

Video Game Music



Early Video Game Music



Early video game music consisted primarily of **SOUND EFFECTS**, **CHIPTUNES** (a style of music which used simple melodies) and early sound **SYNTHESISER** technology. **SAMPLING** began in the 1980's allowing sound to be played during the game, making it more realistic and less "synthetic-sounding".

How Video Game Music is used within Video Games



Music within a video game is often used for **CUES** (knowing when a significant event was about to occur). Video game music is often heard over a game's title screen, options menu and bonus content as well as during the entire gameplay. Music can be used to increase tension and suspense e.g. *during battles and chases* and can change, depending on a player's actions or situation e.g. *indicating missing actions or "pick-ups"*.

How Video Game Music is Produced



Fully-orchestrated video game music scores are now popular – technology is used in their creation but less in their performance. The composer uses music technology to create the score, it is then played by an orchestra and then digitally converted and integrated into the game. Video game soundtracks have become popular and are now commercially sold and performed in concert with some radio stations featuring entire shows dedicated to video game music.

Character Themes in Video Game Music



Characters within a video game can also have their own **THEMES** – like **LEITMOTIFS** within Film Music. These can be manipulated, altered and changed – adapting the elements of music – orchestration, timbre, sonority, texture, pitch, dynamics – depending on the character's situation or different places they travel to within the game.

Famous Video Game Music Composers and their Soundtracks



Koji Kondo
Super Mario Bros. (1985)
The Legend of Zelda (1986)



Michael Giacchino
The Lost World: Jurassic Park (1997)
Medal of Honour (1999)
Call of Duty (2003)



Mieko Ishikawa
Dragon Slayer (1993)



Martin O'Donnell and Michael Salvatori
Halo (2002)



Jesper Kyd
Assassin's Creed (2007)



Tommy Tallarico
Assassin's Creed (2007)