



Ludic Method **A Free Play Introduction**

Mary Flanagan

Jesper Juul

Marijam Did

Shalev Moran

Zuraida Buter

26.03. 10:30 – 16:00 Experimental Game Cultures
Symposium part1 (Ringvorlesung),
VZA7 Auditorium

part1, Ringvorlesung, VZA7 Auditorium

hosted by Jahrman / Brandstetter

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 10.30.-11.00 | Opening and introduction Margarete Jahrman |
| 11.00-11.45 | Play our way out, play our way in: Speculative Play (or speculative future play) in Dystopian Times Mary Flanagan https://maryflanigan.com |
| 11.45-12.30 | The Dystopia of Play: Games, Freedom, and the Plague of Optimization Jesper Juul https://www.jesperjuul.net |
| 12.30-13.15 | Break |
| 13.15-14.00 | Everything To Play For. How Videogames are Changing the World Marijam Did https://www.marijamdid.com/ |
| 14.00-14.45 | Limits And Demonstrations: Games Doing Politics Shalev Moran https://www.shalevmoran.com |
| 14.45-15.00 | Break |
| 15.00-15.45 | Exhibition Games Zuraida Buter https://www.zo-ii.com |
| 15.45-16.00 | Closing remarks Thomas Brandstetter |

Ludic Method. A Free Play Introduction.

The symposium will bring together contributions to the Ludic Method, a principle that is introduced in Experimental Game Cultures. The event will feature a diverse group of speakers, who will engage in a series of discussions on a range of topics, including ludic research practice, new insights into cooperative and viable experimental game art, future society dynamics, artistic research, science and epistemic things, technologies and key tools such as AI and deep dreaming, non-human and pataplay, gender and cognitive sciences. These discussions will be conducted in a playful „ludic“ format, and the event will also include a call for contributions to a future PLAY BOOK.

The disruptive concept of the „ludic method“ builds on artistic experiences made in cultural public spaces and on the design of rule-driven systems (games), which are then opened in processual forms of play and insight. It combines methodologies introduced in scientific research, and rule-driven systems, comparable to the magic circle of play, with arts.

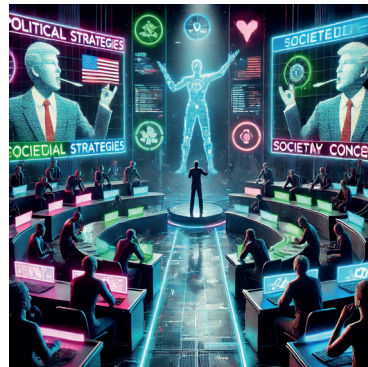
It explores new paths of artistic research, experimental game, and arts, connecting to systemic and experimental thinking with the socially relevant, in a “psycholudic approach”, to contribute to a more balanced and democratic world.

The aim of this ludic discourse is to develop new cultural techniques to continuously innovate game dynamics and methods of art as research. The utilisation of performative practice and installations, functioning as experimental systems, marks a progression in ludic method research, leading to the creation of artistic artefacts as epistemic objects that facilitate a sustainable flow of discourse.

The symposium will feature contributions from a diverse and international group of authors, including practicing artists, theoreticians, and experts in game studies.

Mary Flanagan. **Play our way out, play our way in: Speculative Play (or speculative future play) in Dystopian Times.** <https://maryflanagan.com>

How should artists and gamers respond in environmental and political crises? Creative people struggle to make a difference and see what is “worth it” in the face of daunting global challenges. Play, however, invites us to initiate a profound shift from current norms and situations. This talk sets out playful challenges among social, ecological, technical domains to make a radical departure from the status quo.



Image, DALL-E, Score 9638

The common image of play and games is one of wonderful freedom and open experimentation, yet there are also two recurring fears about the value of play. The traditional fear is that playing is fundamentally frivolous. The newer fear is that playing leads players towards narrowminded optimization, forgetting both beauty and human values as they descend into a purely rational state of mind. In this talk, Jesper will tell a history of the value of play, as expressed in the history of video games, from arcade games to big-budget titles, to casual games, and recent experimental indie games.

Jesper Juul. **The Dystopia of Play: Games, Freedom, and the Plague of Optimization** <https://www.jesperjuul.net>

The common image of play and games is one of wonderful freedom and open experimentation, yet there are also two recurring fears about the value of play. The traditional fear is that playing is fundamentally frivolous. The newer fear is that playing leads players towards narrowminded optimization, forgetting both beauty and human values as they descend into a purely rational state of mind. In this talk, Jesper will tell a history of the value of play, as expressed in the history of video games, from arcade games to big-budget titles, to casual games, and recent experimental indie games.



Image, DALL-E, Score 3495

Marijam Did. **Everything To Play For. How Videogames are Changing the World** <https://www.marijамdid.com/>

The lecture will examine the political Efficacy of videogames - an under-examined sphere within the impactful games discourse. How can they become political tools, with actual ability to drive real-world change beyond being mere signifiers? We will critically analyse various games titles alongside case studies from other artistic media, in particular Fine Art, and will compare the best practices and failures. By utilising learnings from thinkers such as Claire Bishop, Nicholas Bourriaud, Walter Benjamin and Theodor Adorno this talk will challenge attendees to rethink what political engagement through play could look like, and what it is not.



Image, DALL-E, Score 5977

Shalev Moran. **Limits And Demonstrations: Games Doing Politics.** <https://www.shalevmoran.com>

Game designer and multimedia artist Shalev Moran will present three of his previous videogame works, each tackling political realities in different ways. From commercial titles to absolute indie, from engaging with old histories to ongoing current events. The presentation will examine different creative strategies in making „political“ games, their potential, as well as their limitations.



Image, DALL-E, Score 3596

Zuraida Buter. **Play in Practice: Exploring The Playful Arts Community** <https://www.zo-ii.com>

Over the years independent game developers and playful artists from different fields have created alternative ways of playing with the world, with games and with each other, bridging the worlds of art, technology, design and games. Having been involved in several festivals and events over the years and connecting many artists Zuraida will take the audience on a journey through several of these projects, festivals and works of playful artists encouraging new perspectives on playful approaches.



Save the date

part2, Symposium, Museumsquartier Wien

09. 04. 2025 13:00

**McKenzie Wark
Ariadne Randall**

Playing Gender@MUQUA Raum D