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P3Zine

Issue 22 | December 2008

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

EXCLUSIVE NEW SHOTS! FREE SCREENSAVER AND WALLPAPERS...

KILLZONE[®] 2

Massive hands-on preview and interview

PLUS!

**BEST_{of}
2008**

**THE MUST-HAVE
GAMES OF 2008!**

*Your top 10 essential
PS3 games this Xmas*



REVIEWED!



Resistance 2

REVIEWED!



**Prince
of Persia**

REVIEWED!



**Alone in
the Dark**

REVIEWED!

**Call of Duty:
World at War**



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Welcome to P3Zine



2008 has seen some blinding releases on PlayStation 3, so this issue we've brought you the definitive list of must-have titles to take pride of place in your Christmas stocking.

As one year draws to a close though we now turn our attention to 2009 with a fantastic hands-on preview of Killzone 2. It looks sensational and plays with absolute aplomb. Don't miss our preview and then take a moment or two to download your free screensaver and desktop wallpapers. Think of them as our little gift to you this Christmas.

Enjoy the festive season and don't forget to come back for your free monthly digital magazine in the new year.

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

Dan Hutchinson, Editor
p3zine@gamerzines.com

DON'T MISS!

This month's highlights...

The latest & greatest titles on PS3

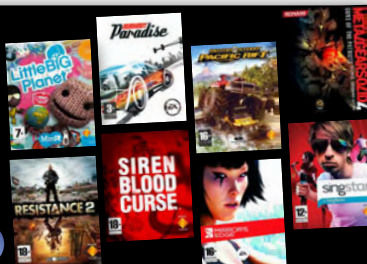


Killzone 2

Exclusive preview and new screens inside...

BEST of 2008

Your top 10 essential games this Xmas



Prince of Persia

Definitive review

QUICK FINDER

Every game's just a click away

Skate 2
 Heavy Rain
 Aliens:
 Colonial Marines
 F.E.A.R. 2 –
 Project Origin
 Lord of the Rings:
 Conquest
 Battle Fantasia

Red Faction: Guerrilla
 Burnout Paradise:
 The Ultimate Box
 Call of Duty:
 World at War
 Prince of Persia
 Resistance 2
 Alone in the Dark:
 Inferno

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Resistance 2

Reviewed & rated



Call of Duty: World at War

Contender for Christmas No.1



Alone in the Dark

In Central Park

- Xbox 360 The Official Magazine



WWW.CALLOFDUTY.COM



Skate 2

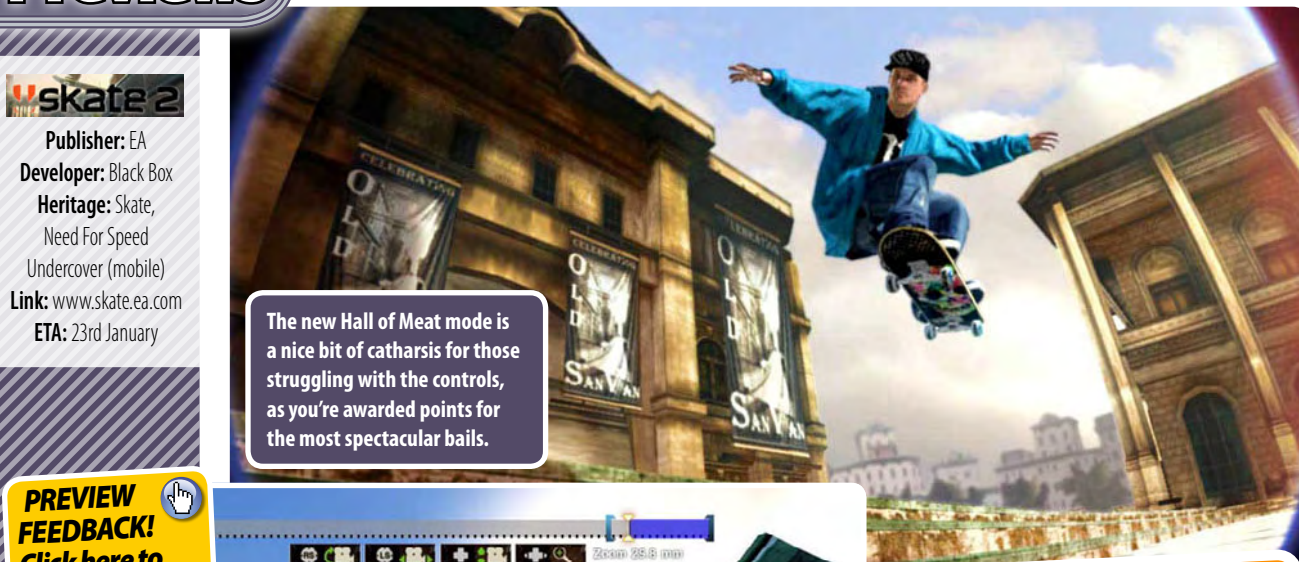
Publisher: EA
Developer: Black Box
Heritage: Skate,
 Need For Speed
 Undercover (mobile)
Link: www.skate.ea.com
ETA: 23rd January

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

One of the highlights of the
 original was the ability to
 record your best lines, and the
 new, improved Skate.Reel will
 offer a more fully-featured
 video-editing package.

The new Hall of Meat mode is
 a nice bit of catharsis for those
 struggling with the controls,
 as you're awarded points for
 the most spectacular bails.

Handplants are just one of
 the many new moves on offer
 – we just hope the finely tuned
 control scheme hasn't been
 overcomplicated too much.



*"The skating district of
 New San Vanelona has
 been completely rebuilt
 in the five years between
 the two games"*



Skate 2

Getting back on the board

**FIRST
LOOK**

What's the story?

Last year, Black Box upset the applecart somewhat by ousting Tony Hawk from his throne as the king of videogame boarders after years of dominance. All it took was a simple change of control scheme – the game using analogue stick movements to perform tricks rather than chaining button commands. It worked wonders – offering something deep, gloriously tactile and tricky enough to learn so that mastering simple moves seemed totally satisfying, without once seeming too convoluted to be worth bothering with.

What do we know?

The game takes place in the fictional skating district of New San Vanelona, the place having been completely rebuilt in the five years between the two games. Unfortunately, the rebuild has been to the detriment of the skating scene, which you have to revive by encouraging others to start boarding once again. You've got twice as many tricks at your disposal to impress the new breed of skater, while you can create ramps and trick spots by picking up and moving items. DIY is very much the theme of this sequel, with a special graphics

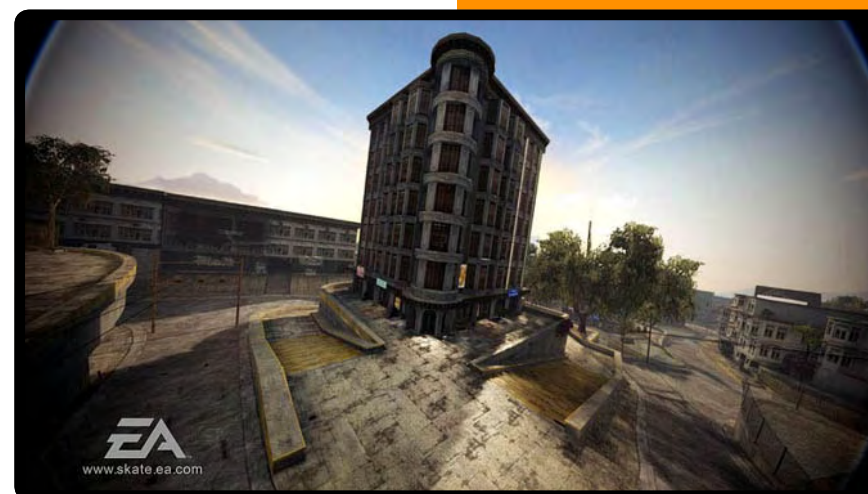
creator allowing you to make
 your own logos for use on
 clothes and boards.

When do we get more?

It's out in January – the 23rd to
 be precise – so with any luck
 we'll have a review for you in
 two issues' time.

Anything else to declare?

You'll be able to transition
 seamlessly between online and
 offline modes, with competitive
 challenges allowing you to face
 off against other PS3 skaters.

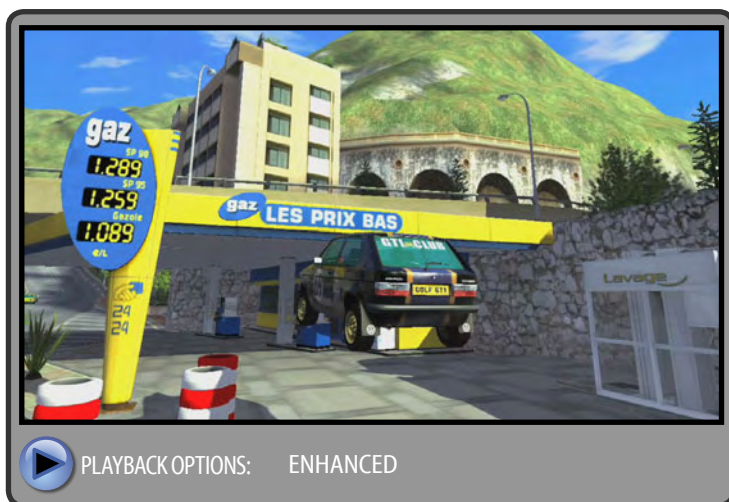


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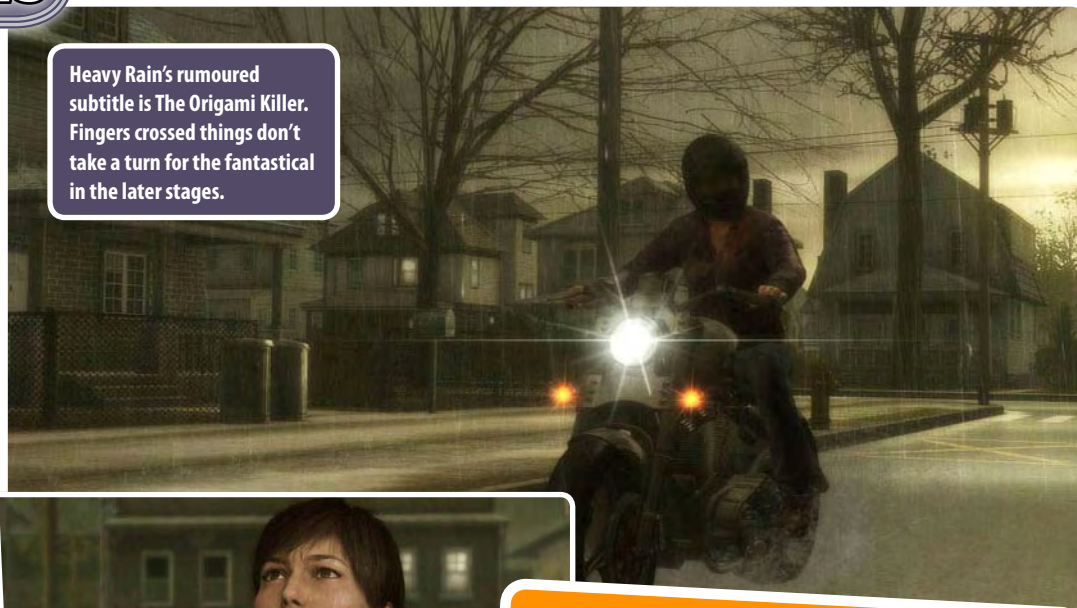


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HEAVY RAIN

Publisher: SCEE
Developer: Quantic Dream
Heritage: Fahrenheit, The Nomad Soul
Link: www.quanticroom.com
ETA: 2009

Heavy Rain's rumoured subtitle is *The Origami Killer*. Fingers crossed things don't take a turn for the fantastical in the later stages.

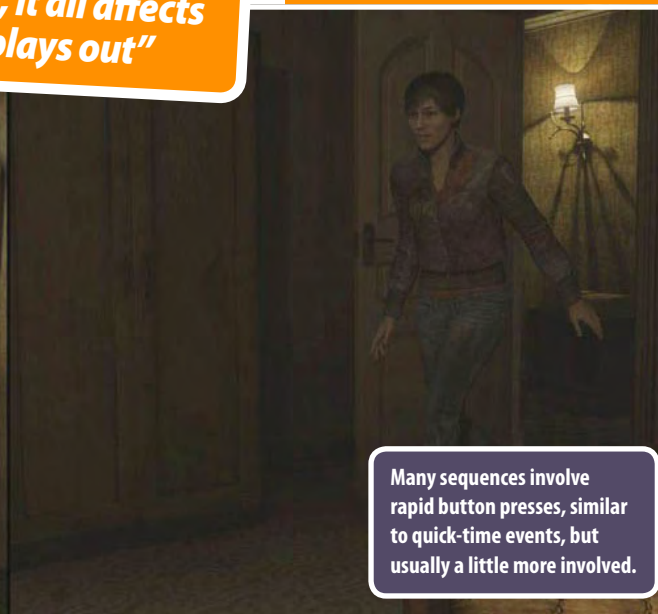
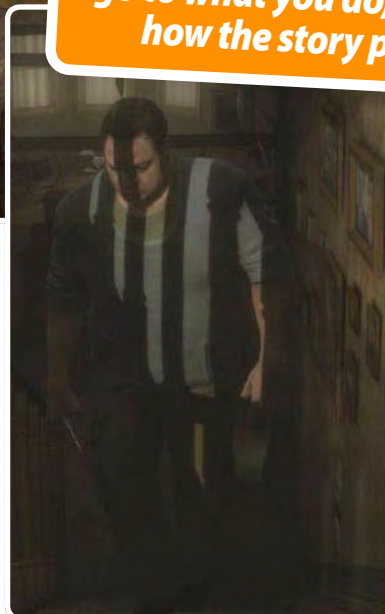


PREVIEW FEEDBACK!
 Click here to tell us what you think of Heavy Rain

The facial detail is quite incredible. With this and *Killzone 2*, PS3 really seems to be starting to flex its graphical muscle.



"In Heavy Rain every action has a consequence – from where you go to what you do, it all affects how the story plays out"



Many sequences involve rapid button presses, similar to quick-time events, but usually a little more involved.

Heavy Rain



A brave new world

What's the story?

Fahrenheit creator David Cage has always been a visionary, though his games haven't always lived up to his ideas, with the aforesaid suspense thriller lapsing into sci-fi silliness in the final third. His latest title, the visually stunning *Heavy Rain*, is something new once again, offering numerous ways to shape the game's story that go above and beyond the simple binary choices available in most titles.

What do we know?

In *Heavy Rain* every action has a consequence – from where you go to what you do, it all affects how the story plays out. For example, you might venture into a house and be disturbed – go upstairs and you might be able to hide. Make a noise and you could be discovered. Which could lead to a fight. The fight could even lead to your character's death. Game over, right? Wrong. The game will carry on even without

this character, and you'll merely follow the story with someone else. The controls involve guiding your character more than moving them in a traditional manner – pointing them in the right direction rather than using standard analogue controls.

When do we get more?

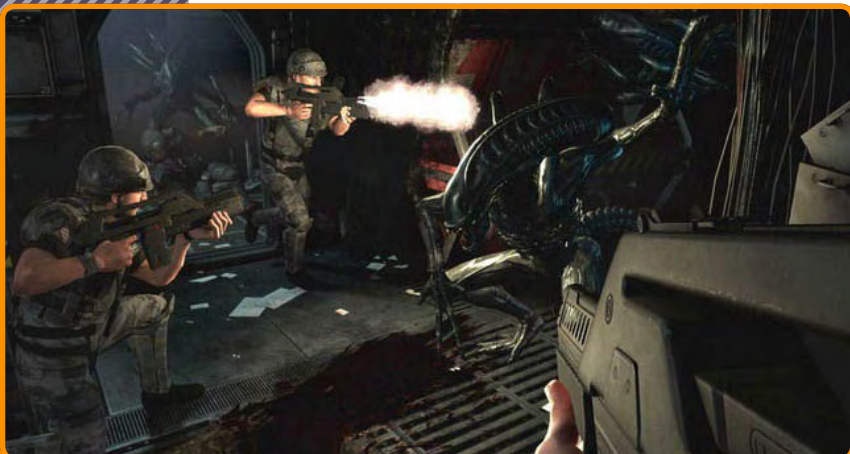
We expect to hear more fairly soon – with a release due next year, we reckon it's not going to be that long before Sony allows the game to be previewed.

Anything else to declare?

Reportedly, the section of the game demoed at E3 will be available to download from the PSN at some point before the full game's launch.

INCOMING

Another secret six heading your way...



Aliens: Colonial Marines

Publisher: Sega | ETA: Q1 2009

There's not been a decent Aliens game for ages, but we're really excited about this forthcoming squad-based shooter, as it comes from Gearbox, creators of the Brothers in Arms games – which are some of the best tactical first-person shooters around. Hell's Highway was a slight disappointment, but that suffered from a protracted development. With the team now having more experience with the Unreal engine, we expect this to be more polished.



F.E.A.R. 2 – Project Origin

Publisher: Warner Bros. | ETA: 13th February

Guns, slo-mo and one of the creepiest children you've ever seen. Yep, horror-shooter F.E.A.R. is back, and so is Alma, destroying the city of Auburn with her freakishly powerful supernatural anger. If that wasn't enough to worry about, you'll have opposing forces who – if the original is anything to go by – are some of the most intelligent AI enemies you'll ever face.

Lord of the Rings: Conquest

Publisher: Electronic Arts | ETA: 16th January

Or Lord of the Rings: Battlefront, as it could well be known. It's essentially a re-tooled version of that famous Star Wars series, but its action is perhaps closer to a third-person brawler. Perhaps the most interesting feature is the ability to play as the forces of evil – taking control of oliphaunts, trolls, the Balrog and even Sauron himself. So if you're bored of Aragorn and Legolas et al, you can go round beating them up instead. Great idea.



Red Faction: Guerrilla

Publisher: THQ | ETA: Spring

The original Red Faction was all about the destruction, which is something developer Volition knows all about – its expertise in creating chaos is evident in the wonderfully OTT Saints Row 2. Guerrilla takes place some 50 years after the original, while the first-person perspective has been swapped for a third-person viewpoint. Meanwhile, its open-world environment should make it a little less linear than the first game.

Battle Fantasia

Publisher: 505 Games | ETA: 6th February

This 2D beat-'em-up is from the makers of the Guilty Gear series. Its American debut provoked generally positive critical notes, with the game's slower pace making it more accessible to newcomers, while its extensive moveset and more technical scrapping offers depth to hardcore players. It might struggle against SFIV, but this is definitely one to watch.



Burnout Paradise The Ultimate Box

Publisher: Electronic Arts | ETA: February

One of our top ten games of the year gets a welcome update, with a tweaked version of the original game plus all the downloadable content released so far – and any leading up to this February release.



IN THE PIPELINE

FEBRUARY	MARCH	SPRING	SUMMER 2009
SACRED 2: FALLEN ANGEL	RESIDENT EVIL 5	WWE LEGENDS OF WRESTLEMANIA	HARRY POTTER
STREET FIGHTER IV	SILENT HILL HOMECOMING	EDGE OF TWILIGHT	MATCHMAN

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COMING AUTUMN 2008

*Additional faceplates sold separately **Some features may be limited in the Wii™ and PlayStation®2 Guitar Hero World Tour games



PlayStation 2

PLAYSTATION 3

XBOX 360 LIVE

Wii

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Vicarious

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redoctane

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KILLZONE 2

Publisher: SCEE

Developer: Guerrilla

Heritage: Killzone,
 Shellshock: Nam 67,
 Legend, Project
 Snowblind

Link: www.killzone2.com

ETA: 20th February

EXCLUSIVE HANDS ON

Killzone 2

Extensive and exclusive hands-on with the game's campaign

With hindsight, Resistance 2's relatively low review score this month may have a fair bit to do with us playing Killzone 2 the day before. If you've been waiting for a real, true 'killer app' for your PS3 – and for some

bizarre reason you're ignoring LittleBIGPlanet – then this could well be the game you're looking for.

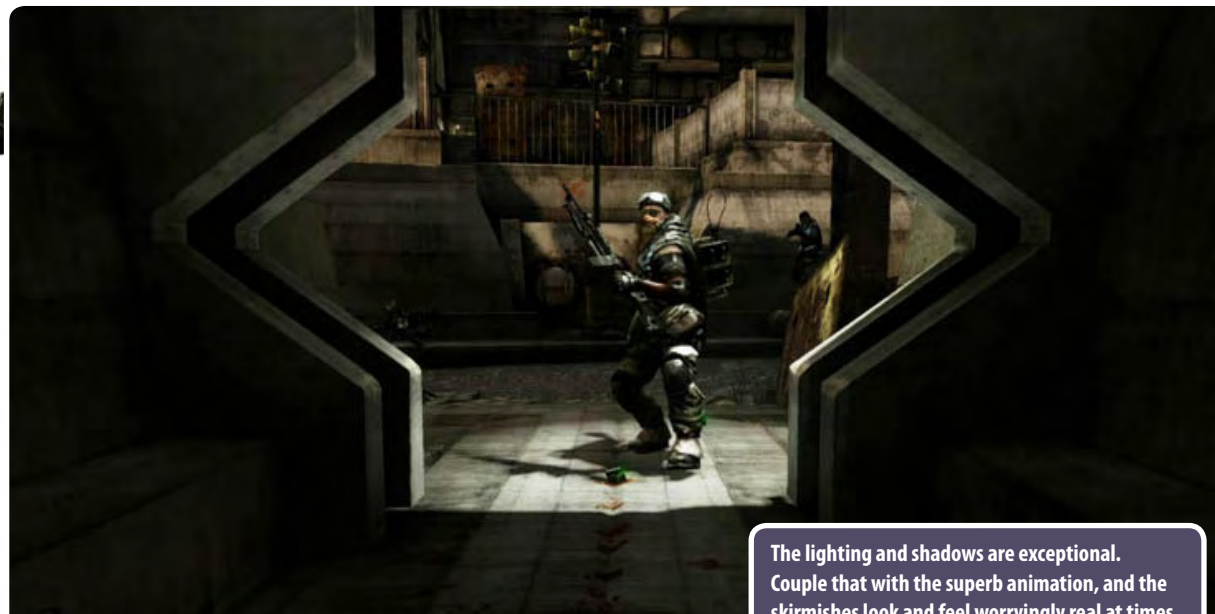
You might well be convinced that the Cell has been tamed, that PS3 finally has something so accomplished that the 360 surely >

KILLZONE 2

> Killzone 2 continued

couldn't keep up. Because Killzone 2 – at least from a technical standpoint – looks absolutely phenomenal. It's not nearly as grey as you might think, either. Sure, the first couple of stages overdose a little on the modern shooter's colour du jour, but the Helghast's red eyes stand out

"If you've been waiting for a true 'killer app' for your PS3 then this could be the game you're looking for"



The lighting and shadows are exceptional. Couple that with the superb animation, and the skirmishes look and feel worryingly real at times.

EXCLUSIVE SCREEN



ROLL OVER
THE BIG
PICTURE

Hero Sev is a bit of a blank canvas, but he's probably the most likeable character, with some of the dialogue almost unintelligible the way it's grunted out.

all the more against the crumbling, decaying backdrops, while blood spatters look more vivid against such starkly coloured locales. Later stages, as your mission takes you deeper into Helghan cities, offer a sickly yellow-green hue to the illuminated night, with lightning crackling across the sky, while the sixth and final stage of our code (reaching just about halfway through the campaign) is something different entirely – a dusty, rusty orange-brown desert environ. Yet it's not the splashes of colour that make your jaw drop so much as the astounding lighting and the incredible effects. There's always something going on that really makes you feel part of a war. Plenty of it's just for show –

KILLZONE 2

> Killzone 2 continued

scripted deaths of minor NPCs, flying debris, background explosions and the falling bodies of Helghast troops – but few games have so effectively recreated the frenetic chaos of war. Even the Call of Duty games rarely offer quite so bludgeoning a sensory assault – not for nothing is the cover system named ‘duck and peek’ as you’ll visibly be keeping your head low as rockets, grenades and bullets fly so close to you that you’d be totally forgiven if you actually ducked yourself.

Action, man

With no intro sequence in the code we clutch in our grateful hands, we’re dropped straight into the action, tasked with advancing the Nemesis Convoy into Visari over the

Occasionally all you’ll see of your Helghast opponents are those red lights.



“Even the Call of Duty games rarely offer quite so bludgeoning a sensory assault”

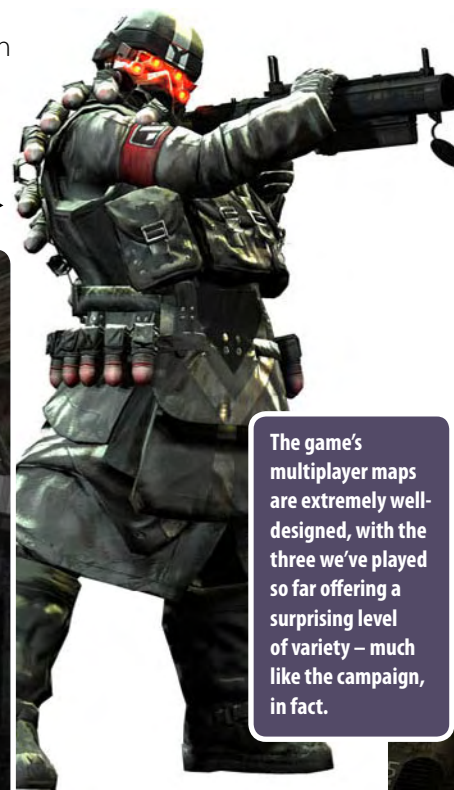
course of six frenzied sub-missions. A beach landing has you firing a well-timed rocket to destroy the bridge holding some of the Helghan resistance, before venturing inside a warehouse to restore the floodgate controls and keep the convoy moving. Then you’ll move to upper walkways to defend your fellow >

In the heat of battle, it’s not always easy to differentiate enemy types – it’s certainly not an issue in the single-player, but takes some getting used to in the multi.



EXCLUSIVE SCREEN

ROLL OVER
THE BIG
PICTURE



The game’s multiplayer maps are extremely well-designed, with the three we’ve played so far offering a surprising level of variety – much like the campaign, in fact.

HEL ON EARTH

Why Killzone 2’s online will blow you away



Seriously
hardcore

Sheer class

Level up

Seriously hardcore

Killzone’s multiplayer feels so good precisely because it’s so out of step with a lot of the more accessible first-person shooters of recent years. It’s not an instant blastathon like Halo, but something slower, more thoughtful and more measured. Run around in an open area and you’ll be picked off pretty sharpish. Stay in cover, move between protective walls and barriers, and stealthily creep towards your opponents, occasionally leaning out to pop off a round or two. That’s the Killzone way.

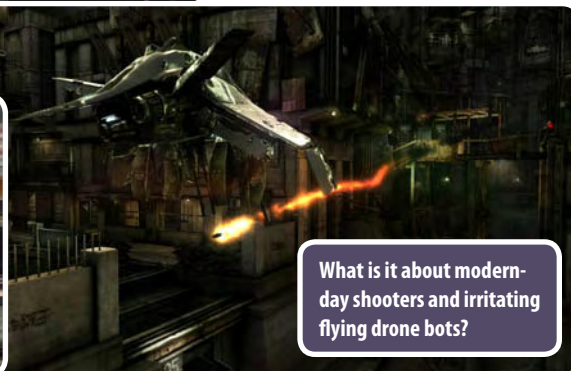
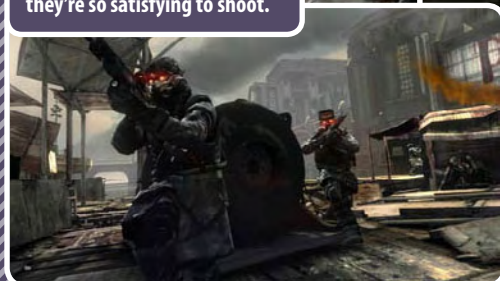


KILLZONE 2



Weapons really have a weight to them, which might take some getting used to – especially if you’re coming from Resistance 2 – but they’re so satisfying to shoot.

This helmet-free fellow is a Saboteur – though occasionally a shot to the head of a Helghan troop will remove his head protection in the single-player, too.



What is it about modern-day shooters and irritating flying drone bots?



> Killzone 2 continued

troops from attack, before rejoining your vehicles and assisting in a charge to secure the Korovis dam. Even during this opening stage, the game’s mixing up the action, taking you from fairly open areas with plenty of cover, into smaller interiors packed with enemies, up to higher positions with machine-gun emplacements to capture, and then onto a massive arena where there are few places to hide from the enemy tanks. It’s intense stuff, and things only get more frantic from here on in, as protagonist Sev and teammate Garza lead a two-man assault on the Helghan Arc Tower which is preventing the ISA from

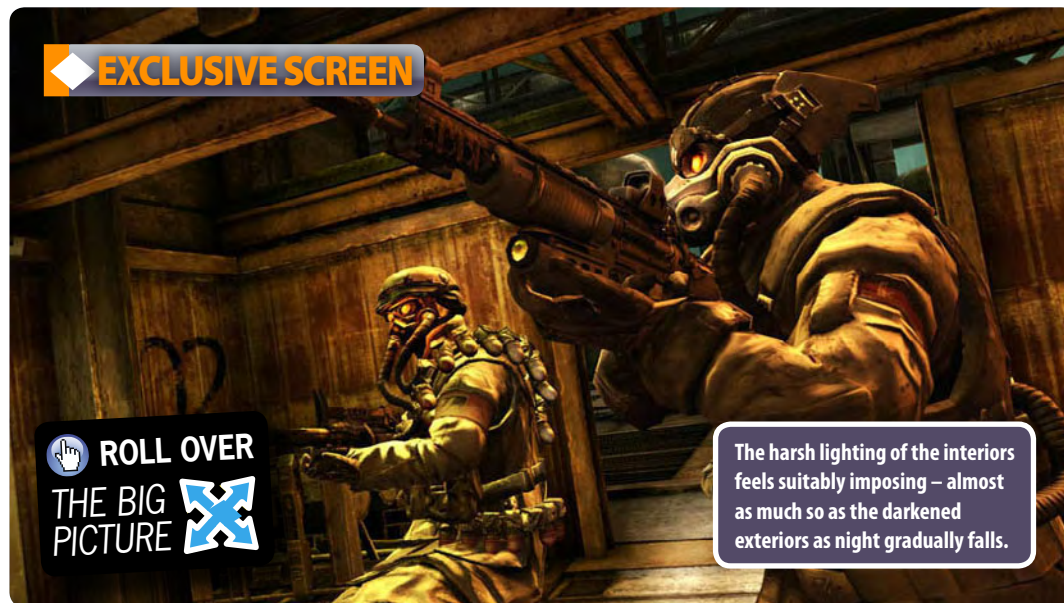
“The larger, more heavily-armed Helghan troopers provide a meaty challenge”

calling in any useful air support.

The game’s third stage offers some of the best set-pieces so far, with larger, more heavily-armed Helghan troopers providing a meatier challenge as your troops defend their captured territory, while Sev and Garza are called in to help Alpha Team veterans Rico and Natko, who are pinned down by Helghast troops. This particular section probably showcases Killzone 2 at its best – you’re told your objective is to ‘survive the Helghan assault’



EXCLUSIVE SCREEN



ROLL OVER
THE BIG
PICTURE

The harsh lighting of the interiors feels suitably imposing – almost as much so as the darkened exteriors as night gradually falls.

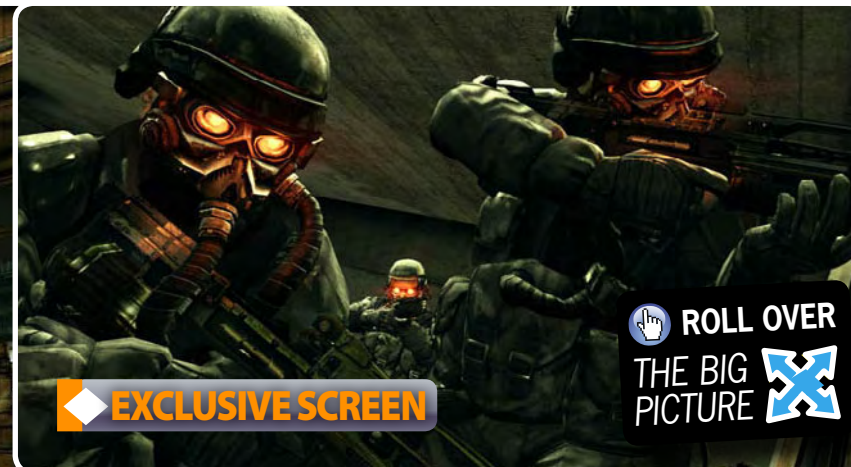
KILLZONE 2

[ROLL OVER](#)
 THE BIG
 PICTURE



Salamun Market has plenty of open spaces
 – you'll really need to sprint between cover
 positions here if you want to stay alive.

[EXCLUSIVE SCREEN](#)



[ROLL OVER](#)
 THE BIG
 PICTURE

[EXCLUSIVE SCREEN](#)

*"There are plenty
 of places to go but
 very few to hide –
 it's blisteringly
 exciting stuff"*

While the Helghast don't
 sound threatening,
 they do offer significant
 resistance in numbers.
 They can be susceptible
 to melee attacks from
 the side, though.

> Killzone 2 continued

which fills you full of dread. Once you've killed a large wave of foes, you breathe a sigh of relief, only to see a ship swoop down to deposit another group of enemies as you dig in, desperately trying to fend off the advancing tide, who are seemingly getting more intelligent – hunkering down behind cover themselves, blind-firing, hurling grenades your way and flanking you. There are plenty of places to go but very few to hide – it's blisteringly exciting stuff. The next two stages involve a lengthy, protracted capture of an important Helghan bridge – your

desperate opponents demolish the first method of crossing the Corinth river, with the attack splitting Sev up from his colleagues. It's quite the departure being on your own, which leads to the pace dropping a little as you creep nervously through alleys and sewage pipes to eventually reunite with Garza, blowing apart an entire building to help your convoy pass further into the Helghast city of Visari.

It's the next stage where things start getting seriously tricky, though. The difficulty is ramped up during an epic outdoor encounter at the one remaining river crossing point, before you advance towards the

hideaway of enemy General Radek, with a lobby shootout clearly inspired by The Matrix, with almost an equal amount of crumbling scenery as bullets fly between the two sides, splintering away chunks of the room's large pillars. Then the game's first real boss fight ensues, before Alpha moves onto brand new territory, escorting a scientist through a seemingly deserted mining village. Seemingly being the operative word. A few skirmishes and a kidnap later, and our heroes leap aboard a train to... well, we don't actually know where, because that's when the credits roll, 42 per cent of the game completed in a

little under five hours.

Thrills and spills

That's five hours of almost constant thrills – of chunky, weighty weaponry chewing through scenery and enemies with equal vigour; of generally intelligent enemies working together to pin you down and push you back; of generous checkpoints and tough but fair difficulty, and even some clever Sixaxis use (explosive charges are set by tilting left and right before detonating remotely). It's all very satisfying.

Sadly though, Killzone 2 blots its copybook in two major ways. The first is with the boss fight at



KILLZONE 2

> Killzone 2 continued

the end of the fifth stage, which is infuriatingly, unfairly cheap and hard. Find yourself stuck with the 'wrong' secondary weapon and you might as well reload from the previous checkpoint because you're given very little margin for error against this enemy, who is much faster and vastly more powerful than you are. It's a totally unnecessary addition, while it's also hugely contrived to have you tackling this enemy alone.

Mistake number two is in the characterisation. Many people have criticised the Gears of War games for their scripts, but rarely do Delta Squad seem unlikeable. The scriptwriters here have Alpha team uttering streams of pointless profanities, frequently bickering in a way that seems much nastier than mere banter, and offering lame fratboy gags which almost without exception fall totally flat. They're also all ludicrously gruff – almost as if some exec at Sony has advised that it should be "like Gears with even more testosterone". You've no affinity with any of your squad, and indeed the occasionally incompetent Helghast seem sympathetic by comparison – the heavy weapons troopers bemoaning their own lack of speed when a grenade is tossed in their direction, and their shouts for assistance make them seem far less threatening. We're told that the voices are placeholders for the time

being – let's hope the script gets the once-over before the game goes gold, too. Failing that, a bit of silence would certainly be golden.

Minor quibbles

In truth, these are fairly minor quibbles in a game which, on this evidence, will set a very high quality bar for 2009 that only a select few games will come close to clearing. Its outstanding audiovisuals alone have pretty much ripped up the rulebook, providing a compelling reason for PS3 owners to purchase, if only to show off to their friends just what the console is capable of at the top of its game. Much-derided by corners of the gaming press and the internet after *that* E3 video, Killzone 2 might just force a few words back down a few throats when it stomps its way onto the scene in February. It's a rifle-butt to the face of every other PS3 FPS. Could it be Sony's very own Halo? We wouldn't bet against it, you know... ●

EXCLUSIVE SCREEN



Suljeva Village offers something very different to most of the footage shown so far, which gives us hope of even more varied environments later on.

ROLL OVER
THE BIG
PICTURE

"Killzone 2 is a rifle-butt to the face of every other PS3 first-person shooter"



Though the game's art style won't appeal to everyone, it's definitely a very well-realised world, mixing serious war elements with hard sci-fi.

P3Zine
KILLZONE 2

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE



FIRST IMPRESSIONS



An early contender for 2009's best shooter

GUERRILLA WARFARE

PS3's best shooter is almost here – we speak to the man calling the shots

Can Killzone 2 really become the PS3's Halo? We spoke to Game Director Mathijs de Jonge of developer Guerrilla to find out more about the making of Sony's killer FPS.

When you first sat down to start planning Killzone 2, what was

your mission statement? What exactly did you want to achieve?

For Killzone 2 we wanted to build upon our vision for Killzone 1 and Killzone: Liberation. An obvious thing to do was to further enhance the strongest features and improve on the weaker elements, but first and foremost we wanted to make a

high quality, fun to play shooter that will appeal to a wide audience.

What in particular did you want to change from the first Killzone? Was there anything in that game that, with hindsight, you weren't happy with?

For us Killzone 1 was a great learning experience. We aimed high and unfortunately we didn't entirely achieve our goals – the framerate for example was lower than we hoped.

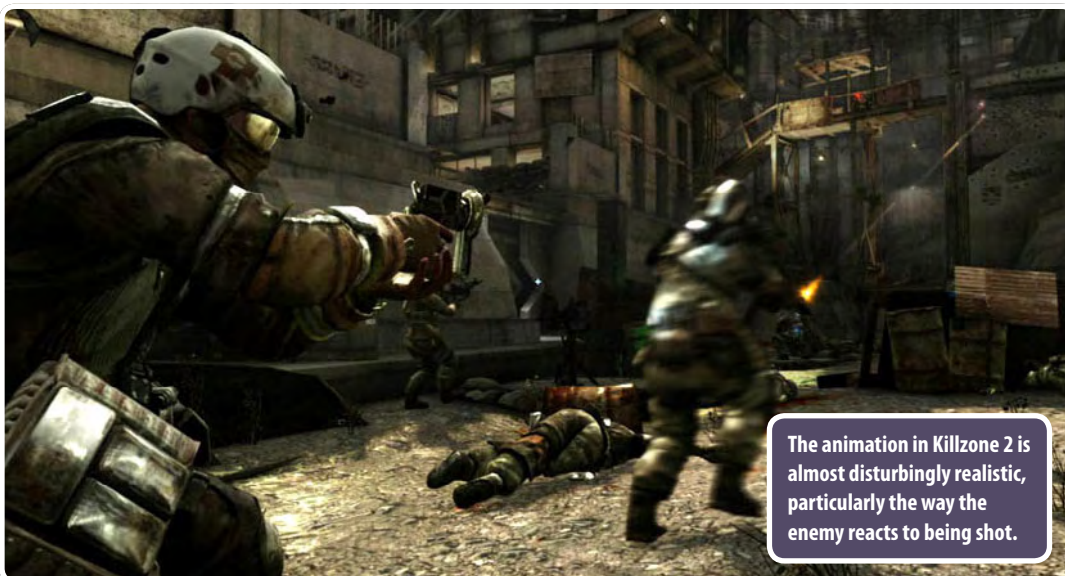
But the game also had its strengths and we knew that the PlayStation 3 would allow us to get much closer to our initial vision. To give an example, current day technology, skills of our personnel and the amount of memory that is available on this platform have made it possible for us to make the enemy hit reaction animation system one of the key features in Killzone 2. It looks amazing.

That E3 2005 video was a tough act to follow. Do you think that

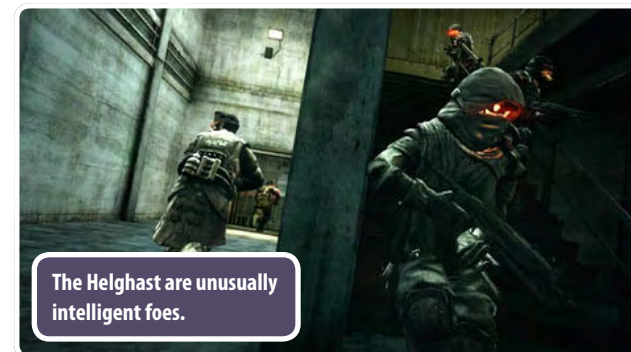
now the visuals are somewhere approaching that footage, and that the game has finally proven itself to the doubters?

Oh yes! I'm confident that we got really close to our target video, not only visually but also in terms of the sheer amount of action going on around the player. In some areas we managed to push the quality beyond what we shown in the video. For example, setting enemies >

Game Director Mathijs de Jonge seems satisfied that Killzone 2 comfortably bests the original.



The animation in Killzone 2 is almost disturbingly realistic, particularly the way the enemy reacts to being shot.



The Helghast are unusually intelligent foes.

> Interview continued



The game's multiplayer component is likely to be a key draw – with its team-based gameplay and hardcore approach, it's a real no-nonsense shooter.

“Setting enemies on fire looks more realistic in the actual game than it did in the E3 2005 trailer”

on fire looks more realistic in the actual game than it did in the trailer.

Did that put you under extra pressure to create something that would dazzle from a visual standpoint as well as a gameplay one?

Well, we aim very high in all areas. It's not only visually where we try to

be among the best in the industry but also sound wise, with full 7.1 surround support, motion-captured character animations, realistic weapon handling and variety. All this combined delivers a unique and highly immersive experience.

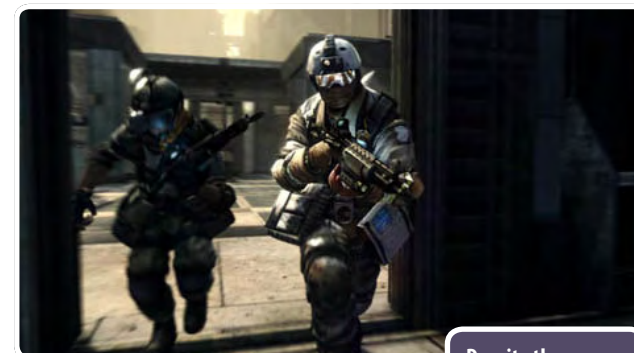
Some of the design decisions – the ‘lean and peek’ cover system, the class system and the way you unlock classes in the online game – give the game quite a different feel from a lot of other first-person shooters out there. Was that a deliberate decision to try to do things differently, or did those elements just happen naturally during the game's development?



Enemy snipers are often deadly accurate.

Yes, it's very important for us to create something that is unique and different – in a good way. While developing, we always try use our own creations, previous games or early prototypes for inspiration as opposed to looking at other games. In my opinion this is the best way to come up with something that is truly unique and gives the game its own original flavour.

The cover system in Killzone 2 is based on the system we developed for Killzone: Liberation, and it was one of our game designers that convinced me that it was possible to turn it into a first-person mechanic. As no other game had ever done that before, he brought some movies that he had captured at home where he acted out the mechanic. It's a great invention that was born from numerous playthroughs of early prototypes.



Despite the fantastical setting, there's a gritty, urban realism to Killzone's environments.

It's quite a tough shooter in the sense that it doesn't take too many hits before you're down – which seems unusual in the current climate, with more games trying to appeal to the casual gamer. Would it be fair to say you're targeting the game purely at a hardcore audience?

We've done a lot of playtesting on Killzone 2 and I'm confident that the four available difficulty levels make

> Interview continued

There's an intriguing backstory to the conflict with the Helghast, and at times you'll be wondering if you're really one of the good guys.



the game appealing for all gamers that are into action games. The mechanics are balanced in such a way that they help less experienced players but also have enough layers of depth for the more hardcore first-person shooter fans to explore.

Helghan is a dark, bleak place, and the graphics look almost monochromatic at times, with the flashes of red blood notably standing out. Has it been difficult to vary the look

of the different areas without compromising the consistency of the visual design?

Not really. We have the player travelling through very different environments like urban, wastelands, underground and more. This allows us make big changes in how different levels/maps look without compromising the consistency of the visual design.

It's been said that your worst opponent could be the planet itself – can you give us any more details of what exactly is meant by that?

The home planet of the Helghast is a very hostile place with storms raging, lightning striking, sand storms and critters crawling around. The Helghast have managed to capture some of the planet's energy



If a team-mate is downed, you can revive him with a special weapon which zaps comrades back to life.

sources and turn it into weaponry. We've developed several mechanics that support this feature, such as a wind system that affects player movement and when you throw a hand grenade into the wind for example, it will fly back at you.

Can you tell us more about which vehicles appear in the game and how they're used?

There is a large variety of vehicles appearing in Killzone 2, like flying Intruders that drop off ISA troops, Helghast sawblade-equipped APC's that can cut through walls, and the player will be able to operate a heavy ISA tank while firing missiles and a machine gun at Helghast tanks. And a very cool vehicle that appeared as a boss in Killzone: Liberation will also be available for the player.

The online beta looked to all intents and purposes like a game which was near-as-damn-it complete. How close are you now to the finish line?

At this moment we're fixing the last couple of remaining bugs, and I'm really happy to see how few there actually are. Killzone 2 is definitely the most polished game I've worked on so far.

Finally, which single aspect of the game are you most proud of? Is there one element which stands out that you think that the players will love?

I'm most proud about the total combat experience and how intense, immersive, varied, realistic and – last but certainly not least – fun, we managed to make it. You're going to love it! ●

KILLZONE 2

Publisher: SCEE
Developer: Guerrilla
Heritage: Killzone, Shellshock: Nam 67, Legend, Project Snowblind
Link: www.killzone2.com
ETA: 20th February

"When you throw a hand grenade into the wind, it will fly back at you!"

KILLZONE[®] 2

FREE!

Four Killzone 2 desktop
wallpapers and a
screensaver for your PCEXCLUSIVE
WALLPAPERS &
SCREENSAVER

● This issue's Killzone 2 exclusives keep coming, with this collection of desktops for your PC, and our deeply impressive screensaver, too. Prove to your friends that you really

know your games by downloading them now. And it really couldn't be easier to do. Just follow the instructions to the right and Bob's your mother's brother.

BEST_{of} 2008

We'd heard that 2008 was supposed to be 'the year of the PS3'. It didn't quite turn out that way, but Sony's console was certainly bolstered by some superb first-party titles and format exclusives. The P3Zine team has spent a while deliberating, but we've finally come up with a top 10 which we think represents the best PS3 had to offer in 2008. We've focused mainly on games exclusive to PS3 and those which are superior on Sony's console, hence no GTA IV and some other multi-format titles you might otherwise expect to see. But we're sure you'll agree that the following games show exactly why the PS3 is starting to get its act together – an eclectic mix of genres which prove the console's versatility, offering quality titles in almost every genre. And feel free to contact us and tell us if there are any glaring omissions – inform us of your own favourites and we'll see how your lists compare.

10 Resistance 2

Sony's big first-party FPS for this year isn't quite up to the quality of next year's effort – the hugely accomplished Killzone 2 – but it's polished, enjoyable and offers more bang for your buck than almost any game released this year. With a wealth of multiplayer modes, a story mode which gets better and better as it goes on (culminating in a shocking climax) and a superb eight-player cooperative campaign, this is an absolute bargain for the price, and will give FPS lovers months of entertainment.

Offering some terrific set-pieces and boss battles, Resistance 2 is one of the best first-person shooters of the year.



9 PixelJunk Eden

It was a toss-up between this and superb tower-defence game Monsters, but Q Games' uniquely arty puzzler wins out by virtue of its originality. With its psychedelic visual style, gorgeous ambient soundtrack and supremely addictive gameplay, it was easily one of the highlights of the year on PSN. At a penny under a fiver, it also represents amazing value for money. We're promised more PixelJunk titles next year, and we can't wait to see what's in store from this truly innovative indie developer.

PSN played host to a number of great titles this year – the quirky PixelJunk Eden is just one of our favourites.



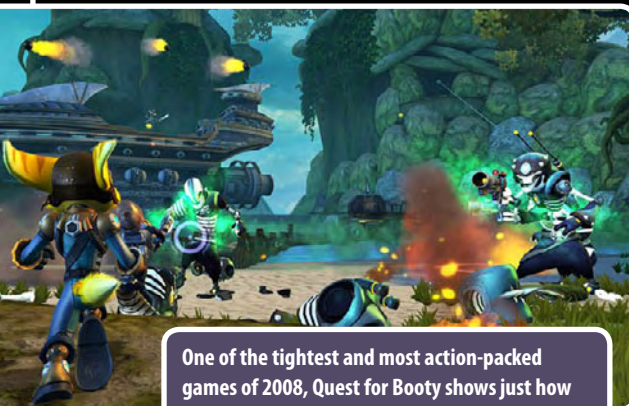
8 Burnout Paradise

One of just two multi-format releases on our list, which means two things. One, that developers are beginning to get their act together when it comes to making the most of the PS3. And two, that it's still not quite enough. But Burnout Paradise proved that the technical wizards at Criterion knew what they were doing when this open-world racer hit shelves at the beginning of the year, with this version pipping the 360 to the finishing line with just the merest hint of extra graphical polish. As for the

Criterion has promised further download packs for 2009, which may see us return to Paradise City sooner rather than later.

game itself, well, it's the usual blisteringly fast racing and crashing, but in a city environment that allows you to go where you please. The amazing downloadable content – completely free, of course – just increased this superb racer's shelf life.

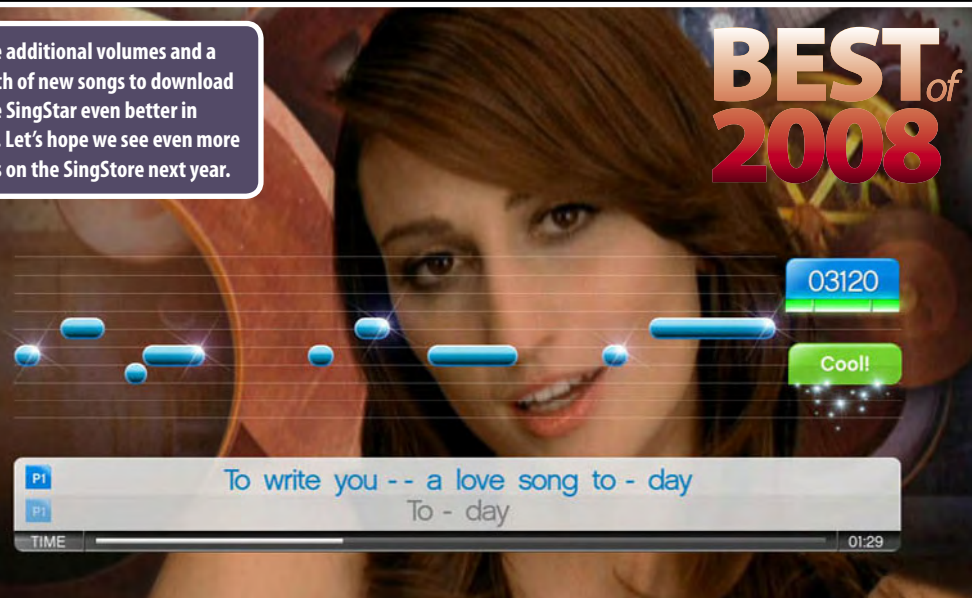
7 Ratchet and Clank Future: Quest for Booty



One of the tightest and most action-packed games of 2008, Quest for Booty shows just how well downloadable episodic sequels can work.

For our money, Quest for Booty was a leaner, tighter and better-paced game than Tools of Destruction. Amazingly, it looked even better – its crisp, colourful visuals blowing most retail titles out of the water. At just four hours long, it didn't keep us busy for as long as we'd have liked, but there was never a dull moment. Quest for Booty offered puzzles, platforming and plenty of blasting as a Clank-less Ratchet attempted to rescue his robotic chum while engaging in some piratical fun and frolics.

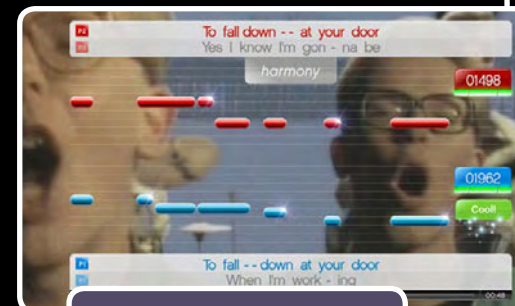
Three additional volumes and a wealth of new songs to download made SingStar even better in 2008. Let's hope we see even more tunes on the SingStore next year.



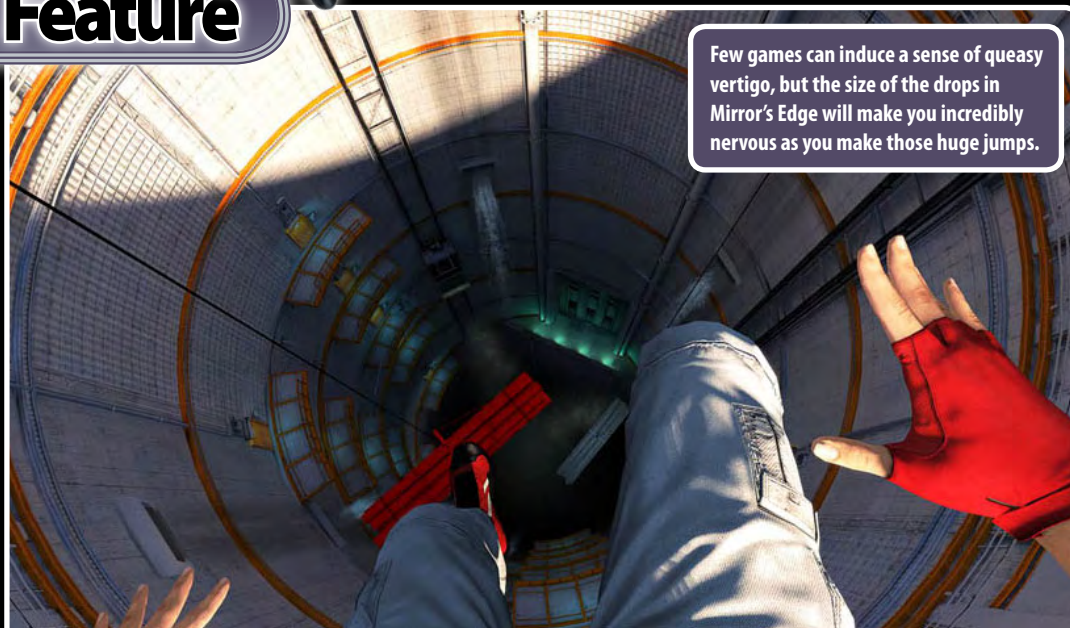
6 SingStar

Hang on a minute, didn't this come out last year? Well, yes it did, but 2008 was the year when SingStar really started to take off, with regular downloadable content, a thriving online community and three more disc-based expansions to really turn this from 'game' into 'format'. At the time of writing there are almost 500 songs available for download, ranging from Ace of Base to The Zutons, providing an unbeatable choice – so much so that Microsoft's competitor Lips seems incredibly limited by comparison. With the promise of wireless mics on the way, the SingStar phenomenon just grows and grows, while the singing experience gets better and better. And if you're not that great a singer, then checking out the performances of people even worse than you can only improve confidence. It's simple – if you don't own this, you're missing out on one of PS3's greatest games.

"At the time of writing there are almost 500 songs available for download"



Like we said, there's something for everyone here, regardless of what your particular music tastes are.

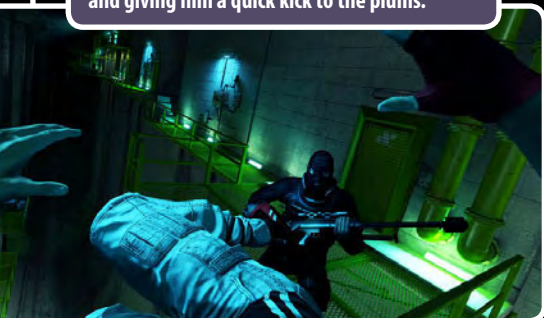


Few games can induce a sense of queasy vertigo, but the size of the drops in *Mirror's Edge* will make you incredibly nervous as you make those huge jumps.

5 *Mirror's Edge*

Another multi-format release that's better on PS3, this innovative parkour actioner is one of the most original ideas of the year. Its ultra-cool art style reminds us of the

There's little more enjoyable than approaching a guard who's been shooting at you from afar and giving him a quick kick to the plums.



urban techno-chic of *Wip3out*, which is perhaps why it feels more at home on PlayStation. Or perhaps it's that its controls – utilising both sets of shoulder buttons – come more naturally using a Dualshock 3 or Sixaxis. Though frustrating in parts, thanks to tricky combat sequences and the naturally unforgiving platforming – offering a tough difficulty curve, thanks to the unconventionality of the concept – *Mirror's Edge* wins through simply because it's one of the most delightfully different experiences of the year. Sprinting away from armed guards as pulsing techno beats and the sounds of runner Faith's panting breaths fill your ears is one of the most adrenaline-pumping experiences we've had in 2008.

4 *Motorstorm: Pacific Rift*

BEST of
2008

Time constraints, the late arrival of playable code and awkward deadlines meant that we never reviewed *Motorstorm: Pacific Rift*, but the amount of time we've made to play it since prove its qualities as a racer. It's far superior to the disappointing first game, offering more courses with more variety and better track design, with some excellent graphical effects really adding to the sense of speed. Whether you find yourself boosting over the apex of a hill, grabbing some serious air-time before landing ahead of your opponents, or desperately trying to extricate your bike from amidst a pack of monster trucks, there are few games that can offer such frantic, fast-paced thrills. Throw in the immensely enjoyable online modes, the screenshot-taking feature and a boatload of other stuff, and you've got a content-packed off-roader which easily ranks among the best titles of 2008. Bonus points for including offline multiplayer, too.

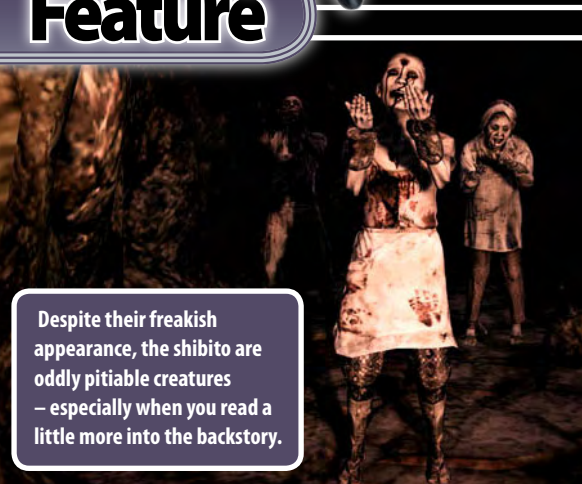


Despite a few dodgy ground textures, *Pacific Rift* does look gorgeous in places – and you can take screenshots of any particularly lush views.

"Pacific Rift is far superior to the disappointing first game"



A greater variety of vehicles – we particularly enjoyed crushing all-comers under the wheels of the monster trucks – made *Motorstorm's* sequel a far better game than the original.



Despite their freakish appearance, the shibito are oddly pitiable creatures – especially when you read a little more into the backstory.

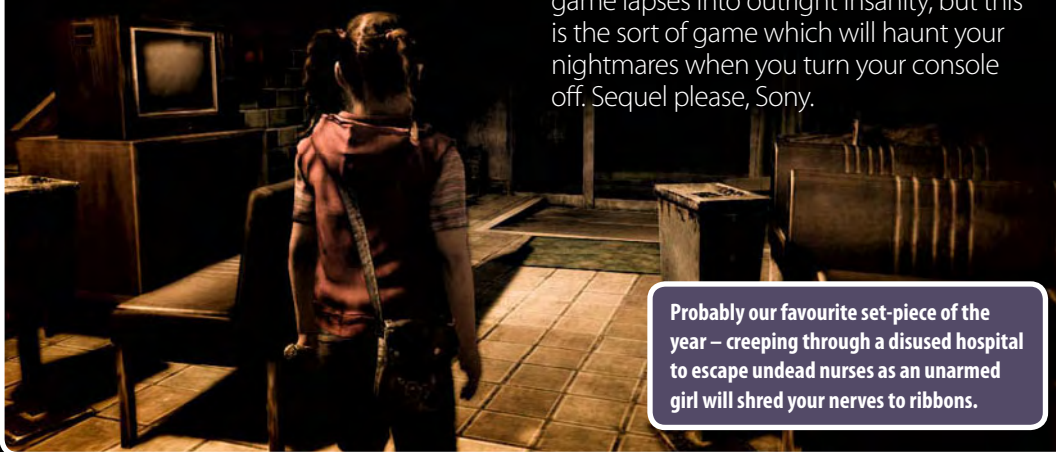
It says something about Siren's atmosphere when even its daytime scenes can induce shivers.



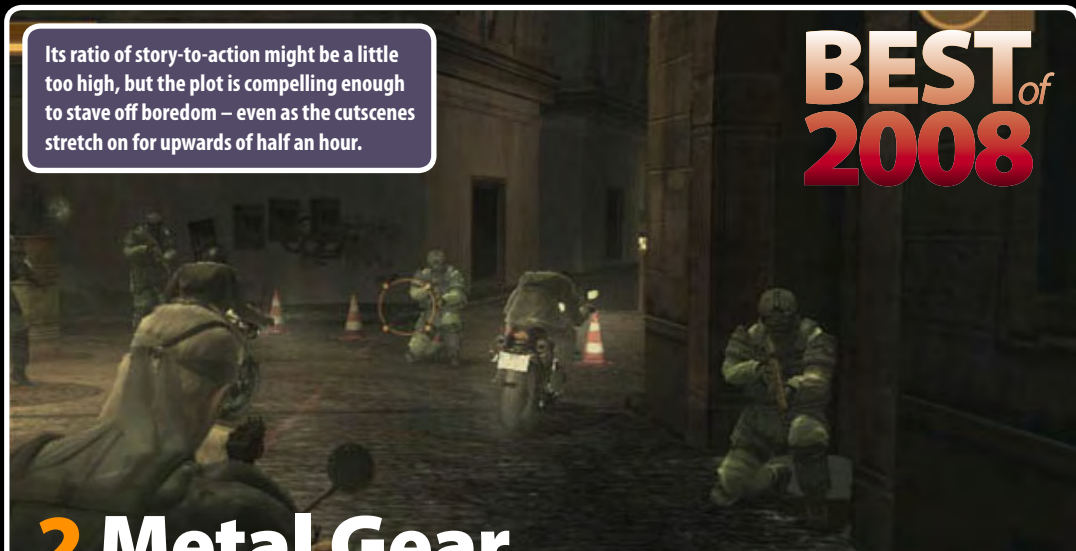
3 Siren: Blood Curse

PSN's best game – and also now available on Blu-Ray for a bargain £19.99 – Siren: Blood Curse is easily the year's scariest horror title, a disturbing psychological chiller whose creeping sense of unease and disquiet knocks Dead Space's comparatively schlocky shocks into a cocked hat. Not that it doesn't have

any jumps of its own – hello, head in a cupboard! – but there's a pervasive tension throughout the game which rarely lets up. The use of light and shadow is exemplary, while the sight-jacking mechanic – allowing you to see through the eyes of the enemy – is a vast improvement from the PS2 Sirens. Its story might be a little confusing, while the very ending of the game lapses into outright insanity, but this is the sort of game which will haunt your nightmares when you turn your console off. Sequel please, Sony.



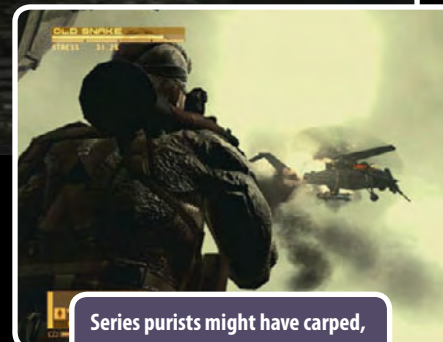
Probably our favourite set-piece of the year – creeping through a disused hospital to escape undead nurses as an unarmed girl will shred your nerves to ribbons.



Its ratio of story-to-action might be a little too high, but the plot is compelling enough to stave off boredom – even as the cutscenes stretch on for upwards of half an hour.

2 Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns of the Patriots

Whether you think its story is gripping hokum or pretentious hogwash, few can deny the brilliance of Hideo Kojima's last – and best – Metal Gear Solid. Though at times overblown, the plot weaves in some impressively weighty themes into its narrative, and while cutscenes occasionally drag on, when you do get to grab the controller, Snake is more manoeuvrable than ever before, crawling, sneaking, hiding and sometimes blasting through a series of beautifully rendered environments. The fan-service here is pretty much unparalleled – a number of vignettes tying up just about every loose end left dangling from the previous games – though there's plenty here to satisfy newcomers, too. As the credits roll, you're left in no doubt that you've had one of the most dazzling interactive experiences of the year, created by one of gaming's few remaining auteurs. Imperfect it may be, but when Guns of the Patriots is good, there's nothing on PS3 that can quite match up.



Series purists might have carped, but we relished the chance to let loose with some seriously powerful weaponry.

The variety in the action – from intense firefights to nifty stealthing – help make MGS4 the best in the series to date.



1 LittleBIGPlanet

It just couldn't be anything else. Media Molecule's masterpiece had a troubled launch, but when we finally got to grips with Sackboy and his astonishing level-creation toolkit, we were absolutely hooked. And even though the P3Zine team has been too busy to study all those lengthy and detailed tutorials in order to create something truly worthwhile, the chance to test out the creations of those with a little more free time has been a revelation.

And the story levels aren't half bad, either. It's not quite as perfect as some claim – Sackboy's handling is occasionally a little imprecise, and the tutorials are going to be incredibly daunting for some – but you'd be hard pushed to find a game as genuinely revolutionary as LittleBIGPlanet, not just for this year, but this entire console generation. If the community really takes off – and early evidence suggests it has – then eventually we're bound to see stages which better anything the game's developers themselves have created. And at that point we'll know for certain that this ingenious conceit has truly paid off.

"You'd be hard pushed to find a game as genuinely revolutionary as LittleBIGPlanet"

The game's unique cut-and-paste art style is no doubt bound to inspire imitators. It's no exaggeration to say it's one of the best-looking games ever.

LBP's inventive puzzles are generally more enjoyable than its pure platforming sections, but the story mode offers plenty of highlights.

BEST of
2008

Seeing how each level was constructed will often spark off a few ideas of your own – it really is ingeniously constructed in places.



Call of Duty: World at War

Once more into the breach

Hunkered down behind a low wall, you're handed a sniper rifle by your superior, Russian sergeant Reznov. You take aim and fire at some guards from a distance, your shots muffled by the drones of planes flying overhead. Then you're off – running while crouching, sneaking through a ruined city, stopping only to pop off

a few headshots with your rifle. The opening stage of the second part of the World at War story is incredibly atmospheric and exciting, but there's the curious sensation of having seen it all before. And, indeed, if you've experienced last year's Call of Duty, the magisterial Modern Warfare, then you have played something very similar. It's this year's All Ghillied Up

"If you've played last year's Call of Duty then you have played something very similar"

– a decent facsimile of the original, but a copy all the same.

Ultimately, that's probably World at War's biggest downside – that it doesn't quite forge its own identity, despite reverting to the

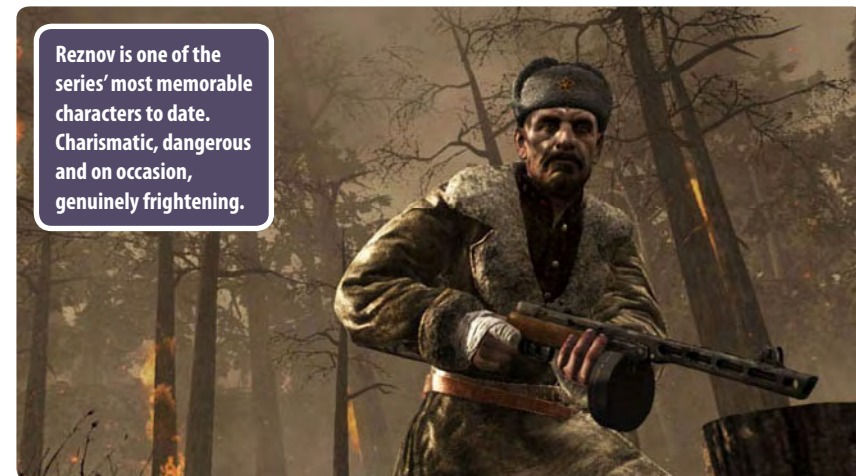


The game's atmosphere is further enhanced by the exemplary use of light and shadow throughout.

There are flying sections to break up the gameplay.



The slower-paced Soviet tale contrasts well with the more gung-ho action heroics of the American missions.



Reznov is one of the series' most memorable characters to date. Charismatic, dangerous and on occasion, genuinely frightening.

This on-rails sequence is one of the highlights of the game, even if it is fairly tenuously linked to the Pacific stages.

> Call of Duty continued

more familiar setting of World War II. After an expertly executed prologue, it even has a beach landing. It might be wonderfully constructed and superbly realised, but this sort of sequence was a cliché even before Treyarch decided it warranted revisiting once more.

Yet it's impossible to be too glum about it, because World at War is still a terrific piece of software. It's every bit as chaotically exciting as its predecessor, just as superbly paced, and equally well-presented. The action rarely lets up, and even at its most frantic, things stay super-smooth. If the game's inherent linearity helps make that possible,

Never be ashamed to hide when the pressure heats up. You can always take the odd pot-shot from your location.

"World at War's two campaigns contrast well, even as they both offer similar themes"

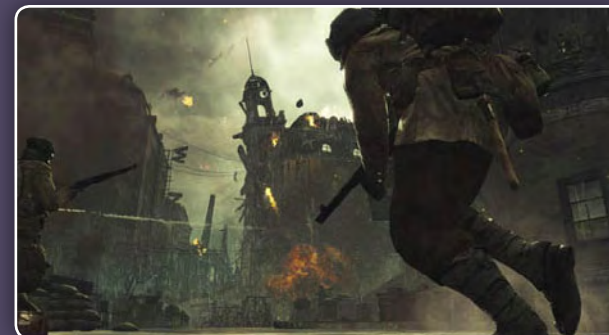
then we're all for more invisible barriers and respawning enemies. Well, perhaps not so much of the latter, on second thoughts.

Theme tuned

World at War's two campaigns contrast well, even as they both offer similar themes – you're marching towards victory and have to fight off the stragglers. In the Pacific, you're offing the last remaining Japanese soldiers, who are fighting for their lives more than anything else, while the Nazi resistance becomes ever more fractured and makes for some unpredictable opponents. Indeed, it even throws up some interesting moral dilemmas – giving you the chance to shoot surrendering

DIE HARD

How to stay alive in World at War



Smoke it

Clock watching

Fire down below

Smoke it

Hurling a smoke grenade can provide a bit of easy cover – you won't often get hit when shrouded in this mist, and you can use it to sprint between positions, or even to run up and surprise the enemy. You can even lob a frag grenade to follow it, which will undoubtedly catch one or two soldiers in the confusion.

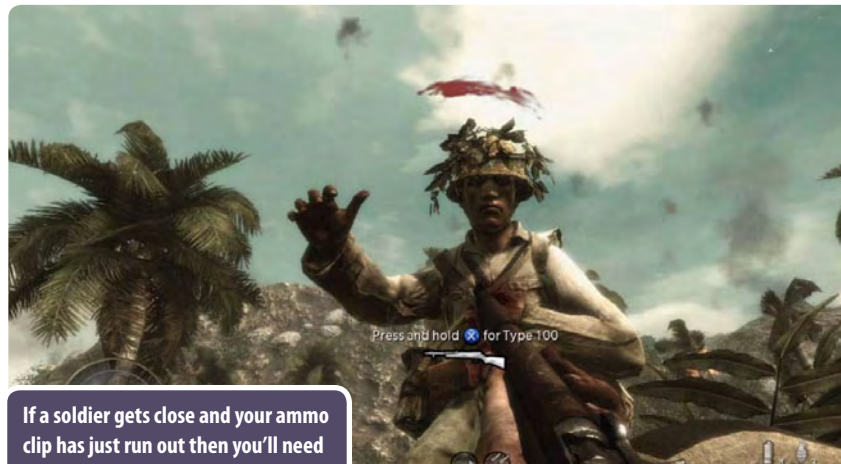
The game doesn't flinch from showing the horrors of war.

> Call of Duty continued

troops on occasion, as you're told you're being merciful by ending their lives. It's chilling stuff, which is why the asinine nu-metal music feels so tacky. And whoever it was that decided the end credits should launch immediately into the admittedly entertaining co-op challenge of Nazi Zombies should be thoroughly ashamed of themselves.

Modern thinking

The game's multiplayer offers a similar experience to Modern Warfare, with a perks system that's been lifted from last year's game – hey, if it ain't broke why fix it, right? – and a few small tweaks, some of which work and some of which don't. The maps don't initially seem quite as meticulously constructed as those in CoD4, and it remains to be seen whether players of that game will make the leap over. In our experience, there are plenty of people playing this though, so



If a soldier gets close and your ammo clip has just run out then you'll need to be swift with that melee attack.

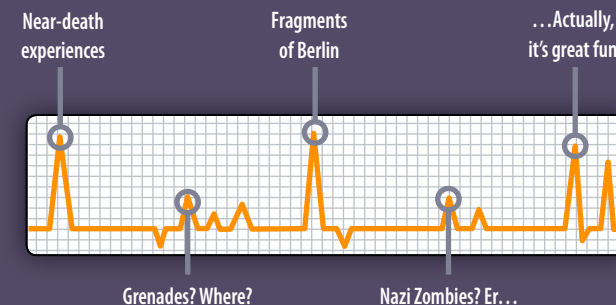
perhaps Treyarch has convinced quite a few of the doubters. And good for the developer, we say. Some naysayers predicted handing the reins to the Call of Duty 3 team was a bad move, but Treyarch has acquitted itself extremely well, providing an entertaining war game that owes too much of a debt to Infinity Ward to be worthy of a

"The game's multiplayer offers a similar experience to Modern Warfare"

higher mark than the one we've given it, but will give most players their 40 notes' worth. ●



PULSOMETER *Signs of life*



Here's another shot from the game's 'on-rails' sections.

P3Zine
Verdict
Just like CoD4 – for better and worse

+ No series does intensity like CoD
 + Oldman and Sutherland add gravitas
 - Occasional tactlessness

86%



Resistance 2

Spawn in the USA

Publisher: SCEE

Developer:

Insomniac Games

Heritage: Resistance: Fall of Man, Ratchet and Clank

Link: <http://beta.myresistance.net>

OUT NOW

Evidently, Resistance really is futile. The Chimera infection which has either killed those it has come into contact with or turned them into vicious, slaving alien beings has obliterated Europe and is now on the move to the US of A. Indeed, the Americans themselves are a little shy on troops, with the twelve thousand sent to aid the European fight being reduced to a mere one – protagonist Nathan Hale, who requires regular inhibitor shots to quell the infection which is starting to take over his body. Naturally, being a gruff, all-American superhero, he refuses treatment until



"Hale goes from cramped narrow corridors to huge forested areas"

Resistance 2's linearity is well-disguised, though occasionally you yearn to explore a little more.

The game isn't beyond cheap tricks to artificially lengthen the campaign – one awful section features an enemy which kills you in one hit.

It's quite a difficult game in places, with enemies ranging from dumb but numerous to tactically astute.

he's taken on the Chimeran menace almost single-handedly, regularly putting off those injections and putting his own life on the line to save others. Either that or he just has a fear of needles.

Anyway, that's essentially it as far as it goes for plot, with this wisp-thin conceit apparently considered enough to sustain the game over seven chapters, as Hale flits between states, taking down sundry spaceships and emplacements to stall the Chimera takeover. It's a pity there's nothing more to it than that, as it gives the game a bit of an episodic feel. The original's story wasn't its strongest point, but there

ALL HALE

Resistance 2's highlights reel



Augers well

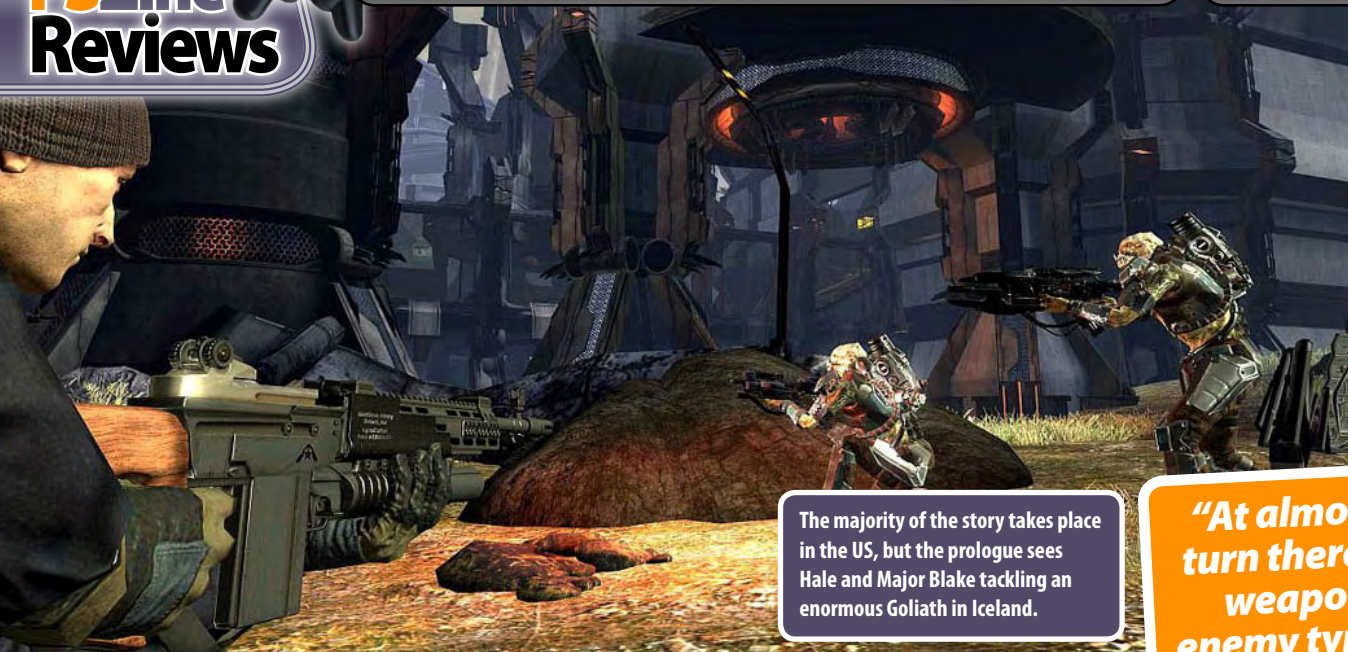
Let's get Kraken

Midnight Resistance

Augers well

The game's weapons, while sometimes feeling curiously lightweight, are definitely one of Resistance 2's biggest assets. Our favourite is undoubtedly the Auger, which allows you to fire through scenery, showing up enemies in bright yellow. And the magnum is a terrific pistol, mainly thanks to its secondary fire capability – you can detonate bullets remotely from a safe distance.

was a sense of logical progression to it – here it seems as if you're just travelling from place to place at the scriptwriter's whim. Fortunately, it means there's a much greater variety to the locations, taking Hale from cramped, narrow corridors to huge forested areas as you're dwarfed by Californian Redwoods. This gives



The majority of the story takes place in the US, but the prologue sees Hale and Major Blake tackling an enormous Goliath in Iceland.

Some environments seem to have been shipped in from other games, but the mix of locales is far more effective than the similar blitzed British cities in the first game.



"At almost every turn there's a new weapon, new enemy type or new boss to take on"

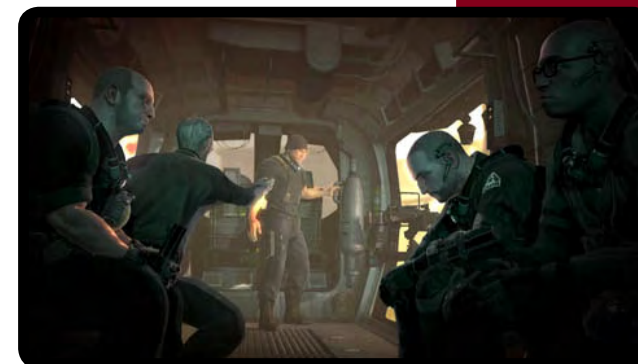
> Resistance 2 continued

each stage its own unique look, and the excellent pacing mixes up the gameplay more than you'd expect, too – tasking you with blasting several tiny, scuttling scorpion-like

creatures and then depositing a screen-filling boss in front of you along with a handy rocket launcher or pulse cannon to take it out.

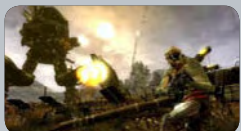
At almost every turn there's a new weapon, new enemy type or new boss to take on, and though it

might make you groan when you have to return into a building you've just exited because a dopey scientist has forgotten the inhibitors, much of



FREEZE FRAME

Going from zero to hero in five easy stages...



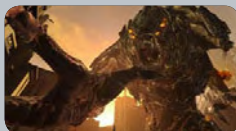
5 MINUTES
Already you're battling your first boss, with four rockets seeing off this stomping Goliath.



1 HOUR
I left my inhibitors in San Francisco – racing back to base to find your second big baddie.



3 HOURS
Twin falls? Not if Hale can help it. It's a long way down from the top of that tower.



6 HOURS
It's Chicago via Cloverfield as the Leviathan attacks. If only he'd open his mouth for us...



9 HOURS
Approaching the end, but multiplayer will keep you coming back for more.



that is down to a nervy anticipation of having to face whatever's inside, alone. And you will be flying solo for the most part – even when you've additional team members purportedly on your side, because for all the use they are they might as well be carrying water pistols.

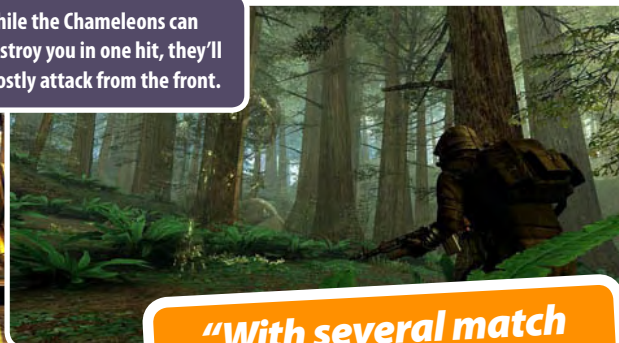
With the onus on Hale to sort out this mess on his own, none of the other characters gets much time to shine, which is why it's all the more surprising how bland our hero seems. It's part of this modern





While the Chameleons can destroy you in one hit, they'll mostly attack from the front.

The cooperative mode isn't as tactical as you might think, relying on frantic blasting rather than anything truly strategic – but it's never anything less than thoroughly entertaining.



"With several match types, it's no cliché to say there's something for everyone"

> Resistance 2 continued

trend towards moody characters who don't say much, apparently so players can empathise and project themselves onto their in-game avatar. But games like Half-Life 2 get around this by having their lead totally mute and other characters creating the interest. Hale talks too much for the former to work properly, and there isn't really anyone to play off, thus starving the game of any real

personality it may have.

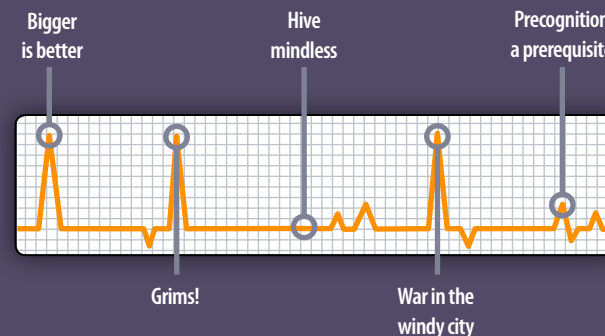
Ultimately, Resistance's campaign lacks any real hook to make it stand out – a great pity considering how well put together it is. It's certainly an improvement on the first game, mixing up what could have been a fairly repetitive experience with some creative locations and thrilling boss fights. A couple of cheap difficulty spikes sour things – one-hit-kill cloaking enemies? – but overall this is a solid and entertaining 10 hours.

If that was all Resistance had in its locker, it would be looking at a score in the low 70s. Fortunately its online options bolster the package to such a significant degree that if you regularly play first-person shooters over the PlayStation Network, you can perhaps even add a few more percentage points to our score. Put simply, it's one of the most comprehensive setups



All weapons have secondary fire – the Wraith gun can generate a temporary shield which is a boon when faced with multiple hostiles.

PULSOMETER *Signs of life*



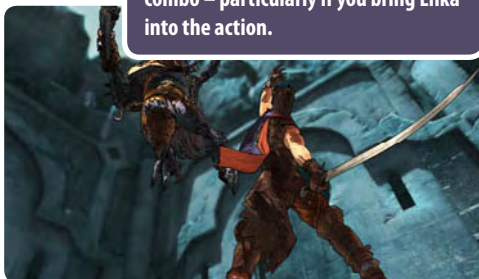
P3Zine
Verdict

A solid, fun, feature-packed shooter, but no more

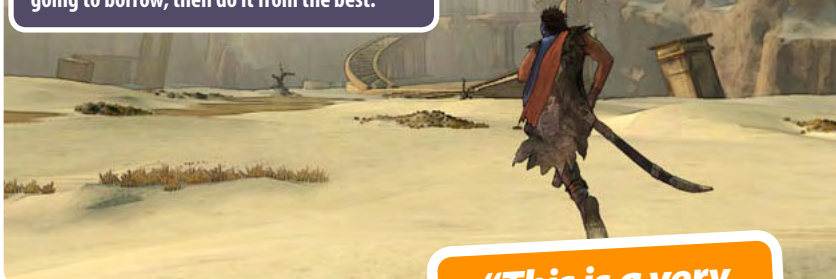
- + Cool weapons and boss fights
- + Great online modes
- A little derivative

82
%

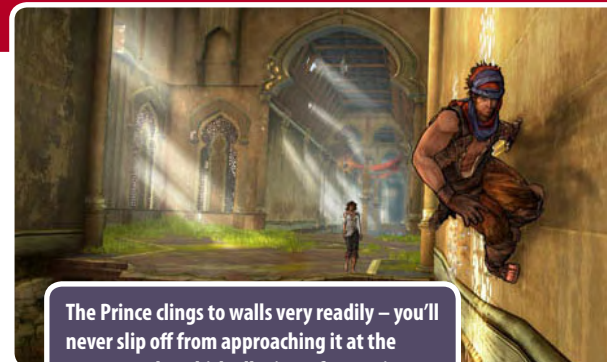
Press Circle at the right time and you can launch your opponent into the air, which is a good way of starting a combo – particularly if you bring Elika into the action.



The idea of a central hub and a light pointing you in the direction of your next objective is very Shadow of the Colossus. Still, if you're going to borrow, then do it from the best.



"This is a very different game from the much-celebrated last-gen trilogy"



The Prince clings to walls very readily – you'll never slip off from approaching it at the wrong angle, which alleviates frustration.

Prince of Persia

About a girl

Prince of Persia? Gorgeous graphics, stunningly fluid platforming, hokey story, shame about the combat. Ctrl-C, Ctrl-V... Despite this being a series reboot, it's business as usual for the Prince. He might have a new Canadian accent and a beautiful

female assistant but he's still suffering from the same problems as the last fella to take on the role.

Yet while the franchise's highlights and lowlights are essentially the same, it's unfair to say that nothing's changed, because in many ways this is a very different game from the

much-celebrated last-gen trilogy. For starters there's the amazing new look – the screenshots scattered across these pages should make it clear just how well the cel-shaded style works, and while for the most part it doesn't look quite so impressive in motion, the Prince himself does. If anything,

he's even more animated than ever before, sprinting along walls, dragging his bladed glove down walls to slow his descent, clambering up to platforms, and – best of all – executing his new roof-run move, which sees him grabbing metal rings on the underside of various surfaces and crawling upside down between them. It's unbelievably cool.

As for the running and jumping, that's going to be a little more divisive. For our money, it's a deliciously fluid system which is



FREEZE FRAME

Taking a royal tour through the game...



5 MINUTES
Uncharted: Prince's Territory? Our hero does sound a bit familiar.



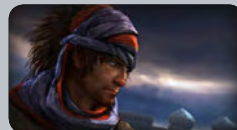
15 MINUTES
That 'have Elika save you fewer than 100 times' trophy is going to need a second attempt...



2 HOURS
Getting into the swing of things, and taking on enemies before they've even materialised.



6 HOURS
Halfway through the game, and learning to fly – do you go to the citadel next or the palace?



12 HOURS
Families? Who'd have 'em? The game's climax is definitely worth the wait.

The roof run is honestly one of the coolest things we've seen all year – you just have to see it in motion.





"With the combat kept separate from the parkour, you can travel through the game's locations within a few minutes"

These monsters might look tough, but if you hit them near the edge of a platform it's usually an instant kill.

> Prince of Persia continued

relatively forgiving – allowing for a free-running flow which the otherwise excellent Mirror's Edge lacked in many places. You don't need to be pixel-perfect with your movements – as long as you're heading in the right direction, the Prince will stick to columns, grip onto walls as if he's got magnets on his boots, and will often even turn the right way once landed to move onto the next swing bar, ring or post.

Though his wisecracks and some references seem wilfully anachronistic, you'll soon warm to the Prince and his sparky relationship with the lovely Elika.

This means you can frequently string together a series of manoeuvres that just aren't possible in any platformer. With the combat kept separate from the parkour, you can travel between the game's 20 or so locations within a few minutes. Indeed, there are even Trophies for making successful timed runs from one given place

to another. Some people will think this feels slightly dumbed down compared to the previous PoP games, where it wasn't always obvious where to go next. But this more linear approach reaps its own rewards, simply because it makes you feel amazing. It's satisfying without ever feeling ridiculously easy, and it looks fantastic when you're leaping around at high speed.

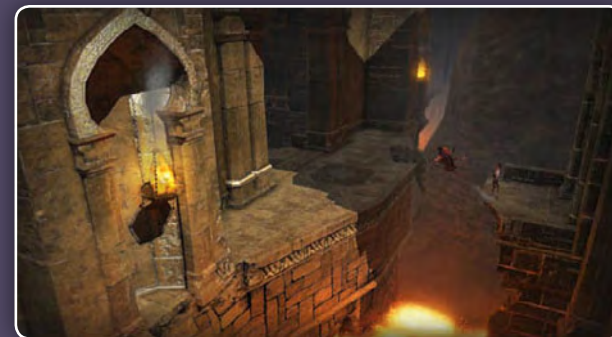
Should you happen to mistime a jump then you'll always be rescued by the hand of your new female comrade, Elika. She's imbued with magical powers, which she needs to



How very Mission Impossible 2! The scale is quite astonishing in places – you'll cover a lot of ground, vertically and horizontally.

IS SHE HUMAN?

Or is she dancer? Elika examined



Double up

Pressure point

Stop and chat

Double up

If you've a jump in front of you that seems too large, then check the wall next to it – if you see any slight wear, as if the wall has been scraped, then you'll usually have to wall-run to the next platform. Failing that, you'll require one of Elika's handiest abilities, which essentially gives the Prince a double-jump – if the picture starts to bleach out to white, then you just need to press Triangle and she'll boost you forward.

use to beautify her land, which has become corrupted with a substance known as... well, Corruption. But she'll spend as much time helping you get to where you need to go, whether it's by giving you an extra boost to your jumps (it's essentially a double-jump mechanic at times) or by swooping down when you're falling to your death, and depositing you back at the nearest piece of solid ground – almost like a living





Some stages are a little too fond of sliding down sloping platforms, but we'll forgive it for the thrill of zipping through such a gorgeous landscape at great speed.

> Prince of Persia continued

Sands of Time, if you like. Though you're as much help to her as she is to you – Elika needs your assistance to dispose of the various evil minions of Ahriman, the evil god who has unleashed this sentient goo on the world. Once you reach the fertile grounds of each location, you can 'heal' that area, which releases a host of light seeds – you need to collect these (often from hard-to-reach places, and many in corners of the level you haven't yet ventured into) in order to unlock other worlds, with



Elika's powers increasing, allowing her and the Prince to perform a series of unique moves when stepping on coloured plates.

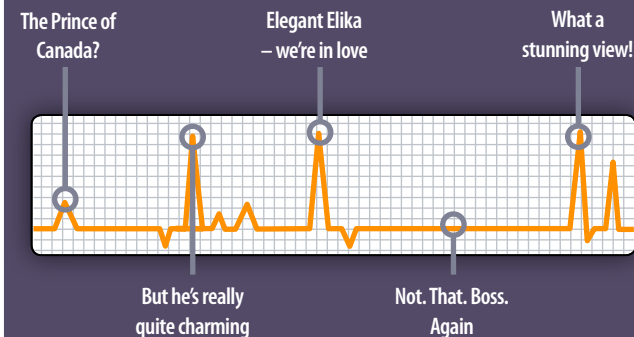
Elika's also invaluable – well, sometimes – during the game's combat, which thankfully isn't too frequent. Indeed, if you're quick about getting through a particular area you can reach the smaller foes as they spawn and prevent them from ever coming to life. But for each of the four main locations, you'll fight a boss character. The combat mechanics are a brave attempt at trying something different, but it just doesn't come off – it might eschew button-mashing for timing-based combos, but stringing together moves is difficult when you don't get an instant response to your inputs – holding R2 to block at the right time should execute a parry, but it's very difficult to time, given the slight delay between you actioning the command and the Prince executing

"Elika's also of valuable assistance during the game's combat sequences"

it. If you're clever, fights against the Warrior and the Hunter in particular can be over fairly quickly, but otherwise you're in for a bit of a slog. It kills the game's pacing dead, while having to face them four times per area is more than a little repetitive.

That said, the scrapping isn't a significant portion of the game, and as long as you're prepared to grit your teeth and get through it, you'll find much to love here, not least the chemistry between the Prince and Elika, as the two start to get to know one another. It means you'll find yourself caring about the characters, and by the time you've spent 12 hours with this pair, you'll be rooting for them come the final battle. ●

PULSOMETER *Signs of life*



The Hunter's easily our favourite boss, offering a challenge without resorting to cheap tricks like some of the others. Scraps with him are rarely wars of attrition like the others can be.



Elika's always close by – it's unusual to have such an effective AI helper.

**P3Zine
Verdict**

Combat aside, this is an absolute delight to play

- + Incredible animation
- + Fluid platforming
- Dull combat, a tad repetitive

87%



Alone in the Dark: Inferno

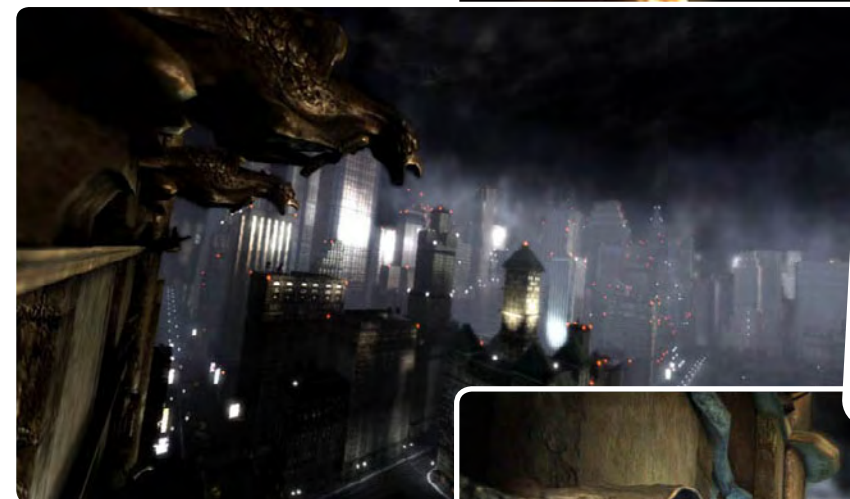
Publisher: Atari
Developer: Eden Studios
Heritage: Test Drive Unlimited
Link: www.centraldark.com/us
OUT NOW

Feeling the burn

Since the release earlier this year of *Alone in the Dark*, we've seen a number of top-quality releases which have had the unfortunate side-effect of making our original score (for the 360 version) of 79% seem perhaps a little generous. So while *Inferno* – a completely revamped version which eliminates many of the issues we had with the original – is undoubtedly a superior game, it's only worth a paltry 1% more.

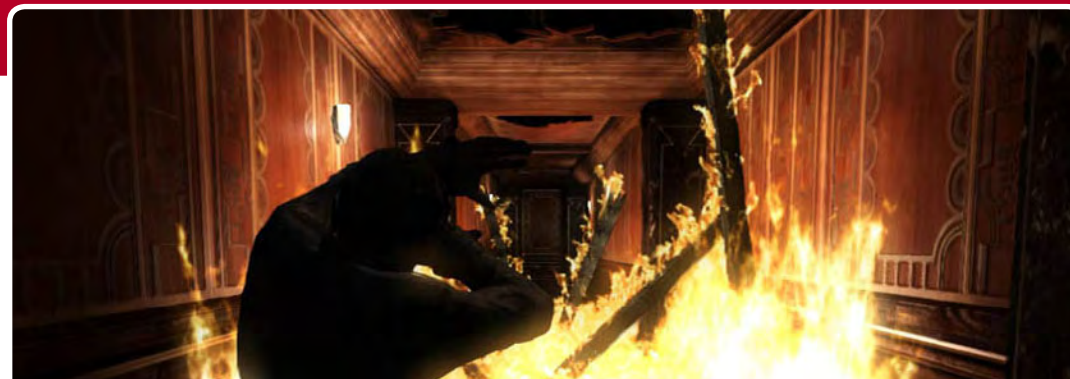
Giving praise

Yet we must give praise to Eden Studios for listening to the criticisms heaped (a little too readily) on



the original, and tweaking many aspects of the game to make for a vastly more pleasurable experience. As Edward Carnby treks through Central Park in order to uncover the mystery behind the steadily escalating supernatural event that's causing buildings to collapse and fissures to appear throughout New York – and also the truth about his part in proceedings – you'll find a number of substantial improvements along the way.

For starters, the atrocious inventory mechanic – which sees



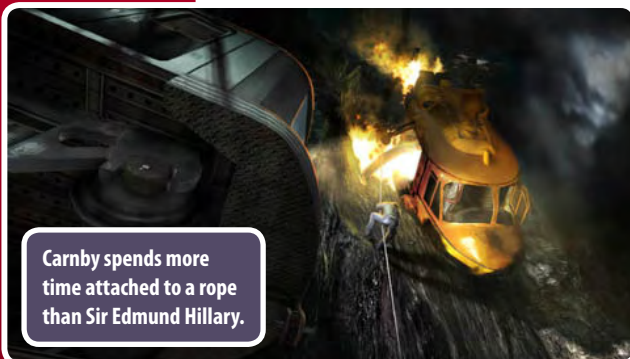
Fire is your most potent weapon in the game – burning chairs as weapons and setting alight bottles of flammable liquid to create Molotov cocktails are enjoyably inventive ways to take down enemies.

"We must give praise to the developers for listening to the criticisms of the original"



Carnby's early escape from a collapsing building is a cinematic highlight, and the improved controls mean you'll be less likely to have to repeat it.





Carnby spends more time attached to a rope than Sir Edmund Hillary.

> Alone in the dark continued

Carnby reach inside his trenchcoat to access his items – is far less awkward than before, and allows you to select objects with the D-pad rather than holding the analogue stick in the appropriate direction. The much-criticised driving sections now have checkpoints, while the gameplay-extending root-burning episode now suggests players tackle this a little earlier.

The camera can now be controlled manually, which is very



The game's TV-style structure and the excellent recaps and 'next time on...' sections are a brilliant idea.



Alone in the Dark's story is well-structured, if not as compelling as it thinks it is. Too many unnecessary F-words spoil the otherwise decent dialogue.

"Alone in the Dark remains a fascinating game which deserves to be played"

welcome when it comes to the combat, which also seems a lot simpler and less clunky. All of this allows you to get on with the meat of the game, which is all about clever puzzle-solving, exciting escapes, interesting exploration and using limited resources to take down enemies. Mainly with fire. The dynamic fire propagation remains the most interesting new feature, along with the TV-style episodic

structure which still works as well as it always did.

Alone in the Dark remains a fascinating game which deserves to be played – as much to see how many games it will influence as for what it offers as a standalone product. Whether the initial critical



A lot of things seem to catch fire – if only to show off the impressive graphical effects.

NEW FLAME

Why the PS3 version is best



Move it

Peripheral vision

Control tweak

Move it

Character movement seems smoother and swifter, with Edward Carnby moving more like someone 20 years his junior, as opposed to the geriatric speed of the original. This has the knock-on effect of making the enemies seem a little slower – they're no longer able to rush you quite as effectively, and are slower to wake up when knocked down.

savaging will make a sequel unlikely remains to be seen, but we'd like to see a follow-up really make the most of this compelling groundwork. ●

**P3Zine
Verdict**

An improvement, but still flawed

- + Genuinely thrilling and different
- + Tweaks add to the fun
- The script is a bit clunky

80%

PlayStation Network

Download 'em today!

GTI Club+

Publisher: Konami
Developer: SUMO Digital
Entertainment
Price: £9.99

Bright colours, blue skies... it's almost like being in an arcade in the mid-90s, give or take a clutch of feral glue sniffers. This is of course no coincidence, as GTI Club+ is a remake of the 1996 free-roaming racer. Back in the day, GTI Club featured no less than four – count 'em – rally cars, and a nifty handbrake feature for those all-important sharp turns. 12 years on, the handbrake is as handy as

ever, but GTI Club+ lets you take the action online with some frantic eight-player action.

As for those cars, it's a mix of old school and new, with Lancias and Italian Job-style Mini Coopers going up against more modern fare, all of which are customisable with paint jobs and decals.

The game's arcade roots are immediately in evidence, with a rudimentary handling model that



"You're only supposed to blow the bloody doors off..."

consists of nothing more than accelerating, turning, and that all-important handbrake, with a logo even flashing up on-screen when you need to use it. The pseudo free-roaming ethos has been maintained, although all this really amounts to is a series of alternate routes to attempt, each with a payoff in terms of speed and difficulty.

Developer SUMO Digital was responsible for the excellent Outrun remake a few years ago, and GTI continues in the same vein, with similar visuals complemented by no-nonsense arcade spills. There's a range of modes on offer, including Free Run, Arcade and Bomb Tag, with a worldwide ranking table available and a promise of regular downloadable content.

The eight-player is really where it's at though, a manic affair with drivers

weaving all over the track, and barging into each other as a matter of course. The city-based tracks are geared for maximum airtime, and stumbling into the lead can often be due to as much luck as judgment.

If you want to pick any holes in it, there are a few invisible walls and unnatural collisions, but in its defence it's not trying to be a simulation, with the emphasis on short bursts of action. Gran Turismo it isn't, but for less than a tenner, it's cheaper than a day at the arcade. ●

P3Zine Verdict

Fun in the sun

+ Instantly playable

- A tad simplistic

76%

A make-or-break year?

What 2009 means for PS3



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.

Sony's Jack Tretton said: "2008 is the year of PS3" at the company's E3 press briefing. Which is a bold statement to be sure, but not – in my opinion, at least – 100% accurate. This year represented a consolidation for Sony, ensuring that PS3 kept up with the competition rather than made any giant strides to overtake Microsoft, or even come close to approaching the astonishing sales of Wii. Sure, it made progress in Europe, regularly outselling the 360, but in the US the console continued to languish in third place for most of the year, while embarrassingly it was outsold

PlayStation Home will finally make its debut next year – can this much-vaunted service revolutionise online console gaming?

by Microsoft's console in Japan for several weeks in a row until the release of LittleBIGPlanet.

LittleBIGSales

Media Molecule's game can't have shifted enough copies in the eyes of the Sony execs who were touting it as a system-seller – having sunk from fourth to 19th place in the All-Formats Top 40 during its first two weeks on sale. Yet it's almost certain to benefit from word-of-mouth, and Sony will raise awareness of the game in December by making it a key focus of its Christmas marketing campaign. Whether that's enough to capture the casual audience Sony has failed to attract during this generation – despite having courted it so successfully in the PS2 years – remains to be seen. But for now, it's likely that the console remains prohibitively expensive for most – certainly for any impulse buys or Christmas presents for anyone except the well-off, particularly in the current economic climate. With Microsoft's price-cuts, Sony could well end up this festive season languishing behind its two competitors.

Ignoring sales, it's been a very solid year for the company – if not quite as spectacular as we'd all hoped at the beginning of 2008. Third-party exclusives are becoming thinner on the ground as publishers realise they're no longer economically viable given the current market split. Had PS3 significantly outsold 360, I'm sure we'd be seeing many more, but at the moment there are very few. Sony still has plenty of its own development teams working on projects, and it's those which will likely bear the tastiest fruit of next year, and hopefully 2009 will see more devs working on PS3 as the lead platform – or at least making the most of the power under its shiny black hood. The likes of Mirror's Edge and Burnout Paradise prove it is possible to make multiformat games better on PS3, but they remain the exception rather than the rule. Still, more and more ports are at least comparable to their 360 counterparts, with fewer games suffering the kind of frame-rate and anti-aliasing issues which sadly plagued the PS3 versions of multiformat titles in 2007.

"It's been a very solid year for Sony, if not as spectacular as we'd all hoped at the beginning of 2008"

Promising times ahead

As for the games themselves, there's plenty of really promising stuff on the horizon. Killzone 2 is already an early contender not just for best FPS of 2009, but best game. We're bound to hear more from Team ICO at some point in 2009 (surely?) which will be one of the highlights of the year, even if the follow-up to Shadow of the Colossus doesn't appear until 2010. Quantic Dream's Heavy Rain looks to be another terrific format-exclusive, while my dark horse tip is inFamous, from Sly Cooper developer Sucker Punch. For my money, it looks like 2009's Crackdown, but possibly even better – and could be a real string to PS3's bow. And we're bound to see a few surprises along the way, too – another downloadable Ratchet is a cert, but I'd very much like to see Siren 2 remade for PS3. Here's hoping that Sony is listening... ●



Open-world superhero actioner inFamous is one of the most intriguing PS3 titles for next year – here's hoping it lives up to the billing.



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