

What inspired you to create the game story?

I was inspired by a number of historical facts related to religion and esotericism. I was also inspired by a lot of thrillers that focus on serial killers. I've already mentioned James Ellroy, but there's also Michael Connelly and Maurice G. Dantec.

To begin with, I even considered using a novelist, but then I realized that the writing constraints were closely linked to the game concept, so I did everything myself. It took a lot longer that way, but – in the end – I believe it gave greater coherence to the whole thing.

Did you invent everything?

The Phoenix character is pure fiction, but some of his behavioral characteristics are inspired by real serial killers. The historical facts and characters I refer to are all real. The real places we filmed in all refer back to a particular time and specific events which I can't mention without revealing part of the plot.

How did you work on the scenario?

It was all very interactive. The concept was refined when writing the scenario. The scenario was changed many times because of technical constraints. I even had to invent some bits of the story according to my own availability for the film-shoots. The fact of being author, director and producer, all rolled into one, gave me great freedom – without which, this kind of project would have difficulty seeing the light of day.

How did you go about attaining this degree of realism in the scenario?

As they say, truth is often stranger than fiction. You just have to cast an eye over the news-in-brief items these last few months to believe it. So I drew inspiration from various real events – the Zodiac killer affair in the States, for example – and my various delvings into esoteric and religious texts, connecting everything up together. The rest comes from the imagination. As far as creating the puzzles and games in the gameplay is concerned, that's teamwork, with each person bouncing ideas off the others and drawing on his or her own experience in graphic art, computing, video games, and so on.

How long did it take you to complete the scenario?

I had the original idea for the concept in 1999. In the course of 2000, I wrote several possible synopses from time to time. In early 2001, the synopsis was finished and I began writing the scenario. At the same time, the research work started contributing new dimensions to the story. By the end of 2001, the main outlines of the scenario had been drawn up and production could start. It finished in late July 2003. So in all it took 4 years to see this project through from initial idea to master.

