

# SHOOT YOU SIR!

ISSUE 33

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A FANZINE FOR SHOOT-EM-UP PLAYERS



Hi there and welcome to issue 33 of Shoot You Sir! Due to personal pressures, this issue is a little later than usual and is not the longest. But the passion is still there and we hope you will enjoy the content. We have reviews of the Steam game, Bullet Casters and the Japanese Switch release of the classic shooter, Batsugun. And in the Blast From The Past, we cover the game that inspired one of my Desert Island Discs. Happy gaming.

## SHOOTER NEWS



There is a crowdfunding project happening around trying to port Triggerheart Exelica to the Nintendo Switch. In fact, this went live as of the 7th July, so you will be able to be a part of this if it is something of interest to you.



Triggerheart Exelica was originally developed by Warashi and released for arcades in Japan, in May 2006, and was later ported to the Deamcast, Xbox 360, and PS2.



Gematsu.com reports that: "The developer, which recently released FANTAVISION

202X for PlayStation 5 and PC, and Castle of Shikigami 2 for Switch, announced that it acquired the rights to Triggerheart Exelica back in May". This is great news for Switch fans, if the game is able to be ported over. It would also be nice to see it arrive on Steam. The game itself is a colourful vertical shooter, with some unique grappling abilities. It's a very good looking game, and would look at home amongst even modern day SHMUPs. With any luck, this classic can be brought to Switch. I feel like I should mention everything feels like it is pointing to an initial Japanese port if successful. This is an educated guess as the crowdfunding is done via Makuake crowdfunding campaign. Time will tell, if we hear anything more we will keep you updated.

## Game Review

By Slyelessar



The Toaplan classic that originally released on the Saturn in the 90's is now available on the Switch. This can be found in the Japanese Switch store. Once you boot up the game, the game asks if you want to start up Batsugun or Batsugun Special. At the start of the game you have a choice of three characters, with the start of what

becomes a staple in future CAVE games, and even games inspired by the games spawned by both developers. The three characters all vary from column shot to wide shot, and all have their own bomb and can be powered up using items during gameplay. The game stylises the three characters in the traditional anime look. The wide shot character is Jeeno, a blonde haired blue-eyed glove wearer. Beltiana, who is a dominatrix. Okay I made that one up, she has a cyberpunk 80's look about her. Think April from TMNT, but in red and less uptight. She has a green lightning shot. Then you have the Iceman. He looks like Val Kilmer's Iceman character from Top Gun, but if he wore Mavericks (Tom Cruise) off duty get-up. Iceman has a column shot, and the most sci-fi looking aircraft. The other two look



more like advanced Jets of some kind . Talk to me Goose! The graphics are lush, and really shows what the power of the Saturn could do at the time, with 2D games. Environments within stages are detailed well, with some really cool elements giving the game a feel of it's own world. The 2D water/ waterfall graphics in level 2 are very cool.

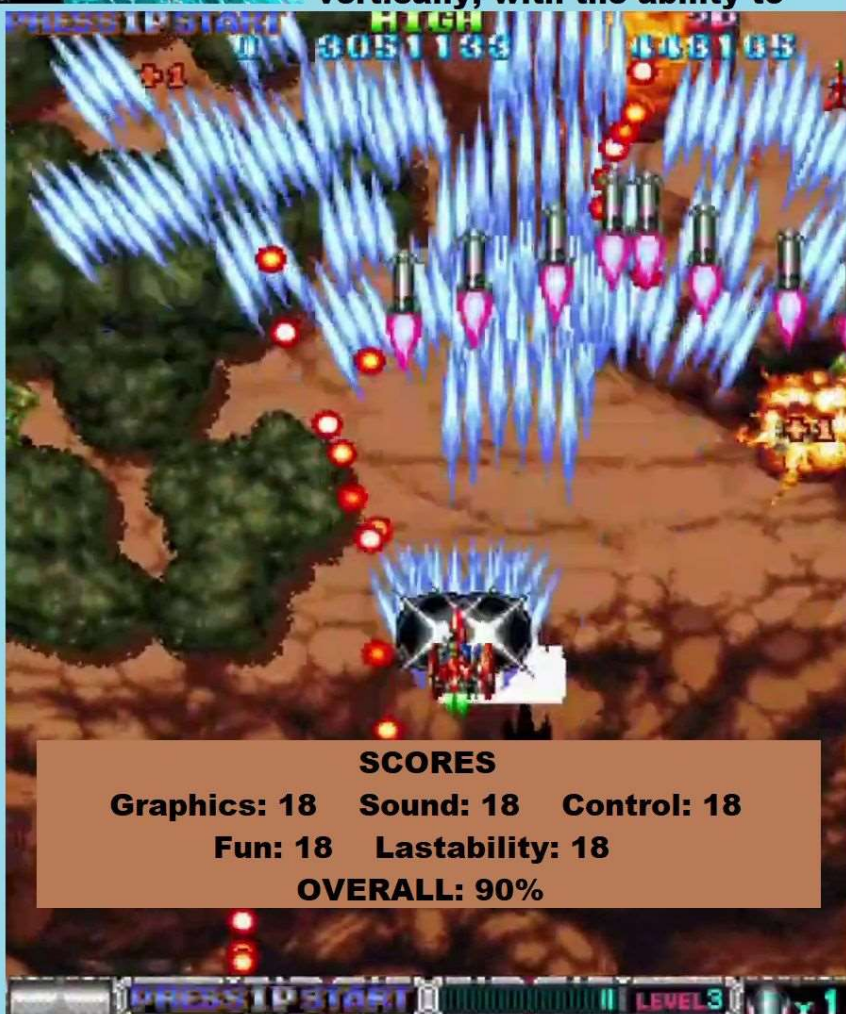
Sprites, although mostly machine and aircraft based, do have a unique look and feel to them. Everything is fast paced, very reminiscent of what the game engines were

## BATSUGUN REVIEW CONTINUED



pushing at the time, with games like F-Zero and eventually Doom, all the rage. Batsugun is bright, colourful, swift and in your face. The initial stage is set under the sea, with latter stages being over land and in the sky. The playscreen is two-thirds of the screen. The action scrolls vertically, with the ability to

move in 8 directions, and going far left or far right reveals that you can get a little bit extra off of the stage map than at first glance, a nice touch. But more importantly, it suits the game. More often than not, this sort of feature has to be implemented well within a game or it just feels pointless. Batsugun keeps it real. By pressing the '-' button on Switch, you get up the options that allow you to change what you want with the game. This might be the control scheme, how many lives you have, sound, etc. The controls are set up so that you can hold down the ZR button for continuous fire, something I am presuming was added as a modern touch to the game. You can tap the B button if you want to get a more original arcade game type feel. Ultimately buttons can be remapped to whatever you want, and this



### SCORES

Graphics: 18    Sound: 18    Control: 18  
Fun: 18    Lastability: 18  
OVERALL: 90%



is a really key adage to the game. The bosses are interesting, with some cool bullet types and patterns. Enemy bullets come at you swiftly and in dynamic movements. There's definitely a bit of targeting where your player sprite is, so you will need to keep on the move, just keep an eye out for stray bullets. The game is the tip of the iceberg when it comes to bullet hell games, it sits just on the cusp of what the developers moving over to CAVE were going to start to include in their future games. Time has been kind to Batsugun, and it still stands out well on Switch despite all of the competition. This says a lot about the legacy of the game and what Toaplan started, and what CAVE would eventually evolve.



## A Blast From The Past



the usual gameplay of left to right, scrolling shoot-em-ups. Avoid enemies and their firepower, whilst shooting as many of the opposition as you can. But there was more. You had to avoid running out of fuel, by blowing up enemy fuel drums. Which somehow added to your fuel. Also you had to adjust your ships height above the ground, to avoid obstacles and be on the same level as



those you were trying to blow away. Your ships height could be gauged by it's shadow, on the floor or by an altimeter display. On the original arcade cabinet version of Zaxxon, you had an aircraft style, 4-way joystick, to move left and right and up and down. There were 2 main areas/environments to fly over. 2 fortress areas separated by an outer space area. These are repeated over and over again, with a Zaxxon Robot boss at the end of every second fortress area. All fairly basic by today's standards but there was enough challenge here to forgive the limited backgrounds. Now, I am a fan of isometric shooters consoles. The best being the fantastic Viewpoint, on the Neo Geo, which I think, took it's inspiration from Zaxxon. Infact I'd go so far to say that isometric games have been rather under valued over the years. It's a great perspective for platform adventures as well as scrolling and free roaming shooters. Zaxxon was a success, back in the 80s and Sega followed it up with Super Zaxxon, in 1982, and a Zaxxon-style shooter, called Future Spy in 1984.

Zaxxon was an isometric shooter, originally released in the arcade by Sega, in 1982. Sega developed this video game in conjunction with the Japanese electronics company, Ikegami Tsushinki. Zaxxon was supposedly the first video game to use "axonometric" projection, which obviously influenced the naming of this shooter. This type of axonometric or isometric projection: creates a 3D perspective, from above and to the side.

Other than it's novel perspective, for the time, Zaxxon followed the

usual gameplay of left to right, scrolling shoot-em-ups. Avoid enemies and their firepower, whilst shooting as many of the opposition as you can. But there was more. You had to avoid running out of fuel, by blowing up enemy fuel drums. Which somehow added to your fuel. Also you had to adjust your ships height above the ground, to avoid obstacles and be on the same level as

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## Game Review

By Slyeessar



The very Sega Saturn looking and sounding **Bullet Casters**, is a cool 2D shoot em up that can be found on Steam, for very little outlay. In fact, it has been on my wishlist for a while and was part of the summer sale. The very Japanese, circa mid 90's looking characters in the game look great. You can even switch between characters in between missions, and they all

look and play differently from one another. Of course, being called **Bullet Casters**, the game has a magic/witchy theme. To start with you have four characters: Ella, your traditional looking, European-esque witch, with red hair and a broom stick. Favill a fire Warlock, that looks like he would be at home as a bad guy-turned good in any modern anime. A lightning



warlock- Torden, who's got a whacky monk type look, and Hana, a rather tall woman in traditional Japanese garb. They all vary with shot type, and spell cast. You can cast a spell during gameplay, which you can drop at any place on the field. Each character has a slightly different cast, all of the bullet variety. This ranges from a shot that fires in a single

direction at an enemy, a large energy ball that slowly lists towards enemy, and things of this nature. It's a lot of fun actually. At the store, you can buy familiars which act like satellite guns. A rather neat take on this. The play screen is of full screen and of the vertical variety. You play set missions for different environments. Most of these start off easy and then become much harder, with each environment having mini bosses, but certain environments only being boss stages. This actually works quite well, and is broken up with the odd shop visit to buy upgrades and the like.





I mentioned graphically and sonically the game reminds me of Saturn games. The Sega Saturn was my first console - thanks for that one Graham! - so I have quite a lot of play time with games from that console and time period. This game made me rather nostalgic for Saturn when playing, so if that is something you are into, this game may be for you too.

The controls are tight, but game play becomes challenging at times. Full screen vertical shooters can make it difficult to navigate bullet patterns, feeling enclosed at times (weirdly). However, this game manages to pull it off well. Bullets are bright and obvious, with enemy bullets looking different to the players/characters. There are some really interesting enemy designs,



including the boss fights, which are tough. The movement of the enemies and their bullets are interesting as well. Like any SHMUP, all enemies of a certain design fire or move in a certain way. There's a rather dynamic bunch of enemies in Bullet Casters, but there's a particular one that moves across the screen like space invaders, leaving bullets in

place on the screen, which other enemies have less linear bullet patterns that come at you. I thought this feature was rather cool, and had me change my tactics to taking out the space invader moving enemies first, so I wouldn't get trapped or caught out when trying to avoid other bullets. It's a colourful game with an eye pleasing pallet. Visually it is a beautiful pixel art game that knows exactly what it is going for, and to that end meets that goal. The game offers up a tight gameplay experience and controls its difficult spikes with a mission based approach.





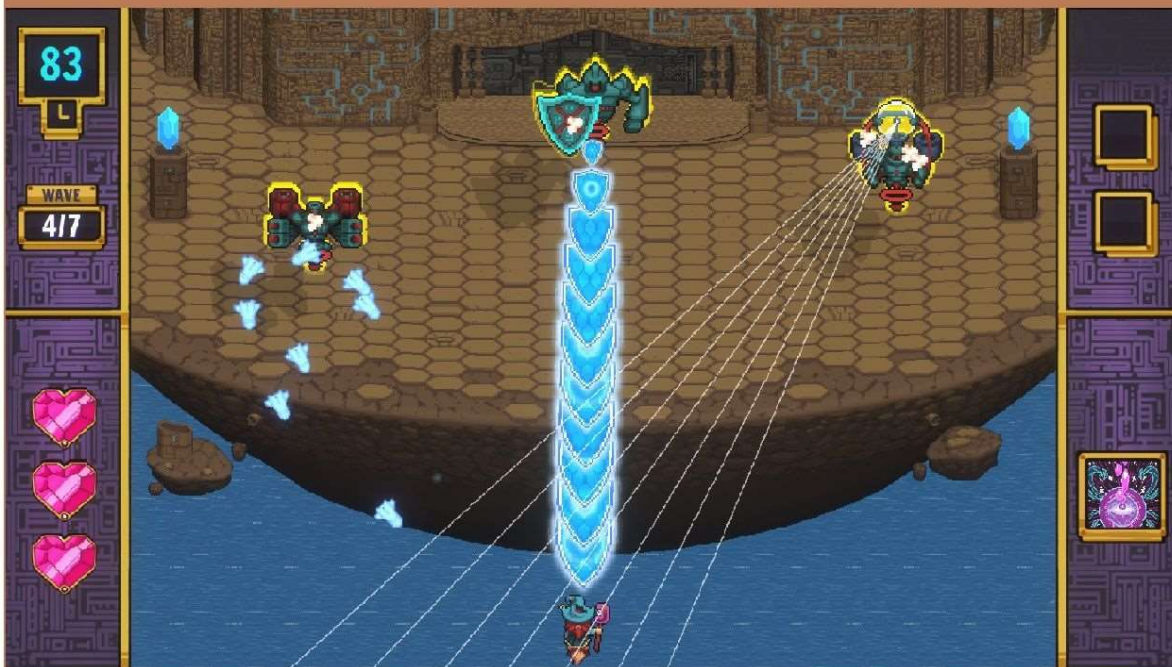
I would recommend this game to most SHMUP players, especially those that enjoy 90's based non-military based shooters. This one hits you right in the nostalgia sack, and is

However, this is not as invasive as the missions on something like Jamestown +, another lovely pixel art game. As I replay the game whilst making additional notes, I notice that the screen is 80% gameplay area, with the two borders having level, wave numbers, lives, and spell cast info dotted around.



fun to play. Given that I am looking at the more unique games on Steam (aka not things on other consoles), this one stands out as my favourite so far. It offers a decent amount, whilst keeping things simple. My largest complaint, and I deducted a couple of points for, is that although it does work with a controller, navigating menus is a bit

laggy. This is strange, as there is no lag when in actual gameplay, which is the most important thing. If the devs could put in a firmware update, it would be most appreciated. In fact, whilst you are at it, I wouldn't mind a sequel!



## SCORES

Graphics: 18  
 Sound: 17  
 Control: 16  
 Fun: 16  
 Lastability: 15

**OVERALL: 82%**