PROPOSAL TO AMEND THE GAMA BYLAWS

Executive Summary:

The Academy of Gaming Art & Design is currently an ad hoc committee of GAMA. It has no formal bylaws, no defined structure, no specific responsibilities, and no defined process for handling any portion of the work it currently undertakes on behalf of GAMA.

The cumulative effect of this situation in the past several years is that the Academy has demonstrated a lack of consistency and responsiveness, it has allowed the prestige of the ORIGINS Awards to decline and it has proved unable or unwilling to embrace change. Its interests are not fully aligned with the GAMA Membership’s. And it has little or no accountability, creating a situation lacking in institutional control over its actions.

If the ORIGINS Awards are to become more meaningful, and rise to the challenge of adding real value to the nominees and the recipients, and are to become recognized widely by publishers, distributors, retailers and consumers as a true mark of excellence, this situation must change.

This proposal sets forth three proposed Amendments to the GAMA Bylaws that will formally describe the Academy, define its structure, enumerate its responsibilities with regard to the ORIGINS Awards, and define how it will operate in the future.

How is an Amendment ratified?

GAMA’s Bylaws (http://www.gama.org/pdfs/GAMA%20Bylaws-Grd%20Org%20Guidelines.txt) outline the following process for ratifying an Amendment:

Article IX - Amendments

These bylaws may be amended repealed or altered, in whole or in part, by a majority vote of all voting members, at any duly organized meeting of the Association or by three-fourths of those voting members present and voting at the annual membership meeting. The proposed change shall be mailed to the last recorded address of each voting member at least thirty days prior to the meeting which is to consider such proposed change.

There are currently 38 Full Voting Members of GAMA. Thus 16 votes are needed to amend the GAMA Bylaws. (A list of the current GAMA Membership can be obtained here: http://www.gama.org/pdfs/Membership%20Directory-%20FVM-Associate.txt. Only those members listed as “Type A – Full” are Voting Members of GAMA.)

Under what conditions can a meeting be called to amend the Bylaws?

The “Annual Meeting” is always held in conjunction with the ORIGINS convention. This year, the meeting was held the Wednesday before the start of the show. GAMA is required, per its bylaws to send notice to all Full Voting members at least 10 days before the Annual Meeting.

NOTE: The Annual Meeting is unique in that amendments to the Bylaws can be approved at the Annual Meeting by 3/4ths of those Full Voting members attending, even if that total is less than half of the total number of Full Voting members. This year 31 Full Voting members were represented either in person or by proxy. Successfully amending the Bylaws would have required 24 votes.

A “Special Meeting” may be called by the Board of Directors or the Executive Committee of GAMA at any time. A “Special Meeting” must be called if 20 Full Voting members request such a meeting in
writing. Notice of such a special meeting must be sent at least 10 days prior to the meeting to all Full Voting Members.

A “Special Meeting” may also be called at any time and place, with or without notification, if every Full Voting Member waives in writing their right to prior notice.

**When will the meeting be called to consider this Amendment?**

First, we intend to ask all the Full Voting Members to waive their right to prior notice and hold such a meeting within 30 days of the distribution of this proposal.

Failing that, we intend to solicit the 20 votes necessary to request a Special Meeting to be held 60 days after the distribution of this proposal.

Failing that, we intend to request that the President of GAMA consider the Amendment as New Business at the regularly scheduled GAMA meeting held at the GAMA Trade Show in the early spring of 2004.

Failing that, we intend to place this Amendment in consideration as New Business at the Annual Meeting in 2004.

**Wouldn’t everyone have to travel to a Special Meeting?**

No. Special Meetings may be held via mail, or Full Voting Members may execute a written proxy which can be carried to the meeting location to represent their vote.

**Have the GAMA Bylaws ever been amended?**

As of this writing there has been no Amendment to the GAMA Bylaws since the current Bylaws were ratified in 1990.

**What will these Amendments do?**

Amendment 1 has three parts:

1. Define the Academy of Adventure Art & Design formally and set forth its role in GAMA
2. Define a process to select a Chair for the Academy, and establish a 5 person Academy Committee, and establish requirements for Academy membership
3. Define the duties of the Academy

Amendment 2 has one part:

1. Define the number and nature of the ORIGINS Awards categories and the nature of the Hall of Fame

Amendment 3 has one part:

1. Define the process for balloting and voting for the ORIGINS Awards

**Doesn’t the Academy already exist, and doesn’t it already do these things?**

Because it exists solely as an ad hoc committee of GAMA, and its actions are not described by the GAMA Bylaws, it does not, and cannot, have any more formal existence, charter, or process. This flaw lies at the heart of the problems the ORIGINS Awards are encountering in terms of winning widespread legitimacy, recognition, and value.
Shouldn’t the Chair of the Academy be responsible for defining the role of the Academy?

The ORIGINS Awards are too important to GAMA as an organization and to the GAMA Membership to be left to the decisions of one unelected individual, no matter who that individual may be.

By encoding the Academy’s responsibilities and structure into the GAMA Bylaws, we will be using the pre-existing mechanism already established by those Bylaws to determine how changes to the Academy’s scope and mission can be made in the future. This puts the responsibility for effectively managing and monitoring the progress of the Academy in the hands of the GAMA Full Voting Membership, where it belongs.

A vote of the GAMA Members to modify the GAMA Bylaws is the only way, and the only appropriate way, to clearly define the Academy’s role, and that of the ORIGINS Awards themselves.

The following is the proposed text of the Amendments to the GAMA Bylaws, hereby submitted for your review and approval.

AMENDMENT 1

Section 1. The Academy of Gaming Art & Design

A. The Academy of Gaming Art & Design will be a permanent committee of the Association.

B. It is the responsibility of the Academy of Gaming Art & Design to administer the annual process of nominating, voting for, and awarding the ORIGINS Awards, and the process of nominating, voting for and inducting new members of the Hall of Fame.

Section 2. The Composition of the Academy of Gaming Art & Design

A. The Academy will consist of a Chairperson, and the President of GAMA, and 3 at large committee members.

   i. The Chairperson will be selected by a majority vote of the GAMA Board of Directors.

   ii. The Chairperson may be removed at any time by a majority vote of the GAMA Board of Directors.

   iii. The at large committee members will be selected by the Chairperson of the Academy with the advice and consent of the GAMA Board of Directors.

   iv. The at large committee members serve at the pleasure of the Chairperson and may be removed by the Chairperson at any time.

B. Persons working professionally in the field of game publishing are eligible to be members of the Academy of Gaming Art & Design.

   i. Such persons must have materially contributed to the graphic design, rules design, illustration, editing, marketing, production or management of an English-language game product currently available for sale to the public by the publisher of that product.
ii. Dues for membership in the Academy may be set by a majority vote of the Academy Committee.

Section 3. Duties of the Academy Committee Chairperson

A. The Chairperson will be responsible for scheduling meetings of the Academy Committee, and creating such subcommittees as deemed necessary by the Chairperson to execute the duties of the Academy, and appointing individuals to those subcommittees as the Chairperson deems necessary.

B. With the advice and consent of the Academy Committee, the Chairperson will be responsible for formulating an annual budget to be submitted to the GAMA Board of Directors for review and approval.

C. The Chairperson will be responsible for ensuring that the nominating, balloting, voting, and presentation of the ORIGINS Awards and the Hall of Fame is performed in accordance with these Bylaws and any other supplementary policies approved in advance by the GAMA Board of Directors.

D. The Chairperson will be responsible for ensuring that the membership of the Academy meets the requirements described in these Bylaws.

AMENDMENT 2

Section 1. The ORIGINS Awards & the Hall of Fame

A. The ORIGINS Award shall be defined as:

“The premiere Award recognizing excellence in the field of English-language tabletop game publication.”

B. Definitions

i. “The Calendar Year of the Award” shall mean the 12 month period from the 1st of January to the 31st of December.

ii. “Work” shall mean a product sold as a single unit, or as several related units designed to be used together and not separately.

iii. “New” shall mean a work where at least 75% of the text of the product exclusive of fiction, flavor text, index, glossary or credits has never been previously distributed.

iv. “Published” shall mean the act of distributing for commercial sale any product qualifying for any of the ORIGINS Award categories, either electronically or physically.

v. “Tabletop” shall mean a work primarily produced in paper, metal, plastic, or other tangible medium, or a work designed to be reproduced by the consumer in such a medium,
and not primarily consisting of software programs designed to be used in conjunction with a computer or other electronic device.

C. The following list enumerates the categories for which an ORIGINS Award will be made annually.

i. "Best Game Periodical"
Recognizing a work consisting of a number of different articles and content sections published as a single unit either electronically or on paper at least 3 times in the previous year with substantially different content each time, primarily featuring articles about gamers, games, or game accessories.

ii. "Best New Game Aide or Accessory"
Recognizing a work published for the first time in the calendar year of the Award which is not a game, but which is used with a game to improve or enhance the game playing experience.

iii. "Best New Tabletop Board Game"
Recognizing a work published for the first time in the calendar year of the Award which consists of a playing surface and a number of other components designed to be used to play a game utilizing that playing surface, when the work would not qualify for consideration as a Tabletop Wargame.

iv. "Best New Tabletop Card Game"
Recognizing a work published for the first time in the calendar year of the Award which consists primarily of one or several decks of cards designed to be used to play a game using those cards, when the work would not qualify for consideration as a Collectible Card Game.

v. "Best New Tabletop Wargame"
Recognizing a work published for the first time in the calendar year of the Award which consists of a set of rules and components primarily used to simulate a combat engagement of either historical or fictional combatants in an historical or fictional conflict.

vi. "Best New Tabletop Roleplaying Game"
Recognizing a work published for the first time in the calendar year of the Award which consists of a set of rules and components used to simulate characters who undertake actions within the context of a story collectively generated by the participants.

vii. "Best New Tabletop Roleplaying Supplement"
Recognizing a work published for the first time in the calendar year of the Award which primarily consists of rules material to be used in conjunction with a Tabletop Roleplaying Game and is not primarily a Tabletop Roleplaying Adventure.
viii. “Best New Tabletop Roleplaying Adventure”
Recognizing a work published for the first time in the calendar year of the Award which primarily consists of a series of encounters, characters, and challenges to be used in the context of the play of a Tabletop Roleplaying Game.

ix. “Best New Game Requiring Sculpted Miniature Figures”
Recognizing a work published for the first time in the calendar year of the Award which primarily consists of rules for the use of sculpted miniature figures, and which cannot be normally played without the use of such figures.

x. “Best New Sculpted Miniature Figure Line”
Recognizing a body of work published for the first time in the calendar year of the Award consisting of one or more related sculpted miniature figures for use with games requiring sculpted miniature figures.

xi. “Best New Individual Sculpted Miniature Figure”
Recognizing a single sculpted miniature figure published for the first time in the calendar year of the Award being a component designed for use with games requiring sculpted miniature figures.

xii. “Best New Tabletop Collectible Card Game”
Recognizing a work published for the first time in the calendar year of the Award consisting of a number of cards that are used to play a game. The number of distinct cards produced must significantly exceed the number of cards used in any individual game.

xiii. “Best New Tabletop Collectible Card Game Expansion”
Recognizing a work published for the first time in the calendar year of the Award primarily consisting of new cards never before published for use as game components in a Collectible Card Game.

xiv. “Artist of the Year”
Recognizing the body of work used in conjunction with a game or game accessory or a sculpted miniature figure produced in the calendar year of the Award by a single artist or a team of artists in any medium.

xv. “Designer of the Year”
Recognizing the body of work produced in the calendar year of the Award by a single game designer or a team of game designers.

xvi. “Publisher of the Year”
Recognizing the body of work produced in the calendar year of the Award by a single game publisher.

xvii. “Game of the Year”
Recognizing a new work produced in the calendar year of the Award that represents a playable game.
“Vanguard Award”
Recognizing any person, publisher, product, or concept the Academy deems worthy of recognition for redefining the business of game publishing, innovating a new game platform, or exceptional contribution to the community.

D. The Hall of Fame shall be defined as:

“Representing exceptional, sustained excellence in the field of English-language tabletop game publication.”

E. Membership in the Hall of Fame shall not prohibit any inductee from future participation in the ORIGINS Award process.

AMENDMENT 3

Section 1. The Nomination and Voting Process for the ORIGINS Awards & the Hall of Fame

A. The nominations process for the ORIGINS Award shall consist of the following steps:

i. Academy Round

a. To the best of its ability, the Academy Committee will compile a list of every product eligible for nomination.

b. This list will be distributed to the members of the Academy for their consideration within 30 days of the end of the calendar year.

c. Each member will be eligible to vote for up to 3 different products in each category.

d. The top 3 recipients of votes and ties in each category will be considered the Academy’s nominations.

ii. Nominations Team Round

a. The Academy Committee will appoint a Nominations Team for each category within 60 days of the end of the calendar year.

b. The Nominations Team will consist of an odd number of individuals and will have at least 3 members.

c. The Nominations Team will consider the eligible products in each category and will forward up to 3 additional nominations not already been nominated by the Academy members to the Academy Committee on the basis of unit sales volume, innovation in design, and consumer utility.
d. The Nominations Team will forward their nominations to the Academy Committee within 90 days of the end of the calendar year.

ii. Committee Review

a. The Academy Committee will consider the slate of nominees compiled by the votes of the Academy Members and the Nominations Teams to ensure that all the nominated products comply with these bylaws and any supplementary policies approved in advance by the GAMA Board of Directors.

b. The Academy Committee may elect to add one additional product to the Nominations ballot at its discretion if it feels the nomination would substantially improve the ballot.

c. The Chairperson will contact the publisher of each nominated product and ask if the publisher wishes to have the nomination removed from consideration. If the publisher cannot be contacted or no notice of removal is received within 10 business days after the publisher has been notified, the nomination will stand.

B. The voting process for the ORIGINS Award shall consist of the following steps:

i. Academy Voting

a. The Final Ballot shall be mailed to each member of the Academy at least 60 days before the Award Ceremony.

b. Completed Final Ballots must be returned to the Academy Committee postmarked no later than 30 days prior to the Award Ceremony to be counted and considered valid.

c. Each Academy Member may vote for one product in each category.

d. The pro-rata total of the Academy Member votes will represent 1/3 (one-third) of the votes in each category.

ii. GAMA Member Voting

a. The Final Ballot shall be mailed to each Full Voting Member of GAMA at least 60 days before the Award Ceremony.

b. Completed Final Ballots must be returned to the Academy Committee postmarked no later than 30 days prior to the Award Ceremony to be counted and considered valid.

c. Each Full Voting Member may vote for one product in each category.

d. The pro-rata total of the GAMA Member votes will represent 1/3 (one-third) of the votes in each category.
iii. Public Voting

a. The Final Ballot shall be distributed to the public via the GAMA Web Site at least 60 days before the Award Ceremony.

b. Completed Final Ballots must be returned to the Academy Committee postmarked no later than 30 days prior to the Award Ceremony to be counted and considered valid.

c. Each member of the Public may vote for one product in each category.

d. The pro-rata total of the Public votes will represent 1/3 (one-third) of the votes in each category.

iv. Internet Voting

a. The Academy Committee may permit internet voting by the Academy, the GAMA Members and/or the Public at its option.

b. If internet voting is enabled, the system must make a reasonable effort to ensure that each eligible voter is allowed only one vote.

c. If internet voting is enabled, the system must make a reasonable effort to ensure that duplicate votes in a category are not permitted.

d. If internet voting is enabled, the system must send a confirmation of the voter’s choices to the voter, and have a mechanism for correcting errors identified by the voter.

C. Tallying the Votes for the ORIGINS Awards

i. The winner in each category will be the nominee with the highest total aggregate vote total.

ii. In the event of a tie, both products will win the category and will share the award.

D. The Nominations process for the Hall of Fame shall consist of the following steps:

i. The Academy Committee will consider suggestions submitted by the Academy Membership and will compile a Nominations List of potential inductees into the Hall of Fame.

ii. This Nominations List will be distributed to the Academy Members within 60 days of the end of the calendar year,

iii. The Academy members may vote for up to three different Nominees.
iv. The top 5 recipients of votes and ties will comprise the Hall of Fame Final Ballot.

E. The Hall of Fame Final Ballot will be distributed to the public at the same time as the ORIGINS Award Final Ballot.

F. The public will vote for Hall of Fame Inductees using the same system and deadlines as that used for the Public vote for the ORIGINS Awards.
   i. The public may vote for one or more nominees
   ii. Internet voting for the Hall of Fame may be used under the same conditions as those outlined for the ORIGINS Awards

G. Completed ballots for the Hall of Fame voting must be postmarked 30 days before the Award Ceremony to be counted and considered valid.

H. A nominee will be inducted into the Hall of Fame if the number of ballots with votes for that nominee exceeds one-half of the total number of ballots received.