Josh Geller — 02 Mar 2003, 00:37 · follows Alice K. Turner

On Sat, 1 Mar 2003, Alice K. Turner wrote:
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Well, they were very specifically associated with sadomasochism.

I had assumed that Wolfe did know about this.

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Alice K. Turner — 02 Mar 2003, 03:26 · follows Josh Geller

I just did a google on this--quite fascinating!

-a-

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Bratt Ian — 02 Mar 2003, 23:21 · follows Alice K. Turner

According to <http://www.sbu.ac.uk/stafflag/mattachine.html>, the word matachin or matachine has been derived from the Arabic of Moorish Spain, in which mutawajjihin, relates to masking oneself.

-Insula

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Tami Whitehead — 03 Mar 2003, 04:42 · follows Bratt Ian

I, Razorkittee, will tell you what The Man said. Take it for what it is worth.

In the book, The Castle of the Otter, by Gene Wolfe, on page 28, for Chapter II, he says: "Matachin Tower: In a Spanish tradition, matachins are masked sword dancers. Some authorities say that the tradition is derived from the Moors. Well, maybe. To the other inhabitants of the Citadel, the Seekers of Truth and Penitence are most visisble on the feast of Holy Katharine, when the journeymen, weating their masks, dance with their beheading swords."

kittee

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