

play!

z i n e

No.95 | May 2016



DARK III SOULS

GAME OF
THE MONTH:

REVIEWS:

Dark Souls 3 - Quantum Break - Ratchet and Clank - Ashes of the Singularity - Banner Saga 2
Battlefleet Gothic: Armada - Killer Instinct - Battlezone 98 Redux - Salt and Sanctuary - Nova Covert Ops
Flat Kingdom - Hyper Light Drifter - Deponia Doomsday - Goetia

No. 95 – MAY 2016

Published monthly • Price: Free

EDITOR:

Miljan Truc

EDITORIAL OFFICE:

Bojan Jovanović, Luka Komarovski, Stefan Starović

CONTRIBUTORS:

Bogdan Diklić, Borislav Lalović, Filip Nikolić, Igor Totić, Ivan Danojlić, Lazar Marković, Luka Zlatić, Marko Narandžić, Milan Živković, Miljan Truc, Miloš Hetlerović, Nikola Savić, Petar Vojinović, Stefan Mitov Radojičić, Pavle Momčilov, Pavle Zlatić, Dejan Stojilović, Vladimir Pantelić, Bojan Petrović, Aleksa Petronijević

ART DIRECTOR/DTP:

Sava Marinčić

CONTACT:

PLAY! magazine

www.play-zine.com | www.play.co.rs
Belgrade | redakcija@play-zine.com



GAME OF THE MONTH DARK III SOULS

Hello everyone,

Another month is behind us as 2016 trudges onwards, and the game releases pick up their pace. This month was all about one thing: Souls. Souls of a Dark kind, that is. Not only did we see the release of the third Dark Souls game, but we've also seen a slew of games inspired in one way or another by this seminal series.

This month is all about dying over and over again – and loving it. The difficulty of Souls games has become the stuff of legends, and how the third game stacks against its illustrious predecessors? Read on and find out! Let's just say that it didn't fail to impress, and it deservedly graces our May cover. With the continued success of these games, it's no wonder that many others try to draw on its elements and capture that feel in their own games. You might notice that many of our reviews reference them at some point or another, and it truly became a synonym for "hard, yet fair" and "a rewarding satisfaction" in the gaming world.

This month also saw a launch of an interesting experiment, in the form of Quantum Break – a highly anticipated high-budget game, which tried to combine the experience of both gaming and watching a TV show. Something that's been tried before, for sure, but not on this scale. With the rise of digital media, the climate is perfect for this next logical step, and success or failure, we're certain that this is only the first of many future attempts at combining modern media for an enhanced audience experience and immersion. VR is just around the corner, and we're certain it will play a pivotal role in the next iteration of the next attempt of a similar symbiosis.

Ratchet & Clank is out as well, tying in with the movie of the same name. What's supposed to be a kid's game and an unnecessary prologue story may have proven to be a fun little space adventure for everyone. If some reports are to be believed, in this case the tie-in game might actually be better than the movie it ties in to. Flashy, hilarious, cute, and colorful, this game seems to have something for kids and adults alike.

On the DLC front, we saw the release of the first Mission Pack for Starcraft 2. It's Blizzard's attempt at keeping the game fresh and, dare we say, lucrative. This one features Nova, protagonist of their cancelled Ghost project from many years ago. Now's her time to shine, and we're there to help her uncover the intriguing plot that's shaking the very foundation of the barely recovering human Dominion.

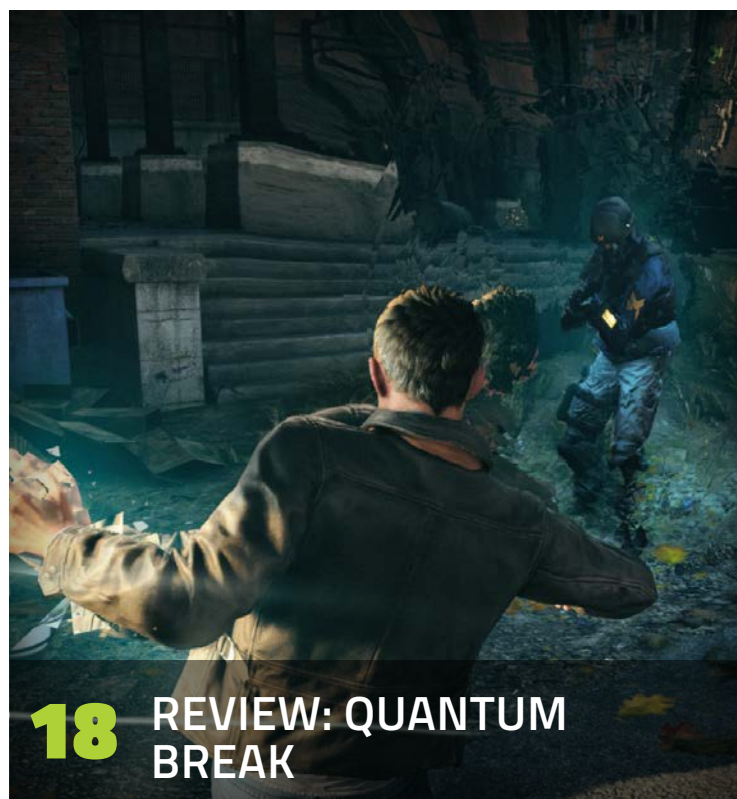
On the eSports front, our colleagues were "On the spot" in Warsaw, reporting from the World of Tanks 2016 Finals. Be sure to read their report and insights from the scene. We particularly liked the way the organizers handled the audience experience – from interactive flashing wristbands, mini-tournaments for merchandise, to VR spectating – they're really setting an example many other eSports giants should follow in their own events. Or even improve upon – we won't mind!

Read up on these and many others on the pages of our magazine, and remember – the summer's nearly upon us and the gaming season is just picking up pace. This month featured many surprises, but next month promises to be chock-full of highly anticipated titles.





14 GAME OF THE MONTH: DARK SOULS 3



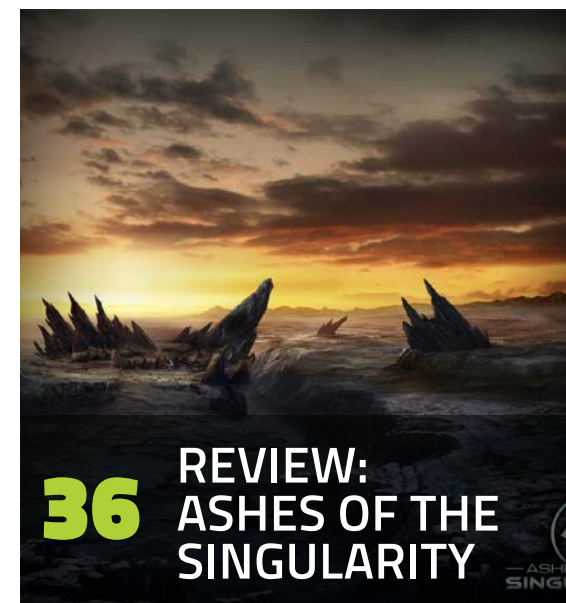
18 REVIEW: QUANTUM BREAK



28 REVIEW: KILLER INSTINCT



31 REVIEW: BATTLEFLEET GOTHIC: ARMADA



36 REVIEW: ASHES OF THE SINGULARITY



6 ON THE SPOT: WORLD OF TANKS GRAND FINALS 2016



ON THE SPOT: World of Tanks Grand Finals 2016	6
DLC: Nova Covert Ops - Mission Pack 1	10
Dark Souls 3	14
Quantum Break	18
Ratchet and Clank	20
The Banner Saga 2	22
Hyper Light Drifter	24
Salt and Sanctuary	26
Killer Instinct	28
Battlefleet Gothic: Armada	31
Flat Kingdom	34
Ashes of the Singularity	36
Deponia Domsday	38
Battlezone 98 Redux	40
Goetia	42



World of Tanks Grand Finals 2016

original M4 Sherman and T 34-85 tanks! There were also some “crews” that had the main task of entertaining the crowd, so one time we saw one of them hanging from a barrel of a gun while the commander swung the turret around.

Upon entering the hall you received several cheering props, most interesting being the white rubber wristband with built in LED lights that would blink white, blue or red. While you're in the main hall the organizers would enable blinking on all the guests' lights depending on which team won or some other event happen. Outside of the main arena there were some extra features, like the area for playing WoT on Playstation 4, or playing a mini side tournament for prizes like WoT T-shirts and other merchandise. We also tried out watching World of Tanks matches in VR which was quite interesting. Of course there was also the store where you could buy merchandise or gaming gear like special editions of Razer Deathadder mouse, Kraken headphones or Goliath mouse pad.

THE TEAMS AND THE STAGE

All of the participants in the event were treated very professionally and even as a member of the press you cannot enter the player's area without having a prearranged meeting at a precise time. Even then, you would have to wait for someone from Wargaming to take you past security. Every team had its own rest and preparation area, while there were special areas designed for interviews. Currently the best teams come from the so called CIS region which we informally call Russia, although this region incorporates several other countries like Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, and a few more. Teams from Asia have gone a long way in catching up with the best out there, but are still a long way from the force they display in other games. North American team has some room for improvement, but was also hampered by the fact that the NA League was held under different rules than the rest of the world. The only ones that are really comparable to the Russian teams are the ones from Europe, our favorites being the guys from Kazna Kru. They are the most diverse team regarding player nationalities and also have a big fan base across Europe, including Poland.

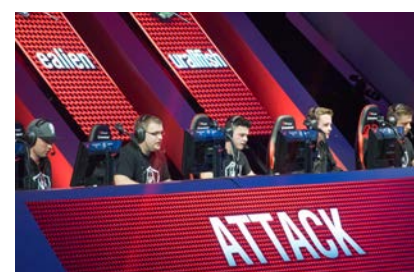
When you enter the main hall the first thing you notice is the large stage on which the participants are surrounded by numerous screens. We were very pleasantly surprised by the effort put in so that the screens are not only pretty but also very functional – on the upper part you can see both team's

health bars, behind every player there is an image of the tank he is driving that gets smashed when it is destroyed in game and the background has details from the map currently played blended with team insignia. The whole stage turns red or blue when a certain team wins, which together with blinking wristbands on spectators' hands creates a nice effect. One thing to note is that the viewing screens had to be put on the sides because of the stage in the middle which made watching the matches a bit difficult. Under the screens are the commentators, one crew for English and another for Russian language, going directly to the Twitch live stream. All of the announcements in the main hall were in English but you could also notice some guys that were communicating directly to the primarily Polish public. From time to time they would throw prizes into the crowd, instigate Mexican waves, shout out team's names, and every other cheering situation that you can generally see on a mainstream sports event.



NEW BATTLE FORMAT

Up to this year World of Tanks eSports matches were limited to Tier 8 vehicles and it started to become a pattern – teams would use just about a dozen types of tanks where machines like IS-3, T32 and T-54 Itwt. dominated. This year, Wargaming decided to introduce Tier 10 battles where the maximum tier of all 7 team members is 68, which is to say you can have five Tier 10 tanks and two Tier 9 or six Tier 10 and one Tier 8. This caused a dramatic change, because teams now use much more varied types of tanks and the battles have become more interesting. Also keep in mind that professional teams tend to use tanks that are not that popular in random battles, for example the Chinese 113 tank is very poor in random but here it's used quite often. The reasons are simple – it has high damage per minute, good mobility, a hard turret and can penetrate almost anything using premium ammo. Opposed to that is, for example, the American T110E5 that is quite popular in random battles but we've seen relatively few of them in the finals. Teams now incorporate a lot of new and different tactics on the battlefield, which is more interesting to watch. The number of



During the World of Tanks world championship that was held in Warsaw, team Na'vi emerged as the new rulers of the show and we saw a lot of excitement and great moves. We covered the event live from Poland and here is a recap of the whole thing.

Warsaw, Poland, was chosen for several reasons – of course there are many World of Tanks players in the country, the so called “siemkas”. The other reason is that if the tournament was held somewhere in Russia it would create problems for teams from other countries, like US, dealing with visas etc. Poland is an EU member state so it makes a nice compromise between the East and the West. The chosen venue was the largest sports hall in Warsaw – Torwar Hall can accommodate almost twice as many visitors than last year's 15.000.

THINGS TO SEE AND DO AROUND THE TOURNAMENT

We were greeted with a nice surprise in front of Torwar Hall – parked in front were





different vehicles used this year compared to the previous finals is almost four times bigger.

THE MATCHES

When an official match starts on the main stage you see a light show, the announcer presents the teams, you have short video clips about them on the screens and then you add the commentators that analyze their tactics and results so far. Russian and European teams dominated the group stage of the competition. We followed Kazna Kru which lost to Tornado Rox but later defeated the North American champions Eclipse, but that unfortunately led them to a match with Na'Vi in the quarterfinals. They lost 5:0 to Na'vi but the result isn't a true representation of the match because there were some quite intense rounds where Kazna had the initiative, yet Na'Vi somehow always managed to come back.

In the end, three out of four teams in the semifinals were from Russian region which explains why we concluded that they are the best in this discipline of eSports for now. The Grand Finals saw a very intense match between Na'Vi and Hellraisers. In an incredible match Na'Vi won the last tiebreaker round when Hellraiser's best player got stuck with his tank on a side of a hill. But what can you do, that is sports for you, or rather - eSports. The closing ceremony was also fantastic and it was interesting to see Na'Vi players handing out autographs after the final match.



HOPING FOR MORE WORLD OF TANKS EVENTS LIKE THIS

We had a great time in Warsaw, everything was great, and we were especially pleased that we were able to see some very intense eSports matches. We were also surprised by the fact that we saw a lot of older people in the spectator crowd, even whole families attending the event. Of course, the majority of spectators were teenagers but it's fun to see a demographic of a game like World of Tanks is a bit unique. Also, younger spectators across the world probably watched the matches online, as we saw Twitch viewers numbering in the tens of thousands at any given moment.



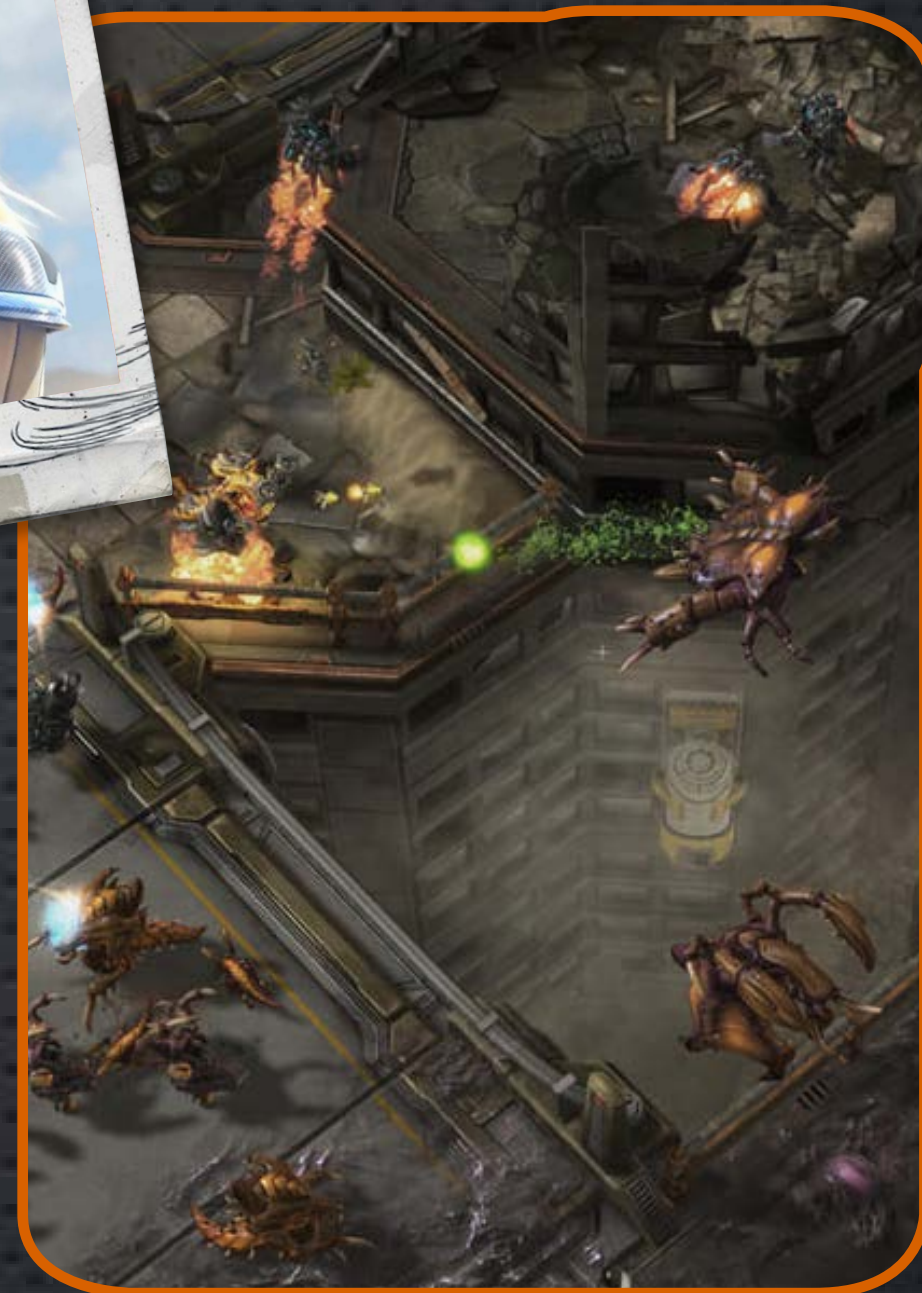


Author: Nikola Savić

DLC

StarCraft II: Nova Covert Ops - Mission Pack 1

NOVA'S 5 MINUTES OF FAME



In the autumn of 2002, almost 14 years ago, Blizzard introduced the world to agent November Annabella "Nova" Terra, a member of the elite Ghost unit from the StarCraft universe. We were introduced to her through a presentation of their latest project at the time, third-person action/crawler titled StarCraft: Ghost. Ambitiously, the game was announced for all the major consoles at the time (Playstation 2, Xbox, Nintendo GameCube), but the events took an unexpected turn. The game was first cancelled for GameCube, only for Blizzard to put the game „on ice“ in 2006. There were no news about the game for years, and many have already done mourning it, until Mike Morhaime finally declared the game cancelled in an interview with Polygon which took place in September of 2014.

In the meantime, we learned more about Nova through the novel StarCraft: Ghost from 2006, and in the Wings of Liberty campaign. She even made her way into Nexus, where she fights side by side with other legendary Blizzard characters in



“FIRST ADDITIONAL MINI-CAMPAIGN FOR STARCRAFT 2”

Heroes of the Storm. Still, where StarCraft fans are concerned, this deadly blonde was always somehow overshadowed by her much more popular ghost-colleague, the famous Queen of Blades – Sarah Kerrigan. Justice for Nova and her never-released game comes 14 years later, in the form of a new StarCraft 2 campaign titled Nova Covert Ops.

Nova Covert Ops was announced at last year's BlizzCon, as first of many mini-campaigns that Blizzards plans to release

for StarCraft 2 after the conclusion of the SC2 trilogy, and therefore practically confirmed that they're not giving up on StarCraft, as many had expected. These mini-campaigns will come in form of DLC content which players can buy over Battle.net. Nova Covert Ops will feature a total of 9 missions, split into 3 episodes (Mission Packs), which are cheaper to buy as a bundle, instead of each episode by itself. If you decide to buy them in a bundle, you'll also receive a special skin for your Ghost units in multiplayer, and we know

“THE STORY TAKES PLACE A FEW YEARS AFTER THE STARCRAFT 2 SAGA ENDED”



how irrationally pricey cosmetics are in games these days (look to CS:GO and LoL for examples), so perhaps the price of this bundle is fairly reasonable – especially if the missions are fun and have a great story. So, let’s see what Nova Covert Ops has to offer.

The first mission pack for Nova Covert Ops was recently released, containing the first three missions, and of course, we couldn’t wait to play them. In the weeks before the mission’s release, Blizzard conducted a very interesting campaign using encrypted messages on StarCraft 2 website and fake news on Twitter concerning the strange events happening in the Korpulu sector, which is an excellent introduction to a story about special units, because the information we gleaned from them were directly linked to the plot of the campaign. The story of Nova Covert Ops takes place a few years after the conclusion of the StarCraft 2 saga. Valerian Mengsk rules the Terran Dominion, and he (seemingly) truly wishes to return it to the path of progress. But, for unknown reasons, the Zerg have started attacking the Terran planets again, sowing turmoil among the populace, and leading to the creation of an organization called “Defenders of Man” who opposes the Dominion.

Amidst all this, Nova wakes up on an unknown DoM location, with no memory of recent events, and receives an anonymous message of imminent danger. And from then on starts the campaign. From what we’ve managed to see the plot looks very intriguing, and somehow reminiscent of old-school StarCraft vibe, with political machinations, conspiracies, and other dirty

plots of the human species, which is also a huge left turn when compared to the space opera about the salvation of the universe that we played in Legacy of the Void campaign. Not that we didn’t enjoy the LotV campaign, but we’re glad to see this SCI callback as well.

To be honest, we didn’t expect to have much to play with in only 3 missions, but it’s obvious that they were carefully planned and composed to offer maximum content. The first and third missions are essentially two missions each, and we were especially delighted with the second half of the first mission, which was a small homage to side-scrolling arcade shooters of old. In it, Nova and her companion mount a getaway through a busy highway, trying to avoid civilians while the enemies converge from all sides – front, back and above! It’s crucial to carefully balance between positioning on the screen and using abilities to eliminate enemies as quickly and efficiently as possible, as well as collecting healing “power-ups” that appears form time to time and which you can easily miss if you’re at the wrong place at the time. The climax of the mission is a boss fight (!) at the end, also in retro arcade style. It’s worth playing Covert Ops just for this mission.

The other missions are combinations of RPG stealth missions and classic RTS maps. Two classic RTS missions feature goals like “survive for XY minutes” and “take x strategic positions”, so nothing new, but elegantly implemented and with interesting micro-maps that demand expanding strategy on the fly. In the stealth missions, you’re leading Nova through Defenders

of Man facilities while trying to remain undetected. We felt that these missions were quite easy even on Hard difficulty, but still, these are only the first 3 missions in the campaign and they’re certainly going to become progressively more difficult as the campaign goes on.

Between the missions you can upgrade both Nova and your army with various items and technologies. Nova has 4 equipment slots (head, armor, main weapon, side arm), and each slot has several choices that you can customize according to personal preference or play style, or what you figure would best suit the mission. The same goes for units – every type of unit can have one upgrade allocated to it. Every unit has unique upgrades, like Jump Jets for Siege Tanks, and shared upgrades, which can be given to one unit at a time.

The locations are all new, and many new models were added to the StarCraft engine and we were especially amazed that on the second, snowy map, all Terran units were covered in snow drifts – a small detail that added a lot to the atmosphere of that



“THE FIRST SET CONTAINS ONLY 3 MISSIONS”



mission, and players are already clamoring for these “snow skins” to be available for purchase and use in multiplayer.

In the end, all we can say is that we’re very pleased with the first set of Nova’s missions; it all feels polished and fun and it’s always a pleasure to play Blizzard’s RTS campaigns because they’re the true masters of that old craft. We just hope

that the mission release frequency picks up, because as it stands, Nova Covert Ops’ release alone is planned to stretch until the end of this year, which means only 9 missions in a full year’s time.

RECOMMENDED PC CONFIGURATION:
OS: Windows 7 64-bit
CPU: Intel i5 or AMD FX
GPU: GeForce GTX 650 or Radeon HD 7790
RAM: 4GB



GAME PROVIDED BY COMPUTERLAND

PLATFORM:
PC
PUBLISHED BY:
Blizzard Entertainment
PRICE:
7.5€

DEVELOPED BY:
Blizzard Entertainment
TESTED ON:
PC

RATING

8

- ✓ The missions are diverse and fun
- ✓ Story reminiscent of the original StarCraft (more political intrigue, less saving the universe)

- ✗ Price
- ✗ The remaining missions will be unnecessarily stretched throughout 2016



Author: Milan Živković

REVIEW

Dark Souls 3

EMBERS STILL BURN BENEATH THE ASHES, NEVER TO BE EXTINGUISHED

The Souls series has come a long way. Basing its roots from the title Demon's Souls, it made us appreciate its motto of "difficult, but fair". Dark Souls 1 and 2 broadened the franchise, not only with tighter gameplay that made overcoming obstacles much more enjoyable, but also opened the door to a grandiose plot which we pieced together with delight. With the Playstation 4 exclusive, Bloodborne, they redesigned their visual style into a surreal world that enabled us to feel more powerful and agile, but also face even more magnificent creatures of the night to test our mettle. And now, seven years since the start of the franchise, we have before us the final part of the Dark Souls trilogy, a conclusion to an epic saga and coming full circle to include all of the accumulated experience and successful recipes from the previous installments. Dark Souls 3 is before us, so let's not waste any time – it's time to die!

"EVERY CLASS HAS IT'S OWN STYLE, BUT IT ALL EVENTUALLY DEPENDS ON HOW YOU CHOOSE TO UPGRADE YOUR CHARACTER"



Something that's important to mention early on is that even though it's part of the Dark Souls series, the third game draws a lot of inspiration and successful elements from Bloodborne. All of this could be separated into five major influences on five areas that define a game. If you imagine Dark Souls as we know it as a basis, and add these five

elements to it, you'll get the true picture about this final installment of the trilogy.

Firstly, there's character design. The Hunters from Bloodborne were fearless "protagonists, agile and bloodthirsty, their design likely influenced by the cult

French movie "Brotherhood of the Wolf". Although Dark Souls 3 allows you to pick a class, including the "bulky" knights, the influence of this design is highly apparent. And not only with your own character, but with the opponents as well, many of which now boast that certain note of "bloodthirsty elegance". Without a doubt, this is a step in the right direction for Dark Souls' already excellent character design.

Next on the list of inspirations are the levels. The first Dark Souls had probably the biggest and most intertwined levels, while Bloodborne had the best designed mazes that were a joy to explore. Dark Souls 3 also has somewhat smaller levels, but just like in Bloodborne, they're well designed and with the same artistic flare. On the other hand, they look no less

grandiose that those from the first game, because using smart and intricate design, as well as broad open locations, leaves an impression of a huge map to explore.

When it comes to the core of every game, gameplay, Dark Souls 3 had its combat system influenced by the speed Bloodborne's combat. Even though your character won't be dodging enemy attacks as elegantly as the Hunters, they will still seem more agile than before. Hit combos and weapon abilities were directly added from Bloodborne, and the action now contains elements to help you feel less vulnerable. Every weapon now has its own special actions that look fantastic and are better at damaging enemies. The only drawback is that these moves have a limited number of uses, so they'll only

DIFFICULTY

It's hard to determine the difficulty of Dark Souls 3 compared to the rest of the series. The first boss might seem harder than usual, but that's a matter of perspective. One thing that we can guarantee however, is that there will be no shortage of challenges.



see limited use until you develop your character to use them more frequently. Furthermore, the great boss battles from Bloodborne are nearly translated into this game, so the enemies won't be simply repeating the same pattern until they die, instead they'll boast multiple phases of moves and shapes. And just like in the PS4 exclusive, you'll be able to stun your





“WHOEVER FAILS TO SHED A TEAR AFTER THE FINALE... MUST HAVE CHEATED!”



BOSSSES

Grandiose boss fights certainly remind us more of Bloodborne than previous Souls titles. Although some are a bit shorter, you'll still feel jubilant with every defeated boss: here, bosses are a hard-earned achievement, unlike being "slaughtered prey" in Bloodborne.



RECOMMENDED PC CONFIGURATION:

OS: Windows 7 64-bit
CPU: Intel Core i7-3770 or AMD FX-8350
GPU: GeForce GTX 970 or Radeon R9
RAM: 8GB
HDD: 25GB



GAME PROVIDED BY BANDAI NAMCO

opponents and then perform a special attack on them. However, this being a Dark Souls game, you'll still have to rely on your trusty shield. You will use it not only to block attacks, but also, with good timing, use it to expose your opponent for the above mentioned special attack. All of this and other minor improvements to the combat system combine into an excellent symbiosis, thus featuring the most complete action in a Souls game. Although, we have to admit that we miss watching the monsters hurting each other, as well as the opportunity to recoup part of energy after quick ripostes. Ah, those Hunters sure were something...

When we compare Dark Souls 3 and Bloodborne in terms of plot, there's not much to say when it comes to influence. From the beginning Dark Souls had a great story that you could slowly piece together. What it does draw from Bloodborne though is the way it tells the story. Although once again fragmented, using subtle hints, music stings, excellent

video sequences and atmosphere, Dark Souls 3 will find its way to the players and enthrall them with its poetic depth. And even though the ending of this trilogy might be less satisfying than we might have hoped, the known availability of multiple endings will surely provide solace to many fans of the series.

The fifth and final element binding Dark Souls 3 and Bloodborne is a somewhat abstract perception of variation. Although all previous installments have dragged the players along, enticing them with their challenges, Bloodborne had truly reached the level of variations that are so genial, that they got the players so invested not just to simply learn all of the enemy's patterns, but to also start thinking like they would. It's not a rare occurrence to get killed by somebody you easily dispatched a hundred times before, just because you've underestimated him. The enemies are often cunning and will require your constant attention. But it's not only them – the levels themselves are

GAMEPLAY

Although many miss the gothic Bloodborne (author being one), Dark Souls 3 is closer to its tempo than previous games. The fights aren't as attractive as the ones in which you play as the agile Hunter, but are more strategic and faster than previous Dark Souls standards. Still, spraying gallons of blood are sorely missed...



full of nasty traps and moments of intense atmosphere, you'll barely have a moment to relax. So the one thing that Dark Souls 3 manages to accomplish, which is certainly on the level of Bloodborne, is that variable element which makes the player immersion that much more intensive, making him experience every defeat, and making each victory more of an accomplishment.

So, is Dark Souls 3 a good game? Without a doubt. It certainly reaches the very pinnacle of a series with an already flawless reputation. Is it faultless? No, but no game is. You will encounter graphics bugs from time to time that will make you laugh; you'll encounter camera issues, which is still better than the previous games; you'll encounter framerate drops. The game plays in 30 fps on consoles, while that number's limit is doubled on PC. But sometimes, in bigger locations, or in the presence of intricately detailed bosses who shower you with a fireworks assault, big drops of framerate are possible.

All in all, this isn't a huge issue, because the game mostly plays extremely well, but it's important to note that these things will occur.

As the (current) conclusion to the cult series, Dark Souls 3 proudly stands beside its predecessors. And even though it's filled with elements that might seem recycled, it contains so many innovations that you will welcome all of the familiar elements. It's something of a miracle for a series to have so many installments, and that it almost can't be faulted for repeated elements. Each game in the Souls series is a small masterpiece. It is rare to find this sort of challenge combined with gameplay so fair that its only requirement from you is to improve your own. Even though it still strives for perfection in its own genre, Dark Souls 3 reminds us how far the series has come to provide us with this wonder of a game. So, be brave and learn from your defeats. Eventually, it will all come to one thing – pure enjoyment.

PLATFORMS:
PC, PS4, XONE

PUBLISHED BY:
Bandai Namco Entertainment

PRICE:
60€

DEVELOPED BY:
FromSoftware

TESTED ON:
PS4

RATING

9

- ✓ Perfect combination of all previous installments
- ✓ The gameplay is more fluid and fun
- ✓ Excellent design of... everything
- ✗ Occasional bugs and camera issues



Author: Igor Totić

REVIEW

Quantum Break

ICEMAN VS LITTLEFINGER

It seems that over the last decade and a half, television and cinema have switched roles. The television nowadays invests in intriguing and thoughtful shows (Breaking Bad, The Wire, Black Mirror), while the cinema mostly invests in blockbusters (The Avengers, X-Men, Hunger Games). Previously, TV shows were mostly sitcoms (of course, with exceptions), while we went to the movies to watch The Usual Suspects, Fight Club, etc. Quantum Break is trying to go one step further and connect a video game with a live action show. They're not the first who's tried something like this (Battlefield: Hardline – we all know better than to talk about that game), but even if it looks like a cheap show, at least it looks authentic. It's a shame that the gameplay is subpar.

The storyline follows Jack Joyce (Shawn Ashmore – X-Men) who, along with his friend Paul Serene (Aidan Gillen – The Wire, Game of Thrones), activates a time travel machine designed by Jack's older brother William (Dominic Monaghan – Lord of the Rings, Lost). There's an explosion after the

machine activates, Littlefinger becomes a villain, Jack gets time control powers, and kicks off a series of events which I won't spoil because the plot is pretty fun. Although the mix of cinematics and live action tells the core of the story, the details and very interesting story elements, as well as closer character descriptions, can all be found in a myriad of documents, computers and journals hidden throughout the levels, and I recommend that you read every one of them because, firstly, they're not boring, and secondly, they help you immerse yourself deeper into the characters and events. It seems that most of the budget went into paying these famous actors who are giving it their all, but the rest of the live action sequences seem cheap and unfinished. What I found the most perplexing is that there are more motion captured cinematics than there are live action sequences. Every clip which contains live action is streamed, so if you don't have good broadband, those clips will stutter.

The weakest aspect of the game is the gameplay. Quantum Break is a third

person shooter and includes special powers and automatic cover system. The weapons are generic, there are only a few of them, and they're hard to differentiate from one another. Which is a shame, because throughout the game you'll be assailed by enemies wearing armor that's specially modified to control time just like you, but they don't have any special or interesting armaments. Also, there are only a few different types of enemies, so the game becomes very dull, very fast. About half way into the game, some absolutely unfair enemies appear, who only have a single weak spot on their back, which is difficult to spot, let alone aim at with a controller. There's an interesting game mechanic that allows you to choose how the story progresses at certain points, but that won't influence the final outcome, just the cinematics, conversations and live action parts.

As I mentioned previously, Jack has powers which unlock as you progress through the game. From time shield, to time grenade, and super speed, i.e. slowing the time around you to very bad bullet-time – which is weird, considering Remedy introduced this concept in Max Payne games. Here, bullet-time is all but

useless. Each power can be upgraded by collecting time fragments, but to be honest, I didn't see much use for those upgrades because most of them simply prolong the effect without changing the power's mechanics. The game will often spoil its momentum and immersion – for example, where on one part of the level your powers can open a certain door for you, they can't open another on a different part for an unexplained reason.

Time travel stories are notoriously hard to write without encountering a few mistakes or holes. Although I managed to find a few, Quantum Break makes an effort to close the circle. Moreover, near the end of the game you can find a huge calendar which explains most of the events which transpired and their chronology, and it was very interesting to follow along and see how they connected their own story into situations that actually happened, such as the terrorist attack on the Twin Towers in New York, the financial crisis, and even the beginning of the Apple, i.e. iPhone phenomenon.

The levels are very well designed and detailed, especially the background which depicts the total ruin of time and it seems as if all of that is really happening to our

protagonist. Time distortions which you experience, as well as sound stuttering and high pitch noises, all masterfully evoke the intensity of the situation. However, the game features terrible motion blur which plummets the frame rate that is already locked at 30, and besmears this otherwise beautiful looking game. Also, the game crashed for me a few times, and always during very involved fights. Microsoft went too far with advertisements for their products, so every PC in the game runs Windows 10 and every phone is a Windows phone. Although, considering how easily some characters in the game hack into all of those, it seems it might be counterproductive. Another obvious sponsor is Nissan, because all of the vehicles appear to be theirs, not to mention all of the advertisements and billboards. Remedy also followed suit, so you'll often see references to Alan Wake game, as well as details from it, for example the Night Springs TV show.

In the end, I'd say that Quantum Break is a good story with interesting ideas told through bad gameplay. It will certainly provide you with about 8 hours of fun, if you decide to collect all the hidden things and chose different paths, but it won't make you play through it again any time soon.

“THE WEAKEST ASPECT OF THE GAME IS THE GAMEPLAY ITSELF”

RECOMMENDED PC CONFIGURATION:

OS: Windows 7 64-bit
CPU: Intel Core i7-3770 or AMD FX-8350
GPU: GeForce GTX 970 or Radeon R9
RAM: 8GB
HDD: 25GB



PLATFORMS:
XONE, PC

PUBLISHED BY:
Microsoft Studios

PRICE:
60€

DEVELOPED BY:
Remedy Games

TESTED ON:
XONE

RATING

7.5

✓ The story
✓ Audio/visual design

✗ The gameplay
✗ The powers

“A MIX OF CINEMATICS AND LIVE-ACTION”



Author: Vladimir Pantelić

REVIEW

Ratchet & Clank

SUPER FUN
HAPPY SLIDE



That first impression you get once you start the game will definitely be positive, because its audio-visual representation will transport you into one of the most beautiful worlds you'll ever get to see in video games. The richness of beautiful color combinations, fantastic scenes that give the impression of an animated movie (hint: they are from the movie), combined with voice acting and music accompanying it - everything is pieced together just right and done to the very brink of perfection. There is also humor, but it's not based on dialogue, but rather in some indeterminately adorable and funny form.

Once you get into the character of Ratchet, a small Lombax (which is some kind of a cross between cat and fox), the game will quickly and easily guide you through the gameplay mechanics. In time Ratchet will unlock some new options, but not as skills, but as additional equipment for himself. The most important part of equipment, the little robot Clank, will join you very quickly and you will soon head out together to save the galaxy.



boots, jetpack, hoverboard, and much more, and add to all of that a weapons arsenal any FPS hero would be envious of. As for the weapons themselves, their number, design, and originality are top notch. Are you going to stick to the flamethrower or throw disco balls at your enemies to make them dance, after which you turn them into sheep using the sheepinator - it's totally up to you. You will always have some new way to destroy the hordes of enemies before you.

Speaking of hordes of enemies, let's clarify that a bit. We literally mean hordes of enemies. That's not as obvious in early levels, but as you progress through the game, soon you'll become aware that the enemies are coming in greater in numbers and becoming stronger. This is of course completely all right, because practically every game gets harder as you progress, but this leads us to another matter. The amount of sheer chaos on your screen will be so great, that in some moments you won't have any idea what's going on. You will fire, your comrades will fire, the enemies will fire, some of them will charge at you, boxes will explode, falling screws

lightly. One would expect that a primarily children's game should be a bit more relaxed, but that really isn't the case here. You'll have to repeat some segments and boss fights many times until you understand what's going on and what you need to do. And yes, to prevent him from being an unnoticeable sidekick, levels in which you control Clank will be more logical in nature. These levels can seriously strain your brain cells, and again, especially near the end of the game. Of course there are no unsolvable problems, but for a game whose target audience are mainly children, we think that the parents will have to jump in and help with some puzzles. Unless today's kids became super smart without us being aware of it.

As you visit different planets, you'll have the opportunity to see and gather something new on nearly each of them. The planets themselves are visually different from one another, so you'll travel through a dessert, snow, lava, tropical island, megalopolis, space station.... Maybe this is where we need to mention one complaint about the level architecture. The design is totally alright, but what can

“A HUGE AMOUNT OF GENERAL CHAOS ON THE SCREEN”

the mission you head right back to the ship. There are exceptions, but a general impression is that it really is a shame that the developers didn't open up this world a little bit more and gave us more freedom to explore.

During the exploration you'll collect cards that, once you gather 3 from the same set, provide nice benefits. For example, more screws for weapon upgrades, better drop rate for the cards themselves, etc. The cards are more of an homage to the old games, and you'll get to see various characters and gadgets from old games depicted on them, and these moments are where the game gets a bit nostalgic.

This whole beautiful, likeable, sometimes linear world has quite enough reasons for us to recommend it to everyone. These are after all Ratchet and Clank and you may have grown up playing their games so they're definitely worth a shot. And even if you don't know of these characters, you should definitely give them a chance. We think that they deserved it with this game and will justify your trust in return. The only condition is that you shut yourself away and immerse yourself in a space adventure led by a cute Lombax and his little robot friend.



GAME PROVIDED BY CD MEDIA



“HERE'S A TRUE FULL-BLOODED TRIPLE A SPACE ADVENTURE”

So, your Lombax will leave his workshop with just a wrench, and by the end he will be equipped with so much stuff that you'll barely know where to put it all. Gravity

will fly towards you. It will all look like general chaos and mess.

Moreover, the game shouldn't be taken

be really annoying is that all the planets, aka levels, are linear and there is very little exploration. The path mostly leads in one direction, and once you complete

PLATFORM:
Sony Playstation 4

PUBLISHED BY:
Sony Interactive Entertainment

PRICE:
60€

DEVELOPED BY:
Insomniac Games

TESTED ON:
PS4

RATING 8.5

- ✓ Design of planets
- ✓ Beautiful audio-visual experience
- ✓ Diverse gameplay

- ✗ Too chaotic at times
- ✗ Mostly linear levels



Author: Bojan Jovanović

REVIEW



The Banner Saga 2

OVER HILLS AND MOUNTAINS...



“A GAME THAT SOMETIMES FORCES YOU TO MAKE CRUEL DECISIONS”

The caravan made its way west through a snow-covered tundra. Travelling together were humans and horned giants – two people whose mutual enemy annihilated their families. We cannot stop, for Draugr are at our heels. We heard them growling in the woods, we had to push on. Frozen and hungry, we barely managed to reach the a warm valley clearing. But this is only the beginning of our journey, and our saga continues.

Two years ago, Banner Saga saw daylight through a successful Kickstarter campaign, a first game coming from studio Stoic. Conceived as a combination of the legendary Oregon Road, somewhat newer FTL and strategic elements of XCOM games, Banner Saga is a unique mix of turn-based strategy with resource management and hard decision making. The sequel, being the second game in the trilogy (yes, there will be a trilogy), is still completely leaning towards everything we've seen before, while only further refining the gameplay as we lead our Viking caravan onward down the river, over roads, and towards the western kingdom.

If played the first game, you'll remember that the battles weren't particularly interesting, even if they were numerous. Without a significant number of opponents and with the simple goal of killing everything that moves, they were the biggest criticism of the original game. Therefore, for the sequel studio Stoic prepared a whole host of new enemies and additional goals to meet during battles. For example, it might happen that all you need to do to win is kill the bandit leader, so if you

manage to do that not only will the combat end sooner, but you'll also potentially suffer fewer losses than if you had to kill every single enemy. The number of special attacks and character abilities was also significantly increased, so you'll be able to experiment more when choosing a team before battle.

In case you haven't played the original game, there's good news for you, because the game is newcomer-friendly. Firstly, you can catch up with the story through an animation that you can access from the main screen, and which allows you to see and hear all of the important events from the first game (so – spoilers!). Then, there are numerous tutorials that will slowly introduce you to all of the game's systems, from turn-based battles, to leveling your characters. For those who have finished the first game however, there's the option to load your final save and continue with all the consequences of your actions included, which might mean that you might be missing some characters, as well as some optional quests. Of course, you can skip that option if you want, and simply start from what the authors designed as the standard beginning of the game.

“YOU CAN LOAD THE SAVE GAME FROM THE FIRST GAME TO GENERATE A STARTING POINT”



However, this is not the kind of game that you'll play relaxed, slouching in your chair with one hand holding the mouse and the other a mug of your preferred beverage. Well, alright, you can do that, but you still won't be relaxed. Banner Saga is a difficult game that demands drastic, sometimes even cruel, decisions from the player – will you leave the part of the caravan containing old and injured people behind, or risk an ambush; will you sacrifice food to make room for everyone on the ship... Every decision has a direct effect on the game and your journey west. That is why it won't appeal to everyone, especially if you don't consider it “fun” to throw companions overboard and down a waterfall so that you can lighten the load on the ships and save yourselves from the current drawing you inexorably towards the abyss.

Audio-visually, the new Banner Saga is virtually unchanged compared to the previous game, because to be fair, there was no need to change such a beautiful art style. Everything you see on the screenshots is the same in the game, hand drawn and traditionally animated, and looking splendid in motion. It's even better when we consider that the hardware requirements are so low, it's almost at a “have PC, can play” level, which is very important for indie titles. Austin Wintory provided the music for this game as well, and it accentuates the game's atmosphere perfectly. If we had to have a technical remark, it might once more be the lack of voice acting for the numerous dialogues. And it shows, considering that you would spend a lot of time in dialogue options.

Just like its predecessor, The Banner Saga 2 is a game that will find its place on the computers of a specific audience that can

power through the punishing difficulty and random events which can annihilate the caravan. If you find yourself in this, then without a doubt – this is a game for you. You might not be able to bring the continuation of this Viking saga to its conclusion, but sometimes even the journey is enough.

RECOMMENDED PC CONFIGURATION:	
OS:	Windows 7
CPU:	Intel/AMD Dualcore
GPU:	DirectX 9
RAM:	4GB
HDD:	6GB



GAME PROVIDED BY STOIC

PLATFORM:	PC	DEVELOPED BY:	Stoic
PUBLISHED BY:	Versus Evil	TESTED ON:	PC
PRICE:	20€		

RATING

8

- More interesting battles
- The graphics are still beautiful
- Sadly, once again no voice acting during dialogues
- The difficulty will drive away a certain number of players
- Essentially, barely any innovation



Author: Vladimir Pantelić

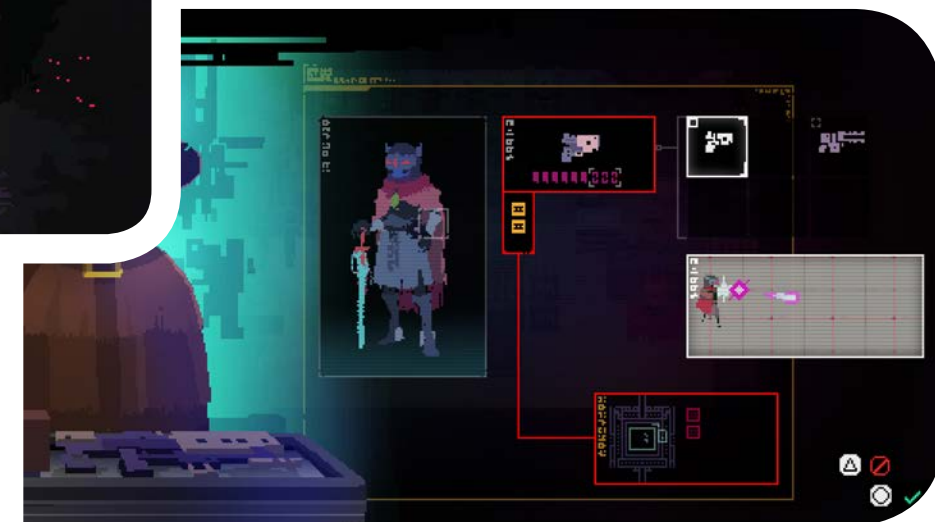
REVIEW

Hyper Light Drifter

Drifter, not so hyper



“THAT FAMILIAR FEELING OF ACCOMPLISHMENT BEING THE REWARD IN ITSELF IS ABSOLUTELY THERE”

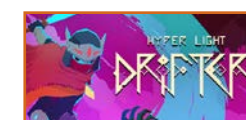


apart from a few of them that don't play fair, this segment of Drifter works rather well. Again, the influence of Dark Souls is obvious and most will recognize Pursuer and his moves while adventuring in the western part of the map. But the thing that shines the brightest and will offer you that pleasing sensation in which the rewards are needless and the only thing that matters is that you're still on your feet is definitely there. And that's what mostly drives you on.

If you're willing to ignore the flaws this title obviously has, and feel like playing something challenging, hard, frustrating at times, but with the well known Dark Souls feel and a rewarding aftertaste, there's no dilemma. It's only unfortunate that everything points to the fact that this could have been an amazing game if only a bit more time and attention was given to it. Who knows, maybe if a sequel comes out, Drifter might shine in its full glory.

RECOMMENDED PC CONFIGURATION:

OS: Windows 7
CPU: 1.2 GHz
RAM: 4 GB
GPU: 512 MB VRAM DirectX 10
HDD: 2GB



GAME PROVIDED BY HEART MACHINE

PLATFORMS:
PC, PS4, XONE, PS Vita, WiiU
PUBLISHED BY:
Heart Machine
PRICE:
20€

DEVELOPED BY:
Heart Machine
TESTED ON:
PC

RATING

6

- ✓ Interesting world to explore
- ✓ Specific graphic style
- ✗ Locked at 30fps and graphics glitches
- ✗ Confusing world with no explanations

Games that have the capacity to change the gaming industry in a certain way and leave a huge mark on their players, programmers and publishers only with their appearance, innovation and status are very rare indeed. These kinds of games appear perhaps a few times in a decade, but when you mention the “Dark Souls” phenomenon now, five years after it was published, it immediately becomes clear where the story goes.

We're witnessing a horde of titles which completely or in some segments, attempt to use a hallmark from a Souls game and attach a few epithets to them. Hyper Light Drifter isn't the first, and surely won't be the last title that got caught up in this trend - trying to get its own share of the spoils, and trying to have one big segment of it compared to the Souls saga. The only question now is how much they managed to succeed in this.

Hyper Light Drifter (or Drifter for short) is a 2D hack and slash game. There's an occasional RPG element in it, but Drifter is as much of an RPG as an average Batman or Assassin's Creed game. Therefore, expect a very action packed experience, if you decide to play it.

The first thing that catches the eye is a very specific visual appearance of the game. These days, pixel art has become a common occurrence, especially among indie publishers, and this game tries its hardest to be unique in this manner. It does so by building its atmosphere through a post-apocalyptic metallic-phosphorescent world, which sometimes looks fantastic, but at times looks very sloppily done. The visuals vary depending on where you are currently and whether you're looking at a landscape created with care or some random hallway with barely two details in it. The background music is solid (if you

like midi ambient music), although it can sometimes completely miss the theme and not fit the events on screen.

Drifter is an open world game in which, after the initial linear level, you can move from the central part of the map into your adventure, without guidelines or limitations, in any direction you like. During your journey you'll go through hordes of very difficult enemies, with checkpoints that are at times too far from each other, and at the end of each segment awaits the zone's boss for you to defeat. Sounds familiar? Well, it was about time we made a connection with the article's introduction. But that system is excellent for all players who like challenges and it's definitely better than the games that hold your hand and don't let you fall provide.

Speaking of falling, here is where you're going to fail... very often. The game is

very challenging and at times even too exhausting. Different things influence the difficulty and, sadly, the player has no control over many of those. First of all, the game is locked at 30 fps. For a game that accentuates reflexes and fast reaction, this is definitely not a positive thing. The difference between life and death is often measured in a millisecond and because of the engine's boundaries, your efforts will sometimes remain unrewarded.

The second, equally as important thing is tied to the gameplay itself - the sheer volume of pixelated objects on the screen you will bump into and get stuck. Obstacles of grass, boxes and various stuff (which we can't even name) will often give you a lot of trouble when moving around. That isn't so bad when you're exploring, but when you're in the middle of a frantic fight with a bunch of enemies, and slam into a flower on the ground, it stops being interesting and gets more and more frustrating over time.

Of course, once you manage to waddle to end of the segment, the mandatory boss fight awaits. And we have to admit,

“IT CAN SHINE IN COMBAT, ATMOSPHERE AND VISUAL PRESENTATION, BUT IT CAN ALSO FAIL IN THOSE SAME ASPECTS”



Author: Milan Živković

REVIEW

Salt and Sanctuary

A SOULS HERBARIUM

Many of you will know what transitioning from 2D to 3D did to some cult games. Successful recipes got smudged, precious ingredients spoiled... In one word, famous titles failed miserably just by following the latest trends and developments in technology. Why is that so? Many think it has to do with the fact that by changing the environment, i.e. the number of dimensions we see the game in, changes its focus. In other words, the focus of the originality and attraction of the game would become watered down beyond recognition. Now that this "tragic" time of "dimensional transition" is over and many developers have continued their old hits only through old 2D gameplay, aiming at nostalgia at the same time, here we have something completely different.

What happens when a 3D game is transitioned into a 2D environment? A complete disaster! As it turns out, not necessarily. Even if it's

not a genuine transition of a game from one environment to another, we have a game that undoubtedly draws inspiration from a few other titles, something that can't be ignored. The inspiration is in fact so obvious that it may be characterized as "creative theft", which isn't really that uncommon these days. On the contrary, if well executed, it becomes a method that is highly appreciated. Because, in the end, who cares who "borrowed" what from whom if the final product is amazing? That's right- no one.

Salt and Sanctuary is an almost perfect Souls Series double, transferred into a 2D environment and with the mechanics of games such as Metroid and Castlevania. There almost isn't an element in this game that won't remind you of games from these series. And since Souls games are hard to explain to someone who has never tried them, we'll leave lots of space for new players to explore this time. Therefore, we'll look into this title and

compare it to the Souls series and the so called Metroidvania video game subgenre.

In Salt and Sanctuary you'll have to cope with a true Souls tempo. This is a place where you don't want to rush things. Every step must be carefully measured, or you'll face a very quick death. The enemies lurk at every corner and they tend to surprise you when you least expect it. Once you balance out the tempo between what the game imposes and what suits you, you'll find that the game suddenly becomes much easier. You'll block the enemy attacks easier, dodge and even counter strike. Unlike Souls games, here you'll get to experience a much wider variety of combo hits, which will enable for a faster gameplay and somewhat more active combat. But death will still have its meaning. The chance that you may lose much if you make a wrong move and that you'll have to go through large segments all over again is still present in all its glory. But there are also many possibilities. If you choose to re-play the game a few times, you can be sure you'll never have the same experience. Choosing a class as well as the way you upgrade your character, even choosing which "order" you belong to, can influence the way

you're going to play the game a lot. Although the Order system isn't explained too well, which we have to admit can be bothersome, it's very broad and it represents an important part of the Salt and Sanctuary game.

Since the game is set in a "Metroidvania" environment, you can be sure that there are huge excellently designed labyrinthine levels waiting for you. The game's mechanics open up the possibility to access new locations by acquiring new moves, and it will still lure you to play on. The fact that the Souls games don't have a map, and we have large 2D levels alike Metroid and Castlevania, makes the lack of a map seem a bit unusual. But as soon as you get used to playing a mash up of all these games and genres, it's not going to bother you that much, but will make you want to reveal the whole puzzle. Not to mention that the same thing is present when it comes to the story, because you'll have to piece together the story based on scarcely scattered information and NPCs you encounter.

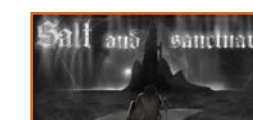
You may have noticed that we had barely any objections to the gameplay itself so. The only thing that can be highlighted as a minus

is a consequence from the lack of budget. The character and environment designs were chosen according to the minimalistic possibilities of the development team. Although the characters are on the brink of being simplistically-grotesque, we have to admit that the development team did an excellent job with so little visual resources. Probably the most beautifully designed are the enemies - especially the boss characters - who will make you hold tightly onto your controller, just like the ones from the Souls games. You're sure to notice all of the graphical lacks and flaws, but you won't be able to shake off the feeling that although not on an amazing level, everything still makes one fully functional whole that does its job.

The same goes regarding the music, which was also obviously limited by a small financial pool, and also does its job well enough. You'll often hear segments playing on repeat, and sometimes you won't hear any at all. But even if all of this was made in a way that its minimalism adds to the dreary atmosphere the game is trying to build, we must admit that it's a real shame that at least a bit more wasn't invested into the game.

Lastly, to sum it all up - we definitely recommend it. Even if at first you may be repulsed by the fact that this is a Souls clone transferred into a 2D environment, you'll soon discover not only the depth, but also the undoubtable genius of the gameplay. Salt and Sanctuary is a perfect example of how to transfer a game to a different dimension in a way that will compensate for all newfound shortcomings with brilliant improvements.

“THE GAME HAS A HIGH REPLAY VALUE, BECAUSE EVERY CLASS OFFERS A DIFFERENT APPROACH TO GAMEPLAY”



GAME PROVIDED BY SKA STUDIOS

PLATFORMS:
PS4, PS Vita, XONE

PUBLISHED BY:
Ska Studios

PRICE:
15€

DEVELOPED BY:
Ska Studios

TESTED ON:
PS4

RATING 8.5

- ✓ Hard, but fair
- ✓ Addictive combat system

- ✗ Lacklustre audio
- ✗ Modest visuals



Author: Bojan Jovanović

REVIEW



KILLER INSTINCT

ULTRA COMBO!

There's an internet meme many of you know, but many won't remember the fighting game from which it originated. The so-called Combo breaker shout, or more accurately "C-c-c-combo breaker!" was and still is the trade mark of Killer Instinct, one of the fiercest rivals of Mortal Kombat from the tail end of the previous century. Many years have passed and KI is back in style.

This year, the game entered its third season and with it came the PC edition that we tested. To be frank, this is the best time to start playing the game because many problems have been sorted out and the whole experience is much better. One of the most impressive things in the game is the choice characters, i.e. their variety. Every fighter has unique mechanics, from the list of moves to some specific attributes that influence the way that character is played. So some characters may have an additional scale for extra attacks, or don't have the ability to cancel stronger attacks, like Tusk.

There are many systems in KI, from the mentioned Combo breaker for which you have to "read", your opponent because otherwise you will open up for a beating in case you miss, to the complete logic behind the possibility of connecting moves into combos. And everything is explained down to the last detail in one of the best tutorials ever seen in a fighting game. Without exaggeration, if you complete the whole training in KI, you will learn everything about the game and begin to understand a lot of principles that the modern martial arts are based on. If you open the list of commands for the selected character you will even see a list of moves that start or end a combo.

You can actually play Killer Instinct for free on PC or Xbox One. That way, you're downloading the whole game and you'll have access to nearly all game modes, including the tutorial, as well as the online modes. The only limitation is the availability of characters - you have only one fighter you can play with, and that character changes every week. If you wish to permanently unlock a character, you'll need to spend 5€. Taking into consideration that the game has 22 characters (there will be a total of 25), the price of the complete package of 50€ is completely reasonable, and you'll also get a large number of cosmetics. The main inconvenience is that the game is loaded with cosmetic microtransactions even after purchasing your characters, while unlocking them takes too much time.

Screenshots really don't do Killer Instinct any justice, because the game should definitely be seen in motion when the smooth animation and amazing effects really shine. Every battle is a fireworks of special moves and sparks (yes, there are literally sparks from certain spells) and it's still transparent enough for you to see which moves to use to block your opponent or to see a move and do a combo breaker. The background music is a great addition to the atmosphere



"EVEN WITH ALL THE FIREWORKS DURING COMBAT, THERE ARE NO HICCUPS IN ONLINE FIGHTS"





“IMPRESSIVE DIVERSITY OF CHARACTERS”

and it's a mix of electronic music and heavy guitar riffs, which were provided by musicians such as Mick Gordon and Celldweller. The music intermingles with the game much more than just providing background noise to the combat (although it does that perfectly), and certain combos and finishers will change the theme according to the rhythm of events on screen. Much more important than the graphics is the netcode, i.e. is there any delay in multiplayer. The good news is that the online component works so well that in tens of hours of testing we may have noticed lag once or twice. The initial matchmaking could have been better though, but once you enter a league you'll face opponents of more or less similar skill and have more exciting matches.



as an Xbox One device simply wasn't recognized, while X360ce and similar applications didn't solve this problem. On the other hand the original Xbox 360 and Xbox One gamepads worked without a hitch and there's always the option of playing on the keyboard where you may freely remap the commands.

Just like its competitor Street Fighter V, Killer Instinct is a platform that will get many additions and patches over the next few months, but sports a powerful base suited for various player profiles. True, it's exclusiveness for Windows 10 makes it impossible for a certain part of the audience to enjoy the game, but it also allows for the whole ecosystem Microsoft has built around the game and playing the game for free with one character with no limitations. But, in case we didn't make it clear enough, we wholeheartedly recommend Killer Instinct to all fans of fighting games.

The only technical flaw is its limitation to Windows 10 and with that, the Windows Store. Just like the mentioned OS the game supports a very specific number of controllers and arcade joysticks, and for example, we had an issue with a Mad Catz fightstick which is declared



RECOMMENDED PC CONFIGURATION:
OS: Windows 10 64-bit
CPU: Intel Core i5-4670K
GPU: GeForce GTX 670 or Radeon HD 7950
RAM: 8GB
HDD: 30GB



PLATFORMS:
PC, XONE
PUBLISHED BY:
Microsoft Studios
PRICE:
50€

DEVELOPED BY:
Iron Galaxy
TESTED ON:
PC

RATING

8.5

- ✓ Every character is unique
- ✓ Excellent netcode and visual spectacle during the fights
- ✓ The game can essentially be trialled for free

- ✗ Bad controller support
- ✗ Microtransactions upon microtransactions

“YOU CAN PLAY KI COMPLETELY FREE, OR BUY INDIVIDUAL FIGHTERS”



Author: Igor Totić

REVIEW

Battlefleet Gothic: Armada

IN THE NAME OF THE EMPEROR AND GOOD GW LICENSES!

We haven't seen any interesting 40k games since Space Marine and Dawn of War games (we still haven't played Eternal Crusade). It's well known that Games Workshop, the people who created the 40k miniatures, have been handing out their license to everyone in an effort to collect on that sweet gaming cheddar. This time however, Tindalos Entertainment managed to perfectly translate the feel of Warhammer 40k universe into their game. From design, to voice acting, everything fits perfectly into fiction of Warhammer 40k. When the popular YouTuber AngryJoe visited the developers, they recited the whole prayer to the Emperor for him, showing that they

respect the universe, that they painted a miniature or two, and that they are gamers who want to properly represent 40k.

BGA is a real-time turn-based strategy. What? Yes, you read that right. The game plays out in two phases: the first one takes place in the galaxy segment, where you pick missions, upgrade your ships and monitor opponent's progress; and the second one in which you manoeuvre your ships in real time and send them forth into combat.

The plot is a classic 40k cliché, as it should be, and follows Abaddon as he mounts an invasion on the Gothic sector. Fans of the 40k universe will immediately recognize Abaddon's name and character, as the big bad of the universe. You take on the role of Admiral Spire who's assigned to defend the Gothic sector from the invasions of Xenos, Mutants, Heretics, and all of them together. Not a simple task.

You start the game on the map of the Gothic sector on which you can survey

“MODIFYING AND UPGRADING YOUR SHIPS IS BOTH DETAILED AND EXTENSIVE”

Love the Emperor for
He is the salvation of
mankind. Obey His words
for He will lead you into
the light of the future.
Heed His wisdom for He
will protect you from evil.
Whisper His prayers with
devotion, for they will
save your soul. Honor His
servants, for they speak
in His voice. Tremble
before His majesty, for we
all walk in His immortal
shadow. Burn the Heretic,
kill the Mutant, purge the
Unclean, in the name of
the God-Emperor.

“BGA IS A REAL-TIME TURN-BASED STRATEGY”

a host of planets and constellations that make up the sector. Each planet has different attributes and give you different benefits, like for example, cheaper ship construction, increased XP gain, upgrade discount, etc. It's important to note that you start out with all bonuses, but lose them one by one as planets succumb to invasions. The campaign takes you through primary and secondary missions and you gain points by winning and losing (yes, the game allows losses) which you spend on ship upgrades and building of new ones.

The second phase are the real-time battles themselves, and it's great! A battle takes place on a 2D plane and the developers commented that they didn't want to

include the 3rd dimension because that would overcomplicate the game. And by the Emperor, they were right. At the beginning of a battle you deploy your units on your starting line. There you can organize your ships into squadrons and formations in accordance with the goal pertaining to the mission you're on. When you're all set, press the "Ready" button and chaos ensues. Although the 2D map has nothing special to offer aside a few asteroids, mines and gassy sections to hide in, the battles are difficult, challenging and complicated. Your ships can have various abilities for maneuvering, range finding, special weapons, and other options that you have to use in combat if you are to win.

Parts of exploding ships will be flying everywhere, you'll see torpedoes gliding towards you and testing your reflexes to quickly change your ship's course and turn hard right to avoid certain destruction. You'll experience mutinies if a ship takes too much damage, so you'll have to execute the captain and replace him with a new one. Ships will assault one another in an attempt to board or teleport troops, and the Unreal engine captures it all in beautiful detail. Each ship is designed down to the last detail and true to the 40k universe. If we really had to nitpick, the only thing that can't be seen are the crews running around. Do note that these ships have crews of 30.000 members and more – and huge cruisers number in 100.000+ crew members, making it quite difficult to pull off.

During the campaign, you'll play as the Imperial Guard, which is one of the four factions available at the game's launch. More factions were announced to come

out as DLCs, and the first one will be the Space Marines. Along with the Imperials, in skirmish, custom and multiplayer modes, you can play as the Eldar, Chaos and Orks. The Eldar are space-elves whose ships are known for their fragility and strange designs, but have the ability to achieve great speeds and use "hit-and-run" tactics. The Orks are, well, orcs in space. Their ships are ramshackle contraptions pieced together out of scrap. Even the Orks themselves wonder how their ships manage to stay together. They feature low maneuverability, but high durability, which means they will usually charge forward using their prows to achieve victory. The Chaos Marines worship the gods of Chaos and their ships feature the four gods' "blessings". Each of them provides different benefits to the ship and changes its appearance accordingly. You'll get to see enough tentacles to last you a lifetime if you play this faction.

Modifying and upgrading your ships is both detailed and extensive. Each ship class (heavy/light cruiser, frigates, transports, etc.) has its armaments that you further modify with various perks. Along with the ship itself, you can also add special abilities, like bombs, boarding, etc. You can also upgrade the crew, i.e. the ship's officers. For example, if you upgrade the Commissar, there will be a lower chance of mutiny on that ship.

The voice acting sounds authentic and represents the 40k universe very well. The character cinematics are semi-animated comics, while full-engine cinematics are used for ships. The transition between the two types of cinematics somehow works beautifully and evokes both the story and the universe. Boring text pop-ups during

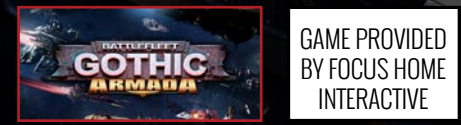
the missions will progress the story onward until you reach an important plot point, which somewhat hinders the tempo set at the beginning.

Initially, newcomers won't have a good time. People who have never played strategies will give up after the first mission. The game is difficult even on lower difficulties. The tutorial is bad. It tries to teach you all of the game's mechanics over a short period of time, and the difficulty curve is so bad that you'll already be confused during the first mission. Micromanagement is at the core of this game, so you'll have to take care of every ship that you brought on the mission. This is somewhat alleviated by slow-time mode which is enabled by pressing the spacebar, giving you a moment or two to gather your thoughts and think about how to proceed. The enemy AI is very smart and knows just when to retreat and when to attack. And this is weird, because the AI of your own ships is terrible. On more than one occasion we would order our ship to attack, only to have it continue drifting on through space. Tactical trajectories that your AI follows are useless, so you'll have to take care of each ship on the map. In the later missions that number can be quite significant. The maps are too empty. Even though the beautiful backdrop behind the 2D plane depicts other planets and systems, including the Eye of Terror, the black hole which spawns all Chaos, the game area is empty and offers few options for strategy outside of maneuvering.

BGA is an excellent strategy and an even better 40k game. Its difficulty will turn away newly intrigued players, but will

keep the fans of the universe, strategists and probably Dark Souls players. This game has seen the light of the Emperor and spreads His truth with honor and we hope that the other developers will start using the 40k license like Tindalos Entertainment did – the Emperor's chosen.

RECOMMENDED PC CONFIGURATION:
OS: Windows 7 64-bit
CPU: AMD FX-8350 X8 4.0 GHz
GPU: AMD Radeon R9 270X / NVIDIA GeForce GTX 760
RAM: 8GB
HDD: 10 GB



PLATFORM: PC	DEVELOPED BY: Tindalos Interactive
PUBLISHED BY: Focus Home Interactive	TESTED ON: PC
PRICE: 40€	

RATING

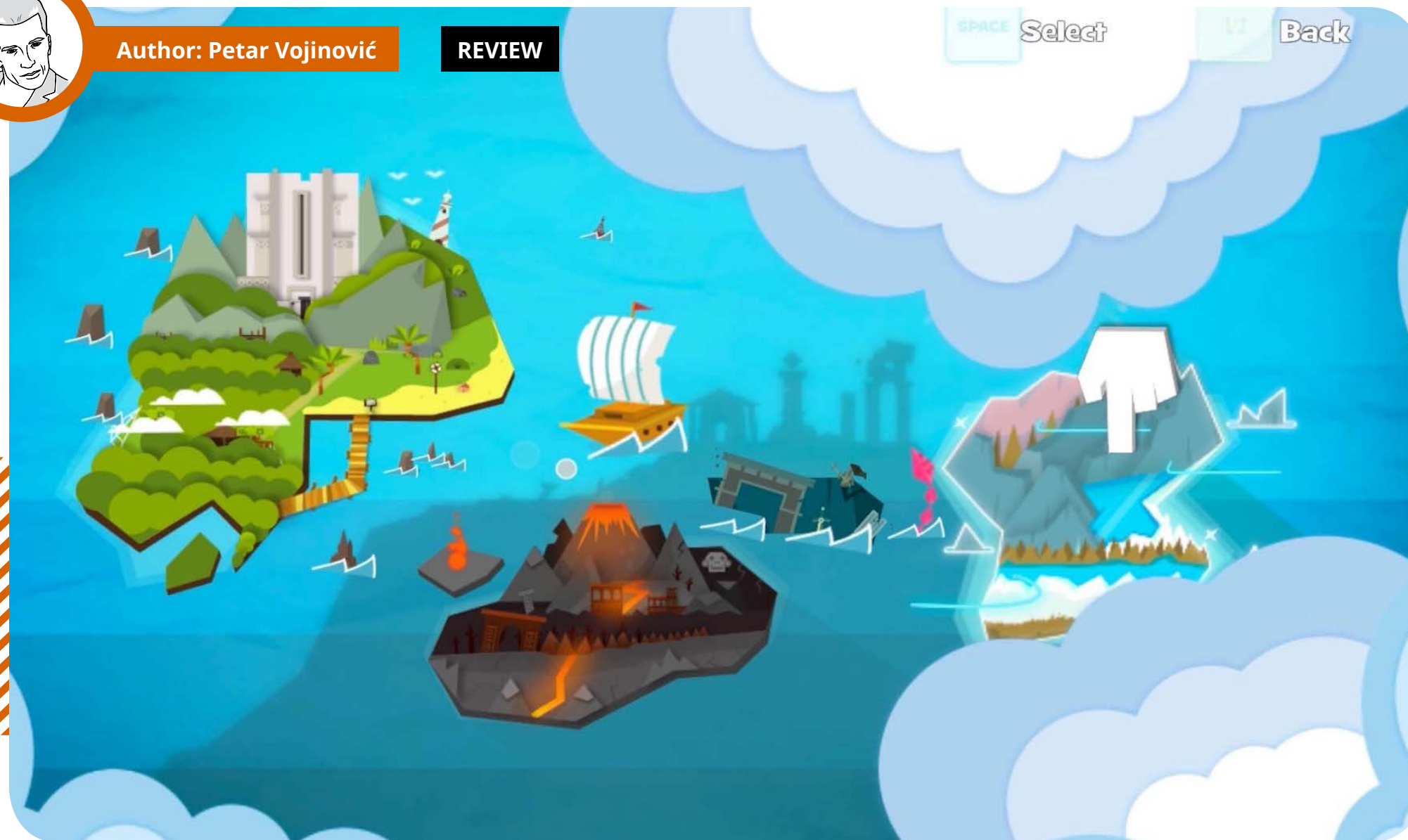
9

- ✓ Detailed ships
- ✓ An authentic Warhammer 40k universe
- ✓ Gameplay
- ✗ Difficulty
- ✗ Empty maps



Author: Petar Vojinović

REVIEW



“THE PROTAGONIST HAS THE ABILITY TO SHIFT INTO 3 FORMS”



morph into a square to break through the obstacle.

Everything said makes Flat Kingdom an exceptional platformer that sadly has two major flaws. No matter how good the platformer part is or how interesting the boss fights are, you'll spend the rest of the game killing generic enemies around the map. Every enemy has a certain shape (circle, triangle, square) and can be destroyed only if Flat is in appropriate form, i.e. the rock-paper-scissors principle. Still, everything boils down to slamming Flat into enemies or jumping on top of them, all of which becomes tedious after a while. The second, much bigger problem, are the horrendous controls if you decide to play Flat kingdom on a keyboard.

Simply, the game sometimes fails to recognize a button press, and that's glaringly obvious when it comes to double jumping, and you'll soon find yourself hitting the keys harder and harder like they were buttons on an old junky TV remote.

If Flat Kingdom was a steak Monte Carlo, the meat would be excellent and the rice would be overcooked. It's a pity that the guys from Fat Panda Games failed to pay more attention to

details, because those were what made the difference from their game becoming excellent, to being merely average.

RECOMMENDED PC CONFIGURATION:

OS: Windows 7
CPU: Intel/AMD 3GHz
GPU: 1GB VRAM
RAM: 6GB
HDD: 4GB



GAME PROVIDED BY GAMES STARTER

PLATFORM: PC
PUBLISHED BY: Games Starter
PRICE: 8€

DEVELOPED BY: Fat Panda Games
TESTED ON: PC

RATING

6

- ✓ Cute graphics
- ✓ Excellent „holy trinity“ system
- ✗ Terrible controls
- ✗ Fights become tedious after a while

Flat Kingdom

„Give me three shapes and two sizes“

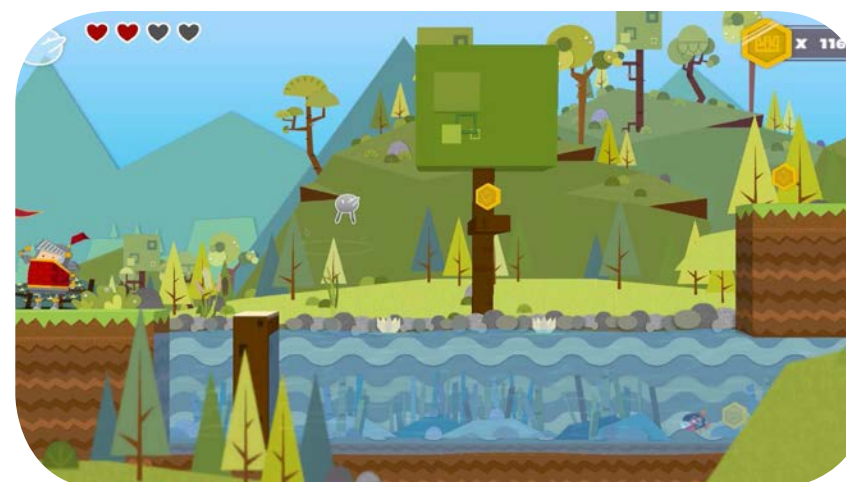
The Earth is flat! And when we say flat, we mean two-dimensional, and when we say Earth, we mean the world of the platformer game Flat Kingdom. This cute 2D “paper-craft” platformer comes from the company Fat Panda Games after a successful Steam Greenlight program, and draws inspiration from the games like Tearaway and Super Mario Brothers is obvious from the first screen and onward.

In Flat Kingdom, you take on the role of a two-dimensional character inventively named Flat, who comes to aid the king of Flat Kingdom whose daughter was kidnapped by a mysterious villain, who also took a magical artefact that causes the world to slowly become three-dimensional. Oh the shock, the horror! The game is divided into worlds in the style of Super Mario Brothers, and while progressing

through them you will slowly learn the story, meet new characters, kill bosses, and jump like crazy.

The most recognizable part of Flat Kingdom is the game's main protagonist. Namely, Flat has the ability to change into three different shapes according to the situation. The round form gives you the ability to double jump, while in the triangular form you can sprint like the Road Runner, of course accompanied with suitable animation of your tiny legs spinning like fans, and the square form will

slow you down immensely while giving you the ability to move objects and deflect arrows. What's especially interesting is that it's possible, and sometimes even mandatory, to combine the forms to circumvent certain obstacles. For example, Flat can make a running start as a triangle until he reaches the needed velocity, then turn circular for the double jump, and finally



“AN EXCEPTIONAL PLATFORMER THAT SADLY HAS TWO MAJOR FLAWS”



Author: Igor Totić

REVIEW

Posthuman Coalition
Heavy Destroyer



Ashes of the Singularity

A NOT SO SUPREME COMMANDER



I was more than a little excited for this title because I thought it's going to hit that nostalgia spot and bring back the good old days of Supreme Commander. The game was marketed as a DirectX12 game that will showcase all of the features of DirectX12. I was disappointed.

Ashes of the Singularity is set in year 2178 where humanity is at its peak and has decided to "boldly go where no man has gone before". At some point, their AI decided to rebel against them and now they're at war with each other. And that's it, that's the whole story. No imagination, no originality. The story is boring and is told through text that just pops up in the middle of a mission. For example, in one mission I was assigned to defend against waves of enemies. Noticing that I didn't do the best

job of organizing my defenses, I had to react quickly and invest into stationary cannons. At that exact moment, a pop-up window appears to show me the story, taking control of the game away from me until I read it, but without pausing the game. And that's how I found myself reading about how I should be building anti-air cannons, which were already being built, while watching waves upon waves of enemies slicing through my base like hot knife through butter. A few missions had goals and stories that were so boring, that I found myself fighting sleep instead of enemies. Map textures are generic and uninteresting, even though the game was advertised as a pilot for DirectX12. The units are stale and visually barely discernible from one another. When you select them, they respond with impersonal robotic sounds, making you care little for them and

sending them to die comes easier for it – in fact, the game tells you to do so a couple of times. The whole campaign is actually a tutorial for multiplayer and skirmish modes.

Ashes of the Singularity is an RTS that wants to be played mostly through strategic moves and economy (macro), rather than careful unit maneuvers (micro). Essentially, I grinded out units and then sent them in my enemy's general direction. The game supports a huge number of units on screen, and some battles turned into rave parties because nothing could be seen from all the lasers. Big clusters of units can be turned into "armies" and as you make new units they get automatically added to it. But, there's also the good old option for grouping as well. Armies are only as fast as their slowest unit, which means that you'll have to take care how you organize your units for maximum efficiency.

The choice of buildings is fairly standard, and includes Factory, Armory, and all of the others that serve to produce your army. However, three buildings do stand out, including two that sent nano-robots to repair your units, or destroy the enemy's, and the Orbital Fabricator, which allows

you to upgrade units, as well as teleport reinforcements from Earth directly into combat. You do that using a special resource called Quantum, which generates during the game. Along with Quantum, you'll have to collect metal and radioactive matter from special points on the map on which you'll first need to build specialized borers.

The bright spot of the game are skirmish and multiplayer modes. In them, you'll have to use everything that you've learned from the campaign's 11 agonizing missions to survive. The AI is ruthless, and I can't discern if it's cheating or is just so well programmed. It ambushed me, flanked me, waited for me to act first, and analyzed. I've "rage quit" more

than once, when after 10 minutes the AI has 200 units and I'm still building up (git gud!). But the satisfaction after winning a battle is almost as immense as beating a boss in Dark Souls.

I recommend Ashes of the Singularity only to players who want something nostalgic and difficult, while I advise the rest to save their money. The game offers nothing new, nothing different from what we've seen from other similar RTS games. There was a lot of hype during the development of this game, only for it to drop rapidly with its release.

RECOMMENDED PC CONFIGURATION:

OS: Windows 7 64-bit
CPU: Quad-Core Intel or AMD
GPU: GeForce GTX 660 or AMD R7 360
RAM: 6 GB
HDD: 13 GB



GAME PROVIDED
BY STARDOCK

PLATFORM:
PC
PUBLISHED BY:
Stardock
PRICE:
50€

DEVELOPED BY:
Stardock
TESTED ON:
PC

RATING

5

- ✓ AI
- ✓ Skirmish
- ✗ Campaign
- ✗ Boring design

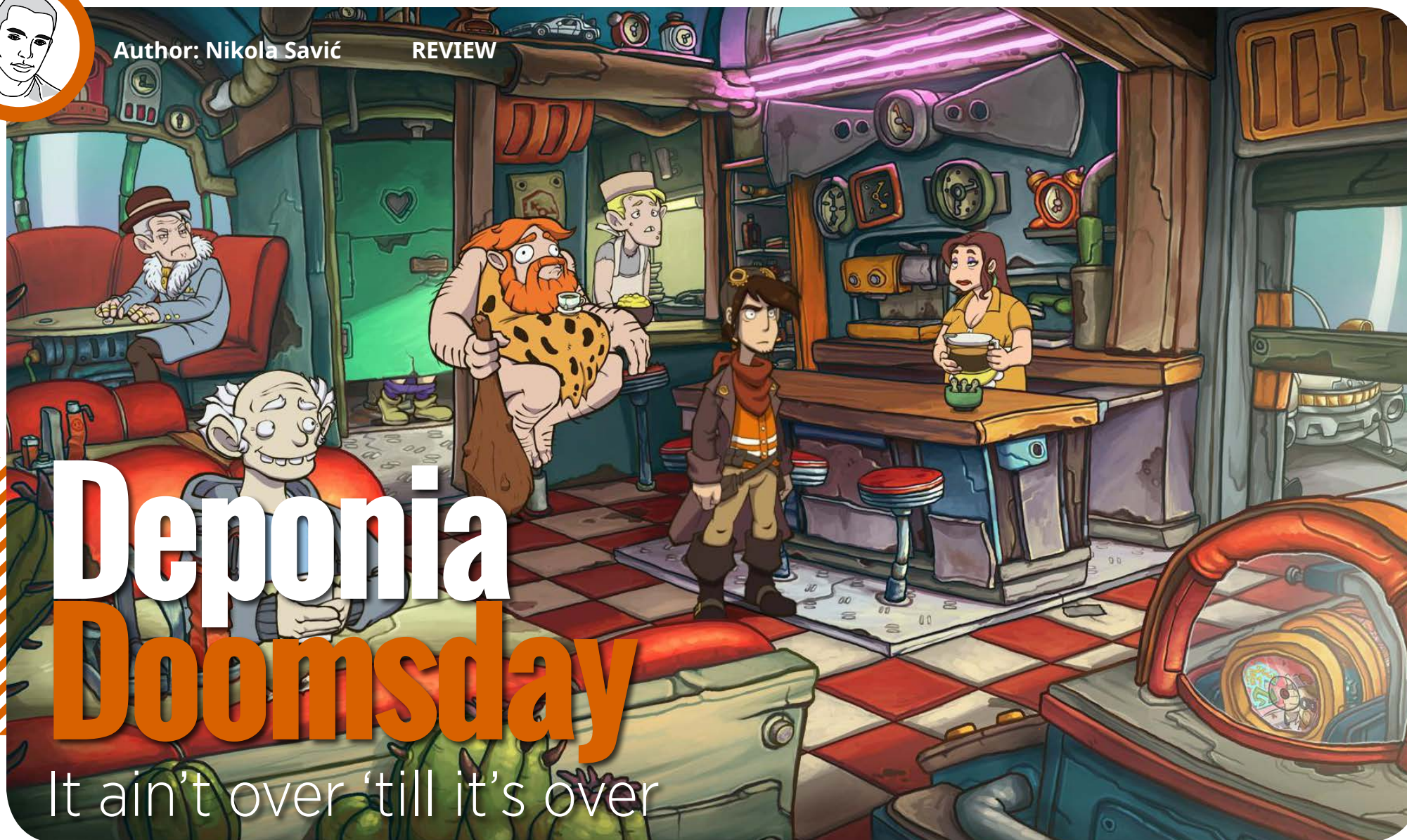
"THE SATISFACTION AFTER WINNING A BATTLE IS ALMOST AS IMMENSE AS BEATING A BOSS IN DARK SOULS"

"THE PLOT IS BORING"



Author: Nikola Savić

REVIEW



Deponia Doomsday

It ain't over 'till it's over

Rufus, you rude, selfish rascal, how I missed you! We think that in the history of video games there never was a main character that you cared so much for, but that also annoyed you with his selfishness, stupid catchphrases and moronic ideas. There may have been a few of course, but none like Rufus!

If you're unsure which Rufus we're talking about, he is the main character of a point and click series of adventures called Deponia, coming to us from Daedalic Entertainment, legendary Germans who gave new life to this somewhat forgotten genre. Deponia first appeared in early 2012, and was then followed with sequels Chaos on Deponia and Goodbye Deponia.

It seemed that the story was complete, and that the trilogy became a part of history, slated for the video game hall of fame. Then all of a sudden, the fourth part of the game was published, called Deponia Doomsday.

Did developers from Daedalic Entertainment miss Rufus and the gang, or they missed the greens that the series brought, we can only guess, but in any case the result is that this March we can dive into the world of Deponia for the fourth time. First of all, anyone who hasn't played the previous games should immediately play through the first 3 titles before even thinking of playing Doomsday, because otherwise you simply won't understand anything, even some of the details in this article.

After (big spoiler!) Goodbye Deponia ended with Rufus, the biggest selfish bastard, saving others by sacrificing himself, it seemed that the saga of Rufus came to an end. Rufus was gone, and Deponia was saved. However, in Doomsday, Rufus wakes up to find that all of it was a dream (yes, all 3 games), and that he is still in Deponia, trying to figure out the way to come to Elysium. This kind of introduction left us the impression of lazy writing for the sake of a franchise reboot, but it is what it is. However, the thing where the writing really hit the right chord was the absolutely superb witticism of Rufus and the gang - it's rare for a game to make me laugh out loud as much as the Deponia series does. You all know what they say about German humor - there isn't any. Then imagine the quality of it in Deponia when the Germans were able to "hit" godlike moments like this. Cynicism, irony and mutual bickering are off the charts. Even if we ignored everything else, I would be glad for the revival of the series just for this.

The gameplay is standard, just like in previous titles, and classic for P&C adventures. It seems that there are plenty of new elements, and some puzzles and problems that are "global" and amazingly designed, and they bring innovations and changes to the way the puzzles are solved. In the first part of the game, the whole confusion with time travel in order to solve



the puzzles is great, and it requires planning of actions so as not to go around in circles. The thing that's wrong with the gameplay are some illogical puzzles and forced, meaningless tasks, but we can attribute that to the whole world of Deponia, which is totally freakish (literally a huge landfill), just like its inhabitants.

Visually, the game is in exactly the same style as the previous titles of the series, locations are still perfectly designed and diverse; the creativity is still there, and the game really reminds us of some cartoons from the 80s that we loved as kids. Music in the game is a bit recycled from previous parts, but there are also some new compositions. The dude with the guitar that sings to us in the cutscenes is still there, and his tunes are still "catchy", singable and silly. The voices performances of all characters are given by the old crew of actors and are once again top notch, bringing those above mentioned great comic scenes and dialogues to life.

Deponia Doomsday is a mandatory title for all fans of the Deponia series; the game is still beautiful, entertaining and funny, and you'll enjoy it just like the previous parts. The only question is: was there a need for a new installment of the game? One

story was completed and told, why engage in necromancy and artificially extend the franchise now?

RECOMMENDED PC CONFIGURATION:	
OS:	Win 7
CPU:	2.6 GHz Dual Core
GPU:	ATI Radeon HD 4500, Geforce 9400 GT
RAM:	3 GB
HDD:	3.5 GB



GAME PROVIDED BY DAEDALIC ENTERTAINMENT

PLATFORM: PC	DEVELOPED BY: Daedalic Entertainment
PUBLISHED BY: Daedalic Entertainment	TESTED ON: PC
PRICE: 30€	
RATING	
8	
<div> <div>✓</div> Rufus is back! </div> <div> <div>✓</div> Humor is still top notch </div> <div> <div>✗</div> Was a reboot really necessary? </div>	

"THE GAME IS STILL BEAUTIFUL, FUN AND HILLARIOUS, AND YOU'LL ENJOY IT JUST AS MUCH AS THE PREVIOUS ONES"



Author: Senad Matić Karić

REVIEW

“ONE OF THOSE GAMES THAT ARE EASY TO LEARN, BUT HARD TO MASTER”

Battlezone 98 Redux

We'll be honest with you: we liked this game's graphics better when it originally came out 18 years ago. The Redux version is too bright and colorful, as if it were set in a film studio (hi there conspiracy theory), instead of on barely lit regions of the Moon, Venus, Mars and other planets, while the original had a dark and foreboding look. You know, making the ships and buildings glow like Christmas trees isn't exactly energy efficient, nor is it stealthy. Anyway, the gameplay is untouched, and that's all that matters here.

Battlezone 98 Redux is an HD graphics upgrade of the classic from 1998, which was quite an intriguing gem at the time that brought a unique combination of FPS and RTS gameplay. You pilot heavily armed hover-tanks, shoot at anything that moves and doesn't wear your side's colors, while simultaneously using a simple first person command interface

to order friendly units to follow you and to deploy in a certain location, as well as to order the production of additional units if you have enough resources. Truly awesome stuff, especially because piloting the vehicles is an experience you'll never get bored of due to truly advanced hover physics which simulate inertia and realistic movement over bumpy surfaces. Bear in mind that the enemy units usually don't stand in one place while you're trying to blow them up, and you can imagine how tough it can be to actually play this and successfully complete missions as opposed to looking like a disoriented armadillo.

To top it off, you can easily spend all of your ammo if you attempt to spray rockets at enemies, leaving yourself at their mercy and standing there like a sitting duck. Yeah, it's old school. And yeah, we like it. At least you can't run out of fuel.

In other words, it's an “easy to learn, hard to master” type of game.

Battlezone is based on the neat idea of United States and Soviet Union duking it out in space far from Earth's green fields and lively cities, without bothering normal people with their superpower crap. American Space Defense forces are on the Moon, defending the democracy as usual and collecting the resource called bio-metal, used for the production of advanced weapons and technology. Unfortunately for them, they quickly discover that the space is not as empty as they first thought – Team Red is also there and is ready to rock. Those pesky Russians never give up, do they? Thankfully (or not, depending on your view of world politics), there's also a Soviet campaign, where you aim to destabilize the American establishment in space through ambushes and sudden invasions of their bases.

What saves this plot from being bland is the discovery of alien technology by both sides. Without spoiling anything, it's not a huge mystery on the level of Nexus: The Jupiter

Incident or Freespace, but it's still a nice touch to an otherwise overdone Cold War concept.

While the American campaign is more or less an extensive tutorial that gradually introduces you to various gameplay mechanics, building types and strategies, the Soviet campaign is an all-out affair. You can use all buildings from the start and build a huge army, so unless you've gotten familiar with every available technology and quickly issuing commands to your units, you won't want to jump into this campaign first.

The Recycler is the main building that enables you to build scavengers to collect bio-metal, basic defenses in the form of turrets and more advanced buildings such as Factories and Armories. The first thing you want to do in any mission is send a few scavengers and set up turret defenses around your Recycler. If you want to repel a large force, you'll also need several tanks circling around the Recycler and other key structures. You can assign your units to follow or defend other units so, for example, you don't have to be there to escort the

Recycler if you decide to move it to a different location.

During the attack on a particularly big enemy base, it's not unusual for your whole attacking force to run out of ammunition. In that case, you either need to quickly get back to your base to replenish your ammo before someone mops you up, or order your armory to launch equipment to your location and sit tight until it arrives. You can even order one of the tanks to pick you up if your vehicle gets destroyed so you don't have to reload the game or, god forbid, walk all the way back to your base. And if you need to take out strong enemy defenses, build a howitzer – that thing is very effective at destroying tough buildings from a huge distance. Things get especially exciting after you lay your hands on the constructor unit, since it enables you to build power plants and highly advanced buildings for automatic repair of your units and ammo replenishment.

All in all, Battlezone 98 is the tactical gaming equivalent of red velvet cheesecake.

Of course, multiplayer mode of a game like this can't be anything but absolutely fantastic, with a choice of Deathmatch for a quick shoot-out and Strategy mode, in which you build bases and armies just like in singleplayer. The Redux version also introduces better mod support through the built-in map editor and Steam Workshop integration. It will be interesting

to see whether this will eventually lead to Battlezone 3 – you know, the game everyone was waiting for instead of this Redux.

Sadly, the developer Big Boat Interactive missed an opportunity to polish the AI and completely rethink certain units (the walker looks ridiculous and is of questionable use). Although you can fly over the ridges, your units are unable to follow you, going the longer way instead and risking an encounter with enemy units. This way, you can't count on them to accompany you if you decide to mount a surprise attack on an enemy base by taking a shortcut into an undefended area.

It's a fun and deep game for sure, but it's hard to recommend if you've played the original. The upgrade simply isn't advanced enough (for example, it would be fun to have underground bases in the style of Hellbender), while the AI occasionally behaves like a drunken sailor.

RECOMMENDED PC CONFIGURATION:

OS: Windows 7
CPU: Intel Core i5
GPU: GeForce 4xx or Radeon HD 7750
RAM: 4GB
HDD: 3GB



GAME PROVIDED BY REBELLION

PLATFORM: PC
DEVELOPED BY: Big Boat Interactive
PUBLISHED BY: Rebellion
TESTED ON: PC
PRICE: 20€

RATING

7

- ✓ Classic gameplay that never gets old
- ✓ Vehicle models and hover physics
- ✓ Split campaign, multiplayer
- ✗ Lazy graphics upgrade
- ✗ AI problems

“HD GRAPHIC UPGRADE TO THE 1998 CLASSIC”



Author: Dejan Stojilović

REVIEW



“WHAT GOETHIA DOES WELL IS GIVING YOU THAT FEELING OF REWARD ONCE YOU SOLVE A PUZZLE”

Goetia

A breath of fresh adventurous air

Probably every one of us lamented over the dreary faith of P&C adventures, what happened and how this once popular game genre ended up where it is now, nearly forgotten with only a few more or less successful releases that are barely enough to satisfy the appetites of the genre's fans.

This is somewhat of the developers' fault as well, because at some point p&c games turned into “pixel hunting”, or solving someone's “somnambular quirks” that don't really have much in common with logic and that in turn has made players combine random objects in an attempt to find a certain combination and somehow finish what they started... But let's get back to Goetia...

Since the very first image one thing is absolutely clear – Goetia's beauty is captivating; each step will enchant you like a bite of the highest quality caviar and will pull you into its gorgeous world, and when you add more than appropriate and excellent background music to that - before you even notice you'll realize that you've spent hours wandering around the small place in which the game plays out.

Goetia puts you in the role of little Abigail Blackwood, who left this world too soon, but she doesn't know how that happened. She wakes up one night, but in a

disembodied state - as a ghost - with a desire to find out how she lost her life and who's to blame. She soon finds out that something bad happened to the rest of her family as well and throughout the game you'll try to find out what secrets and dark intrigues does the Blackwood house hold.



The story progression, and the game progression as well, will depend on solving puzzles that unlock new locations which you can visit. What Goetia does well is giving you that feeling of reward once you solve one of the puzzles, and that feeling will grow as you progress through the game, because the puzzle difficulty increases as you progress and in the last third of the game you'll run into a few very challenging ones that require quite a bit of brain exercise. The puzzles will be a real challenge and most of them will require you to carefully read documents you collect as you float through the game.

We should mention that the creators put in a lot of effort when it comes to the written material because there is a pile of ripped journals, coded messages, and letters between family members in the game that really add to the atmosphere and give insight to what happened after our protagonist passed away. Of course there's a personal journal, a codex of sorts that's used to keep track of unsolved puzzles and their locations. As Abigail is a ghost, she interacts with objects by “possessing” them to do a certain action.

Now, not to rain on anyone's parade, but we have to point out some of the game creator's omissions. The large amount of material, for the sake of better immersion, is in handwritten English alphabet which can often be hard to read, and there's no way to see a more modern version of the text by pressing a command. There is also no voice acting which adds to the difficulty of the whole situation.

The decision to remove any kind of a “hint” system makes Goetia really cruel to beginners and inexperienced players that may at some point give up on the game entirely. The awkward map that sometimes causes more confusion than help, no inventory (although this is a logical decision because of the state our main character is in) can also be very inconvenient in case you forget the location of some little thing that you might need and the map is of no use, so brace yourself for a bit of roaming.

Goetia is a pleasant refreshment and a high quality title that can be rated as a “must buy” for p&c game lovers. The atmosphere, a nice challenge, a story that is truly attention grabbing, with the lovely graphics, and various locations, but with a few flaws - all guarantee supreme enjoyment and fun.



RECOMMENDED PC CONFIGURATION:

OS: Windows 8
CPU: intel core i5-4440 or AMD FX 6300
GPU: Nvidia GeForce GT 740 or AMD Radeon R7 250
RAM: 4 GB
HDD: 7 GB



GAME PROVIDED BY SQUARE ENIX

PLATFORM:
PC

PUBLISHED BY:
Square Enix

PRICE:
15€

DEVELOPED BY:
Sushee

TESTED ON:
PC

RATING **8.5**

- ✓ Beautiful graphics
- ✓ Excellent background music
- ✓ Interesting story
- ✗ The lack of an inventory
- ✗ Terrible map

“SINCE THE VERY FIRST IMAGE ONE THING IS ABSOLUTELY CLEAR - GOETIA'S BEAUTY IS CAPTIVATING”

play

z i n e

