

= Viewtiful Joe =

Viewtiful Joe (??????? , By?tifuru J?) is a side scrolling beat ' em up video game developed by Team Viewtiful for the GameCube . It was originally released in 2003 as a part of the Capcom Five under director Hideki Kamiya and producer Atsushi Inaba . The game was later ported to the PlayStation 2 by the same design team under the name Clover Studio , subtitled Aratanaru Kib? (?????? , lit . " A New Hope ") in Japan . The game 's story concerns Joe , an avid movie @-@ goer whose girlfriend Silvia is kidnapped during a film starring Joe 's favorite superhero , Captain Blue . Joe is shortly thereafter thrust into Movieland , where Silvia is taken by the villainous group known as Jadow . After accepting a special V @-@ Watch from Captain Blue , Joe transforms into the tokusatsu @-@ style persona " Viewtiful Joe " and sets out to rescue her .

The gameplay of Viewtiful Joe features traditional 2D platform side @-@ scrolling intermixed with 3D cel @-@ shaded graphics . Abilities known as " VFX Powers " grant the player special actions for combat and puzzle @-@ solving , such as slowing down or speeding up time . Viewtiful Joe was critically acclaimed for its unique visual style and gameplay , earning itself a number of awards from various media publications . A minor commercial success , the game spawned a few sequels with releases seen on other consoles such as the PlayStation Portable (PSP) and Nintendo DS . An anime adaption of the game was also produced .

= = Gameplay = =

Viewtiful Joe 's core gameplay is similar to a traditional side @-@ scrolling beat ' em up . Taking control of Joe , the player is mostly limited to moving left , right , up , and down on a fixed 2D path . The game contains platforming elements such as the ability to jump and double jump . Combat consists of fighting multiple enemies on screen at once , with the enemies appearing from all directions , including the foreground and background . Joe has the ability to punch , kick , and dodge ? which he can do by leaping upward or ducking . Dodging enemies ' attacks successfully temporarily dazes them , leaving them wide open for attack . The player has certain number of hit points in the form of " Life Marks " located above the VFX Gauge , which decrease whenever Joe takes damage . Health can be restored by picking up hamburgers .

Viewtiful Joe features unique gameplay elements in the form of Joe 's " Viewtiful Effects (VFX) Power " , which is designed to emulate camera tricks seen in films . VFX Power is used in both battling enemies and solving various puzzles . These three powers are limited by the " VFX Gauge " located at the top of the screen . Normally , the meter is full , giving the player access to Joe 's super powers via his Viewtiful Joe transformation . The meter slowly empties when an ability is in use . Once it depletes , Viewtiful Joe changes to normal Joe , lowering his attack and defense and leaving him temporarily devoid of VFX Power . The VFX Gauge automatically refills over time and can also be manually filled by picking up bottles of " VFX Juice " . The first VFX Power is " Slow " , which slows time , causing the player 's attacks to be more powerful , increasing Joe 's reflexes , and allowing him to dodge attacks more easily . The second VFX Power , " Mach Speed " , allows Joe to move at a faster speed , creating multiple after @-@ images of him when he unleashes a flurry of attacks on all enemies on the screen . It can additionally cause his attacks to envelop Joe in a temporary heat shield , rendering him immune to flame attacks and setting enemies on fire when struck . The last VFX Power , " Zoom In " , causes a camera close @-@ up of Joe , powering up his normal attacks , granting him a set of new attacks , and paralyzing all lesser foes in proximity to him . However , any damage dealt to Joe whilst zoomed in is increased too . Any two VFX Powers can be combined . The VFX Gauge can be extended by collecting a certain number of V @-@ Films present in each stage . The bar reverts to its normal length when a new stage begins .

Defeating enemies gives the player " V @-@ Points " in the form of small and large coins , while using special attacks gives them " V @-@ Marks " , or " Viewtifuls " , which can be converted into V @-@ Points . Viewtifuls can be quickly gained by using combos or long chains of attacks . For example , while using Slow , striking a dazed enemy sets up all other enemies on the screen for a chain reaction , causing all points accrued during the duration of Slow to be multiplied by the

number of enemies struck . If used deftly , the player will accumulate a large number of Viewtifuls due to the multiplier effect called " X @-@ Bonus " . Each stage in Viewtiful Joe consists of several interconnected missions , or scenes , that the player must complete in order to advance . When completing the stage , the player is graded on the number of V @-@ Points earned , the amount of time taken , and how much damage Joe took . V @-@ Points can be used between stages to purchase new abilities , expendable weapons (which include the " Voomerang " and " Shocking Pink Bombs ") , more health , and health @-@ restorative items . Clearing the game on various difficulties allows players to play as different characters such as Silvia , Captain Blue and Alastor , with the PlayStation 2 version also allowing players to play as Devil May Cry 's Dante .

= = Plot = =

Viewtiful Joe is divided into seven stages , or " episodes " , interspersed with storyline cutscenes and bookended by an opening and ending cinematic . The setting is divided between Earth , or the real world , and " Movieland " , the game 's fictional world of films . The plot begins in a movie theatre on Earth in which the game 's central character Joe and his girlfriend Silvia are watching a tokusatsu drama starring the aged superhero Captain Blue . The movie 's antagonist , having seemingly defeated Captain Blue , suddenly reaches out of the screen and abducts Silvia , taking her into Movieland . Joe is likewise picked up and taken into Movieland by Captain Blue 's giant mecha . Inside the movie , Joe must rescue Silvia from the evil Jadow , the game 's organization of villains . To help him , Captain Blue entrusts him with a V @-@ Watch , a device Joe can use to transform into a superhero upon saying the word " henshin (transform) . " Joe promptly does so , inventing his own catchphrase : " Henshin @-@ a @-@ go @-@ go , baby ! "

With the guidance of Captain Blue , Joe fights his way through a number of Movieland 's locations such as cities , underground caves , an underwater base , and a submarine , often travelling via his trusty , robot aircraft " Six Machine " . One by one , Joe defeats the members of the Jadow , the game 's bosses . These include Dark Fiend Charles the 3rd , Iron Ogre Hulk Davidson , Aquatic Terror Gran Bruce , a doppelgänger of Viewtiful Joe , and Blade Master Alastor . Before fighting Alastor , he reveals that in order for the Jadow to break out of Movieland and into the land of humans , they need the " DNA of the Creator " , namely Silvia . Joe makes his way to her , trouncing the Jadow 's leader Inferno Lord Fire Leo in combat , only to witness Silvia being kidnapped once again afterwards . Joe and Six Machine race off into outer space after her in the game 's final episode .

Finding Silvia atop the control room of a space station , Joe discovers that Captain Blue has been behind the plot the entire time . The former hero reveals that he is the creator of the film in which they currently exist and that he is Silvia 's seemingly @-@ deceased father . Transforming into the colossal robot King Blue , the villain proclaims that he will take Sylvia 's energy by force in order to break into the real world . Joe tells him off , telling him that he 's no hero . Joe summons a newly transformed mecha " Six Majin " , and the two engage in combat . When the fight ends , Captain Blue and Viewtiful Joe abandon their respective vehicles and face off in a final battle within the space station .

Joe is victorious , and Captain Blue , finally coming to his senses , thanks the young hero for stopping him . He explains that two decades earlier , Blue was a revolutionary film maker who was soon thought of as a fad . Wanting nothing more than to create heroes , Blue was sucked into one of his own films , allowing him to live out his dream as a hero . However , he had lost touch with reality and wanted revenge on the people who had betrayed him . As Captain Blue and Silvia embrace in a heartfelt reunion , the director tells Joe that the story is not complete . He snaps his fingers , and the space station 's onboard computer warns of a large number of UFOs heading towards Earth . Blue tells Joe that a hero will be needed twice more to save the world . Joe attempts to leave but not before Silvia requests a V @-@ Watch from her father and to accompany her boyfriend . Viewtiful Joe and a newly transformed Silvia head out to stop the impending threat together .

= = Development = =

Viewtiful Joe was developed by the design staff " Team Viewtiful " , a part of Capcom Production Studio 4 . The game was announced in late 2002 as part of the Capcom Five , a line @-@ up of five then @-@ upcoming GameCube games to introduce new content to the console . It was directed by Capcom alumnus Hideki Kamiya , whose previous credits include the planning of Resident Evil and Resident Evil 2 and the direction of Devil May Cry . It was produced by Atsushi Inaba , who previously worked on the Ace Attorney series and Steel Battalion . In its earliest stages of development , Viewtiful Joe went under the working title " Red Hot Man " , but the name was changed due to copyright conflicts with the American rock band Red Hot Chili Peppers . Viewtiful Joe 's development team initially consisted of six people working under a twelve @-@ month deadline . As work continued , the size of the team grew , and development ended up taking a full 21 months to complete . The game was conceived as a " staff @-@ focused project " aimed at increasing the skill of its creators , specifically director Kamiya .

Inaba stated , " We wanted to create was a challenging game with stunning visuals and fluid gameplay " . As a lifelong fan of superheroes , Inaba 's aim was to combine traditional Japanese tokusatsu with American comic books . The character designs created by Kumiko Suekane were inspired specifically by 1960s and 1970s Japanese @-@ costumed tokusatsu television shows such as Kamen Rider and Ultraman . Graphically , the game adopted a 2D side @-@ scrolling style mixed with 3D cel @-@ shaded animation . Despite many games in the then @-@ modern industry shying away from 2D graphical formats , Inaba said , " We have been able to breathe new life into the genre because we are using a new stylistic way that hasn 't been seen before . " The team chose the GameCube as its platform because of their target audience and because it lent itself well to Viewtiful Joe 's gameplay .

The musical score for Viewtiful Joe was co @-@ composed by Masakazu Sugimori and Masami Ueda . It was released alongside the score for Viewtiful Joe 2 on a double album titled Viewtiful Joe + Viewtiful Joe 2 Original Soundtrack in Japan on 22 December 2004 by Suleputer . A music video is played within the game featuring a rap vocal song titled " Viewtiful World " composed by D.A.I. The video features a group of people , including Inaba himself , motion captured as some of the game 's characters . On 11 June 2003 , Avex released the video on DVD and released the song as a single . Both the North American and Japanese releases of Viewtiful Joe feature English voice acting in order to keep a " western comic book feel to [the game] . " Voice @-@ over work in Viewtiful Joe was provided by Soundelux Design Music Group . Voice actors for the game include Dee Bradley Baker , Christina Puccelli , Gregg Berger , Mikey Kelley , Roger Rose , and Kevin Michael Richardson . Director Hideki Kamiya provides the voice for Six Machine .

A budget re @-@ release of the game for the GameCube titled Viewtiful Joe : Revival was released in Japan in late 2003 , adding a " Sweet Mode " to decrease the difficulty setting from the original game 's " Kids Mode " . A PlayStation 2 port of Viewtiful Joe was released by Clover Studio in 2004 . It was released in Japan with the subtitle A New Hope . The release added the character Dante of Devil May Cry as an unlockable character . The PlayStation 2 version does not feature progressive scan seen in the GameCube version . The game was also re @-@ released under Nintendo 's GameCube Player 's Choice label in 2004 in North America and Europe .

It is said that Director Kamiya based Joe 's run animation on how he got to work , and the bosses of the game are based on Capcom executives .

= = Reception = =

= = Reviews and sales = = =

Viewtiful Joe received positive reviews upon its release . The GameCube version of the game currently holds a GameRankings aggregate score of 92 % , while its PlayStation 2 port holds a score of 88 % . Metacritic lists the GameCube and PlayStation 2 versions of the game at 93 out of 100 and 90 out of 100 , respectively . The game 's graphics , gameplay , and challenge have all

been common areas of praise among many reviewers . IGN gave Viewtiful Joe an " Outstanding " rating , noting that the beautiful cel @-@ shaded graphics and high @-@ intensity action make it one of the best action games on the GameCube and PlayStation 2 . Likewise , Eurogamer called it " imaginative , beautiful , engaging and above all else entertaining " . Game Informer praised it as " a completely original and highly entertaining work of art " . Criticisms about Viewtiful Joe have been few but consistent among reviews . IGN complained of the game 's lack of boss variety . GameSpy has concurred , noting that the bosses were too easy due to a powerful attack that the player can perform . Reviewers have also criticized the lack of progressive scan in the game 's PlayStation 2 port . IGN and Eurogamer have additionally pointed out that the PlayStation 2 port suffers slowdown in later stages of the game .

In Japan , the GameCube version of Viewtiful Joe sold through its initial shipment of less than 100 @,@ 000 copies during the week of its release . Preorders of the GameCube version sold out on Capcom 's North American website prior to its ship date , and Viewtiful Joe debuted as the tenth best @-@ selling game in the region . The PlayStation 2 version sold a poor 9 @,@ 912 units in its first week of release in Japan . Worldwide , sales of the game reached 275 @,@ 000 copies on the GameCube and 46 @,@ 000 on the PlayStation 2 . Sales of the game in both North America and Europe were lower than what Capcom had predicted , but due to its small budget , the game was considered by Inaba to be relatively successful commercially .

= = = Legacy = = =

Viewtiful Joe garnered a number of awards and nominations from various magazines , popular gaming websites , and video game award programs . IGN named Viewtiful Joe " GameCube Game of the Year " and " Best Action Game of 2003 " . At GameSpot 's Best of 2003 , the game was nominated for " Best Artistic Achievement in a Game " , " Coolest New Character " , " Best GameCube Game " , " Readers ' Choice Best GameCube Action Game " , and " Readers ' Choice GameCube Game of the Year " . It was also named the fourth @-@ best GameCube game of 2003 by GameSpy , winning the website 's " Most Stylish " award for the year . Viewtiful Joe won " Most Innovative Game Design " in Nintendo Power magazine 's 2003 Player 's Choice Awards . It won " GameCube Game of the Year " awards for 2003 from both USA Today and GMR . The game was nominated by the Academy of Interactive Arts & Sciences for " Platform Action / Adventure Game of the Year " in 2003 and was nominated for three British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) Awards including " Best Design " , " Best Intro / Animation " , and " Best GameCube Game " . The game won " Unsung Hero Game of the Year " at the 2003 Golden Joystick Awards and " Best New Franchise " at the 2004 G @-@ Phoria awards . Finally , it was recognized at the 4th Annual Game Developers Choice Awards as one of three " Game Innovation Spotlights " .

Viewtiful Joe has been included in a number of " best games " lists in the years following its release . It was rated the 27th best game made on a Nintendo system in Nintendo Power 's " Top 200 Games " list in February 2006 and the 10th best game on the GameCube in its August 2008 issue reflecting on the top 20 games for each system . Both GameSpy and the G4 television program X @-@ Play named Viewtiful Joe the ninth best game of all time for the GameCube . In 2007 , Viewtiful Joe was named the 17th best GameCube game of all time in IGN 's feature reflecting on the system 's long lifespan . Later in 2007 , ScrewAttack listed the game at seventh on their Top 10 GameCube Games of All Time .

Viewtiful Joe was successful enough to establish a franchise , and a few other related media titles were released . Viewtiful Joe was followed by a direct sequel titled Viewtiful Joe 2 ? released for both the GameCube and PlayStation 2 ? and two spinoffs : Viewtiful Joe : Red Hot Rumble for the PSP and GameCube and Viewtiful Joe : Double Trouble ! for the Nintendo DS . An anime adaption of the game was produced by Group TAC , airing on the Japanese television station TV Tokyo beginning in 2004 and being licensed for US distribution by Geneon Entertainment in 2005 . A set of Viewtiful Joe trading figures was released by Agatsuma Entertainment in October 2005 , while a series of action figures made by Jazwares was released in July 2006 .

In 2004 , Capcom registered the domain name ViewtifulJoe3.com , suggesting another sequel .

Shortly thereafter , the website was devoid of content . In January 2006 , Atsushi Inaba expressed interest in developing a title in the series for the Wii . However , as none of Clover Studio 's games proved to be an outstanding financial success , Capcom officially dissolved the subsidiary in March 2007 after the release of its final two games , ?kami and God Hand . Its key members left to form a new company called Platinum Games . Capcom producer Jun Takeuchi commented at the 2009 San Diego Comic @-@ Con International that there have been currently no plans to continue with the series , although Viewtiful Joe has appeared as a playable character in Capcom 's 2008 Wii fighting game Tatsunoko vs. Capcom : Ultimate All Stars and is a playable character in Marvel vs. Capcom 3 : Fate of Two Worlds for the PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360 .

However , in 2012 , Platinum Games announced the development of The Wonderful 101 , then known as Project P @-@ 100 . This was the first project that reunited Kamiya and Inaba as director and producer on a title since the development of the Viewtiful Joe series . Furthermore , The Wonderful 101 uses the same tokusatsu thematics of the Viewtiful Joe series , and the two share a similar art style albeit different gameplay . This has led fans to hail The Wonderful 101 as a spiritual successor of sorts . The franchise would also later be featured in Archie Comics ' Worlds Unite crossover with several other Capcom and Sega series , taking place in the Sonic the Hedgehog and Mega Man comics .