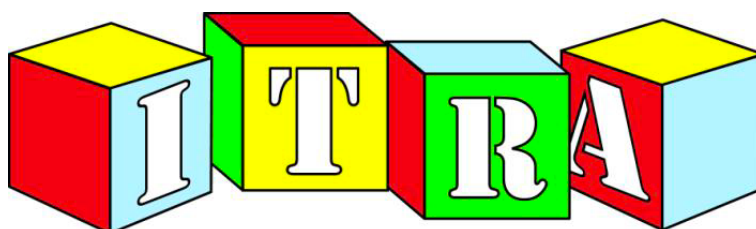


ITRA NEWSLETTER
International Toy Research Association
Vol. 28 No. 1 Spring/Summer 2024

<http://www.itratoyresearch.org>



**INTERNATIONAL TOY
RESEARCH ASSOCIATION**

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We encourage you to send the editors articles, news of exhibits, calls for papers, invitations for collaboration, and professional accomplishments for the next newsletter. Know of a new or forthcoming book that would be of interest to ITRA members? Send us that information too and we will consider it for review. Plans for the Fall/Winter issue are already underway, so the sooner we hear from you the better in order to ensure your ideas and contributions are included.

Contact the newsletter team at: itranwsltr@gmail.com

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



The change of seasons often finds me imagining what new adventures and opportunities might lie ahead. While that is certainly the case, this year the approaching solstice also finds me reflecting back and marveling at how dynamic our sense of time can be – at one moment racing by and at another standing still. Was it really less than a year ago that many of us were busily making travel arrangements, emailing at all hours to confirm details or report changes in plans, and putting the final touches on our presentations for the 9th ITRA World Conference? In some ways it seems as if it was only yesterday, while in others it seems like it was a very long time ago. On the flip side, our next ITRA conference is still two years away, yet feels like it could be here tomorrow.

Please mark your calendars and save the dates 5-7 August, 2026 when we will meet in Augsburg Germany for our 10th ITRA World Conference. I'm thrilled that Volker Mehringer will serve as the conference chair. He's already hard at work making arrangements. If you are interested in serving on the organizing or scientific committees or have ideas for a theme or session strands please let us know (gpenell@uindy.edu & volker.mehringer@phil.uni-augsburg.de). I'll be in Augsburg in September and welcome your input to get the conference planning wheels in motion.

Your ITRA board has also been hard at work this year. In her role as Editor-in-Chief, Luisa Magalhães has assembled a dynamic team and introduces them in this newsletter. On a personal note, there aren't enough words to express my appreciation to the board and Luisa especially, for their support the last two months. When I had to step back to devote time to care for my mother-in-law, Luisa stepped up. Without her and her leadership, this issue of the newsletter would have been much less developed. To those who submitted articles, reviews, and news – thank you. If you sent something that didn't get included or was time sensitive, please accept my apologies. Any omissions and the publication delay are on me.

In terms of ITRA's finances, the lengthy process of transferring the association's accounts from Greece is complete, in no small part due to Cleo Gougoulis's persistence and tireless efforts. In addition, all of the accounts from the last conference have been settled. I'm happy to report that ITRA is on solid financial grounds and is well positioned to go forward. We deeply appreciate the British Toy and Hobby Association's (BTHA) renewed support for the 2026 ITRA Prizes for Outstanding Toy Research. BTHA has supported ITRA from our beginning and we are proud to feature two of our BTHA colleagues in this issue's Member Profile. Congratulations to BTHA for their 80 years of advocacy and support of UK toy makers and their continued leadership on all things toy related now and into the future.

As a reminder, the ITRA prizes for Outstanding Toy Research are open to toy research completed between March 2023 and December 2025. To our budding student researchers from the undergraduate through master's levels, as well as our newly minted or soon to be doctoral colleagues, please remember that the junior ITRA prize is for you! Watch the ITRA website for updated information and deadlines early next year. In the meantime, feel free to contact me if you have questions. And, faculty advisors, please be sure to share this information with your students.

Speaking of the ITRA website, the board has been busy reviewing and updating it. For example, we revised the landing page to better capture who ITRA is and reflect the mission as stated in the amended ITRA constitution that was ratified at the 9th World Conference. We identified and uploaded missing programs from past ITRA meetings and other documents like the constitution. The board is considering other changes, including a possible update to the ITRA logo. We'd love to hear your thoughts on what works and what doesn't. What changes or additions would make the website, and even ITRA itself, more beneficial to you? This is your association and we need you.

For me, it has always been the people of ITRA that makes it such a special and supportive community. One of best aspects of serving as president is hearing about folks' projects and helping connect members to advance that work. Reading cutting edge toy research that transcend disciplinary and geographical boundaries especially when it comes out of innovative collaborations and new research networks whose seeds were planted at our last conference is truly exciting. It is what who we are and what we do – thank you.

Whether frozen in time or racing against it to the next deadline, I hope that the coming months bring you plenty of playtime, success on your projects, and that the power of playthings bring inspiration, comfort, and purpose.

Toyfully,
Greta

MEMBER PROFILE – Roland Earl and Rebecca Demming, British Toy and Hobby Association (BTHA).

In honor of the British Toy and Hobby Association's 80th Anniversary and steadfast support of ITRA the "Member Profile" section features two BTHA colleagues who have been most supportive of ITRA and ITRA's initiatives, along the years, **Roland Earl, BTHA Director** and **Rebecca Deeming, BTHA Communications & Events Manager**. BTHA is celebrating this milestone throughout 2024, starting with a new logo and branding (<https://www.btha.co.uk/btha-starts-its-80th-anniversary-with-a-new-look/>).



Established in 1944, the BTHA exists to promote best practice and excellence in all aspects of product design, toy safety, ethical manufacturing, environmental issues and responsible marketing and by so doing protect and promote the interests of their members. Today it has around 150 members ranging from international toy giants to small family-run businesses that together account for more than 80% of the UK toy market. Membership of the British Toy & Hobby Association shows the member's commitment to adhere to the BTHA Code of Practice under the umbrella of the Lion Mark which includes rules covering ethical and safe manufacture of toys, toy safety, a ban on counterfeit goods, an assurance to market responsibly, a commitment to improving sustainability and a desire to promote the value of all play through support of the Make Time 2 Play campaign. BTHA members are manufacturers committed to making good quality toys in a responsible way. The BTHA also administers the Toy Trust - the industry's charity and organizes a range of events including the London Toy Fair. For a short 2-minute video snapshot of their history and what BTHA does, see: <https://www.btha.co.uk/80th-anniversary/>



Roland Earl, based in London, UK, is currently a Director General at British Toy and Hobby Association. With a robust skill set that includes Marketing, Negotiation, Team Building, and more, Roland Earl contributes valuable insights to the toy industry and supports ITRA, since long ago.

Rebecca Deeming, based in London, UK, is currently a Communications and Events Manager at British Toy & Hobby Association, bringing experience from previous roles. She holds a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Journalism Studies from The University of Sheffield. With a robust skill set that includes InDesign, Final Cut Pro, Court Reporting, Broadcast Journalism, Print Journalism and more, Rebecca contributes valuable insights to the toy industry.



Volker Mehringer, University of Augsburg, interviewed Roland and Rebecca, about their favorite toys, work with BTHA and their perspectives on the toy industry and ITRA. The edited excerpts from the electronic interviews follow.

What is your most memorable or precious toy from your childhood? What about this toy makes it special to you?

RE - I have always been a big lover of animal figures, zoo animals in particular and I still have a passion for them now!

RD - I loved marbles, as growing up. As an only child I had a lot of solo play, and I loved using my imagination to create different families and my own town out of the marbles and all the different, pretty colours.

What was it about toys and games that got you interested in them as a career?

RE - I never stopped liking toys, even when I was supposed to be a grown up and to be honest, lots of people would be the same, I think. And many more would, once they joined the toy industry, enjoy the fun product design, the rapid changes, constant deadlines, and fun and happy community this industry is. I never want to leave. One day I will of course, and the very happy memories and great friendships will keep me thinking fondly of the sector always.

RD - I'm a big kid myself, so getting the opportunity to work in the world of toys and games was a no brainer. The creativity this industry has is wonderful to be around. I can honestly say that there hasn't been a day where I've woken up and dreaded going to work, which is testament to the BTHA and to the atmosphere of the toy industry in general.

Do you share your office space with any toys? If so, what are they, and what do you think they say about you?

RD - Our office is full of a diverse range of toys from our members including board games, historic plush toys, construction sets and arts and crafts. We have specific display cabinets in our meeting room area protecting some special vintage toys too. One of our members even visited the office to install a model figure made from magnets which really brings the office to life. Not to mention the personal collection of soft toys and dolls Roland has on his own desk! Our office exemplifies that there is something for everyone in the toy industry!

How did you get to BTHA?

RE - I worked in several jobs before putting my hand up for toys. In publishing, mainly with the daily pink business newspaper, and The Economist, too. They were great jobs but toys are quite unique and it's hard to leave the toy and games sector. Many stay forever for the love of it. I am glad I came and joined in.

RD - The BTHA has been the only proper job I've had as an adult. I joined the BTHA just a week after graduating university when I was 21, and nearly nine years later I'm still here! I've enjoyed working across both the communications and events side of the organisation which has kept the work interesting year after year, working on new projects and events.

What are, in your opinion, the most important things the BTHA is standing for or doing?

RE - Our team at the BTHA provides a vast range of services for our members and the industry. From organising the annual Toy Fair, which provides toy manufacturers a platform to showcase their products in front of thousands of retailers, licensors, and the media, to offering a vast range of guidance documents and training webinars and seminars on a range of issues including toy safety, environmental, data protection and trade. It's hard for me to pick the most important thing that we do!

What are the main projects you are currently working on?

RD - This year to help mark the BTHA's 80th anniversary, we have launched a new re-brand of the Association. We have a brand-new website (<http://www.btha.co.uk>), a re-vamped logo and have updated our marketing materials and we have created some new, fun play related characters to help best represent our brand.



Looking back, how has toy business changed, since you are working for the BTHA?

RE - The Association has changed massively in its 80-year history. We must keep up with the constant changes in industry practices, advocating government on behalf of our members. From a BTHA specific point of view, it has been great to see more women become involved in the BTHA on our board and our committees, steering the work of the Association, over the last 20 years.

What do you think about the intersections and relationships between toy researchers and people in the business of making and promoting toys, and what do you envision as ITRA's role in that regard?

RE - The toy industry is always continuing to improve in all aspects. Whether it's to make toys as safe, diverse, sustainable, and as fun as possible, it is an industry that is always looking to adapt and grow in whatever way it can with the consumers' best interests at heart. If there is a way that researchers can cooperate with manufacturers for the good of the industry, then that can only be a positive thing.

RD - The great thing about ITRA is how diverse the association is. Having now been to the last two ITRA conferences it has been great to meet so many researchers interested in distinct aspects of the toy and games industry, but what I love the most is how passionate everyone is about their particular interests and also for the industry in general. It's this passion that makes working in toys so much fun and rewarding.

INTRODUCING YOUR ITRA EDITORIAL BOARD FOR 2024-2026



Luisa Magalhães, ITRA Editor-in-Chief & Secretary

I am proud to introduce our new Editorial Board. Our task shall be collectively performed, resting on the expertise and dedication of the Team that accepted the challenge of joining me serving ITRA in plural ways. We aim at developing ITRA social media profiles, expanding the reach of ITRA research and news, through Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn. The website shall also be updated, relying on the skills of Paul Darvasi and ITRA Board member Brian McCarty. We will hopefully reinforce our connections with toy industry, as promised. Here is your Editorial Board:

Paul Darvasi, Gold Bug Interactive & OISE | University of Toronto (Canada)



Play and learning (aren't they the same thing?) are Paul's twin passions, and lie at the heart of everything he does. Paul teaches about games and play at the University of Toronto, where he is a founding member of the PlayLab. He makes games and playful experiences in his role as CEO and co-founder of Gold Bug Interactive, and brings players together as the Executive Director of the Serious Play Conference. While based in Canada, Paul has had the pleasure to work with organizations around the world, including UNESCO, the US Department of Education, and diverse NGOs and cultural institutions. Paul mobilizes knowledge about the power of games, play and learning with speaking, writing, and research, and is a relentless media literacy crusader. His work has been featured on PBS, NPR, CBC, the Huffington Post, and Polygon, among others. When all is said and done, Paul says that he will always be that kid in the basement, sifting through a box of LEGOs and building a project one piece at a time.

Rebecca Horrace, Playful Insights Consulting (USA)



Rebecca has been involved in children's education, from brick-and-mortar classrooms to running a homeschool cooperative program and even founding and leading a 4-H club for military youth. She is an educational expert in the areas of child development, child-centered learning, children's play, and developmentally appropriate best practices. Rebecca founded Playful Insights Consulting to bridge the gap between play and education across toys, content, media, and curricula using UX research, child-development knowledge, and childhood play expertise. Her expertise and passion have earned her title of Play Ambassador and Expert Contributor for the Genius of Play, a non-profit website devoted to play advocacy. It is Rebecca's passion to reignite the dwindling spark between play and education along her career journey.

Vicki Thomas, CEO Vicki Thomas Associates (United Kingdom)



Vicki is playing to her strengths these days: making, traveling, researching, writing and sharing her experiences and view of the world. She considers play as a creative and social process that is not just for children. Toys and playthings are for everyone. She runs a design consultancy and continues to lead a Sustainable Futures Research Centre at the University of Northampton.

Vicki says, "I am looking forward to a playful time, as I join other ITRA members on the new editorial board."

Lisa Murphy, Ooey Gooley, Inc. (USA)



Lisa Murphy has been involved in early childhood education for over 35 years. She is the founder and CEO of the educational consulting company, Ooey Gooley, Inc. In 2013 she received a Masters in Early Childhood Education from Champlain College in Vermont, in 2018 she received an award for Play Advocacy, in 2020 her book, *Lisa Murphy On... Being Child Centered*, was nominated for “Best in Education” by Midwest Book Awards. In 2022 she was awarded the “Doctor of Play” award by the U.S. affiliate of the International Play Association and in 2024 she began working on her second master’s degree, this time in Children’s Literature from Hollins University in Virginia. Lisa presents hundreds of workshops a year and is forever grateful to know that her presentations have been called: humorous, energetic, content-rich and inspiring. She currently resides in Central Florida where she continues to be an outspoken advocate committed to protecting a child’s right to play.

Markus Wiemker, Game Design scholar and professor (Germany)



Markus studied Sociology, Philosophy, and Psychology with a focus on Media and Cultural Studies at the University of Technology RWTH Aachen in Germany. He has been teaching Game Design and Game Studies at various schools and universities in Germany, Austria, and Singapore. He has also developed Game Design curricula for institutions in Europe, Southeast Asia, and West Africa.

BOOK REVIEWS

Book Reviews: *Un monde de jeux Histoire et mécaniques de jeux de société, du jeu royal d’Ur au Monopoly (A world of games History and mechanics of board games, from the royal game of Ur to Monopoly).*

A history of board gaming: 40 games that changed everything

Reviewed by: Gilles Brougère, Professor Emeritus Université Sorbonne Paris Nord (France)

Oriol Comas I Coma & Ulrich Schläder (2021) *Un monde de jeux Histoire et mécaniques de jeux de société, du jeu royal d’Ur au Monopoly (A world of games History and mechanics of board games, from the royal game of Ur to Monopoly)*. Ynnis Editions. 160 pp; ISBN# 978-2-37697-5 (29€).

<https://ynnis-editions.fr/produit/un-monde-de-jeux-histoire-et-mecaniques-de-jeux-de-societe-du-jeu-royal-dur-au-monopoly/>

[There is also a Spanish (Castilian) edition: *Un mundo de juegos* and a Catalan one: *Un mon de Jocs*]

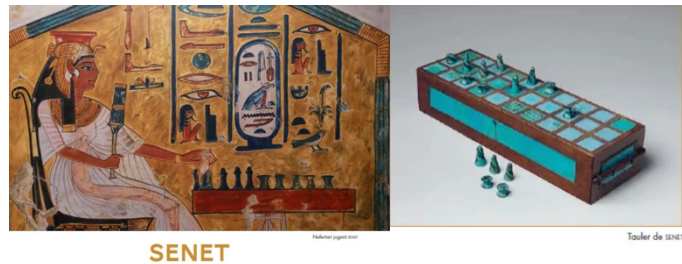


Hélène Delforge and Géraldine Volders (2022) *Une histoire du jeu de société : 40 jeux qui ont tout changé (A history of board gaming: 40 games that changed everything)*. Paris, 404 éditions, 208 pp., ISBN: 979-1-0324-0531-4 (29,95 €) or Babelio. 216 pp.; EAN: 9791032405314. <https://www.lisez.com/livre-cartonne/une-histoire-du-jeu-de-societe-40-jeux-qui-ont-tout-change-beau-livre/9791032405314> or <https://www.babelio.com/livres/Delforge-Une-histoire-du-jeu-de-societe--40-jeux-qui-ont-t/1470221>

These two books participate to the growing interest in board games that preceded the Covid19 health crisis, even if the latter led to the spotlight being turned on this ideal domestic leisure activity in the event of confinement and on the growth in sales. Indeed, the board game (the English term only partially translates the French term 'jeu de société' used in these two books, which also includes games that do not use a board—the fact remains that these two books do not go very far beyond the board game) is experiencing significant growth, which testifies to its ability to do more than resist video games, but rather to make progress too, albeit less spectacularly. This growth is reflected

in increased sales and even more new games, the use of crowdfunding with spectacular successes in this area, but also by an increasingly recognised place within cultural activities, as evidenced by these two books.

Although these are not scientific works, they are submitted by journalists, players, creators in the games industry, and collectors, with each author bearing several of these labels. The research presented is not always rigorous, and references are often conspicuous by their absence. It's more like one of those beautiful books you give as a Christmas gift, where the often, high-quality photographs that accompany the texts are essential.



Apart from their commercial value in providing a gift book that you leaf through more than you read, they also highlight the material dimension of the board game. In the past (think of the Egyptian *Sennet* or the *Royal Game of Ur*) and today (see *HeroQuest* or *Carcassonne*), board games are objects whose materiality is essential both for their playability and for the symbolic attachment they can engender. Contemporary research (such as that by Melissa Rogerson, <https://study.unimelb.edu.au/student-life/inside-melbourne/the-value-of-board-games>) has shown this link between the player and the materiality. What characterizes board games is the relationship between actions and media, and the history of games reflects developments both in the actions proposed to players and in the materials that make these actions possible.

The importance of board games is reflected in the long-standing interest in games of the past, which is the focus of book. The first part presents three board games (or types of games) considered to be the benchmarks par excellence in the field: go, chess and the Mancala family. These games represent play continents in terms of their spread and interest generated (books and diverse social practices). They are heritage games, as evidenced by their contemporary re-editions and by the variants, all mentioned by the author.

The second part presents old games from different eras and cultures, as well as modern derivatives that are more or less faithful to the originals. While they do not reflect the same historical continuity as the first three, they do reveal mechanics that have become essential in later games. Some are abstract, others refer to cultural themes such as hunting. Some are well-known, such as *Snakes and Ladders*, while others are little-known, such as *Rithmomachia*, a game that involved complex arithmetic calculations. It's a journey through the human ingenuity demonstrated by this diversity of games.

The third part looks at more recent games whose publisher and/or author are known, and which are part of a more contemporary logic of novelty. The title might give the impression that these games precede *Monopoly*, which is not the case. Rather, like *Monopoly*, they are classics of the 20th century, as *Scrabble*, *Mastermind* or *Cluedo*.

This part can be seen as a transition to the second book, which is concerned only with games made after 1979 and refers to the new cultures of contemporary board games, which have been, no doubt awkwardly, called as modern board games and which refer to cultural transformations. This date, certainly arbitrary, is that of the first *Spiel des Jahres* (Game of the Year) awarded by a specialist jury in Essen, Germany, where a fair dedicated to board games has been held from 1983 onwards. From 1988, an International Board Game Festival has been held in Cannes, in the



same venue as the Film Festival—quite a programme, and the equivalent of the Palme d'Or, the prize for the best game of the year, called *As d'Or* (Golden Ace). The change thus refers to the increasingly important place given to the game designer, who is seen as an author in his or her own right. This is reflected in the development of events focusing on board games, and in the fact that prizes are awarded to game designers. In this way, we can see board games coming closer to the logic at work for other creative products such as cinema and its festivals, or literature and its prizes.



The second book is devoted to this new gaming culture and its products, and is therefore more original in that it provides access to lesser-known information. The first book is part of a tradition, that of works presenting the wealth of heritage games. The second shows us how the board game has been profoundly renewed, even if this sometimes only concerns a public of passionate. However, some of these games have enjoyed real popular success. What's interesting about this book is that it looks at games through the eyes of their creators. Whether in interviews conducted by the authors for this book or given to websites or newspapers, the authors are given the floor to understand the creative process: what was the idea behind the game, how was it developed, what difficulties did the people behind the project have to overcome, how was the theme chosen if at all? Some of them met with a company who took the project into its industrial and commercial dimension, while others had to set up their own company, which they usually sold once it was a success. The result is that the stories and authors are as different as the games themselves.

In 1995, *Catan* was published, often regarded as the benchmark for modern board games. Its author, Klaus Teuber, created it for his family to play, even though he had already created some award-winning games. The years that followed saw an explosion in the creation of new games. And it's always the story of one or more authors meeting the process of publishing. In fact, what characterizes these games are that they are published, and that they require work in terms of design, production, launch and marketing, without which the game could not exist. Not only does playing involve manipulating objects (cards, pieces, aprons, tokens, etc.), but these objects, together with an original set of instructions, known as the rules of the game, presuppose that you have first bought, hired or borrowed (or even stolen) the game box. These are copyrighted games that cannot be copied. Of course, as soon as a game is successful, copies are made, but legal action can be taken with varying degrees of success depending on how slavish the copy is. This is where the modern board game comes close to the toy, through the importance of a material dimension behind which there are creators, those whom the book by Hélène Delforge and Géraldine Volders highlights in a very interesting way.

For its part, Oriol Comas i Coma's book reminds us that the materiality that translates rules into concrete actions is constitutive of the board game, whether the authors are unknown and disappear behind a process of incessant transformation that stems from the players who, at a different time and in a different culture, take hold of a game. It was undoubtedly with the industrialization of games at the end of the 19th century that games were no longer the product of a cultural process, but of a company that owned them. This led to the emergence of competition and a proliferation of games, often with very limited innovations (a new theme, a few extra squares in the game of goose), sometimes radical, as shown by the recent history of the board games.

NETWORKING

Priyanka Narvekar, candidate in the MSc in Global Strategy and Innovation Management program at The University of Leeds, is looking for participants involved in the innovation process for toy design to interview for her master's thesis focused on the innovation process for toys, specifically around the impact of including children in the development of inclusive toys. Contact her at: p.narvekar88@gmail.com

The 19th Annual Young Inventor Challenge (YIC), sponsored by People of Play, for young toy and game designers between the ages of 6-18 years will open registration this summer. The competition provides young designers from around the world with an opportunity to create an original play product and pitch it to professional toy and game inventors and a chance to win big prizes during the Chicago Toy & Game Fair in November, 2024. Last year, 78 unique YIC projects were submitted for judging in the virtual showcase and reviewed online by over 50 professional inventors and executives from many well-known companies. Explore [photos](#) of 2023 winners and [past published toys and games](#). Caregivers, teachers, and other adults are encouraged to check out the resources and rules at www.younginventorchallenge.com for inspiration and registration notification sign-ups.

People of Play is also accepting nominations for the **2024 Toy & Game International Excellence (TAGIE) Awards** to honor the best and brightest innovators, designers, retailers, suppliers, PR and marketers in the global toy and game industry. Nominations are due 2 August, 2024 at: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfhzyWobB30ZDA46svnkhW7sqC31-vV93yyI6KyWdg7YtCNyg/viewform?pli=1>

Toy & Play Sustainability Research Hub – Vicki Thomas, Research Fellow for Sustainable Futures at The University of Northampton in the UK, is in the process of setting up a Toy & Play Sustainability Research Hub. The need for this type of center grew out of the collaborative research work academics done over two decades with toy and play companies (John Crane /Big Jig), charities (Sue Ryder/UNICEF) and toy organizations (British Toy & Hobby Association/The Good Toy Guide). Based on visits to trade shows, discussions with toy companies, licensors, retail buyers and many involved in education, it is clear that it is vital that toys become – recyclable, greener, more sustainable, regenerative. For this to happen The Toy **World** - not just the industry - needs take a lead. Moreover, international collaboration is required. Systems of manufacture and waste collection need to be re-thought across the globe and information has to be shared, so that laws can be changed. Research seems to indicate that industries cannot work in silos. For example, soft toy producers have to work with the textile industry, electronic educational gadgets need to be recycled with domestic appliances. A hub is needed, so that information can be shared and acted on. Individual organizations might be competitors and they will benefit from working together and not duplicating research.

At this point the hub has met twice (18 March, 22 April) and held a virtual and in-person summit 20-21 May. From these meetings emerged the idea a neutral (common play) ground on how we could work together and across industries, countries, and legal systems to make a difference globally. There was also an urgency on instigating projects that could attract commercial and /or government grant funds.

I'd like ITRA and its members to play their part. The educational voice is less well represented, although there are academics at the University working on outdoor play and teaching teachers in China about play in early years education. Wastebusters are “members” working with schools to recycle toys, but their work is almost only a pilot for what needs/could be done. In short, if you want to have a voice and be involved then just let me know. So far, the only commitment is going on a mailing list and send me paragraph introducing yourself and giving your priorities for the hub. Then I'll send you an invite to the next meeting - tentatively monthly - and an update.

For further information contact: Vicki Thomas at vicki@vickithomasassociates.com
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/vicki-thomas-35465826>

MEMBER'S FORUM

ARGENTINA

Daniela Pelegrinelli (2023) *Prodigiosa Marilú: Historia de una muñeca de moda 1932-1961* (*Prodigiosa Marilú: History of a fashion doll 1932-1961*). Ampersand. ISBN: 9786316558039. Spanish only. 422 pp.



BELGIUM

Jean-Pierre Rossie (2023) “Masks and Masquerades in Amazigh Morocco”. In Luisa Magalhães and Cândido Oliveira Martins (eds). *Masks and Human Conditions. Disruptive Meanings and Cultural Challenges*. Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 167-188. A power point with 63 slides based on this chapter is available at: https://www.academia.edu/95164348/PowerPoint_Masks_and_Masquerades_in_Amazigh_Morocco



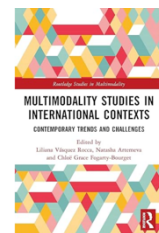
“Children’s Spinning Tops in North Africa and the Sahara.” In Claudia Lambrugo (ed.). *A Turning World: A Multidisciplinary Approach to the Spinning Top and other Toys and Games*. Milano University Press, Università degli Studi Milano, pp. 361-381.

“Espacios y grupos de juego en la ciudad de Tiznit en Marruecos” and “Espaces et groupes de jeu dans la ville de Tiznit au Maroc.” *Crítica Urbana. Revista de Estudios Urbanos y Territoriales*, Vol. 6, núm. 30, Ciudades, infancias y juegos. A Coruña: Crítica Urbana, pp. 26-29. https://criticaurbana.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/CU30_Rossie_FR.pdf

“An Anthropological Approach to Intercultural Early Childhood Education.” Syllabus for Play, Education, Toys, and Languages (PETaL): An International Master’s Programme for the Education of 21st Century Early Childhood Teachers, Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees, Marmara University, Istanbul, Turkey. Braga: Centre for Philosophical and Humanistic Studies, Faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences, Catholic University of Portugal, 23 p. – Available on <https://www.academia.edu/112398367>

BRAZIL

Danielle Barbosa Lins de Almeida (2024). Once upon a time: Toy stories, affordances, and the playing activity. In Rocca, L.V., Artemeva, N. & Fogarty-Bourget, C. (Eds). *Multimodality Studies in International Contexts: Contemporary Trends and Challenges*. New York: Routledge. ISBN 9781032434872



CANADA

Here we grow again! Congratulations to **Emilie St-Hilaire** who successfully defended her PhD dissertation at Concordia University in Montreal, Canada on 28 February, 2024. Her dissertation is entitled *Facets of the Reborn Doll Phenomenon: Non-reproductive Motherhood, Synthetic Relationships, Performance, Community, and Self-care*.

Emilie's dissertation begins by addressing some basic questions about the hyper-realistic reborn dolls collected by thousands of women around the world, such as: How are reborns made? Who buys them? What are typical reactions to the dolls? And, beyond these initial questions, she considers the purpose and potential of these dolls as a hobby, and also as something more than a hobby. By delving into the culture surrounding not just reborn dolls but the whole concept of babies and reproduction Emilie situates reborns in relation to motherhood. Through the theoretical lens of the 'good life' (as described in Lauren Berlant's *Cruel Optimism*) she describes how reborns emerge from pronatalist rêverie but also subvert reproductive optimism by offering an alternative to heteronormative reproduction. From there, Emilie develops the concept of synthetic relationships to examine how reborn dolls (and also sex dolls) provide fulfilling relationships that produce real emotions. These relationships provide outlets for the rehearsal of power significant in the production of self. The final chapter investigates the therapeutic elements of reborn dolls. Membership in a doll enthusiast community provides a sense of belonging for this oftentimes alienating interest. Big questions about the future of synthetic relationships (with dolls and also with artificial intelligences) are prompted by this investigation. Reborn dolls are queer, fantastical, beloved by collectors from a range of economic, political and cultural backgrounds. Understanding these fascinating objects tells us about a niche hobby grounded in physical touch that is surging in popularity in the midst of the ever-ephemeral and intangible digital age.

Requests for copies of Dr. St-Hilaire's thesis can be made via: <https://spectrum.library.concordia.ca/id/eprint/993545/>

FINLAND

Congratulations to two-time doctoral candidate **Dr. Katriina Heljakka** on her successful doctoral defense on March 2nd, 2024, at the University of Turku! Kati earned her first Doctorate in Arts from Aalto University in 2013. *How play moves us: Toys, technologies, and mobility in a digital world*. Turun Yliopisto University of Turku: <https://www.utupub.fi/handle/10024/176418>

The thesis deals with the technologization, digitalization, and connectedness of play between 2010–2020. The purpose of the thesis is to increase the understanding of what the digital leap of play, means in terms of mobilizing the players physically, cognitively, and emotionally. The research explores forms of contemporary play, playthings, and players in a time when digitalization and connectedness have extended to various tools and realms of play—including play activities related to toys, mobile technologies, digital cameras, smartphones, digital toys, social media, and social robotics. The thesis presents a range of empirical studies interested in the mobilization tendencies of current digital devices, toys, and connected media cultures that inform and inspire contemporary play and players of different ages as a form of digital culture that unites players and generations.

The thesis's scholarly contribution is to generate new play knowledge. The publications included in the thesis highlight various play patterns and practices among children of preschool age, adults, and seniors who engage in digital play through the use of digital devices or digital toys, either solitarily or socially, as part of intergenerational play. The findings of the thesis illustrate how changes in the ecosystem of play are linked to the opportunities for players to engage in creative play activities, their documentation, and their social sharing. The connections of evolving digital technology to play are diverse; mobile devices with and without screens are used as an extension of play to enrich the experiences and outcomes of play and to empower the players by allowing them to showcase their imagination, creativity, and ability to connect with peers and other player communities.

The thesis concludes that contemporary technology embodied in digital devices and Internet-connected playthings allow for the expansion of play into human and toy interactions that non-technological playthings would not support. Technological development thus expands the historical, digital-material, and narrative dimensions of play.

GREECE

Cleo Gougoulis (2024, March 9th) presented at the Anthropology of Play Workshop held at the Royal Anthropological Institute in London. Cleo's presentation outlined possible publication and networking with other Associations studying play and toys such as TASP and ITRA.

HONG KONG - CHINA

Remi Leclerc (2024). *Design matters to play matters to design*. <https://www.museumofplay.org/blog/design-matters-to-play-matters-to-design/>

NETHERLANDS

Jeffrey Goldstein (2024). Brian Sutton-Smith. Notes and snapshots. In Michael M. Patte, Fraser Brown, and Anna Beresin (Eds.). *Brian Sutton-Smith Playful Scholar: A Centennial Celebration, Play & Culture Studies. Volume 17*. Rowman & Littlefield. <https://rowman.com/ISBN/9780761874027/Brian-Sutton-Smith-Playful-Scholar-A-Centennial-Celebration-Volume-17>

USA

Anne Boyd presented "A Nation of Confederacies: Physical Representations of the Lost Cause Mythology from World War II Through Present Day" based on her dissertation research at the Spring Academy on American History, Culture & Politics Conference (18-22 March, 2024) in Heidelberg Germany (https://www.hca.uni-heidelberg.de/spring/index_en.html).

Freyja Hartzell traveled to Manchester, UK in April to collaborate with a group of interdisciplinary scholars on an edited volume exploring the material culture of disability. Freyja's chapter focuses on dolls and disability. She is also collaborating with Ozlem Çankaya, Associate Professor at MacEwan University in Canada, on a co-authored article combining their expertise in design history and child development. Freyja's other major project over the past 9 months is preparation for a forthcoming exhibit, *Dollatry: Playing with Likeness*, that will open in New York next year and will coincide with Toy Fair, 2025. As part of the exhibition development, she has been working with students to collect and record "doll stories" told by doll artists, collectors, and entrepreneurs. Freyja says that she is reminded every day what a rich and dynamic community the toy world is!

Rebecca Horrace (in press). Unpacking Bluey: The Playful World of Media Discourses and Literacies. In K. Dunlap (Eds). *Bluey: The psychgeist of popular cuture: Bluey*. ETC Press.



Isabel Prochner (2024). *Designing for Sex and Gender Equity*. Routledge. ISBN 9781032283647. Part of the Design Research for Change Series. <https://www.routledge.com/Designing-for-Sex-and-Gender-Equity/Prochner/p/book/9781032283647>

Bhoomi Thakore (2024, March 21). *Virtual Toys: The Mediatization of Play on YouTube*. Paper presented at The Association for the Study of Play (TASP) Conference held at The Strong National Museum of Play in Rochester, NY.

Follow us on Facebook to get the most up-to-date toy news,
member highlights, conference and CfP announcements.

<https://www.facebook.com/itra2018>



SPECIAL GUEST FEATURE

REPORT ON THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF PLAY WORKSHOP

On 9 March 2024 the Anthro-Play group hosted a hybrid workshop convened by anthropologist Kellynn Wee at the Royal Anthropological Institute in London featuring work in progress on the anthropology of play and games. Presentations included:

“Creating safe spaces in mobile games during the pandemic and how it changed the rules of social interaction in strategy games and MMORPGs” by Ana Maria Luca discussed a mobile app game called Emperors and Beauties and how it became a social space for Chinese migrants during the pandemic as the “noobs” took over from the serious gamers.

Agnessa Spanneliis (University of Edinburgh) examined how games are used in policy making and their role as a boundary object in the engagement between citizens and policy makers in her a paper, “Exploring system’s complexity: A case of policy co-development for sustainable transportation in a national park.”

Inna Yaneva-Toraman’s presentation, “Anthropological contributions to multidisciplinary research through game design and the power of play,” focused on how co-creating games can be used as forms of community engagement around topics such as foodways, climate change, and marine plastics. This included a fascinating coconut hunt game she organized in Vietnam where coconuts were released at sea for participants to track and find. Inna has also worked in the past on hand made toys during a research project for the museum of Papua New Guinea.

Based on her research of play cultures in tabletop role playing games in Singapore, Kellynn Wee (University College London) proposed thinking about play as latent, seeping and as negative space in in her presentation “Atmospheres of Play: Play Cultures in Collaborative Storytelling Games” by drawing on the notion of atmospheres of play and reflecting players’ occupation and exploration of ambivalence and uncertainty.

Hazel Andrews’ (Liverpool John Moores University) paper, “Mordaith in Mallorca: Playing with Toy Tourism” took a phenomenological approach to explore touristic and toy tourism practices based on her fascinating range of experiences bringing a doll named Mordaith on holiday—including gaining free entry to a club!

In “Play, Fun, and Fear in Disaster Preparedness” Chika Watanabe (University of Manchester) discussed how disaster preparedness educators in Japan and Chile use playful and fun methods to teach children and their families how to prepare for a potential future disaster. By using playful methods and keeping fear at bay, they strive to make preparedness part of everyday life.

Giles Bunch’s presentation “Simulation, games, and human spaceflight: Ethnographic Encounters with European Space Agency Flight Controller Training” focused on simulations and games played during flight controllers’ training, including spaghetti towers, “interlab” simulations and completing electrical circuits through verbal communication. Giles also addressed issues arising from gamification processes by asking the question: What happens when the game isn’t fun — when it’s waged labor?

Cleo Gougoulis (University of Patras) briefly outlined possibilities for publications and networking with other Associations studying play and toys such as TASP and ITRA.

The group’s plans for the near future include presenting their work in two special panels on “Methodologies and Theories for an Anthropology of Fun and Play” and on “Dark Fun” at the European Association of Social Anthropologists conference in July. They are also organizing a conference on *The Anthropology of Play: Encounters and Emergences* from 11-12 July 2024 at the Institute of Advanced Studies, Common Ground (G11, South Wing) – University College London).

For more information contact the organizers at: ANTHRO-PLAY@JISCMail.AC.UK

SPECIAL FEATURE

LUDUS PRO PATRIA: WAR TOYS AND NATIONALIST IDEAS IN THE EARLY DECADES OF THE 20TH CENTURY IN GREECE

By Kristallia Markakai, Democritus University of Thrace (Greece)

Greece saw a nationalist outbreak during the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century that continued until the First World War. This outbreak was the outcome of a chronic irredentist tendency of the Greek state to acquire parts of Western Anatolia, following the national revolution of 1821 and its subsequent formation. The rise of nationalism in that aforementioned era was expressed through toys, games, educational methods, the state's very own nationalist propaganda, and the elite's interests in investing in war as an expanding opportunity. Following other European countries' examples, these new formative doctrines emphasized stimulating and cultivating the youth's nationalist reflexes through playing with a number of children's toys of that age.

Toy soldiers mainly made of lead, wooden swords, toy guns, miniature warships and airplanes became an inseparable part of a child's or a teenager's daily routine, combining their need for stimulation through acting, the need for imitating the adults and the state's nationalist narrative to create the perfect young body and spirit of the future soldier. The vast majority of those kids were poor, while the bourgeois offspring enjoyed them aplenty in their living rooms based mainly in Athens or Thessaloniki. To assure this method's spread over the majority of the children's population, the elite decided to donate toys through charity, while school regulations and teachers encouraged violent games such as stone wars throughout the country. Magazines, schoolbooks, Greek nationalist literature and meetings with war veterans also helped boost the indoctrination by presenting war as an everyday natural event that was perceived as a game. Following the successes of the Balkan Wars and the subsequent territorial gains, the Greek state maximized the "efficiency" of those techniques by increasing the production of such toys, while also organizing collective gymnastics as part of the school's curriculum. The purpose of those events alongside physical education, was for the child to develop the physical prowess of a soldier, while also having the mental capacity of a ruthless nationalist killing machine. The "love for the homeland" became the rhetoric of war and playing it became its physical embodiment.*



The atrocity that came to be known as the First World War, and its disastrous consequences, sparked wide anti-war and anti-militarist sentiments among the societies that counted millions of deaths, injuries and hate. During the inter-war period, anti-polemic ideas slowly posed a barrier to the production of war toys, thus connecting playing with other aspects of life, such as health and imagination. Many schools and other institutions in Greece followed this tendency in order to create social ideas that didn't embrace militarist and nationalist sentiments. Hatred was deemed to be a thing of the past during those times as new progressive ideas gradually covered more ground. Discussion of nationalist ideas faded from children's literature as did promotions of militarist toys as the most entertaining and educational tools for children and adolescents. It seemed that the world had no need for war as evidenced by most of the pamphlets, books, school doctrines and toys of that time.

Whatever the historical period may be, more attention is needed on the fundamental connection between joyful toys and educational indoctrination. How might these connections give form to a society at that time and even defining the era itself as part of the sociopolitical conditions that apply to it. Nothing is empty in the context of historical developments and every new approach to sociopolitical organization, every new item of comfort and joy, every technological development should be seen as a consequential cause of a population's shifts on ideas and traditions -- especially when these ideas and traditions aim to send the future generation to war for the "benefit of the country" and butcher them, exploiting their needs for stimulation, joy and knowledge.

*For more on this topic see: Bonbons and Bayonets: Mixed Messages of Childhood in the Late Ottoman Empire and the Early Turkish Republic," in *Childhood in the Late Ottoman Empire and After*, ed. Benjamin C. Fortna (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 173–88. Available in JStor at: <https://bit.ly/3XqacGq>

CALLS FOR PAPERS

24 November, 2024 Submission Deadline (Early Proposal Deadline for reduced registration fee 24 July)

19th International Conference on Design Principles and Practices

Conference Theme: Thinking, Learning, Doing: Plural Ways of Design

Conference Dates: 24-27 February 2025

Lasalle College of the Arts, Singapore and Online

For more information see: <https://designprinciplesandpractices.com/2025-conference/call-for-papers>

30 June, 2024 Submission Deadline

Replay: The Polish Journal of Game Studies

Special Issue: Cozy Games and Coziness in Digital Games

Editors: Marta Tymińska and Agata Waszkiewicz.

Cozy games (Cook, 2018; Waszkiewicz & Bakun, 2020) and games featuring elements of coziness are an interesting object of research not only due to their unique aesthetic, but also because of their political and activistic potential.

Full Call at: <https://www.czasopisma.uni.lodz.pl/Replay/cfp>

Papers written in either Polish or English should be submitted to replay@uni.lodz.pl.

31 July, 2024 Submission Deadline

The 3rd International Academic Conference of Yoobee College of Creative Innovation

Auckland, New Zealand

Conference Dates 22 – 24 January 2025

For more information see: <https://call-for-papers.sas.upenn.edu/cfp/2024/02/10/cfp-call-for-papers-deconstructing-realities-the-3rd-international-academic>

30 August, 2024 Submission Deadline

Toyetic Television: A Companion

Editor: Sophia Staite

Intended for Peter Lang's Genre Fiction and Film Companions series, this volume turns a critical eye to the genre of toyetic television and its many transmedia intertexts, exploring the significance and resonance these texts hold for children, adults, and communities. For more information and submission details see: <https://call-for-papers.sas.upenn.edu/cfp/2024/05/29/call-for-chapters-for-toyetic-television-a-companion>

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

24-28 June Design Research Society DRS conference, Boston, Massachusetts USA featuring a special track on Play Design. <https://www.drs2024.org/theme-tracks/#27>

27-28 June 2024 Games for Change Festival New York, NY USA

With the theme "The 2030 Marker: A Catalyst for Global Change," the festival aims to ignite community engagement and drive social change by demonstrating how games break down barriers to connect people across generations and around the globe.

<https://festival.gamesforchange.org/>

28-30 June, 2024 Games & Literature: On the Literaricity, Research, Collection and Archiving of Computer Games Marbach am Neckar, Germany

International interdisciplinary conference of the Marbach Weimar Wolfenbüttel Research Association (MWW) at the German Literature Archive Marbach (DLA). For registration please email: forschung@dla-marbach.de

1-5 July, 2024 DiGRA 2024: Playgrounds

Guadalajara, Mexico

While symbolizing openness, structured freedom, and creativity, playgrounds are not only places of romantic unhindered joy. Digital and analogue playgrounds are places that urge us to ask questions related to their creation, management, and accessibility, for instance. Nurturing the ongoing discussion between different generations using digital playgrounds from the past 40 years is essential to understanding the development of analogue and digital



games for the decades to come. In this year's edition of the DiGRA conference, we seek inspiration and theoretical support from the study and form of playgrounds to look into digital play through the concept of playgrounds and to explore potential advances for games research from the insights of educators, designers, and childhood researchers to better understand what facilitates open-ended play?

<https://digraconference2024.org/>

3-5 July Playful Learning conference from the Playful Learning Association in the UK

<https://playfullearningassoc.co.uk>

4 July, 2024 Board Game Academics Conference

Morristown, New Jersey USA

The conference seeks to combine research and gaming in novel ways that benefit academics and gaming by critically examine the role of gaming across society, education, and beyond. We are mainly focused on the historical, cultural, and systemic exploration of games as they relate to themes of race, gender, nationality, (de)coloniality, ability, sexuality, and class. <https://boardgameacademics.com/register/>

23-26, July, 2024 The 18th European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA) Biennial Conference (EASA2024)

Theme: Doing and Undoing with Anthropology

University of Barcelona, Barcelona Spain

The contemporary moment has accelerated the pace at which societies and ecologies are undone. Surrounded by multiple emergencies and apparent threats requires adapting and undoing forms of being to rethink how other ways of living can be 'done' together. Science is called upon to respond to these emergencies and new ways of un/doing by shaping a future framed as either apocalypse or redemption. At the center of the conference theme is examination of questions like What would "undoing" anthropology imply? How can we reimagine and reconfigure what it means to do anthropology today? How can we find new ways of doing and undoing in the broadest possible sense? There will be two panels directly related to the topics of play and fun:

Methodologies and Theories for an Anthropology of Fun and Play that will explore the challenges and possibilities for doing and undoing an anthropology of fun and play.

Dark Fun? Play in Unexpected Places explores the potentials and pitfalls of attending to fun in unlikely places framed around the question of How we methodologically and theoretically respond to fun and playfulness when they emerge in situations and contexts that are not usually expected or supposed to be fun?

The conference will be held via **dual modes providing** delegates have the option to attend in-person (f2f) (the larger portion of the event) and/or online (a separate day taking place on 18 July 2024).

<https://easaonline.org/conferences/easa2024/info>

12-14 August, 2024 Serious Play Conference

University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM), Toronto Canada

Explore how the power of play, games and gamification are transforming education, training, and knowledge mobilization. Experience interactive sessions, compelling speakers, and cutting-edge research. This is where learning and innovation come to play. For more information see: <https://seriousplayconf.com/>

19-21 August, 2024 Replaying Japan: The 12th International Japan Game Studies Conference

Theme: Preservation, Innovation and New Directions in Japanese Game Studies

University of Buffalo, SUNY Buffalo, NY USA

This conference brings together a wide range of researchers and creators from around the globe to present their work on topics related to the theme of preservation, innovation and new directions in Japanese Game Studies in a post-Covid world. For more information see: <https://replaying.jp/>

21-22 August, 2024 Save the Games: A Digital Preservation Symposium

The Strong National Museum of Play Rochester, NY USA

This symposium is meant to advance the field of video game preservation. Featuring information sessions, networking opportunities, and tours of museum collections, this gathering will bring together international leaders in video game preservation. The purpose of the symposium is not only to share knowledge but also to cultivate relationships among key contributors in game preservation in order to further the collective work of preserving our digital play heritage. <https://www.museumofplay.org/save-the-games-a-digital-preservation-symposium/>

21-23 August, 2024 The Brazilian-Brazilian Congress on TEA and Inclusive Education
Federal University of Pelotas, Campus Capão do leão - Campus Universitário S/N - Auditório Eliseu Maciel, Capão do Leão - Rio Grande do Sul Brazil
Organized and coordinated by the Center for Studies and Research in Cognition and Learning of the Federal University of Pelotas and the Center for Research in Child Studies of the University of Minho-PT, this meeting aims to provide opportunities for researchers, educators and families to discuss, collaborate, debate and build bridges for transformative and inclusive education.
<https://doity.com.br/conlubra>

13-15 September, 2024 The Superhero Project 8th Global Meeting: The Technological Superhero
The View Hotel, Eastbourne, East Sussex, United Kingdom
The Superhero Project was the first academic conference solely dedicated to the superhero genre. At the 8th meeting, the conference will examine the potent intersection between the superhero and technology.
<https://www.superheroproject.net/>

11 October, 2024 Women in Games Global Annual Conference
Theme: Play – Grounded: An Exploration of Play Landscapes.
Virtual: Taking place virtually on Friday October 11th (the Day of the Girl), the one-day event will once again cover three global time zone, beginning at 7am GMT and ending at 9pm GMT.
The conference will focus on the phenomenon of play and play spaces and will provide a platform for much needed exploration and discussion of play’s trajectory in contemporary life. *Where* play happens influences *what* play is and can be.
<https://www.womeningames.org/get-set-for-our-global-20th-anniversary-conference/>

TOY FAIRS/EXPOS EXHIBITIONS

21-25 August, 2024 Gamescon for Business
Koelnmesse Exhibition Halls, Cologne, Germany
This industry focused, trade show is described by the organizers as “the world's largest event for computer and video games, and Europe's most comprehensive business platform for the gaming industry.” The event brings together international players to showcase games and innovations, explore emerging trends, network, and seek new business opportunities.
<https://b2b.gamescom.global/gamescom/the-gamescom/>

7-10 November, 2024 People of Play (POP) Week
Chicago, Illinois USA
POP Week events bring together consumers, families, inventors, manufacturers, retailers, educators, hobbyists, social media influencers and the media to play, celebrate, discover, support and promote the creation of toys and games. The week kicks off with the largest and longest running inventor pitch, networking and education event in the world, The Chicago Toy & Game Group Innovation Conference on 7-9 November followed by the 22nd annual Chicago Toy and Game Fair (CHITAG) 9-10 November. This is a fun hands-on event for the entire family to celebrate play, test out new products, meet toy & game inventors, and compete or watch the Illinois National Yoyo contest. The week is filled with many other events, including the Young Inventor Challenge, the Play in Education conference, and much much more. For information on all events, see: www.chitag.com



28 January – 1 February, 2025 Spielwarenmesse
Nuremberg, Germany
<https://www.spielwarenmesse.de/en/fair-profile/>

“Where does he get those wonderful toys...?” – Batman (1989)

EXHIBITIONS

11 August 2023 – 14 July 2024 Toys, Tales & Tenacity: Childhood Experiences of War
Shrine of Remembrance, Melbourne, Australia

From cherished toy soldiers and adventure comics to immersive cadet training and captivating computer games, children have long engaged in war-like activities that ignite their imagination and spirit. Through these games, stories, and activities, they navigate a world that can often seem senseless, finding meaning and understanding within the chaos. This first-of-its-kind exhibition delves into the experiences of children during war, shedding light on their unique perspectives and the profound impact war has had on their upbringing.

<https://www.shrine.org.au/exhibitions/toys-tales-tenacity>



27 January-22 December, 2024 Europe Plays

Tartu Toy Museum, Tartu City, Estonia

This hands-on exhibit confirms that both the young and old have always found and continue to find a childlike joy in playing. Visitors from all over Europe can find a toy characteristic of their nation and rejoice in recognition. Tartu Toy Museum is the biggest toy museum in the Baltic States displaying over 5000 toys from its vast collection. <https://www.mm.ee/en>

8 March – 27 October, 2024 Dolls, Plushies, and Pioneer Spirit - Women in Toy Design
Spielzeug Welton Museum, Basel Germany

The pioneering women in toy and game design, women who through their creativity, vision, entrepreneurial spirit, and struggle for equality have shaped Toyland, are the focus of this exhibit. As designers of everything from classic dolls and plush animals to construction kits and board games to therapeutic educational toys. Throughout the run of the exhibition the museum is also hosting a number of special events.

<https://bit.ly/3P5LZjB>



1 June – 2 September, 2024 Playful Putters

The Strong National Museum of Play, Rochester, NY USA. Highly interactive, the exhibit lets you "putt" your skills to the test on a nine-hole course while also learning about the history of miniature golf.

<https://www.instagram.com/museumofplayroc/reel/C79QqZ00Ge/>

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

All well that ends well, right? The newly formed editorial board is launching the first steps to freshen up our Newsletter and I am very grateful that we are engaging in a very productive teamwork. Altogether, we are evolving into a multifunctional and multidisciplinary team as you will probably witness in the next newsletter – yes, this number is still produced in the traditional format, but it will soon change. ☺

You, dear ITRA members, will be invited to collaborate with us. Please check your emails in the next few weeks. You will soon be called to participate in a survey – yes, a survey – that will allow us to get a gist of your insights and concerns. Your answers will help us shape the new newsletter.

The editorial board is also planning to move further in the publishing strand, but that's something you will soon be invited to participate in – as editors, authors, and stakeholders.

More soon, stay tuned!

Luisa