

CounterPlay '19: Playing at the Edge - Programme

Thursday, April 4th

Main stage

08.30-09.15: Arrival and play

9.15-9.45: Welcome concert

9.45-10.00: Welcome speech

10.00-10.30: Helle Marie Skovbjerg: Building Play Communities of Tomorrow:

Play communities of tomorrow must contain the values of play and makes it possible for participation through sharing, caring and daring. Based on a number of empirical examples this talk will focus on courage, openness and trust of the unknown as a foundation for building play communities.

10.30-10.45: Let's play – meeting the play community!

11.00-12.00:

Small stage: Islands

Islands is part game, part conversation, part visualisation of the web of interconnections between strangers. This session will ask you to find things in common with other players privileging obscurity in those commonalities as a central game mechanic. Through conversation, play and reflection this session will examine the friendships and boundaries we create within our societies.

By Jim Thompson & Lynn Parker

Meeting Room 2: Playing the Fool

An exuberant dive into the fool archetype: present, joyful, honest, embodied, real, curious and aware. Enjoy a process where your heart becomes wide open, your body is fully lived in, you can feel energy, emotion and joy moving through you and share an experience of being connected to a curious, spacious way of thinking.

by Angela Halvorsen Bogo

Teaching Room 1: A virtual playground - YouTube as a site for children's playful practices

YouTube is an example of a social media platform that has come to play a significant role as inspiration for play for children. I will draw on examples from a recent study of child-youtubers as producers of playful - and playable - content. The presentation will be followed by a shared research session, where we will search for examples of playful social media content in order to build a shared vocabulary or catalogue of playful, online practices.

By Stine Liv Johansen

The Loft: Navigating the lines between mental and physical library spaces

This is an experimental intervention, guiding participants through an exploration of the physical library space to (re)consider their mental models and prior experiences. We will playfully explore ways in which they may experience physical and shared social spaces, with map and instructions, before returning for reflection. We aim to adapt this for new students to help them find a greater sense of belonging in university spaces. It may also be adapted for other social or public spaces.

by Andrew Walsh and Jess Haigh

The Box: Creativity vs Play: Mind and Body

A workshop that combines Dance and Parkour/Art du Deplacement to explore creativity and play through solo, duo and group work; brought to you by Esprit Concrete. We will invite you to learn about yourself and others whilst interacting with others and the environment. Play and creativity combined together can be a very enjoyable and beautiful experience. The challenges that may come from being out of our comfort zone can prompt self-reflection and in turn train your body and mind.

By Louiseanne Wong

12.00-12.45: LUNCH

...and don't miss "Playing On the Soft Edge of Wisdom: Speedcoaching with Dr. Snail"!

12.45-13.45:

Small stage: Playing with grief

Is it possible to mourn in a playful way? Playing with grief unpacks this question by looking at the possible connections between grief and play. How have games successfully represented our feelings of love, loss, and commemoration? And what tools have game designers available to work with grievers? This session shows that it's actually possible to harness games as a language to talk about stigmatised feelings, and to explore the grief stories of others through the medium of play.

By Sabine Harrer

Meeting room 2: Recreational Synergies

Most of us live in a world that takes our senses for granted but the need and right to play are the same for everyone. But what about those who are deprived of one or more senses and those with altered abilities? In this session, the rules may be reversed for those who are 'different'. We will not just play but also share our experiences from the games in order to make them relevant for everyone. Hopefully this will inspire ideas and action for a more inclusive and playful society.

By Eliana Perifanou and Mariagni Ellina

Teaching room 1: Call for Play: Child-Centered Design for Public Play Spaces in an Aegean Village

This paper presents the process of a 15-day workshop on the design theme of "public play spaces". Combining the activity mapping with the local people's views of play, we came up with a design solution named "Call For Play" that brings together local people's highlights and stories about the village and a physical-digital navigation system that tracks through the village to invite and inspire play.

By Gökçe Elif Baykal, Eva Liisa Kubinyi, Bryce Duyvewaardt and Maarten Van Mechelen

The loft: Office Playground

The "office playground" will be a participatory installation where participants explore the areas of overlap between 'play' & 'work', using office aesthetics (such as Venn Diagrams, office furniture, meeting points, charts, etc).

By Alexia Mellor & Anthony Schrag

Teaching room 1: Newborns - performance play (runs from 12.45-14.15!)

NEWBORNS is a playful performance experience that invite you to participate in a transformative act. The intention is to stimulate a sensuous and awake mode of being to perceive the mystical. You can choose to participate actively as a player inside the playground or watch as an audience from the outside. The experience use mixed materials such as clay and water to warp and transform players. There will be time for reflection and it will be possible to have a bath afterwards.

By Jakob la Cour

13.45-14.15: COFFEE

14.15-15.15:

Small stage: How to get your creativity at play in your worklife

Making plasticine characters and using animation as a creative tool to communicate offers a different way of developing together, from being very academic, analytical and intangible, using only your intellect to basically be thinking with your hands; everything becomes tangible. Come and try for yourself what building puppets and making films with them can make you reflect on your work life.

By Tina Klemmensen

Meeting room 2: ART WAR: Play and Placemaking

This project explores the idea: "What are the conditions under which adults play?" Often, play is framed to be 'nice' and avoids the darker elements of our psyche: conflict, opposition, power, etc. These are however integral parts of us, and our argument is that incorporating these into play gives adults a more nuanced engagement. We wish to present previous examples of our work and play an 'oppositional' game about 'insiders' and 'outsiders' at Dokk1 in Aarhus to explore these ideas.

By Nina Luostarinen and Anthony Schrag

Teaching room 1: Playful Nature

We will create an in-situ installation for the conference inspired by the context and space, using whatever meaningful material we find on hand, that would invite participants and the general public to engage in a playful creative process. Rather than defining any specific outcome, this idea can and will evolve with the input from you! We are especially interested in playing with the edge of ... if you are interested to play with us.

By Benjamin Lee Martin and Andrew Amonson

The loft: Playful learning in higher education?

Can we merge the ideas of playful learning with the academic didactic of higher education? This session will present preliminary findings and offer hands on interaction with different kind of playful didactics aimed to be part of the education of teachers and pedagogues in the Danish University colleges. Come join us on testing and discussing how to bring play back to the educational system.

By Heidi Stensman Pugh

The box: Unserious Movements and Playful Bodies

What moves and touches you? Do you perceive yourself in your body? What if the next big shit you are about to explore has always been so close to you that you have forgotten it? Let's experience the creativity in our bodies and movements with joy, curiosity and playfulness. We will move, dance and play together to explore unserious movements, playful bodies, touches and interactions through a creative physical workshop. There are no movement experiences necessary. By Susi Rosenbohm

Main stage:

15.30-16.15: Troy Innocent: Citizens of Play

Play in public space can critique the dominant ways of thinking about smart cities, opening up the city as playground, making it hackable and mutable. These two ideas, the worldview that comes with seeing the 'smart city' as a hackable system and the strategies that come with a playful attitude, set the scene for the playful citizen. This presentation will present initial findings from a one-year study investigating the relationship between playable and smart cities, drawing upon interviews with over thirty artists, designers, producers, architects working with urban environments to develop and present projects.

16.30-17.30

Small stage: New Games as a Life Style

New Games are cooperative games for all ages, sizes and abilities. They are about group interactive play, not computer or video games. Everyone can play New Games if they wish to but no-one is forced to join. The games sometimes include competition but winning is not emphasized: rather, including everyone and having fun is. However, many social & developmental skills are learned playing New Games. The games also help reduce obesity and bullying. NG help people look at life in a more playful way.

By Dale Le Fevre

Meeting room 2: Come to (the edge of) your senses

Discover the world around you using all your senses to explore "the edge". In a playful, interactive series of games, in a safe environment, test your understanding of the senses: how they interact and how they give you your experience of life. Test the edge of your comfort zone, of your sensory knowledge and of your creative boundaries. #toucantoo join a play pirate, sensory scientist, happiness facilitator and wellbeing coach, and give yourself permission to go back to being a five year old.

By Natasha Blok

Teaching room 1: Laughter Yoga

By Lotte Mikkelsen.

Excursions: #PlaySign – Photoplay with Traffic Signs

When was the last time a traffic sign made you laugh or think about public space as our shared playground? Maybe these signs, put in place to regulate behaviour, can instead become portals to a parallel universe of opportunity and adventure for the courageous player? Join us on a playful adventure to the edge, playing with traffic signs, re-imagining the rules and expanding the possibilities of public space!

By Nina Luostarinen

18.00 - : Dinner at Hantwerk

(Fiskerivej 2D, 8000 Aarhus C)

08.45-9.15: Music! Dance!

9.15-10.00: Tilde Bekker: Exploring digital design opportunities of open-ended play

The session will be interspersed with open-ended play activities, where participants can try out how different design decisions, related to digital properties, influence the opportunities for open-ended play. They can explore and experience for themselves the influence of open-endedness on play, and play around with consequences of design decisions related to open-endedness.

10.00-10.30: PLAY!

10.45-11.45

Small stage: Playing at the edge of chaos

Welcome to the Edge of Chaos, a juicy realm of creative fertility and growth. We experience this realm when immersed in play, a pleasant sensation of stretching the imagination. This concept emerges from complexity theory which understands games as living ecosystems. In this session we will explore how this can deepen our understanding of play, sharing a variety of games which exercise our imaginations whilst being physically gentle. Talking games, non-verbal games, finger games and hand-clapping games. We will welcome the possibility of unpredictable and creative outcomes with joyful and curious wonder.

By Kevin Davidson

Meeting room 2: Improject – Interactive insights on communication in projects

Did you know improv only exists to make actors more relaxed and less trying to control situations? Are you immediately recalling work-related situations to which this fit? Then come along, let's play Improject. We will improvise, have fun and learn....And maybe even change the way you look at conversations...

By Anne Hoffmann

Meeting room 1: Rules of Eating: Ludic Food in Korea and Nordic Europe

The saying "don't play with your food" has been turned around, as the playfulness of eating is now being recognized and, occasionally, even celebrated. This presentation provides a cross-cultural study between Korean and North European traditions of eating with a goal to distinguish differences in their play elements and playfulness. Ultimately, the study argues that both food (ontologically) and eating (pragmatically) in Korea involve various elements of play and playfulness that are generally lacking in Nordic Europe.

By Veli-Matti Karhulahti and Annette Nielsen

Teaching room 1: Playing with Disability at the Edge of the Future

We will conduct a worldbuilding session, in which we imagine future solutions to real world problems, focusing on problems facing people with invisible disabilities. This approach uses embodiment, our senses of humor, our physical relationships, and our deepest desires to connect; to consider how we can use play to transform the painful edges of our lives into constructive solutions, comedic stories, and playful moments of triumph.

By Laura Cechanowicz

The loft: Imagine!

Imagine! will engage participants in a playful approach to learning, inviting everyone to follow their fascinations using a range of drawing materials to create a Forest of Imagination. Creative enquiry and reflection will be central to the workshop.

By Penny Hay

11.45-12.30: LUNCH

12.30-13.30

Small stage: If I take one more step...

Serious Games and playful explorative approaches actively invite participants to explore the edge of their own comfort zone. Beyond this “low stress and low anxiety”-zone lies the “optimal performance zone” often referred to as “learning zone”. But what happens if our workshop participants reach their “second edge” and enter the danger zone? And equally important: How can we invite them back into wanting to explore or play more?

By Julian Kea

Meeting room 2: Edge-ucation: Co-Creating Chaos

Edge-ucation in the Chaos Lab: Experience the healthy risk, natural joy, and extreme play featured in a setting full of odd, but simple materials. Novel experiences provide opportunities for adaptation, innovation, and playful learning in this "adventure playground" for adults. Co-create a little chaos in the Chaos Lab.

By Mike Sullivan

Teaching room 1: Playful exploration for social design; on the edge between design and improvisation theatre

In this workshop we explore the cross-over between social design and improvisation theatre, within the context of an actual societal challenge. Through a series of playful design exercises using body and voice as tools, we will work through the different phases of a design process. This results in a prototype played out for an audience. The group co-creates tools and generate knowledge that are practically applicable and can be taken home to use.

By Bjørn van Raaij and Henk van der Steen

The loft: Playful Journeys

Ever thought how to introduce people to a forest? We have been making playful journeys for just such a task and more. Using playful objects, quizzical characters and thoughtful games we bring people into a shared world to engage with these things. We'd like to share our approach and methods with you and talk about our work and practice. Following this we will host a workshop where you can bring your own playful thoughts to creating a trail of your own in response to one of our wicked questions.

By Angie and Jim Thompson

The box: Changing the World Through Play

Can play help us with our failing democracies, rising inequality, global warming, and an epidemic of stress and anxiety? Quite a lot it turns out! Through improv games, philosophizing, and examples from around the world you will learn the methodology and tools of performance activism and discover just why play is such a powerful tool for changing the world. Are you ready to make history?

by Esben Wilstrup

13.30-13.45: COFFEE

13.45-14.45

Small stage: The Goblin Aesthetic

Deep in the belly, the Inner Goblin grumbles calling to be released, to create absurd and delightful situations in public. Its secret is that this is an undertaking that must be done together. Let us gather to find our inner goblins and release others from their cages of propriety. During this workshop, we will share ideas for revolutionary play. We will explore local problems through a goblin aesthetic, and we will make masks to march as our inner goblins.

By Albert Kong

Meeting room 2: Played Out: At the Edge of Work and Play with “Playbor”

The panel explores shifting boundaries between work and play through the concept of “playbor,” which highlights an increasingly normalized system of relations between producers, consumers and industry; corporations prescribe technical and social “rules” which entice and circumscribe activities, ultimately setting forth the conditions for thinking, talking and even knowing when and how to play.

By Maxwell Foxman, Raul Ferrer-Conill, Sonia Fizek, Mathias Fuchs and Mark R. Johnson.

Meeting room 1: Create a Conference Zine Using Visual Literacy

In this workshop, we will use the art of zine making to learn and apply a framework for interpreting, thinking critically about, and gaining understanding from visual information. Breaking into groups at tables, there will be materials and directions available for you to tell the story of your experience at CounterPlay '19, using the framework we discuss. With some new skills and a story to tell, you may start a small press to distribute your zine!

By Sarah Huber

Teaching room 1: THE DREAM BUREAU

Welcome to the Dream Bureau, part of the Office for Dream Certification and Wish Fulfilment. Please take a seat – one of our Administrators will call you shortly... This prototype secret role game models the pressures faced by ‘street-level’ or frontline service workers. It is based on primary ethnographic research and secondary analysis of the literature on street-level human service organizations. Simple, fast-paced, and fun, it has been designed to stimulate reflection and discussion of the various dilemmas and pressures involved in frontline service delivery across a variety of ‘street-level’ policy contexts.

By Rob Jones

The loft: The Social Game // Cultural Protocols

The Social Game is the latest contribution to a series called 'Cultural Protocols' -- a collection of formats that play with and modify everyday situations. Most of all human interactions are guided by social conventions (i.e. shaking hands/bowing/hugging), and a bundle of those conventions is what we call a protocol (i.e. the protocol of a dinner). By playing out or removing cards participants can alter the very basic rules by which we interact. While a stack of premade cards will be provided by us, participants will also add new cards to the game itself.

By Thibault and Nina Lund Westerdahl

15.00-16.00

Small stage: Finding the Game (that takes you to the edge)!

Before we can even start to play we need to discover what the game is. Once found it we can take it as far as possible... to the edge. Creating a safe and playful atmosphere we will learn that the games are right under our eyes.

By Anthony Trahair

Meeting room 2: BodyLoops

Playful Nature invites you to discover “BodyLoops” as a tool for exploring playful movement with yourself and others bring comfortable clothes you can move in and an open mind.

By Benjamin Lee Martin and Andrew Amonson

Teaching room 1: Performing the Landscape

Performing the Landscape is a participatory spatial and interactive event. We will spend some time using our bodies, actions and movements to explore a new visual language in response to the environment. Working together we will develop certain rules to inform a collective walk, unique to the participants involved and the cityscape that we move through. We will finish by performing the collective walk/action together.

By Jenny Cashmore

The loft: Building Worlds/Colliding Worlds: Interactive Storytelling in the Public Library

In this workshop you will be introduced to two worlds: the world of Raccoon Ranch, location of a murder mystery, and the In Between, a mysterious place that exists in the world’s nooks and crannies. You’ll meet the locals, then become one. We’ll find out together what happens when these two worlds collide.

By Sherlonya Turner and Audrey Huggett

The box: PerformanceLab : physical fun!

PerformanceLab is an innovative, playful and artistic workshop, that will contribute to the sense of our mobile selves. Based on Augusto Boal’s research, the PerformanceLab workshop will provide a space for physical composition, expressivity and musicality of movement, and to dig for the intersections between the proposed exercises and playing.

By Gaby David

Main stage

16.15-16.35: Qazi Abdur Rahman: Teaching love: Using ‘Play at the edge’ as a school practice

This talk will discuss how ‘Playing at the edge’ is practiced in our school to bring students and their parents closer and foster critical thinking, openness, creativity, connectedness, cultural inclusiveness for exploring meaning and laughter. We practice ‘Playing at the edge’ to tear down the barriers separating parents from their kids and teachers, separating different subjects they study, separating students among themselves in terms of language, religion, local values, nationalities; and to instill love in their tender hearts for everything they see around, for ‘others’ and for themselves.

16.35-17.00: Microtalks

A series of short, energetic micro talks sharing experiences, impressions, feelings, thoughts and ideas from the first two days of CounterPlay '19.

17.00-17.30: Music! Dance! Play!

18.00 - : Play Party at the Dome (Inge Lehmanns Gade, 8000 Aarhus C)

Saturday, April 5th

Main stage

10.15-10.45: 'The Role of Craftsmanship, Wonder and Storytelling in Play' - a conversation with A Secret Club

In the conversation A Secret Club will show examples of how craftsmanship itself can help bring about wonder, poetry and storytelling. Annabelle and Kenn will also touch upon the playful ways in which they develop and design their play as well as how they take inspiration from things as diverse as lullabies and secret societies, psychogeography, folklore, fairground attractions, the lost and found, language, 1980's toys (including RC cars) and 17th century cabinets of curiosities.

by Annabelle Nielsen and Kenn Munk

11.00-12.00

Small stage: Playful Reflection - Open Space

If you need time to slow down, let the impressions settle in and reflect upon what has happened so far – this is for you!

Meeting room 2: Play for your Soul

Play is a spiritual act. We don't do it for efficiency, to make money, or to extend our lifespans – though these can be a result. We do it to contact a part of our being that we can easily lose touch of. Your inner child, your joker, your soul. Through games, mindful/playful techniques & reflective discussion, we'll see how play nurtures this vital part of ourselves, enabling us to engage with lived experience at a deeper level. In getting closer to our edge(s), we see our core more clearly.

By Ben Ross

The loft: Make Art Play

Make Art Play is an experimental print workshop that is designed to be an interlocutor between ideology and pragmatism. This workshop is aimed to give participants a refreshing view that hopes to encourage DIY printmaking as a mode of resistance. The lines between craft and art are blurred when we use our imagination. You are invited to bring your critical minds to experiment with different interventions of the idea of self & branding as a resistance to being seen as an anonymous consumer walking on earth during the late capitalism era. We encourage participants to use the workshop as a way to interrogate ideas and feelings that have surfaced during the Counter Play festival and put it into practice.

by Alessandre Petzer

The box: Playing in the Shadows: meeting our inner edges

This workshop will give us permission to playfully meet & express the slightly messier bits of us that we normally don't let others see - what Carl Jung calls our "shadows". Taking on the archetype of the Fool, we will use guided meditation, theatre games, embodied exercises and reflective writing to lightly step in and out of our edges, in a safe and held space. This will be an active session, with a strong likelihood of loud, silly noises.

By Robbie Foulston

12.00-12.30: LUNCH

12.30-13.30:

Small stage: Playful Reflection - Open Space

If you need time to slow down, let the impressions settle in and reflect upon what has happened so far – this is for you!

Meeting room 2: The art of play: Play personalities for career and leisure time

Everyone has his/her own play personality DNA so has every job and activity. The workshop seeks to analyze and combine these to create a play personality DNA library for jobs and activities to help you to choose your path for a healthier and happier life - in career and leisure time.

By Gabi Linde

Teaching room 1: Play/Connect/Grow

This workshop for adults will explore the edge between play and personal growth, between play and spirituality - to look at how play can be an interface between our public self and our inner worlds. We've seen first-hand, through our workshops with adults, how play can be a catalyst for change – a way of reconnecting with a lost or shut off part of ourselves. That reconnection can be hugely transformative, and also challenging. Who am I, as an adult, if I allow myself to play? If I can open up and feel like myself again through play, what else can I do? What changes might it precipitate in my life?

By Jessica Penrose and Sharon Hodgson

The box: Embodied Play

In this play-workshop Bart will invite you to give room to the wisdom of your body in a playful way. After 2 days of playing at the edge we will let our bodies tell us what our brain doesn't know. The wisdom of our body's will bring us playfully over the edge of what we think we know and tell us what step to take next. It may be helping us to contribute to make this world more playful!

By Bart Durand

13.45-15.30:

Small stage: World Café: Reflection & Conversations

15.30-16.00:

Wrapping (and cleaning) up!

16.00- : Into the forest!

(“Tumlepladsen” in Riis Skov, Dronning Margrethes Vej 107, 8200 Aarhus)

In the afternoon, we will go play in a nearby forest and make a bonfire, tell stories, drink warm drinks and play some more when it gets dark.

We will prepare soup and bread for everyone - bring warm clothes!

That's it. Thank you for playing!