

=====

## Het LEIDSCHEPLEINSPEL



It is in the early fifties of the last Century and my family is on a dark winter-evening sitting round the table, just the moment for a game to play. And, although my mother did not like playing games, when this one was taken out of the locker by my father everyone, even she, was enthusiastic for this one: Het LEIDSCHEPLEINSPEL would be for sure promising a nice and happy evening for our family.

But where did this game come from? Only our family played the game and in none of my friends' homes an example could be found!

Later, in my collecting days, I did find more of them but only a few. So, this was really worth researching.

But on the Box of the game no information at all was given, only the name.

On the Board there is more:

= the name of the firm that did publish the game: SYRINX

= the name of the artist who designed the board: Dopey Scheffer

On the Board and added to the Rules is the following text:

Wettig gedeponereerd. ALLE RECHTEN VAN ONTWERP TEKST EN BEELD ZIJN  
BESCHERMD VOLGEND DE AUTEURSWET 1912

*(Deposited conform Law. ALL RIGHTS OF DESIGN TEXT AND IMAGE ARE PROTECTED  
ACCORDING TO THE AUTHORSLAW 1912)*

= with K-number K198 on the Rules which indicates the printer: Ellermann Harms from Amsterdam, because after 1941 the Germans wanted to control the distribution and use of paper, so every printing-firm got a unique number.

The publishing-firm SYRINX is a complete mystery. During the years of WWII this firm (as far as we know) did publish at least some 10 games (see addendum) but nothing more about its seat (maybe Amsterdam) or business can, after so many years, be found.

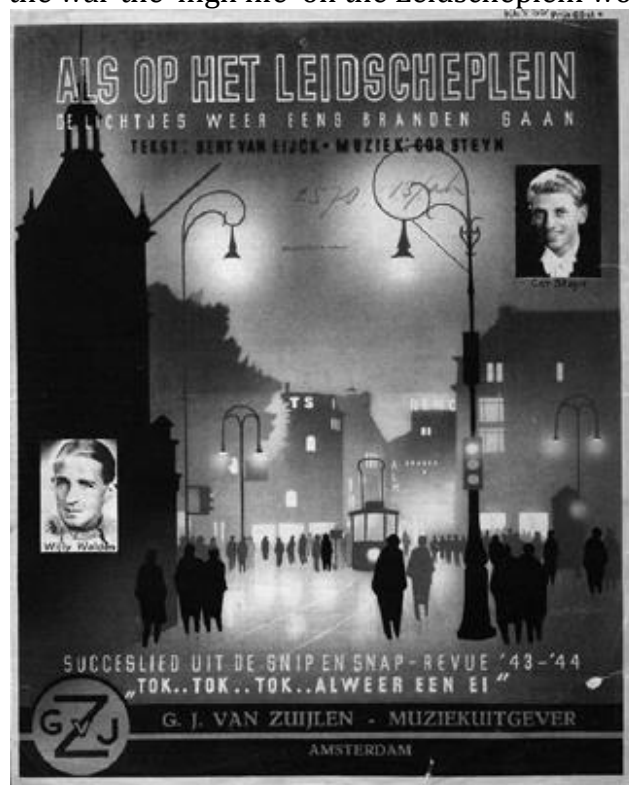
The name of the artist: Dopey Scheffer, does give more clues.

We know that his Christian name was Jan Scheffer and that "Dopey" was his 'nickname', obvious coming from the name of the youngest dwarf in the film "Snowwhite and the 7 Dwarfs"! Jan was in 1943 working for Mr. Joop Geesink in his studio, which became after the war the famous Dutch "DOLLYWOOD" a studio where all kinds of puppet-films did come from.

Geesink also produced and published games during the war under the name VARIÉTÉ. But before the war Geesink owned a cartoon-studio and designed decors for theater-productions like the "SNIP & SNAP Revue". One of the highlights of the Revue of '43-'44 (amusement and thus also theater-productions did continue during the war years at daytime, because in the evening and at night it was forbidden to go on the streets) was this song written in '42:

*(WHEN AT THE LEIDSCHPELEIN THE SMALL LIGHTS WILL SHINE AGAIN)*

This, of course, refers to the nostalgic past when there was no darkening and the wish that after the war the 'high life' on the Leidscheplein would return.



When I found the published score with the original cover, I immediately recognized the artwork from the Geesink-studio. We can only guess about the relation between song and game, but it would not be unthinkable that Geesink did see the Revue as a good promotional vehicle for his game!

This game itself is a kind of "time-capsule" where one of the entertainment-centers of Amsterdam from before the war is frozen in time. Nowadays only a few of these establishments (bars; restaurants; cafés theaters) did survive and are still there on the

(now named in the new spelling) LEIDSEPLEIN. Even the famous Police-Bureau has been closed at the end of the seventies of the last Century!



At first sight the game does have a kind of resemblance to Monopoly but in my opinion (and that is why we liked the game more than the famous one during our youth) it is better and more balanced. Players become owners of the diverse establishments and entertainment-businesses and are at the same time visitors of the other players places'. During the first rounds, the first visitor becomes the owner of a place. Rolling the 2 Dice (1 normal six-sided- and 1 Poker-Die) brings the players round the Board and indicates what consumption(s) has to be taken by using the numbers, but also indicates with the Poker-Die what to do further:

**Ace:** paying a round for all players; **King:** only pay for yourself; **Queen:** pay also for the lady (when women are also playing the game is it the opposite: no pay with a Queen, pay double with a King!) **Jack;** free entrance and no pay; **10** pay for 1 but also take a PECHKAARTJE (Bad Luck Card) -here are some examples- and follow the instructions:



; 9 pay for 1 but also receive one of the following small cards to your own wish:



Liquor-license / Outdoor-Café-license / Music-license / Dance-license  
A player always receives a license-card, when the 9 is thrown with the Poker-Die, of his wish, also in the situation that he cannot place the card on one of his establishments immediately! Getting this license-card allows the player to lay it on the Board in one of his owned places when the owner-card mentions this extra:



This is an establishment where all licenses are allowed!

With these licenses on your place, visitors do have to pay more:

**Liquor-license:**

Without it the visitor only has to pay for a "KOFFIE" (Coffee) but with the license the thrown number on the die indicates what to order: **Example** – with a thrown 5 it becomes a COCKTAIL, as can be seen on the yellow hexagon, and you must pay 2.50 .

**Outdoor-Café-license:**

First take a drink inside and then outside and pay for both (double).

**Music-license:**

The price for **every** consumption is raised by 1,- .

This thus also counts for drink **and** food and, if so, for the lady and for giving a round.

**Dance-license:**

For every visitor you have to pay 2.50 entrance. If so, also for the lady and when giving a round.

For the Theaters (blue line) and the Snack(food)bars (red line) the identical colored hexagons give the payment conform the thrown number.

For the Hotel you must rent a room for 5,- , order something to eat, according to the thrown number and red hexagon and buy a drink: KOFFIE without a license and using the yellow hexagon and the thrown number when a Liquor-license is on the Hotel.

And don't forget to pay all the extra's when you stand a round (thrown Ace) or when the lady is at your side! Only the corners are 'free' places (no pay) but when entering the POLITIEBUREAU (Police station) you lose a Turn.

So round after play-round you spent your start-money of 75,- and receives income from your places.

The PECHKAARTJES partly take money out of the game or order to close establishments for a certain time. Closed places (the owners-card is laid upside down on the establishment on the board showing **GESLOTEN** -closed-) are jumped over when moving your pawn in your turn and thus cannot generate income.

When a player is not able to pay for his costs, he is immediately bankrupt and must close all his businesses and returns his licenses to the bank-holder and is out of the game.

Now the game speeds up because more and more establishments must close the doors because of bankruptcy of the owners and the last one in the game, wins.

+++++

Enclosed, in nearly every game I have seen, is a sheet of paper with an announcement:



*L.S.*

*If wished one can order to the Leidscheplein spel, a gameboard with establishments at the Rembrandt- and Thorbeckeplein in Amsterdam and at the Buitenhof in The Hague, with corresponding owners-cards.*

*The game can be played in the same way.*

*SYRINX SPEL*

This announcement is again a mystery.

Nor a board with the other entertainment-location in Amsterdam (*Rembrandt- en Thorbeckeplein*), nor of that in The Hague (*Buitenhof*) ever 'popped up' or have been seen by collectors.

It would be amazing to find these, when they exist at all, but probably the wish to publish them in 1942 was there but it never materialized.

***It was all due to my father Wim Horn who bought this game during WorldWarII !***

# Addendum

1940

# SYRINX Spelen (games)



1941



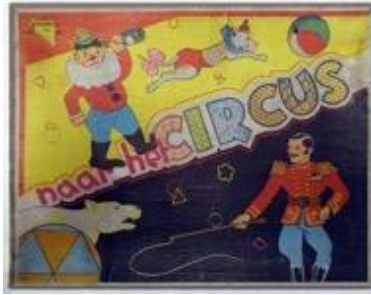
1942





1943





1944



These are the SYRINX-games that through the years are located at auctions or which are part of collections of game-collectors. Some are confirmed as SYRINX-games because there is a mentioning in advertisements for games at the time. In these advertisements no other titles that could be connected to SYRINX are found. F.H.

Besides the “**LEIDSCHEPLEINSPEL**” and “**t Beleg van Leyden**” these games are simple ones and are all made out of cheap cardboard and are low prized. The “Damspel” from 1944 even does have punched cardboard draughts-men!