

Sage G.C.:

Hey! Sage here. Just wanted to let you know in case you're interested, this episode was recorded live with video. So if you go to Patreon.com/20SidedStories, there is a link to a private YouTube video that you can watch on your TV or your computer or just on your phone while you're working out or cooking or whatever the hell you do.

Cool!

[CATACOMBS intro music plays.]

[eerie, deep] Welcome to the CATACOMBS.

[Music fades out.]

PIRATES Director's Commentary #1: Teaser Trailer

Sage:

Fuck it, we're doing it live. Hello, and welcome to the *20 Sided Stories PIRATES OF THE PUBLIC DOMAIN* Director's Commentary, the first ever one for the teaser trailer.

[Gentle guitar music plays.]

I've been thinking a lot about what sort of content I can make that is faster that isn't gonna burn me out trying to juggle both the main feed episodes and the Adventure Pass feed. It's a lot. I'm just one person, don't have unlimited time.

And I figured this is something I could do, record it live, react in the moment to the episodes with it open and break it down, get more technical, into details that we usually don't have a lot of time for in the post mortem episodes.

We'll still do a post mortem at the end of the season, but that's a little ways away from now. This is something we could do throughout as it airs. I'll try to catch up here and dive into the process in real time, pause if I have to, but overall, just try to talk as it goes. And if you have any questions or things you want me to dive into more specifically in the future, please let me know and I'd be happy to.

[Music ends.]

So I have the project open. And it should just kind of auto track along, and I'll scroll around. This is the teaser trailer, A.K.A. Shoebill's prologue. Don't actually have that officially anywhere. But yes, it is supposed to be Shoebill's prologue, he is my main NPC of the season. And just like all the other characters, this kind of sets up what he was doing in 1716 before the main story kicks off in 1717. It also, just like all the other prologues, was made *after* the main season so we could focus in on the certain plot bits and details that we already knew were going to be more important later. Little-little story hack there. Some retconning in the meta, so to speak.

So I'm going to press play and we're gonna listen through together. Here we go.

[Keyboard taps.]

*[Water laps on the side of a ship. Seagulls cry in the distance.
A group of **Sailors**, led by **Shoebill**, walk along the dock.
Cargo boxes bounce and sway in their arms.]*

And we start out on the docks with “Drunken Sailor” me coming in as Shoebill.

I almost put “Drunken Sailor” at the very beginning of the- sorry, the very *end* of the season, but it almost seemed like it would be too obvious. We’ve all heard the shanty like a million times, it’s probably the most well-known sea shanty. So I figured let’s just put it right up front. First thing we start with just to get you *right* into the zone.

Shoebill: *Copyright-? It’s a workin’ song!*

[Trailer continues playing in the background.]

Sage: Because even “Drunken Sailor” in this world is copywritten to take the extreme. This is also one of the only episodes of *20 Sided Stories* that is written. The only other one being the Station Blue crossover. Only two episodes *20 Sided Stories* that have scripts. I usually, obviously, don’t wanna write things for a, uh, an improv show. But occasionally there are moments like that. And this teaser trailer, we tried to do an improv version of it. But it was just messy. It- it just was super long. It couldn’t be within under, like, three minutes, right?

Crew: *For we’re westward bound from these Private grounds*

Guard: *I’ll have you know, I’m an officer of the law and you best be listenin’ to me!*

Crew: *With a good ship taut and free!*

Sage: And it basically becomes a musical. [chuckles] Um, which *PIRATES OF THE PUBLIC DOMAIN* did evolve from a musical idea which evolved from a short film that I didn’t finish.

Crew: *Rolling down to Old Maui, me boys*

Sage: There’s been a lot of iterations into the concept over time.

Crew: *Rolling down to Old Maui*

[The song cuts off and a prison door slams shut. Water drips in the prison.]

Sage: A lot of elements going into that transition to get it just right. Kinda turned into a maniac to try to get the feeling. Absolutely perfect with the gate shutting and the doors opening.

Prisoner: *Hey! Big bird.*

Sage: The reverb changes to a prison here. And we got Christian Baltazar, who’s- uh, I was honored to- to have sing along on the track with me. Christian was obviously supposed to be in the show, but he got COVID. So this is me still keeping him a part of the world, so to speak.

Prisoner: *[dreamy] Wide, open air.*

Sage: He was playing a different character than he would’ve played.

Prisoner: *—thousand islands, singin’ what ye wish, no laws. No money, no greed. [chuckles]*

Sage: So the concept overall. It's really just like the happy birthday thing, right? Like "Happy Birthday" has a copyright on it. You can't sing that on a TV show if you don't want to pay royalties to whoever the fuck owns the copyright for that. What if it was that but to the extreme?

Literally just the idea of free things in The Private Isles, this hyper-capitalist corporatocracy was illegal.

[Shoebill starts to sing. A gentle tune joins the song. Thunder rolls throughout.]

Shoebill: *How soft the breeze through the island trees*

Sage: And now "Old Maui" has gotta be my favorite sea shanty. So it just felt right to be the one that I included in this trailer. Since it's a lot of kind of yearning for another world, right? So I replaced some of the lyrics, uh, made it more accurate to our story. It's mostly pretty faithful.

Crew: *Our baggy sails running 'fore the gales*

Sage: How 'bout Christian's voice, huh? Ooh, buttery.

Crew: *Rolling down to Old Maui*

Guard: *Stop that!*

Crew: *Sorry.*

Sage: And gotta love Greg as a, uh, as a British guard, just classic.

[Subtle, tropical marimba music plays.]

The Storyteller: *Pirates of the Public Domain.*

Sage: And Joyce comes in here. This was originally Jess. I secretly updated it. Sometimes is secretly update episodes. Shh, don't tell nobody.

Uh, I love Joyce. I will talk more about her in the future. And this character of The Storyteller/Narrator/Mother Nature incarnate

The Storyteller: —set sail for 20SidedStories.com/pirates.

Sage: And there we have it. There's the teaser trailer.

So little in this project file compared to, like, a main episode. It's so, like, refreshing to be able to look at almost all of it in one screen. Still have to scroll quite a bit. Yeah, there's a little bit of an original score, but it's mostly a musical number to get you into the shanty spirit.

Like I said, it's one of the only written things in *20 Sided Stories*, it had a script. And we just kind of did it online. Christian did some of his singing parts solo on his own. And yeah, just pieced it together the best I could to make it sound like an episode of 20 Sided Stories would. There's still a little bit of improv, like with Greg's guard in the background calling out and getting mad at Shoebill and the pirates while they're singing.

[Audio is rewind and fast forwarded in the background.]

Shoebill: *[sings] —and we go way down when the—*

Guard: *There you go, stop it now. Stop that! Hey! Oye! I'll have you know, I'm an officer of the law and you best be listenin' to me!*

Sage: I mean, he was just, like...

Guard: I did go through a lot of training to get this position!

Sage: There- there's some long clips that he just went...

Guard: *By the Royal Court, you're under arrest!*

*[The **Guard** unsheathes his sword.]*

Sage: [amused] On and on and on and on just talking, yammering forever. More than I could actually edit down, but we got some good clips in there.

What other interesting things can I break down?

The ambience got a fair amount of elements in here.

[Animals cry out. Wooden wheel clatter along a stone road. A crowd chatters.]

We've got a harbor. We've got a ship in the background hitting the dock. We have sort of a marketplace in full surround sound. That is then edited down to two tracks stereo, left and right.

And then it switches over to the prison. Got a thunderstorm.

[Thunder rolls. A gentle, mysterious tune rises.]

Storm gets a little bit stronger as he talks about The Public Domain.

[The gentle, mysterious tune gets louder.]

Gotta go for that really mysterious, stringy arpeggio thing.

And yeah, then end in a big- big musical harmony.

So that does it for the teaser trailer, which we released on Talk Like a Pirate Day. In case anybody didn't notice that. Even though a lot of the other content wasn't ready, so maybe it's a little bit too early but whatever.

[A gentle, adventurous tune fades in.]

I'm gonna move on to the introduction now, which is a lot of me already talking in the introduction. So we're about one degree away from that Bo Burnham joke where we're reacting to ourselves reacting. But, uh, [chuckles] let's do it anyway. Let's see what happens.

Thanks, all! See you in the next 20 Sided Story.

[Music crescendos and fades out.]

Credits

Shoebill played by Sage G.C.

Guard played by Greg Reasoner

Sailor played by Emily Ervolina

Prisoner played by Christian Baltazar

The Storyteller voiced by Joyce Torres

Transcripts by Tiffany Chapman