



Detailed Press Release
for the SPIEL.digital 2020 Press Conference

SPIEL goes digital

In Germany alone, 5.6 million people regularly play board games, around 33 million play from time to time. For board game fans worldwide, this year's corona-related cancellation of SPIEL - the world's largest board game convention - was a bitter disappointment. Numerous publishing houses were also hit hard by the cancellation, as many smaller national and international exhibitors in particular sell almost their entire annual edition stock at SPIEL year after year. In addition, innumerable license and B2B deals are concluded at the event.

In May 2020, the organizers Friedhelm Merz Verlag decided to create a fully-blown online convention in the shape of SPIEL.digital, with an elaborate, carefully planned program, where fans from all over the world can intensively engage, play and buy the latest board game new releases. A live program in all world languages, competitions and tournaments, interactive discussions, a media hub and much more awaits gaming enthusiasts who will celebrate a glittering festival of games here. In addition, a separate area for trade visitors enables exhibitors to pursue their international business deals.

In the last few months, a unique convention and board game platform has been created, which will also serve as a games information portal beyond the end of the event

In the last few months, a unique convention and board game platform has been created, the content of which will mostly remain online after the end of the convention. With SPIEL.digital, Friedhelm Merz Verlag is ultimately also creating a new, modern information portal from which the industry will benefit in the long term.

Successful start with more than 400 exhibitors from 41 nations

The broad and sophisticated concept immediately inspired more than 400 exhibitors from 41 nations, who will present their new board, card, and role-playing games to the visitors of SPIEL.digital.

SPIEL.digital not only offers the organizers new opportunities - In addition to many well-known game publishers, innumerable international exhibitors will have a presence at the event for the very first time

Many of the publishers registered for SPIEL.digital are first-time exhibitors. For them, the online games event is a low-cost alternative to SPIEL since there are no travel and accommodation costs. This year, the high level of participation from Latin America is striking. Numerous game publishers from Brazil are exhibiting for the first time. Many South American game designers are also presenting prototypes for the very first time.

We are particularly happy about the participation of a new exhibitor from West Africa. Nibcard Games is not only a young, ambitious Nigerian publisher that has published 24 games so far. They are doing real pioneering work in their home country, organizing an annual Tabletop Games Convention in addition to their publishing activities, and recently opened the first Tabletop Games Café in Nigeria.

A four-day, around-the-clock gaming spectacle awaits visitors

The starting gun will be fired on Thursday, October 22nd, 2020 at 10:00 am

In order to meet the requirements of exhibitors and visitors from all over the world, SPIEL.digital will be open from Thursday, October 22nd 2020, 10:00 am (UTC+2) until Sunday October 25th 2020, 23.59 (UTC+1), 24 hours a day for all four days.

Opening show on October 22nd, 2020 at 1:00 pm on the German live-stream channel of SPIEL.digital

The opening show of SPIEL.digital will be broadcast on the German live-stream channel on October 22nd, 2020 at 1:00 pm. It also integrates the numerous other international official live streams into the program, which will provide information about the new releases over the four days of the online convention in all world languages.

Free admission allowing more than 1,400 new game releases and world premieres to be tested and bought

With free admission, board game fans can discover more than 1,400 new releases and world premieres and try them out at virtual gaming tables. This is made possible by integrating online platforms such as Board Game Arena or Tabletopia, on which board game enthusiasts play as if they were at a real game table. Both platforms are providing free premium access for visitors to SPIEL.digital. If you want to buy your board game treasures right away, you can of course do so.

Go on a tour of discovery through 17 theme worlds or search specifically via the list of new releases

At SPIEL.digital, board game newbies can find inspiration in 17 specially created theme worlds where they will discover the latest game genres. Gaming experts will find their entry point via the list of new releases, from where they will be directed to the respective exhibitors' stands.

Extensive supporting program and official SPIEL.digital live streams in English, French, German, Portuguese, Italian, Spanish and Russian

To meet the needs of the expected rush of visitors from all over the world, there are informative and entertaining official SPIEL.digital live streams in English, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian and Russian. The game tables offered are also available in many languages, together with the game explainers.

The range of products on offer at the event is augmented by numerous campaigns and events by the exhibiting publishing companies and many media representatives, who can also present content at SPIEL.digital. There is also a lot on offer for families. For example, there are competitions and tournaments, question and answer sessions with well-known game designers, lectures and panels, as well as the EDUCATORS' DAY - aimed at educators who want to use board games in school or adult education, along with prize draws and much more.

Two hugely different 2020 game trends

- Together against the game:

The trend towards **cooperative games** is even stronger in 2020. Whether this is in so-called escape games such as BREAK IN (Schmidt Spiele), ESCAPE ROOM DAS SPIEL 2 (Noris Spiele), Kosmos Verlag's new releases from the escape game series "EXIT - Das Spiel", in card games such as BISS 20 (Drei Magier Spiele) or SILENCIO (Zoch Verlag), in family games such as GHOST ADVENTURE (Pegasus) or SWITCH and SIGNAL (Kosmos), in crime games such as MICROMACRO (Edition Spielwiese) or INSTACRIME - MUNFORD (Abacusspiele) - teamwork is always required when players try to reach their goal together.

- Puzzle fun in solo mode:

Solo games are also becoming more popular in these times of pandemic. These include the puzzle game TRILOS (HCM Kinzel), OBSTHAIN, a challenging solo laying puzzle (Board Game Circus) or the game series CANTALOOP (Lookout Games).

The awarded games 2020

This year's two co-operative main prize winners of the world's most important audience award for table-top games are also very much on trend. In 2020, the prize is celebrating its 30th anniversary and will be awarded in the categories "Best Family and Adult Game" and "Best Children's Game". This year the Kosmos Verlag has swept the board. The Stuttgart-based games publisher has won "Best Family and Adult Game" with DIE CREW and has also won "Best Children's Game" with ANDOR JUNIOR.

1st Place DEUTSCHER SPIELEPREIS 2020 (German Games Prize 2020)

The box of the cooperative card game **DIE CREW** is relatively small. But it packs a big punch! 3-5 players aged 10 and up take on the role of astronauts who go on missions to explore a new planet that has appeared at the edge of the solar system. To this end, the players can play out a story consisting of 50 missions. Little by little the level of difficulty increases. In this innovative trick gathering card game, it is not the highest number of tricks, but only the right tricks that will lead to victory.

DIE CREW, Publisher: Kosmos, Designer: Thomas Sing, 3-5 players as well as a 2-player version from 10 years upward.

1st Place DEUTSCHER KINDERSPIELEPREIS 2020 (German Children's Game Award 2020)

A cooperative game for 2-4 children from 7 years of age is **ANDOR JUNIOR**, which has won this year's GERMAN CHILDREN'S GAME AWARD. Players slip into the roles of magician, archer, warrior, and dwarf to face a series of challenges together. In ANDOR JUNIOR, no two games are the same, because each adventure offers different tasks for the heroes. This fantastic game, which is also great entertainment for adult players, won us over not least due to its detailed and atmospheric game material.

ANDOR JUNIOR, Publisher: Kosmos, Authors: Inka and Markus Brand, 2-4 players aged 7 and up.

ROOT wins innoSPIEL award as most innovative game of the year

Modern board games do not have much in common with the good old MONOPOLY or LUDO (MENSCH ÄRGERE DICH NICHT) anymore. The sector has developed rapidly in recent years. Games with constantly new mechanisms keep appearing. Many of them break with familiar patterns and take completely new paths. Once a year, innoSPIEL, an award for outstanding board game innovations, honors a particularly innovative board game.

This year, ROOT (Leder Games/Quality Beast) has won the day. The other nominees were PALM ISLAND (Kosmos Verlag) and TEAM3 (ABACUSSPIELE).

ROOT is a successful asymmetrical game that combines several game genres on one board with excellent equipment and design. It is not only a strategy game but also a majority game, Eurogame, trading and deck building game. ROOT as a game plays completely differently in each guise, but the game designer always interlocks all the mechanisms in a virtually perfect, artistic way.

In ROOT, each player has their own goal, their own rules, uses identical game material in their own special way and interacts with fellow players in different ways. The likes of these completely different playing styles of the individual factions have never been seen before on the gaming table, but nevertheless result in a harmonious whole and a perfect feel to the game.

ROOT - A GAME OF WOODLAND MIGHT AND RIGHT by Cole Wehrle, Leder Games/Quality Beast, 2-4 players, from 10 years, 60-90 minutes, approx. 50,- euros

During SPIEL.digital local games will also be played around the globe

To ensure that board game enthusiasts do not have to give up their haptic pleasure completely, SPIEL.digital will actively integrate board game shops, cafés, and larger game groups into the event via its "SPIEL Local" program. All around the globe, gaming enthusiasts will be able to visit smaller local events in Germany, Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Iran, Canada, Austria, Sweden, Switzerland, Spain and the USA during the games convention to play the new games releases. Visitors to SPIEL.digital will find an overview of all participants under the program item "SPIEL Local".

We hope that our presentation has given you a good overview of SPIEL.digital. Hermann Hutter, Chairman of the interest group "Die Spieleverlage e.V." (Association of Games Publishers) will now give you details regarding economic matters concerning the German games sector.

Bonn, 19.10.2020

Dominique and Maximilian Metzler
Press and Organization SPIEL.digital 2020
Friedhelm Merz Verlag - Event Organizer