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Project Description – Videogame Music and Sound Producer

This project will focus on producing music and sound made specifically for videogames. The purpose of this project is to gain experience in a field of great personal interest and potential as a career option. The goal is to create music and sound that integrate well within the context of a game.

When people ask what my favorite kind of music is, I used to always avoid sharing my actual preference, and that is videogame music. While I still love traditional music like 80's rock, I always found video game music has always been my favorite genre of music. I do not just mean I like to listen to the music as I play through a game, but I frequently like to listen to soundtracks of my favorite games on YouTube and sometimes analyze the multiple components that make up the composition. Videogames can be so fascinating to me as many pieces and sound effects within games can have a memorable impact and create a sense of nostalgia within a gamer such as myself. A big chunk of what makes a game great, is its music and sound design. Nothing is more off putting than when the music or sound design and lack thereof can take the player out of a game's immersion in a game. This severely impacts their overall experience.

I predict I will have a rocky start, but I will push through and continue to learn as I go along. I have already made some videogame inspired music but never made music/sound in the image of someone's game in progress. With this project, I will be more inclined to polish the overall product and give it all I got. Skills I really look to improve upon within sound production are compositional theming, mixing, recording, and finding creative approaches that follow the guidelines of a game development team.

Doing such a project will hopefully prepare me for what the real world is to bring. More importantly, this will help determine if this is the correct path for me moving on. This is a great opportunity to gain experience and further develop skills within music/sound production.

Methods

For this project, I have laid out a plan of studying and practicing techniques that are used to form videogame music. First off, I will be doing research online to help gain more knowledge on videogame sound design. The music program I will be using is called Ableton Live. I will be tackling a daily routine of various short exercises that focus on different aspects of videogame music/sound such as theming composition, rhythm, instrumentation, recording, mixing, etc. For example, one day I'll practice rhythmic composition by creating several bars of an interesting drum pattern that fits within the context of a game's setting. On top of this training, I will be collaborating with peers at City Tech who are currently developing a game or who may have already finished but still need original sound assets. I will work closely with the game developer to make sound assets that follow their guidelines and desired direction of their game's atmosphere.

WBS – Videogame Music and Sound Design

1. **Coordination and Team Building**
   1.1 Reach out to advisor for more information and guidance
   1.2 Contact colleagues who need sound for their game
2. **Research**
   2.1 Listen to video game music and analyze how they are constructed for inspiration
   2.2 Search the web for common composition and sound production techniques, tips, etc
   2.3 Investigate for useful software such as plugins or Digital Audio Workstations I may want to use
   2.4 Set budget for equipment and resources
   2.5 Scout for useful videos on game music and sound design
3. **Daily Practice Exercise Routine**
   3.1 Rhythmic composition exercise (Mondays)
   3.2 Melodic composition exercise (Tuesdays)
   3.3 Instrumentation experimentation and theming exercise (Wednesdays)
   3.4 Sound manipulation/effects exercise (Thursday)
   3.5 Mixing exercise (Friday)
4. **Consultation and Sound Development**
   4.1 Discuss with developer about ideas and direction for tone and theming for music and sound. Request video footage of gameplay as reference.
   4.2 Creative sketch process and brainstorm
   4.3 Choose instrumentation
   4.4 Create rhythmic pattern
   4.5 Create basic chord progression
   4.6 Follow up chord progression with supplemental bass line
   4.7 Create melodic hook
   4.8 Create sound effects for certain actions within the game
5. **Feedback**
   5.1 Send prototype to game developer for feedback
   5.2 More sketching and tweaking
   5.3 Repeat 5.1 and 5.2 till game developer needs are met
6. **Finalization**
   6.1 Mastering
   6.2 Converting completed music and sound into compatible file format
   6.3 Record video of music and sound implementation within actual gameplay

Deliverables

- Signed proposal from technical advisor
- Calendar schedule
- Completed daily composition and sound production exercises (ex: .wav and/or project files)
- Sound sketches following game developer guidelines
- Sound/project files for final product
- Video of gameplay with final implementation of music and sound

Resources

Hardware
- Upgraded Custom Computer System (PC Desktop)
- Microphone
- Studio Headphones
- Midi Keyboard
- Audio Interface
- Instruments

Software
- Digital Audio Workstation (DAW)
- Synthesizers/Plugins

Budget Estimate

Physical Equipment	Description	Cost
Desktop Computer System Setup	Custom build including casing, monitor, etc	$1100 (owned)
Professional Headphones	Sony MDR-7506	$130 (owned)
Audio interface	Presonus Audiobox USB	? (owned)
Midi Keyboard	Casio	? (owned)
Microphone	X1 large diaphragm condenser mic	$100
	Total	$1,430

Software	Description	Cost
Ableton Live Standard Edition (DAW)	Upgrade from trial. Student discount.	$270 (owned)
Syntehsizers/Plug-ins	Virtual instruments and effects	$100
	Total	$370
	Grand Total	$1,700

Schedule

1. Coordination and Team Building		
Start Date	End Date	Description
1-Feb	8-Feb	Find Game developers to work with
2/22/2021	2/22/2021	Advisor Meeting #1
22-Mar	22-Mar	Advisor Meeting #2
22-Apr	22-Apr	Advisor Meeting #3

2. Research		
Start Date	End Date	Description
1-Feb	Continuous	Videos and Readings

3.Daily Practice Exercise Routine		
Start Date	End Date	Description
22-Feb	22-Mar	Exercises

4. & 5. Sound Development & Game Developer Feedback		
Start Date	End Date	Description
22-Feb	22-Feb	Game Developr Meeting/Sketch #1
22-Mar	22-Mar	Game Developr Meeting/Sketch #2
22-Apr	22-Apr	Game Developr Meeting/ Sketch #3
29-Feb	Continuous	Work on game music and sound

6. Finalization		
Start Date	End Date	Description
22-Apr	27-Apr	Mastering
27-Apr	27-Apr	Exporting final tracks and sounds
27-Apr	2-May	Video of game music and sound

Proposed Table of Contents/Portfolio Outline

- Introduction
- Methods
- Budget
- Calendar
- Deliverables
    o Signed Proposal
    o Archived research and notes
    o Daily Exercises
    o Videogame music and sound brainstorm/sketch (from game developer meetings)
    o Music and sound for Videogame (work specifically done for someone's game)
    o Video of music and sound implementation with gameplay
- Conclusion