**Game Review # 1**

**CS1010**

**Name:** Jesus Otteson

**Game Title:** Katana Zero  **Price:** $14.99

**Genre:** Platformer  **ESRB**: Mature

**Rating:** 83%  **Rating Source:** Metacritic

**Platform:** PC (STEAM)

I choose Katana Zero as it has been highly recommended for me to play by all my friends and it is a kind of game I don’t usually play, a platformer.

**What story is the game trying to tell?**

Katana Zero is a goofy story about a sword for hire fighting against an Italian mob highly inspired by old mobster movies like the godfather all meanwhile the nation he is currently residing in is being invaded by an asiatic nation. Most of the story comes from the characters you meet and the associations you make with them.

**Did you like playing the game? Why or why not?**

I actually really liked the game in the long run, it got a bit of getting use to since the controls and the gameplay were something I don’t usually play. However, the story and the characters you meet in the game have a lot of personality. It became really fun to try to find new characters and flesh out the story and the world building a bit more.

**Rate the artistic and creativity for the game? Justification?**

Artistic Creativity, 10/10. The game had a cyberpunk VHS visual feel to it, while incorporating a sort of out of place edo-period Japan samurai dodging bullets and slicing enemies in half. The game knew how goofy it was and really leaned into it while also keeping a serious tone about it. It was equal parts a cyberpunk noir mystery game and an over the top sarcastic action platformer creating a satire of other cyberpunk games that take themselves very seriously.

**What would make this game better?**

The game itself was played in a way that all your current actions were just plans waiting to be executed after you completed the stage. I would have loved putting more on the line by having only one go to complete a stage. With higher stakes on the line the game would have brought way more adrenaline and focus to complete the stages.

**What games influenced this game or has been influenced by it?**

Yes, this game had been heavily influenced by old gameboy platformers like Samurai Jack with its wall jumping, enemy slicing mechanics. There seems to be a replay feature that could be attributed to games like Super Meat Boy and Braid. A lot of environment elements and the story could be attributed to old table top games like Cyberpunk and movies like Mafia or the Sopranos.

**Describe the game controls (and review them):**

The Katana Zero game controls are as follows:

Left – Left Arrow Key or – A

Up – Up Arrow Key or W

Down – Down Arrow Key or S

Jump – Up Arrow Key or W

Slash – Left Mouse Button

Pickup/Throw – Right Mouse Button

Walk – Ctrl

Roll – Enter

Slow-Motion – Shift

Interact – Space

Confirm – Enter or Space

Back – Backspace or ESC

Replay FF – D or Right Arrow Key

Replay Rewind – A or Left Arrow Key

Replay Pause – Left Mouse Button or Space

Replay Eject – Right Mouse Button

The games controls are really responsive and require you to be able to fluidly move around and think quickly on your feet when playing. Button mashing won’t get you to the end of the level and therefor you will need to make every action and movement count when gliding through the map.

**What makes the game fair?**

The game itself is made so the better you are at the controls, the easier the game becomes. There is always a path or a way to get around the game, it is just about finding it. Most the time the NPC’s aren’t the toughest obstacles but rather the environments and if you are able to control you character confidently and accurately the game will reward you for your abilities.

**What makes this game different from others.**

This game is very similar to other modern day indie platformers, the only difference that makes the game stand out is its story, characters and satirical feel that will keep you focused on the goal and bring in different dialogue or events that make you chuckle as you cut an enemy in half.

**In your opinion are there any societal effects that could occur from playing this game (good/bad)?**

I don’t believe there are very many if any societal effects that this game could produce. It is a casual game that provides a light hearted story. This game isn’t meant to have any huge political messages or anything truly controversial in it. However, I only managed to play about 2 hours of this game, so the overall plot may hold some surprises later on.