



Flower

- Genre: Adventure
- Published: 12. February 2007
- Publisher: Sony
- Developer: Jenova Chen and Nicholas Clark
- Sound: Vincent Diamante

This analysis will focus on the importance of sound to the game, its gameplay and its aesthetic. Lastly, it will compare two games and how each rely on sound and what is achieved through it.

Game Description

Flower is a game developed by Thatgamecompany (designed by Jenova Chen and Nicholas Clark) and released in February 2009 for PlayStation 3. The role of the player consists in controlling the wind in the third person point-of-view and move flower petals through meadows, hills and human constructions. By getting close to flowers, the player will gather more petals and have an impact on the environment, since it enables him to bring back to life certain dead areas of the landscape. Flower is focused on provoking emotions in the player, mainly positive and relaxing, but the game also has darker places and atmospheres.

Gameplay example:

[bXqiKebP3d8?.swf](#)

Sound Analysis

What purpose does the sound have?

Flower's goal is pretty simple but the game lives mostly from its atmosphere in which sound plays an important part. Sounds in Flower has mainly the purpose to underline the players actions. It indicates

for example when the player passes by a flower or reaches a checkpoint. It partly helps to give the player feedback but mostly contributes to the game's mood.

Relationship between actions and sound

Background Sound

Flower has a background sound which changes with the player's progress and navigation. It alters with each level as well as within the level itself, when the player reaches certain checkpoints. It also adapts to the player's speed and therefore makes navigation more exciting, giving it a feel of lightness and dynamic.

The music changes with the player's progress into the level:

[N2Q0m9-Hiqc?.swf](#)

Objects and Checkpoints

Objects like flowers or windmills trigger sound that fits harmoniously into the background music. Additionally there's the sound of grass which occurs as the player is moving low through the grassland.

Interacting with flowers:

[TVKFB70-MZg?.swf](#)

Movement

In Flower, the player's character itself is and has the sound of wind, which underlines navigation throughout the world. The sounds may be influenced by the player's speed and adds to the game's dynamic gameplay.

Narration & Dramaturgy

Narrative Metatopics

In the beginning of each level, the background music will be calm, if sad and melancholic at a times, but will pick-up speed as the player begins to gain momentum.

Dramatising

When a player finishes certain levels, he may hear birds, insects and further nature sounds that weren't in place before as life is reintroduced to the world. Sudden silence between levels is sometimes used as well, which builds up suspense of more things meant to come.

Time perception

Flower most effectively suggests change in time by the visually varying level design. In the beginning, the player flies through wild landscapes whereas in the later levels he must reintroduce nature to grey cities and industrial areas. Each level has its own individual background music however.

Character and Personality

As according to the nature of the player's character, the only audible sounds are that of the wind progressing through grass and objects. Player's character's sounds are light and flowing and reflect the flexible navigation in the game. Further sounds are introduced when the player has won a speed boost.

Suggestion, Metaphor, Subtext

The recurrent theme in Flower is rebirth. Not only must the player reintroduce vibrant colours to a desolate world, he must also destroy industrial trash and reintroduce nature to a grey world left behind. Wind carries flowers' seeds and has been culturally associated with change. Therefore, related wind sounds are appropriately predominant in Flower.

Room

Navigation, Orientation

The lower the player flies, the more he may hear the sound of grass. This helps determine his character's current altitude. The deeper the player is into the level, more instruments are introduced which are evocative of progress. Basic progress through the game is audible through a female choir that sings for a half a second when the player reaches a checkpoint. When making a sudden and significant impact in the environment, sounds will reflect such achievement by a bass crash of winds which suggest something of great scope has happened.

Crash of winds aid in understanding the importance of the player's actions:

[RJE63Vw9aKg?.swf](#)

Setting, Scenography

Flower's background music shifts between peacefully ambient to emotionally orchestral and the pace may be slow or fast depending on the player's progress or level. Often, long-sounding instruments will suggest how expansive the fields are that the player must travel, therefore effectively complementing the room.

Composition / Mix / Aesthetic

The background music is played by different classical instruments (piano, string and wind instruments, choirs) and most of the sounds are realistic, the most important one being the blow of the wind through grass. Objects like flowers, human constructions or dead areas will react to the touch of the player and produce sounds and melodies. The background music will also dynamically respond to the player's actions in the game's world.

The music in Flower is systematic and complex but the sounds still sound fairly aerial and light. They create an overall feeling of relaxation and quietness though certain levels also have more aggressive and darker music.

The melody changes depending on the progression of the player through the different levels or in a level itself and the interaction between the player and the objects of the world also produce sounds. They are used in order to strengthen the immersion of the player in the game.

Game Comparison: Proteus

[Link to Proteus Analysis Page](#)

Purpose of sounds

As flower does have a specific goal and stunning visuals, the role that sound plays isn't as big as in Proteus but nevertheless crucial for a thrilling game experience. While in Proteus, sound is the main motivation for the player to keep playing, in Flower, it adds to the atmosphere and the gameplay.

Objects

Object sounds are less prominent than in Proteus and rather subtle in comparison to Flower.

Movement

The player in Proteus is less prominent than in Flower, as he is neither visually nor audibly present.

Composition / Mix / Aesthetic

The music in Flower doesn't sound as „random“ or „childish“ as the music in Proteus. This is classical music that is widely known, not ambient electronic or 8-bit. All the sound elements in Flower are realistic and arguably more „mainstream“ than the ones in Proteus, which is a game that takes much more liberties with sounds and experiments with them.

Comparison Conclusion

Although the sound in Flower depends a lot on the player's location, his progress and his speed of movement, it is much more predefined than in Proteus. In Proteus, the player's main motivation is to experiment and experience sound, as objects and movement allow him to directly influence music and atmosphere. It motivates the player to keep exploring the environment in Proteus in search for new sounds and sound combinations as the system brings about a continuous variation. In Flower, the sounds mostly underline the general atmosphere of the current environment and contribute to an audibly interesting gameplay.

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