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Game as Art: Background Research

The legitimization of video games as a form of art reveals two opposing side that do and do not consider them as a piece of artwork. Although some critics agree that video game graphics are a form of art of it in themselves they do not believe that the video game as a whole is a form of art. The act of going through the game and playing takes away the artistic aspect of it. In a way though, art is supposed to be experienced and is supposed to be taken in through the eyes of different experiences and interpretations. If a person looks at something takes a picture of it or takes an already man-made object and calls it art, is it really so? The man-made object as itself is not called art, until the artist puts it through an artistic lens and interprets it as art. It is that interpretation that makes it an art piece not, necessarily the mere existence of it. But then, how is it that a medium, such as a digital game, that has the ability for a player to choose the way they experience the piece, the lenses they see it in and their interpretation, not art? The playability and interaction is what makes moves the person through all the writing, the plot lines, and the different animation frames, the renderings and makes it into an experience, but an experience that is controlled by the player. The game maker provides the game, but it is then the player who has to open it up and immerse themselves in it.

The argument that players are only playing for the action or gameplay, overgeneralizes the situation in it of itself. Some people do play games solely for competition, however, there is also the immersion that is created through the graphics, writing and programming. Games like

Okami, which is inspired by Japanese brush strokes, requires the user to fully complete the entire aesthetic. When the player moves a certain way, a brush stoke appears so that it looks like they are painting. That brush stroke does not appear, unless the player summons it with interaction. In order to fully experience a game, one must play it or at least watch someone play it, or else the full experience or story that the game developer shows is just a bunch of commands stuck in a game.

Without gameplay there is no game and without a game there is no gameplay. Art is supposed to provide an experience and the fact that the user can control their experience does not take away from its legitimacy as an art form.

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