Beat: Entertainment

ATARI AT LUCCA COMICS & GAMES 2022 FOR ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Nolan Bushnell Guest of Honor

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USPA NEWS - The festival celebrated Atari's 50th anniversary with the presence of the guest of honor Nolan Bushnell, founder of Atari and named by Newsweek as "one of the 50 men who changed America".
The creator of the first large-scale coin-op (Computer Space), as well as the inventor of Pong, was celebrated through an exhibition in San Franceschetto, a former oratory in Piazza San Francesco. Inside the exhibition area some of the rarest Atari coin-ops and many other goodies.

Nolan Bushnell allowed me some of his time for an interview the morning of October 31st.
FR: “Nobody wants to read an encyclopedia to play a game. Games should be easy to learn and hard to master. Someone says you pronounced these words after the release of Computer Space. Do you think they are still current, in the present day?”

NB: “I absolutely believe that in life things should be easy to learn and hard to master. I think that is the right trajectory of most human activities. I think that a lot of people don’t like to be beginners, but you have to be a beginner all the times. My advice is to be an elegant beginner.”

FR: “In the last 50 years the videogame panorama has dramatically changed. We are not talking about going to a bar in Sunnyvale to insert coin and play an arcade videogame anymore. Nowadays we can play anywhere, anytime, and the offer of both hardware and game titles is huge. What do you think about the situation of the videogames panorama and what do you think that will come next?”

NB: “I think that part of the life I’ve always believed in is that videogames are good for you and that people playing games keep their minds active and actually build their brains. Some recent studies proved that people who play games are smarter than people who don’t, and I think that’s a good thing. I also think that the future will see the gamification of many other things: the future education is gamified, because this make it stickyer and faster. People talk about the Metaverse: one of the things about the Metaverse is there will be new kind of games that can be enabled with smart contracts and the infrastructure of the web 3.0. The other part that I think is kind of interesting is: we’ve seen a lot with regular games, we’ve seen quite a bit with virtual reality, I think augmented reality is a little bit behind and I think in the next few years augmented reality will become more important.”

FR: “In your life you have been involved in several projects; according to a previous interview of yours, your tinkering started from a spark you got in 3rd grade. What do you feel like saying to today's young people, who often do not have that spark?”

NB: “My advice to young people is one: be an elegant beginner, begin a lot of things, start a lot of things, have as many different experiences as you can. And that means: don’t play videogames all the time, you know? Do other things, have different jobs, have different hobbies, become passionate! I think there is a very small gap between being a videogame player and a videogame designer. I encourage people who love to play videogames to take that step and become a designer. It’s a very small step. I think that it can be as rewarding to design a game as it is to play a game.”

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