

Ovation, by Kristen Lunde [Looking Glass Workshop]!

Graphics:

- The game looks easily-parsable and readable based on looking at the player board and card alone!
- The player board is *very* charming [the piano track up top, the music sheet in the BG]
- I think it would be cool if the **effect** of the engine-building cards were on the *bottom* of the card so they could slide under the board and clear out the now-unneeded info sooner [if players want], and it takes up much less table space
- I want the tickets to have a reminder of how many endgame points they're worth ON the tickets
- In the prerequisite arrows, it would really help if there were a buffer around the icon that's in there to help with readability [like a big white circle], and for the Inspiration ones have a plus sign in the circle with them
- The Music cards look as stackable as the other cards but they need another ID method besides just the colored background, both for colorblind help and for when they're stacked and only the top white section is showing

Gameplay Mechanics:

- **Setup:** I feel like Marianna's **Keyboard Concerto in A** is the superior choice of magnum opus for her because it's the only one that synergizes with her passive ability
- **Before turn 3:** I'm already seeing examples of how there's a serious attempt at making sure there are many branching possible paths and relevant agency for players! The fact that the music notes throttle the number of bonuses you can activate paired with the fact that you can access every kind of action through every *other* kind of action [eventually] adds a level and depth to the balance that's leagues above other games in this genre
- **Turn 6?:** I have two musical notes and two bonuses under two different actions that I DON'T take because of the options available in the middle of the table; I didn't plan well enough to take full advantage of my bonuses, which is the *good* kind of frustrating, because I only have myself to blame! [Yes, the end result is technically because of the specific cards revealed in the middle, but I arrived at this point by not planning well in the face of what was in the middle which I COULD have planned around]
- I really like the fact that engine cards all give you a point, so nothing is useless even if you never intend to use the ability
- I'd keep an eye on the cost-to-benefit ratio of chains that allow you to **perform** multiple times in a turn, since that breaks the fundamental principle of music-note-throttles
- **Before turn 8:** The patron that lets you move from Fortune to Inspiration [**Princess Sophie**] is way too strong, because that essentially replaces all the Inspiration you just spent on the card you just bought [or if you buy a cheap thing, it gives you a *profit* on inspiration]. Especially since there are other cards like **Princess Anna** that are strictly worse in that they only give one flat Inspiration instead of letting you loop it. From a mathematical perspective, **Princess Sophie** pays for the difference in two turns, even BEFORE you factor in the daisy-chaining/engine-ing that you might have under Inspiration.
- **Before turn 11:** Literally every time someone performed a concert, it felt like a no-brainer to give them a ticket because the benefit of +1 Inspiration feels better than the opponent

having half an Inspiration or half a point; it could in theory affect endgame majorly, if we start having to spend a lot of tickets but since it's been a pretty even split it all comes out in the wash. This is the **one** thing in the game that felt like **irrelevant agency**, since the choice was never really a choice; it was always superior to give the ticket to the person

- **Turn 12:** The **Prince Leopold** card; see notes above about **Princess Sophie**
- I really like that you can choose point Patrons early to help guide your strategy or late to try to shore up points
- **Turn 14:** the ticket feedback is **even worse** for the double-Inspo cards and magnum opus!
- **Game End:** Kirsten won handily, by getting all three **Maestro** cards. I firmly believe endgame points need an overhaul to be less *flat* to facilitate and incentivize creating different gameplay loops for yourself with your engine
- Maybe incorporate bringing the patrons with you? Extra resources/points for matching stuff?

Misc:

- The **ludonarrative harmony** of this game is absolutely fantastic, oh my sweet lord, 13/10
- The overall design of this game is an absolute masterwork, and I sincerely hope you're proud of what you've built here! The most upsetting and frustrating thing about the game is that *I can't buy it yet*.

Homework:

- **Everdell** is a tableau/engine-builder with a similar feel:
<https://boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/199792/everdell>