



PRESS START 2 CONTINUE

Production Notes

Upon learning that his former companions Zack (Joshua Stafford) and Sam (Jennifer Zahn) have been captured, ultra-violent ninja Lin-Ku (Al Morrison) is forced to take drastic action. Specifically, he has to team up with bubbly, positive-thinking princess Xanna (Jenny Nelson) to save his friends – and the world – from the world’s most inexplicably successful evil overlord Count Nefarious Vile (Peter Davis).

In order to defeat Vile, the unlikely pair are going to have to infiltrate hidden levels, take full advantage of their inventory and really polish up their puzzle-solving skills. Zombies, monsters and succubi stand between them and their goal. Meanwhile, Zack and Sam are getting pulled into the bizarre card-based fighting world of Jackamo while the bad guys wage corporate war over home-security consoles.

With the original *Press Start* production team back on board, from writer Kevin Folliard and director/producer Ed Glaser to composer Jake Kaufman and effects wizard Rod Contreras, this is definitely not a Hollywood production. Instead, it’s a labor of love made by fans of the very videogame conventions they’re spoofing.

RESPONSE TO THE ORIGINAL

“The best videogame movie ever made” - Destructoid.com

“A surprisingly well-written parody of videogame conventions”- PC Gamer Magazine

“A cult classic in the making”- Kotaku.com

Made with a shoestring budget (and that’s second-hand shoestrings, mind you) the original *Press Start* was nonetheless well-received by gamers and critics. Compared to big-budget movies based on videogames, the endless in-jokes, references and spoofs on gaming conventions really hit home with gamers.

Fans of the first movie were soon asking for a sequel, but there were obstacles to consider. Not only

was budget an issue, but there were also the usual challenges: adding to the original story, new characters, and most importantly deciding if there was enough new material to be had in the parody department.

And of course, the ultimate question had to be asked: would the original cast and crew be willing to go through it all over again?

MAKING A SEQUEL

Fortunately, the cast was more than willing to don their costumes once more. The main reason the first movie got made was due to the enthusiasm of cast and crew, and thankfully that enthusiasm was still there. As said by director Ed Glaser, “what we lack in money, we make up for in poverty. So we’re running on passion and ingenuity.”

Writer Kevin Folliard worked closely with Glaser before pre-production began to make sure a movie could be made and laughs could be had without an increase in budget. But although *Press Start 2 Continue* was filmed in HD, that isn’t the biggest change in the look and feel of the sequel.

While the first movie was a quest movie largely based on fantasy and role-playing games, the sequel looks to more “urban” games for inspiration. Featuring alley brawling and sneaking around corporate buildings, *PS2* looks more like games such as *Metal Gear Solid* and *Killer Instinct* than it looks like a Mario or Zelda game. And with the reluctant pairing of Lin-Ku and Princess Xanna, it is more of a “buddy movie” than a quest.

Xanna’s character also brings a new gaming element to the franchise as a character who enjoys puzzles and cartoonish fun. Between her own style of facing challenges and Zack and Sam’s Jackamo adventure, the movie contrasts the conventions of grittier games against the sillier aspects of casual games.

PICKING UP FROM PRESS START ADVENTURES

Thanks to the ongoing animated web series *Press Start Adventures* (pressstartadventures.com), there is a lot of story behind *Press Start 2 Continue*. The cartoons picked up where the first movie ended, covering Count Vile’s quest for revenge and a return to power. Several new characters have also made their mark in the online story and fans will be pleased to know that many of them are making their live-action debut. Nevertheless, the movie stands alone. Watching the cartoons enriches the experience for old fans, but missing them doesn’t detract from it for new ones.

The succubus Morgan Le Slay (Jane Cox) appears in the film, as does the long-haired assassin Scarthcaroth (Marty Scanlon) and the gadget-telepath Schizoid Cricket (Alex Mitchell). But perhaps the most exciting character of all, the sardonic vampire lord Vlad, is finally making a live-action appearance.

Voiced in the cartoons and now in the movie by videogame voice actor David Humphrey (Shadow the Hedgehog from *Sonic Adventure 2*), Vlad was originally conceived as an off-camera buddy who Vile

would gossip with on the phone. Never seen or heard in the first movie, he became a cameo guest star in *Press Start Adventures*. But because those cartoons were written after the movie itself and posted online while the movie was still in production, there was never a plan to include Vlad in the movie.

Over the course of three seasons of cartoons Vlad quickly became a fan favorite and an entrenched member of the cast. So when work started on the movie sequel, one of the earliest discussions was how to incorporate Vlad. As a shadowy bat-monster it seemed less than feasible in a microbudget movie, but with CGI artist Rod Contreras willing to render the laid-back demon lord and David Humphrey willing to lend his voice, Vlad was at last able to cross over into a live action setting.

SMALL BUDGET FILMMAKING

As with the first movie, the budget for the film was in the low four figure range. But the cast and crew conspired to make the most of it and take advantage of their strengths from the first movie.

By re-using locations from the first movie and other Dark Maze productions such as *RoboGirl*, the script was written to work with resources available. Local videogame developer Volition (*Red Faction*, *Saints Row*) generously allowed filming in their offices, providing the evil Count Vile with a lush corporate setting.

Production Designer Meagan Rachelle stretched the budget dollars for props, costumes, makeup and set dressing by shopping smart and using craft skills to build or re-purpose what couldn't be purchased.

Combined with Ed Glaser's HD camera trickery and CGI effects from Rod Contreras, the movie sports much higher production values than the raw budget numbers would lead one to expect.

CAMEO GUEST STARS

David Humphrey (*Vlad*) is an American actor and bass singer best known for being the original voice of Shadow the Hedgehog in the Sonic games. He was cast to play Shadow in *Sonic Adventure 2* in 2001, by his colleague and friend Ryan Drummond who was the voice of Sonic the Hedgehog at the time. He would voice Shadow for the next few years in the Sonic games *Sonic Heroes* and *Sonic Battle*.

Arin Hanson (*Mug-Wug*) is a voice actor best known online for his contributions to Newgrounds.com under the handle "Egoraptor," from the extraordinarily popular *Metal Gear Awesome* to the anime satire *Girlchan in Paradise*. A prolific voice actor, he's voiced dozens of games and cartoons which have appeared on major gaming consoles and national and international television, including *Marvel: Ultimate Alliance*.

Stuart Ashen (*Commercial Narrator*) is a doctor of psychology and a British comedian from Norwich, England who specializes in reviews of so-called "electronic tat." The man behind ashens.com and a contributor to ThatGuyWithTheGlasses.com, Dr. Ashen is best known for his videos showcasing outrageously cheap knock-offs of videogame systems (including the notorious "POP Station" and "Vii") and bargain store curiosities. These, along with his ongoing series "Terrible Old Games You've Probably Never Heard Of", are well known on YouTube and Blistered Thumbs, the videogame-focused

sister site of *That Guy with the Glasses*. Dr. Ashen is also the star of BBC comedy web series “Ashen’s Tech Dump” and “Back Space”, both satirical looks at the world of gadgetry and geekery.

Noah Antwiler (*P.O.L.I.G.A.M.O.N.*) a.k.a. “The Spooky One” is the creator and host of comedy video site *The Spooky Experiment*. An avid gamer and movie buff, he’s got an opinion about pretty much everything, from movies and videogames to comics and wrestling. Winner of the 2009 Mashable award for “Funniest Person to Follow,” Noah’s biting criticism of some of the sacred subjects of geekdom has earned him a large following of fans and enemies. Best known for his ongoing rage against the *Final Fantasy* series, *The Spooky One* has tackled the worst of FMV games, the dregs of the *Highlander* franchise, and more.

Tim Ekkebus and Rory O’Boyle (*Commercial Voices*) are both actors of X-Strike Studios, a low-budget company that makes parody films of specific video games. Their most recent release is *Resident Horror*, a spoof of the popular *Resident Evil* franchise. Besides acting, Tim Ekkebus is a writer and director, who’s first work was X-Strike’s first film, *River City Rumble*.

CAST

Al Morrison (*Lin-Ku*) is an Iaido instructor and second degree black belt, with additional experience in Kendo and Kobujutsu.

Jenny Nelson (*Princess Xanna*) recently graduated from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign with a BFA in Acting. She currently resides in Chicago where she is an actor, object manipulation and flow artist, as well as a hoopdance performer and instructor.

Joshua Stafford (*Zack Nimbus*) is more than merely a videogame enthusiast; he’s also a game tester for Volition, Inc., the developer of such games as *Summoner*, *The Punisher*, and *Saints Row*. He is also a skilled martial artist, with several years of experience in Ninjutsu, Kobujutsu, and Iaido.

Peter Davis (*Count Nefarious Vile*) began his career as a professional actor, director, writer, and dramaturg over thirty years ago in California, working with such companies as Synthaxis and Theatreworks. After more than two decades in higher education, he moved to Chicago in 2003 and began acting again, including productions with *Defiant* (*A Clockwork Orange*), *Strawdog* (*Three Sisters*), and *Remy Bumppo* (*Arcadia*, *Aren’t We All*, and *The Best Man*), where he is also the resident dramaturg. Since 1991, he has been a professor in the Department of Theatre at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign where he chairs the MA/PhD Program.

Andy Dallas (*Shopkeeper*) is a world-renowned performer and former president of the Society of American Magicians. He has appeared in several of director Ed Glaser’s previous productions, including *Press Start*, *RoboGirl*, and *Rampage*.

FILMMAKERS

Ed Glaser (*Producer/Director/Editor*) is a filmmaker, freelance videographer, and founder of *Dark Maze Studios*. He is a graduate of the theater directing program at the University of Illinois,

and although he has directed several stageplays, his true passion has always been for film. He has directed several microbudget movies including *Press Start*. Besides feature-length movies Glaser also is a contributor to popular comedy site ThatGuyWithTheGlasses.com and is currently involved with several web series including *Press Start Adventures*, *Space Ninja*, and *Deja View*.

Kevin Folliard (*Writer*) is a writer and performer in the Chicagoland area with a degree in English and Creative Writing from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He has written screenplays for several films and series including the acclaimed video game parody *Press Start*, *Press Start Adventures*, and *RoboGirl*. His short fiction has appeared in the literary E-zine Burst. Kevin currently is an academic writing advisor at the University of Maryland University College. His voice over work can be heard in popular web cartoons and he is frequently seen on stage in various productions in the Chicago area. Currently, Kevin is seeking representation for two young adult fantasy manuscripts.

Meagan Rachelle (*Production Designer*) has worked on production design for several microbudget films, including *Dead by Dawn* where she also served as Assistant Director, *Press Start*, and *Night of Anubis*. She also provided the vocalizations for Shantae in the DSi game *Shantae: Risky's revenge*. Besides her work on props, sets and costumes, she is also the PR/Marketing Assistant for Dark Maze Studios.

Jake Kaufman (*Composer*) is a prolific and versatile musician and videogame composer. He has created soundtracks for numerous games, including *TMNT*, *Contra 4*, *Shantae: Risky's Revenge*, and *Batman: The Brave and the Bold: The Videogame*. In his spare time he programs new music using vintage game consoles like the NES, TurboGrafx16, and Game Boy.

Rod Contreras (*Visual Effects*) has always had an interest in art and illustration. Although his background is mostly in computer aided design it was just a short jump to the use of 3D and video editing programs, all self taught. Rod has provided visual effects of various levels for several independent short films, ranging from small 3D props and digital sets to fully animated sequences. His visual effects work for *Press Start* and *Press Start 2 Continue* have been the most extensive to date.