



U-WARS Interview

Q: Jeremy, did you like working with Biart Studio? What could you tell us about your joint work?

A: This is my first game with Biart, in what I hope will be the first of many! What first attracted me to the project was the amazing state-of-the-art visuals. And of course, working with the guys at Biart has been an absolute pleasure and a lot of fun. It's always rewarding, in a creative sense, when you get to work with talented, enthusiastic people who know what they want to do and where they want to go with their creation. Writing the music for a game should be a collaborative process; when that's in place, the music always works the best, and it will shine through in the notes. Working with Biart was about as collaborative as it gets. It's also interesting to point out that Biart has a background in making "serious games", such as games for military and defense training for real life situations. The studio has executed projects with great precision. We have great mutual respect for each other's talents, and we're making excellent progress towards a final product that is both rousing and entertaining for the player.

Q: How did you write the music for U-Wars?

A: As goes with most people in my field, it all starts with a granular idea. As soon as I began discussing U-Wars with Biart, a flood of ideas rushed through my mind. Like a chef preparing a dish, there's a lot of ritualistic preparation involved in making an idea or series of ideas ready for the scoring sheet, or virtual scoring sheet in my case. You see, a lot of my work is produced in my studio digitally. I have thousands of instruments I can choose from. Usually when I sit down to hammer out a theme, it's already gone through the gears in my mind and I know exactly what to do.

Press contact

IEM Consulting • Hanauer Landstrasse 192 • 60314 Frankfurt • Germany
Martin Szymanski • Tel: +49 (0) 69 / 15 34 64 79 • Mob: +49 (0) 162 / 30 90 30 8
Mail: martin.szymanski@iem-consulting.com



U-WARS Interview

Recording and performing the music is always the easiest part of the process, while generating the ideas themselves and growing them to fruition is the most challenging (and rewarding) part for me.

Q: What was your inspiration for the music?

A: I'm a huge movie fan, so I have an inherent love for big, bold, underwater adventures. For U-Wars I drew upon a lot of different influences as inspiration, but as you play through the game I hope to evoke some of the same intense, claustrophobic, urgent, awe-inspiring moments that you might experience in films like Das Boot, The Hunt for Red October, U-571, or heck, perhaps even The Abyss.

Q: How much time did you spend on writing and producing the music for U-Wars? What factors influence music development?

A: Writing the music U-Wars has taken many months of cumulative work. A lot of factors influence the development of a video game score - most of which involve getting the music into the game and then adjusting from that point forward. Often times I'll be hired mid-way through development, will catch up with the development team, and then will have to wait for the game to progress further before writing more. Or, in other cases, the developer will know every iota of music they want before a single polygon is even manipulated. In that case, it's more about form over function.

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Q: What do you think about the game in general speaking terms?

A: I think it's a great title that will provide gamers with a lot of excitement, diversity and challenge. I've always enjoyed third-person shooters, dating back to the first Lara Croft: Tomb Raider. Man that was a long time ago, it seems... or maybe I'm just getting old. I'm particularly impressed with the visuals. Bioshock was one of the first games I'd seen to really handle the underwater realm w/ much realism. The underwater environments in U-Wars really steal the show. You're going to feel like you're controlling the camera of a Jacques Cousteau documentary, except, well - you're in an action movie and there's a helluva lot more gunfire and explosions.

**Q: Have you ever written music for an underwater-themed game before?
How was this different?**

A: Yes, but truth be told, it's been awhile! I wrote some underwater-themed music for Harry Potter and the Gaia Online MMO, zOMG! That was actually a lot of fun, but in each case, the mood for these games were entirely different, not to mention the genre. For Potter, it was mysterious, magical, wonderous. For zOMG!, more flamboyant, not unlike my early work with Square. For U-Wars, it's a lot more militaristic, but I've worked hard to keep it interesting and thematic without sounding cliché.

Q: How did the game's story and gameplay influence your music on the project?

A: U-Wars is a sci-fi tactical shooter. Lots of terrorist threats, world-threatening enemies, stuff that holds a lot of relevance in today's world climate. Like movies, I feel that games, more today than ever have the ability to serve as platforms for great

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stories and modes of gameplay that take today's issues and transplant them into unfamiliar or fantastical circumstances. It allows us to disconnect from the seriousness of it all, but for those that want to draw the connections, they are there and very much relevant. In this sense, the story and gameplay were of huge influence to my work on the project.

**Q: What were your ultimate goals when writing the music for U-Wars?
Did you set out to accomplish anything specific?**

A: I wanted to create a large sense of scale. U-Wars has excellent contrast in the characters and the story line (which is intense at times), so I want to emphasize the action on the screen whether the story is focusing on the Golden Hawk or the action of the Seals. I believe music, should not be a missed opportunity in a game score. I worked to have the music perform as a prime mover in terms of driving the experience in an entertaining and meaningful way. With this in mind, I decided to develop, what I feel are strong melodies and motifs which help the music to take an active role in the experience rather than a passive one.

Q: What was the most challenging aspect of U-Wars for you?

A: Nothing was challenging! It was all a piece of cake! ;-) I'm kidding, of course. In all actuality, the most challenging aspect has been in pairing down the good ideas in order deliver the best ideas. With a game like U-Wars there are so many possibilities.

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Q: Does this genre of game influence the type of music you write? Is there a certain kind of game that's hard to write for than others?

A: Every project presents it's own unique set of challenges. I find that the best game scores are the ones that are as effective inside the game as they are outside of the game (ie. is it fun to listen to in the car?). If the music doesn't work on it's own, it will not work in the context of the game. U-Wars is a tactical shooter. You are leading an elite squad of highly trained fighters and the music needs to serve this style of game play.

Q: What kind of criteria did Biart Studio give you prior to creating the music for U-Wars? Did they have a specific direction they wished for you to go, or did they leave it up to you?

A: Make the game sound awesome. As I said earlier, working with Biart has been a creative collaboration. We all feed off of each other and they have provided me plenty of creative freedom in exploring new and challenging ideas. I want to be able to listen to this score in ten years and be proud of it.

Q: Jeremy, would you like to play U-Wars when the game is released? :)

A: Absolutely! My whole team would love to. But, if possible, send me an early copy! I've got to brush up on multiplayer so I can kick all of their butts on XBOX Live. ;) As busy as things are for me, I always find time to play.

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Q: Would you like to wish Biart Studio something regarding their project before its final release?

A: Thank you guys for the great opportunity. This is a very special game and I'm honored to be a part of it.

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