

AIRBITER



INTERVIEW: JEFF CRONENWETH

**D.O.P of
The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo
The Social Network
and
Fight Club**



DEAD SPACE 2
Review

WARNING: Demon babies ahead

ARBITER



Jeff Cronenweth

Cinematographer

We ask the man behind the camera on Fight Club, The Social Network and One Hour Photo some questions about his trade.

We would like to warmly thank Meredith Emmanuel Bates for making us seem far more professional than anyone expected.

Also everybody who supported issue #1 by downloading it and subscribing.

Keep an eye out in Feb for issue 3 and our special Oscars edition.



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EDITOR'S NOTE

Hey all,

Well it's finally here, Issue #2 leaves our computers, flies across the interwebs and into your homes. Yes, it's a little late but you can't rush perfection (or important hollywood people). We have a great issue in store with everything inside from motion controls to movies and even a little art to boot. It's been a crazy month chasing down all the work for the articles, but we now have another notch on the belt and only two and a half weeks till deadline for issue #3... Sigh... *hurries back to work*.

- JOSHUA PHILPOTT

CALUM W. A.

When not tirelessly manning the helm of Arbiter, Calum divides his time between writing for food, fleeing from deadlines and working on his collages of Josh's face.

www.bloodyjaw.com



JOSHUA PHILPOTT

When not trying to chase down Calum about deadlines or being generally over opinionated, Josh tends to use his time to do experiments on small animals to try and breed his own race of super intelligent mutant rats that will one day enslave you all.

Rawdlc.com



Respawn VS.

Hey guys,

Great magazine, cant wait to read more and more.

I just wanted to add a rant here that I'm sure isn't new but just annoys the hell out of me. I use a PS3 and I have a kickass ADSL, high speed, 400Gb per month connection. I have the Sony headset and some really great fps titles. I love playing online.

Well I used to anyway. What's put me off is the fact that nearly everyone else out there runs straight out into the open wildly laying off rounds in any direction, they get killed, spawn 10 metres back, rinse lather repeat.

FFS learn a lesson. Flank! Or talk, we've got mics, we can chat and get a plan. If just 5 or 6 guys worked as a team instead of being bloody lemmings, you would wipe every map clean of these morons.

Or here's a better idea, it's simple and can be patched. Respawn takes longer after each death so you get tapped once, you have to wait 30 seconds, twice is 1 minute, 3 times is 2 minutes.

Have some bloody consequences for a fatality. In the old days we used to have lives, 3 of them to be exact. And games back then were longer. To complete the original game of Donkey Kong would take twice as long as Force Unleashed 2 (I've had bowel movements longer than FU2 - ED).

When Mario got hit by a barrel he didn't just take cover and start feeling better.

That was one life down, two to go.

Honestly last time I played online, the guy who got killed the most won a trophy for being "the last winner."

Sincerely,
James from Melbourne

Thanks James, You're a beacon of sanity in the otherwise soulless hellhole that is online gaming.

CONTACT US

If you have questions for us or maybe a rant that you wish to share with the world. We have dedicated this section of the magazine just to you.

Email us at : arbiter.magazine@gmail.com

Feel free to contact us for next months issue and you may see your words here!

Remake

It is currently the trend in Hollywood to remake old films, old being a relative term. In the case of the recent Swedish hit novel/film "Girl with the Dragon Tattoo", the original is barely a year old in its native country and yet here comes Hollywood with an English language remake. (Calm down son, Jeff Cronenweth might be reading) Is it too much to ask an audience to read subtitles?

Apparently US cinema goers are not even capable of sitting through an English (as in British) film, as evidenced by the remake of "Death at a Funeral" only three years after the original, and even going so far as to cast the same actor (Peter Dinklage), in the same role in both films.

So far we have a maximum three year gap between original and remake, not far enough by my reckoning, so what about the three original "Karate Kid" movies, the first being made 26 years ago?

26 years still not long enough, how about 41?

That's a random number to just pull out of thin air, but let's think about that in the context of John Wayne. "True Grit", originally starring John Wayne 41 years ago has just been given the remake treatment, I can only assume that it has taken so long to remake a John Wayne film, because every filmmaker was convinced The Duke would climb out of his grave and kick ass all over Tinsel Town if done poorly.

They can all sleep soundly, "True Grit", starring Jeff Bridges, Matt Damon and Josh Brolin is cinema at its finest, remake or otherwise. Maybe it's the genre, the western. "3:10 to Yuma" was successfully remade in 2007 from its predecessor 50 years earlier, although again, decades separate both films.

We can go even further back. 73 years separates Peter Jackson's "King Kong" from the classic 1933 version. The new film shows Jackson's love and respect for the original in every scene and surely plays a huge part in the new "Kong" being an incredible giant monkey themed romp.

Not to be one sided, good remakes do exist and not all boast a 7 decade gap. The Bourne Trilogy first found life as a telemovie in 1988 and in only 14 years Matt Damon has turned Jason Bourne into a spy that rivals James Bond or Jack Bauer.

I am fully aware that every spy just mentioned has the initials JB, but that mystery of the universe will be delved into another time.

We also have Matt Damon starring in 2 of the successful remakes, is he the unknown quantity, should he be cast as the rebellious kid with a talent for dancing in the "Footloose" remake?

Some films are remade with alarming regularity, Romeo & Juliet, A Christmas Carol, Pride & Prejudice, just to name a few. Multiple versions of these flicks turn up every handful of years and the quality of each version is generally hit or miss, or a radical departure from the norm.

Romeo & Juliet starring Leo DiCaprio is a perfect example and, soon to come, "Pride & Prejudice & Zombies" will undoubtedly be a genre busting undeadathon, the likes of which neither Jane Austen nor Mr Darcy could have ever foreseen.

So what have we discovered? Do remakes need to be made? The answer is a resounding....Sometimes. Using what we know of successful remakes then it would seem, the next big hit should be: A Western retelling of the Sound of Music, starring Matt Damon as Maria, who, after falling in love with and marrying Captain Von Trapp (played by King Kong of course), is forced to flee the country due to the multitude of zombies and sudden rise in brain eatery.

Copyright, Trademarked, JD. 2011. (Give me a call Spielberg, to discuss the Von Trapp children casting.)

If there is point to my ramble, it is that remakes should at the very least be unique in some way, a carbon copy remake will never work (I'm looking at you Gus van Sant), have a healthy gap between original and remake, and all star Matt Damon.

JD (potential Von Trapp child)

**And through the miracle of modern movie magic, you could play ALL the Von Trapp kids.
Arbiter would watch that masterpiece.**

In Camera: Jeff Cronenweth

By Calum Wilson Austin

Audiences often overlook the contribution of a cinematographer to a film. It being a visual medium and a collaborative art form, the Director of Photography has a hand, even if they're not directly involved, in every frame shot.

Jeff Cronenweth is, sadly, one of those underrated filmmakers but that could be set to change with his Oscar nomination for cinematography on *The Social Network* and his upcoming slate of films.

Having worked with (*Social Network* director) David Fincher before, Cronenweth's visual style and Fincher's direction are perfectly matched and well worthy of the 7 Oscar nominations *The Social Network* has gathered.

Born in 1962, the son of legendary cinematographer Jordan Cronenweth, Jeff Cronenweth's resume is unassumingly packed with excellent movies. As director of photography on *K-11: The Widowmaker*, *One Hour Photo*, *Fight Club* and a bevy of music videos, Cronenweth has consistently made visually exciting films throughout his career.

Excitingly, Cronenweth and Fincher are reteaming this year for an English-language adaptation of Steig Larsson's *Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*. With a new cast and the Cronenweth-Fincher combination behind the camera, the film will if nothing else, look good.

We managed to track down Cronenweth and ask him a few questions about film, Facebook and *Fight Club*.



Rooney Mara as the new Lisbeth Salander



Jeff Cronenweth

First off, does it bother you that your IMDB picture isn't of you?

If you open the picture I'm slightly to the right. But I don't mind sharing.

In the films you've been D.O.P on, how do you go about choosing a visual style? What is involved with the decision?

We discuss what the story needs and then do an amount of testing to determine the best tools and light sources for the visual canvas. The visual style should emerge from the substance of the script rather than override it. Story and characters create drama; we enhance and reinforce that drama.

A favourite of ours is the, particularly captivating, rowing scene in *The Social Network* set at the Henley Royal Regatta. What kinds of challenges were associated with filming that scene?

First and foremost the Royal Regatta was very protective of the annual race and its prestige and history by, rightfully so, limiting our presence and opportunities to capture it as we normally would. This created a challenge in that it had to be shot over many days in many locations under different lighting conditions. The style choice was both out of aesthetics as much as a creative solution to mask all the coverage into one seamless race.

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What made you decide to shoot The Social Network with a Red Camera? Was it a stylistic choice or a practical one?

Fincher stopped shooting on film after Panic Room and used the Viper for both Zodiac and Benjamin Button, but that technology is antiquated and we were looking for the next advancement in digital photography. We had both used the Red One camera on commercials and music videos and with the announcement of the new mysterium x chip and a little push from David's close friend Steven Soderbergh who's been a long time advocate, we tested and chose to go with the system. The MX chip offered a great dynamic color range, an improvement in latitude, highlights not vanishing as quickly into clipping areas and actually extending the toe area.

I've always wanted to know, when you were filming Fight Club, what kind of unconventional techniques did you use to get the eclectic look? Were they in-camera or in post-production?

The first rule is, don't answer Q&As about Fight Club.

Obviously there are quite a few visual effects in the film but the entire look and style was completed in camera. The picture was photographed on Kodak stock, processed at Technicolor and finished with traditional timing methods. This was pre DI world. So just progressive choices in both light sources and color choices you could say.

You've probably heard this a lot, as you're involved with the new Girl with the Dragon Tattoo. How do you feel about the stigma attached to remaking such a recent film, and how are you distancing your take on the story from the Swedish version?

While I don't want to preempt or spoil the film for you, I can say what we are doing is quite different. The script is similar, as are the characters but our interpretation is different and the visual style will hopefully be unlike anything you expected – the previous filmmakers made a good film and we are making a better one, but that's as much as I can say!

The stigma doesn't concern me as much as making a good picture does. The rest is conjecture, but as they say, all the publicity has to be helpful!

Lastly, congratulations of the Oscar nomination and thanks for answering our questions.

You're most welcome!

WORLD in MOTION

MOTION CONTROL HAS BECOME A STANDARD PART OF GAMING, BUT AS A WHOLE THE WORLD SEEMS CONFUSED... NEVER FEAR GRANT 'STUBBY' NOY IS HERE TO EXPLAIN ALL.



The video gaming world has had a huge surge of motion controlling lately and it does seem hard to sift the duds from the dudes in this strange turn for the industry. With Nintendo starting the ball rolling far further back than you probably think, motion controls have always had their pros and cons. Some issues being tied to the technology and the hardware provided, through to the software support or limitations of the developers. Either way, we, the gamers, are left in the middle asking "Is it any good?" and no one can ever give us a straight answer so here's a bit of a breakdown of the pedigree from a gamer's point of view.

THE PAST

Most people think that Nintendo's Wii was the first motion sensitive console, which is true to a degree in that it was the first console to have a motion sensitive controller as its standard interface from player to machine. But Nintendo have dabbled in this region many years ago with the NES in 1989, when they brought out the "power glove". This accessory is, as it sounds, a glove with sensors that you could use to control games with movements. It turned out to be utterly terrible. Most NES games didn't have a control scheme for the glove and the ones that did were badly integrated. So the first motion controller was a total flop, mainly due to a lack of support and communication. The power glove was made by a company that didn't make games and there were only 2 proper power glove games made by Nintendo during its lifespan. Even though they didn't work too badly, it was a unanimous failure according to gamers and developers. So it was swept under the rug with the Betamax tapes of "The Wizard" and gratefully forgotten.

The next proper attempt wouldn't be until years later when Sony brought out the "EyeToy" for their Playstation 2. EyeToy was a digital camera that projected your image onto the screen and the game "worked" around you. Making you look like a right pillock but laughing all the way. Marketed and aimed at kids, EyeToy enjoyed some time in the sun and since Sony were backing the project, there were a lot of games with EyeToy compatibility. Even Pro Evolution Soccer let you put a photo of your face on one of your players. Though time does make fools of us all and after a long stream of virtually identical mini game compilations, interest dropped like a stone. But EyeToy always stayed around, Sony would even try to bring it to the PSP, to mass confusion.



In a futile attempt to spark interest in its dying Gamecube, Nintendo announced a motion controller which was instantly shunned by all who heard about it. Nintendo went back to the drawing board and decided to design a new console based around the controller, thus giving it a clean slate and allowing them time to work the bugs out of the motion control. Ta da, the Wii was born and the world took to it like fish to water. Selling like mad and being hailed as an innovator of modern gaming, the Wii kept skyrocketing with great 3rd party software support and a trophy cabinet full of glorious 1st party titles.

THE PRESENT

The motion controls for the Wii work on 3 levels. First, the Wii remote uses gyros and weights to know which direction you hold it. Secondly, the sensor bar has 2 infrared LEDs which tell the remote where the pointer is positioned on the screen and how far away you are. It's a simple system that may have already been obsolete on its launch day, but it worked well enough and has since been upgraded with the "Motion Plus" to give it more pinpoint accuracy. The fact that developers weren't forced to incorporate motion controls into their games, the remote could be held sideways for a more traditional controller, worked in its favour too. Nintendo has however posted a dramatic drop in overall Wii sales over the last 2 years and some of their major 1st party games aren't selling as well as expected. This is probably because of the Wii's inability to keep up with HD machines.

It's only made for standard definition and when viewed on a plasma or LCD screen, its graphical limitations are immediately obvious.

Just prior to the Wii's release, Sony filed a lawsuit against Nintendo. They claimed they had stolen their idea of a motion controller based console. What they were referring to was the "Sixaxis" controller of the PS3, which was horrid to use in the few games that actually supported it. The hilarity is, Sony have released their revamped motion controller called "Playstation Move" which is, in essence, a complete rip off of Nintendo's Wii remote. With one small difference though, instead of using a sensor bar with LEDs, Sony have opted for an EyeToy-like camera to give the controller its anchor point. The use of the camera brings a new problem to the table. Ambient light is now a factor; the move controller seems afraid of the dark and has a tendency to spaz out unless you sit in a well lit room. Which means any game with atmosphere, like Dead Space, may be ruined. Not to mention that the controller has a glowing ping-pong ball on the end. That thick creepy ambience of a horror game is out the window when you see the glowing ball-end reflecting off your TV screen. As far as games are concerned, the Move has a smattering of titles from Resident Evil to even more sports compilations and some small games on the Playstation Network. It has potential to match the Wii but is hampered by flaws in design.

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Plus, Sony doesn't really seem to have a plan for the Move, incorporating it as an optional controller with very few Move-only titles announced. This can work both ways as the gamer isn't forced into using a potentially awkward motion controller for a title. Without a serious outlook, interest from developers and audiences will drop. If Sony can get 2 or 3 different genre titles for the move that don't feel like they should be played on a regular controller, then they could be onto a long term success.

And what kind of a race would it be without a third competitor? What Microsoft has gone for is more like the EyeToy than the Wii. The Kinect adopts a camera and the user's body as its interface but with a few important additions. They added a second camera next to the first to allow for pseudo-depth perception and a directional microphone for voice recognition. The technology in this kit is impressive, but not fully utilised by the Xbox currently.

The Kinect recognises the player's body by the points of articulation. Your shoulders, elbows, knees and wrists are registered by the 360 then that information is sent to the console and translated into the game's engine. This eliminates having your image on screen and instead makes your actions that of your game's character. This brings with it its own unique issues. Since your playing area is empty except for you, you won't get physical feedback from the game. Because of this your character is reacting differently than your body. So you're throwing a punch which isn't registering because your gaming avatar just had his teeth knocked out and you're pissed off because the game's not working. Sadly it is working, just not with you. Also, to use all those points of articulation, you must be standing. This means that, amongst other things, racing games are out because you can't properly accelerate, brake or hold your arms out straight for even 5 minutes at a time.



Having said all this, the big 3 companies have seen remarkable success with their motion controllers and for different reasons. Microsoft has done the smart marketing by aiming theirs at the younger gamer, a demographic that Microsoft has never really tapped. But also by releasing a bundle where the Kinect comes with the console at an awesome price tag, just before Christmas. Good pricing and good timing are building blocks for success in this market. Signs of "down the road" potential are looking good with more emphasis on Xbox Live video chat options and voice recognition expansion. Plus a promise of Star Wars and Gears of War games around mid-year only sweeten the deal. This is Microsoft's first real attempt at a first-party accessory (besides the HD-DVD add-on) and with this much focus it's doubtful it will fail.

So a clear cut winner is not easy to find. All of them have their own pros and cons. The idea of a motion controller is to help immerse the player by bringing physical interaction with the digital medium. The only common factor between these controllers is the gamer. Everything comes down to a personal preference as all these controls act and react to your actions in different ways. So what works best for you may differ to the next person. Motion controls are not just a fad, they won't go away anytime soon and there is some fun to be had here. Don't dismiss it because you never really know until you try it out.

WORLD IN MOTION



DEAD SPACE 2

As your character comes to, a man stands above you frantically pulling at your restraints and talking erratically about getting you out of here. Your mind flashes back to scenes of you with doctors, speaking about the terrors that took place on the USC Ishimura. Then nothing. You have no memory of where you are or how you arrived in the straight jacket, but alarms are sounding and it is crystal clear that something is very wrong. Through the flashing lights and chaos you see something rise up behind your rescuer's head. Fear floods in as you realize you have seen this creature before. With one swoop of it's tail it puts a clean hole through the centre of your saviour's head and the transformation begins. Flesh bursts, blood spills, and a necromorph is born. It lets out a chilling scream and your terror reaches a peak as your situation becomes clear...

You are still strapped to the chair.

There is no question that Visceral Games are masters of fear.



For those that are new to the franchise Dead Space is considered as one of the greatest horror experiences ever created and is hands down the most atmospheric game you will find of it's time. Dead Space quite literally will take you to hell and back and have you clutching your seat the whole way down. Naturally these are big sequel shoes to fill and as with all horror genre content the question immediately becomes "how do you take it to the next level?" Well, Visceral Games know horror and the love for the genre is clear. The rules for a good horror sequel are simple, more of everything. More gore, more death and bigger and more epic set pieces. Dead Space 2 has all of this in spades. The attention to detail with character models and environments make the experience more absorbing and the use of sound is even more terrifying than it was in the first game.

Controls have been given a polish too, movement feels less weighted and the melee is now a useful combat tool instead of the last resort it was for dead space 1. The only flaw seems to be that the games break-neck pace does greatly reduce its suspense. By not allowing the player to get relax you remove the ability for them to get comfortable before the next big shock. This however could also be put down to traditions of horror sequels and does not make the game any less spellbinding, even if this may prove frustrating at times. Dead Space 2 may not really revolutionize gaming or redefine what it is to be scared, but it will provide you with a tense and atmospheric experience with 10 - 12 hours of solid gameplay and has a multiplayer section for those that are interested. For people that tried the first game and weren't impressed there isn't much here that has changed but for fans or just horror fanatics this is the closest you will get to being in a horror movie without becoming a victim.



ALMAN
BE
PRAISED

NEXT GEN ART

The Digital world has come a long way. What used to be a dull and underused format has begun to flourish as technology improves faster and faster. We at Arbiter decided to grab an expert and have a chat about the world of Digital Art.

Denny Markovic kindly offered his time.



Where did you study?

I went to Randwick TAFE and did a Diploma in Interactive Digital Media. The actual course was only scraping the surfaces of 3D, Web Design/Coding, Flash Development and Screen. But due to my somewhat manic obsession with 3D at the time, I took my studies way further by acquiring my own lectures and such, such as the DVDs from "The Gnomon Workshop."

Where do you plan to take it?

Hopefully to a studio which will accept me into their ranks and let me blast away some kind of ridiculously high detail model for their video game and/or film. It's not an easy industry to get into that's for sure; it requires a lot of patience, passion and a bit of loopiness too, but the pay off most of the time is pretty worth it. My Dream jobs include working with Pixar, Industrial Light and Magic, and of course, Blizzard Entertainment.

Was it a love of games or something else that made you choose this medium?

Some very specific games and entertainment mediums are what inspired me to take this route. Shadow of the Colossus and ICO are two big inspirations with their minimalist yet emotionally gripping designs and ideas. Blizzard Entertainment's absolutely mesmerising

CG work are catalysts behind my passion to perfect and push my skills to the farthest reaches of the Universe. While I'm kind of miles away from ever being as good as any of those artists, patience is a virtue and I'd love to have my work be looked at one day and people can say, "holy Batman, that kicks ass".

What are some tips for people wanting to get into 3D design?

Learn the basics of every area (modeling, animation, VFX, rendering, lighting and cameras etc), then stick to the one you feel most comfortable and confident in. As harsh as it may sound, being a master in every area is close to impossible and it's realistically a lot better to simply focus on one aspect and polish it to an absolute shine.

That and be extremely persistent and don't give up. That's the hardest part about it all - you've got ALOT of competition out there and the only ones to truly succeed are the ones that never give up. Passion is what pulls you through.



What are some of your favorite artists?

Fumito Ueda (the mind behind ICO and Shadow of the Colossus), Ryan Church (Concept Artist behind several high profile films), Chris Metzen (wrote the original stories behind Warcraft, StarCraft and Diablo) and Taron for his utterly insane organic modeling techniques. Special mention to Jeremy Vickery as well who is a master of lighting.

What tools do you use for project creation?

For 3D, my main tools are LightWave 9.6 and 3D-Coat 3.3. 3D-Coat is used for high detail sculpting and pixel painting, while LightWave is used for pretty much everything else. For Digital Painting, I'm almost purely a Painter XI user as I love how it utilises colour and its brushes are absolutely amazing. I've been trying to deviate a little bit lately though and have started slowly learning some 3DS Max.

Thanks for taking the time to answer our questions, much appreciated.
No Problems.

