



Get Your Game On At SAAM Arcade

Smithsonian American Art Museum's third annual gaming showcase begins Saturday

By Courtney Rozen



The SAAM Arcade kicks off Saturday, with nearly 40 games plus concerts and workshops.

Toy with a cube built for toddlers, control a game by hugging a teddy bear and experience virtual reality at the SAAM Arcade, the Smithsonian American Art Museum's third annual gaming showcase featuring video games by student and professional developers.

SAAM Arcade is one of the largest game festivals hosted by a national museum, said Lindsay Grace, director of American University's Game Lab and a advisor to the SAAM Arcade.

The free event kicks off Saturday at 11:30 a.m. with nearly 40 independent games on display in the museum's Kogod Courtyard.

Some of the games were built by individuals -- including some by students -- and some by programmers from South Africa, Spain, Russia and other countries, Lindsay said.

But the Arcade will also feature U.S.-made games and highly promoted games with large-scale development budgets.

"The idea is to offer something to everyone," Grace said.

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Each of the games submitted endured a multitiered vetting process in which they were evaluated by former attendees, international gaming experts and showcase leaders.

There are also workshops, designed to teach attendees of all ages to create their own games. Ben Norskov, an adjunct professor at Parson School for Design, will teach "DBP: Design, Build, Play." Attendees will learn to build an analog game, which is one that doesn't require a computer.

"Anyone that can draw, cut a piece of paper or roll a dice can make an analog game quickly," Norskov said.

There's also musical performances, with [Bit Brigade](#) and [Triforce Quartet](#), two bands whose names reference classic arcade games, performing both days.

Admission is free. Go [here](#) for more information.

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