

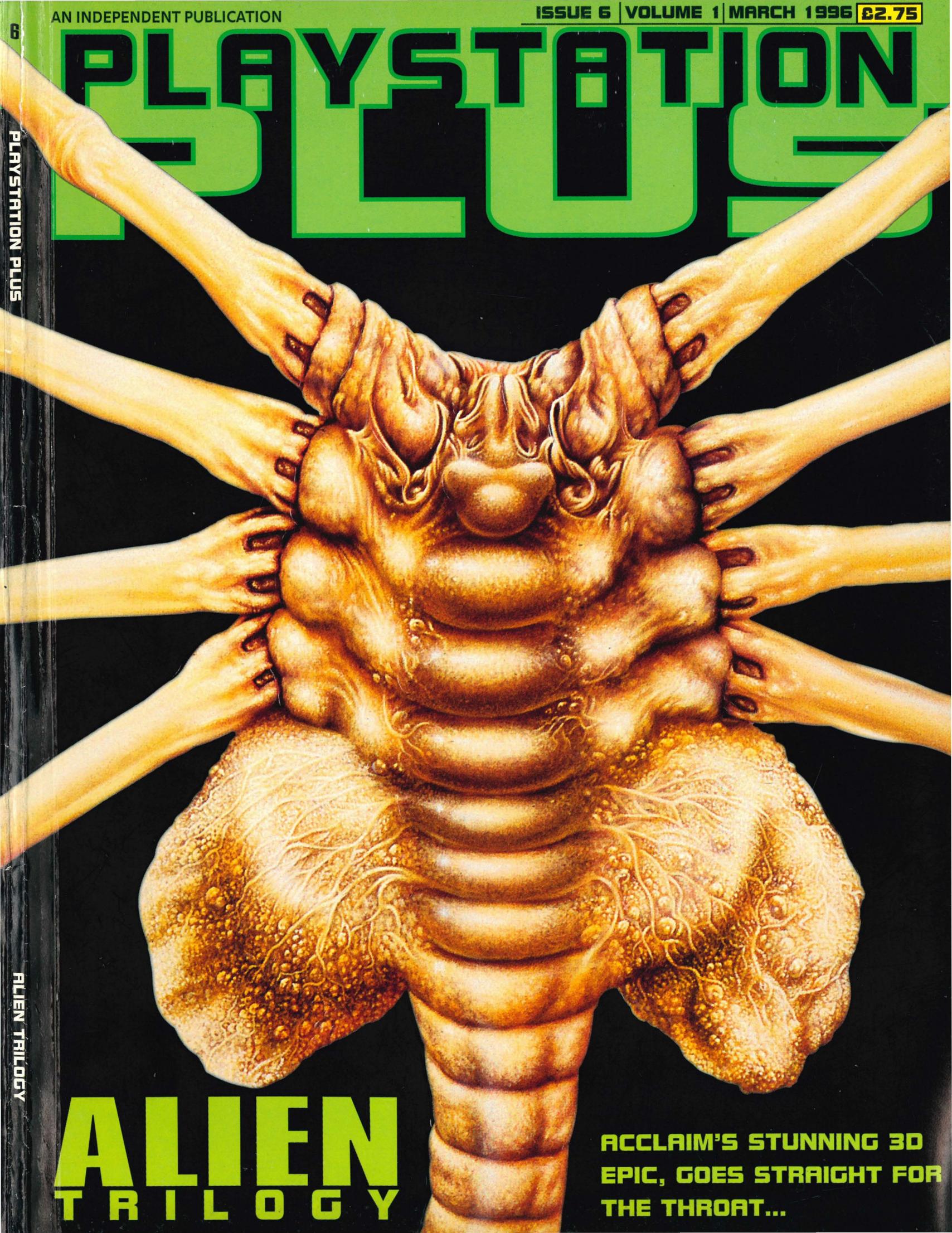
AN INDEPENDENT PUBLICATION

ISSUE 6 | VOLUME 1 | MARCH 1996 | £2.75

PLAYSTATION

PLAYSTATION PLUS

ALIEN TRILOGY



ALIEN TRILOGY

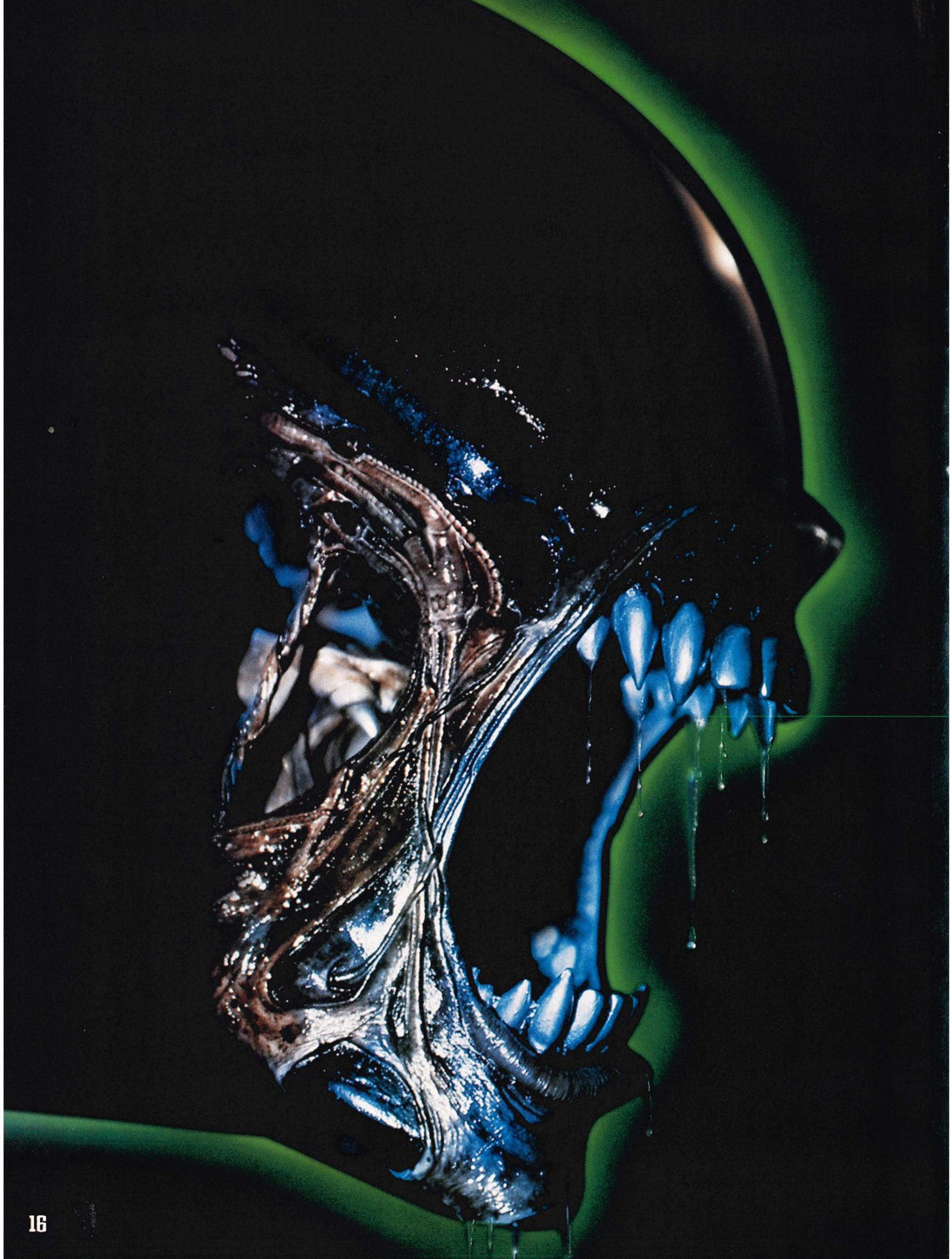
ACCLAIM'S STUNNING 3D EPIC, GOES STRAIGHT FOR THE THROAT...

PLAYSTATION PLUS

Welcome to this, the sixth issue of PlayStation Plus. To celebrate our half a year in existence, we thought we'd push the boat out and try something a little, well, different with our cover. And the Facehugger was also the perfect way to do Acclaim's brilliant Alien Trilogy justice. So, here's to the next six months, and thanks for your continued support...

The PlayStation Plus team.





ALIEN

TRILLOGY

'This is Flight Lieutenant Ellen Ripley of the Nostromo signing off!'

One of the life's greatest traumas is having a distant relative tell you how you've changed at obligatory family gatherings. However, for the first time in my life I feel compelled to do the same thing. I'm sitting in a darkened conference room with *Alien Trilogy's* Producer and Acclaim's PR bloke looking at the said *Doom* clone and, as sampled squeals and the retort of pulse rifle fire echo around the room, I'm impressed. All the seemingly impossible promises made about *Alien Trilogy* during our exclusive preview in Issue Two have been realised, and as the Producer proudly leads us through the labyrinthian Acheron complex, true to Acclaim's words, and to quote Hudson from the second film, the aliens are literally coming out of the goddamned walls. *Alien Trilogy* has come a long way since our preview in the second issue, and, (partially) coining a phrase from aunties everywhere 'I didn't recognise it from the last time I saw it...'

Now, we're among some of *Doom's* greatest fans but — in the same 'wouldn't it?' world where one day food will come in pill form — wouldn't it be great if someone crossed *Doom* with the *Alien* films? The possibilities would be incredible, with the player blasting away at oncoming aliens, avoiding gouts of acid blood, and shooting Facehuggers as they leap at their on-screen face. It's such a cool idea, it has always struck us as amazing that nobody jumped on the bandwagon. Over two years ago, however, the very same idea was sketched out on paper at Probe's Croydon offices, and touted to Acclaim as a possible Mega-CD title. After initial work, though, the Sega medium was deemed too slow to handle what Probe had planned, so the project was temporarily shelved. It has now fallen to the PlayStation to realise the adventure, which has the potential to become the greatest game to grace the Acclaim label to date. In space they may not be able to hear you scream, but the anguished yells of disappointed Sony users is going to be considerably harder to ignore if *Alien Trilogy* emerges as anything less than brilliant...



BLASTING BARRELS REVEALS PREVIOUSLY HIDDEN FACEHUGGERS AND BONUSES.

THE FULLY-GROWN 'DOG ALIEN' MAKES IT DEBUT TOWARDS THE END OF THE 'FURY' SECTION.

THE CRYOGENIC CHAMBER IS DESERTED APART FROM ONE SMALL 'BAMBI' ALIEN.





ALIEN TRILOGY™

GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: AVE
CONTINUES: PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS: THREE

RELEASE APRIL

PRICE £44.95

BY ACCLAIM

PLAYERS 1



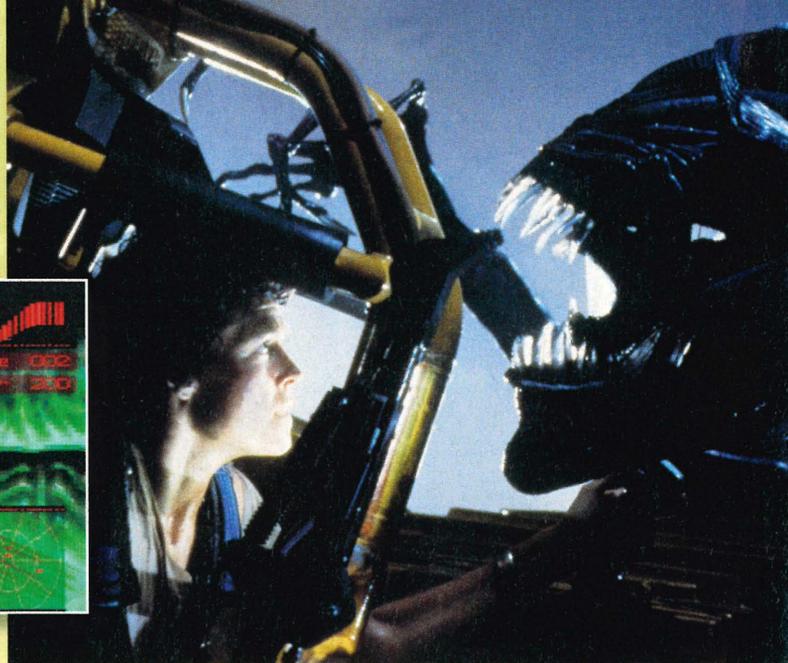
In the darkness of space lurks a horror beyond belief. Best described as a fusion of speed and teeth, HR Giger's alien creation still ranks as one of the big screen's greatest creations. Everything about the alien is geared to survival. It incubates in a host body taking the fluids needed to grow, before bursting out of the victim's chest killing it instantly. From here, the alien follows a life pattern similar to that of an insect. They instinctively turn their locale into a hive, using bodily secretions to create walls which double up as cocoons for further incubation, and living at the centre of the hive is an egg-laying Queen who towers above her minions and is attached to an egg sac pumping out Facehugger eggs to propagate the species. In short, the alien is the deadliest parasite imaginable. It can survive in any environment, and is incredibly hard to kill.

This perfect creation has been the centrepiece of two very good films (*Alien*, *Aliens*), and one second-rate piece of shite (*Alien 3*), and is set to return in the mooted *Alien Resurrection*. Of course, as with most major movies, attempts at bringing the

alien menace to the home machines have been plentiful. From the distant days of the ZX Spectrum and Argus Press' *Alien* strategy game, through to Activision's credible *Aliens* for the C64 and Acclaim's *Alien 3* for the Super NES, there has been a pretty constant supply of *Alien*-related games for the home. But none have captured the atmospheric feel of the films. None have offered the user the fear that facing such a formidable creature would generate. Now, however, Acclaim are pitting the player against the alien in a game based on all three of the films — with the user dropped into a *Doom*-like scenario armed with familiar weapons from the films and set in recognisable settings. The bitch is indeed back, is impregnating your PlayStation, and exceeds all expectations. This time it's war...



BEFORE THE QUEEN IS ENCOUNTERED, THE EGG CHAMBER AWAIT.



ENTER THE THIRD DIMENSION

While *Alien Trilogy* owes more to *Doom* than Fergie does to her bank, credit goes to Acclaim's team for furthering the genre. 'Everything in *Alien Trilogy* is displayed in true 3D,' Cliff B. Falls, the Associate Producer, offers. 'In *Doom* if you walk past a bad guy they flip over as they only exist in a 2D plane. In *Alien Trilogy*, if you walk around an alien, it exists as a 3D model — so you'll see its side, its ass, everything.' The same is also true of the play area. 'You'll find narrow passages alongside

crates,' he elaborates, 'and in any other game you'd never be able to walk past them as the game logic wouldn't allow it. Yet in *Alien Trilogy* you can see any area from any angle.' The main benefit of this — aside from looking good — is that the player can hide behind a wall of objects and pick off oncoming aliens or guards using the duck and shoot buttons.



THE REALISM EXTENDS TO BLOWING OUT THE WINDOWS.



118
Health 100
Armor 200



COMPANY GUARDS EXPLODE IN A SHOWER OF BLOOD, WHILE SYNTHETICS ARE MORE RESILIENT.



EVOLUTION OF THE SPECIES

Giger devised a reproductive system which allowed the alien to survive in any environment. Each film has expanded upon his ideas, with the alien spawn inevitably surviving for another sequel...

FACEHUGGER TRAP

ALIEN

As Kane (John Hurt) discovers to his cost, the egg acts as a trap and as he pores over it, the top opens revealing a veiny lump inside. In a moment of motion picture history, a crab-like creature attaches itself to his face.



THE NIGHTMARE BEGINS

One of the greatest mysteries surrounding the initial *Alien* Trilogy designs was how Probe were going to cram aspects of the three films into a game – after all, the first and third films could only boast one creature as they preferred to rely on suspense for their thrills. Using a little artistic licence, the developers opted to recount the events of the three films as closely as possible, but not in the same order. As such, the player – stepping into the khaki duds of Ellen Ripley – begins the game exploring LV426 in search of the stricken colonists (and mimicking the events of the second film), before jetting off to the prison planet, Fiorina where the third film's dog alien has been joined by thousands of its cousins. And the game is rounded off when it returns to events based – very loosely – on the first film. 'You always need to take a certain amount of artistic licence with games

based on films,' reasons Cliff, 'so to make the *Alien* part of the game more exciting, we're dropping the player into the 'Bone Ship' where the eggs were first found. It sort of rounds things off nicely, as the level begins with an intro sequence of Ripley entering the ship muttering about how it's "time to end things once and for all", and the final battle takes place with the huge 'Space Jockey' (the alien Kane, Lambert and Dallas find before discovering the eggs). In addition to the expected blasting, the plot also has a twist with a secondary ship following Ripley's one, with company types out to round up alien specimens for biological-warfare experimentation...



1 RECREATING THE EVENTS OF THE SECOND FILM, THE DROP SHIP ENTERS ACHERON'S ATMOSPHERE.



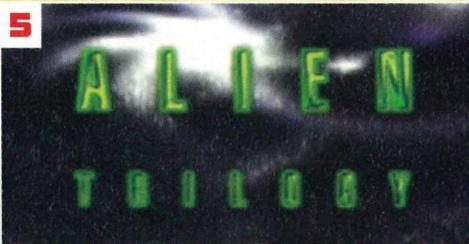
2 AS WINDS BUFFET ITS STEEL-CLAD BODY, THE TURBINES ARE UNLEASHED TO EASE THE LANDING.



3 WITH LIGHTS BARELY PENETRATING THE FOGGY SURFACE, THE DROPSHIP STRUGGLES TO DESCEND.



4 NO SOONER HAS THE SHIP HIT THE GROUND THEN THE APC CONTAINING THE MARINES ROLLS OUT.



5 AS THE MARINES HEAD TOWARDS THE STRICKEN COLONISTS, THE GAME LOGO FADES INTO VIEW.



6 THE BASE SEEMS DESERTED WITH ONLY A HANDFUL OF LIGHTS ON, AND NO SIGN OF LIFE.



7 BISHOP OVERSEES THE PARTY AS A BYPASS OPENS THE DOOR TO THE BASE.



8 THE MARINES SCOUR THE GANGWAY AS THEIR MOTION TRACKERS INDICATE MOVEMENT.



9 LOOKING UP, THE UNFORTUNATE MARINE IS DRAGGED KICKING BY A PAIR OF ALIEN HANDS.



10 STUNG INTO ACTION, THE MARINES TRY TO KILL THE ALIEN, FIRING IN ITS WAKE.



11 BISHOP CAN ONLY WATCH AS THE MARINES ARE TORN APART, AND RIPLEY RESOLVES TO GO IN.

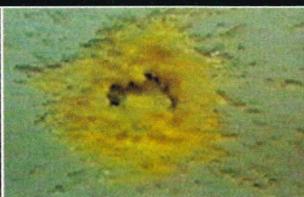


12 THE APC IS BREACHED AS AN ALIEN ATTACKS. RIPLEY BLOWS ITS HEAD OFF AND STEPS INTO THE FRAY.

ACID BLOOD

ALIEN

The Nostromo's medical computer indicates that, despite the attached parasite, Kane is in near perfect health. Ash (Ian Holm) cuts into one of its legs and yellow blood spurts from the wound, rapidly burning through the floor.



ALIEN TRILOGY™

THE COMPANY YOU KEEP

As if contending with hordes of alien warriors wasn't enough, the evil machinations of Welland-Yutani (the 'Company' Ripley works for) have dispatched a series of guards to protect their alien subjects. As such, as Ripley picks her way through the colony and prison complexes, the guards are dogging her every move. 'We've put two types of guard in,' Cliff explains. 'One is human and the other, synthetic. The main difference is that the humans are easier to kill, while the synthetics stand up to more firepower and spurt white blood when they eventually fall.'

Similarly, towards the end of the Fiorina segment, the base is invaded by the Samurai guards – like the ones which attempted to pull Ripley from the edge of the smelting plant at the end of the third film.



THE FULLY MATURED DOG ALIENS ATTACK IN PACKS OF THREE OR FOUR, AND ARE EXTREMELY HARD TO KILL.



TRUE TO THE FILM, SMART GUNS ARE BEST FIRED IN SHORT BURSTS. ITS GRENADES ARE BEST SAVED FOR THE QUEEN'S LAIR.



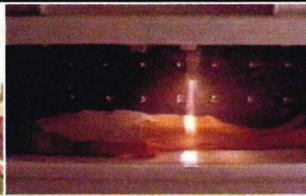
ILLEGAL ALIENS

Throughout the three films, the alien's design has been redesigned slightly, with Giger's design given a ridged head for the second film, and a dog-like stance for *Alien 3*. Giger's original intention was that the alien's DNA would become spliced with that of its victim on impregnation, and this theme continued in early drafts of the third film and made it into *Alien 3* as Giger's vision of the 'dog alien.' The game continues this trend, with the assorted corridors playing host to Facehuggers, alien warriors, eggs, and the 'dog' alien. 'We've got some really cool stuff

in there,' Cliff grins, 'for instance during the Acheron level, the player has been sent to collect the tags colonists wear. When you find the colonists, they've been cocooned into the walls by the aliens ready to generate new ranks. So when you go up to them real close you'll hear a sample of 'please kill me' taken from *Aliens* and a Chestbuster breaks out! It will then run off and turn into a Facehugger, like in the films.' Despite the latter part of Cliff's claim – after all, Chestbusters grow into warrior aliens – *Alien Trilogy* is as full of alien creatures as promised. And,

INCUBATING CHESTBURSTER ALIEN

A scan indicates that something has lodged itself in Kane's chest. Soon he wakes up, seemingly unharmed. During a meal, however, he convulses and a creature bursts from his chest and scuttles into the shadows.

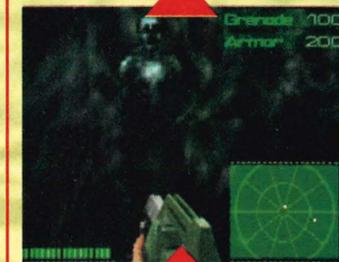




AN EXAMPLE OF PROBE'S EFFECTIVE LIGHT-SHADING.



THE PRISON PLANET PLAYS HOST TO THE TOUGHEST STRAIN OF ALIEN — THE MATURED 'DOG' CREATURE.



courtesy of a specially-created piece of software, the individual creatures differ in their abilities, with some considerably more intelligent than others. Similarly, not all the aliens are as powerful as warriors, and Probe have added the 'Bambi' alien (so named because of its unsteady legs) of the third film who comes along and nips Ripley occasionally before running away.



THE BAMBI ALIEN IS UNSTEADY ON ITS FEET AND BASICALLY SERVES AS CANNON FODDER.



OBJECTS OF DESIRE

Ripley's task is made easier by other objects. As with the weapons, these are selected via Ripley's inventory screen or the R buttons.

PROTECTIVE VEST

Dampens the damage inflicted by the Company guards' guns. Has little effect against alien slashes, though.



AUTO MAPPER

Resembling a laptop computer, this device charts and records the areas Ripley has visited, storing them for later use.



BATTERY PACK

Used to activate switches and doors. Strangely, these Earth-made batteries also power up the bio-mechanical doors in the third section's 'Bone Ship.'



BOOTS

Acid is only harmful when an alien lies dead on the floor and so this Marine Issue sturdy footwear will protect Ripley's feet.



ENERGY

Comes in two forms, either as a collectable pod or as floor tiles. Both raise Ripley's energy by ten points.



ADRENALINE SHOT

A more powerful variant of the energy pods. Adrenaline shots are extremely thin on the ground, though.



ID CARD

Collection of these forms several of the missions, and they can be found by searching the dead bodies of guards and colonists or by blowing open lockers.



MEDIKIT

Replenishes lost energy. One of the more common powers, and can be used at Ripley's discretion.



NIGHT VISION GOGGLES

The alien secretions on Acheron and in the 'Bone Ship' reduce visibility and thus render the alien virtually invisible. These reduce the effect.



SHOULDER LIGHT

This illuminates the dark areas far more effectively than the goggles.



RAPID GROWTH ALIEN

The search for the chestburster has been going for mere hours, when Brett (Harry Dean Stanton) finds a slimy mess on the floor. Lifting it up, it is apparent the creature has shed its skin — and has grown to over six feet tall.





ALIEN TRILOGY™

TERMINAL CASE

As big a cliché as it is, *Alien Trilogy* also professes a slight puzzle element. 'Basically, a bit of lateral thinking is needed to get some of the doors working and to solve some of the missions,' Cliff offers. 'As the level loads, the mission briefing is given, and this could be anything from kill everything to turn on the lights. However, doing this may require a battery to power up the relevant switch so then you've got to hunt down the battery and find the device which powers the door you need.' Some of the puzzles aren't quite so obvious, though, and on entering a room your motion detector could be going wild, indicating multiple targets, but there's nothing in the corridor ahead. Pumping a grenade into the wall removes some of the alien mucus, though, and may also partially reveal another exit — with the aliens milling around inside. Probe also promise a number of hidden levels in addition to the basic 33, but these are yet to be placed within the game and can only be found by wiping out 99% of the creatures in a level.

DOOR SWITCHES VARY IN DESIGN YET, FOR SOME REASON, USE THE SAME BATTERIES.



Alien Trilogy is the first 'Next Generation' game from Acclaim to utilise their much-touted motion-capture technology. Based in their Manhattan office, close liaison between Probe's programming team and the New York capture team is needed, with Cliff and Probe's Jo Bonar overseeing the relations. When coding the game, Probe make notes of what animation they'll need and a list sent to the motion-capture studio. From here, an actor is employed and has his entire body wired up to a series of SGI workstations. 'In past motion-capture games,' says Cliff, 'the sensors have only been placed on moving parts of the body — elbows, knees, etc. With *Alien Trilogy* we wired up every part so that the on screen animation will be closer to the way muscular movement works.' The actor then goes through the motions of crawling, attacking, and whatever else is needed, and the completed

skeleton is sent back to Probe in Croydon. 'From here, the artist can then add a 'skin' to the skeleton — including the alien tail or company garb — and the sprite is ready for inclusion in the game. The other benefit being that it is a true 3D representation and, as such can be viewed from all angles,' he adds.

Dropping the aliens and guards into the game also uses a specially-created system, with a team of 15 graphic artists piecing together a map editor which gives an overview of each labyrinthian stage.

'Each alien is represented by a coloured dot, and these are placed at key points on the sketch map,' explains Cliff. 'We can then highlight one of the dots and add a series of attributes to that certain alien — better hearing, agility, or strength, for example. Creating this map editor took a year and a half alone, but it makes for a more varied game.'



THE ALIEN SPRITES ARE 3D MODELS WHICH CAN BE VIEWED FROM ALL ANGLES. WALKING BEHIND ONE, FOR EXAMPLE, MEANS YOU WILL BE IN LASHING DISTANCE OF ITS TAIL.

WHEN AN ALIEN IS DESTROYED IT IS REDUCED TO A POOL OF ACID BLOOD. TREADING IN THIS REDUCED RIPLEY'S ENERGY IMMEDIATELY.



THE 'BONE SHIP' IS POPULATED BY EVERY BREED OF ALIEN, INDICATING THAT THE DEAD CREATURE WITHIN THE JOCKEY CHAMBER WAS TRANSPORTING THEM SOMEWHERE.

FACEHUGGERS ARE INCREDIBLY FAST AND SCUTTLE AWAY FROM IMMEDIATE DANGER. THEY ALSO HIDE IN NICHES IN THE WALLS.

ALIEN INCUBATION

ALIENS
Searching for the missing colonists the Marines discover that the aliens have cocooned the colonists and left eggs to impregnate them — thus ensuring further additions to the hive. As the team looks on, an alien is born.



SCREEEEECH!

The screeching of the aliens has been recreated perfectly using samples from the film. Over 60% of the game's effects have been lifted directly from the films, including speech snippets and the effects for the drop ship landing during the first FMV sequence. Fox supplied the programmers with recordings of the individual effects, and when the intended effect was missing a degree of improvisation came into play – for instance, creating the noise of an egg cracking open was obtained by mixing Vaseline and jam together and squishing them together into a microphone!

The music duties were split between two professionals, with Steve Burt – a

keyboard player with Mike and the Mechanics and session musician with Barbra Streisand – adding the atmospheric tunes which accompany the blasting action, while the gung-ho FMV music was supplied by Bob Schumachi who is now working on Fleetwood Mac's brand new album.


LET'S ROCK!

Ripley begins her mission armed with a rather hopeless pistol, but this is easily upgraded as the game progresses. As with all the game's power-ups, more powerful guns have been left scattered around the play area by earlier Marine expeditions, and appear in order of power as a reward for progression through the labyrinthian levels – with Vasquez's Smartgun acting as the ultimate destructive incentive. Finding the shotgun is one of the first puzzles the player encounters as it has been hidden away in a room secured behind a series of locked doors, and new weapons are automatically added to an inventory. From here, they can then be selected either via this screen or, if in a hurry, using the L and R buttons – and the weapon will instantly revert to the next in power whenever the ammunition expires.


9MM PISTOL

The default weapon. Ripley begins the game armed with this, and ammo is plentiful, if lacking in power.


SHOTGUN

Based on Hicks' good luck charm from the second film, and useful when retreating from an oncoming alien warrior.


PULSE RIFLE

The marine corps equivalent of a machine gun, and is doubly effective with its built-in grenade launcher.


FLAMETHROWER

Weak in terms of taking out aliens, but visually very impressive. Best used in the egg chambers before Facehuggers emerge.


SMART GUN

As wielded by Drake and Vasquez in the second film. Devastating to the extreme, and can also throw seismic charges for extra damage.


MOBILE REPRODUCTION
ALIENS

Ripley (Sigourney Weaver) discovers two Facehuggers running free, their spidery legs sending them skittering fast over objects. They can also wrap themselves around a victim's head, using the tail to slowly throttle them into submission.



ALIEN TRILOGY™

'GET AWAY FROM HER YOU BITCH...'



With *Alien Trilogy* obviously comparable to *Doom*, Probe have tried to add as many ideas as possible to the original Id concept. Thus, in addition to the full 3D sprites, *Alien Trilogy* also plays host to end-of-level bosses and, logically enough, these are Queen aliens. And this is where Cliff really gets going: 'She's huge and when you go in, there are eggs everywhere. When you walk up to them they open, and a Facehugger will jump out. So you really want to blow away the eggs before they open, but this pisses off the Queen who's still attached to the egg sac. If she sees you she doesn't want to break away from the sac as you're not really screwing with her yet. She'll try to bite you, but she'll only go for you if you shoot her. At which point she breaks away from the sac (using an effect sampled from the film), and this thing is huge.

He continues: 'She's so big, and because of the 3D nature of the sprites, you can actually walk under her legs without ducking! Her crotch is six feet tall! And from a distance you can see her and shoot her, but when she gets closer you start to see only her crotch!' Producer's enthusing aside, the Queen sprite really is a credit to the motion-capture technology, and as the Queen attacks, her piston jaws snap, her four arms wave, she moves with incredible speed and, as Ripley found out, she's a bitch to kill. 'It's best to run away and pick at her from a distance,' he laughs.



INTRO-VEINUS

The slight additions to the plot are explained away via a series of intermission FMV scenes. The intro sequence was completed two years ago when the game was in its embryonic stages, but has been smartened up considerably since we first saw it. It begins with a motion-captured Ripley deposited by the drop ship in a scene reminiscent of the section in *Aliens*. As Ripley runs a bypass, the door opens and the game begins. Acclaim's US motion-capture offices have really gone to town on the FMV sections, and a suitable cut scene appears at every opportune moment. 'We wanted to add a film quality to the game,' enthuses Cliff, 'and it gave us the chance to really push the motion-capture studio. As such, in addition to the intro sequence, there's a scene for Ripley leaving LV426, entering and

leaving the prison complex, and clambering into the 'Bone Ship.' Equally impressive, however, are the death scenes whenever Ripley is overwhelmed by the aliens. 'We wanted a different one for each way of dying,' Cliff continues, 'so if Ripley is attacked by a warrior, that's the ending you'll see. If she gets burnt by acid, bitten by the 'Bambi' alien, or whatever, there's an animation for each.'



FMV PLAYS A HUGE PART IN LINKING THE THREE FILMS.

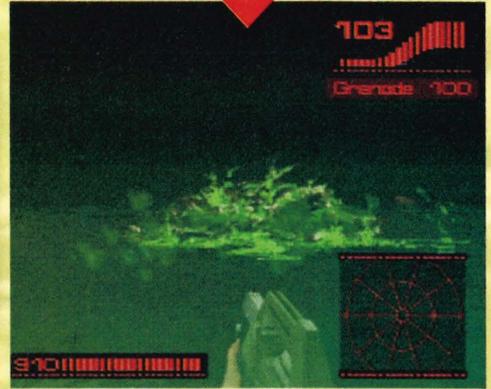
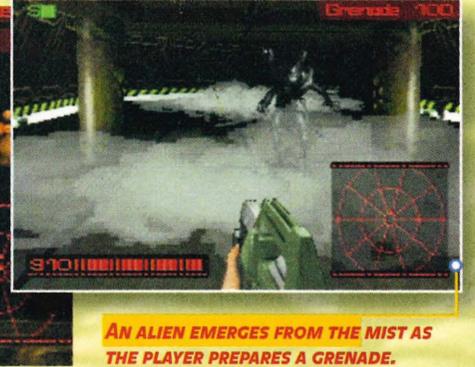


EGG-LAYING QUEEN

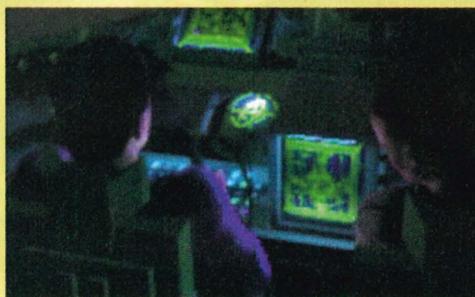
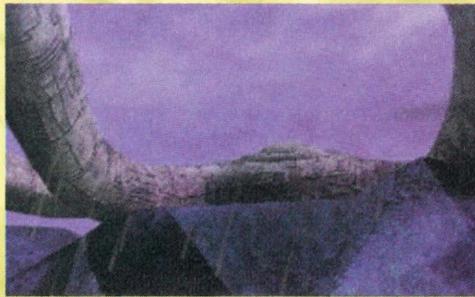
ALIENS

Aliens took the 'insect' nature of the aliens to its logical conclusion when Ripley stumbled across the impressive bulk of the Queen. Attached to an egg sac and guarded by the warriors, the alien race comes full circle.





AN ALIEN EMERGES FROM THE MIST AS THE PLAYER PREPARES A GRENADE.



DNA SPLICING

ALIEN 3

Alien 3 saw the concept of aliens cross-breeding with a host of creatures, and inheriting traits from them. This creature burst from a dog and so grew into a creature which was more adept at moving on four legs.



ALIEN TRILOGY™

A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH

Ripley begins the game with 100 life points, and these are whittled away during confrontations with the aliens and company guards. Death literally lurks around every corner, with aliens hanging from ceilings and leaping over walls, Facehuggers springing from holes in the wall, and puddles of acid spreading across the floor. Other hazards are slightly more obvious, but do give the Probe lads the chance to flex their designing muscle. One of the most impressive effects is a level in the bowels of the Acheron complex which is made up of pipes. Some of these have ruptured, though, and spew harmful steam at Ripley, reducing her energy a point at a time. 'The aliens are obviously the most dangerous adversary as they remove ten points with each swipe,' Cliff states, 'but we've tried to make it a little more tactical so the player learns ways to blast away while retreating at the same time. Of course, there are also aliens clinging on to the ceiling that only drop down when Ripley is directly underneath!'

A perfect example of this can be found in the innovative *Alien 3* section. Fans of the film will remember the scenes where the convicts and Ripley are trying to lock the alien in the tunnel complex so they can force it into the furnace. Probe have recreated this, and it is a stage Cliff is particularly proud of: 'You can kill the dog-aliens in this stage if you can find the big smart gun, but they are a hybrid strain of alien and very hard to kill. You can kill them by backing up and running while firing all the time – but you have to turn corners, so your best bet is to run, keep an eye on it and have it follow you. Then you hit the door switch, and (claps hands together) it slams. Then there's this big window in the door which you can shoot through to kill the alien. That's really cool.' And he's not wrong.



THE SMALL CALIBRE WEAPONS ARE BEST USED AGAINST THE GUARDS.

MORE ESSENTIAL READING

Titan and Boxtree Publishing's continuation of the *Alien* legend takes the acid-blooded monsters ever onward...

HIVE

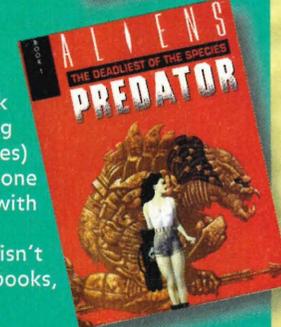
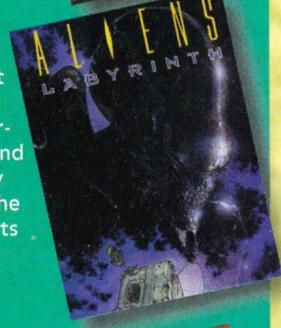
A scientist creates a robotic alien to infiltrate a hive and steal the life-giving royal jelly from the Queen's chamber. As ever, things don't go according to plan, and the scientist and his party become trapped on the barren planet. And then a party of Marines turn up unexpectedly...

LABYRINTH

More alien experimentation as a scientist apparently manages to suppress the aliens' natural desire to kill. But with martial law rapidly seizing hold of the base and so-called 'dissenters' going missing, only one woman is brave enough to uncover the horror behind the experiments. And meets the specially-created 'King' alien in the process.

ALIENS VERSUS PREDATOR

The alien menace has apparently been vanquished, and humans are getting back to their normal lives – with the elite using trophy wives (genetically-created beauties) as the ultimate fashion accessory. When one trophy goes AWOL, though, and falls in with a Predator stalking the wrecked Earth, it soon becomes apparent the alien menace isn't as dead as once thought. Spanning two books, AVP adds DNA-splicing to the mix. Cool.



COMMENT

STEVE I'm a massive fan of the *Alien* films, and on seeing the preview code a few months ago, I was really looking forward to getting to grips with *Alien Trilogy*. Well, forget what you saw in the preview, as *Alien Trilogy* far surpasses that initially impressive code. Fans of the films will love the samples, the moody atmosphere, and the aliens lifted from the trilogy, while game-players will just want to get in and blasting. The much-touted motion-capture is absolutely stunning and the aliens do actually work in 3D (although they get a little messy up close), and the use of *Doom*-style lighting makes them even eerier. For the game to work for me, it had to remain true to the films while supplying the much needed gameplay, and Probe have incorporated both beautifully. The action is as fast as *Doom*, but there's more to it, with the use of Queens, as bosses, inspired. Similarly, little touches like locking doors to secure aliens or watching a Chestbuster erupt just add to its overall appeal. This is, without a doubt, the best use of a film licence yet.

RATING

GRAPHICS	93
ANIMATION	91
SOUND FX	90
MUSIC	87
LASTABILITY	94
PLAYABILITY	93

OVERALL



COMMENT

ALEX I'm in two minds over *Alien Trilogy*. There's no denying it's a polished first-person blaster, and is one of the most atmospheric games I've played thanks to cool light-sourcing and sound effects. Still, personally I don't think it has the sheer adrenaline rush that makes *Doom* so intense – in comparison *Alien Trilogy* is almost laid back, with Ripley trudging slowly through the corridors, rather than rushing madly around, emptying ammo cartridges from the Pulse Rifle. Visually *Alien Trilogy* is awesome, with both the background graphics and characters sprites being more realistic and detailed than anything I've seen before. The true 3D graphics work exceptionally well, and combined with the motion-captured animation and sampled sound effects, *Alien Trilogy* really is a delight to behold. It's more structured than id's masterpiece too, and as a one-player game it's highly entertaining. Unfortunately it's not quite as exciting, partly due to the lack of a Deathmatch mode.