

PRESS RELEASE

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Kiwi duo dicing with pirates on Kickstarter

What is it that connects two Aucklanders to the 1920's world of shipping, to piracy, and to a world class German artist?

Three years ago Amanda Milne and Julia Schiller saw that New Zealand had precious little presence in the international board games market, so they decided to do something about it. They formed Schilmil Games Ltd.

Now, with four published games and over 60 retailers in New Zealand, Australia and the USA, they are launching Manifest, their most ambitious board game project yet, using the international crowd funding site Kickstarter.

The designers finished refining the game with the help of over 100 play-testers throughout New Zealand, a job that took 2 years from initial concept. Manifest will be their fifth published game, but it is the first time they are using Kickstarter to crowd-fund the printing stage.

In the game players control a shipping company negotiating contracts and shipping cargo (such as motorcycles to Petrograd and wool from Auckland), as well as migrant passengers, to ports around the world. Players have to avoid pirates, storms, dockside thieves and other 1920s style hazards on the way. If you manage to deliver the goods you gain points for your company.

Reviews have been excellent. On the well-known gaming web site Board Game Geek, Zirk van den Berg says: *"Manifest is a solid, smart euro game – light enough for family fun, interesting enough for more demanding gamers. The mechanics feel familiar, but combine into an elegant game with distinct charm. I, for one, would rather play Manifest than Ticket to Ride, for instance, and I can see people having a lot of fun with this one."* USA-based ISlayTheDragon says: *"Manifest rises above standard pick-up and deliver titles, revealing its true nature as a highly interactive "take-that" game of mayhem."*

In their quest to design and publish a world-class New Zealand board game, Milne and Schiller have had some luck along the way. Looking for a top illustrator, they contacted Franz Vohwinkel in Seattle, the German-born artist responsible for the artwork of over 200 of the world's best-known board games. To their surprise, he readily agreed to help.

"At first, we had no idea that he was the rock star of the game-art world!" says Milne. *"We just loved his work on Africana. He found it novel to work with female game designers from NZ, and enjoyed playing the prototype we sent him. He was a dream to work with and the result is a fantastic looking game".* *"Apparently, being a female game designer is a rare thing"* says Schiller. *"If we can pull off a successful game by self-publishing it, then it will be a major coup for us".*

So what next for Manifest? *"We are going for it"* says Milne. *"We've asked for \$27,000 in funding. Two days in, we are 14% there and we are asking everyone to get behind us and back us on Kickstarter".* *"It's not something for nothing. You'll get a world-class board game. There are other*

rewards too and if we succeed, we hope you'll also get satisfaction out of seeing a company run by two Kiwi women making it in the international marketplace!"

Why Kickstarter? "The international board game market is highly competitive" says Amanda Milne. "We wanted Manifest to be a truly world-class board game. We've spent two years and nearly every cent we have on designing and testing Manifest. We've got the product ready, but print and production needs to be world-class too. The logical choice to fund this was Kickstarter".



If you'd like to help Amanda and Julia in their quest, visit www.manifestgame.com and you'll be taken straight to their Kickstarter page.

Manifest the board game is on Kickstarter until April 3rd



Schil and Mil in front of the Manifest Game map

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Photos available for download [here](#)