

Sound Design Treatment

Audio Production Methods

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I have chosen the provided clip of Disney & Pixar's Wall-E. I have seen this film before and am familiar with it, which will undoubtedly affect some of the aesthetic choices I will make. However, I will not be referencing any materials on how the sound design for Wall-E was done, so that I will have a fresher approach to doing my own.

My principal aim for this project is to communicate Wall-E's character - his optimism, isolation and friendly nature.

In order to give Wall-E some extra personality, sound design for his voice will be largely based on my own one, with editing and heavy processing. My process will be partly inspired by the way Ben Burtt created R2-D2's voice for the original Star Wars, where he recorded himself doing baby talk (*Star Wars, 2014*).

Aside from the diegetic sounds of Wall-E's activities and any music, the soundscape will be quite sparse to reflect how alone he is. It will consist of gentle wind and dust sounds, with far off creaks of the piles of scrap.

Wall-E is a film intended for all audiences, especially families, having a "U" rating (IMDB, 2008). This will impact my sound design in the sense that there should be no offensive dialogue or elements that may upset children. It would be inappropriate in a thematic way too, I will have to approach it from a playful and emotional standpoint instead.

Central to my emotional profile of Wall-E will be his relative loneliness, offset by his upbeat and friendly nature. I will be able to communicate this clearly through the use of quiet environments during the long shots and the small interaction with his insect friend and companion. The short theme plan to compose for Wall-E will be written with the pair of them in mind, using only two instruments which work in harmony. The romantic aspect of Wall-E's personality will also be on show here in the feel of the melody and also my song choice for the start of the clip.

The vast majority of the sound design (aside from the ambiances) will be highly synchronous as I aim to keep to focus on the characters in the limited time I have to bring them to life. Especially with Wall-E's mechanical nature, it is essential that the various whirs and buzzes he makes are precisely timed with his actions to connect them effectively. His vocalisations are a little different, as he has no mouth so there is no visual feedback, meaning the human side of him is a little less predictable. I plan to add vocals where they feel they would naturally be to capitalise on this and sell the idea of him having real feelings and impulses despite his robotic construction.

The music will be a largely asynchronous, though it will become diegetic when it attaches to Wall-E as he appears on screen. I will sync it with the pan down to earth to connect it and him by extension, to the desolation of the world. The final resolving chord of the small theme I will compose for the ending is intended to sync with the titles appearing. This is planned to solidify link between the pleasant sound and romanticism of the theme with Wall-E's name. A little overt perhaps, but it should be effective.

Citations:

Star Wars (2014, February 7). Ben Burtt interview: R2-D2 Available at: <https://youtu.be/eUwnFYBPMIU> (Accessed: 15 March 2016)

IMDB (2008) Parents Guide for WALL-E. Available at: http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0910970/parentalguide?ref_=tt_stry_pg#certification (Accessed: 15 March 2016).