

Game Developer Diary – Part Five

Dave Hasle, Senior Producer – Monolith Productions

Our Audio has won us critical acclaim on *Condemned: Criminal Origins* and we're so pleased to have the same Audio Team for *Condemned 2* that we had with *Condemned: Criminal Origins*. Our Audio Lead, Brian Paminatuan, works under the Audio Director, James Ackley. Kristen Quebe, Sound Designer and Nathan Grigg, Composer, have both worked very closely with Brian to give us another audio masterpiece.

I asked Brian to take a few moments out to share with everyone some of the thoughts and approaches he took with the Audio team in delivering another strong, unique audio experience.

BRIAN PAMINTUAN: One of the many great aspects of the first game for us was the audio experience and how it strongly carried the player along. With *Condemned 2*, we've really strived to carry that immersive feeling even further.

In *Condemned 2*, the goal has been accomplished, but achieving that *Condemned* feeling has been done in some unique ways. Since the combat has always been a really big focus, the audio had to really stand out and help the overall combat experience. We now have fist combat, as well as melee weapons and fire-arms. Plus, there are many different aspects to combat that we did not have in *Condemned: Criminal Origins*.

So for me, it all starts with the ambience. This has always been one of the biggest audio factors in the *Condemned* world. It puts you in the realm of the space, keeps you on edge, and also sets up various key gameplay moments to make them shine. With the game already looking realistically dirty and scary, adding the creepy ambient drones, some distant commotions, water drips sounds, and moments with just a rat running by knocking over a bucket will get you to jump!

Here are some example sounds of the ambience I am referring:

[AMBIENCE LINK – PLEASE USE THE .wav FILES ZIPPED WITH THIS DIARY]

Now combat is unique for us. Every punch, block, weapon impacts, special combat sounds – the player has to feel it all! You need to feel like you're really beating someone with that weapon and getting that satisfaction that it is really happening! We want you walking away thinking "*That was freakin' intense!!*"....

Another unique feature we applied to make the experience fully engaging was adding "music combat". This happens at certain times when we want combat to either stand out or when we have a moment of a quick audio boost in the pacing of the game. Once music combat kicks in, you get the sense that you can't quite figure out why cases of combat seemed more intense and visceral. It's basically sets of stylized music riffs that we can pick and have firing off,

overlapping with melee combat. Each riff is timed out to play on specific impacts, swings, movements, deaths, etc. Then, you add the combat dialogue, deadly yells, the crying pains and of course, the bone crunching bloody weapon impacts! We've found this to work very well for us. Even with the new additions and new approaches to *Condemned 2*, we feel that we've matched the rhythm and tone of the *Condemned* universe but have cranked it up to even a higher standard.

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