

Thursday, July 24 – “Raising the curtains on the realism of battle”

Something I always do when I’m making a game, I thought up a catch-copy for this game myself. “Raising the curtains on the realism of battle.”。

I’ve mentioned this a few times on a number of occasions, but ever since I started elementary school – even up until today - I’ve been fascinated with books about war, reports and records from army and navy battles, war movies and comics and just about everything else in between. Back in the 70’s and 80’s I was even collecting some pretty dangerous equipment like wooden swords, metal shurikens, weighted chains, kunai (well, a kind of kunai.. actually it was just a really fat nail used for construction). My friends and I would get together and play with this stuff. These are different times though, so kids... please don’t imitate that. (laugh) A few of us even had to take rides in ambulances, myself included...

Those experiences though may have been what allowed me to make fighting and swordplay games. I used to be a little monkey hopping around, growing up in the mountains around Tokyo, but at this age now the only motion acting I’m able to do is maybe for enemy monsters (like a skeleton demon). However, when I see something moving, I’m still able to recognize whether it’s real or not.

We’ve put in all of what I call the “realism of battle” into Devil’s Third. We’ve created the ultimate battle action game, combining the killing techniques of martial arts, swordplay and firearms. We’ve also pushed player maneuverability (controllability) to its limit. Letting the player fly through the air is just about the only thing we don’t allow... and that’s only for the sake of realism. (laugh) In other words, players will be able to do anything they want within the game.

Normally, if you try to put all these features and options into an action system, you’ll end up with a system where everything ends up half-baked and mediocre; switching modes is slow, the actions are clunky, accuracy is poor, or players will just find something and say “What’s this? We don’t need this!” Our action system uses every button on the WiiU GamePad (as a Devil’s Third game designer I recommend players use the WiiU Pro Controller). Controlling the character is very easy and I think players will get used to it very quickly. None of the players’ inputs will be eaten (i.e. entered but ignored), and they’ll be able to fight with a wide range of precise and varied battle techniques.

Now let me go a little further in detail.

On a real battlefield, human beings will use any means necessary to survive. There's nothing pretty, nor dirty, about war. Let me ask you something. If you and I were to face each other at four meters apart, with you holding a handgun and I a katana, who do you think would survive the battle? Here's the answer: I'd win, 95% of the time. At only four meters apart, you wouldn't be able to stop my movements with a handgun. Closer than four meters though and I wouldn't even be able to swing my sword. At that range killing moves become more physical and more about brute force. So neither guns nor swords are perfect in every situation. That what the realism of the battlefield is, the fight over life.

Through the virtual world of the Devil's Third video game, I've created an action system where players can experience that realism. I've also taken the liberty to give that system a name. I call it the "RUNE" system. Just like Valhalla, it is taken from Norse mythology – in this case, the writing system.

Our staff has put their hearts and souls into the "RUNE" system. The name "RUNE" is an acronym for "Real Ultimate Ninja Engine." The first game to implement the "RUNE" engine is finally approaching release, and I'm sure that players who get their hands on this game will be able to enjoy its smooth gameplay without feeling any discomfort or surprises. (This is a good thing!)

I believe I may have spent five... actually, make that all 25 years of my development life in creating the "RUNE" system. In a way, it's like the Egg of Columbus, and I'm positive that very similar systems will be coming out after this. That's fine. But at least let me name the system, because whatever systems follow or spin off from it will ultimately all be the "RUNE" system. (laugh)

"RUNE" doesn't just stop at the action system either. It's a massive multiplayer system that encompasses all layers, including strategy, planning, tactics and combat. It includes all of the realism of battle. I think anyone who saw our introduction video that was released the other day could sense that as well.

So please, work on your skills in single player, then come challenge me in a real battle through the online multiplayer. Devil's Third is just about to see release.

Let's meet on the battlefield.

I'll finally get a chance to play with everyone soon... I can't hold back the excitement!。

Tomonobu Itagaki