

Ways of Perceiving Essay

Name: Zack Robert Jones

Student No: 1803261

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Tutor:

Ways Of Perceiving

Intro

Newgrounds

Ahh, good old newgrounds, despite everything, that site's still kicking. Newgrounds is an online web site, created by Tom Flup. The site was originally Toms personal site, where He'd publish his own games. The site did not become what it's known for until the addition of the portal, which allowed users to create an account and upload their own creations, be it animation, artwork, flash games or audiotracks.

The site began to gain a lot of notice and attraction, becoming a hotspot for not just young, inspiring artists, but online bullies as well. Eventually with the rise of youtube, a site in which anyone could upload anything of varying content or quality, soon, even animators who had made their name off newgrounds began to jump to youtube. Despite the rise of these alternative platforms, newgrounds have somehow managed to survive with a dedicated following of supporters.

VR

Virtual Reality is something I'm worried about. On the one hand it offers an alternative look at game design and unique takes on already established and worn out genres. On the other hand, this might just be an extremely expensive fad.

As of right now, the current state of VR seems to be... both? It's honestly too early to tell what the outcome will be. Most of the products out for these VR systems are tech. Demos or small minigame collections, some of which don't even require VR to play, which is only a bonus for every consumer who didn't buy a VR system. However there is one interesting game that can be run both on or off VR, and thats:

VR Chat

VRChat is a strange game. Well, it's less of an actual game and more of a virtual chat room. Players can log in, join servers and interact with other online players. The game has managed to develop some strange communities among its servers, including an example of an actual christiona church, which officially runs and hosts service every sunday.

I think with the disconnect people have with modern art and the rise of internet art sites, I think VR Chat would be a perfect place to show a public audience both the importance of these sites and where artists now go to show their artwork.

Video Games

I think Video games are art; a statement I am oddly embarrassed by. Why? Well, mostly because of how the internet has turned the “Games as Art” argument into a joke at this point; but realistically, games have been supported as art since 2011, with the supreme court ruling that games should be protected as an art form. The industry is widely supported and grows in love and support every year. I think the main problem here is that, while video games are popular, there is still a mainstream effect to them, and so only a select few are widely known and loved, but these titles don't usually explore, analyse or push the medium. They rarely have anything important to say. I think it's this mainstream limit that upsets the discussion, as there are a lot of interesting, unique games that don't get the mainstream recognition they deserve.

Final Fantasy 7

Final Fantasy VII is a weird game; both in its presentation and its place in gaming history. *FF7* (abbreviation) is the seventh mainline entry in the *Final Fantasy* franchise. It was released during the fifth generation of consoles, releasing on the playstation one in 1997 to a positive reception. *FF7* was the first in the series to use 3D polygon graphics, rather than the pixel based sprites of the previous entries.

Let's talk about console generations for a second. With technology constantly improving hardware and operating systems, each console is an improvement in quality to the previous. While this may seem beneficial, and it does have its benefits in the long run, these jumps from console to console tend to hurt the development of games; at least at the start of each generation. The development and programmers usually have a hard time with these newer operating systems, since they've just spent 8 or so years getting used to the previous system. This can lead to three different types of situations:

1. The team plays it safe, working with the console slowly to learn its strengths and its weaknesses; releasing a product certainly works but doesn't push the system to the limits of what it's capable of (*Final Fantasy 10* and *Final Fantasy 13* are good examples of this in effect. While the *FF* series is known for having vast, open and explorable worlds, both *10* and *13* drop this feature, instead opting for a more linear game experience)
2. The team becomes over ambitious with the new system and end up designing games that are too difficult for the console to run properly (a good example is *Sony* and *Team ICO's The Last Guardian*. A game that was announced for the Playstation 3, beginning its development in 2007 and became stuck in development hell, not releasing until 2016 on the playstation 4)
3. The team sticks to what they know best and makes a game for the previous generation and just port the product over to the new console.

Soundtrack

FF7 has an amazing OST. most of the tracks have a calming, nostalgia feeling to them (and for the record, I don't play this game until a view months ago) yet these tracks still have this sense of impending doom.

Shadow of the colossus

Shadow of the colossus is beautiful. It is the pinnacle of, not only art through the medium of games, but of art in general. At its core SoT (abbreviation) is an action adventure, puzzle game, released on the playstation 2 in 2005, with a remake of the game in 2018 on the playstation 4. It is the second entry of a series of (currently) three games, the other two being ICO, Shadows predecessor, and The Last Guardian being its sequel.

Although there may be some similarities with tone and art styles between the three games, there is no linking story or lore between them. Even the canon order of the games is left to the players interpretation.

Story (or what hints there are)

You play as Wander (a name given to the protagonist by the fans. The name originated from the game's original development title "Wander and the shadow of the colossus". That's right, even the protags. Name is left as a mystery) who rides for an ancient, forbidden land. He travels with an unconscious (or possibly dead) woman dressed in white, and wields a magical, glowing sword. Upon entering the forbidden land, Wander is greeted by the voice of a strange and possibly evil entity, who offers to wander a bargain: wander must venture forth across the forbidden land and kill sixteen colossi, and in return the entity will bring this woman back to the land of the living.

And that's pretty much it.

Almost all of the plot details are left to the players imagination, even the culture is mysterious to pin down as the language being spoken in cutscenes are completely made up. Unlike FF7, this game doesn't rely on deep storytelling, but rather on intrigue and mystery.