



# The Patroness Didn't Play Along

It felt like it always does, be it a premiere or not. For the first time, the "Kinderspiel des Jahres" got an event of its own. For the first time, the press conference took place in Hamburg. But those who had the honor of attending the press conference for the "Spiel des Jahres" in Berlin knew the procedure. While the hall filled up, the jury's live-ticker provided the Internet world with information and impressions. The nominated games were introduced through a film presentation, and their makers received certificates. Finally, the children's game of the year was revealed – an announcement which, once again, furnished a surprise.

But no – it wasn't actually quite the same as usual. After all, the event was about children's games, and therefore, several representatives of this target group were involved in the process. Equipped with a balloon in the color of the award's symbol (the Children's Game pawn), each child was allowed to announce the title of one of the nominated games. And all of them together then pulled the black cloth off the prize-winning game – an action that was noticeably fun for the youngsters.

The patroness was new as well, although something like her existed before. In the first ten years, Antje Huber (then minister for Family Affairs, Youth and Health), supported the "Spiel des Jahres" and also enthusiastically joined the game-playing evenings that followed the award ceremony. After having been vacant for a long time, the position is now filled again. Dr. Kristina Schröder (a minister whose title is no longer in charge of health but, besides family and youth, includes women and seniors), didn't really

want to play along, though. She missed the event and only read a short welcoming speech.

As mentioned above, the revelation of the main winner provided a surprise – almost like the award ceremony in 2006. That year, Kirsten Becker and Jens-Peter Schliemann were touted highly for their *NACHT DER MAGIER*; this time, they were favored with *VAMPIRE DER NACHT*. The outcome was the same. As you probably know by now, the "Kinderspiel des Jahres 2010" is *DIEGO DRACHENZAHN*. In our "Spiel des Jahres Toto," there was just one participant who had foreseen this game winning, prior to the nomination list being made public. In the short history of this award, game designer Manfred Ludwig is the first author to win the prize for the second time; and HABA became the first company to win it for a third time.

Not everybody in the game scene was enthusiastic beforehand about the division of Game of the Year and Children's Game of the Year into two locations. And the expanse of time between the publication

of the nomination list and the award ceremony – more than two months – is certainly a subject worthy of discussion. But the jury members can pat themselves on the back for their decision: Never before after a prize ceremony has there been such a resounding reverberation on TV. This is likely to justify the costs of the event borne by the association. *KMW/sbw*



Main prize for for the second time:  
Manfred Ludwig

## Is the adult game back to where it started?

Before 1979, games were considered kids' stuff. Only through the "Spiel des Jahres" jury were they elevated to the level of a cultural asset. As the former jury spokesman Synes Ernst writes on the association's homepage, the association succeeded in achieving its goal of promoting and advocating the value of play in society, in a circle of friends and in the family. It was not until ten years later that children's games were brought into the jury's focus, first as a special prize, and from 2001 on as an independent award. Meanwhile, the sales figures of the awarded children's game even exceed those of the Game of the Year. This is hopefully not due to a decreasing interest in the latter – in this case, we would be back where we started. In the early 1980s, the director of the second biggest German game company at that time told me: "We make games for adults only for image reasons. We make our money with children's games."

