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Kuttscene

(_dataspill) Engelsk "cutscene". Også kalt FMV (Full-Motion Video sequence). En kort, filmlignende sekvens i et dataspill, ofte brukt for å fortelle videre på en historie. En ikke spillbar mellomsekvens der spilleren ikke kan influere på hva som skjer.

"Cut scene: the full motion graphic animation sequence with which most video games begin and which punctuates the beginning and end of game levels." (Dovey og Kennedy 2006 s. 144)

Det er "cinematic sequences [...] used by designers to create narrative in a variety of ways [...][:] introduce a central narrative tension [...] shape the narrative in a certain direction [...] compensate for missing game narrative [...] associate the game with cool modern cinema [...] provide the player with information" (Simon Egenfeldt-Nielsen m.fl. i *Understanding video games*, 2008; her sitert fra Ritzer og Schulze 2016 s. 400).

Kuttscenene skal som regel skape sammenheng mellom de enkelte spille-sekvensene, og utgjør det fortellende på bekostning av spillingen (Röders 2007 s. 11). Dette kan gjøres på mange måter. Konamis fotballspill *Pro Evolution Soccer 2012* (2011) har kuttscener "der du følger karakteren din på trening, under pressekonferanser, i garderoben eller i møterommet. Det er en veldig god måte å menneskeliggjøre det hele." (*Dagbladet* 12. oktober 2011 s. 45)

Å se en kuttscene kan være noe spilleren oppnår som gevinst/belønning etter å ha lykkes med noe og blir tatt med "videre i historien". En kuttscene kan derfor beskrives som "a personal mini-movie, a cinematic vignette that is only produced as a result of, or reward for, player interaction" (Atkins 2003 s. 38). I spill kan det være "dramatic, prescripted cutscenes that functioned as rewards ("eye candy"), a kind of break in the fast-paced action, and taken together, a telling of the events of the storyworld's history in a chronological sequence." (Harrigan og Wardrip-Fruin 2009 s. 417) Og kuttscener kan etablere fortelletråder som inspirerer spillere til å utføre "lengthy campaigns organized as a series of single-player "missions." " (Harrigan og Wardrip-Fruin 2009 s. 410)

De kan ha "specific gameplay functions, often providing information to the player about upcoming events and challenges, or catapulting the player into the thick of the action. […] Cut-scenes bring cinema into the game." (Rune Klevjer i https://bora.uib.no/bora-xmlui/bitstream/handle/1956/17275/Klevjer; lesedato 18.12.24)

En kuttscene inneholder vanligvis ikke noe valg- eller spillbart, og gjør dermed spilleren til tilskuer. En kuttscene kan f.eks. vise hvordan historien går videre etter at spilleren har utført eller løst en oppgave. Til sammen viser kuttscenene i et spill vesentlige deler av en historie. De danner ofte overgangene mellom oppdrag, verdener eller nivåer i spillet. Kuttscenene er ment å lage sammenheng/koherens mellom spillesekvensene. Et kriterium for noen dataspillanmeldere er at kuttscener bør være "sømløse", dvs. at overgangene mellom det spillbare og filmsekvensene bør danne en helhetlig opplevelse for spilleren, uten for store påtvungne pauser og illusjonsbrudd.

Kuttscener kan hindre innlevelsen i spillet, fordi slike scener som er ikke bruker-styrt og fortellende, kan forstyrre den medrivende "immersjonen" som selve spillingen kan ha skapt (Röders 2007 s. 11). Barry Atkins sammenligner kuttscener med "those often tiresome pauses between frenetic action in which plot is explained slowly and carefully to both protagonist and audience in a certain kind of action movie." (Atkins 2003 s. 35)

Kuttscener kan "provide a valuable, sometimes essential, tool for game design – not only to explain backstory, but as reward, encouragement, as a pacing tool, to help sustain immersion and more. […] The most obvious definition of a cutscene would probably be "a film in a game". Of course, this is how most cutscenes – and certainly most dramatic and well-remembered cutscenes – appear. However, there have been a number of cutscene techniques which do not fit this definition – some games, such as *Max Payne*, have used comics to tell their story, while games like the *Baldur's Gate* series have used pure audio and text to great effect. […] Perhaps the best definition of a cutscene is "any non-interactive storytelling or scene-setting element of a game"." (http://www.gamasutra.com/view/feature/131410/better_game_design_through_.php; lesedato 20.11.14)

"Cut scenes are short film sequences that 'cut in' to the game play. If a cut scene is running there can be no interaction with the avatar. Some cut scenes can be over-ridden with a press of a button, but not all. This can be a source of frustration for the game-player who continually fails a challenge set up by a cut scene and is doomed to view the cut scene repeatedly until they acquire the skills necessary to progress […]. Howells (2002) explains the uses of the cut scene in video games succinctly. He states: "The intro movie introduces the characters and scenario (the game world) and establishes the game's fundamental conflict, while subsequent cut scenes continue causal lines, introduce new plot elements, show character interaction and continually delineate explicit goals. Once the goals have been stated, the player moves to an action sequence…" (2002: 113). According to King

and Krzywinska, cut scenes: '...frequently employ the same expository devices as cinema, using a combination of long shots, mid shots and close ups to provide orientation for the player...' (2002: 12). These scenes are used, then, to set up the story in the beginning, to provide information to players at various intervals throughout the game and also provide rewards for progress made. They interrupt the flow of game-play and render the player and the avatar inactive as the scene plays out." (Samantha Lay i http://www.participations.org/Volume%204/Issue% 202/4_02_lay.htm; lesedato 03.06.14)

"Cutscenes are non-interactive sequences inserted into the action of a video game. Sometimes also called "cinematics", they are included in almost every modern game that has any kind of story or plot. Sometimes, they can be overused, causing the game to feel more like watching than playing. Cutscenes can take two forms. They can be produced in-engine, by moving the characters and viewpoint within the game itself. They can also be pre-rendered animations or even live-action videos triggered during certain events. Pre-rendered cutscenes can contain any content desired, and can be as detailed as your animation studio […] will allow. Their drawbacks are the amount of data required to store video files on the game disc, and a noticeable visual difference between the video and the game content. […] The word "cutscene" itself was possibly first coined by Ron Gilbert while making *Maniac Mansion*, wherein he defined cutscenes as short "scenes" that "cut" away from the action itself, to show what else was happening in the game world when the player wasn't around." (http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/ Cutscene; lesedato 17.11.14)

"An in-engine cutscene […] will most often have custom movements for the character models that don't occur in normal gameplay. In-engine cutscenes have several innate advantages:

- The scenes will look exactly like the rest of the game.
- The animation data required to render the scene will take less storage space than the equivalent in video […]
- If a character's appearance can change, the changes will be reflected in the cutscenes.
- They can include interactive elements, like the ability to move the camera or zoom in during the scene.

The main disadvantage to an in-engine cutscene is that you are limited to the capabilities of the game engine itself. However, game engine technology can now do in real time what once took pre-rendering. Detailed and realistic hand and facial animation, camera and lighting tricks, and special effects are all possible within even a relatively old console architecture like the Sony PS2. […] During the era of "Full Motion Video", a number of games featured cutscenes which were not simply prerendered, but live-action, with (usually not very accomplished) actors playing the roles of the game characters. […] this could make the cutscenes look far more

like traditional film and television" (http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/Cutscene; lesedato 17.11.14).

Kuttscener kan hinte om hvilke utfordringer som er i vente senere i spillet, og dermed bidra til å forberede spilleren (Rauscher 2012 s. 104). De kan antyde hva motstanderne har fore, varsle om snarlige vendepunkter, og forberede nye dramaturgiske settinger i spillet (Rauscher 2012 s. 110).

"My final list of basic cutscene functions includes the following ten categories:
- Surveillance
- Hint
- Foreshadowing
- Transition
- Scene setting
- Mood setting
- Choice and Consequence
- Resolution
- Rhythm and Pacing
- Player Reward

[…] By Surveillance or Planning tool, Salen and Zimmerman (2004, p. 408, 410) mean practical information that the player can gain from a cutscene:
"As a surveillance tool, cutscenes might allow players a glimpse of another part of the game space, or provide information on the current whereabouts of a character of a character or treasure they are seeking. As a planning tool, cutscenes can provide players with information about an event or obstacle they will soon encounter, or elaborate on the outcome of an action."

[…] By Game Play Catapult, Salen and Zimmerman (2004, p. 410) mean transitions that move the character and/or storyline to a new location, state or situation: "[cutscenes] can also work to catapult a player into a new situation. They can add
narrative drama by building suspense, or provide narrative movement from one situation to the next."

[…] By Scene and Mood setting, Salen and Zimmerman (2004, p. 410) mean cutscenes that serve to create mood and atmosphere to a game world or game situation: "Cutscenes can reinforce the differences between settings and highlight what might be new and unusual about an upcoming level. […] Cutscenes can also establish mood, or reinforce the emotional arc of game events."

[…] By Choice and Consequence, Salen and Zimmerman (2004, p. 410-411) mean cutscenes that show the results of player actions (implying the player had at least some choice in the matter): "Cutscenes give game designers the power to

dramatically reveal the outcomes of player choices, outcomes that can affect not only the player's character, but often the game world as well."

[…] By Rhythm and Pacing, Salen and Zimmerman (2004, p. 411) mean cutscenes that serve to hasten or slow the pace of the game: "The rhythm created by the cutscenes is a way of controlling the game's overall pacing. […] Variation and control of cutscene pacing contributes to narrative play by emphasizing specific moments in a game. A long, slow cutscene that follows a player's solution to a particularly difficult puzzle can signify the importance of the event in the overall game experience."

[…] By Player Reward, Salen and Zimmerman (2004, p. 411) mean cutscenes that reward the player for successfully completed goals and progress: "Although using cutscenes as rewards might seem like a straightforward design idea, the experience of receiving such a gift during game play can be tremendously satisfying and motivating." " (Delahay 2013) Salen and Zimmermans bok fra 2004 har tittelen *Rules of Play: Game Design Fundamentals*.

"*Pac-Man* (Namco, 1980) was the first game to include cut-scenes in the literal sense of the term: brief non-playable intermissions that "cut" away from the action to present a kind of staged "scene" depicting Pac-Man and his monsters chasing each other around. The animated intermissions in *Donkey Kong* (Nintendo, 1981) were the first to unambiguously convey a story and a plot: Kong steals the princess and Jumpman saves her. […] the introduction of the CD-ROM, especially the way in which it came to dominate the console market through Sony's PlayStation, dramatically expanded the storage space available for video, music, and voice. It set a new standard for what players expected in terms of media content and production values in games. *Final Fantasy VII* (Square, 1997), was particularly influential in raising the bar in this respect. Its pre-rendered cut-scenes, referred to as full-motion video (FMV), were lavishly produced, cinematic-looking and spectacular, and resonated well with the semi-3D graphics of the rest of the game. Like the *Metal Gear Solid* series (Konami, 1998-present), the *Final Fantasy* games after *Final Fantasy VII* (Square, 1997-present) have made numerous cut-scenes and non-playable dialogue their trademark […] *Wing Commander IV* (Origin, 1996) and *Command and Conquer: Red Alert* (Westwood, 1996) had large amounts of live-action cutscenes" (Rune Klevjer i https://bora.uib.no/bora-xmlui/bitstream/handle/1956/17275/Klevjer; lesedato 18.12.24).

"Det første vi fikk se av helten i "Wolfenstein 3D" var et temmelig grettent ansikt i nederste del av skjermen. Ettersom spillet var et av de første førstepersonsskytespill i historien, der vi fikk se handlingen gjennom øynene til hovedpersonen, fikk vi ikke sett så mye mer til ham enn nettopp dette mugne fjeset som var ment som en indikator på hvordan du hadde det. […] I noen av de seinere spillene [i *Wolfenstein*-serien] var endelig tradisjonen på plass der man etablerer rollefiguren i kuttscener" (*Dagbladets* fredagsmagasin 21. august 2009 s. 25).

I Gearbox og Ubisoftes krigs-/actionspill *Brothers in Arms* (2005) er det "lagt vekt på å beskrive de enkelte soldatens styrke, motivasjon og personlige egenskaper generelt. Spillets cut-scenes bidrar til personbeskrivelsen, så spilleren vil kunne huske den enkelte soldaten og føle med ham i løpet av de åtte dagene som inngår i spillet." (tidsskriftet *Gamereactor* i september 2004, nr. 23)

Kojima Productions' *Metal Gear Solid 4* (2008) inneholder kuttscener på opptil en halv time, og dette verket er dermed en mellomting av en film og et dataspill. I Electronic Arts'*Army of Two: The 40th Day* (2010) er det "ikke mulig å hoppe over kuttscener, noe som kan bli temmelig irriterende når du må se dem flere ganger dersom de avspilles før en vanskelig scene." (*Dagbladet* 13. januar 2010 s. 49) EA Black Box et al.s bilspill *Need for Speed: The Run* (2011) er "[h]eseblesende og intenst, selv om det noen ganger føles som du henvises til passasjersetet gjennom avbrekk og filmsekvenser." (*Dagbladet* 23. november 2011 s. 45)

I artikkelen "In Defence of Cutscenes" skriver medieforskeren Rune Klevjer: "A cutscene does not cut off gameplay. It is an integral part of the configurative experience. Even if the player is denied any active input, this does not mean that the ergodic experience and effort is paused. A cutscene is never truly 'cinematic', no matter how poorly implemented it may be. In any case, it can not avoid affecting the rhythm of the gameplay. This need not be in the negative sense. For example, in the arcade-inspired *James Bond in Agent Under Fire* (a fun game that makes up in spectacle and atmosphere for what it lacks in gameplay), the numerous but short cutscenes provide regular moments of release from intense action. They create a characteristic rhythm in which the regular interruption/release is always expected. As a player you quickly learn the code, constantly being thrown rapidly in and out of bodily ergodic effort. Still, a good cutscene has other qualities than just being 'rhythmically' well-implemented. Notably, it may work as surveillance or planning tool, providing the player with helpful or crucial visual information. Another rather well-established convention is the 'gameplay catapult', building up suspense and creating a situation, only to drop the player directly into fast and demanding action-gameplay. Both techniques are elegantly implemented in the gangster-themed *Grand Theft Auto III*, a game successfully combining story-based mission structure and a more open-ended gameplay. This unusual mix is enabled through the impressive simulation of a big, populated city for the player to play around in. The game also illustrates a significant gameplay-function of good cutscenes: reward by entertainment." (http://folk.uib.no/smkrk/docs/klevjerpaper.htm; lesedato 01.10.12)

"The short, stylistic and humorous mission briefings in *GTA III* [dvs. *Grand Theft Auto*] become a part of the gameplay's reward structure, independently of which new missions, items or weapons they may introduce. Some of them are good, some of them are not so good, but you will never know before you get there. This may not be a very sophisticated technique, but it adds extra motivation and satisfaction to the game. Chasing new cutscenes can be more fun than chasing bigger guns. *GTA III* also features an interesting kind of in-game 'hybrid' car-jump sequences,

actually generated in real-time but looking much like a spectacular cutscene, a result of the triggered slow-motion effect and change of camera angle. Being both a simulation (run by the physics engine) and a sheer spectacle to sit back and watch, these jumps provide a striking illustration of the duality of computer games: At once representation and action, reading and configuration, communication and event, mediation and play." (Rune Klevjer i http://folk.uib.no/smkrk/docs/klevjerpaper.htm; lesedato 01.10.12)

"Gabriel Knight: The Sins of the Fathers (hereafter GK1) features hand-drawn graphics and a somewhat colourful graphical style. […] For GK1, there are four main cutscene types. The first category comprises of the chapter openings. The game is divided into ten chapters – one per in-game day. Each day begins with an early morning shot of the street outside the main character's bookshop with some mundane morning events taking place (on a regular morning a paper boy brings the newspaper and Grace comes to work). A threatening main theme plays in the background as the day's number appears on the screen, painted in red. These scenes are always accompanied by a text segment from the same longer poem written specifically for the game. Later on, the intro imagery changes depending on where the main character is, but the music, red headline and poem quote are found in the start of every chapter. The second category includes simple scripted events, which involve only an individual animation (e.g. reading a newspaper) or a simple triggered non-interactive dialogue. The third category contains the more complex scripted event clusters – these can involve character animation, environmental animation such as cars arriving or leaving a scene and occasional close-ups, but everything is strictly in-engine. Even these close-ups seem to use the same system that is used for inspecting inventory items. These events often involve fairly long scenes with lots of special animations and non-interactive dialogue. The second and third categories both commonly result from player interaction with the environment or the player entering a new area. The two categories could be argued to be two extremes of the same category, but I have opted to handle them as separate cases since simple and complex events may have different functions and use contexts. Fourth, there are motion comics that represent higher quality 2D art with simple animation. The sequences are often arranged into animated comic pages where frames appear and animate individually as the scene unfolds. The motion comics are often seen in the middle of real-time scripted events." (Delahay 2013)

I Brøderbunds eventyrdataspill *Myst* (1993) "[t]he main functions of the cutscene appear to be Resolution, Hint, Foreshadowing, Mood Setting, Resolution and Player Reward. Resolution is directly applicable, since the message itself is a direct response to the player entering the right code. Hint is another very central function, since the core gameplay consists of puzzles and the puzzle involving the access code and tower rotation is essential for progress. Foreshadowing is present in the little that is said about Atrus' two sons, both of whom the player will later find trapped in magical books in the library, as well as other minor references to the so far untold backstory. Mood Setting is present throughout the message and is

underlined by the fact that there are very few full video sequences and nearly no characters in the game – the individual recorded message on an empty island (the player has had to explore the island through once to find the code to unlock this message) is very central to the atmosphere. Player Reward is also present, since there are few videos and only the right solution displays the actual message, although some other codes display other less extensive visuals." (Delahay 2013)

"Grim Fandango contains two main types of cutscenes – pre-rendered and real-time. Real-time cutscenes range from simple responses to player commands to triggered gameworld events. Because of the pre-rendered backgrounds of the game, real-time cutscenes are always limited to the same fixed set of camera angles and positions that are available when moving around. Pre-rendered cutscenes, on the other hand, contain a lot of special character animations, non-interactive dialogue, facial animation, effects, various camera angles and camera movement. […] The main functions of the cutscene are Foreshadowing, Transition and Mood Setting. Foreshadowing is most apparent in the overhead remarks of the dangers (e.g. Petrified forest) and the length of the journey in general. Transition takes place both physically (Manny starts in a corridor outside his boss' office and ends up locked in a closet) and on a more abstract level (Manny is now in serious trouble with his employers). Mood setting is present throughout the scene – Manny's image as a good-hearted underdog is strengthened, and there is also a discernible air of threat at the end. Choice and consequence would be applicable if the player had more choice over the solutions, but since there was only one solution to begin with it doesn't apply. Had this cutscene been removed without anything added in its place, the immediate effect would be that player would miss some key points of information: that the client should have had a clean record, but main character's computer showed him false records and he will now be punished for a mistake he didn't really make. Second, it underlines main character's role as the underdog in the company he works in – he is obviously being kept in the dark about many things and any attempts to fix the situation just get him in deeper trouble. Still, even if the player skipped the cutscene they would still know that they were locked in the room by the boss, because that part is a separate piece of in-game animation. The cutscene could have been easily replaced with an in-engine conversation scene, but a lot of the movie-like nature of the scene would have been lost – the camera shifts from character to another, the angry faces and gestures of the boss, the smug expressions and postures of the main character's main rival and finally the first defiant but ultimately ashamed reactions of the main character." (Delahay 2013)

I *Max Payne* (av Remedy Entertainment m.fl., 2001 og senere) "the experience of waking up from a coma is represented through the embedding of visual panels inspired by graphic novels. This borrowing of resources from another medium reminds us that digital technology is not only a medium but also a meta-medium capable of encoding and displaying any type of signs. In addition to static graphic panels, *Max Payne* uses *cut-scenes*, a standard feature of computer games, to represent dream sequences, but it gives them an unusual twist by allowing the

player a low grade of agency. Rather than watching the dream sequences as though they were movies, the player guides Max, the dreamer, in a tour of several locations. Since this tour is strictly linear, offering no choice of itinerary, the dream sequences blur the borderline between pre-rendered cut-scenes and genuinely interactive episodes in which the player must display gaming skills. This limited form of interactivity not only reflects the "painful lack of agency" that dreamers may experience but also allegorizes the illusory nature of the player's sense of free will, since the game's developer considerably shapes the course of events in the vast majority of narrative games." (Marie-Laure Ryan og Jan-Nöel Thon i https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/j.ctt1d9nkdg.5.pdf; lesedato 05.12.23)

"Enjoying games like the *Mass Effect* series, therefore, where the parallel space of playable cut-scenes is unusually dominant and complex, may not be very different from the enjoyment reported by writers of literary fiction, who find that their own characters start speaking back to them as autonomous persons, going about their own ways." (Rune Klevjer i https://bora.uib.no/bora-xmlui/bitstream/handle/1956/17275/Klevjer; lesedato 18.12.24)

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