

**EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE MY ENEMY: MÚSICA POPULAR Y TRANSMEDIALIDAD
EN ARCANÉ**

**EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE MY ENEMY: POPULAR MUSIC AND TRANSMEDIALITY
IN ARCANÉ**

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Resumen

La popularización de *Arcane*, lanzada en 2021 en Netflix, ha ido de la mano del éxito de billboards *Enemy*, de Imagine Dragons. La banda sonora de la serie se fundamenta sobre diversas propuestas musicales precedentes producidas por Riot Games, cuyo interés en expandir el mercado e-deportivo a través de estrategias transmedia se ha visto traducido en el creciente peso de sus productos no jugables. La serie propone el enfrentamiento de los integrantes de dos ciudades opuestas socioeconómicamente, lo que, junto a la relación entre sus protagonistas y las músicas seleccionadas para su ilustración, la acercan a la experiencia cotidiana del público. El análisis propuesto y la recopilación de la experiencia de los participantes en el fenómeno transmedia, nos muestran cómo la estrategia seguida por la desarrolladora ha impactado de forma efectiva sobre el consumo tanto del videojuego como de la música de los artistas participantes en su banda sonora original.

Abstract

The popularization of Arcane, released in 2021 on Netflix, has gone hand in hand with the billboard success by Imagine Dragons, *Enemy*. The series' soundtrack is rooted in previous musical commodities produced by Riot Games, whose growing interest in expanding the e-sports market through transmedia strategies has been reflected in the increasing weight of its non-playable products. The series proposes a confrontation between the members of two socioeconomically contrasting cities, which, along with the relationship between its protagonists and the selected music for its illustration, brings the imagined reality of the show closer to the daily experience of its audience. The suggested analysis and the collection of the participants' experiences in the transmedia phenomenon shows how the strategy followed by the developer has effectively impacted the consumption of both the video game and the music of the artists involved in the confection of its Original SoundTrack.

Palabras clave

Arcane; Imagine Dragons; videojuego; League of Legends; transmedia; fandom.

Keywords

Arcane; Imagine Dragons; video game; League of Legends; transmedia; fandom.

1. Introduction: Transmediality in Esports

The popular music that articulates the soundtrack of *Arcane*, the animated series released on Netflix in November 2021, with its broad range of artists and genres, cannot be understood without a first approach to the specific context that engendered it. The series offers a staging of the lore¹ in *League of Legends*, a video game developed by Riot Games, which constitutes one of the main disciplines of esports or electronic sports around the world.

Arcane presents a dystopian fantasy that can be understood as a metaphor, conscious or unconscious, of the growing gap between classes in our society, where the positive technological progress of an economic and intellectual elite influences population groups in situations of social exclusion, creating alternative pathways of circulation for the economy.

Since the first decade of the 21st century, the esports industry has been the catalyst for multiple scenarios embedded in the popular daily life of millions of players around the globe, for whom music affords an essential socializing element. Cases like that of *League of Legends* are paradigmatic to explain how the esports industry has managed to connect transmedia audiovisual products that, despite their diversity, converge on an original medium: the video game. The work of the music production team at Riot Games is fundamental to understand the use of popular music as a cornerstone for the commercialization of the game. It is also necessary to consider the use of different music genres to appeal to geographically distant users with diverse cultural referents and, of course, the participation of these very users in the transmedia culture.

To analyse the points of convergence between the series and the video game, as well as the impact of popular music on their dissemination, I will follow Jenkins' theory regarding media convergence and participatory culture (2006, 2009), which has been addressed by other authors in the same field such as Scolari (2013), Stein (2016), or Sánchez-Olmos and Viñuela (2019), among others.

¹ The Oxford Learner's Dictionary defines *lore* as «knowledge and information related to a particular subject, especially when this is not written down; the stories and traditions of a particular group of people» (Oxford Learner's Dictionary, n.d.). In the case at hand and in other fantasy contexts, it usually refers to the story built to give depth to the imagined world.

I will also refer to the concept of hyperrealism theorized by authors such as Rambarran in *The Oxford Handbook of Music and Virtuality* (2016) or Richardson in *En Eye For Music* (2012), which will be useful for the definition of Imagine Dragons' role beyond the sonic realm, within the show.

Furthermore, I highlight some of the conclusions in Alice Ramos de Mesquita's dissertation for Universidade Federal de Pernambuco (2022), in which she analyses *Arcane's* transmedia strategies to assess their influence on the consumers' immersion in the video game's fictional universe. The results shown by the researcher are complemented by a survey conducted for the purposes of this article regarding the analysis of *Enemy*, in order to evaluate the knowledge and impact of the series' music and its consumption. The quantitative data gathered through different social media platforms have provided further affirmation on the effectiveness of the transmedia strategy followed by Riot as a marketing tool.

Finally, I will draw a series of conclusions in line with the categorization suggested by Díaz Gasca in his thesis *Music Beyond Gameplay* (2013), in which the author explores the consumption of original video game soundtracks and their relation to three levels of concretion: experiential, economic, and sociocultural.

In favour of contextualizing the series and the relevance of the *League of Legends* lore as a narrative reference point, we must first review in the musical universe of *League of Legends* and previous by-products of the game, produced by the same brand, that have informed the original soundtrack under discussion.

2. The Musical Universe of *League of Legends*

League of Legends is a free Multiplayer Online Battle Arena (MOBA) video game, in which two opposing teams battle each other on a preset map, with the goal of destroying the enemy team's base before the other team destroys theirs. The game's plot and characters (or *champions*), each have a backstory that serves the game's narrative. All these have been put in relation through the digital creation of a world-map, Runaterra, constituted by a collection of fantastic continents that allow for the various areas and their inhabitants to find connecting storylines and dynamizations (Riot Games, n.d.). The plot in *Arcane*

takes place, specifically, in the narrow strait that separates the urban centers of Piltover and Zaun on these imagined lands.

However, until the video game made the leap towards competitive gaming and began to position itself as one of the most popular games in the market, the basis of its lore was not as explicitly built, to unite all the events and sub-products of the brand. Today, the stories, relationships, and confrontations between the different characters have specific interconnections to form a coherent discourse in each new mediatic proposal –a strategy that does not differ much from that followed by other developers like Epic Games in *Fortnite*.

The first competitive event for *League of Legends*, in 2011, did not only establish the basis to initiate this development, but it also served to gestate the social dynamics that have been present in championships ever since, in a close parallelism to the dynamization of traditional sports events. As Till suggested in *Pop Cult* (2010), music, in these circumstances, even if it is not the center of attention for the viewers, becomes a symbol of social cohesion for the group and begins working ritually.

Since 2014, the World Finals of the video game have included an opening ceremony –an appropriate term for the context that is being discussed, suggested by the own organizers of these events. The first contact with the public at the beginning of each event is usually mediated by an audiovisual show, that to this day has featured both preexisting bands (e.g., Imagine Dragons or American Current) and other music groups explicitly created by Riot Games, featuring character alter-egos from their game. In this second group, we find examples such as K/DA or True Damage (Febrer Coll, 2020), both formed entirely by *League of Legends* characters (e.g., Ahri, Akali, Evelynn and Kai'Sa in K/DA), embodied by real-life singers such as Soyeon or Madison Beer, among others.

With these bands, Riot Games has managed to blur the line between reality and fantasy, like in the pioneering case of Gorillaz, who have been frequently described as belonging to the category of the hyperreal (Rambarran, 2016; Jeffery, 2017). With groups like K/DA, the avatars of the singers have appeared on stages at opening ceremonies, on TV interviews, and as the own managers of their social media channels, presenting themselves as «the representation of [a]

simulation that blurs the boundaries between reality and fantasy, and is usually digitally produced» (Rambarran, 2016, 150).

The bands and characters that have emerged from the game have strategically served to bring it closer to a wide and culturally diverse audience. For example, with True Damage, during their debut at the 2019 World Finals, Riot Music's team developed a spectacle that brought heterogeneous singers and genres together, from hip hop to pop, to assemble a live performance. Among the collaborators in the event were American rapper Thutmose, Korean star Soyeon, and Latin-American Becky G, singing in their respective languages, appealing to the game's main consumer audiences (Kamberovic, 2023; Febrer Coll, 2020). This strategy also served the expansion of the potential market of the musicians towards the participants of the esports scene.

In what regards the audiovisual development of the video game in relation to other sub-products of Riot Games, 2014 marked a significant date when the first music video dedicated to the presentation of a new character, Jinx, was released –who is also one of the protagonists in *Arcane*. With *Get Jinxed* Riot Music introduced its first animated video clip specifically designed for a game *champion*, in an initial collaboration with Fortiche Productions, while still counting with a limited budget for audiovisual production outside of the game itself.

As noted by Riot Games' team (Stream Wars, 2021), at this time the original budget for art and music was not more than \$500 per month, but the introduction of cinematics allowed them to create their first audiovisual products, which were well received and ended up leading to the creation of a music-focused department within the company. Through this rapid development, we may see the relevance of music in the articulation of the sonic world of *League of Legends*, as well as the potential of the product to be translated into other commercially viable formats.

The game's lore began to take a central role and, since then, it has been developed prominently through musical means, including animated videos, live holograms, and CGI (Computer Generated Imagery), as well as other multimedia formats. The success of these outputs escalated until culminating in *Arcane*, which its own producers define as «our love letter to you, the players and fans who, over the years, have been with us helping to make *League of Legends*

what it is today» (Stream Wars, 2021, n.p.). The music videos, bands, and other sub-products created by Riot Games have also afforded a continuous transmedia exposition that, through commodities such as the series, feed back into themselves. In other words, the audiovisual proposals of the developer work to connect fans' prior knowledge with the series' story, relying on their participation in the fan community for its success.

Thus, we see how the transmediality of the described products moves from the video game, through the screen, and on to the performative stage. Their multiple uses and presence across various media allow us to refer to Jenkins' categorization in *Convergence Culture* (2006), according to which the strategy followed by Riot Games would represent an example of convergence, as it presents an opportunity for media conglomerates, «since content that succeeds one sector can spread across other platforms» (19).

As Ramos de Mesquita (2022) points out, quoting Jenkins, we can refer to the *extension* of *League of Legends* towards potential audiovisual markets by approaching different content delivery systems, to the product's *synergy* in the search for new economic opportunities, and to its *franchising* in what regards the effort to commercialize the content generated under new conditions, different from the original ones.

Riot Games has touched on all three concepts through collaborations with various international popular artists and through the creation of various sub-products inspired in *League of Legends*. Among all its collaborators, Imagine Dragons has been especially relevant since the production of *Warriors* (2014) the song that established the initial musical reference for the game's fans. This song opened the first live ceremony at the first World Finals and has become one of the brand's music references for fans. It is not a coincidence that the same group stars in *Enemy* (2021), the track that introduced *Arcane* and was key to the popularization of the series, in addition to becoming a billboard hit around the world (Acharts, n.d.).

3. Popular Music in Arcane

After establishing the musical foundations that inform the series, it is pertinent to approach its plot, to understand how the elements underlined so far converge in its episodes, created and produced by Riot Games in collaboration with Fortiche Productions.

Arcane, following the lore in *League of Legends*, presents the confrontation (and collaboration) between the citizens of Piltover, a progressive city-state with revolutionary technologies, and Zaun, an adjacent suburban district that is in a constant environment of smoke, darkness, and decay (Riot Games, n.d.). The resources that arrive from Piltover to the streets of Zaun do it through the black market, creating an underground economy that sustains a continuous dialogue between both cities.

This duality depicts how fiction can incorporate ideas that extend towards our experience of reality. As Weinreich (2010) emphasized in the context of the first meeting of the Gesellschaft Für Fantastikforschung:

On the one hand, here are the realistic Second World scenarios of *The Sims*, and on the other, the fantastic universes of *World of Warcraft* and others. But that doesn't mean that players can't be at home in both worlds (...). Nor does it mean that there are no crossovers between realism and fantasy. (4)

The series' story line, despite being set in a fantastic environment, is based on the relationships between the main characters and the conflicts that arise from the continuous confrontation between two contrasting social environments. Thus, although the names of the cities and objects that appear in the series belong to the lore originated in the video game, viewers who are not familiar with it can still participate in the narrative and follow it easily, as they can find their own experience of the world reflected in it.

The main characters represent two possible faces of each of the protagonist cities: sisters Jinx and Vi show the most nihilistic and optimistic faces of Zaun, while Caitlyn and Jayce, from Piltover, may be seen as representing submission and rebellion against established power. Both sides try to get hold of a new energy source called Hextech, which promises to revolutionize the world, each with its own purposes and according to their respective social needs. Jinx will be the

detonating character for the plot's development, as she has to decide on who will be in control of the technology.

The music that frames the nine episodes of the series, structured in three acts like if it were an opera or theatre play, includes both a cinematic orchestral baseline that gives continuity to the story, and a series of tracks by popular music artists belonging to different genres, which give character and concretize the narration of different scenes. Although the orchestral parts present similarities to the in-game music of *League of Legends* and can be seen as a reference for game players, the turning point that allowed the popularization of the series was the inclusion of pop singers and bands in its OST (Çakir, 2021).

Among the collaborating musicians, each contribution gives specific scenes an explicit narrativity. An example can be found in Bea Miller's *Playground*, which sounds when Zaun is shown for the first time, with lyrics that reinforce the visuals of the scene, helping to situate the viewer within the ambience of the city: *Welcome to the playground / follow me / tell me your nightmares and fantasies / Sink into the wasteland underneath / Stay for the night, I'll sell you a dream.*

Similarly, the track composed by Sting and violinist Ray Chen under the title *What could have been*, plays during a scene depicting Jinx's disillusionment with her sister, with whom she sees no possibility of reconciliation. Her anger leads, during this episode, to an active quest for revenge against Piltover: *I want you to hurt like you hurt me today and / I want you to lose like I lose when I play what could have been.*

The company's music team emphasized their careful selection of artists to include in the narrative that they had imagined, and how they wanted to highlight the contents of each selected scene through specific music choices (*League of Legends*, 2021). This curation was clearly reflected in the presentation of the series through a musical video set in Zaun, whose debut served as an overture to the 2021 World Finals (*League of Legends*, 2021), which created a reference point and significant expectation for the video game's followers.

However, the musical references in the series go beyond diegesis and are purposely incorporated into various scenes, as in the iconic case of *Get Jinxed* (2014), which the character herself is shown listening to in the fourth episode. This phenomenon creates a sort of *ludomusical boomerang* (Martínez Núñez and

Navarro Remesal, 2021), in that «film and video game media promote an evolution of their soundtracks (...) The composers themselves reimagine and rework their work enhancing the narrative of the piece to intervene in the emotions of the player» (Porta Pérez, 2022, 54, my translation) or, in this case, the viewer. Although Martínez Núñez and Navarro Remesal did not originally refer to a transmedia in their approach to this concept, but to the reworking of an imagined soundtrack by a composer, here we may see a similar process on the reworking of a pre-existing narrative. In this sense, *crossmedia* would be a better term to define the event (Jeffery, 2017).

Within this going back and forth from the original text to secondary products (and vice versa), we must underline the role of the fans of the series in their elaboration of alternative and complementary content, which make them fundamental pillars in the transmedia development of the series (Jenkins, 2009). Though the observation of discussion forums on different social networks, one can identify byproducts that go from fan art to debates around the use of music in the series. The work carried out by users like *black-cat-of-zaun* (2022) on Reddit are especially noteworthy, as it identifies *leitmotifs* in the series and links them to specific fragments of the official soundtrack. Their selection allows us to follow the referring narrative, for example, to the psychological development of the main character, Jinx, through the modulation of the sound fragment that represents her in different scenes.

In the same vein, the second season of the series, scheduled for 2024, has created speculation and dialogue among its followers. Understanding the relevance of community participation in the series' success, the producers themselves have polled the audience to determine which artists or groups they would like to see included in the future soundtrack. Christian Linke, co-creator of Arcane, asked on Twitter: «Any dope music artists out there that should be part of Arcane Season 2? Hit me» (Linke, 2023, n.p.), unleashing over four thousand comments, both with suggestions and responses, as well as hints about potential collaborators from the producer.

This shows how media convergence takes place both within the company, in this case the video game developer, and the fandom itself: «it involves both a change in the way media is produced and a change in the way media is

consumed» (Jenkins, 2006, 16), now through the democratic possibilities of access to content production, as facilitated by the internet.

In this context, the case that has generated the most explicit point of attraction for the general consumer was *Enemy*, a track produced by Imagine Dragons explicitly for the premiere and diffusion of the show. As the case affords an example of convergence on different levels, it is pertinent that we address in further detail.

4. *Enemy*: A Case Study

One of the key factors in popularizing the series was the inclusion of a *sound trademark* soundtrack in the series, especially for *League of Legends* fans, provided by Imagine Dragons as the original band in the opening of the multi- and transmedia strategies for Riot Games. The group's involvement in the production of the track for the series began during its early drafts, as the group's lead singer has pointed out on several occasions (Riot Games Music, 2022).

Enemy was released as the main song to represent *Arcane*, and it alluded both to the self-destructive mentality of the main character of the series (*Oh, the misery / Everybody wants to be my enemy / Spare the sympathy / Everybody wants to be my enemy*) and to the potential experience of social exclusion for listeners. Dan Reynolds, the group's lead singer, pointed out in an interview for iHeart:

Enemy is about reconciling internal conflict in a world where it feels impossible to trust even yourself (...) In *Arcane*, two sisters' lives take them on different paths and leads to a division that threatens to tear an entire city apart. Like the series, the song is meant to be both personal and a critique of a society that seems intent on creating division. (Nattress, 2021, n.p.)

Nevertheless, the song does not only talk about the character, but also about the singer's own experience and, by extension, it can allude to the potential experience of social exclusion of its listeners. Some readings from fans and critics of the series have highlighted the ability of the song to connect with the everyday experience of the consumer, to the same extent that the series does through a metaphor about society:

At its core, «Enemy» is a song about fear and oppression. The narrator is confronted with an oppressive force that they cannot see or understand, yet still feel its presence. This is a common experience for many people, particularly those living under oppressive regimes or facing discrimination. (Sharer, 2023, n.p.)

Along with the ability to allude to individual and collective experiences through the lyrics, other authors have referred to the composition of the song and previous works by the band, referring to the use of *relative novelty* in successive tracks and the strategic application of repetition by the band (Farris, 2019).

In *Enemy*, there is a progression of only two chords on a B minor tonality, that alternate in each verse (F#minor and G major7). At a rhythmic level, there is a clear contrast between the verse, which follows a semiquaver pattern, and the pre-chorus, with longer notes. The band makes strategic use of a silence preceding the chorus, which is only broken by a drum that anticipates the entrance of the voice. At the melodic level, it is remarkable how the melody moves in a descend pattern during the verse and pre-chorus sections but offers a characteristic 6th-interval jump on the chorus (*everybody wants to be my enemy*). To add on this, there is a rap section that breaks the repetitiveness of the verse-chorus succession, bringing dynamism to the piece.

The fact that the song does not contain a chords progression including the tonic, avoiding a final resolution, creates a sense of tension that is maintained throughout the piece (Tan, 2022). The inclusion of the hip-hop segment can also be linked to Riot Games' previous work with K/DA or True Damage, which also provided a fusion of genres that makes it appealing to a wider audience (Febrer Coll, 2020).

As DeNora (2010) emphasized, music serves as a reference to experience, as it alludes to the memory of the listeners and to their familiarity with what they hear. Following this, the viewers can approach the series and the world that it presents from two positions: that of fans who recognize Imagine Dragons as a reference in the musical universe of *League of Legends*, and that of those who approach the same universe for the first time through its popular references, thus participating in the narrative and its dynamics *a posteriori*.

The song quickly reached high positions in billboards all over the world, providing the group with their fifth Top 5 hit (TopCharts, n.d.), and it was nominated for the

American Music Awards and MTV Video Music Awards, among others (IMDB, n.d.).

We may attribute its success to the marketing strategy crafted by Riot Games, in addition to its production, which included presenting the aforementioned music video at the 2021 Finals, the explicit use of the band as a reference point for fans of the brand, and the exploitation of the original product beyond its original limits. These include other innovative ways to incorporate the soundtrack into the series, that we can relate to the success of *Enemy* and the music in the show overall, such as the inclusion of the band in one of the episodes in a cameo. We must refer here to the hyperrealism argued by Rambarran (2018), to which I referred previously, in reference to Baudrillard's (1993) original proposal, according to which the breaking of the boundaries between the real and the fantastic allows for immersion of the viewer within the narrative.

Rambarran argues that to appreciate the various roles of a group that lies within the category of the hyperreal, one must take into account that the group is a *simulation* of a pop group, avoiding the real/original and false/representation division. In this sense, the transmediation of Imagine Dragons from the real to the hyperreal involves understanding their intervention within the series as a *simulation* of themselves. With them, *Enemy* becomes an integral part of the show and the sonic reality of the scene in which it is inserted. Once again, we can corroborate the promotion of an affective relationship between the consumer and the narrative of the series (Ramos de Mesquita, 2022).

Furthermore, we see how Imagine Dragons becomes part of the series not only as a sound reference but also a visual one, similarly to what is presented through the analysis of *The Rivers of Alice* and *Vetusta Morla* by Sánchez-Olmos and Viñuela (2019). These authors pointed out how, «despite the fact that the video game has worked as a catalytic element of the transmedia strategy, its creators have expressed the relevance of *Vetusta Morla*'s music in the creative process» (70, my translation), which ultimately coincides with the case discussed here.

a. Music in the Show and League of Legends Consumption

To evaluate the relationship between the consumption of the video game and its fictional universe, Ramos de Mesquita (2022) implemented a questionnaire

among consumers of the series, both players and non-players, which allowed her to confirm different hypotheses. For instance, she found that the series contributed to improving the experience and enhancing the immersion of the consumer in the fictional universe of the game; that the series directly influenced the subsequent behavior of consumers, some of whom started playing *League of Legends* after watching it; or that the series effectively promoted an emotional relationship between the consumer and the narrative of the series.

Considering this analysis, I carried out a brief survey to provide further insight into the relationship between the viewers' knowledge of the video game, the series, and their music consumption. After sharing the questionnaire through social media (Twitter, Discord, Reddit, and LinkedIn), 425 people responded, which allowed me to draw specific conclusions for the case under study and further corroborations regarding the Ramos de Mesquita's contributions.

Among the participants, 97.2% expressed their familiarity with Imagine Dragons prior to watching the series. Among these, 46.4% had listened to *Enemy* prior to the series' release, and 14.8% had also listened to other tracks in the series. On the other hand, 36.7% of the participants had not listened to any of the music featured in the show.

After watching the series, these numbers took a turn, and only 15.3% did not continue consuming its OST and, furthermore, most of them (77.2%) confirmed that they did not only continue listening to *Enemy*, but other artists featured in the show. This inclination towards a higher musical consumption, as associated with the experience of watching *Arcane*, highlights the efficacy of the popular music-based strategy followed to build the serie's soundtrack, as well as the effectivity of the show in affording a reciprocal gain between Riot Games and the quoted music participants.

Although only 2.6% of participants pointed to the music as the main attraction for watching the series, 96.5% of respondents considered the music to be a good complement to the series (48.5%) or even to make it more attractive (48%), which helps to confirm the prior assertion according to which the series contributed to the improvement of the consumer's experience and immersion in Riot Games' universe. In this same vein, the expansion of the series within Riot Games' created lore contributed a higher immersion of the viewers into the series, as 85.6%

expressed having gained a deeper understanding of the backstory in *League of Legends* –that is, considering that 34.4% affirmed not consuming any products related to the game as an e-sport.

There is a high level of media user-transference, as 76.7% of respondents expressed being *League of Legends* players (51.8% active, 25% non-recurrent) and familiar with numerous sub-products of the same brand, such as K/DA or True Damage, as well as various collaborating artists (such as Lil NasX or Chrissy Constanza). The main reason for watching the series for this group was also its direct relation with the main product (51.3%, mostly coinciding with active players), which indicates the degree of participation of the brand's fans in the elements that unite them as a community, reaffirming Jenkins (2006) idea according to which fans are a structural pillar in building transmedia.

It is also relevant to investigate the behavior of those who did not originally consume the video game and ended up downloading it after watching the series (22.4%), which highlights the effectiveness of the marketing strategy and artist selection by the show developer. Many of these people are now part of discussion forums or communities dedicated specifically to the debate of the series' content and *fan art*, such as the specific Reddit channel for the series or a Discord server which already hosts over 5,500 members.

5. Conclusion: Transmediality and Reception in *Arcane*

In summary, this article has covered the use of music in the *League of Legends* Universe up to the specific case of *Enemy*, showing how, since the success of Riot Games' first audiovisual with *Get Jinxed*, the company has found in transmedia a way to expand its fantastic universe and its market. The active participation of the game's consumers in the development of sub-products has afforded a dialogue that benefits both the creation of audiovisuals by the brand and by its fandom.

The survey carried out to address the case study of *Enemy* has demonstrated the effectiveness of the transmedia strategy followed by Riot at different levels: in terms of its *extension* to potential audiovisual markets, in terms of product synergy

in the search for new economic opportunities, and in terms of its *franchising* in reference to the commercialization of content under new formats.

This is further supported by the implementation of a discourse that is close to the viewer, both from the social context presented in the series and through the lyrics of *Enemy*, which has resulted in a successful approach towards the audience and its everyday experience.

This allows the drawing of several conclusions regarding the consumption of the series, which include the success of the song that introduced it to the public. To do this, the three categories earlier suggested by Díaz Gasca (2013) regarding the consumption of video game soundtracks outside of the audiovisual are particularly useful.

Firstly, at an experiential level, there is a relation between the music and the video game that occurs on a meta-ludic level, rooted in personal experiences around the game and its OST. As noted, in the specific case of *Arcane* we see a double entry point that refers both to the *League of Legends* preexisting fans and to the viewers who encountered the series for the first time, without prior knowledge of its lore. In the same vein and linking this to the previous *quasi-metaphor* regarding the growing gap between social classes, the narrative approach of the songs allows an association between the everyday and the fantastic –whose limits are blurred through play with the hyperreal– for all viewers regardless of their previous experience with the game.

At a sociocultural level, the effect of music as a cohesive element for participants belonging to a similar cultural environment must be underlined. Video games, as they become socializing agents, tend to function as sociocultural motivators. Therefore, the desire to form social connections among players and the recognition of *being a gamer* through music, plays an integral role in both initiating and sustaining interactions among participants. In this sense and as shown in the preceding analysis, the role of fandom is reaffirmed as a cornerstone in the reception of *League of Legends*-related products.

Finally, at an economic or marketing level, the music related to video games and their effect on the audience proves to be a commodity and a reference point for the creation of additional non-playable audiovisual products. The role of

original soundtracks in the promotion of musical consumption encourages the audience to respond to it as it is related to a reference product.

In conclusion, the growing impact of the *League of Legends* universe in a larger sociocultural environment, that benefits from transmedia strategies, has afforded the building of an increasing audience over the years. The success of Imagine Dragons with *Enemy*, in *Arcane*, can be defined from various perspectives, all rooted in the strategy from which they have taken part since their debut with Riot Games in 2014. To continue on this path, we are now left with the wait before the release of the new season, and with the mystery of which bands will define its original soundtrack.

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