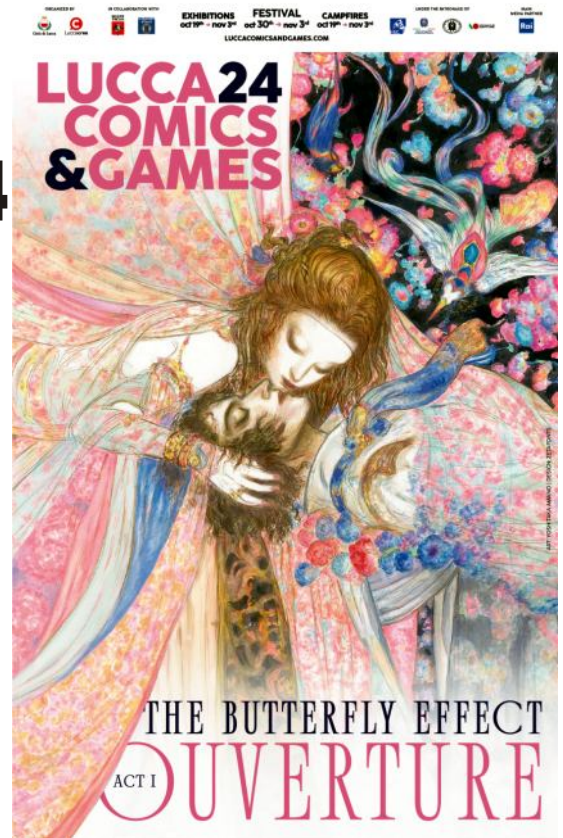


The Butterfly Effect: Lucca Comics & Games 2024



Another memorable edition of *Lucca Comics & Games*, the event that celebrates the transformative power of art and creativity, is close at hand. *The Butterfly Effect* is the title of the 2024 edition which runs from 30 October to 3 November.

Just a little bit of history

I believe, in order to be able to fully appreciate the Games part of the event, you are not supposed to belong to a generation prior to Generation Y. Also called Millennials, born between the early Eighties and the year 2000, they are the first digital natives. Of course, later generations are more than ok. Unfortunately, being born exactly on the border between two earlier generations, Baby Boomers and Generation X, I am not blessed with the power of digital vision.

However, as a young teenager, I used to enjoy the event in the days when it was called Salone Internazionale dei Comics. I remember going with friends to the *pallone*, the big ball, an inflatable white and green structure set up at the centre of piazza Napoleone (pictured above), in the hope that famous artists would draw something for us, and they did. From its start, in 1966, until the late Seventies, the *pallone* contained most of what was going on during the event. In those lucky days, everything was free. The entrance ticket was introduced in 1990. At that time, there were neither games, nor cosplayers (costume players), the people you see wandering around town wearing the outfits of their favourite characters. After that period, as it gradually gained popularity, the event started to require bigger premises so from 1980 to 2006 it was moved to the Palazzetto dello Sport. Then the first Lucca Games arrived. It was a parallel event originally organised in 1993 in a tensile structure outside the Palazzetto. Finally, in 1996, the Salone Internazionale dei Comics became Lucca Comics and in 2000, when the two exhibits were united to form one, the event became Lucca Comics & Games.

Fifty years of D&D art

Despite my widespread ignorance regarding digital developments, there is a game that rings my bells, which is called Dungeons and Dragons. D&D, or DnD, is a fantasy tabletop role-playing game that was first published in 1974, so this year Lucca

Comics & Games celebrates its fiftieth anniversary with a comprehensive exhibition hosted at the Dei Servi Church, from 26 October to 3 November. On display, there will be works from the *Koder Collection*, the world's most complete collection of artwork related to *Dungeons & Dragons* and fantasy games, assembled over the course of more than two decades. With the aim of preserving them, the collection brings together more than 100 pieces: original works, both published artworks and preparatory sketches, memorabilia, rare publications, and iconic objects, created over the last half century. There is also the idea of sowing the seeds for a long-term project, the founding of an institution that will make them accessible to the public, and will highlight the impact that this type of art has on popular culture. Therefore, it will be a retrospective on the last fifty years of *D&D* art and on the ways in which it has spread through society, forever influencing the worlds of gaming and literature, achieving a global impact. This is the famous "butterfly effect", a corollary of *Chaos Theory*, which studies the way in which small changes can lead to large consequences, precisely in the spirit of *Lucca Comics & Games*.

The Butterfly Effect and Puccini's centenary

This year's festival posters have been designed by world famous Japanese artist Yoshitaka Amano, who decided that his project should also celebrate Puccini's hundredth anniversary. For the three acts of *The Butterfly Effect*, Amano created three images, to be released at the end of three different months: June, September, and October 2024. The first one, *Overture*, is dedicated to Puccini's *Tosca*. It features an embrace, both physical and imaginary, between a man and a woman, which captures the energy of the festival and the thousand colours of its audience of butterflies. The second image is dedicated to *Madama Butterfly*, and the third one, to be released on 30 October, is linked to Puccini's immortal princess Turandot, to reflect the apotheosis of creativity and passion that is *Lucca Comics & Games*. In the year of the Puccini centenary, Amano has tried to think of *Lucca Comics & Games* as a contemporary version of that synesthetic ideal which, a century ago, was represented by Opera, a combination of literary invention, scenic wonder, and musical magic.

– by Chiara Calabrese