

## ROLE-PLAYING GAME

# VAMPIRE: THE MASQUERADE BLOODLINES

Buffer than a buffed-up Buffy in the buff.

Even if vampires and RPG licences aren't your bag, here's a phrase that should do it for you: *Half-Life 2* engine. The first game we've seen to license this code (known as Source), *Bloodlines* has been in secret development at Troika (*Arcanum*, *Greyhawk*) and been kept

If she looks too good to be true, she is.

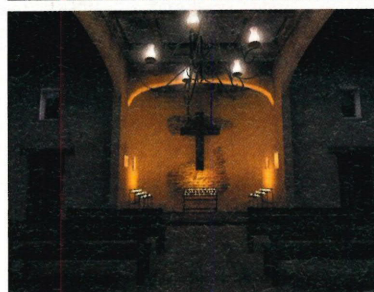
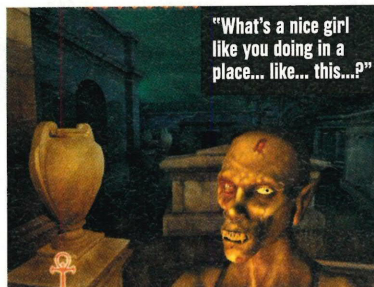
1. Sounds fun. Now what do you need me to do?  
2. Whatever. Just tell me what you want so I can get the hell out of here.

under wraps until *Half-Life 2* itself could be announced.

A follow-up to *Vampire: The Masquerade - Redemption* (PCG 85, 70%), *Bloodlines* conjures a dark White Wolf world of grim urbanity. Depending on your choice of clan and special abilities, you'll need to play a specific vampiric role - be it frenzied brawler, gregarious seducer or secretive lurker, among others.

Our exclusive look at *Bloodlines* revealed some jaw-dropping visuals, complemented by unsettlingly believable facial characterisation. Suddenly, RPGs are cool again.

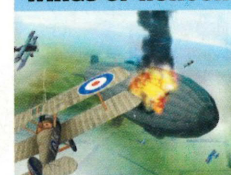
■ Release date **Spring 2004**  
■ Web site **www.troikagames.com**



With such bloody goings-on at hand, it's no wonder the Sunday turnout is so poor.

## GOBBETS

## WINGS OF HONOUR



As Tim Stone so often laments, there just aren't enough WWI flight sims around. He's pleased, then, to note the imminence of *Wings of Honour*, a slightly arcade approach to the genre which combines dogfighting with a strong plot and diverse missions. Whether City Interactive's experience with *Smash Up Derby* will help with *WoH* remains to be seen. Expect it late this year. [www.city-interactive.com](http://www.city-interactive.com)

## TRUE CRIME



This is Activision's answer to Rockstar's hugely successful *GTA* series, and attempts to portray many of the flashy criminal activities seen there, but this time from an undercover cop's perspective. Nick Kang must drive, shoot and, er, brawl his way to victory. Or something. A PC version has not been confirmed, but the word is that it's happening.

## DEPP BLUE SEA



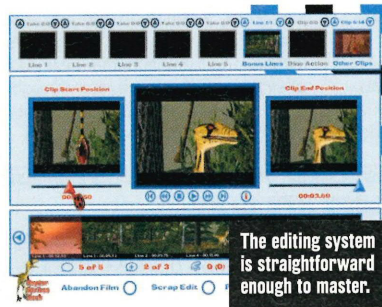
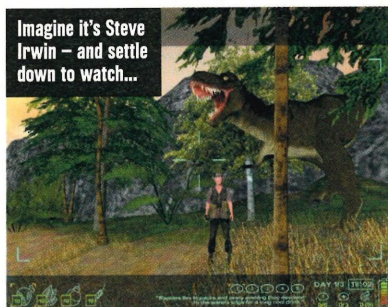
Now this is bizarre. Bethesda won't admit it, but the piratical RPG sequel *Sea Dogs II* has now been renamed *Pirates of the Caribbean* - to tie in with this summer's film of the same name, starring Johnny Depp. Though there will be no correlation in terms of story, nor presumably of characters, the game will be set in similar times and places. Expect a release by July. [pirates.bethsoft.com](http://pirates.bethsoft.com)

## VIRTUAL TV

# DINOSAUR MOVIE MAKER

Virtual TV goes dinosaur-shooting.

Imagine it's Steve Irwin - and settle down to watch...



The editing system is straightforward enough to master.

Ever wondered what happened to Jon Hare, he of Sensible Software fame? Well, wonder no more. Roving the land like some kind of peripatetic games genius, he's now directing the development of some intriguing software called *Virtual TV* - and its first incarnation as *Dinosaur Movie Maker*.

*Virtual TV*'s concept is simple enough: you must make short videos that fulfil certain criteria - by manipulating presenters, backgrounds and subject matter to create the most exciting clips possible. Although with *Dinosaur Movie Maker*, you're filming dinosaurs on a *Jurassic Park*-style island,

the beauty of the format is that you can apply it to a diverse range of subjects to create different experiences: think music videos, war reporting, paparazzi...

*Dinosaur Movie Maker* offers fairly sophisticated editing tools to put together your films; that said, it's clearly being created with younger gamers in mind. The first-person controls and 3D nature of the world should make it accessible to all, though, and much stealth and cunning will be required to capture the saurian beasts on celluloid.

■ Release date **Spring 2004**  
■ Web site **www.legba.co.uk**

## STRATEGY

# NORTHLAND

No, not Scotland...

This is possibly the most Cultured game PC GAMER has ever seen. By that, we don't refer to its love of fine wines and architecture, its penchant for Lalique or fashionably expensive London couture. Rather, we mean its enviable heritage as the natural successor to the frighteningly successful (*In Germany, mind* - Ed) strategy/management series.

Of course.

Developers Funatics - those 'crazy' Germans behind both previous *Cultures* titles - are once again at the helm, although there's no word on why the series' name has been ditched for this outing, which is otherwise very much the third in the series. No matter, for *Northland* doesn't seem to have lost any of the appeal that made its predecessors so popular.

Once again, you'll be managing the development and conquest of cutesy little towns with intricate economic and financial models. Story will play a bigger part than ever, with Viking gods playing games with the mortals (and not in the sense of Nordic tiddlywinks). As usual.

We'll take a closer look next issue before the game's release in July.

■ Release date **July**  
■ Website **www.gmxmedia.net/northland**

"This game will appeal right across the board... Although it appears to be for children, it's also a great experience for everyone else, both as a fascinating game and as an enjoyable experience in making films." **JON HARE, DIRECTOR OF DESIGN**

