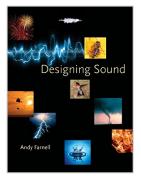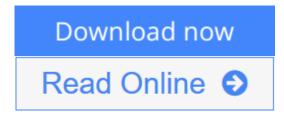# Designing Sound (MIT Press)

By Andy Farnell

Designing Sound (MIT Press) By Andy Farnell

Designing Sound teaches students and professional sound designers to understand and create sound effects starting from nothing. Its thesis is that any sound can be generated from first principles, guided by analysis and synthesis. The text takes a practitioner's perspective, exploring the basic principles of making ordinary, everyday sounds using an easily accessed free software. Readers use the Pure Data (Pd) language to construct sound objects, which are more flexible and useful than recordings. Sound is considered as a process, rather than as data -- an approach sometimes known as "procedural audio." Procedural sound is a living sound effect that can run as computer code and be changed in real time according to unpredictable events. Applications include video games, film, animation, and media in which sound is part of an interactive process. The book takes a practical, systematic approach to the subject, teaching by example and providing background information that offers a firm theoretical context for its pragmatic stance. [Many of the examples follow a pattern, beginning with a discussion of the nature and physics of a sound, proceeding through the development of models and the implementation of examples, to the final step of producing a Pure Data program for the desired sound. Different synthesis methods are discussed, analyzed, and refined throughout.] After mastering the techniques presented in *Designing Sound*, students will be able to build their own sound objects for use in interactive applications and other projects

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Designing Sound (MIT Press) By Andy Farnell Bibliography

- Rank: #785546 in eBooks
- Published on: 2010-08-20
- Released on: 2010-08-20
- Format: Kindle eBook

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Editorial Review

Review

A monumental work. This surely has the potential of becoming the sound designer's bible!

(Kees van den Doel, Scientific Computing Laboratory, University of British Columbia)

An excellent, practical introduction to sound synthesis methods. The most useful resource on Pure Data that I've come across. Essential reading for anyone wanting to learn how to create sounds.

(Karen Collins, Canada Research Chair in Interactive Audio, University of Waterloo)

Andy Farnell's *Designing Sound* is a fantastic and incredibly inspiring book. With hundreds of fully working sound models, this 'living document' helps students to learn with both their eyes and their ears, and to explore what they are learning on their own computer. Perfectly balanced between theory and practice, the book will help students and professionals alike to develop and refine the skills and understanding that they require to synthesize the worlds of sounds around them and the sounds in the imagined worlds of advertising, TV, film, computer games, and their own original audio art. A great textbook, a great workbook, a great way to actually learn how to design sounds -- I can't wait to use *Designing Sound* in my classes.

(Richard Boulanger, Professor of Electronic Production and Design, Berklee College of Music)

Putting the creativity of every single sonic nuance in the hands of the sound designer -- and the listener -- is the gift that Farnell brings through his book Designing Sound. What an empowering experience!

(David Sonnenschein, Director, Musician, and Author of *Sound Design: The Expressive Power of Music, Voice and Sound Effects in Cinema*)

About the Author

Andy Farnell has a degree in Computer Science and Electronic Engineering from University College London and now specializes in digital audio signal processing. He has worked as a sound effects programmer for BBC radio and television and as a programmer on server-side applications for product search and data storage.

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