Chapter 1

# Video Games as Aggregating Mediums and Resulting Products of Several Visual Communication Languages

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## ABSTRACT

*The aim of this chapter is to analyze the conception and the design process of a video game, which, like other areas of visual production, such as comics, illustration and animation (digital) has several steps of formal and conceptual development. These steps are based on areas of knowledge and development such as drawing, digital 2D and 3D production and Motion Graphics.*

*We begin by analyzing the importance of drawing as the mean and instrument of initial definition and design of characters, environments, narrative and expressiveness of the game elements along with its narrative (from first sketches to the main storyboard). Next, we analyze the production and digital post-production processes of the game from which the ideas and initial intentions are digitally reproduced. We also address steps such as 3D modeling and character animation, as well as composition.*

*Finally, we examine the importance and function of motion graphics inside the game experience and the game contexts in which this communication feature is applied.*

## FROM CONCEPT TO OBJECT: DRAWING AS THE BASIS OF THE CREATIVE PROCESS

Drawing is an area of knowledge common to several activities - artistic or technical, symbolic or objective. Drawing history follows art history, architecture and design history (in case understand them separately), but it also follows, within a normative context, engineering history (that always used it). However, despite its relevance, its recognition as an autonomous activity is relatively recent. Drawing has always been considered a vehicle and a project.

If we consider that the beginning of design projects, as well as visual arts projects, in general, was substantially dominated by conceptual concerns, it becomes fair to state that drawing is a reflective or compulsive "drift", an organizational instrument of ideas, as well as a simultaneous process of addition and subtraction and an operational function for the creation of something.

Within the "unlimited limits' of drawing's history, there are two "versions" of the predominant application of drawing, as we understand it in representation and / or presentation: drawing as a project and drawing as an autonomous activity by itself. The first version is ambivalent and "servant hood" to various areas of knowledge, such as the visual arts (in general), architecture and design. The second version belongs exclusively to the arts and visual arts world. It is the first version that we will be treating here, describing the intervention of drawing's project methodology applied to animation and video games, which sums up to the development of characters and environments. We will present drawing process and procedures in order to present it as an irreplaceable tool of the first stage of the development of ideas, where creativity is complementary to the graphical response in the search for appropriate solutions.

Drawing, design and purpose. Terms and concepts inherently related to visual arts, design and architecture. Closely related, they are also subsequent to each other. First the idea, the first drawing materialized as an almost intelligible sketch, immediate, often uneasy and hesitant. Then, the first certainties, the project on paper, the quest for the consolidation of the idea. Finally, the object, execution, and its implementation. Drawing, either if it is manual or computational, is an essential tool in the visual arts project methodology (scholar or masses like)[1], either at a bi-dimensional level (physical or virtual), either at the development level of three-dimensional objects of varying scale (architectural or small commercial level industrial design).

According to Alan Pipes (2007), the Eureka moment belongs to drawing: Pipes considers the drawing moment as inevitable, intense and immediate. These are the unshown actions, the highly intimate 'thought drawings', personal to who ever invents them. The first project drawings are from a conceptual domain and subscribers of an open methodology where drawing is an essential tool.

These drawings, as the author's property, are "thrown" to the sketchbook[2] with the anxiety of those who "solve problems" or "want to solve problems". The same occurs in the first phase of development of the animated characters for video games and video games themselves, where drawings are quickly made and become the projection of the drawer's will.

Like in many other areas of visual arts or mass media arts, such as audiovisuals and multimedia, both the character design moment, and the project in which it is integrated, use design's project methodology as a guarantee of a scientific approach, which structures and directs the idea as an answer and solution to the problem or proposal. This is a methodology, which, in summary, we divide into three basic stages. They are the following:

1st - structuring the projectual problem;
2nd - the project;
3rd - the project execution.

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