

Answers by Rob McDaniel, Game Designer, Sucker Punch Productions.

When you first started working in the games industry did you ever think it would be as big as it is now? And when you first started playing videogames did you ever imagine they could be this cool?

I started in the industry in 1998, so it was well into its major growth to what it is today. It has grown about as I would have expected in the past seven years. Now, the changes from when I first played Pong and Atari as a kid are just amazing. From the sheer number of play mechanics, to the immersiveness, and the quality of the visuals and sound that the best modern games have is just staggering. In 1979 when I was running around as a block fighting duck-like dragons in Adventure I would not have imagined games like God of War would be here for my monster crushing pleasure in 2005.

What have been your favourite PlayStation projects to work on?

Well, I've worked on all three Sly Cooper games and they have all been great to work on for different reasons. In the first game it was our first PlayStation 2 project so we got to do better visuals and animation than we were able to do before, and the game design was straightforward enough that most of the levels I could create and have working on my own. Sly 2 was great because we got to step back and really change the structure of the game with the more open environments, and getting Bentley and Murray in on the action. In Sly 3, we've had fun adding more playable characters to the team and finally getting behind the barrel of Carmelita's shock pistol and also multiplayer. We keep asking for more from the coding team and somehow they've been able to get more and more out of the hardware.

With the advent of PS3, are there any concepts that you've been dreaming about for years that, with the new technology, can now be brought to fruition?

"Fractal Slumlord and the Infinite Tenants of Chaos" might just be ready for the masses. <evil grin>

Equally, are there any other classic titles that you would like to see remade, with the benefit of modern day developing?

Hmmm, I thought of several, but then I did a search and found out that they had either been remade recently or there is a mod community working on it now. Here we go, how about "Out of this World"? That could be cool. Now, who would they get for the voice acting for the alien to say "My tuba..."?

Where do you see the future of gaming, what areas do you think will change in the future?

Even more connectivity, customization, and new user input. It's amazing to me how much perceived variety there is when your use of the same controller between games is nearly identical.

Do you feel we've had the 'golden age' of gaming, or are we seeing it now?

I think we're seeing it now. Gaming is mainstream and the power of the next generation is going to make it easier to do all the flashy stuff people respond to. Improving visuals will not be enough if there is not a real improvement in fun, in gameplay. It will be interesting to see how things develop from here, the different ways developers push beyond the graphics.

What's the best PlayStation launch party you have ever been to?

The launch party for Sly 2 had my brother as the DJ (DJ minimal) and a band made up of one of our animators and his brother (Neon Brown). There was good food, drinks, and music, including Dimitri's Disco Mix and a minute or two of "Freebird" on request. "Freeebirrrrd!"

If you could transport yourself into a game which one would it be?

"Planetscape: Torment" would be interesting. Being an immortal nameless warrior in a city that's a dimensional crossroads means there's never a dull moment.

What's your funniest PlayStation moment at E3?

At E3 2004, the Sly 2 kiosks were right next to a bank of PS2s with EyeToy games. It was quite funny seeing a few famous people coming by and flailing around trying to smack down zombies at the EyeToy stations.

Describe, in ten words or less, what sums up PlayStation for you?

Games, games, games...it's all about the games...