Music 15

Lecture 7

Wednesday, Feb 26, 2020

Lecture Outline

1. Announcements

2. Section Information

3. Assignment 4 Recap

4. General Review

5. Final Project Overview

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Announcements

- **<u>Final Project</u>:** DUE by 11:59 pm on Friday, **March 13**

- **<u>To receive extra credit</u>:** You must submit both of the following by 6:30 pm on Thursday, **March 5**:

  - **Complete draft** of the final project (include PDF with link to soundtrack music)
  - **Walkthrough video** of your game (include link to YouTube/Vimeo video in your PDF)

- We will show and discuss some of the early submissions in class on Thursday, March 5. You can receive **<u>up to 5%</u>** extra credit.

Section Information

- **Grades for Assignments 3 and 4 are coming**

- Some have answered my requests for more information on Assignments 1 and 2. Your grades are also coming.

- **Thanks for your patience!**

Assignment 4 Recap

- Experimental music can be a challenging and even polarizing art form. Why?

  - Like other postmodern art, experimental music often rejects traditional music norms
  - The composer may want you to think differently about music
  - Do you have to like it? Definitely not. However, it's good to at least know what's going on.

- It can be useful in video games if you tweak it until the sound fits the mood

- What strategies are there to improve the sound? Here are examples of adding delay (**version 1**) and changing instruments / etc (**version 2**):

  - Original Music: https://brownian.bandcamp.com/track/single-particle-equal-area
  - Modified Version 1: https://brownian.bandcamp.com/track/single-particle-feedback
  - Modified Version 2: https://brownian.bandcamp.com/track/probability-mapping-with-bells

General Review

What have we covered up to this point?

- Important **terminology** in video game music composition (see Quiz)

- Basic music composition **techniques and technology** (see Assignments 1-4)

  - Techniques: arpeggios/chords, instrumentation, music analysis, experimental methods
  - Technology: LMMS, MIDI, SoundFont, Lexikon Sonate, PixelSynth, Soundflower

- Common **troubleshooting** strategies in electronic music composition

- **Food for thought:** Aside from gaining an appreciation for video game music, how might these topics be useful in your future career, hobbies, or other pursuits? **Possible scenarios**: 1) You need to configure the audio for a company conference call; 2) Your future startup needs feedback on the music or sound design for a promotional video.

Final Project Overview - Preliminary comments

- **For the final project, you are asked to create the following:**

  1. At least **15** compositions for at least **5** game scenes   **(covered today)**
  2. Cue list of 15 compositions / game situations   **(covered today)**
  3. Adaptive music implementation of 15 compositions   **(covered today <u>and</u> next Wed)**
  4. Music for at least **4** transitions between scenes   **(covered today <u>and</u> next Wed)**
  5. **One** possible walkthrough sequence   **(covered next Wed)**
  6. **One** soundtrack that matches the walkthrough   **(covered next Wed)**

- If you do more complex work---such as use FMOD or Wwise---you may team up with others. However, **complex work will not earn you extra credit**.

- Please let me know if you plan on using FMOD or Wwise. **Multi-student submissions must be approved**.
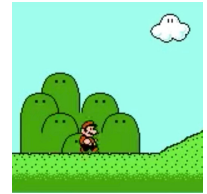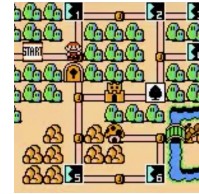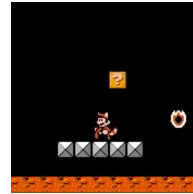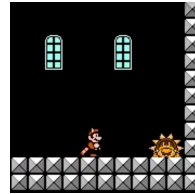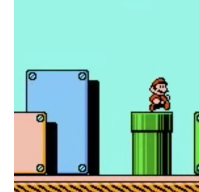
Final Project Overview - First 4 items

1. Break up the music you created in the previous assignments into **constituent elements** that could be played or manipulated separately. You may also alter the instrumentation, change tempo or transpose the notes / change the key to create additional musical materials from the elements you already have.

2. Create a **cue list** of music in correspondence to game situations or player actions.

3. Create music for each cue using elements from step 1 by using **adaptive scoring** techniques of horizontal re-sequencing and vertical remixing / layering.

4. Create a set of additional musical clips that can serve as transitions between different scenes and create a **transition matrix** as discussed in class.

Final Project Overview- Item 1 (scenes/elements)

- **Super Mario Bros 3:**
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bKublR3pZ2s

  (Watch the first 7 minutes)

- Notice the 8 unique scenes in the video above
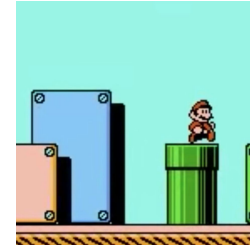
- In your project, you need at least **5 scenes**

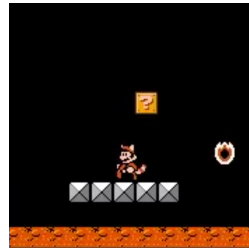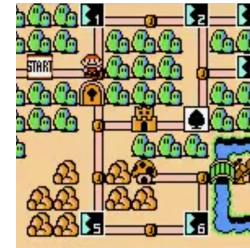# Final Project Overview- Item 1 (scenes/elements)

Detour

Hero

Anti-Hero

Tense

Prelude

Final Project Overview- Item 1 (scenes/elements)

- Take the 4 music compositions you've already made:

    - Prelude Scene   **(Assignment 1)**
    - Hero Theme   **(Assignment 2)**
    - Anti-Hero Theme   **(Assignment 2)**
    - Tense Scene   **(Assignment 4)**

- Alter the instrumentation, change the tempo, or transpose the notes in these compositions to create new music compositions.

- Create a composition for a **5th scene** in your video game (e.g. a **detour**). Now modify that composition as you did with the 4 compositions above.

- You will need at least **15 in-scene musical elements (i.e. compositions)**.

Final Project Overview- Item 1 (scenes/elements)

- To write the prelude composition in Assignment 1, we talked about using the **chords-first** method. In the chords-first method, we first write the chords (as the name suggests) and then write melodies and bass lines to match those chords. Alternatively, you could have used the **melody-first** method, which just means that you start with a melody and then add chords and bass lines to match that melody.

- If you ever watch interviews with musicians, the interviewer will often ask them how they go about writing their songs, and the musicians will usually answer by referring to one of those methods.

Final Project Overview- Item 1 (scenes/elements)

- Aside from chords-first and melody-first, we discussed the **MIDI** method in Assignment 2, which just means that you download a MIDI file and adjust the instruments to match the mood you're going for in your video game.

- We also discussed some **experimental** music composition methods in Assignment 4. You can just write "Lexikon Sonate" or "PixelSynth" to describe your composition method, depending on which software you used.

- Finally, for the final project, we've talked about **alteration** methods for writing new compositions, like changing the tempo or the instrumentation

Final Project Overview- Item 1 (scenes/elements)

State the composition method you used for each composition. You could write:

1. MIDI
2. Changed instrumentation of #1
3. Increased tempo of #1
   ...
14. ...
15. ...

Each number in the list above corresponds to one of your 15 in-scene compositions. The list should have the same order as the cue list (i.e. each item in the list above corresponds to each row in the cue list).

Final Project Overview - Item 2 (cue list)

Music composition

1. Hero theme
2. Hero theme with different instrumentation
3. Hero theme with faster tempo

   ...

14. …
15. …

Game situation / player action

1. Normal play
2. The hero drinks a performance-enhancing potion
3. Time is running out

   ...

14. …
15. …

# **Final Project Overview - Item 3 (adaptive scoring)**

- In this item, you will adapt the music to the game situation or player action by using the adaptive composition techniques we've discussed in class

- You must implement **both** horizontal re-sequencing and vertical remixing. Possible ways of implementing these methods include

  - Horizontal re-sequencing: cross-fading between distinct compositions over time
  - Vertical remixing: cross-fading between instruments of the same composition

- We will discuss in greater detail how to implement these techniques during next section's lecture on March 4

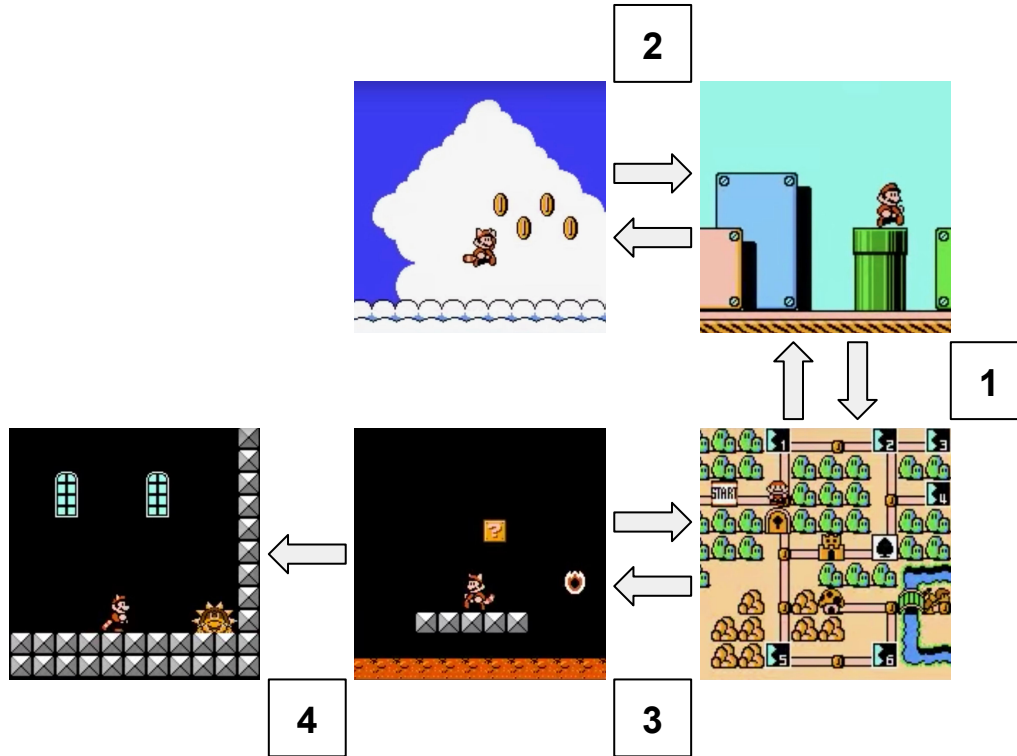# Final Project Overview - Item 4 (transitions)

- **Super Mario Bros 3**: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bKublR3pZ2s

  (Watch the first 7 minutes)

- Notice the transition music between game scenes

- You need at least **4 unique transition compositions**

- You may **modify** MIDI files
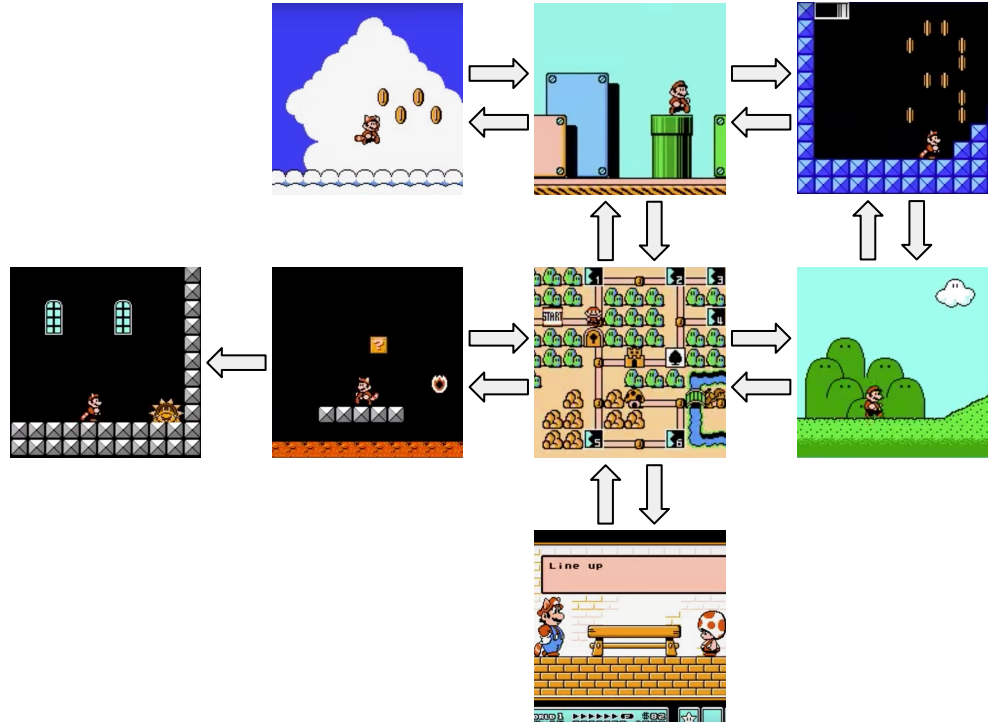
Final Project Overview - Item 4 (transitions)

On-on-one help

Please help someone in need if you are finished