MUSIC AND THE MAKING OF FUN PLAY IN GAMES

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- Music is an important, sometimes foundational, part of how we play games

- Music helps to make games 'fun'

MUSIC AS PART OF PLAYING GAMES – VIRTUALITY

Proust: 'real without being actual, ideal without being abstract' (influence→Deleuze/Bergson)

Massumi (2014): Virtual as 'nonsensuous' (not directly sensed) 'dimension of reality'

Music is part of this sensuous arsenal used by games to realize, render or project the virtual universes.

CONCEPTUALISING THE VIRTUAL
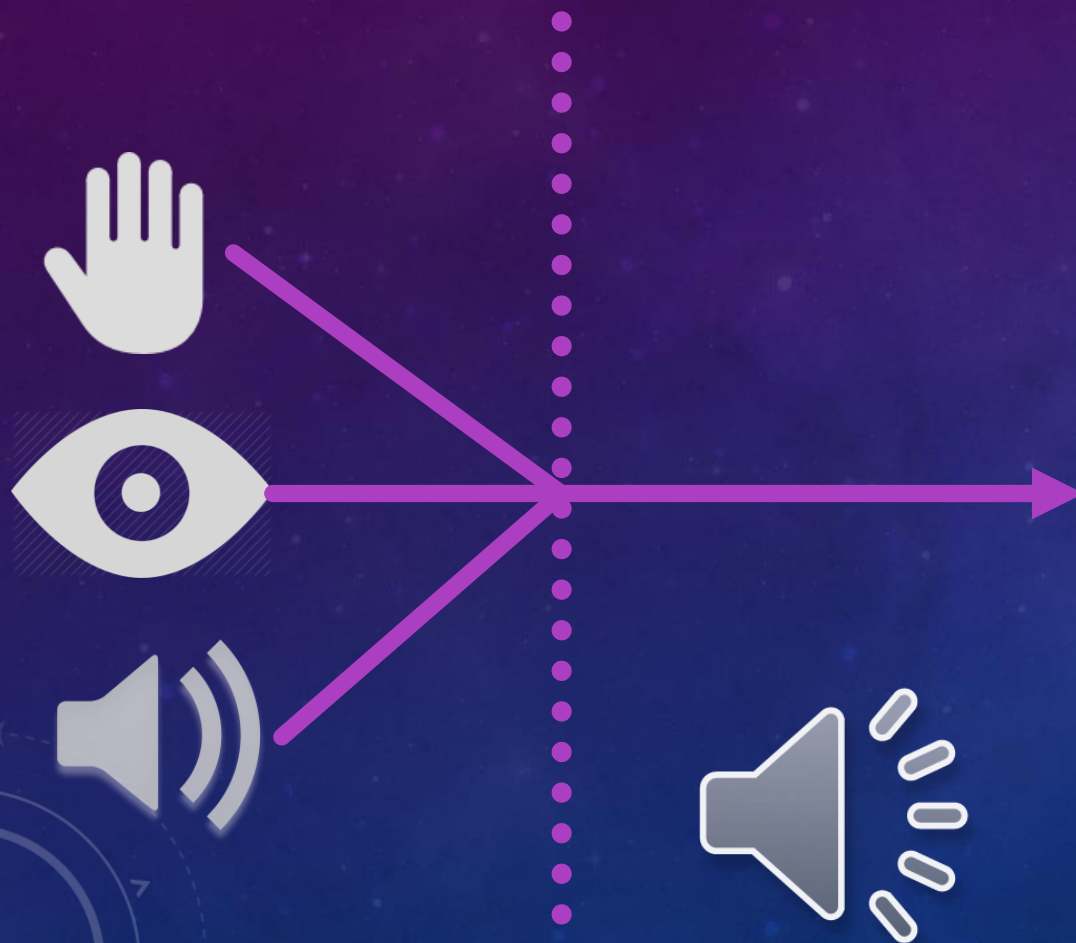
Elite

CONCEPTUALISING THE VIRTUAL (JUUL, 2005)

Fictions of the game

Rules of a game

Through fictions we understand the rules of the game

MUSIC AS PART OF PLAYING GAMES RULES/LUDIC CONSTRUCT

TOCA Race Driver 2

Daytona USA

MUSIC AS PART OF PLAYING GAMES RULES/LUDIC CONSTRUCT

- '*Daytona USA*'s theme tune wasn't about the words — it was about the tone, the voice, the nonsense. "Rolling Start." Surely *Daytona USA* holds the record for the noisiest game in history?' – Barker, 2012

- 'This isn't realism – it's joyous videogame exuberance.' – Towell, 2012

- Music helps to imply ludic construct – interactive register and tone of the game

MUSIC AS PART OF PLAYING GAMES – COMMUNICATION

- Listen to music to gain gameplay-relevant information.

- Help to play, help to win – also mislead, based upon knowledge of player engagement with music

Resident Evil 4

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Age of Empires III

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Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell

THEORIES OF PLAY

Common factors:

- some notion of rules, parameters or external forces that serve as boundaries or frames for play,

- creativity within those given rules/parameters/forces and

- a distinct mood or attitude of play.

Scholarship

- Psychology (Brown, 2009)

- Philosophy (Suits, 2014 [rev.])

- Game design (Salen and Zimmerman, 2004)

- Sociological (Henricks, 2006)

- Education (Patte and Brown, 2013)

- Biology (Bateson and Martin, 2013)

- Critical theory (Upton, 2015)

- History and critical theory (Huizinga, 1938)

MUSIC AND THE FUN OF GAMES

It is the 'fun-element that characterizes the essence of play' – Huizinga

'[A]bove all, video games are meant to be just one thing – fun.

Fun for everyone.'

– Satoru Iwata, President of Nintendo, 2002–2015

THEORY OF FUN

- Fun is not directly equivalent to 'winning', 'happy', or 'joyful'
- Fun 'may be a consequence of the gradual reduction of a high level of ambiguity or extreme novelty in a stimulus complex to a manageable cognitive structure the child can manipulate and over which...he or she can experience some power' (Singer & Singer, 1992)
- Fun is 'a moment of discovery...Fun comes from 'richly interpretable' situations.' (Koster, 2014)

FUN AND GAME MUSIC

- Adds to create complex and novel stimulus of games
- Playing **with** games and music – seek to find interrelationships
- Empowerment through interpretation and understanding of music in terms of game

DIRECTIONS OF GAME MUSIC RESEARCH

- Musical cultures within games (e.g. William Cheng, Mark Sweeney)

- Musical structures and forms in games (e.g. Elizabeth Medina-Gray, Steven Reale)

- Signification and pre-existing music in games (e.g. William Gibbons)

- Histories and traditions of game music (e.g. Neil Lerner)

- Creativity and wider socio-cultural discourse about game music (e.g. Kiri Miller)

- As performance (e.g. Melanie Fritsch, David Roesner)

- Immersion (e.g. Isabella van Elferen)

- Psychological effects (e.g. Mark Grimshaw, Siu-Lan Tan)

- Understanding interactivity (e.g. William Cheng, Karen Collins)

- Play in games (e.g. Roger Moseley)

'The Ultimate Combo':
David Soames

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