

Technology

A Look at Recent Tech Happenings

"The Two Thrones" brings timely end to series

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Entertainment Editor

The ability to control time, is the basic premise behind "Prince of Persia: The Two Thrones" the latest release in the long running "Prince of Persia" series.

The original "Prince of Persia," a 2-D side scrolling action adventure released in 1989, was one of the first games to use retroscope animation (tracing live actions frame by frame) to get realistic looking character movements. Since then, the series has always been known for its realistic physics and brilliant puzzles combined with thrilling action. "The Two Thrones" proudly upholds that tradition.

"The Two Thrones" is the culmination of story arcs that run through its predecessors, "Prince of Persia: Sands of Time" and "Prince of Persia: Warrior Within."



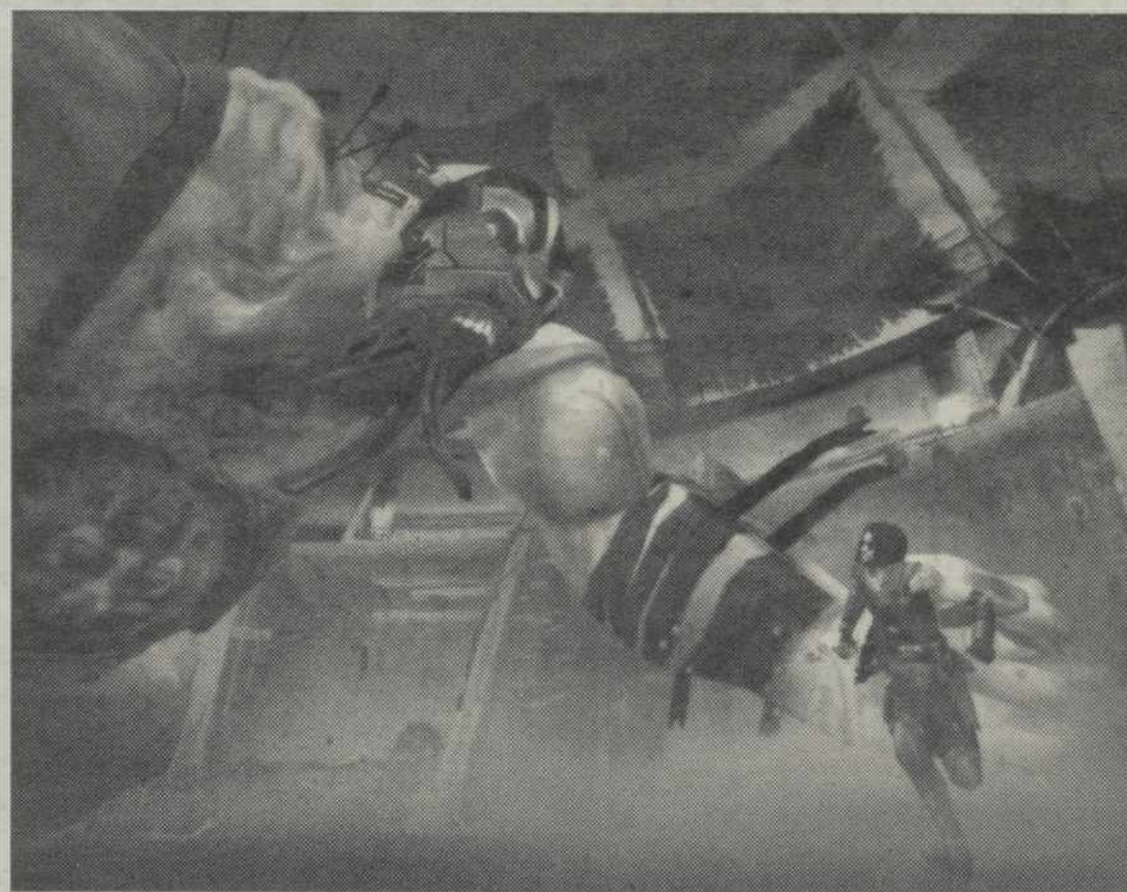
Though not the oldest of the games, "Sands of Time" is the first in the series to be released on the next generation consoles. With a tight control scheme and beautiful imagery, this 2004 release was a ground breaking game that coined time reversal power that has been a trademark of the series. Using the Jade engine that was first used in the 2003 sleeper hit, "Beyond Good & Evil,"

"Sands of Time" was, graphically, top notch at the time of its release.

"Warrior Within" continues the Prince's journey as he is slowly driven mad from being hunted continually by the Beast of Time, The Dahaka. This 2005 sequel was far more violent than its predecessor, featuring an incredibly dark story that was reflected by the vicious fighting style adapted by the game. "Warrior Within" also introduced the akimbo swords that allowed for much more visceral moves (disemboweling followed by a decapitation being my personal favorite).

"The Two Thrones" picks up where "Warrior Within" left off; with the Prince on his way home to Babylon after sealing the sands within the Empress of Time, a woman named Kaileena.

Soon after his return, Kaileena is kidnapped and the sands of time are released once again. Of course it wouldn't be a "Prince of Persia" game if it wasn't up to the Prince to save the day. This time though the Prince isn't alone, in a manner of speaking. The Prince's malevolent alter ego, aptly called the Dark Prince, begins to take ever increasing control of the Prince's mind and body. This eventually manifests itself in a whole new body for the Prince, his skin turned black as coal with



glowing runes running along his arm and back.

You play through the game as both the normal and dark Princes, each with his own unique powers and weaknesses. The Dark Prince is twice as strong and can attack enemies from a distance, but he steadily loses his vitality unless he is killing bad guys. Conversely, the normal Prince has average strength, focusing more on stealth, which leads to incredibly fast assassination tactics. He can also retain his health and even regain it when he drinks from the games many water fountains that double as save points.

The combat system is visceral and tight; the controls respond extremely well to the demands of the fast paced action. The fighting style used by the Prince in "The Two Thrones" is a combination

of the violent ordeal from "Warrior Within" and the straight forward swordplay in "The Sands of Time." All the time control powers are unique, though not much has changed since "Sands of Time." They can still garner some extremely satisfying game play moments, not the least of which is the power to rewind the game up to ten seconds into the past. This makes for a popular game mechanic, allowing experimentation within the game without the fear of having to restart at your last save point.

Over all, "Prince of Persia: The Two Thrones" is one of best games to be released this year and with it being available for Gamecube, X-Box, Playstation 2 and PC, there is no excuse for not experiencing one of the most fantastic time traveling games ever.

iPods have multiple uses

SIMON KIRSCH

Staff Reporter

Many people all across America have iPods, yet most do not know how to fully utilize this device. While the ease of use that comes from automatically updating your songs is nice, this prevents owners from downloading songs from more than one computer or letting others access and download their song library. But with a few tricks, and a change of preferences, iPod owners can begin to expand their libraries and use their iPods to the fullest.

There are two kinds of modifications that one makes on their iPod: change of preferences/exploitation of windows and an actual change of software. I will deal with the first, because from my experience, running Linux on an iPod is too risky. Linux is a third-party software that can enable owners to do much more, but it caused me more problems than fixes. Unless you have Linux experience, don't install the program.

Without using Linux, there are many amazing things that can be done to an iPod, but choices often have to be made. If an owner wishes to manually update songs, they can pick and choose what goes on an iPod, but this comes at the expense of time.

I think that everyone should use the manual update

choice, because it gives complete power over an iPod. Apple get lots of criticism because the iPod apparently doesn't allow users to choose their songs. Manual updating fixes that. All a user has to do is go to Edit: Preferences: iPod and select manual update.

Getting songs off an iPod and onto another computer is a slightly more difficult task. The best way is to use free software like iPodRip for Macs or EphPod for Windows. Both open up an iPod and give access to downloadable songs. To use both of these programs, one must enable disk mode on their iPod.

Another way to remove songs is to un-hide all files. To do this go to Tool: Options: Files and click "view hidden files." Be careful when accessing hidden files though, because your iPod's song library depends upon a complex system of organization, and can be significantly hurt if files are moved incorrectly. This feature is not readily available on Macs, but iPodRip is a perfect alternative.

Files will not have names when they are hidden. Instead, each is given an identification number, so unless you access your iPod often, it isn't worth your time. Just download the easy to use EphPod, and remove files at your own leisure.

Playlist Spotlight: Becky Farris

KELSEY SCHRADER

Staff Reporter

"[My music taste is] eclectic," Becky Farris, science teacher, said. "It means a lot of different styles." Eclectic is just the right word to describe this playlist, which ranges from Enya to The Animals.

In her classroom, Farris is personable, funny and truly cares for her students. This is her 11th year working at West Linn, after three years of substituting. She generally listens to her music when she feels like dancing (Yes, Farris dances. Who knew?) or when

she needs help concentrating while grading papers.

"I guess my favorite song would be 'Carol of the Bells,'" Farris said. "It's a Christmas carol that always reminds me of the good things about winter: Christmas, and the fun of playing hand bells."

