

Real Musical Connections in a Virtual World

The study of score-based spatial listening environments in video games remains popular within the burgeoning subfield of Ludomusicology. Environmental verisimilitude in Grand Theft Auto V (GTA V) however is predominantly achieved through the implementation of licensed pre-composed popular music delivered via the in-game radio mechanism.

Compelling research opportunities arise from the variegated music genres experienced during gameplay, which permeate a combination of radio stations both ubiquitous and isographic to the geography and socio-cultural boundaries of the game world. Cultural complexities of geographical contiguity are thereby delineated, with urban-oriented hip-hop stations emblematic of metropolitan areas, and complimenting the rock and country musical palette endemic to rural locales.

Heterogeneous simulacra of archetypal 'citizens' in their social milieu are identified through music and vehicle profiling taxonomies, constructed by the game engine. Through music, the player is thus dynamically informed during gameplay of the game world's temporal constituents' stratified social and economic distances.

Through the dissemination of millions of game copies to a worldwide audience, GTA V has isomorphically conceptualised its internal matrix of musical culture connectivity on a global scale. With propitious immersional and ludomusicological study matter, the resulting copacetic metaverse forms a satirical mimesis, with popular music framing the player's entire gaming experience.