



MIXERS

AND

MAESTROS

JERRICK FLORES

MIXERS AND MAESTROS

Mixers and Maestros is a competitive rhythm game on the PC where 2 players vie to achieve the highest score. To amp up the competition however, players can actively combat each other.

They do this through remixing each others tracks. These mixes result in actual audio altercations the other player hears and also additional negative effects that make it easier for a player to lose their beat.

While the game objective is for players to achieve the highest score, the real high end goal is to do this while the flow of the song is constantly changing.



TARGET AUDIENCE:

VIGILANT VIRTUOSO

Mixers and Maestros' target audience are the "hardcore" rhythm gamers that enthusiastically hone their skills. Those who are more than happy to spend their week's free time mastering a song in a rhythm game. While they are versed in games, their musical knowledge, specifically in Electronic Dance Music, approaches an encyclopedic level. They are always playing music in the background. Current artists they are listening to include: Mystery Skulls, Tristam, and Pegboard Nerds.

They have played rhythm games in the past but arcade titles like *Dance Dance Revolution*, *Guitar Hero*, etc., despite allowing them to put on a performance, are too gimmicky; and hardcore titles like *Osu!*, while compelling, are too isolated an experience. They yearn for an intense rhythm game where they can flaunt their skills in a sophisticated manner.



TONE AND STYLE

Mixers and Maestros must be as **intensely high energy as possible**. Everything, from music choice to environmental aesthetics, **must breathe life!** The world must be filled with a lot of dynamic objects in bright colors that are in constant movement.

Feedback and other reactionary stimuli directed to the player must be intense enough to invigorate the player, but must **not** disrupt their focus on gameplay.

However, this must be done under the constraint of realism. No fantasy or supernatural themes allowed.

This is all to achieve that sense of trance one gets in the midst of a concert, that feeling of being hyper-focused and “in the moment”, despite all the activity around them. That feeling is then used as fuel to heighten the game's intensity.

THE SOUL OF THE MELODY

The majority of competitive rhythm games in today's market are very flat and shallow in the area competition. Leaderboards do not facilitate real-time interaction between players. Irrelevant debuffs that affect a player for a short time are not that interesting.

The target in competitive rhythm games has always been for the rhythmically inclined to duke it out... but what is so often forgotten when competition is thrown into the mix is that the main focus of rhythm games is to *showcase and highlight individual rhythmic talent*.

So the hook for the game is interaction that perpetuates the idea that negative effects done onto another player can disrupt them, but can also help focus them, as well as make them look **good** skillfully.

The debuffs in *Mixers and Maestros* are centered around this. All of them only increase the difficulty of the song for the affected player. They last for an infinite period unless the opponent actively removes them. It is crucial that debuffs can become trivial if a player is at a really extreme skill level. Because if they can perform at that high level, then the game, and hopefully their opponent, should respect that.

CORE GAMEPLAY

Players, or in this case, the DJs, will connect to each other (through an online / LAN connection) and choose a single track they will both DJ. They will also choose a difficulty for that track, which is also shared.

Once chosen, both DJs will start individual, but identical, plays of that track at that difficulty.

The play area (and rhythm games) will be split up into two Zones, the **TUNE ZONE** and the **MIX ZONE**.

During their play, DJs will compete to get the most crowd **FAVOR** (a combination of accuracy and points in typical rhythm game fashion) from hitting prompts in the **TUNE ZONE**.

Alongside that is the **MIX ZONE** where DJs can hit prompts to alter gameplay in the **TUNE ZONE** of both players.

At the end, each DJ's **FAVOR** will be compared against the other, and the higher one wins!

ZONES

MIX ZONE <KEYBOARD>

With the keyboard, DJs can mix their opponents track, changing the levels of different parts of their opponents song.

These changes introduce levels of negative effects to the opponent's **TUNE ZONE**, that can possibly mess up their rhythm and hurt their favor.

Similarly, DJs use the keyboard to “un-mix” their track, removing levels of negative effects on their own **TUNE ZONE**.

This is done through more rhythmic input, with prompts streaming in from the top and bottom of the zone. The player will have to press the appropriate keys (“Q”, “W”, “E”, “R”, “A”, “S”, “D”, “F”), to fill up specific meters for different changes, once the meter is full, a level of a negative debuff or recovery will automatically be applied to the appropriate DJ.

Missing prompts in the **MIX ZONE** will NOT decrease **FAVOR**.

TUNE ZONE <MOUSE>

With the mouse, players will tune the track to match the beat.

As they move their mouse around, one of seven wheel sections will be highlighted.

From there, prompts will stream in from the outside edges of the **TUNE ZONE** and the player will have to highlight the section it is approaching and when the prompt overlays a marked area in that section, tune it with the appropriate response:

Left Clicking



Left Hold



Right Clicking



Right Hold



Double Clicking

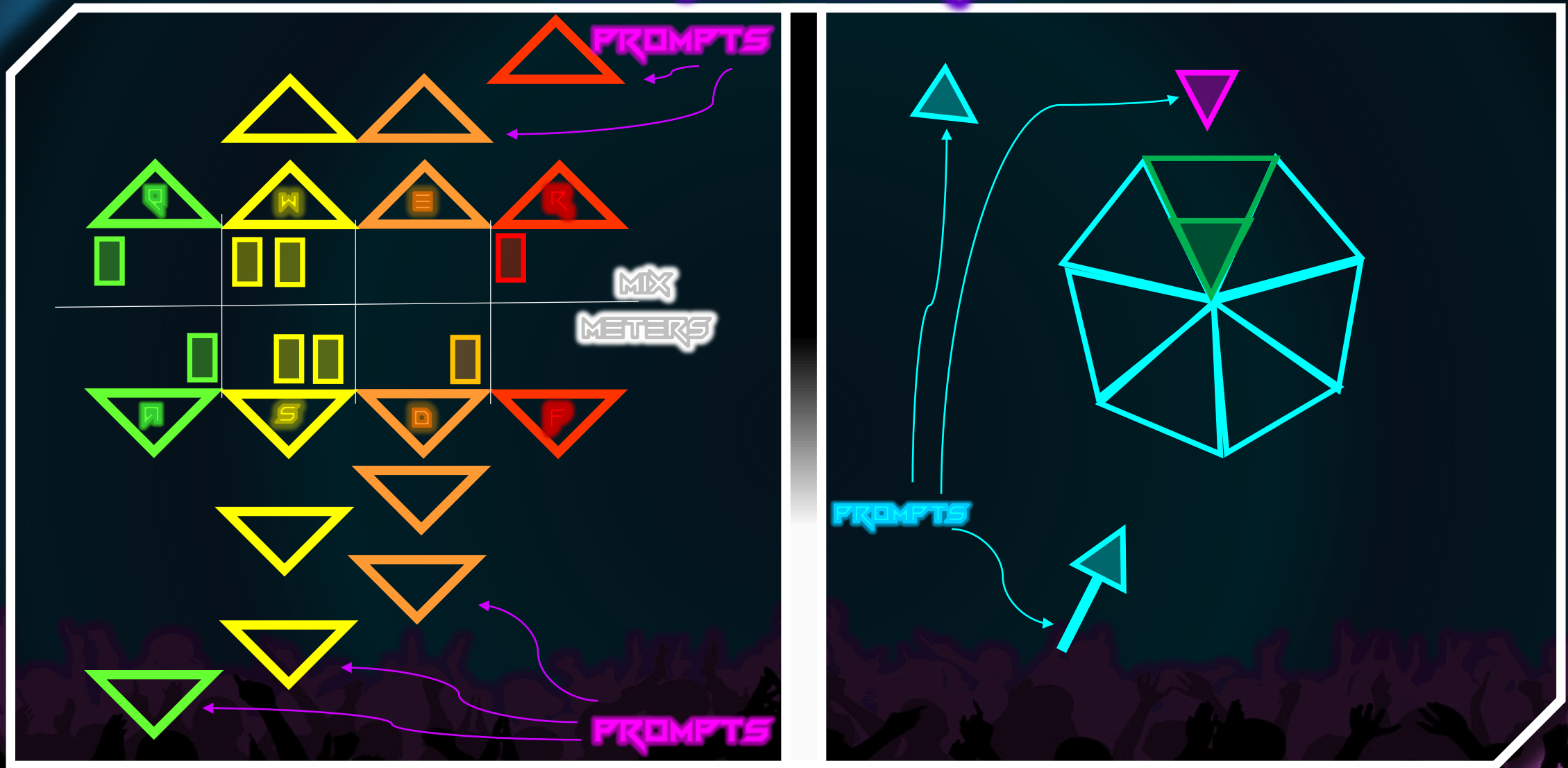


Double Hold



DJs will earn **FAVOR** when they make the right response to the beat and lose it on wrong / mistimed responses.

ZONES MOCKUP



MIX ZONE

HYPE

TUNE ZONE

MIX ZONE EXAMPLES

VOLUME

When DJs raise the **VOLUME** of the other's track, the crowd gets even louder to match. This makes it harder to read the crowd and the DJ must focus harder to figure out how to tune the track to hype them further.

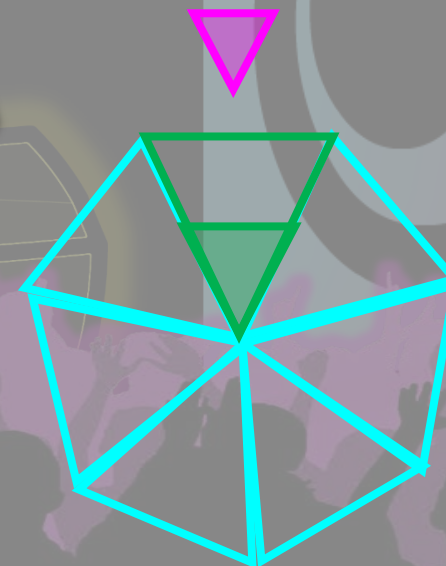
This translates to a vignette appearing and intensifying around the opponent's **TUNE ZONE**, making it harder to see approaching prompts and react accordingly.



TEMPO

When a DJ raises the **TEMPO** of an opponent's song, their adversary has to make more of the right tunes to keep up – but this also means they have more room to miss them as well.

The opponent will now be exposed to additional **TUNE ZONE** prompts that can be hit. The negative to these prompts is that they award no **FAVOR** when hit, but still decrease **FAVOR** when missed.



MIX ZONE EXAMPLES

BASS

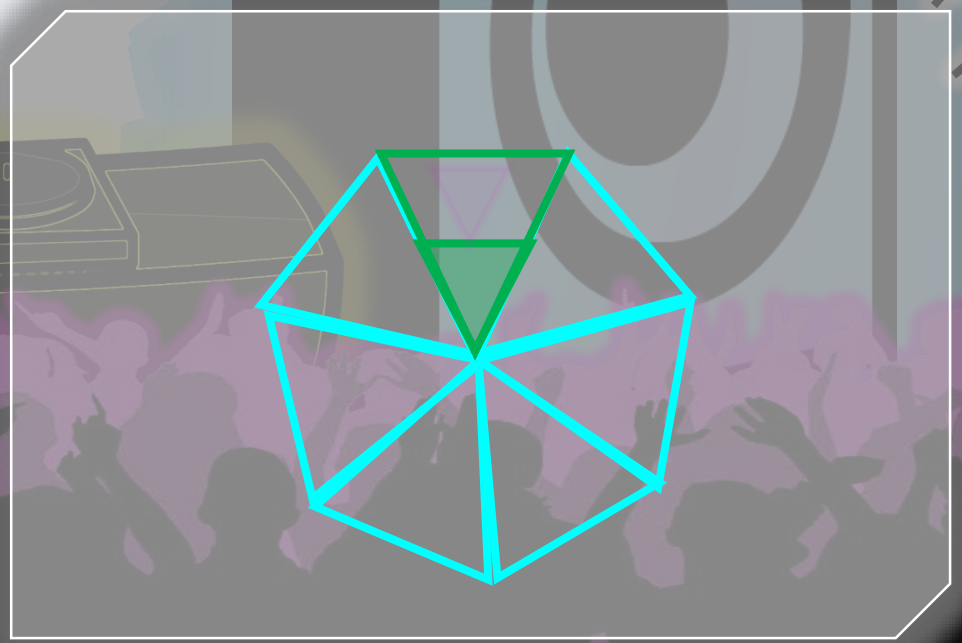
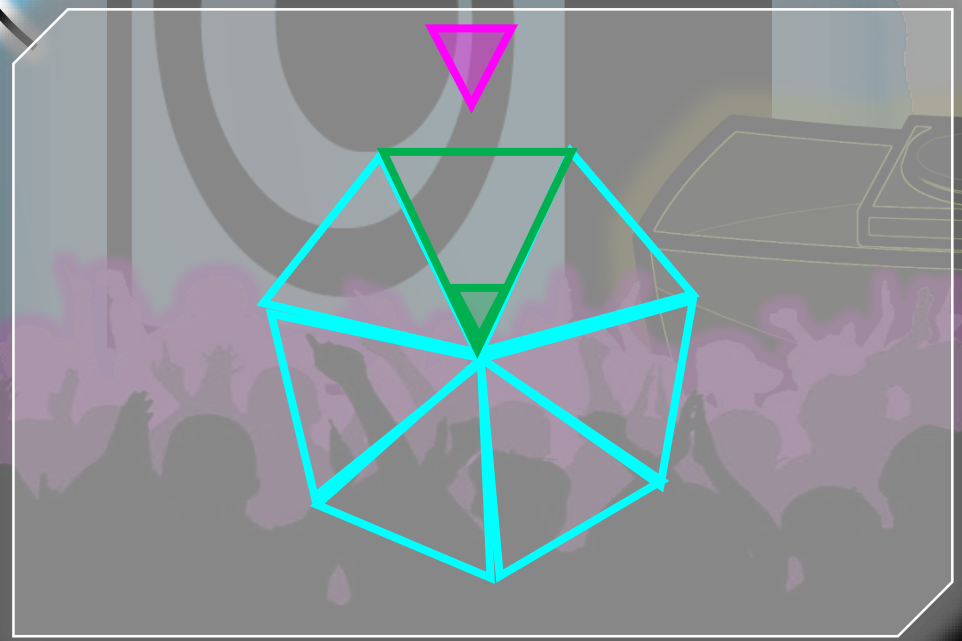
By raising the **BASS** level of the other DJ's track, that DJ now has to track the core beat they follow to make tunes. The opposing DJ must time their tunes even more perfectly to tune the track right.

The areas that determine when to hit a prompt on the opponent's **TUNE ZONE** sections are reduced and the opponent must increase their accuracy accordingly.

NOISE

Raising the **NOISE** on the opposing DJ's track really dirties their track. This disrupts the opposing DJ's ability to determine when to make the right tune.

The prompts in the **TUNE ZONE** gradually turn invisible as they approach the center.



OTHER GAMEPLAY FEATURES

MIX METERS

In spite of the goal to make each DJ duel as high octane as possible, there is one sole restriction in the mixing system: **mixes and recoveries are not immediate**. 'Cause that would make for a garbled and hard to listen to track.

And no crowd likes listening to jumbled mess.

So every prompt hit in the **MIX ZONE** adds to a corresponding mix meter, and when that meter is full, then the mix or recovery is shot off with a short timer— to allow DJs to adjust.

DROP THE BEAT!

Every time a DJ doctors their own track or fires off a mix to their opponent, they **HYPE** up the crowd.

When the crowd is fully hyped, a DJ can hit the spacebar and do what they do best: **DROP THE BEAT!**

Dropping the beat fully hypes the crowd for a period, applying a multiplier to any **FAVOR** earned during that period!

The beat drop is such an overwhelming part in a DJ's track that all debuffs on the track are **removed during the period** – and **only return to half their level** after the period!!!



CLOSING REMARKS

While *Mixers and Maestros* is a competitive game, it is all about challenging your opponent to reach their limit and surpass it – and having them do the same to you.

Interaction between players is all about raising one's opponent up onto a higher level. From there, it is up to the opponent to shine in the spotlight, die in it, or bring themselves back down. Regardless the result, the other player can always raise them up again.

All the style and aesthetics are there as supplements to help players focus and give them the rush and encouragement they need to advance their skills.

