8-bit composition Unit:
Composing for Old School Video Games

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Paradise Valley Community College

What's the plan?

- Video games?
- 8-bit?
- Potential projects
- Let's play!
- Some considerations
- Questions?

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How to reach the resources

- www.JaredOLeary.com
  - Music Education Presentations
  - 8-bit Composition Unit?

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Video Games?

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Video Games?

- Who plays video games?
- Why use video games in music education?

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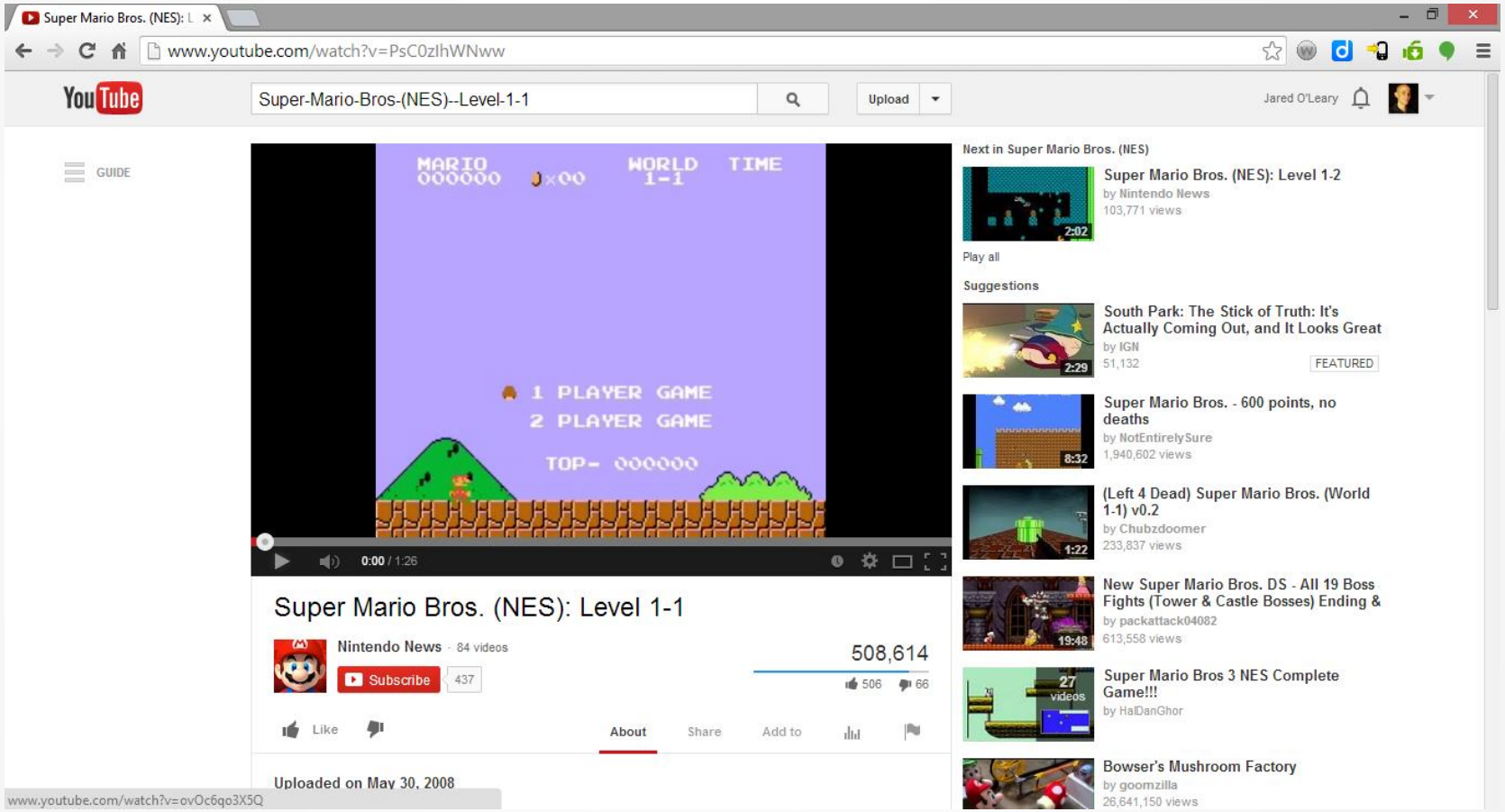
Jumping in:
Super Mario Bros (NES)



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What are 8-bit video games?

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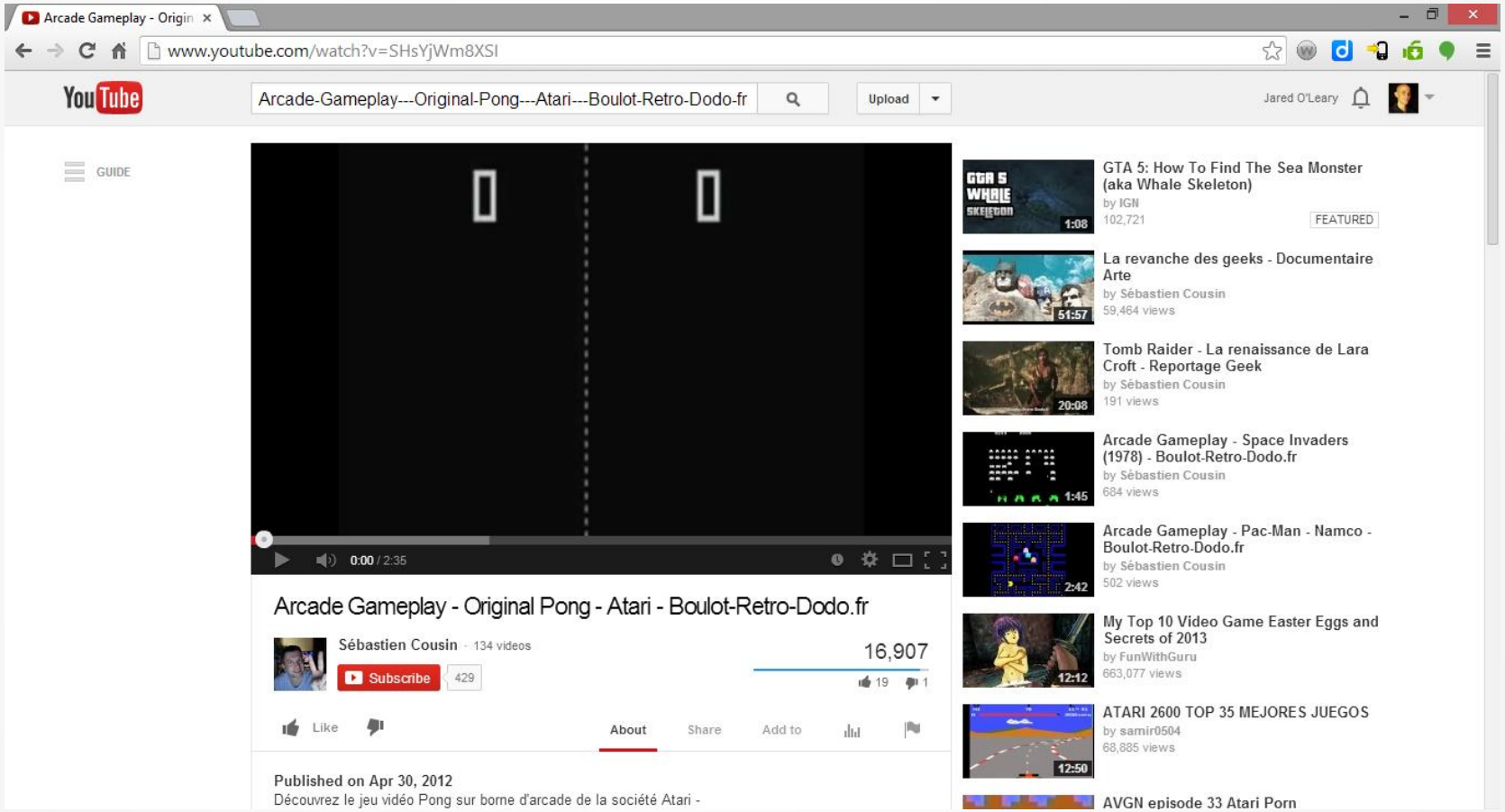
An intro to 8-bit: Pong (Atari)



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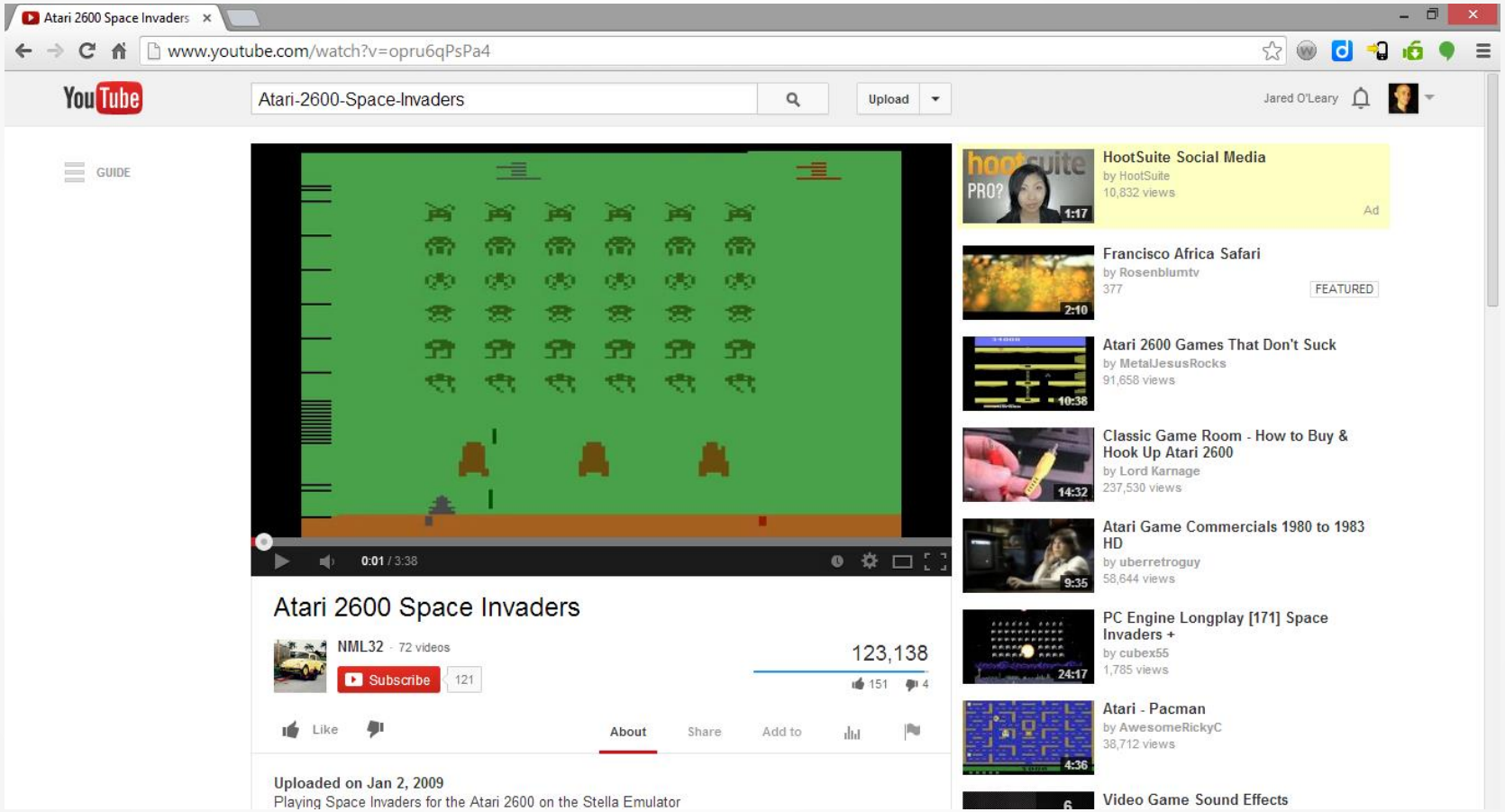
An intro to 8-bit: Space Invaders (Atari 2600)



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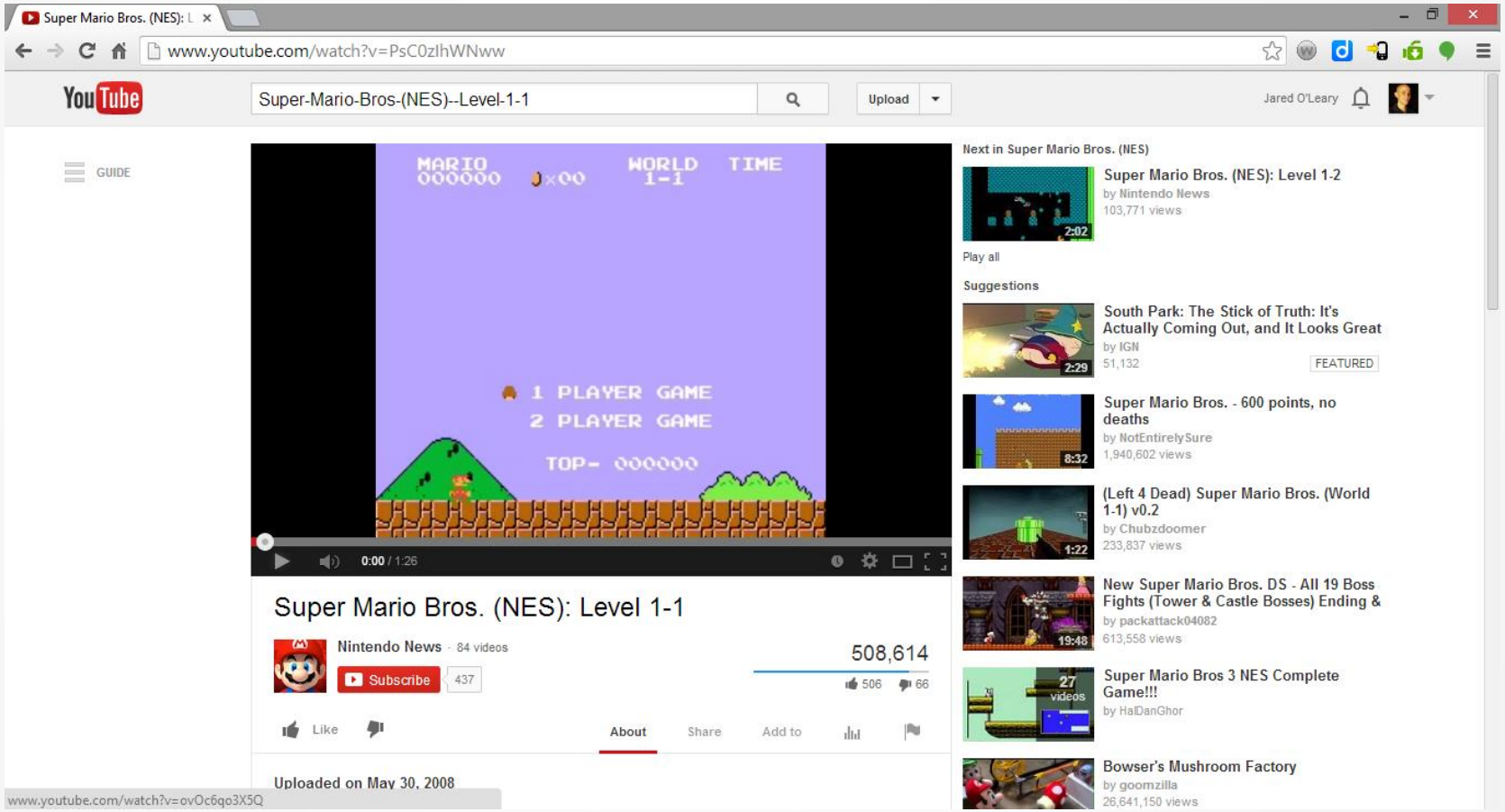
An intro to 8-bit: Super Mario Bros (NES)



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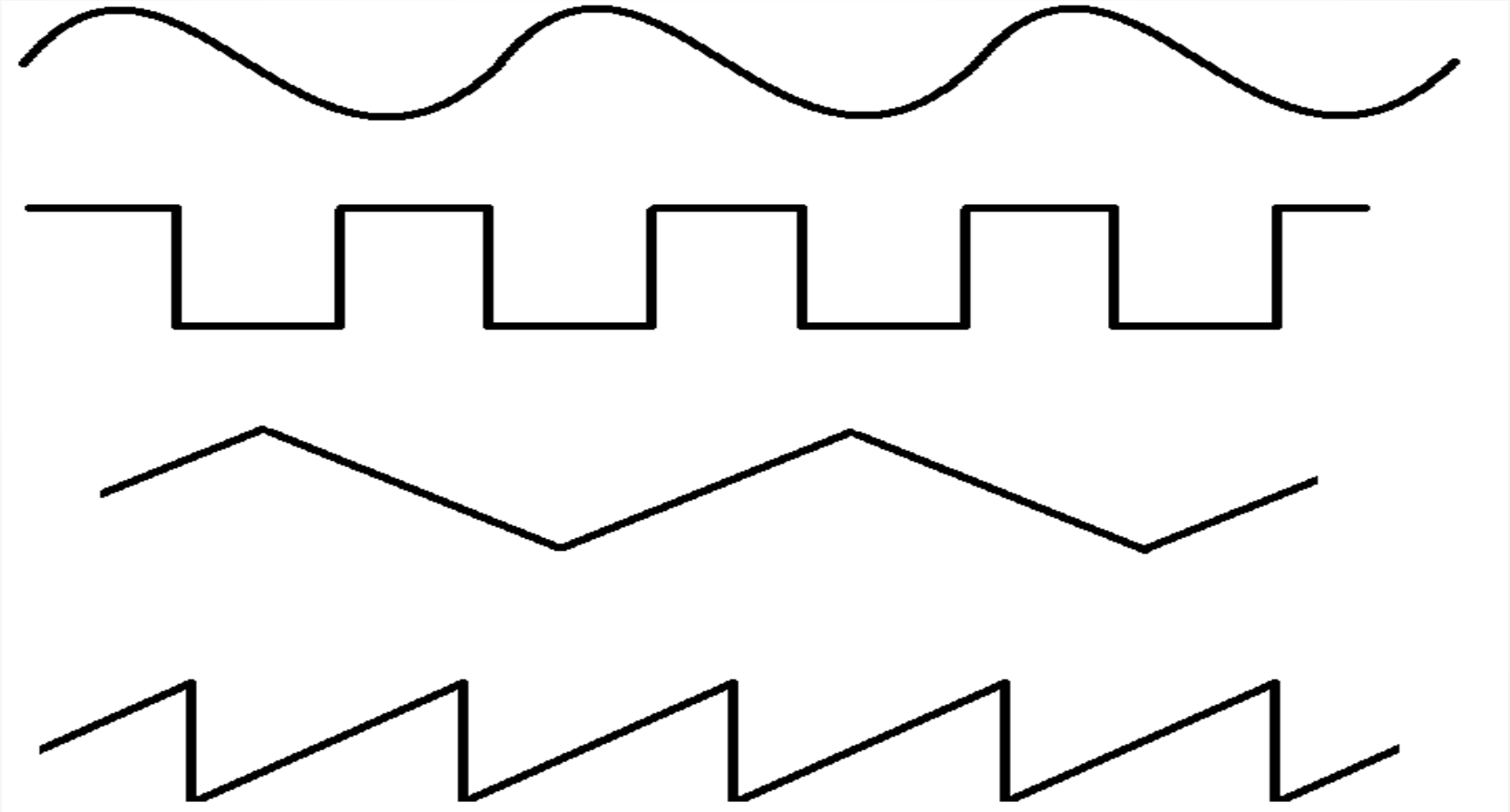
Wave forms in 8-bit



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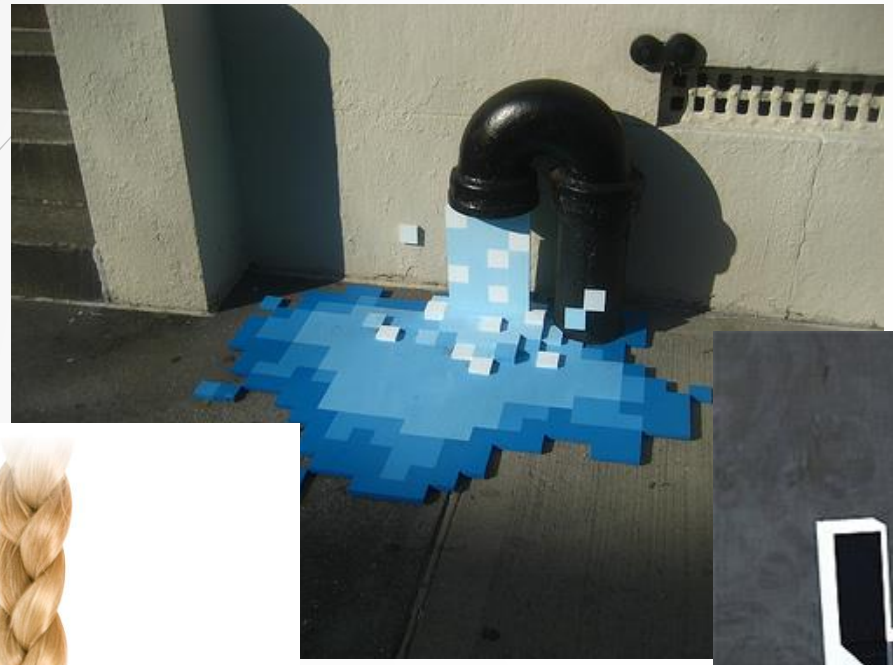
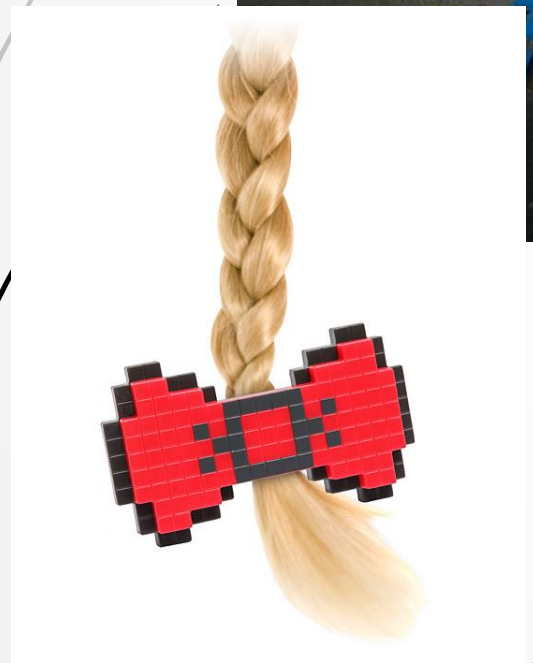
Is 8-bit relevant?





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Potential projects

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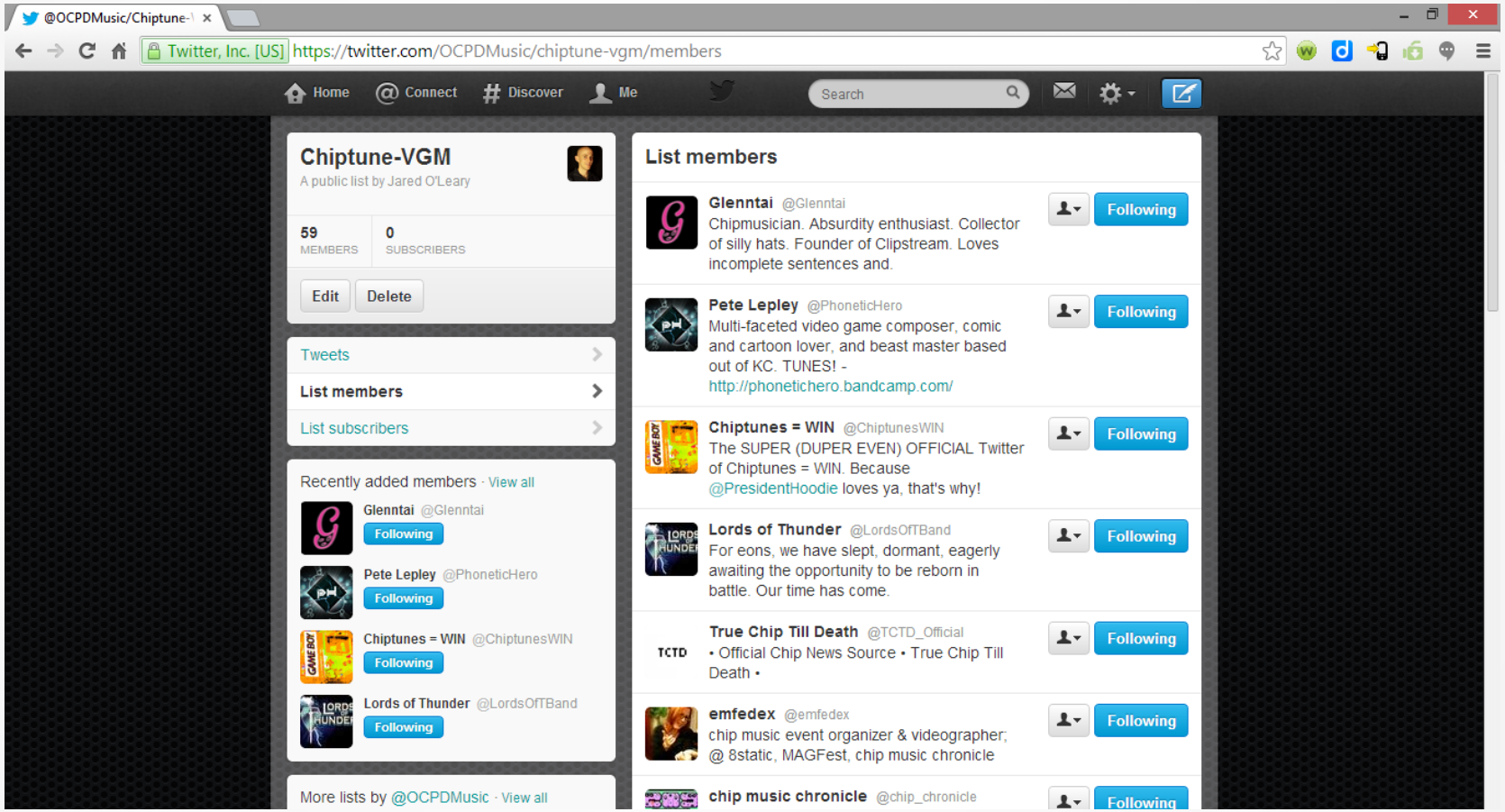
What could a project look like? Composing original works



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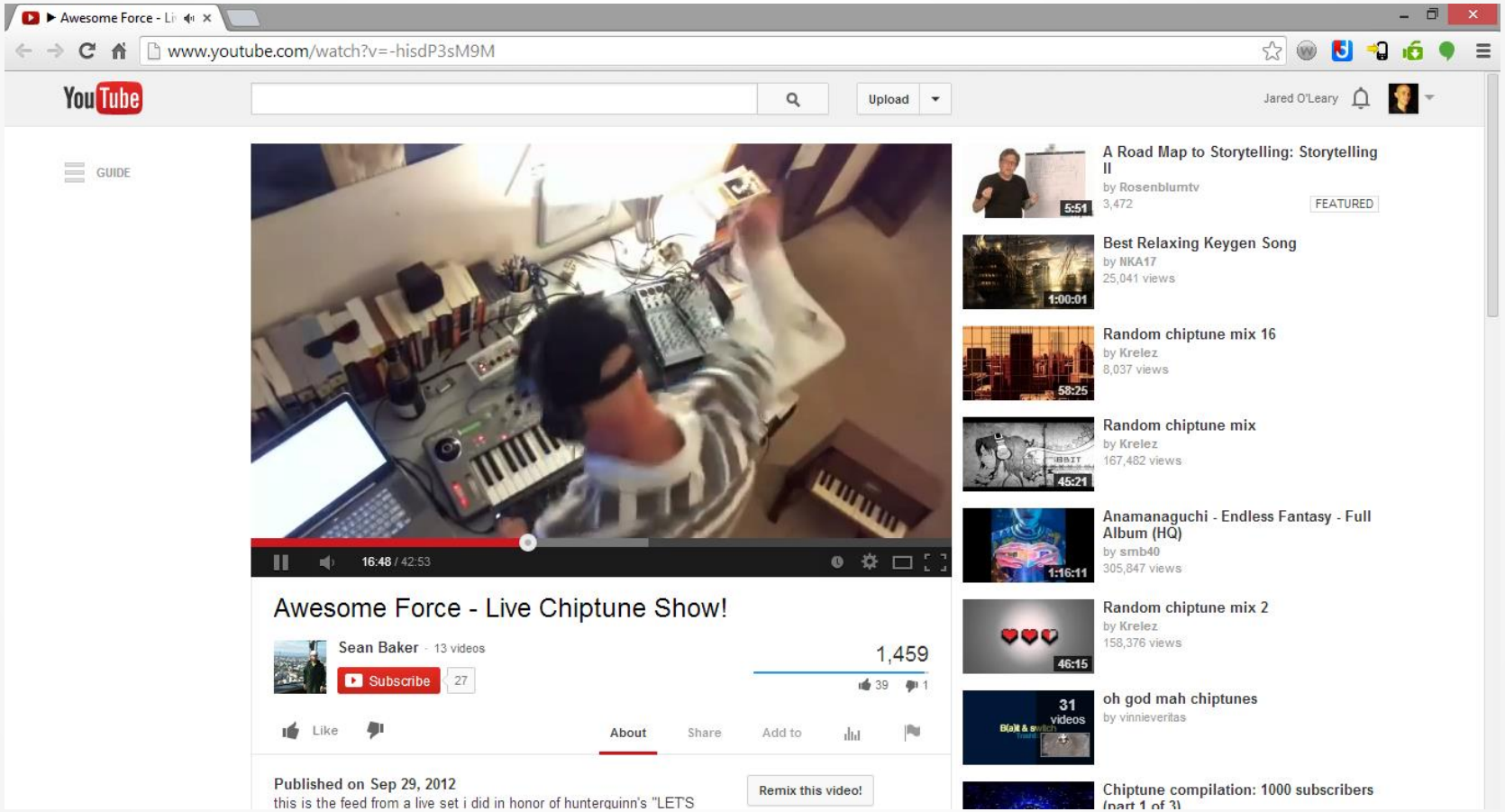
What could a project look like? Performing original works



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What could a project look like? Film scoring for 8-bit video games

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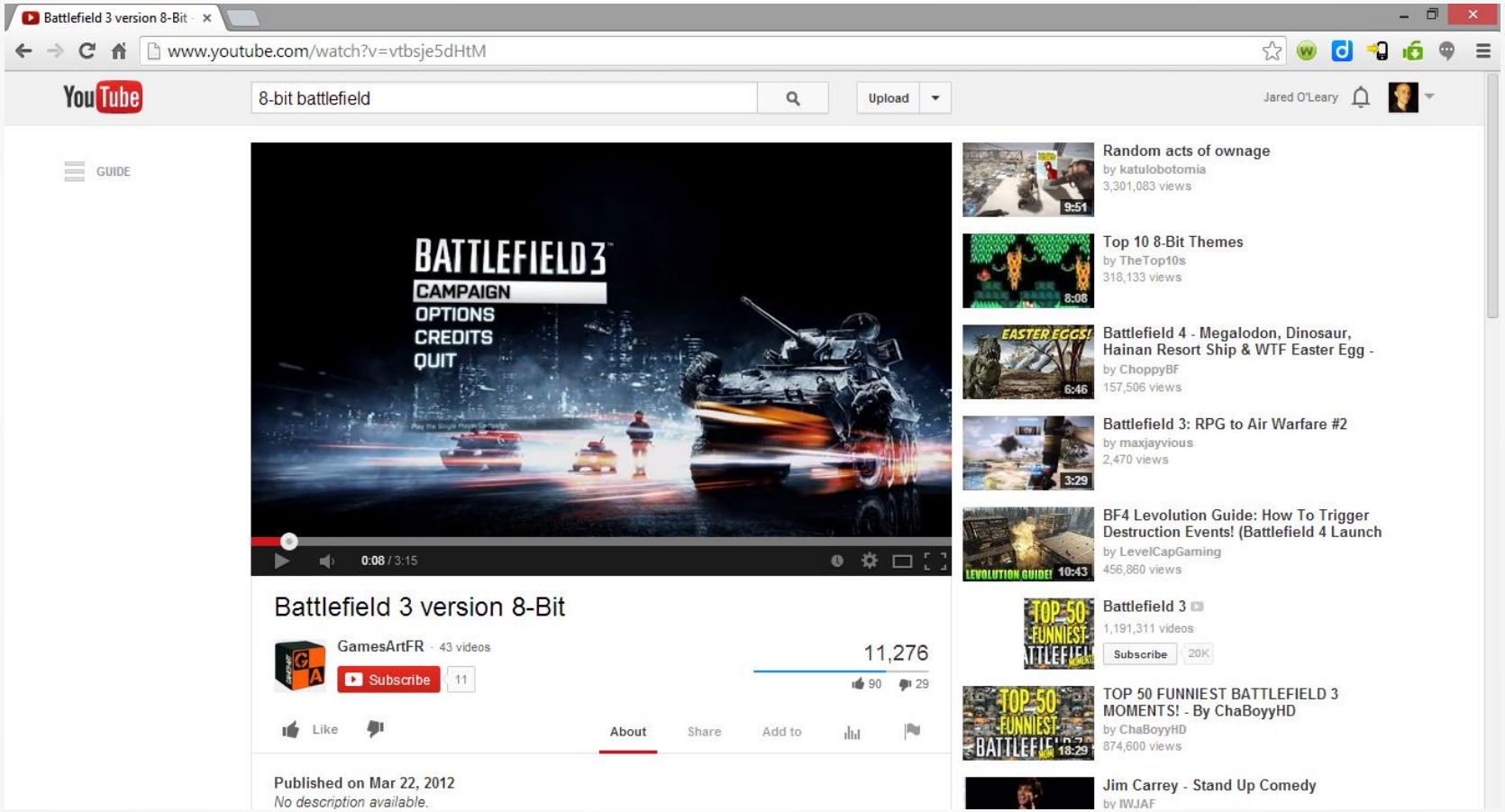
What could a project look like?
Film scoring for modern video games



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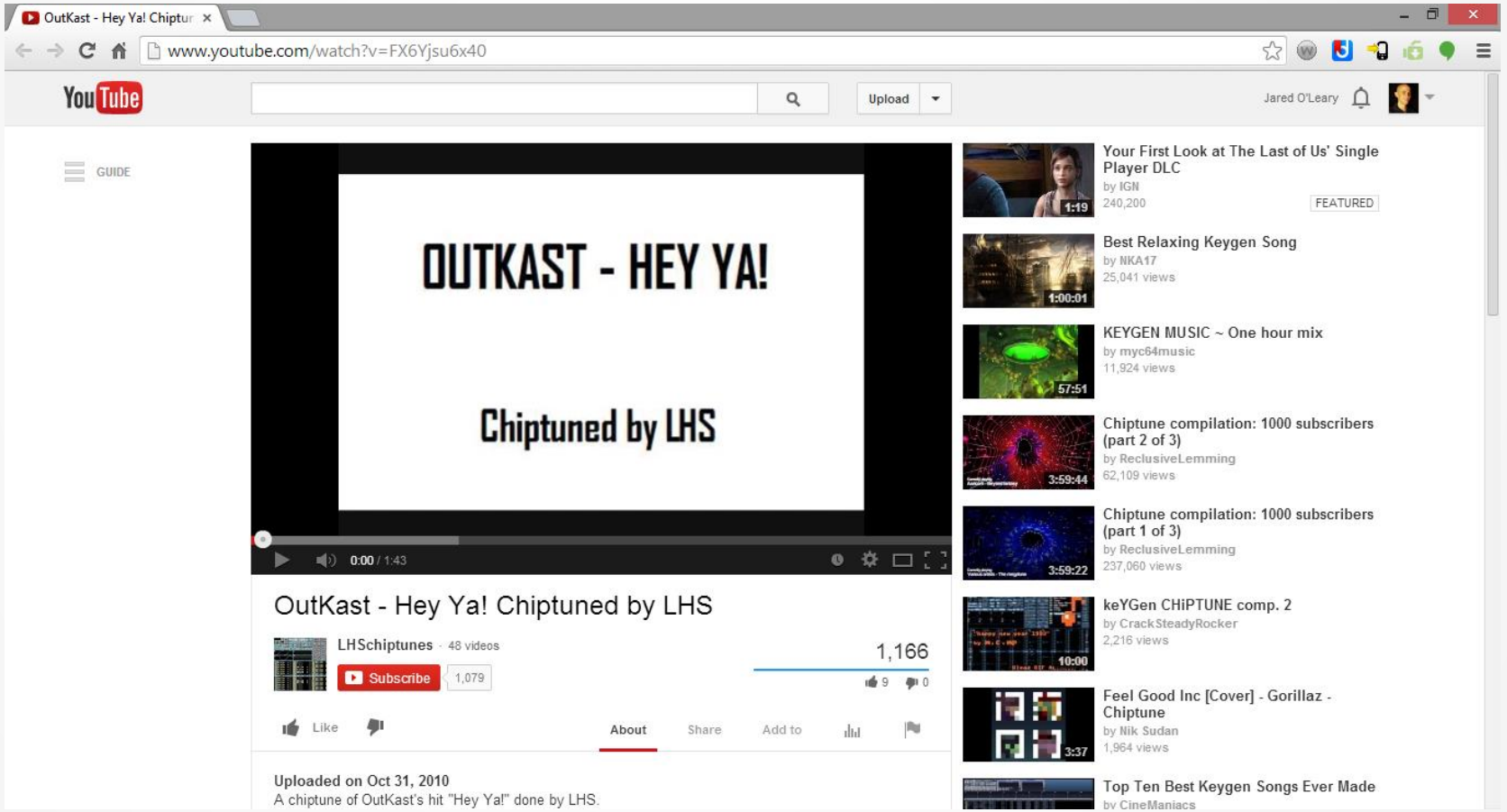
What could a project look like?
8-bit remixes/covers/arrangements



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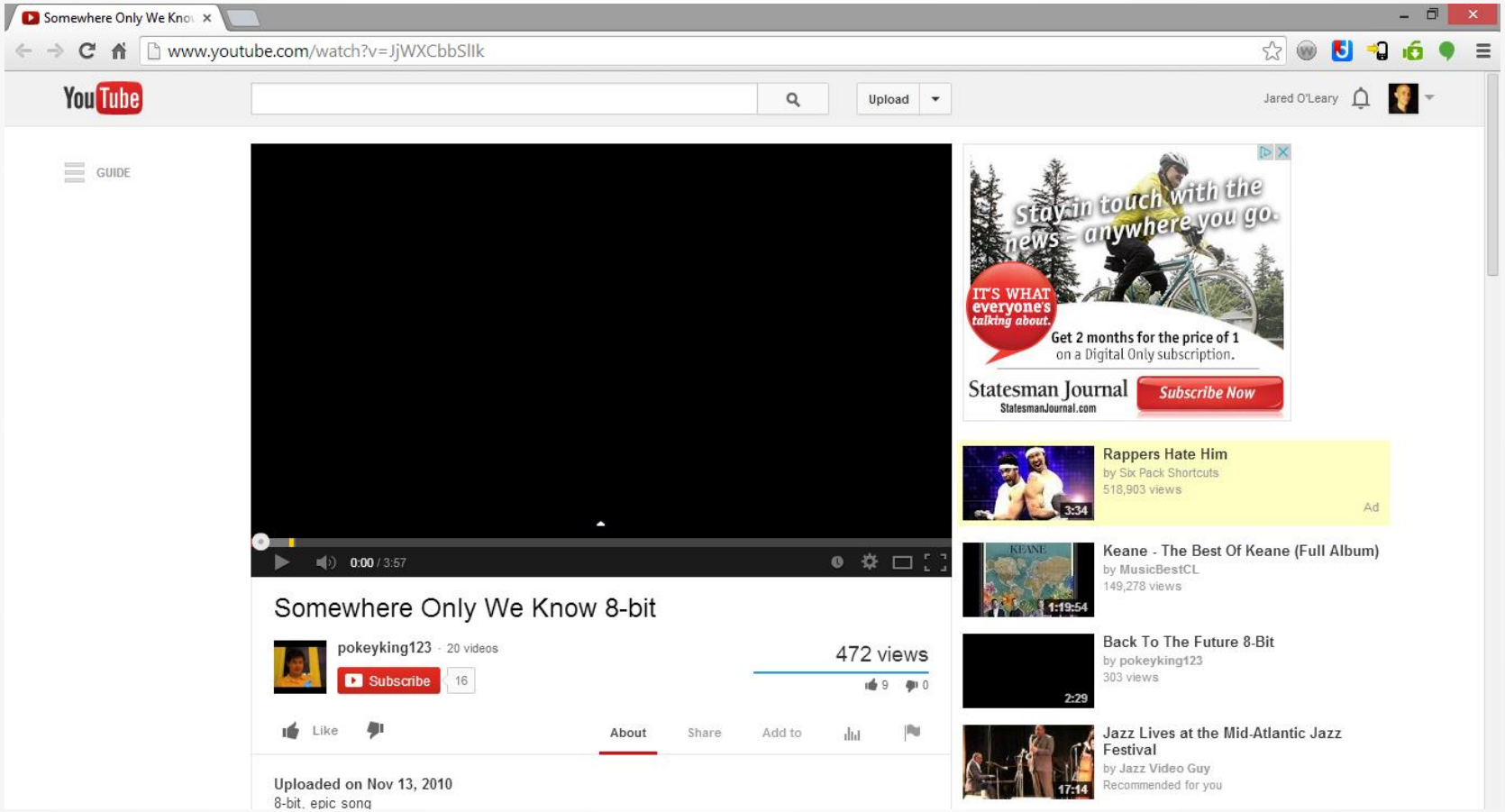

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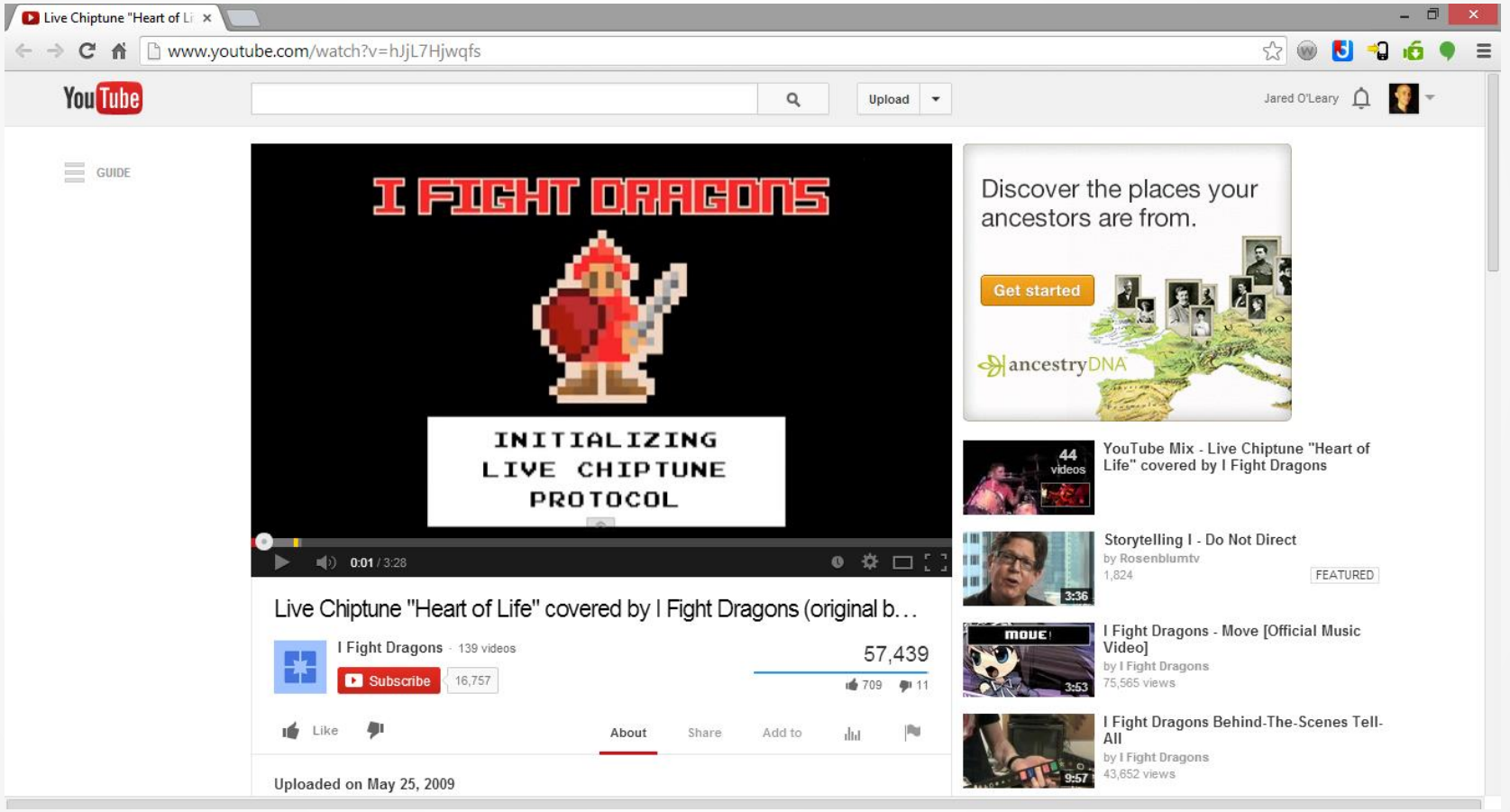

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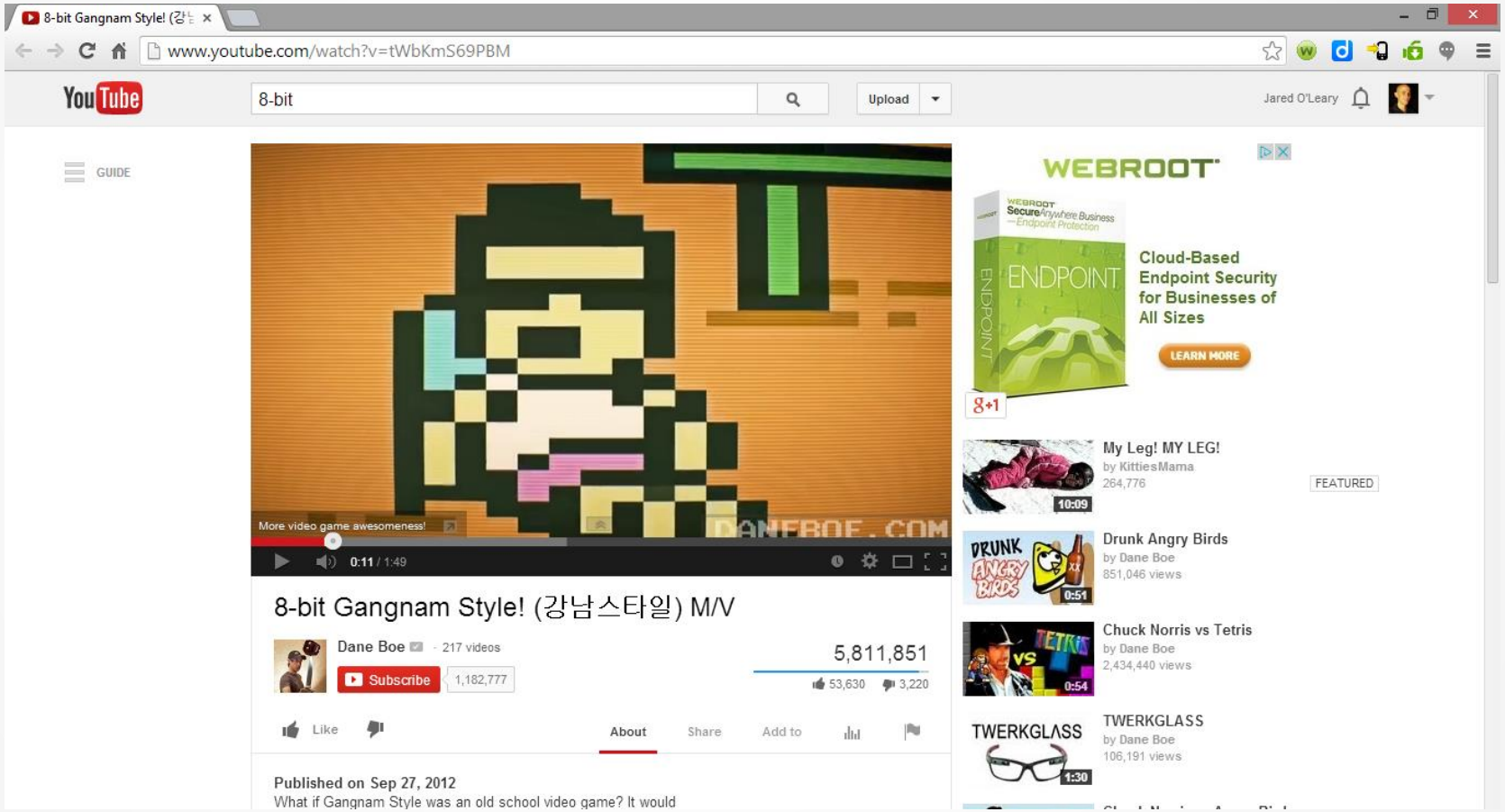
What could a project look like? Interdisciplinary projects



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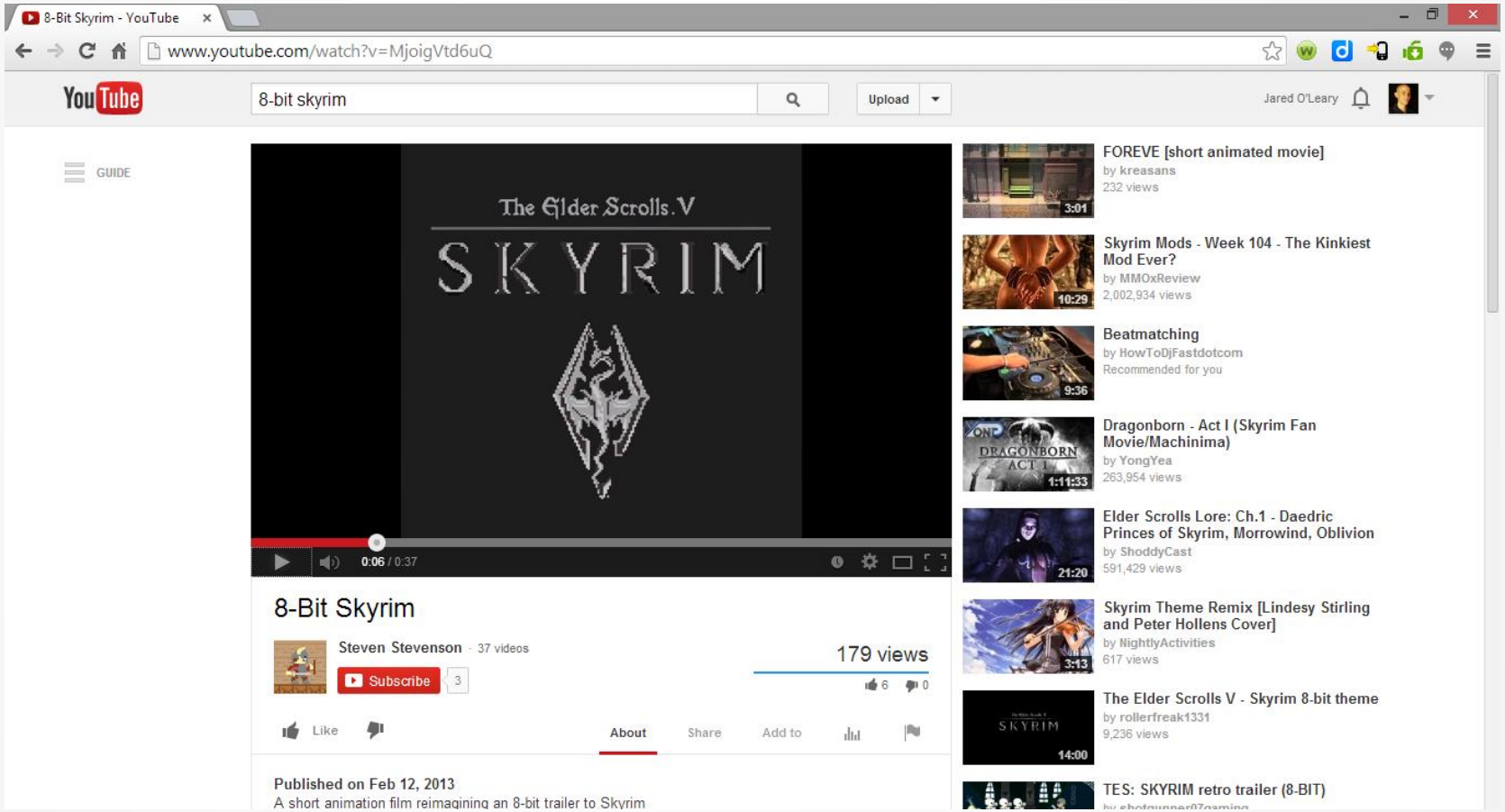

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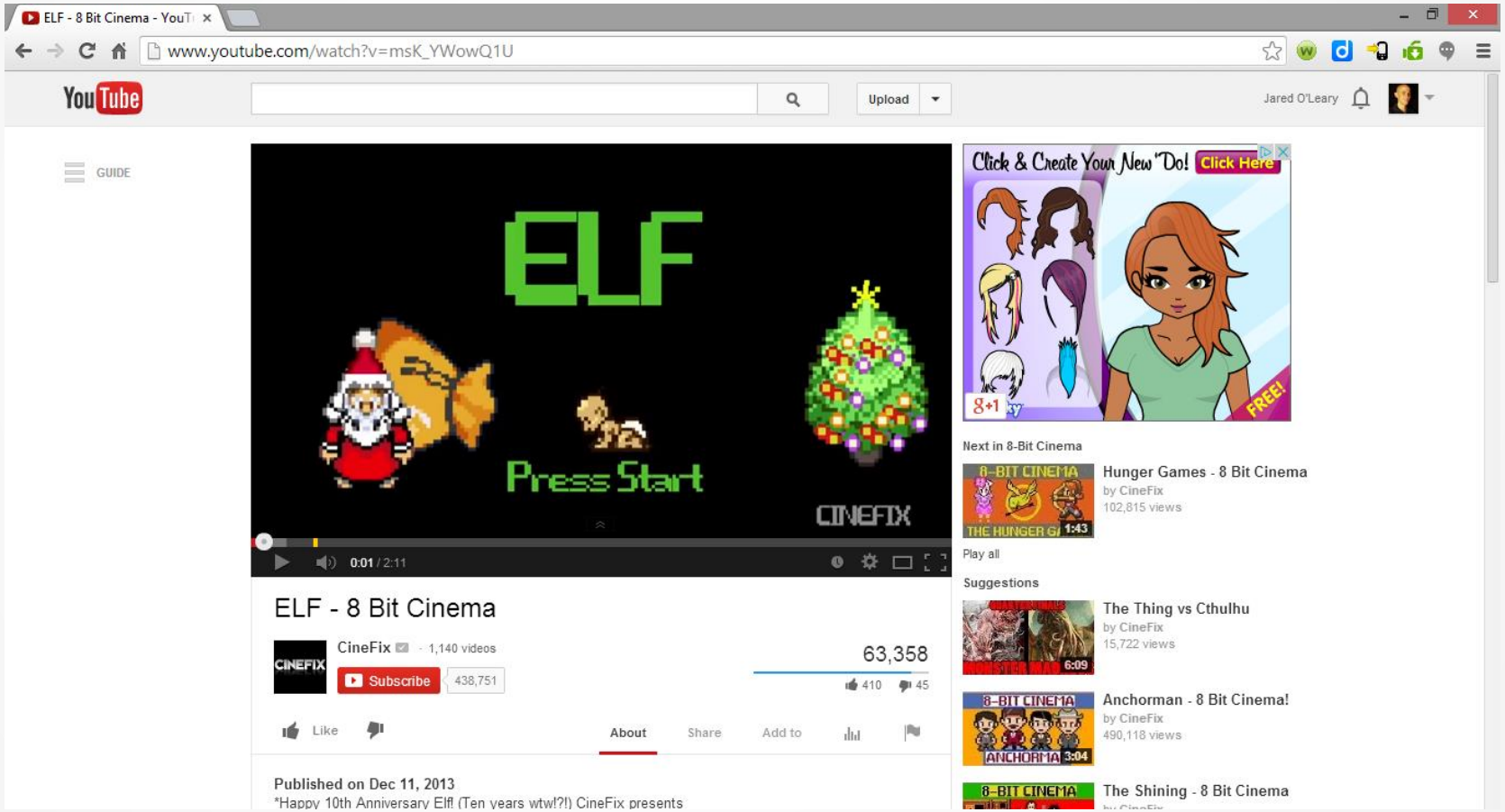

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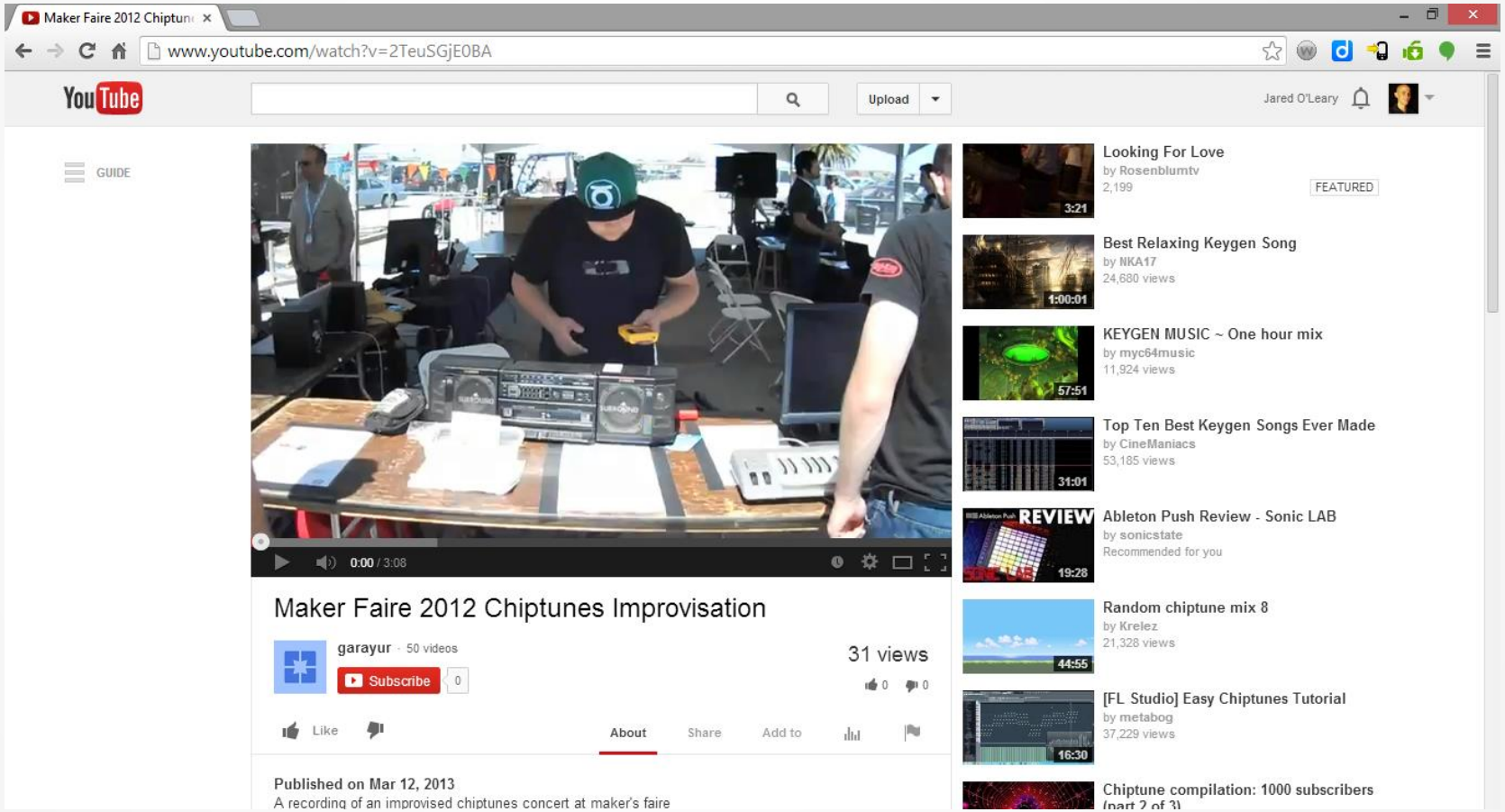
What could a project look like? Interdisciplinary STEM/STEAM projects



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Let’s play!

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What just happened?

- Film scoring
  - Except it's live
- Considerations:
  - Thematic material
  - Interactions with the environment
  - Interactions with the player
  - Flexible

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Some considerations

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Why 8-bit and not any MIDI data?

- Technological constraints = project criteria
  - Memory = Limited number of measures
  - Evolving environments = Evolving music
  - Key/Mode = Key/Mode
  - Limited channels = Limited number of voices
  - Wave form limitations = Limited timbre options

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How do I…

- …find the games to play?
- …know which games are appropriate to play?
- …find/create 8-bit sounds?
- …find out what technology to use?
- …teach a project like this?

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