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GEARS OF WAR "MAD WORLD" > The sound and fury that so often typifies violent video games is stripped away with surprisingly emotive results

in this spot for the apocalyptic Xbox 360 offering. Instead of grinding metal, whizzing bullets and exploding ordinances the soundtrack features only Gary Jules' melancholic cover of Tears for Fears' classic "Mad World," which, coupled with life-like effects from Digital Domain, captures the game's gloominess and nihilism in one grand

stroke. This testament to the power of music may leave you with the urge to blow your nose rather than blow shit up.

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DIGITAL DOMAIN PUTS 'GEARS OF WAR' GAME INTO OVERDRIVE

Using videogame engine, Digital Domain directs teaser for much-anticipated Xbox 360 release

Venice, Calif. – There is a point when playing a video game seems less like a game and more like guiding a character through a blockbuster action film. Today's next-generation videogames combine photorealistic people and places with high-octane action and drama for a more engaging and interactive kind of entertainment.

Digital production studio Digital Domain, known for creating stunning visuals seen in feature films and commercials, has watched the convergence of games and movies from the beginning. Having worked on videogame projects before, Digital Domain has established something of a track record for creating excellent ads for games. So, for the

upcoming release of *Gears of War*, published by Epic Games and arguably the most anticipated release for the Xbox 360 platform thus far, Digital Domain was asked to lend its cinematic expertise. But this time, DD artists would be taking a very different approach to their work....

Despite the availability of Digital Domain's Academy Award-winning proprietary software and expensive software packages like Maya, the visual effects artists working with creative consultant David Fincher and director Joseph Kosinski from Anonymous Content would create a :60 entirely "in game." In other words, they would use Epic's Unreal Engine 3—the software that actually runs the *Gears of War* on the Xbox 360—to create and render the commercial from scratch.

By using Unreal Engine 3, Digital Domain produces a commercial that looks like the actual game and gives consumers an accurate peek into what they can expect down the line. Also, Epic Games benefits from getting to market faster with commercials that are on the air before the game is completed. This isn't possible without using the game's software engine itself and it leaves game publishers free to stir up more interest prior to the release date.

Gears of War takes place in a science fiction world where humanity is in a life and death struggle with The Locust Horde; a nightmarish race of creatures that surfaces from the bowels of the planet. The hero is Marcus Fenix, "a disgraced former war hero who seeks personal redemption as he leads his fighting team against an onslaught of merciless warrior fiends." It sounded like the perfect project for the studio responsible for visuals in feature films like, "I, Robot," "The Day After Tomorrow," "X-Men" and many more.

The :60 opens with a quiet moment in Marcus' day. Devoid of sound effects, Marcus is walking through a war torn city to the bittersweet ballad "Mad World" by Gary Jules. He catches a reflection of himself in a puddle and reaches down to investigate

what appears to be a rock in the water. When he turns it over, we see it is the face from a marble statue of a young boy.

Behind Marcus, the street shakes. Something beneath the ground starts tearing up the roadway. Marcus takes off through the alleys. Rain pelts the cobblestones and Marcus sees more creatures up ahead. He dives through a window and into a dark building. Slowly he lifts his head up from the dirt and rubble to see a fifty-foot creature bearing down on him. All he can do is defend himself. He fires his weapon seemingly in vain. The creature lifts a giant tentacle and brings it down near our hero. Everything abruptly goes black.

“Videogames are astounding today,” said Ed Ulbrich, The President of Digital Domain’s Commercial Division. “When you see the subtle facial expressions, real time rendering of objects, reflections, shadows, particles, and physics, you realize how far we have come. The technological advancements in the videogame industry are no less significant than those that are responsible for the astronomical leaps we have experienced in the commercial and feature film businesses. This is an exciting convergence of technology across all media.”

ABOUT DIGITAL DOMAIN

Founded in 1993, Digital Domain, Inc. has established a world-class reputation for innovation and artistry. Recipient of four Academy Awards, the studio has produced visual effects over the last ten years for films that have generated over \$4 billion in worldwide theatrical box-office sales.

In the world of commercials, Digital Domain is one of the industry’s largest and most honored creators of visual effects, including the cutting edge advertising campaigns for Adidas and Nike directed by David Fincher. The division consistently works with a stellar group of A-list directors including David Fincher, Michael Bay, Joe Pytko, Lance Acord, Rob Cohen and Alex Proyas. Industry awards for the commercials division include numerous Clio awards, AICP awards, Cannes Lion awards as well as numerous other industry honors.

Digital Domain is currently one of the largest digital studios in the world and hosts an integrated production studio that includes divisions for Feature Film Visual Effects, Commercial Production, Music Videos, Location Based Entertainment and Feature Film

Development.

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Credits for Gears of War "Mad World"

Directed by: Joe Kosinski

Agency: **McCann-Erickson San Francisco**

| | |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| Scott Duchon | Creative Director |
| Geoff Edwards | Creative Director |
| Mat Bunnell | Copywriter |
| Nate Able | Art Director |
| Mike Harris | Group Strategy Director |
| Chris McDonald | Account Director |
| Mandie Bowe | Account Executive |
| Hannah Murray | Broadcast Producer |

Production Company: **Anonymous Content**

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|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Joseph Kosinski | Director |
| David Fincher | Creative Consultant |
| Jeff Baron | Executive Producer |
| Sue Ellen Clair | Head of Production |
| Michael DiGirolamo | Head of Sales |
| Scott Kaplan | Producer |
| Julien Lemaitre | Production Supervisor |

Animation and Visual Effects by: **Digital Domain, Inc.**

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|------------|---|
| Ed Ulbrich | E.V.P. of Production/Executive Producer |
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|-----------------|------------------------------|
| Lisa Beroud | Executive Producer |
| Eric Barba | Visual Effects Supervisor |
| Vernon Wilbert | Co-Visual Effects Supervisor |
| Melanie La Rue | Visual Effects Producer |
| Alex Thiesen | Visual Effects Coordinator |
| Dave Stern | Flame Artist |
| Kevin Ellis | Flame Artist |
| John Cason | Assistant Editor |
| Chris De Santis | Previs Supervisor |
| Ryan Vance | Technical Director |
| Daniel Maskit | Technical Director |
| Nancy Adams | Digital Artist |
| Jeff Dierstein | Digital Artist |
| Dan Fowler | Digital Artist |
| Juan Gomez | Digital Artist |
| Lori Green | Digital Artist |
| Terry Naas | Digital Artist |
| John Riggs | Digital Artist |
| Greg Szafranski | Digital Artist |
| Daniel Thron | Digital Artist |

Motion Capture: **House of Moves**