

GLYPTODON MAGAZINE

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Zé Mendes

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BRAZIL: Imperial
and Paper Dungeons

AGROFLORESTA

Learn all about
the Glyptodon's
new project

LUNA MARIS

Colonize the
moon and be the
best in the space race

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Editorial – Names have power

Rumpelstiltskin is a fairy tale assigned to the Grimm brothers in the 19th century. Similar to Little Red Riding Hood or Cinderella, the tale has many variations, but the core of the story is the same in all versions: a young lady receives help by a magical creature; the creature and the lady make a deal to be paid in the future; years after that, the magic creature returns to collect the debt; the lady needs to discover the true name of the creature to avoid a terrible fate.

The tale deals with a variety of subjects, like the dangers of lying and being greedy, but the matter of the name always drew my attention. A powerful magical fairy could be defeated by a simple word. It's an important message to anyone: names have power.

If you think about board games, a product brand communicates the main idea of the game or creates expectations about what the players will find when they open the box: *Terraforming Mars* is a good example of title that informs game core (turning Mars into a habitable place); *Carcassonne* doesn't inform the game concept, but creates curiosity by using the name of a famous French city.

In this number of Glyptodon Magazine you will find three examples of games with interesting names. *Brazil: Imperial* invites players to take a role in a fictional version of Brazilian past filled with queens, kings and adventures. *Luna Maris* talks about science, mineral exploration and technology in the near future. *Agrofloresta* proposes an alternative look at human relationship with nature and agriculture, a necessary concern these days.

And while we're talking about names and their importance, it's time to explain the meaning of Glyptodon and why we have chosen that name.



Glyptodon was a genus of large, heavily armored mammals that lived in South America during prehistory. They looked like big armadillos with 3.3 meters in length, weighted up 2 tons with big and hard shells. Such a fantastic and impressive type of animal with great resistance, strength and a deep connection with the land. All characteristics we need to create a new business.

We are a newborn game studio, with a long way ahead of us to prove our valor. Similarly to the mighty glyptodon we need to practice the resistance to survive in a competitive industry, strength to beat the challenges and find our connections with the land to create something new and unique.

And how far will this big armadillo get? Only time will tell.

INTERVIEW ZÉ MENDES



Zé Mendes, game designer of **Brazil: Imperial**, isn't a rookie in the board game's world. His first project was **Futboard**, published in 2018, a beautiful and fun game about the most popular sport in Brazil: football.

In **Futboard** we can notice two characteristics of Zé Mendes' work: the interest in Brazilian themes and an astonishing visual art work to improve the experience during the gameplay. These characteristics are fundamental elements of **Brazil: Imperial** and help us to explain the enthusiasm of the players about the game.

In the following conversation, Zé Mendes talked about the development of the game, the real extension of its sales success and the inspirations behind **Brazil: Imperial**.

Your newest game, Brazil: Imperial, was launched at the end of 2021 and caught the attention of many players around the world. What will we find in this game?

The game is something we're calling "Euro-X", a mix of the popular resource management and production plus all the freedom to expand across the map that 4X games offers you to create your own Empire from zero. A 100-minute experience with a "Tupiniquim" innovation: Modular Maps that recreate real regions. In addition, the game is themed around Brazil's rich History with a focus on the Imperial Era of the 19th century, and dozens of historical characters, most of them unknown even in Brazil.



The game is a commercial hit. How big is this success?

At the moment the game is signed in 14 languages divided in 3 continents: South America, Europe and Asia. And from the news that comes in, it looks like more is coming. The game was sold out in the first month of sale on the French market, and messages keep coming from several players around the world wanting a copy of the game. In fact, this level of success was a wonderful thing and it rewards our dedicated work and care over the years of development.

Can Brazil: Imperial contribute to the insertion of Brazilian board games in the international markets?

For sure! We are very happy with the success of the game worldwide, it brings visibility to national designers and publishers. And beyond that, the game is called "Brazil", which brings all the focus to our country. I hope I helped new designers to launch a game in the international market with this seed we planted.

Brazil: Imperial is a huge game to plenty of mechanics, components and art. How long did it take to get ready? What were the most significant changes during development?

The idea of such a game was born many years ago. But it only went into the paper at the end of 2016. It was 5 years of hard work. Until the very last moment, before sending the files to the factory, I, Michael Alves, Diego and the development team were working on the details of the game. For sure something I was very pleased with, was the idea of modular maps - it not only adapts the game to the exact number of players, but also creates real historical maps. This was a great challenge until finding the perfect shape for the tiles. Brazil is a game that needs to be seen as "a work as a whole". The very idea of mixing Euro styles with 4X in an experience of 25 minutes per player is something you hardly find, that itself was a big challenge, as there aren't many games to draw on and study. It needs to be well tested to confirm that it is really fun.



Which games inspired you during the process?

Since I had my first contact with modern board games, around 2009, I used to look for a game which could combine freedom of movement and resource management. This was something I only found in PC games like Age of Empires and Civilization. These games let you create an empire the way you want on maps with different features and challenges. One of the boardgames that inspired me a lot was Cuba, my first modern board game. This game brings all that wonderful feeling of manufacturing and marketing the Products. You have a board with your own farm from which you take these resources and then you have the building pieces that turn them into Products. Another game that inspired me, and which is perhaps even more important, is Agricola, the Euro I was playing the

most so far. It was the big inspiration in how we do actions with the Worker Placement mechanics, and how Resources are produced on the map. Because I wanted to see games like this added in freedom over the map, I ended up creating this game myself. The games that inspired me are old and not as well remembered these days, and in the case of PC games, they are not even well known to the Boardgamer audience. The union of these two specific universes worked out very well and was exactly as I dreamed.

All the times I saw Brazil: Imperial on the table the players were unanimous in praising the game art concept. Has art been a concern since the beginning of the project?

It was, and I'm very happy with the praise from the audience! I'm also a Graphic Designer so I felt like blessed to have the opportunity to work as an Art Director on something this special. Even more when dealing with this historical subject that I love and that needed all the affection our people and country deserve. We invited 9 artists, of which 8 Brazilians, to create the illustrations. All this art piece was inspired by real historical works of art and architecture from that time, that show our History. For example, some of the buildings illustrated in the game are inspired by real buildings from the Imperial era. Our main concern was to leave all the arts in harmony and, especially, with a Brazilian identity. Something cheerful, colorful and beautiful. Based on public reception, I believe that this mission was accomplished.

Looking to the future, are you working on any new games? Are there any plans for Brazil: Imperial expansions?

Game designers are always imagining new games. Our mind never stops creating.

Right now I have another international project coming up this year and another game still in development. Furthermore, in partnership with the national designers Rony and Lukas, I'm finishing the development of a new Solo Mode for Brazil: "AUTÔMATO". It's a game mode in which the player uses a deck of cards to simulate an opponent. It's basically like playing against the computer, but analog. In addition, we have just released 2 more unpublished maps for Brazil that are free to download on BGG. But you ask about a real expansion to Brazil? Is something epic coming around? Hello, boss? Director, am I free to comment? Is there more to come? (laugh)



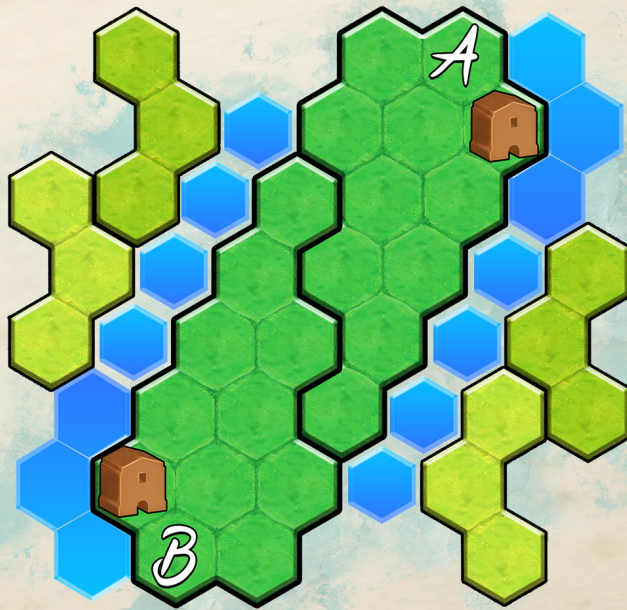
TREATY OF UTRECHT



Combat Chance 

The ownership of the North Cape is at stake, who will control its rivers?
On this new two-player map there is little room for more than one emperor!

A map by Tiago and João Paulo Miranda



From planting an idea to "Agrofloresta"

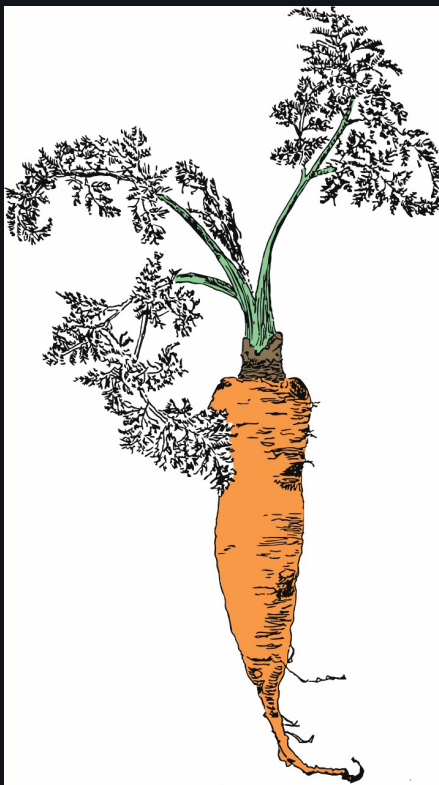
By Monique Garcez

Just over a year ago, the **Liga Brasileira de Mulheres Tabuleiristas*** sowed the seed of an open competition named "Ligadas na Meeple" to select and publish one original game created by women. This little seed was watered by MeepleBR and after a long work, **Agrofloresta** was selected to be the first game published with the Liga's seal.

**In a free translation Brazilian League of Female Boardgamers, is an entity dedicated to promote women's protagonism in the board games universe. Created by game designers, artists and enthusiasts of the hobby, the group organizes workshops, study groups and publishes a periodic magazine about Brazil's board game community.*



Laila Terra is a visual artist and the creator of **Agrofloresta**. In the next paragraphs, Laila talks about the game, the importance of experiences like the competition, and the presence of women's perception in the board game market.



From women to women

"I always created games, but the idea of publishing my own games was too far away for me. I used to ask myself 'How do I publish my games?'. I came to search about open competitions, but the number of opportunities are minimal, and I didn't find this model in Brazil". The experience with Ligadas na Meeple competition was an important opportunity for people, like Laila, to show their projects to a publisher (a rare chance to women in this industry).

The creator of **Agrofloresta** has a good opinion about the experience of sending a game for evaluation, and praised the transparency of the process. "The coolest thing in this open competition was the role of Liga Brasileira de Mulheres Tabuleiristas. The principle wasn't the masculine capitalist competition, but the fact that all participants received feedback and orientations about their games. You could feel that everyone was helping each other. A great innovation for me".

To Laila, the process was inspiring: "I think it's extremely interesting

that the initiative is a process aimed at women. I believe it is a cultural and political milestone in the board games world”.

The game



Agroforesta* is the theme of the game and impacts significantly in the gameplay, a mix of hand management, open market and network building. “It’s a game with set collection too, because you need to create a plantation with vegetal association between species. You need to consider what you are planting to create the best combination in your farm”, Laila says.

The game is playable by 2 to 4 players and has a flexible complexity, adapting to adult and children

players. At this moment, Laila herself is working on the illustrations, but there exists the possibility to select another artist to create the visual art concept of the project.

“The fundamental idea in Agroforesta is showing another perspective about our relationship with Earth. Most games present an old fashioned European colonialist/extrativist concept and we need to change it”, Laila says.

Empowerment

To women who wish to produce and publish games, Laila leaves a special message: “Creating and producing is a very pleasant process. You will experience very important processes for a human being. Try to create something new, free and self conscious. Don’t reproduce the old games because in general they are chauvinist, colonialist and reproduce an extractivism capitalist logic. And most important: you can join groups of women dedicated to play and develop board games, it’s a fantastic experience. If you don’t find this type of group in your neighborhood, go ahead and try to create something like that to implement new ideas”, she concludes.

**According to U. S. Department of Agriculture “Agroforestry is the intentional integration of trees and shrubs into crop and animal farming systems to create environmental, economic, and social benefits.” in agroforestry the diversification of the farming system initiates an agroecological succession, like that in natural ecosystems, and so starts a chain of events that enhance the functionality and sustainability of the farming system.*

LUNA MARIS

Luna Maris is an eurogame developed by Ricardo Amaral, a talented game designer and Physics teacher. I participated in the playtests phase and gathered a lot of information about the theme, the game mechanics and other stuff. So take your protein pills, put your helmet on and control your stress, because we're going to explore the Moon!



THEME

Space exploration is developing thanks to the cooperation between private corporations and governments around the world. Before the challenge to occupy another planet, it will be necessary to create a Moon base to extract resources from our natural satellite. Iron, titanium, water and a powerful fuel, helium-3, are natural wealth available on the Moon.

To get these riches is not easy: it will require lots of work to install lunar probes, to process extracted minerals and to ensure the working conditions for scientists and engineers in the crew.

In *Luna Maris* players take on the role of coordinators in charge of organizing the lunar operations of a big company. It will be necessary to organize the crew, to fulfill demands, supply worker's necessities, improve rooms in the complex and respect the strict environmental parameters.

Luna Maris Overview

Luna Maris is a strategic game for 1 to 4 players. The core mechanisms are Worker Placement, Hand Management, Action Points and a little bit of Set Collection. Combining these elements, it's very clear we are playing a typical eurogame.

The objective is to get as many victory points as possible by the end of the match. So it's necessary to generate resources – iron, titanium, water and helium-3 – to fulfill demands that are available to players. We also gain points for performing certain actions during the game, like harvesting vegetables in the greenhouse, but it is possible to lose points if you produce great quantities of garbage and CO₂.



Each player starts the game with 6 Scientists cards. Activating these, they can execute actions in the lunar base. To perform an action the player needs to put the Scientist meeple in a room in the complex, discard the adequate Scientist card, pay the activation cost (energy, water, oxygen etc.) and, finally, receive the benefits of the activated room.

In total there are 10 rooms, each one with its particularities and special rules:



Airlock: in this place scientists dress in space suits and install lunar probes to extract minerals.



Industrial complex: extracted minerals are processed here. Also the scientists can control the air filters and decrease the CO₂ emissions.



Greenhouse: the astronauts need food to work. The greenhouse is very important to sustain the crew members.



Shipping Dock: after assembling resources, it's necessary to expedite the cargo to Earth and receive some victory points.



Laboratory: research is developed in this area. In this place it is possible to improve the Industrial Complex, Recycling facility and other areas.



Mining Station: the extraction of basalt and titanium is fundamental to sustain a high level production.



Comms Room: it's always good to have the best workers. It's possible to hire high level scientists and improve the human resources of the lunar base.



Power Plants: the solar boards provide lots of energy to the facilities, but sometimes it takes an extra energy supply.



Recycling facility: industrial activities produce huge amounts of garbage. Don't worry! It's possible to recycle and obtain resources in a green sustainable economy.

Sleeping Quarters: If the stress level of the crew is high, maybe it's necessary to take time off for some of the Scientists.

Every match has 5 rounds, and at the end of the journey players count the points and discover which one was more efficient in managing the company's crew.

PLAYTESTS AND ART

We did a great number of tests. In each new match data and players feedback were collected and the team used this information to improve the balance of the game.

The main concerns were to balance strategies and to ensure useful rooms in the lunar base, with interesting actions to take.

The most difficult thing was not allowing one unique way to win, because in this scenario we would have a product with a very short useful life. In the actual stage we are proud to say that *Luna Maris* has many different strategies to goal the victory: focusing on installing lunar probes and producing raw resources; investing in the industrial complex and guaranteeing access to water and helium-3 to fulfill high level demands; hiring high level Scientists and optimizing your actions. These are just some of the possibilities.

The other challenge was to make all rooms in the lunar base useful. In a game limited to 5 rounds, there was a risk that some space would be tedious or boring to the players.

To avoid this problem it was necessary to do lots of calculations, because each room needed to generate victory points objectively – scoring victory points just after it was used –, or indirectly – scoring points in the end of the game or allowing more efficiency in the production.





The white box and the art in clear colors make up an uncommon option if you think in games about mining or space exploration, which gives a special aspect to Luna Maris. Diego Sá was the Brazilian artist and designer responsible for giving life to this representation of space exploration in the 21st century.

Diego Sá chose photorealistic images in purple, light pink and green mixed with watercolor patterns composing an amazing and unique style: the player boards similar to tablets, the food cards with “technical data” about vegetables and the great diversity of the Scientists are the proof of the creativity and modernity of Luna Maris art.



LUNA MARIS: NEXT STEPS

We sent the final archives to the factory and the production was finished last month. Similarly to other games processes, like *Brazil: Imperial* or *Paper Dungeons*, this is an international print: the product has been available in many languages since the beginning of the sales.

In a regular scenario, Luna Maris will arrive at the game stores at the end of the first semester of 2022.

One small step for us, one giant leap for Brazilian game design.

PROMO PAPER DUNGEONS – SHADOW DUNGEON

You can find below one promotional Dungeon Card for your regular matches of Paper Dungeons. It can be used with the components of the base game.

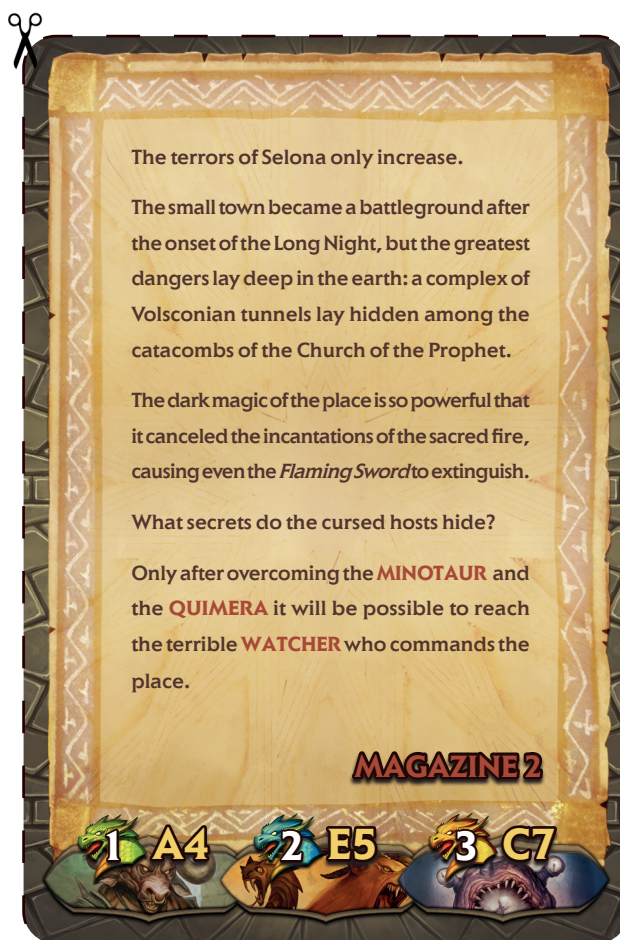
This dungeon features three differences from those found in the base box: **additional water courses, blockaded rooms, and the loss of a magic item.**

During the second step of the setup (Rules, p. 2), besides marking the rooms with villains and the black walls, you must completely fill the indicated rooms in the Dungeon Card (C1, C5) and draw zigzag lines to signalize additional watercourses (E5, C7).

The *blockaded rooms* can't be crossed in any way. Not even magical items, like Khar Medallion and Intangibility Cloak, can help you in this case. To continue your exploration, you will need to turn around the blockaded room.

Additional watercourses are similar to original water areas in the dungeon: usually you can't pass through this area, but the *Khar Medallion* avoids this limitation.

The last modification is the loss of a magic item. The forces of darkness have blocked the power of the *Flaming Sword* 🔥, so you must scratch this magic item from your player sheet, as it will not be possible to acquire it during the match.



STAGES OF GAME DEVELOPING



New project - the game is still a prototype and we are working to set the core mechanics, game flow, and potential visual identity.



In development - the game is in playtest; this phase is essential to establish game rules, find mathematical balance and evaluate possible game modes.



Art & Design - game rules are now consolidated and it's time to establish the visual identity of the product; in this phase, playtests aim to improve user experience.



File preparation - rule book is last reviewed, blind tests and final adjustments are made on the files to print.



In production - all files are sent to the factory and after evaluation of the printed proofs, the game production begins.



Finished - the game is finally ready for sale and distribution by us or our partners in other countries.

COMING SOON



LUNA & MARIS

Coordinate astronauts and mining operations on the Moon.



Eletrika

Construct energy lines and manage hydroelectric power.

Paper Dungeons: The Long Night

Explore new dungeons, complete side quests, and find the treasure box.



Marajoara

Archaeologists searching for Amazon ceramics.

Street art

Street artists compete among themselves to rule the walls of the city.

Agrofloresty

Cultivate an ecological farm with Brazilian native species.



1890: National Railroad Plan

Build railroads and make your fortune investing in Brazilian railway companies.

Project Zeppelin

Duel between civilizations in a fantastic world.

Project Barn

Moles and rabbits dig tunnels and compete for carrots.



Project Boss' dream

A cooperative exploration experience.

Project NPC

Help the community... and make a good profit.