



## THE ART OF VIDEO GAMES: FROM PAC-MAN TO MASS EFFECT

by Chris Melissinos and Patrick O'Rourke  
Introduction by Mike Mika

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More than 100 illustrations

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VIDEO GAMES

**CHRIS MELISSINOS**, former Chief Gaming Officer and Chief Evangelist for Sun Microsystems & founder of Past Pixels, is the curator for The Art of Video Games exhibition, which runs from March 16 to September 30, 2012 at the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, DC.

Best known for his role in web-based game technology development, virtual world application, and lectures on the future of games and computer technology in society and education, he is a frequent speaker at game and technology conferences such as the Game Developers Conference, E3, Consumer Electronics Show, Penny Arcade Expo, and JavaOne, and lectures at universities and industry events across the globe.

**PATRICK O'ROURKE** is a freelance graphic designer, photographer, gamer and video editor.

**MIKE MIKA** is Chief Creative Officer for Other Ocean Interactive and Creative Director at Making Fun, LLC. He has been developing games for nearly twenty years, running the gamut from engineer and designer to animator and writer. Mika helped launch mobile game developer ngmoco:) with some of the industry's top talent, and is a prominent figure in the preservation of video game history.

For more info go to:

[www.welcomebooks.com/artofvideogames](http://www.welcomebooks.com/artofvideogames)

**For Smithsonian American Art Museum exhibition + book, over 3.7 million votes selected 80 games.**

# The Art of Video Games: From Pac-Man to Mass Effect

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In the **forty years** since the first Magnavox Odyssey pixel winked on in 1972, the home video game industry has undergone a mind-blowing evolution. Fueled by unprecedented advances in technology, boundless imaginations, and an insatiable addiction to fantastic new worlds of play, the video game has gone supernova, rocketing two generations of fans into an ever-expanding universe where art, culture, reality, and emotion collide.

As a testament to the cultural impact of the game industry's mega morph, the **Smithsonian American Art Museum**, with curator and author **Chris Melissinos**, conceived the forthcoming exhibition, *The Art of Video Games*, which will run from March 16 to September 30, 2012.\* New York publisher **Welcome Books** will release the companion book this **March**.

Melissinos presents video games as not just mere play, but richly textured emotional and social experiences that have crossed the boundary into culture and art.

Along with a team of game developers, designers, and journalists, Melissinos chose a pool of **240 games** across five different eras to represent the diversity of the game world. Criteria included visual effects, creative use of technologies, and how world events and popular culture manifested in the games. The museum then invited the public to go online to help choose the games. More than **3.7 million votes** (from 175 countries) later, the **eighty winners** featured in *The Art of Video Games* exhibition and book were selected.

From the *Space Invaders* of the seventies to sophisticated contemporary epics *BioShock* and *Uncharted 2*, Melissinos examines each of the winning games, providing a behind-the-scenes look at their development and innovation, and commentary on the relevance of each in the history of video games.

Over 100 composite images, created by **Patrick O'Rourke**, and drawn directly from the games themselves, illustrate the evolution of video games as an artistic medium, both technologically and creatively.

Additionally, *The Art of Video Games* includes fascinating interviews with influential artists and designers—from pioneers such as **Nolan Bushnell** to contemporary innovators including **Warren Spector**, **Tim Schafer** and **Robin Hunicke**. **Mike Mika**, noted game preservationist and prolific developer, has written the introduction.



\* After Washington D.C., the exhibition travels to several cities across the United States, including Boca Raton (Museum of Art), Seattle (EMP Museum), Yonkers, NY (Hudson River Museum) and Flint, MI (Flint Institute of Arts). For the latest confirmed dates and venues, please visit the *The Art of Video Games* exhibition page at <http://americanart.si.edu/taovg>