

PANORAMICAL

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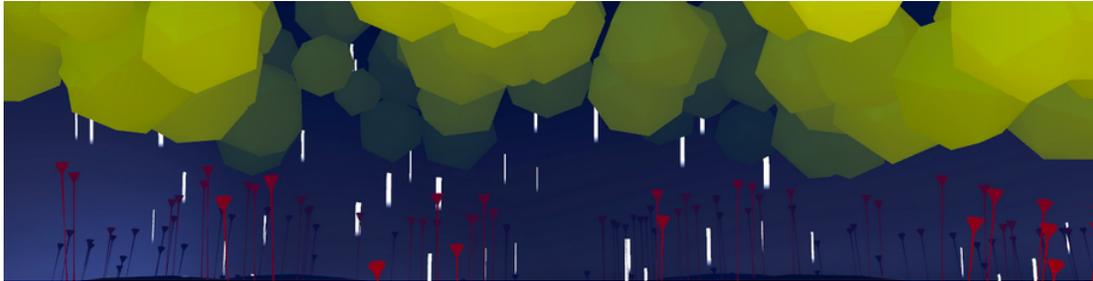


Figure 1: *PANORAMICAL* scene, 2015.

Abstract

PANORAMICAL is a digital anthology of musical landscapes with analog controls. It is a collection of places that morph to your touch using a MIDI controller or a game controller. Initially conceived as an installation piece, players twist knobs on a custom-built controller and morph a constantly moving abstract landscape PANORAMICAL player control shapes as well as sounds to create an immersive playful experience at their own pace. It's been showcased in dozens of events around the world and it's now in development for PC and Mac as a downloadable title.

1 Introduction

PANORAMICAL is an independent collaboration between game developer and visual artist Fernando Ramallo and composer David Kanaga. Fernando is the lead programmer, artist and designer. David is the lead composer, also providing input into the general design.

Fernando met David at Indiecade 2011 and they created the initial prototype for PANORAMICAL while hanging out after a tiresome GDC 2012. They worked on PANORAMICAL remotely, with David in Oakland, California and Fernando in Buenos Aires, Mexico and Berlin.

The team received funding from Indie Fund in 2013. In 2014, Ramallo and Kanaga teamed up with Finji (Adam and Rebekah Saltsman) and Polytron to help with business and marketing for the release.

They took the prototype to festivals and art installations around the world to wide appreciation and interest. They started full-time development on a larger experience for home computers and brought on guest collaborators for extra scenes in addition to those created by David and Fernando.

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The collaborators contributed their own distinct styles. Creative contributions were made by: DOSEONE, DISASTERPEACE, BAIYON, KOZILEK, as Scene Audio Leads. Matt DiVito, Phil Fish, George Buckenham and Richard Flanagan served as collaborative Scene Art Leads.

PANORAMICAL is a digital anthology of musical landscapes with analog controls. In a world that is ever changing to the player's touch, you are encouraged to take your time, experience the scene and move on to the next at your own pace. Each play through is unique as the player changes the soundscape with every interaction.

2 Preliminaries

PANORAMICAL was conceived as an installation piece repurposing a music mixer full of sliders and knobs that players use to gradually change the world's shapes and sounds. After showing it at several art and games festivals around the world, the team decided to create a full at-home play experience with guest artists.

The team was interested in the idea of using a Korg Nanokontrol mixer full of knobs and sliders as a method to create new player experience and game mechanics through controlling several analog variables at once.

The first prototype had the user orbiting a planet while changing its shape. Music was added so that it changed with every control. The combination of the abstract shapes and music changing instantly at a touch felt so perfect that the team was compelled to make a more polished version.

Ramallo and Kanaga took the scene to a few events and it had a positive response so they decided to create a full desktop version. Throughout the three years since the original prototype, PANORAMICAL has been shown at festivals and galleries around the world along with several custom built controllers.

Brendan Byrne, electronics and product designer at Xiwi Electronics came into contact with the game and the original controller and felt a compulsion to create something worthy of the game. Brendan and Fernando discussed the various designs of the controller and finally settled on a controller layout specific to

PANORAMICAL. There are two controller designs, one for gallery installations and one available on a limited edition run. The team will cover craft, materials and assembly.

3 Challenge and Resolution

The most challenging part of building PANORAMICAL was creating a framework around the scenes to present them in an interesting way at a pace set by the player. Creating good controls based off of a MIDI controller was VERY hard but the team managed to map the game to both keyboard and gamepad with equal success. Working directly with an electronics product designer to understand the inner workings of both the physical and digital is unique in the games industry to PANORAMICAL.

Users are encouraged to play it normally with a keyboard/mouse setup or with a MIDI controller (one of the supported consumer products or a custom PANORAMICAL limited edition controller).

4 Conclusion

PANORAMICAL is a collection of abstract immersive environments that "morph to your touch". It's about exploring beauty in the interaction of shapes, color and sound in an ever-changing game world. There are no set gameplay goals defined for the player and the game is designed to move forward and find interesting combinations in each scene as the player sets the pace for their own experience. PANORAMICAL is about finding beautiful surprising moments inside environments of moving shapes, twinkling lights and immersive soundscapes.

PANORAMICAL is a game created by designers and musicians who are exploring the interaction between a musician's sound controls, the game music and the 3D world-space. As the game took shape and form, the creators partnered with someone who specializes in electronics hardware to create a custom controller experience.