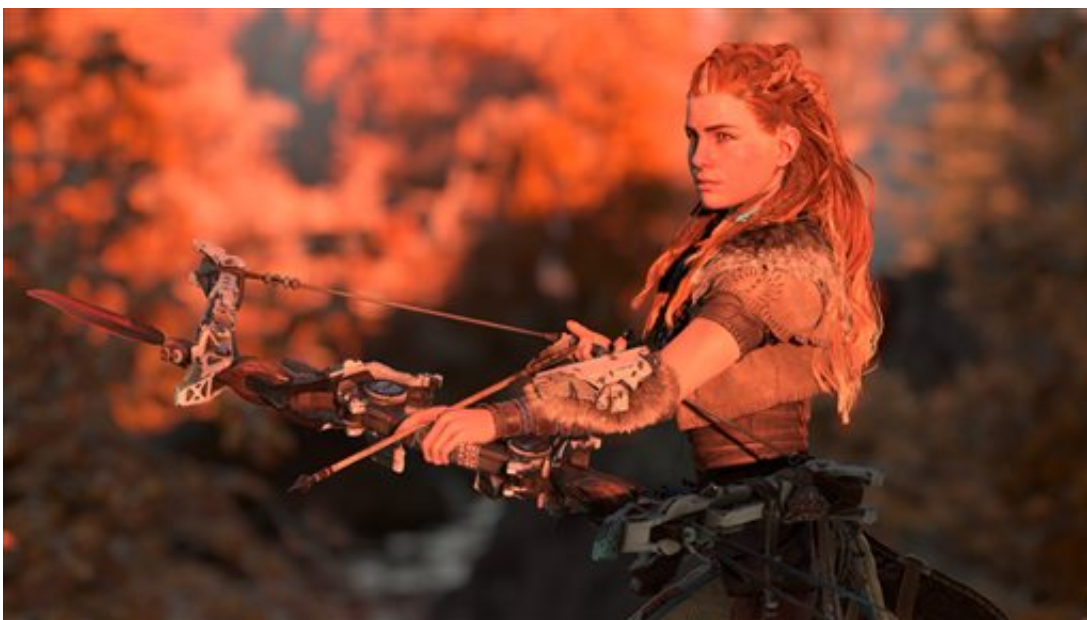


Women of E3: A glimpse at gaming's new heroines

June 19 2015, by Derrik J. Lang



This photo provided by Sony Computer Entertainment America, LLC shows the female character, Aloy, in the Sony video game, "Horizon Zero Dawn." (Sony via AP)

Lara Croft and Faith have some company.

Following a noticeable absence of female video game protagonists at the Electronic Entertainment Expo over the past few years, several developers are unabashedly introducing gamers to all-new heroines at the annual trade show extravaganza that's historically been a boys' club.

Croft and Faith, stars of the hotly anticipated prequels "Rise of the Tomb Raider" and "Mirror's Edge: Catalyst," aren't the only virtual leading ladies at this year's E3. Several new female characters are entering the fray.

A sampling of E3's original female protagonists:

ALOY, "HORIZON ZERO DAWN"

Guerrilla Games, keepers of the "Killzone" series, are forging a different path with Aloy, the bow-wielding huntress starring in "Horizon Zero Dawn." She's not merely a Katniss Everdeen knockoff.

During a demonstration of the third-person title featuring the expert archer at Sony's E3 briefing, Aloy deftly dispatched robotic creatures resembling dinosaurs, taking them down with arrows, traps and hand-to-hand combat in a post-apocalyptic vista that's been reclaimed by Mother Nature.

EMILY, "DISHONORED 2"

The young heir originally depicted as a girl in the shadowy first-person steampunk adventure "Dishonored" is all grown up for the game's follow-up.



This photo provided by Team17 shows, the female character, Rae, in the video game, "Beyond Eyes." (Team17 via AP)

"Dishonored 2" will co-star an adult rendition of Emily Kaldwin, who has become a supernatural assassin alongside her childhood protector Corvo Attano.

In footage that debuted at publisher Bethesda Softworks' ever-first E3 stage presentation, Kaldwin was armed with a crossbow and the trippy power to swiftly zip up buildings, through hallways and down stairwells.

JOULE, "RECORE"

"ReCore" developers Armature Studio introduced Joule and her robotic companions to the world at Microsoft's E3 briefing in visually arresting footage that showcased the scrappy young woman exploring a desert

planet and tangling with mechanized beasts.

The game's creators, who previous worked on the "Metroid Prime" series, are no strangers to crafting a sprawling sci-fi adventure anchored by a strong female protagonist. "Metroid" bounty hunter Samus Aran is one of gaming's best-known leading ladies.

Will Joule join her ranks?

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EVIE, "ASSASSIN'S CREED: SYNDICATE"



This image provided by Microsoft Studios shows, Joule, the female protagonist from the trailer announcement for the upcoming Xbox One exclusive "ReCore" from legendary creator Keiji Inafune and the makers of "Metroid Prime." (Microsoft Studios via AP)

It's not just the guys who can be ruthless.

Ubisoft's "Assassin's Creed: Syndicate," the London-set installment of the long-running stealth series, will feature a pair of protagonists: Jacob and his twin sister, Evie Frye.

Evie is armed with a cane sword, hidden blades and throwing knives in the fight against the Templars during the Industrial Revolution. Ubisoft debuted new footage of the raven-haired hit woman during its E3 briefing Monday.

While the third-person series has featured female Assassins, Evie is a welcome addition following last year's dude-fest "Assassins Creed: Unity."



This photo provided by Ubisoft shows the female character, Evie Stealth, left, in the video game, "Assassin's Creed: Syndicate." (Ubisoft via AP)

RAE, "BEYOND EYES"

"Beyond Eyes," an independent game from developer Tiger & Squid, casts players as Rae, a blind girl who interprets the world with painterly imagery.



This photo provided by Bethesda Softworks shows a screenshot of the female character, Emily Kaldwin, from the trailer for the video game, "Dishonored 2." (Bethesda Softworks via AP)

As players guide Rae through a blank canvas on-screen, the 10-year-old girl harnesses her other senses to fill in what's surrounding her with watercolor-like illustrations on Rae's journey to find her missing cat.

"Beyond Eyes" is among the indie titles coming first to Xbox One as part of ID@Xbox, Microsoft's indie self-publishing program.

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