

Symposium Dinner

Attendees who registered for the symposium dinner are welcome to attend 1989 Arcade Bar on the night of Tuesday 1 October.

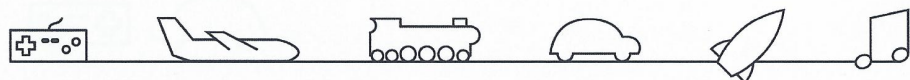
We'll make our way there following the Tuesday afternoon session of the Symposium, meeting at around 6pm.

1989 has a bunch of old coin-operated game machines and a great selection of food and craft beers. 1989 is also running their monthly pop culture trivia night that night (free to participate but not mandatory), so if you want to join in, bring your trivia brain.

Address: 22 King Street, Newtown NSW 2042

How to get there:

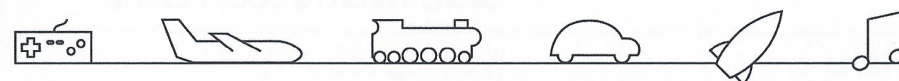
- Train from Circular Quay to Central, then bus from Railway Square to King St: routes 423, 426, 428, M30
- Train from Circular Quay to Newtown, then 10m walk



The Ludomusicology Society of Australia

LSA Symposium 2019

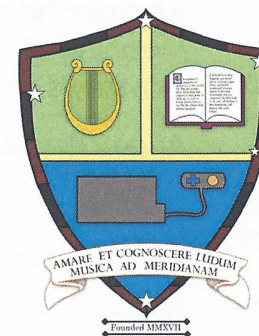
Transportation



Tues 1 – Wed 2 October 2019

Sydney Conservatorium of Music

The University of Sydney



Symposium Programme

Tuesday 1 October

9:00		Registration
9:30	Iain Hart	Introduction
Session 1		
9:45	James Wierzbicki	Revisiting the Ambient Sounds of <i>Tomb Raider</i>
10:15	Paul Ballam-Cross	Nostalgia, Gaming, and Self-reference: King Gizzard and the Lizard Wizard's <i>Doom Clone</i>
10:45		Morning tea
Session 2		
11:00	Kenny McAlpine	Keynote address: Fifty Shades of Play: The Colour of Music
12:00		Lunch
Session 3		
1:30	Iain Hart	Drivers Don't Race to Music, Except When They Do: <i>Race Driver: Grid</i>
2:00	Barnabas Smith	Approaching the Function and Meaning of <i>Assassin's Creed Odyssey's</i> Sea Shanties
2:30		Afternoon tea
Session 4		
2:45 - 4:15		Round table discussion
6:30		Dinner

Wednesday 2 October

Session 5

9:30	Craig Morgan	The Mental Health Of Australian Screen Composers: A Journey
10:00	Matthew Hindson	From 8-bit to Analog: Behind the Creation of <i>Nintendo Music</i> for Clarinet and Piano
10:30		Morning tea

Session 6

10:45	Andrew Powell	Who Crosses the Fantastical Gap? Traversing Diegetic Realms in Video Games
11:15	Bradley Kagan	Slave To The Rhythm: Examining the Transportational Effects of Immersion through the Music and Game Mechanics of <i>Crypt of the Necrodancer</i>
11:45	Iain Hart	Wrap up

All times are **AEST: GMT/UTC+10**

For the socials, use:

#lsasymposium2019



Paul Ballam-Cross

Nostalgia, gaming, and self-reference: King Gizzard and the Lizard Wizard's Doom clone

In the output of Australian band King Gizzard and the Lizard Wizard (hereafter referred to as King Gizzard), a recurring element is their use of references to other music. These include both references to their own albums and broader popular culture.

Several of King Gizzard's releases are in markedly different styles; for instance, their 2015 release *Paper Mâché Dream Balloon* refers to late 1960's pop music. Their most recent release *Infest the Rats' Nest* likewise refers to music of the past. In this case, the album is reminiscent of the thrash metal releases of the mid-1980's, such as those of Metallica, Slayer or Anthrax.

In turn, these releases were referred to in the music of *Doom* (1991) and *Doom II* (1994); several parts of *Doom* and *Doom II*'s soundtracks implicitly imitate the music of various metal bands. As a promotion for the 2019 release of *Infest the Rats' Nest*, King Gizzard released a browser game entitled *Mars for the Rich*, a title taken from the one of the songs on the release. *Mars for the Rich* is, for all intents and purposes, a clone of *Doom* soundtracked by *Infest the Rats' Nest*, creating a circle of reference and imitation. This is nostalgia as transport; King Gizzard's imitation of *Doom* is designed to be familiar to players acquainted with the game. In referring to *Doom* with the release of *Mars for the Rich* (and the album *Infest the Rats' Nest*), King Gizzard are intentionally playing on the nostalgia of their listeners.

Iain Hart

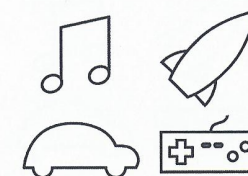
Drivers Don't Race to Music, Except When They Do: *Race Driver: Grid*

There are two main traditions and two main implementation methods for music in driving games. The first tradition is the use of popular music. Karen Collins links popular music to driving games by observing that the limited length of races makes them a better fit for short pop songs than the gameplay in most other genres, and Tim Summers draws a link from popular music in driving games to the experience of the ubiquitous car radio.

The second tradition is the use of what I call, for want of a better term, 'driving game music'. Winifred Phillips describes this as "a driving brand of techno dance music that perfectly suits [the] sense of speed". However, many driving games use techno elements alongside synthesised orchestral elements and opt for crispness or clarity of timbre over loudness. Momentum is the most important function for this tradition, as it allows driving game music to match and smooth the action of gameplay.

Meanwhile, music in driving games is implemented in one of two main ways: driving to music that enhances gameplay, and driving in musical silence to enhance the realism of the simulation. Interestingly, neither the two traditions nor the two implementations are particularly delineated based on gameplay or stylistic genres.

Race Driver: Grid is a continuation of the long-running *TOCA* series of racing simulators by Codemasters, though at times it eschews the precision of its touring car simulator ancestors in favour of accessibility. Nevertheless, it engages in the 'driving game music' tradition and the 'driving in musical silence' implementation—except when it doesn't. Races at significant narrative milestones are supplemented with music, some of which actively respond to the player. *Grid* shows that even well established traditions of video game music can be responsive to both gameplay and innovation.



Matthew Hindson

From 8-bit to Analog: Behind the Creation of *Nintendo Music* for Clarinet and Piano

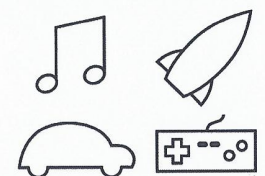
Bradley Kagan

Slave To The Rhythm: Examining the Transportational Effects of Immersion through the Music and Game Mechanics of *Crypt of the Necrodancer*

The surge of popularity in video games in recent years has allowed for a deeper understanding and analysis of how video games can help transport their players to another world. A key contributing factor in this immersive process is the music and sounds present within the game. These audio sources combine with the interactive and reactive nature of gameplay to provide an immersive experience that draws players into these gameworlds. A striking example of this effect can be seen in the game 'Crypt of the Necrodancer'. My presentation will deconstruct and analyse the way music is utilised as a controlling element that reinforces the transportational sense of player immersion. Within this game the player is restricted to only move to the beat of the soundtrack. All gameplay and musical elements respond and move in time to the music, resulting in the player 'dancing' around the levels. My presentation utilises Isabella Van Elferen's ALL methodology to break down and examine three key aspects of the game and its music by drawing connections between the gameplay mechanics and the audio design. The three focus areas are:

- The affective nature of music and how it is designed to make us feel through its tempo and genre.
- The way musical literacy can be used to teach the player to preempt gameplay actions with musical cues.
- How the interaction between gameplay and music helps tie the players' actions into a believable and transitional gameworld.

My presentation will highlight the way the game mechanics and music intertwine to provide an immersive and transportational experience for the player.



Craig Morgan

The Mental Health Of Australian Screen Composers: A Journey

In Australia we have a health crisis, the mental health of our screen composers. According to research conducted in Australia and supported by similar research in the UK, Australian Screen Composers are five times more likely to experience symptoms of depression than the general population, ten times more likely to experience symptoms of anxiety than the general population and suicide attempts are more than double that of the general population. Armed with information from various mental health websites I began a lecture series designed to equip my composer friends with the tools and resources needed to cope with this issue.

I became interested in this delicate topic when my own PhD research unearthed a phenomenon that I termed 'studio loneliness'. Stressed-out screen composers who worked many hours without proper breaks, nutrition, ventilation, sunlight or seeing anyone. This is exemplified by one interviewee asking me directly "...now that the interview is done, do you mind if we just talk for a while?"

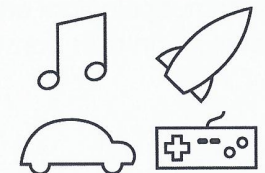
Specifically regarding video-game composition, my survey had five respondents who were currently writing music for video games. Four out of five said that the function of the music was non-diegetic (off screen) – one responded that the music was for the opening titles. Again, four out of five indicated that the instrumentation was a mixture of virtual instruments and a live performer. Interestingly, three out of five composers intended for their music to be played by human performers at some stage. All cues were created alone, without collaboration.

Andrew Powell

Who Crosses the Fantastical Gap? Traversing Diegetic Realms in Video Games

In discussing analysis and interpretation of film music, Robynn Stilwell's 2007 essay proposed the *fantastical gap*, a metaphorical divide between the classically defined "diegetic" and "nondiegetic" spaces within the narrative which music may "cross" in terms of its narratological role. While such terminology and the expanded lexicon introduced within the past decade are useful in initial analyses of multimedia, they fail to capture many of the diverse options of diegetic matters one must consider when exploring the interactions of music in video games. Moreover, the role of the player is critical in the unfolding events and must be considered in analytical discourse as they become an active participant in the construction of the diegesis, rather than simply remaining outside as a passive observer. This new, additional role suggests a three-dimensional relationship that extends beyond the traditional plane insinuated by the terminology that has dominated analytical discourse.

This paper explores the divergence from classical and contemporary terminology of literary and film music terminology, proposing a narratological space in which both character and player interact with music. Exploration of this space includes such titles as *Super Mario Bros.*, *Final Fantasy VII*, and *Heavy Rain* to depict the various levels of interaction. A more formal overview of the use of music in *Grand Theft Auto V*, focusing not only on player's control but also music's significantly different role interlaced within the narrative, will offer insight to the multifaceted diegetic considerations of video game music—and the need for more accurate terminology.



Barnabas Smith

Approaching the Function and Meaning of *Assassin's Creed Odyssey's* Sea Shanties

Contemporary open-world video games often employ diegetic audio to establish, support, or connote depth and granularity within the modes of gameworld transport.

Whether via vehicle radio speakers, horse hooves, or motion captured NPC performances, this sound is generally designed technically to adhere to actual world principles of acoustic sound wave transmission, and aesthetically to reinforce the environment depicted.

Assassin's Creed Odyssey reprises the series' use of diegetic music to sonically embellish the existences of the temporal constituents within its gameworld. One example is presented by a series of 'sea shanties' sung by the NPC crew of the *Adrestia*, a trireme sailed by the player as they navigate their way between the dozens of Grecian islands.

With a Peloponnesian War setting, the content and design of these songs also needed to maintain congruency with linguistic accuracies of the game's dialogue. Compounding this complexity was the necessity to include melodic motifs that reflected current respected scholarly interpretations of ancient Greek culture.

A series of ancient poems and soliloquies were selected and set to primarily new compositions. As such, *Odyssey's* naval travel shanties can be perceived as historical text, anachronistic performance, contemporary creation, and faithful interpretation.

This paper aims to address the challenge of how this body of music might be studied by approaching it via several lines of contemporary ludomusicological enquiry, transcription analysis, and a critical evaluation of its construct.

James Wierzbicki

Revisiting the Ambient Sounds of *Tomb Raider*

This presentation seeks to make two points. One of them—of a positivistic, analytical nature—has to do with the 'ambient' sound heard almost constantly, but likely not much attended to by gamers, in the first four instalments (1996–99) of the *Lara Croft: Tomb Raider* franchise. The other—of a personal nature—has to do with the serious problems faced by a seasoned musicologist who late in his career realises that he wants not just to observe but actually participate in the ludomusicology movement that seriously engages so many of his students.

My presentation will account for how I decided to 'jump onto' the ludomusicology bandwagon, at last, by revisiting a series of games with which I had been involved some two decades ago, when during a transitional period between one career and another I worked full-time as the stay-at-home parent. Prompted by the new ludomusicology spirit, I remembered that in the '90s I indeed played the *Tomb Raider* games intensely, paying full attention both to helping the avatar deal with her small-scale difficulties and, more interesting, to solving the large-scale puzzles that each episode posed. But I also remembered simply listening, during moments of game play when I needed time not to act but simply to think, to the 'environments' in which various episodes transpired. I remembered that I wondered, back then: 'Why are the repetitive sounds of these environments not boring?' And with my current research I attempt to answer that question.

