

Beyond the player's manual: Experiencing the world (and the city) as a playground

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Abstract:

As we grow up, we lose our ability to play. In the same way, the progress of civilisation makes it lose its touch with the ancient playful rituals based upon the cyclical liberation of the ordinary world. This primeval search for freedom (which comes from within the person) is represented in adult life by the carnivalesque attitude, which more than just an inversion of opposites it is an attempt to transcend this duality with a bottom-up approach. Yet this behaviour is more widely contained within the world of *play*: its aim is to renew and regenerate our everyday by adopting a new view of the world through "fun". Play is discussed as an attitude that changed the space into a playground, exemplified through a game of Hide and Seek played by locals in Tallinn's Old Town: the experience of the place through a playful behaviour opens new possibilities of thinking about the space and the everyday.

Keywords:

Carnival, play, playful, threshold, change, in between, shift, experience, liberation, freedom, ways of using, behaviour, urban space, innocence.