



The action starts to heat up very early on in the game.



"I knew I should have worn a brace as a child."

ALIENS VS PREDATOR 2: PRIMAL HUNT

REQUIRES ORIGINAL
ALIENS VS
PREDATOR 2

■ £19.99 | Pub: VU Games | Dev: Third Law Interactive | ETA: August 22 | www.vugames.com

REQUIRES PII 450, 96Mb RAM (128Mb for Windows 2000 and XP), a 16Mb 3D card and the original version of AvP2 **DESIRES** PIII 800, 128Mb RAM and a 32Mb 3D card

Martin Korda goes feral in the first expansion pack for Monolith's classic shooter

OH DEAR, oh dear, oh dear. And it was all sounding so promising. Three new sets of interlocking missions they claimed, which would capture the essence of the original AvP2 and answer the questions about the mysterious artefact from that very game, the one which gives the bearer control over the acid-filled alien hordes. New weapons, new enemies. This was to be it. The rekindling of the love affair I shared with AvP2, the game I gave my heart to last

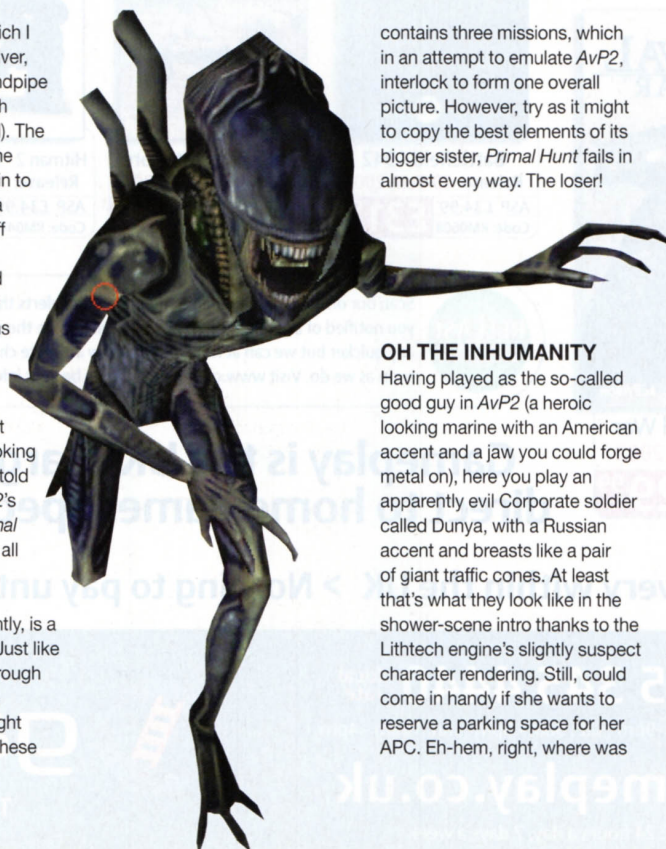
Christmas, but one to which I lost far more. Intestines, liver, spleen, kidneys and a windpipe if I remember correctly. Oh yeah and bladder (control). The single most terrifying game ever and I were once again to be reunited, entwined in a frenzied bond of blown off limbs and melted skin (I usually have to pay a kind lady from Kings Cross for that sort of thing), screams of child-like fear and an endless barrage of shouted expletives as dead bodies swim in a vat of blood. Yes it was all looking so promising when I was told what to expect from AvP2's first expansion pack, *Primal Hunt*. So just where did it all go so horribly wrong?

Well, let's start at the beginning, which apparently, is a very good place to start. Just like before, you get to play through three campaigns, human, Predator, and in a very slight twist, Predalien. Each of these

contains three missions, which in an attempt to emulate AvP2, interlock to form one overall picture. However, try as it might to copy the best elements of its bigger sister, *Primal Hunt* fails in almost every way. The loser!

I? Oh yes, while showering, you're called away mid-lather to go and find the alien-controlling artefact in some ancient underground ruins, leaving your boyfriend Dimitri cupping his balls in frustration in anticipation of your return.

Tragically, the Corporate missions are about as subtle as a kick in the furry spheres. Within a minute of the first mission, you're swamped by legions of aliens. No suspense. No tension. Just action. And that's how it continues. There are no puzzles to solve, just a few levers to pull and loads of aliens to shoot, and while they do crawl up walls to rake at your eyes more ferociously than a slapping wife whose just found out her husband's been banging her sister, the lack of suspense and failure to capture the fear of AvP2 through erratic lighting and clever use of sound, makes the whole affair less gripping than a leper's hand. The final mission is superb though, and will have you



INPERSPECTIVE

ALIENS VS PREDATOR 2

Reviewed Issue 110, Score 93%

A terrifying masterpiece, the three campaigns are as thrilling as they are varied. No shooter fan should be without it.

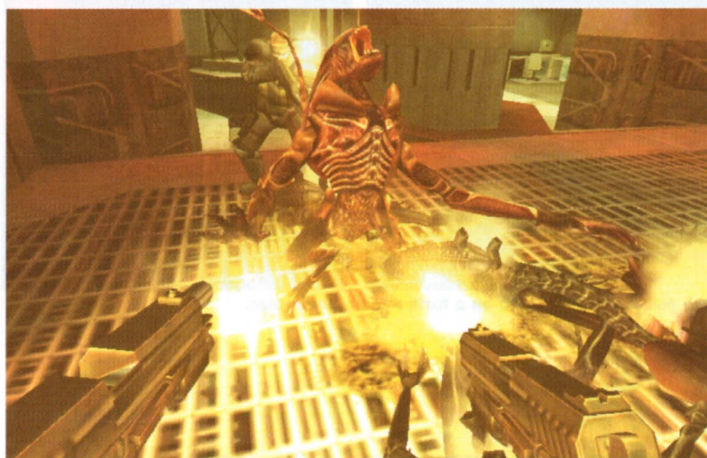
DIE HARD NAKATOMI PLAZA

Reviewed Issue 117, Score 74%

Same price, but about three times as long and much more entertaining than *Primal Hunt*. If you've got 20 notes going spare, it's well worth the investment.



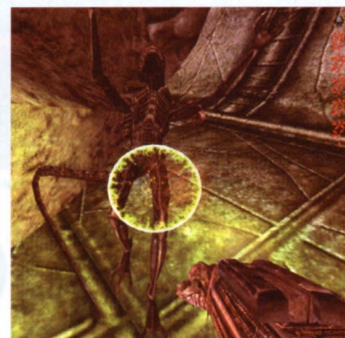
Aliens will crawl along walls in order to get at you.



Failing in theatre auditions can be a painful experience.



"Hey helmet head. Over here."



A reunion with my college roommate.

unloading every round from your arsenal as you battle for dear life. Also, all three missions are monumentally difficult on the higher levels and will give even the most hardened alien-slaughterer an exhilarating

challenge, due to the sheer numbers and toughness of the enemies.

PREDATORY SKILLS

So on to the Predator campaign. What a joke this one is.

Apparently the most important campaign of the three in terms of storyline, it turns out to be little more than a pathetically cobbled together set of substandard missions, gelled weakly with some ill-thought-out and uninspired cut-scenes. Watching a bunch of predators waving at each other incomprehensively, looking like they're having their first stretch of the morning instead of mapping out an essential mission to liberate a priceless artefact, then running off in random directions and leaving you with a sidekick who gets stuck behind a pebble does not, in my estimation, constitute a gripping plot. In fact, I'd argue it doesn't even constitute an un-gripping one. The missions aren't much better either. Three new indigenous alien species consisting of a giant cow, a rock creature and a mutated ankle-biting worm make cameo appearances, but they can all be dispatched with the minimum of effort. Once again, puzzles are a nonentity and it's not long before the whole campaign degenerates into a simplistic corridor-based shooter. By the end of the three missions, the limp-wristed plot actually answers fewer questions than Thribblewat College For the Dropped at Birth would if they entered University Challenge. Oh yes, I nearly forgot, the Predator's much vaunted new

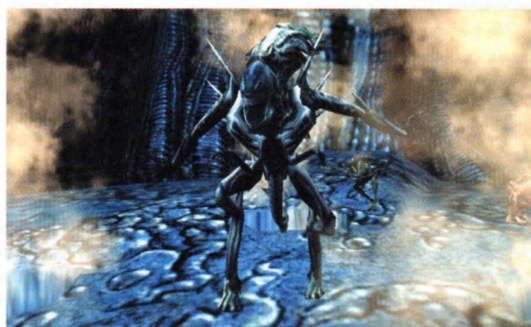
weapon – the wrist laser – is so effective, you won't even bother using its other weapons. Dull, dull, dull!

ALIEN TO ME

Which leaves us with the Predalien missions, which sadly, aren't too great either. Generally it's just a case of finding the right vent to crawl through, while mincing endless droves of humans and a couple of predators into meaty strands. However, it's not all bad, and the predator confrontations are harder than a kilted Scot

would surely have been infinitely better. As it is, apart from a few frantic and hellishly hard human missions, the rest of the package only just bobs its ugly head above the mire of averageness. For £20 you could buy the far superior and much more entertaining *Die Hard: Nakatomi Plaza*. Either that or you could simply re-ignite your love affair with the brilliant *AvP2*. In fact, that's exactly what I'm going to do now, and to hell with the woman from Kings Cross. She was too expensive anyway... [EW]

AVP3 WISH LIST



We all want to play as the alien queen.

HERE ARE A FEW THINGS WE'D LIKE TO SEE IN AVP3. COO THAT RHYMES AND EVERYTHING

1: Continuous blood trails from the Predator when it's wounded (until it heals itself), so that you can track it even when it's invisible.

2: More human versus Predator confrontations when playing as the human. The ability to cover yourself in copious amounts of mud and cobble together an inventive array of weaponry from leaves, twigs and berries in order to defeat your vastly superior foe which is armed with cutting edge technology (like Arnie in Predator) would also be an interesting feature. Actually, forget that last one.

3: Working as part of a team of aliens rather than on your own, being able to play as the alien queen and having a greater array of alien mutations to fight against. Yeah, that'll do.

"Within a minute of the first mission, you're swamped by legions of aliens"

jogging during a highland storm. While wearing no pants. Or shoes. Yes, that hard. But ultimately, the three missions are still overly scripted, bugged and again, lacking in tension or thrills.

So quite bleak then compared to *AvP2*? But when you think the last notable thing developer Third Law Interactive did was an average FPS based on a bunch of make-up wearing rockers, perhaps it's not a surprise that *PH* is as unspectacular and predictable as it is. Had Monolith (developer of *AvP2*) been behind this, it

PCZONE VERDICT

- ✓ Cheap
- ✓ Frantic and challenging human missions
- ✗ Crap Predator campaign
- ✗ Very bugged
- ✗ Repetitive
- ✗ Less scary than my gran

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A shadow of the beast it could have been