Abstract

Sound and music play an extraordinary role in the world of video games, creating rich and immersive experiences for players. Not only do they add realism and form the atmosphere of gameplay, but they also play key roles in shaping emotions, interactions and narration of games. Sound and music in games make ways to create unique sound worlds, create tension, accentuate important game moments, etc. They coexist with other elements of the game (code elements, user interface, graphical assets, gameplay mechanics), evoking various emotions in players. They are also tools that provide players with gameplay feedback and communicate the storyline. In this context, sound and music in games are not just accompanying elements, but become even crucial, with their presence contributing to deepening the immersive experience of the player.

In this dissertation, I try to trace the theoretical, practical, psychological, as well as artistic and technological aspects related to the video games audiosphere. The main purpose of my dissertation is to study the communicative aspects of sound and music in video games, to try to determine how music and sound in games are perceived by the player, to describe their meaning and function in a communicative as well as musicological perspective.

The dissertation attempts to answer the following specific questions:

- how do music and sound in games stimulate the player's emotions during gameplay?
- what criteria determine the conceptual shape of sound design in video game production?
- what part do sound and music hold in the communication structure of a video game?
- if sound design and music in video games can be characterized using artistic categories?
- what are the relations between the game genre and its sonic sphere?
- in what ways has game music become a part of culture?
- to what extent can games with the leading role of music constitute a separate genre?

The dissertation primarily refers to research perspectives related to the theory of communication, game studies, musicology, and sound studies. A significant research tool in the dissertation will be the analysis of the audio content of video games. More than 250 selected titles will be analyzed. Due to the fact that the music games I am focused on also operate unique interfaces and controllers locally I will also refer to a specific approach within

game studies, which is platform studies. The dissertation also benefits from a historical perspective, examining early representations of the game audiosphere. The dissertation consists of 7 sections. The first two sections are a discussion of the two components of this audiosphere, which are the sound layer and the music layer. Their characterization provides the basis for the development of a communication model that is related to the game audiosphere presented in the third chapter. The next two sections then discuss the specific communicative problems associated with games, which are - immersivity and realism. In the last section, I discuss the game genre in which the potential of the medium's audiosphere is most fully realized – audio games.

Keywords: music in games, sound in games, sound design, sound studies, game studies, audio games. communication aspects of sound and music, audiosphere