

EDITION 04 - EXTRA REVIEWS

Professor Layton and the Lost Future [Nintendo DS]

I'm going to start this review with a confession. It's not a confession I'm ashamed of but it's one that will set the scene for this game. It's the first video game I have ever cried at. But more on that later.

'Professor Layton and the Lost Future' is the third game in the Layton trilogy for the DS which sees 150 or so puzzles included as part of a narrative that's part beautifully-rendered anime-style cut scenes and part pre-rendered 2D comic-style artwork. The aim of the game is to follow the plotline, travelling between locations and interacting with characters, solving brain-teasing puzzles along the way, earning you points as you do so.


As with the previous two games the puzzles are a refreshing mix of styles and challenges and aren't boring compared to the two previous puzzle-packed games. In this one, joining the three hints per puzzle, redeemed by spending collected coins, is the super hint, practically revealing the answer, though reducing the satisfaction of solving a puzzle.

Really it's business as usual with the set-up: puzzles, conversations, plotline, but it's a set-up that works. Thrown into the mix as usual are

some minigames with the puzzles, this time based around driving a car around a road system to collect items, a parrot-delivery game and a sticker storybook, the first two being quite tricky but thankfully not as frustrating as the tea-making mini-game from the second game.

But whereas the game is as enjoyable as ever, it's the plot and story that once more stands out and, though it doesn't have the shock twist of the Curious Village, it's a better story than Pandora's Box and twists and turns much more than either of the previous game and, the final cut scene, will have you in tears, as much as the most expensive Hollywood blockbuster or emotive piece of music.

If you enjoyed the previous two games then you'll already have this; if you didn't, there's nothing here to really change your mind. If you've not yet experienced the world of Professor Layton then pick up the trilogy now and prepare to be engrossed, especially by this engaging – and touching – third chapter that takes an improbably, fantastical premise, and eventually roots it mostly in logic. Magical.

Philip Lickley


Super Scribblenauts [Nintendo DS]

The phrase 'Web 2.0' is what is bandied around nowadays like confetti, the freedom for the individual to take control of the internet and make it their own.

Video games, however, have remained a restricting experience. Rooms that you can't escape from, limits to where you can venture, invisible walls that you suddenly hit. But, where games like 'Grand Theft Auto' have attempted to destroy this concept on the X-Box, 'Super Scribblenauts' is doing it on the DS.

A sequel to the great but flawed 'Scribblenauts', the concept of the game is to complete a series of missions by spawning items and using them to solve puzzles. But what is amazing about this game is that practically anything can be spawned, providing its not rude or copyrighted. Yes, with a click of the DS touch screen you can bring up a keyboard into which you can type an item and watch it materialise on screen. The range of words in the game is incredible and it can be hours before you even get to the individual missions, instead just spawning random items on the sandbox main screen of the game.

The two big changes to this game from the first is the ability to put in adjectives (so you can have a big red shy toaster) and the option to control Maxwell, the headphone-wearing hero of the game, with the D-pad, meaning there's much more control than in the previous game.

What's more, adding adjectives makes things work realistically. Angry objects will attack, smelly objects will stink and huge objects will be, well, bigger than usual.

Once you've got bored of the main menu, creating God and pitting him against the Devil, and other amusing scenarios, you can head to the missions, built around constellations in the night sky, and score points and unlock further levels. You can also get medals for spawning particular items or working through levels.

As well as the hundred odd missions you can even create your own scenarios and send them to friends, which increases the life-span of this game even more.

That said, though, you'll still end up spending most of your time dragging over

your friends and amazing them with everything that can be spawned and watching their mouth drop, even if certain omissions are weird (such as the lack of the word 'dancing' as a description) especially in the light of all the internet jokes in it, including ceiling cat, Rick Roll and om nom nom nom.

Though it's not a perfect game – some missions are frustrating, occasionally repetitive and sometimes not working with a reasonable solution – the amount of fun creating things (with a dictionary that goes as far as creating a different, accurate, dinosaur for T-Rex, Triceratops, Stegosaurus and, amazingly, Parasauralophus) far outweighs and problems and is one of the unique and amazing experiences the DS offers and is well worth a purchase to wile away an idle hour. You'll be amazed by just what can be generated by this game that creates a talking point in itself, before you even get to playing the game.

Philip Lickley


Title: Fable 3

Developer: Lionhead Studios

Release Date: 29/10/10

Platforms: Xbox 360, Microsoft Windows

Set in the industrial revolution of Fable's world of Albion, Fable 3 is the brand new instalment of Lionhead's biggest franchise. The much anticipated game has undergone some major changes, some good, others questionable.

Fable 3's storyline is based on the premise that the King (your brother) is treating the people of Albion in a negative way. In other words, he's the baddie. Your job is to overthrow the King and take Albion for your own, making decisions along the way. The main premise is that you interact with the people, and gain 'Guild Seals' which allow you to upgrade your character, making quests easier. It also allows you to gain items to change clothing aesthetics, gain extra expressions to say to people and upgrade your weapons.

Fable 3 has been subject to a major menu overhaul. Menus and lists are almost completely eradicated to make way for a new, simpler interface. In a way, this is good. Fable 2's menu system was overloaded with information and extremely unorganised. However, the game now has major limitations, particularly in terms of interacting with people. Now, you can only pick one or two options at a time, and they are random. So if you are looking for a particular expression, you have to go through a load of them until you get the right one. The start menu now transports you to a 3D space called 'The Sanctuary.' This

is essentially a 3D menu in which you can equip items and customise your character. It's a pretty nice addition to the game, it simplifies things and it makes all the items viewable. I wouldn't say it's particularly efficient but it's a lot nicer than Fable 2.

As for items and upgrades, I feel Fable 3 has gone backwards on this one. Melee weapons that you find at the beginning of the game can be used right through to the end with no problem, and there seems to be very little differences between each one. They are upgraded by performing certain tasks listed on the weapon, for example, killing 200 hollow men with a weapon will gain +20 damage. This encourages you to play with different weapons, instead of sticking to just one.

Spells are upgraded and you can now use 2 spells at once, which is interesting! I am a little disappointed with the fact that 'Raise Dead' is no longer a spell. 'Raise Dead' used to raise corpses that you've killed in battle to fight with you. This spell is now in potion form, so it's not gone completely. Gameplay is the same as always, one button for melee, one button for spells and one button for ranged. This is great for new gamers, but can get a little tedious for more experienced players. The flourishes, however, are great and they are enough to stop you from getting too bored with the combat system.

The storyline is an amazing concept, but in a lot of places it falls flat. As always, the story itself is fairly short but there are a ton of things to do upon the games completion, and even more things to collect, such as Gnomes (much like the old gargoyles), books and Demon Doors.

The graphics, environment, characters and sound are Fable 3's strongest points. Albion is such a believable place, and Bowerstone Industrial is particularly well designed. Also, with its huge range of voice actors it really feels like they've put an effort into characterisation. You are able to understand and react to character emotions, and being able to choose the outcome of events is something that has always been appealing in Fable games.

The Co-op mode has greatly improved. You are able to play through other peoples storylines from start to finish, and you can also marry and start businesses with people in other worlds. This means you can buy houses and earn money in their world, buy items, interact with their people and gift items to them.

Overall, despite being flawed in a lot of places, Fable 3 remains first and foremost a fun game to play. It will have you laughing, it's full of comedy and it's a laugh to play with friends too.

Sally Blake



Chico and Rita

This year at the Bradford Animation Festival, I was able to catch a film that looked quite intriguing to see: "Chico and Rita". I knew little about the plot but since I am interested in different types of animated films, I decided to see the film.

The story is set in 40s Cuba and revolves around 2 central characters: Chico (voiced by Eman Xor Oña), a young piano player with aspirations to reach the top and Rita (voiced by Limara Meneses), a beautiful singer who also has dreams of fame and an extraordinary voice. They are united by their desires for recognition and their passion for music. However, the road they travel is laced with heartbreak and impossibility that constantly pulls them apart.

The story is one of simplicity; a love between two people, fuelled by music and the heat of the moment. However, it does not entertain the masses by giving them a straight cut love story where everyone ends up happy. The trials and tribulations that each character goes through helps the story in terms of integrity, and aids in putting the point across of how you want love to be is different to what love actually is. Even though it may be said that this kind of story has been done before, it would be fair to say that "Chico and Rita" rejuvenates the approach, especially by the way it is traditionally animated.

the film; the traditional 2D approach helps replicate to 40s Cuban environment, whether the scenes involves lack of movement or fast paced scenarios. However, the style also works well in the other landscapes represented during the time period, such as New York, Hollywood and Paris.

Another highlight in the film (and probably the strongpoint of the film) is the soundtrack featured. Vibrant jazz pieces composed by Cuban musician Bebo Valdés really help to secure the film's authenticity that it will be remembered for.

The only negative view I would have to take on the film would be the pace. Even though the story was eventful, it lacked engagement at times due to less material being offered. However, there were parts of the film where silence was utilised and worked well in helping reflect on what just happened or what was happening.

Originally a collaboration between Oscar award winning director Fernando Trueba and artist Javier Mariscal that started ten years ago, they've both come together to direct "Chico and Rita"; a quite enjoyable film that has a relaxed style of animation throughout. It may not be everyone's cup of tea (there is mild nudity near the beginning), it is definitely worth watching when you get the chance.

Chris Ejizu



The animation works well with the context of

Confessions (Kokuhaku)

When I headed to the FrightFest All Nighter for Halloween this year, the organisers said they had a special Japanese thriller called "Confessions" to start us off... and boy, what a film.

It felt quite special because it was the UK premiere of the film and it's also a contender for the 2011 Oscar of Best Foreign Language Film. Before I detail why it probably deserves to win, I'll explain the initial plot:

High school teacher Yuko Moriguchi (played by Takako Matsu), who is also a grieving mother plans her revenge on the certain students she feels are responsible for the death of her 4-year-old daughter. As the story goes on, we discover a more tangled web that has been weaved to reveal what really lies beneath that will change the lives of all involved.

I feel that it is one of the most compelling and engaging stories I have seen in cinemas today. Based on the Kanea Minato novel, it is evident that a lot of work and experimentation with the initial dark plot went into the film from the writer Tetsuya Nakashima (who is also the director). The film not only explores the dark undertone of how far people will go, but also implement funny moments to calm the mood at times. The twists and turns that it makes the audience experience during the film are well-sculpted and fit the overall concept, as well as the explanation of the character's with an ending that leaves you quite satisfied but wanting more at the same time. The way the story is told was a highlight that added to the film's value.

Similar to "Kill Bill" and "Memento", the story is told through a non-linear narrative; however the film is divided into different segments, where it goes into the perspective of those involved, via their "confessions" of their secrets. As you go through each perspective, it makes you think about various topics, such as bullying, karma, punishment, revenge, children in modern society and the value of life. However, the opinions you have for characters seem to change as you watch each person's "confessions".

The cast within the film do a great job in portraying their characters. Takako Matsu plays the role of bereaved mother well, but also is able to apply quaint madness to her now twisted personality; especially in the way she wants those who made her suffer to feel the same. Kaoru Fujiwara and Yukito Nishii play the students Naoki Shimomura and Shuya Watanabe respectively, under the teacher's wrath really well, with both of them having their individual but demented reasons for their actions and their reactions to the outcomes. Supporting cast such as Yoshino Kimura (Naoki's mother), Masaki Okada (The Student's new teacher) and Ai Hashimoto (A student who befriends Shuya later in the film) add more character to the film and have an engaging as well as a highly-developed back-story.

Another feature that complimented the film was the cinematography. Masakazu Ato and Atsushi Ozawa create a really effective and beautiful look to the overall film, with various slow-motion shots that are used right in the context of the story and increase the emotion of the film. Slight subtleties that are used well are heightened by the cinematography and deliver more to the audience.

Other features, such as the brief but beautiful visual effects done by Omnibus Japan and the soundtrack all come together to create a more approachable film and add more emotional colour to the dark story that these characters are engulfed in.

Director Tetsuya Nakashima has taken a good novel and has brought the audience a spectacle of a film; he has developed a universe where the line of being a hero or a villain are blurred, changes come in silent but brutal force and gives the audience an experience that's unmissable and unforgettable.

Chris Ejizu



The Crave Interview by Jay James

Like rock music then look no further than new comers on the block, 'The Crave'. They mix a new young energy into a classic rock sound and have toured with some big names. We asked a few questions about the current tour with Status Quo so have a see down below.

1/ A classic rock sound with some new energy. How does it feel to be supporting a rock icon in Status Quo?

It's pretty crazy. My old man took me to see Quo when I was 11 years old, now we're sharing the stage with them for a month. They're a British institution and it's amazing to see them still having so much fun 40 years into their career, very inspiring. It's great to be playing to such large crowds every night; we've made alot of new fans. We toured with Deep Purple last year too so it's kinda nice to be bringing a younger feel to an older market.

2/ Do you have a favourite Status Quo song?

Personally my highlight of every night is 'Whatever You Want', we always go out to watch it, if you don't tap your foot and bounce your head to that there's something very wrong with you. We've even learnt the infamous "Quo dance".

3/ Is there any interesting stories from past shows back stage?

Francis Rossi is a bit of a joker and has been taking the p**s out of our drummers dreadlocks all tour. We were backstage in catering and Rossi made a snide remark about CJ's dreads and CJ came straight back at him with "Rossi, I've got two ponytails....where's yours?!" that shut him up. He's a great laugh though.

4/ What should new and old fans bring to these shows?

Some money to buy our new album 'Breaking The Silence'. The guys are really worth catching live and are currently supporting Status Quo on an extensive tour hitting many cities including Manchester, Glasgow and Bradford. So make sure you get your tickets now to avoid disappointment.

ROSA PARKS SYMPOSIUM

Reconceiving Equality through Intergenerational Learning

The 6th Annual
Rosa Parks Symposium

8th December 2010
9.30am - 4.30pm

Norcroft Centre
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Keynote Speaker

David Ruebain
Chief Executive Officer
Equality Challenge Unit

Other Speakers include

Cllr Mehboob Khan
Leader of Kirkstall Council
May Ikeora
Regional Co-ordinator AFRUCA Child Rights

Milton Brown
Chief Executive Officer
Parents of Black Children Association

Maryam Ahmed
BBC Broadcasting Assistant
Owen Williams
Chief Executive Calderdale Council

Dr Brenda Thomson
Bradford City for Peace



Booking is essential on this free conference



Artist: Take That
Album: Progress



The biggest question of the year we could ask (OK, maybe not, but stick with me here!) is whether 'Progress' is a 'Take That' album or a 'Take That feat. Robbie Williams' album. Well, whoever you think recorded it, there's no doubt that Robbie has firmly stamped his mark across the album, whether it's his vocals being the most dominant across all eleven tracks or the much more electronic and, dare I say it, interestingly produced feel to the album compared to the usual 'Take That' fare. Whether that's down to Mr. Williams' influence or the work of Stuart "The Killers" Price (an excellent producer) remains to be seen, but whatever the reasons behind the outcome of the sessions between the singers, who must have seen the sessions as a bonding session as much as a recording session, it's an album that blows a lot of this year's increasing stale music out of the weather. Yes, an album, from a boyband, is one of the top of the year.

This 'Robbie Williams feat. Take That' album kicks off with lead single 'The Flood' which benefits from a fantastic singable chorus and a tangible feeling of water throughout which blends seamlessly into 'SOS', surely the band's second single, which continues the theme of the album being the child between the experimental 'Rudebox' and Robbie's latest 'Reality Killed The Video Star'. Featuring a tempo and attitude not dissimilar to 'The River' by 'Good Charlotte', the track explodes into life between Williams and Owen and sticks in your head immediately, especially with the morse code themed backing and the use of repetition in the chorus and the ending with Owen.

There are many other highlights to the album though. 'Wait', though not as good as the other tracks, is pleasant enough, whilst 'Kidz' is a thumping anthem of a track which surely will set the crowd alight at their 2011 concerts, and 'Pretty Things' is a catchy ballad.

Likely third single 'Happy Now' takes a bit to get going, and is definitely inspired by Robbie and is as cheerful as the track suggests. Following 'Underground Machine', another Robbie-led track, comes the second mention of 'Progress', this time led by Mark Owen and seemingly about his personal problems rather than the band's progress as a whole. On this track Owen shines and you can feel the emotion when it gets to the chorus.

'Affirmation', Barlow's chance to shine, is not the track by 'Savage Garden', but another song on the album with a memorable chorus. If ever there was an album to show the band can write a catchy, speedy chorus then 'Progress' is the one.

Tenth track 'Eight Letters' and hidden eleventh 'Flowerbed' see two traditional 'Take That' ballads that bring the album to a satisfying conclusion.

As a dedicated Robbie fan I'm glad to hear that the band have taken an influence from him rather than the other way round and this influence and the excellent production from Stuart Price make this one of 2010's strongest albums, proving that the former boy band have broken from their manufactured shackles to make a truly interesting LP. Progress indeed.

Philip Lickley



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Bradford Students Join National Protest Over Rise in Cost of Education

The demolition march and the next step

On November 10th Bradford students marched in London alongside thousands of students to protest against the rise on tuition fees.

Students clambered onto coaches in the early hours, organised by Academic Affairs Officer Mateusz 'Matt' Wysocki.

Speaking to a Post-Graduate Bradford student protester about the march, he said: 'It was necessary for us to go out and

march because even if it doesn't change anything this time round the government will think twice before making any further cuts.

'We should be investing in higher education not making cuts.

'It shows that we are not going to sit back and take things like this lightly. I feel that although it doesn't affect me directly education is an integral part of society. By making cuts to higher education we are causing

irreversible damage to our future generations. In hard economic times we should be investing in higher education not making cuts.'

The violence that erupted sparked much criticism and was condemned by NUS President Aaron Porter. Although many students could sympathise with the violent protesters, they did not agree with them. This is understandable considering many

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