

Press Release
Announcement

01 June 2018

RAINBOW ARCADE

A queer history of video games 1985-2018

13 December 2018 – 13 May 2019



Original disks for the first queer video game known to date »Caper in the Castro« and its “straight” version »Murder on Main Street«, 1989, C.M. Ralph.

For the first time worldwide, the queer history of video games will be explored in a major exhibition: »Rainbow Arcade« will open at Schwules Museum Berlin in December 2018 and features a wide variety of exhibits spanning over 30 years of media history, including playable titles, concept drawings, modifications written by fans themselves and documentations of online communities. The exhibition will be taking stock of contemporary pop cultural questions of representation, stereotypical and discriminatory narratives in entertainment media, and our cultural memory. For the first time, research by the LGBTQ Game Archive will be presented in a museum.

It is remarkable that while video games have become a natural part of our contemporary culture, almost every new release that portrays LGBTIQ* people and the realities of life in a negative way is quickly celebrated as groundbreaking or discredited as sudden ideological politicization. Yet there are a few examples of mainstream titles from the 1990s featuring relatively sensible coming-out storylines and same-sex marriage & flirting options. »Rainbow Arcade« asks not only how social discourses and developments have been reflected in video games and if there has been any major progress in regards of LGBTIQ* representation in entertainment media. In addition, the exhibition explores issues regarding our digital memory and the unique challenges posed by digital culture to archives and institutions and the archival absence of contemporary queer media history.

The exhibition is accompanied by an extensive supporting programme with international developers, artists and researchers. There will also be a catalogue for which a crowdfunding campaign will take place in the summer. Further information, including the press kit, will be released later this year.

»Rainbow Arcade« is curated by an internationally well networked team of curators, consisting of Sarah Rudolph (herzteile.org), Jan Schnorrenberg (Schwules Museum) and Dr. Adrienne Shaw (Temple University, LGBTQ Game Archive). For further press inquiries, the press department of Schwules Museum will be happy to connect you with the curators at any time.

»Rainbow Arcade« is a cooperation between Schwules Museum, the LGBTQ Game Archive, Computerspielmuseum Berlin and Temple University in Philadelphia, PA (USA). The exhibition is also an official partner & program component of gamesweekberlin 2019 (8 - 14 April 2019) and other project partners are Booster Space, BerlinGameScene.com und Jugend im Museum e.V..

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Senatsverwaltung
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