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Photo source Resources Disclosure: This post may contain affiliate links. That means if you buy something we get a small commission at no extra cost to you(learn more) The gaming industry eclipses $100 billion in annual revenue each year. And that number keeps on climbing. This is the perfect time to dive into the video game industry whether as a programmer, concept artist, game designer or story writer. Even if you don’t want to work in the industry yourself, it can still be fun to learn how it all works behind the scenes. And that’s why I curated this huge list of 20+ awesome gaming documentaries ranging from the most niche indie games to massive studios like Naughty Dog. There’s something in this list for everyone and these vids will leave you longing for some screen time with your favorite console. 1. Double Fine Adventure Watch Now The Double Fine Adventure Kickstarter was the impetus of this entire documentary. Filmed over the course of 3 years, this doc captures tons of behind-the-scenes footage from the design, development, and production of Broken Age. It can be tough finding this documentary since it has the same name as the parent company. But if you search for the Doublefine documentary it’s out there. You can watch this in 1080p streaming online or as HD Blu-ray disks you can order from the online shop. It follows the creation of one of the most infamous projects in the 2010’s led by industry legend Tim Schafer. You get to peek into the entire game development process with interviews from cast and crew members. Easily one of the lesser-known documentaries with a lot to offer aspiring game designers. Just note the Blu-ray set includes extra scenes, commentary, and deleted footage that couldn’t make it into the original documentary. So if you want the unedited director’s cut I do recommend the hard disc version. Watch Now The Indie Game documentary is by far one of the best you could watch on game development. It’s well known in the gaming industry as one of the most detailed and popular documentaries capturing the truths behind indie game development. This got a prominent feature in The New York Times along with being honored as a Sundance award winner. While this feels like a “general” indie gaming documentary it does have a focus on the team behind Super Meat Boy and their 2-year process of developing a killer title from scratch. So you get tons of footage of the team that really shows just how much work goes into the creative process. Developing a game is tough even for larger studios like Nintendo or Square-Enix. But going at it with a small team and a limited budget can be even tougher. With video games it’s always the idea and the creativity that wins in the end. I think this documentary is living proof of that. You can grab a physical copy of the doc from their online shop or watch it streaming online from any of the links on the homepage. Watch Now The Naughty Dog game studio first came onto the scene in the mid-80s and struggled for a while to find their niche. But things paid off with their 1996 release of Crash Bandicoot. Ever since then Naughty Dog has been a strong contender in the gaming space and they just recently celebrated thirty years in operation. Sony was nice enough to produce this incredible documentary focused on the team at Naughty Dog. This covers a full exploration of the company’s history dating back to 1984 and their current progress in the modern gaming era. It’s a 50 minute documentary with interviews from the whole team including founders Andy Gavin and Jason Rubin. Best of all this is totally free to watch on YouTube. Doesn’t get much better than that! Watch Now In the 1980s Atari was a force to be reckoned with. Now it’s basically a monolithic company that no child has ever heard of. Atari: Game Over is a documentary on Netflix that looks into the overshadowed history of Atari. This is meant to shed light on their company’s growth and rapid advancement into the gaming market, along with their decline and market loss to competitors like Nintendo. It totals just over 70 minutes long and was first released in 2014 so it’s still a recent documentary by any standards. Director Zak Penn does a great job keeping your attention on the screen and taking you through the timeline of Atari’s rise and fall in the gaming industry. Watch Now The creator of Minecraft Markus Persson accumulated a net worth well over a billion dollars. This was all earned on the back of his incredible game Minecraft. What is it about this game that made it so popular? And how did Markus develop this game into the hit we see today? Minecraft: The Story of Mojang follows the development of Markus’ game studio Mojang so we can all see how it operates. This is truly a story of hard work and developing a brilliant idea at just the right time. The documentary shows a lot of hidden scenes from Markus’ life and footage never before released to the public. It’ll give you a newfound appreciation for Minecraft and the crew behind the game. If you’re already a fan of Minecraft then I don’t have to sell you on anything. But if you’re an indie game designer, developer, artist, anything… this doc is still worth a watch just to see how someone else made their dream a reality. Watch Now I can’t say this is a game documentary that’ll leave you inspired, although it really depends what you get out of it. Thank You For Playing is the touching story of a game programmer Ryan Green who built a video game surrounding an emotionally tumultuous journey in his life: the realization that his(and his wife’s) young son Joel had cancer. They created a game over the course of two years called That Dragon, Cancer and this documentary chronicles the entire idea from late nights coding to heart-wrenching doctor’s appointments. It truly is an intimate film with so much to cover. I could never do it justice in a few short paragraphs. But you can check out the online trailer and see what you think. There’s plenty of ways to watch this online too from iTunes to Amazon and Vimeo, all of which you can find on this page. Watch Now Noclip is a group of filmmakers who create video game documentaries crowdfunded by the international gaming community. They have a large YouTube channel if you wanna check it out with tons of free videos to look through. But one I really love and highly recommend is the Final Fantasy Documentary spanning 3 parts(about 120 minutes total). This includes real interviews with Japanese game designers, concept artists, and programmers who share their experience working on the Final Fantasy series. Noclip does an amazing job on all of their documentaries and this one is no exception. It’s a must-watch video series for any Final Fantasy lover or JRPG fan who enjoys Square-Enix titles. And if you like this be sure to bookmark the Noclip YouTube channel to revisit later. Watch Now While this isn’t technically a documentary movie, it is a very detailed documentary TV series that I highly recommend watching if you can. G4TV produced Icons from 2002-2007 with a whopping 88 total episodes spanning five seasons. Each episode focuses on a different game studio, game series, or aspect of game development like character design or sound FX. There’s an episode on the Xbox, the Gameboy, the Super Mario series and Prince of Persia and Final Fantasy… pretty much every massive gaming franchise to date. These episodes feature incredible behind-the-scenes interviews hosted by the G4 team. This is rare footage you will not find anywhere else in the whole world. Only trouble is G4 shut down in 2014 and they’ve never released any of their original programming on DVD. Luckily some of it has survived and can be found on YouTube if you search around long enough. This is one series that’ll keep you entertained for weeks and there’s so much you can learn across all areas of game design & development. Watch Now The Lost Arcade takes a look into arcade culture in New York City. This follows a few groups of die-hard gamers that never let the arcades leave. Most gaming has since turned into personal gaming in the home, but there’s a culture around arcades that never really died out. And this documentary captures that culture brilliantly with interviews and scenes of the camaraderie behind this pop culture phenomenon. There is a free trailer on Vimeo if you wanna check it out and you can even buy the full version right from Vimeo too. Watch Now GameLoading: Rise of the Indies is a fantastic documentary focusing on the massive influx of indie game studios in recent years. We’ve never lived in a time where game development could be accomplished by almost anyone. It’s much cheaper to develop a game than it is to create a movie or TV show, at least if you compare high-quality indie games to modern AAA titles. In this 90-minute documentary you’ll hear from countless indie devs as they share their experiences working on their projects and pushing through deadlines to get their games released. It’s a tough choice as a career and even tougher as a hobby. But if you’ve ever needed some inspiration to forge ahead with your indie project then this documentary is the place to start. Watch Now World of Warcraft celebrated its 10 year anniversary in November of 2014. In commemoration of this game’s massive success the company released this beautiful documentary for free on YouTube. It’s called World of Warcraft: Looking for Group and it paints an elegant picture of the game’s rapid rise in popularity. MMOs quickly took the Internet by storm and they’ve never really slowed down. But WoW is perhaps the largest MMO with the most history and this documentary proves it. You’ll find interviews with some of the game’s developers and get a sneak peek into the many moving parts of Blizzard Entertainment. And you can’t beat that $0 price tag. Watch Now I’ve had real trouble finding a copy of this 2014 documentary anywhere. But it’s one of the most unique and detailed movies offering a look into video games as a career. The Art of the Game spans 60 minutes and follows the lives of some students from a San Francisco university as they attempt to land jobs in the gaming industry. You can find plenty of press coverage on the movie along with a free trailer. But you’ll have to do some searching in Google to find the full version. I really think it’s worth the effort because this documentary shows how much effort, talent, and personality is required to land a job in gaming. But in the end it’s worth it if you can wake up and love every minute of what you do for a living. Watch Now The Last of Us is a video game series developed by Naughty Dog and released in mid-2013. Given the team’s love of filming and sharing trade secrets they created this behind-the-scenes documentary showcasing the game’s development process. Again this is an official release by Sony under their PlayStation YouTube channel. The documentary is available for free and can be viewed anywhere in the world. Over this 90-minute documentary you’ll realize just how much work goes into creating a kick-ass video game. It’s not all play time with your team and that goes double for a huge studio like Naughty Dog. Since you can watch this whole thing for free online I’d absolutely put this near the top of your “must watch” list. Watch Now God of War: Unearthing the Legend is a feature length documentary first released in 2010 as a journey behind the scenes in this game’s creation. Experts in game design and storytelling share their thoughts about Kratos and the mythology of the game. But you’ll also find plenty of interviews with developers who talk about the complexities of the gameplay. Unfortunately this is a tough documentary to find. It used to be available on the PlayStation store but has since been removed. You can try searching around to find it streaming on YouTube or Vimeo, but for the most part this doc will be a tough one to locate. Watch Now The “Fighting Game Community” is the world of professional gaming focused on multiplayer battle games. And this documentary takes you inside this community with a deeper look at the gamers who love the competition. It may not be super interesting to game developers or artists since there’s not a lot of backend game dev content. But it should grab your attention if you’re into competitive gaming or just love to study the culture of video gaming as a whole. Watch Now Filmed across five different cities over half a year, Super Game Jam is the coolest new indie game dev documentary in this list. It does what many other documentaries have tried to do: peer into the minds of game designers, developers, artists, and writers to figure out how they make indie games that capture a fan base. However this doc aims to pair two indie developers together and have them compete to create a new game in 48 hours. Yes, just two days! This is a radical idea and not something you’ll see anywhere else. But it’s a clear representation of the many challenges indie devs face in the growing game industry. Learn More For more of a general look at the video game industry check out Video Game Invasion: The History of a Global Obsession. This documentary spans a full 90 minutes and was first released in 2004 as a look into the wildly advancing field of game design. Yet here we are, almost two decades later and gaming is still growing faster than ever. It’s one reason I still recommend this documentary: the contents may seem dated but it’s crucial to know where you come from. If you’re just getting into game design or indie game development I highly recommend scouring the web for a copy of this documentary online. I’m not sure who originally produced the doc or if it was ever released on DVD. But try doing a search in Google videos to find a trailer or a full stream. Watch Now From Bedrooms To Billions: The PlayStation Revolution is a PlayStation documentary originally funded as a small Kickstarter project. This was created under the umbrella of a documentary team that’s produced two other great video game films. To date this PlayStation doc is still in development but very close to release. By the time you read this it may already be out! Yet I had to include this here because I just have not found any great PlayStation documentaries that focus on the rise of the console itself. This is bound to be an epic watch and certainly worthwhile for video game fans. Watch Now All Your History Are Belong To Us peeks into the development process of the world’s most popular video game titles. This series has a similar vibe to the G4 Icons TV show, except these episodes can run a bit longer and have a different directorial style. You’ll find episodes on superhero games, EA Sports games, Call of Duty, DoTA, Capcom, Blizzard, and so many other big names in the gaming space. This series really lets you see how larger studios and larger teams develop games from initial idea to final release. There’s a lot you can learn from this videos but it’s easy to get lost in the hundreds of hours of footage. Watch Now The Discovery Channel created a five-part series on the video game industry following its history from the very first computer game in 1958 up to modern Internet gaming. It’s called Rise of the Video Game and is probably one of the more unique series in this whole list. Again it’s meant to be a historical count of gaming through the decades so it covers a lot of pop culture and gaming trends, not just development. Still you can learn a lot about game development through history and by studying the changing trends adopted by larger studios. It was generally given good reviews and it’s one of the better documentaries that I recommend for studying gaming history. Only trouble is, like many docs here, you may struggle finding a copy to watch. But if you’re willing to spend some time in Google you can probably find all five episodes on Discovery’s website or their YouTube channel. The best video game documentaries highlight the industry’s ability to engage, even when you have no controller in hand. You don’t always have to be sitting down with a video game to enjoy the medium. It’s a highly versatile art form that’s effectively entertaining even if you’re just learning about its history or following the long and sordid development of your favorite games. The next time you’re in the mood for a movie, forego the usual suspects and consider throwing on one of the following documentaries. At the very least, you can still feel like you’re part of the community without actually dealing with said community. The Best Video Game Documentaries 20. Video Game Invasion: The History of a Global Obsession Video Game Invasion Director: David Carr & David Comtois Who better to host an exposé into the video game industry than, erm, Tony Hawk? Actually, considering how popular his gaming series is, it’s not a terrible choice. Especially since Hawk’s love for gaming is evident as he takes viewers on a ride through the prolific industry. If you’re an avid fan of video games, no matter how old they are, you’re going to get a kick out of Video Game Invasion. Hawk starts back in the 1970s with Pong and works his way through the mania that swept the nation. Ever wonder where your favorite games of today stemmed from? Video Game Invasion helps bridge the gap between today’s technical marvels and the pixelated favorites of yesteryear. Doom and other influential series take the spotlight as we learn why we’ve grown obsessed with this digital medium. 19. Rise of the Video Game Director: N/A Think the gaming industry has always been the multi-billionaire dollar trade it is today? Through this five-part documentary from The Discovery Channel, we explore exactly how we got to where we are, starting with the earliest incarnations of the digital form of entertainment. Each episode takes us through a different generation of gaming, from the earliest release in 1958 to the 21st-century Internet-based wonders we know and love. While there are some factual issues in Rise of the Video Game, the basic concept is a fun and insightful glimpse into the history of gaming featuring some notable titles. 18. From Bedrooms to Billions: The PlayStation Revolution From Bedrooms to Billions The PlayStation Revolution Director: Anthony Caulfield & Nicole Caulfield It’s hard to deny the influence that the PlayStation brand has had on the gaming industry. From Bedrooms to Billions aims to explore the history of Sony PlayStation and lay out the blueprint for the successful gaming console. It all started with a demo of a tyrannosaurus and wound up exploding into franchises like Uncharted, Horizon, and God of War, but how exactly did PlayStation rise to its level of success? Find out in From Bedrooms to Billions: The PlayStation Revolution. Even if you’re not a Sony fan, this 90-minute documentary is a fascinating look back at a company that helped pioneer modern gaming. 17. Nintendo Quest: The Most Unofficial and Unauthorized Nintendo Documentary Ever! Nintendo Quest Director: Rob McCallum If the name is an indication of anything, this is going to be one wild ride. When Jay Bartlett and Rob McCallum make a friendly challenge, it allows viewers to take a trip down memory lane. Bartlett is on a quest to own every North American release for the NES in 30 days, and Nintendo Quest follows him on this journey across the United States. What starts as a friendly challenge blossoms into a once-in-a-lifetime experience as Bartlett and McCallum happen upon die-hard collectors with rare gems. If you love Nintendo, this is a must-watch. Though you may need to coach yourself not to seek out some of the treasures found during Bartlett and McCallum’s adventure. 16. The Art of the Game The Art of the Game Director: Matthew Davis Walker How has the video game industry evolved since its earliest incarnations? It’s a question explored in depth in The Art of the Game. The hour-long documentary follows several students of the Academy of Art University in San Francisco as they vie for the same job in the gaming industry. Their interwoven stories take us through the annals of video game history, specifically how it has become a viable artform post-millennium. The Art of the Game is a delightful look into the culture of gaming and how it really works as an artistic medium. One of the best video game documentaries for anyone who wants to know how hard it gets. 15. The Lost Arcade Director: Kurt Vincent We may spend our time plopped in front of consoles and high-end gaming PCs, playing the latest and greatest AAA titles. However, so few of us would pass up on the opportunity to spend a day in an arcade, manipulating the grease-covered controls of classic cabinets. The Lost Arcade puts the spotlight on these venues, specifically the Chinatown Fair in New York City. Unless you’re from the region or ingrained in the fighting genre community that’s practically made the arcade its second home, you may know nothing of this iconic spot. Regardless, if you’ve ever stepped foot inside an arcade and found yourself delighted by the digital pings and glimmering lights, The Lost Arcade is well-worth a watch. 14. Ecstasy of Order: The Tetris Masters Director: Adam Cornelius Tetris has its own fascinating history, but Ecstasy of Order: The Tetris Masters looks beyond the development of the puzzler and focuses on the greatest players as they prep for the Classic Tetris World Championship. Even if you’re not heavily invested in Tetris, Ecstasy of Order proves to be an interesting film. Though it predates the rise in modern eSports events, the documentary spotlights “professional” players who put their talents and hard work in Tetris. The Tetris Masters really showcases the devotion that players have to their favorite games, even if it’s something as outwardly simple as Tetris. 13. GameLoading: Rise of the Indies Director(s): Lester Francois / Anna Brady Before 2001, indie gaming was a small blip on the radar. It has since grown into a massive industry that fills Steam libraries and makes up a large portion of digital downloads. It’s this booming industry that serves as the focus of GameLoading: Rise of the Indies. The feature documentary dives into the world of indie gaming and the developers behind it, exploring the games and the inspirations for them. See how independent game developers have altered the playing field and, through hard work and focused ambitions, have turned themselves into viable competition for big-budget publishers. Viewers will traverse the indie gaming timeline through the eyes of Davey Wreden (The Stanley Parable), Christine Love (Analogue: A Hate Story), Mike Bithell (Thomas Was Alone), and many more. 12. Grounded: The Making of The Last of Us Director(s): Jason Bertrand/Matt Chandronait/Jeffrey Keith Negus/Ryan O’Donnell/Cesar Quintero What goes into making one of the most notable and critically acclaimed games of a decade? It’s a question that the team at Naughty Dog answers in Grounded: The Making of The Last of Us. Follow the complex development of Naughty Dog’s dark and moody adventure, which explores mature themes and difficult relationships in the setting of a post-apocalyptic world. See how the talented team dealt with the involved and dogged development of The Last of Us. Creative director Neil Druckmann and voice artists Troy Baker and Ashley Johnson share their stories in this revealing “making of” documentary. Grounded touches on the highs and lows of the development process and helps players better appreciate the experiences unfolding in front of them. See also: the making of the game’s Left Behind DLC. 11. Gameplay: The Story of the Videogame Revolution Director: Richard Goldgewicht Video games aren’t anything new. We’ve been playing them for decades and enjoying the escape that they provide. Gameplay: The Story of the Videogame Revolution takes us on a trip through time to follow the industry we’ve fallen in love with, from its earliest incarnations to the booming moneymaker that it is today. Goldgewicht features well-known and pivotal titles, using them to showcase how the gaming industry has grown and evolved over time. For 90 minutes, viewers will embark on an educational trek in one of the best video documentaries that reminds us of the games we used to play and their role in shaping the current games we enjoy. NEXT PAGE Some of the coverage you find on Cultured Vultures contains affiliate links, which provide us with small commissions based on purchases made from visiting our site. Despite being fairly young compared to the likes of film and TV, gaming is rich with history and fascinating details. At the same time, there's an emotional core and romanticism surrounding many games and their creators, who work tirelessly to see their projects to completion. These aspects naturally lend themselves to some captivating documentaries—and some filmmakers have taken advantage of this, especially of late. Given its dynamic culture and history, as well as the slew of games on the market, there's no shortage of great topics to pick when it comes to gaming. These are some of the most entertaining and intriguing. Updated January 2, 2023, by Stephen LaGioia: As gaming continues to expand as a medium and grow in popularity, so too has the documentary film scene surrounding it. With everything from retro and arcade gaming to esports, indies, and hardware, there is a seemingly endless well of intriguing content to draw from on this front. And with so many docs (especially more recent releases) dealing with gaming, this list of the best video game documentaries has been refreshed and revisited. Education, as well as entertainment factor, were considered in these picks of the best gaming documentaries. 12 Nintendo Quest Aside from being charming, retro games can make for rewarding, lucrative collectibles. That's the notion this road film from Rob McCallum looks to tap into with 2015's Nintendo Quest — and follow-up miniseries on Amazon Prime Video. The documentary revolves around retro game collector Jay Bartlett as well as his friends and film crew, as he embarks on a trek through Canada and the central US to gather all 678 officially licensed NES games. There are a few catches. Jay must pull off this feat in just 30 days, and can't buy online; exclusively getting the games through retail stores, friends, and other collectors. The result is a memorable road trip that's part vacation and part intense scavenger hunt. Intermixed are various bits of history and interviews touching on the culture of playing, collecting, and competing in games. This one is fairly laid back and straightforward, but a fun watch all the same. Nintendo Quest can be found free (with ads) on the Roku, Tubi, Plex, and Filmzie apps, and can also be rented or bought on Amazon Prime Video and Apple TV. While this documentary errs on the drier side, it has the benefit of being available to be watched from the convenience of YouTube, so there is that. But really, Video Game Invasion from 2004 does do a fine job of getting into the early history of gaming in depth. Hosted by Tony Hawk (because why not?), the documentary leans heavily on fun retro footage as well as interviews from various industry heads and fans, including Atari founder Nolan Bushnell. Those looking for a straight-up educational video of the 70s, 80s, and early 90s gaming in particular should enjoy this one. Given the more personal level they take on, as well as the heated competition involved—esports and documentaries would seem to mesh well. This 2015 film by Patrick Creadon reinforces this notion, featuring a deep dive into the blossoming esports industry and honing in on pro gamers. The movie highlights a group of passionate, dedicated League of Legends players competing in the ESL's 2014 Intel Extreme Masters World Championship. The film's combination of intriguing details, high-stakes competition, and a more personal focus makes All Work All Play a gripping watch for most of its two-and-a-half-hour runtime. Unfortunately, this title isn't available for streaming. Taking a more characteristic angle, 2015's The Lost Arcade serves as a love letter to the Chinatown Fair arcade in New York. Closed in 2011, the arcade was soon reopened, but it would be transformed somewhat under new management. Director Kurt Vincent brings elements of nostalgia and personal connection with his anecdotes, focusing on the fighting game community and New York City at large (where the arcade resided). Known as the "last arcade", which served as a place to hang out and connect with a diverse, often underprivileged youth—the film carries a more personal and emotional weight. This film can be rented on Vudu, Apple TV, Google Play, and YouTube. Produced by FilmRise, this esports-centric documentary looks in-depth at the inner workings of the pro gaming scene. Specifically, the movie follows two professional players of one of the most favored esports titles, StarCraft 2, as they fight to make the World Championships at BlizzCon 2014. The film captivates by honing in on the sheer, raw talent (and rapid-fire keystrokes) of the players. At the same time, it entertains and draws in viewers emotionally, with a motivational, fist-pumping "rise to the top" premise akin to a sports movie. It's easy to get invested in this hour and 30-minute ride, which zips by faster than a Zerg swarm. This title is currently available for free (with ads) on Peacock, and can be rented on Apple TV. The multi-part miniseries High Score is a chronological history of the 80s and 90s gaming, narrated by the voice of Super Mario himself, Charles Martinet. The series is chock-full of interesting gaming facts, fun footage, as well as exclusive interviews that delve into gaming's early days, cultural influence, and inevitable rise. All six episodes more or less stick to a theme, genre, or cultural era, which includes Atari's rise, the Nintendo-Sega console wars, and early role-playing games. Martinet brings a fittingly lighthearted character to this feel-good, nostalgic romp—which both seasoned gamers and newcomers can get something out of. The deep, overarching gaming segments are occasionally broken up with more personal narratives, adding sentimentality and cultural relevance to the mix. High Score is a miniseries that's currently exclusive to Netflix subscribers. This 2022 documentary by Drew Roller goes into excellent detail documenting the creation of the esteemed GoldenEye. It covers Rare's history and some of its key developers, the conceptual and logistical process of GoldenEye's creation, behind-the-scenes looks, and its overall cultural impact. GoldenEra colorfully illustrates the workings of the hit FPS to outsiders, while serving as a love letter to its fans. It tosses in some interesting, lesser-known facts that may have escaped even some diehards—like the fact that GoldenEye was conceived as an on-rails game and a 2D platformer early on. Between the ample GoldenEye trivia, great production value, and warm and fuzzy nostalgia, GoldenEra is a gaming doc worth checking out, even for non-fans. The film can be viewed for free (with ads) on Roku, Vudu, Tubi, and Freevee, and rented or purchased on Amazon Prime Video, Apple TV (buy only), Vudu, Microsoft Store, and Google Play. The blocky open-world epic known as Minecraft fast became a gaming phenom following its alpha release in 2011. But behind this endlessly fun game of building, crafting, and enemy-slaying is a similarly gripping story of its grassroots conception and rise to fame. This Kickstarter-backed film has interviews with key designers from Minecraft studio Mojang, including Swedish game programmers Jens Bergensten and Markus Persson, commonly known as Notch. The documentary served as a draw for gaming historians and Minecraft fans on Xbox platformers, releasing on Xbox Live in 2012; a precursor to Microsoft's $2.5 billion purchase of Mojang. Given its unique development and unlikely ascent to superstardom, The Story of Mojang is a great tribute and an interesting watch. Despite being fairly long at 104 minutes, it's sort of a truncated history of a vast game and culture. Still, the film succeeds in stoking intrigue with its nostalgia and its raw, personal nature. The documentary can currently be rented or bought on Apple TV. This 2012 film by James Swirsky and Lisanne Pajot feels ahead of its time, as indie gaming has since become a rising force. The documentary nicely outlines the life of up-and-coming young devs and covers the then-young indie scene. It highlights a few pioneers of its renaissance; specifically the creators of Braid, Super Meat Boy, and Fez. Indie Game: The Movie takes more of a personal approach with a quasi-rags-to-riches arch. It covers the developers' uphill battle to see their projects to completion with few resources and small budgets. This display of constant progress while overcoming adversity connects on an emotional level, providing inspiration along with intrigue. Indie Game also entices from a creative standpoint, as creators including Phil Fish and Edmund McMillen discuss their artistic insight and the development process of their inventive games. The film can be bought or rented or bought on Apple TV, Amazon Prime Video, Google Play Movies, and YouTube. This 2014 film by director Zak Penn film is a celebration of all things Atari during its heyday. Despite being 66 minutes, Game Over gets into impressive detail regarding the ambitious studio in its youth, covering its rise and collapse in the 70s and 80s. The film also highlights a then-recent gaming "ground zero" excavation in the form of a New Mexico landfill. This is spliced with a history of the infamous E.T.; a forsaken relic and a legend unto itself. The hyped game was apparently overproduced to the point where excess carts were buried in the landfill. The legend was at least partly validated, as excavators unearthed over a thousand copies of this gaming artifact. This amusing folk take, coupled with the rich, groundbreaking history of Atari at large, rounds out a great film that's over all too soon. The movie can be found free (with ads) on Roku, Tubi, Pluto, and Plex rented or bought on Google Play Store, YouTube, Microsoft Store, or Vudu (buy only). In the world of video games, the stories behind the screens often hold just as much intrigue as gameplay itself. Gaming documentaries offer a deep dive into the culture, history, and evolution of the video game industry. From chronicling the lives of legendary developers to examining the impact of gaming on society, these films can be both entertaining and informative. In this article, we’ll explore the must-watch gaming documentaries that every enthusiast should add to their watchlist.Why Watch Gaming Documentaries?Gaming documentaries provide numerous benefits for both casual gamers and hardcore fans alike. Here are some reasons to tune in:Understanding History: Learn about the origins and development of your favorite games and franchises.Cultural Impact: Discover how video games shape and reflect societal trends.Inspiration: Gain insight from developers and industry insiders on their creative processes.Community Engagement: Connect with other gaming enthusiasts and broaden your perspective on the gaming culture.Top Must-Watch Gaming DocumentariesHere’s a list of essential gaming documentaries that every fan should consider watching:1. High Score (2020)This Netflix original series takes viewers on a nostalgic journey through the evolution of video gaming. Each episode highlights a pivotal moment in gaming history, from the rise of arcade games to the creation of iconic franchises like Super Mario and Street Fighter.2. The King of Kong: A Fistful of Quarters (2007)This compelling documentary follows two gamers competing for the world record in the classic arcade game Donkey Kong. It showcases the competitive gaming scene and offers a glimpse into the passion of arcade enthusiasts.3. Atari: Game Over (2014)This documentary delves into the fall of Atari, one of the most iconic names in gaming. It investigates the legend of the buried E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial cartridges and provides insight into the gaming industry’s evolution during the ’80s.4. Indie Game: The Movie (2012)Focusing on the struggles of independent game developers, this documentary follows the creation of iconic indie titles like Super Meat Boy and Fez. It emphasizes the emotional and financial challenges faced by developers trying to bring their visions to life.5. Gameplay: The Story of the Game (2016)This documentary takes an in-depth look at the impressive journeys of various game developers and their contributions to the industry, highlighting both successes and failures. It emphasizes the collaborative nature of game development.6. Power Up: The Story of the Game (2016)This film explores the cultural significance of gaming, highlighting how it has impacted generations. It features interviews with gamers, developers, and industry experts reflecting on gaming’s role in their lives and society at large.7. Video Games: The New Masters of the Universe (2016)This thought-provoking documentary looks at how video games have evolved into a dominant form of entertainment. It explores the commercialization of gaming and its relationships with technology and pop culture.Table - Quick Reference of Must-Watch Gaming DocumentariesTitleYear ReleasedPlatformFocusHigh Score2020NetflixHistory of GamingThe King of Kong2007VariousCompetitive GamingAtari: Game Over2014VariousAtari’s DeclineIndie Game: The Movie2012VariousIndie DevelopmentGameplay: The Story of the Game2016VariousGame DevelopmentPower Up2016VariousCultural ImpactVideo Games: The New Masters2016VariousIndustry InsightsCase Studies of Impactful Gaming DocumentariesMany of these documentaries have had a significant impact on public perception of gaming. For instance:The King of KongThis documentary not only revived interest in classic arcade gaming but also sparked debates about the validity of video game records and the intense rivalry that exists in the gaming community.Indie Game: The MovieThe film demonstrated the struggles and triumphs of indie developers, leading to increased support for indie games from gamers and publishers alike. It also highlights the emotional rollercoaster that comes with game development.First-Hand Experience: What You Can LearnWatching these documentaries can provide insights and lessons applicable to gaming enthusiasts and aspiring developers:Perseverance: Many developers faced failure before achieving success. Their stories can inspire gamers to pursue their passions relentlessly.Collaboration: The importance of teamwork in game development is prominently featured, showcasing how diverse skills can lead to creative breakthroughs.Community Engagement: Many documentaries highlight how communities rally around games, emphasizing the social aspect of gaming.ConclusionGaming documentaries serve as a treasure trove of information for anyone interested in the gaming world. From historical milestones to personal stories of struggle and success, these films provide fascinating insights into the industry’s culture and evolution. With this list of must-watch gaming documentaries, you can expand your knowledge of gaming history while enjoying captivating narratives. Grab some popcorn, sit back, and get ready to dive deep into the world of gaming!Related Documentaries in the world of video games can show a lot of the behind-the-scenes during the creation of a video game. You get to see the day-to-day life of developers, as well as the problems and what has to be overcome. Sometimes, it is about competitors or a glimpse into a culture around games. It isn’t always sunshine and rainbows, but the experiences depicted connect us through shared human experiences. Here are some of the best gaming documentaries and where to watch them. Image Credit: CBS All Access. Runtime: 90 Minutes Services: Paramount+ When you were younger, did you ever argue with a friend about what console was better? The war between Nintendo and Sega was real console war that changed gaming. Nintendo brought video games back after the industry crash, but Sega wanted a piece of that pie, and boy, did they take it. Sega of America started to make moves that had Nintendo threatening stores to pull their products, and one that got Sega pulled in front of Congress caused the creation of ratings being slapped on video games by the ERSB. Image Credit: YouTube/Core-A Gaming. Runtime: 12 Minutes Services: YouTube (Channel: Core-A Gaming) With only twelve minutes of runtime, Core-A Gaming shows you the tough culture of fighting games in Pakistan and the rise of one of the top Tekken competitors. It is rare to get such a deep look inside gaming in other cultures. Seeing what players in Pakistan must do to get their hands on the game or even a gaming console makes it seem like you are witnessing the impossible. Pakistan has become a place where other Tekken pros have started to train. Following the rise of Asrlan Ash and his country’s rise to prominence is so interesting that even if you aren’t into fighting games, it will get its hooks into you. Image Credit: Digital Eclipse. Runtime: Varies Services: All major consoles, Steam, and GoG Digital Eclipse has found its niche in making playable documentaries. You get video interviews, playable games, playable demos, and even the design notes of Jeff Minter. Jeff Minter is a legendary name that modern gamers might not recognize. Minter’s career spans decades, and The Jeff Minter Story shows that his passion and left-field ideas were so unique that they pushed him out of the mainstream gaming world. That never stopped him as he continued to make classics like Tempest, Gridrunner, Centipede, and many others. This in-depth playable documentary is a piece of gaming history no one should pass up. Jeff Minter is what every game creator should strive to be in the modern industry. Follow us on MSN for more of the content you love. Image Credit: BlinkWorks Media. Runtime: 103 Minutes Services: Amazon, Apple TV, and Steam Indie Game: The Movie follows four people who create indie games. As they develop their games, you see their personalities for better and worse. The three games in this film, Braid, Super Meat Boy, and Fez, really ushered in a new age for indie games. Watching developers follow different paths to create their games shows how different game development can be. It also shows how crunch time and delays affect developers’ lives. Following a developer’s highs and lows isn’t for the faint of heart. Before you begin making games, you should watch this film. It shows you the reality of game development. Image Credit: YouTube/PlayStation. Runtime: 114 Minutes Services: YouTube (Channel: PlayStation) The continuation of the God of War series showed how fatherhood can change you. Raising Kratos shows how the game came to be and all the struggles the development team overcame before launch. Raising Kratos follows Santa Monica Studio’s creative struggles, personal sacrifices, and determination to create God of War (2016). The film reveals the emotional side and the technical challenges of game development. It highlights how the development team worked with a single creative vision to redefine Kratos and the game he stars in. Fans and creatives owe it to themselves to see the ups and downs of video game creation. Raising Kratos is a triumphant tale of a nearly impossible task being taken on and succeeding to the highest degree. Image Credit: FilmBuff. Runtime: 80 Minutes Services: Unavailable (Must Buy DVD) It is unfortunate that the Documentary made for the making of the game That Dragon, Cancer, isn’t readily available. Watching parents grieve while making a video game based around their terminally ill son will change you. Thank You for Playing follows Ryan and Amy Green as they develop That Dragon, Cancer, a game chronicling their young son Joel’s battle with terminal cancer. The film tackles themes of love, loss, and the therapeutic power of creativity. It shows how art can help with the process of grief and connect people through shared human experiences. It is a beautifully haunting piece of media that will never leave you after watching it. Image Credit: YouTube/Hold Back to Block. Runtime: 75 Minutes Services: YouTube (Channel: Hold Back to Block) Hold Back to Block creates a documentary to take you behind the scenes in the communities of fighting games. It shows what it means to find a community that accepts you and feels like family, even outside gaming. The fighting game may seem crass and hardcore to an outsider, but there is more than meets the eye. The film not only shows what the community means to different competitors but also shows you the biggest stages they face off on. Seeing all the competitors speak on their origins and how they came up is so interesting because it isn’t something you often see with video games. Even if you aren’t part of the FGC, this documentary will give you a glimpse of an aspect you never knew about. Communities are full of families and enemies; the FGC is no different. In a game that is 1 Vs. 1 you wouldn’t think there are the people to have your back. Image Credit: Youtube/Noclip. Runtime: 79 Minutes Services: Youtube (Channel: Noclip – Video Game Documentaries) Imagine you are tasked with the massive burden of making a new entry in the legendary series DOOM for modern audiences. This documentary covers DOOM (2016) from concept to creation. The story behind the new era of the franchise is messy. You have failed sequels and internal power struggles during the buyout of id Software. Watching people being so open about their failures in game development is rare. DOOM 4 seemed destined to fail, and the team knew that. They buckled down and decided to make a modern game that was close to the franchise’s roots. You see every step and misstep that created DOOM (2016), from the concept art to the amazing music. The interviews are so open and honest that they are refreshing. Image Credit: Digital Eclipse. Runtime: Varies Services: All major consoles, Steam, and GoG Before creating Prince of Persia, Jordan Mechner made one of the best-selling games of 1984 while in college. The game was like playing a karate movie and was called Karateka. Once again, Digital Eclipse created a playable documentary that brings you closer to the game. It shares Mechner’s early life and the games he created interestingly. Seeing all the notes and everything involved in making Karateka is a rich experience that gamers should appreciate. Playing older games doesn’t have to be a boring experience, and Digital Eclipse proves this by providing more than just a re-release of a classic game. This type of presentation makes you care more about the subject. Follow us on MSN for more of the content you love. Read More: 10 Best Games From the 1990s 12 Retro Games We Still Love to Play Today Share on FacebookPost on XFollow usSave With all of the blockbuster games coming out like God of War: Ragnarök and Pokémon Scarlet and Violet selling up to tens of millions of copies, it's clear that the video game medium has become a mainstream staple in entertainment. It's a rapidly and constantly growing industry and, over the years, several worthwhile documentaries have been produced to chronicle that growth. There are many aspects to the gaming industry, and many of these documentaries do well in covering each facet. From "making of" movies like Grounded: Making the Last of Us to coverage of competitive gaming scenes like Free to Play, there's plenty of fascinating content to watch. Unlocked: The World Of Games, Revealed Buy To Watch On Amazon Prime Video For a more historical and all-encompassing video game documentary, Unlocked: The World of Games, Revealed should prove to be an interesting watch. An 8-part docuseries, Unlocked: The World of Games, Revealed documents the history of the video game industry, its growth, and the future of the medium as a whole. The series was released in 2016, which should make for topical enough commentary on gaming. It features celebrities, icons of the industry, and cultural/technological/historical experts as well. When the original The Last of Us launched for the PS3 as the console's "swan song" before kicking into the PS4, it quickly became one of the greatest PlayStation exclusives in the publisher's history. Made by the same studio behind the Uncharted series (Naughty Dog), this post-apocalyptic zombie game blended gripping survival horror with cinematic flair. Given the game's immense technical fidelity, meticulous work was needed in its making, and Grounded: Making the Last of Us is an insightful behind-the-scenes look at its development. Grounded: Making the Last of Us is available to watch on PlayStation's YouTube channel and brings forth several of the creative team to talk about what it took to make the acclaimed title. The history and success of video games as a medium can be traced back to arcades. Arcades have made for some memorable gaming experiences, making it a no-brainer as the premise of documentaries. The King of Kong: A Fistful of Quarters is a documentary movie from 2007 following Steve Wiebe - the two-time Donkey Kong champion - as he attempts to achieve the game's world record. It's an engaging concept for a movie, especially one that aims to celebrate an important piece of gaming history. For those that cherish that golden age of arcade gaming in the '80s, The King of Kong: A Fistful of Quarters is a must-watch. With the rise of the video game medium came esports as a compelling form of entertainment, and Free to Play is another great choice for those that want to see the behind-the-scenes element. Like with The Smash Brothers, Free to Play is an intimate and dramatic look at the high-end players behind the controllers. This time honing in on Valve's popular MOBA game DotA, this movie focuses on Benedict "hyhy" Lim, Danil "Dendi" Ishutin, and Clinton "Fear" Loomis - specifically how their first International tournament affected their private lives. Nintendo's catalog of fighting games has certainly expanded over the years, but Super Smash Bros. Melee for the GameCube arguably stands as its most famous. The publisher may not have intended for the game to develop the intensely dedicated and grassroots competitive community, but it's still going strong even over 20 years since its release. Perhaps one of the most memorable gaming documentaries available, Travis "Samox" Beauchamp's 9-part docuseries The Smash Brothers chronicles the history of the meta scene's growth. Likewise, it also centers around seven of the biggest pro players of the time. Triple-A blockbusters unsurprisingly demand the greatest share of the spotlight in the video game industry. Many boast grand scopes and cutting-edge technology, but that shouldn't discount the depth of quality that can be found in the indie game scene. Indie titles have some of the best receptions on PlayStation 5, Nintendo Switch, Xbox, and beyond, and Indie Game: The Movie is a poignant watch for those that want to know about the work that goes into making such games. This documentary movie centers around the struggles of developer Phil Fish while working on Fez; Edmund McMillen and Tommy Refenes during Super Meat Boy and Jonathan Blow looking back on his efforts for Braid. The concept of the "console wars" is one of the most infamous aspects of the gaming community online. However, the cleverly-titled documentary Console Wars shows a real-world version of the stiff competition in the industry during the '90s. This documentary movie shows the heated rivalry between the then-upstart game publisher Sega attempting to take on industry behemoth Nintendo. Console Wars documents the competition at the corporate level, as well as the cultural level within this sphere of entertainment. A more recent documentary, the 2020 series High Score will be a worthwhile experience for any gaming enthusiasts interested in the classic era of the industry's evolution. It puts spotlights on the creatives behind many retro video games, including the likes of Doom 64. High Score is a loving homage to this era of games, showing audiences the history and "making-of" for so many titles and their respective characters. As with the aforementioned The King of Kong, this is essential for fans of gaming's "golden age," but from a broader perspective. Ecstasy of Order: The Tetris Masters is another fun gaming documentary in the vein of The King of Kong. As the name suggests, this movie revolves around the world's greatest Tetris players. It shows how these elite players prepare for the Classic Tetris World Champion, documenting decades' worth of history. Starting in 1990, it begins with Thor Aackerlund's record-setting victory up to when Harry Hong set the greatest "max-out" score. Much of the video game industry owes its success to what Tetris did, making this another fun "time capsule" watch. Should players enjoy getting to know the development behind the PlayStation landmark The Last of Us, then Raising Kratos will have fans just as intrigued. The overall God of War franchise has been a pillar of PlayStation since the days of the PS2 as a rip-roaring action game, but it reached euphoric new heights when the 2018 soft reboot gave the titular antihero a more personal, cinematic direction - in addition to pulsating combat. Raising Kratos documents game director Cory Barlog as well as some of the voices behind the game to show fans what went into this game's process. MORE: 10 Best Talent Tree Abilities To Unlock In The Witcher 3 - Wild Hunt

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