



## Motivate Play

Focus of the exhibition is motivational design for games. Commercial games succeed in keeping players occupied and interested for a long time. How do they do this? Are motivational systems in Indie games different or do they use similar strategies? To what extent does the reward and punishment system change when players do not voluntarily play, but need to be involved into learning and therapeutic processes in serious games? What design strategies should be chosen for creating intrinsic motivation out of extrinsic motivation? The exhibition "Motivate Play" tries to answer this questions in focusing on game mechanics and 'meaningful' gameplay interactions.

Games are control systems that are exceptionally motivating. From simple motivational techniques such as clearing or aligning game designers develop cybernetic control systems (such as Tetris) that are gradually getting more complex. The simplest and most complete control system in game mechanics is the continual challenge for the player and his avatar. The game provides the player with a specific challenge: In Tetris falling blocks and overflowing containers. And it offers opportunities for action to tackle the problem. In Tetris you can move and rotate the blocks. In a next step the game evaluates the player's decision. The game rewards correct decisions. In Tetris a line disappears, you get positive sound, points and more playtime. However the game punishes wrong decisions. In Tetris you get an obstructed situation, gloomy sounds, and game over. As a player, if you are perfectly challenged, conservatively punished and well rewarded you may feel like floating through the game (Flow).

The exhibition expands basic game mechanisms and shows a range of additional resources that game designers and games offer to increase involvement of players. In Clicker Heros possibilities for interaction are reduced to clicks, but each nonsensical click develops the Avatar further. On the other hand, the fast multiplayer game ChuChu Rockets is chaotic and confusing. Here, up to 4 player arrows have to be placed on a field and, as a result, freed mice are guided into their rockets as fast as possible. Only, all rockets are interchanged now and then - and many mice go astray. In Beautiful Katamari you roll as a big sticky ball through a toy world and clean up everything, since all objects you roll over stick to you. The Adventure ZakMcCracken and the Alien Mindbender is not only visually but also historically absurd, making the title into a conceptual game. An absurd story spiked with humor and strange puzzles take you to the moon and back again - strange squirrels included. Evolve, on the other hand, uses a monster and turns asymmetric gameplay into a concept. This game doesn't feature a fight of everyone against everyone but a powerful monster that fights three weaker hunters. If you do not cooperate well, you simply will loose.

There is so much to discover in the diverse motivational structures of these elaborate universes we call games.