

DigitalArts

The world's biggest creative design & technology magazine

Creative Monster details gory and funny *Shot at Love* viral for WET game

Monday 28 Sep 2009 - 11:25

Produced by the recently launched Creative Monster Productions, the new viral campaign for videogame WET from Bethesda Softworks manages to put a humorous spin on a dark and gritty offering.

With its atmospheric intro, *Shot at Love* -- the first of three virals -- reflects the mayhem wrought by assassin Rubi, the game's protagonist. We move through the scene like detectives arriving moments too late. Rubi's victims lie scattered about the room. However, the mood unexpectedly lightens, as a man with a pipe through his chest breaks out in song. His mortally wounded companions follow suit, all of them belting out a musical declaration of love for the enigmatic girl who took their lives.

[Watch *Shot at Love* -- warning: contains a reasonable amount of gore.](#)



Shot at Love is directed by Creative Monster's Jamie Sterba and featuring VFX by partner company Identity Studios. It employs a distinct blend of campiness and (implied) violence that conveys the Tarantino-esque atmosphere of the game. The grainy look of the film adds to that mystique, feeling like stock footage from a B-movie, long-hidden away in a vault somewhere.

Two additional spots, *Heartbreaker* and *Lovestruck*, feature characters from *Shot at Love* praising Rubi from the grave.



Sterba says that while the musical twist is what hooked him in the beginning, "for all of its atmosphere and intensity, this is a subtle comedy piece. The opportunity existed to tap into humor and humanity, and Blake was looking for the same thing."

Partner company Identity Studios provided 3D tracking, modelling, animation and compositing to simulate a shotgun blast through the torso of an actor (above). The 3D wound was created from scratch; artists tracked both the camera and the actor so that the wound would dynamically match the actor's breathing and muscle movements and lit the wound to match set lighting and background atmosphere.

As important as the musical payoff, of course, was the eerie set-up, grabbing the audience's attention by luring them into a dark, dangerous world.

"We asked ourselves, 'How do we engage the audience from the beginning?' Sterba recalls. "You hear this brutal action offscreen, so when you enter the room you're adjusting to the grisly aftermath and the last thing you expect is a song."

That song is delivered by a collection of thugs, each one more brutish than the last. "We operated from the notion that the scarier they looked, the better they should sing," Sterba muses.

It was important that the actors' performances not be too polished. The same applied to their makeup.

"In order to strike the perfect balance, there had to be an aspect of camp to the makeup," Sterba explains. "So we kept the look of their wounds a little bit silly. One fan said one thug who's suffered an acid burn looks like he has pizza on his face, which is, more or less, the reaction we were going for."



Sterba preceded and followed the WET virals with more traditional, broadcast projects for McDonald's. Was it tough to shift gears? "The creative approach and the audience may differ, but in the end I'm drawn to work with strong visuals, production design, and humor," he concludes. "And I use these elements to connect the brand with the viewer."

Digital Arts Staff

For more information see the [Creative Monster Web site](#).