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Classical California Radio Spotlights Video Game Music

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A Classical California radio host has programmed over 12 hours of video game music for the station's web stream "Arcade"

Classical California is a classical musical radio network that includes the KUSC station in Los Angeles and KDFC in San Francisco.

The host and producer of the KUSC Morning Show and The Opera Show, opera expert **Jennifer Miller Hammel** has curated a comprehensive playlist for "**Arcade**," a new streaming channel highlighting video game music for Classical California.

A free, 24-hour streaming channel, Arcade features medleys of video game music from the 1980s to the present, combined with classical music featured in games.

"There's been so much classical music used in video games," Hammel **told KQED**. "[It shows] how these incredibly important cornerstones of classical music have then served to heighten the experience for a gamer."

"I just thought about the games that have stuck with me since I was four or five years old that have affected me personally, since my earliest days playing *Pac-Man* on the Atari," she added. "So within an hour, I had put together 12 hours of music," she says.

Hammel also describes the industry's shifts in bringing film music to the concert stage, as well as video game music — this summer, the **Hollywood Bowl** marked the 10th anniversary of the Game Awards, with a concert featuring music by **Lorne Balfé** and a **performance by Gustavo Santaolalla**, who composed the music for both the video game and TV versions of *The Last of Us*.

"It's been really validating to see how this music is affecting people in the concert halls just as much as it's affecting them when they're sitting at home and they're playing in front of their console," Hammel expressed. "We have a major donor at KDFC in San Francisco who's in her 70s. She has just fallen in love with Arcade. She listens to it nonstop and she's never picked up a video game in her life."

"The big thing I want everyone to take away from this is that there are no borders here: Good music is good music. And for me, if a piece of music makes me feel something, if it tells me a story, then I'm glad I've heard it," Hammel **told The New York Times**.

"I really want to dispel that idea for our older crowd that game music is dumb. I think they think that it's written by composers who are less than, composers who were not educated — that it's dumb, simple, bleep-bloop music," she added. "I've met and talked to so many of these incredible artists that create this music. And they are just as interested and invested as any modern classical composer."



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