

= Music of The Last of Us =

The music for the 2013 action @-@ adventure survival horror video game The Last of Us , developed by Naughty Dog and published by Sony Computer Entertainment , was composed by musician Gustavo Santaolalla . Supplementary music for the game 's downloadable content The Last of Us : Left Behind was composed by Santaolalla , Andrew Buresh , Anthony Caruso and Jonathan Mayer . Both soundtracks were produced by Santaolalla , Mayer , and Aníbal Kerpel , with separate segments recorded in both Los Angeles and Nashville . Santaolalla , known for his minimalist approach to composing , was excited to work on the soundtrack due to the game 's focus on the characters and story . He began composing the music early in the game 's development , with few instructions from the development team on the tone that they intended . In collaboration with each other , the team and Santaolalla aimed to make the soundtrack emotional , as opposed to scary . Santaolalla used various instruments to compose the score , including some that were unfamiliar to him .

The soundtrack album for The Last of Us was released on iTunes in June 2013 . Additional compositions , including some composed for Left Behind , were released on a second soundtrack in February 2014 . Critical reception to the soundtracks was positive , as reviewers felt that the music connected appropriately with the gameplay . In particular , critics felt that the minimalist approach of the soundtrack 's composition matched the gameplay . The game 's music was nominated for numerous awards . Several tracks became popular and begot cover versions and live performances .

= = Production and composition = =

During the initial development of The Last of Us , creative director Neil Druckmann and game director Bruce Straley compiled musical tracks that they found inspirational . When searching for a composer to work on the game 's music , they realised that Gustavo Santaolalla composed many of their compiled tracks . Straley described Santaolalla 's music as " organic instrumentation , minimalist , dissonance and resonance with the sounds " . The composer agreed to work on the game 's soundtrack when contacted by Sony . After hearing the game 's pitch , Santaolalla was excited to work on the game ; he had previously wanted to compose for video games , but refused to work on those without a focus on story and characters .

Santaolalla began work on The Last of Us early in its development . Druckmann did not give him specific directions but offered him the game 's stories and themes . Santaolalla appreciated this freedom and felt it assisted his process . He felt the need to " go into some more dark place , more textural and not necessarily melodic " , when composing . The composer prefers to compose as he records , as he has little knowledge of reading and writing sheet music . To challenge himself , Santaolalla used a variety of unique instruments that were new to him , giving " an element of danger and innocence " . For The Last of Us , he used a detuned guitar , producing deep noise . To produce unique sounds , Santaolalla recorded in various rooms , including a bathroom and kitchen . The team wanted the game 's AI to affect the music . They also tried to make the music evoke a reaction from the player , as their familiarization with the sounds would trigger a previous emotion that they felt . Music manager Jonathan Mayer felt that the game 's action music was atypical for video game action music , stating that it is " relatively low @-@ key " , and that taking it out of context changes the immediate reaction to it . The game 's theme , " The Last of Us " , was the first piece of music that the team received , and they were very impressed . With the music , the team aimed to " get emotion " , as opposed to " horror " . Inspired by the sparing use of music in the film No Country for Old Men (2007) , the team used music judiciously and tried to find other ways to " make your palms sweaty " . The orchestral portions of the score were recorded at Ocean Way Studios in Nashville by the Nashville Scoring Orchestra .

Aside from the official soundtracks , licensed tracks also appear in the game . In the main game , during the section titled " Alone and Forsaken " , Joel and Ellie listen to the songs " I 'll Never Get Out of This World Alive " and " Alone and Forsaken " , both by Hank Williams . In the downloadable

expansion pack *The Last of Us : Left Behind* , Ellie and Riley dance to the Etta James cover of the song " I Got You Babe " . In addition , " String Quartet No. 3 in E @-@ Flat Minor , Op. 30 " by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky and " String Quartet No. 4 in E @-@ Minor (B.19) " by Antonín Dvořák are also present in *Left Behind* .

= = Albums = =

= = = The Last of Us = = =

The soundtrack for *The Last of Us* comprises songs from the game , composed and produced by Gustavo Santaolalla . The soundtrack spans thirty tracks , covering a duration of 56 minutes . Sony Computer Entertainment first published the album digitally via iTunes on June 7 , 2013 , and physically on June 13 , 2013 . The soundtrack was also included as pre @-@ order downloadable content in the *Sights and Sounds Pack* .

The orchestral score , performed by the Nashville Scoring Orchestra , was recorded at Ocean Way Studios in Nashville , while the soundtrack 's drums and percussion , performed by Santaolalla , M.B. Gordy and Jonathan Mayer , was recorded at EastWest Studios in Hollywood . All recording was done by Mark Senasac and Aníbal Kerpel . The soundtrack was mastered by Tom Baker at Precision Mastering in Los Angeles .

In the context of the game , the soundtrack was well received . Andy Kelly of Computer and Video Games felt that the score is " sparse and delicate " ; Eurogamer 's Oli Welsh echoed these statements , adding that the music compliments the game 's environments . Jim Sterling of *Destructoid* also praised the music 's ability to compliment gameplay . Matt Helgeson of *Game Informer* praised Santaolalla 's work , calling it " understated and haunting " . Chris Kerr of *Side One* felt that the soundtrack was " the perfect companion " to the game , stating that it is " poignant , moving , and overflowing with desolate hope " . Similarly , Keri Honea of *Game Revolution* felt that the album can be " easily enjoy [ed] outside of the game " , praising its unusual tracks and sound . *GameSpot* 's Tom Mc Shea named the music as one of the game 's standout features , calling it " exceptional " and praising its addition during emotional scenes . Thom Jurek of *AllMusic* praised the album 's variety , stating that Santaolalla manages to " draw in and keep the attention of the listener " .

All songs written and composed by Gustavo Santaolalla .

= = = The Last of Us Volume 2 = = =

The Last of Us Volume 2 , the soundtrack for the downloadable content *The Last of Us : Left Behind* , features compositions from the game , composed and produced by Gustavo Santaolalla . It also features works from Andrew Buresh , Anthony Caruso , and Jonathan Mayer , as well as some additional tracks from the main game . The soundtrack spans 25 tracks , covering a duration of 58 minutes . Sony Computer Entertainment first published the album on iTunes and Amazon Music on February 7 , 2014 , one week prior to the release of *Left Behind* .

The recording and mastering of the soundtrack took place in the same locations as the first album . The orchestral score , performed by the Nashville Scoring Orchestra , was recorded at Ocean Way Studios in Nashville , while the soundtrack 's drums and percussion , performed by M.B. Gordy , Santaolalla and Mayer , was recorded at EastWest Studios in Hollywood . All recording and mixing was completed by Aníbal Kerpel , with additional mixing by Mark Senasac , Joel Yarger , Mayer and Caruso . The soundtrack was mastered by Marc Senasac at PlayStation Recording Studios .

In the context of the game , the soundtrack was generally well received . Mike Futter of *Game Informer* felt that the soundtrack improves the game . Adnan Riaz of *Nouse* echoed similar remarks , stating that the soundtrack accompanies some of the game 's " crucial moments " , and that it " builds the atmosphere for the exchanges " between the characters .

= = Legacy = =

The Last of Us won Excellence in Musical Score at the 2014 SXSW Gaming Awards , and the soundtrack received nominations at the 10th British Academy Video Games Awards and Spike VGX 2013 , and from Hardcore Gamer , IGN and GameTrailers . The game 's main theme was performed live at the 2012 Spike Video Game Awards in Culver City , California on December 7 , 2012 . Music from The Last of Us was also performed live at The Last of Us : One Night Live in Santa Monica , California on July 28 , 2014 . The event featured scenes from the game performed live by the actors , accompanied by the game 's score , performed by Santaolalla and his band . The popularity of the game has led to numerous cover versions of the music being released by various artists , such as violinist Taylor Davis , guitarist Igor Presnyakov and musician Ben " Squid Physics " Morfitt .