



International Toy Library Association (ITLA)

ITLA is a non-profit making international organisation of national toy library associations and direct international members.

Some of the purposes of ITLA are :

- To disseminate the concept of toy library as a means for bringing play and play materials to people.
- To serve as a link between national toy library organisations, providing opportunity for international exchange of ideas, experiences and materials.
- To organise periodic international events and conferences in collaboration with national associations and partners from many countries. ITLA organises the International Toy Library Conference once every three years.

www.itla-toylibraries.org



French Toy Library Association (ALF)

The French Toy Library Association (ALF) is a non-profit making national association registered by the ministry for youth, sport and community activity.

Created in 1979, it gathers together and represents toy libraries at a national and international level. Its mission is to lead the network of toy libraries and regional associations, to provide help, advice and information. In support of the creation of toy libraries, ALF works for their recognition and for that of the profession of toy librarian. ALF collaborates with training and contributes to research about toy libraries.

There are 1150 toy libraries at present in France spread throughout the country. These cultural organisations set play at the heart of their activities and welcome people of all ages.

Organizer of the Conference : Association des Ludothèques Françaises

7 impasse Chartière

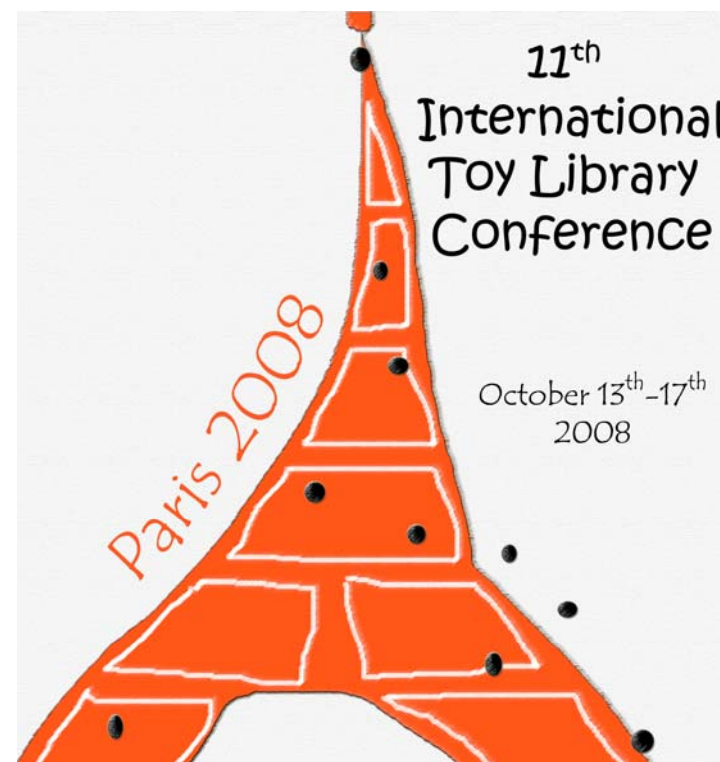
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11th International Toy Library Conference



Call for papers and first announcement

The 11th International Toy Library Conference will be held at the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie de la Villette in Paris from 13th –17th october 2008

Title of the Conference :

Toy libraries bringing toys and games to life



More informations on www.alf-ludotheques.org

Without restricting itself, this conference would like to invite participants to reflect upon and present experiences, research and theories about the objects, the material culture of toys and games that are the basis of toy libraries.

This call for papers, based on variations on three themes, would like to ask contributors to link their paper to the relation between toy libraries and playthings, with toys and games. The aim is to better understand these things in the contemporary world, but also in their history ; to examine the relationship between play and its objects ; to analyse the relationship of toy libraries and toy librarians with playthings. It is about clarifying the place of the object, whether central or marginal according to its use.

Some questions seem particularly important to us : what connection exists between toy libraries and more contemporary toys and games? What is the relationship with playthings made in the community and by children? How are the activities based on the objects? Do children use toys and games in a specific way that is different at the toy library to that in other places? What is at stake for the organisation of the facilities, the toy librarians' training?

It goes without saying that it is appropriate to take into account a wide range of cultural situations, but also the children in their social, cultural, national, and ethnic diversity and gender not forgetting children with special needs.

The question of recognition of the work achieved, and of the toy library itself by other institutions and the government emerges through the different themes proposed.

Theme 1 : Toys and games in toy libraries

This first theme puts the emphasis on the place, uses, and "life" of play materials in toy libraries ; it is about them, starting with toys and games.

How does a toy library select, manage, analyse, organise and give life to play things? What are the choices and the taboos linked to values, cost, situation, security, and even hygiene? What tools and training are needed to achieve these things? What problems do we encounter? What is the relation of toys and games to the job of a toy librarian?

We would also be interested in the relationship of the toy library with the toys and games industry and commerce.

The way play takes place in a toy library and the use made of toys and games on that occasion has its whole place in this theme. The relation of a toy library with contemporary objects, particularly with video games and more generally with multimedia, is an important aspect of this theme.

Activities based on a distance from or a criticism of industrially manufactured objects by the toy library naturally belong here as well as the practice of making toys and games that happens there.

Theme 2 : The toy library, a cultural institution

The toy library seems to be an institution organised around toys and games, the cultural objects of childhood but also of adults. We can in this way talk about a cultural or socio-cultural institution. It is important to explore what this means, to develop international comparisons of the institution related to things.

What is the toy library's identity compared with other institutions where we can perhaps find toys and games (early childhood centres, educational, leisure and cultural institutions like libraries or media libraries).

What should be the rules of toy libraries and toy librarians? What training for toy librarians? What recognition for the facilities? What requirements for toy libraries that develop their practice in special environments (hospital, school, prison, humanitarian aid, etc.)?

How is a toy library perceived by the wide community? What is its cultural and social influence on toy consumption for example, on the improvement of products in the play market, etc?

Theme 3 : Objects and playwork practice in the contemporary world

This third theme aims to broaden reflection on toys and games in the contemporary world beyond toy libraries. It is about presenting research, practice, and analysis of present-day toy and games, work that could interest toy librarians. This includes connections with tradition or history, and subjects related to the production, diffusion, promotion and consumption of playthings. Questions concerning production conditions (globalisation, child labour), quality, security, and the strategies of advertising and marketing find their place here.

The place of contemporary objects, video games in particular, constitutes an important dimension of play culture. Questions related to design, ergonomics, toy adaptations to children's diversity come under this theme as well. We could also ask ourselves about the educational, even therapeutic dimensions of certain toys.

The analysis of play activities, by adults as well as by children in relation to objects, whatever their nature or origin, can also be taken into account.

Guidelines for proposed interventions

- Abstracts should be sent by email as an attachment by 15th april 2008 to the following address : congres@alf-ludotheques.org.
- The abstracts should be no more than 500 words per intervention, in the chosen language for the intervention : english, french or spanish. They should indicate the name of the author(s) (specifying the name of the presenter(s) at the conference), their institutional affiliation, their postal and email addresses.
- The options are a paper or presentation (20 minutes maximum), a symposium composed of 3 or 4 papers (the abstracts in accordance to the common model would be preceded by an introduction of no more than 200 words), a poster (a paper on a board on display for half a day to be presented by its authors for an hour. Poster format to be A 0, height = 1,20 m ; width = 0,90 m).
- The abstracts should specify how the presentation is in keeping with the general pattern of the conference. The abstracts should refer to one of the themes and if necessary specify why it concerns the world of toy libraries.
- Each participant will present one intervention only.

Proposed interventions will be considered by the scientific committee which will inform authors of its decisions before the 1st june 2008.