Asura's Wrath

Who has six arms and throws giants into space?

» **Platform** PlayStation 3 • Xbox 360 » **Style** 1-Player Action
» **Publisher** Capcom » **Developer** CyberConnect2 » **Release** 2012

Tight, flashy combat unites with insane feats of bravado in this stylish tale of a man seeking vengeance. Asura can pummel foes with his fists, unleash a barrage of energy projectiles, and channel his rage to perform outrageous acts.

The E3 2011 demo played out like the final boss battle of many games, with Asura's enemy growing larger with each phase of the fight. The gameplay also evolved along with the fight; Asura sprints towards the huge missle-firing antagonist, chases him through a field while throwing back heat-seeking warheads, and even-

tually tosses the behemoth into space. Instead of doing something reasonable like dying, the bad guy grows even larger, shoving his finger through the atmosphere towards Asura like a raging comet. Asura grows four extra arms, intercepts the daunting digit, punches the crap out of it, and destroys his enemy in a flash of glory.

While still early in development, Asura is emerging as a potential successor to the likes of Dante and Bayonetta. The playable demo may have been heavy with quicktime events and light on true battles, but the brief taste did not disappoint. » **Tim Turi**

This new xenomorph type uses its head like a battering ram. Taking it on from the front seems like a waste of ammo, dude

Ghost Recon: Future Soldier
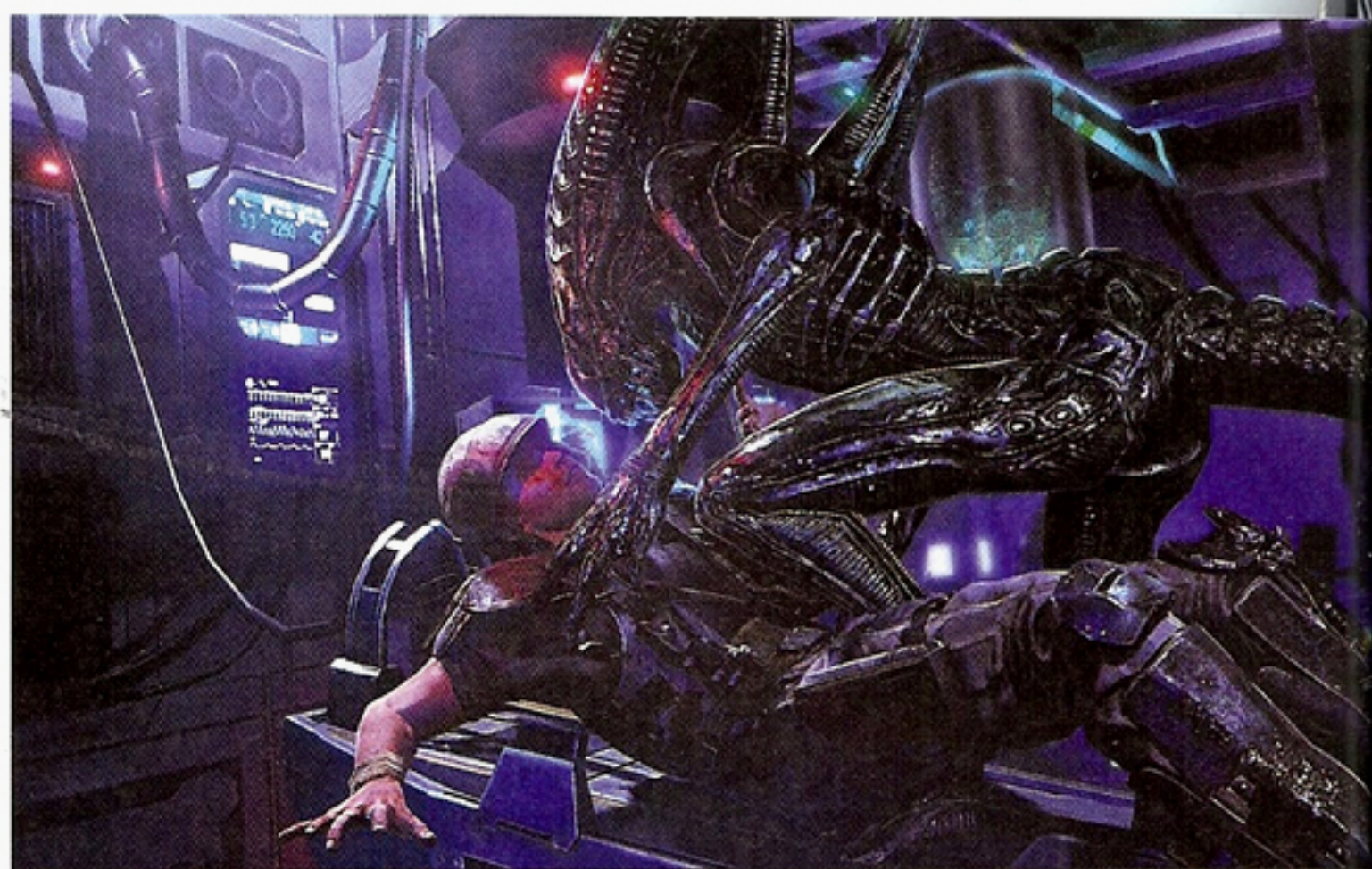
The Ghosts return from hiatus

» **Platform** PlayStation 3 • Xbox 360 • PC » **Style** 1 to 4-Player Shooter (16-Player Online)
» **Publisher** Ubisoft » **Developer** Ubisoft Paris » **Release** 2012

Since we last saw Future Solder a year ago, Ubisoft pushed back the release date into 2012 as the developer honed the gameplay. So how is it coming along?

Future Soldier feels like a departure from the tactics-heavy Advanced Warfare games. Your AI soldiers are largely autonomous, and the increased battle awareness lets you focus on the task at hand rather than babysitting. Even with the improvements, I'm still most interested in playing the campaign in four-player co-op.

The competitive multiplayer pits the Ghosts versus the Bodark, the Russian equivalent to the elite U.S. unit. Both groups have unique weapons and armor that you earn by leveling up. Once you find a weapon you like, you can spend XP and choose from over 50 attachments to customize it to your liking.

If you're itching to get your hands on Future Soldier, dig in for a long wait. Ubisoft says the multiplayer beta isn't starting until early 2012. » **Matt Bertz**

Wii U

Even though footage from Aliens: Colonial Marines was shown during Nintendo's E3 press conference, don't take that to mean that a Wii U version is inevitable. "We're investigating it as a platform and seeing how it could work," says Gearbox co-founder and chief creative officer Brian Martel. "Obviously there are questions about where it's going to come in on specs and those kinds of things. We're just making sure the game can be what it needs to be. If it can, great."

That's not to say that Gearbox is down on the platform, however. Martel says that he does see some exciting ways to implement the system's unique touchscreen, including as a Marine's motion tracker or for welding and hacking minigames. "And that's just scratching the surface. It's a really cool system, no doubt. I think [Nintendo] is finally maybe going to get that hardcore audience it wants."

Aliens: Colonial Marines

Gearbox's shooter could be more than just another bug hunt

The hunters look as though they were torn from the movies

We've been tracking Aliens: Colonial Marines since our March 2008 cover story, even as the pings from Sega and Gearbox have grown increasingly faint. That changed during E3, when Gearbox CEO and co-founder Randy Pitchford showed off the game in a demo behind closed doors.

In an interview after the presentation, the studio's co-founder and chief creative officer Brian Martel sounded contrite about the gap in information on the shooter. "Maybe we were talking about it a little earlier than we should have," he told us. Regardless, the game is certainly looking to be worth the wait.

Colonial Marines is set months after the events of Aliens, and it marks a return to LV-426. The nuke that lit up the planet's surface at the end of the film didn't exactly eradicate the xenomorphic threat. If anything, the fact that the creatures are alive and seemingly thriving should point to just how dangerous they really are.

We see some of that threat in action, as a squad of Marines crash lands on the planet's surface. Despite the nuclear blast, many key areas from the film remain intact. In addition to providing a familiar setting, Gearbox says it will fill in some of the story's gaps. "What happened to Hudson when he got pulled down through the floor?" Martel teases. "Did he turn into a xeno?" Martel says that it's critical that players see the aftermath of what happened to characters like Hudson and Vasquez, as well as tie up a few mysteries. "How did those eggs get on the ship in Alien 3? We don't remember the queen running off and doing some of that," he adds.

Gearbox sees Colonial Marines as a sequel to Aliens, and that extends to the gameplay. The feeling of being hunted is there, but this is a game about taking on swarms of xenomorphs rather than tracking a single stowaway. The squad moves with ruthless efficiency, reinforcing choke points with automated turrets and moving as a team, but even they prove to be no match for their horrifying enemy. Fortunately, players work together in groups of four to help even the odds.

After a standoff inside an operations center, the squad retreats to another area. While outside, we spy a new variation of xenomorph in the rainy gloom. The bull-headed mutation sounds like a particularly nasty foe. "You can't take him on head on," Martel says. "Most of the weapons won't work on him, so you have to find a new way. That's really great in co-op, and it makes you think a little bit more in single-player – or run in single-player." Gearbox is working closely with Fox to expand the roster of enemies, so you won't be facing the same hunter types we've all seen before.

As Pitchford points out, Aliens has been tremendously influential to video games. A faithful extension of the film has been a long time coming, and it's looking as though Colonial Marines could be what fans have been waiting for. If the team can keep encounters fresh throughout an entire campaign, this could be an infestation worth rooting for. » **Jeff Cork**

» **Platform**
Xbox 360 • PlayStation 3

» **Style**
1 or 2-Player Shooter
(4-Player online)

» **Publisher**
Sega

» **Developer**
Gearbox Software

» **Release**
Spring 2012

The squad reinforces its defenses during tense "Take a Stand" moments

Game over, man