

STEAMGIFTS COMMUNITY'S
DIGITAL GAMING MAGAZINE

SGM

FORGIVE ME
FATHER

NECROMUNDA

CHANCE
TO WIN!

HIRED GUN

NEWS

Fresh News from the
Gaming World

REVIEWS

Just Cause 4
Going Medieval
Rain World
The Evil Within
Backbone
Noita
and more!

EXTRA

Screenshot of the Month
Upcoming Games
Hot On-Sales

ISSUE #1

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Alpha2749



FallenKal



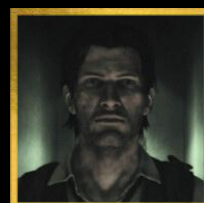
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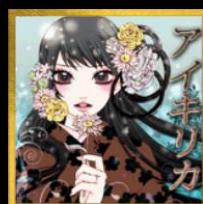
Chris Kutcher



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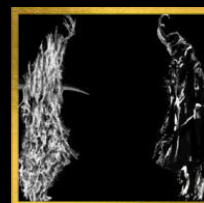
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nightshine



fernandopa



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Volcanic

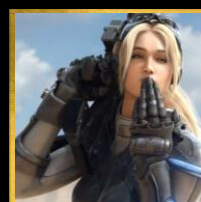


Celtic7Guardian

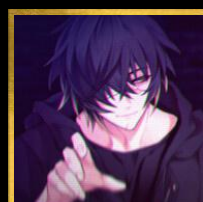


VinroyIsViral

GRAPHIC DESIGNER



AtomicBlonde



kiiroichi

GRAPHIC ARTIST/DESIGNER

WE'VE MADE IT!

Here we are... flipping the virtual pages of our own digital magazine..

Who would have thought? Well, I did. And due to your support, together, we've made it possible!

It all started a few months ago, when I had the idea of creating a Dynamic Giveaways Event on SG, where everyone could participate. Initially I was planning to host an event centered around Christmas, involving puzzle-solving, interaction between users, and opening gifts!

That plan was unfortunately scrapped (or fortunately, since it led to this), due to my own lack of free time and, to be honest, motivation. I felt like the idea and execution could have worked (after all, I did create other similar events that went smoothly), but something was lacking. I knew deep down that by the end of the event, I'd feel empty and unfulfilled again.

Why? Well, the 'why' is simple. Most of the games given away are not played. I might even dare to say that more than 90% of them end up collecting dust in the winner's Steam library. Is that a bad thing? I don't know. I am not the one to judge, as I am guilty of doing it too. We simply like games but don't have enough time to play them! It's understandable.

Okay, so now that we've established the "why" part of my hesitation of hosting the giveaways event, let's focus on the "how". How to fix it?

Well, the answer to that you've probably figured it out already. SGM. The Magazine was the answer to my internal struggles.

What better way to motivate someone to play a game than the feeling of 'recognition'? A feeling of validation and an extra reason for playing the games you have won. The feeling of progress and satisfaction as you know that your time is valued and will lead to something that others might enjoy as well. For me, that is the reason I love and have always been in love with video games. Playing games alone is perfectly fine and normal, but I think that at the end of the day, if you have nobody to talk to about your virtual accomplishments or adventures, it's a bit sad.

That being said... Thank you once again, for supporting the project and being part of it! We don't know what the future will bring to us, how many issues will be published or games given away. But as long as there will be a community built around it and a demand for "more", I'll do my best to make it possible each month.

Plenty of ideas already brewing for the next issue. Do you have one as well? Make sure to share it. Be part of the team.



AtomicBlonde

Team Fortress 2 is getting its first major update in years!

Recent multiplayer games seem to shut down almost weekly, but 16 years after release, good ole' Team Fortress 2 is still chugging along with a new "full-on update-sized update" coming this summer. Valve's hero shooter has been in maintenance mode for a few years, only receiving seasonal updates and patches to fix exploits and fight bots. So, judging by Valve's "bleeding-edge communication" blog post, this will be the game's first major content update in years.

According to the blog post, the update will bring new "items, maps, taunts, unusual effects, war paints and who knows what else?!" The past few summer updates have primarily been focused on items, so fans can sink their teeth into something a bit more chunky this time.



source: rockpapershotgun.com

Sony, Microsoft and Nintendo to skip E3 2023

Gaming's biggest publishers aren't coming back for E3's first in-person event since 2019.

The Entertainment Software Association made a big hullabaloo of announcing the return of E3 back in September, with PAX organizer ReedPop taking over the show. E3 2023 is set to be the first in-person version of the event since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. A planned split between business days and public days seemed like a real "have your cake and eat it too" situation, aiming to please the press and developers while still making money off public ticket sales. But that plan seemingly was not enough to lure back the biggest companies in gaming: according to an IGN report, Microsoft, Nintendo and Sony are all skipping this year's show.

The news is a major blow for E3's 2023 comeback. But it's also not a shock: Sony didn't have a booth at E3 in 2019, and E3's attempts to hold digital shows in 2021 (result: messy) and 2022 (cancelled) have made it clear that publishers can get the word out about their new games without E3's help—and without paying millions of dollars for floor space in the Los Angeles Convention Center.



While it's still possible major publishers like Ubisoft, Activision Blizzard, and Take-Two will have a presence at this year's E3, some will doubtlessly follow the platform holders' lead here. Others, like EA, already opted to host their own events nearby years ago. It's increasingly hard to see E3 itself as a worthy expense for game companies that can rent their own event spaces for a fraction of the price, or for attendees paying for pricey tickets. In 2019, a three-day ticket to E3 cost \$249.

source: pcgamer.com

Saints Row Future Uncertain as Reboot Flopped



Saints Row reboot sales have flopped and now the franchise's future seems uncertain. IP owner Embracer Group previously acknowledged the game's mediocre critical and commercial reception, but this is the first time it has admitted that the reboot underperformed with "sub-par" return on investment.

source: playstationlifestyle.net

Open beta for Diablo IV starts this month!



The open beta for Diablo IV is just weeks away. Blizzard announced that the open beta will kick off on March 24th and last until the 26th, while those who pre-ordered the game will get early access to the game from March 17th to 19th.

source: blizzard.com

New Studio Wildlight Entertainment Formed by Triple-A Game Veterans

Developers from various triple-A studios such as Respawn and Naughty Dog have come together to form new studio Wildlight Entertainment. Founded in 2022, Wildlight has billed itself as "comprised of talented creators from some of the biggest IPs" in the games space.

Similar to Wayfinder Games from earlier this February, Wildlight is a new studio made up of ex-EA developers. Its staff page also lists alumni from developers such as Sony Santa Monica (God of War Ragnarok), Infinity Ward (Call of Duty: Ghosts), and Riot Games (Valorant).

Like several new startups, the studio's LinkedIn emphasizes having "a positive, supportive work environment built on mutual trust and open communication, where everyone has a voice and everyone is treated with respect."

The studio's first game will be a currently unannounced triple-A title that it's been working on "for some time."



source: gamedeveloper.com

Next Civilization Game Officially Announced by Firaxis

CIVILIZATION

Revealed alongside the announcement that former COO Heather Hazen will be the new studio head, Firaxis didn't confirm whether or not it would be the seventh game in the mainline series or if it would be a spinoff in the vein of Civilization: Beyond Earth.

With the announcement only coming now, without any mention of a release date, mechanics, or any other game details, it's likely that the new Civilization is still years away, but it will seemingly be Firaxis Games' main focus going forward.

source: ign.com

Sons of the Forest is an Instant Success - Sells Millions in the First 24 Hours

Sons of the Forest, the follow-up to 2014's spooky survival horror game from developer Endnight Games, was among the most anticipated releases for 2023, but few could have foreseen exactly how big a hit it would be. Since its release on Steam early access on Feb. 23, Endnight has revealed the full extent of its reach; within 24 hours, it has eclipsed 2 million in sales. For context on how big a deal this is, its predecessor surpassed five million sales by the end of 2018. Though this number will slow after the initial influx of early access adopters, it is on track to completely obliterate the trail laid down by its predecessor, The Forest, within the year..



source: twinfinite.net

FORGIVE ME...

.. Father Gabe for I have enjoyed playing this visually pleasing and grotesque little title on your platform, a bit too much, and now I shall sin once again through sacrificing 5 copies of the game in hopes of corrupting more innocent souls!

Forgive Me Father draws inspiration from horror grandfather H.P. Lovecraft, set in a comic-book style world. As the only person with full control of their faculties, the player, travels and searches for answers and relief to the suffering.



Do you have a moment to talk about our Lord and Savior, Cthulhu?

Inspired by the classics

Gameplay wise, it is clear to me that the devs took inspiration from OG's, such as Doom and Wolfenstein 3D, which defined the shooter genre. And trust me, that's a good place to draw inspiration from.

With a variety of weapons, upgrades, abilities skill tree, and 12 hardcore levels.. Forgive Me Father should keep you glued to your pro gaming chair for at least 7 hours! Give it a chance :)

□ AtomicBlonde



Did you bring my pads, padre?!



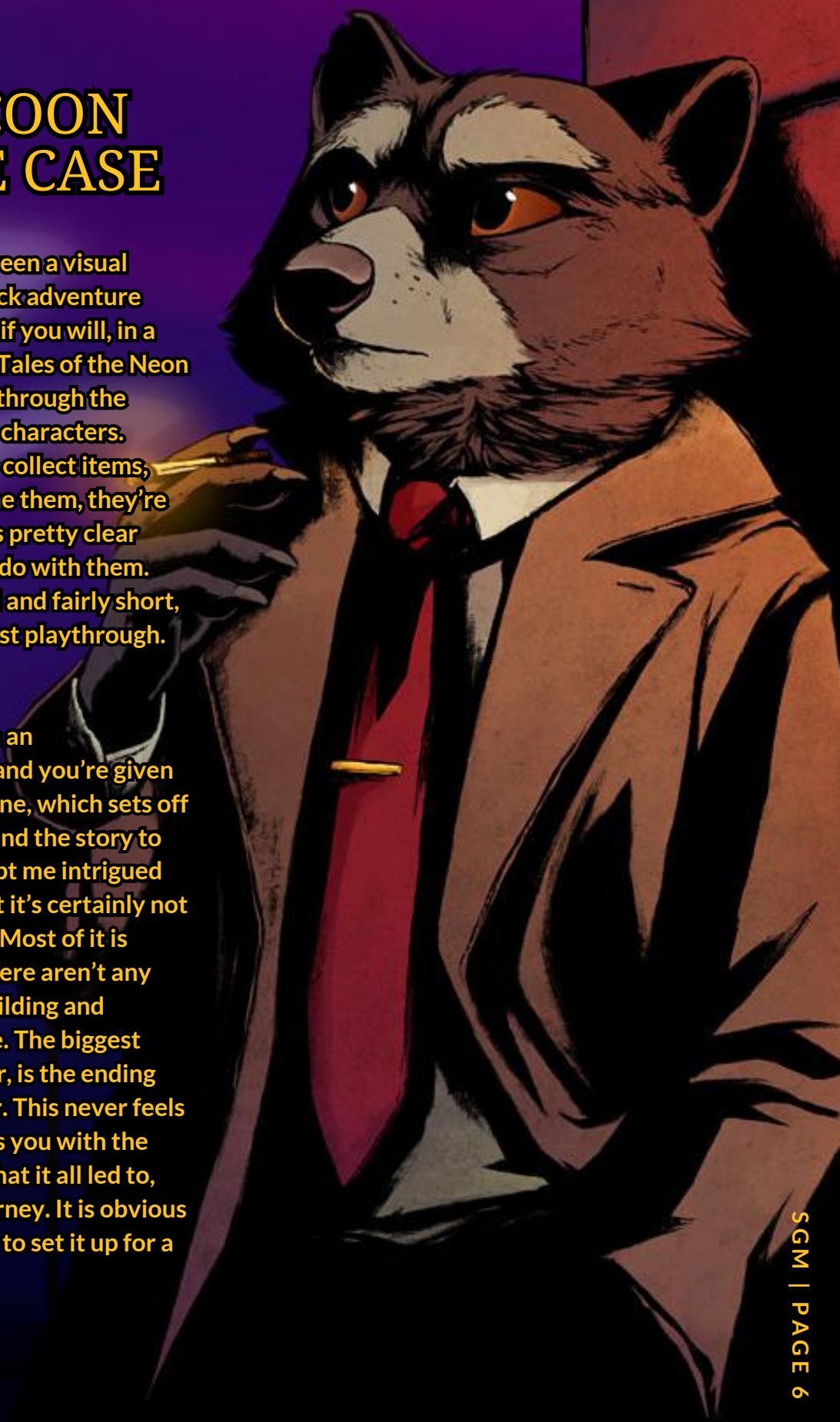
FORGIVE ME FATHER

BACKBONE

THE RACCOON IS ON THE CASE

Backbone is a mix between a visual novel and a point-and-click adventure game, a visual adventure if you will, in a similar vein to Lacuna or Tales of the Neon Sea. You mostly interact through the world by talking to other characters. Although you sometimes collect items, you don't need to combine them, they're never hard to find and it's pretty clear what you're supposed to do with them. The game is pretty casual and fairly short, around 4-5 hours for a first playthrough.

You play as a detective in an anthropomorphic world and you're given a case to look into someone, which sets off the rest of the story. I found the story to be fairly decent and it kept me intrigued throughout the game, but it's certainly not going to blow your mind. Most of it is pretty predictable and there aren't any real twists. The world-building and characters are well-made. The biggest disappointment, however, is the ending that ends on a cliffhanger. This never feels very satisfying and leaves you with the feeling of not knowing what it all led to, abruptly ending your journey. It is obvious that the creators wanted to set it up for a sequel.

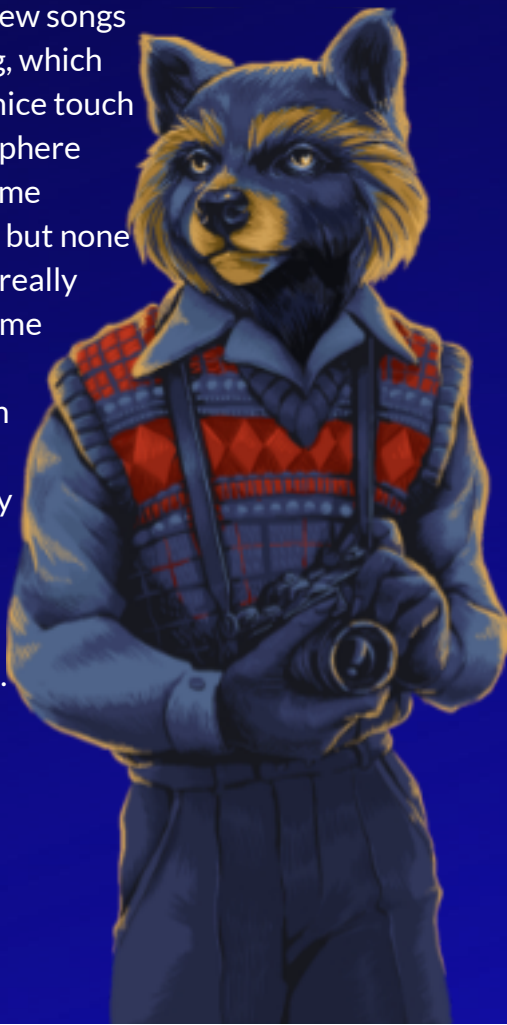


What drew me, and likely many of you, in is the beautiful pixel art graphics, which are undoubtedly one of the highlights of the game. Aside from the pixel art, there are also some high-resolution pieces used in cutscenes that look marvelous. Although, there are a few minor graphical issues, but nothing too concerning



There's nothing like a good cigar and a midnight stroll through the city to help organize your thoughts.

The sound is pretty minimalistic as none of the characters in the game are voiced. And the music overall is ok, but nothing special. There are a few songs that are sung, which add a really nice touch to the atmosphere when you come across them, but none of the music really stood out to me personally. However, I'm not often captivated by music in games, although it does happen.



Gameplay-wise, you'll mostly be interrogating and talking to people to gather information. At times, you'll be presented with simple puzzles and some light stealth sections that are easy to complete. There's only one point-and-click adventure puzzle in the game and that is when you have to figure out a code to a door. While some people may be disappointed by this, I don't think it greatly affects the game.



Hey! Pssh! Wanna buy some weed?!

And now onto the things I didn't like about the game. One of the first things that bothered me was that, even though the game has an option to change keybindings, it doesn't work well. For me, it sometimes didn't register keys like right-Shift or right-Control when I tried to bind them.



Example of one of many grammatical errors.

Another issue is that if you decide to change the interaction button "E," it only partially replaces it, and you still need to press "E" for many things. Additionally, you only get one persistent checkpoint save file. This is a common problem in these types of games and is a lazy game design, especially if there are several easily missed achievements. To avoid excessive replaying while going for mutually exclusive or easily missed achievements, I've learned to manually back up these save files.



Greg. Nice fella.

Despite some of its shortcomings, I mostly enjoyed the game. It only fell short in its ending and the glitchy achievements.



Strong "Only God Forgives" vibes.

My biggest complaint about the game is that several of the achievements are finicky and can easily glitch out. This is a problem that many achievement hunters have complained about, and it requires you to delete your achievement data and disable cloud saving. The game also has some grammatical issues and could benefit from some overall polishing.

❑ Fallen Kal



STORY	★★★★☆
GRAPHICS	★★★★☆
GAMEPLAY	★★★★☆
SOUND	★★★★☆
FUN METER	★★★★☆



- Beautiful pixel graphics
- Wonderful world and characters
- Decent story



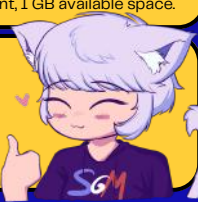
- Glitchy achievements
- Only one save file
- Poorly implemented keybinding system
- Ends on a cliffhanger
- Could use some overall polishing in terms of graphical and grammatical errors

V
E
R
D
I
C
T

Genre: Adventure, Detective
Developer: EggNut
Release Date: April 24, 2019

System Req: Multi-core 1.8GHz,
4 GB RAM, Nvidia GTX 760 or
equivalent, 1 GB available space.

GOOD JOB,
DETECTIVE!



DRIFT STREETSTM JAPAN

I WONDER IF YOU KNOW HOW THEY LIVE IN TOKYO..

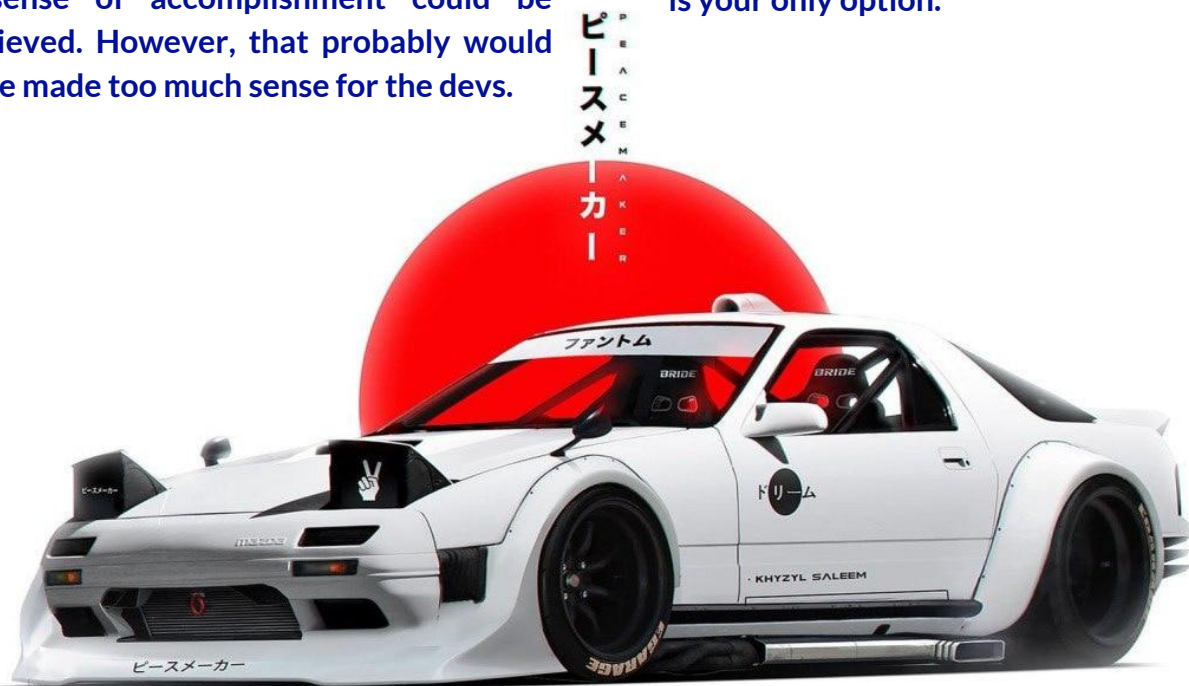
Are you searching for the perfect driving game that simulates drifting with realistic physics? A game with a compelling storyline about illegal drift racing and jaw-dropping graphics? And a soundtrack to match that of NFS: Underground? Then you will have to look elsewhere, as you won't find anything like that in Drift Streets Japan.

The game has no storyline or even a clear goal. There is no sense of reward or objective. The only progression is earning money as long as you keep drifting, and using that money to buy and upgrade different cars. If the cars or tracks were unlocked through an achievement system, a sense of accomplishment could be achieved. However, that probably would have made too much sense for the devs.



My Hot Wheels car after I step on it at 3 AM

Drift Streets Japan feels like an unfinished early access game. There are no tutorials or even a proper menu or title screen. The game starts at the garage, where you must select your first car. The selection is limited due to the amount of money available, so the cheapest sack of potatoes is your only option.



The graphics also feel incomplete. The scenery is simplistic, with low texture resolution and lack of details. The lighting is pretty poor too, especially on the night tracks. The only positive aspect of the graphics is the car models, which are visually appealing. The colors of the cars and rims can be changed, and front and rear bumpers, side skirts, wings, and rims can be selected from a limited number of options. The customization is nice, although there are not many choices available.



Nothing a can of spray paint and some duct tape can't fix..

The same can be said about the sound. The car sound effects are enjoyable, especially the turbo engine sound. But the music is nothing special. It is just there, muffled by the car sounds.

The gameplay feels a bit odd. At times, it is impossible to turn your car, causing it to slide straight without any control. Other times, the drift won't stop no matter how hard you try to brake the car. This feels strange and can become frustrating very quickly.

Especially when you upgrade the car with a turbo and nitro, the lack of control and constant drifts can lead you to switch to a less powerful car. The physics also feel clunky and unfinished. Some crashes cause the car to fly, and some poles appear to be indestructible, as if they're made of adamantium.



Sung Kang would be proud.

Despite all the issues surrounding Drift Streets Japan, if you enjoy drift racing games or have an interest in tuning options, you might want to give this game a try. The concept is good, but in reality, Drift Streets Japan is an unfinished game with many flaws.

FSpectro

STORY N/A

GRAPHICS ★★☆☆☆☆

GAMEPLAY ★★☆☆☆☆

SOUND ★☆☆☆☆

FUN METER ★★☆☆☆☆



- The car models
- Decent engine sounds
- Nice concept
- May be enjoyable for JDM or drift enthusiasts



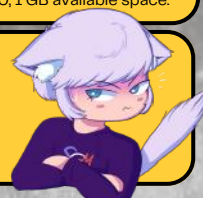
- No sense of achievement
- Outdated graphics
- No tutorial
- Bland music
- Unpredictable car physics

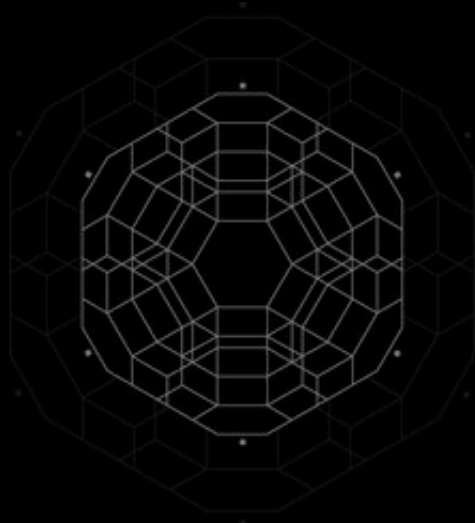
VERDICT

Genre: Racing, JDM, Indie
Developer: JDM4IK Games
Release Date: December 21, 2015

System Req: Intel Pentium i3+,
2 GB RAM, Nvidia Geforce
GTX750, 1 GB available space.

STEER
AWAY
FROM IT!





S I G N A L I S

WAKE UP. BOOT THE LSTR SYSTEM. FEEL THE COLDNESS OF THE METAL POD IN WHICH YOU SLEPT.

SOMETHING IS NOT RIGHT - THE LIGHTS ARE FLICKERING, AND THE DOORS WON'T OPEN. INVESTIGATING FURTHER, YOU FIND OUT WHAT THE CAUSE OF THIS IS. YOUR SCOUT VEHICLE'S SYSTEM HAS FAILED DUE TO A HARD LANDING ON THE SURFACE OF AN UNKNOWN PLANET. THERE IS NO SIGNAL FROM THE PILOT.



Hope you packed your winter wear.

THIS IS THE START OF SIGNALIS. THE PROTAGONIST IS AN ELSTER UNIT. THESE ARE TECHNICIAN REPLICAS, MACHINE SERVANTS FOR GESTALT OFFICERS. HER JOB WAS TO MAINTAIN THE SHIP AND HELP HER ASSIGNED GESTALT OFFICER, THE PILOT. WHERE HAS SHE GONE TO?

REMEMBER OUR PROMISE.

WHAT AWAITS YOU - THE PLAYER - IS A SURVIVAL HORROR AKIN TO THE CLASSIC RESIDENT EVIL. TO EXPLORE THE GOVERNMENT FACILITIES OF THIS DYSTOPIAN SETTING TO FIND WHO ELSTER IS LOOKING FOR, YOU'LL HAVE TO SOLVE PUZZLES, SAVE YOUR AMMO FOR ONLY THE MOST NECESSARY SITUATIONS AND DEAL WITH THE LIMITED INVENTORY. THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE LOCATIONS YOU'LL VISIT AS ELSTER IS ON POINT. THEY'RE ALL VERY GLOOMY, DYSTOPIAN, RUN DOWN, AND OCCASIONALLY BLOODY AND GORE-Y.





Obligatory survival horror bathroom. Grab the toilet ammo!

THERE IS, MOST OF THE TIME, A VERY WELL-DONE MAP AVAILABLE IN THE GAME. WHENEVER YOU ENTER A ROOM, THE MAP WILL SHOW THE AVAILABLE DOORS. WHEN THESE DOORS ARE CHECKED, THEY WILL GET MARKED AS "LOCKED", "OPEN", OR "UN-OPENABLE" ON THE MAP. IF THERE IS AN INTERACTABLE ITEM IN A ROOM, THERE WILL BE A NOTE OF IT ON THE MAP TOO. I THINK THIS MAKES THE GAME QUITE ACCESSIBLE FOR PEOPLE WHO ONLY HAVE TIME FOR GAMING SOMETIMES OR FOR THE ONES WITH A WORSE SPATIAL ORIENTATION.

I HADN'T NOTICED THE MAP UNTIL I WAS HALF-WAY DONE WITH THE GAME. I WAS DRAWING MY OWN MAPS. AND HONESTLY, I DO RECOMMEND THAT OTHERS DO THE SAME. IT WAS FUN! THE FLOORS AREN'T BIG OR CONFUSING, SO THEY'RE EASY TO DRAW. THEY'RE CONVOLUTED, THOUGH, SO HAVING ANY MAP IS HANDY. MAKING YOUR OWN IS A SIMPLE WAY TO BE MORE INVOLVED IN THE GAME.

ACHTUNG. ACHTUNG.

ELSTER WILL HAVE TO DEAL WITH MANY DIFFERENT KINDS OF PUZZLES. SOME OF THEM ARE THE CLASSIC FIND-COMBINE-BRING KIND. THEY DON'T GET REPETITIVE AS THEY ARE DONE SLIGHTLY DIFFERENTLY AND ARE ALTERNATED WITH MORE INTERACTIVE PUZZLES. THE DIFFICULTY OF PUZZLES SEEMS TO BE WELL-BALANCED. THERE ARE HINTS TO BE FOUND FOR SOME OF THE HARDER PUZZLES - IT'S UP TO YOU TO FIND AND READ THEM. THERE WAS ONE THING THAT HAD ME STUMPED. I HAD AN IDEA HOW TO DO IT.

ALTHOUGH I WASN'T ABLE TO FIGURE IT OUT FROM THE DESIGN OF THE PUZZLE. HOWEVER, I THINK EVERYTHING IS NICELY SOLVEABLE IF YOU DON'T RUSH AND THINK ABOUT IT FOR SOME TIME.

SOMETHING THAT ELSTER USES A LOT TO SOLVE PROBLEMS IS A RADIO MODULE. THIS WAS A FUN MECHANIC TO USE. TUNING INTO THE CORRECT FREQUENCIES IS USED FOR BOTH PUZZLES AND COMBAT. SOME FREQUENCIES LEAD TO NUMBER STATIONS, AND THIS ADDS TO THE ATMOSPHERE. IT IS TERRIFYING - WHAT DO THE NUMBERS MEAN? YOU MIGHT FIND OUT. IT IS ALSO RETRO, WHICH GOES WELL WITH THE OVERALL AESTHETIC OF THE GAME.



Sci-fi locksmith simulator.

BESIDES THE RADIO MODULE, THERE IS ALSO A MEMORY MODULE STORING ALL THE INFORMATION YOU HAVE UNCOVERED AND THE DIAGNOSTIC MODULE TRACKING ELSTER'S CURRENT HEALTH AND THE NUMBER OF DEATHS SO FAR. CAN YOU BEAT THE GAME WITH LESS THAN 16 DEATHS?



WHAT WILL BRING DEATH IS BEING UNPREPARED TO DEAL WITH THE ENEMIES. THERE ARE MULTIPLE TYPES OF ENEMIES, THE MAJORITY OF WHICH ARE EASY TO DEAL WITH WHILE SOME ARE A BIT MORE COMPLICATED. THEIR WEAPONS AND SPEEDS ARE DIFFERENT. WILL YOU SNEAK PAST THEM, TRY TO OUTFRAN THEM OR KILL THEM? IN THIS WORLD, THERE ARE ALSO ROAMING AND STATIC ENEMIES, SO YOU'LL NEED TO PLAN ACCORDINGLY.

HAB KEINE ANGST.

THERE ARE PLENTY OF ITEMS TO HELP YOU SURVIVE. BY PLAYING THE GAME AND EXPLORING, YOU WILL ENCOUNTER SEVEN WEAPONS YOU CAN USE TO FIGHT THE ENEMIES YOU ENCOUNTER.

WITH WEAPONS COMES AMMO. AMMO IS SCARCE, BUT IF YOU'RE A CHICKEN LIKE ME WHO RUNS FROM FIGHTS, YOU MIGHT FIND YOURSELF DROWNING IN HANDGUN AMMO. SOME WEAPONS CAN BE LOADED WITH DIFFERENT TYPE OF AMMO, SO THAT'S WORTH EXPERIMENTING WITH.

TO USE WEAPONS, YOU HAVE TO EQUIP THEM AND YOU WILL HAVE TO GO INTO "AIM MODE." THE LONGER YOU AIM AT THE ENEMY, THE STRONGER THE IMPACT WILL BE.

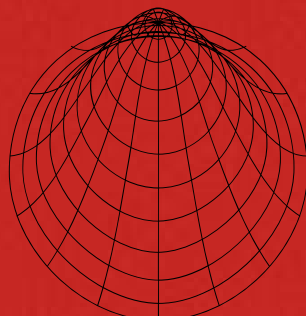


SIGNALIS has a generous auto-aim.

ANOTHER THING YOU CAN USE IF YOU HAVE TO ENGAGE IN COMBAT IS A STUN ROD TOOL. IT IS POSSIBLE TO STUN MULTIPLE ENEMIES AT ONCE (EASIER THAN SHOOTING MULTIPLE ENEMIES). HOWEVER, DON'T FORGET THAT STUN IS NOT DEATH, AND EVEN DEATH IS NOT THE END FOR THESE ENEMIES. DEAD ENEMIES ARE ON A TIMER, AND THEY WILL EVENTUALLY GET UP. TO BE SURE THE ENEMIES WON'T GET UP, YOU HAVE TO BURN THEM (SIMILAR TO THE EVIL WITHIN) USING VARIOUS ITEMS YOU'LL EVENTUALLY UNLOCK. AS WITH AMMO, THESE ITEMS ARE SCARCE. WHICH ENEMIES WILL YOU CHOOSE TO INCINERATE? PERHAPS THE ONES NEAR YOUR SAFE SPOTS?

WHEN IT COMES TO HEALING ITEMS, THERE ARE MULTIPLE OF THEM, TOO. THEY ALL WORK DIFFERENTLY. SOME HEAL A LOT OVER TIME, SOME HEAL A SMALL AMOUNT BUT IMMEDIATELY. IT'S UP TO YOU TO CHOOSE THE BEST HEALING ITEM DEPENDING ON THE SITUATION. WHAT I LIKE ABOUT HEALING AND HEALTH IN SIGNALIS IS THAT YOU DON'T REALLY KNOW WHAT YOUR HEALTH IS, AND YOU DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH YOU HEALED. YOU CAN SEE ELSTER'S HEARTBEAT. IT GOES FROM BLUE TO YELLOW TO RED. WHEN YOU'RE IN THE RED, YOU'RE ALMOST DEAD. THAT IS EASY TO UNDERSTAND. BUT HOW MANY HITS IS IT FROM YELLOW TO RED? DID YOU PERHAPS WASTE A HEALING ITEM? THIS MIGHT KEEP YOU ON YOUR TOES AND ADDS TO THE TENSE AND UNCOMFORTABLE VIBES THE GAME TRIES TO MAKE YOU FEEL.

LASTLY, THERE ARE TOOLS THAT ARE USEFUL FOR EXPLORING. THESE NEED TO BE EQUIPED, SO YOU NEED TO CHOOSE ONE OF THEM. THERE IS A CAMERA FOR TAKING SCREENSHOTS IN PLACE OF NOTES, AND A FLASHLIGHT. I LIKED THE IDEA OF THE LIMITED CAMERA. IT DID DITHER THE SCREEN A BIT (I.E. ADDED NOISE TO IT), WHICH MADE IT VERY INTERESTING. HOWEVER, I DID NOT HAVE ANY USE FOR THIS TOOL AS I WAS ALREADY TAKING NOTES ON PAPER. DOING A "NO NOTES, CAMERA ONLY" PLAYTHROUGH MIGHT BE AN INTERESTING CHALLENGE.



PERHAPS THIS IS HELL.

EVER SINCE I PLAYED RESIDENT EVIL 4, I'VE BEEN IN LOVE WITH THE IDEA OF A LIMITED INVENTORY, COMBINING ITEMS AND INVENTORY MANAGEMENT IN GENERAL. NOW, SIGNALIS DOESN'T HAVE A TETRIS-LIKE INVENTORY, WHICH IS A SHAME, BUT IT DOESN'T NEED IT. WHAT IT DOES HAVE IS SIX SPOTS IN THE INVENTORY. THIS IS A POINT OF FRUSTRATION FOR MANY PLAYERS. THE DEVELOPERS HAVE SAID IN AN INTERVIEW THAT EVEN WITH BIGGER INVENTORIES, PEOPLE KEPT HAVING THEM FULL AND THAT SURVIVAL HORROR IS ABOUT MAKING YOU FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE. I AGREE. I DON'T SEE AN ISSUE WITH HAVING SIX SPOTS ONLY.

IN THE BEGINNING, YOU'RE ABLE TO BE A HOARDER. PERHAPS YOU'LL KEEP A THING OR TWO IN THE UNLIMITED STORAGE BOX, BUT YOU'LL PROBABLY HAVE A LOT OF ITEMS ON YOU. THAT IS FINE. THERE AREN'T AS MANY ITEMS YET. YOU'RE LEARNING. YOU'RE NOT SURE WHAT KINDA PLAY STYLE YOU'LL GO FOR. YOU'RE NOT SURE HOW MUCH AMMO YOU'LL NEED UNTIL YOU RETURN TO THE SAFE SPOT.



Manage your inventory! No need to be a hoarder.

AS YOU PLAY MORE, YOU'LL FIND OUT THAT YOU DON'T NEED TO RELOAD AS MUCH, OR PERHAPS YOU DON'T HEAL OUTSIDE OF THE SAFE SPOT. WELL, DON'T TAKE AMMO WITH YOU. DON'T TAKE HEALING ITEMS WITH YOU. KEEP TRACK OF WHAT ITEMS YOU HAVE IN STORAGE.

IF YOU HAVE PLENTY OF THEM, THERE IS NO NEED TO PICK THEM UP IN THE WILD. I ENDED UP GOING OUT WITH A FULLY LOADED HANDGUN AND A FLASHLIGHT ONLY. I HAD THE REST OF THE INVENTORY FOR LOOTING, SO I DIDN'T HAVE TO BACKTRACK A LOT TO KEEP ALL MY GOODIES. HOW YOU MANAGE YOUR INVENTORY AND HOW MUCH YOU BACKTRACK ALL DEPENDS ON YOU AND YOUR PLAYSTYLE. IF INVENTORY SIZE IS THE ONLY THING THAT IS KEEPING YOU FROM PLAYING SIGNALIS, THERE ARE MODS THAT INCREASE THE INVENTORY SIZE. I DON'T THINK IT'S NEEDED, BUT I ALSO THINK THAT EVERYONE SHOULD HAVE A FUN EXPERIENCE.

A DREAM.

SPEAKING OF MODS, I ALSO STUMBLED ACROSS A FIRST-PERSON MOD, WHICH IS PRETTY NEAT - SOMETHING TO CONSIDER FOR A REPLAY. I KEPT FORGETTING THAT SIGNALIS IS A 3D GAME. THE CUTSCENES AND MAIN GAMEPLAY SECTIONS LOOK VERY 2D SO WHENEVER IT ZOOMS OUT FOR THE 3D POINT-AND-CLICK SECTIONS, IT FEELS WEIRD. WEIRD, BUT IN A GOOD WAY. WHAT I ALSO APPRECIATE ABOUT THE ART DIRECTION IS HOW THE GAME PLAY WITH FRAMING. SOMETIMES THE 3D PARTS ARE IN FULL SCREEN, SOMETIMES THEY HAVE BLACK BARS TOP AND BOTTOM, LEFT AND RIGHT. THE MORE UNSETTLING A SCENE IS, THE SMALLER THE WINDOW THROUGH WHICH YOU ARE SEEING THE SCENE.

THE GAME ALSO MAKES USE OF A LOT OF FLASHING IMAGES AND TEXTS, EVEN GLITCHES. IT BUILDS THE ATMOSPHERE AND DEEPENS THE CONNECTION TO ELSTER, WHO IS PART-MACHINE WITH CONFUSED MEMORIES. THAT IS PRETTY COOL. HOWEVER, THIS WILL MAKE THE GAME UNPLAYABLE FOR SOME PEOPLE. THERE AREN'T ANY OPTIONS TO TURN IT OFF OR SLOW IT DOWN, AND IT'S A SHAME THAT NOT EVERYONE IS ABLE TO EXPERIENCE THE GAME FIRST HAND.



Not the most inviting beach, but it is nicely quiet.

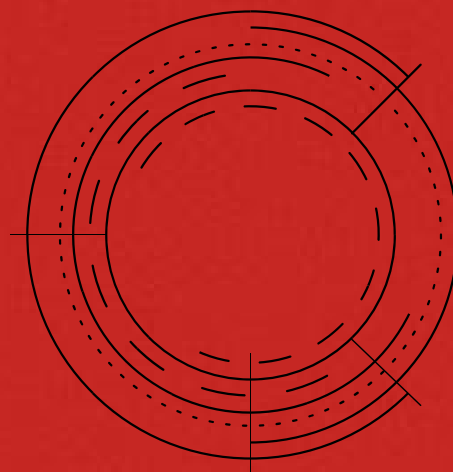
BESIDES GRAPHICS, SOUND IS ALSO IMPORTANT FOR IMMERSION. MOST OF THE SOUND IS AMBIENT. THE WHITE NOISE, THE SCREAMING OF ENEMIES, AND THE FOOTSTEPS, ALL ARE WELL DONE. WHEN MUSIC STARTS PLAYING, IT IS A CLASSICAL TRACK. THERE IS SOMETHING MAGICAL ABOUT CLASSICAL MUSIC IN HORROR (JUST LIKE IN, AGAIN, THE EVIL WITHIN).

ENDING THOUGHTS

I HAVEN'T TALKED A LOT ABOUT THE STORY IN THIS REVIEW. I'LL MEME AND SAY THAT EVERY COPY OF SIGNALIS IS PERSONALIZED. IT IS TOLD IN AMBIGUOUS FRAGMENTS AND THE CONCLUSION IS BASED ON HOW YOU PLAY. WHAT SIGNALIS WAS ABOUT FOR ME WILL BE PROBABLY DIFFERENT FOR YOU.



Game over screen.



I CHOSE TO WRITE ABOUT SIGNALIS MAINLY BECAUSE I REALLY LIKED THE ART STYLE AND I HAVEN'T PLAYED A HORROR GAME IN A WHILE. IT DID NOT DISAPPOINT IN ANY DEPARTMENT. IF YOU LIKE GAMES LIKE RESIDENT EVIL, DEAD SPACE, ALIEN, THE EVIL WITHIN, OR NIER, I THINK YOU WILL LIKE SIGNALIS AS WELL. I WOULD ALSO NOT HESITATE TO RECOMMEND SIGNALIS TO BEGINNERS IN THE "SURVIVAL HORROR" GENRE IF THEY DON'T MIND THE AMBIGUOUS STORY TELLING.

THE GAME HAS 13 ACHIEVEMENTS ON STEAM. SOME ARE UN-MISSABLE, AND SOME ARE OPTIONAL, WITH ONE TIED TO OBTAINING ALL THE ACHIEVEMENTS AND ONE TIED TO BEATING THE GAME ON THE "SURVIVAL" DIFFICULTY. I HAVEN'T COMPLETED THE GAME ON SURVIVAL YET, BUT IT IS SOMETHING I'M EXCITED TO DO.

□ PAULINA

REMEMBER OUR PROMISE

STORY ★★★★★☆
 GRAPHICS ★★★★★☆
 GAMEPLAY ★★★★★★
 SOUND ★★★★★☆
 FUN METER ★★★★★★



- Atmosphere is on point
- Unique and fun puzzles
- The conclusion is based on your playstyle
- A challenging but fun game to 100%

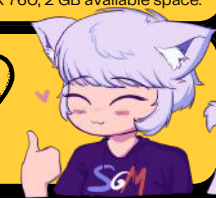


- No accesibility options for photosensitive people
- The enemies don't hear you running unless you're very close

V
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Genre: Indie, Horror, Sci-Fi
Developer: rose-engine
Release Date: October 27, 2022

System Req: AMD FX-6300,
 4 GB RAM, NVIDIA GeForce
 GTX 760, 2 GB available space.



DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO SURVIVE?

The Evil Within is delicious, mesmerizing horror! It's a third-person shooter horror game with survival mechanics at its core.

Shinji Mikami, the creator of Resident Evil, created The Evil Within, so you know you're in for a treat.

Is it any good? you might ask and the answer would be Definitely yes! The Evil Within is a masterpiece. It elevates the survival horror genre in every aspect; be it story, game mechanics, immersion, characters, art design or player engagement.

Have you ever had your nervous tick kick in so fast and so often, you didn't even notice it until the danger on screen subsided or, well, you died? When was the last time you were so drawn into a game that you couldn't stop, no matter how difficult it seems, how bad you are at it or how, let's just say it, scared shitless it makes you? The Evil Within excels in doing all this and more!

THE EVIL WITHIN



Forget about cheap jump scares. Instead, prepare to get uneasy from hearing a chain rattle on the floor or a distant monster's intermittent growling. You cannot help but tiptoe to the disturbance. Every. Single. Time.

SO HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT IN THE EVIL WITHIN.

You kick off with a cinema-level cutscene then the gameplay loop hits you. While figuring out what just happened, you explore the place and try to stay alive.



Home Alone: Lost in Krimson City

Each level is designed in such a way that pushes you to think, How can I possibly get out of here? and of course, What was that!

You need to be sneaky. You have to manage your resources efficiently. You'll find yourself in situations in which thinking on your feet is the only way to survive.

The story in The Evil Within is long in a good way and takes you on quite a journey. Naturally, there are a few twists. What's genius about it is there are always clues, visual and audible, yet you won't be able to pinpoint exactly how the story will end up or what the big mystery is. I caught a few of those clues, one visual, one both visual and audible, and the third was basically a game mechanic. The ending still was a bit of a surprise and that's just testimony to good writing. The story is linear with no side quests, a godsend in a time when open-world games are the norm.

The storytelling is brilliant: you're thrust into an impossible situation and are grasping for clues, an explanation, anything at all. The story leaves bread crumbs for you to follow and clues that bring into question the veracity of what you're seeing. The Evil Within never gives away too much but still rewards you with bits and pieces of lore when you take the time to explore each location to find anything that can shed some light on what's really going on: news clippings, journal entries, and the crown jewel of all, tape recordings

THE ENVIRONMENT IS IMMERSIVE, ALMOST TO A FAULT. I FELT TOTALLY CUT OFF, AFRAID AND ALONE.



It is time for prayers.

SEBASTIAN CASTELLANOS

While on the surface *The Evil Within*'s character development appears minimal, the game introduces us to an instant classic: Senior Detective Sebastian Castellanos, a man's man and an icon in his own right.



This man could fit right into a Rammstein video.

I found myself comparing him to no less than Max Payne, substituting the latter's cynicism with Sebastian's silent stoicism. Think about it: Both are detectives; both face a heartbreaking tragedy; both need to meander their way to uncover an unholy mystery; and both are exceptionally proficient at taking down whatever is thrown at them. Both are my heroes!

The dialogues are short and often cryptic. There are however flashback scenes that are quite revealing story-wise. My only gripe would be that after collecting and reading most of the journal entries and news clippings, listening to the tape recordings, watching and attempting to interpret all the clues in the cutscenes, and of course after beating the game, the story still isn't 100% clear. I'm a little fuzzy on the sequence of events specifically as to who did what and when. It's mostly clear but some details elude me. Otherwise the story would be a perfect 5/5 for me.

For a game from 2014, the graphics hold up really well. The visuals are mostly monochrome in tone or at least feel so. It fits the dreary atmosphere. I believe the studio made a conscious choice in this regard and I fully agree with it.



Ah shit, here we go again.

The character models are varied and each has their own personality, so to speak. This extends to the countless, nameless mobs you need to butcher to make it out alive. The face models are mostly average with the exception of the protagonist, Sebastian. You can easily tell they took their time perfecting it.

The aesthetic is that of the 1930s, especially so in the early and mid game. Seeing a parked car in a later chapter was kind of a wake up call in its own way! It's telling of how good the immersion is. I really liked the minute details in everything looks-wise; the weapons and the little animations you get when you're AFK for too long and the way a weapon rests on your back when it's holstered.



THE AMBIENT SOUNDS ARE SCARY GOOD, LITERALLY!

As for the audio in *The Evil Within*, it's sort of perfect.

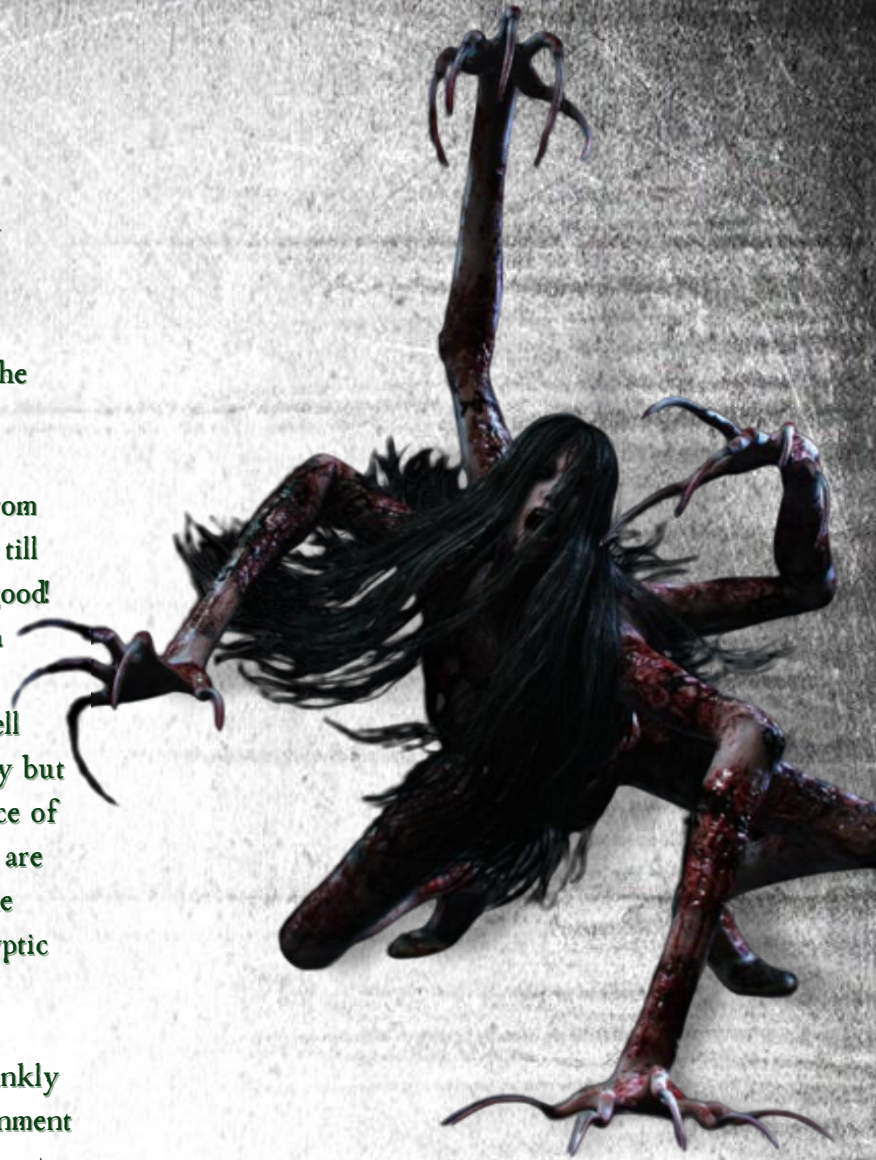
You hear a monster growl hungrily nearby and the hair on the back of your neck stands! You hear someone laugh innocently (which makes it even worse) so you hurriedly get the item you need from there and decide to skip scavenging for resources till you get to the safety of a save point. Yeah, it's good! The audio also plays a significant role in giving a clue here and there about the story itself.

The voice acting is very convincing and plays well into each character's personality: The gruff, manly but pleasant voice of the lead; the cold, fake-nice voice of the nurse, etc. On that note, the voice recordings are truly well made. There are only 10 throughout the game and they're vital to fully understand the cryptic story.

I cannot comment much on the music because frankly it was taking away from my focus on the environment and me trying to stay alive, so I lowered its volume to about 10% throughout my playthrough.



She plays hard to get..



What pleasantly surprised me the most in the *Evil Within* is its gameplay. See, I didn't know what to expect; just that I'd suffer a lot. The *Evil Within* totally won me over.

Each new chapter, sometimes even checkpoint, presents a little puzzle you need to solve in order to proceed. It's rarely repeated and it takes player engagement to a whole other level!

You don't just 'git gud' at aiming and dodging then play brain dead for the rest of the game (no matter how fun that could be at times lol). There's a different sort of joy here: Surveying for clues, coming up with a theory, testing it, failing some but eventually succeeding, then fine tuning your method till you hit the sweet spot and ding ding ding! you've done it! Very rewarding!

EACH FIGHT WITH THE HORRIFIC CREATURES CAN EASILY BE, AND USUALLY IS, A LIFE-OR-DEATH SITUATION.

This kept me on my toes the entire game. You need to carefully manage your ammo and resources stock, and tactically choose when and how you fight your battles. Whichever way you play; the question is, how much health and ammo will you have left after each fight? :) This forces you to play stealthily because otherwise you literally have weapons without ammo if you decide to 'go loud' from the get go. This is good news for stealth lovers; even better is that The Evil Within delivers in the stealth mechanics department.

I especially like how the game made your melee useless unless you're wielding a certain handheld weapon (the axe). The enemies punch and kick at you whenever you get too close; even when they're knocked down, they'll try and grab you. If you think you can MMA your way in combat like in other games, well, you're gonna have a bad time!

There are plenty of ways to deal with enemies, be that sneaking behind them for silent kills, luring them to traps or eliminating them with good, old-fashioned weapons. Sometimes you can choose to ignore enemies all together but risk missing out on potential loot where they roam and the loot they sometimes drop upon death.

There are a plethora of weapons to choose from. Mainstays include two firearms and a versatile crossbow. The crossbow proves to be very handy. There's a rich variety of enemies and likewise a slew of ways to deal with them. Headshots are forever fun! Stomping on enemies till you hear that familiar squishy sound is morbidly satisfying.

I really dig how they made the zombie-like creatures capable of using tools and of responding to your own actions. The AI is not dumb.

There's a fairly straightforward upgrade mechanic in place. You'll need to be wise in what and when to upgrade. The game employs a checkpoint system for saving, plus a manual save point per chapter. This is more than fair.



This is where the magic happens .



You'll understand later :)

In a few parts, you get a companion. It made for a refreshing change. What's better is that they're actually useful; enough to make a difference, not too much that they totally negate the danger. Just perfect!



Brothers in arms (and terror).

The learning curve wasn't steep. The game does an excellent job of spreading out new mechanics. As for the game engine, it is stable. I never had the game crash or bug out on me in 40+ hours.

THE EVIL WITHIN IS SUCH A JOY RIDE!

Yes, I fully realize how mad that sounds when talking about a horror game. The story drew me in from the first minute and never let up except for a very short lull ... somewhere!

The gameplay loop in each chapter is very satisfying. There's definitely a rhythm to it. It was refreshing to see the enemy types well spread among the chapters. Having zombies that could use different weapons really is great. Sometimes they have better weapons than yours! Beating certain bosses after several tries is both a serotonin boost and a huge relief!

To make for a more immersive playthrough, you may choose to disable most or even all your HUD elements.

Upon completion, the game surprised me with a large number of really good unlocks and a NewGame+ mode!

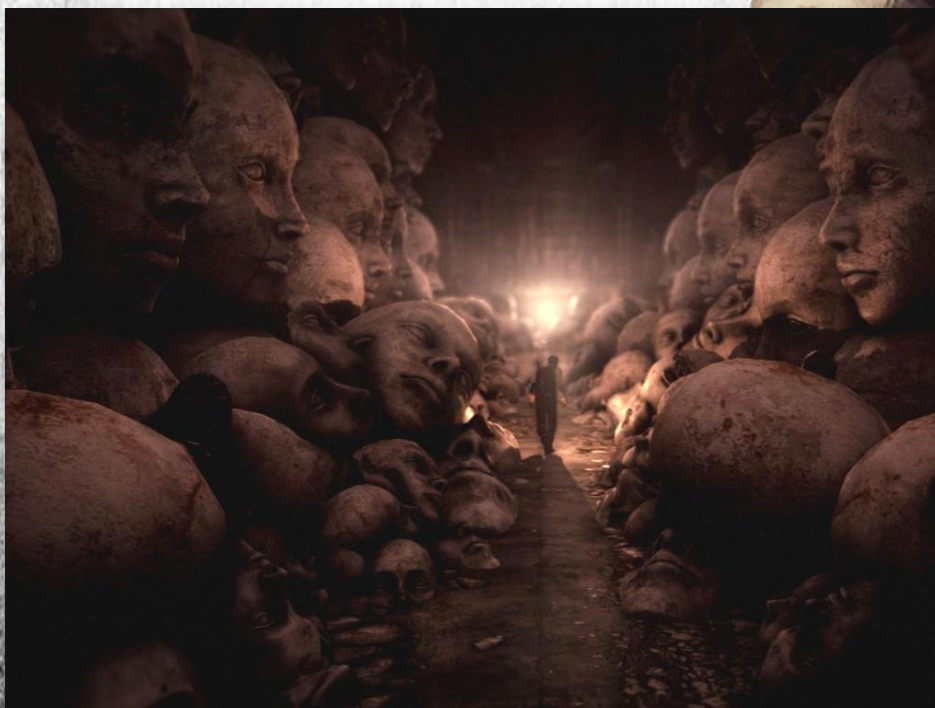
To be honest with you, The Evil Within is not really for the faint of heart.

The atmosphere is grim, the characters serious, the dialogue scarce, the story tragic and the events gruesome and chock full of gore. The gameplay isn't the easiest out there either. Yet it's nothing short of mesmerizing in its hold on you.

Play it if you can brave your fears and command nerves of steel. If you do, I promise you an exquisite experience that will be etched into your memory forever.

☐ Volcanic

SGM | PAGE 22



The light at the end of the tunnel.

STORY	★★★★★☆☆
GRAPHICS	★★★★★☆☆
GAMEPLAY	★★★★★☆☆
SOUND	★★★★★☆☆
FUN METER	★★★★★☆☆



- The story is beautifully told in bits and pieces
- Challenging gameplay and 'intelligent' enemies
- Atmospheric and immersive world
- Boss fights are a delight
- Creative save point system

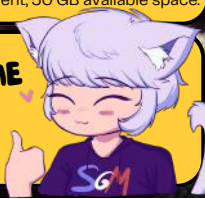


- Controls can be janky
- Not so generous frame rates
- No dedicated key to swap shoulders
- Achievements require owning the DLCs to 100%

VERDICT

Genre: Action, Survival Horror System Req: i7 with four plus cores, 4 GB RAM, GeForce GTX 670
Developer: Tango Gameworks or equivalent, 50 GB available space.
Release Date: October 14, 2014

GREAT GAME
if YOU'RE
BRAVE



Noita

Wands, explosions and pixels with physics

Noita is an action roguelite game that is somewhat reminiscent of Spelunky, in that your goal is to traverse your way down a series of caves and fight the final boss at the end. Exploring levels and killing enemies is optional, but provides gold and items to help with the increasing difficulty as you progress further down. The graphics aren't the prettiest to look at, and most of the music isn't that good, but who cares about that? We're here to talk about the gameplay.



What are you staring at? I'm just taking a bath.

The primary movement mechanic in Noita is levitation. The amount of time you can hover is limited but generous, and regenerates quickly upon touching the ground. Coupled with the mainly projectile based combat, it can make the game feel closer to a top-down shooter like Nuclear Throne than Spelunky, at times. Unfortunately, the combat isn't super interesting most of the time, especially in the early levels, as an effective strategy a lot of the time is to simply wait behind cover, then peek and shoot. The game also features a nightmare mode, which solves the problem with the combat, to an extent, by making enemies more aggressive and giving them more health, but it's only unlocked after beating the main game.

The pixel graphics aren't merely a stylistic choice. Each pixel is physically simulated, and almost all parts of the environment interact with the player and with each other. Heat will turn liquids to vapour, electricity will run through metal, enemies will spray pools of blood that you can bathe in to douse the fire that's burning you, explosions will dig through the ground, and random blocks of ice will break off and come out of nowhere to bonk you in the head for 100 damage. The list goes on and on. The highly interactive and dynamic environment is truly impressive and definitely one of the key components of what makes Noita unique and interesting.



High level wand tinkering in action. Definitely not the work of an idiot.

A lot of newer games in the roguelite genre feature meta progression, but thankfully Noita doesn't. Unlocking items that appear in subsequent runs is fine, but I want to beat a game because I became more skilled at it, not because my character got a bunch of permanent upgrades.



Look, a bunch of spells to buy! If only I knew what any of them did...

In Noita, knowledge is skill. There's not much room to improve in terms of mechanical ability, so most progression will come from understanding the environment, enemies, and most importantly, spells and wand tinkering. A lot of my early deaths left me confused, thinking things like "How did that explode?" or "Where did that electricity even come from?" In one instance, I took a perk called Always Cast which reads "Adds a random spell as 'Always Cast' to the equipped wand." Having no idea what that meant, I proceeded to test out my wand, which then exploded in my face wiping out most of my health.



Moments before disaster.

The game requires you to experiment and try new things in order to learn about its intricacies, but that can often lead to you getting punished in unpredictable ways. In another instance, I suddenly started teleporting around all over the place. Was it because of an enemy? Was it an environmental effect? Without a lot of experience in the game, it's hard to tell, which means you can't really make adjustments for future. It can be frustrating compared to the relative simplicity of a game like Monolith where all you need to think is "How did I die? I got hit by the enemy's bullet. What should I do next time? Dodge better." That being said, once you do get past that early hump of being completely in the dark, it becomes a lot easier to identify your mistakes.

One of the most important factors in the quality of any roguelite is variety, and Noita has no shortage of it. The game lets you customize your wands with different sets of spells, which is referred to as "wand tinkering". It's definitely not easy to figure out how it works, and wands would often behave differently from how I expected them to. From what I was able to figure out on my own, each wand has a set of stats, including number of spells per cast, the delay between each cast, the recharge time after all spells have been cast, mana recharge rate, number of spell slots, and more. There are 393 total spells, which can be projectiles, projectile modifiers multicasts, and utility.



Here's something for you to look at that isn't just a dark cave,

From bouncing disc projectiles with chain lightning between them to spark bolts that trigger a multicast of explosions, the amount of combinations you can put together is virtually limitless, and it keeps every run interesting as there's always something new to try. Despite not having a thorough understand of the system and lacking knowledge on most spells, I was still able to cobble together some wands that did a decent amount of damage. Apart from wands, the game also features perks which add another dimension to the variety. A lot of them don't really change the gameplay too much, but some of them have a significant effect, like the Lukki Mutation which gives you additional



The final showdown.



limbs that let you crawl around like a spider. It doesn't reach the levels of Enter the Gungeon or The Binding of Isaac in terms of variety, but there's still more than enough here to get your money's worth.

Noita isn't a game that lends itself well to newcomers of the genre, nor those expecting a super casual experience. What it does do is provide a deep gameplay system to explore for those willing to overcome its initial learning curve. In a sea of bland, uninspired indie titles, Noita stands out for its unique take on roguelites, and I would recommend it to anyone looking for their next one to play.

❑ RayOfLight

STORY N/A

GRAPHICS ★★☆☆☆

GAMEPLAY ★★★★★

SOUND ★★☆☆☆

FUN METER ★★★★★



- Lots of variety
- Interactable and dynamic environment



- Mediocre combat
- Hard to learn, and not always in a fun way

V
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Genre: Roguelike, Difficult

Developer: Nolla Games

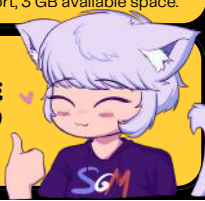
Release Date: October 15, 2020

System Req: Dual Core CPU Intel i5,

4 GB RAM, 512MB VRAM, OpenGL

3.0 support, 3 GB available space.

DECENT GAME
if YOU'RE INTO
ROGUELIKES



JUST CAUSE[®] 4

Before Installing

Before I started playing Just Cause 4 (which I'll be referring to as JC or JC4 throughout this review), I knew very little about the game or the franchise. I knew this was a third-person open-world game with a massive map, many side quests, and a reactive and interactive environment (i.e., everything blows up).

As the game was installing, I googled about the JC's franchise plot to see if I needed any catching up before booting the game, but Reddit assured me the plot for each JC game is independent of each other, so with that in mind, I finally clicked "Play."

First Impressions

After a short introduction where little is said, done, or explained, we control Rico Rodríguez. There is probably more here to dig into if you've played the other games in the franchise, but I did not get much information out of this short intro. Before you realize it, you're controlling the main character.

I started pressing random buttons (since the game doesn't give you a lot of hints of what does what). I shot a grenade, fired some shots, jumped, reloaded, and even used RB to grapple myself to the nearest wall. Then I grappled myself to a tower nearby, to the top of another wall, and suddenly I was parachuting across a valley. In

15 seconds, I had covered an insane amount of ground already, and it became quite clear that traversing through the vast landscapes in this environment would be a blast. Rico glides across the geography with ease, and I was looking forward to reaching my objective (flagged by a green marker on the screen, which was fortunately small enough that it didn't distract me but contrasted enough with the environment that I could easily find it when I looked for it).

We start going up and down valleys, following some pipes, and you can avoid some baddies by taking the high route and staying out of their way. I wanted to see if the game would give me some combat tutorial, so I decided instead to go BOOM on them, which gave me the first chance to fire around.

My main impressions at this point were that aiming/ shooting with an Xbox controller is way harder than

with a mouse and keyboard, auto-aim and/or aim correction will be a must for me (I don't know if it was on by default or not, but I could see the crosshair floating towards the enemy and I was grateful for that), and Rico seems to have a decent amount of health that regenerates quickly enough to not be much of a worry. I don't want my experience to be too stressful, so I'll keep these settings and difficulty levels, even if the game offers me the chance to ramp them up.

Core Game

The reality is that, after the tutorial, there are still a few additional missions that are aimed mostly at teaching aspects of the game, namely, Supply Drops, territorial expansion, Grapple Lifter, Grapple Booster, and Retractor. You also learn how to manage troops across the map, but at this point, I feel that both the tutorial, and the story are quite



You're immediately taken away by the depth of the visual field

rushed and not necessarily coherent. Characters are introduced extremely quickly without any background, and then they are fundamental parts of the story, and you're supposed to care for them. Sorry, but I don't.

If the story keeps being a miss, the gameplay and the graphics remain a plus. Moving around Solis is a blast. Better if you start at the high ground and can glide across the landscape, but moving to high ground is easy with the help of your grapple. I quickly learned to grapple the ground, gain some momentum and then lift off with the parachute, which seems to be the main mode of transportation across the island.

The story tries to tease you about some spontaneous revolution started by Rico, but if we're being honest, it's very flaky. It's just too convenient and hard to believe.



So... I guess I did leave the stove on after all!

That's when you start to be introduced to more missions. Some of the earlier examples include escort, where you jump on top of a moving truck and kaboom all the other vehicles that approach; prisoner liberation, where you go into a base, open some prison doors, protect prisoners, and make everything else go kaboom; and transport, where you drop a helicopter (?) from a container in front of you (??) and become a pilot for someone that I barely know (but it doesn't matter, as long as you go kaboom at some point).

kabooming things and exploding Black Hand infrastructure more generally. The amount of Squads necessary to liberate an area depends on the neighboring areas, so there's a strategic element to which areas you liberate and in which order - so you don't run out of squad resources.

Some areas also require region strike missions to be accomplished before you can move your squads in. These missions usually involve visiting the area and causing chaos - for instance, messing with the Black Hand airport in Islas Intichayers or stealing a warship in Recalada.

My biggest complaint is that it's not entirely clear how this system is supposed to work when you first start playing. Sure, the game has a mini tutorial that explains the mechanic, but not the logic or strategy behind it, and since this is such an open-ended world that gives you so many degrees of freedom, it's hard to even know where to start.



Classic escort mission - jump on top of a car, pretend gravity doesn't apply to you, kaboom everything that approaches

It doesn't really matter so much since your main goal is to gain ground and kaboom things, but it would be a nice plus if you had the world fleshed out a bit more and believable characters instead of just throwing a lot of random story bits and hoping they stick (spoiler alert - they don't stick).

It took me a while to finally figure out the core gameplay loop - it's all about territorial liberation. When you start the game, most of the map is dominated by your enemy, the Black Hand. You have to generate a type of resource named "Squads" to liberate more territory, and you do so by

That said, these strike missions tend to be very fun and well-designed. You're usually moving a lot within enemy bases. Still, the most aggravating aspect of them is when you're forced to defend a position - that usually means staying within range of a transmitter to hack data or protect a person, tower or vehicle



Gliding through the landscape in a Javi mission - the glider controls fantastically



When she says she's home alone.

while a transmission is sent. Enemies approach from everywhere, and when you're stationary, you tend to run out of ammo very quickly, so these missions can get frustrating quite easily, and I wish there were fewer of them.

The main storyline missions are divided into three categories, or "Operations" - each focused on a geographical area, usually requiring you to conquer many of the adjacent territories before advancing onto a daredevil mission. For instance, "Operation Windwalker" is all about conquering the lower part of the map to finally put in place your plan of skydiving into the eye of a tornado (?).

There are also three mission categories that are not necessarily related to the main story - those are the grappling mod missions, given by Sargento (balloon mod), Javi (retractor mod), and Garland (booster). These mods are generally beneficial, and the missions add depth to the world, even if they are not necessarily required. They were among my favorite side-content, not only because they add utility but also because they tend to be fun, with Javi missions involving a lot of grapple-puzzling and Garland making you feel like a proper stuntman, fully utilizing your kit and sending enemies flying around the map. 🤪

Another general complaint I have is with movement - with a map that big, going from place A to place B takes a while. In the early game, your best option is the grapple + parachute + wingsuit combo, which allows you to cover any kind of terrain much faster than you'd be able to with a land-based vehicle. But as soon as you start to access fast travel and, more importantly, key supply drops such as helicopters and fighter jets, all other modes of transportation pale in comparison. And this is a shame because the times you're forced into some modes of transportation for missions (say, driving Mira around or piloting a glider) are usually very fun and varied. Still, the lack of practicality means you only experience these elements of the game every now and then, usually for a short time.

The difficulty felt right for me - Rico can soak an incredible amount of bullets and explosions. You'll most likely die only if surrounded by 12+ armored enemies, if hit by five rockets in a row, or if inside an exploding vehicle when it goes kaboom - helicopters and motorcycles were the most common for me. That said, the aforementioned defense missions are incredibly annoying and frustrating because while you're a titanium colossus with superhuman health, the things you need to protect are usually made out of papier-mâché and reinforced with shortcrust pastries.

You're frequently running out of bullets, but the movement is so good that Rico can just move around avoiding or soaking bullets until he finds something on the ground or latch his grappling hook onto someone's face for some melee action.

Rico's generous health pool is very forgiving and allows you to be a bit bolder in your actions than you would otherwise - this is also further made evident by how mission progress is kept if you die.

Shooting tended to be okay - most weapons control fine, with noticeable differences in the rate of fire, firepower, and accuracy. I liked that I could shoot from the hip throughout the game, but the weapons seemed more effective whenever I took the time to use the iron sights. That's a good tradeoff between your mobility when shooting from the hip and the added firepower you get when you properly aim and clear a room in a shorter time.

One of my other complaints with the game is the number of keys you have to press in order to use certain aspects of vehicles such as vertical takeoff, invisibility, acceleration, etc. For the sake of brevity, I won't elaborate more on this, but just know that this game has an excessive number of inputs for a variety of mechanics. It is also good to note that the weapons have similar issues as the vehicles in terms of mechanical input overload.

Another minor complaint is about the size of the world - it is so big, so immense, and there are so many things to do in such a non-linear fashion, including the main quest, that you rarely connect with a place. I remember "El Abismo," where you start the game, the airport, and Cuya, but very little in between. This is a shame because the game has so many beautiful locations.

Unfortunately, the open-world bloat makes these places beautiful to see but very lame to interact with since there's typically nothing you can do in these places. Having just finished Deus Ex: Mankind Divided before playing JC4, I got used to a small world (DX: MD happens mostly within a few city blocks in Prague) with an extremely high level of interaction, where every NPC has something interesting to say. This is the polar opposite of that.

I expected the missions in the main quest to be very repetitive. While the things that need to be done tend to be the same (hack a console, protect a transmitter, etc.), the game does a decent job of making it look like different missions, and I did not expect that level of polish. You're still doing the same things, but the game successfully tricks you into thinking you're doing different things.

Something else that stuck with me - this game is so over the top. One mission has you carpet-bombing an entire oil refinery just for the fun of it. You're frequently shooting down 50 choppers a minute while killing 200 highly trained soldiers and slinging between valleys at 200 mph. It's great when you're looking to suspend reality for a few minutes or hours, but gosh, how different it is from games that try to look

serious. I always chuckle when I'm leaving an area after completing a mission, and there's a literal war breaking out between your faction and the Black Hand at the graveyard of the site you just obliterated from the face of the earth. It's awesome.

Final Stretch

When you get to "Project Illapa," you understand the game's beat. You experienced enough of the similar-yet-different missions to know what to expect, and you learned one thousand new ways of making things go kaboom. So it's time to kaboom the first place you've been to in the game.

To be frank, the last mission was a bit underwhelming compared to the rest of the game. Don't get me wrong - it has a great beat and pacing, and I felt the difficulty was good, without many boring segments like defend the transmitter that we've seen throughout the game. But given that the previous missions were absolutely bonkers freaking bananas like carrying a giant gun on a train through the desert or paragliding through a tornado, "Project Illapa" felt a bit flat.

Once you've killed the last enemies, an achievement pops up on the side of the screen, and a cutscene starts. I did not expect THAT to be the end, but apparently, it was. Again, not a bad mission by itself, but it felt short and not so grandiose versus what we've been doing throughout the rest of the game.



RKO in 3.. 2..

Last Impressions

One thing worth mentioning is that Solis is a great world. It has a lot of variety of terrains and landscapes; it is truly gorgeous. It has a good mix of cities, villages, outposts, and different kinds of bases, from simple fuel depots with one or two trucks to sprawling complexes perched on cliffsides or mountains. That being said, Solis is not a very interactive world - sure, you can explode a lot of things in a lot of ways, but you hardly interact with the world besides opening doors, lowering bridges, or blowing up targets.

Also, for all its beauty, Solis is so big, and you have so much incentive to simply fast-travel or to choose a fast-moving aerial vehicle that you hardly experience travel by land, which is one of the most underrated and underutilized aspects of the game. I know that the present philosophy of AAA game design prioritizes massive open worlds (check) and non-linear storylines (check). Still, I can't help but imagine how much better it would be if the storyline were a bit more rigid, forcing you to conquer region by region by properly interacting with each region in its entirety. Forget raiding one base and then suddenly owning a huge chunk of the map - instead, design clever missions that involve a lot of driving around with time to flesh out the NPCs, their motivations, and their lives. This aspect of the game is extremely underutilized, and it's such a shame because it could have made the world come alive in an unmatched way.

The supply drop also felt a bit short. You're constrained by four things - how many pilots you have (for most of the game, you'll have 2-4 pilots and more in the endgame),

how many factories you have (which affect how quickly you can reorder things from the same pilot), which supply drops are unlocked (with more unlocked for each mission or region you finish), and the time it takes between you calling a supply drop and one arriving in front of you.

On JC4 (and this is maybe because I had DLCs installed), I had access to automatic rifles, stealth jets, and a mech brawler from the first moment. With these things, I don't care about other unlocks because they will hardly beat the ones I already have, turning the whole unlock system meaningless.

Replayability

If you have played the game as I did (i.e., blazing through the main mission stories), you'll have a lot of stuff left to do after the game ends. To be fair, most of it is open-world bloat that does not necessarily add to the enjoyment in itself, but I found the side-quests generally varied and interesting. One of the few I did during the game was destroying all the blips I found, but there are a lot of acrobatic tricks (either with your car, plane, boat, or wingsuit), speed stunts, additional vehicle escort, prisoner protection missions, etc.

Frankly, I spent a lot of time clearing the main story and probably won't cover all the side-quests, but the game is just so beautiful to look at, and Rico moves so well around it that I don't doubt I'll keep the game installed and just mess around every now and then.

That being said, since there are no branching storylines or skill trees, progression is pretty much limited once you have beaten the main game. It's different from games like Celeste, where you can play the whole game again with the improved skill to try to beat your earlier

times - here, you pretty much reached the end of the road, but it's a beautiful and engaging road. Just be aware it won't bring anything new that you haven't seen before.

I tried comparing how my control of Rico at the end of the game differed from my control of Rico at the beginning of the game, and not much that has changed. Granted, I

have a much better understanding of shooting mechanics, I'm way more efficient moving around with my grappling hook, wingsuit, and parachute, and... that's kind of it. His health hasn't changed. He can't carry more weapons. He hasn't really unlocked anything besides the grappling hook mods, and that was in the first 15 minutes of the game... I don't feel like an unstoppable God in the last mission any more than I felt in the first or second... and that bothers me somewhat. It's like - besides the plot, it feels like I could have tackled the end of the game straight from the beginning.

Compare that with games like The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild, where you can actually meet the final boss straight from the start, but you're so underpowered that you're helpless to do so. Instead, you have to play the game and slowly but steadily evolve as a character. Endgame Rico is early game Rico, but with more squad reserves, which feels a bit unsatisfying.

□ fernandopa

STORY ★★☆☆☆
GRAPHICS ★★★★★
GAMEPLAY ★★★★★
SOUND ★★☆☆☆
FUN METER ★★★★★



- Gorgeous graphics and beautiful landscapes
- Great movement
- Shooting and blowing up stuff is fun
- Over-the-top action



- Unconvincing story and unidimensional characters
- Poor voice acting. The english with spanish accent feels forced.
- Over-the-top action

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Genre: Action, Open World System Req: Intel Core i7-4770, 8 GB RAM, NVIDIA GeForce GTX 1070, 60 GB available space.
Developer: Avalanche Studios
Release Date: December 4, 2018

A NICE DOSE
OF GAMING
ADRENALINE



When your boyfriend's idea of "going to a movie" is watching football at his friend's place.

RAIN WORLD

Rain World is a unique and mysterious experience, presented through cryptic small images and elusive dreams that leave you to piece together the puzzle of its lore. If you're the type of gamer who craves clear-cut narratives and spoon-fed exposition, this story may not be your cup of tea. But if you're up for a challenge and love delving into the depths of a rich and complex world, then Rain World's story is an adventure worth taking.

Certainly an enigma, and its open-ended nature may not be to everyone's liking, but for those who appreciate a narrative that allows them to draw their own conclusions, this game is a must-play. As for the ending, while it may be a bit ambiguous, it still fits the overall tone and atmosphere of the game, leaving you with a sense of both wonder and uncertainty. For me, it was a fitting conclusion to a story that was as much about the journey as it was about the destination.

The story is presented through small images displayed by a mysterious "guide-creature-thingy" that you encounter along your journey, as well as the dreams you have during various hibernations, hinting at a greater picture. It's an adventurous tale of survival and discovery, and you'll need to be prepared to sift through some cumbersome processes to access the nuggets of lore at your disposal. But if you're up for the challenge, it's sure to be an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

Rain World's graphics are a mixed bag, with some aspects that are truly mesmerizing and others that can be a bit frustrating. On the positive side, the animation in this game is absolutely gorgeous, with everything moving in a fluid and seamless way that is both organic and captivating. Even the lowly cockroaches are rendered with such detail that they become a disgusting-yet-beautiful sight to behold. And the flora and fauna of this world move with a lifelike quality that is simply astounding for a pixelated game. The water physics are also lovely, creating an immersive and believable world that is a joy to explore.



My cat when I do anything food related.

On the downside, it can be a bit hard to see the routes you need to take or where enemies may be lurking, which can make progression a bit frustrating at times. And it isn't always clear what objects in the environment you can interact with or not, which can lead to some trial and error gameplay. This was certainly an intentional design for the game, but I can see how some could be frustrated by it.

But on the other hand, it can be frustrating when you're trying to progress and can't quite figure out where to go or what to interact with. I can see how this intentional design could be a turnoff for some players, as it can lead to a lot of trial-and-error gameplay that may not be everyone's cup of tea.

However, for those who are willing to put in the effort, the rewards are well worth it, as the developers designed the game to be more of a "wild" and "untamed" experience. I feel as if the game has a perfect blend between direction and ambiguity in the traversal department, and while it can be frustrating at times, it's always rewarding when you finally figure out how to progress.

As for the pixel artstyle, to me, it is a the perfect fit for this game. Some may not be fans of the aesthetic, but for me, it's an essential part of the game's charm. I can't imagine experiencing this world in any other form - it just wouldn't be the same.



If you jump, I jump!

Playing Rain World is a total sensory experience that really gets your blood pumping. The cacophony of other creatures chomping away or stalking you with menacing growls, sends shivers down your spine, causing your instincts to kick in, and sending you into fight or flight mode. Also, when you manage to spear a fierce predator, the satisfying thud of your weapon sinking into its flesh provides a therapeutic release that's hard to match.

The game's music is top-notch, and some of the tracks perfectly capture the intensity of trying to survive in this dangerous world, whether you're running from danger, jumping from one platform to the next, or trying to fight back against your enemies. It's a real shame that the music doesn't play more often, as it really enhances the experience, but even without it, the game's wild and unnerving ambiance keeps you on the edge of your seat, and always eager for more.

The experience of playing Rain World is like taking a plunge into the deep end of the survival game pool. The gameplay is an intense, unforgiving challenge that demands precision in every move you make. You'll need to be aware of your surroundings, as well as your own abilities, in order to avoid getting devoured by a predator or ambushed by hostile creatures. The controls are easy to learn, but hard to master, adding another layer of difficulty that keeps you on your toes.

It is an immersive game, making you feel like you're right in the middle of the food chain. At times, you'll feel like a prey being hunted, while at other times, you'll feel like a predator on the hunt. The enemy AI is impressive, and it's clear that they can sense your fear, responding to your movements and blocking your escape paths with ruthless precision. Some even bait you with valuable items such as weapons or food, just to ambush you and cause your quick demise.

Exploration is an essential part of the game, with danger lurking around every corner. You'll need to be on high alert at all times, as you venture through a diverse and unique map that doesn't feel too big, while at the same time, not feeling too small. The flora and fauna are full of depth, making everything feel like it has a purpose and fits perfectly into the game's environment.

The platforming in Rain World is excellent, with dynamic movement that rewards players who take the time to learn the tiny movement techs that make some areas more accessible. The sense of achievement you feel when you nail a challenging jump is unparalleled. However, it's frustrating when enemies camp tunnels and instakill you the moment you reach them. And some areas can leave you trapped until you get enough "levels" to activate a gate leading to another area, which can be a real pain.



Rain World is a game that's equal parts fun and frustrating. There are times when you'll feel like you're on top of the world, executing slick maneuvers and outsmarting your enemies. But then, there are other times when the game's mechanics will leave you feeling like you're banging your head against a brick wall.

The reliance on certain mechanics that aren't tied to your skill can be downright infuriating, and there were moments when I found myself ready to rage quit. The AI can also be incredibly unfair, making you feel like the whole world of Rain World is against you. But even with these frustrations, the game is still enjoyable, and the sense of accomplishment you get when you finally overcome a difficult obstacle is hard to beat.

In conclusion, Rain World is a game that will test your limits and push you to your breaking point, but it's an experience that's truly worth having. It's not for the faint of heart, and there are moments when you'll want to scream and give up, but the sense of accomplishment you get when you finally overcome the game's challenges is hard to beat.

This game is unique and engaging, and it rewards skill and perseverance in a way that few other games do. While there are certainly frustrating moments, the overall experience is one that's not to be missed. So if you're up for a challenge and want to experience a game that's truly different, I 100% recommend playing Rain World. It's an experience that you won't soon forget.

□ VinroylsViral



The internet ruined me.

STORY ★★★★★☆
 GRAPHICS ★★★★★★
 GAMEPLAY ★★★★★☆
 SOUND ★★★★★☆
 FUN METER ★★★★★☆



- Difficult, but fun and rewarding
- The controls are easy to learn but hard to master
- The enemy AI is intelligent and acts like how a true predator
- Diverse, expansive, and unique map
- Fluid and seamless animation



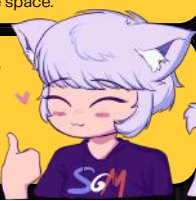
- The AI is just downright unfair at times, and you will feel as if the whole world is against you

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Genre: Platformer, Difficult
Developer: Videocult
Release Date: March 28, 2017

System Req: Dual Core 2.4 Ghz,
 2 GB RAM, any GPU really, 2 GB
 available space.

**DIFFICULT
 DIVERSE
 FUN**



MONSTER TRAIN

HELL HAS FROZEN OVER. LITERALLY!

So, imagine this: You and your fellow hellspawn are on a mission to reignite the inferno. The angels are relentless in their attacks, but your pyre-powered, multi-floor, single-car train carries you forward. To doom, hopefully.

Makes sense? No? Well, it doesn't matter. *Monster Train* isn't carried by its story, but rather its unique take on card-based combat. With multiple floors to fight on and a bunch of units and spells at your disposal, you're in for an addicting treat of a game.

When enemies enter your train, they generally start at the bottom floor. You begin each turn by setting up your units and casting spells to prepare for combat. When you end your turn, combat commences. The enemy angels will then fight the monsters you've positioned on that floor. If the angelic foes survive your defenses this round, they move up the floors towards your pyre, the core of the train, while ally units stay. This game design enables you to have 'big brain' moments as you strategically plan ahead for the next floor.



It's time to duel!



The game was largely easy to get into. Coming from other card battlers, I had no trouble figuring out how to play. Newcomers to the genre can take comfort in the transparency of consequences when playing a card and starting combat.

The quality of life is generally high in Monster Train. You can easily see health points and attack values of units; you even see a preview on mouseover before playing a card. You can see the effect of combat in advance and change the speed of combat at any time.

However, while learning the game, I found myself missing a way to see ‘what actually happened here?’ i.e. a log of events. Most of all, I feel like the preview before playing a card should show when an enemy effect will trigger as a consequence. A way to see who a given unit will attack - and how that would change when playing a given card - would also have given me an easier time strategizing.

As for replayability, and as a veteran of the genre, I found the rate of unlocks a bit slow. After some hours of gameplay, runs started to feel a bit samey. The different monster clans are a neat idea, but when starting out, they do not feel as different as I would’ve liked, unlike the classes in similar games. Run-changing upgrades were few and far between. On the flipside of this, there is a great sense of freedom in how you upgrade your cards and take the deck itself in a direction you want, which will appeal to a lot of players.



This took only a few hundred hours to complete.

A consistent cartoonish art style gives the game a delightfully cozy and interesting appeal but may not be for everybody. While the animations leave something to be desired, the characters do have character and stand out. The user interface is functional and generally does a very good job at conveying the information the player needs. Vibrant, colorful, animated card designs make it easy to remember most cards and tell them apart.

The background music I found to be spot on. And that's important, since you will be hearing a lot of it! The hit sound effects are decent. The other sounds I found a bit lacking, especially the grunts and voices of the monsters and angels.

If you like roguelike card battlers, *Monster Train* is easy to recommend. While the game and games like it provide little in ways of story and graphics, it delivers snappy gameplay with a good variety of cards and upgrades to experiment with. Despite each run not feeling totally unique, the clever take on combat on different floors with a steady stream of upgrades result in an exciting experience and leaves you with that 'just one more run' feeling.

❑ Nightshine



Grumpy Cat.

STORY	★ ★ ☆ ☆ ☆
GRAPHICS	★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆
GAMEPLAY	★ ★ ★ ★ ☆
SOUND	★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆
FUN METER	★ ★ ★ ★ ☆



- Clever card battling concept with multiple floors
- Snappy gameplay
- Vibrant animated card designs
- Great music
- Intuitive UI



- Feels a bit samey as you work through unlocks
- Low-quality animations
- Poor monster sounds
- Some consequences could be better conveyed

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Genre: Card Game, Fantasy
Developer: Shiny Shoe
Release Date: May 21, 2020

System Req: Core i5,
4 GB RAM, GTX 1050, 2 GB available
space.

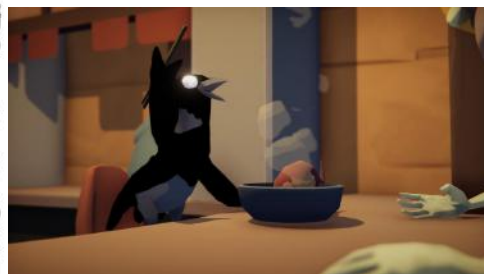
**COULD EASILY
SINK HOURS
INTO IT**



DEATH'S DOOR

Much like the Legend of Zelda: The Minish Cap which, I played on the Game Boy Advance SP as a kid. I got stuck on that game for a while because I played in Spanish without being able to speak it. I completed it after a few years when I switched it to English. I quite enjoyed both. A funny thing is that I got really confused in the forest biome in Death's Door. I blame myself for quitting midway through clearing this specific biome (I think it's the most confusing of them all). If you are interested in playing Death's Door, a tip would be to start and finish a biome in a single playthrough, or it might get a little confusing if you are like me.

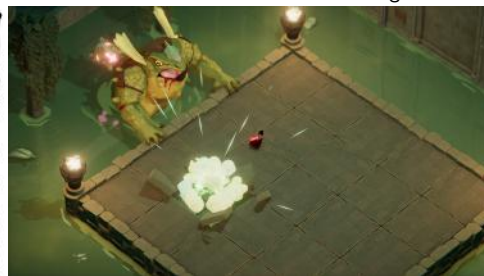
The game feels really cute with cartoonish hand-drawn environments. With a cool protagonist, a crow, with the task of harvesting the souls of creatures who cling to life past their time, creating all sorts of problems to the balance of the world.



Let's dig in!



Hogwarts...?!!



Keep running!

The combat is precise, so it will be rewarding when getting good, and your fault if you mess up. But don't stress about dying, as the game is pretty forgiving. Whenever you pass a door, it creates a checkpoint, so when you die you are sent to it, and even better, most of the progress you made remains. Enemies respawn, but if they are part of a clearing stage to go to another area, they don't. Each biome adds new enemies. For instance, the forest adds aggressive plants with different abilities, like spitting a firebolt or acid. The Witch Manor gives you cursed inhabitants turned partially into pots. The Castle makes you fight a sort of ape who wields a boomerang that uses as a head ornament. There is also an enemy that follows you into all biomes, but they have a unique attack for every different biome. The lesser bosses all have different styles of fighting. The last fight is a mix of stages switching from a dodging stage and fighting the big boss which has an arsenal that blends all styles from all the other bosses into one.

The ambient music is soothing, which makes playing a very relaxing experience, even with some deaths in the mix.

Where it's lacking is the lack of speech in the dialogue options, but prefer it over the grunts, which can't really express all the emotions that you try to convey (looking at you, Yakuza). Also, the development of the main character, besides the skills you get along the way of your journey and the stats you can purchase back in the Reaping Commission Headquarters, is lackluster. You are just another crow who happens to be the fated one, but that's fine. What's important is not who you are, even if you are a silent protagonist who you don't know much about. But it's about what feat was accomplished in the end, which in this case, was to re-establish balance to the grey world.

Turning this grey world into a simpler world, even if for a fleeting moment.



Now I am become Death, the destroyer of world.

□ Growing Strong



Indeed it does.



How much can a crown be worth, when a crow can dine upon a king?

STORY	★★★★☆
GRAPHICS	★★★★★
GAMEPLAY	★★★★☆
SOUND	★★★★★
FUN METER	★★★★☆



- Runs smoothly, with simple and precise controls
- Not difficult, but challenging enough to keep you focused
- The calming music which softens the overall theme of the game



- Some difficult puzzles
- Lack of character development

VERDICT

Genre: Adventure, Hack & Slash System Req: Intel Core i5-4670K, 8 GB RAM, GeForce GTX 1050, Developer: Acid Nerve Release Date: July 20, 2021 20 GB available space.

PRETTY AND UNIQUE



WORMS ARMAGEDDON

A WORM'S LIFE

(ISN'T EASY)

Welcome back to the classic retro game where you get to play as a team of worms and fight against enemy worms and the environment.



Now we know what really caused the dinosaurs extinction.

The game offers different single player modes you can chose from. Modes such as:

"Quick Match" against the computer. You can select to play a standard team on a random environment. There are no ranking, and no rewards.

"Training" gets you accustomed to the use of specific weapons and tools from basic to advanced training. Upon completion, different things (new missions, more options, utilities, etc) can be unlocked.

"Missions" comes with varying objectives during a fixed set of missions like simply annihilating the enemy or retrieving a specific crate. Overall there are 33 missions to challenge yourself with. Some missions may unlock more stuff. These missions can be quite difficult and frustrating, especially if you haven't yet accustomed yourself to different tools and weapons. But they can be restarted as often as you like.

"Deathmatch" allows you to go against the computer and raise your team's rank as the matches become harder with each higher rank. Reaching higher ranks can unlock stuff as well.

OPTIONS AND CUSTOMIZATION

The game allows you to create new teams, add new worms, change the names of your beloved worms, their nationalities, the languages in which they curse at you, and even their gravestones.



There is also the schemes options, where you can change the difficulty level to beginner, advanced, or customized for each team. Various weapon options and game options can be changed as well, such as the starting life amount, time available per round, amount of crates, and much more.

Extended options allow you to select a bigger font, which is a very useful tool.

24 YEARS LATER, ONLINE LOBBIES STILL EXIST

LAN parties may no longer be a suitable option for multiplayer, but through direct internet connection, people still gather to this day to play with their worms together and cause absolute mayhem.

Catch this!



Game lobbies still very much active.

Surprisingly the "wormnet" isn't dead yet and you can play against people around the world. You can join a room or host your own game with customized settings and rules. A lot of the players there seem to be veterans with corresponding skills. They even have their own lingo and rules. A chat function is also available.



THE VARIETY OF OPTIONS FOR "CLEANSING" YOUR ENEMIES

Util.					
F1					
F2					
F3					
F4					
F5					
F6					
F7					
F8					
F9					
F10					
F11					
F12					



IS IT WORTH PLAYING THESE DAYS?

Worms Armageddon doesn't really have much of a story though the missions try to tell some. So don't expect much in that department.

As for the graphics, this is a retro game from 1999. With its 2D drawn style it has aged quite well, unlike older 3D games. The maps, worms, and weapon effects still look good today, though some text writings can be quite hard to read as they are too small or pixelated.

On the sound aspect, there isn't much music in the game. There is some discreet background music that doesn't disturb the game play and annoys you in the menu. Weapon and effect sounds are quite decent. Voices could definitely be done better as they are sometimes hard to understand. Some sounds, however, seem to be a bit out of place, or simply too loud and disturb the flow, like the winning sound after a successful game.



Don't have to guess in which team Vinny Jones is.

Gameplay is quite simple and straight forward. Move, jump, use your weapons and tools. The different modes can challenge you in different ways. Sadly there is no overview for the controls. This is especially noteworthy because of the different jumps the worms can perform. They are very important but aren't clearly listed anywhere, so you either have to figure them out on your own or look them up online.



The fact that you have different modes and even local and online multiplayer makes it quite fun to play and for me the game hasn't lost its charm over the years.

The different modes can give players a challenge. And with it's community still active, playing and creating new maps, I think the game has lots of replay value.



The ingenuity of man can be frightening.

I struggled finding the right rating for Worms Armageddon, as the nostalgia of playing this 20 years ago may have affected my opinion. This type of game might not be for everyone, but I thought it was fun and I most likely will continue playing it, even if it's just for some quick games when I don't have much time.

❑ AiKirika

STORY N/A

GRAPHICS ★★★★★

GAMEPLAY ★★★★★

SOUND ★★★★★

FUN METER ★★★★★



- Different modes
- Single and multiplayer
- Customization options
- Timeless graphics
- Replay value



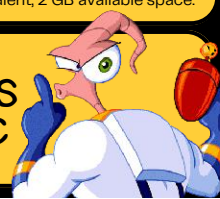
- Lack of controls overview
- Not intuitive enough
- Online multiplayer at times barely active and most of the online players are veterans
- Mediocre music and sound

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Genre: Strategy, Turn-based
Developer: Team17 Digital Ltd
Release Date: May 31, 1999

System Req: Intel Core 2 Duo,
2 GB RAM, Nvidia GeForce 8600GT
or equivalent, 2 GB available space.

TIMELESS
CLASSIC



NECROMUNDA

HIRED GUN

**BRUTAL, FAST-PACED,
ACTION-PACKED
EXPERIENCE**

Necromunda: Hired Gun is a brutal, fast-paced, action-packed first person shooter set in the Warhammer 40,000 universe on a planet under the same name. The game is officially licensed by Games Workshop, who own the IP of the Warhammer and Warhammer: 40,000 universes.

The game puts you in the shoes of a 'hired gun', essentially a bounty hunter or mercenary type, who, armed with just their weapons, bionics (implants), and a loyal Mastiff, has no real affiliation with any of the surrounding factions, and can work for, or against, any of the factions depending on the contract and money.

It kicks off with a mission whose focus is on hunting a bounty that has been placed on a killer known only by name, who murdered a member of the Merchant's Guild. Quickly the mission begins to deviate from the original plan when you begin hearing reports over your radio that fellow hired guns in your team begin coming across unexpected threats, and are being picked off one-by-one. Eventually, you also end up being shot up. Your life is saved by your bionics, and a certain famous bounty hunter 'Kal Jerico' finding you. Those of you who have an interest in the Warhammer universe may have already heard of Kal from other Warhammer content.

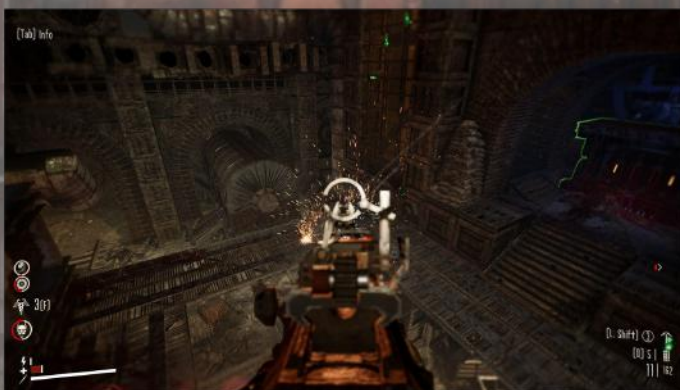
This takes you into the main 'hub' of the game, where you can upgrade your Mastiff's and your own bionics, buy and upgrade weapons, and pick missions or bounties.



A large, sandy open environment

THE GAMEPLAY IS BOTH GREAT AND CLUNKY

The developers play around with a large number of gameplay mechanics, borrowing looter-shooter mechanics from games like *Borderlands*, where you can find treasure chests with weapons scattered throughout the levels, as well as the ability for enemies in the levels to drop weapons and other trinkets. While the weapon amount is limited in the game, you can get different variants and different modifications on your weapon drops. You can also modify your weapons and their attachments in the hub. The rarest weapon type is '+3', which has increased statistics including increased accuracy, higher damage output, and better handling.



Mid-combat.

The game tries to slap in as many different mechanics as possible including grappling hooks, wall-running, multi-jumps, animated takedowns, teleporting, slo-mo and super-strength, just to name a few.

While the game tries to cram all of these different features in, it is more successful in some rather than others. For instance, the game has a takedown mechanic similar to *DOOM*'s takedown mechanic where a short, fluid animation is played when you perform a takedown, making the combat feel very nice. This takedown mechanic in *Necromunda* seems to only be available when enemies are below a certain health threshold and when you are looking at them from a certain angle. Otherwise, the prompt to perform a takedown just does not appear. Likewise, when you do get the prompt, the game pulls you into an animation, which looks very clunky as it pulls you to an animation start location, which could even be inside a wall or another prop. The animations take anywhere from 2 to about 8 seconds, which pulls you out of the fight and causes you to take considerable damage, as other enemies can still damage you when you are in the animation. As such, the takedowns in *Necromunda* were not satisfying to do, and closer to the end of the game, I found myself simply shooting through enemies' shields.



I'm a firestarter, twisted firestarter.



Hanging with the boys.

The movement is fairly fluid, although to activate the wall running, you have to sprint alongside a wall and jump once into the wall, which sometimes may not activate.

The game also offers abilities from upgrading your bionics. These abilities range from: a 'slo-mo' effect, which slows down everything around you while you keep your initial speed, to an augmented view, which highlights enemies and shows the location of interactable objects and locations, to even a power up where you teleport to the nearest enemy and explode everything in the vicinity.

One interesting mechanic that I personally have not seen before is that when you have taken damage, you enter a short time period where doing any damage to other enemies heals your HP. This is very useful as with the number of enemies and damage you take would see you using medkits very frequently otherwise.



WEAPONS AND SHOOTING

The weaponry in *Necromunda: Hired Gun* is not bad. You are presented with a variety of weapons, which you can find or buy throughout the game. While there is a large choice, there is a limited inventory space, so if you want to switch weapons, you do have to sacrifice one of your others. The weaponry ranges from your stock-standard laser pistol, and includes Warhammer staples such as lasguns, stubbers, bolters, grenade launchers, and plasma rifles.



Pretty fire.

The shooting is also not bad, with a range of sights and optics, which you can apply to your weapons, and solid-feeling weaponry. The time-to-kill is quite high, with there being more of 'bullet-sponge' type enemies where you need to focus on a single enemy for a fair amount of time. However, there is a fair mix of enemies and some can be taken out with a simple headshot.



She has those crazy eyes.



Finally some practical woman armor.

THE LORE - CONFUSING?!

Just to preface this, there are no spoilers in this section: Simply a discussion about the story, how it was presented, and the overall quality.

The story in Necromunda: Hired Gun is first and foremost, very confusing, specifically the way the story is told. The main story is explored through the main story missions and bounties, all of which seems very thrown in together just in the hope that something sticks. The game does introduce characters and plot-points, but some seem like they are poorly introduced, and leave you feeling like you were already supposed to know what was going on.

One other let-down in the story is choices. The game is very linear with a single ending, and while you are presented with a (very limited) number of choices, they practically do not change the world in any way.

Lastly, the voice acting and voice-overs are a huge let-down. While the voice acting itself is not bad, the biggest culprit is the audio mixing. A lot of the time, I found myself missing important dialogue or voice lines simply because the ambient sounds and music were too loud. The volume would sometimes be louder, sometimes quieter, and it didn't seem to be normalized to any level.



Speak your final words, criminal scum!!

WORLD-BUILDING

Necromunda: Hired Gun features an Original Soundtrack by Olivier Zuccaro spanning 30 tracks and is a great fit for the gameplay and setting. The soundtrack fits the Necromunda Underhive setting beautifully. Likewise, the environment, world-building and visuals are absolutely stunning. While they aren't 'RTX On', or 'Next-Gen' quality, they are very beautifully crafted, which I hope is visible through some of the screenshots I have added to the review.

The dev team seems to really be invested in the Warhammer universe, as it really just fits so well in the sort of place the Underhive is described to be, with gritty, old, worn-down environments, which look plausible. The environments also had a lot to traverse and explore, especially if you want to locate all of the chests.

Environmental storytelling is also fairly well done, with each level and area evoking a new and unique feeling and creating a sense of history and age to each area.

The world-building, visuals and music were probably the best parts of the game. You really feel like you are in the Warhammer universe in the Underhive on Necromunda.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Overall, the game was fairly fun. While I don't think I will be coming back to it, I don't feel like I wasted or didn't enjoy my time with it. It was a good experience but just not a very polished one with the developers throwing in a lot of different mechanics and just trying to fit in as many different themes as possible. At the end of the day, this resulted in a fairly enjoyable, although clunky, experience.

In my playtime, I did not come across any bugs, so it is definitely better than even most recent 'AAA' games in that department.

For the Achievement hunters out there, this is also a fairly fun game for that. I put it upon myself to go through and get every achievement in the game before writing this review, and I was able to accomplish that. It is a fun game to 100%. While some achievements can be difficult, it is completely doable, and is not too grindy at the end of it all.

□ ALPHA2749

STORY	★ ★ ☆ ☆ ☆
GRAPHICS	★ ★ ★ ★ ☆
GAMEPLAY	★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆
SOUND	★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆
FUN METER	★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆



- Fantastic atmosphere
- Great environment design
- Faithful to the Warhammer: 40,000 IP
- Difficult but attainable achievements
- Beautiful visuals



- Story is presented in a confusing manner
- The story is not very engaging
- Choices do not matter
- Clunky mechanics

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Genre: Action, Adventure, FPS
Developer: Streum On Studio
Release Date: June 1, 2021

System Req: AMD Ryzen 5 2600,
4 GB RAM, 6 GB VRAM, Radeon RX
5600, 50 GB available space.

CAPTIVATING
UNIVERSE



GOING MEDIEVAL

Worth a try, but a long way to go still

Going Medieval is a survival city builder in a medieval setting. You start a new save with several settlers who want a new start on the frontier. You get quite the limitless possibility of building your settlement and decorating the houses. There's quite a diversity of the flora and fauna as well - you also get decent choices for farming both crops and animals. In addition to the survival and city-building aspects, you also get a chance to work on protecting the settlement against raiders by crafting weapons and setting settlers against the intruders. And, of course, don't forget to build a fortress around your settlement to protect all that's been built.

In reality, Going Medieval is like playing with Legos - you have endless possibilities, the prospect is fun, and everything is set out for you - the only thing missing is the build manual for what you want to achieve. To some, that will be exhilarating - the idea alone that you can take and build whatever your imagination can bring you. To some, it will be a painstakingly long process of having no creative outbursts while trying to survive patching together shed after shed, while you have nothing left but a map filled with sheds... just so many sheds... with some of them having beds in them.



Medieval Sims?

The game itself is a mix between Sims and, well, anything with a medieval setting in it. I do have to say that the game does cover most of my favourite genres, and it did not let me down in what it is. You truly get the creative freedom to build whatever you want on the map - a bit too much, if I must say. The current state of the game is that you have quite a lot of research and build options specifically for the looks of the houses, letting you wish for more diversity regarding farming, storage, combat stuff... anything, really.

But despite it getting on my nerves, this is also what makes the game promising - it's an Early Access game as of the moment I'm writing this review, and while I know most of you are probably squinting your eyes and writing the game off already, don't be so quick to judge - the devs are still there and quit busy at work improving the game and bringing more stuff to it. So, kudos to them, and I will definitely keep my eye on the progress of updates.

Well, there really is none to speak of. You get a generic background story of why these people decided to start a new life in the wilderness, and every now and then, you get snippets of text about why someone attacks you or why someone joins you, of which most, if not all, you will come to ignore after the 3rd time the same stuff comes up.

To be frank, it's not a game that really needs a story. The magic lies within having the freedom to develop your own people and your own little settlement. Although, backtracking a bit to the build manual comment of mine - the game really would benefit from some basic and generic storyline that keeps a check on the player so they don't forget some important detail in putting together the settlement. But for that to come, the game needs to be in a more finished state. But that would really help in bringing out the best in the game and eventually rank it way better down the road.

Just as with the story - there really is nothing much to speak of. It doesn't have any cinematic cutscenes, an environment in which to get lost in, or a lot of details to dwell into about the characters. What it does have is a nice-looking world with a good attention to detail with the wilderness, fauna, flora, build items, weapons, and many other options. It's relaxing and does pull you into the setting - all 4 seasons are quite nicely done, and a snow season well done in the game will always be a weak spot for me.

The mood is set, the medieval soundtrack is on (which you can also acquire if you deem it worthy of your music collection), and you can get immersed in the game.



Brace yourselves. Winter... is here?



No aliens were involved in the construction of this pyramid.

Well, I simply can't go back to the Legos again - gameplay is like those first 10 minutes getting your new set of Harry Potter Legos out on the floor - you have your pile of doors, you have your pile of hats, you have your pile of something you can't recognize, and somewhere out of the reach you have the build manual. However, you have it open on the wrong page, and you try to see if what you did now from page 3 will not hamper your progress too much when you finally find page 1 of the manual.

You'll see where I'm coming from - there are only some basic prompts that try to act as a tutorial for you in the beginning, but mostly everything is hidden behind an almanac, which would be a great addition to a tutorial but doesn't serve much purpose in itself. Research is just a bunch of stuff thrown together that has no underlying structure or connectivity between each research option (at least for the most part). A lot of build options are hidden under one generic build option (e.g., fields - all the fields are hidden under one choice, which usually is what you built last, meaning you will find an option to plant apple seedlings under seeding beets).

It's also a bit clumsy - it offers you the chance of strolling through 10 levels of layers (going by 0.1 step) which is.. I don't really have any idea what or why. Since the game doesn't really benefit from anything more than having the layers divided in stories of the house or simply block heights. This just made building anything with several stories quit cumbersome and I eventually left half of the second story without a floor so I can see what's going on below. Trading is clumsy as well - you just get a list of both what you and the trader have and you can't really sort it out to see which is only traders stuff or which is yours.

Making clothes, weapons and, armour is another cool feature of the game - but if you manage to survive several of the raids which periodically come, you will already have your storage filled with this stuff. If there is any bonus of crafting it yourself, then I have not noticed.

It does quite a lot of stuff very well, but some of the core mechanics truly need to step up for the game to wow me more. For instance, building houses truly offers freedom of choice, combat has a nice foundation, farming crops is fun, and you have a nice selection of animals to tend. But for now, these good things are just thrown together in a bowl, and you are free to chow on them one by one, but to truly enjoy the salad, there are still some key ingredients along with dressing missing. But don't forget this is still a work in progress, and hopefully, the devs will have a similar outlook in the future.

Despite me ticking off box after box of stuff I disliked, I did enjoy the game. I really did, and I do have to say that you really need to tap into the potential of the game in order to truly bring out the fun in it. When the devs get around to making the game richer in content, then the irregularities and nuisances of this fun will be honed out and could also be brought over to the more casual gamer who doesn't have several hundred hours to experiment.

Is the game bad by itself? That's up to you to judge - from one point of view, the game simply offers sandbox mode with what you can expect in the full version of the game. I have faith in devs, so hopefully this grows into something bigger.

□ ChrisKutcher

STORY **N/A**

GRAPHICS ★★★★★

GAMEPLAY ★★★★★

SOUND ★★★★★

FUN METER ★★★★★



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- The freedom to build the settlement however you want
- Visually the game looks good
- Combat system has a good foundation
- Survival aspects are nicely done

- The game is messy
- Content is limited
- There is no story or true tutorial
- Core of the game needs improvements to be fun for the casual gamer

Genre: City Builder, Medieval
Developer: Foxy Voxel
Release Date: June 1, 2021

System Req: AMD Ryzen 5 3600,
8 GB RAM, 4GB VRAM, Radeon RX
580t, 2 GB available space.

**HAS
POTENTIAL
FOR MUCH
MORE!**



Applewood.



A forest, a mountain, and a mysterious fruit...

I feel a bit guilty when it comes to Applewood. You see, it used to be that this was a game that cost money. I only heard about it after it was free. I said to myself, "Looks cute, I'll give it a try sometime." Several months later, I went into Applewood blind.

What I found came as a complete shock. The game wasn't just good; it was great. Applewood shines because the developer put their heart and soul into their work. The world is its own. The characters are charming and memorable. The simple plot allows for the excellent character interactions and writing. I can't express how much this surpassed my neutral expectations.

The gameplay is mostly good. Sections requiring quick reactions were tricky, and some vines were finicky to grab onto. Fortunately, the frustrating moments were mostly optional.

You play as an imp with wings named Ringo, and while he has limited stamina, he can fly straight across or drop downward. The flight helped make recovery from missed jumps easier, though the jumping felt solid on its own.

Ringo has to deal with his enemies in different manners since there's no traditional combat. Usually it involves throwing things. A visual in the way of an aiming line makes this viable. It gets tricky, if not outright annoying, when you have to throw things swiftly. Still, I did like having to use environmental items to fight.

The pixel art is excellent, and the soundtrack is catchy. I was also happy that it has collectibles. There are four main types of collectibles, and they promote exploration while being fun to find. On the negative side, I did have a glitch occur that crashed my game. Someone else had the exact same issue and got a quick answer from the dev that fixed my problem too. It was encouraging to see that the dev was keeping a close eye on the forum to help players.

You might notice that I'm glossing over specifics for the plot. That's intentional, as it benefits from going in without prior knowledge. I highly recommend checking out Applewood. As for me feeling guilty, it's because the developer deserved my money given how much I loved this game. Perhaps I can find another way to support them, but either way, I'm very glad I decided to play it.

□ Celtic7Guardian



UPCOMING RELEASES IN MARCH



A new dark fantasy Three Kingdoms action RPG from Team NINJA, the developers of Nioh.

Release Date: Mar 3, 2023



Featuring modernized gameplay, a reimagined storyline, and vividly detailed graphics, Resident Evil 4 marks the rebirth of an industry juggernaut.

Release Date: Mar 24, 2023



Experience the emotional storytelling and unforgettable characters in The Last of Us™, winner of over 200 Game of the Year awards. Now on PC!

Release Date: Mar 28, 2023



System Shock is the fully fledged remake of the ground breaking original from 1994, combining cult gameplay with all-new HD visuals, updated controls, an overhauled interface and all-new sounds & music

Release Date: March, 2023



"FATAL FRAME / PROJECT ZERO: Mask of the Lunar Eclipse" was released in Japan in 2008 as the fourth game in the FATAL FRAME / PROJECT ZERO series. The series masterpiece is being brought back to life with upgraded graphics.

Release Date: Mar 9, 2023



WWE 2K23 is Even Stronger with expanded features, gorgeous graphics and a deep roster of WWE Superstars and Legends. 2K Showcase returns as an interactive sports documentary focusing on the 20-year career of John Cena and WarGames is finally here!

Release Date: Mar 17, 2023

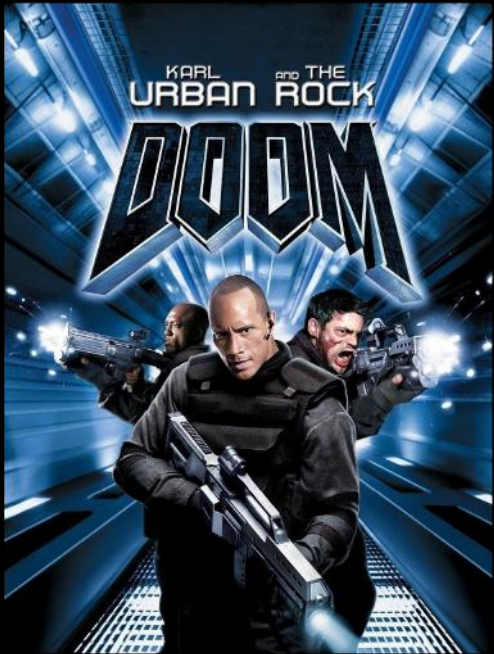


RAVENBOUND

Ravenbound is a fast-paced action game that combines the challenge of a roguelite with the choices of open world. Systemic Reaction, a creative division of Avalanche Studios Group, built on their expertise from creating vast open worlds and fast-paced action to merge it into the roguelite experience in a new fantasy world.

Release Date: Mar 30, 2023

Doom (2005)



"Okay, what the hell?" - might be your first reaction when learning that a movie based on the legendary FPS game exists. Even more so, it has existed for almost 20 years now. Still not surprising enough for you? What if I tell you that the cast consists of WWE and movie superstar Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson and The Boys fan favorite Karl Urban? Isn't that awesome? Come on, don't tell me you're not at least a bit intrigued by this movie. I sure was, and I must say... Oh boy, was I disappointed.

Where should I start? The plot. The plot?! There is no plot. Or at least, not one that has any resemblance to the original IP. Sure, the action happens on Mars and we've got guns and some really cringy 2005 action pieces. And even though I somewhat enjoyed the simple premise, I just couldn't shake my thoughts from trying to figure out what was going on in the producer's head. You can't get your hands on such a big (even in 2005) and iconic IP, and then transform it into a generic B movie.

While the special effects weren't that bad for the year it was released, they still have no saving grace for today's standards. BUT the first-person camera was pretty sweet, not gonna lie.

It makes sense why it was a complete flop and nobody even recalls a Doom movie exists today. Everything worked against it, even the cast. Besides Dwayne Johnson, who basically plays The Rock in every movie he's in, and while his performance is mediocre, you still know what to expect. The same cannot be said about Karl Urban and Rosamund Pike, from whom I honestly expected more range. But in the end, their acting fell flat, and I guess they went into it just for the check. Can't blame them. It's a shame really because there is a lot of potential in the DOOM universe for a blockbuster of a movie, but sadly, the movie industry only recently started paying attention to gaming universes, and they need to start treating them IPs with respect.

I do have hope, though, that in the future, we might get the Doom movie we deserve. Until then, we'll have to settle with the games.

Personal Score: 56%

AtomicBlonde



Dwayne Johnson



Karl Urban



Rosamund Pike



Deobia Oparei



Richard Brake



ABBA Ed Sheeran DUA LIPA SNOOP DOGG CARDI B METALLICA
 IED-ZEPPELIN AVICII
 BTS

SGM's Playlist

IMAGINE
 DRAGONS



LINKIN PARK

RIHANNA

KAYE
 WEST

GORILLAZ

SKRILLEX

DEP=CH=MOD=

LANA
 DEL REY

Modern Talking

GUNS N' ROSES



BON JOVI

BEYONCÉ

THE NOTORIOUS
 B.I.G.

Miyagi & Andy Panda - I Got Love (Uroš)
 Yakuza 5 - Machine Gun Kiss (abubis)
 King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard - Billabong Valley (Garlboh)
 Bôa - Duvet (VinroyIsViral)
 Gorillaz - Silent Running ft. Adeleaye Omotayo (Kiïroichi)
 Itou Kanako - Denshou no Shi - Verum- (Celtic7Guardian)
 Jesper Kyd - Ezio's Family (Volcanic)
 Linkin Park - Iridescent (Funnyduck)
 The Neighbourhood - Sweater Weather (b100dh00d)
 FF15 - Somnus (BAE)
 Pearl Jam - Jeremy (TMMIMITW)
 Aqua - Barbie Girl (Muddy)
 Rammstein - Lügen (AtomicBlonde)
 Gorillaz - Feel Good Inc. (ZenZen78)
 All Time Low ft. Pale Waves - PMA (jbondguy007)

DAFT
 PUNK

SHAKIRA



RAMMSTEIN

DMX

THE PRODIGY

ARCTIC
 MONKEYS

EMINEM



RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS

NIRVANA



Ariana Grande

KISS

PUSSYCAT
 Dolls

D

AC/DC

BLACK
 SABBATH

Slipknot

BACKSTREET BOYS

SCREENSHOT

of the Month



By Sv. Prolivije
(Assassin's Creed Valhalla)

Honorable Mentions



By Nextreme
(Biomutant)



By Garlboh
(Len's Island)



By VinroyIsViral
(punch club)

**HOT
SALES**

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(Sale ends 6th of March)

Sales as HOT as me!

GET THEM
WHILE YOU
CAN!

✦ CREDITS AND THANKS! ✦

Well, it's about time we wrap this up for now. The release of this first issue has been one hell of a journey, and we definitely couldn't have done it without the help of our wonderful team, our very generous contributors, our patient editors, and in general of all the people who collaborated on the creation of this magazine.

But let's be more specific! We want to extend our thanks to:

OUR CONTRIBUTORS, because without them we wouldn't have games to review in the first place

-[GarboDX](#), for giving us SIGNALIS, Noita and Death's Door

-[kiiroichi](#), for giving us Just Cause 4

-[Naycon](#), for giving us Monster Train

-[AtomicBlonde](#), for giving us Backbone, Drift Streets Japan, Worms: Armaggedon, The Evil Within, Rain World, Going Medieval and Necromunda: Hired Gun

OUR EDITORS, who made the magazine easier to read for all of us

-[VinroyIsViral](#), for editing Rain World, Going Medieval and Death's Door

-[kiiroichi](#), for editing Noita

-[Volcanic](#), for editing The Evil Within, Monster Train, Backbone, Necromunda: Hired Gun and SIGNALIS

-[Celtic7Guardian](#), for editing Drift Streets Japan and Worms Armaggedon

OUR ARTIST AND OUR DESIGNER, because what's a magazine but a gargantuan artistic effort?

-[AtomicBlonde](#), for putting together nearly the whole damn thing (sounds easier than it is!), and providing an amazing management of the entire project!

-[kiiroichi](#), for designing the Noita review pages and the credits page (yes, this one, hello everyone!), and drawing our lovely mascot, Paige

Join Us.

Reviewer. Contributor. Editor. Reader.

What's Your Role?

SGM