

SHOOT YOU SIR!

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A FANZINE FOR SHOOT-EM-UP
PLAYERS

Hi there and welcome to 2024. There is a lot to look forward to this year, with a bevy of top shooters coming our way. We'll do our best to cover the best of them. And in some case, the worst. We take a look at a rather rare, 90s console in this issue. Please enjoy. Happy gaming.

SHOOTER NEWS



There is a third installment from the shooting legends Irem, that is a collection of 3 rather fun shoot-em-ups and is coming out this year. The three are Mr. Heli, Mystic Riders, and Dragon Breed. Quite and exciting trio.

Mr. Heli, aka Battle Chopper, is a quirky adventure where you can steer an orange Chopper named Mr. Heli, through a ton of innovative stages. The hero copter can fly and walk, wielding three different weapons. Along the way, you will mine crystals (I used to love Crystal Mines 3) There are also hidden paths, secrets, and puzzles built into the levels.



MYSTIC RIDERS



YER A WIZARD... OR TWO!

Mystic Riders: As a wizard, this 1992 Arcade Shoot 'em up takes you on a magical journey that's a bit different from IREM's usual dark and challenging shoot 'em up style. Developed by the same team that gave us the comical Daiku no Gen-san (Hammerin' Harry), this shmup ventures into a world of fantasy and magic.

This one has 2P Co-op, with the wizard Mark and the witch Zeal. While riding a broomstick, defeat giant turtles, ghosts, grim reapers, dragons, and other mystical creatures. Fling your broom in a boomerang fashion to block projectiles. Mystic Riders is quite a gem in the genre.

MYSTIC RIDERS



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Dragon Breed is, as you might expect, a dragon-themed shooter where you ride a massive dragon named Bahamoot. Fortunately only you, as the rider, can take damage, while the dragon just laughs at enemy fire. There's some run-and-gun action here too. Similar to R-Type or X-Multiply, you are flying into a heavy bio-mechanical scene, set in a post-apocalyptic world. A really great retro blaster.



BE FIRE, BE DEATH!



BE FIRE, BE DEATH!



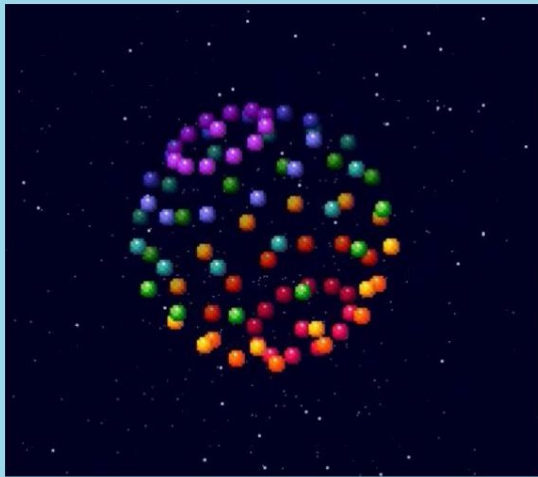
BE FIRE, BE DEATH!

SCHILDMAID MX



Schildmaid MX is an interesting shooter from HitP Studio and eastasiasoft, and will be coming in 2024, to PS4, PS5, Switch, Xbox One and the Xbox Series X|S. This horizontal scroller is a fairly conventional shmup, space opera but has some very nice visuals and a lot of challenge. Bullet Hell in space. Who'd have thought. Worth keeping an eye open for, we reckon.

A BLAST FROM THE PAST



This blast from the past is different from all the rest, so far. In that it is not pre-1990 like the others and it is not concerned with a video game but a Video Game Console. The FM Towns Marty. Which was infact manufactured by Fujitsu, before they helped in destroying the lives of British sub-postmasters. The FM Towns Marty started life in Japan, on 20th of February 1993.



It was considered part of the Fifth Generation of games consoles, which covered the 32 and 64 bit era. It was said to be a 32 bit console, although it only had a16 bit data bus. It used CD-ROMs and 3 1/2 inch floppy discs. They even brought out a FM Towns Marty 2, in 1994 but it was just the same console, with darker casing and a lower price.



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Super Shooting Towns



I remember, at the time, it did a very reasonable version of the Neo Geo's wonder shooter, Viewpoint. It also had it's own Super Shooting Towns shmup, that was an insect based scroller, with a nice look. It covered many popular games of the time, like Raiden, Wing Commander, Galaxy Force 2 and Afterburner.



In today's collector's market, the FM Towns Marty is quite a rarity and seen as a console that was ahead of it's time, that produced a number of excellent arcade ports. So for collectors, this is a console to be lusted after. If you are just a shmup freak, then there are plenty of other period consoles that would suit you better and mostly, for a lot less cash.



Game Review
By Graham Pike

Nintendo Switch



Knights and Guns may not be a traditional, scrolling shoot-em-up but it is very much inspired by old school arcade games, like Arkanoid and Space Invaders. It also offers 2-player simultaneous play, which means you have to find a like minded gamer to double up your fun and destructive power.

This is a classic revenge story, played out in a medieval, fantasy world, with sumptuous 2D, cartoony graphics. Kind of Disney goes gothic, with lots of squat sprites and lovely backdrops, that mix humour and atmosphere, rather well.



The essence of the gameplay is that your hero sprite runs left and right, firing upwards. They can also sprint left and right to avoid dangers, do screen wide power attacks and perform small jumps, which only really get used on the occasional platform stage.



**Review
Continued**



Your enemies come in the guise of undead, mutants, aliens, machines and beasts. They drop from the sky but those that are not blasted by your hero land and jump across the screen again and again. Some can fire missiles at you and some larger ones, when hit, split into multiple smaller versions of themselves.

And as a rule of thumb, the larger enemies do more damage and the smaller ones move quicker. If you get landed on by an enemy, run into them, or get struck by one of their missiles, you take damage. Take a few hits and you are dead.



Like in every good shooter, killing foes can result in them dropping power-ups, including traps, chests, keys, scrolls of lore, books of monsters or coins. Those coins can be used between stages, to buy upgrades to stats, armour and firepower.



I won't bother you with the game's background story but it ends up with the heroes of this game, the Knights, having the use of firearms. There is a good range of weapon choice too, from pistols, machine guns, shotguns and futuristic plasma weapons. In typical shooter style, things start with a few enemies coming at you, as cannon fodder.

But things soon heat up, with all sorts of beasties coming at differing angles and speeds. Add this to their missile attacks and things get very hairy indeed. Again, like any good shooter, you have to learn rapid response, as well as tactical movement, to survive.



I do like the different weapons in this game, they do play quite differently and are mostly, a lot of fun. The ability to buy upgrades between stages and choose your route through the world, also adds quite a bit of fun and variety. Like a lot of shooting games, there is a lot of repetitiveness in Knights and Guns.



But there is enough firepower and stage variety here, to keep your interest. Normally I don't really go for the squat, comical look, you get in this game. But these are well done, with some excellent detail and colouring. The music is also very well done and very much in keeping with the game's look.

metal. Nothing on the level you get in games like Valfaris and Slain but still fun and as I said, it works well, in tandem with the overall presentation of the game. Knights and Guns is no classic or must have shoot-em-up but it is a well crafted, old school, arcade style blaster, that I enjoyed a lot. It is different enough to give the hardened shooter fan some challenge and something a bit different.



SCORES
Graphics: 17
Sound: 17
Control: 18
Fun: 16
Lastability: 18
OVERALL: 86%