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ISSUE 20

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SUPER SMASH BROS.

THE ORDER: 1886

THE EVIL WITHIN

DESTINY

WATCH_DOGS

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TIPS & STRATEGIES

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PlayStation 3



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6/17/14



XBOX ONE PS4



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Mild Suggestive
Themes
Violence

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cover story

WATCH_DOGS

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Big Brother is watching! At least he is in Ubisoft's new open-world game, Watch Dogs. This month we look at near future Chicago and show you what the hack all the fuss is about.



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(p14)

welcome

FROM THE PUBLISHER



WAITING FOR WATCH_DOGS

Game delays can be maddening. A game gets announced, and we see previews and want to play.

Sometimes we're told how great the game looks and plays, and our anticipation grows.

Next, the pre-order cards show up, offering some nifty bonuses if we put down our \$5, so we do and start marking the days off our calendars.

Then, one afternoon, we're reading the latest news and, lo and behold, the game we've been looking forward to for the last six months, that we already put a deposit on, is delayed. Now we have even longer to wait.

That is what happened with this month's cover story, *Watch_Dogs*. This original franchise, coming from the wizards at Ubisoft Montreal (the studio behind *Assassin's Creed*) features an ambitious open-world setting and plenty of innovative gameplay concepts.

So what happened to push a game this big, this anticipated, back six months? There's never one answer. Programming this complex can take longer than anticipated. Sometimes the developers have a difficult time making all of the disparate parts—single-player, multiplayer, minigames, the main storyline—work together in unison. It can also take a long time to catch and kill the most severe bugs in a game of this size.

In this instance, *Watch_Dogs* was announced for the new generation of game consoles, as well as PS3, Xbox 360, Wii U, and PC. Frequently, working with new tech poses its own problems, which can add additional time to a project. And if there are two new pieces of tech—like the Xbox One and PS4—double that.

Nobody likes these delays. Fans lose faith, retailers have to change their plans, and companies have to tell shareholders that the game isn't going to bring in the money when they promised.

What matters, though, is the end result. We recently sat down with a near-finished version of *Watch_Dogs*, which left us more than pleased. What we've played so far has been entertaining, polished, and just as innovative as Ubisoft promised. While our excitement had cooled somewhat (particularly while concentrating on awesome new games like *Titanfall* and *inFAMOUS: Second Son*) we're back to counting the days until its release.

So, when you hear about delays such as the one *Watch_Dogs* suffered, just turn to *Walmart GameCenter*. We'll let you know what's going on and keep you at the center of everything gaming!

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Nintendo

WALMART MAKES GAMING MORE AFFORDABLE WITH VIDEOGAME TRADE-IN PROGRAM

While already offering great low prices on the latest and greatest new videogames, Walmart knows that gamers love options. That's why, at more than 3,100 stores nationwide, Walmart is now helping customers get even more value out of the games they own through a recently launched trade-in program.

Using this program, customers can trade in those games they've conquered (or grown bored of) for instant credit—usable in-store or online for anything sold at either Walmart or Sam's Club. Thousands of titles for popular systems like the Xbox 360 and PlayStation 3 will be accepted, and trade-in value will be determined by Walmart associates depending on the base value of the title and the game's condition.

So, what happens to all of those games people trade in for credit? Later this year, those games will become part of a new "Certified Pre-Owned" selection offered at both local Walmart stores and online at Walmart.com. Fully refurbished and in like-new condition, these

"GAMING CONTINUES TO BE AN IMPORTANT BUSINESS FOR US, AND WE'RE ACTIVELY TAKING AIM AT THE \$2 BILLION PRE-OWNED VIDEOGAME OPPORTUNITY."

DUNCAN MAC NAUGHTON, CHIEF MERCHANDISING AND MARKETING OFFICER FOR WALMART U.S.



Certified Pre-Owned offerings will let customers choose from a wide variety of titles for fantastic prices—and without having to worry if the game will work or not once taken home.

"Gaming continues to be an important business for us, and we're actively taking aim at the \$2 billion pre-owned videogame opportunity," said Duncan Mac Naughton, chief merchandising and marketing officer for Walmart U.S. "When we disrupt markets and compete, our customer wins. They'll save money on videogames and have the flexibility to spend it however they want."

Are you the type of gamer who prefers to buy their games new or who can't wait until a particular release gets traded in and offered as used? Fear not—Walmart and Walmart.com will still be your one-stop shop for the hottest titles at the coolest prices.

"While new releases will remain the focus of our gaming business, we're glad to give our customers the option to buy pre-owned games," added Mac Naughton. ©

BY THE NUMBERS

720p Resolution PlayStation 4 owners can now broadcast in thanks to the latest firmware update

4 Number of discs *Wolfenstein: The New Order* will include for the Xbox 360 version

41 Weight difference (in grams) between the old and new Vita models

0 *Star Wars* games that are now considered canon, after Lucasfilm announced that all expanded-universe releases will no longer be considered official

12 Original shows Microsoft will be launching this summer as part of their original programming for the Xbox One





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BORDERLANDS GET NEW IN-BETWEEN CHAPTER LATER THIS YEAR

Gearbox Software has officially announced a new chapter for its hit *Borderlands* franchise, but it's not a sequel...or a prequel! Yes, *Borderlands: The Pre-Sequel*—set for release this fall for the Xbox 360 and PS3—will live up to its unusual name by having a unique position in the series: taking place between the events of the original *Borderlands* and *Borderlands 2*. Telling the story of how the villainous Handsome Jack made his rise to power, *The Pre-Sequel* will let players take up the role of one of four heroes: Athena the Gladiator, Wilhelm the Enforcer, Nisha the Lawbringer, or Claptrap the Fragtrap. No, that's no mistake—players will finally be able to control *Borderlands'* loud-mouthed robot mascot. Another crazy twist to the game? The integration of oxygen

as an important element of gameplay. Characters will expend oxygen with everything they do, meaning survival will rely on finding O2 canisters to refill your reserves. You'll also be able to use up oxygen in quick bursts for things like double-jumps, and since enemies will have their own breathing devices, taking out a foe's oxygen tanks will help give players an added advantage.



MINECRAFT ON MORE SYSTEMS SOON

One of gaming's biggest success stories in years is about to get bigger, as the world-building phenomenon known as *Minecraft* is expected to release on the Xbox One, PlayStation 4, and PlayStation Vita by the end of summer. When those versions hit store shelves near you, they'll be up to date with the other console versions of *Minecraft*, promises developer Mojang. For those wanting to upgrade their experience from the previous generation of systems to the current batch of consoles, the company plans to support the transferring of worlds built into the PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360 versions to the PlayStation 4 and Xbox One, respectively. Moving creations from the PS3 to the PS Vita may also be supported, but Mojang says they aren't yet certain that feature will be workable.

SUPERHEROES INVADE NEXT-GENERATION VERSION OF DISNEY INFINITY

Disney *Infinity* fans, good news: The game is set to get bigger and better this fall with the release of *Disney Infinity 2.0: Marvel Super Heroes*. Disney Interactive considers this to be the next-generation edition of their standout toybox simulator, and players will now have access to more than 20 characters from the Marvel Comic Universe, including Iron Man, Captain America, the Hulk, and Black Widow. In addition to larger themed worlds, new discs will offer expanded scripted storyline content, pre-crafted games for use in the Toy Box,

additional costumes, weapons, vehicles, sky and terrain customizations, and much more. Even better? *Disney Infinity 2.0: Marvel Super Heroes* will also be available to the two latest entries in the world of game systems, the Xbox One and PlayStation 4. For those fans who love Disney characters or who invested in the first *Disney Infinity* release, there's more good news: Those beloved worlds and characters will still very much be a part of the game going forward, and *everything* you already have—whether it's Power Discs or your saved Toy Boxes—will work in the new game.



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JUNE



**THE ELDER SCROLLS
ONLINE**
BETHESDA SOFTWORKS / XBO, PS4

30

JULY



SNIPER ELITE III
505 GAMES / XBO, PS4, 360, PS3

01

AUGUST



MADDEN NFL 15
EA SPORTS / XBO, PS4, 360, PS3

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THE EVIL WITHIN
BETHESDA SOFTWORKS / XBO, PS4, 360, PS3, PC

26

ATARI'S SHAME RESURFACES, THE PRINCE OF PERSIA RETURNS, MORE REMASTERED GAMES COMING...

Christmas in the Quartermann household takes place in the sweltering heat of summer with a little event known as E3! Before that, everyone in the industry is as tight-lipped as possible so as to not spoil any of their big reveals, making my job harder than usual. Even so, I wouldn't be the legendary seeker of secrets if I couldn't dig up some shiny gold nuggets of gossip...I'd be remiss in kicking off this issue's column if I didn't make mention of one of the biggest gossip-related stories in the history of videogaming: the Atari desert landfill. You see, legend states that back in September 1982, then-industry leader Atari had so many unsold copies of *E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial*—one of the biggest commercial failures ever in gaming—that they dug a hole in the desert near Alamogordo, New Mexico, dumped in thousands of copies of it and other unsold Atari 2600 cartridges, and then bulldozed over them, hoping to forever hide the shame they'd brought on our industry. In the 30-plus years since, people have wondered and speculated and argued over the story, some questioning if such an event had really taken place. Finally, my Q-faithful, we know the truth: that it's real. As part of a special documentary they're filming for release on their Xbox One, Microsoft got together a team of gaming historians and giant digging apparatuses, headed into the desert, and unearthed the evidence. The best part? Some of the recovered cartridges still play to this day. Though, having played *E.T.* myself, maybe that *isn't* the best part... Speaking of adventures across the burning

sands of an expansive desert, one series the Q-Mann is ready to get back to is *The Prince of Persia*—if *only* there were a new chapter in the works! Wait, what's this? Why, it's a tweet from Ubisoft Reflections engineer Drew James. Before the tweet (and James' entire Twitter account) mysteriously vanished, it asked "What's next for #PrinceOfPersia?" and was accompanied by a gorgeous art piece showing what looks to be the prince in front of a fantastical desert landscape. What's got this Quartermanniac even more excited is what we get when we combine this with another tasty tidbit that's floating around in the ether: that Ubisoft Montpellier is indeed working of a *Prince of Persia* game, one that's in 2D and powered by the UbiArt Framework. A new side-scrolling *Prince of Persia* sounds like the perfect way to spend 1,001 nights...Finally, while your friendly neighborhood Quartermann would rather be slingin' rumors instead of "I told you so"s, it *does* just so happen that I told you to expect a PlayStation 4 version of *The Last of Us*, and now, Sony has officially unveiled *The Last of Us Remastered* for the system. I also told you to get your space luggage packed for a potential next-gen port of the *Mass Effect* trilogy, and *even more* evidence to that happening has been uncovered. What's next? A next-gen reworking of 4A Games' fantastic *Metro* titles? It is certain. Playing Telltale's *The Walking Dead* or *The Wolf Among Us* on the Xbox One and PlayStation 4? Outlook good. And then there's—well, actually, I better not let slip what I know about *that game* just yet. Maybe you'd better tune in next month... ©

WALMART'S TOP SELLERS

THIS MONTH'S TOP-SELLING VIDEOGAMES...

- 01 **TITANFALL**
ELECTRONIC ARTS / X360, XBO
- 02 **CALL OF DUTY: GHOSTS**
ACTIVISION / WiiU, PS3, PS4, X360, XBO
- 03 **NBA 2K14**
2K / PS3, PS4, X360, XBO
- 04 **GRAND THEFT AUTO V**
ROCKSTAR GAMES / PS3, X360
- 05 **BATTLEFIELD 4**
ELECTRONIC ARTS / PS3, PS4, X360, XBO
- 06 **SKYLANDERS SWAP FORCE: STARTER PACK**
ACTIVISION / 3DS, Wii, WiiU, PS3, PS4, X360, XBO
- 07 **DISNEY INFINITY: STARTER PACK**
DISNEY INT. / 3DS, Wii, WiiU, PS3, X360
- 08 **LEGO: THE MOVIE**
WARNER BROS. / WiiU, PS3, PS4, X360, XBO
- 09 **MLB 14: THE SHOW**
SCEA / PS3, PSV
- 10 **NEED FOR SPEED: RIVALS**
ELECTRONIC ARTS / PS3, PS4, X360, XBO

SEPTEMBER

THE SIMS 4
EA / PC, MAC

02



Destiny
ACTIVISION / XBO, PS4, 360, PS3

09



MIDDLE-EARTH: SHADOW OF MORDOR
WARNER BROS. / XBO, PS4, 360, PS3, PC

16

FIFA 15
EA SPORTS / XBO, PS4, 360, PS3

23

OCTOBER



DRAGON AGE: INQUISITION
EA / XBO, PS4, PC

07

BATMAN: ARKHAM KNIGHT
WARNER BROS. / XBO, PS4, PC

14

NOVEMBER



CALL OF DUTY: ADVANCED WARFARE
ACTIVISION / XBO, PS4, 360, PS3, PC

04

Disney INFINITY



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2.0
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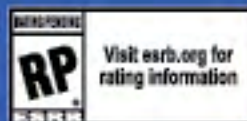


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5

to **PLAY**



NEW GAMES
YOU DON'T
WANT TO MISS

MARIO KART 8

1

- PUBLISHER NINTENDO
- DEVELOPER NINTENDO
- PLATFORM WII U
- RELEASE DATE MAY 30

"Aside from providing an exciting visual when the player is racing upside down or on a vertical surface, there are gameplay implications as well. In anti-gravity mode, players can collide with other racers and obstacles to get a small speed boost. You'll need to change how you race on both surfaces to get the fastest times. Anti-gravity also allows our developers to be even more creative in how they design tracks. In addition to a few truly mind-bending layouts, some tracks also have multiple paths that let players choose between gravity and anti-gravity. And as with other Nintendo franchises that have made the jump to HD on Wii U, *Mario Kart 8* has a remarkable amount of visual detail for players to take in. The power of the Wii U also allows our developers to implement more creative track designs and new types of online features, like Mario Kart TV."

—BILL TRINEN, DIRECTOR OF PRODUCT MARKETING, NINTENDO OF AMERICA

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(s14)



5

to **PLAY**



EA SPORTS UFC

2

- PUBLISHER EA SPORTS
- DEVELOPER EA CANADA
- PLATFORMS XBOX ONE, PS4
- RELEASE DATE JUNE 17

"Accessibility is very important for us. We're working very diligently to craft a control scheme that's easy to understand but still allows the hardcore fan the ability to perform the variety of skills and techniques they expect to see. At a very high level, all the striking is performed using the buttons, and all the grappling is performed using the right analog stick. In regards to submissions, I'd venture to say it would be impossible to create a submission game that doesn't involve onscreen overlays. One thing we've strived to do is make our system expose more of what goes into setting up each submission. The game-play and animation system shows how a fighter would go about setting up an armbar from full mount, step-by step, and the minigame is where you battle to see how deep the submission goes, or if the defender can escape."

—BRIAN HAYES, CREATIVE DIRECTOR, EA CANADA

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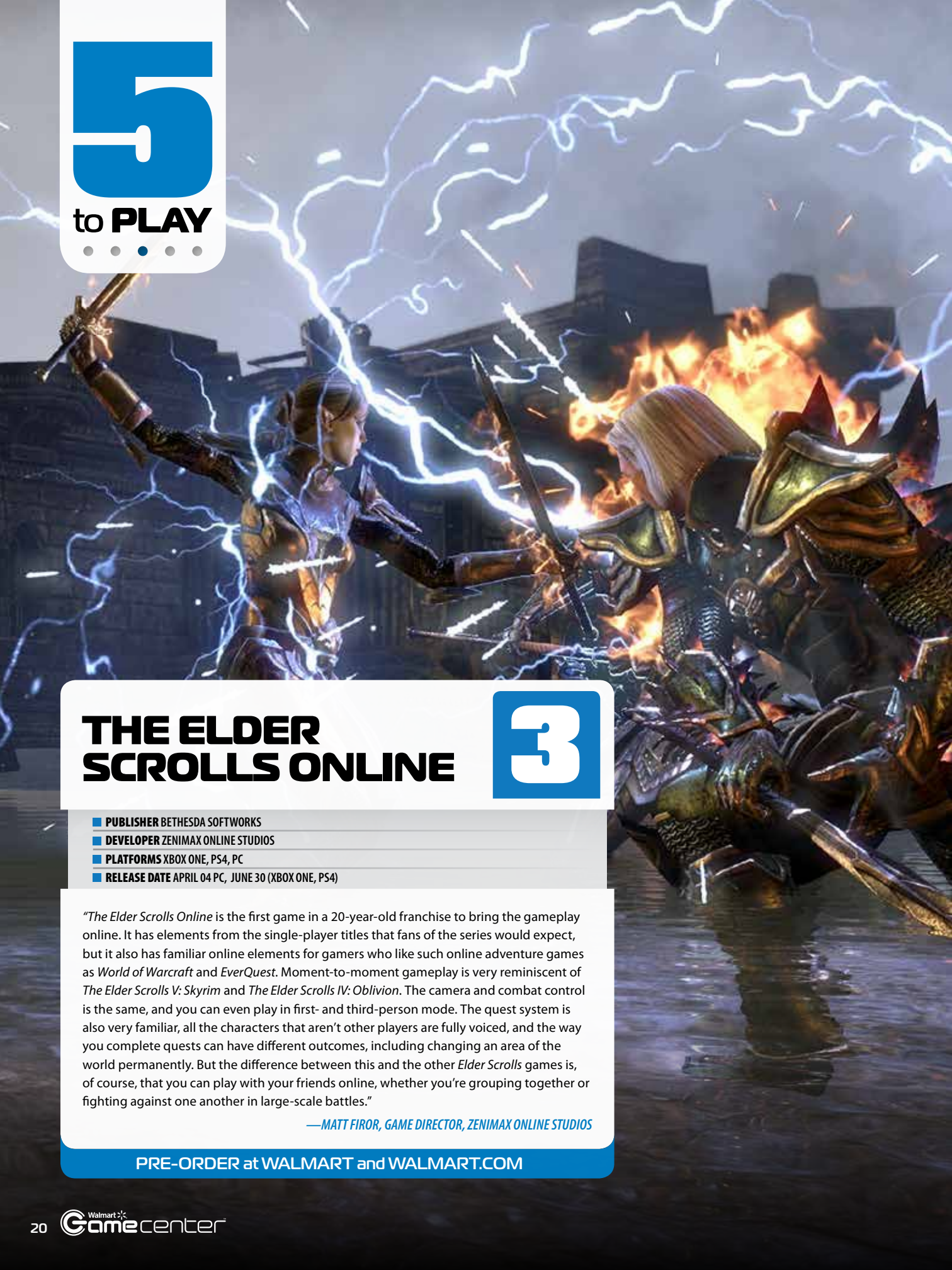


Blood
Intense Violence
Strong Language
Use of Alcohol



SQUARE ENIX

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5

to **PLAY**



THE ELDER SCROLLS ONLINE

3

PUBLISHER BETHESDA SOFTWORKS

DEVELOPER ZENIMAX ONLINE STUDIOS

PLATFORMS XBOX ONE, PS4, PC

RELEASE DATE APRIL 04 PC, JUNE 30 (XBOX ONE, PS4)

"*The Elder Scrolls Online* is the first game in a 20-year-old franchise to bring the gameplay online. It has elements from the single-player titles that fans of the series would expect, but it also has familiar online elements for gamers who like such online adventure games as *World of Warcraft* and *EverQuest*. Moment-to-moment gameplay is very reminiscent of *The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim* and *The Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion*. The camera and combat control is the same, and you can even play in first- and third-person mode. The quest system is also very familiar, all the characters that aren't other players are fully voiced, and the way you complete quests can have different outcomes, including changing an area of the world permanently. But the difference between this and the other *Elder Scrolls* games is, of course, that you can play with your friends online, whether you're grouping together or fighting against one another in large-scale battles."

—MATT FIROR, GAME DIRECTOR, ZENIMAX ONLINE STUDIOS

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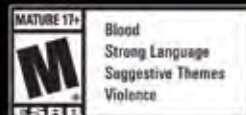
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4

- PUBLISHER EA SPORTS
- DEVELOPER EA CANADA
- PLATFORMS 360, PS3
- RELEASE DATE APRIL 15

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ACTIVISION



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WOLFENSTEIN: THE NEW ORDER



5

- PUBLISHER BETHESDA SOFTWORKS
- DEVELOPER MACHINEGAMES
- PLATFORMS XBOX ONE, PS4, 360, PS3, PC
- RELEASE DATE MAY 20

"*Wolfenstein* has always been about mighty guns, and *The New Order* is no exception. Because we're huge fans of the franchise ourselves, though, we didn't want to introduce anything to the game that didn't feel true to the universe. This is a very big reason for us moving the timeline forward, branching off from the main series, and introducing powerful sci-fi elements and advanced weaponry. The Laser Kraftwerk, for example, is a super handy multipurpose rechargeable laser rifle that you can use as a weapon to disintegrate [enemies] or to cut through metal grates that lead to new areas. And whether you're a run-and-gunner or prefer a stealthier path, we have weapons to complement your gameplay style. We feel that *Wolfenstein: The New Order* falls right in the sweet spot of honoring the legacy of the franchise, yet expanding the scope into an epic adventure with heart, soul, intellect, and copious amounts of mayhem."

—JENS MATTHIES, CREATIVE DIRECTOR, MACHINEGAMES

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10 secrets

of THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN 2



BY PAUL SEMEL

As you all know, Spider-Man does whatever a spider can—which, presumably, includes keeping secrets. Spiders are good like that. This, however, is not a skill shared by the non-spiders who work at Beenox, the Québec City-based studio behind the new movie-connected action game *The Amazing Spider-Man 2*. Not only did the game's executive producer, Stéphane Gravel, spill secrets about the game to us recently, but he also told us some embarrassing things about his coworkers as well.

01 | HEAD, SHOULDERS, KNEES AND TOES

In *The Amazing Spider-Man 2*, Spidey uses his webs to heal himself. "We got that from the scene at the end of the first *Amazing Spider-Man* movie, when he patched himself up with his web shooters," Gravel explains. But while that worked well in the film, it didn't initially in the game. "The first time we did it," Gravel notes, "it didn't work right and instead he sprayed his web all over himself. It was kind of weird-looking."

02 | HIDDEN RHINO

Rather than just a videogame version of the new movie, *The Amazing Spider-Man 2* is actually a sequel to Beenox's 2012 *Amazing Spider-Man* game. That's not to say there aren't some fun nods to the film in the game, however. "While our game starts before the movie," Gravel explains, "the two do overlap. So, while Rhino isn't in our game, we did debate having him appear and even made a model of his armor, which is why it's hidden somewhere in the game."



03 | STAND THE MAND

Like the movies, Beenox's *Amazing Spider-Man* games also have cameos from *Spider-Man* co-creator Stan Lee. Except in this game, Stan doesn't just pop in, make a joke, and then head to the craft-service table for a snack. "During a brainstorming session," Gravel recalls, "someone had put the words 'Comic Stand' on this board with other ideas, and someone realized we could make it say 'Comic Stan' if we had the sign malfunction."



05 | HELP DESK

Among the people who work at Beenox, Gravel tells us, a couple of pranksters lurk. But at least their hijinks are somewhat work-related. "One time, when our lead artist, Jimmy Samson, went on vacation," he recalls, "they covered his desk with fake webbing. They also hung out our mascot—this inflatable Spider-Man who, because we're French-Canadian, we call 'Pierre Paquet'—over his desk."

06 | WHO'S CHICKEN?

With Beenox located in Québec City, you'd think they could get pretty much any food they want for lunch. Unfortunately, Gravel explains, their favorite fried-chicken place is just a bit too far away. Well, usually. "One night, while making *The Amazing Spider-Man 2*," he explains, "our lead programmer Alexandre Lessard drove there, got something like \$600 worth of food, and drove back. He said his car smelled like fried chicken for a week."

07 | PING-PONG PLAYA

While game studios often have arcade machines or other distractions to give their employees a break, the one Beenox has may have worked a little too well. "We bought a Ping-Pong table like a year ago," Gravel explains, "and it just became such a big thing around the studio that it became a common excuse when someone was late for a meeting that they were probably playing Ping-Pong."

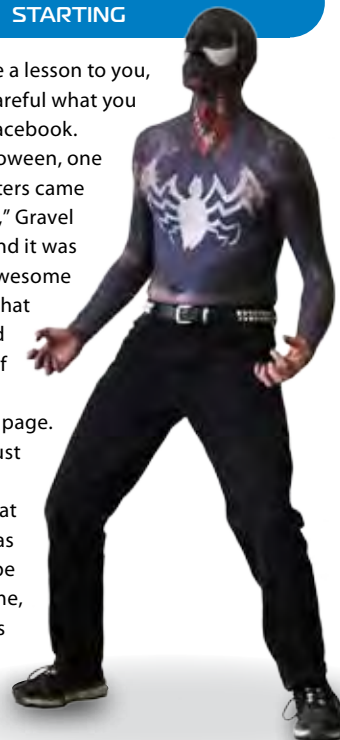


08 | FEELIN' HOT HOT HOT

While their penchant for Ping-Pong sometimes made Beenox staffers late to meetings, it also, Gravel notes, sparked a studiowide Ping-Pong tournament. But this, he adds, is not the only way Beenox-ians get competitive. "They won't like me for saying this," he sighs, "but the guys on the programming team try to prove their masculinity by eating really spicy sauces. They buy really spicy sauces off the Web and dare each other to eat them. Lessard even once made his own and made sure it was super-hot."

09 | I'M TIRED OF RUMORS STARTING

Let this be a lesson to you, kids. Be careful what you post on Facebook. "Last Halloween, one of our testers came as Venom," Gravel recalls, "and it was such an awesome costume that we posted pictures of it on our Facebook page. But that just started rumors that Venom was going to be in the game, which he's not."



10 | BELIEVE IN THE BEAT

Like the movie, *The Amazing Spider-Man 2* game features one of Spidey's most iconic enemies, Electro. But while you'd think this would prompt someone, anyone, at Beenox to suggest that they should call the game *The Amazing Spider-Man 2: Electro's Boogaloo*, Gravel says that, no, no one did. "Being French-Canadian, English isn't my primary language," he concedes, "so I don't even know what a 'Boogaloo' is." Uh, it's a reference to the classic 1984 breakdancing movie *Breakin' 2: Electric Boogaloo*. "Sorry, don't know it." Maybe they should've kept this secret to themselves.

04 | POLICE ACADEMY

It's not unusual for games to feature characters who look like people who made the game. But in the case of the police chief in *The Amazing Spider-Man 2*, who looks like Gravel, this wasn't a case of him pulling a Hitchcock. "When we were using a 3D scanner to make some characters," he explains, "I was really curious how it worked, so they scanned my head. But months later, when we were finishing the game and had to replace the police chief, we didn't have any extra characters. So, we found the old scans of me and used that."



COVER STORY

WATCH DOGS

WELCOME TO YOUR NEW REALITY

BY RAY CARSILLO



- PUBLISHER UBISOFT
- DEVELOPER UBISOFT MONTREAL
- PLATFORMS XBOX ONE, PS4, 360, PS3, PC, WII U
- RELEASE DATE MAY 27 (WII U Q4 2014)



A big focus in modern games is the immersion factor. How much can a game suck you into its fictional world? If any aspect breaks this contrived illusion, it can ruin the experience. So, when Ubisoft Montreal started work on *Watch_Dogs* half a decade ago, they zeroed in on trying to make this one of the most immersive games ever seen.

They began by setting up shop in the real world, in modern times, in an environment that people from all walks of life could relate: Chicago. But it turns out that this urban locale was a bit of a shock to the system for the guys who brought us *Assassin's Creed* and *Far Cry*.

"I think it's a challenge anytime when you try to go into a known urban setting," admits creative director Jonathan Morin. "It constrains creativity in a certain sense, but it also gave us clear goals. For example, I had to nix several items we wanted players to hack initially, because you can't hack them in real life. We had to use reality as a

barrier to have something elegant and not to cross the line of sci-fi too much."

It wasn't just the setting that went into grounding the game in reality, though. The diverse selection of characters technomancer Aiden Pearce encounters during his adventure, combined with a plot based around stories you might see on the evening news—like identity theft and government hacking—are the real driving points of *Watch_Dogs* and will keep players exploring this open-world take on the Second City.

"I really wanted to push the dramatic tone with *Watch_Dogs*, something that's a

bit rarer in games," says Morin. "To do it in an open world was even more risky, since you can spend hours upon hours in the setting."

In order to provide that hook, Morin didn't try to ape other games—instead, he looked to TV and the most popular crime drama in recent years.

"*Breaking Bad* was an inspiration and source for the characters in regards to their tone," he reveals. "I got attached to [protagonist] Walter White after two or three episodes, but my wife took a bit longer, and it was because those guys seemed to be making the wrong choice every single



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**"I HAD TO NIX SEVERAL ITEMS WE WANTED
PLAYERS TO HACK INITIALLY, BECAUSE YOU
CAN'T HACK THEM IN REAL LIFE."**

CREATIVE DIRECTOR JONATHAN MORIN

AIDEN'S ALLIES

The life of a vigilante like Aiden is mostly a solitary one, but every now and again, even he needs some help. When those times arise, he looks to a short list of allies to help him continue his quest for vengeance against those who killed his niece.

JORDI CHEN When it comes to Jordi, think of Harvey Keitel's character in *Pulp Fiction*. If you need a mess taken care of, you call in Jordi...for a price. Unlike the Wolf, though, Jordi has an artistic flair to cleaning things up and takes great joy in doing it, expressing himself in how he removes "problems."

CLARA LILLE A hacker known as BadBoy17, Clara reveals herself to Aiden when they both can further their use to each other. Clara may have a lead on the people who hired the gun that killed Aiden's niece, while our protagonist's unique skillset can help Clara accomplish her own goals.

NICOLE PEARCE Aiden's sister—and mother to his deceased niece, Lena, and still-grieving nephew, Jackson. While Aiden still can't forgive himself for that night, Nicole has, all in the hopes of having her brother around more in her life. She also hopes a more reliable presence from him can help Jackson with his post-traumatic stress.

Smartphone Breach

Smartphone Breach is a required component acquired for One-Time Hacks.

time and some people have a hard time connecting with that. But at the same time, compared to movies, TV manages to bring you to a level of understanding of the character that's far more profound than you can do with a two-hour movie."

Morin explains that most game designers treat scripts like they're just another form of the typical 90-minute

cinematic experience, but he thinks that's a flawed approach.

"In reality, the length of a game like this is closer to that of a full TV-series run, so we had the luxury to try to bring a lot more layers to it," he says. "That's why Aiden talks to himself; there's a narration going on there. It helps the players understand the guy progressively and they don't perceive him

just as a bad guy who acts in a certain way, but instead shows emotional layers and suggests more sophisticated motivations as to why he acts as he does. This helps the players stay in the character's head."

But the immersion doesn't end with the single-player component. *Watch_Dogs* breaks down the walls between single-player and multiplayer modes and makes the transition between the two as seamless as possible in order to make players always feel as if they're in Aiden's shoes. The same world map, weapons, and vehicles from single-player carry over, and the same objectives are given to everyone, so there's no inherent advantage for any individual player when jumping into a multiplayer match.

"THE LENGTH OF A GAME LIKE THIS IS CLOSER TO THAT OF A FULL TV-SERIES RUN, SO WE HAD THE LUXURY TO TRY TO BRING A LOT MORE LAYERS TO IT."

CREATIVE DIRECTOR JONATHAN MORIN

SECOND SCREEN

Watch_Dogs will feature ambitious off-screen elements for both iOS and Android





"We wanted to make sure to nix the intimidating part of online play," Morin says. "A lot of people will play an action-adventure game like *Watch_Dogs*, but we found through testing that 60 to 70 percent of them are intimidated by the idea of a multiplayer lobby. But when you're playing *Watch_Dogs*, it feels like just another mission. You can go into the grid on the map

and press a single button, and instantly, you're there."

No cluttered menus to work through and a world and characters grounded in reality? *Watch_Dogs* may well be the ultimate immersive experience, where the only time you realize you're no longer in Aiden's world is when the credits roll and you finally switch your system off. 📺



THE MORAL CODE

A lot of games these days like to tie consequences to player choice with a binary good-and-evil system. Even here, though, *Watch_Dogs* works in plenty of shades of gray.

"We're trying to hide our system in an instinctive type of choice," creative director Jonathan Morin explains.

"Many games have a whole new interface and really try to explain the tenets of each choice, because they want to make sure players understand there are choices."

"IN LIFE, YOU DON'T OPEN A DOOR, MEET A NEW PERSON, AND GET A LIST OF DIALOGUE OPTIONS."

CREATIVE DIRECTOR JONATHAN MORIN

But Morin and his team wanted a system that more closely mimicked what we see in our day-to-day lives simply walking the streets.

"In life, you don't open a door, meet a new person, and get a list of dialogue options," he says. "Sometimes you only realize you had choices after you actually made them, and we wanted to be more like that. That's why our reputation meter doesn't have scores. It does have a positive/negative feel, but we don't want to become the game that says, 'Yeah, kneecapping a guy is better than shooting him in the head.' Instead, you just tell players that there are consequences to how they play all the time, just like in life."



STEAM POWER

One of Aiden's most powerful hacks is tapping into the steam-release system underneath most of Chicago and causing a blockage. After only a few seconds of overwhelming pressure, the pipes blow, and Aiden has a giant pothole between him and his pursuers.

Steampipe Hacked**MAN ON THE RUN**

Aiden not only has to deal with the unseen hacker force trying to shut him down, but due to his "vigilante" status, he's got to evade the Chicago PD as well. Sometimes getting away means sacrificing the boys in blue for the greater good.

TEXTING WHILE DRIVING

Unlike most urban open-world adventures, Aiden can't shoot a gun while driving. This is because he has to maintain one hand on the wheel, while the other grips his smartphone. Besides, unique hacks are a lot more effective than a pistol in this world.

SPEED RACER

Having the right car is critical to the high-speed chases found here. Aside from being able to quickly hotwire most cars, Aiden can also call Jordi, who knows a guy who knows a guy who'll give Aiden some sweet rides after doing a couple of favors.

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PUBLISHER NINTENDO
DEVELOPER SORA, BANDAI NAMCO
PLATFORMS WII U, 3DS
RELEASE DATE SUMMER 2014 (3DS), WINTER 2014 (WII U)



SUPER SMASH BROS.

NOW WITH SEVERAL WAYS TO SMASH!

BY ANDREW FITCH

While Nintendo may be one of the most innovative game companies the industry has ever seen, many of its most famous names can come off more like clinical scientists than game developers. You can just imagine elite creative minds like *Mario* creator Shigeru Miyamoto and *Zelda* director Eiji Aonuma tinkering in the lab wearing white coats.

Not *Super Smash Bros.* director Masahiro Sakurai. He's engaging, energetic, has flowing hair more akin to a rock star than a game designer, and comes off as just another gamer

who'd just as soon pick up the controller and take on all comers as he would design another devious *Smash Bros.* stage.

"The *Super Smash Bros.* series gathers the greatest Nintendo characters together in one place," Sakurai enthuses. "There's really nothing quite like it."

And there's never been anything in Nintendo history like the latest version, which will take the fast-paced brawling action between iconic characters and take it across two platforms—the Wii U and 3DS. The most impressive element? You'll find no compromises in the portable version.

"The 3DS version will run at 60 frames per second, and it will all be in stereoscopic 3D," Sakurai says. "For a game like *Smash Bros.*, this is quite a feat."

Of course, it wouldn't be *Smash Bros.* without some twists on the action. In the *Mega Man 2*-themed Wily Castle, for instance, the notorious Yellow Devil will assemble mid-battle and accost the fighters during the

"THE SUPER SMASH BROS. SERIES GATHERS THE GREATEST NINTENDO CHARACTERS TOGETHER IN ONE PLACE. THERE'S REALLY NOTHING QUITE LIKE IT." DIRECTOR MASAHIRO SAKURAI



3DS
VERSION



course of the action. This means players will need to take on perhaps *Mega Man*'s most infuriating foe, but there's a catch. When the Yellow Devil's last remaining energy is snuffed out, it'll blow—the one who delivers the final strike is immune, but the rest of the players will be caught in a deadly explosion.

Online has become a big part of *Smash Bros.* in recent iterations, and this version will see that feature return, along with a few twists.

"When you're not playing with friends, you'll be able to enter one of two online modes, which we're calling For Fun and For Glory," Sakurai explains. "In For Fun, the only data recorded will be number of victories. In For Glory mode, the only stage available will be Final Destination. There are no platforms or elevated areas on this stage; it's perfectly flat. The results of your matches, including your defeats, will all be recorded in For Glory."

Of course, with friends, you can set the rules to whatever you want, and at its core, that's what *Smash Bros.* has always been about—best buddies turned bitter rivals taking control of would-be friends like Mario and Link and turning them into the fiercest of enemies. ©



WII U
VERSION



CHALLENGERS APPROACHING

ZERO SUIT SAMUS



"In the previous title, Zero Suit Samus was designed with slightly less physical

strength, so I thought we needed to find ways to toughen her up," says Sakurai. "That's why we've given her a pair of jet boots and the moves to work with them. What used to be a weakness now results in kicks that combine both power and speed."

SHEIK



Zelda's *Ocarina of Time* alter ego returns to the fray with a few

refinements. "We've polished Sheik's moves and added two more special attacks, which we're calling Burst Grenade and Bouncing Fish," Sakurai reveals. "Burst Grenades are little bombs that burst once you pull the pin out, while Bouncing Fish is an acrobatic kick technique."

LITTLE MAC



Sakurai describes *Punch-Out!!*'s diminutive, determined green-clad

pugilist as "an up-close brawler who wants to stay rooted to the ground." "Though his body is small, he packs huge punches and can throw them quickly as well," he says. "There's one attribute that's unique to Little Mac: his power meter. When it's completely full, you'll become armed with a one-shot-only attack: the K.O. Up-percut. One punch, insta-K.O.!"

MEGA MAN



Capcom's venerable Blue Bomber is armed with a diverse array of powers

culled from the franchise's 25-year-plus history, including the Top Spin from Top Man in *Mega Man 3*, the Super Arm from Guts Man in the original *Mega Man*, the Flame Blast from Flame Man in *Mega Man 6*, and the Metal Blade from Metal Man in *Mega Man 2*.

- PUBLISHER BETHESDA SOFTWORKS
- DEVELOPER TANGO GAMEWORKS
- PLATFORMS XBOX ONE, PS4, 360, PS3, PC
- RELEASE DATE AUGUST 26

THE EVIL WITHIN

VAGABOND EVIL

BY ERIC L. PATTERSON

In the blink of an eye, detective Sebastian Castellanos finds himself falling as the elevator he's riding plummets toward the ground. Finally, it comes to a stop, and as Sebastian steps out, he sees a city in ruin. Buildings are toppled. Smoke fills the air. The earth below his feet rumbles, sending entire chunks of pavement jutting up violently.

When *The Evil Within* was first revealed last year, it was easy to imagine that the events of the game would be primarily taking place within the halls of Beacon Mental Hospital. Now, it's obvious that won't be the case. The secrets behind this newest project from Japan's master of survival-horror, Shinji Mikami, are hard to pin down, but that sense of mystery is just what he and his team hope to instill in players.



"What exactly is going on is really confusing, but you understand that you're in danger," says producer Masato Kimura. "You know that you have to escape, but you don't know what's happening, really. However, you then get a sense of achievement once you understand something you didn't understand before."

Feeling that accomplishment in *The Evil Within* won't simply come from figuring out its story—it'll also be the reward for surviving the scares awaiting in the game. While Mikami's no stranger to conjuring horror, this will be a different blend than many of his fans are used to. Think of a mix of Mikami's own work on *Resident Evil 4* and rival franchise *Silent Hill*—something where fears, both physical and mental, merge together into one even more terrifying nightmare.

THINK OF A MIX OF MIKAMI'S OWN WORK ON RESIDENT EVIL 4 AND RIVAL FRANCHISE SILENT HILL—SOMETHING WHERE FEARS, BOTH PHYSICAL AND MENTAL, MERGE TOGETHER

However, don't expect *The Evil Within* to be nothing but terrifying situations that seem hopeless. Much like with his work on *Resident Evil* and *Dino Crisis*, Mikami looks to have a satisfying level of action here. Players will have a variety of weapons at their disposal, such as the Agony Crossbow—which can make use of rounds that carry timed explosives or flash-freeze anything they hit—and traps that'll help provide defensive support when outnumbered by the game's zombie-like foes.

So, too, will there be balance in how players feel as they get deeper and deeper into the adventure. Kimura notes that, for the team, making sure there's a good divide between when you feel safe and when you feel threatened is crucial to making sure players will want to keep progressing in *The Evil Within*.

"If you keep eating only sweet food, or you keep eating only spicy food, you'll get tired of it," he explains with a laugh. "It has to be the best balance between those two, and we're thinking seriously about that balance." 🍷



THE ORIGINS OF FEAR

When it comes to horror videogames, there's long been an interesting divide: Western versus Japanese. For us here in the West, we prefer more straightforward, physical horror—men in hockey masks carrying around an axe, for example. In Japan, however, horror stories have typically been more about mental or emotional threats and less about direct physical ones.

So which way will *The Evil Within* be heading?

"It's a blend in between," says producer Masato Kimura. "Director Shinji Mikami picks up a lot of ideas from his staff; some staff members like Japanese horror movies, while some like Western horror movies. So, he picks and chooses from all of those ideas."

Even though tastes in terror may differ, Kimura notes that people around the world can still relate to one particular facet of stories, no matter what portion of the globe they come from.

"There's a core thing that moves players' emotions," Kimura explains in regards to the act of surviving—and triumphing—over seemingly hopeless situations. "I think we can share that with both types of players."

■ PUBLISHER ACTIVISION

■ DEVELOPER BUNGIE

■ PLATFORMS XBOX ONE, PS4, 360, PS3

■ RELEASE DATE SEPTEMBER 9

DESTINY

BUNGIE EMBRACES THEIR DESTINY

BY ERIC L. PATTERSON

For many gamers, the name “Bungie” is synonymous with *Halo*. Of course, the men and women working at the developer’s headquarters in Bellevue, Washington, are much more than that—and they’ll soon be proving it with their first post–Master Chief project, *Destiny*.

While it was but a small slice of what players everywhere will be diving into come September, we recently had a chance to go hands-on with *Destiny*, providing a tantalizing taste of what the team at Bungie has been working on. Yes, this is a first-person shooter at its core—one that builds upon the vast experience in the genre the developer not only gained during its years working on *Halo*, but also its pre-Xbox releases, such as *Marathon*.

And yet, *Destiny* is no ordinary experience of running around fantastical locations with a

variety of weapons in order to dispatch an alien menace. The worlds presented here—starting with Earth and then branching out to other planets in our solar system—feel far larger in breadth and scope than anything we’ve seen in the genre before. While Bungie shies away from calling *Destiny* an MMO, it’s games like Blizzard’s *World of Warcraft* that best describe what playing *Destiny* feels like in terms of exploration and possibility.

Equally expansive are the character-customization options that the team at Bungie is building into *Destiny*. The game’s three character classes—Titan, Hunter, and Warlock—each offer unique playstyles, which can then be personalized to your particular tastes through a selection of skill trees. Armor and weapon drops will be plentiful throughout play sessions, and as your equipment levels up, you’ll decide which stat upgrades you prefer over others. Every-

thing we saw while playing *Destiny* reinforced one important tenet: This will be *your* story, *your* adventure, and you should be the one to decide who your character becomes.

Of course, you won’t be alone: Another focal point for Bungie in the development of *Destiny* has been crafting a game that makes you *want* to play with others. Whether you’re joining a Fireteam with your friends or giving a quick helping hand to a random stranger, your experience will be enhanced by having others around—not lessened due to fighting over shared item drops or vying for precious XP.

Bungie has lofty, long-running plans for its first footsteps beyond the long shadow of *Halo*—and, given what looks to be in store for us in the inaugural chapter of *Destiny*, the future of the first-person shooter is looking brighter than ever. 





***THIS WILL BE YOUR STORY, YOUR ADVENTURE,
AND YOU SHOULD BE THE ONE TO DECIDE WHO
YOUR CHARACTER BECOMES.***

PLAY YOUR WAY

While Bungie hasn't revealed the full roster of game modes that'll be available in *Destiny*, here's a look at some of the major methods players will have for venturing out into the game's worlds.

STORY

Of course, *Destiny* will have a more traditional, story-focused adventure. While you'll be able to encounter and interact with other players in this mode, Bungie promises that other players won't get in the way of the more dramatic, narrative-driven moments.

STRIKE

Strikes are three-member missions that typically run about 20 to 30 minutes, typically culminating in a boss battle. The first part of Strikes will take place in a shared environment (where public events may crop up), but the later halves will unfold in private, instanced segments.

RAID

In Raids, up to six players will come together for what can be considered "endgame" content. Raids won't be available to players until they've reached higher experience levels—and Bungie warns that survival will require skill and teamwork.

PATROL

Unlike Strikes or Raids, Patrols will be found directly in the environment. These optional side-quests will be tied to the game's different factions and will range from scavenging for materials to taking out a set number of enemy units.



■ PUBLISHER SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT

■ DEVELOPER READY AT DAWN

■ PLATFORM PS4

■ RELEASE DATE Q4 2014

THE ORDER: 1886

RULE, BRITANNIA!

BY JOSH HARMON

As the first major new potential franchise to debut on Sony's PlayStation 4, *The Order: 1886* has the unenviable burden of living up to our lofty expectations of a new hardware generation.

Thankfully, developer Ready at Dawn has some big ideas on how to fulfill those hopes.

The first is a story and setting that feels distinct from what we've come to expect from modern action games. *The Order* takes place in an alternate-history version of Victorian London, where the Industrial Revolution has produced technological wonders that border on the magical. You play as Galahad, a member of a secret society with its origins in the Knights of the Round Table of Arthurian legend. For centuries, they've battled to maintain order against a race of human-animal hybrids known as half-breeds.

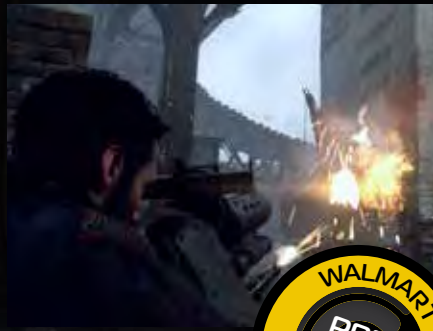
The second innovation lies with *The Order's* emphasis on cinematic storytelling. From a visual standpoint, Ready at Dawn has made a concerted effort to make every second of the game feel like one cohesive experience. Gameplay will sport the same stunning real-time

FROM A VISUAL STANDPOINT, READY AT DAWN HAS MADE A CONCERTED EFFORT TO MAKE EVERY SECOND OF THE GAME FEEL LIKE ONE COHESIVE EXPERIENCE.

graphics as cutscenes, and everything from camerawork and atmosphere down to the ultra-widescreen presentation seeks to drive home that unity.

That filmic quality extends to gameplay as well. Rather than repeating the same tasks over and over with minimal variation, *The Order* instead aims to offer a carefully paced and varied balance of many different activities, such as shooting, exploration, melee combat, and environmental interaction. The game will also integrate interactivity into sections you'd usually expect to be handled by cutscenes. When Galahad needs to send a message to a comrade, you'll be tapping out the morse code yourself. When he's tussling on the ground with an enemy, struggling to grab a fallen knife, you'll be guiding his hand to the weapon.

The end goal is an experience that blurs the boundaries of the medium, one that evolves the tried-and-true action game into something more polished, engaging, and approachable. If it can execute on that vision, despite its grimy historical setting, *The Order: 1886* might offer a glimpse into gaming's future. ☺



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The *Elder Scrolls Online* brings the traditionally single-player series boldly into the realm of massively multiplayer online role-playing games. The challenge the developers faced? Incorporating the feel that fans of the series love while implementing the necessary structure for a massive online experience, servicing thousands of players at once. Overall, the team at ZeniMax Online Studios succeeded.

Character creation features plenty of choices for race, class, and faction, but regardless of choice, you enter Tamriel as a soulless wanderer looking to find your way. Traditional *Elder Scrolls* elements abound: You can pick up hundreds of items scattered throughout the world, read lengthy tomes filled with the lore of the land, and visit familiar locations from the past. You can even switch between first- and third-person views, just like in the single-player games.

For your first 10 levels or so (the game's current cap is level 50) you'll mostly be on your own, finding your way about the world and learning the basics of combat, spellcasting, and more. At those moments, the game seems most like *Oblivion* or *Skyrim*. Once you wander into a dungeon or hit a boss encounter during a quest, however, you'll find this is a different beast, and you'll quickly need to recruit

some allies to succeed. Fortunately, finding others willing to team up is easy, even if you're just looking for some short-term help getting through a particularly tricky situation.

Though not remotely bug-free, *The Elder Scrolls Online* is surprisingly polished, particularly for an MMO and a game from Bethesda, which has been very responsive in addressing issues as they arise. The game looks good (if not great) and is packed with quests, crafting options, and even high-level "Veteran" content for when you've completed the main storyline. Plus, in true *Elder Scrolls* fashion, you can even choose to become a vampire or werewolf for even more variety.

The Elder Scrolls Online is a great option for someone looking for a fantasy-based MMORPG without the words "War" or "Ever" in its title. If Bethesda adds the promised content and keeps up on fans requests, this could become one of the most robust virtual worlds out there.

rating

83%

SILVER

PUBLISHER BETHESDA SOFTWARES

DEVELOPER ZENIMAX ONLINE STUDIOS

PLATFORMS XBOX ONE, PS4, PC

RELEASE DATE APRIL 04 (PC), JUNE 30 (XBOX ONE, PS4)



KIRBY: TRIPLE DELUXE

Kirby makes his debut on the Nintendo 3DS in triumphant fashion with *Kirby: Triple Deluxe*. Nintendo's iconic Pink Puffball must traverse the Dreamstalk that's just sprouted in Dream Land and rescue King Dedede from a spider-like enemy called Taranza. On his quest, Kirby will be able to learn four new copy abilities to complement the 20 classic returning transformations like Stone and Needle. His most impressive new power, however, is when he goes Hypernova by eating a Miracle Seed. Kirby can change the entire terrain of a stage to open up new pathways and unlock hidden items when he finds one of these rare super-fruits. Combining these new powers with inventive puzzles courtesy of the 3DS' gyroscope and classic Kirby platforming should make the main game a delight for Kirby fans new and old, even if, as a whole, it might be a bit too short or too easy for most experienced gamers.

CLASSIC KIRBY PLATFORMING SHOULD MAKE THE MAIN GAME A DELIGHT FOR KIRBY FANS NEW AND OLD.

rating	■ PUBLISHER NINTENDO
89%	■ DEVELOPER HAL LABORATORY
SILVER	■ PLATFORM 3DS
	■ RELEASE DATE MAY 2

GAME
OF THE
MONTH



MARIO GOLF: WORLD TOUR

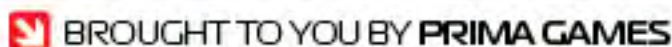
It's been nearly a decade since Nintendo's portly plumber last hit the links, but he's still in surprisingly good form in *Mario Golf: World Tour*. The golfing basics have been honed to a rewarding blend of skill and intuition, providing helpful indicators but leaving it up to you to factor in things like wind and the slope of course. The Castle Club single-player campaign, which allows you to deck out your Mii in stat-boosting gear and compete in tournaments against the *Mario* crew, is an absolute blast. The real meat, however, comes from multiplayer, where you can compete head-to-head or enter into a constantly rotating lineup of asynchronous tournaments against other players in your region or even the whole world. The only real blemish on the experience is the selection of skill challenges required to unlock new courses: Later trials ramp up the difficulty to a level that's a bit too frustrating for the pick-up-and-play fun of a portable game.

THE GOLFING BASICS HAVE BEEN HONED TO A REWARDING BLEND OF SKILL AND INTUITION.

rating	■ PUBLISHER NINTENDO
81%	■ DEVELOPER CAMELOT SOFTWARE PLANNING
SILVER	■ PLATFORM 3DS
	■ RELEASE DATE MAY 2



MARIO KART 8™



MUSHROOM CUP MARIO KART STADIUM



The second turn of the race provides an example of a common *Mario Kart 8* dilemma: taking the corner wide will push you along a series of dash panels and a set of Coins. Taking the inside route is faster, but has no Coins. Your first laps in every race should be about building up your Coin count. Afterwards, consider the inside path every time.





You can cut this corner with a Mushroom, if you have one. Just mind the pipes!



Just past the second turn is an antigravity panel that lets you stick to the track as it twists around. The next corner can also be cut with a Mushroom if you have one, and has a ramp you can Jump Boost off of.



The hairpin turn near the end of the antigravity section of track leads to a small ramp that will let you glide over a chasm. If you're far behind and have a Lightning Bolt, you can send racers into the chasm as they try to glide across. Don't miss collecting Coins on the way over the gap!



The last set of turns presents another split roadway, with the wider racing line taking you over a set of dash panels and more Coins. The wider line ends with a ramp you can Jump Boost off of for additional speed.



Alternatively, you can cut the corner even tighter by using a Mushroom and going through the sand. Many pipes are set up here, so be careful about how you blast through this area. This is also a good tactic to defeat incoming Red Shells, as they might hit the pipes.

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WATCH_DOGS

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WATCH_DOGS MINIGAMES

Aside from Aiden Pearce's primary mission, there are lots of additional things to try in *Watch_Dogs*' Chicago. Take a break from the hacking, crime, and constant surveillance with one of these minigames. These are amusing, strange, and often panic-inducing challenges to play between proper missions, and completing them successfully can reward you with Skills, Achievements, and other bonuses. Here is an overview of four of the six types of minigame.

CASH RUNS



This is a parkour-based AR phone game, where you collect large gold coins and avoid big red skulls. You can make your own courses using the Challenges App.

You can rearrange objects in the city before you start a Cash Run in order to make a track a bit easier. An example thereof is causing a traffic jam nearby, which reduces the risk that you'll be hit by or have to dodge cars while playing the Cash Runs in the Loop or Mad Mile.

Take your first run at a new track at a brisk walk with no concern for your final time. Cash Runs are a test of memory, precision, and reflexes, and knowing the course counts for more than raw skill.



CHESS



Sit down and engage your brain with many bouts of chess with a variety of characters. There are four types of chess game to master, or you can just play a full game of chess.

Capture: Prevent pawns from reaching the other side of the board. These are easy enough for a chess novice to complete, but remember that it's just as easy for your opponent to capture your pieces. Do not pursue an opening move that leaves your one chess piece in danger of being captured.

End Game: Checkmate your opponent in a specified number of moves. Remember that a king is vulnerable, but can still capture any piece that you move within one space of it. Losing one of your few remaining pieces to the enemy king can render the puzzle impossible to complete.

Path: Capture all pieces on the board in as few moves as possible.

Survive: Your king must avoid being checkmated for a given number of turns.

NVZN



Access NVZN Graffiti, or open your smartphone and select the NVZN App from anywhere, then set about destroying the invaders before your time runs out.



Invest in skills that improve your Focus ability to help knock down the fast-moving Drones, which are worth the most points.

After every fourth Wave of aliens, you enter a Bonus Wave which lets you rack up big points and possibly unlock a new weapon or power-up. Once you get past Wave 13, the aliens begin to get progressively faster and more dangerous, so be sure to go into that Wave with all the Bonus Waves completed, even if that means starting over.

SHELL GAMES



Follow the ball under the cup as a hustler attempts to trick your eyes and remove as much cash from your wallet as possible.



The key to defeating the harder levels of the Shell Game is your Focus ability. The more points you've invested into it, the easier it will be to spot the Shell Game dealer's sleight of hand.

Watch the Shell Game dealer's hands. He does have tells for when he's shuffled the ball from one cup to the other, such as when the cups tip slightly. If the cups leave the table at all, assume the ball's changed places.



ONE ON ONE WITH MATT BRUNNER CINEMATIC DIRECTOR / MURDERED: SOUL SUSPECT

WGC: How'd you come up with the concept for this game?

Matt Brunner: We started the concept of the game from the pretty simple premise that we wanted a protagonist that was a ghost. And then we started exploring different characters that the ghost could be, and fairly soon in the process, we came up with the idea that it would be really interesting if it was somebody that was looking into or trying to understand the circumstances of their own death. And then we thought that it would be a great character if it was actually a policeman whose job it is to figure out why people die and then having to use that skillset for his own benefit.

WGC: What interesting mechanics can players expect with a ghost protagonist, and what challenges did that present in development?

WE THOUGHT THAT IT WOULD BE A GREAT CHARACTER IF IT WAS ACTUALLY A POLICEMAN WHOSE JOB IT IS TO FIGURE OUT WHY PEOPLE DIE.

MB: There are a lot of fairly new mechanics for the game that you use, as a ghost, to get around in the world and to do investigations. Some of the ones that feel like they're traversal-related are, for example, passing through walls, which is very unusual in the game space, where you're used to having solid walls no matter where you go. This game is almost flipping that. The ghost world is solid to you, but the real world is not, so you can pass through people, pass through walls, pass through objects, just as if they didn't exist. Then you can also manipulate humans. You can't puppet them, but you can manipulate them, so you can possess them, influence them, mind-read, and a number of other mechanics for getting people to either do what you want, think about what you want, or see what they're looking at.

WGC: How did you come up with the problem-solving mechanics, and what do

you hope players will get from that side of the game?

MB: We wanted you to unfold the mystery through a series of investigations where you can kind of figure it out on your own. So, what we've done is placed clues and a mechanism for uncovering those clues, which are very specific to you being a ghost, and as you uncover the clues, you have to make sense of them. And then, as you make sense of them, you begin to understand what's going on.

WGC: *Murdered: Soul Suspect* includes some action elements. They're not heavily featured, but what did the team want to accomplish with them?

MB: We have enemies primarily as a pacing mechanic and to keep the player from just sitting back on their laurels and not having to strategize much about where they go and just think about

what they're doing. Also, it's a strong fictional element, because the demons that exist in the world are really ghosts that have hung around for too long. So, if you, as a character, were to stay in this dusk world too long, you'd actually turn into the same thing, so it's both a narrative element as well as a pacing element.

WGC: If you could be a ghost in any game out there besides your own, which game would you haunt, and why?

MB: I was thinking it would be interesting to be in a ghost in a space where you really want to understand what the background psychology is to some characters that you've been playing around with—particularly ones that you can't talk with. So, it's the fly-on-the-wall thing. What is that person actually thinking? So, it could be anything from *Uncharted* to *Gone Home* that you sit there wondering what this character is actually thinking. ☺

One of the more surprising reveals of last year's E3 was the latest collaboration between developer Airtight Games and publisher Square Enix for the afterlife-themed crime thriller *Murdered: Soul Suspect*. With the game ready to haunt store shelves soon, we had a chance to sit down with cinematic director Matt Brunner to get the lowdown on this curious murder mystery.



VITAL SIGNS

OCCUPATION CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER/CINEMATIC DIRECTOR, AIRTIGHT GAMES
GAME HIGHLIGHTS DARK VOID
QUANTUM CONUNDRUM
MURDERED: SOUL SUSPECT

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MATURE 17+



Blood and Gore
Intense Violence
Language

Online Interactions Not Rated by the ESRB



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