

ALIEN RESURRECTION

Film tie-ins are notoriously poor timekeepers, and Argonaut's new firstperson shooter is no exception. Has the three years of development been well spent?



Human enemies will appear, but the aliens are more unnerving



Nine weapons are expected to make an appearance in the final game, but some of these will be specific to particular characters, such as Call's laser

Some three years in the making, Argonaut hopes that *Alien Resurrection* will blend a firstperson experience with an atmosphere more reminiscent of survival horror. Although a thirdperson incarnation of the game was largely complete before ECTS last year, the decision was taken to switch to a firstperson perspective in order to better convey the haunted-house-in-space theme of the films. *Alien Resurrection* will look dated alongside next-generation titles but it promises to extract every last drop of juice from Sony's grey box, with the game featuring high-poly enemies and environments showcasing dynamic lighting effects, plus specific animations for different damage locations.

Although the controls can be confusing at first, there is a range of options to customise them, and the first of ten levels affords players the opportunity to get used to the system. Starting *in medias res*, Ripley must explore her immediate surroundings to find out what is going on. Players will have to adopt the role of three

other characters as the game progresses, each with distinct attributes and weaponry available to them. By way of example the android, Call, can take more damage than Ripley. Plot and structure are each heavily based on the celluloid original, with the ultimate goal being to reach smuggler ship, the Betty, and escape from the USS Auriga. Puzzles appear to be standard firstperson fare, with save points dotted around the ship and elements of resource management thrown in.

While this is all standard fare, Argonaut has worked hard at conveying a deeply involving sense of atmosphere throughout the game. From the very start, playing *Alien Resurrection* is a slightly disturbing experience. Sound effects are remarkable, with the dull throb of the ship's engines taking the place of music, and a constant computer chatter that may also provide clues to the canny player. Dual Shock effects are also striking. And though the aliens are slow in comparison to those in *Alliens Versus Predator* – or indeed the films themselves – they attack from all directions and are an insidious and disconcerting threat, getting tougher as the game progresses.

With a fifth instalment in the movie series looking unlikely for the near future, this title will doubtless keep franchise devotees happy, but it should also have the potential to appeal to fans of quality gameplay.



Locations in the game will be familiar to fans of the movie, as will the facehuggers, whose attacks will require the use of an autodoc

Format: PlayStation

Publisher: Fox Interactive

Developer: Argonaut

Release: September

Origin: UK

