

The Emotional Puppeteer:

Uncovering the musical strings that tie our hearts to games

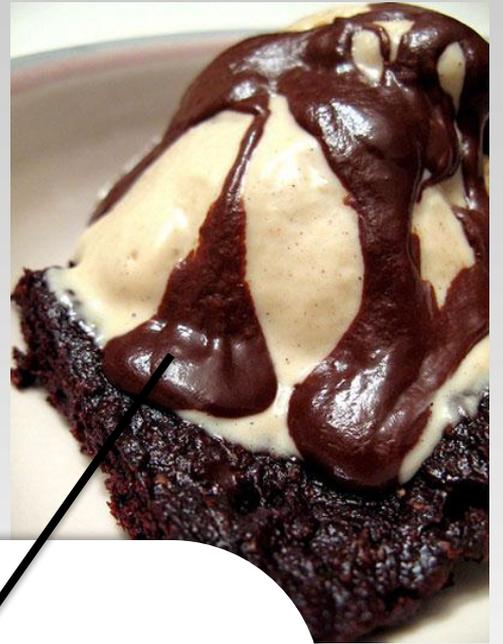
Marty O'Donnell, Audio Director & Composer

Brandi House, User Researcher



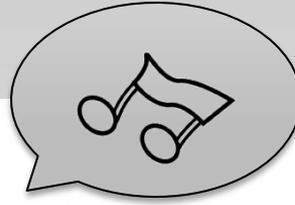
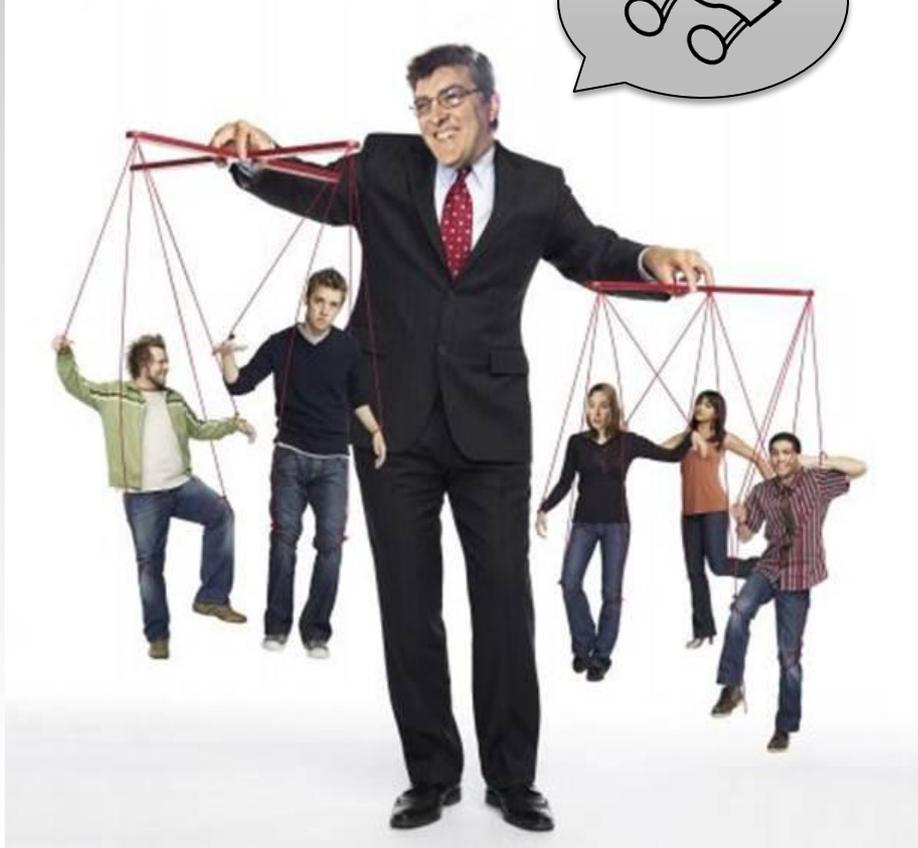


**Game
Development**



Exciting
Mysterious
Heroic **Powerful**
Aggressive **Stealthy**
Triumphant **Foreboding** **Serene** **Primal**
Hopeful





But...



... what about protecting my golden goose?



- People are... complicated
- Arm yourself for battle
- And, if all else fails...



So! Let's talk about feelings.



As you listen, think of how this piece makes you feel...



Music Selections:

<i>Lento</i> – Alien 3	Elliot Goldenthal
<i>Film 1</i> – 16MM	Jorane
<i>Gracie's Recapture</i> – Long Walk Home, Rabbit Proof Fence	Peter Gabriel
<i>Leave No Man</i> and <i>Chant</i> – Black Hawk Down	Hans Zimmer
<i>Down in the Lab</i> – Underworld	Renholder
<i>Hyper Sleep</i> – Alien	Jerry Goldsmith
<i>Spacey, Pulsey</i> , and other clips – Halo: Reach	O'Donnell/Salvatori



- Listen to this piece, and think of any scene, story or image that comes to mind. What do you see happening here?



"... Firing has long since ceased, and a surviving soldier looks left and right, taking in the awful sights in the late afternoon sun. Stretcher bearers lift wounded and maimed comrades off the sloping grasses in slow-motion, while medics tilt waterskins across their lips. Their uniforms are streaked with dirt, blood, and grass.

After a few moments, the soldier sees his brother, still alive and standing, and they give each other a knowing look -- happy they are both alive and unhurt, but recognizing this is no time for celebration."



- Choose up to 3 words that best describe the feelings evoked while listening to this music:



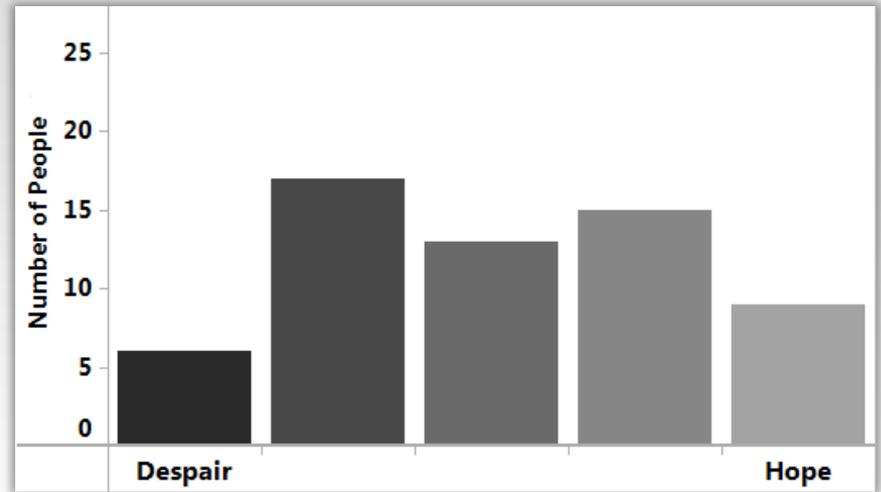
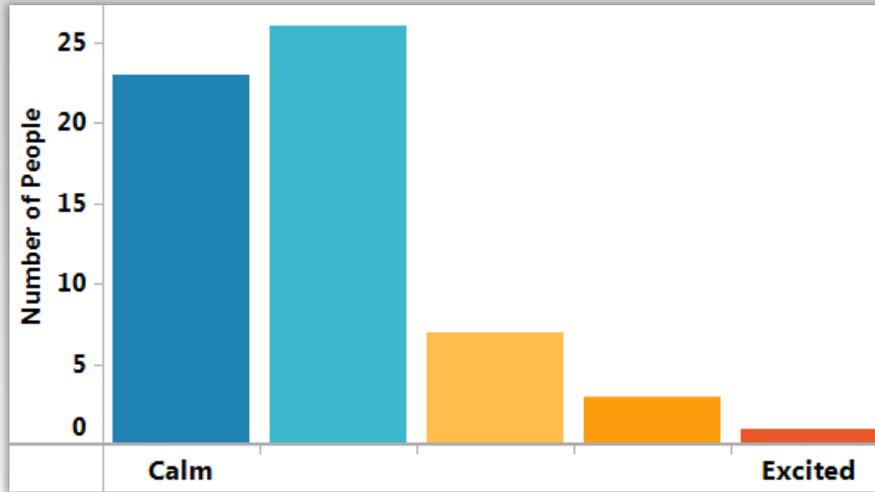
- Aggressive
- Creepy
- Exciting
- Glorious
- Hopeful
- Moving
- Powerful
- Reflective
- Serene
- Tense
- Ancient
- Evocative
- Foreboding
- Heroic
- Joyful
- Mysterious
- Primal
- Sad
- Stealthy
- Triumphant



Emotional Fingerprint



- Rate your emotional state at the end of this piece of music:



- Planned Vertical Synchronicity... it's baack!

Ambient



"...that moment of uncertainty, trying to find one's bearings in search of... something."

Percussive



"...the massive air-land force rolls off towards the sunset, ready to kick the ass of anything in its way..."

Combination



"I'm flying through space, in enemy territory. I think I'm safe, but I can't be sure."



+



=

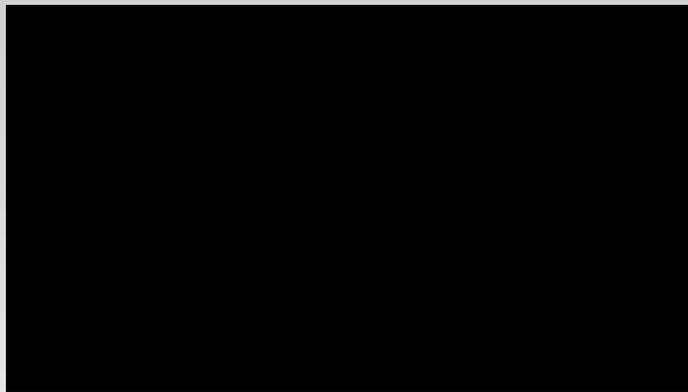


So... what does this have to do with *games*?



50 total combinations of music with videos from games



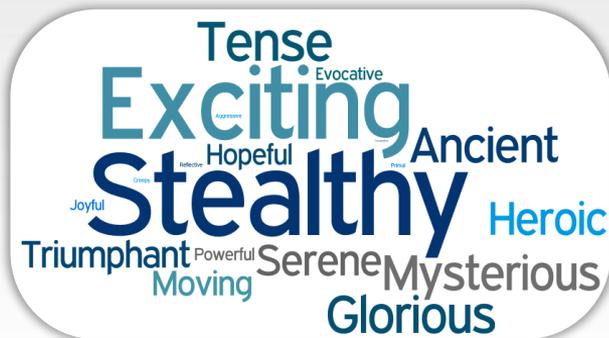


92% of the combinations were correlated with emotions of the music alone

Music 68%

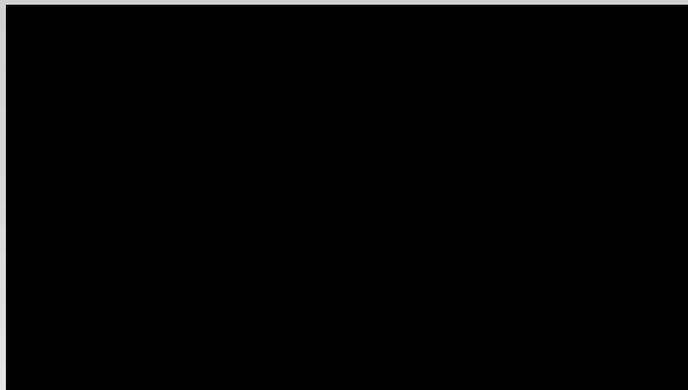


Visuals 2%



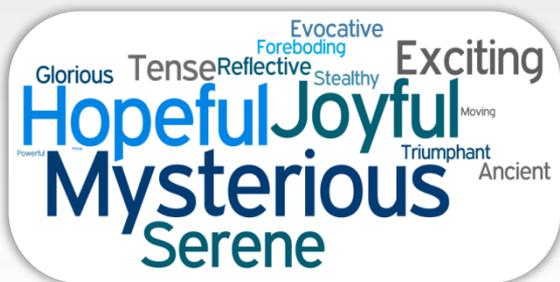
Combination



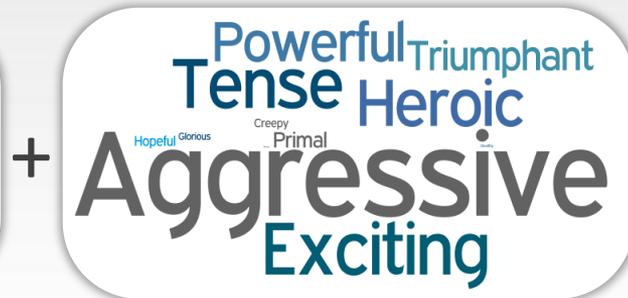


The remaining **8%** of the combinations were too disastrous for human brains to accept

Music **0%**



Visuals **65%**



Combination



Music Alone



Music > Visuals: Foreboding, Hopeful, Powerful, Primal, Sad, Serene

43%* avg – explains the overall experience

Visuals Alone



Visuals > Music: Stealthy and Heroic

33%* avg – explains the overall experience



Ambient 42%



Percussive 3%



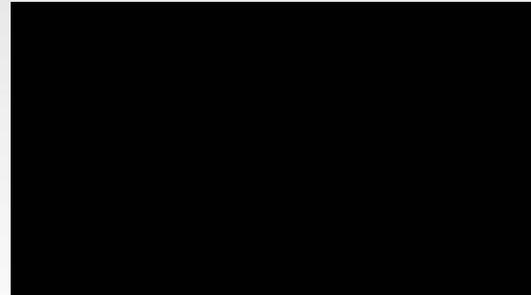
Music Combo 38%



Visuals 54%



Final Combo



- **Man up, and talk about the ‘feelings’ in your game**
- **Prioritize music crafted for your unique experience**
- **Use research to support your goose**

