

= Jeremy Soule =

Jeremy Soule (/ ʒoʊl / ; born December 19 , 1975 in Keokuk , Iowa) is an American composer of soundtracks for film , television and video games . He has won multiple awards and has been described as the " John Williams of video game music " and " a model of success " for Western composers . He has composed soundtracks for over 60 games and over a dozen other works during his career . He is best known for his work in The Elder Scrolls and Guild Wars series , and several other top @-@ selling titles such as Total Annihilation , Neverwinter Nights , Dungeon Siege , and Harry Potter .

After several years of private composition studies he became an employee of Square in 1994 . After finishing the soundtrack to Secret of Evermore in 1995 , he left to join Humongous Entertainment , where he composed for several children 's games as well as Total Annihilation , his first award @-@ winning score . He left to form his own music production company , Soule Media in 2000 , now called Artistry Entertainment . Through the company , Soule has created several award @-@ winning soundtracks , including Icewind Dale , the Harry Potter series of games , and all of the main Elder Scrolls games since 2002 .

In 2005 , he founded DirectSong , a record label that publishes digital DRM @-@ free versions of his soundtracks as well as those of classical composers . Soule 's works have been played in several live concerts such as the Symphonic Game Music Concert in Germany and the international Play ! A Video Game Symphony concert series . While many of his works are orchestral , he considers himself a " music practitioner " , or someone who creates music in general rather than just one type of music . Several of Soule 's soundtracks have been created both credited and uncredited with the help of his brother , Julian .

= = Early life = =

Soule was born in Keokuk , Iowa to a public school music teacher father and a graphic designer mother . He became interested in music and symphony orchestras at the age of five . Soule began taking piano lessons at an early age and became entranced with music , even writing music notation in the margins of his math homework ; after his teachers and his father realized his talent , he began taking private lessons with professors from Western Illinois University when he was in sixth grade . He claims to have earned the equivalent of a master 's degree in composition before completing high school , though , as he never enrolled in the school , he did not earn a degree . He was split between trying to become a concert pianist and a composer when he grew up ; he ended up deciding to become a composer once he realized how difficult it would be to do both .

While playing video games as a child , Soule came to believe that the experience they created could be greatly enhanced by having a better musical score . After completing high school , he took a year to create a portfolio showcasing what he felt video game scores should sound like . Soule sent the tape to LucasArts and Square . Square very much appreciated the portfolio ; he does not believe that LucasArts ever listened to his tapes as they had a " no unsolicited package " policy . Soule began working at Square in Seattle only two weeks after first submitting his demo tapes .

= = Career = =

= = = 1990s = = =

Soule was promptly given the task by Square to score Secret of Evermore . The finished game features an untraditional score incorporating ambient background sounds (like wind blowing and ocean waves) into the music and utilizing a more mellow orchestral sound . Part of the reason for this was that the sound program used in Evermore was not up to the technical challenge of what Soule wanted to do with it , forcing him to work creatively within his limitations . When Ron Gilbert of LucasArts left to form his own company , Humongous Entertainment , and Square moved from

Seattle to Los Angeles , Soule quit Square to score Gilbert 's children 's adventure game series , Putt @-@ Putt ; he was the company 's third employee . Soule composed the soundtracks to 11 children 's games over the next three years , with multiple titles in the Putt @-@ Putt , Pajama Sam , Freddi Fish and Spy Fox series .

While working at Humongous , Soule met fellow employee and video game designer Chris Taylor , and signed on to compose the soundtrack to his major project , Total Annihilation . Soule convinced Taylor that , given the large amount of other real @-@ time strategy games coming out at the same time as Total Annihilation with techno scores , that to separate themselves they needed to do a large orchestral score . He went so far as to bet a year 's worth of reduced pay that it would pay off ; Gilbert felt that it did after the first sentence of the first review of the game he read was about the music . Given the software limitations at the time , to make the sound work correctly required a full live orchestra , the first that Soule had ever worked with ; the orchestral tracks in Evermore had been performed by Soule and his brother by themselves , two instruments at a time . The soundtrack earned Soule his first award , that of " Best Music " of 1997 from GameSpot in their year @-@ end awards . Soule spent the next two years composing music for the game 's two expansion packs and for children 's games .

= = = 2000s = = =

In February 2000 , Jeremy and his brother , Julian , formed Soule Media as an independent music production company ; its name has since been changed to Artistry Entertainment . Julian works as a sound engineer and composer for the company , and has assisted Jeremy in several projects throughout his career , both credited and uncredited . The first large project that Jeremy Soule worked on through the company was 2000 's Icewind Dale , which won the best music of the year award from both IGN and GameSpot .

In 2001 , Soule scored the first of five Harry Potter games that he would work on between then and 2005 . His first game , Harry Potter and the Sorcerer 's Stone , was nominated for an Academy of Interactive Arts & Sciences award for " Outstanding Achievement in Original Music Composition " , while Chamber of Secrets and Prisoner of Azkaban won and were nominated , respectively , for a British Academy of Film & Television Arts award for " Best Score " in the Game Music Category . The other games he composed for that year include Baldur 's Gate : Dark Alliance and Azurik : Rise of Perathia , which he later described as a bad game lifted up in the eyes of testers and reviewers by good music . He was responsible for composing the soundtracks to three top @-@ selling role @-@ playing games in 2002 , those of Dungeon Siege , The Elder Scrolls III : Morrowind , and Neverwinter Nights ; Morrowind earned him his second Academy of Interactive Arts & Sciences award nomination .

Since then Artistry Entertainment has grown and scored a string of highly successful games such as the Guild Wars series , Star Wars : Knights of the Old Republic , Warhammer 40 @,@ 000 : Dawn of War , The Elder Scrolls IV : Oblivion and The Elder Scrolls V : Skyrim . Oblivion was an award @-@ winning soundtrack by Soule . It was nominated for the 2006 British Academy of Film & Television Arts and Academy of Interactive Arts & Sciences awards , and won the MTV Video Music Awards and Official Xbox Magazine soundtrack awards . In 2005 Jeremy and Julian Soule founded DirectSong , a company which sells DRM @-@ free downloads of Jeremy 's compositions as well as works by dozens of classical composers . By 2007 the company had grown to over one million registered customers , though Soule noted that not all of those customers resulted in a sale of a non @-@ free product . Soule says that the traffic numbers for DirectSong have surpassed some major record labels at times . DirectSong has also struggled to fulfil orders or provide timely support , with some customers sometimes waiting more than a year for CDs , resulting in an " F " rating by the Better Business Bureau , based on 58 complaints .

In 2006 , Soule composed music for the first Guild Wars title , and would ultimately go on to compose music for all expansions for the first game , as well as the soundtrack for Guild Wars 2 . Soule also uses DirectSong to sell " expansion packs " of music for games such as Guild Wars that can be played in game like the rest of the soundtrack . He estimates that at least 10 % of the players

of Guild Wars have bought his musical expansion for the game , Battle Pak 1 . Soule also worked on another of Chris Taylor 's real @-@ time strategy titles in 2007 , with the launch of Supreme Commander .

= = = 2010s = = =

November 2011 saw the release of the fifth installment in the Elder Scrolls franchise , Skyrim . The game 's soundtrack is among Soule 's most critically acclaimed pieces of work , receiving a BAFTA nomination as well as numerous other awards from organizations such as the Game Audio Network Guild . Soule would also go on to compose the music for two of the official DLC packs for the game , Dragonborn and Dawnguard , both released in 2012 .

In March 2013 , Soule launched a Kickstarter project to fund a classical music album called The Northerner : Soule Symphony No. 1 , seeking \$ 10 @,@ 000 for the album . The campaign ultimately raised a total of \$ 121 @,@ 227 . The project features vocals in Old Norse , with Soule citing the successful use of the similar Icelandic language by Malukah in one of her own projects during development . The symphony has been delayed several times , and is currently scheduled for 2017 . For the project , Soule and his company are developing new audio technology .

In 2014 , Soule signed an MMO exclusivity deal with Sony Online Entertainment , in order to compose music for Everquest Next and Landmark . The move saw an end to his six year collaboration with the Guild Wars series . Everquest Next was later cancelled in March 2016 , but Landmark is still in development .

In 2015 , Soule composed a Dota 2 music pack , along with his brother Julian . The soundtrack was available as part of the Compendium , a pack of digitally @-@ distributed content that funded the prize pool for The International 2015 tournament , which took place in August 2015 and ultimately featured the largest prize @-@ pool in e @-@ sports history , with over \$ 18 @,@ 000 @,@ 000 in total .

= = Legacy = =

Music that Soule has composed has been played in numerous live concerts . His music from Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets was performed on August 20 , 2003 at the first Symphonic Game Music Concert in Leipzig , Germany , and his music from Morrowind was performed at the third Symphonic Game Music Concert on August 17 , 2005 . Selections of his pieces from Morrowind and Oblivion are played in the international concert series Play ! A Video Game Symphony . Jeremy Soule attended the world @-@ premiere of Play ! on May 27 , 2006 in Chicago . Music from Oblivion has also been played at the Press Start 2007 -Symphony of Games- concerts in September 2007 in Japan . Soule 's music has been featured in numerous top @-@ selling games ; he once estimated in an interview that around 10 million games with his music in them were sold in 2006 alone .

Selections of remixes of Soule 's work appear on English remixing websites such as OverClocked ReMix . Soule is a supporter of the game music arrangement community , even going so far as to submit his own arrangement to OverClocked ReMix . He did so to help promote and inspire younger and newer composers . The track , " Squaresoft Variation " , arranges the Final Fantasy VI piece " Terra " ; Soule has said that he chose the piece to remix because when he first started at Square he spent some time debugging the game before his composition duties for Evermore started .

= = Musical style and influences = =

Soule rarely gets to see the game he is composing for in any sort of completed state before he begins work ; as a result he bases many of his musical decisions on the company 's previous games . He credits his success with this strategy to the fact that many of the games he works on come from studios that have created several successful games in the past . He finds it much easier to compose a soundtrack to a game that is very visual in nature , such as a role @-@ playing game . He also

likes to see the storyboards and concept art for the game , as he considers them a good provider of " pure emotional intent " for the game . When composing a soundtrack , the first thing that he decides is the tempo and the amount of energy the music will have ; this decision is as much based on the genre of the game as it is the artistic style of the game . After that , Soule starts composing smaller tracks in the soundtrack , to make sure that they match up with the vision of the game before he starts on the major themes . Soule tries to compose all of a game 's soundtrack himself rather than in a team , though he sometimes collaborates with his brother .

Although many of his works are orchestral in nature , Soule has denied that it is his " style " , as he feels that the term boxes him into only creating one type of music . He prefers to call himself a " music practitioner " , or someone who creates music in general rather than just one type of music as he is capable of many styles , such as Japanese pop , which he has written along with Jeff Miyahara . Soule considers music to be like a language , which can be arranged in many different ways if you understand the structure . He does not have a favorite genre of game to compose for , preferring instead to compose for " ambitious " games by people with " new ideas " .

Soule 's greatest musical influences are " Debussy 's exploration of harmony " , " Wagner 's grand operas " , and " Mozart 's form and composition " . While many of his orchestral works are based on movie scores in terms of scope , he does not often listen to movie scores , though he names his favorite composer as John Williams . The influence has been noted by critics , who have termed Soule " the John Williams of video game music " . Among video game music influences , he has cited Square for providing him " with the education for what quality means to this business " and Nobuo Uematsu in particular . His favorite style of music to listen to is British pop and rock music , while his favorite video games are the ones that he has written scores to , especially the ones made by Chris Taylor , though one of his all @-@ time favorites is The Legend of Zelda . He has said that the games he would most like to work on that he has not already are ones by Shigeru Miyamoto , a Final Fantasy game , and a Metroid game .

= = Works = =

= = = Video games = = =

= = Awards = =