

BACK ON THE MEDIEVAL TIMES

GUILDS

AND BECOME RICH MERCHANTS

Guilds are actually very popular with the game designers, and immediately after London here we are with Anderis. You never heard about Anderis? To tell the truth the only Anderis I knew was an excellent white wine from the Italian island of Sardegna, but a quick reading at the beginning of the rule booklet explains that Anderis was the winner of the 7 Kingdom War and that she became rich and wealthy: therefore, Guilds were created to enroll more merchants and to generate more wealth.

The game components are all strong and well done: the hexagonal board is assembled from six 6 different sectors, each one

showing four tents in player colors (yellow, green, blue, and red). In the middle of the board there is a fountain with six very small basins that will be used to count the turns with a ridiculous microscopic token that was so small that I was compelled to immediately search for a wooden one from my spare parts box. Coins are also provided: silver (value 1) and gold (value 5), used to purchase Personality cards (using the silver coins) and Room tiles (with gold coins).

Each player will use a personal board with a 3x4 squares grid: this is supposed to be the headquarter of the Guild and should be filled step by step with living rooms, kitchen,

bedrooms, gardens, etc. The set-up is based on the number of players: everyone will get 10 silver coins but the number and the position of the Personality cards to place around the board will vary between 3 and 6. Finally, 2 to 5 "room" tiles are also offered at the beginning of the game and in every following turn. GUILDS may be played by 2 to 4 people, but from now on I will describe the four players game, to avoid confusion with all those numbers.

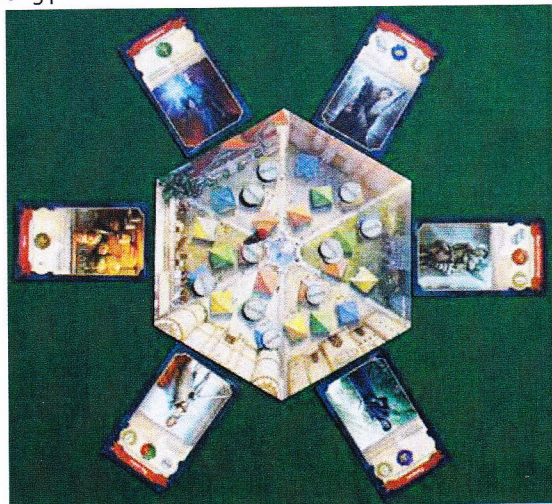
The game starts placing the Personality cards around the board (near the six sectors) and sorting 5 "Objective" cards from a deck of 18. The remaining 13 will not be used at all, and this obviously helps to maintain a certain variability from game to game: they are common objectives for everybody and will assign 5 Victory Points (VP) to each player that will collect the maximum or minimum number of the depicted personality cards (or room tiles), while the second classified will get 3 VP.





Every Personality card depicts a human or an animal and contains essential information. On top we find three icons: the leftmost means that extra money will be assigned to the owner at the beginning of each turn; the middle one explains to which "group" the card belongs and the rightmost shows the VP points that are won or lost at the game's end. Some cards also have an extra information printed under the drawing: this can be a bonus or a special action that this personality may do when activated. The "Witch", for example (top left card in Picture 2), gives 3 extra silver coins to his owner, belongs to the "magicians" group and subtract 2 VP at the end of the game.

Starting with the First Player everybody in turn must now try to get some Personality cards: this is done in an auction, where everybody bets SILVER coins, placing the money on TWO tents of his color in TWO DIFFERENT sectors of the board. This means that each player would like to purchase the personality cards assigned to those sectors: if someone wishes to place his money in a sector where there are already bets he must place more coins than the preceding offer or add coins to his previous one to rise it. Picture 3 shows the board during the betting phase.



I find this mechanics very interesting and quite new if compared to the normal betting systems. The players must carefully plan the use of their money to be able to bet in two different sector every time, and this is not so easy, at least in the first game or two. Anyway, on his turn a player should select one of the following options:

- 1 – Place a bet or rise one of his own in TWO sectors
- 2 – Take ONE (and only one) card from a sector where he actually has the higher bet.
- 3 – Pass: this decision does not prevent the player to bet again in the following round, unless ALL the players pass and therefore the betting phase ends.

When this happens all the silver coins still on the board are taken back and added to the personal reserves of the players, who may now convert 5 silver coins in 1 gold: this is the main way to use the remaining silver coins, unless a player need to make a "reservation" of some "Room" tiles. Otherwise all the silver coins are discarded at the end of the turn.

In the following phase the players, in turn, may purchase one or more new rooms for their office: this phase is again performed on rounds and in each one you may purchase just ONE tile. The cost will vary from 1 to 3 gold coins for the small square rooms (that will assign from 1 to 5 VP) and from 2 to 5 gold coins for the big rectangular tiles (that will assign from 2 to 7 VP)

Every new room must be immediately placed inside the personal board and the players are obliged to check that every "opening" (door or window) will be respected: you may place an opening against



My lines for WIN

Dagmar de Cassan, Editor -in-Chief

Between the last win and this one we have visited PLAY Modena and taken a look on what is new in Italy, new releases, some prototypes, some Italian issues of games already seen in Essen. People played, tested, looked at games and bought them, but besides games there was a big focus on CosPlay and other topics related to games.

For us, slowly but surely the focus is homing on our games Award Spiel der Spiele - most new releases have arrived and are being tested, we are making first preliminary selections.

Currently, we also spend a lot of time on the new EU-wide data protection law; we are an organization in Austria and therefore must adhere to those laws, implement them and document the implementation. But we are, all the same, already working on the next issue of win, which will have the first "big" reviews of 2018 releases - maybe a future award winner will be included. Therefore, do download and read or WIN!

Current issues of WIN can be found at

<http://www.gamesjournal.at>

and our Games Companion Game by Game at

<http://www.gamescompanion.at>



the external wall (as this will become a window) but you cannot do the same against an internal wall: And you cannot place a new wall, against an already existing opening. In other words, you must keep all the doors inside the office open. Of course, you may place a new room in a different position inside the personal board, without connecting it to the rest of the rooms: this is normally done when you really wish a very good tile, but you cannot connect, but you still hope to do that later in the game it. If you cannot legally place a tile you are not allowed to purchase it.

Sometimes you see a tile that you really need but you cannot purchase because you do not have enough gold coins: if you still have some silver coins at this point of the turn you may place one of them on that tile to preserve it for the next turn. Then all the other tiles, all the personality cards still on the board and all the remaining silver coins are discarded and a new turn starts: new cards and tiles are distributed, and each player receives 10 silver coins (plus any eventual extra coins from the previously acquired cards).

At the end of the last turn the players calculate their VP adding:

A – the VP of their Personality cards. Note that some of them may assign

negative VP.

B – the VP of the rooms installed in the Office (some may also assign extra VP if you have in your stock specific cards or tiles)

C – the VP of the “objective” cards (Max or Min)

Some final considerations

I think that Guilds is particularly good for the “average” player: the rules are not difficult to understand and to explain but the

right use of the personality cards is not immediate for the younger players or for a family game, unless an expert “teacher” helps everybody on the first game or two.

The key points obviously are the betting phase and the purchase of the room. The rule that you should bet on TWO different sectors at the beginning seems a simple variant but it in effect it completely changes the concept of “auction”. Before rising a bet, the players must now make exact calculations about their silver reserve: do I need to maintain 5 silver coins in order to get that gold one that I need to purchase a room? Or it is better to absolutely get that card because it is basic for my strategy, even if I will not be able to purchase a new tile? This is the sort of doubts

that you usually have when the auction starts, and you realize that your competitors are challenging you...

There are not “fixed and certain” suggestions or strategies that may help the players to win this game: everything depends on the situation on the board, the number and types of the available Personalities, the number and type of rooms that you need, etc. I personally try to get as a primary objective a Personality card that assign a free “gold coin” at the beginning of every turn



(there are only three of them) if it appears in the first 2-3 turns, and for this card I am ready to spend all my silver coins. But if arrives too late (turn 5 or 6) it does not worth so much money and it will be better to save your silver to change it in gold coins.

Pietro Cremona

An interesting game of "combo" with an innovative auction system and a good mixture of luck and tactics.

It is important to remember that you always need to bet in TWO different sectors: sometimes players forget this, and they will find it impossible to compete in one sector because even if they have the money to rise a bet there they do not have enough to place a bet in the second one. This will oblige you to pass and therefore to lose the selected personality, or to bet into a new sector with less interesting cards.

Without GOLD coins you will not be able to purchase new rooms: in other words, you have to save some silver coins during the auction, if possible. In the first two turns it is usually a good idea to take just one card (possibly one that grants some extra coins) and keep at least 5 silver coins to get 1 gold coin. Remember that the best rooms need 2 to 5 gold coins to be purchased, therefore sometimes you will not purchase a room in one turn in order to save some gold coins for the next one.

The rooms for your office must be selected and used with "open eyes": remember that all the openings must be legally placed, so if you make a mistake it may happens that you are obliged to place a room in a very bad position, one that will prevent you to efficiently complete your headquarters. In order to score VP for a room she should be connected to the main entrance through different doors: if you cannot reach a tile because it is not connected you do not score its' points. But if you play well you may get 10-20 VP from your rooms (the same amount of a good hand of Personalities) otherwise it will be very difficult to win the game.

Looking at its components Guilds initially seems a simple game, but this is not the true sensation: you need a certain "application" and sometimes also a sort of ... Diplo-

macy to obtain something (if you do that I will kill your card with the special effect of my Personality!). Some cards also offer the opportunity to transfer other cards to the opponents: therefore, you may use the latter to get extra money all along the game and finally to pass them (with their negative VP) to your opponents at the end.

A game usually lasts 70-80 minutes (when you already know the rules) and it is variable enough (different objectives, different distribution of personalities and rooms) to have a long life. As in every game where "combos" are important you also need a little luck, sometimes, but this is not too invasive. ☑

Pietro Cremona

INFORMATION

Designer: Christian Giove

Artist: M. Barbati, F. Musetti

Price: ca. 40 Euro

Publisher: Stratelibri / Giochi Uniti 2017

www.giochiuniti.it

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
10+

TIME:
90+

BEWERTUNG

Placement, auction
Users: With friends
Version: it
Rules: de en it pl
In-game text: yes

Comments:

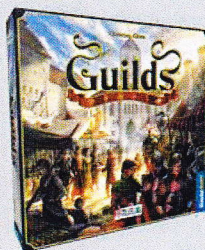
Much-used topic * Some gaming experience is an advantage * Good rules * Unusual auction mechanism

Compares to:

Area-filling games using auctions

Other editions:

Asmodee (de), Galakta (pl), Giochi Uniti (en)



My rating: ★★★★★

GAMES BUYER INFORMATION SYSTEM - GABIS

STRUCTURE

Each game review also features an evaluation which can help you to find the game that best suits your tastes. The color accompanying each game title represents the USER Group. The headline also contains icons for age and number of players.

The BAR in the evaluation box displays color codes for up to 10 features of a game.

USER GROUP

We have defined 4 target groups (color accompanying the head line)

Kinder:

Games for children an educational games. Adults can play in a guiding function.

Familien:

Children and parents play together, all have the same chance to win and have fun.

Freunde:

Young people and adults play together as equals

Experten:

Games with special demands on rules and playing time. Especially for game geeks

Please note for the user groups **Children, Family** and **Friends**: Children who love to play can be ahead of their peers! Please note that our target group "families" does not imply the classical concept of „family games"! Furthermore, our user groups can overlap. The choice of suitable games always depends on your playing partners and your fun with games!

Games that are especially eligible for **Solo** play or for **2 players** or **Large groups** of players are marked with an icon.

FEATURES

Each game targets preferences for different features in a player, therefore each game is not suitable for each player. We have listed 10 features players note when deciding on a game. Only if a player finds his preferred features in a game he will enjoy the game. The color code marks the dominant features. Educational games train the highlighted preference.

Empty boxes: This feature is neglectable or not present

One colored box: This feature is present, but not essential

Two colored boxes: This feature is present and important in the game

Three colored boxes: This feature is dominant and essential

Chance:

The game is influenced by dice, cards or any other form of random generator

Tactics:

Take decision, short-term planning, planning based on one move

Strategy:

Think ahead, long-term planning, planning for several moves

Creativity:

The player has to provide words, phrases, images and other creative efforts

Knowledge:

Cultural and educational knowledge, long-term memory

Memory:

Remember, learn by heart, short-time memory

Communication:

Talk to each other, negotiate, inform

Interaction:

Influencing each other, bluffing, auction

Dexterity:

Motor skills

Action:

Body movement, balance and reaction

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Version: The edition of the game on which the review is based

Rules: This lists the languages in which rules are available or are included in the game, often even more translations can be found on the web.

In-game text: A YES marks a game with language-dependent components that cannot be played without translation or knowledge of the language