

City of Heroes: Going Rogue *** [VIDEO GAME]



JASON GRAVES

Jason Graves Promo 016 (for download)

13 tracks - 39:10

Paragon Studios released this new expansion to their popular *City of Heroes* video game in August. *Going Rogue* intends to turn things on their head, flipping the heroes into vigilantes and vice versa. The music for the game comes from Jason Graves, whose *Dead Space* score was one of the best cinematic video game scores of 2008.

In *Going Rogue*, Graves has shifted into the superhero realm with a big opening thematic idea for orchestra with chorus. The action music that follows begins to dissolve into techno beats and electronics rather quickly, but there are plenty of fascinating moments to attract listeners. "A Brave New World?" is one of the album highlights; pedal strings shimmer while textures float almost magically in and around them.

As with *Dead Space*, *Going Rogue* finds Graves creating compelling thematic ideas and weaving them into contemporary embellishments, lending the entire score a depth that can only enhance game play. Even when things are mostly percussive, as in "Beyond the Shadow of Doubts," thematic ideas surface enough to keep the pulsing from feeling routine. "Building a Better Tomorrow" has thematic elements that would easily be at home in any contemporary superhero film.

For the most part, *Going Rogue* leans more on electronic elements, but the addition of choral ideas and orchestral themes helps humanize the overall experience.

This is another stellar effort by Jason Graves, whose music continues to impress with each new release. Recommended for those who discovered this composer in the course of their own gaming, or through his earlier album releases. Samples of the score can be heard at Graves' website: www.jasongraves.com. —Steven A.

Kennedy

Comments regarding this review can be sent to: stev4uth@hotmail.com.