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Issue 18 | August 2008

P3zine

Free Magazine For PlayStation 3 Gamers. *Read it, Print it, Send it to your mates...*

PLUS!
E3 SPECIAL REPORT
Every new PS3 title unveiled

SOUL ALBUR IV

The definitive review inside!

PREVIEWED!

REVIEWED!

PREVIEWED!

PREVIEWED!



Resistance 2



Motorstorm 2



WWE Legends of WrestleMania



SIREN: BLOOD CURSE
The best horror game on PS3

CONTROL →





Welcome to P3Zine



Following last month's E3 there's a slew of news and previews in this month's issue. Don't miss the latest on Resistance 2 and be sure to check out the Top 10 announcements from Sony as we saw it.

We also have two fantastic new titles up for review this issue. First up comes Soul Calibur IV - without doubt a must-buy beat-'em-up if you're a fan of the genre. And more immediately there's the release of Siren: Blood Curse. At less than twenty quid and available for download as you read this it's a no-brainer for horror junkies.

Enjoy the issue...

Dan Hutchinson, Editor
p3zine@gamerzines.com

MAGAZINE FEEDBACK!
Click here to tell us what you think of the magazine

MEET THE TEAM

There's nowt they don't know about PlayStation



Ian Morris
In the ring with Wrestlemania



Steve Hill
Recovering from Resistance 2



Chris Schilling
Getting his breath back from Soul Calibur IV

DON'T MISS!

This month's highlights...

The latest & greatest titles on PS3



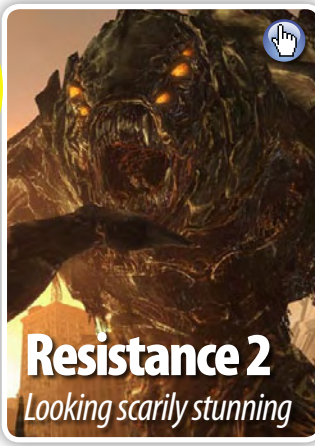
Soul Calibur IV
Awesome new beat-'em-up reviewed!



Motorstorm: Pacific Rift
Sony's new buggie-fest previewed



Siren: Blood Curse
Horror of horrors! Download it today...



Resistance 2
Looking scarily stunning

QUICK FINDER

Every game's just a click away

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Ratchet and Clank | Resident Evil 5 |
| Future: Quest for | MAG |
| Booty | Rock Band 2 |
| Legends of | Resistance 2 |
| Wrestlemania | Motorstorm: |
| God of War 3 | Pacific Rift |
| Gran Turismo 5 | Rise of the Argonauts |
| LittleBigPlanet | Soul Calibur IV |
| DC Universe Online | Siren: Blood Curse |

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We recommend you close and re-open the magazine and select "Play" when asked about the multimedia to enjoy the magazine as intended.



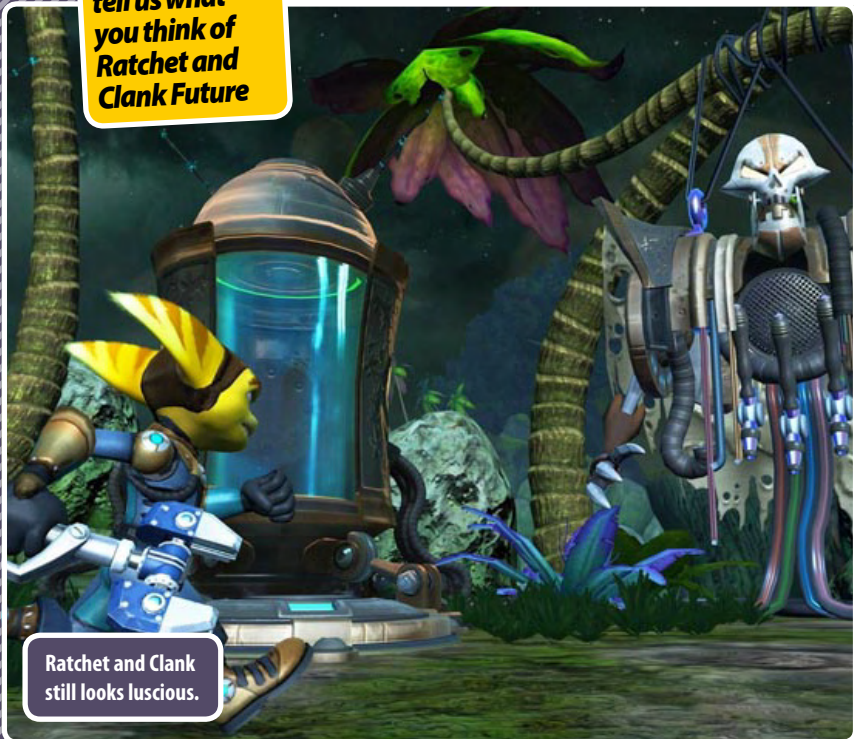


Publisher: SCEE
Developer: Insomniac
Heritage: Resistance, Ratchet and Clank
Link: www.insomniacgames.com
ETA: Winter



More Ratchet and Clank action for a budget price can't be a bad thing.

PREVIEW FEEDBACK!
Click here to tell us what you think of Ratchet and Clank Future



Ratchet and Clank still looks luscious.

"This is a downloadable expansion pack that's set to contain four levels, offering 3-4 hours of gameplay"



New gameplay mechanics seek to stretch the Ratchet experience even further.

FIRST LOOK

Ratchet and Clank Future: Quest for Booty

The Dynamic Duo are back again

What is it?

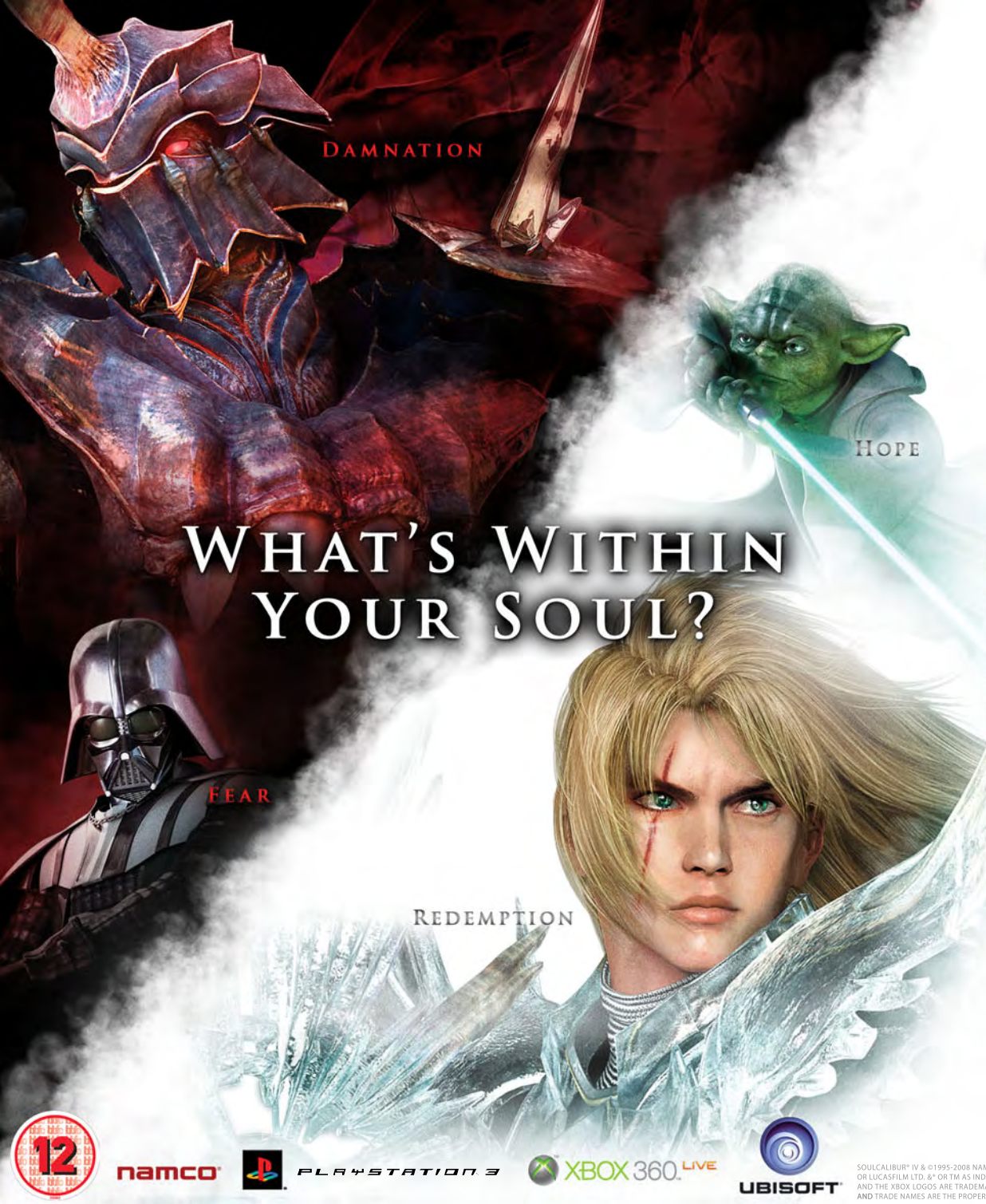
This one really caught us off guard. It's not a fully fledged sequel to Ratchet and Clank, but rather, it's a downloadable expansion pack that's set to contain four levels, offering 3-4 hours of gameplay, for the bargain price of \$14.99 (£7.50).

Will three hours of gameplay be worth it?

There's no denying that squeezing a Ratchet and Clank game into three hours will be a massive challenge, but from what we've seen, Quest for Booty isn't making many sacrifices. The same quality of level design, graphics, story, and most importantly, humour are all still present here – if you were to compare it to a shop-bought game, you'd be hard pushed to tell the difference.

When can we expect more?

Ratchet and Clank Future: Quest for Booty is set for a release sometime towards December, but there's still no firm release date. It's also been confirmed that a version will be following on Blu-ray, for those of you who enjoy their games in a more material form.



DAMNATION

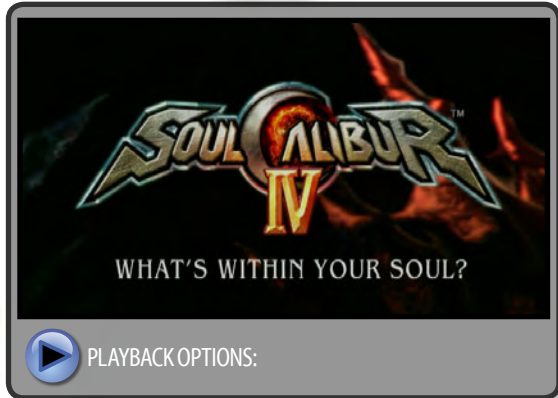
HOPE

FEAR

REDEMPTION

WHAT'S WITHIN YOUR SOUL?

SOUL CALIBUR IV



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PLAYSTATION 3



XBOX 360 LIVE



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Publisher: THQ
Developer: Yuke's
Heritage: WWE
 SmackDown, Rumble Roses
Link: www.legends
 ofwrestlemania.com
ETA: March 2009

PREVIEW FEEDBACK!
 Click here to tell us what you think of Legends of Wrestlemania



You can feel the Hulkmania running wild.



"Letting you play as any number of wrestling legends, this is a real blast from the past"

Immortal wrestling moments, preserved in videogame form.

Legends of Wrestlemania



It's the immovable object, meeting the unstoppable force...

Another new WWE game?

Stay calm wrestling fans, and don't try to adjust your screens, as what you're seeing is true – years after combining the Day of Reckoning, Raw, and SmackDown series into one game, THQ have lifted the veil on a new game, called Legends of Wrestlemania. Letting you play as any number of wrestling legends, this is a real blast from the past.

What are we going to be doing?

Apparently, the main mode of the game is the Wrestlemania Tour mode, which sounds like it's going to be a series of historical matches from Wrestlemanias past, set up with archive footage from the events themselves. With a roster of over 40 superstars and managers, plus the ability to create your own Legend, and online play, Legends is shaping up to be a fully fledged grappling experience.

When do we get to see more?

Cunningly, the game's currently scheduled for a March 2009 release – the same time that Wrestlemania 25's going to be taking place, but we wouldn't be surprised if there were at least some sort of footage on the SmackDown disc, too.

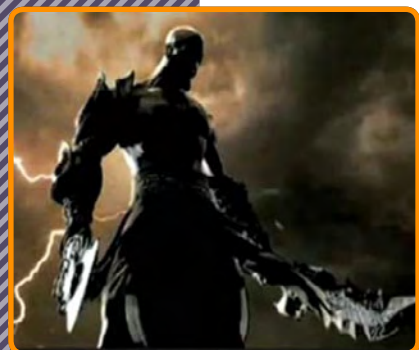


It looks a lot better than those Legends of Wrestling games, we can say that much.



INCOMING

Another magnificent seven riding in...



God of War 3

Publisher: SCE | **ETA:** Late 2009

Unveiled in FMV form, complete with an incredibly cheesy voiceover, Sony confirmed at the E3 show that God of War 3 will be making it's way to a PS3 – no real surprises there, then. The downside? We've got to wait until 'Late 2009' to get our hands on it, and we've seen nothing of the actual game as yet.

Gran Turismo 5

Publisher: SCEE | **ETA:** 2010

Yep, you read that ETA right, as according to an interview with Polyphony head honcho, Kazunori Yamauchi, the man himself has revealed that GT5 may not be released until 2010. In the meantime, we'll have to make do with a hefty update to Prologue, that's meant to be hitting the PSN soon.



Little Big Planet

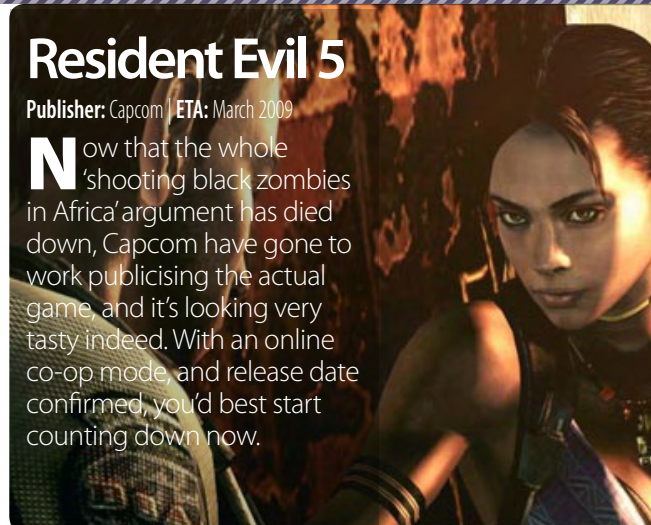
Publisher: SCEE | **ETA:** October 2008

Brilliantly, Sony chose to use Little Big Planet to present their boring sales figures to the world. Also, it was announced that the general public will be able to charge real money for content in the game, with the possibility of becoming a LBP millionaire.

DC Universe Online

Publisher: Sony Online Entertainment | **ETA:** TBA

Helmed by comic book legend Jim Lee, who's worked as an artist on several of the biggest comic books, DC Universe Online is a new game for PS3 from SOE. Letting you make a superhero, this is a bit like City of Heroes, but with a license. We're expecting it to be great, then.



Resident Evil 5

Publisher: Capcom | **ETA:** March 2009

Now that the whole 'shooting black zombies in Africa' argument has died down, Capcom have gone to work publicising the actual game, and it's looking very tasty indeed. With an online co-op mode, and release date confirmed, you'd best start counting down now.

MAG

Publisher: SCEE | **ETA:** 2009

Massive Action Game (or MAG to its many friends) is exactly what it says on the tin – a huge, online game with massive potential. Letting up to a staggering 256 players wage war across an online battlefield, this could be a big hit for Sony.



Rock Band 2

Publisher: EA | **ETA:** 2008

Oh yeah, this is just what we needed. Even though we've yet to see the PS3 version on these fair shores, Harmonix have announced a sequel's coming this year, with great songs, including Spoonman – Soundgarden, Ace of Spades – Motorhead, and Alive – Pearl Jam.



IN THE PIPELINE	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	SPRING
	BROTHERS IN ARMS PAIN AMUSEMENT PARK	LEGO BATMAN SAINTS ROW 2	SMACKDOWN 2009 SACRED 2	ALPHA PROTOCOL ETA: March LEGENDS OF WRESTLEMANIA ETA: March

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THE OFFICIAL VIDEOGAME

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SUPERBIKE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP



PC DVD

XBOX 360



PlayStation 2



PLAYSTATION 3

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CONTROL →



RESISTANCE 2

Publisher: SCEE
Developer: Insomniac
Heritage: Ratchet and Clank, Resistance
Link: www.projectabraham.com
ETA: November

PREVIEW FEEDBACK!
Click here to tell us what you think of Resistance 2

Resistance 2

The Brumak doesn't look so bad now

Deep breath... "OMGNOOB WTFBBQ! HOW BIG IS THAT THING!" This is a semi-accurate transcript of the first thought that went through our head upon seeing the latest gameplay of Resistance 2. You find yourself standing on the top of a huge tower block in the middle of an unknown American city. The first thing that strikes you is the view – with the sun setting, you can see for miles into the distance, and everything looks lovely, even the glass windows, which now reflect everything accurately. The second thing that strikes you is the palm of the Leviathan, plucking you from the ground like a peanut from a

bag, presumably as your legs flail helplessly below.

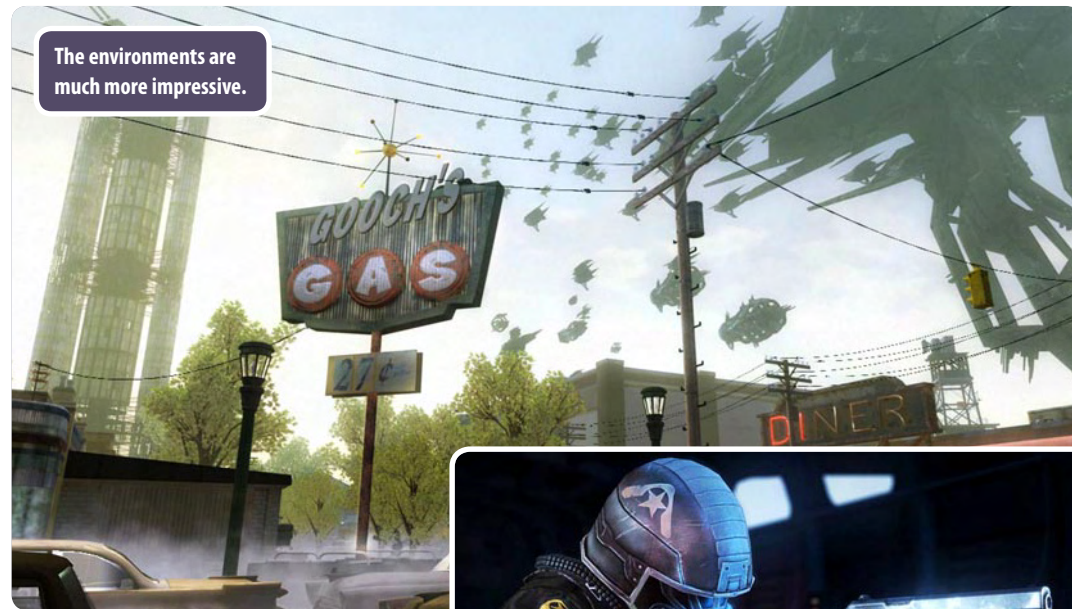
The Leviathan, as you may have guessed, is an absolutely humongous beast of a creature, that makes the monsters of Gears of War look like a kitten with a broken paw. It stands taller than the building you're standing on – and every inch of it is covered in rippling muscle – this is like Triple H put through a growth ray. The animation is almost as spectacular as the thing itself, as it strides through the city, gripping the roofs of buildings as it goes. Rockets just bounce off it, impacting in its skin. As it lifts you from the ground, you turn and aim your rocket launcher, just as it opens its mouth to yell at you. Potting a rocket right in the source of its fetid breath, the creature stalls, and flings you half way across the city.

It's an entirely scripted sequence, but the battle against the Leviathan

"The first thing that strikes you is the view – you can see for miles into the distance"



Oh no! They've got Nathan Hale! Good to see he's still got that same expression though.



The environments are much more impressive.



Stop, or he'll shoot. He will, you know.



America's really let itself go...



> Resistance 2 continued

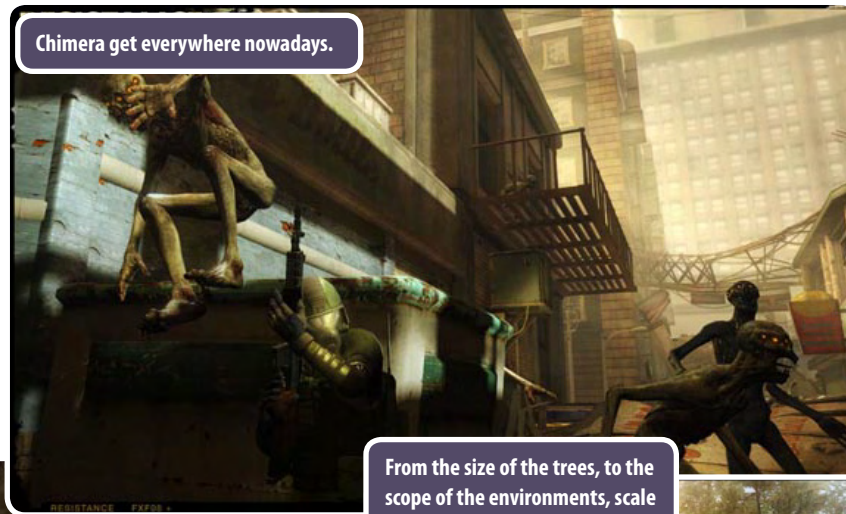
is one of the most hair-raising sequences we've seen. If there are plenty of 'OMG' moments like this in Resistance 2, then fans can be sure of a treat. In all honesty, when compared to Killzone 2, there can only be one winner. If Killzone 2 is a tank, then Resistance 2 is an F-22, sleek, sophisticated and capable of producing stunning impressive set pieces with a better flow.

Thankfully, during the E3 show, a few more snippets of information have started to leak out. Set to launch alongside Resistance 2 is a re-designed MyResistance.net, and Insomniac have taken a leaf out of the Bungie Book of Community Management. Quite simply, this is going to be your one-stop shop for networking and tracking the progress of your friends from the web browser of your PC. Letting you keep track of you and your friends' progress, you can keep a tab on what trophies you've achieved and how many ribbons you've won, but even more impressively, you can even get real-time updates on matches your friends are in, straight to your desktop.

From what we've seen, Resistance 2 is shaping up to be one of the games of 2008, on any platform. Smooth, sophisticated, and a lot more polished than the first Resistance (which wasn't a bad game in itself), this is one to watch out for. ●



This isn't an accurate depiction of America. Look, you can see their ribs.



Chimera get everywhere nowadays.



Not a sight you want to be seeing.

What are the Helghast doing in Resistance 2?

"Resistance 2 is shaping up to be one of the games of 2008, on any platform"

From the size of the trees, to the scope of the environments, scale is everything in Resistance 2.



We wouldn't advise standing around here when the Chimera show.



PERCENTAGE COMPLETE	FIRST IMPRESSIONS
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- 🎸 Walk This Way (Run DMC)
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- 🎸 Nobody's Fault
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Walk This Way

JUNE 27TH 2008



PlayStation 2

PLAYSTATION 3

XBOX 360 LIVE

Wii



CONTROL →





Publisher: SCEE
Developer: Evolution Studios
Heritage: WRC, Motorstorm
Link: www.motorstorm.com
ETA: November

FIRST LOOK

Motorstorm: Pacific Rift

Now with a totally tropical taste

PREVIEW FEEDBACK!
 Click here to tell us what you think of Motorstorm: Pacific Rift

As much as we liked Motorstorm, you couldn't help but think it was just a little bit drab. If brown was your favourite colour, you may have been in luck, but setting the entire game in the middle of a desert canyon proved to be a bit of a duff move for Evolution, as the game looked oh-so samey. Thankfully, for the sequel we've had a change of heart, as Motorstorm is now set in a colourful, tropical island paradise.

But there won't be any sipping of mojitos and enjoying the Caribbean sun, because Motorstorm 2 is sticking to what Motorstorm does best – vicious, in-your-face racing action. And plenty of it.

The deformable tracks we all know and love from the first game are making their triumphant return here, and we're promised that you'll never race the same race twice, as you and your opponents smash through various bits of scenery,

scattering debris across the track, and causing major levels of havoc for those behind you.

We've been promised that the AI-controlled vehicles have had a substantial overhaul to deal with the extra debris, too – not only choosing the best route through the carnage, but also trying to take you down with every chance they get. Unfortunately, one of the most

entertaining things on Motorstorm was dodging the moves of an AI-controlled car, and watching as they take themselves out on the canyon wall, so we're hoping the AI won't have been fixed too much to spoil our fun entirely.

"We've been promised that the AI-controlled cars have had a substantial overhaul, too"



4x4s are dwarfed by the new monster trucks.



Careful you don't stray into the sea...





> Motorstorm continued

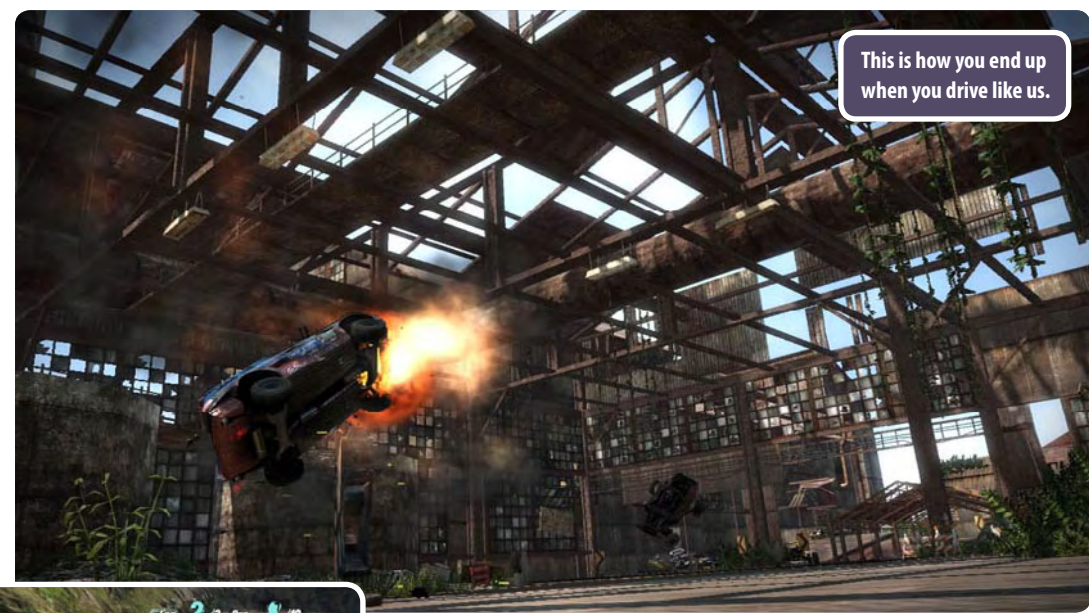
Graphically, the game looks, well, about the same as Motorstorm 1, if ever so slightly less impressive. While the environments are more varied and the colours a lot brighter, the one defining feature of the original – the mud – seems rather sparse on the ground, leaving the sequel looking a tad disappointing. Whether it's the other releases on the PS3 that are making Pacific Rift look dull we don't know, but the graphics are not Pacific Storm's strong point. Thankfully, the vehicles are.

Joining the ranks of big rigs, quad bikes, buggies, motorbikes and rally cars for Pacific Rift are monster trucks – a class we saw unveiled in the trailer, as they squished a motorbike. Bound to be the class of choice for newbies, who'll undoubtedly be drawn to the 'sturdiness' and strength, the monster truck should help shake things up a bit and bring an extra flavour to the racing pack.

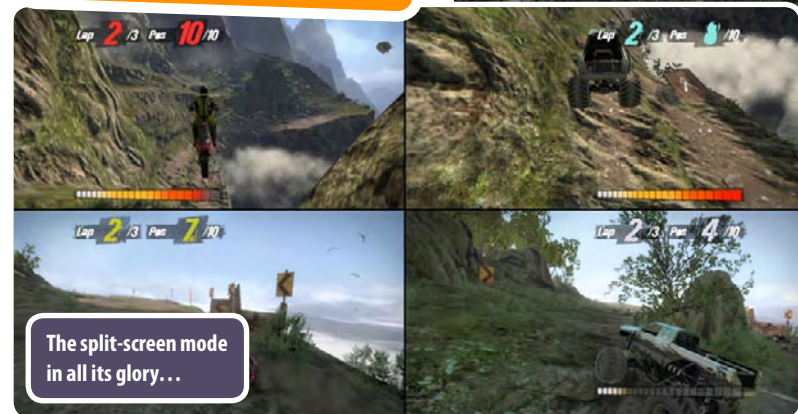
However, possibly the most impressive feature of Motorstorm 2 (and also the likely reason for the lack of a graphical overhaul) is the revamp the game's multiplayer mode will be seeing. Supporting 20 players online, things are sure to get manic, but much to the joy of fans of the original, we'll also be seeing a four-player split-screen mode on the disc at launch – take a look at the screens that are surrounding this page to see more.

Overall, Motorstorm 2 looks to offer more of the same but in a different environment. Whether the ever-so-slight evolutionary approach will succeed remains to be seen, but Pacific Rift's set to be a solid racer when it's released this winter. ●

"Joining the ranks of big rigs, quad bikes and rally cars are monster trucks"



This is how you end up when you drive like us.



The split-screen mode in all its glory...



Barren rock, with an observatory? What?



...and with two players too.

P3Zine

MOTORSTORM PACIFIC RIFT

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

70%

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

70%

Good, but it needs that special something to make it stand out



“DESTRUCTIBLE PROPS, GREAT CAMERA
AND MIGHTY MELEE COMBINE TO FORM
THE PERFECT HUMAN WEAPON”

GAMESPY - 4/5

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GAMESPOT - 8.0/10



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PLAYSTATION 3



CONTROL →



HIT AND MYTH

Heading to ancient Greece on the PS3

We love mythological games, and one that's impressing us is *Rise of the Argonauts*. We sat down with Ed Del Castillo, President of Liquid Entertainment, to find out what makes the game tick.

Why did you choose to base your game around the legend

of Jason, the Argonauts and the Golden Fleece?

Ultimately, the story of Jason and the Argonauts is a great opportunity for us to have a gathering of heroes – a collection of the 'X-Men' of mythological Greece brought together with a common goal. As such, we took some liberties with

the original composition of the Argonauts in order to give the player the unique opportunity to team up with the 'all-stars' of Greek mythology – Hercules, Achilles, Atalanta, Pan, Daedalus, Perseus – all characters that fans of mythology know well.

Another interesting element unique to the age of ancient/mythological Greece is that the laws of morality are very different than what we are accustomed to today. Rather than an absolute ruleset that deemed actions right and wrong, the Greeks were much more concerned about the context governing a particular situation. It was perfectly acceptable to kill a man on the street, provided it was done for the right reasons.

In *Rise of the Argonauts* we use the different mentalities of the gods as a means of filtering the morality and ethics of the time to the player,

so that these types of choices feel familiar rather than alien.

How does the combat system in *Rise of the Argonauts* work? Is it stat-based, or is it more like a third-person action game?

When we started to work on our combat system, we knew that we didn't want to follow typical game conventions about fighting. If you saw a movie and someone got run through with a spear, you'd expect that person to be dead, right? So why is it that a videogame character



"It was acceptable to kill a man on the streets, provided it was done for the right reasons"



> Interview continued

can be impaled repeatedly and still get right back up?

Combat in *Rise of the Argonauts* is all about lethality. You don't have to hit a soldier 20 times to get his HP down to zero before he dies. If your blade hits flesh, you can kill almost any enemy in a single hit.

We were a bit concerned about the streamlining of the interface. Removing the HUD is all well and good, but it's a lot easier to look at a bar and see how much health you have left than it is to try and gauge how much damage your armour's taken. What measures have you taken to ensure that gamers aren't hindered by the lack of an interface?

By design, *Rise of the Argonauts* has a very minimal interface. We want players to be immersed in the world at all times, and thus didn't want a lot of stuff constantly on the screen to keep reminding players that they are playing a game.

Instead of a health bar, players can just look at Jason. As he takes damage, you can see his armour become torn up, and blood starts running down his body. The Argonauts will also look more and more injured as they near death, and they'll clearly let Jason know when they need help.

In our focus tests, we found that the best way to wean people off of their dependence on a user interface is to not provide it to begin

with – at which point they start to immediately see the cues that exist within the world.

One of the most interesting touches in *Rise of the Argonauts* is the way each dialogue choice is tied into the levelling of your character – could you run down how this works?

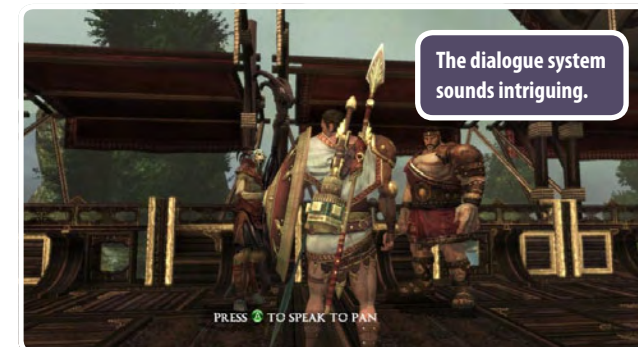
My favourite thing about character progression in *Rise of the Argonauts* is that it's woven into every part of the game. No matter what the player is doing, they will always be advancing their character.

Jason has four patron gods that help him on his quest: Ares, Hermes, Apollo and Athena. As Jason's popularity with the gods grows, they will grant him new abilities.

Most significant dialogue choices are aligned with one of Jason's patron gods, embodying their ideals. A Hermes-aligned choice is clever and often humorous, while an Apollo choice is more noble and altruistic. This also means that you aren't stuck choosing only one patron god at the beginning of the game – you can choose to work with whichever god you please.

What other ways are there to boost your favour with the gods?

For example, Ares is all about charging into the fray and swinging until everyone around you is dead, so he grants Jason aspects that let



him smash through shields and hurl enemies onto their backs. Apollo follows the old adage 'The best offense is a good defence', granting Jason aspects that allow him to withstand the mightiest of blows and regenerate his health, as well as more direct skills, like improving Jason's ability to use his shield.

But the coolest skills Jason can earn are God Powers, in which the gods themselves lend Jason their strength. Athena can summon a great storm, triggering bolts of her father's lightning that Jason can use to his advantage. Hermes opens a gate to Tartarus, wrenching the spirits free from Jason's enemies and leaving their bodies behind. Each god can grant Jason a range of God Powers, from the tactically useful to the devastatingly destructive. ●



Publisher: Codemasters

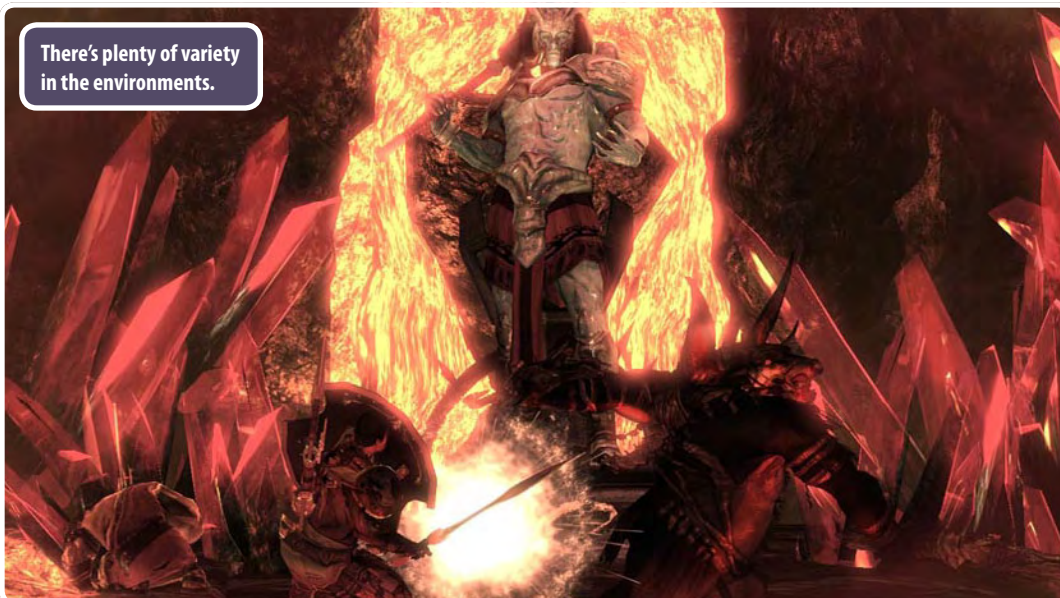
Developer: Liquid Entertainment

Heritage: Dungeons and Dragons: Dragonshard, Lord of the Rings: The War of the Ring

Link: www.rise-of-the-argonauts.co.uk

ETA: September

There's plenty of variety in the environments.



"Jason has four patron gods that help him on his quest: Ares, Hermes, Apollo and Athena"

PS3 at E3

Why the future looks bright for Sony's current console

A professional presentation and a solid line-up of games. Though Sony wasn't exactly full of surprises at E3, it unveiled a superb range of software and

some additional features which will improve PS3's multimedia capabilities. So read all about Sony's ten best moments of the show below.

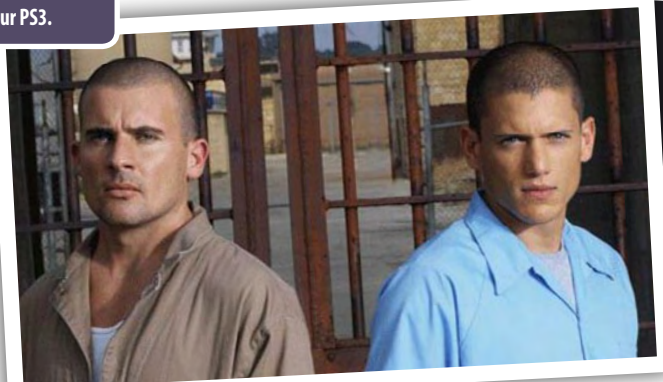
10

HD AND MORE TV

Unveiled during Sony's press briefing by Jack Tretton, Sony's new TV and film download service has an impressive line-up of content already, with film companies such as Fox, MGM, Lion's Gate, Warner, Disney and Paramount allowing titles to be downloaded. PSN users have the ability to both rent and purchase titles, while anyone with a PSP will be able to take their films on the move.

You'll soon be able to watch TV shows on your PS3.

The interface seems user-friendly, and an average two-hour standard definition film will only take an hour to download, with viewers able to start watching while it's downloading. It's also relatively straightforward to connect your consoles directly to make the whole process even quicker. With Microsoft announcing a partnership with Netflix, Sony needed to raise its multimedia game, and it did so with this demonstration.



MGM are one of the many film companies supplying content to the service.

STILL ALIVE

9

While it probably says more about Nintendo's showing than anything else, the PS2 arguably had a better conference than the Wii, with Sony promising a total of 130 titles for 2008 – not bad, considering it's a last-generation console (and indeed was the first on the market ahead of Xbox and GameCube). A fairly short but still impressive showreel displayed games like Star Wars: The Force Unleashed, Tiger Woods 2009, Madden XX, and Warriors Orochi 2. And, perhaps most significantly, the sequel to Sega's superb crime drama, Yakuza 2.

With the likes of brilliant role-player Persona 4 due for a Western release before the end of the year, this eight-year-old console proves it can still compete with the best of them.



...including a sequel to Sega's stunning Yakuza.



There are still plenty of games planned for PS2...

8

CHEAPER CLASSICS

Announced as Greatest Hits during Sony's conference (though they're under the Platinum branding across Europe), PS3 now has a range of budget-priced titles which will allow players to pick up some cracking early titles for less than half their original cost. Titles like Uncharted: Drake's Fortune, Heavenly Sword and Ratchet and Clank: Future are already available, and have recently been joined by Motorstorm and Resistance: Fall of Man. But there's plenty still to come, and not only from Sony itself. Assassin's Creed, Call of Duty 3, Fight Night, Need for Speed Carbon, Ninja Gaiden Sigma, Rainbow Six Vegas and the mighty

Oblivion for £20? Sounds like a bargain to us.

Sony's new budget PS3 range includes Heavenly Sword.



Oblivion will all be available for the RRP of £19.99 or less over the next few months. Some absolute bargains in there, particularly if – like many PS3 owners – you were a late adopter and missed some of the best early titles.

7

LET'S OFF-ROAD

Motorstorm 2 promises to be a lot more colourful than the first game.

Motorstorm was a bit of a missed opportunity – easily the best-looking PS3 launch title, it nevertheless felt far less exciting than the early footage and adverts had led us to believe. Yet while it was only briefly touched upon during Sony's conference, sequel Pacific Rift looks like the game the original should have been. For one, it somehow looks even better – it's blisteringly quick too, and the lush tropical setting is much easier on the eye than the dull, brown mudfests of the first game, too.

With four themed stage types taking you close to volcanoes, through jungles and across beaches, a brand new photo mode, and a wealth of other tweaks, Pacific Rift looks like it could well end up being one of PS3's best sequels. – check out our two-page preview in this issue for more information.

Find out more about this game in our preview this issue.



6

SHORT BUT VERY SWEET

The appearance of Kratos at Sony's conference garnered one of the biggest cheers, despite being onscreen for only a matter of seconds. Yes, the trailer for God of War III was mean, moody and faintly magnificent, though it was over just a little too soon. Still, the thought of Sony Santa Monica pushing the PS3 to its limits, just as it did with both the previous games, is mouth-watering stuff. It's not going to be here until at least 2009, but the simple fact

that it's being made is cause for celebration among many gamers. If there's one title likely to make your 360-owning friends insanely jealous it's this one. As Jack Tretton put it: "If this is what year two of the PlayStation 3 life cycle looks like, imagine what years three and four look like."

Let's keep our fingers crossed that Kratos appears in year three, but even if not, his return will be one of the most eagerly-anticipated titles of the next couple of years.

God of War III will clearly be one of the finest-looking PS3 games we've yet seen.



The return of Kratos was warmly received at the E3 show.

5

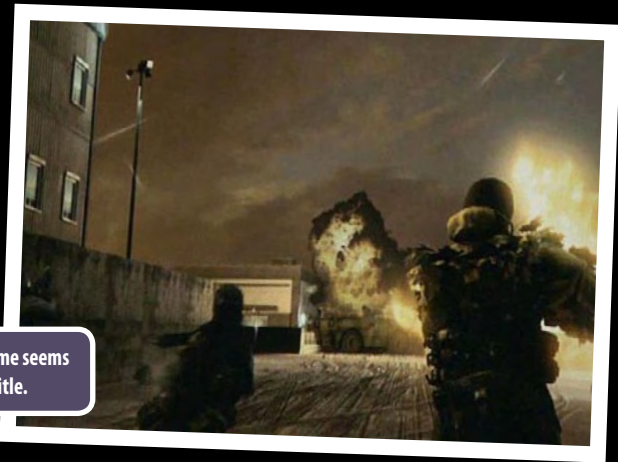
MASSIVE CARNAGE

You begin to wonder whether Sony is making a playful joke at its own expense. Forthcoming huge multiplayer shooter MAG's acronym really does stand for Massive Action Game, apparently. Still, silly name aside, it made for a fairly impressive showing closer to Sony's press briefing. It's a brand new IP from developer Zipper, and its USP is that it allows up to 256 players to compete in online battles. The game won't contain any AI bots, but purely real players, split into teams led by those who've gained significant experience online and who are deemed skilful enough to command squads. You'll be able to enhance your character's abilities with special advancement trees which you can follow in

accordance with your specific playing style. The idea is to create a game which features several small-scale skirmishes as part of an epic battle. While we didn't get any in-game footage, the trailer certainly suggested Zipper is on the right track.



Up to 256 characters will be able to battle online in MAG.



Massive Action Game seems to be the perfect title.



1-3 PIXELJUNK EDEN

446

PixelJunk Eden is a very special game indeed.

4 NETWORKING

The PlayStation Network has had its fair share of criticism, with many pointing out its dearth of new releases during recent months. However, from the showreel of games we saw in the middle of Sony's



press briefing, there's plenty of cause for optimism. Titles such as *Fat Princess* showed a great deal of originality, while *Ragdoll Kung Fu: Fists of Plastic* looked very amusing indeed. 2D shooter *Crash Commando* looked extremely polished, while *PixelJunk Eden* (now available to download) and *Flower* offered something a little artier but no less impressive.

Indeed, all the PSN titles seemed extremely polished, with premium titles like *Siren: Blood Curse* (reviewed in this very issue) and *Ratchet and Clank: Quest For Booty* showing exactly what's possible from downloadable games. While the quantity still might not quite be enough for some, there's absolutely no arguing with the quality.

3 BOLT FROM THE BLUE

Sucker Punch's *inFamous* was one of the most pleasant surprises – not because it wasn't expected to appear, but that it looked tremendous. Were it not for the fact that it's still a bit of an unknown quantity (and that it won't be out until early next year) it would have been even higher on this list. It's essentially an open-world superhero game – a little like the 360's *Crackdown* but a little darker. You'll get the choice for your character to

follow the path of a traditional hero, or you can take a leaf out of the Joker's book and explore your dark side.

You play the survivor of a strange blast which hits the city, and which grants you the power to shoot lightning bolts from your hands. Though this was the only real power shown off, it looks to be extremely flexible, allowing you to both hurt and heal, with the electricity acting as a defibrillator for those wounded.



We don't know much about inFamous, but it looks stunning.



The game lets you take on the role of a superhero.

2

CLOVER AND OUT

Perhaps the aliens have just come for the cheap petrol.



JJ Abrams has a lot to answer for. While it was probably planned for a long while before Cloverfield, we couldn't help but compare the enormous leviathan in Resistance 2's demonstration to the shaky-cam Godzilla-alike. Which really is no bad thing – the footage shown looked extremely exciting as you sprint through buildings, letting off rockets through windows at any possible opportunity before the building is destroyed by this ridiculously large foe.

It's the scale that's been massively expanded in Resistance 2 – both offline and on. The single-player game takes part in huge

cityscapes and wide-open rural areas, while the multiplayer game will feature 60 players.

Insomniac has also tweaked the weapon system, so you'll only be allowed to carry two at once. This is tempered by the fact that each gun is stronger, and because ammo is relatively scarce, you'll need to chop and change more often, adding much-needed variety. This has also allowed Insomniac to go to town with each weapon's abilities, with some truly unique guns which you'll be unwilling to let go of. Sounds good to us.

We think that now would be a very good time to run.



1



We promise you, you've really never seen a game like this before.

SACKBOY STEALS THE SHOW

If there's one thing that's traditionally boring about E3 conferences, it's the section where we're introduced to a series of bar charts and graphs while the company in question boasts of how well it's doing. Sony had a brilliant answer to this, which not only made the section far more interesting, but also managed to showcase the wonderful flexibility of one of its own triple-A titles. We're talking about LittleBigPlanet of course, and its protagonist Sackboy, who guided the audience through Sony's recent successes with pop-up statistics and pictures appearing as he made his way through a custom-designed LBP stage. The game itself rightfully appeared on

many critics' 'Best of' lists once E3 had finished, but it was this demonstration more than anything else which proved how amazing it's going to be. After all, if you can make stats fun, then you know you're onto a winner. So Sackboy stole the show, and everyone went away with their heads buzzing about the possibilities of this truly remarkable piece of software. It's going to be really fantastic.





Soul Calibur IV

A different Calibur of fighting game

Publisher: Ubisoft
Developer: Project Soul
Heritage: Soul Calibur series
Link: www.soulcalibur.com
OUT NOW

A tale of swords and souls eternally retold, meets a long time ago, in a galaxy, far, far away. It might seem like a clash of cultures, but the appearance of characters from the Star Wars canon in Soul Calibur IV is actually one of the least remarkable aspects of what it's – for our money – the premier fighting game of this generation.

It's a hugely playable and feature-packed beat-'em-up from a developer that's confident in its franchise's qualities, playing on them expertly, while introducing enough new touches to make it a significant improvement on Soul Calibur III, the PS2 exclusive which arrived to a mixed reception three years ago.

Soul Calibur has always been a hugely balanced scrapper, and this time it seems like no-one is overpowered. While some have complained about Yoda's



"Soul Calibur IV is a hugely playable and feature-packed beat-'em-up"

idiosyncrasies in the 360 game, few will have such qualms about Darth Vader in the PS3 game. Though some of his moves look a little strange for a character who's athleticism isn't widely featured in the Star Wars films, he's an impressively imposing figure with some neat Force attacks, but who certainly isn't unbeatable. The same goes for The Apprentice, from Star Wars: The Force Unleashed – though he's more difficult to unlock with Vader than with the nippy Yoda. Once you've bested him, he's highly enjoyable to play as, if nowhere near as flamboyant as the more outlandish characters on the roster.

The game's difficulty curve is tuned almost to perfection – most

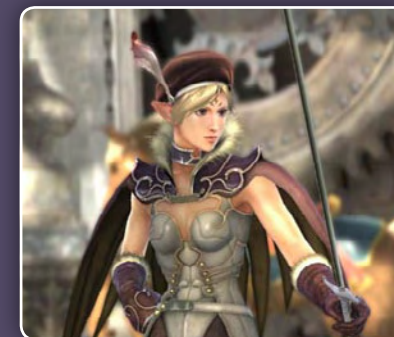
players should get through each character's (brief) story mode without too much trouble, perhaps only stumbling on the last couple of fights. Which is as it should be.

Arcade mode is marginally longer, and offers a slightly stiffer challenge, but it's on Hard mode where the AI really raises its game, teasing you into rash attacks, and pulling off counters and guard impacts far more often. Meanwhile, the most substantial single-player addition – The imposing Tower of Lost Souls – offers an increasing challenge as you climb through the floors with your chosen fighters, tackling more difficult and numerous opponents. Pass 20 floors, and you'll be given the chance to descend into the catacombs, this time with some even more fearsome foes to fight – though at least you'll get the chance to regain energy



THE NEW BATCH

Fresh-faced fighters step up to battle



Scheherazade



Angol Fear

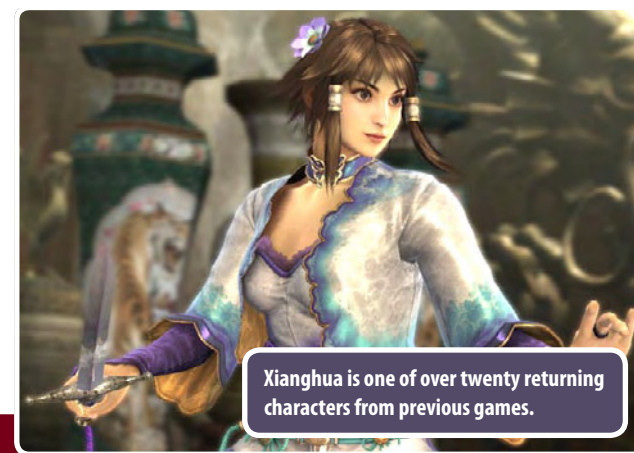


Algol

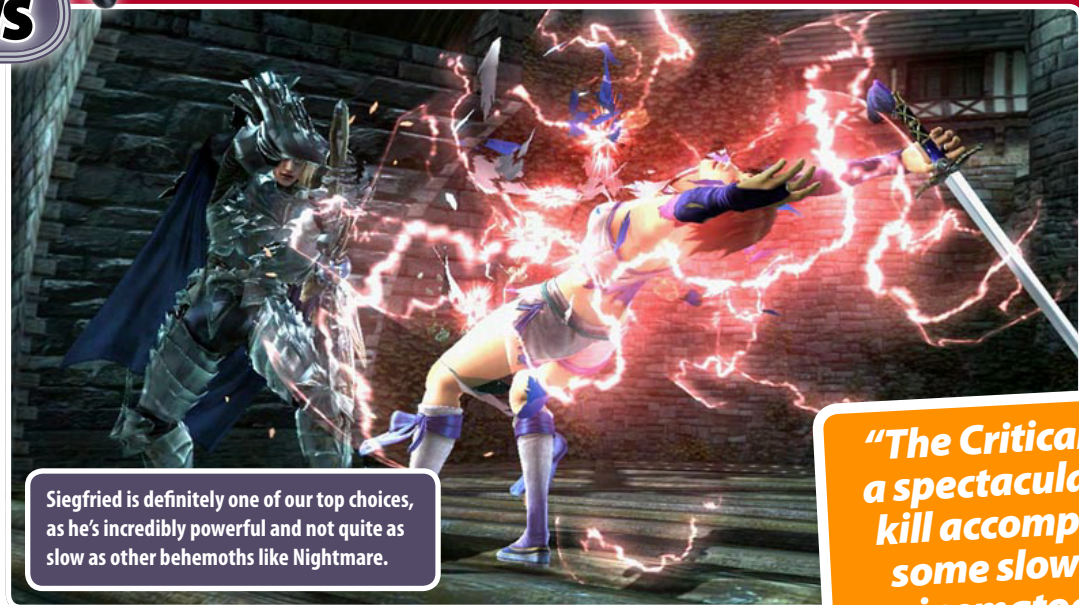


Scheherazade

Designed by Japanese artist Yutaka Izubuchi, Scheherazade uses a sword in a similar style to Raphael and Amy. Of all the manga-influenced characters, she's perhaps the one who most resembles a standard Soul Calibur fighter.



Xianghua is one of over twenty returning characters from previous games.



Siegfried is definitely one of our top choices, as he's incredibly powerful and not quite as slow as other behemoths like Nightmare.



Kilik is a good character to play as, because he's able to hit enemies from a significant distance.

"The Critical Finish is a spectacular one-hit kill accompanied by some slow-motion cinematography"

> Soul Calibur IV continued

by swapping between brawlers judiciously during each battle.

There's no big change in the mechanics, but then Project Soul didn't need to alter too much. The most significant new feature is the Soul Gauge, which turns from green to yellow and eventually to red

when blocking enemy attacks. This encourages players to go back on the offensive, as otherwise they're at risk of going into 'Soul Crush' with the chance for opponents to end the fight instantly with a Critical Finish – a spectacular one-hit kill accompanied by some slow-motion

cinematography which frames the action beautifully. In some modes you'll also have active and passive skills, which either activate automatically, or can be selected during combat – you might be able to give yourself a health boost, or temporarily increase your fighter's

strength. These are all fairly minor adjustments, but they all add up to make for a more well-rounded fighting experience.

As for the characters themselves, each has had his or her moveset slightly modified, so even experienced Calibur fans will need to relearn their favourite characters' foibles. And the newcomers add something different – playing as Darth or The Apprentice might not be for you, but they can be

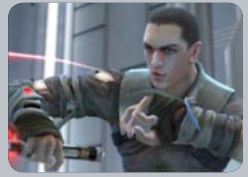


FREEZE FRAME

You've gotta have soul to succeed...



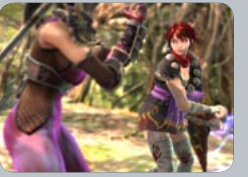
2 MINUTES
Of course you're going to start with Darth, and he's as good as you'd hope, too.



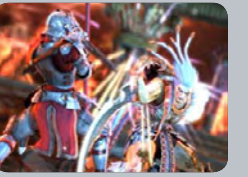
15 MINUTES
Battling The Apprentice. He looks bland, but he knows some cool Jedi moves.



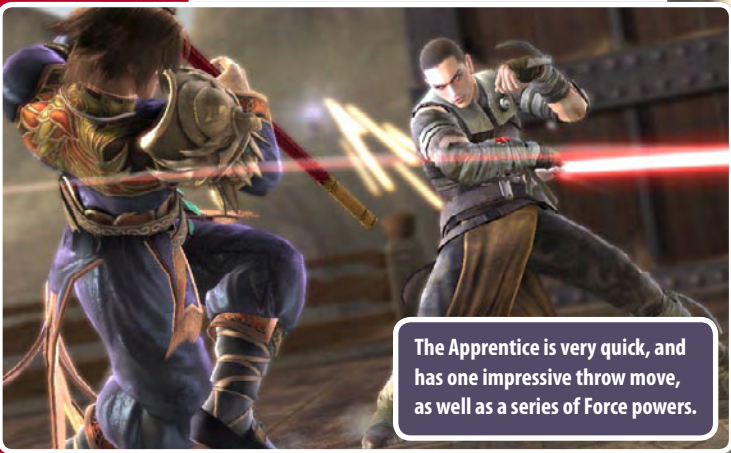
1 HOUR
Moving up the tower, and encountering some seriously tricky opponents.



4 HOURS
By this time you should be working your way through the game's unlockables.



15 HOURS
Even if you're a demon at the game there's plenty more you won't have seen.



The Apprentice is very quick, and has one impressive throw move, as well as a series of Force powers.

Mixing high blows and low ones is the best way to get through your opponent's defences.



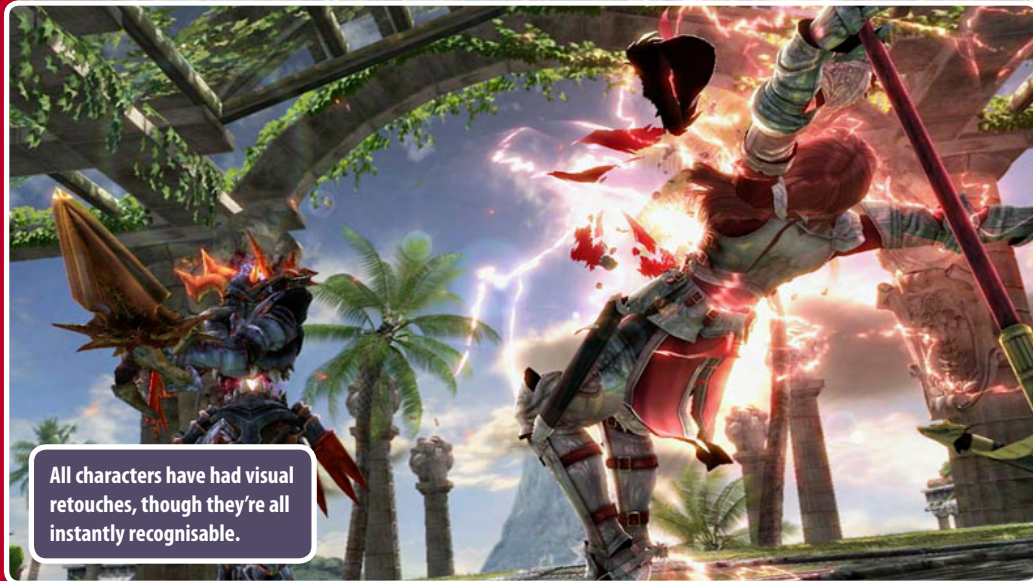
> Soul Calibur IV continued

completely ignored. Some will love the anime-styled characters (created by famous Japanese manga artists) and some will loathe them, but

again, you're not really required to use them. We're also convinced that fans will love Algol and Hilde, the two new 'traditional' characters. Algol's easily the most interesting final character in a Soul Calibur

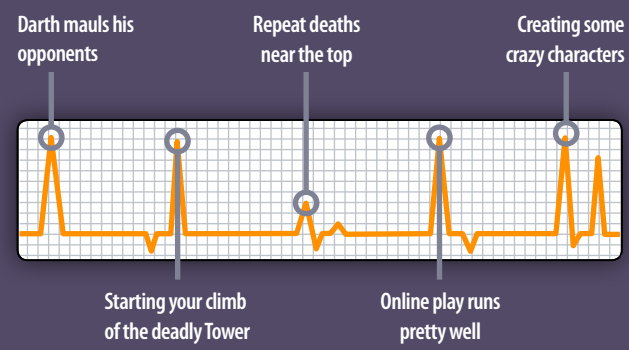
game. Described by his designer as the most powerful character in the series to date, he's not nearly as tough to beat as his reputation suggests. While he's no pushover, he's not nearly as cheap as previous final opponents, besting you with skill rather than spamming moves. Similarly, Hilde's likely to soon become a fan favourite, wielding a lance and sword simultaneously to make her effective both from distance or at close range.

We've come this far and not even mentioned the astounding graphics – all huge, detailed character models and sumptuous backdrops – nor the epic soundtrack and terrific sound effects. And we'll leave the exceptional character creation mode for you to discover the delights of yourselves. All that remains for us to say is simply: buy this game. You won't regret it. ●



All characters have had visual retouches, though they're all instantly recognisable.

PULSOMETER *Signs of life*



"We're convinced that fans will love Algol and Hilde, the two new 'traditional' characters"



P3Zine Verdict

A polished fighter with features to spare. A must.

- + Amazing range of characters
- + Tons of options
- + Fantastic presentation

92%



Siren: Blood Curse

Afraid of the dark? You soon will be...

Publisher: SCEE

Developer: SCEI

Heritage: Siren series,
Rule of Rose

Link: <http://uk.playstation.com/games-media/games/detail/item103388/Siren-Blood-Curse>
OUT NOW

It's not often we'll afford a lengthy review to a downloadable game, but then Siren isn't your average PSN title. Available in full at £19.99, or in four separate three-episode packs for £6.99 each, it's a whopping nine gigabytes' worth of game, split into twelve downloads of slightly more manageable size. Sadly, you won't be able to play the individual episodes until you've installed all three of each chapter, making it more effort

to bother with than some will be willing to expend. But while it probably takes as long to download as it does to complete, Siren: Blood Curse is more than worth the hassle.

Blood Curse is actually a remake of cult PS2 horror title Siren, known as Forbidden Siren in Europe. Though hardly wildly successful, it's widely regarded as one of the most influential games in its genre, introducing audiences to the

concept of sightjacking – being able to view the world through your enemy's eyes. Yet this is as far removed from the original game as it's possible for a revamp to get – though the basic location is the same in both versions, the game's Japanese title proves to be arguably more appropriate than its western monicker, the new translation replacing the original eastern protagonists with a group of Americans.

Hanuda Village is the setting, an abandoned hamlet which – for reasons we won't go into here – is full of shibito ('corpse people'), or zombies, if you prefer. A documentary crew filming a strange ritual sees an American student interrupt the ceremony to save the life of one of the intended sacrificed, and before long, all are being chased by these semi-human creatures. What follows is one of the most bizarre videogame stories you'll ever experience – suffice to say that you'll get to control a host of characters in a series of nightmarish

HIDE AND SHRIEK

Stealth or force, the choice is yours...



Sneak and destroy

Shoot the runner

Jack your body

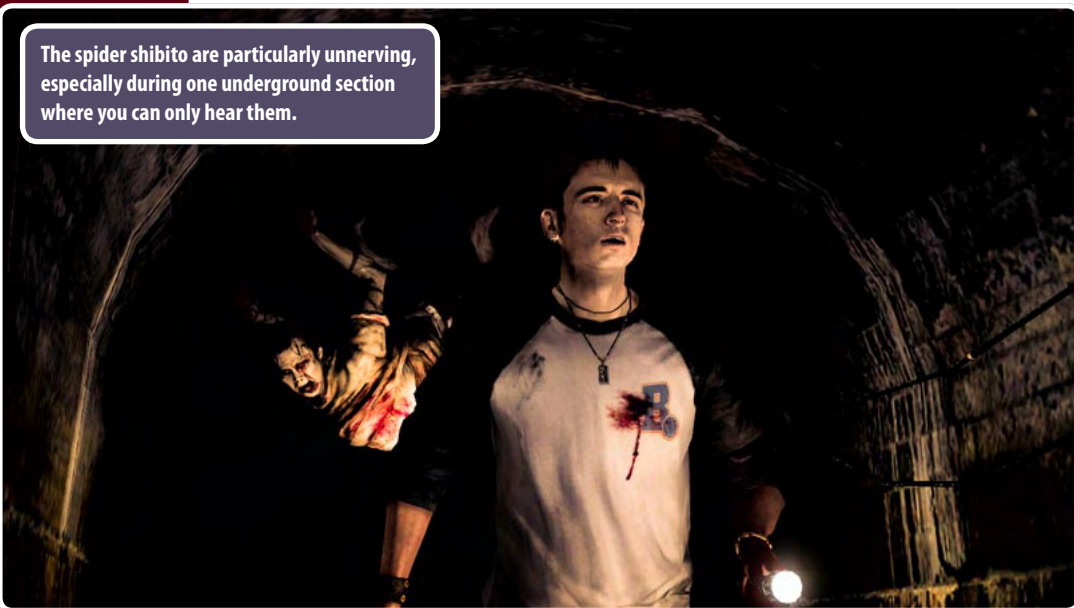
Sneak and destroy

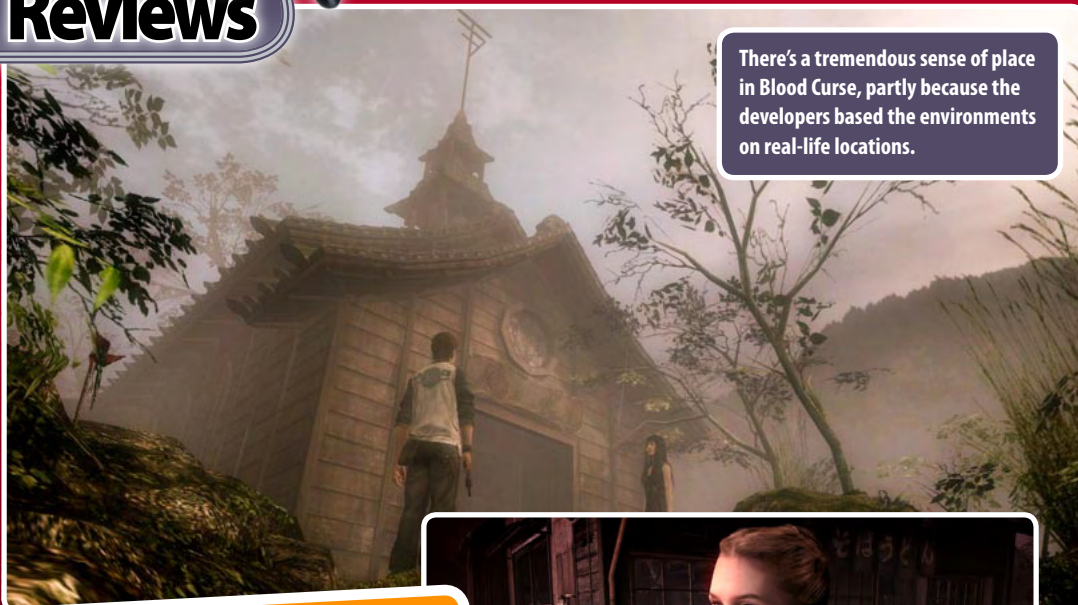
It's daylight – albeit a day shrouded in mist – and your enemy's looking right at you. How to get past him? Well, if you creep behind a mine cart and give it a good shove, you might just be able to knock him off his feet and steal his weapon. But don't turn your back on a downed enemy – they might not stay down for long...

scenarios, sneaking, hiding and sprinting from the shibito while attempting to figure a way out of this place, and uncovering the mysteries of the village. While the narrative twists and turns – not to mention the overlapping timelines – might confuse some players, the story throws in a couple of cracking



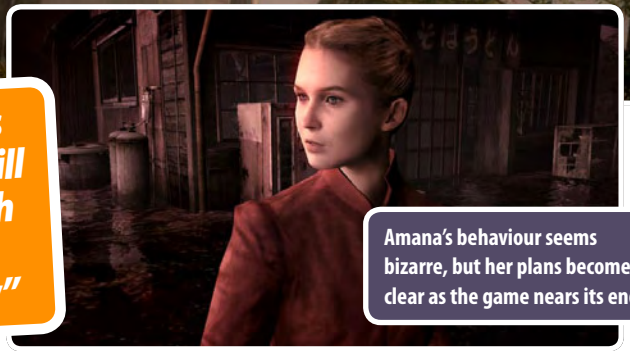
The spider shibito are particularly unnerving, especially during one underground section where you can only hear them.





There's a tremendous sense of place in *Blood Curse*, partly because the developers based the environments on real-life locations.

"While sightjacking is rarely necessary, it's still terrifying to get a flash of yourself from an enemy's point of view"



Amana's behaviour seems bizarre, but her plans become clear as the game nears its end.

> *Siren: Blood Curse* cont.

twists to keep you hooked. The backstories of these characters are further fleshed out by the archive – a fascinating resource which holds detailed information on items discovered throughout the game, like a student ID card, a child's diary, or part of a screenplay written by one of the characters.

While sightjacking is rarely necessary – often helpful, but only once or twice is it actually required – it's still terrifying to get a flash of yourself from an enemy's point of view, and the darkness sometimes hides some truly horrifying foes. It has a potent atmosphere, enhanced by the grainy graphical filter and unnerving musical score, and while there's a few dodgy textures here

and there, the character models and lighting are exceptional, with sequences set during a thunderstorm providing a couple of genuinely jaw-dropping moments.

Director Keiichiro Toyama claims that he draws from his own nightmares to frighten his audience. The approach certainly works – though some of *Siren's* nasties leave us wondering just how much cheese he consumes before bedtime. It's not often you'll come across creatures with wings in their eyes, nor grotesque, semi-larval monstrosities with human faces that shriek with shrill laughter as they shamble towards you.

It's also fair to say that Toyama is scared of the dark, because most of the time you'll be peering at the >

FREEZE FRAME

Counting down the horror



10 MINUTES
Well, it's 10 hours if you count the download time. An effective opening sequence sets the scene.



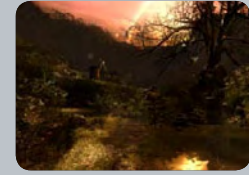
2 HOURS
The creepiest hospital you've ever been in, and you're playing an unarmed young girl. Eek!



6 HOURS
A slightly awkward protect mission is then redeemed by an amazing jump-shock moment.

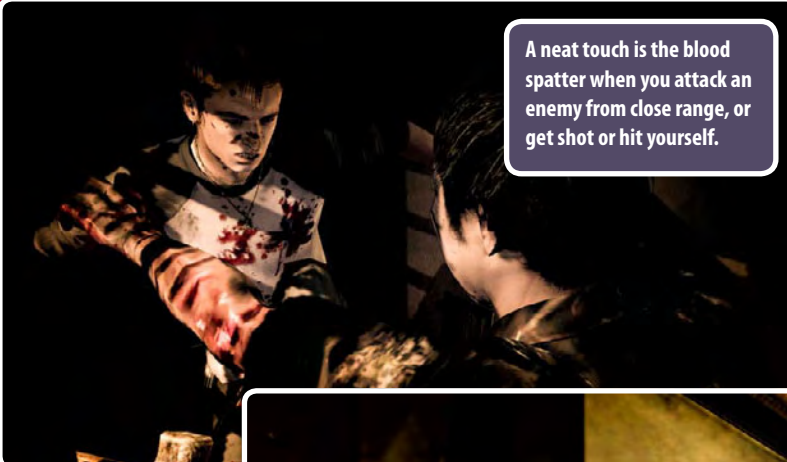


7 HOURS
Siren's even scary when it's light – there are plenty of shibito here to attack you and your companion.

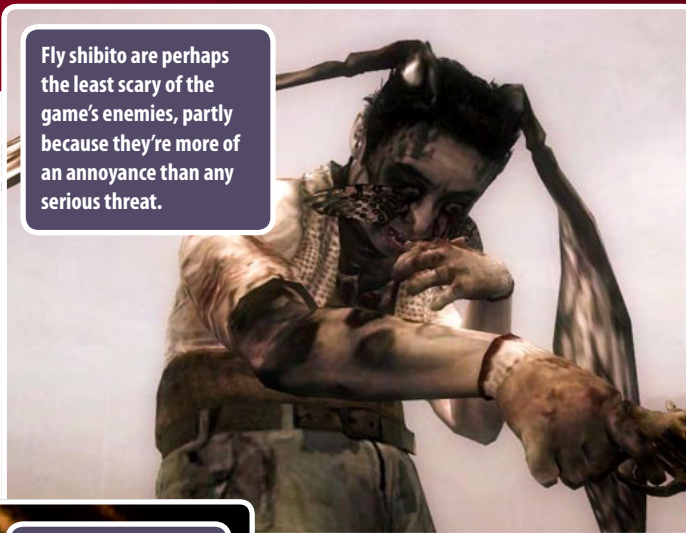


10 HOURS
A dramatic denouement – and you'll want to go back to pick up those archive items you missed.





A neat touch is the blood spatter when you attack an enemy from close range, or get shot or hit yourself.



Fly shibito are perhaps the least scary of the game's enemies, partly because they're more of an annoyance than any serious threat.



It's fair to say Siren's quite gruelling, but in a very good way.

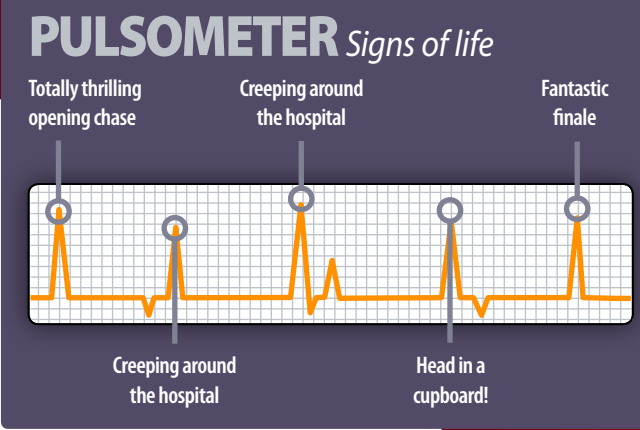
"Blood Curse is a polished, thrilling and downright scary horror game, which for less than 20 pounds, is an absolute bargain"



> Siren: Blood Curse cont.

screen into the inky blackness that envelops almost everything in the game. In the night-time sections, you'll barely be able to see more than a few feet in front of you with a torchlight, and should you be attempting to hide from the lurching shibito out for your blood, then you'll be lucky if you can see at all. While some might find this frustrating, it's all part of Toyama's plan – after all, it's what you can't actually see that scares you the most.

To further the sense of disorientation, the controls aren't what you might expect of a third-person action-adventure – the right stick merely controls your torch, allowing a very narrow spectrum of camera movement. Again, this is entirely deliberate – sprinting through dilapidated houses and disused hospital corridors feels all the more frantic when you're fumbling



a little with unfamiliar controls, and should you choose to attack, it's with all the graceless terror of someone unused to wielding weaponry and desperate to save their own skin.

Of course, perhaps the most awkward thing of all about Siren is its distribution method, and sadly it's going to prevent a lot of people from experiencing the best horror title of this generation so far. With the interface clumsiness and control quirks of the previous games all but eradicated, Blood Curse is a polished, thrilling and downright scary horror game, which for less than twenty pounds, is an absolute bargain. ●

P3Zine Verdict

The best horror game on PS3

- + Incredible atmosphere
- + Shocks and twists aplenty
- Occasionally unclear objectives

88
%

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www.gamerzines.com

PlayStation Network

Online gaming at a bargain price

PixelJunk Eden

Publisher: SCEE
Developer: Q-Games
Price: £4.99

The PixelJunk series has come a long way in less than a year, from the imperfect but underrated Racers through the addictive Monsters, to this superb arty platform-puzzler.

You play as a grimp, who is essentially a cross between a bee and Spiderman, as he shoots streams of silk to propel himself around various gardens, collecting pollen as he goes. This pollen (gained from spin-jumping into enemies or hitting them with your swinging silk line) is used to activate seed pods, which transform into flowers and leaves when you touch them, allowing you to progress

higher and wider in order to grab Spectra pods. These in turn are used to invigorate your own Eden, allowing you to access other, more difficult gardens.

Structural quirks aside – you're required to enter each garden five times to collect all the spectra, essentially repeating the first four visits by the time you're on your fifth trip – Eden is a wonderfully produced piece of software, its gorgeous art style melding with trippy techno beats to make for an amazing sensory experience. Get the hang of the tricky controls, and you'll soon be flinging your grimp around with gay abandon. Throw in Trophy support and the ability to upload gameplay videos to YouTube, and you've got an essential PSN buy. ●



P3Zine Verdict
A totally unique experience

- + Addictive gameplay
- Gets repetitive

89%

Fatal Inertia EX

Publisher: Koei
Developer: Koei
Price: £14.99

This is Fatal Inertia's second bite at the cherry, having debuted on the 360 last year. Yet some critics were unfairly dismissive of the game after its admittedly appalling demo – this future racer might

not be the smoothest mover, but it has some neat ideas up its sleeve. This PSN version has been tweaked since the original release, tightening the controls and balancing the gameplay. And for just under 15 quid, it's a good racing game, hampered by the fact that it's in a genre with two games – F-Zero and WipEout – that it compares poorly to. ●



P3Zine Verdict
Improved, but not enough

- + Better than the 360 one
- Still clunky at times

69%

Elefunk

Publisher: SCEE
Developer: 8bit Games
Price: £4.99

On the face of it, Elefunk is a simple, bright puzzler about reuniting pachyderms with their chums by building bridges to cross large chasms. In reality it's a construction simulator which, on its later levels, practically requires

a structural engineering degree to progress any further.

The problem with Elefunk is that it's extremely difficult to tell where you're going wrong. Early stages have fairly transparent solutions after a little trial and error, but once you're approaching the end you'll be pulling your hair out. ●



P3Zine Verdict
Tough-as-nails puzzler

- + Charming graphics
- Rather frustrating

62%

PS3's secret weapon

Why PSN is a key part of Sony's armoury

Sony's E3 conference was professionally produced, with one or two highlights – Little Big Planet makes stats fun! It was a little short on inspiration though, particularly when it came to forthcoming PS3 titles – God of War III made an appearance, but only in brief CGI form, while exclusives like DC Universe Online and MAG failed to impress the watching audience.

Yet if there was one area where PS3 stood head and shoulders above the competition, it was with its download service. All the PlayStation Network titles showcased looked impressive, with a good mix of big-budget content and titles developed by smaller teams. While Microsoft had the likes of Galaga Legions and Geometry Wars, PSN was the service with the truly original content, and the seeds have been sown in

recent weeks, with the likes of Siren (reviewed this issue) and the superb PixelJunk Eden displaying class and originality. Though PSN might not have a new release every week, it's clear that Sony's commitment to quality is paying off. While we might sometimes have to wait a few weeks for titles to arrive, the vast majority are going to be worth the wait.

Ratchet and Clank Future: Quest For Booty looks every bit as impressive as predecessor Tools Of Destruction, though at around four hours long, it's a much more bite-sized portion of gaming – understandable given the price and distribution method. Meanwhile, the side-scrolling multiplayer shooter Crash Commando looked hugely polished, and a lot of fun.

It was two other games which took most of the plaudits, though. ThatGameCompany's Flower, a spiritual sequel to the popular fIOW, looked utterly stunning, with its beautifully serene stages whizzing by, as petals whistle between individually-animated blades of grass. The idea is that you control an increasing swarm of petals with the Sixaxis, guiding it past obstacles

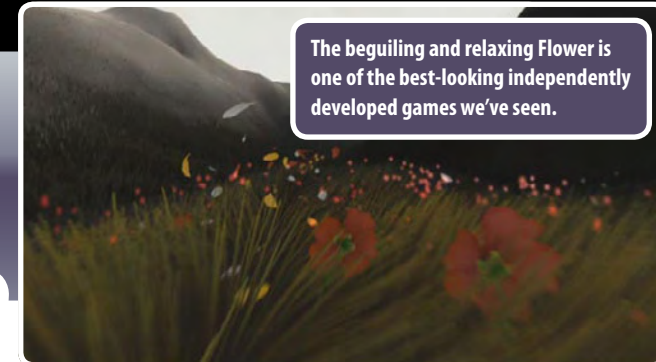
"If there was one area where PS3 stood head and shoulders above the competition, it was with its PSN download service"

and interacting with more flowers to expand your group. It seems to have the same mentality as fIOW, and we can't wait to get our hands on it.

Fat-bottomed girls

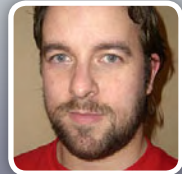
The biggest surprise came in the form of the charmingly-named Fat Princess. With some delightfully gory cartoon graphics, this 32-player online game sees two sides attempting to rescue the titular obese maiden from their opponents' castle. If you're defending, you can feed your princess more cake to make her even more difficult to carry, while five different character classes create some unique co-operative play, with warriors protecting mages and archers taking out enemies from distance. Some attendees were moved to name it their Game of the Show, for its wonderfully original look and feel.

The beguiling and relaxing Flower is one of the best-looking independently developed games we've seen.



It's also just been announced that western PS3 owners will be seeing Japanese-developed oddity The Last Guy. Using real-life overhead maps of cities like Los Angeles, Tokyo and London, you have to guide the survivors of a catastrophe – one that's turned most of the world into zombies and monsters – to Escape Zones, where they're picked up by a rescue force and escorted to safety. As your chain of followers increases, it's almost like a modern day version of Snake, and its wonderfully strange presentation marked it out as yet another PSN title to watch. ●

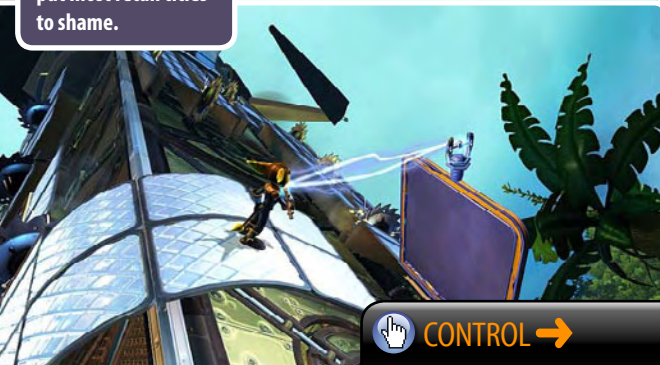
Sony Japan's The Last Guy is another original idea to hit PSN, and it should be here very soon.



Chris Schilling

Chris is the proud owner of all three 'next-gen' consoles. Every issue Chris will chart the progress of PS3 and commenting on Sony's latest and greatest initiatives.

It might be only four hours long, but Quest For Booty's visuals put most retail titles to shame.



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Chilling review...

SILENT HILL: HOMECOMING

PLUS!

Hellboy: The Science of Evil

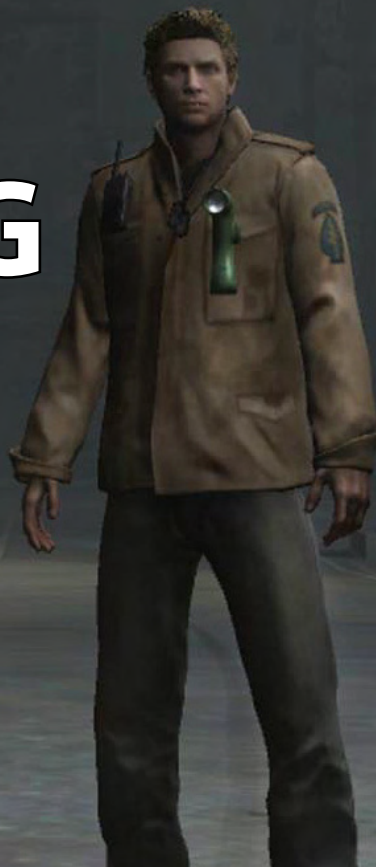
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