

action using technology created by Industrial Light & Magic. "This project is really like shooting a film, just with different types of technology," says Adrienne Wilkinson, the *Xena: Warrior Princess* star who was chosen to play fiery Zabrak Jedi Maris Brood. "A regular videogame voice job is very self-contained, you don't get to read a script and you don't even get to see the dialogue of the characters you are interacting with. With Maris Brood they had about 10 pages of character descriptions and her story is incredible. It could be a movie in itself."

While Brood is one of many electrifying characters caught up in the maelstrom that has engulfed the galaxy following the formation of the Galactic Empire, the story of *The Force Unleashed* centers on one man—the mysterious figure known only as Darth Vader's secret apprentice. "We did our best to make this guy as dimensional and multi-layered as possible," says Sam Witwer, whose uncanny resemblance to the character depicted in the concept artwork helped win him the role. "Strictly speaking, he's a bad guy; he starts out as the baddest of the bad. *Star Wars* heroes usually have blonde hair, blue eyes, and a 1970s haircut and here I am with dark hair, dark eyes and no haircut. We're going for the photo negative of Luke Skywalker; the opposite journey from the opposite end of the spectrum. But the same themes are prevalent throughout this character's journey."

Adopted as a child by Darth Vader, who senses the boy's innate connection to the Force, the apprentice is raised in isolation as the Sith Lord's personal assassin, dispatched to hunt down the last of the Jedi. When Vader conspires to use the apprentice to help him overthrow the Emperor, the volatile young Force-wielder becomes caught up in a galactic struggle that will lead him to question his allegiance to the dark side. Accompanied on his missions for Vader by beautiful Imperial pilot Juno Eclipse (Nathalie Cox) and his eccentric droid sidekick

"WE HAD A LOT OF FREEDOM TO CREATE THESE NEW CHARACTERS AND LOCATIONS AND STORYLINES, [AND] THE GIFT OF BEING ABLE TO TELL THE STORY BETWEEN THOSE TWO EPISODES—THAT'S A FERTILE PIECE OF GROUND RIGHT THERE."

—ART LEAD MATT OMERNICK

