

PLAY21

CREATIVE GAMING FESTIVAL
NOVEMBER 5-13, 2021 | ONLINE & HAMBURG

«_Restart Together!»

playfestival.de



Leaving crisis mode

PLAY – CREATIVE GAMING FESTIVAL

📅 November 5–13, 2021

„Restart Together!“ is the motto of the PLAY – Creative Gaming Festival, which will take place from Nov. 5 to 13, 2021: online and on-site in Hamburg.

Computer and video games have become much more important since the beginning of the pandemic. With strict contact restrictions in place outdoors, many social activities have shifted to virtual gaming worlds. PLAY21 addresses questions concerning how, in a global crisis situation, games can bring people together, how games can become alternative venues for encounters and can open up new spaces for reflection, and how gaming culture will change through and after Corona.

Multiple festival access modes

The PLAY - Creative Gaming Festival will take place as a hybrid from November 5 to 13. The various offerings of the festival can be accessed via playfestival.de. These include: the live program among other things the opening on November 5 and the awards ceremony on November 12, hosted by OddNina and Manuel Fritsch (Insert Moin); the popular „PLAY Couch“ talk format with host Christian Schiffer; the Speakers Corner, an open stage for short thematic talks and the curated exhibition this year focusing on multiplayer games.

The virtual festival location is PLAYvalley, a festival environment built on Topia. There the attendee can find the event streams, workshops and the exhibition, where people can play together online. Another established part of the program is „Snacktimes“, short tutorials on various topics of creative access with games. In the evening, festival visitors can look forward to various show formats: among other things, there will be a Games Olympics in Minetest, a show with the British game developer and entertainer Alistaire Aitcheson, an interactive Twitch streaming, roundtable discussions and a text adventure reading.

Exhibition and award ceremony

In addition to the PLAYvalley playable exhibition, depending on the pandemic situation, there will also be a physical presentation of the games. Ten innovative games can be played contactless behind shop windows in downtown Hamburg. The location is yet to be announced. The six games nominated for the Creative Gaming Awards are an integral part of the exhibition. The international prizes will be awarded for the seventh time in the categories „Most Creative Game Award“ and „Most Innovative Newcomer Award“ to the most creative project and the best up-and-coming production. An expert jury will select the winners, who will be announced at the award ceremony on November 12, 2021. This year, there were 146 submissions from 36 countries.

Educational offerings

For the duration of the festival, which for the first time has been extended to nine days, there will be an extensive school program. For example, the festival will visit ten schools with workshops, and there will be events at the Schorsch District Center in St. Georg. Festival visitors will also be able to gain direct insights into Hamburg's successful games industry via „home visits“. „We are pleased to be able to carry out a festival this year that embraces the experiences of the past months and makes them playfully experienceable. The developed online formats offer a broad spectrum of participation possibilities. The implementation of workshops for school students in Hamburg is also an important advance in the discourse encompassing games and their importance for our coexistence,“ says PLAY Managing Director Andreas Hedrich.

„Playing with games!“ is the motto of the Creative Gaming initiative, which has organized the PLAY Festival since 2008. PLAY is the world's first and only festival that combines the fields of media art, discourse and education with the culture of digital games. The focus is on the creative application of digital games.

Each festival edition is committed to current developments and has a specific thematic focus:

„Since Corona, many social activities have been transferred to virtual game worlds and new forms of exchange and communion have come into existence. We want to take a closer look at these developments and also venture to look into the future ‚after Corona‘“ says Christiane Schwinge, artistic director of PLAY, who says goodbye to the PLAY management team with this festival edition in order to dedicate herself to new challenges. Her successor is yet to be announced. Andreas Hedrich: „Christiane Schwinge is one of the architects of the festival and has been part of it from the beginning. She has shaped the festival like no other and set important accents. Many thanks for the long and inspiring journey through the festival years!“

I am available at any time for queries and further information and look forward to your and your editorial consideration.

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PLAY21 – Creative Gaming Festival is an event of the Initiative Creative Gaming e.V., of jaf - Verein für medienpädagogische Praxis Hamburg e.V. in cooperation with spielbar.de, the Federal Agency for Civic Education's platform on the subject of computer games, Behörde für Schule und Berufsbildung Hamburg and JIZ – Jugendinformationszentrum Hamburg of the Behörde für Schule und Berufsbildung Hamburg.

Supported by HAW Hamburg – Department Design, Media, and Information offering a Master's Degree in games, the BürgerStiftung Hamburg and gamecity:Hamburg.
Sponsored by: siebold/hamburg messebau GmbH.