SONY

COMPUTER
ENTERTAINMENT

Rise to Honour™

Q&A with Jet Li

1.   What makes making a game different from making a movie? What were you able to do now that you couldn't do before?

 In terms of the creative process of developing the story and idea behind a game, it is very similar to how a film is made. I think the biggest difference is probably in how the game is experienced by the audience –an active vs. passive role. With a movie, the degree to which an audience can be involved has a certain limit, but with a game, players are able to not just experience the emotional ride of the characters, but also feel as if they are the character themselves.

In the past I've always had to be concerned with camera angles, lighting and other aspects of filmmaking that one needs to be aware of. However, with computer technology those things are not an issue while doing the movements themselves. For *Rise to Honour,* I was able to focus much more on developing unique movements, and not have to deal with issues such as wardrobe, lighting, camera angels and more.

2.   What are the main differences between working on a film and working on a game?

Working on a film, the set up necessary for an action sequence takes a long time, and we need to shoot the scene many times to get different angles. Alternatively, for *Rise to Honour*, the developers used motion capture for the action sequences, which utilizes a   a 360-degree system, with lots of pre-set cameras. With the motion capture system, the moves are captured accurately and I only need to perform a particular action sequence once and they have it in many angles, so there is no waiting time. It was quite fast. Plus, you don't have to worry about clothing style or make up while you were doing it – that task is left to the development team to complete back at the office.

3.   How did you feel when you first saw yourself as a computer generated character?

When I first say myself as a computer generated character, it was kind of strange as this character was able to perform . movements similar to myself in real life.

4.   Did you need to do any additional training/work to complete some of the moves in the game?

I did not need to do any additional training for *Rise to Honour*. Most of our work was in designing and developing dozens and dozens of maneuvers for the characters to have available to them in the game.

5.   How long did it take to complete your work with *Rise to Honour*?

The total time we spent working on the game and motion capture was about six weeks. However, the game has been in development for three years now. *(Can we add a line to how that compares to time spent making a movie? Maybe Jim, you can offer this?)*

6.   Was making a video game more or less challenging that making a movie?

I would not say that making *Rise to Honour* was necessarily more challenging than making a movie. However, I would say that the biggest challenge for me was in learning and adapting to the new environment in which games are developed. It was a very educational experience!

7.   How many different martial arts forms or styles are implemented in the game?

In *Rise to Honour,* we tried to utilize a wide variety of movements from many different types of fighting, however most of the moves for my character are based on moves I have performed in many of my films. Those are the signature moves that the audience will be familiar with and identify, but we tried new things as well.

8.   Did your character have a specific martial arts style for the game? If so, what was it and how was it implemented for the fight sequences, or did he improvise with his extraordinary skills?

There was no specific martial arts style for the game, except that we tried to model it after my own ways of moving, since many of the people playing the game will identify those movements with my style of action.

9.   Did you create any game specific martial arts moves?

Cory Yuen, my good friend who helped with choreography on this project, worked with us to create some new and exciting movements for the game. For *Rise to Honour*, we were able to try out different types of movements that we've never been able to achieve on film. I'm excited to see the end result when we launch next year!

10.   What was the biggest challenge with making a video game?

I think the biggest challenge in making *Rise to Honour* was in learning and adapting to the different environment in which games are made. Since this was my first video game I was able to learn quite a bit.

11.   Did you have any creative control over the content of the game?

There was a definite collaboration on many aspects of the game development, including in the creative direction of *Rise to Honour*. We spoke extensively about the story; the action; the fighting style; locations of action. I learned many new things and we helped the Sony Team to translate this Hong Kong film style action into a fun, fast-paced gaming experience.

12.   How was your overall experience? What did you learn?

The overall experience in working on *Rise to Honour* was very enjoyable. I learned that the process of developing a videogame is a very long and challenging. I developed an appreciation for the hard work that goes into videogame development. And I really enjoyed working with the Sony team, who are all very passionate about what they do.

13.   Are you/ Did you taking part in the testing and development process and providing input as the game progresses? What were your impressions/observations?

I've been able to watch and play some of the earlier demonstration versions of *Rise to Honour*. While I did not partake in any formal testing, I did enjoy seeing the game progress through different stages of development. And of course it is very strange and exciting to be playing a video game and see yourself on the screen! We were involved in the development from the very beginning and it's been a great learning experience. In the process, we suggested ideas andalso had a lot of questions.

14.   How has your personal involvement shaped this project?

While it's still a bit early to say, since the final product has not been released, it is my hope that I was able to lend some valuable insight to the creators of the game. It was my intention to be as involved as possible in the development of *Rise to Honour* and I hope that my participation adds to the enjoyment of the game. (This is a good one)

15.   What do you feel you have specifically bought to *Rise to Honour*?

I feel that my film and my martial art experience along with a certain expectation of standards in terms of Hong Kong style action have been my greatest contributions

16.   Was there any learning curve to working in this medium, i.e. getting used to motion capturing?

Doing motion capture was a little different than doing action for films, but it not something that was entirely foreign to me. Although there were things that I needed to adjust to, , for example, one was that there was not a lot of time between scene set-ups. We did considerable planning beforehand, but since all the cameras, lights, and computers capture systems were pre-set, in a 360-degree coverage, we could and did a lots of shots in a very short period of time.

17.   Considering your massive influence on the martial arts genre, do you see yourself possibly returning to the video game world, especially if you decide to do a sequel to Rise to Honour?

I very much enjoyed the process of making this game. It's my hope that I'll have similarly enjoyable experiences in the future.

18.   Were there any specific problems that you found working within this medium that you didn't expect? Were there additional challenges working with a programmer instead of a filmmaker, for example?

There weren't any specific problems working on *Rise to Honour* that surprised me. Of course, with any project there is a certain amount of unexpectedness in the activities you undertake.

In working with programmers and other members of the team instead of a filmmaker on a movie, there was a different level of technical language used in communicating, but I think we worked it out quite well.

19.   Was there ever any concern about losing technical accuracy of martial arts form with the transition from motion capturing to a character's onscreen performance in the game?

The Sony Team has great software and hardware for capturing the technical accuracy of the martial arts form through the motion capture process. While we were down at the San Diego studio, we did some testing and made adjustments to the process during the production and I think the results are excellent.

20.   Were there other famous martial artists that were involved in the *Rise to Honour* project?

My good friend Cory Yuen was there with me and is responsible for the choreography in *Rise to Honour*. As you probably know, he has worked for a long time in the film industry in Hong Kong, both as an action choreographer and director for many films.

21.   When you were planning fights, were there specific weapons in mind that seemed appropriate to your skills, or did you prefer to improvise?

The moves and weapons used were often dictated by the storyline for *Rise to Honour*.

22.   How much input did you have in the fight sequences?

For the fight sequences, I put on a body suit with all these green balls. Cory, the team and I came up with the movements and II performed them. We made adjustments for motion capture and actively discussed fighting movements for other characters and we were satisfied with the outcome for the fight sequences.

23.   Many people have been watching your films around the world for many years. What do you think about this opportunity to attract newer, younger audiences to martial arts movies and philosophies?

I've always been interested in a video game's ability to immerse the user in the experience the game creates. This t is one of the reasons that initially drove me to want to work on *Rise to Honour*. The process by which such an engrossing game-play experience is created fascinates me and I'm glad I was able to participate in this project.

24.   Do you think the fighting system in *Rise to Honour* accurately recreates your fighting style?

From what I've seen so far of the game and action in *Rise to Honour*, I think the programmers and designers did an excellent job of accurately representing my movements. And I think the Sony Team was successful in translating the action into a gaming system.

25.   What are some of your favorite moves in the game?

I have yet to experiment with every move of the game, so at this point it is hard to say.

26.   How do you like being the star of a videogame and knowing that others are actually stepping into your shoes as a character?

As an actor, I find the opportunity to immerse the user in the world of my character, Kit Yun very exciting. I believe it's one of the unique properties of the videogame experience that is very difficult to develop in the traditional filmmaking process. While films are a very visual and emotional artistic medium, videogames take it one step further into the realm of a unique personal experience.

27.   Do you think there is room for more Hong-Kong action inspired video games?

Yes, I think there is always room for further development of any artistic medium, including the Hong-Kong action genre.

28.   Would you consider yourself a fan of video games – what sort of games do you prefer to play?

I used to play the classic 80s games. In terms of types of games, I'm more of a Tetris, puzzle game kind of guy.

29.   Overall how have you found the experience of being involved in the creation of *Rise to Honour*?

Being a part of the creation of *Rise to* Honour has been fun and a great learning experience. I'm amazed to have discovered what technology is capable of doing today! And I realize it takes a lot of time, effort, and lots of dedicated people to make a game a success.

30.   Any funny stories you want to share about working on the game? What did you like most about being involved in the development?

Out of the entire development process, I most enjoyed being a part of the team effort and to have met these talented people who love what they do. I also appreciate the opportunity to challenge oneself in a new format and to learn a new form of media/entertainment. .