As the remake of CLASH OF THE TITANS storms the DVD/Blu-ray realm this week on the Warner label, the video-game tie-in is also debuting from Namco Bandai for the PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360. For a rare peek into the writing process that goes into a genre game, Fango got in touch to Phil Hay and Matt Manfredi, co-scripters of the feature and writers of the game counterpart, and prodded around their grey matter to see what makes them type.

Hay and Manfredi’s screenplay credits also include AEON FLUX and CRAZY/BEAUTIFUL; they’re currently working their magic on the upcoming R.I.P.D. (REST IN PEACE DEPARTMENT), based on the Dark Horse comic, and the you-knew-it-was-coming CLASH OF THE TITANS 2.

FANGORIA: A screenplay is generally 90 to 120 pages; a video-game design document can be hundreds of pages. How long did it take you to write the CLASH OF THE TITANS game, and would you like to adapt another of your screenplays into that medium in the future?

MATT MANFREDI: We wrote it over the course of a few months, and were able to do that because they had worked out a very good template for the story and its branching elements, and had already incorporated a lot of our and Travis [Beacham’s] screenplay. It was a fun opportunity to include a lot of stuff that had been cut for time and cook up more in the voice of the movie. As for other adaptations, of course, we’d be very interested in doing that if appropriate.

PHIL HAY: We never understood why the CRAZY/BEAUTIFUL FPS never got off the

ground…huge missed opportunity!

FANG: It’s very rare that a film’s writers are also involved in the tie-in game’s design. Can you share with us how you made this transition?

HAY: We got a call from our producer, Basil Iwanyk, saying they wanted to lock in the tone and feel of the movie in the game. We then met with the development team and were really impressed with everyone. They were already pretty far down the line, but we felt we could help, and they were cool enough to let us into the process. We took it as a fun challenge.

FANG: Video games have some standard configurations, like first-person shooters, hexgrid war games and statistical sports simulations. How involved were you in choosing the type of game CLASH OF THE TITANS would become, and what were some of the limitations you encountered with that choice?

HAY: Namco Bandai and Game Republic had already figured out the template when we were brought on board. We were still given a fair amount of latitude in crafting the storyline—there was a lot of ground to cover.

MANFREDI: We were mainly involved in the story and dialogue elements. Our movie is around two hours long. The game is so much longer, like 20-plus hours of play, so obviously there’s a lot of room in there.

FANG: Since CLASH OF THE TITANS was a licensed property and not a new IP, did you find

yourselves creatively limited by a hefty “bible” detailing what you could or could not do in the game design?

HAY: Again, they had been working for quite some time on the game. We provided character stuff and dialogue for the scenarios they had cooked up, some of which were based on the screenplay, some of which were not. But we had no trouble working within those lines. They had made good choices that were true to the spirit of the script.

FANG: Sam Worthington’s likeness is used in the game, and yet the rest of the visuals have a very different style from the feature. Was the game’s look decided before or after the film’s production art was finalized?

MANFREDI: I know the [movie team] shared all kinds of design elements with the game developers when we were in prep and production, so they did draw a lot from that. But yeah, they wanted to do their own thing as well. It’s a different medium.

FANG: The CLASH OF THE TITANS game did not make its original street date, which was to have coincided with the film’s release back in April. How do you feel this has helped—or hurt—its appeal to gamers now?

MANFREDI: I’m no expert, but sure, there are pluses and minuses in releasing the game alongside the DVD instead of the theatrical release. They wanted the extra time to do everything they wanted. I’m always for that.

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