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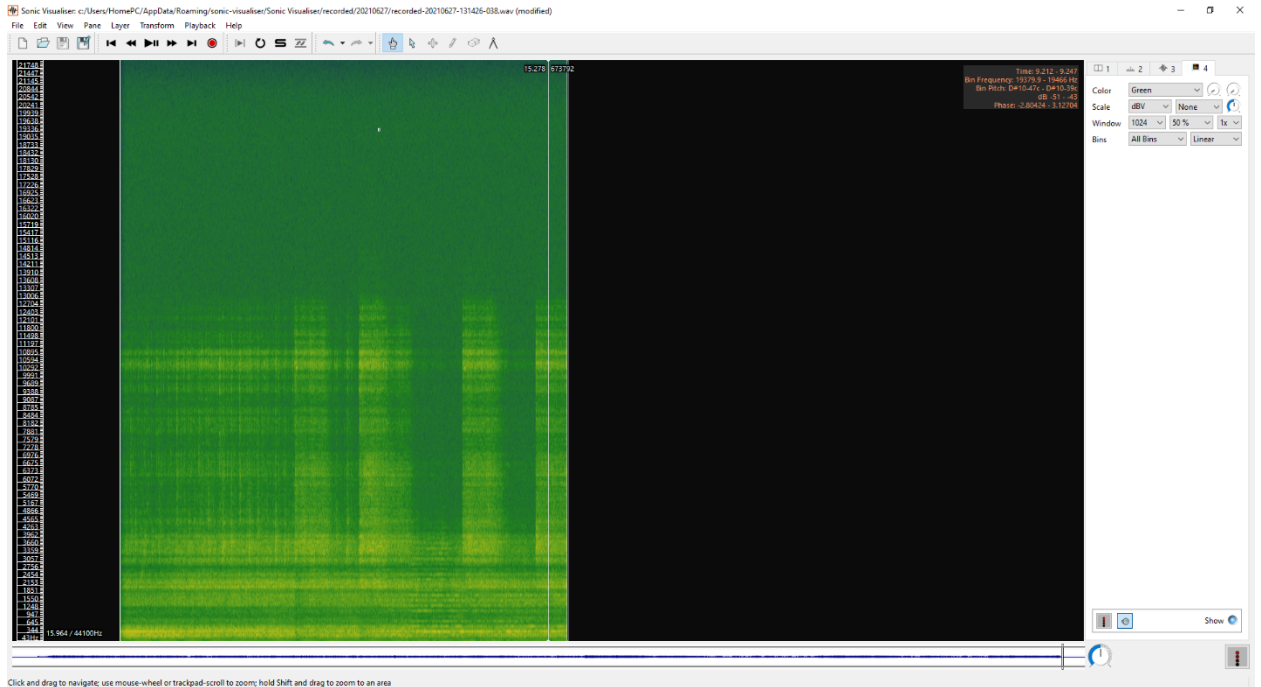
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Limbo is a remarkable video game about a young boy that embarks on a journey to find his sister. This 2-D puzzle platformer sends you on a mission to solve puzzles that progressively become more difficult as the boy moves forward. The atmosphere is a dark, film noir, mysterious, and it solely focuses on the boy. Other types of life forms are lacking in this game, but the incredible visuals and sounds are what makes Limbo one of the greatest games. The most memorable scene in the game for me was when the boy first encounters the “Hotel” sign in the industrial part of the map. This specific scene gave me the emotions and sensations explained by Brian Massumi’s “The Autonomy of Affect” and Kaja Silverman’s “Suture” in their discussions.

As the boy begins to walk into the “Hotel” scene, there is a slight drop in sound which was to transition the previous scene with the next. This is also building up suspense as the character continues to walk forward until the “Hotel” sign is visible. Once the boy sees the “H”, you immediately hear the sounds get louder and you hear the loud sounds of electricity. I was subconsciously building sensations within because of the sounds and visuals of the electricity. In this spectrogram you can see the fluctuations and pauses in the sound in order to create and build suspense.



You can notice that at the beginning of the clip, the signal strength is relatively low, and it remains like that for a couple seconds until the strength thickens, putting out more energy. That extra energy is felt while moving forward on that level. This sound caused me to feel the visceral sensations that Massumi was mentioning in his study. He mentioned:

Affect is this two-sidedness as seen from the side of the actual thing, as couched in its perceptions and cognitions. Affect is the virtual as point of view, provided the visual metaphor is used guardedly... Affects are virtual synaesthetic perspectives anchored in (functionally limited by) the actually existing, particular things that embody them. The autonomy of affect is its participation in the virtual. Its autonomy is its openness.

(Massumi: 16)

My perspective on electricity is that it is dangerous, and it can hurt you or kill you. Even though the electricity in the game is virtual, the visuals and sounds caused my body, or inner sensations to act before it shifted into an emotion. I have been electrocuted in the past, and your experiences

can shape or alter your perspectives. I believe my experience with this scene was intensified because of my prior experiences. The sound of electricity is another way for LIMBO to introduce a new form of dying in the game. Here is a sound clip of the electrocuting hotel sign:



LIMBO_hotel_electri
city.wav



Limbo brought out many different emotions during gameplay. Kaja Silverman's discussion on "suture" was something that I got to experience while playing the game. Suture allows us to emerge into the game by means of creating an identity. Limbo lacks a structured narrative, dialogue amongst characters, and colorful images. However, because of this, the visuals and sounds become the primary source of engagement between the screen and the player.

The boy walking around the map is what helps me identify with his character. It is the sounds and visuals of him walking that creates the “suture” effect. You never get to see a 360-degree view of the protagonist or any facial features for that matter. It is the sound of him walking that adds weight to his character, making him more relatable and humanistic. It creates an imagery of seeing myself in the character’s shoes. Silverman’s report mentions:

Interpellation designates the conjunction of imaginary and symbolic transactions which results in the subject’s insertion into an already existing discourse. The individual who is culturally “hailed” or “called” simultaneously identifies with the subject of the speech and takes his or her place in the syntax which defines that subjective position.

(Silverman: 219)

I put myself in the game as the character and I found myself doing everything in my power to safely cross the electrocuting hotel signs.

Limbo is a game that evoked pleasant and unpleasant feelings. The amazing visuals and sounds are what made this game so great. Although the game is not fully immersive, it gives you a sense of being immersed as the character in the game. This game takes you on a bizarre journey that taps into the subconscious mind of a little boy, and the ride is worth it.

Works Cited:

Massumi, Brian. "The Autonomy of Affect" in *Cultural Critique*. number 31. Autumn 1995.

Silverman, Kaja. "Suture" from the *Subject of Semiotics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982).