

Welcome to Pick Up and Deliver, the podcast where I pick up my audio recorder as I step

off the train and deliver an episode to you while I walk home.

I'm Brendan Riley.

While greetings listeners, it's a lovely day here in suburban Chicago.

The sun is out, the sky is blue and almost without interruption.

When you look toward the horizon, there is a haze of white rather than blue, but I don't

see any clouds, so I think that's the effect of the light more than any kind of overcast

nature.

Instead we just have bright white sun or bright blue sky, bright light on us. The temperature

on my phone indicates that it's low fifties and that's about what it feels like.

I've got a warmer jacket on, no hat or gloves and I suspect I will not need to put any

hat or gloves on as I'm walking.

All right, weather is firmly in your mind, so let's talk some board games.

It's been a couple episodes since I did one of these, so it's time for a board game

espresso triple shot.

[Coffee noises] Order up!

For those of you new to the podcast, the board game espresso triple shot is an episode

where I talk about three new games I've tried recently and one expansion or game I've

dusted off or some other significant play.

Yeah, that's what it is.

Why don't we jump right into it?

Just as a reminder, these are not full reviews, these are first impressions because they're

games I've played once or maybe twice.

Or in the case of one of these, I think four times, but we'll get there.

So first game I want to talk about today is Dracula's Feast.

There's a 2017 game designed by Peter C Hayward with art by Tania Walker and published

by Jelly Bean Games.

This is a social deduction game in which players are different supernatural

characters from, kind of from the universal monster pantheon, but they're all the generic

versions of those.

And the idea is that you are trying to figure out what everybody's identity is.

In the game you go around and there are a number of ways that you can interact with the

different players which can reveal to you things about their identity, including maybe

even looking at their card and figuring out their identity.

And the goal is to be able to identify each player based on those reactions on your turn.

It's a pretty simple game.

I imagine the depth comes from the variety of different characters that you can be.

I think we used like about two thirds.

We played a sixth person game or five person game.

We used about two thirds of the possible options.

There were additional options available, but we didn't get to try those ones.

I would put this in the category of fine.

It was fine.

We had a nice time with it.

The art on it is really great.

Antonia Walker is the winner here.

Very dynamic.

It has a sort of 1950s feel to it, but it isn't 1950s art.

I really like the feel of the game from that perspective.

It was easy to understand.

We had a quick learning session that worked out very nicely.

And overall it was fun to play.

But it's also pretty unmemorable.

And certainly after one play we weren't like, oh, let's make this a regular game.

I certainly didn't put it on my to buy list.

It was fine.

So, but that was Dracula's Feast from 2017.

Next up I recently got to try Glyphics.

This was published in 2022 designed by Eric Olson, who has made a splash this year with

a game published by the OP.

This is Flip 7.

It's his newest game, which has really taken the board game review space by storm.

I really like it.

It's an excellent little push your luck game.

Very similar in feeling to Dead Man's Draw.

In fact, solves one of the problems of Dead Man's Draw, which is that in a larger player count

game there's a long time between turns.

Flip 7 gets rid of that by having everyone take turns drawing cards rather than having

you draw cards until you bust and then someone else goes.

But we're not talking about Flip 7.

We're talking about Glyphics.

Glyphics is a party game based around the central core idea of a lot of party games

which is trying to get someone to guess a word.

Unlike games like Taboo or Charades, you aren't operating on teams in Glyphics.

Instead, every player is playing by themselves.

But the goal is when you're the one giving the clue, whoever gets the answer and the player

who's giving the clue gets the score.

Alright, so the way the game works is you have a card with six different clues on it.

You're going to play five rounds.

So one of the clues you will not do, you will do the other five.

The game comes with a bunch of small plastic pieces and those pieces have a variety of

shapes.

Some of them are straight, different lengths of straight.

Some of them are curved or wavy or they're circles or ovals or squares or rectangles.

There's a bunch of different shapes.

All of them are hollow so a rectangle, it's not filled in rectangle, it's a hollow rectangle.

They're two-dimensional.

And then there's a couple people, a couple little stick figures, a couple more.

Weird or elaborate shapes.

So maybe there's like maybe 20 to 30 pieces of plastic on the table in various shapes and

sizes and arrangements.

On your turn you're going to pick one of the words on your card.

Like for instance one person had the clue "faucet" and then you're going to like make

a picture with the pieces on the table and you're allowed to move the pieces so it can

be a moving picture.

So you don't have to do.

So like the person doing faucet, they took one of the wavy symbols that means that they

were intending to mean water and they kind of wiggled it and then they had it go down into

the curved thing that was a bowl.

So like you can manipulate the pieces, move them a little bit and your goal is to communicate

the experience or communicate the clue and have to get someone to say it.

You're allowed to point, you're allowed to like wave your hands to trying to get people

to follow up with what they were saying but ultimately you are just trying to get people

to guess the word.

It was more fun than I thought it was going to be.

Actually liked you quite a bit.

It would definitely be a game I would play occasionally.

If someone was like hey you want to play around the glyphs, certainly I do.

That's a fun little party game.

I'm not inclined to like go out and buy it but if I found it at for a cheap price at

a discount store or at a used store I certainly would buy a copy.

Because I think it's interesting and it'd be a fun game to play occasionally.

There are a couple major problems with the publication as far as I'm concerned.

One, it didn't come with anything to count score.

There's no note pad and pencil, there's no score pieces.

Admittedly that would raise the price but that's part of the danger of making a game.

But I'm not a big fan of not giving people what they need to play the game in the game

and there's no pieces to keep score with.

So I think the overall flow of the game would be better if there were.

When we played we just grabbed a copy of Incan Gold and used a little gems from that to

keep score.

That worked fine.

The score is went between like 11 and I think on the low end somebody had like 5 or 6.

So you know you could if you had like 80 little plastic pieces that's probably enough.

70 even would have been fine.

The game also doesn't come with a way to keep track of the minute.

You're supposed to spend one minute.

The game wants you to provide a timer.

Now the reality is almost everybody's got a phone in their pocket and that can keep track

of a minute.

But again, I like a game that doesn't require you to go get other things.

So a sand timer would have been nice.

That said, those are minor complaints.

They're just warnings if you decide to pick this up.

So this game was called Glyphics.

If that were it isn't, clicking in your head, just think of Hyroglyphics without the Hyro.

It's published by BigG Creative Designer Eric Olson.

Next up is the game I've only played.

Next game up is the game I played once online and once on the table.

Maybe twice online, once on the table.

This is Heat.

Heat came out in 2022 to much regard.

I heard a lot of people really excited about it.

I believe it's a days of wonder publication, which means pretty high production values,

really nice art, really nice pieces, thoughtful game.

It was designed by Daniel Skjold Pedersen and Asger Harding

Granerud.

It's got art from Vincent Dutrait.

And it's not his Agricola style, cartoony art.

It's the more realist style, think of something like Tenpenny Parks.

Heat is a car racing game in which you are sort of deciding how to navigate your car

through the racetrack, trying to account for other drivers, trying to account for how much

we wear or heat you're putting into your engine and trying to arrange it so that by the end

of the second round when we play there were two laps.

By the end of the second lap, you're the first one across the line.

Or if other people cross the line in the same round as you that you get further in that

round past the finish line than they do.

It's a well designed, really thoughtful, interesting game in it you have a bunch of cards that allow

you to go different speeds and then there are these heat cards that you get for doing different

things in your deck.

And basically you're deciding you draw a certain number of cards and you decide which

cards to use and when.

The main nuances of the game are you can push your engine to go a little bit further, you

can take heat and draw a card to go a little faster.

The heat itself kind of gets in the way it slows down your ability to do stuff.

There are cards that are there are if you're going slower than the heat dissipates you can

discard it out of your deck back into the supply.

There's a mechanism where if you're going too fast when you go around a corner you might

spin out in which case then a bunch of stuff happens you have to kind of reset and that's

bad for the race unless a lot of people are spinning out I guess.

All in all I thought this was a pretty fun game when I played it on the table which was

this last time last time I played it it was really fun to play even though I don't really

like the theme I don't particularly care for racing games I really don't care about car

racing.

In that regard I did like the bicycle racing game that the same design team made called

Flamme Rouge.

I did like that game quite a bit it had very similar mechanisms this one does have a drafting

mechanism where if you end up right behind another car then you can like basically

go forward one or two extra spaces optionally and it did have this neat mechanism where

the corners if you're going too fast when you go around the corners then you take a bunch

of heat or you spin out I think you take a bunch of heat and that can cause a lot of trouble.

So there's a big element of kind of brinksmanship where you try to get right up to the corner

without going over it unless you are willing to take a bunch of heat and it's all about

managing your cards and your expectations so that when you're in the final push that you

have enough speed to get across the finish line before anybody else.

Now I could see this I've heard things about this game being very hard to learn from the

rules I was taught it when I played it recently I was taught it by somebody who really knew

what they were doing and that worked out really well.

I did play this twice on board game arena when it first appeared on that platform and

I didn't really enjoy myself very well in part because I don't think I really understood

the rules.

I watched a video but as is often the case when I play a game online it took me longer to

grasp the rules than I was willing to wait to play so my first couple plays were a little

blind.

Overall this is an interesting game if you like the theme you're probably going to think

it's great.

If you don't like the theme it's pretty fun but not a game I'm going to go out and buy

because I don't care about racing games.

That is heat from 2022.

The final game I got to try recently is A Gest of Robin Hood.

This is a 2024 game from GMT.

It's recently appeared on board game arena and has become one of my sort of constant

games.

I'm playing that with Chris, (hi Chris) and we're playing sort of in a constant play at

refresh, play at refresh.

Which is very interesting.

It is a two player game.

I believe it does fall into the category of coin games in that different players have

vastly different things they can do and different ways of achieving victory.

In the game one player plays the sheriff of Nottingham and his henchman, the other player

plays Robinhood and his daring band of Merry Men.

And the idea is you're trying to accomplish the things that that side would want to accomplish.

As the sheriff you're trying to arrest or suppress the Merry Men and you're trying to enrich

yourself as Robin Hood you are trying to achieve justice to get the land into revolt through

various kinds of daring do and robbing people.

The gameplay on your turn you're going to pick one of three actions.

You can either do one plot, you can trigger the event card or you can do one plot and one

deed.

They cost different amounts of money so you have to manage your money.

They involve moving your pieces around the board.

It's very tactical that way.

So far I haven't done great although Chris gave me some advice that really helped on the

Robinhood side in terms of just kind of what you think you should be doing.

I need to continue working on that.

I think everyone one of our four or five games that we've played so far but I'm interested

in continuing to learn.

It feels a little bit like learning Pax Renaissance which was a process of very slowly learning

what the game does.

It's pretty interesting.

I think it would be fun to play on the table if I had someone to play with regularly

but it's definitely complicated enough that it's a game you need to learn in order to

do well.

It's kind of game you can just play once in a while probably because I can't.

A Gest of Robin Hod was designed by Fred Serval with Robert Altbauer, Terry

Leeds, Chechu Nieto.

Published by GMT Games and I've been playing it on board game arena.

Definitely worth checking out if you think that sounded interesting which... I think it's

interesting.

Well that's about it for me today.

I hope that that has given you an insight into some of the games I've been playing and

some of those sound interesting.

I'd love to hear what you think of them.

You can share that with me over on boardgamegeek.

Wombat929 is my username there or if you go to guild 3269 you can see what we've been

saying over in the guild and you can sure your thoughts there.

I'd love to hear them.

That's about it for me today.

Thanks for joining me.

I hope your next walk is as pleasant as mine was.

Bye bye.

[Music]

Brought to you by Rattlebox Games.

[music]