

-Before we dive into Sacred Line II, I would love to talk about you and your background. What first inspired you to become a musician? What is the origin story of Sasha Darko, and how did you come up with that professional name?

Installed FL Studio and played around a bit, then started going deeper.

I don't remember now, but it has something to do with a character from Donnie Darko.

-You began your performing as a musician at just 10 years old. What first inspired you to become a homebrewer and chiptune composer?

I think love for the console I grew up with. I don't do classic chiptune, but starting with an album GENESIS I developed a style of sound I call "witchdrive", mixing YM2612 chip sound and dark trap music. Still use it for my tracks from time to time.

-I've read in past interviews you gave that you can't say there's an influence you can point to, but that you enjoy freedom in music, seeing no limits in genres. Where has that freedom taken you most recently? Do you feel that your games and music have any qualities that are quintessentially you?

Each album I produce comes in a different genre. Post-metal in 2017, witch house in 2018, light ambient in 2019, angelwave / neoclassical in 2020, then a rap mixtape.

I'd say freedom of thought.

-What tools do you use to code and compose for games as well as conventional music?

Unity and GINCS, Daz 3D for models, FL studio with lots of plugins for making music.

-In addition to your musical and programming work on video games, you perform music, write, and are a visual artist. Does your creation in one area sometimes influence your creativity in another?

Sure. Music and visual sides are connected to me.

-How did you first connect with James and Mega Cat Studios?

I asked them via e-mail about releasing SLII, and they agreed to do so.

-At the heart of Sacred Line II's gameplay is its horror aesthetic. What about horror resonates with you?

Freedom in expression, creating an atmosphere unlike any other.

-I like to ask developers if there are reflections of themselves in the game's protagonist. Do you identify with Sarah or her experiences in the game?

No. There's no character I identify with.

-You've described as a goal providing a unique experience that's never been seen before on the platform. How do you feel Sacred Line II delivers on that goal?

Other developers usually make things you play with a classic set of everything - health bar, jumping, etc.

Sacred Line is about putting yourself in an eerie world, feeling it and living through its story. It's anything but a classic game for the system.

-What aspects of Sacred Line II are you most proud of?

Its atmosphere and soundtrack, and visual fidelity.

-What new challenges or surprises surfaced in developing Sacred Line II?

Compressing a huge and epic story with lots of assets into a 4 MB game.

-Sacred Line II's offerings include a "Survivor DLC" tier in which you will create a personalized game inside the Sacred Line world for fans. How many people have taken advantage of this tier? How does it feel to see people so excited about your work that they want to be in it?

Only one and it was fun to do that. Made it for the customer in the US and his family, they were playing it together. Creating a horror story for all ages it's something I believe I haven't done before and it was interesting.

-Are there any other projects you have lined up on the horizon, Sega Genesis/Mega Drive or otherwise? Any dream projects? Collaborations?

As for the games - no.

-Have you ever considered converting your music to chiptune and releasing them on cartridge albums?

Nope.

-Are there any homebrew games in development that you are excited to play?

I don't think so. There are interesting indie projects for PC, but can't say there's anything interesting enough for me on the modern homebrew console scene.

-I really appreciate you taking the time to talk with me and share your experiences. Is there anything else you would like to tell readers and fans?

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