

Text D

Game music outside games (live concerts, radio stations, movies, TV series, education)

1. In 1999, Belinkie stated:

“A major reason the music is viewed differently is that in Japan, video games are played by adults as well as children. In the U.S., adult gaming usually takes place on PCs, and so console systems are seen as children’s toys.”

2. Remixes and live performances were also common variations to original soundtracks in Japan. With the first generation of gamers coming to age, this also changed significantly in the West. Almost ten years later Karen Collins describes the following scene:

“San Jose, California, March 2006: [...] It is the first time I have seen so many people turn up for an orchestra; every seat is filled as the show begins. This was, however, no ordinary performance: the orchestra would be playing classics, but these were classics of an entirely new variety – the songs from ‘classic’ video games [...]” (Collins 2008a: 1)

3. In 2003, the presumably first live performance of video game music took place outside Japan, at the Leipziger Gewandhaus on August 20, 2003, entitled “Symphonisches Spielemusikkonzert”. It was the inaugural event of the Games Convention. Due to its popularity, it was extended into a concert series and continued till 2007.

4. In 2005, the specialized project “Video Games Live”, initiated by the composers Tommy Tallarico and Jack Wall, premièred in Los Angeles with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra. Since then it has toured the world and, in 2008, the already traditional “Symphonische Spielemusikkonzert” was replaced by a “Video Games Live” show, which took place in the Leipziger Arena. Another tour project specializing in video game music trades under the name “Play! A video game symphony” and premièred in 2006 in Chicago.

5. In 2008, the WDR Rundfunkorchester Cologne also added video game music to their repertoire because its manager, Winfried Fechner – at the instance of a friendly conductor – had visited a

concert of the Games Convention Leipzig and was amazed that the audience consisted of 2000 young people listening to classical music. Therefore, in 2008, the concert “Symphonic Shades – Hülbeck in Concert” was performed, dedicated to the music of the German composer Chris Hülbeck. It was also the first video game music concert which was transmitted live via radio.

6. In general, the impact of video game music on today’s culture cannot be ignored as the following examples may demonstrate: Internet radio stations specializing in video game music have existed since at least 2003, when “Final Fantasy Radio” was launched on America Online.

7. In April 2009, while being on a flight with Delta airlines, if you had chosen to listen to channel 6A, you might also have had an encounter with video game music: you could have listened to the Soundtrack of *Fallout 3* (Bethesda Game Studios, 2008).

8. The movie *Scott Pilgrim vs. the World*, which generally works with video game aesthetics and conventions, also uses the sounds typical for 8-Bit-Games and features an 8-Bit “Universal” theme before the movie starts. In one scene, music from *The Legend of Zelda* series appears: the “Fairy Fountain” theme, written by Koji Kondo. Director Edgar Wright explains how he convinced the holder of the rights to permit him to use this music:

“[...] Shigeru Miyamoto—the Mario creator from Nintendo—has seen part of the film. We had to get his permission to use this piece of music from ‘The Legend of Zelda’ for one scene. So when I was writing to Nintendo to get permission, I was saying, ‘This music is like nursery rhymes to a generation.’”

9. Video games and their sound and music are cited in other musical genres as well as in popular TV series such as *Scrubs* or *The Simpsons* and are the topic of performances such as the “Game Over Project”, directed by the Swiss artist Guillaume Reymond, or inspire theatre performances such as “BestBefore” by the group Rimini Protokoll. “‘You Can’t Hum a Video Game,’ wrote Mr. Davis. That statement seems to have been officially disproved, as the Recording Academy recently made changes to allow game soundtracks to win Grammy Awards beginning this year. A new category for competition has been created: ‘Music for Television, Film, and Other Visual Media.’ [...] It remains to be seen whether any game music will be nominated for these awards, much less win them.” (Belinkie 1999)

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