

Internationale Spieltage

SPIEL '18

Messe Essen · 25.-28. Okt. 2018



**Detailed Press Release regarding
the Opening of SPIEL '18 with COMIC ACTION**

36th International Games Event SPIEL '18 in Essen

**SPIEL '18 has again grown rapidly in terms of gross exhibition space
and exhibitor numbers**

Once again, this edition of SPIEL - the 36th - can report rapid growth. The gross exhibition area will increase again this year - this time by a further 11% to 80,000 square metres (previous year 72,000 sq.m.). The number of exhibitors has also increased once again with 1,150 exhibitors from 50 nations (previous year: 1,100). This year, the games event will occupy an entire hall more than last year in the shape of the recently erected Hall 6. This growth is driven above all by a further increase in internationality and the considerably increased commitment on the part of these exhibitors.

**Increasing numbers of national pavilions are impacting on the image
of the games event**

The number of national pavilions also continues to rise in 2018. While Korean and Taiwanese manufacturers have been presenting jointly at SPIEL for a long time, large joint stands featuring French and British publishers are now being added in Hall 4. For the first time there will also be an Indonesian pavilion in Hall 3, where the Creative Economy Agency, supported by the Indonesian government, together with the Indonesia Board-Game Players Association, will present games by 15 Indonesian game authors.

**From subculture to mainstream pop culture -
board games are booming at the height of the digital era**

In recent years, board games have gone from a subcultural phenomenon to mainstream pop-culture. We live in the middle of the "Golden Age" of board and card games, both from an economic and a cultural point of view. With its 180,000 visitors, SPIEL is something like the engine and the heart of this booming board game world - year on year. One glance into the halls, which are already buzzing shortly after opening on Thursday, is enough to show even the last doubters how popular board and card games have become.

The German Cultural Council guests at SPIEL '18

Thanks to an initiative of the Game Designers Association (SAZ), numerous members along with the President of the German Cultural Council will attend SPIEL for the first time. On Thursday, October 25th, 2018, they want to gauge the popularity of SPIEL and the analogue games on show. On the same day, the Cultural Council and SAZ extend an invitation to a panel discussion in Saal Panorama at 2 p.m. Board games will be looked at here under the theme, "Games - cultural assets and part of our society: appreciation, promotion, perspectives". Special consideration is given to what analogue games offer: they are the motor for education, mental challenge, ensure cohesion in families and integration, create a sense of togetherness and provide amusement. The industry is eagerly awaiting answers to questions such as how the theoretical acknowledgement of the analogue game as a cultural asset to date can be put into practice in a sustainable way and what funding opportunities are available.

Veranstalter:

Friedhelm Merz Verlag GmbH & Co. KG
Bismarckallee
D-53173 Bonn
T: +49/228/ 342273
Fax: +49/228/ 856312
E-Mail: info@merz-verlag.com
<http://www.spiel-messe.com>

Ausstellerbetreuung:

Frau Dominique Metzler
Friedhelm Merz Verlag GmbH & Co. KG
Bismarckallee 8
D-53173 Bonn
T: +49/228/ 342273
Fax: +49/228/ 856312
E-Mail: info@merz-verlag.com

Techn. Organisation:

Messe Essen GmbH
Messeplatz 1
D-45131 Essen
T: +49/201/ 72440
Fax: +49/201/ 7244448

Gaming cafés and board game groups make an important socio-cultural contribution

In the past, adults who regularly played games together were more likely to be dismissed by society as nerds and geeks. In the meantime, there has been a significant change in consciousness. When adults come together today to play, compete and, of course, hold games evenings, they are seen to be indulging in a hobby that is now widely recognised and has long since left its niche.

This development is also underlined by the rapidly increasing number of gaming cafés, which make a socio-cultural contribution that should not be underestimated, and the emergence of more and more gaming groups in which adults meet regularly to play.

Visitor numbers at SPIEL have risen significantly in the past two years

Also, the attendance figures for SPIEL speak a very clear language. Whereas in 2015 there were 162,000 visitors, by 2016 there were 174,000 and last year 182,000 gaming enthusiasts who wanted to find out about their favourite hobby, exchange ideas with like-minded people and test the new games releases in each year.

With 1,400 new games releases, visitors can look forward to a veritable firework of innovations

With 1,400 new products and world premieres (previous year 1,200) being presented at SPIEL '18 by publishers from all over the world, board game fans can look forward to a veritable firework of innovations.

"The innoSPIEL Award" - a prize for the most innovative game of the year

When thousands of games titles are vying for the attention of families, casual players and games enthusiasts alike, many consumers might be overwhelmed. Here, the innoSPIEL award, which Friedhelm Merz Verlag has presented in conjunction with the City of Essen since 2017, is a valuable orientation aid because the prize focuses on quality and innovative features.

This year, a qualified jury has chosen three titles from the current range of games, which are characterized by particularly innovative concepts:

- In the game BONK, 2-4 players, playing as teams, try to push a larger wooden ball into the opponent's goal using small steel balls. Each player gives the steel ball the necessary momentum using his own pivoting chute. The gently curved playing surface between the teams makes aiming more difficult. The wooden ball needs to be struck well, if it is to roll into the opponents' half. The first team to score five goals, wins.

BONK by David Harvey, Game Factory, 2-4 players, ages 8 and above.

- COOL RUNNINGS is a classic game of pursuit in which four competitors race to the finish line. The game pieces are moved using action cards. The key feature is that there are real ice cubes in the players' game pieces. It is not only important to be the first to finish - there must also be something left of the ice cube. On its way to the finish line it is constantly exposed to adversity: opponents might blow on it, sprinkle salt on it, or splash it with water from a pipette.

COOL RUNNINGS by Olivier Mahy, Ravensburger, 2-4 players, ages 8 and above.

- One hundred cards, numbered from 1 to 100, a few life cards and a joker - and the game is ready to play - reduced to absolute basics and yet it gets the mind pulsating. The aim of THE MIND is to play out the respective hands of cards together in ascending order, without communicating, or giving any hints. At the beginning, each of the 2-4 players has one card in their hand, at the highest level, up to twelve.

THE MIND by Wolfgang Warsch, Nürnberger Spielkarten Verlag NSV, 2-4 players, ages 8 and above.

Game trends and highlights

The 1,400 plus new game releases and world premieres being presented at SPIEL '18 promise an extremely entertaining mix of games. In the following we have compiled a few trends and highlights:

More and more new releases are cooperative games

We see a very clear development towards more and more cooperative games that are not a competitive free-for-all, but everyone plays together against the game. Communication is at the forefront here and this cooperation promotes positive factors that we can put to good use in our society: trust, consideration and empathy with others. In this respect, it would be good if we could play even more games in the future than we already do today.

Examples of cooperative new releases are:

- A secret Darknet gamer-institution has struck in the cooperative reality game X-CODE (Amigo) and released a computer virus. Should the virus become active, all data on the Internet would be lost forever. Under time pressure, the players try to crack an unknown 12-digit code and thus save the world from collapse.
- With LIGHTHOUSE RUN, players can expect an exciting sailing regatta: The Amigo family game is a dynamic race with cooperative elements. The appealing game board with 3D lighthouses quickly immerses you in the captivating and entertaining gaming experience.
- A cooperative memo collecting game for 2-5 players from 8 years with interactive game board and LED labyrinth is DIE LEGENDEN DER IRRLICHTER by HABA.
- A floating research station is hit by a destructive storm. The cooperative tile-based game FORBIDDEN SKY by Schmidt Spiele turns 2-5 players into adventurers in the fight against time.
- SPACE ESCAPE (Game Factory) is a successful family game, its author Matt Leacock will also be giving autographs during SPIEL. In this game players must work together as naked mole rats to reach a rescue capsule before they are bitten by horrid snakes.
- In HOLDING ON: DAS BEWEGTE LEBEN DES BILLY KERR (Asmodée), players work shifts together in a hospital. They must take care of Billy Kerr, who has just arrived in hospital after suffering a heart attack, keeping him alive to find out his story.
- NYCTOPHOBIA: DIE GEJAGTEN (Asmodée) is a cooperative game of survival that can also be played by blind people. Up to four players must escape together from a killer, who pursues them in a pitch-dark forest. The highlight of the game: The fleeing players wear dark glasses. They see nothing and must rely on their sense of touch and their communication with each other to find their way out.
- With ROLL FOR ADVENTURE, Kosmos-Verlag presents a fast, exciting dice game with simple rules. 2-4 heroes face the armies of the Dark Lord together to complete the magical amulet in time and save the ancient kingdom.

A new trend is finding its way into games cupboards - Unique Games

We are also observing a gradual development towards very individual game editions, which began a few years ago with so-called legacy games. In this game genre, no two games are the same, because rules and components change irrevocably from round to round depending on the player's decisions. At the end of a completed campaign each game is unique.

In the next developmental step, we now see the first so called Unique Game in the form of DISCOVER - ZU UNENTDECKTEN LANDEN by Asmodée. Thematically it is about survival in the wilderness, be it with each other or against each other. The publisher puts together the vast majority of all components in the box differently for each game. So, each purchased copy is unique and each game plays differently.

The new connoisseur games

- A new legacy game is THE RISE OF QUEENSDALE (alea), which visitors will find at the Ravensburger booth. The king's wish is the command for up to four brave knights who are to build him a worthy castle. Here, too, a unique gaming experience is created, as all the achievements of the players from previous games flow into the current game and the game is constantly evolving.
- An opulent game of miniatures in which players take on the role of world-famous villains is VILLAGE ATTACKS by ADC Blackfire. As a vampire prince, Succubus or Lich, you must defend your castle against the angry villagers.
- In REYKHOLT (Frosted Games) the well-known game author Uwe Rosenberg lets 2-4 players run a farm in Iceland. But they must hurry, because the season is short. Hiring a worker at the right time can bring the decisive advantage.
- The games made by Facade Games look like old books. At SPIEL '18, the American publisher is presenting its new release DEADWOOD 1876, in which 2-9 players try to plunder the gold-filled safes of a small town.
- Successful author Stefan Feld takes us to the cities of the Roman Empire in FORUM TRAJANUM (Huch!). In this challenging strategy game, 2-4 players aged 12 and above will help their Emperor Trajan build the most magnificent Imperial Forum in history.
- Stefan Feld also remains true to the theme of Rome in another of his games called CARPE DIEM, released by alea. 2-4 rich patricians want to organize their own neighbourhoods in such a way that they score as many points as possible in several assessments.

Games bring the whole family together

- HABA invites 2-5 players aged 8 and over on an exciting mountain tour with a high degree of interaction in the game MOUNTAINS. With a little luck, a good memory and one or the other favour from your competitors you will collect the most summit stamps!
- In the strategy game OKAVANGO (Jumbo) the players - as rangers - have the task of forming herds and bringing their animals to the waterhole unharmed. Who will ensure the survival of his herd?
- Throwing dice, clapping, crowing, snatching: 3-8 brain acrobats coordinate the actions of their restless bodies in VOLLPFOSTEN (Zoch Spiele), concentrating right to the end of every hair.
- PLANET (Blue Orange) lets 2-4 players from 8 years upward, create a whole world using their own hands. Move by move they cover a large twelve-sided cube with landscapes. The aim of the game is to make your planet as attractive as possible for animals to find a habitat on.
- Almost every child is afraid of monsters - but what if cuddly toys wake up at night and protect the sleeping children? The adventures that result from it can be experienced by 1-4 players from 7 years in DER HERR DER TRÄUME (Asmodée). The game consists of miniatures of the cuddly toys, their opponents and a ring binder: each double page reveals a new game board and sets the rules for the respective adventure - ideal for parents and children to play together.
- 8BIT BOX by Iello is reminiscent of the console games of the 1990s. It features three games, all aimed at bringing back memories of old video games and experiencing the associated thrill at the gaming table in a whole new way.
- Kosmos helps the Incas achieve greatness of old: Klaus and Benjamin Teuber have oriented their new game along the lines of the world of CATAN. In CATAN - AUFSTIEG DER INKA an innovative displacement mechanism makes the rise and fall of one of the oldest advanced civilizations in the world comprehensible. The basic elements of the successful game CATAN - settling, acting, building - are extended into this game and the 3-4 players from 12 years upward are confronted with new strategic game situations. In this way nature reclaims settlements once they have been built. The game is equipped with detailed figures.
- Ravensburger presents its brand-new quiz game KNOW. Thanks to a connection to Google Assistant, the 1,500+ quiz questions are always up to date, and the current location also influences the answers, for example to the question "How far is it from here to Honolulu?". There is also a version that can be played without a language assistant.
- To celebrate the tenth anniversary of STONE AGE, publisher Hans im Glück has brought out a jumbo anniversary edition. It contains a summer and a winter version as well as two mini expansions for even more Stone Age fun.

Kids games: Magic, tricky, funny

- KÖNIG GRUMMELBART (Schmidt Spiele) is cooperative. Here 2-4 children from 5 years up try to bake his majesty a cake together and place it on the grand feast table. But the scatter-brained court weasel has left the ingredients on the stairs. Now the players try to nudge or flick their figures from step to step and then grab the appropriate ingredients out of the bag.
- One of the trendy escape games is the children's game EXIT KIDS - CODE BREAKER by Kosmos. The young detectives from the age of 7 up, must put their heads together to crack the code of the electronic lock. Sometimes the detective equipment in the form of a UV lamp, a mirror and a red filter also helps. There are two game modes, so players can either take their time or must work under time pressure.
- After several "toilet games" caused a sensation last year, Mattel is also jumping on this bandwagon by presenting KACKA-ALARM. In this children's game, the players run the risk that every time they flush the toilet, "Mister Kacka" might jump back out of the loo, which means they must catch it in mid-air if possible.
- Repos launches CONCEPT KIDS: TIERE (Animals), a version of CONCEPT's game principle for the little ones. In the description and word game, 2-12 children from the age of 4 upwards must together describe an animal to another player. However, they may only use the symbols on the beautifully and simply designed game board to do this.

The new party firecrackers

- DAS CHAMÄLEON by HCM Kinzel is a funny and challenging party game for 3-8 players from 10 years. Among them is the chameleon, the only one who doesn't know which term is being looked for. But the other players are not allowed to notice this and so the deceit and trickery begins in order not to get caught.

- Hasbro has DUMMSCHWÄTZER in its bag for the young party target group. What sounds quite simple at first turns out to be a tricky task in practice. Because while a speaker is trying to describe terms, he hears himself delayed over a headphone microphone. The result is usually stuttering, and it becomes difficult for the other players to guess what is meant.
- To mark the 25th birthday of the party classic TICK TACK BUMM, which has sold over six million copies in the meantime, Piatnik is now publishing the game TICK TACK BUMM CHAIN REACTION. Here, quick-wittedness and spontaneity are called for as two or more players form word chains before the bomb explodes.

Card games are fast and gripping

- In NESSOS (Iello) 3-6 players slip into the roles of Greek heroes who want to offer mythical creatures as sacrifices to the gods. A tricky game of deduction and bluff with many unexpected twists.
- In KRASSE KACKE (Pegasus) the players must divert suspicion from their own pets as soon as possible and blame the other players' pets. Who did the poop on the carpet? KRASSE KACKE is funny, quickly explained and has a crazy theme.
- BLANK (Hutter Trade) has many blank cards at the beginning. The winner of a game may design one of these blank cards and thus introduce new, individual rules into the game. So, the game is constantly changing.
- EISERNER VORHANG (Frosted Games) manages with just 20 cards. 2 players as USA and Soviet Union wrestle for supremacy in the struggle of ideologies.

The winners of the German Games Prize - Deutscher SpielePreis 2018

A very special highlight during SPIEL is the awarding of the Deutscher SpielePreis. **Worldwide this is the most important audience prize for board games** and is presented in the categories "Best Family and Adult Game" and "Best Children's Game".

- The game **AZUL** by **Michael Kiesling** from the publishing house Next Move (Distribution: Pegasus) will be awarded **the prize for the best family and adult game 2018**.
As players we tile the palace of the Portuguese king in AZUL. For this purpose, we make use of the stock available from tile manufacturers and at first place the colourful, nice-to-touch tiles in the holding area of our own display. We score points for putting these tiles in good combinations on the royal wall.
AZUL turns an abstract game mechanism into a wonderfully concrete game.
A catchy process, a low entry threshold and great tactical possibilities make this beautiful to touch game of high-quality design a pleasure for beginners and enthusiasts alike.
AZUL, by Michael Kiesling, Next Move, 2-4 players, from 8 years, 30-45 minutes, approx. 40 Euro.
- The **Deutscher KinderSpielePreis 2018** goes to MEMOARRR! by Carlo Bortolini by Edition Spielwiese and Pegasus Spiele.
MEMOARRR! takes us on a treasure hunt on a volcanic island. On a 5x5 field card display the players reveal one card in turn according to the memory principle. The card must match the card that was turned over before. Choosing the wrong card makes it easier for the other players to find the treasure.
MEMOARRR! entices children to get started quickly and thanks to its steep learning curve along with an expert version offers lasting fun for the whole family. Players with a good memory have a clear advantage with MEMOARRR! as their knowledge of the treasure island increases in each of the seven rounds. Soon they will be able to completely lead their rivals for the pirate treasure astray.
MEMOARR! by Carlo Bortolini, Edition Spielwiese and Pegasus Spiele, from 8 years upward, 10-20 minutes, approx. 12 Euro.

Friends of the Ninth Art get their money's worth at COMIC ACTION

For comic fans, Panini in particular will have some tasty titbits on offer. Artists like ARTHUR "ART" ADAMS and JOYCE CHIN from the USA, MIGUEL FERNANDEZ from Spain and the German artist MICHAEL VOGT have already been announced and will be present every day. On Thursday and Friday LEE SULLIVAN from England will be on hand. Panini will also be bringing numerous comic specials with them, which will only be available at the games event in limited editions.

Huge supporting programme searchable on-line

With the growth of SPIEL and an ever-increasing number of exhibitors from all over the world, the supporting programme is once again growing considerably. More than 1,300 individual games fair events have been registered this year. A database, in which visitors can inform themselves about signing sessions by game authors and comic artists, about tournaments and competitions, games fair panels and much more, is on-line on the SPIEL homepage at www.spiel-messe.com, and can of course also be used on mobile devices.

Panel on the international games market

A very special event is an international panel that highlights the developments in the international games market: "How will Germany and the world play in the future? We will be having the discussion with international industry representatives and game authors on Friday, October 26th, 2018 at 2 p.m. in the Saal Berlin at Messe Essen. What will the games market of the future look like? Do the different markets align themselves with each other with their games or do different countries demand different types of games? How can I position myself as a publisher or author to have international success? All those interested are very welcome. Admission is free.

Panel speakers are: Stephen Buonocore, Stronghold Games; Friedemann Friese, 2F Games; Sophie Gravel, Plan B/Next Move; Carol Rapp, Asmodée Deutschland; Ignacy Trzewiczek, Portal Games; Eric M. Lang, Canadian Games Author and Director of Game Design at CMON. The journalist Frank Zirpins will comper the event.

Bundled information in the free SPIEL-GUIDE

This year, for the first time, a free 64-page trade fair guide called the SPIEL-GUIDE, will be distributed at all three entrances to the event halls. In addition to the hall plans, this extremely useful guide contains a complete list of new releases, individual programme highlights and tips on visiting the fair.

International games event helps dress up the players

This year at the Friedhelm Merz Verlag booth in Hall 3, Stand 3H100, T-shirts with the games event logo and the inscription "SPIELkamerad" will be available for all fans of SPIEL who would like to take something home.

Hall Allocation for SPIEL '18

For 2018, the halls have been allocated as follows:

- The Press-New Releases Showcase is again being held in hall 1A.
- Visitors will find board and card games in halls 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.
- As usual, kids can get their money's worth in the Galeria. Here you will find the giant children's paradise with animations, jumbo and movement games and much, much more!
- Comics, miniature games, fantasy board games and live role-playing games can be found in hall 6.

I hope to have given you a little taster of SPIEL '18 with COMIC ACTION in my presentation. I will now hand over to Hermann Hutter, chairman of the interest group "Die Spieleverlage e.V." (Association of Games Publishers) who will be giving you details regarding economic matters concerning the German games sector. I hope you have fun while playing working!

Essen, October 24th, 2018

Dominique Metzler,
Organization and Press Officer
SPIEL '18 with COMIC ACTION
for the Event Organizer - Friedhelm Merz Verlag