

FREE!

360zine

Issue 56 | July 2011

Free Magazine For Xbox 360 Gamers. *Read it, Print it, Send it to your mates...*

PREVIEWED!

CALL OF JUAREZ: THE CARTEL

*Is this the grittiest
game of the summer?
Find out inside*

PLUS!



FIRST LOOK!
**FORZA
MOTORSPORT 4**



FIRST LOOK!
FIFA 12



PREVIEWED!
FAR CRY 3

THE POWER OF THREE

*Huge preview round up,
including Battlefield 3,
Gears 3 and Mass Effect 3*



Navigation icons: FREE! (with controller icon), NAVIGATE (with arrow icon), CONTROL (with arrow icon), and various other UI symbols like a magnifying glass, a question mark, and a close button.



Welcome to 360Zine



You can tell we're getting towards the end of the console cycle. Even without a new Xbox on the horizon, the number of threequels covered in these pages suggests that the little black box has been around quite a while.

Still, there's not much to complain about when you look at the quality on show. We have in-depth previews of the humongous Gears of War 3, the gorgeous Far Cry 3, Shepard's return in Mass Effect 3 and the potentially Call of Duty-beating Battlefield 3.

With it being summertime, you might think that the games have dried up, but that's not exactly the case. The awesomely original Shadows of the Damned and the artistically ambitious Alice: Madness Returns get the review treatment. Enjoy the issue!

360Zine FEEDBACK!
Click here to tell us what you think of the new issue

Jon Denton, Editor
360zine@gamerzines.com

MEET THE TEAM
Probably the best games writers on the planet



Andy Griffiths
Hot for Juarez.



Thomas Worthington
Shepard is his Lord.



Far Cry 3
First preview

Don't miss! This month's top highlights



GEARS OF WAR 3
HUGE PREVIEW!



Mass Effect 3
In-depth preview



Battlefield 3
All the latest info



COJ: The Cartel
Hands-on inside

QUICK FINDER

Every game's just a click away!

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| FIFA 12 | Far Cry 3 |
| Forza | Shadows of the Damned |
| Motorsport 4 | Alice: Madness Returns |
| Call of Juarez: The Cartel | UFC Personal Trainer |
| Gears of War 3 | |
| Battlefield 3 | |
| Mass Effect 3 | |

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TECHLAND UBISOFT



PS3



XBOX 360

XBOX LIVE

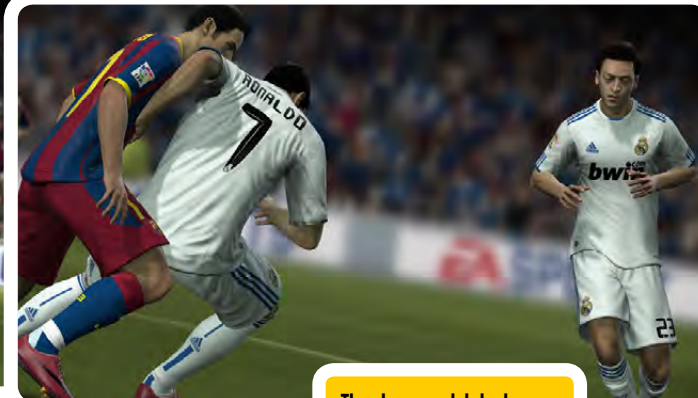
PC DVD ROM

FIFA 12

Publisher: EA
Developer: In-house
Heritage: FIFA series
Link: www.ea.com/uk/football
ETA: 30th September



The improved collision detection makes set pieces more straightforward.



The player models look improved and sport most of the fashion trends the more enigmatic players are sporting. No snoods, though.



"This year something much more exciting is on the horizon..."

FIRST LOOK

FIFA 12

Expect this year's edition to have plenty of impact

PREVIEW FEEDBACK!
 Click here to tell us what you think of FIFA 12

What's the story?

The FIFA series has always attracted a committed football enthusiast following, even though many of the yearly iterations haven't warranted the renewed investment. There are some things that are always promised, such as better dribbling, more convincing AI and improved visuals, but this year something much more exciting is on the horizon: the Player Impact Engine.

Unlike FIFA 11, players will no longer stutter and stumble when they connect with each other, instead contact works exactly as it would in real-life, culminating in bone-crushing tackles, inertia-halting blocks and other events which successfully emulate the beautiful game and believe us, it really is beautiful.

What else is new?

The build we sampled included an option for 11-versus-11 online multiplayer with support for two unlucky blighters being in goal, and there's a new hub dubbed 'Football Club' which is a persistent multiplayer mode where gamers can represent their chosen team in dedicated 'Support Your Team' leagues. It's similar to what we saw in EA's recent World Cup tie-in, but with more functionality to keep track of how your friends are getting on. In addition, possession play has also been tweaked via a new precision dribbling mechanic, which allows certain players to keep the ball much closer to their feet when manoeuvring around.

When do we get more?

Very soon. The football season kicks off again in a few weeks, so expect the preview coverage to ramp up shortly.

Anything else to declare?

We're always a bit apprehensive when it comes to annual releases, but FIFA 12, with its improved physics engine, has the potential to be the most evolved iteration in years. No doubt we'll be getting our hands on this one shortly.

ONLINE PASS

Activate your Alice: Madness Returns Online Pass* to access a bonus download of the original American McGee's Alice



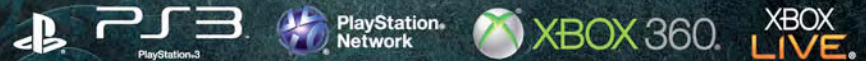
▶ PLAYBACK OPTIONS:

IN STORES JUNE 17TH

[WWW.EA.COM/UK/ALICE](http://www.ea.com/uk/alice)



AN AMERICAN MCGEE GAME



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Publisher: Microsoft
Developer: Turn 10
Heritage: Forza series
Link: www.forza
motorsport.net
ETA: Winter 2011



FIRST LOOK

Forza Motorsport 4

**PREVIEW
FEEDBACK!**
Click here to
tell us what you
think of Forza 4

Getting Kinected to the road

What's the story?

There have been four Forza Motorsport games in the time it took Polyphony to make and release Gran Turismo 5, and they have consistently proven what a force Turn 10 are when it comes to pure automotive brilliance. Forza Motorsport 4 looks to take everything the team has learned in previous games, amplify it, refine it and plaster it with the most glorious presentation the series has managed yet.

What do we know?

Well, along with the usual bevy of cars and tracks, Forza Motorsport 4 will feature a host of Kinect connectivity. The first, and most superficial, is Autovista, where you can literally walk around and interact with super hi-res car models by wandering around your room. The car models on show have a million polygons in them. To be honest, no one really knows if that's a lot or not any more, but it certainly sounds like a lot to us.

The game will feature head tracking for an in-cockpit view, so you can glance at the mirror or out of the window just by moving your dome. Amazing really, although how useful it will be is up for debate. Almost certainly useless is the ability to steer by holding your hands out like an idiot and pretending you've got a steering

"Forza 4 features a whole host of Kinect connectivity, too"



Visually it's better than ever.





"Forza 4 will be one of the most complete gaming experiences out there"



> **Forza 4** continued

wheel in your hands. No one over the age of eight will really want to do that, but it's nice that it's in there. For the kids.

More interesting than Kinectivity, for most then, is Forza 4's pedigree on the road. A new deal struck with Pirelli has given Turn 10 access to decades and decades of tyre data, and the team has hurled its old physics modelling in the bin and started again to give players the most authentic and believable real-racing experience available on a console.

When do we get more?

Forza 4 is out later this year, so expect the next batch of previews in *360Zine* to feature heavy and in-depth hands-on coverage. Turn 10 is a fantastically efficient developer and Forza is always a premium product.

Anything else to declare?

This should be the pinnacle of realistic racing games. The new Microsoft wireless wheel and Kinect compatibility could be a marriage made in heaven for the car-game enthusiast, but even if you just fancy a casual Sunday drive, Forza Motorsport 4 will have you covered to supply you with one of the most complete gaming experiences out there.



TROPICO 4



▶ PLAYBACK OPTIONS:



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16
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RATING

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CONTROL →



INCOMING

A fistful of top new titles coming to 360...



Fable: The Journey

Publisher: Microsoft | **ETA:** 2012

A strange one, this. The fourth game in the much-loved Fable series is leaping headlong into the world of Kinect, and will see you commanding a coach using imaginary horse reins to travel the world of Albion. You'll also be casting spells with your hands, Harry Potter style. We need to see more. And soon.



SSX

Publisher: EA | **ETA:** 2012

The early worries that EA had turned SSX into some sort of serious snow-surf have been allayed. This is still the madcap mountain hunter that it has always been, but this time with the added danger of landslides and avalanches to contend with when you're pulling off sweet air and tricking for boost. Our hunch is that this could easily be one of the surprise hits of next year.

Halo Combat Evolved Anniversary

Publisher: Microsoft | **ETA:** 2011

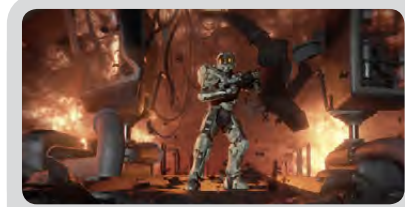
It has been rumoured forever, but E3 2011 saw Halo: Combat Evolved Anniversary officially announced. It's not been rebuilt on the Reach engine, but has been completely remodelled and retextured. It looks great, and is still a fantastically varied and well-paced campaign. And if you haven't played this landmark FPS, well then you really don't have an excuse not to. It's even going to be released at a lower price, too.



Brothers In Arms 4

Publisher: Ubisoft | **ETA:** 2012

The once-proud tales of real soldiers in World War 2 has taken a turn for the comic, with an Inglorious Basterds-influenced stomp through the Nazis. It's a class-based co-operative shooter in the mould of a Left4Dead, with the focus on cartoon violence and generous fascistic bloodletting. It may not be the most sensitive game in the world, but is any war game really an apt documentation of conflict? Not really. This is just Gearbox letting loose with a flagging franchise, and it might just work.



Halo 4

Publisher: Microsoft | **ETA:** 2012

When Microsoft announced this as the start of a new trilogy, there was many an eye rolling. Nonetheless, 343 Industries has a blank slate to tell a new Halo story – the only things it needs are Master Chief and Cortana. We might not even be fighting The Covenant. We probably will be, but we might not. Oh who are we kidding?



Assassin's Creed Revelations

Publisher: Ubisoft | **ETA:** November

Four years in a row is a tough ask for any developer, but Ubi Montreal has managed to improve the beautiful but inconsistent Assassin's Creed series year on year, and 2010's Brotherhood was a high point, with genre-redefining multiplayer. This tale of old Ezio should better its predecessor again.

UPCOMING

JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UFC Personal Trainer EDF: IA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deus Ex Human: Revolution Warhammer 40K: Space Marine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gears of War 3 RAGE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Batman: Arkham City PES 2012

child of eden

IN STORES JUNE 17

IGN
"BEST OF E3 2010"

GAMESPOT
"BEST OF E3 2010"



▶ PLAYBACK OPTIONS:

child of
eden EXPERIENCE
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CONTROL →





Publisher: Microsoft
Developer: Epic Games
Heritage: Gears of War series, Unreal series
Link: www.gearsowar.com
ETA: 20th September

HANDS ON

Gears of War 3

"Gears of War is not a shooter with cover. It's a shooter about cover"



The original dudebros are back

Has there been a more imitated game in this console generation than Gears of War? Call of Duty comes close, but since Gears' 2006 debut we've seen an entire new sub-genre explode. For the past five years, everyone's been leaning behind little walls. Epic has a lot to answer for.

Gears is so often referenced in games criticism that you could be fooled into thinking that anyone could knock up a Triple-A blast, but in truth, almost every other cover-based shooter is crushingly boring. So what makes Gears such a compelling blast?

For one, these guys have been designed to *love* smashing into walls with their shoulders. It's how they move around, and without cover they're probably the most useless soldiers in history. The same goes for their enemies, though. It means Gears is not a shooter with cover. It is a shooter *about* cover. That's a fundamental difference, one that barely any imitator has got right.



No game does brown and grey better.



**PREVIEW
FEEDBACK!**
Click here to tell us
what you think of
Gears of War 3



I've got my eye on
you, good-lookin'.

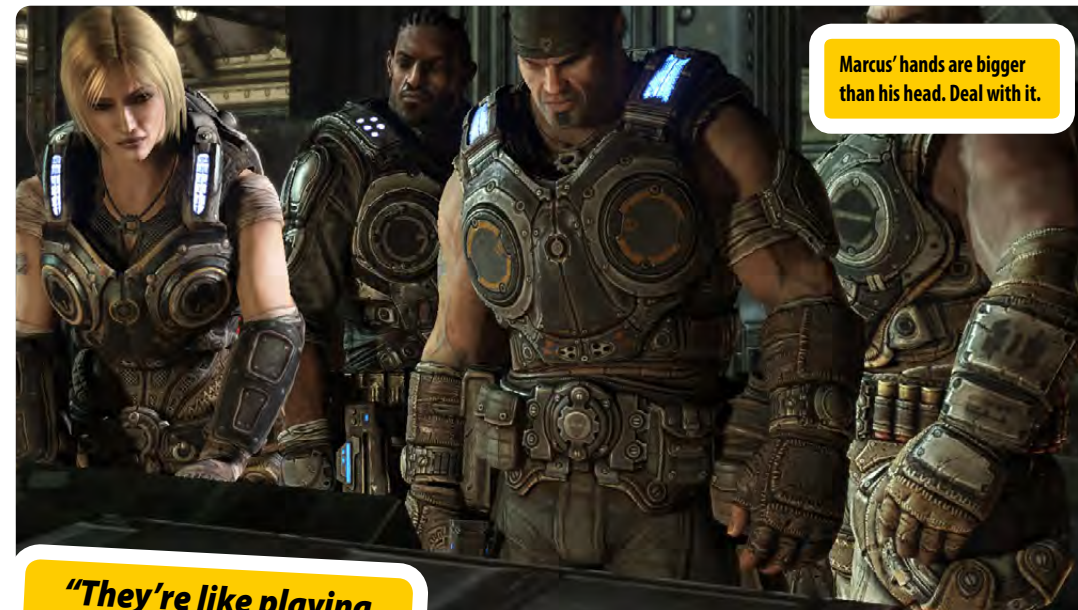


> Gears 3 continued

Secondly, it's a game brimming with character. These musclebound 'dudebros' are easy to criticise because at first glance, they represent everything that's boring about modern gaming, but on closer inspection, the Gears are funny, likeable and so bloody chunky

you feel like you can just grab them. They're like playing with action figures from the 80s. You want to root for them. You genuinely want them to succeed.

Finally though, Epic isn't just a bunch of idiots who've lucked upon a winning formula. They're a supremely talented team of veteran shooter-builders who have tapped into the thickest vein of the



Marcus' hands are bigger
than his head. Deal with it.

**"They're like playing
with action figures
from the 80s. You want
to root for them"**

male gamers – sometimes, we just want to dive into that primal part of our brains and watch the world burn.

Gears of War 3 doesn't deviate from this. Epic knows what brought it to the dance and isn't about to break it. What Gears 3 does do though, is bring back more of the 'combat chambers' that were dotted through the original. These aren't anything specific, but Cliffy B and his crew felt Gears 2 was too set-piece driven; perfect for the first play through, but lacking in the depth of tactical options and replayability that helped make Gears' combat so influential in the first place.

Not that it's abandoning all things dramatic, of course. They're called Epic

for a reason. As anyone who watched the E3 live demo will attest, the 'I'm on a boat... fighting a huge sea monster Lambent boat-eating creature from Hell' set piece, Gears of War 3 is still looking to smash out of your HDTV and grab you by the throat until your eyes bulge.

Backing up the four-player co-op campaign is the multiplayer (already





> Gears 3 continued

looking slick if the Beta is anything to go by), Beast mode and the all-new Horde. It borrows from Call of Duty's Zombies to deepen the onslaught – now you can buy barricades and turrets to defend yourselves from the barrage of Locust, and every tenth wave sees a huge boss character come to ruin your day. It could be as life-consuming as it was in Gears of War 2, and a darn-sight more tactical.

Killing the enemy will give you points which translates into cash. This cash can be spent on building barricades at specific locations on the map, or buying new weapons, activating spawn points, or even buying yourself back into the action. It's the most advanced and ideas-driven version of this type of mode we've seen yet – not surprising from the team that came up with the idea in the first place.

This is the sort of package that has become synonymous with Triple-A gaming. It ticks every box – co-op, solo,

multiplayer and survival – and Epic is going to do everything within its power to stop people trading it in, so expect a tonne of DLC maps and content after launch. Games are becoming as much of a service as they are a product, and Epic is on the frontlines of delivering that to its customers.

Microsoft may be lacking in big hitters for the core gamers in 2011, but Gears of War 3 is shaping up to deliver exactly what most 360 owners are craving: big action, supreme quality and just the right amount of stupidity to make the whole thing tick over nicely. Bigger, better and *even* more badass then? Sounds about right. ●



360Zine



HOW COMPLETE?



85%

FIRST IMPRESSIONS



90%

The return the series demanded

CALL OF JUAREZ The CARTEL

Publisher: Ubisoft
Developer: Techland
Heritage: Call of Juarez,
Link: <http://callofjuarez.ubi.com>
ETA: 22nd July

PREVIEW

Call of Juarez: The Cartel

Cleaning up the new Wild West

Say what you want about Techland, but they certainly aren't a developer which lacks balls. Most studios would be more than happy with Call of Juarez in its previous historical Wild West guise, but rather than resting on their laurels and cranking out another co-operative enthused tail of debauchery and pea-shooting, instead they are bringing the series into the modern day, right in the middle of a 21st Century drug war on the border between USA and Mexico.

Modern transitions happen all the time (see Call of Duty and Medal of Honor), but the trick is to keep existing fans happy, and while The Cartel shares some tropes with its predecessors this is very much a reboot of the series.

For starters, rather than just having two main protagonists, there are three – Kim Evans, Ben McCall and Eddie Guerra – facilitating a rarely seen three-player campaign co-op structure. Each character has their own weaponry, personality and back story which



Why fire one gun when you can shoot two?

"While The Cartel shares some tropes with its predecessors, this is very much a reboot of the series"



Throughout the entire campaign you'll be able to cap foes with your buddies.

CALL OF JUAREZ the CARTEL



> The Cartel continued

affects how players witness the plot. The opening involves the all-American task force tracking down a Mexican drug cartel after a high-profile bombing takes out the premises of the US law agency. The setting sounds cornball, but there

isn't any of the Hollywood blockbuster cleanliness you might expect with a tone more in common with 'No Country for Old Men' than 'Fast and the Furious'.

That isn't to say the plot is slow and plodding, though. One gameplay section we witnessed featured the trio of protagonists fighting through dark



Players will get to see what the Wild West has become.

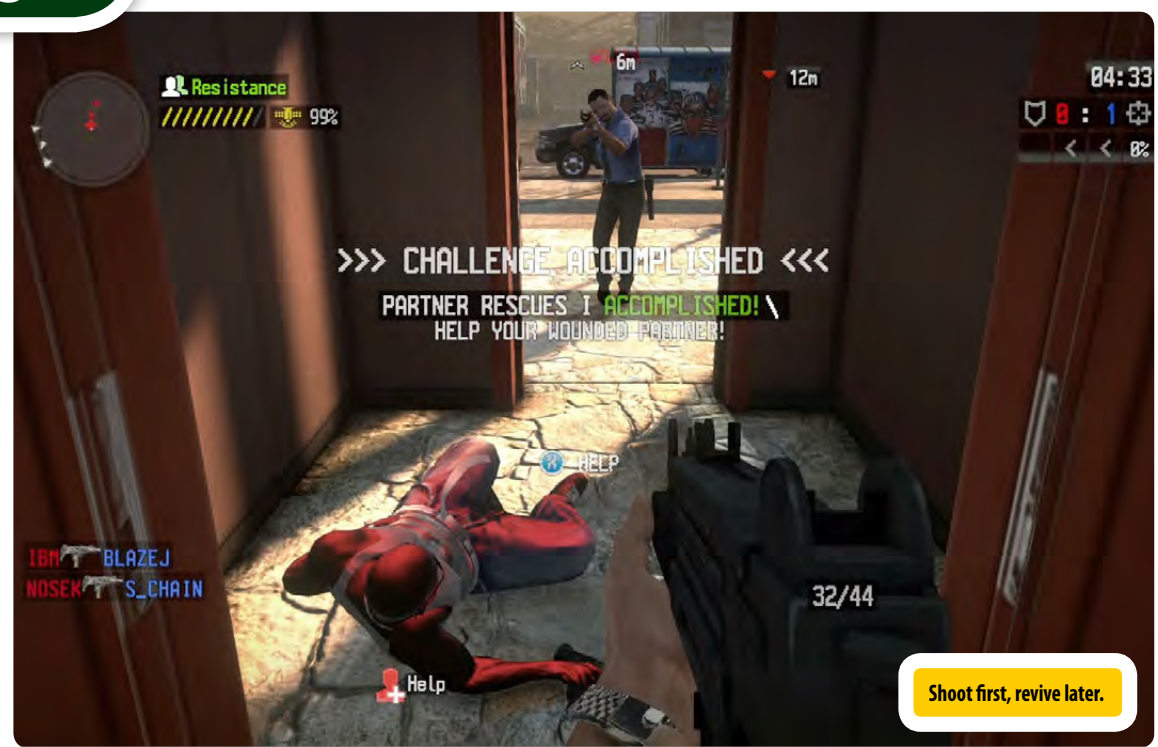
"There's a feeling that the protagonists are functioning completely outside of the law"

alleys to an open marketplace with all-guns blazing in an attempt to capture some fleeing undesirables. There was plenty of blood and guts on show with a surprisingly large number of cronies to slaughter. Gunplay felt similar to Call of Duty in terms of tactile feedback, and the mixed arsenal of assault rifles, revolvers, shotguns and sub-machine guns appropriately imbued new and old Western themes. Like in 'Bound in Blood' there's a feeling that the protagonists are functioning completely outside of the law, or at least they have the power

to do so, which in-turn led to us feeling more like vigilantes than heroes. It's a very interesting dichotomy which we suspect will be properly explored during pivotal story moments.

To supplement the morally ambiguous campaign there's also two different competitive multiplayer modes, both involve cops versus foul-mouthed drug-runners. The first mode is objective-based and involves criminals carrying out a series of objectives, e.g. stealing cocaine from a warehouse, while the boys in blue must stop them. There will be several different maps, all with different objectives, and it definitely reminded us of Kane & Lynch, if only due to the copious amounts of swearing uttered in-game. The action is

CALL OF JUAREZ The CARTEL



Shoot first, revive later.



> The Cartel continued

seamlessly put together with on-foot and vehicle sections all culminating in a surprisingly different online experience. The second mode is more vanilla and of the Team Deathmatch variety – which is not necessarily a bad thing at all. In addition, it's also worth mentioning that all the persistent bells and whistles you'd expect of a modern release are

accounted for, with XP-based unlocks and the ability to revive fallen comrades.

Overall, Call of Juarez: The Cartel has plenty of interesting elements going for it but aside from the censor-enraging setting, it's lacking that certain something to make it stand out. It's a distraction rather than a fully fledged rival to Battlefield 3 or Modern Warfare 3, but with the arrival of those juggernauts still a few months away, it could prove worthy of your attention. ●

PREVIEW FEEDBACK!
Click here to tell us what you think of CoJ: The Cartel



HOW COMPLETE?	FIRST IMPRESSIONS
80%	80%
Shaping up to be a valuable refresh of the series	

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HANDS ON

Mass Effect 3

Don't fear the Reapers

Let's start with some bad news shall we? Mass Effect 3 is definitely not coming out this year.

We hate to be the ones to break it to you, but come Christmas morning, you won't find Commander Shepard under your Christmas tree ready to whisk you away on a galactic voyage while your family gathers round the other TV to watch the Queen delay your festive dinner. BioWare has effectively ruined your Christmas. Sorry to break that to you.

So that's the bad news out of the way. The good news is that we've got a tonne of new details on the highly anticipated third instalment that should make the wait (it's now slated for an early 2012 release) a little less agonising.

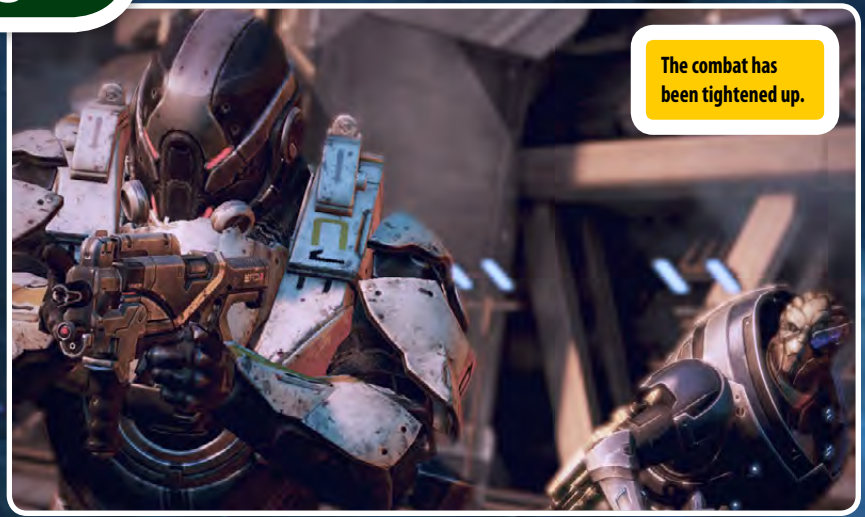
So what's new? Well for one thing, the Reapers are here – not coming, not on their way but here – already laying waste to our historic capital city. Fleeing the planet after popping in for a brief court appearance, it's up to 'saviour of the universe' Commander Shepard to

"It's up to 'saviour of the universe' Shepard to once again scour the galaxy"



It's still very much a cover-based shooter.



MASS EFFECT 3

The combat has been tightened up.



The tactical options are immense.



"BioWare have said that every acquaintance you've made along your journey will appear in Mass Effect 3"

> Mass Effect 3 continued

once again scour the galaxy to recruit friends new and old to help put an end to the Reaper invasion, and reclaim Earth for the human race once more. It's a familiar story, but with a new enemy on

the space avenger's tail. Cerberus, a group led by the Illusive Man who you begrudgingly served under through all of Mass Effect 2, is back. But not as friendly as before.

In Mass Effect 3, the organisation has turned against you and put quite the

bounty on Shepard's head. Doesn't sound too great for our hero considering he's already got a planet in need of saving. Lucky for you, Shepard has accrued a good number of friends willing to answer the call of duty (a Facebook account to be jealous of). BioWare has said that every acquaintance you've made along your journey will appear in some form in Mass Effect 3, assuming they didn't die under your watch in prior escapades.

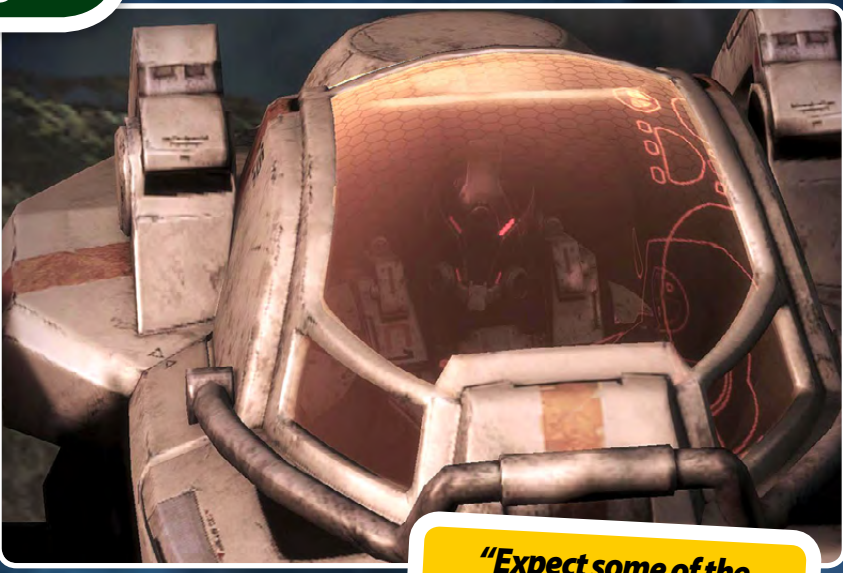
Not all of your former squadmates will be budding recruits, though. Whereas Mass Effect 2 boasted a hefty number of interchangeable buddies, Mass Effect 3 will feature a smaller but more robust, tight-knit roster providing much deeper relationships for players to engage in.

Confirmed appearances from Liara T'Soni, Kaiden, Ashley, Wrex, Mordin and fan-favourite Garrus will play a part in Shepard's final chapter, many of which will join in the action. That's not to say they'll need a little convincing. Much like Shepard's call to arms in Mass Effect 2, early details suggest you'll have to travel far and wide in search of recruits new and old and gain their allegiance. Confirmed hotspots include the home-worlds of Turian and Quarian races and a return visit to the Krogan planet of Tuchanka which you should have passed by in Mass Effect 2.

We've also been told that there will also be a few trips to Earth. Though you'll be fleeing the planet moments into Mass Effect 3's opening hours, BioWare has picked many cities on our planet as 'showpiece locations' including Vancouver, which promises



MASS EFFECT 3



"Expect some of the biggest battles the series has ever offered"



PREVIEW FEEDBACK!
Click here to tell us what you think of Mass Effect 3

> Mass Effect 3 continued

to be an epic landscape unlike anything we've seen in Mass Effect to date.

In return, you can also expect some of the biggest battles the series has ever offered, with the benefit of a revised combat system. Shepard is far more versatile when it comes to moving around the battlefield. Mixed reports suggest that BioWare is looking to loosen the restrictions around each class meaning you won't be strictly tied to the weapons and abilities limited to the choices you made in the original.

The weapons themselves will also feature some useful upgrade slots too, allowing you to throw scopes, barrels and more. These become pertinent as enemies will be armoured to the teeth encouraging you to seek out a chink in their bulky exteriors. The RPG elements of Mass Effect 3 will also be considerably more robust than the slimmed-down package its predecessor had to offer, with a small number of rumoured class additions. – 'Heavy Melee' suggests we'll see soldiers performing more Close-Quarters-Combat.

It's not all about your brawn, though. Maintaining friendships and being cautious of how you handle your conversations is vital. Though you'll be traversing the galaxy to seek the aid of races, the choices you make can affect



The visuals are a high point for the series.

which races will side with Shepard, saving you the work of doing missions for them or making it even harder to gain their approval. Even decisions you made way back in Mass Effect may come back to haunt you, and even affect humanities struggle against the Reaper invasion.

So it's been delayed. If by the end of this preview you're still hung up on such disappointment then we feel for you, we really do. The bittersweet truth is that a delayed game is ultimately a better conclusion for a series that has helped define the current generation of consoles. Until then, we'll continue to spit polish our N7 armour and look forward to Shepard's swan song. ●

360Zine



HOW COMPLETE?



80%

FIRST IMPRESSIONS



90%

A thrilling end to the trilogy



BATTLEFIELD 3

Publisher: EA
 Developer: DICE
 Heritage: Battlefield series, Mirror's Edge
 Link: www.battlefield.com
 ETA: October

PREVIEW

Battlefield 3

Appetite for destruction

Something to bear in mind: as beautiful as Battlefield 3 is, its developers DICE has still to prove itself as a purveyor of premier FPS campaigns. Neither of the Bad Company games managed to get anywhere near the best-in-class level of Call of Duty or Halo. And Battlefield 3's E3 tank demo, as pretty as it was, didn't really spark the kind of whoopin'-and-hollerin' reaction that its peers lapped up from the boisterous US crowds.

In truth, despite the significant leaps and bounds DICE has made in story-driven single-player action, Battlefield 3 is still a multiplayer at heart. That's why the press were sat down for a game of Rush at E3 rather than chucked into a single-player level, and that's also why

Battlefield 3 has every chance of toppling Call of Duty this year, at least with the critics.

If you're familiar with Bad Company 2's superb multi-tired Rush mode, then Battlefield 3 won't be much of a shock to the system. The E3 level, set in Paris, is still a battle of attack and defence; of M-Com capture, bottlenecks and glorious unscripted drama. It's just that everything's that much bigger and bolder now.

The action begins in the pitch-black tunnels of the Parisian metro, lit only by the torchlight of the newly re-spedded Engineers. It's a tense opening, punctuated by the crackling of gunfire and the echoed shouts of your squadmates. Once you're out into the blue skies of the French capital though, the open-ended skirmishes that have made Battlefield such a thrilling multiplayer experience make a return.

Unlike Call of Duty's lone-wolf murder sprees, Battlefield is about teamwork. Your tight-knit squad of four needs to work together to achieve objectives, mixing up classes and approaches to outwit and outflank your opponents.

"Unlike Call of Duty's lone-wolf murder sprees, Battlefield is about teamwork"



BATTLEFIELD 3

> Battlefield 3 continued

The classes have been tweaked, if not quite overhauled. The medic and assault classes have now joined forces, so you can dish out medic packs and heal people while still being on the frontlines – a controversial choice, but considering the overwhelming power medics had in Bad Company 2, it's probably one that's for the best.

The Engineer is still a dab hand at repairing vehicles, and blowing up the enemies, and his new underslung torch is a godsend if you're battling through the dark. Snipers are still the lifeblood of the back line, but have to hold their breath, CoD style, before firing accurately, slightly easing their powers (especially at higher levels, where Bad

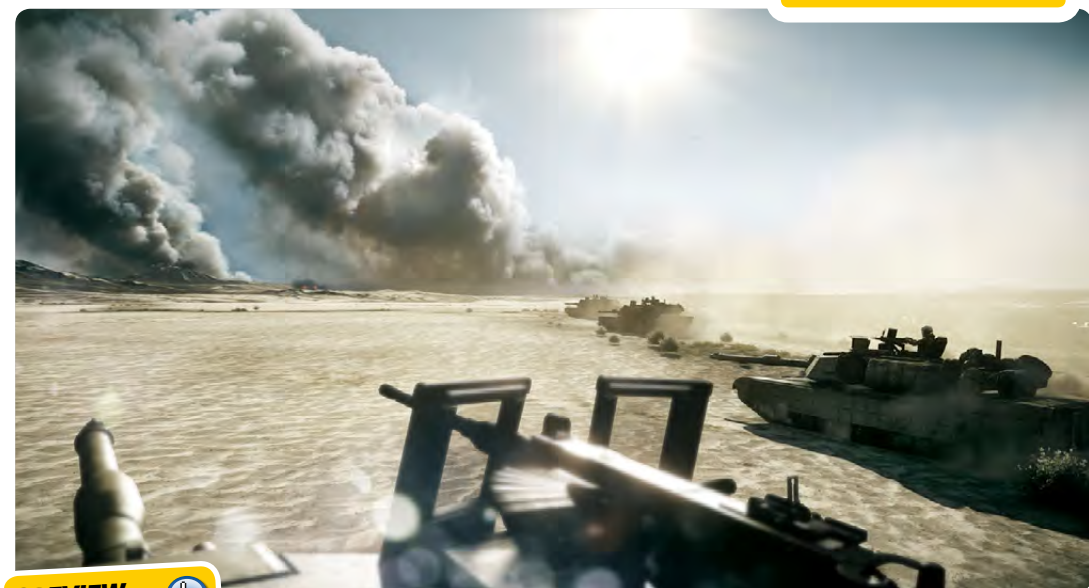
Company 2 was dominated by dead-eyed marksmen). Finally, there's also the returning Support class, who can pop his light machine gun on a bipod and then spray bullets in the enemies' direction for a nice suppression XP bonus.

So, it's a case of evolution rather than revolution then, to use the old cliché, but when you're dealing with the masters of multiplayer, that's no bad thing. Where Battlefield 3 will shine is in its moments; in the stories that come from its skirmishes. Call of Duty might be able to match its gunplay, but it can never hope to compete with the emotion and drama of an amazing Battlefield conflict.

The war is waging strong, then. But which team will you be on? ●



Multiplayer will be the main event, but DICE is keen to create a best-in-class campaign.



PREVIEW FEEDBACK! Click here to tell us what you think of Battlefield 3



360Zine BATTLEFIELD 3	HOW COMPLETE?	FIRST IMPRESSIONS
	80%	90%
<i>Beautiful and brainy. It's going to be a hell of a fight</i>		

FARCRY 3

Publisher: Ubisoft
Developer: Ubisoft Montreal
Heritage: Assassin's Creed, Far Cry 2
Link: <http://farcrygame.us.ubi.com>
ETA: 2012

PREVIEW

Far Cry 3

Welcome to paradise

After pages and pages of games featuring men with loud guns aimed into the middle of Unreal Engine-powered screens, you might think we're a little bored of first-person shooters. And you'd be right. The genre is so flooded and well-trodden that it's hard to get excited about any of it any more, even the big hitters like Modern Warfare 3 are met with more of a knowing nod than a leap and a shout.

Far Cry 3 is different, though. Yes, it still involves a floating gun at the bottom of the screen, explosions, enemies jabbering in foreign tongues and enough noise to shellshock a legion of war heroes, but it's also smart. Very smart. In fact, it might just be the smartest shooter in town.

As the sequel to Far Cry 2 (in case you hadn't worked that one out), Far Cry 3 borrows much of what made that game so special. If you've never sampled the delights of Ubisoft Montreal's descent in the lethal savannahs of war-torn Africa, you'll have missed out on a shooter that's obsessed with systems. AI systems that react to you properly in full 360-degree

"There's no sense of second album syndrome coming through here"

space. A fire system that is governed by the weather as well as the combustibility of your surroundings. A buddy system that sees you accompanied by occasionally useful, occasionally useless compadres, who if they go down under fire, you can choose to save, ignore or even euthanise – you see, this isn't your ordinary duck shoot.

So, with all this in hand, Far Cry 3 supplants the action to where it all began, a tropical paradise. Two, in fact. Far Cry 3 features a pair of enormous open archipelagos, which you're free to explore at your leisure. Well, not at your leisure, at your absolute peril, as they're teeming with the militant troops of a maniac, the mohawked mad-man in the image to your right. He's got it in



FARCRY 3

> Far Cry 3 continued

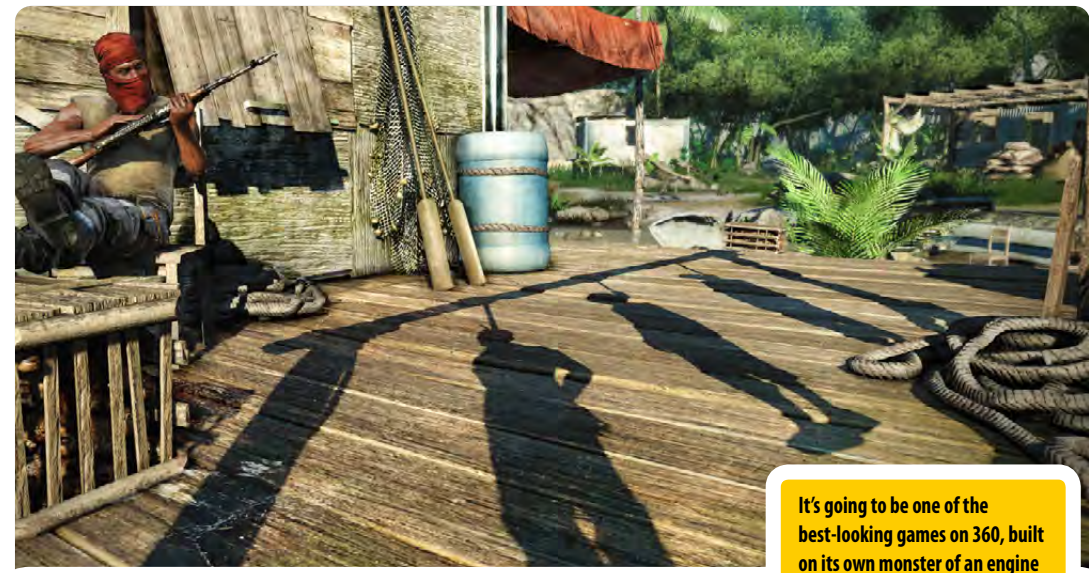
for you for some reason, and won't stop at anything until you're dead.

If all this makes Far Cry 3 sound your typical dunder-headed action game, though, then you'd be very wise to think again. This will be a game about measured pace and thoughtfulness, about tactical approaches to combat and adapting to your environment in order to survive. Perhaps most importantly of all though, it will be a game about moments.

Moments of the kind that made Far Cry 2 so memorable and unique. Moments like finding a wounded enemy being carried to safety by his colleague. Moments like using cover

and stealth so well that you trick a bad guy into freaking out and shooting his own buddy. Moments like fleeing the scene of a skirmish, taking stock of what you've accomplished on a distant rocky outcrop, and just as you're about to relax, you hear gunshots. An enemy with a stomach wound has crawled all the way up just to carry out retribution. It's either you or him. You know what to do... Click, boom!

With another year of development time and undoubtedly an enormous team at Ubi Montreal (Far Cry 2 had its own building), this is shaping up to be one of the shooters of 2012. Instead of Battlefield vs CoD, we could have Far Cry vs Bioshock. Our brains feel significantly better already. ●



It's going to be one of the best-looking games on 360, built on its own monster of an engine



PREVIEW FEEDBACK!
Click here to tell us what you think of Far Cry 3



HOW COMPLETE? **80%**

FIRST IMPRESSIONS **90%**

The smartest shooter you'll play next year

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Shadows of the Damned

Publisher: EA

Developer: Grasshopper

Heritage: No More Heroes,
Killer7

Link: www.ea.com/shadowsofthedamned

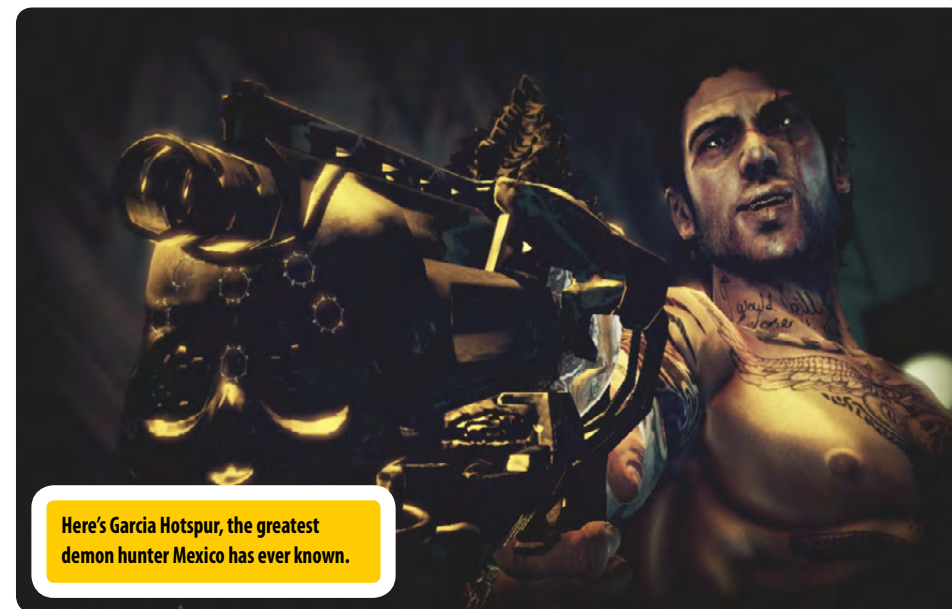
OUT NOW

We're on the road to Hell

The last time luminary creators Shinji Mikami (Resi 4, Devil May Cry) and Suda 51 (No More Heroes) got together, they came up with one of the most bizarre and interesting games of the previous generation, the gloriously weird Killer7. This is a pair that seems to spark off each other, Mikami providing the

gameplay ideas and Suda the craziness, and it's this partnership which makes the unheralded Shadows of the Damned the care-free joyride that it is.

If you mix the over-the-shoulder shooter mechanics of the recent Resident Evils with the tongue-in-cheek grindhouse of Machete and Planet Terror, you'll begin to get a picture of



Here's Garcia Hotspur, the greatest demon hunter Mexico has ever known.

this action-packed tale of revenge and redemption. You plays as the incredibly named Garcia Hotspur, a demon hunter whose girlfriend has been taken to a castle by a malevolent monster. Only this isn't Mario, as this castle is in the belly of hell itself, and Garcia's going to have to go straight down the esophagus.

You're joined on your journey by Johnson, a talking English skull who can transform into a torch, motorbike and most importantly, a selection of guns. The banter between Hotspur and Johnson is bawdy and humorous, not to be taken seriously and littered with filthy gags which are as groansome as they are gleeful.

It's that tone that propels Shadows of the Damned. This is a game not to be taken seriously, but one with serious mechanics. The action is sharp and pacey, the shooting always engaging

and thankfully cover-free. And just when it seems like the zombie-blasting is starting to run its course, the designers throw a clever idea at you to mix things up, be it a new enemy or a fiendish puzzle.

It's so rare these days for an action game to challenge us cerebrally as well as dextrously that even Shadows' early switch puzzles come as a nice surprise. They're all discussed liberally in the snappy script, given context in the excellent interpretation of the underworld, and while not hugely tough to figure out, at least make you stop and think for a second. It's the kind of pacing that games did so well a few years ago, a technique that has long-since been lost sadly, and been replaced by big-bucks explosions and relentless gunplay.

In fact, Shadows is a bit of a hark back to the PS2 days. It's not the



"The ideas and personalities of its creators have put down on a digital canvas, free of focus-testing and hand-holding"



Yes well, maybe it was a little rude to suggest it had a head like a beetroot. No wonder it looks so angry.

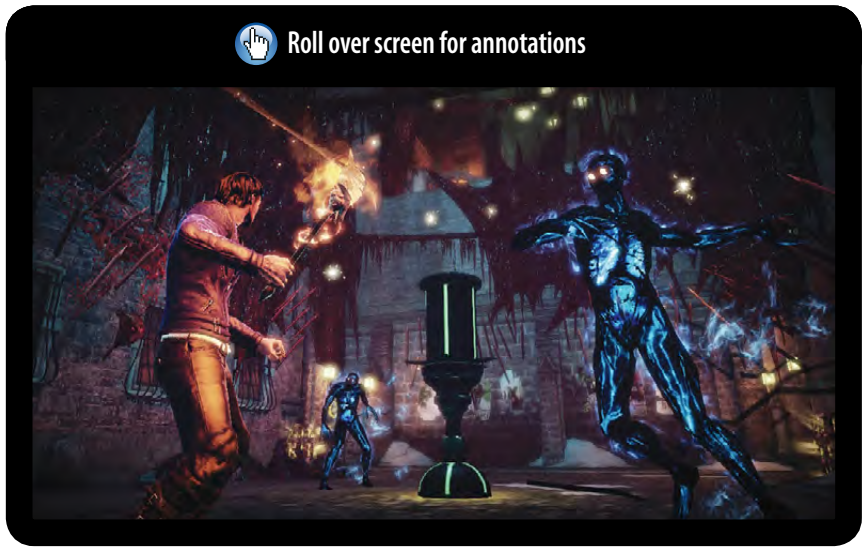
The weaponry gets more and more ridiculous as the story progresses. You're never short of something new to play with.

> **SOTD** continued

prettiest game in the world by any means, and doesn't concern itself with pretending to be a movie (despite some very welcome nods to horror flicks) or splitting itself in half with multiplayer modes. It's just the ideas and personalities of its creators put down on a digital canvas, free of focus-testing and hand-holding.

If the stream of ideas and environments that make up the first two-thirds of the game continued right up until the end, we'd be labelling this as an all-time classic, but unfortunately *Shadows of the Damned* does become overly reliant on enemy spawns and the overuse of its light-and-dark system (where the dark world sucks your life away and makes enemies invincible until you can find and shoot a goats head with a bolt of lighting (yep, it's a pretty weird game). By the time you do finally reach the castle and the game's denouement, it hasn't quite outstayed

its welcome, but it's definitely time to say goodbye to it. Hopefully, *Shadows of the Damned* will find the audience it deserves, as it's hard to think of anyone who wouldn't enjoy its slick, daft and surprisingly clever journey into the lighter side of grindhouse. Definitely the game of the summer so far, and another reason to be excited whenever you see the names Mikami and Suda. Magnifico. ●



360Zine Verdict *It's so rare for a game to feel completely unfiltered. Great stuff*

- Unbounded creativity
- Sharp mechanics
- Ideas slow down towards the end

85%



Alice: Madness Returns

Publisher: EA

Developer: Spicy Horse

Heritage: American

McGee's Alice

Link: www.ea.com/alice
OUT NOW

Through the looking glass

Rarely has a game promised so much and delivered so little. Just look at the screenshots dotted around these pages; look at the creativity on show, the surrealist architecture, the rampantly original character design... it looks like the perfect tonic to gaming's current obsessions with guns and grunt, right?

Except, there's very little in the way of substance to back it all up. In Alice: Madness Returns, the 10-years-in-the-waiting sequel to American McGee's Alice, you do indeed explore the depths of Wonderland, as Alice attempts to cleanse herself of the vile memories of her family's fiery death. And that Wonderland is an amazing



"The combat is dynamic, borrowing elements of God of War and Zelda"

place to look at. Unfortunately though, you spend all your time within it playing a game that actually feels about five years out of date.

Ultimately, this is a platforming brawler that may look like the most original thing to appear on 360 in years, but it's lacking in a few important areas. It has echoes of God of War, Zelda and even Darksiders, but without the imagination of any of them. There's literally not a single mechanic or gameplay system that has not been done somewhere else, and done better. The platforming is ludicrously easy, so you feel like you're simply moving through the environments in order to progress the game – there's not even the illusion of choice.

Occasionally Madness Returns throws in a switch puzzle or an invisible



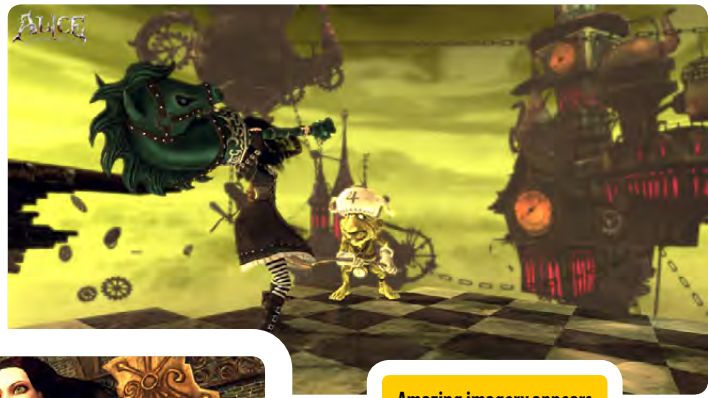
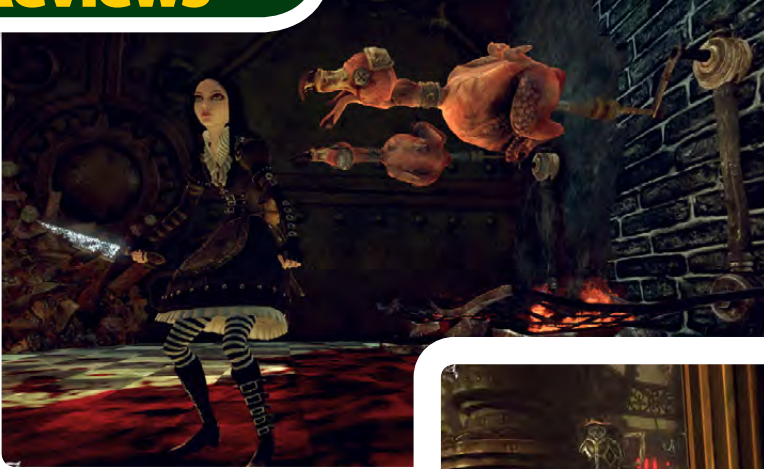
The character models and set design are absolutely stunning at times.

bridge to spice things up, but if you've had any experience playing action games, you'll never get stumped. And even if you somehow do, you can just hit the left bumper to shrink Alice and display highlight arrows that show you exactly what to do.

It's not that a game like Alice: Madness Returns should be particularly difficult, either. It should be about the journey, but that journey just feels so perfunctory when all you're doing is aimless progressing. Thankfully, the worlds are pretty and interesting enough to get you through, but it's a shame that you're doing something so dull in a world that's so interesting.

Slightly more dynamic is the combat, which borrows Zelda's lock-on and God of War's blocking. It's not exactly thrilling stuff, but there's some satisfaction to be had from taking out a group of little teapot gremlins or





"As pretty as Alice can be, she's not much to talk to"

On the one hand, it's hard to chastise something that's so artistically interesting and original. On the other, though, it's about as unambitious and old-fashioned as modern games come. And ultimately, that's what matters. It takes an incredible amount of patience and good will to plod through *Madness Returns*, and the reward is seldom worth it. As pretty as Alice can be, she's not much to talk to, and she's not got anything new to say. Disappointing. ●

Amazing imagery appears throughout, but it's never used in interesting ways.

It isn't quite the Alice you remember from the books. This one's a bit more fetishistic and bloody.



> Alice continued

weird baby-faced lumps of tar using a combo of a huge knife and a pepperpot chain gun. Combat doesn't outstay its welcome either, so you don't feel overwhelmed and suffocated by constant brawling. It helps to break up the monotony, actually.

The real drive to get through *Alice: Madness Returns* are, unquestionably, the views. Each of the game's five chapters are a joy to behold when you take a minute to just stop and look. American McGee and his team of artists at Spicy Horse have outdone themselves, reimagining the Alice lore with a fetishistic Victorian eye, leaving it sitting somewhere between a Marilyn Manson video and *The Mighty Boosh*. It's admirable that there's no let-up either, even when the game descends into industrial warehouses or icy tundras, there's still something bizarre and amusing to see around every corner.

It's a tough game to figure out, then.



360Zine Verdict *Beautiful to look at but sadly lacking in the gameplay department*

- Great set design
- Uninspiring gameplay
- Feels old-fashioned

70%



Publisher: THQ
Developer: In-house
Heritage: UFC Undisputed
Link: www.ufc-personaltrainer.com
OUT NOW

UFC Personal Trainer

You want to be a fighter?

It's taken a long time for a fitness game to be aimed at men. This isn't massively surprising when you think about it, but nonetheless, any product with the UFC branding all over it has the potential to seriously resonate with that company's ever-expanding audience, and its commitment to promoting fitness as well as fighting is admirable.

One thing's for certain, you're going to get a serious workout with UFC Personal Trainer. MMA training circuits are heavy work, exercising both cardiovascular stamina and martial arts technique. Unfortunately, you might find yourself fighting with Kinect more than with your opponents.

We tested UFC Personal Trainer in a good 10 feet of space from the TV. The



"One thing's for certain, you're going to get a serious workout"



reviewer in question is 6'1. As soon as you begin the game's fitness test, you're asked to complete a minute's worth of sit-ups, then a minute's worth of push ups. The camera and software struggled hugely with the press-ups, registering only 11 in a minute, despite well over double that number being executed – honest.

When it comes to the proper training modes, you might find yourself getting frustrated. Activities like punching pads or the bag are handled brilliantly, giving great feedback and measuring accuracy impressively, but the fact the viewing angle doesn't change from a standing exercise to one on the floor is a huge problem unless you happen to live in a tube tunnel or a bowling alley. Or you're tiny.

So, as an accurate way to measure calorie burn, UFC Personal Trainer is flawed, but be under no illusion – you

will still get a fantastic workout if you follow the programmes. UFC fans will also get a real kick out of training with the likes of Dan Hardy, Urijah Faber and Greg Jackson, although the repetitive voice is irritating when your heart is beating through your throat.

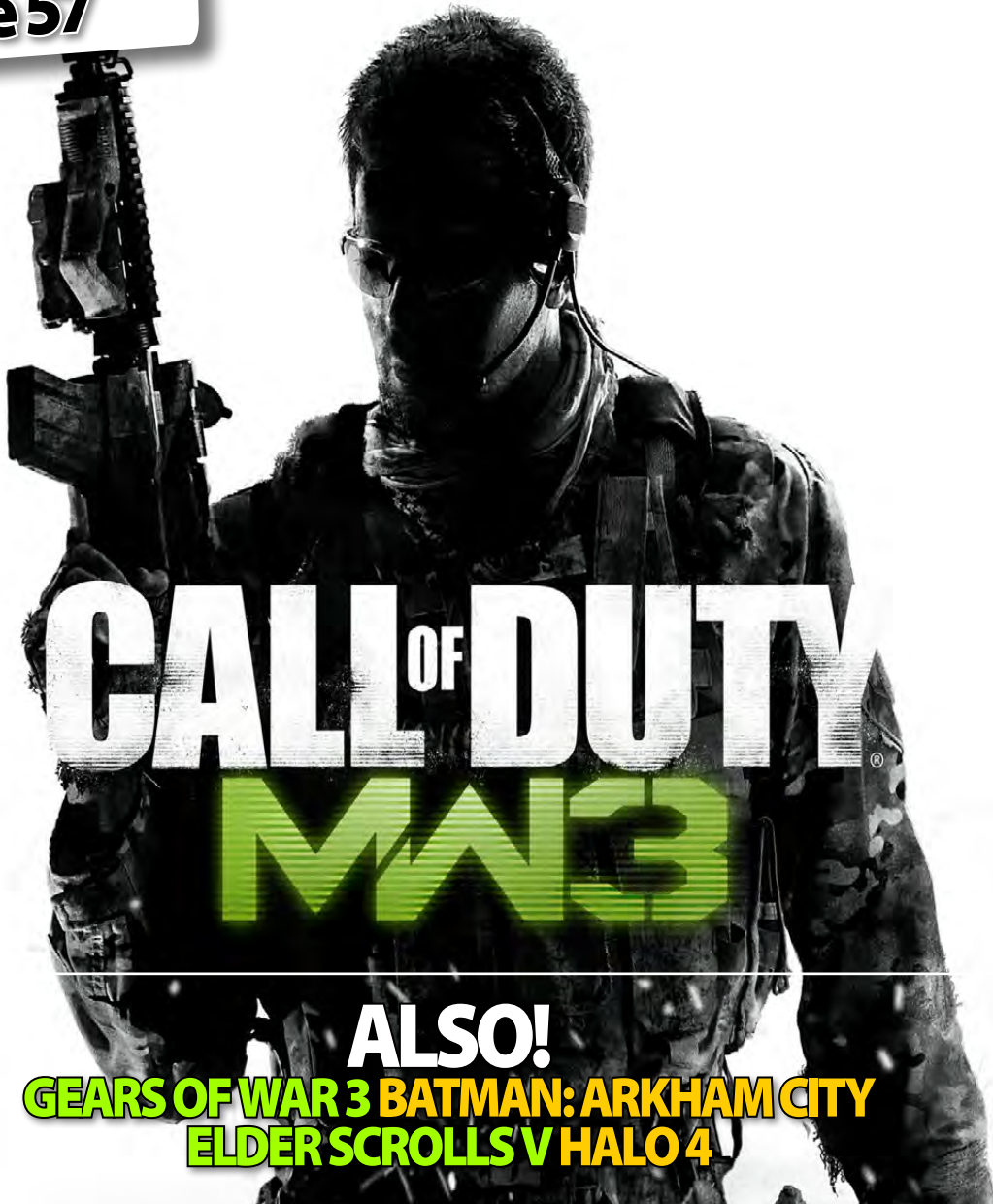
Before you invest, make sure you have a lot of room, that your Kinect is fully tuned to your play space, and accept that some exercises aren't going to be measured flawlessly, but that won't stop you actually getting what you want and need out of the game. Despite all that, it's still the best fitness game so far for Kinect. ●

360Zine Verdict *Inaccurate, but still a heck of a workout in your own home*

- Good branding
- Will get you fit
- You need a room the size of Mars

78%

In 360Zine
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