

= Final Fantasy concerts =

Final Fantasy is a media franchise created by Hironobu Sakaguchi and owned by Square Enix that includes video games , motion pictures , and other merchandise . The original Final Fantasy video game , published in 1987 , is a role @-@ playing video game developed by Square , spawning a video game series that became the central focus of the franchise . The primary composer of music for the main series was Nobuo Uematsu , who single @-@ handedly composed the soundtracks for the first nine games , as well as directing the production of many of the soundtrack albums . Music for the spin @-@ off series and main series games beginning with Final Fantasy X was created by a variety of composers including Masashi Hamauzu , Naoshi Mizuta , Hitoshi Sakimoto , and Kumi Tanioka , as well as many others .

Music from the franchise has been performed numerous times in concert tours and other live performances such as the Orchestral Game Music Concerts , Symphonic Game Music Concerts , and the Play ! A Video Game Symphony and the Video Games Live concert tours , as well as forming the basis of specific Final Fantasy concerts and concert series . The first such concert was the 20020220 Music from Final Fantasy concert on February 20 , 2002 , which sparked a six @-@ concert tour in Japan entitled Tour de Japon : Music from Final Fantasy beginning in March 2004 . A North American concert series titled Dear Friends -Music From Final Fantasy- followed from 2004 ? 2005 , and after its conclusion was followed with the More Friends : Music from Final Fantasy concert on May 16 , 2005 . Voices - Music from Final Fantasy was a concert held in Yokohama , Japan on February 18 , 2006 focusing on vocal pieces from the series . The longest running Final Fantasy concert series so far is the Distant Worlds : Music from Final Fantasy concert tour , which began in 2007 and continues to date around the world . The latest officially licensed concert is Final Symphony , featuring music from Final Fantasy VI , VII and X. All of these concerts have played only music from the main Final Fantasy series , and do not include music from the multiple spin @-@ off series with the exception of Final Fantasy VII Advent Children , the 2005 computer animated film sequel to Final Fantasy VII .

= = 20020220 - Music from Final Fantasy = =

20020220 - Music from Final Fantasy was the first official concert devoted to music from across the Final Fantasy series . A previous concert , Final Fantasy Symphonic Suite , had been performed on May 20 , 1989 for a limited audience to create an orchestral version of the soundtracks of Final Fantasy I and II , which have only been released together . The music of 20020220 was arranged for orchestra from the original songs composed by Nobuo Uematsu primarily by Uematsu himself and Shiro Hamaguchi , with " To Zanarkand " and " Yuna 's Decision " arranged by Masashi Hamauzu , and was performed by the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra on February 20 , 2002 at the Tokyo International Forum . The orchestra was conducted by Taizou Takemoto , and the concert was hosted by Masakazu Morita and Mayuko Aoki , the Japanese voice actors for Tidus and Yuna from Final Fantasy X.

The orchestra played 17 songs over a period of almost two hours . The setlist ranged covered songs from the very first Final Fantasy game through Final Fantasy X , the latest game to have been released . Their rendition of " Suteki da Ne " from Final Fantasy X was accompanied by Japanese folk singer Ritsuki Nakano , known as " RIKKI " , who sang the track in the original game . Similarly , " Melodies of Life " from Final Fantasy IX was performed by Emiko Shiratori , the original performer for the song in that game 's soundtrack . " At Zanarkand " and " Yuna 's Decision " , both from Final Fantasy X , were solo piano pieces performed by Aki Kuroda , while " Liberi Fatali " and " One @-@ Winged Angel " saw the orchestra combined with a small chorus . Kiyotsugu Amano performed guitar accompaniment for " Dear Friends " (Final Fantasy V) and " Vamo ' Alla Flamenco " (Final Fantasy IX) .

An album based on a live recording of the concert was released on May 9 , 2002 by DigiCube , and was subsequently re @-@ released on July 22 , 2004 by Square Enix . The album spans 25 tracks over two discs and covers a duration of 1 : 47 : 27 , and includes the initial tuning of the orchestra ,

the speeches given by the MC , and the songs themselves . The album was well received by critics and was termed an " amazing soundtrack " and " probably the best Final Fantasy arranged album ever made " by Robert Bogdanowicz of RPGFan . Liz Maas of RPGFan agreed ; although she found there to be a lack of actual innovation overall , she felt the music was " wonderful " and the album as a whole " rather enjoyable " . Patrick Dell of Soundtrack Central felt that the album was " wonderful " and " an impressive display " , although he greatly disliked the performance of the choir . Dave of Square Enix Music Online was not as impressed by the album , saying that many of the performances were " lacking cohesion and direction " , although he felt that overall it was " satisfactory " and " worth repeated listens " . Sophia of Square Enix Music Online , on the other hand , felt that it was a " fantastic album " and a " must have " .

= = Tour de Japon = =

Tour de Japon - Music from Final Fantasy (or Tour de Japon) was a concert tour featuring music from the Final Fantasy video game series that toured Japan from March 12 to April 16 , 2004 . The tour was built upon the success of the 2002 Music from Final Fantasy concert , and featured seven concerts in six cities . The series of concerts featured music composed by Nobuo Uematsu and arranged by Shiro Hamaguchi . The orchestras were conducted by Taiz? Takemoto , as the orchestra in 2002 had been . Uematsu guest conducted the encores for each performance ; he used a borrowed baton that he had snapped and taped together . Tour de Japon featured fewer non @-@ orchestra performances than 2002 ; " Opera " Maria & Draco " " featured the singing of Etsuyo Ota , Tomoaki Watanabe , and Tetsuya Odagawa , while Manami Kiyota and Yuji Hasegawa performed songs from Final Fantasy Song Book : Mahoroba during the intermission . Different orchestras were used in each performance ; these were the New Japan Philharmonic Orchestra , Tokyo City Philharmonic Orchestra , Sapporo Symphony Orchestra , Nagoya Philharmonic , Kyushu Symphony , and Osaka Symphoniker Orchestra . One of the performances was recorded and released exclusively on DVD to Nobuo Uematsu Fan Club members .

= = Dear Friends - Music from Final Fantasy = =

Dear Friends - Music from Final Fantasy was a concert tour featuring music from the Final Fantasy video game series that toured the United States from 2004 to 2005 . The concert was the first Final Fantasy concert tour for North America and featured record sales and sold @-@ out concerts . The series of concerts featured music composed by Nobuo Uematsu from the later releases of the series . The name of the concert series , in addition to being the name a Final Fantasy V piece that is played at the concerts , was chosen by Uematsu to represent his appreciation for the support given to him by fans of his music and of the Final Fantasy series .

The series was originally conceived as a single concert to be held on May 10 , 2004 , performed by the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra and conducted by Miguel Harth @-@ Bedoya . The concert was hosted by James Arnold Taylor , the English voice actor for Final Fantasy X 's Tidus , and featured large screens hanging above the orchestra playing scenes relevant to the music being performed . Like the concerts before it , Dear Friends featured several groups and instruments in addition to the orchestra , including a guitar for " Dear Friends " , castagnettes for " Vamo ' Alla Flamenco " , and piano for " At Zanarkand " and " Cloud Smiles " , which at the time was not named and was only known to be featured in the upcoming Final Fantasy VII Advent Children . The encore piece , " One @-@ Winged Angel " , saw the orchestra joined by a full choir , the Los Angeles Master Chorale .

The concert was termed " a complete success " by IGN , who commented that they " walked away impressed with the performance , the presentation , and the timelessness of Uematsu 's compositions " . The response to the concert was greater than expected , with tickets selling out in three days . After " many fans pleaded for another chance to see the concert " , Dear Friends was expanded into a full concert tour the following year , conducted by Arnie Roth . Roth took on the role of conductor for the series after trying to get the show to be performed by his Chicago Pops

orchestra , and hearing that other tour locations were hesitant about putting on the concert . He has said that he tried to add to the concerts his personal touch in the areas of " drama and timing " . Different orchestras were used in each performance , though the format and setlist remained the same .

= = More Friends : Music from Final Fantasy = =

More Friends was a single concert performed while the Dear Friends series was still touring . It was meant to loosely correspond with the one @-@ year anniversary of the first Dear Friends concert , also held in Los Angeles . The concert contained a selection of musical tracks from the games , composed by Nobuo Uematsu , arranged for orchestra by Shiro Hamaguchi , Tsuyoshi Sekito , and Michio Okamiya , and performed by an orchestra conducted by Arnie Roth on May 16 , 2005 at the Gibson Amphitheatre in Los Angeles , California . Much like the 2002 concert , they were accompanied by several different groups . The Black Mages , a band led by Nobuo Uematsu that arranges Final Fantasy music into a rock music style , performed their songs " The Rocking Grounds " and " Maybe I 'm a Lion " , and joined with the orchestra to perform " One @-@ Winged Angel " , while RIKKI sang " Suteki da Ne " as she had in the original game . Emiko Shiratori performed both the Japanese and English versions of " Melodies of Life " in a single piece , opera singers Stephenie Woodling , Chad Berlinghieri , and Todd Robinson sang the vocal components of " Opera " Maria & Draco " , and the CSUF University Singers , a local choir , performed as part of " One @-@ Winged Angel " .

A recorded album was released on February 15 , 2006 by Square Enix with the catalog number SQEX @-@ 10065 . The album spans 13 tracks and covers a duration of 74 : 54 . The album was well received by critics such as Patrick Gann of RPGFan , who said that " the recording quality is great , almost every song is aimed to please , and rarely do Square Enix fail in this regard " . Sophia of Square Enix Music Online concurred , terming it " An album with a little bit of everything " and " a must @-@ have for any Final Fantasy fan " .

= = Voices - Music from Final Fantasy = =

Voices - Music from Final Fantasy was a concert held in Yokohama , Japan on February 18 , 2006 featuring vocal arrangements of Final Fantasy music . Based on compositions by Nobuo Uematsu , the music was performed by the Prima Vista Philharmonic Orchestra in the Pacifico Yokohama Conference and Convention Center , conducted by Arnie Roth , and sung by various performers . The 16 pieces and two encore songs were interspersed with announcements by Uematsu and Rieko Katayama , the MC . As in previous Final Fantasy concerts , many of the pieces were sung by the original performers from the game . Emiko Shiratori sang " Melodies of Life " , RIKKI performed " Suteki da ne " , Izumi Masuda reprised her role in " Memoro de la ?tono " , and Angela Aki sang " Kiss me Good @-@ bye " , to date the only song from Final Fantasy XII to be performed at a Final Fantasy concert . Angela Aki also sang " Eyes on Me " , originally sung by Faye Wong in Final Fantasy VIII . The Black Mages performed their song " Advent : One Winged Angel " along with the orchestra . Other local singers and choirs joined the orchestra for the remaining pieces , with Etsuyo Ota , Tomoaki Watanabe , and Tetsuya Odagawa performing " Opera " Maria and Draco " " as they had in the Tour de Japon two years prior . A DVD of the performance was released on June 21 , 2006 , containing a recording of the full concert as well as interviews with Nobuo Uematsu , Arnie Roth , and the vocalists .

= = Distant Worlds = =

= = = Distant Worlds : Music from Final Fantasy = = =

Distant Worlds : Music From Final Fantasy is a concert tour featuring music from the Final Fantasy

series that began touring on December 4 , 2007 in Stockholm , Sweden and continues to date . Unlike previous tours , it is a worldwide tour . Produced by AWR Music Productions and supported by Thomas Böcker in a consultative capacity (from 2007 to 2011) , the series of concerts features music conducted by Arnie Roth and composed by Nobuo Uematsu . Launched in conjunction with the twentieth anniversary of Final Fantasy , the two @-@ hour @-@ long concerts include music from every single game of the series . Like the Dear Friends concerts , giant video screens display video and art stills in order to accompany the music being played . During the tour , additional songs have been added to the setlist . These include " Ronfaure " from Final Fantasy XI , added on April 11 , 2009 , " Man With A Machine Gun " from Final Fantasy VIII , added on June 18 , 2009 , " Main Theme of FFXVII " , added October 8 , 2009 , and " Dancing Mad " from Final Fantasy VI and " J @-@ E @-@ N @-@ O @-@ V @-@ A " from Final Fantasy VII , added December 12 , 2009 .

After the Distant Worlds II concert in Stockholm , the additional pieces performed were added to the setlist , and for every concert afterward different songs out of that rotation have been chosen for each performance . " Kiss Me Goodbye " from Final Fantasy XII was played at the June 18 , 2010 Detroit show , though it was not officially added to the general setlist . It was played again at the April 1 , 2011 concert in New York City , which featured an expanded setlist over two concerts . In April 2011 Square Enix announced that the concert series was expected to run for at least three more years . Uematsu has said that he prefers for the tour to add arrangements of older pieces from the series , as he feels that they are what fans are more interested in ; he and Roth intend to continue to add more arrangements to the setlist . He was hesitant for pieces from Final Fantasy XIII and XIV to be added , as he did not feel that they had been around long enough to build a strong following like the older songs .

Released on December 4 , 2007 to coincide with the first concert of the tour , the Distant Worlds : Music from Final Fantasy album features the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra and contains most songs performed at that concert . It was recorded in August 2007 at the Stockholm Concert Hall . The CD is sold at all of the concert venues and online at the official website . The album received mixed reviews from critics , with Patrick Gann of RPGFan saying that " The recording quality is decent , the performance is standard , and it 's all the classic Final Fantasy you 've come to love " , but expressing disappointment that the album contained only one new arrangement , with the other songs composed of arrangements originally made for other concerts . Andre of Square Enix Music Online , however , despite also wishing for more original arrangements , felt that the quality was superb and that the album as a whole was " one of life and energy . " Chris of Square Enix Music Online also praised the album , finding similar features and flaws .

= = = Distant Worlds II : More Music from Final Fantasy = = =

Distant Worlds II : More Music From Final Fantasy was a concert in the Distant Worlds series featuring music from Final Fantasy that was performed on June 12 , 2010 in Stockholm , Sweden , just as the first Distant Worlds concert was . Arnie Roth returned to the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra with a completely new program presenting more pieces from Final Fantasy . Simultaneously with the concert , a new CD with the same repertoire was released under the name Distant Worlds II : Music From Final Fantasy . The recording was done by the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Arnie Roth in January 2010 . The name Distant Worlds II only refers to the Stockholm concert ; the series itself has continued under the original Distant Worlds name with the new arrangements added to its permanent rotation .

= = = Distant Worlds : Music from Final Fantasy Returning Home = = =

Distant Worlds : Music from Final Fantasy Returning Home was a concert in the Distant Worlds series conducted by Arnie Roth featuring music composed by Nobuo Uematsu and Masashi Hamauzu from the Final Fantasy series . The concert was performed on November 6 and 7 , 2010 in Tokyo , Japan , by the Kanagawa Philharmonic Orchestra with guest performances from vocalists Frances Maya and Susan Calloway , among others . The concert premiered several arrangements

from Final Fantasy XIII and XIV , which were then added to the general rotation . The entire 2010 Japan concert was recorded live for a DVD and 2 @-@ CD set which was later released on January 19 , 2011 .

= = = Tour locations = = =

= = = A New World = = =

Beginning in 2014 , Square Enix began touring a new series , A New World , which featured cut @-@ down versions of the arrangements for Distant Worlds , edited by Arnie Roth , and played in smaller venues . The concerts , marketed as more " intimate " versions of the Distant Worlds concerts , feature more solo and duet performances to correspond with their smaller chamber orchestras . Like the main concert series , A New World is an international series , with over 30 performances in America , Australia , Britain , Canada , France , Germany , and Malaysia . An album of music from the concert was made available as a digital album to purchase on Bandcamp on August 22 , 2014 .

= = Final Symphony = =

Final Symphony is an official concert tour featuring music from Final Fantasy VI , VII , and X. The world premiere took place May 11 , 2013 in Wuppertal , Germany where it was performed twice by the Wuppertal Symphony Orchestra at the venue Historische Stadthalle Wuppertal . A performance by the London Symphony Orchestra took place May 30 , 2013 in London at the Barbican Centre . It marked the first live performance of video game music by the London Symphony Orchestra , making a historical moment for the Final Fantasy franchise and video game music in general . At Final Symphony in Wuppertal and London , Nobuo Uematsu and Masashi Hamauzu were in attendance . At the performances by the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra , both composers talked about their work on the series on stage of the Tokyo Bunka Kaikan concert venue . Final Symphony Tokyo was the first video game music concert ever to be greeted with standing ovations in Japan . Additional performances took place in Denmark , Sweden and in Finland . The tour continues to date .

The pieces were arranged by Masashi Hamauzu , one of the composers for Final Fantasy X , along with Jonne Valtonen and Roger Wanamo , and the arranged works are based on compositions by him and Nobuo Uematsu , who acts as a consultant for the concerts . Thomas Böcker is producing the concerts , as he had done for numerous other video game music concerts in Germany , Sweden and Japan (Symphonic Game Music Concert series) . Eckehard Stier conducts , who is experienced in the field of video game music due to his work on the CD album Drammatica by Yoko Shimomura and the Symphonic Fantasies concerts in Tokyo . The concert featured pianist Benjamin Nuss in 2013 (Wuppertal and London) , Mischa Cheung in 2014 (Tampere) , with Katharina Treutler being the main pianist of the concert series , performing at the events in Tokyo , Aarhus and Stockholm in 2014 .

On October 10 , 2014 , the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra released a video of its critically acclaimed performance of the Final Fantasy VI Symphonic Poem from Final Symphony Stockholm online (available to watch for free and on demand) . On December 13 , 2014 , it was announced that an album of the music from the concert is to be released in early 2015 , with the album recorded , mixed and mastered at London 's Abbey Road Studios . The music is to be recorded by the London Symphony Orchestra , and Nobuo Uematsu will supervise the production . Before the album 's release part of it will be broadcast by the UK radio station Classic FM .

= = Other concerts = =

In addition to concerts specifically devoted to the Final Fantasy series , music from the games has been performed at many other concerts and concert series . Music from the series was played in the

first four concerts of the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra 's Orchestral Game Music Concerts series from 1991 to 1994 , and each concert has been released on an album . Outside Japan , Final Fantasy music was played for the first time at the Symphonic Game Music Concert series , a series of annual German video game music concerts starting in August 2003 . It has also been played live by the Australian Eminence Symphony Orchestra since October 2003 , an independent symphony orchestra specializing in classical music from video games and in the Video Games Live concert tour from 2005 to date as well as the Play ! A Video Game Symphony world tour from 2006 onwards , for which Nobuo Uematsu composed the opening fanfare that accompanies each performance . The music made up one fourth of the Symphonic Fantasies concerts in September 2009 and in 2012 which were produced by the creators of the Symphonic Game Music Concert series and conducted by Arnie Roth ; music from the Chrono series , the Kingdom Hearts series , and the Mana series made up the rest of the concert .