

War Pigs

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vispo.com/warpigs



Illustration 1: War Pigs in Game Mode. Play is on loop 56 (of 88). Total score so far is 49.

War Pigs, available for Windows or Mac desktop computers at vispo.com/warpigs, is an interactive music game, an odd musical instrument, and a different way of listening to the great 1970 anti-war anthem War Pigs by the heavy metal band Black Sabbath. I've partitioned the entire song into 88 disjoint loops and created an original game that you play as you progress through listening to the loops. The loops vary in length; they're 5-8 seconds long.

Part of the pleasure of the game is in this new and different way of listening to a song. You listen to it in 5-8 second loops. It's like deranged vinyl. It's like a vinyl record that sounds good when it skips—and there are 88 great scratches in it. It plays a great loop until you give it a nudge. Then it plays another great loop. And it makes a game of how you nudge it. And keeps score. And shares your scores with the world, if you want.

Additionally, there's Play Mode, separate from the game experience, in which you riff on the loops of War Pigs. You play the loops like an odd musical instrument where you control the length of the loops, among other things. And you can record your playings. And share them, if you want, with other people who play War Pigs.

The art of the War Pigs audio waveform was done by my friend Regina Célia Pinto from Rio, Brazil. We see infamous war pigs from history, as well as various demons and devils. We finished War Pigs in 2007, so it doesn't contain the more recent porcine politicians such as Donald Porky Trump, Kim Jong Oink and Vlad (Piggy) Putin.

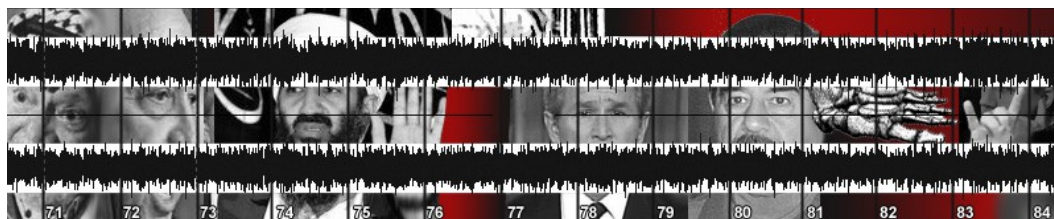


Illustration 2: Regina Célia Pinto did the art in War Pigs; here we see loops 71-84

Game Mode

When you first enter War Pigs, you're in *Game Mode*. You click the waveform of the song as close to the *end* of each loop as you can manage, so the transition from that loop to the next loop sounds smooth, seamless. You can listen to the loop as many times as you like, before you click, without penalty. The closer your click is at the *end* of each loop, the better your score; the idea is to get the *lowest* score possible—which is 0. The game is over when you reach the end of the song. You can upload your score to the Internet if you like.

To be good at the game, you need to listen to the loop a couple of times to hear where it ends, so your click is informed by both looking at where play is and hearing where play is. If you click just based on looking at where play is, you probably won't do as well.

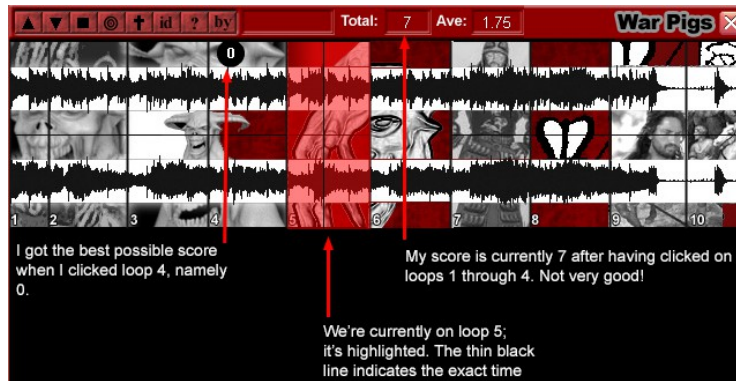


Illustration 3: War Pigs in Game Mode.

Play Mode

There's also a *Play Mode*, which is non-competitive. In *play mode*, you play the loops like an instrument, composing a new song out of the loops or parts thereof. You can save your song and/or upload it to the Internet. You navigate between play mode and game mode by clicking the two buttons at top left with triangle symbols in them.

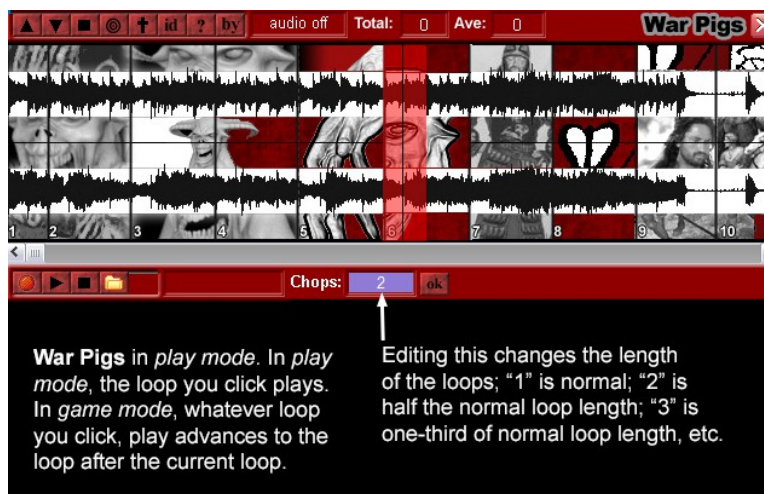


Illustration 4: War Pigs in Play Mode. The size of the loops is half of the normal size.

As with just about all of the multimedia I made with Director, War Pigs was originally distributed on the Internet for free as a Shockwave piece at vispo.com/vismu/warpigs/warpigs8.htm, where it's still available as a Shockwave piece—but more or less unrunnable and unviewable because, these days, few browsers run the Shockwave plugin, so I've created a desktop app of War Pigs for Windows and Mac. It's available at vispo.com/warpigs. There's also a video tutorial about War Pigs at youtu.be/nCo4d5fURoo

Get War Pigs

War Pigs is available for Windows and Mac desktop computers. The Windows version is a 32-bit executable that runs on all versions of Windows from Windows 3.11 to the present. The Mac version is also a 32-bit executable that runs on all versions of the Mac OS from macOS 10.7 (Lion) to the present.

It's getting so that the operating system on your own computer will barely let you run a program downloaded from the internet that doesn't go through the iTunes store or the Windows store or whatever. Genuine security threat or a grab to control the app space?

To run War Pigs in Windows, you will probably have to right-click the War Pigs executable file WarPigs2.exe and select “Run as Administrator”. In other words, you have to give the program permission to run on your machine (other than simply by double-clicking it, which should be all you need to do).

You may have to give WarPigs2.app permission to run on the Mac, also.