

= Journey ( 2012 video game ) =

Journey is an indie video game developed by Thatgamecompany and published by Sony Computer Entertainment for the PlayStation 3 . It was released on March 13 , 2012 , via the PlayStation Network . In Journey , the player controls a robed figure in a vast desert , traveling towards a mountain in the distance . Other players on the same journey can be discovered , and two players can meet and assist each other , but they cannot communicate via speech or text and cannot see each other 's names . The only form of communication between the two is a musical chime . This chime also transforms dull , stiff pieces of cloth found throughout the levels into vibrant red , affecting the game world and allowing the player to progress through the levels . The robed figure wears a trailing scarf , which when charged by approaching floating pieces of cloth , briefly allows the player to float through the air . The developers sought to evoke in the player a sense of smallness and wonder , and to forge an emotional connection between them and the anonymous players they meet along the way . The music , composed by Austin Wintory , dynamically responds to the player 's actions , building a single theme to represent the game 's emotional arc throughout the story .

Reviewers of the game praised the visual and auditory art as well as the sense of companionship created by playing with a stranger , calling it a moving and emotional experience , and have since listed it as one of the greatest games of all time . Journey won several " game of the year " awards and received several other awards and nominations , including a Best Score Soundtrack for Visual Media nomination for the 2013 Grammy Awards . A retail " Collector 's Edition " , including Journey , Thatgamecompany 's two previous titles , and additional media , was released on August 28 , 2012 . The game was released digitally for the PlayStation 4 on July 21 , 2015 and a physical edition was released on October 2 , 2015 .

= = Gameplay = =

In Journey , the player takes the role of a robed figure in a desert . After an introductory sequence , the player is shown the robed figure sitting in the sand , with a large mountain in the distance . The path towards this mountain , the ultimate destination of the game , is subdivided into several sections traveled through linearly . The player can walk in the levels , as well as control the camera , which typically follows behind the figure , either with the analog stick or by tilting the motion @-@ sensitive controller . The player can jump with one button , or emit a wordless shout or musical note with another ; the length and volume of the shout depends on how the button is pressed , and the note stays in tune with the background music . These controls are presented pictorially in the beginning of the game ; at no point outside of the credits and title screen are any words shown or spoken .

The robed figure wears a trailing magical scarf which allows the player to briefly fly ; doing so uses up the scarf 's magical charge , represented visually by glowing runes on the scarf . The scarf 's runes are recharged by walking , or a variety of other means . Touching glowing symbols scattered throughout the levels lengthens the initially vestigial scarf , allowing the player to remain airborne longer . Larger strips of cloth are present in the levels and can be transformed from a stiff , dull gray to vibrant red by singing near them . Doing so may have effects on the world such as releasing bits of cloth , forming bridges , or levitating the player . This in turn allows the player to progress in the level by opening doors or allowing them to reach previously inaccessible areas . The robed figure does not have visible arms to manipulate the game world directly . Along the way , the player encounters flying creatures made of cloth , some of which help the player along . In later levels , the player also encounters hostile creatures made of stone , which upon spotting the player rip off parts of the figure 's scarf .

In each level , the player may come across one other player temporarily connected to their game . When players approach each other they charge one another 's scarves . They cannot communicate with each other beyond patterns of singing . Players can help each other by activating strips of cloth or showing paths , but cannot hinder each other and are not necessary for completing any level .

When two players finish a section at the same time they remain together into the next one ; otherwise they are connected to new players when they move on . While all of the figures generally look the same , without gender or distinguishing characteristics , individual players can be told apart by unique symbols which are shown floating in the air when they sing and are displayed on their robes at all times . The entire game takes about two to three hours to complete .

= = Story = =

Journey 's story is told wordlessly throughout gameplay and using cutscenes . The player 's character begins on a sand dune in a seemingly endless desert . In the far distance looms a large , foreboding mountain with a glowing crevice that splits its peak . As the character approaches the mountain , they find remnants of a once @-@ thriving civilization , eroded by sand over time . Scattered throughout the ruins at the end of each area are stones at which the traveler rests ; these stones give the traveler the vision of meeting a larger , white @-@ robed figure in a circular room , with art on the walls describing the rise and fall of the civilization mirroring the player 's journey . The player must also contend with the ancient automatons left over from a war which ended the civilization , and which still roam the city looking for intruders .

The player continues to journey deeper into the remains of a once sprawling city at the base of the mountain . Eventually making it safely to the mountain , the traveler begins to climb it , struggling as they enter the colder climates and encounter deep snow and high winds . With the crevice still a fair distance away , the traveler falls and collapses in the snow . Six of the white @-@ robed figures appear before the character and grant the traveler new energy , allowing the player to reach the summit of the mountain and walk into and through the crevice as the screen fills with white . The player is then shown the game 's credits , playing over the ending cinematic . This cinematic shows a shooting star emanating from the crevice and traversing the path the traveler took through the ruins , and shows glimpses of other robed travelers heading towards the mountain . Eventually , the star comes to rest at the sand dune where the game began , and the player is given the option of starting the game again . As the credits end , the player is shown the PlayStation Network IDs of the other travelers who shared part of the trek .

= = Development = =

Journey was the last game made under a three @-@ game contract between Thatgamecompany and Sony , the first two being Flow and Flower . Development of the game began in 2009 , after the release of Thatgamecompany 's previous title Flower . The 18 @-@ person development team for Journey was composed mainly of creators of the company 's previous games ; co @-@ founder Jenova Chen was the creative director and Nick Clark returned as lead designer . Kellee Santiago , producer of Flow and Flower , did not reprise her duties , concentrating instead on her role as the company 's president , and was replaced by Robin Hunicke .

When development began , Sony expected the game to be completed in a year , rather than the more than three it finally took . Thatgamecompany always expected needing an extension ; according to Hunicke , they believed finishing the game within a year was " unrealistic " . Development ended up taking even longer than anticipated , as the team had difficulties paring down their ideas for the game and maintaining efficient communication . Over the course of development the team grew from seven to eighteen people . At the end of the second year , when Sony 's extension had run out , the game did not spark the emotions in the player that the team wanted . Sony agreed to another one @-@ year extension , but development ultimately exceeded even that .

The stress of the project led to the feeling there was not enough time or money to complete everything the team wished to , which added to the stress and caused arguments about the design of the game . The developers ended up reducing the overtime they spent on the project to avoid burning out , though it meant further delays and risked the company running out of money as the game neared completion . In a speech at the 16th annual D.I.C.E. Awards in 2013 , Chen admitted

that the company had indeed been driven to bankruptcy in the final months of development , and that some of the developers had gone unpaid at the time . Hunicke described the solution to finally finishing the game as learning to let go of tensions and ideas that could not make it into the game and be " nice to each other . "

The game is intended to make the player feel " small " and to give them a sense of awe about their surroundings . The basic idea for the game , as designed by Chen , was to create a game that moved beyond the " typical defeat / kill / win mentality " of most video games . The team initially created a prototype named Dragon that involved players trying to draw away a large monster from other players , but eventually discarded it after finding it was too easy for players to ignore each other in favor of their own objectives .

The developers designed the game like a " Japanese garden " , where they attempted to remove all of the game elements that did not fit with the others , so the emotions they wanted the game to evoke would come through . This minimalism is intended to make the game feel intuitive to the player , so they can explore and feel a sense of wonder without direct instructions . The story arc of the game is designed to explicitly follow Joseph Campbell 's monomyth theory of narrative , or hero 's journey , so as to enhance the emotional connection of the players as they journey together . In his D.I.C.E. speech , Chen noted that three of their 25 testers had cried upon completing the game .

The multiplayer component of Journey was designed to facilitate cooperation between players without forcing it , and without allowing competition . It is intended to allow the players to feel a connection to other people through exploring with them , rather than talking to them or fighting them . The plan was " to create a game where people felt they are connected with each other , to show the positive side of humanity in them . " The developers felt the focus on caring about the other player would be diluted by too many game elements , such as additional goals or tasks , as players would focus on those and " ignore " the other player . They also felt having text or voice communication between players or showing usernames would allow players ' biases and preconceptions to come between them and the other player .

The game was released on March 13 , 2012 for download on the PlayStation Network . A PlayStation Home Game Space , or themed area , based on Journey was released on March 14 , 2012 and is similar in appearance to the game . A retail " Collector 's Edition " of the game was released on August 28 , 2012 . In addition to Journey , the disc @-@ based title includes Flow and Flower ; creator commentaries , art , galleries , and soundtracks for all three games ; non @-@ related minigames ; and additional content for the PlayStation 3 . In September 2012 , Sony and Thatgamecompany released a hardcover book entitled " The Art of Journey " , by the game 's art director Matt Nava , containing pieces of art from the game ranging from concept art to final game graphics . On July 21 , 2015 , Journey was released on the PlayStation Network for the PlayStation 4 , ported by United Kingdom studio Tricky Pixels ; owners of the digital PlayStation 3 version of the game were able to download the new version for free .

= = = Music = = =

The music in Journey was composed and orchestrated by Austin Wintory , who had previously worked with Thatgamecompany on the soundtrack for Flow . Wintory worked closely on the soundtrack with sound designer Steve Johnson , as well as the programming team , so the music would dynamically tie in to both the actions of the player and sound effects caused by nearby game objects , and feel as if it were " unfolding in real time " . Johnson felt having short pieces of music that looped without reacting to the player would be a " missed opportunity " , and wanted to create music that changed while still containing a composed emotional arc . Jenova Chen met with Wintory at the start of the game 's development to describe his vision for the project , and Wintory left the meeting and composed and recorded the main cello theme for the soundtrack that night . He continued to work on the soundtrack for the next three years , experimenting and discarding many ideas . The game 's orchestrations were performed by the Skopje Radio Symphonic Orchestra in Macedonia .

Unlike many games , where different songs have different themes for each character or area ,

Wintory chose to base all of the pieces on one theme which stood for the player and their journey , with cello solos especially representing the player . Wintory describes the music as " like a big cello concerto where you are the soloist and all the rest of the instruments represent the world around you " , though he describes it as not necessarily orchestral due to the inclusion of electronic aspects . The cello begins the game as " immersed in a sea of electronic sound " , before first emerging on its own and then merging into a full orchestra , mirroring the player 's journey to the mountain . While the game 's art style is based on several different cultures , Wintory tried to remove any overt cultural influences from the music to make it " as universal and culture @-@ less as possible " . Tina Guo features as the cellist for the soundtrack . She is a close friend of Wintory and has since performed " Woven Variations " with him , an eight @-@ minute orchestral variation on the Journey soundtrack . All of the non @-@ electronic instruments in the soundtrack were recorded with a live orchestra .

The soundtrack was released as an album on April 10 on iTunes and the PlayStation Network . The album is a collection of the soundtrack 's " most important " pieces , arranged by Wintory to stand alone without the context of the player 's actions . The album comprises 18 tracks and is over 58 minutes long . It features the voice of Lisbeth Scott for the final track , " I Was Born for This " . After its release , the soundtrack reached the top 10 of the iTunes Soundtrack charts in more than 20 countries . It also reached No. 116 on the Billboard sales charts , with over 4000 units sold in its first week after release , the second @-@ highest position of any video game music album to date . The soundtrack was released as a physical album by Sumthing Else Music Works on October 9 , 2012 . In 2012 Wintory released a download @-@ only album of music on Bandcamp titled Journey Bonus Bundle , which includes variations on themes from Journey and Flow . The soundtrack itself was subsequently released on Bandcamp on June 19 , 2013 . An album of piano arrangements titled Transfiguration was released on May 1 , 2014 , on Bandcamp as both a digital and physical album . A two @-@ record vinyl version of the album was released in 2015 .

In January 2016 , Wintory started a Kickstarter for a Journey Live concert tour , in which the fifteen @-@ piece Fifth House Ensemble from Chicago will perform the music from the game while a player works their way through the game . The ensemble will react to the player 's actions , using a specially @-@ scored version of the soundtrack , composed by Patrick O 'Malley with Wintory 's oversight , that breaks the music into small pieces to enable this reaction . Wintory had wanted to do a performance of the Journey soundtrack in this interactive manner , but did not have the time to rework the soundtrack for this purpose . Wintory came to know Dan Visconti , the composer for Fifth House Ensemble , after Visconti published his praise for the Journey soundtrack and had encouraged other members of the ensemble to play the game . The group saw how Journey 's soundtrack had been used for various Video Games Live concerts and believed they could pull off Wintory 's vision of an interactive concert , doing most of the reworking of the soundtrack under Wintory 's direction . Sony has provided Wintory with a version of the game developed by Tricky Pixels that disables the music to allow the ensemble to provide this , and other modifications required for the concert performance . The Kickstarter was launched for \$ 9 @,@ 000 in funding for a four @-@ city tour , but within a few days already surpassed its funding levels , allowing for more cities to be included .

= = Reception = =

Journey received critical and commercial success worldwide . After its release , it became the fastest @-@ selling game to date on PlayStation Store in both North America and Europe . At the 2011 Electronic Entertainment Expo , prior to release , the game won awards for best download game from 1UP.com , GameSpy , and GameTrailers . After publication , the game was heavily honored at end of the year awards . At the 16th Annual D.I.C.E. Awards , formerly known as the Interactive Achievement Awards , Journey won 8 awards , the most honors received of the night ( which includes " Game of the Year " , " Outstanding Innovation in Gaming " , " Casual Game of the Year " , " Outstanding Achievement in Game Direction " , " Outstanding Achievement in Art Direction " , " Outstanding Achievement in Online Gameplay " , " Outstanding Achievement in Original Music

Composition " , and " Outstanding Achievement in Sound Design " ) ; it was additionally nominated for " Downloadable Game of the Year " , " Outstanding Achievement in Gameplay Engineering " , and " Outstanding Achievement in Story " . Journey was selected as the best game of the year by IGN and GameSpot , among others .

The soundtrack was nominated for the Best Score Soundtrack for Visual Media at the 2013 Grammy Awards , the first video game soundtrack to be nominated for that category , though it did not win . Additionally , the game won the award for best music and was nominated for the best graphics award from IGN , and was selected as the best PlayStation Network game by GameSpot . At the Spike Video Game Awards , Journey won awards as the best PlayStation 3 game , the best indie game , and the game with the best music , and was additionally nominated for game of the year , best downloadable game , best graphics , and best song in a game for " I Was Born For This " . It received the 2013 Annie Award for video game animation . It won five awards at the 2013 British Academy of Film and Television Arts awards : Artistic Achievement , Audio Achievement , Game Design , Online Multiplayer and Original Music , and was nominated for Best Game , Game Innovation and Story . In March 2013 , it won six awards at the annual Game Developers Choice Awards : Best Audio , Best Game Design , Best Visual Arts , Best Downloadable Game , the Innovation Award , and Game of the Year .

Journey received high acclaim from critics who praised the visual and auditory art direction as well as the emotional response playing with a stranger created . It received the IGN Best Overall Game Award for 2012 and Ryan Clements of IGN described the game as " the most beautiful game of its time " , saying , " each moment is like a painting , expertly framed and lit " . Jane Douglas of GameSpot concurred , calling it " relentlessly beautiful " and lauding the visual diversity of the world and the depiction of the rippling sand ; Matt Miller of Game Informer added praise for the animation of the sand and creatures , saying the game was visually stunning . The music was also complimented , with Miller describing it as a " breathtaking musical score " and Douglas calling it " moving , dynamic music " .

Reviewers were especially pleased with the emotional experience of playing the game , particularly with other players . Christian Donlan of Eurogamer described it as a " non @-@ denominational religious experience " that , with the addition of another player , moves beyond metaphors and becomes a " pilgrimage " to the player . A reviewer writing for Edge magazine said the emotional arc of the game hits with " occasionally startling power " , while Patrick Shaw from Wired said the game made him feel a " wide range of emotions ... wonder , fear , even sadness . " Miller said all three times he played the game , " each time , without fail , individual moments ... managed to give me goosebumps , and those moments have remained on my mind for weeks afterward . " Joel Gregory of PlayStation Official Magazine praised the game 's story for being open to the player 's interpretation , leaving an ambiguity that drew him in . The addition of an unnamed second player was described by Donlan as brilliant and as a " master stroke " , and Edge said it made for " a more absorbing , more atmospheric experience " .

The few criticisms for the game centered on its length and pacing . Clements noted that not all players would appreciate a game with a " deliberate , melancholic pace " and short duration , comments echoed by the Edge review . Miller noted the lack of a complex gameplay elements in Journey , and Shaw was disappointed that the game was only a few hours long , though Douglas said the length was perfect . Miller concluded the game could be compared to " a musical concert , a well @-@ directed film , or a long @-@ awaited book " , while Clements concluded , " completing Journey will create memories that last for years . "