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Audience = Myself

Purpose = Explore the effect of music and sound in video games

Voice = Open and free

The Role of Sound in INSIDE

The soundtracks and auditory cues that you hear in video games often go hand in hand with the current scene. Some sounds can provide a sense of dread to warn you of upcoming danger while others, a sense of accomplishment for completing a task. In this paper, we are going to explore 3 different scenes from INSIDE that demonstrate great examples of visuals and sounds working together to further convey a scene.

The first chase scene (see example 1) where the player is running from the men and the dogs has a soundtrack that made me very anxious the first time I played it. Once you see the man with the flashlight focus on you, and you hear the music start playing, you know that something big is about to happen. One thing I really appreciated about this scene was the dampening effect that the water had on the dog barks and the chilling music once the player was submerged. It really makes you feel immersed in the game since the way that the water dampens the sound is what you would expect in the real world.



Example 1: Player running from men and dogs in the first chase scene (goo.gl/wlVnwx | goo.gl/0fmoy5)

The unsettling soundtrack that you hear when you encounter the mermaid creature is a great example of the dread that music can cause in a game. In example 2, you hear the eerie music grow louder as you approach the door, indicating danger on the other side. And sure enough, you are greeted by the mermaid creature when you push the door open. Whenever that soundtrack played from that point on, the player knows that they will encounter another mermaid creature shortly after. The player has been conditioned to associate the audio clip with future danger. The same can be said in regards to the terrifying sound of the dogs barking as they chase the player.



Example 2: Approaching this door plays the mermaid song (goo.gl/sTnFim | goo.gl/0heEGR)

Closer towards the end of the game, the player encounters a bridge of sorts with an intermittent shockwave that threatens to obliterate anything in its path. At the beginning of the shockwave, there isn't any music or sound other than the "boom" every few seconds. But as the player progresses towards the end, the shockwave gets more violent and a soothing hum can be heard in the background. This hum appears to get louder as the player makes it closer to the end of the section, almost as if encouraging the player that they are almost there. And when the player eventually makes it to the end, it's just the pleasant music with no more shockwave. I really liked this part of the game because I felt the music matched perfectly with the action that

was going on. The sound that the shockwave makes at the halfway point is unlike anything I've ever heard before, and it was probably my favorite part of the game.



Example 3: Player running across shockwave bridge (goo.gl/lgKGIy | goo.gl/rLGKOX)

Overall, a big takeaway I've learned from Playdead's INSIDE is the importance of sound in video games. INSIDE is a unique gaming experience to say the least, and there's no doubt in my mind that the game wouldn't have been as successful had the sound design not been as spot on as it is. From the little things like the boy's labored breathing during the chase scenes to the soundtracks and background ambiance, they all contribute to an amazing playing experience that kept me from quitting the game until I had reached the end.