

TOY MUSEUM OF CATALONIA

FIGUERES

NATIONAL PRICE OF POPULAR CULTURE 1999 | CROSS OF SANT JORDI 2007



Roser Redó Riera (1925)



MUSEU DEL
JOGUET
DE CATALUNYA
COL·LECCIÓ JOSEP MARIA JOAN ROSA
FIGUERES

BRIEF VISITOR'S GUIDE

« The new inflames me and I'm in love with the old »

J.V. Foix



There are two clearly distinguished yet interrelated and basic benefits when visiting the Toy Museum depending on the visitor's age:

- a) It serves as a bridge to the world of museums so visitors can appreciate and value the importance of preserving and informing about the patrimony around them, no matter what it consists of, and the appropriate attitudes when visiting a public cultural space; and
- b) It provides an introduction to new points of view and serves as a means to reflect on a very familiar subject matter for both children and adults: toys and games.

A guide is not needed to visit the Museum as the items are clearly laid out and presented. The toys are grouped together by subject area and also include photographs from different time periods of children and their toys so that visitors can see how children played in years past. Each toy also includes an explanatory note (name, date, manufacturer, origin, etc.) and, in some cases, a note written by well-known authors reflecting on specific toys and games.

A visit to our Museum allows visitors to be exposed to numerous considerations, encouraging them to reflect on them during or after their visit:

- The past, present and the future based on the evolution of games and toys (before and after industrialisation, with the appearance of new materials, depending on society's evolution and life conditions, etc.);
- Facts and phenomena related to the environment and science, for example, in the "Optical Illusions" section or by seeing the multiple applications of scientific developments to toys; and
- The aesthetic traits of the toys and games themselves, bearing in mind the different periods, countries of origin or if the toys and games were aimed at boys or girls.

THEMATIC SECTIONS

Entrance and Stairwell

We find the Eiffel Tower (1929) consisting of 9,832 Meccano metal construction pieces and 8,623 screws, along with a collection of scale-model cars. When you reach the first floor, you will also see various tops and Ernest the bear, an untiring tightrope walker.



Playing in Ancient Times

There are dolls, rattles, die, and tiles made of clay, bone or ivory. These items all date from Classic Greek and Roman times and were found in archaeological sites in Empúries, Tarragona, etc. You can also play "Tic-Tac-Toe" using a reproduction of a game board from those times.



Children's *Auques*

Here you can see examples of many typical Catalan games, some of which are still played today.



Outdoor Play

There are horses, bicycles, scooters, toys for the beach, balls made from different materials (wicker, leather, plastic, etc.), tops, bowling pins –including a set bearing the likeness of Popeye the Sailor Man which you have to disassemble to play–, *diabolos*, circles, tricycles, jumping ropes, skates (including a pair belonging to the writer, Quim Monzó, and a picture of him playing when he was younger), etc.



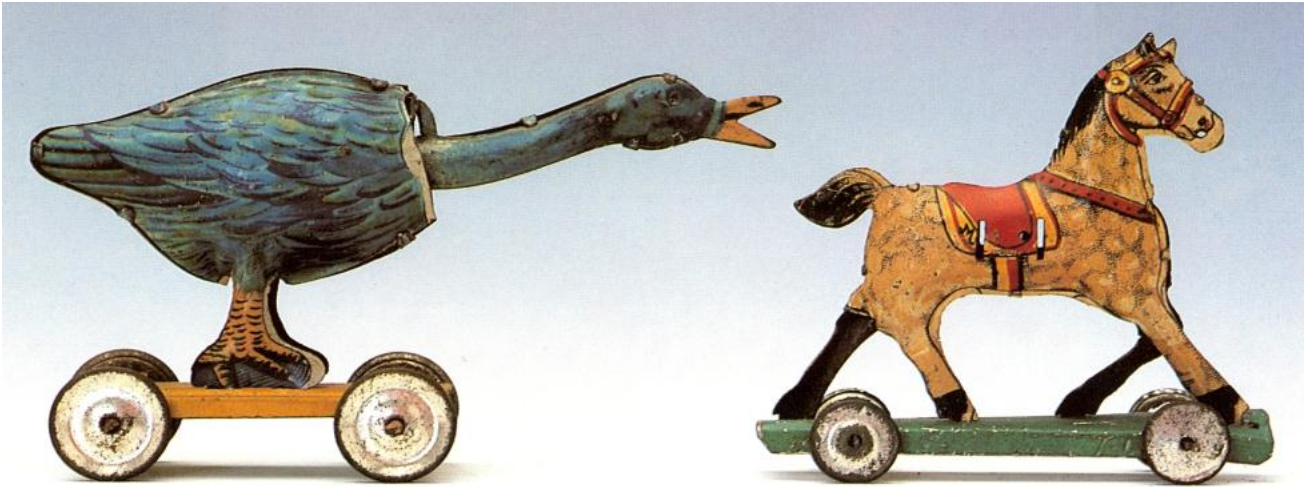
Travel

Included among the many toys representing different means of transportation, there is a miniature of the Mataró train station from 1900, Salvador Puig Antich's electric train (along with a text from the writer, Manuel Vázquez Montalbán), all manner of cars (including a 1930 Bugatti from the Payá factory and a Swedish car made in 1984 by Playgram), an Imperial Trolleycar made in Barcelona (1930), a bus from the same city (1915), and a Barcelona taxi (1920), in addition to hydroplanes, motorcycles (with or without sidecars), boats of all types and materials, etc.



Animals

The majority are made of cardboard and have wheels to move them or they serve as rockers. It's interesting to compare these to the plastic dog made by Ambi Toys in Amsterdam in 1995. There's also a picture of the artist, Joan Brossa, with a cardboard horse, and another large horse which belonged to the politician, Ernest Lluch.



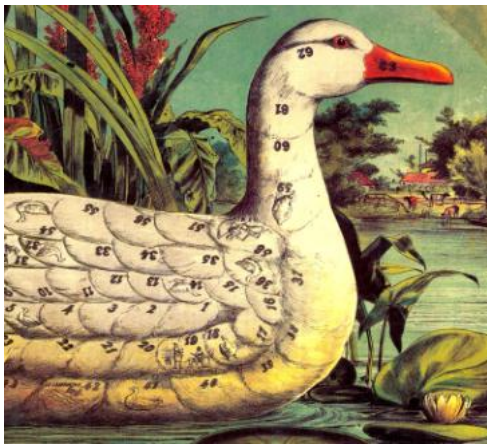
Dominus Vobiscum

Here we'll find churches, altars, processions and priest disguises, along with pictures of children playing.



After-dinner games

Among many other games, we can see *El adivino mágico* (The Magic Fortune-Teller), made in Catalonia by Agapit Borràs, and which is similar to today's "Trivial Pursuit" due to the types of questions asked.



Family Life

There are numerous examples of dolls from different eras and made in a wide variety of material, including *Pepas* (typical Catalan dolls made from cardboard), a wax doll, another doll with four different faces, *Mariquita Pérez* and *Gisela* (famous dolls from the 40s and 50s in Spain) along with all their accessories, and even the first *Barbie* from 1959. We can also see a typical Catalan kitchen set (along with a note by the world-renowned chef, Ferran Adrià), tea sets, miniature food for dollhouses, irons and sewing machines, religious schools and different types of shops.



The world of show business

We can see the play theatres children played with at the beginning of the 20th century (with typical décor, characters, play titles), marionettes and puppets (devils, farmers, police, etc.), circuses and Chinese shadow puppets.



Optical Illusions

We can see how a zoetrope works (a precursor to films) and observe different optical illusions (anamorphic projectors, etc.). We will also find how to make fun shadows with our hands or see the CineNic toy (manufactured in Catalonia and a great success as the first toy allowing people to project moving images).



Construction games

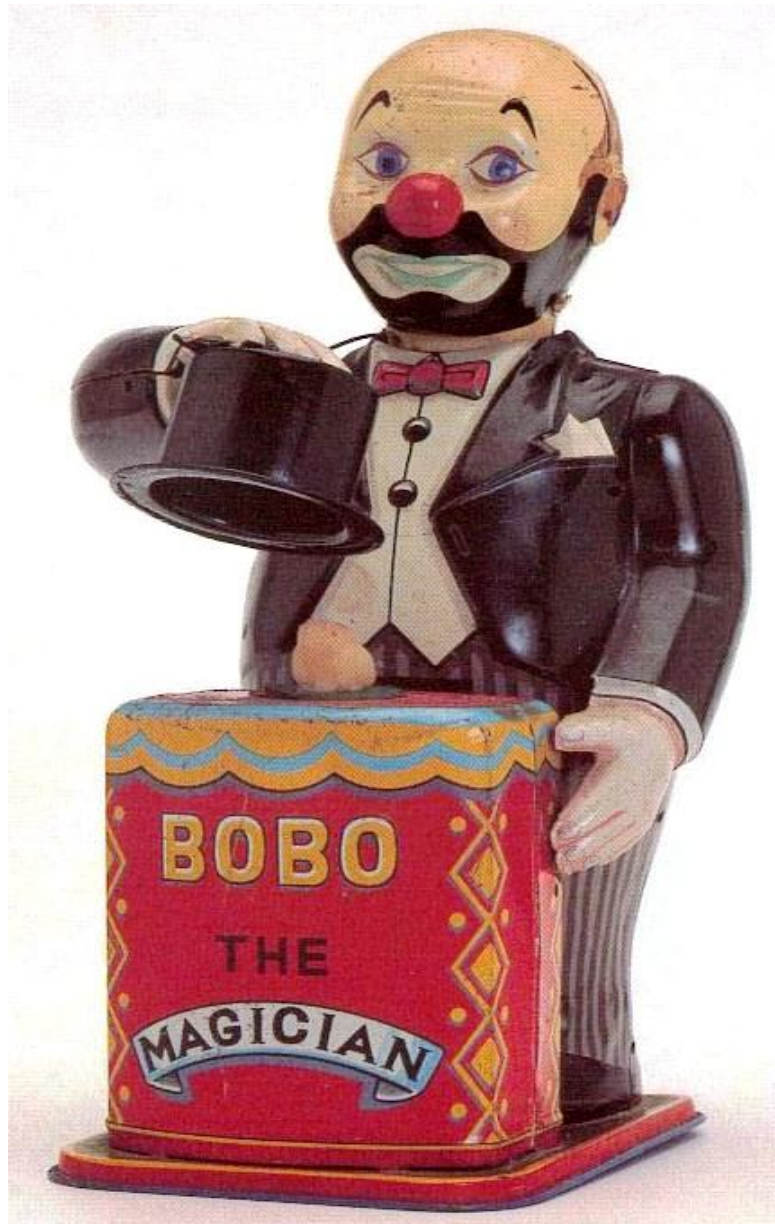
Among many shapes and materials, the collection of construction games made by Meccano (metallic constructions such as the Eiffel Tower found on the Museum's ground floor) and Kapla (wood blocks) stand out.



Magic tricks and conjuring

Behind the curtain we'll discover many types of items and magic kits such as *El pequeño prestidigitador* (The Little Conjurer) which belonged to the poet, Joan Brossa.





The *caganer*

In this section we'll find many examples of the most popular figure in the Catalan Christmas manger scenes (throughout Spain, families traditionally put together a small manger scene in their homes at Christmas). The *caganer* (or "pooper") is said to bring good luck (his/her actions making the fields around the manger fertile, thus representing a symbol of prosperity). The *caganer* is normally hidden within the manger, and visitors have to try to find him/her.



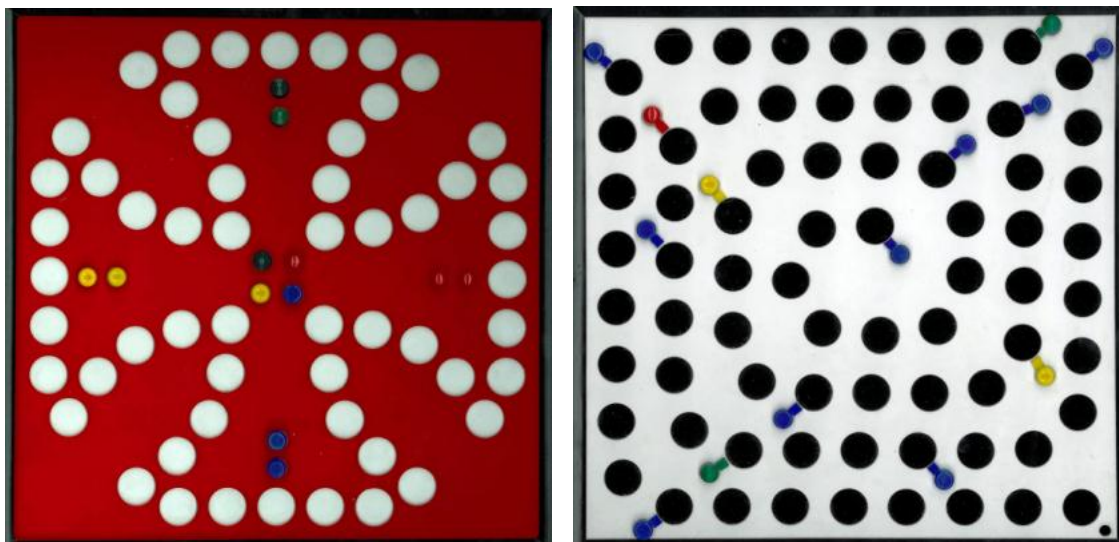
Card games

We boast an ample variety of playing cards with different designs and subject matters.



Games for the visually impaired

There are numerous board games and books adapted for the blind. There is also a book available for visitors to see and feel what Braille writing is like.



Allegro Giocoso

In addition to the numerous musical instruments on display, we should highlight small recorders for children, including the *Cuentacuentos* story-teller.



Dressing-up

In this section visitors will find numerous disguises, masks and photos from different eras of boys and girls in disguise.



Playing with paper

This section includes paper cut-outs, including a large paper skeleton or the interesting figures made by BOOOX in 1990.

Phoney war

Here we'll find children wearing uniforms from the Spanish Civil War, lead soldiers, strategy games, etc.



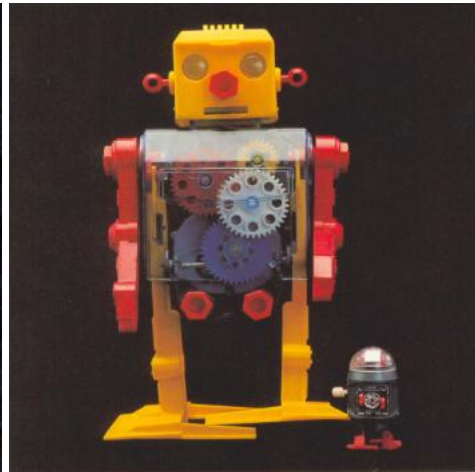
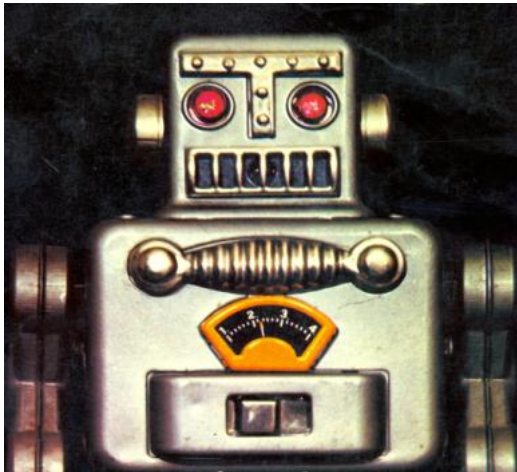
Magical Movement

This section features numerous wind-up or battery-operated toys. These include pool players, students (with their marks attached to their suitcases), Charlie Chaplin, the three little pigs, etc.



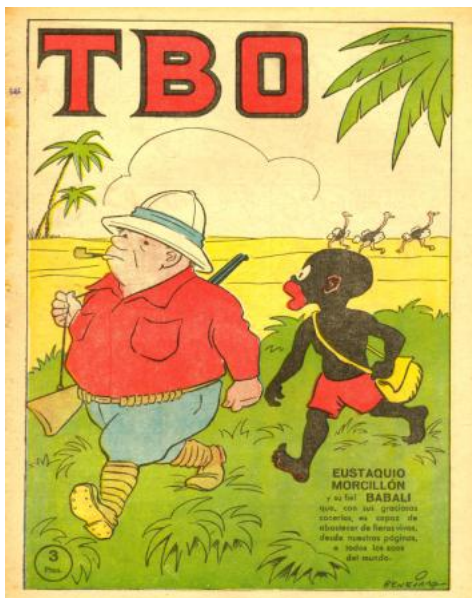
Intergalactic toys

There are spaceships and robots, the majority made in plastic or metal and many of which are battery-operated.



Comics and cartoon strips

Here we'll find examples of typical comics such as *TBO*, *Patufet* and *Esquitz*, and even a cigar cutter invented by Professor Franz de Copenhagen, a character in the *TBO* series.



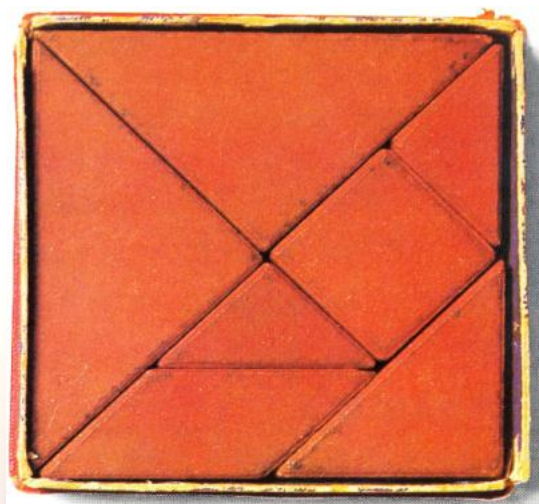
Dolls of the world

It's interesting to note the differences in dolls from different countries (materials, facial features, dresses, etc.).



Puzzles

This section includes a wide variety of puzzles and games that require keeping your wits sharp.



Parlour games

These cases feature different board games, interesting dominoes (circular or containing chocolate, for example), a 1940 "Cheminova" chemistry set, an "Silabario Eléctrico" (Electric Syllabary), the famous Aladdin Toys' wood toys manufactured by Torres García in the 1920s, a 1930's travelling salesman's wares, etc.

Mickeymania

On display are many diverse items related to Walt Disney's most famous mouse, Mickey.



Bears and Teddy Bears

Children have always had rag or plush bears and teddy bears, and they are resistant to almost anything.



Don Osito Marquina / The first twenty years of Salvador Dalí

Found among the different plush toys is *Don Osito Marquina* (Marquina Teddy Bear Esquire), a teddy bear belonging to Anna Maria and Salvador Dalí. *Don Osito Marquina* is accompanied by the letters written to him by the poet, Federico García Lorca. We have also prepared a DVD with 3-D lenticular portraits of Anna Maria and Salvador Dalí in 1914, both making faces; and a reconstruction of the Dalí-Domènech family portraits, including the parents, the brother, the sister, Salvador himself, school, and Salvador's first work and exhibits.



A tribute to the toymakers

If we look up, we'll see many different cardboard animals that live on different floors of the Museum. We'll also see the famous "giant" busts of Figueres, a collection of Scaléxtric cars, manufacturing processes for a tin toy and a traditional spinning top, a 1945 table football (foosball), one of the Three Wise Men which also serves as a mailbox to drop off cards for the Three Wise Men (children in Spain traditionally send their cards to the latter versus Santa Clause as gifts are given on January 6th, the day of the Epiphany), etc. In the museum shop that follows this section, there is also a working cable car.



Papirustòria

At the end of the visit to the museum, we offer a video about pop-up books.

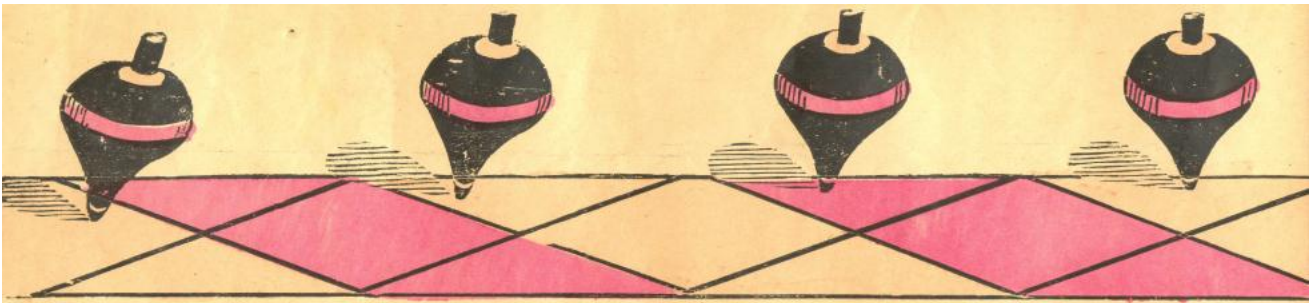




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