

'Alice' videogame a mad, action-filled Wonderland

June 15 2011

A bizarre, action-filled Wonderland opened for videogame lovers on Tuesday with the arrival of "Alice: Madness Returns."

Players descend into the tormented mind of a storybook Alice who must triumph over manifestations of her own psyche in what was billed as the first "triple-A" console title to be created completely in China.

A Mad Hatter character that embodied her rage as an adversary in the first "Alice" returns in the sequel as a confidante for the heroine, according to American McGee, head of Shanghai-based Spicy Horse Games.

"They are figments of Alice's imagination; pieces of her personality," McGee during a webcast from Shanghai. "Facets of her mind take on different roles."

Game play was designed not to intimidate "casual" players, yet also complex enough to capture the interest of "hardcore" gamers used to intense fighting titles, according to McGee.

There is a threat at play in the "Alice" sequel that McGee wouldn't reveal to keep it a surprise.

"I can say that the threat this time is less about Alice going mad than it is about an external threat that is creeping into Alice's mind," McGee said.



The setting for the game is a grim Victorian London from which players travel to a "beautiful yet ghastly Wonderland."

Spicy Horse created "Alice" for US videogame publishing giant <u>Electronic Arts</u>, which made the title available at its freshly-launched Origin online shop at store.origin.com at a price of \$60.

Versions of "Alice" were tailored for play on <u>Xbox 360</u> or <u>PlayStation 3</u> <u>videogame consoles</u> or personal computers.

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Citation: 'Alice' videogame a mad, action-filled Wonderland (2011, June 15) retrieved 23 April 2024 from https://phys.org/news/2011-06-alice-videogame-mad-action-filled-wonderland.html

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