

## **Heavenly Sword Specialist Press Event**

19<sup>th</sup> July 2007

### **Ninja Theory – Background**

Ninja Theory Ltd, was formed in Cambridge, England, in November of 2004, by Nina Kristensen, Mike Ball, Tameem Antoniades and Non-Executive Ninja, Jez San OBE. Ninja Theory entered into an exclusive agreement with Sony Computer Entertainment Europe for their new game Heavenly Sword™ for PLAYSTATION®3.

At E3 2006 in Los Angeles, Heavenly Sword received multiple awards including Best Fighting Game, Best Artistic Design Award for Technological Excellence, and was the only western game to win an award at the Tokyo Game Show 2006.

Ninja Theory believes that the next-generation of games consoles offer an opportunity to elevate the games experience into one that can rival film and literature and was one of the first development studios to commit exclusively to next-generation consoles.

If you're wondering why they are called "Ninja Theory", it's because they wanted a name with "Ninja" in it and that's the best we could come up with!

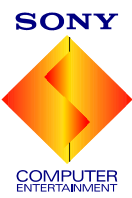
[www.ninjatheory.com](http://www.ninjatheory.com)

### **Nina Kristensen: Co-founder & Chief Development Ninja**

Nina Kristensen entered the games industry in 1996, joining Millennium Interactive as a graduate artist. She spent two years modelling and animating MediEvil™'s quirky in-game characters. At Sony Computer Entertainment Europe (SCEE), Nina worked as a Lead Artist, later to become Art Manager for the Cambridge Studio. Working to strict deadlines, she recruited and deployed art resources across internal and external projects, including the BAFTA award winning MediEvil2.

Upon co-founding Just Add Monsters, Nina was primarily responsible for project management and art direction, as well as company strategy. Now that Just Add Monsters has become Ninja Theory, Nina has helped build the company into one of the largest independent game developers in the UK and is overseeing the development of the PLAYSTATION 3 game, Heavenly Sword.

Nina won the Businesswoman of the Year award in the Cambridge Evening News' Business Excellence Awards 2005. In her spare time, Nina sleeps.



## **Tameem Antoniades: Co-founder & Chief Creative Ninja**

Tameem has been involved in the games industry since 1995 having worked as a games programmer and designer at Millennium Interactive and Sony Computer Entertainment Europe, Cambridge.

After five years in the trenches, he co-founded Just Add Monsters in 2000 and headed up the design of critically acclaimed Kung Fu Chaos for the Xbox, published by Microsoft Games Studios.

In 2005, Just Add Monsters became Ninja Theory and Tameem continued work on the award winning Heavenly Sword, as Creative Director.

He was lucky enough to be able to expand his design role into story and character development, on-set motion capture direction, cinematography and editing working closely with Andy Serkis and Weta Digital in New Zealand.

With the arrival of powerful new console hardware, Tameem believes in the potential of games as a new dramatic medium and hopes to continue to push this area of gaming beyond expectations.

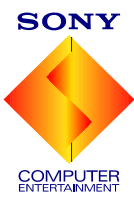
## **Mike Ball – Co-founder and Chief Technology Ninja**

Mike has been developing computer games professionally since 1992. During this time he has worked as a programmer at Millennium Interactive, Head of Programming at Virgin Interactive and Manager of the Internal Technologies Group at Sony Computer Entertainment Europe.

By 2000 Mike felt it was time to start his own company and became a co-founder of Just Add Monsters Ltd. Mike was responsible for the creation of the combat engine and technology for the multiplayer game Kung Fu Chaos.

As Co-founder and Chief Technology Ninja of Ninja Theory Ltd, Mike was determined to push the company to become one of the best developers in the world. To this end, he is responsible for the development of a second generation combat platform on PLAYSTATION®3 that brings the heroic tale of Heavenly Sword to players' homes. Mike is looking forward to the third generation!

In his rare spare time Mike likes to mountain bike (with a cup of tea) and surf (with a Cornish pasty)... he does both equally badly.



## **Mat Hart – Producer**

Prior to entering the games industry Mat Hart was a professionally trained project manager working for the UK's National Air Traffic Services Ltd. He has worked on projects such as radar tower installations, roll-out of new radio communications systems and re-engineering of business software systems. He gave it all up to wear shorts...

He spent a little over a year at LEGO Interactive working as the external Project Manager on games such as "Bionicle" and "LEGO Stars Wars" as well as two unreleased games: "LEGO Soccer Adventure" and "LEGO Racers: Create + Control".

He then joined Kuju Entertainment Ltd as Project Manager on "Battalion Wars", subsequently working on "Battalion Wars 2", an unannounced Wii game and the final stages of "The Regiment".

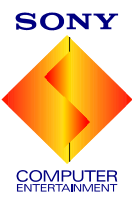
Mat joined Ninja Theory in early 2006, taking the role of Producer on Heavenly Sword, a PLAYSTATION 3 exclusive published by SCEE. He is responsible for the project overall and is working hard with his team of Leads to deliver the best quality game possible.

When he's not working Mat loves spending time with his family. He also plays a ton of pen and paper role-playing games and coming from Essex, he isn't afraid of being called a geek.

## **Alessandro "Talexi" Taini – Senior Concept Artist**

Talexi was born in Genoa (Italy) where he studied illustration and advertising at the School of Visual Communication. He then moved to Milan where he began a successful career as a creative designer and visualiser, working for various advertising companies. During that time he also created various published book covers as a freelance artist.

Talexi then moved to London where he worked as concept artist and graphic designer on the award winning LUMINAL (Best Movie Award at the Rome Independent Film Festival '04). In 2005 he published his first horror illustration book DARK DEMONIA, written by Italian novelist Isabella Santacroce. Since 2003, Talexi has been the Senior Concept Artist at Ninja Theory working on HEAVENLY SWORD, one of the most anticipated original video games for PlayStation3.



## **Laura Kippax – Lead Character Artist**

Laura started at the company in 2002 shortly before the transition of Monsters to Ninjas. She was one of the first character modellers at Ninja Theory which gave her the unique opportunity to be the primary modeller of both playable characters in Heavenly Sword, Nariko and Kai.

Laura's role transitioned to Lead Character Artist in 2005. Working with a small (but perfectly formed) team, the rest of the diverse personalities that appear in the title, from the army rabble, to the unique, flamboyant Generals were modelled, rigged and textured.

Laura finds she has a natural affinity with those who bake... mainly cake.. of the chocolate variety.

## **SaiTong Man – Lead Combat Design Ninja**

SaiTong joined Ninja Theory, formerly Just Add Monsters, in 2002 leaving behind a life of design engineering to work on the company's first game, Kung Fu Chaos. When Just Add Monsters (who reformed as Ninja Theory) began working on Heavenly Sword, he was given the task to design and develop a new combat system.

Over the last few years of development, working with a close knit team of programmers, designers and animators, SaiTong has designed and combined the features and content in order to implement the combat system for the currently highly anticipated next-gen title Heavenly Sword.

SaiTong dislikes cheese, salty foods and coffee. He likes to design and build stuff and his favourite word is potato.

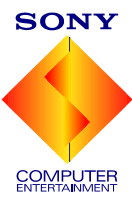
## **Stuart Adcock – Senior Character Artist**

Stuart graduated from Bournemouth with an Animation degree and began his career with Sony Cambridge in 2001 creating characters and animations for Ghosthunter on the PS2.

As part of Sony's Advanced Technology Group, he was granted early access to PS3 and was responsible for pushing boundaries and exploring new ideas and methods for next-gen character creation. This led to a pivotal role in creating the "Alfred Molina" realtime face demo for the PS3 press launch event at E3 2005.

Stuart then channelled his experience into the highly anticipated PS3 title "Heavenly Sword" and grabbed the opportunity to become a Ninja. He took responsibility for facial development and was tasked with sculpting the digital faces, the facial expressions and supervising the facial animation.

He was fortunate to be part of the team involved in the performance capture sessions at WETA digital and even slipping into a motion capture suit to play a cowardly commander. Just don't mention his "precious" one line of dialog that was eventually over dubbed.



## **Tom Colvin – Lead Audio Ninja**

Having been surrounded by microphones and spliced tape since birth, Tom was destined for life as a Sound Designer. After spending several years as a freelance sound engineer and producer, Tom got his first job in games with Climax Ltd. In 2002

Following the completion of the score and soundfx for the Xbox title Sudeki, Tom joined Ninja Theory in 2005, and has been striving to push the boundaries of quality and style in audio ever since. He and his team have worked closely with Nitin Sawhney and the foley artists who created the sound of Crouching Tiger (Play it by Ear) to produce a beautiful and compelling sonic experience within Heavenly Sword.

Tom likes his guitar and assorted African instruments, designing synthesisers, and playing twitch games. He dislikes freezer food and moths.