

play matters by miguel Sicart

chapter 1 - play is

"we are fools looking at the finger when someone points at the moon"

This to say that play is more important, most important even. This must be true, as in games **gameplay is always king**

"play is designed as mediated by things created to facilitate emergence of play".

This is perfect as a design philosophy. Created elements and mechanics that engage the player in free play or in **emergent gameplay** is exactly what a toy is.

I had stumbled upon this by chance once last semester when I created the toy "waterful" in my game-a-week class.

I have often noticed a higher level of engagement from players when playing "waterful" (a "game" with no goals or set rules) than any of my other games.

miguel Sicart claims that his theory is a "struggle against efficiency, seriousness and technical determinism".

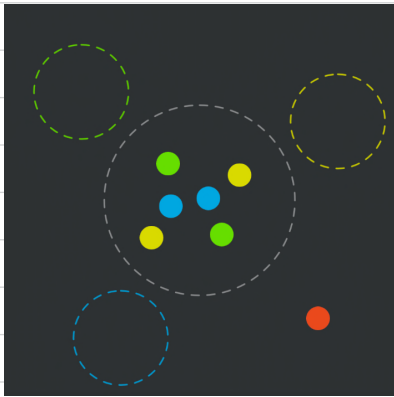
In a recent article of mine, I proclaimed that such theories add no value to my design practices.

But, I would have to argue against myself that, in this one exception, it does me more credit to be romantic.

6:30 pm

- play is Contextual → Space, technology, companions
- play is Apollonian → Desire to create
- play is Dionysiac → Desire to destroy
- play is Carnivalesque → Laughter, freedom
- play is Appropriative → It takes over
- play is Disruptive → breaks status quo
- play is autotelic → A flow activity
- play is Creative → free expression
- play is personal → In its effect

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I could not find any mechanics that I add without comprising the simplicity of the toy.

- Maybe an element that when touched or entered destroys the marble.
- perhaps when two different marbles enter a region they merge into a new marble.

Any and all elements I can think of steered the toy much into the direction of a game. Instead of adding to the freeplay nature of the toy.

perhaps minimalism and simplicity are more important here than I previously imagined.

So I simply made a few visual improvements.

I'm going to upload the builds to Itch and call it a day.