

Press InformationNo. 2

August 2018

What gamescom in Cologne is for all computer game aficionados is SPIEL in Essen for more than 180,000 board game fans - a games paradise of superlatives. A four-day spectacle and a date on which Christmas, Easter and birthdays all come together for many game-crazy people. The world's largest fair for board and card games is experiencing extraordinary growth once again this year, because analogue games are as popular as never before with young people too.

36th Internationale Spieltage SPIEL '18 with Comic Action from October 25th to 28th, 2018

1,150 exhibitors (last year 1,100) from 50 nations are expected to attract more than 180,000 games fans when the motto at this year's SPIEL '18 in October is once again "Come and play!". With 11% more floor space, the fair is growing significantly once again this year by occupying one whole additional hall. Games for all tastes and all ages can now be tested on an area of 80,000 sqm - including 1,400 new games and world premieres (last year 1,200).

Dear colleagues,

Although the SPIEL fair has always grown steadily throughout its 36-year history, the event has developed at breath-taking speed over the last five years. Whoever believed in the 1990s that computer games would replace analogue games in the long term has had to think again.

Today, board and card games are becoming an increasingly important leisure-time hobby and not only in Germany - they are seen as hip and trendy all over the world. It is the younger generation in particular that is tossing the dice and developing strategies at the gaming table with great enthusiasm.

All previous events are clearly eclipsed by this year's edition of the fair, because SPIEL is growing at a remarkable rate, this time by a respectable 11% over 2017 to a preliminary record of 80,000 sqm gross exhibition area. With 1,150 exhibitors from 50 nations presenting 1,400 game novelties at SPIEL '18, the magnitude of the offer is unique throughout the world.

In the hope of arousing your curiosity, we would like to cordially invite you to gain an overview of this fascinating game world by presenting to you today a small selection of different new games and programme highlights.

Game culture - a part of our society: Esteem, promotion, perspectives - a podium discussion with prominent personalities

In cooperation with the German Cultural Council, the game Spiele-Autoren-Zunft is organising a podium discussion entitled "Game culture - a part of our society: Esteem, promotion, perspectives" in Saal Panorama at SPIEL '18 in Essen at 2 pm on 25th October 2018.

A closer look will be taken at the gaming culture under special consideration of analogue games as a

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motor of education, mental challenge, family cohesion and integration, as well as a means of creating of a feeling of togetherness and pleasure. How can the theoretical acknowledgement of analogue games as a cultural asset be put into practice on a permanent basis? What promotion options exist?

Many Asian publishing houses are also presenting their novelties at this year's SPIEL.

Indonesia is showing particular commitment this year

It's not only manufacturers from Europe, America and Australia who will be presenting the latest games in Essen. Publishers from Japan, Korea and many other Asian countries will be presenting themselves at country pavilions or with their own fair booths. A new aspect is the great trade fair commitment being shown by Indonesia, because together with the Indonesia Boardgame Players Association, the Indonesian Creative Economy Agency started a search for 15 Indonesian game authors whose high-quality board and card games will be presented at a large stand in Hall 3, thus representing the sector in Indonesia.

Unique Games - a completely new type of game

Asmodée is embarking on a completely new course by presenting its first so-called "Unique Game". DISCOVER - ZU UNENTDECKTEN LANDEN is a completely new type of game, because each edition is absolutely unique. Although several components, such as the majority of the interior cards, are the same, many other parts were selected at random by the publishers for every game. This means that you can never be sure what is concealed in any given box and no two games can be played the same way.

The best game innovations are awarded the innoSPIEL at the SPIEL fair

Particularly innovative game ideas are awarded the "innoSPIEL" innovation prize at the SPIEL fair. We would like to extend a cordial invitation to you to join us here when this year's winner game is announced at the press conference and presented in detail at the press novelties show.

An international panel takes a look at developments in the international games market - What games will Germany and the world be playing in future?

We will be holding a discussion with international representatives of the industry and game authors on Friday, 26.10.18 at 2 pm in Saal Berlin at Messe Essen. What will the games market of the future look like? Will the various markets align with one another or do different countries demand different types of games? How can I position myself as a publisher or author to enjoy international success? All interested parties are welcome. Admission is free.

Games for school lessons - TEXTURA teaches German-Polish history

Many board games are educational and suitable for use in schools. This also applies to the game TEXTURA SPECIAL EDITION, which is aimed at schools and other educational institutions and is intended to teach young people about German-Polish history. Topics such as the Order of Teutonic Knights, the Hambach Festival, the First World War, Auschwitz and the Oder-Neisse line are explained here in the course of the game. Thanks to sponsorship from the Federal Agency for Civic Education, TEXTURA can be made available to schools free of charge.

Worker placement games are a popular genre

In so-called worker placement games, the players place their pieces or workers on squares in order to perform certain tasks and win valuable points. As these mostly tactical and strategic games are very popular among practiced players, numerous games of this genre are to be found among the game novelties presented. An example of this is REYKHOLT (Frosted Games) by the well-known game author Uwe Rosenberg, who gets the players to run a farm in Iceland. They have to be quick though, because the season is short. Hiring an employee at the right time can produce the decisive advantage.

Reaching the goal together - cooperative games are still the trend

Cooperative games are those in which all of the players have to work together to win the game as a team.

- The objective of X-CODE is to save the world from collapse! A computer game virus has been released in the Darknet which is threatening to delete all of the data in the Internet. In this cooperative real-time game by Amigo, the players attempt to crack a code under time pressure in order to prevent the imminent disaster.
- SPACE ESCAPE by Game Factory is the name of a new, galactic, cooperative adventure for the

whole family. Successful author Matt Leacock, who will be signing his game at the fair, has caused quite a stir in the past with his bestseller PANDEMIC LEGACY.

- The fast and easy-to-play family game ROLL FOR ADVENTURE by Kosmos is also cooperative.
- HABA is also launching a new, cooperative memory collection game for all the family. In DIE LEGENDEN DER IRRLICHTER, the highlight is clearly the interactive game plan which lights up the game.

Party games

- Hasbro is offering DUMMSCHWÄTZER to the young party target group. What sounds very easy to begin with proves to be tricky in practice, because while a speaker attempts to describe certain terms, he hears himself with a time delay through a headset. What comes out here is usually a stutter which makes it difficult for the other players to guess what is meant.
- Another amusing party game is CHAMELEON (HCM Kinzel) where a player secretly slips into the role of a chameleon. The objective now is to describe terms in order to track down the chameleon.

This game is played with real ice cubes

The pieces in COOL RUNNINGS (Ravensburger) consist of real ice cubes. The winner of this new race game is the first player to get his ice cube over the finish line. Or the last one still remaining after all of the other pieces have melted away. A pinch of salt, a water bath and rubbing with the thumb produce just the right amount of schadenfreude at the gaming table.

Console game feeling at the gaming table

8BIT BOX by Iello is reminiscent of the console games of the 1990s. It contains several games, all of which have the goal of arousing old video game memories and reliving the thrill with the others round the table.

The classic game SCRABBLE is turning 70 and is celebrating its anniversary with a special edition

More than half of all households have it in Germany alone. To mark the occasion of its 70th birthday, Mattel is producing a jubilee edition of the classic game SCRABBLE in a modern design. Mattel can also offer novelties such as SCRABBLE PRACTICE & PLAY and SCRABBLE TOWERS, however.

UNO now for colour blind people too

The popular card game UNO can now be played by colour blind people too. In UNO COLORADD (Mattel), the cards have been designed in such a way that players with a colour recognition disorder can also get fully involved, because a symbol represents the colour on every card.

Children's games - sometimes they're a bit quirky, sometimes they promote team spirit

- Among the so-called escape games is the children's game EXIT KIDS - CODE BREAKER by Kosmos. The young detectives must work together to crack the code of the electronic lock. A detective's kit in the form of a UV lamp, a mirror and a red filter is sometimes of help. Two play modes ensure that the players can either take their time or have to work under time pressure.
- After several "toilet games" caused quite a stir last year, Mattel is now jumping onto this bandwagon too with KACKA-ALARM. In this children's game, the players run the risk of "Mister Kacka" jumping out of the toilet every time it is flushed and then having to catch him in the air if possible.

An exclusive SAFEHOUSE FIRST AID Kit awaits visitors at the Moses stand

Last year, bestseller author Sebastian Fitzek presented his novelty SAFEHOUSE in person at SPIEL '17. This year, the Moses publishing house will be distributing an exclusive and free SAFEHOUSE FIRST AID Kit among visitors to SPIEL '18 with which the game can be made easier or more difficult. The publishers will also be presenting the card game BLACK STORIES SEBASTIAN FITZEK EDITION, a gruesome guessing game in which the players have to feel their way towards the solution and in which the questions have to be formulated in such a way that they can only be answered with "yes" or "no".

Join in and win a trip to the Antarctic with Amigo

All ICECOOL fans are called upon to upload their ICECOOL trick shot videos during SPIEL '18 at www.icecoolantarctica.com. In addition to the games packages that can be won, the main prize with Amigo is a trip to the Antarctic.

"Played books" - an exhibition by the European Game Collectors' Guild

The worlds of games and books often interlink with one another: book topics and heroes of literature find their way into games, games about books are developed, books are written on the basis of games, authors dedicate themselves to games in their texts, indeed complete game manuals are drafted. There are books that can be played and games whose boxes come in the shape of a book. In this year's exhibition on the occasion of SPIEL '18, the members of the European Game Collectors' Guild (ESG) dedicate themselves to this diversity.

Awarding of the "Deutscher SpielePreis" seal of quality

The excitement is mounting again. Who is going to win this year's Deutscher SpielePreis? The world's most significant audience award, in which players, dealers and journalists cast their vote, is traditionally awarded at the international games conference in Essen in the categories "Best family and adult's game" and "Best children's game". The prize winners will be presented at length in the press conference and at the novelties show.

Free admission to SPIEL '18 for Cosplayers and Larpers in costume

On all days, the first 100 Cosplay and Larp enthusiasts will be granted free admission to SPIEL '18. This only applies, however, to visitors who turn up in full costume at the entrance "Eingang Mitte / Halle 6". In cases of doubt, the staff at the Messe Essen cash desk will have the last word.

We hope we have whet your appetite for games and would be delighted to welcome you this year to SPIEL '18 featuring COMIC ACTION '18. Please find below a summary of the most important information for press and media representatives:

- "SPIEL '18 with COMIC ACTION '18" opens to the media with the press conference on October 24, 2018 at 11 am in CC West, Saal Europa. Immediately afterwards the New Releases Showcase will be held in Hall 1A where again numerous trend-setting games will be premièred. You couldn't hope for a better testing area than the international games event and COMIC ACTION.
- At an evening event on October 24, 2018, the awards ceremony for the German Game Prize is to be held. There are only a limited number of admissions, the allocation of which we vary from year to year. You will receive separate invitations for this event.

If you kindly complete and return the attached invitation to the Press Conference, you will receive your press pass and parking permit in a few days by return. We will of course keep you updated on future developments. Should you have any telephone queries, I will be pleased to help. I can be reached on +49 228 342273.

Kindest Regards,
Friedhelm Merz Verlag (organizer SPIEL '18 with COMIC ACTION)

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