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DESIGNING A GAME FOR MUSIC: INTEGRATED DESIGN

APPROACHES FOR LUDIC

MUSIC & INTERACTIVITY

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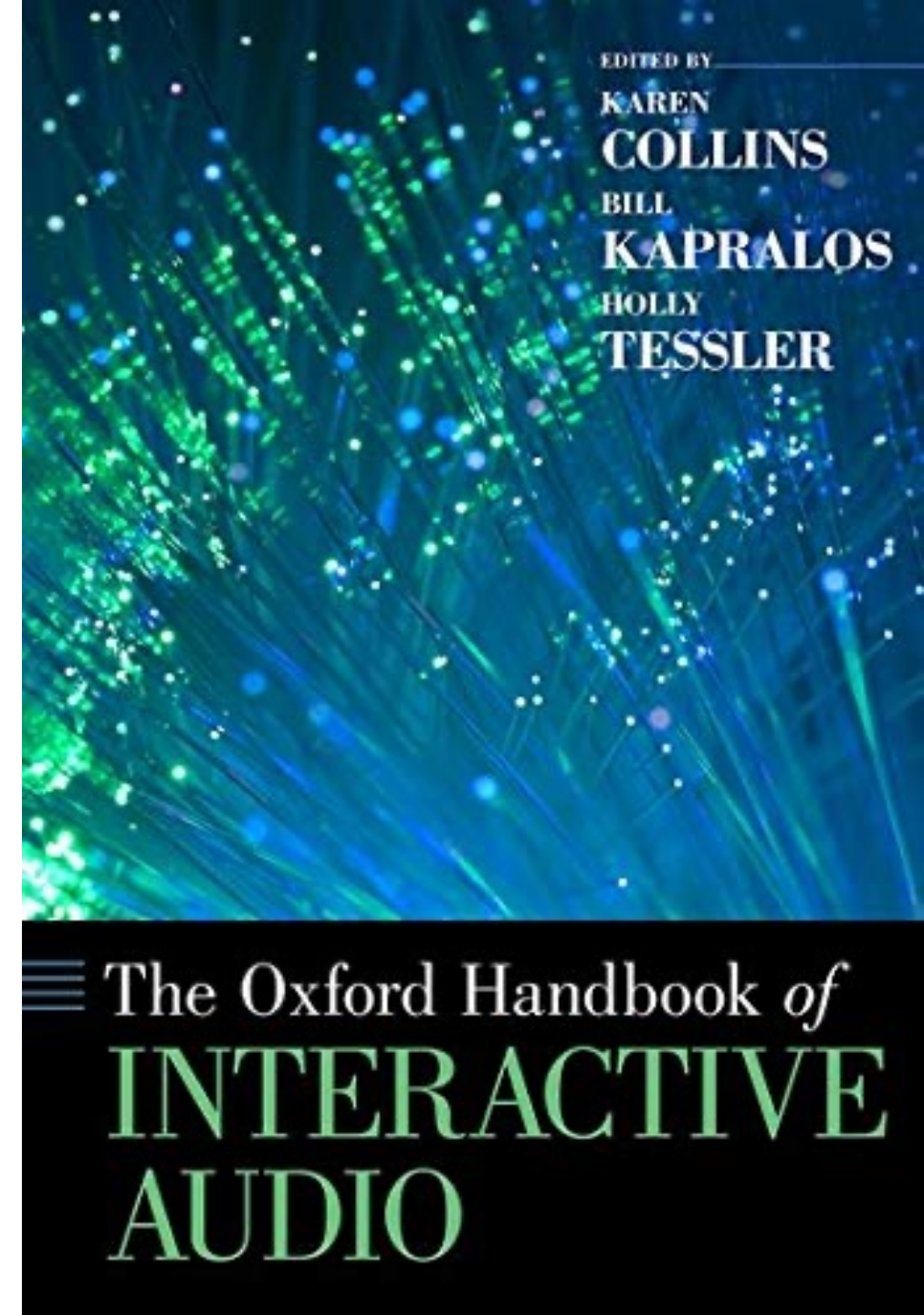
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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION STATEMENT

This chapter, published as part of the Oxford Handbook of Interactive Audio, derives from research undertaken for Stevens' PhD which investigated interactivity within a video game context with reference to the musical soundtrack. The primary research involved testing work on participants and analysing results within existing theoretical frameworks, suggesting a new paradigm for future work in the medium. Collaboration with the co-author involved: conversations through which concepts were challenged, proof of concept work in a video game engine that served to verify the ideas proposed, assistance with constructing the figures used, and checking references and formatting.

ABSTRACT

This chapter examines the inherent conflict between player autonomy and musical structure within videogames. Ludic music in games is typically congruent with the action and can heighten feelings of mastery by providing emotional rewards for player achievements. However, the confirmations or violations of musical expectancy that are effective in provoking emotional responses in the kind of tonal music typically utilized in games are difficult to achieve within the temporal uncertainty of a game, where the player has the autonomy to act at any time. The chapter examines the changes in attitudes, tools, and production processes that would allow the progression from current dynamic or adaptive approaches, which treat the music system as a passive receiver of instruction, to a more authentically two-way interactive approach where musical structure inputs to the game's decision-making processes in order to create a more powerful alignment of musical emotion and game events.



As audiences are increasingly no longer solely listeners but also active producer-consumers, and as video games and other interactive systems increasingly permeate our daily lives, understanding interactivity and its impact on the audience has never been more important. A collection of newly commissioned chapters on interactivity in music and sound edited by preeminent scholars in the field, this book marks the beginning of a journey into understanding the ways in which we interact with sound, and offers a new set of analytical tools for the growing field of interactive audio.

What does it mean to interact with sound? How does interactivity alter our experience as creators and listeners? What makes interactive audio different from non-interactive audio? Where does interacting with audio fit into our understanding of sound and music? What does the future hold for interactive media when it comes to our musical and sonic experiences? And how do we begin to approach interactive audio from a theoretical perspective? The Oxford Handbook of Interactive Audio answers these questions by exploring the full range of interactive audio in video games, performance, education, environmental design, toys, and artistic practice. Examining these questions from a range of approaches – technological, emotional, psychological, and physical – the book provides a thorough overview of the fascinating experience of interactive sound.

Book Blurb

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