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QUESTIONS WITH

*Caitlin
O'Connor*

Concert Exclusive
Rogue Wave

GAMES REVIEWED



THE LAST
OF US



Kanye West
Yeezus



Megadeth
Super Collider

R_S
July 2013

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20 QUESTIONS

Get To Know Your Cover Model

Caitlin O'Connor

Photography by Andrew Gates
Make-up and hair by Bioanca Robinson



Caitlin O'Connor was born in Los Angeles, California, but raised in Uniontown, Pennsylvania. She is an American actress, model and TV host. Upon graduating high school in Pennsylvania, she moved back to Los Angeles where she attended UCLA where she graduated with a major in English and a minor in Theater. This is also where Caitlin got her first modeling experience by posing for UCLA's Bruin BearWear Catalog. In 2011, Caitlin appeared as a series regular on the MTV show, Chelsea Settles. Just one year later, 2012, Caitlin was named one of Hollywood's Hottest Girls by Yahoo News. She was also named one of the top ten hottest girls in America for 2013 by Maxim readers and given a column for their July/August issue as "The Helpful Hottie," Advice Girl. Caitlin recently landed a starring role in a Pepsi Next commercial and was featured on TMZ on TV. Her credits don't stop there though, she's also made numerous appearances on various Web, Cable and TV shows as a celebrity guest and as a host. She also has a few national commercials, print campaigns and magazine features under her belt. When Caitlin is not posing for the cameras, she is an active supporter of Generosity Water, a clean water organization. It's always nice to see a beautiful girl who also has a heart.



20 QUESTIONS

Your Cover Model Cont'd



20 QUESTIONS

1. What's your Ethnicity?

Irish-Hungarian.

2. What's your zodiac sign?

I'm a Leo. I'm stubborn and love giving lavish generous gifts.

3. Where are you from originally?

I'm originally from Los Angeles. I was born in West Hollywood, California, but I was raised in a small town in Pennsylvania.

4. What did you like most about growing up in the Uniontown, PA?

My favorite part of growing up in Uniontown, Pennsylvania was the small-town vibe. It's a quiet town with lots of local family-run businesses with kind and compassionate people.

5. What kind of mischief did you get into while growing up?

Growing up, I got into my fair share of mischief. I was pretty sheltered as a young girl and a bit shy. After high school I started to come out of my shell and I enjoyed going out dancing with my girlfriends.

6. What's the craziest thing you've ever done?

The craziest thing I've ever done is fall in love. Love is dangerous. [laugh] And yes, I'd do it again for sure. [smile]

7. What's your favorite hobby and why?

My favorite hobby is traveling. This summer I vacationed in Cabo and did a few photoshoots in Chicago and New York City. I love traveling to new places and experiencing the food and different cultures, Europe is my next stop.

8. What's your guilty pleasure?

My guilty pleasure is sugar and desserts. I love to bake cookies.

9. Who do you admire and why?

I admire old Hollywood glamour and the starlets that defined that era. Audrey Hepburn, Sophia Loren, Marilyn Monroe, etc. I admire their beauty, style and essence. One of my favorite past times is enjoying black and white films and old movies at Hef's on the weekends with friends.

10. If you could change one thing in the world what would it be and why?

If I had the power to change one thing in the world, I would clear my generation's student loan debt (which surpasses credit card debt in the nation) and allow students to enter college at no cost for the first two years.

11. What's one of your personal goals?

One of my personal goals is to raise a family and provide a comfortable, supportive and nurturing homelife for my kids. I love children and can't wait to have my own.

12. What do guys compliment you on the most?

Definitely my eyes the most, but my red hair also gets a lot of attention.

13. What's your favorite body part on yourself?

My favorite body part is my eyes. Eyes are the windows to the soul.

14. What do you look for in a guy?

I look for intelligence, a sense of humor and someone who is confident, but not cocky.

15. What's the first thing you notice about a guy?

The first thing I notice about a guy is his hair. I usually like dark-haired men, although, every once in a while, a blonde will catch my eye too.

16. What's your ideal first date?

My ideal first date would be dinner and a movie. I'm a pretty simple girl, I like to have a chance to talk and get to know someone on a first date.

17. What turns you on?

My turn-ons include laughing, exercising, dancing and guys in glasses.

18. What turns you off?

My turn-offs are gossiping, bad hygiene, negativity, violence, arguments and old ladies driving slow. [laugh]

19. What's your biggest pet peeve?

My biggest pet peeve is young women getting too sloppy at the club, try to keep it classy ladies.

20. Who's your celebrity pass?

Chris Hemsworth.

RM

20 QUESTIONS

Your Cover Model cont'd



20 QUESTIONS
Your Cover Model Cont'd



20 QUESTIONS
Your Cover Model Cont'd

Eyes are the
windows to
the soul.

20 QUESTIONS

Your Cover Model Cont'd



STATS:

Birthday: August 3

Height: 5'7"

Weight: 120lb

Measurements: 34C-26-34

See more of Caitlin at
twitter.com/Caitlin_OConnor

ALL ACCESS

The Latest Albums Reviewed

The Resurrection?

Written by Jeremy Weeden

Kanye West is back with his 6th studio album, *Yeezus*. *Yeezus* is a sonic journey that takes the listener on an eclectic journey through Kanye's mind. The album has touches of electronica, old-school hip-hop, reggae and even some classic Kanye.

The album starts with the Daft Punk assisted "On Sight," a futuristic sounding track with hard drums and loud synthesizers. The abrasive sounding track finds Kanye matching it's aggressiveness with abrasive raps like "Real nigga back in the house again/Black Timbs all on your couch again/Black dick all in your spouse again/and I know she like chocolate men/She got more niggas off than Cochran."

The next song is the industry rock influenced "Black Skinhead," a drum heavy track filled with Kanye's screams. The end of this song finds Kanye saying God repeatedly and then segues into the dark and brooding "I Am A God" an ode to his celebrity and power. This song highlights the fact that Kanye can and will do whatever he wants to as he hollers, "I am a God, so hurry up with my damn massage/In a French ass restaurant, hurry up with my damn croissants."

After this is "New Slaves," a song that finds Kanye speaking on the new kinds of racism in the world. He compares the age when his mother was a child and racism was blatant and in your face to the more subtle racism of today. The song completely switches lanes at the end and Frank Ocean takes the song out singing over a smoother slower beat.

The album takes it down a notch with the Justin Vernon and Chief Keef assisted "Hold My Liquor." Chief Keef sings "I can't handle no liquor/But these bitches can't handle me/I can't control my niggas/And my niggas they can't control me/You say you know me, my nigga/But you really just know the old me." This is a track that finds Kanye unable to leave an ex alone despite everything that says he should.

"I'm In It" is a song about Kanye's sexcapades and is full of the kind of humor Kanye used to show often. He raps hilarious lines like "Your titties let em out, free at last/thank God almighty, they free at last/ We was up at the party but we was leavin fast/Had to stop at 7-Eleven like I needed gas/I'm lyin I needed condoms, don't look through the glass."

"Blood on the Leaves" is reminiscent of Kanye's work on *808's and Heartbreaks*, and is a tale of a relationship killed by the bright lights of fame. The song features the pairing of a sample from Nina Simone's version of "Blood on the Leaves" and the bass line from C-Murder's "Down 4 My."

"Guilt Trip" is a cosmic sounding song about a lost love that left Kanye and features Kid Cudi singing.

"Send It Up" featuring Chicago newcomer King Louie over a boom bap, old-school sounding beat. This song is easily the hardest on the album and features King Louie contributing a verse and the hook, the repetitive and catchy, "We can send this bitch up it can go down."

The last song on the album, "Bound 2" is most reminiscent of old Kanye. The song features a classic soul sampled beat and Charlie Wilson singing on the bridge. Kanye raps about a relationship that, to his surprise, actually lasts this time, leaving many to speculate he is talking about Kim Kardashian.

Yeezus is an excellent album overall and definitely Kanye's most unfettered. While most Kanye albums feature many singles and songs with catchy hooks, *Yeezus* does not. The album did not even have an official single until after it had already been released. Despite this, *Yeezus* is an outstanding, cohesive work of art that will probably be remembered as one of Kanye's best.

Artist: Kanye West

Album: Yeezus

Website: kanyewest.com

★★★★★

Label: Roc-A-Fella/Def Jam

Release Date: June 18, 2013



ALL ACCESS

The Album Reviews Cont'd



Mega It's Not

Written by Dan Sinclair

Super Collider is thrash metal veterans Megadeth's 14th studio album and the first one to be released on frontman Dave Mustaine's own label Tradecraft. Though Megadeth has gone through many lineup changes over the years all the same musicians from 2011's *Thirteen* are here, including original bassist David Ellefson, drummer Shawn Drover and Chris Broderick on the other guitar. But enough of that, let's start headbanging and put up those signs of the devil... oh, wait. Don't do that. The Born-Again Christian Mustaine probably won't appreciate that.

But no matter what religion any of the band members follow, none has forgotten how to thrash on the first track "Kingmaker." The first song comes out kicking some ass. It's heavy and fast as shit, the dueling guitars whirl, swirl and scream and Mustaine's distinct voice shines through. Dave sounds like the scary guy down the hall who likes to complain about everything, but not in a whiny way, more in a way you can't help but listen to, and afterwards he just says, "Rock and roll," and you nod in agreement though you know not why.

And just as you've banged away a couple thousand brain cells in celebration of the first song's awesomeness, the title track comes on next and you go, "Uh, what?" "Super Collider" starts off promising enough with a nice loud thrashing guitar solo, but then it slows down to the same bored beat that's been polluting modern rock radio for years before transforming into one of those semi-catchy, but tired, choruses that could've easily been Nickelback or 3 Doors Down.

Then "Burn!" comes on and does the same thing. What is going on? This is almost butt rock. "Burn, baby, burn 'cause it feels so good" is about as generic as lyrics can get. This is followed by "Fire/I got the fire," so if nothing else, at least Beavis and Butthead will appreciate it.

"Built for War" is better. It's heavier throughout and features an almost Pantera-ish chanting-like chorus of "Built for war/What do you think fists are for?" But then "Off the Edge" comes on next and farts right back to the familiar old hard rock verse/chorus/verse begging for radio play. The headbanging has stopped and the head scratching has commenced.

But then "Dance in the Rain" comes on and Mustaine belts out spoken-word type lyrics semi-reminiscent of 1993's "Sweating Bullets." You sing out, "Powers that be will never learn" and rejoice. Disturbed's David Draiman even adds a little guest vocals over the powerful dueling guitar solos. "Beginning of Sorrow" is nothing special, but at least sounds more like Megadeth than Nickelback.

"The Blackest Crow" features a little slide guitar and almost sounds like an interesting take on a country song. Unfortunately, it resorts back to a chorus that sounds much like the weaker songs on the album. Shame, there was a real opportunity to do something new there.

The next two songs ("Forget to Remember" and "Don't Turn Your Back...") are much stronger and along with "Kingmaker" and "Dance in the Rain" really highlight the album. The chorus to "Forget to Remember" almost reminds me of an older '80s hair band track, but not in a cheesy way. Like one of the few you still proudly admit to liking. "Don't Turn Your Back..." is the heaviest, fastest, most Megadeth-y song here aside from the album opener. "The best advice that I can lend/Don't turn your back on a friend" does sound pretty positive for the usual dark music of Megadeth, but the more you listen to it, it sounds more as a threat than encouragement, so that's cool. The album ends with the Thin Lizzy cover "Cold Sweat."

Though there are a few good songs here, *Super Collider* has to be a severe disappointment for Megadeth fans. Personally I'm all for a band branching out and exploring themselves musically instead of just rehashing the same old shit year after year, but this album sounds watered-down, almost as if it's just trying to gear itself for wider audiences and more radio play. It may work in the end with Dave Mustaine and the boys converting several medium-to-slow-speed hard rock enthusiasts into new Megadethers, but they may lose some longtime hardcore fans by doing so, too.

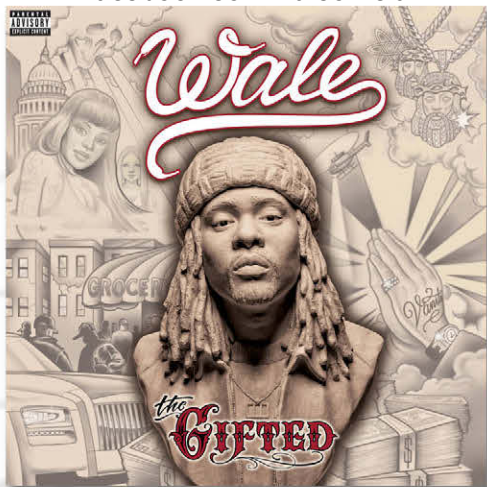
Artist: Megadeth
Album: Super Collider
Website: megadeth.com

★★★★★
Label: Tradecraft via Universal
Release Date: June 4, 2013

ALL ACCESS SPOTLIGHT

Written by Silas Valentino

[Facebook.com/waleofficial](https://www.facebook.com/waleofficial)



Wale, *The Gifted*

"How awesome is this narcissism" begins Wale (pronounced Wah-Lay) on the track "Vanity" off of his third album, *The Gifted*. Personal success and boasting play a reoccurring theme on the record, the album cover even features a statue of Wale that seems fitting for a library setting next to a Sir Isaac Newton statue. But Wale is quick to denounce himself comically (opening track "The Curse of the Gifted" begins with a dialogue between two men spray painting Wale's statue and ragging on his bravado). Wale has found success and his 70's Go-go style approach to rap is sounding large and alive on his latest release.

The album has a mega guest list that ranges from contemporary juggernauts to classic comedians. An ode to the sticky green "Rotation" plays like a slow burner with Wiz Khalifa and the king of features: 2 Chainz. "Gullible" is a head swinging soul romp with Cee Lo Green lending his voice on the chorus hook. But the most surprising guest is Jerry Seinfeld who offers a quirky dialogue on the finale "Black Heroes/ Outro About Nothing." Wale is having fun creating music and *The Gifted* makes it sound clear.

Queensrÿche, *Queensrÿche*

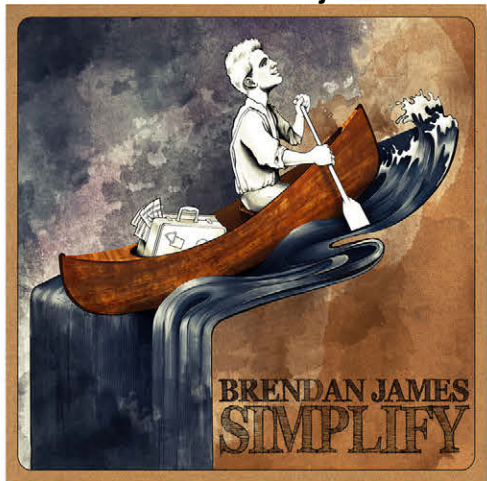
Breakups can be tuff, especially when it's between members of a heavy metal band. After a 2012 backstage altercation at a show in Brazil, Queensrÿche began its process to divide. Lead singer Geoff Tate split from the rest of the band and he was replaced with Todd La Torre. But in a strange turn of events, there now exists two versions of Queensrÿche: one with Tate and another with Torre and the rest of the members. Until at least November 2013, when both parties will meet back in court, the world will have to big enough for two Queensrÿches.

Queensrÿche is Torre's debut and he comes in strong. "Search and you'll find the answers/ to be the change you want to see," he sings on the track "Redemption." This version of Queensrÿche has their holsters equipped with double shots of guitar shredding and big vocals. Though there isn't an immediate "Silent Lucidity"-esk hit, Queensrÿche can still play to impress both an old fan or new. With tensions between the two Queensrÿche camps strong, so is the music. "Now I'm standing at the crossfire/ now I'm raising up my fist," sings Torre on "Where Dreams Go to Die" as he leads his charge in the Queensrÿche civil war.

[Facebook.com/queensryche](https://www.facebook.com/queensryche)



[Facebook.com/brendanjamesmusic](https://www.facebook.com/brendanjamesmusic)



Brendan James, *Simplify*

Simplify is the fourth album by singer songwriter Brendan James. It's a collection of 12 songs inspired by the modern day life of the 30-something James. Since releasing his debut album in 2008, James has been honing and mastering his craft. Generally upbeat and washed with gentle lyrics, *Simplify* is a strong effort from the East Coast pianist.

"Windblown" begins the record with a buoyant piano melody and lyrics telling of James' life caught floating in the air. "Dreams are like another man's change dangling in my pocket/ lost my own so I borrowed his, whatever gets me farther," he sings in tone that recalls Tracy Chapman. Track "Constellations" begins with a slow build of piano and light fading guitar and then enters James' voice singing about the fear and woes of growing up and finding your place. James' musical influences are from the greats of the 70's singer songwriter dynasty. The folk of James Taylor and the piano storytelling of Carly Simon, who James has worked with in the past, are essential ingredients in *Simplify*. The album would play perfectly on a morning coffee break while thinking back on the past and considering the present.

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LIVE & LOUD

The Live Show Reviews

Rogue Wave

Photos by Nicolas Bates

Written by Dan Sinclair

It's been a long time since the Oakland-based indie rockers Rogue Wave made their way south to Los Angeles. But don't ask me how long it was because frontman/songwriter Zach Rogue was the one who brought it up over again throughout the show. And it didn't seem like the band had been away from L.A. for so long on purpose as Zach kept saying how great it was to be back and that it had been "too long." But however long it was, it was clear that Los Angeles was happy to have them back if one were to measure that sort of thing by enthusiastic crowd noise.

The show starts off with "Every Moment," the very first song off their very first album, *Out of the Shadow*, and the fans couldn't be happier. Next, with multi-colored flashing light bars behind him, Zach tells everyone, "It's the old shit!" and goes right into the second song off that debut album, "Nourishment Nation." Everyone sings "Don't worry, it won't take long!"

Rogue Wave has a new album called *Nightingale Floors* and "Siren's Song" is the first tune they play from it. The guy up front jumping up and down, with hands raised high up in the air signifies this was a good choice. And when the next new song was announced with "This is 'S(a)tan,'" a man somewhere in the back yelled out, "Hail, Satan!" But the part-poppy, part-mellow lullaby was anything but the devil's music. Zach finished the song out by shredding a little guitar close up in the face of everyone stage right, much to their emphatic approval.

Then the crowd goes nuts when the band goes into the familiar hit "Publish My Love." It was fitting that Zach "Mixed up the distance of the Miracle Mile," playing here smack dab in the middle of it. Does this mean that we now can publish his love as well?

But as happy as the fans are to have Rogue Wave here, it's the band who are the thankful ones. Zach sincerely thanks everyone for coming out to the show. "When we first starting playing L.A. years ago, we couldn't get ten people to show up."

"Figured It Out" comes next for Zach's sister who is in attendance. And after that "Bird on a Wire" beats out "Ghost" by round of applause. Zach thanks everyone for voting, admitting that he "Never put songs to a vote before" because "This isn't a democracy!" But the cheers get even louder as soon as the fans here the beginning of the next song, "Love's Lost Guarantee." Some girl not too far away screams so loud I may now be deaf in my left ear.

One of the catchier new tracks, "College," comes right before this writer's choice for song of the night, "Chicago X 12." Then the girl that busted my eardrum's life becomes complete when they finally played the song she had been yelling for all night: "Eyes." Luckily I recognized the song before she did and was able to cover my ears before she could send my right eardrum to a similar fate as the left. I didn't check, but I'm sure glass shattered somewhere.

And just when you thought the El Rey couldn't get any louder, fan favorite "Lake Michigan" comes up and every female in the place (and most males, too) all do their best imitation of the eardrum destroyer, screaming and jumping up and down. Everyone sings along, moving and dancing in unison and this continues into the closer "Harmonium."

Rogue Wave then gives fans a three-song encore comprised of "Cheaper Than Therapy," a super-cool cover of Screaming Trees' "Nearly Lost You" and, of course, "California." After all you can't have a band from California not play their song called "California" in the state of California.

But before that last song, Zach mentioned something about getting old and our favorite eardrum-shattering woman reassured him "You're still hot!" And screamed and screamed again and then screamed some more. And though Rogue Wave said their good-byes and left stage and the house lights were up, she stayed and kept screaming for more. She may still be there.

See, Zach? That's the kind of shit that happens when you stay away too long. Come back to Los Angeles again soon, Rogue Wave.

Venue: The El Rey

Website: roguewavemusic.com

Date: July 20, 2013

City: Los Angeles, CA



Dan Lead



Patrick Spurgeon



Zach Rogue



Masanori Christianson

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QUESTIONS WITH
HIROMI



COMING UP

Models To Keep An Eye On

Hannah Flattery

Photography by Andrew Gates
Make-up & hair by Kari Cottom

H

annah Flattery is back for her second feature in RUKUS magazine and it is obvious why we brought her back. This beautiful Irish girl was born in Dublin, Ireland. As a teenager she started modeling for different car shows and events like the British Touring-Car Championships and British Super-Bike. After doing this for a short while, she decided to try her hand at modeling and found it was a lot of fun dressing-up and playing for the camera. Hannah made the rounds as model in Ireland, but knew if she wanted more out of her career, she would have to move to the U.S.. She made her way to Los Angeles, California, the entertainment capitol of the world. Soon after moving to LA, she won the Beverly Hills title; Miss Swimsuit USA and was thrust into the industry, modeling consistently for various lingerie and bikini campaigns. Since this fateful move she has been featured in several national and international magazines, music videos, print campaigns and TV commercials. Hannah's star is on the rise and she's making the most of it.



COMING UP

Models To Keep An Eye On Cont'd





THE STATS

Birthday:
January 8

Zodiac Sign:
Capricorn

Measurements:
32B-24-34

Height:
5'8.5"

Weight:
114lb

Ethnicity:
Caucasian (Irish)

Hometown:
Kildare, Ireland

Turn Ons:

I love a guys toned arms, it makes me feel small which I like. If they also have tattoos it's a definite plus.

Turn Offs:

When guys in Los Angeles ask you to meet them somewhere for a drink or a date, if they can't even offer to pick me up then it's not going to work.

Ideal first date:

Dinner at a nice and classy restaurant.

Guilty Pleasure:

Definitely chocolate without a doubt. Chocolate makes everything better. [smile]

Pet Peeves:

Someone talking with their mouth full, I just don't get it.

Celebrity Pass:

Colin Farrell. He just happens to be Irish too, but I like him because he's got that rogue, bad boy thing going on and a sexy smirk.

See more of Hannah at
twitter.com/hannah_flattery

COMING UP

Models To Keep An Eye On Cont'd



Alexa Rae

Photography by Andrew Gates
Make-up and hair by Bioanca Robinson

Alexa Rae was raised in Vancouver, Washington. Her modeling career started after attending a modeling agency with a friend. She found interest in the agency/school and convinced her dad to let her attend as well. Alexa quickly fell in love with the whole modeling experience and found she was a natural. The camera absolutely loved her and she loved being in front of the camera, it was a perfect match. After graduating from the modeling school, she work a few runway shows, but wanted something bigger so she picked up and moved to California. Although, her modeling career is really just beginning, she has already been published in a few different magazines. Alexa has big dreams and an even bigger tenacious drive to make a name for herself in the industry. Modeling is her life and she strives to live large.

COMING UP

Models To Keep An Eye On Cont'd



THE STATS

Birthday:
April 16

Zodiac Sign:
Aries

Measurements:
30B-25-34

Height:
5'6"

Weight:
113lb

Ethnicity:
Irish and Caucasian.

Hometown:
Vancouver, WA

Turn Ons:

When guys kiss my neck, I am a sucker for that. Also, when guys grab my face when they kiss me.

Turn Offs:

People who smell bad. I don't like to be laying my head on a guy's shoulder and smell his armpits, it's disgusting.

Ideal first date:

Going over to the guys house and have him cook me a meal. I love when men can cook. Also someone who is willing to cook for me is big. I am not a superficial type of girl. I don't need fancy things to keep me happy.

Guilty Pleasure:

Watching the Food Network channel. I always think that maybe if I watch it enough, I will actually learn how to cook. [laugh]

Pet Peeves:

One of my biggest pet peeves is when I am hanging out with a guy and he is spending all his time on his phone. I don't like to be rude, but I love when guys give me their full attention.

Celebrity Pass:

My celebrity crush is Liam Hemsworth. He is absolutely gorgeous and I heard he's single.

See more of Alexa at
ModelMayhem.com/2508664

GAME ON

The Latest Games Reviewed

Master of Puppets

Written by Jesse Seifhan

Gaming has its roots in the basement. For dozens of years before video-based entertainment, millions of people waged epic wars by lamplight or toppled armies with a fistful of Cheetos in one hand and a 20-sided die in another. The feeling of imaginary victory was as powerful as the creativity built within a small network of friends and games like Dungeons and Dragons let people do something more than most games could. In the digital era, few games have the ability to recreate such glory, save for those LAN party staples such as Counter-Strike or Halo. The world of Borderlands is built around that cooperative experience and with their newest piece of Downloadable Content, Gearbox is bringing Dungeons and Dragons out of the basement and into Pandora, with one tormented character playing Dungeon Master.

The beauty of this setup is that it taps into the weirdest mind in the game, Tiny Tina, who is like the Cheshire Cat jacked up on Jolt Cola. She tackles many of the standard DM issues, like unbalancing the battles and providing crazy campaigns that provide little clarity. But her ADD-fueled behavior leads her to change her mind about the weather, the characters, and the enemies, so things pop in and out of the world with the flick of her wrist. You can almost see her grabbing the die-cast model off of the table and replacing it with something else while cackling to herself.

The variety is the key to this DLC, something Borderlands has been slammed over on not only both main games, but plenty of the downloadable add-ons as well. This feels similar to Far Cry 3's Blood Dragon campaign, something meaty enough to latch on to after the core gameplay is finished. Every new area has a whole host of different enemy types. The caves feature drunken dwarves, the forest are filled with angry treants and orcs, while the castle sections feature skeletons, knights, dragons, and more. These aren't just re-skinned versions of the myriad of bandits from the main campaign, but instead retooled and unique enemy types with their own behaviors, animations, and dirty tricks.

All of the vendors in the world that sell you ammo, weapons, and health have new dialogue, all done in faux-fantasy high-speak. Old favorites from the game help out on your epic quest, including the always-awesome Mr. Torgue, who provides laughs that sometime force you to put the controller down for a minute, which is fine because your friends will be laughing as well. Like the majority of Borderlands experiences, they only really shine when you're playing co-operatively. The bosses, both of the mini and final variety, are rough and rarely let up if you are playing solo. The huge sprawling landscapes and hundred-story towers only feel worth it if someone is right next to you slogging through the same bullet fodder. This DLC is just fine if you're flying solo, but gather up some buddies so everyone can enjoy the writing and take down some of the tougher enemies in the game.

The hidden bonus of this campaign is actually within the story, as characters that usually only feel special because of your heroics now get 3-10 hours of new story that wraps up with a bit of an emotional arc. If you don't care about these cartoon people by the end of your time playing Bunkers and Badasses (Tina's name for this game), then you haven't been paying attention. Gearbox has done right by those clamoring for more with the best DLC I've played in years and a great way to top off the first season's worth of extra content. Tiny Tina is one of the more beloved and, at the same time, controversial characters in the Borderlands universe. Giving her keys to the final piece of content was bold, but the brilliant writing and advanced level-design is an unbeatable combo.

Game Title: Borderlands 2 DLC: Tiny Tina's Assault on Dragon Keep

Producer: 2K Games

Platform: Xbox 360, PS3, PC

Website: borderlands2.com

★★★★☆

Ratings: Mature

Genre: First-Person Shooter

Release Date: June 25, 2013



TINY TINA'S
ASSAULT ON
DRAGON KEEP

GAME ON
The Game Review CONT'D



THE LAST OF US™

The Fittest Survive

Written by Josh Schilling

There are a lot of things that have to go right for a game to rise above average and achieve greatness. Game mechanics, graphic artistry, and dialogue are but a few of the important facets that lead to a successful game, but in my opinion the overall story is the most vital when it comes down to a quality experience. And while I feel that *The Last of Us* delivers superior levels in just about every area that a game can offer, the overall story is where I have to try and make my point. I'm not going to say that it is bad at all...quite the contrary, I think that the story is moving, thought-provoking, and, most importantly, memorable. I just want to raise the question of redundancy, and its place within the gaming genre as a whole.

This game revolves around a zombie apocalypse. Stop me if you ever heard that statement before. Sure the zombies, or "infected" as they are described (but they are zombies nonetheless), are different in that they are a product of an airborne fungus that destroys their minds, but this game adheres to the overdone model of killing those creatures before they eat you. The question I have is, can or should you look at every game as it stands on its own merit? Is it wrong that I couldn't help but compare this to the 2012's *The Walking Dead* (Telltale not Activision!) with the similar plots of protecting a non-familial younger girl through a zombie infested apocalypse and the moral-raising question of who's worse, the living dead or the living? I ask this only because I believe that it is impossible to look at any single game within a vacuum, just like you can't help but compare other forms of art and entertainment. I feel that the prevalence of zombie games along with the quality and similarity of *The Walking Dead* game lessens the shine of *The Last of Us* in my eyes. However, there is a mighty fine shine on this game, and the truly interesting fact is that even with the similarities described above, and the seemingly overdone zombie genre as a whole, this game stands out as one of the most memorable that I have ever played.

This game just oozes quality from just about every aspect. One small example is that in the game you are able to unlock concept art that is virtually indistinguishable from what you actually see in the gameplay. The voice acting is award-worthy and the story will stay with you long after you've finished it. If *Bioshock: Infinite* was a punch to the head, the story of *The Last of Us* is a punch to the soul. There are no moral choices here...no good ending or evil ending...you only play a part in the overall tale, and you feel the emotions of the story because, in the overall scheme of things, there are no choices. You do not lead the progress of the story, you are along for the ride, and this lets the powerful narrative achieve an effectiveness that you can't get when the player gets to be involved in the decision making. This, and the overall presentation of this game, helps it reach the level of a work of art, and the real beauty is that it can be appreciated in so many different ways. Even the multi-player, which might just be included as a throw-in aspect on some games of this genre, fits in nicely within the frame of this title.

This is a must play experience that should end up being the crowning achievement of the developer Naughty Dog and the PS3 as a whole. It is a finely polished piece with an attention to detail that is rare to find in the gaming world. If you haven't yet played this game, do yourself a favor and experience a zombie apocalypse as it should be portrayed.

Game Title: The Last of Us
Producer: Sony Computer Entertainment
Platform: PS3
Website: thelastofus.com

★★★★★
Ratings: Mature
Genre: Action-Adventure
Release Date: June 14, 2013



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