

RED DEAD REDEMPTION 2

MASSIVE GAMEPLAY REVEAL - ROCKSTAR'S STUNNING OPEN WORLD EXPLORED

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GAMES MASTER



METRO EXODUS
We battle mutants, marauders, and... massive bears?!

RAGE 2

DOOM ETERNAL

FALLOUT 76

HANDS-ON ACCESS + DEVELOPER SECRETS + HUGE RETRO FEATURE

APCALYPTYPSE SPECIAL



DRAGON QUEST XI
The wait is over!
Full review inside



CONTROL
2019's weirdest game?
Developer tells all



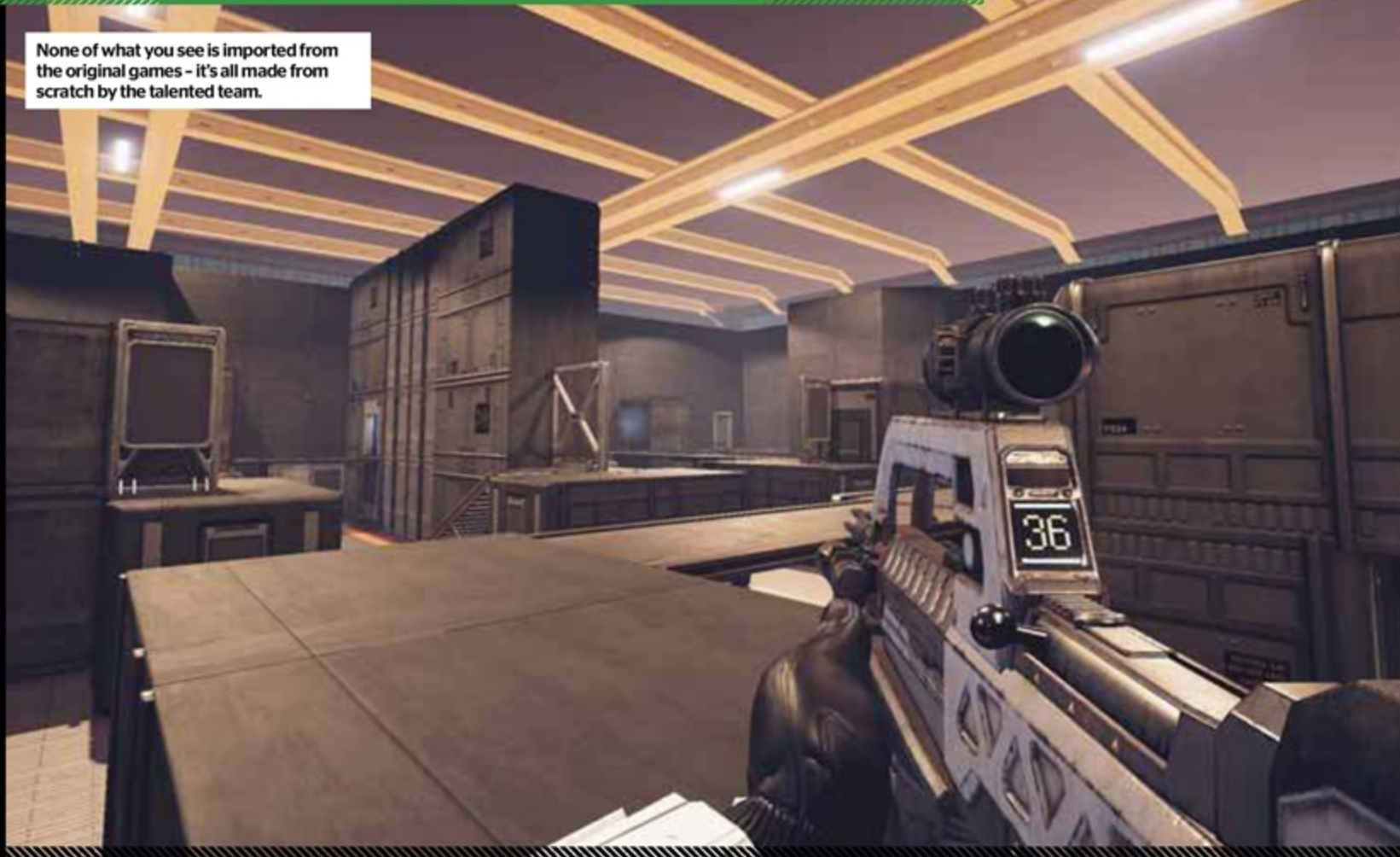
CALL OF DUTY: BLACK OPS 4
Hands-on verdict - can COD still compete?



CultureMaster

The Outer Regions Of Gaming!

None of what you see is imported from the original games - it's all made from scratch by the talented team.



THEY KNOW WHAT THE LADIES LIKE

The fans at **Soon Studios** discuss bringing the multiplayer Halo experience to PC, and getting the green light from Microsoft and 343 Industries

When the Halo series stormed onto Xbox in the early 2000s, it changed the face of first-person shooters forever. With revolutionary features such as a dual analog control scheme and regenerating shields, it became the benchmark for the genre. So successful was the series that its protagonist, Master Chief, was propelled to superstardom, becoming the mascot for Microsoft's games machine. However, for a series that's had such an impact on console, Halo has made relatively small waves on PC. We're catching up with a team of steadfast Halo fans who are hoping to change that.

That team is Soon Studios, and its mission is to recreate the multiplayer experiences of Halo games from the Bungie era (2001-10), for PC. The game, Installation 01, is being built using the Unity 5 engine and will be playable for free on all PC platforms, including Windows, MacOS, and Linux. The project's founder and lead, Alexander Rogic, explains how his dream of a modern classic Halo PC experience came to life: "Back in 2013, we

didn't have a lot of Halo games on PC or there wasn't really any kind of big support in the day, and I thought, "Hey, maybe I could try something!" So, I started putting stuff together in Unity and sharing it with people on forums and YouTube."

Off the back of the content he had created, Rogic was approached by fellow Halo fans, including Nathaniel Hatfield, now the game's project manager, and built up a team of people eager to lend their talents. "Everything really kicked off in August 2016 when we released a documentary-style video showcasing our latest progress, and it just blew up from there," says Rogic.

Polishing the Halo

Installation 01 is a combination of what the team see as the best parts of Bungie's Halo games, focusing mainly on aspects of Halo 2 and 3, with a sprinkling of Combat Evolved and Reach. "From an artistic and development standpoint, we've been able to do that because we've done our homework really, really well," explains Hatfield. "We've gone back and we've looked at the impressions and the influences that the creators took when they were creating these games, what made them make the



The Energy Sword: one of Halo's most iconic weapons, and a deadly choice in multiplayer.

design decisions that they made in gameplay, in art, in interactions with the community, and we've styled ourselves as the next step, the evolution of what we think that would have been, taking the same original influences, taking the same love for creation, and applying our own creativity and passion, and having fun with it while we do it".

To dedicate so much of their free time to the project, each member of the team is clearly passionate about Halo and each has their own reasons for wanting to be involved. The series has even helped shape lead animator Matthew Lake's career path. "Halo was what got me into storytelling and making Machinima films, then that led me into doing animation, and now I do

"EACH MEMBER OF THE TEAM IS HUGELY PASSIONATE ABOUT THE HALO SERIES"



The team's always on the lookout for new volunteers - have you got the skills?



Halo 2 and 3 are the main inspirations, but there are elements of Reach and Combat Evolved in there too.



No release date has been announced so far, but what we've seen is looking extremely good, and takes us right back to our misspent youth. We can't wait to start shooting like it's 2005 again!



animation on Installation 01 and I've got a job doing animation, and I love doing that," says Lake. "I think there's a multitude of different reasons for recreating Halo: there's the whole community aspect, there's all the map making, the custom games. It's one of the very few games where there's just so many crazily contrasting things going on with the game, so many different reasons to bring people together."

It's a sad fact that most fan projects get slapped with a cease-and-desist order. Sometimes it's because the developer is moved by the popularity of the project and wants to make it official, as in the case of the upcoming Resident Evil 2 remake; at others, a company wants to retain sole control over the usage of its IP. Much to Soon Studios' surprise, Microsoft and 343 Industries had no notion of pulling the plug on the project; instead, they gave the team their blessing to continue their aim of bringing Halo to PC players.



Unsurprisingly, the team was humbled by the hospitality shown by both companies, "About a year ago they gave us the opportunity to sit down on a call with several studio higher-ups, as well as a legal representative from Microsoft," explains

SEE THIS! SEE THIS! SEE THIS! SEE THIS! SEE THIS! SEE THIS! SEE THIS! SEE THIS! SEE THIS! SEE THIS! SEE THIS! SEE THIS! SEE THIS! SEE THIS! SEE THIS!

See This

You can keep up to date with Installation 01's progress through the game's website: bit.ly/gm_installation01

Hatfield. "What was really heartwarming, was one of the first things they said was, "Well, I think what this call is really about is, what can we do for you?" And it just blew us away. When you're growing up, people always say, "Never meet your idols because they're going to disappoint you." Well, in this case, we got to meet our idols and they certainly did not disappoint us, they made us feel validated in what we were doing, they made us feel really happy and continually motivated to make this product successful and do good by ourselves, by Halo, by Microsoft, by 343 Industries, and by the community as a whole." ■ Anne-Marie Coyle

GLOBAL MASTER

Quench your thirst, videogame style



LIQUID COURAGE

This special edition of Prima's Dark Souls III guide comes with a real-life replica of an Estus Flask. However, it's not as helpful as the virtual version; this model flask is sealed, so, sadly, nasty wounds will have to be sorted with medical attention rather than a magical healing potion.



LARA LOVE

Lara needs a lot of energy for running around those ancient ruins, and Lucozade is clearly her soft drink of choice. In fact, she's guzzled so much of the stuff they've even rebranded the sparkling soda 'Larazade'... or, you know, it's part of a promotion for Shadow Of The Tomb Raider.

BOTTLES OF FUN

Grab a bottle of this limited edition Nuka-Cola Quantum from Jones Soda and prepare to roleplay your very own post-apocalyptic scenario. It's available in a refreshing and delicious radioactive berry flavour - just don't get carried away and start trying to buy stuff with the bottle caps.

