

Jazz Jackrabbit new addition to the Sound and Vision archive

Hilversum – You are a fluorescent green rabbit, entangled in epic battles with tortoises amidst colorful and dreamy landscapes. While this may sound like a psychedelic high, it's a reality in Jazz Jackrabbit; a video game by Epic Games (back then: Epic MegaGames). The game is now added to Sound and Vision's game collection and consequently preserved for future generations. Ineke Middag, Unitmanager Museum at Sound and Vision: "Producer Arjan Brussee was and is a trendsetting Dutch game developer. The iconic and high-quality game Jazz Jackrabbit, of which Brussee was one of the main producers, cannot remain absent in a collection of Dutch video games."

Sound and Vision, the national audiovisual archive of the Netherlands, has been acquiring video games since February 2016 – as well as other forms of 'contemporary' media. Media consumption in the Netherlands has long surpassed the trend of solely tuning in to the traditional channels of radio and television. Jazz Jackrabbit is added to the newborn collection of games due to the involvement of Dutch programmer and game developer Arjan Brussee, who together with Cliff Bleszinski developed the game. Jazz Jackrabbit was commended as an innovative and popular game at the time of release in 1994. It was the first PC game that featured 'side scrolling'; a mechanic solely used in console games until then. The first episode 'Turtle Terror' was distributed freely as Shareware - a strategy that aided the game's reach and success – while five additional levels could be purchased to expand the original game. The magazine PC Format praised Jazz Jackrabbit's high-quality graphics and gameplay, dubbing it "Arcade Game of the Year" in 1995.

Arjan Brussee: "Jazz Jackrabbit was the start of my career, and therefore also the early onset of what would later be Guerilla Games. It's great to see Sound and Vision taking up this game in her archive. Computer games are unfortunately rather fragile, and older games often dissolve due to the rapid evolvement of technology in a broad sense. Nowadays, video games assume an important role in the daily interests of kids and adults. By preserving them we can recognize the cultural impact the game had back then. I hope that many games will be added to the collection!"

Arjan Brussee kicked off his career in the so-called demoscene. This competitive group of programmers, active in the '80s and early '90s, created impressive audiovisual presentations - despite the limited computational power of that time. Brussee was one of the founders of Guerilla Games (est. 2000) and worked on the successful Killzone franchise which made Guerilla Games the largest Dutch game developer. He is now reunited with Cliff Bleszinski in Boss Key Productions.

Sound and Vision's new addition – Jazz Jackrabbit – is currently playable during the Let's Play exhibition, which runs from the 12th until the 20th of November. Play through several other Dutch games that belong to the collection, such as the popular race game A2 Racer II by Davilex. A variety of consoles and arcade machines from partner 'Nederlands Instituut voor Games en Computers' in Zwolle are also available to play on. And, don't forget to create and stream your very own Let's Play video of a Dutch retro game to YouTube!