Why Steampunk?

After doing some research on why people like steampunk, I didn’t come up with a lot of specific information. Everywhere I searched, I mostly saw people say: “It looks cool (if executed nicely)”. Below I put some examples of what I found and I’ll try to sum it up in a few words. Apparently, people are mostly attracted by aesthetics when they are asked about what they like about Steampunk. This is a good thing since we are not creating a narrative-heavy game, but rather chose to approach Steampunk from the visual and art style point of view, so it’s easier to convey that sense of wonder through visual stimuli instead of also adding in complex emotions.

Huffington Post:

*‘It’s the perfect mash-up genre for a culture obsessed with mixing and remixing, fanfic, memes, and ‘shipping.*

*Gotham. Sleepy Hollow. Bates Motel. Guardians of the Galaxy. Fifty Shades of Grey. Kindle Worlds. Lately, we really seem to be into creative takes on the old classics. And Steampunk is like the ultimate mash-up genre — both futuristic and retro. Plus, it’s got room for anything and everything fandom’s little heart can dream up: Aliens and AIs, zeppelins and zombies, pirates and corsets, goggles and gaslights, mad scientists and scullery maids. It’s romance, horror, science fiction, fantasy, and adventure (and even occasionally a whodunit or a spaghetti western). Basically, it’s the kind of structured yet flexible framework that allows for endless reinvention, and it rewards experimentation within the shared yet ever-evolving universe of the alternate past.*

*It’s a much-needed countercultural aesthetic for design.*

*Today’s futurism all looks like Apple: slick, shiny, hyper minimalist. All form on the outside, all function on the inside. You can’t tell, from looking at it, exactly what an iPad does - and you’re not supposed to. You’re also not supposed to be able to take it apart, tweak it a bit, and put it back together. The guts are entirely self-contained.*

*This style can be attractive, but it’s also become completely mainstream. So certain visually hungry types are searching for something distinctive... something more. The Steampunk design aesthetic? It’s minimalism’s polar opposite. The guts of a Steampunk machine are on the outside. You can see the function, you can see the bells and whistles, you can see how it does what it does. You can also see how to take it apart and make it better. Plus, it looks old; it revels in a sense of history, of having been somewhere, of having lasted and endured through a long, long time. It’s scratched and scuffed and stained, and like its function, it wears its history on the outside.’*

On reddit, I found people’s answers to the question ‘Why is steampunk cool?’:

*‘Well that's complicated, but I feel like a lot of people just really love the fashion and style, the elegance and tone of the 19th century is appealing to a lot of people, especially since it's contrary to modern-style that have become very informal.’*

*‘I like steam punk because it uses a level of technology that I can understand well. You could create almost anything, you're limited only by your creativity. Not to mention that the level of technology is low enough that guns aren't that effective yet and melee weapons are still a perfectly reasonable method of fighting.’*

*‘Any complex piece of entirely mechanical machinery is, by its very nature, inherently beautiful and fascinating. Take a look at the inside of a wind-up watch, for example. The elegant motions of the gears and springs make the device seem almost alive.’*