

= Limbo (video game) =

Limbo is a puzzle @-@ platform video game developed by independent studio Playdead . The game was released in July 2010 as a platform exclusive title on Xbox Live Arcade , and was later re @-@ released as part of a retail game pack along with Trials HD and ' Splosion Man in April 2011 . Ports of the game to the PlayStation 3 and Microsoft Windows were created by Playdead , released after the year @-@ long Xbox 360 exclusivity period was completed . An OS X version was released in December 2011 , followed by Linux port in June 2014 . Ports for PlayStation Vita and iOS were also released in June and July 2013 , respectively . An Xbox One port was given away for free on 23 November 2014 to the majority of customers who purchased an Xbox One on its original launch day , and a PlayStation 4 version was released on 24 February 2015 .

Limbo is a 2D sidescroller , incorporating the physics system Box2D to govern environmental objects and the player character . The player guides an unnamed boy through dangerous environments and traps as he searches for his sister . The developer built the game 's puzzles expecting the player to fail before finding the correct solution . Playdead called the style of play " trial and death " , and used gruesome imagery for the boy 's deaths to steer the player from unworkable solutions .

The game is presented in black @-@ and @-@ white tones , using lighting , film grain effects and minimal ambient sounds to create an eerie atmosphere often associated with the horror genre . Journalists praised the dark presentation , describing the work as comparable to film noir and German Expressionism . Based on its aesthetics , reviewers classified Limbo as an example of video games as an art form . Limbo received positive reviews , but its minimal story polarised critics ; some critics found the open @-@ ended work to have deeper meaning that tied well with the game 's mechanics , while others believed the lack of significant plot and abrupt ending detracted from the game . A common point of criticism from reviewers was that the high cost of the game relative to its short length might deter players from purchasing the title , but some reviews proposed that Limbo had an ideal length . The title was the third @-@ highest selling game on the Xbox Live Arcade service in 2010 , generating around \$ 7 @.@ 5 million in revenue . The title won several awards from industry groups after its release , and was named as one of the top games for 2010 by several publications . Playdead released Inside in 2016 , supported financially by the success of Limbo and revisiting many of the same themes from it .

= = Plot = =

The primary character in Limbo is a nameless boy , who awakens in the middle of a forest on the " edge of hell " (the game 's title is taken from the Latin limbus , meaning " edge ") . While seeking his missing younger sister , he encounters only a few human characters who either attack him , run away , or are dead . At one point during his journey , he encounters a female character , who abruptly vanishes before he can reach her . The forest eventually gives way to a crumbling city environment . On completion of the final puzzle , the boy is thrown through a pane of glass and back into the forest . He walks a short distance until he again encounters a girl , who , upon his approach , stands up , startled . At this point , the game abruptly ends .

= = Gameplay = =

The player controls the boy throughout the game . As is typical of most two @-@ dimensional platform games , the boy can run left or right , jump , climb onto short ledges or up and down ladders and ropes , and push or pull objects . Limbo is presented through dark , greyscale graphics and with minimalist ambient sounds , creating an eerie , haunting environment . The dark visuals also hide numerous environmental and physical hazards , such as deadly bear traps on the forest floor , or lethal monsters hiding in the shadows , such as a giant spider . Among the hazards are glowing worms , which attach themselves to the boy 's head and force him to travel in only one direction unless bright light comes in contact with it , which changes the direction of the player until it

is removed by static NPCs .

The game 's second half features mechanical puzzles and traps using machinery , electromagnets , and gravity . Many of these traps are not apparent until triggered , often with deadly consequences . The player is able to restart at the last encountered checkpoint , with no limits placed on how many times this can occur . Some traps can be avoided and used later in the game ; one bear trap is used to clamp onto an animal 's carcass , hung from the end of a rope , tearing the carcass off the rope and allowing the branch and rope to retract upwards and allow the boy to climb onto a ledge otherwise out of reach . As the player will likely encounter numerous deaths before they solve each puzzle and complete the game , the developers call Limbo a " trial and death " game . Some deaths are animated with images of the boy 's dismemberment or beheading , although an optional gore filter blacks out the screen instead of showing these deaths . Game achievements (optional in @-@ game goals) include finding hidden insect eggs and completing the game with five or fewer deaths .

= = Development = =

According to Playdead Co @-@ founder and CEO , Dino Patti and lead designer Jeppe Carlsen , Playdead 's game director , Arnt Jensen , conceived Limbo around 2004 . At that time , as a concept artist at IO Interactive , Jensen became dissatisfied with the increasingly corporate nature of the company . He had sketched a " mood image " of a " secret place " to get ideas , and the result , similar to the backgrounds of the final game , inspired Jensen to expand on it . Jensen initially tried on his own to program the game in Visual Basic around 2004 , but found he needed more help and proceeded to create an art style trailer by 2006 . He had only intended to use the trailer as a means to recruit a programmer to help him , but the video attracted substantial interest in the project from across the Internet , eventually leading him to meet with Patti , who was also dissatisfied with his job . Their collaboration led to the founding of Playdead . Although Patti helped in the first few months with programming , he realised that the project was much larger than the two of them could handle , and Patti developed the business around the game 's expanded development .

Initial development was funded personally by Jensen and Patti along with Danish government grants , including funding from the Nordic Game Program , while large investors were sought later in the development cycle . Jensen and Patti did not want to commit to major publishers , preferring to retain full creative control in developing the title . Jensen originally planned to release Limbo as a free Microsoft Windows title , but by this point , Jensen and Patti decided to make the game a retail title .

Playdead chose to ignore outside advice from investors and critics during development , such as to add multiplayer play and adjustable difficulty levels , and to extend the game 's length . According to Patti , Playdead felt these changes would break the integrity of Jensen 's original vision . Patti also felt that the investors " tried to control the company with no usable knowledge or respect " , citing that after Microsoft raised concerns about the death of the boy , " one of the investors suggested we make him appear older by giving him a moustache . " Numerous iterations of the game took place during a two @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half year development cycle , including changes Jensen had demanded to polish the title , some elements being added two months prior to the game 's release . Patti stated that they " trashed 70 % " of the content they had developed , due to it not fitting in well with the context of the game . The core development team size was about 8 developers , expanding to 16 at various stages with freelancers . Playdead developed the design tools for Limbo in Visual Studio ; Patti commented they would likely seek third @-@ party applications for their next project given the challenges in creating their own technology . Patti later revealed they had opted to use the Unity engine for their next project , citing the development of their custom engine for Limbo as a " double product , doing both engine and game " , and that their Limbo engine is limited to monochromatic visuals .

Limbo was released on 21 July 2010 on the Xbox Live Arcade service , as the first title in the yearly " Summer of Arcade " promotion . Although the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) had listed entries for Limbo for the PlayStation 3 and Microsoft Windows platforms , Playdead confirmed

that this was a mistake on ESRB 's part , and that they had no plans for the game on these systems . Patti later clarified that they had planned on Windows and PlayStation 3 versions alongside the Xbox 360 version initially , but after reviewing their options , decided to go with Xbox 360 exclusivity , in part that " Microsoft provided us with an excellent opportunity , which included a lot of support for the title which in the end would mean a better visibility for Limbo " . According to producer Mads Wibroe , part of their decision not to release for the Windows platform was to avoid issues with software piracy , something they could control on the Xbox 360 . Patti stated that staying exclusive with the Xbox platform was an assurance that they would be able to recoup their investment in the game 's development . Sony Computer Entertainment executive Pete Smith stated later that while they had tried to vie with Microsoft for exclusivity for Limbo , Playdead refused to relinquish its intellectual property to Sony as part of the deal . Patti affirmed that Limbo would not be released for another console , but that their next game , already in development as of October 2010 , may see wider release .

However , in June 2011 , users found that a trailer for Limbo appeared on the Steam software service , which video game publications such as PC Gamer took as a preliminary sign that a Microsoft Windows version would be released . Similarly , a possible PlayStation 3 version was projected based on the title appearing on the Korea Media Rating Board in June 2011 . On 30 June 2011 , Playdead announced their ports of the game to the PlayStation 3 via the PlayStation Network , and to Microsoft Windows via Steam , later set for 19 July and 2 August 2011 , respectively . Patti clarified that their change of mind from their earlier Xbox 360 @-@ exclusive approach was because " we want as many people to play our games as possible " . The release was set for nearly a year after the original availability of the Xbox 360 version , after the expiration of the Xbox 360 exclusivity rights for the game . Both the PlayStation 3 and Windows versions of the game have additional secret content , according to Patti ; it is unknown if this content will be added in a patch to the Xbox 360 version . Playdead has since published a Mac OS X version of the game through the Mac App Store in December 2011 , fulfilling their promise to release the title before the end of 2011 ; though they had wanted to also release the Mac Steam version by then , this version was ultimately delayed to mid January 2012 . A Linux version of the game , based on a Wine @-@ encapsulated package prepared by CodeWeavers , premiered in the Humble Indie Bundle V charitable sales event in May 2012 . A native port for Linux was later released on 19 June 2014 , with porter Ryan C. Gordon bringing over the Wwise audio middleware that previously prevented a native port from being possible . The PlayStation Vita version of the game was developed by Playdead with assistance from the UK studio Double Eleven , and was released in June 2013 . The Vita version does not use the handheld 's touchpad features ; Patti stated that they " didn 't feel it would suit Limbo at all " and wanted to provide the " original experience " of the game to Vita players . The Vita version has Cross @-@ play support with the PlayStation 3 version , allowing the user to buy the game once to play on either platform . The iOS version of the game was announced shortly before its release in July 2013 , and was designed to optimize the game for use on the touchscreen devices .

In April 2011 , an Xbox 360 retail distribution of Limbo alongside other indie games Trials HD and ' Splosion Man was released . Playdead began selling a " Special Edition " physical copy of Limbo for Microsoft Windows and Mac OS X , which included art cards , the game 's soundtrack , and anaglyph stereoscopic glasses that work with a special version of the game to simulate three dimensions . The title was later ported to the Xbox One console and released in December 2014 , with early adopters of the console getting the title for free ; Microsoft 's Phil Spencer called the title a " must have played " game that affected their decision to give the game to the majority of early adopters . There is some confusion as not all early adopters received the game . A PlayStation 4 version of the game was released in February 2015 .

= = = Story , art and music direction = = =

From the game 's inception , Jensen set out three goals for the final Limbo product . The first goal was to create a specific mood and art style . Jensen wanted to create an aesthetic for the game without resorting to highly detailed three @-@ dimensional models , and instead directed the art

towards a minimalistic style to allow the development to focus its attention on the gameplay . Jensen 's second goal was to only require two additional controls ? jumping and grabbing ? outside of the normal left @-@ and @-@ right movement controls , to keep the game easy to play . Finally , the finished game was to present no tutorial text to the player , requiring players to learn the game 's mechanics on their own . The game was purposely developed to avoid revealing details of its content ; the only tagline the company provided was , " Uncertain of his sister 's fate , a boy enters Limbo . " This was chosen so that players could interpret the game 's meaning for themselves .

Some aspects of Limbo bore out from Jensen 's own past , such as the forest areas that were similar to forests around the farm where he grew up , and the spider coming from Jensen 's arachnophobia . Jensen drew inspiration from film genres , including works of film noir , to set the art style of the game ; the team 's graphic artist , Morten Bramsen , is credited with recreating that art style . Much of the game 's flow was storyboarded very early in development , such as the boy 's encounters with spiders and mind @-@ controlling worms , as well as the overall transition from a forest to a city , then to an abstract environment . As development progressed , some of the original ideas became too difficult for the small team to complete . The storyline also changed ; originally , the spider sequences were to be present near the end of the game , but were later moved to the first part . In retrospect , Jensen was aware that the first half of the game contained more scripted events and encounters , while the second half of the game was lonelier and puzzle @-@ heavy ; Jensen attributed this to his lack of oversight during the latter stages of development . Jensen purposely left the game with an open ending though with a specific interpretation only he knew , though noted after the game 's release that some players , posting in forum boards , had suggested resolutions that were " scary close " to his ideas .

The game 's audio was created by Martin Stig Andersen , a graduate from the Royal Academy of Music in Aarhus . Andersen 's specialisation was in acousmatic music , non @-@ traditional music created from generated sounds that have no apparent visual source . He was drawn to work with Jensen on the game after seeing the initial trailer , having been drawn in by the expressions of the boy character ; Andersen compared the early visuals to his acousmatic music : " you have something recognizable and realistic , but at the same time it 's abstract " . Andersen sought to create acousmatic music exclusively incorporating the sound effects of the game 's environments . Two examples he pointed to was the use of electricity noises while in the presence of a ruined neon " HOTEL " sign , and silencing the wind sound as the spider approached the boy in the forest . Andersen avoided the use of easily recognizable sounds , distorting them when needed as to allow players to interpret the sounds ' meanings for themselves . Andersen constructed most of the game 's sounds through a number of " grains " instead of longer sound loops , allowing him to adjust the playback to give better feedback to the player without sounding repetitious ; one example he cites was the use of separate sounds for the boy 's toe and heel when they make contact with the ground , giving a more realistic sound for movement . Many reviews for the game stated that there was no music in Limbo , but Andersen countered that his sound arrangements helped to evoke emotions ; the acousmatic music was intended to leave room for interpretation by the player in the same manner as the game 's art and story . Andersen noted that this helps with immersion within the game by making no attempt to control the emotional tone ; " if [the players are] scared it will probably make them more scared when there 's no music to take them by the hand and tell them how to feel " . Due to fans ' requests , Playdead released the game 's soundtrack on iTunes Store on 11 July 2011 .

= = = Gameplay direction = = =

The gameplay was the second element created for the game , following the graphics created by Jensen . The gameplay was created and refined using rudimentary graphic elements to establish the types of puzzles they wanted to have , but aware of how these elements would be presented to the player in the released version . Limbo was designed to avoid the pitfalls of major titles , where the same gameplay mechanic is used repeatedly . Carlsen , initially brought aboard as a programmer for the custom game engine , became the lead designer after Playdead found him to be

capable at creating puzzles . Carlsen stated that the puzzles within Limbo were designed to " [keep] you guessing all the way through " . Jensen also wanted to make the puzzles feel like a natural part of the environment , and to avoid the feeling that the player was simply moving from puzzle to puzzle through the course of the game . Carlsen identified examples of puzzles from other games that he wanted to avoid . He wanted to avoid simple puzzles that gave the player little satisfaction in its solution , such as a puzzle in Uncharted 2 : Among Thieves that involved simply moving a sun @-@ lit mirror to specific points in a room . In contrast , Carlsen wanted to avoid making the puzzle so complex with many separate parts that the player would resort to trial @-@ and @-@ error and eventually come out with the solution without thinking about why the solution worked ; Carlsen used an example of a puzzle from the 2008 Prince of Persia game that had seven different mechanics that he never bothered to figure out himself . Carlsen designed Limbo 's puzzles to fall between these limits , demonstrating one puzzle that only has three elements : a switch panel , an electrified floor , and a chain ; the goal ? to use the chain to cross the electrified floor ? is immediately obvious to the player , and then tasks the player to determine the right combination of moves and timing to complete it safely . They often had to strip away elements to make the puzzles more enjoyable and easier to figure out . The decision to provide little information to the player was an initial challenge in creating the game . From their initial pool of about 150 playtesters , several would have no idea of how to solve certain puzzles . To improve this , they created scenarios before troublesome spots that highlighted the appropriate actions ; for example , when they found players did not think about pulling a boat onto shore to use as a platform to reach a higher ledge , they presented the player with a box @-@ pulling puzzle earlier to demonstrate the pulling mechanics .

The team developed the game 's puzzles by first assuming the player was their " worst enemy " , and made puzzles as devious as possible , but then scaled back their difficulty or added visual and audible aids as if the player was a friend . One example given by Carlsen is a puzzle involving a spider early in the game ; the solution requires pushing a bear trap to snare the spider 's legs in it . Early designs of this puzzle had the bear trap on the same screen as the spider , and Playdead found playtesters focused too much on the trap . The developers altered the puzzle to put the trap in a tree in an earlier off @-@ screen section when facing the spider ; the spider 's actions would eventually cause this trap to drop to the ground and become a weapon against the spider . Carlsen stated that this arrangement created a situation where the player felt helpless when initially presented with the deadly spider , but then assisted the player through an audible cue when the trap had dropped , enabling the player to discover the solution .

One animator was dedicated full @-@ time during three years of the game 's development to work out the boy 's animations , including animations that showed anticipation on the player 's actions or events in the game , such as reaching out for a cart handle as the player moved the boy near it . Jensen felt this was important as the character was always at the center of the player 's screen , and the most important element to watch . Playdead included gruesome death sequences to highlight incorrect solutions and discourage players from repeating their mistakes . While they expected players to run the boy into numerous deaths while trying solutions , Carlsen stated that their goal was to ensure death wasn 't a penalty in the game , and made the death animations entertaining to keep the player interested . Carlsen noted several early puzzles were too complex for the game , but they would end up using a portion of these larger puzzles in the final release .

= = Reception = =

Limbo 's initial release on the Xbox 360 has received acclaim from video game critics and journalists ; the subsequent release of the game for the PlayStation 3 and Microsoft Windows platforms received similar praise , holding Metacritic aggregate scores of 90 / 100 and 88 / 100 , respectively , compared to the 90 / 100 earned by the Xbox 360 version . Some journalists compared Limbo to previous minimalist platform games such as Another World , Flashback , Heart of Darkness , Oddworld : Abe 's Oddysee , Ico , Portal and Braid . Reviews consistently noted Limbo 's short length for its higher selling price : two to five hours of gameplay for 15 euros or 15 U.S. dollars . Reviewers asserted this length @-@ to @-@ price ratio was the largest drawback for the

game , and would be a deterrent for potential buyers . Some journalists contended that the length of the game was ideal ; The Daily Telegraph 's Tom Hoggins considered the short game to have a " perfectly formed running time " , while Daemon Hatfield of IGN commented that " it 's better for a game to leave us wanting more than to overstay its welcome " . Numerous independent game developers , in an organised " Size Doesn 't Matter " effort , commented on the critical response to Limbo 's length @-@ to @-@ price ratio . The independent developers questioned the need to quantify that ratio , and noted that it only seems to be used as a factor in judging video games and not other forms of entertainment such as films .

Limbo was generally praised for its puzzle design and the simplicity of its controls . Jake Gaskill of G4 TV was impressed by the complexity of the puzzles based on the two simple actions of jumping and grabbing onto objects , similar to LittleBigPlanet , with a variety of elements to assure " you 're always facing something new and challenging " during the game . Game Informer 's Matt Miller commented that part of the success of Limbo is that " every one of these [puzzles] stands alone " ; the game accomplishes this in Miller 's opinion by varying the elements throughout the game , and preventing the player from getting too accustomed to similar solutions since " everything changes " . GameSpy 's Ryan Scott believed that the game empowered the player to work through solutions themselves , and its puzzle design , " with its elegant simplicity , offers up what feels like a world of meaningful possibilities " . The frequency of death was not considered a distraction from the game ; not only were the deaths seen as necessary as part of learning and overcoming each obstacle , but reviewers found the checkpoints where the player would restart to be plentiful throughout the game . Will Freeman of The Guardian praised the game but noted that beyond the " smoke and mirrors " of Limbo 's artwork , the game is " undermined by the title 's lack of innovative gameplay " , which he says has been seen in earlier platform games .

= = = Presentation = = =

Limbo 's graphical and audio presentation were considered by reviewers as exceptional and powerful elements of the game . The monochrome approach , coupled with film grain filter , focusing techniques and lighting , were compared to both film noir and dreamlike tableaux of silent films , allowing the visual elements of the game to carry much of the story 's weight . Cian Hassett of PALGN likened the effect to watching the game through an old @-@ fashioned film projector that creates " one of the most unsettling and eerily beautiful environments " in video gaming . Garrett Martin of the Boston Herald compared the art style and game design decisions to German Expressionism with " dreamlike levels that twist and spin in unexpected angles " . The art style itself was praised as minimalistic , and considered reminiscent of the art of Lotte Reiniger , Edward Gorey , Fritz Lang , and Tim Burton . The use of misdirection in the visuals were also praised , such as by using silhouettes to avoid revealing the true nature of the characters or shadows , or by showing human figures across a chasm who disappear once the player crossed the chasm .

Reviewers found the sound effects within the game critical to the game 's impact . Sam Machkovech , writing for The Atlantic , called the sound direction , " far more colorful and organic than the fuzzed @-@ out looks would lead you to believe " . Edge magazine 's review noted that the few background noises " [do] little else than contribute towards Limbo ? s tone " , while the sound effects generated by moving the boy character " are given an eerie clarity without the presence of a conventional soundtrack to cover them " .

IGN 's Hatfield concluded his review by stating , " Very few games are as original , atmospheric , and consistently brilliant as Limbo " . Chad Sapeiha of The Globe and Mail summarised his opinion of the game 's atmosphere as an " intensely scary , oddly beautiful , and immediately arresting aesthetic . " Limbo is said to be the first game to attempt a mix of the horror fiction genre with platform games . The game has been considered an art game through its visual and audio elements .

= = = Plot = = =

The game 's story and its ending have been open to much interpretation ; the ending was purposely left vague and unanswered by Playdead . It was compared to other open @-@ ended books , films and video games , where the viewer is left to interpret what they have read or seen . Some reviews suggested that the game is a representation of the religious nature of Limbo or purgatory , as the boy character completes the journey only to end at the same place he started , repeating the same journey when the player starts a new game . Another interpretation suggested the game is the boy 's journey through Hell to reach Heaven , or to find closure for his sister 's death . Another theory considers that either the boy or his sister or both are dead . Some theories attempted to incorporate details from the game , such as the change in setting as the boy travels through the game suggesting the progression of man from child to adult to elder , or the similarities and differences between the final screen of the game where the boy meets a girl and the main menu where what could be human remains stand in their places .

The absence of direct narrative , such as through cutscenes or in @-@ game text , was a mixed point for reviewers . John Teti of Eurogamer considered the game 's base story to be metaphorical for a " story of a search for companionship " , and that the few encounters with human characters served as " emotional touchstones " that drove the story forward ; ultimately , Teti stated that these elements make Limbo " a game that has very few humans , but a surplus of humanity " . Hatfield praised the simplicity of the game 's story , commenting that , " with no text , no dialogue , and no explanation , it manages to communicate circumstance and causality to the player more simply than most games " . Both Teti and Hatfield noted that some of the story elements were weaker in the second half of the game , when there are almost no human characters with whom the player comes into contact , but that the game ends with an unexpected revelation . GameSpot 's Tom McShae found no issues with the game posing questions on " death versus life and reality versus dream " , but purposely providing no answers for them , allowing the player to contemplate these on their own . McShae also considered that the brief but gruesome death scenes for the boy helped to create an " emotional immediacy that is difficult to forget " . The New York Daily News ' Stu Horvath noted that Limbo " turns its lack of obvious narrative into one of the most compelling riddles in videogames " .

Other reviews disliked the lack of story or its presentation within Limbo . Justin Haywald of 1UP.com was critical of the lacking narrative , feeling that the game failed to explain the purpose of the constructed traps or rationale for how the game 's world worked , and that the final act left him " more confused than when [he] began " . Haywald had contrasted Limbo to Braid , a similar platform game with minimalistic elements which communicates its metaphorical story to the player through in @-@ game text . Roger Hargreaves of Metro stated that the game has " very little evidence that [Playdead] really knew where they were going with the game " , citing the second half , when the player is traveling through a factory @-@ type setting and where he felt the game became more like a typical two @-@ dimensional platform game , and led to an anticlimactic ending ; Hargreaves contrasted this to more gruesome elements of the first half , such as encountering corpses of children and having to use those as part of the puzzle @-@ solving aspects .

= = = Sales and accolades = = =

Before its release , Limbo was awarded both the " Technical Excellence " and " Excellence in Visual Art " titles at the Independent Games Festival during the 2010 Game Developers Conference . At E3 2010 ? about a month before its release ? Limbo won GameSpot 's " Best Downloadable Game " , and was nominated for several other " Best of Show " awards , including " Best Platformer " by IGN , " Most Original Game " by G4 TV , and " Best Puzzle Game " by GameSpot . The game was nominated as one of 32 finalists at the 2010 IndieCade festival for independent developers , ultimately winning the " Sound " award .

Following its release , Limbo was named " Game of the Year " , " Best Indie Game " , and " Best Visual Art " at the 2010 European Milthon Awards during the Paris Game Show in September 2010 . Game Informer named Limbo their Game of the Month for August 2010 . Limbo was awarded the " Best Indie Game " at the 2010 Spike Video Game Awards . The game received the most nominations for the 11th Annual Game Developers Choice Awards , earning seven nominations

including for the " Best Debut Game " , " Innovation " , and " Game of the Year " awards , and ultimately won for " Best Visual Art " . The title won the " Adventure Game of the Year " and " Outstanding Achievement in Sound Design " Interactive Achievement Awards from the Academy of Interactive Arts & Sciences and was nominated for " Outstanding Achievement in Game Direction " and " Outstanding Innovation in Gaming " . The Academy also named Limbo as the winner of the 2010 Indie Game Challenge award in the " Professional " category , along with a \$ 100 @, @ 000 prize . The game was selected as the 2010 Annie Award for Best Animated Video Game . Limbo was named as one of ten games for the publicly voted 2011 " Game of the Year " BAFTA Video Game Awards . In addition , the game was nominated for the committee @-@ determined BAFTA awards for " Artistic Achievement " , " Use of Audio " , " Gameplay " and " Best Game " . The inclusion of the independently developed Limbo among other larger commercially backed games such as Assassin 's Creed : Brotherhood and Call of Duty : Black Ops for such " Best Game " awards is considered an indication that the video game industry has started to give more recognition to these smaller titles .

Several publications , including Time , Wired and the Toronto Sun placed Limbo as one of the top ten video games of 2010 . IGN named it the third best Xbox Live Arcade title of all time in two lists , published in 2010 and 2011 , in both cases following Shadow Complex and Pac Man Championship Edition . Limbo was spoofed by the comedy troupe Mega64 during the 2011 Game Developers Conference , and later by the CollegeHumor sister website , Dorkly .

Within two weeks of its release on Xbox Live Arcade , Limbo gained more than 244 @, @ 000 players to the global leaderboards ? a rough measure of full sales of the game ? which was considered an " incredibly impressive feat " compared to previous Xbox Live Arcade titles , according to GamerBytes ' Ryan Langley . Within a month of its release , more than 300 @, @ 000 copies of the game were sold . By the end of August 2010 , the number of players on the global leaderboard grew to 371 @, @ 000 , exceeding the number of players of other Summer of Arcade games released in 2009 , and approaching the number of lifetime players of Braid , released two years earlier . Langley , who had expected Limbo 's sales to fall " due to the lack of repeatable content and being a strictly single player experience " , considered that these figures had " beaten everyone 's expectations " . Phil Spencer , the Vice @-@ President of Microsoft Game Studios , stated in September 2010 that Limbo was " our number one Summer of Arcade game by a long stretch " , and further posed that Limbo represents a shift in the type of game that gamers want out of online on @-@ demand game services ; " it 's becoming less about iconic [intellectual property] that people know and it 's becoming more diverse " . Limbo was the third @-@ highest selling Xbox Live Arcade title in 2010 , selling 527 @, @ 000 and generating about \$ 7 @. @ 5 million in revenue . In March 2011 , Microsoft listed Limbo as the 11th @-@ highest selling game to date on Xbox Live . Playdead stated that more than two million users on the Xbox 360 service played through the demo within the year of the game 's release .

The developers announced that as of November 2011 , they had sold over 1 million copies of the game across the Xbox 360 , PlayStation 3 , and Microsoft Windows platforms . By June 2013 , just prior to the iOS release , Playdead announced that total sales of Limbo across all platforms exceeded 3 million . The PlayStation 3 version was the top selling third @-@ party downloadable game on the PlayStation Network service in 2011 . The PlayStation 3 version was also voted " Best Indie Game " in the 2012 PSN Gamers ' Choice Awards . The Mac OS X version of Limbo was awarded with Apple 's Design Award in 2012 .

Applications for grants from the Nordic Game Program , which had funded Limbo 's initial development , increased 50 % in the second half of 2010 , believed to be tied to the game 's success . Playdead was able to buy itself back from its investors in August 2011 from the revenue made from sales of Limbo . Playdead 's followup title , Inside , first released in June 2016 , is visually and thematically similar to Limbo , and includes some elements that were cut from Limbo 's development .