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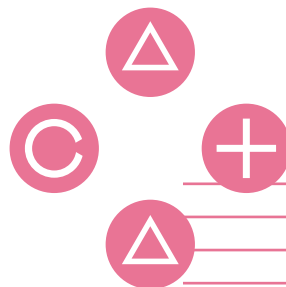
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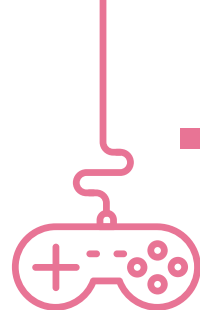
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# Journal Orientation

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Acta Ludologica is a scientific journal in the field of games and digital games. The journal contains professional scientific reflections on digital games; it also offers academic discourses on games, especially media and digital competencies, creation, design, marketing, research, development, psychology, sociology, history and the future of digital games and game studies.

Acta Ludologica is a double-blind peer reviewed journal published twice a year. It focuses on theoretical studies, theoretical and empirical studies, research results and their implementation into practice, as well as professional publication and scientific reviews of digital games.

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## Stagnation of Originality, but Opportunity for Meeting Generations

Nothing goes on forever. At least not at full speed, and for everyone at the same time. In the past, it was not so difficult to come to the market with a new, completely original game because there were not so many games to compare it with yet. Every pioneering game had a chance to become its own genre-defining archetype. However, due to the “curse” of pop-cultural artworks, neither do games go away. They culminate. Each new game basically competes with everything previously created and designed to be played. Being original within such an oversaturated market might be a headache, at least as far as the mainstream is concerned. As in the entire contemporary pop-culture mainstream production, the share of original artefacts is decreasing; the digital-gaming sector is also increasingly approaching recycling to maintain profits. Many legendary hits and proven concepts – *Final Fantasy VII*, *Quake*, *Crash Bandicoot*, *GTA*, *Mass Effect* – have recently returned as remakes or remastered versions.

They have been remastered primarily not for the new generation of gaming devices, but for gamers both new as well as old. Younger generations usually no longer take into account anything incompatible with HD displays or do not consider them as interesting. Gaming companies are also aware of this fact, and they are gradually ending support for some features of their older devices. On the other hand, sometimes, voices from gaming generations who love those devices are nevertheless heard, and even giants of the digital-gaming industry can admit they probably made a wrong decision (as when Sony reconsidered ending support for the PlayStation 3 and Vita). Remastered and remade games currently represent a golden mean, a win-win strategy for all stakeholders. Today's generation of gamers gets proven quality with up-to-date standards and older generations are appealed to by nostalgia. Somewhere in between, an amazing opportunity for these generations to meet each other is created.

Unlike current trends, this issue presents an original set of content concerning different areas of game studies. The game studies section is introduced by Dinko Jukić and his analysis of the phenomenon of myth in digital games, culture, and brand identity by analysing the significance of the role of parenting and guardianship in the

games *The Walking Dead* and *Heavy Rain*, all within the discourse of marketing semiotics. Matteo Genovesi then examines the themes of failure and death in digital games as integrated parts by case studies of the games *Dead Cells* and *Sekiro: Shadows Die Twice*. The discourse of discrimination against women and stereotypical negative female gender roles in digital games is explored by Borivoje Baltežarević et al., utilizing the content analysis of female representation in digital games. Subsequently, the theoretical study by Dana Hodinková, Olga Púchovská, and Lucia Račkovičová deals with the cosplay phenomenon from the perspective of art marketing, aiming to create a potential framework for further research in this area. The section is concluded by Steven Dashiell with a discussion on defining the meta-discourse of tabletop role-playing games, focusing on a conversation not linked to or completely unrelated to the game as a source of determinants of gaming capital, or elements of value.

In the next sections, the topic of how game jams can benefit the educational process, Tarja Porkka-Kontturi, a director of communications at Global Game Jam, and manager and organizer of other similar events, is discussed in an interview. Scientific reviews on the publications *Immersion, Narrative and Gender Crisis in Survival Horror Video Games*, and *Independent Videogames: Cultures, Networks, Techniques and Politics* are untraditionally followed by a review of the film *Free Guy* that thematically undoubtedly relates to game discourse. The issue concludes with news from the digital-gaming sector and add-on contributions that trace parallels between the historical world of the Holocaust and the mythical universe of *Castlevania*.

Paradoxically, even if the gaming industry was affected by a certain degree of originality stagnation, whether due to a change in the market's nature or as the result of the long-running COVID-19 pandemic, it stimulates creativity within the study and research of this area. I believe this issue proves that.

**Mgr. Zdenko Mago, PhD.**

*Acta Ludologica's Editor-in-Chief*

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