Music Defines a Game's World

Mitchel Wong

Who The Heck Is This Nerd

- Freelance Composer/Sound Designer/Bass Trombonist
- Demo Experience at PAX and EGX
- Co-organizer of GAB
- Wants to be the best King K Rool player in MA

Why Music?

- More than just "sounds nice"
- Helps establish the tone and themes of the game
- Imprints memories, makes the game/events more memorable, lets people recall events

Tone/Emotion

- What is the tone of this area?
- Where is this?
- Why/what do I do here?
- When?

Tone/Emotion

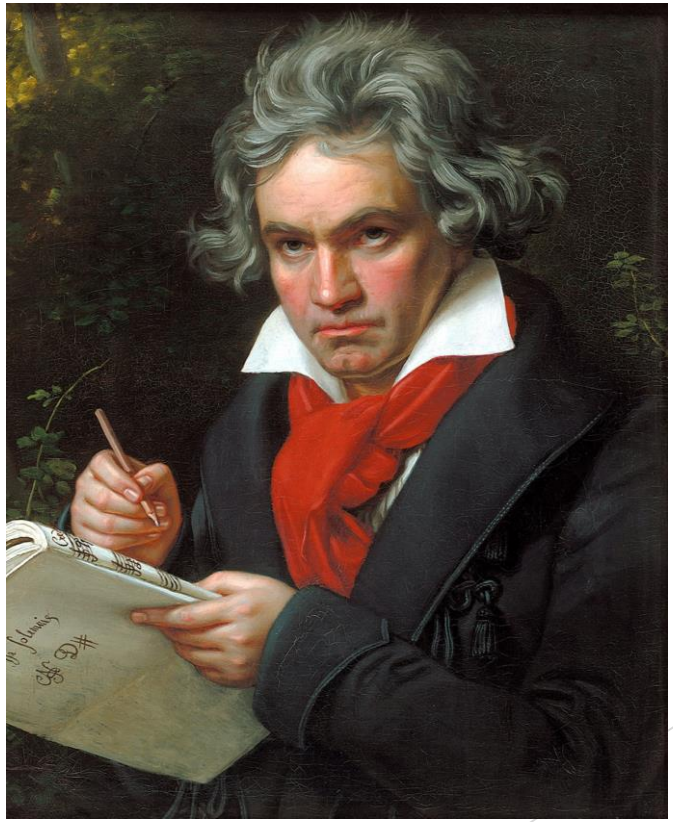
- Celeste

With Darkest Dungeon Audio

What Can A Composer Do For You?

The Obvious:

- Completely original!
- Can make the music custom-tailored to the game. More than just pretty background sounds
- Situational music (Battle, boss battle, the item shop, title, menu, saving, etc)
- Lets people associate music with persons/places/things/events throughout an experience (**leitmotif**)



But wait there's more!

Music/Leitmotifs can be used more than just for setting the tone! Some less obvious things:

- Have direct effect on/develop the narrative and lore!
- Provide depth to worldbuilding!
- Tie together **relations between** characters, places, things, events!
- *Foreshadowing??* You can do that with music???

Narrative

- Story Progression and Development

- Lyrics

HE HAS NO GRACE

Worldbuilding/Culture

- Gives culture and character to the world around in conjunction with art
- Specific cultures/subcultures with associated music

Worldbuilding cont.

- Similarities/differences (Xenoblade Chronicles)

Bionis:

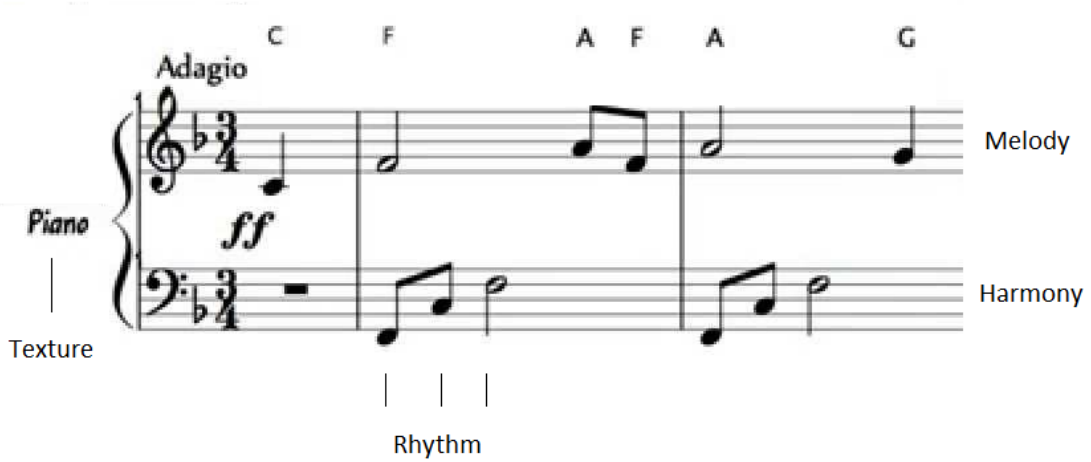
Mechonis:

Why Grant Kirkhope is Super Dope

Mitchel Wong

Tools Used To Reflect Relations

- Melody
- Rhythm
- Harmony
- Texture



- DK 64 Islands

Relations - Subworlds

- **Banjo Kazooie** (game)
- **Grunty's Lair** (main overworld)
- **Grunty's Lair:** Treasure Trove Cove

- **Treasure Trove Cove** (Major World)
- **Salty Hippo** (Large Subsection)
- **Underwater (modifier)**
- **Vs Nipper** (Boss Fight)
- **Indoors** (Small Subsections of world)
- **Indoors Underwater**

Relationships Between Characters
Developments of characters

- Leitmotifs~

- Undertale
  - People to people
  - People to places
- Xenoblade
  - Growth of a character

Foreshadowing/"Foreshadowing"

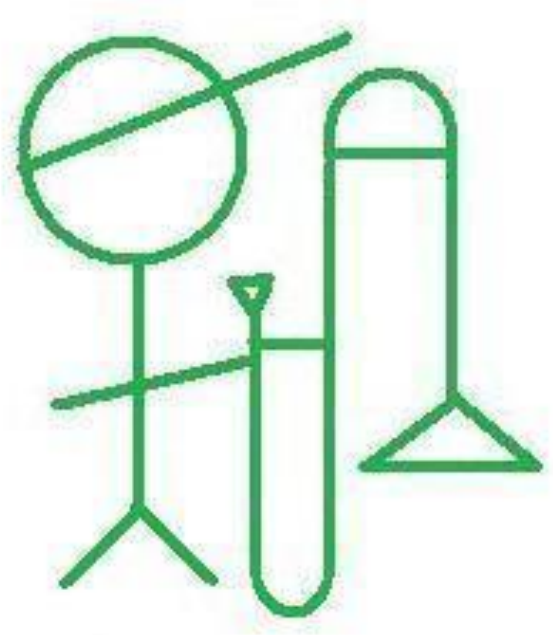
- Ballad of the Goddess (Skyward Sword)
- Undertale: His Theme
- Bioshock Infinite: Will the Circle Be Unbroken
- Ocarina of Time/Majora's Mask

-Lots of ocarina melodies recur as major plot points: warp songs, song of healing

-Clock Town variations

Takeaways

- Music is more than just pretty sounds and background noise, in conjunction with art, it's the life and breath of the world
- Music can be a tool specially crafted to reflect narrative as well as relations of characters, locations, and events
- Recurring music can have impact on players, especially with variations to fit the current setting.
- Bring your composer on sooner rather than later: for flexibility and exploration!

Thank!
Got more questions?

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