

Der Teddyautomat

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At first glance, the Teddyautomat, the teddy bear slot machine, resembles the familiar video games commonly found in arcades and bars. Behind a glass partition, a classic stuffed toy bear sits in a steel chamber with moveable side walls. After depositing a coin, the user has the choice of pushing one of two illuminated buttons — either "Teddy gets squashed" or "Teddy is spared." The number of the respective choices made thus far is displayed on a counter below each button. A round of voting lasts 10 minutes; the time still remaining until the ballots are counted and the winning result is carried out is displayed on a countdown clock. In addition, one minute before time is up, potential voters are issued a shrill warning to "place your bets" [Faites vos jeux!]. If the vote comes out in Teddy's favor, nothing happens; if the majority decides that "Teddy gets squashed," the toy bear is turned to face the spike-covered walls and is slowly impaled and crushed.