

NieR:Automata™

Companion Document to

AMUSEMENT PARK FOR STRING QUARTET

from NieR: Automata

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for the Videri String Quartet "Quarentets" arrangement competition

Nier & Drakengard, Viruses & Pandemics

Nier: Automata is the sequel to 2010's Nier. Both games are spin-offs of the Drakengard series, famous for offering multiple, very different possible endings to each of its stories. Nier's story unfolds in the same universe, but on a timeline dictated by a specific thread across the possible endings in the Drakengard games.



Nier: Automata's story happens at the end of one such thread of events, starting with one of the possible endings for Drakengard; the summoning and subsequent defeat of a demon in modern day Tokyo which triggers the spread of an uncontrollable pandemic disease called the "White Chlorination Syndrome".

A last resort plan to survive the extinction event, "Project Gestalt", is put in place; humans transfer their souls ("Gestalts") out of their infected bodies into artificial clones ("Replicants"). With this plan in place, overseen by AIs, they hope to buy enough time for AIs and the surviving humans to develop a cure and eventually re-insert the extracted human souls back inside their original bodies.

Hundreds of years pass, and the world is populated entirely by Replicants.

This is the context in which the events of Nier (the first game) take place. Gestalts are found to be susceptible to corruption, turning into "Shades", and Replicants become self-aware. The events spiral into a conflict that leaves Project Gestalt in shambles, sealing humanity's fate for good.

Nier: Automata's story takes place another couple of centuries later. In between the events of Nier and the beginning of Nier: Automata, a machine invasion from another world forces the Replicants to move to the Moon, leaving Earth inhabited only by AIs, androids and other vestiges of humanity's fight against the original pandemic. In order to fight the invader, a new generation of androids, the "YoRHa" forces, are created, of which the game's protagonists ("2B" and "9S" – later "A2") are part of. Over the course of the game's story, androids (new and old) are infected by a virus as they battle the invading forces – and thus another cycle of infection begins.

Thus, Nier: Automata takes place on Earth, long-since wiped of human life by a demonic plague – and its story is the fight of their android heirs against another threat of extinction at the hands of a virus.

The Amusement Park



The submitted piece is an arrangement of a music track from the NieR: Automata score titled, quite plainly, “[Amusement Park](#)”. It was an interesting pick for a track to arrange under the “Quarentets” theme for many reasons;

Musically, quite simply, there is a lot of material to play with in the form of motifs and melodies to manipulate and develop. It’s also a fan favorite from the score, so it felt like a great pick.

Thematically, in the context of NieR’s post-pandemic world, the Amusement Park and what it represents is interesting to reflect on, on many levels – it’s a place which used to be filled with joy, light, excitement and happiness, now robbed of its life, but it still retains a certain inherent beauty and sense of wonder. It certainly is presented as such in the game – visible signs of abandonment, but still bright with colorful lights and loud with festive sounds. Also, as the machines have taken residence and made it their own, one could say it still has purpose even without its original creators’ presence.

Thinking back to the real world and the current events in relation to the Amusement Park in the context of NieR’s post-apocalypse, it invites reflection on what our presence in this world means, where our existence sit in the grand scheme of things and what happens when we are removed from the world. It makes you ponder about what begins and ends with human life, but also what carries on, what traces we leave and what simply “is”, regardless of our presence or absence. The Amusement Park is essentially a bite-sized version of a world stripped of humans, an observation of what is gone and what remains “after”.

Whew. To end on a lighter note, the Amusement Park is a gateway to the Machine Village, where 2B and 9S meet a community of peaceful machines trying to live in community, isolated from the corrupted Machine Network – essentially living in quarantine!

Final Note

I just wanted to say thanks for the opportunity, and I hope you enjoy the music! I certainly enjoyed making this arrangement and look forward to listening to a wonderful album full of great music, regardless of if this piece ends up on it or not!

Cheers and stay safe and healthy!

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