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Metroid

Metroid^[a] is a science fiction action game franchise created by Nintendo. The series is primarily produced by the company's first-party developers Nintendo R&D1 and Retro Studios, although some games have been handled by other developers, including Fuse Games, Team Ninja, Next Level Games, and MercurySteam.

Metroid follows space-faring bounty hunter Samus Aran, who protects the galaxy from the Space Pirates and their attempts to harness the power of the parasitic Metroid creatures. *Metroid* combines the platforming of *Super Mario Bros.* and the adventure of *The Legend of Zelda* with a dark science fiction atmosphere and greater emphasis on nonlinear gameplay.

The series consists of fourteen games that were released on each Nintendo video game console except the Nintendo 64. It is one of Nintendo's most successful franchises, and the games have received varying levels of critical acclaim. As of September 2012, the *Metroid* series had sold over 17.44 million copies.^[1] The series has been represented in other Nintendo media, including the *Super Smash Bros.* series. Additional media includes soundtracks, comic books, and manga.

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<i>Metroid</i>	
	
Genre(s)	Action-adventure
Developer(s)	Nintendo R&D1, Intelligent Systems, Retro Studios, Nintendo Software Technology, Team Ninja, Next Level Games, MercurySteam
Publisher(s)	Nintendo
Creator(s)	Satoru Okada Gunpei Yokoi Hiroji Kiyotake Yoshio Sakamoto
Platform(s)	Nintendo Entertainment System, Game Boy, Super NES, Game Boy Advance, GameCube, Nintendo DS, Wii, Nintendo 3DS, Nintendo Switch
First release	<i>Metroid</i> August 6, 1986
Latest release	<i>Metroid: Samus Returns</i> September 15, 2017

References

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Common gameplay elements

The *Metroid* series contains gameplay elements from shooter, platformer, and adventure games.^[2] The series is notable for its non-linear progression and solitary exploration format where the player only controls Samus Aran, with few or no other characters to interact with. The series has been a 2D side-scroller in all its incarnations until the *Metroid Prime* series changed the perspective to a first-person perspective, leading to a new first-person shooter element. The player gains items and power-ups for Samus's cybernetic suit primarily through exploration, and occasionally by defeating alien creatures through real-time combat with the suit's arm cannon. Many such upgrades enable further avenues of exploration.^[2]^[3] A recurring upgrade is the Morph Ball, which allows Samus to curl into a ball, roll into tight places and plant bombs.^[2]

The original *Metroid* was influenced by two other major Nintendo franchises: *Mario*, from which it borrowed extensive areas of platform jumping, and *The Legend of Zelda*, from which it borrowed non-linear exploration.^[2] The game differed in its atmosphere of solitude and foreboding.^[2] *Metroid* was also one of the first video games to feature an exploration to the left as well as the right, and backtracking to already explored areas to search for secret items and paths.^[4]

Games

The 14 games in the *Metroid* series focus on the adventures of Samus Aran and her assignments to wipe out threats to the Galactic Federation presented by the Space Pirates and their attempts to harness various biological weapons such as the Metroids and Phazon.

Metroid

Samus travels through the caverns of the planet Zebes to stop the Space Pirates from exploiting the parasitic organisms known as Metroids for galactic domination. She confronts the cybernetic lifeform Mother Brain, as well as its guardians, Kraid and Ridley.^[5] It was released on the Nintendo Entertainment System, also known as the NES.^[6]

Metroid II: Return of Samus

The Galactic Federation deems the Metroid species too dangerous to exist, and after their own failed attempts, employs Samus to travel to the Metroid homeworld, SR388, and exterminate the entire species. After killing every Metroid (among them Alpha, Gamma, Zeta, and Omega Metroids) and the Queen Metroid, Samus finds an unhatched egg behind the Queen Metroid's chamber. Before Samus fires on the Metroid egg, an infant Metroid hatches and believes Samus to be its mother. After it helps her escape back to her ship, Samus hands the hatchling over to the Ceres research station for study.^[5] It was released on the Game Boy, and is also available on the 3DS Virtual Console.^[7]

Super Metroid

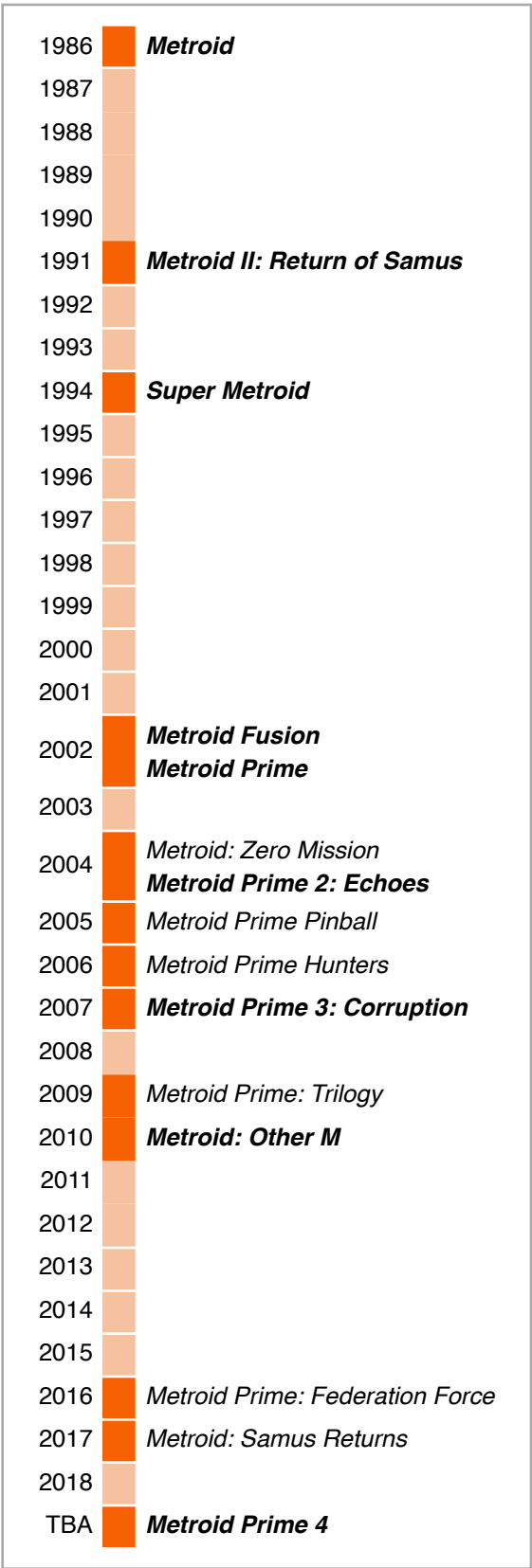
Just after she leaves, Samus receives a distress signal from the Ceres research lab.

She returns just in time to catch Ridley stealing the hatchling, having killed all of the scientists. She follows Ridley to a rebuilt base on Zebes, where the Space Pirates are once again attempting to clone the Metroids and use them as weapons. Samus kills the reborn versions of Ridley and Kraid, as well as new guardians Phantoon and Draygon, then confronts Mother Brain once again.^[4] Samus is nearly killed in the battle, but the Metroid hatchling, now having grown immensely, rescues her. Mother Brain kills it just after it restores Samus's energy,^[5] and Samus in turn destroys Mother Brain with a supercharged weapon known as the Hyper Beam apparently left by the hatchling's death. She then escapes Zebes during a countdown that leads to the entire planet exploding, taking with it the few remaining cloned Metroids.^[5] It was released on the Super Nintendo Entertainment System (SNES), and said to be "one of the greatest games of all time" by IGN.^[7]

Metroid Fusion

While acting as a bodyguard for researchers on the planet SR388, Samus is infected by a native creature known as the X Parasite, originally the prey of the Metroid species.^[4] Doctors surgically remove portions of her armor and cure the X infection with a vaccine created from the DNA of the Metroid hatchling (*Metroid II: Return of Samus*).^[4] The vaccine not only allows her to survive the parasites, but to absorb them to power up her energy and weapons. She is then sent to investigate a disturbance at the Biologic Space Labs research station, where it is revealed that specimens from SR388 had been carriers of the X parasite. An X mimicking Samus, nicknamed the SA-X, has taken control of Samus's old suit, methodically breaking into different parts of the station to allow the X parasites to infect the entire station.^[5] While trying to destroy the rapidly multiplying X as well as clones of the SA-X, Samus discovers a secret Federation Metroid breeding program. Before Samus can react, the SA-X discovers the lab and triggers a security system that ejects it into space, killing the Metroids (as the X Parasite and Metroid are natural

Release timeline



enemies). The Federation eventually shifts interest towards researching the X parasite, especially the SA-X's capabilities, and orders the shipboard computer to prevent Samus from destroying it. Samus then convinces the computer, whom she had nicknamed "Adam" after her former Commanding Officer, that the X pose a threat to galactic civilization, claiming that the arriving Federation troops will be overwhelmed by the multiple SA-X patrolling the ship. Adam, in a sudden change of heart, suggests that she alter the station's propulsion to intercept with SR388 to destroy the planet and wipe out both X populations.^[4] After fighting one of the SA-X clones and changing the station's propulsion, Samus races back to her ship, where she encounters an Omega Metroid which seems to have escaped the laboratory breach. The SA-X returns and tries to kill the Metroid, since the ice-beam it has seems to be the only weapon able to damage it, but the SA-X is badly damaged in the battle. Samus absorbs the SA-X parasite to regain her suit's Energy, defeats the Omega Metroid and leaves the station before it collides with SR388.^[4] It was released on the Game Boy Advance.^[8]

Metroid Prime

Samus receives a distress signal in her new ship and travels to Tallon IV to stop the Space Pirates from exploiting a powerful radioactive substance known as Phazon. She discovers that the Chozo once settled on this planet, and their disappearance, as well as the emergence of Phazon, is due to a meteor impacting the planet decades ago. After ruining a Space Pirate mining operation and collecting the twelve Chozo Artifacts that allow access to the sealed impact crater, she confronts and defeats Ridley before delving deeper into the impact site and discovering Metroid Prime, a matured Metroid, mutated and corrupted by Phazon. Metroid Prime had been feeding off the Phazon Core of the meteor to increase in size and strength. During the final battle against Metroid Prime, Metroid Prime grabs and takes Samus's Phazon Suit from her. She flees the impact site and after the credits, there is a glimpse of a dark hand coming out of a pool of Phazon in the arena where Samus and Metroid Prime fought. It is implied that this hand is Dark Samus in the future games and that Metroid Prime by taking Samus's suit becomes Dark Samus.^[4] It was released on the GameCube^[9] and is the first of the Metroid Prime Trilogy.

Metroid: Zero Mission

Metroid: Zero Mission is an enhanced remake of the *original Metroid* designed to retell the game's story. It has an addendum to the original storyline: After defeating Mother Brain, Samus is ambushed by Space Pirates and her ship crash-lands back on the surface. With her ship and arsenal destroyed and armed with only an emergency pistol, she is forced to infiltrate the Space Pirate mothership to find a way off the planet. She finds ancient Chozo armor more powerful than her original while deep within Chozo ruins, then goes on to defeat the Ridley Robot and escapes from the mothership before it self-destructs.^[4]^[10] It was originally released on the Game Boy Advance,^[11] and a version was released for the Wii U Virtual Console.^[12]

Metroid Prime 2: Echoes

Samus is sent to investigate the planet Aether after a squad of GF Marines was lost there. Samus finds them all dead, killed by several creatures, mostly by an evil race called the Ing. The Ing possess life forms, transforming them into monstrous "dark" versions of their former selves to wage war with Aether's dominant race, the Luminoth. Upon meeting the only remaining member of Luminoth (the others are frozen in stasis chambers, awaiting the destruction of the Ing), Samus learns Aether has been split into two dimensions by a meteor similar to the one that crashed on Tallon IV. Samus agrees to assist by recovering Aether's planetary energy (the "Light of Aether") from Dark Aether. She does this by going to Dark Aether and absorbing the energy into her

suit, then placing the energy back into the Energy Controllers on Light Aether. By completing this task, she destroys Dark Aether and the Ing that inhabit it. The final boss fights consist of one against the Emperor Ing and Dark Samus. Dark Samus vaporizes in front of Samus's eyes, but as she flees, Dark Samus is shown to reform in outer space.^[4] It was released on the GameCube in 2004.^[13]

Metroid Prime Pinball

Metroid Prime Pinball is a pinball version of *Metroid Prime*, following the same storyline and has similar gameplay elements; however, it is just presented through pinball format rather than as a first-person adventure.^[14]

Metroid Prime Hunters

When the Federation receives an unusual telepathic message regarding an "Ultimate Power," Samus is sent to the remote Alimbic Cluster in the Tetra Galaxy to investigate and secure it. Others have also received the message, and six rival bounty hunters arrive with similar intent. When all parties arrive at the source of the transmission, it is revealed that the message was a false lure sent by an ancient creature known as Gorea, who intended to manipulate visitors into releasing it from a void between dimensions. Upon this revelation, Gorea attacks and syphons the energy from the other hunters, allowing it to commandeer their weapons. After killing Gorea, Samus and the other hunters escape the cluster, empty handed, but alive.^[4] It was released on the handheld Nintendo DS in 2006.^[15] It was also the first game that many played on the DS since, at its original release in some regions, the console came bundled with a demo, *Metroid Prime Hunters: First Hunt*.

Metroid Prime 3: Corruption

Samus, along with bounty hunters Rundas, Ghor, and Gandrayda, are brought together in a ship over Norion to discuss a Space Pirate infection sweeping the Galactic Federation supercomputer network, one composed of organic Aurora Unit systems. Having this network shut down allows for the Pirates to engage in large scale combat in an attempt to further spread Phazon. As a battle erupts on Norion's surface, enormous Phazon-based seedships, called Leviathans, also begin to rain from the sky onto planets in order to begin corrupting them with Phazon. After a skirmish with Dark Samus which left her asleep for a month, Samus is charged with destroying these "Phazon Seeds" and restoring functionality to the Federation's computer network, as the other three hunters have mysteriously cut all contact during their missions. Samus is told that after the battle on Norion, her body gained the capability to self-generating non-hazardous Phazon, allowing for her to enter a "Hypermode" attack frenzy with her suit's PED (Phazon Enhancement Device). After purging three planets of Phazon (including a Space Pirate homeworld), the Federation locates the source of Phazon - planet Phaaze - which is made entirely of Phazon. As the Federation engages the Space Pirates in orbit, Samus enters the depths of the planet and succeeds in destroying Dark Samus and Phaaze, rendering all Phazon in the galaxy inert and cleansing her body from its corruption. A ship is seen following her into Warp Space at the end.^[16] It is the third game of the Metroid Prime series, and was released for the Wii console.^[17]

Metroid: Other M

Samus receives a distress signal and follows it to a mysterious vessel named the Bottle Ship. There, she encounters a squad of Galactic Federation soldiers, including her friend Anthony Higgs and her former superior officer Adam Malkovich. They find out that the director of the ship, Madeline Bergman, has been conducting research on illegal bioweapons for the Federation. Eventually, Samus finds a survivor who claims to be Madeline Bergman, but is later revealed to be an android with an artificial

intelligence duplicating that of Mother Brain, so that the bioweapon Metroids can be telepathically controlled.^[18] The Federation soldiers are mysteriously killed by a secret assassin among their ranks. Samus refers to this assassin as "the Deleter". His or her identity is never explicitly revealed in-game, but the Deleter is thought to be James Pierce for a few evidential reasons.^[19] Samus later discovers that these weapons are Metroids that have been genetically modified to remove their weakness to cold, making them virtually indestructible. Adam sacrifices himself to detach Sector Zero, the Metroid breeding area, from the main ship and activate its self-destruct sequence. After defeating a Queen Metroid, Samus finds the real Madeline Bergman, who tells her the truth about the android she found earlier. The artificial intelligence, named MB, took on a human shape to build an ideal relationship with the Metroids, similar to the one Samus had with the Metroid hatchling (*Super Metroid*). After developing emotions, MB revolted, telepathically ordering the cloned Zebesians life forms on the ship to attack their captors. MB appears and attacks Samus and Madeline, but is stopped when Galactic Federation reinforcements show up, led by Anthony, the only surviving member of the original squad. Samus, Anthony and Madeline all escape on Samus's gunship. In an optional epilogue, Samus returns to retrieve "something irreplaceable:" Adam's helmet.^[18]

Metroid Prime: Federation Force

Announced at E3 2015, *Metroid Prime: Federation Force* is a spin off of the *Metroid Prime* series. The game is a 4 player co-op game focusing on missions. It also features a mode called Metroid Prime: Blast Ball.

Metroid: Samus Returns

In June 2017, Nintendo announced an official remake of *Metroid II: Return of Samus* for the Nintendo 3DS.^{[20][21]} It was published on 15 September 2017.

Metroid Prime 4

In June 2017, Nintendo announced that *Metroid Prime 4* is currently in the works for the Nintendo Switch.^[22] Rumors from multiple sources have suggested the game was being developed by Bandai Namco Studios.^[23] On January 25, 2019, Nintendo released a three-minute video which detailed that development on the game had been restarted from the beginning, with Retro Studios taking over from the still-unconfirmed original developer.^[24]

Development

History

Nintendo's Research and Development 1 (R&D1) began development of *Metroid*, an action game for the Family Computer Disk System that was released in Japan on August 6, 1986.^[4] In North America and Europe, *Metroid* was published for the Nintendo Entertainment System in August 1987 and on January 15, 1988, respectively.^{[25][26]} Unlike the Japanese release, the Western versions of the game used passwords instead of a save system. Codes also allow for changes in gameplay; the "NARPAS SWORD" code grants Samus infinite ammunition, health, all power-ups, and a modified Ice Beam.^[4]

A sequel, *Metroid II: Return of Samus*, was released for the Game Boy in 1991 in North America, and in 1992 in Japan. It was the first game of the *Metroid* series whose North American release featured a save system,

allowing the player to have three separate save files. *Metroid II* also established the current "look" of Samus Aran and her Power Suit, namely the bulky look of the Varia Suit upgrade and the visual difference between the "Beam Mode" and "Missile Mode" of Samus's arm cannon.^[4] Dan Owsen of Nintendo acknowledged in an interview that Nintendo R&D1 was involved in developing the Game Boy Color. He noted that Nintendo R&D1 included a special "Metroid palette" in the console's hardware, which "makes *Metroid II* look really, really nice on Game Boy Color", remarking that this made the game's graphics comparable to the original *Metroid*.^[27]

Director Yoshio Sakamoto began planning concepts for *Super Metroid* in early 1990, but his studio was committed to making another game, so developers from Intelligent Systems were brought in to help complete the game.^[28] After *Super Metroid*'s release, there would not be another sequel for eight years. A Nintendo 64 game was considered during the period, but Nintendo "couldn't come up with any concrete ideas".^[29] In 1999, Retro Studios, a newly formed second-party developer based in Austin, Texas, was given the project for *Metroid Prime*. Nintendo rarely allows overseas teams to work on its games but this was one occasion when they allowed a high-profile game to be developed by a studio outside Japan.^[30] After it became a top seller on the GameCube, a trilogy was authorized.^[2]



In the first *Metroid* game, the player controls protagonist Samus Aran who fights alien monsters on the fictional planet Zebes.

Rumors abounded since 2005 about the development of a game called *Metroid Dread*, supposedly a 2D side-scroller for the Nintendo DS. In *Metroid Prime 3: Corruption*, there is a message in the Metroid breeding zone of the Space Pirate Homeworld on a computer panel that if scanned says "Experiment status report update: Metroid project 'Dread' is nearing the final stages of completion." Developers from Retro Studios gave a full but cryptic denial of any connection with the rumored game, and Nintendo denied they were making another 2D *Metroid* game.^{[31][32][33][34]} However, at E3 2009, Sakamoto confirmed *Metroid Dread* existed at one point, and may still be in development,^{[35][36]} though in a later interview Sakamoto stated that Nintendo prefers to keep secrecy on the project, and also that he would like to "reset the situation at once and start from scratch."^[37] On the May 3, 2010, 75th episode of IGN's Nintendo Voice Chat Podcast, editor Craig Harris confirmed that the story for *Metroid Dread* was fully written and he had seen it at one point in time, claiming "[Nintendo] has it and can bring it back at any time." ^[38]

A new *Metroid* game was announced at E3 2009, *Metroid: Other M*. It was developed in cooperation with Team Ninja and directed by long-time series developer Yoshio Sakamoto. It was released on the Wii on August 31, 2010.^[39] Sakamoto complimented Team Ninja's work and expressed interest in working with them again, but said he currently has no ideas for new *Metroid* games.^[40] Retro Studios' senior designer Mike Wikan said he would like to see a game continuing the story of the *Prime* trilogy, and producer Kensuke Tanabe said other *Prime*-like games could explore Samus' unique abilities such as the Morph Ball in a multiplayer feature.^[41]

While Nintendo did not formally announce plans for a *Metroid* game for the Wii U, *Animal Crossing* producer Katsuya Eguchi mentioned in an interview how such a game could make use of the console's tablet controller

to perform actions such as scanning enemies and retrieving information.^[42] A demo program for the Wii U, *Battle Mii*, showed Mii characters dressed in Varia Suits, as well as Samus's gunship from *Other M*;^[43] this was later revealed as a mini-game called "Metroid Blast", which is featured in *Nintendo Land*.^[44] *Nintendo Land* producer Shigeru Miyamoto, who was also involved with the *Prime* trilogy, has declared that this minigame reflects his ideas for future *Metroid* games,^[45] while also displaying the series is "a franchise that we value and we certainly want to see what we can do with it in the future". Miyamoto added that Retro is "a very high priority" in the development of more *Metroid* games.^[46] In 2014, a former artist from Next Level Games revealed his company had interest in developing a 3DS *Metroid* game, going as far as building a prototype, before Nintendo asked them to do *Luigi's Mansion: Dark Moon* instead.^[47]

In 2016, Nintendo released *Metroid Prime: Federation Force*, the first game in six years. Nintendo were criticized for releasing a multiplayer-focused spin-off, rather than a core series game after such a long interim.^[48] The following year saw the release of *Metroid: Samus Returns*, a side-scrolling remake of *Metroid II*, with *Metroid Prime 4* announced for the Nintendo Switch in the future.^[49]

Creation and design

Metroid was designed to be a shooting game that combined the platform jumping of *Super Mario Bros.* with the non-linear exploration of *The Legend of Zelda* and a distinctly darker aesthetic. The name of the game is a portmanteau of the words "metro" (as in rapid transit) and android, and was meant to allude to the mainly underground setting of the first game as well as its robot-like protagonist.^[50] Halfway through development of the original *Metroid*, one of the staff said to his fellow developers "Hey, wouldn't that be kind of cool if it turned out that this person inside the suit was a woman?", and the idea was accepted.^{[2][51]} Ridley Scott's 1979 science-fiction horror film *Alien* was described by Sakamoto as a "huge influence" after the world of the first *Metroid* had been created. The development staff was affected by the work of the film's creature designer H. R. Giger, and found his creations to be fitting for the *Metroid* universe.^[52] In recognition of this, a character was given the name Ridley, after director Scott.



The first *Metroid Prime* game, released in 2002 for the Nintendo GameCube, introduced 3D and FPS elements to the series as the player controls Samus Aran investigating the fictional planet Tallon IV.

Metroid, *Metroid II: Return of Samus*, *Super Metroid*, *Metroid Fusion*, and *Metroid: Zero Mission* were all developed by Nintendo's internal R&D1 division. The games which have been developed by separate teams are *Metroid Prime*, *Prime 2*, *Prime 3* and *Prime 4* (Retro Studios), *Metroid Prime Hunters* (Nintendo Software Technology Corporation), *Metroid Prime Pinball* (Fuse Games),^[4] and *Metroid: Other M* (Project M). The central figures in the production and development of the *Metroid* series are Satoru Okada, who directed *Metroid* and created the series; Yoshio Sakamoto, who acted as a character designer for the first game and has directed or supervised the development of most of the subsequent games; Gunpei Yokoi, who headed the R&D1 division and produced the first two games; Makoto Kano, who wrote the scenario for *Metroid*, co-

designed the second game, and produced the third; and Hiroji Kiyotake, who designed characters for the original game. *Mario* and *The Legend of Zelda* creator Shigeru Miyamoto was involved with the *Prime* trilogy, having been the one that suggested Retro to work with the franchise.^[2]

Audio

The *Metroid* series has been noted and praised for its unique style of video game music.^{[2][53][54]} Hirokazu "Hip" Tanaka, composer of the original *Metroid*, has said he wanted to make a score that made players feel like they were encountering a "living organism" and had no distinction between music and sound effects.^{[53][55]} The only time the main *Metroid* theme was heard was after Mother Brain is defeated; this is intended to give the player a catharsis. At all other times, no melodies are present in the game.^[55] The composer of *Super Metroid*, Kenji Yamamoto, came up with some of the games' themes by humming them to himself while riding his motorcycle to work. He was asked to compose the music for *Metroid Prime* to reinforce the series continuity.^[56] *Metroid Prime*'s Dolby Pro Logic II surround sound was mixed by a member of Dolby.^[57] Developers from Retro Studios noted how the 6 MB memory budget for all sound effects of a level in *Metroid Prime* was crucial in producing a quality soundtrack, as each sound had to be of very high quality to be included.^[56] Composer Kenji Yamamoto utilizes heavy drums, piano, voiced chants, clangs of pipes, and electric guitar.^[57] *Metroid Prime 3: Corruption* took advantage of the increase in the amount of RAM that took place when the series switched from the GameCube to the Wii; this allowed for higher quality audio samples to be used and thus allowing a better overall audio quality.^[56] Kenji Yamamoto, who composed the music to *Super Metroid* and the *Prime* trilogy, copied the musical design of the original *Metroid* in *Metroid Prime 3*, by keeping the music and themes dark and scary until the very end, when uplifting music is played during the credits.^[56]

In other media

Characters and elements from the *Metroid* series have appeared in different mediums. Samus has appeared in Nintendo games such as *Super Mario RPG*, *Tetris* (Nintendo Entertainment System version), *Tetris DS*, *Galactic Pinball*, *Kirby Super Star*, *Kirby's Dream Land 3* and *WarioWare*.^{[4][58][59]} Several characters and game environments have appeared in the *Super Smash Bros.* series. Samus is a playable character in all five *Super Smash Bros.* games.^{[60][61]} *Super Smash Bros. Brawl*, *Super Smash Bros. 4* and *Super Smash Bros. Ultimate* also feature Zero Suit Samus, a version of the heroine using the blue form-fitting suit seen in *Zero Mission* and the *Prime* series.^{[62][63]} Ridley makes cameos in *Super Smash Bros.*, where he can be seen flying through the level Zebes, and in *Super Smash Bros. Melee* both as an unlockable trophy and in the game's opening, where he is fighting Samus at Ceres Space Station.^[64] In *Super Smash Bros. Brawl*, Ridley, in both normal and Meta Ridley forms, appears as a boss character.^[65] Due to demand from fans, Ridley was made a playable fighter in *Super Smash Bros. Ultimate* alongside fellow newcomer Dark Samus. Kraid also appeared in *Super Smash Bros. Melee* as a stage hazard in Brinstar Depths and unlockable trophy. Various other characters such as Metroids, Mother Brain and Dark Samus appear as either trophies or stickers in the *Super Smash Bros.* series as well.

Mother Brain was also the primary villain in the *Captain N: The Game Master* TV show.^[66] A Metroid-

lookalike enemy, called the Komayto, was encountered by Pit in *Kid Icarus* for the NES.^[4] In *Dead or Alive: Dimensions*, a fighting game developed by Team Ninja for the Nintendo 3DS, one stage is a replica of the arena in which Samus fights Ridley in *Metroid: Other M* and features both as assist characters;^[67] Samus, however, is not featured as a playable character in *Dimensions*,^[68] as Team Ninja's Yosuke Hayashi stated in an interview that "it would be better to let her focus on her job rather than kicking everyone's butt in [*Dead or Alive: Dimensions*]"^[69] A Wii U launch game *Nintendo Land* has a mini-game based on the series called "Metroid Blast".^[44]

Comics and manga have been made for various magazines based on *Metroid*,^[70] *Super Metroid*,^[71] *Metroid Prime*,^[72] *Metroid Prime 2: Echoes*,^[73] and *Metroid: Zero Mission*^[74] in both the United States and Japan. Samus Aran and other *Metroid* characters also featured in the *Captain N: The Game Master* comic books by Valiant Comics.^[75] In Japan, six short "E-comics" were created to chronicle Samus' life and were published by Kodachi.^[4] Also in Japan, Comic Bom Bom published a three-volume manga starring Samus called *Samus and Joey* (メトロイド サムス&ジョイ).^[76]

Both Samus Aran and Link from *The Legend of Zelda* series were planned to be playable characters for the Wii version of *Marvel: Ultimate Alliance* however they didn't make the final release.^[77]

The MMO Kingdom of Loathing has a minigame called "Metroid", which is a text-and-button based version of Metroid.

Possible live-action movie

In 2003, two producers optioned the rights to create a live-action film based on *Metroid*, but the rights expired.^[4] John Woo acquired the rights a few years later,^[78] and Lion Rock Productions was to produce and release the film before 2006,^[79] but it either has been canceled or remains in limbo.^[80] Sakamoto has expressed no interest in working on a *Metroid* movie himself, but stated he could support such a project by Ryuji Kitaura, director of the CG scenes in *Other M*, if the concept and methodologies were good enough.^[37]

In December 2012, Peer Schneider of IGN published an article explaining the fate and some production details of the proposed John Woo-directed *Metroid* movie with an exclusive interview with one of the former producers of the *Metroid* movie, Brad Foxhoven. The movie with John Woo as director was first pitched in 2004 and initially had Nintendo's full support. Foxhoven stated in the IGN interview, "Nintendo was quite supportive of the idea, as they were all fans of John's previous films" and that production studio Tiger Hill was "in it for the long haul" and had started a three-year development period. The *Metroid* movie was originally set for a 2006 release but slipped because Tiger Hill was spending most of the development time attempting to cope with Nintendo's restrictions on the *Metroid* franchise. The reason for Nintendo's restrictions was the past critical and commercial failure of the *Super Mario Bros.* movie which, according to IGN, "had left an indelible impression on Nintendo and how it would approach future licensing deals with Hollywood." One writer that was brought in to write a script for the *Metroid* movie, among "several writers", was David Greenwalt of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Angel* and *Grimm* fame, the furthest that the production process reached was "a treatment for a live action film that John would possibly direct."^[81]

The article revealed that early scripts for the movie were going to focus on series heroine Samus Aran and her origin. Tiger Hill wanted to explore Samus prior to her becoming the lone bounty hunter featured in the series. According to Foxhoven, the movie version of Samus Aran was "to be an exceptionally talented, but also flawed character who was looking for redemption," and elaborating that, "We wanted to see her struggle, to be humbled, and to be forced to rise up against crazy odds. And of course we wanted to see the cool weapons in all of their glory." The major problem that the writers faced was attempting to build-out Samus's back-story, Nintendo had "creative" and "licensing" walls that the writers ran into. Foxhoven stated that these questions came up: "What are they doing when they are NOT fighting? What is their daily existence and relationships? What are Samus's aspirations, history, and fears?" and further stated that "Nintendo appreciated the questions, but had never thought about them before, and ultimately didn't have a lot of answers" and at the end, Nintendo "felt uncomfortable with our team [Hollywood] being the ones to propose those answers" which basically caused the *Metroid* movie project to be ultimately canceled sometime in 2007. Foxhoven however foresees *Metroid* becoming a movie, stating at the end of the IGN interview that "for Nintendo, they walked away appreciating the process and how much further they needed to explore the franchise so that it has a chance for a feature film at some point" and he revealed that "there are quite a few Hollywood executives in town who grew up playing *Metroid*, and who would be willing to take the time needed to bring Nintendo along in the process."^[81]

Reception

The series has been highly praised by critics, being ranked as the 70th top game (collectively) by *Next Generation* in 1996^[108] and as the eighth best video game franchise ever by IGN in 2008.^[109] In 2001, *Electronic Gaming Monthly* chose *Super Metroid* as the best game ever.^[110] The *Metroid* games have since appeared in other "best game" lists, with all games released up to 2005 included in a *Nintendo Power* top 200 Nintendo games list,^[111] *Prime* in the IGN top 100,^[112] *Metroid*, *Super Metroid*, *Prime* and *Echoes* in a list by GameFAQs users;^[113] *Metroid* and *Super Metroid* in *Game Informer*'s list;^[114] and *Prime* and *Super Metroid* in *Edge*'s list.^[115] The series has been influential in many other games, including *Castlevania: Symphony of the Night*.^[3]

Samus Aran was recognized by *Guinness World Records* as being "enduringly popular"^[1] and as the "first playable human female character in a mainstream videogame", although Toby Masuyo ("Kissy") from Namco's *Alien Sector* predates her by one year.^{[116][117]} Other characters from the *Metroid* series have also received their own share of acclaim. Ridley was the number two most requested Nintendo character by IGN and number one by the fans to be added as a playable character to the *Super Smash Bros.* series^[65] and Mother Brain has been commonly ranked among the all-time best video game bosses.^[118]

The original *Metroid* has been described as being boosted by its "eerie" music, adding a "sense of mystery and exploration" to the game by making the game "moody and atmospheric".^{[2][53]} IGN praised the well timed music that helped add suspense to the experience.^[54] GameSpot described *Super Metroid* as better than the original "in literally every conceivable way",^[119] *Metroid Fusion* was noted for its "understated score" which fit

the mood of the adventure and its excellent stereo sound effects, making it an uncommonly good Game Boy Advance sound experience.^[120] *Metroid Prime* was considered one of the best games ever made upon its release, winning Game of the Year from various publications and websites.^{[121][122][123]} IGN called the aural experience with *Metroid Prime 2: Echoes* "mesmerizing".^[124] Music from *Metroid* has been frequently re-released as part of "best of" video game music releases.^{[125][126][127]} *Metroid Prime*'s soundtrack was called the best sound design on the GameCube. The sound effects were also noted for a high degree of accuracy and blending with the soundtrack.^[57] On the popular video game music site OverClocked ReMix, *Super Metroid* is the tenth most remixed video game, while the first *Metroid* video game was twenty-fifth.^[128]

Aggregate review scores

Game	GameRankings	Metacritic
<i>Metroid (GBA re-release)</i>	62% ^[83]	58 ^[82]
<i>Metroid II: Return of Samus</i>	79% ^[84]	-
<i>Super Metroid</i>	96% ^[85]	-
<i>Metroid Fusion</i>	91% ^[87]	92 ^[86]
<i>Metroid Prime</i>	96% ^[89]	97 ^[88]
<i>Metroid: Zero Mission</i>	90% ^[91]	89 ^[90]
<i>Metroid Prime 2: Echoes</i>	92% ^[93]	92 ^[92]
<i>Metroid Prime Pinball</i>	80% ^[95]	79 ^[94]
<i>Metroid Prime Hunters</i>	84% ^[97]	85 ^[96]
<i>Metroid Prime 3: Corruption</i>	90% ^[99]	90 ^[98]
<i>Metroid Prime: Trilogy</i>	92% ^[101]	91 ^[100]
<i>Metroid: Other M</i>	79% ^[103]	79 ^[102]
<i>Metroid Prime: Federation Force</i>	65% ^[105]	64 ^[104]
<i>Metroid: Samus Returns</i>	87% ^[107]	85 ^[106]

Sales

The Metroid series has been commercially successful, with *Super Metroid*, *Metroid Fusion*, *Metroid Prime*, and *Metroid Prime 3: Corruption* exceeding one million copies sold.^{[28][129][130]} By September 2012, the series had sold over 17.44 million copies worldwide.^[1]

Sales of *Metroid* games in Japan, however, have typically been lower than in the United States.^[131] In particular, the first two installments of the *Metroid Prime* series didn't sell well in Japan,^{[132][133]} although it was believed that generally, Japanese gamers rarely like first-person shooters, since it can cause motion sickness to many Japanese players,^[134] thus it was suggested that the Metroid series was better suited to the American market, due to cultural differences. In its debut week in Japan, *Metroid Prime 3: Corruption* sold 32,388 units, ranking it behind *Ryū ga Gotoku Kenzan!*, *Super Smash Bros. Brawl*, *Wii Fit*, and *Gundam Musou Special*.^[135] Furthermore, *Metroid: Other M* was the third best-selling video game in Japan during its week of release with 45,398 copies sold, ranking it behind *Wii Party* and *Monster Hunter Diary: Poka Poka Airu Village*.^[136] It sold an additional 11,239 copies the following week.^[137] The popularity and influence of

the series, specifically the earlier games, lead to the formation of the Metroidvania genre.

Notes

- a. Japanese: メトロイド Hepburn: *Metoroido*

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External links

- Official website (<http://www.metroid.com/>)
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