How did you get started as a game developer?

I wanted to create worlds and tell stories, so I chose game development as the best format.

What drew you to exploring retro hardware?

I never had anything except pirate versions of Mega Drive and NES, because I lived in the country where you couldn't buy licensed hardware. So when I had the money, I started to dig into the retro scene to look at the things I missed.
One of the most important things which most people don't care about - the MD1 model sound changes things when you move from the other versions, it sounds amazing.

Is there a particular reason you favor the Genesis/Megadrive?

Mega Drive was the only thing I had in childhood until I got a computer when I was 14. Thanks to rental and trade, I was able to play most of the games on the system. The games on the MD are extremely imaginative, they are not targeted at a "child" audience and have a soul.
Also, the chip of the system resonates with me a lot, that sound. I still listen to a lot of Mega Drive soundtracks.

What inspired Sacred Line?

It was inspired by music. The development as a whole was driven by the F.E.A.R. Main Theme and also by events happening in the game. The title was inspired by the song of Akira Yamaoka.

Why a horror visual novel?

Horror is a genre free of borders, so you can use your imagination to no limits.

The original Sacred Line was praised for its brooding sense of dread. What would you say is key to achieving this atmosphere in a more static format?

You can achieve great results not even showing pictures, like it was with the Fighting Fantasy series. It's all about how and what you're describing to the player. If you can deliver a strong scene to the player just by using the words, then it might have a better effect and make it memorable, depending on their imagination.

What were some of the lessons learned over the course of creating Sacred Line? How did they shape your approach with the sequel?

The first part was mostly about adapting the story of the PC version into the visual novel format. SLII was built from the ground up as a visual novel adventure, so it led to having more freedom with the way the story is being told.

What do you think it is about old school pre-rendered images that lend themselves so well to horror and adventure games?

3D scenes fit well with the overall game style and the way the story is told. I like Harvester, for example. 90s FMVs games have a charm and 3D made them that way.

How did you go about crafting and managing the branching storylines? Will Sacred Line II work from a "canon" ending? Or is there a way to reflect your past choices?

Yes, there's a canon ending in both of them. The secret ending in the first game was an Easter Egg breaking the 4th wall. I would even call it meta - to learn the code to unlock it in the Sacred Line Genesis you need to check the surroundings in the PC version.

Why did you opt for physical dice rolls for combat rather than in-game systems?

It feels fairer when you roll the real dice, isn't it? Because it's about how you roll it, not about a computer deciding your choices.

For those just getting into the series, will they be able to dive in with Sacred Line II?

It stands out well as a Sarah story, especially with the in-game Encyclopedia explaining things.

Where does the story pick up?

It has a prologue that tells what was before the events of SLI. Then it switches to the events happening parallel to the story of the first game, two sisters moving in different directions, but eventually, their paths cross.

Can you give us a tease of any new wrinkles you're working into the sequel?

It has a couple of tricky puzzles, one will make you think. SLI didn't have any puzzles, that wasn't the focus. It's also much bigger, the size limit of 4MB already has been reached and a few adjustments were made to optimize the content.

What would you say is your favorite facet of the series?

Its atmosphere.

How does it feel to be a full-on series now for a beloved classic console?

Splendid.