

Prince of Persia is a work of art

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Video game company Ubisoft has given gamers incredible games such as the *Ghost Recon* series and *Assassin's Creed*. Ubisoft's latest release has resurrected an old franchise that is bound to keep gamers entertained. The brand new *Prince of Persia (POP)* separates itself from its preceding titles with a brand new character and a unique approach to the game. Fans of the old *Prince of Persia* series will not be disappointed in this reincarnation of a beloved franchise.

The story begins with the main character, who is simply called the Prince, trying to look for his donkey in the middle of a sandstorm. He falls into a crevice and meets a girl named Elika. Elika is a princess of an ancient kingdom that keeps the God of Darkness, Ahriman, in captivity so that he will not cause havoc and destruction on the world. After Elika's father releases Ahriman, the Prince and Elika have to restore the world by traveling to certain points called the Fertile Grounds and heal the land by using Elika's magic powers.

One of the two big differences in this game that separates it from its predecessors is the introduction of the Prince's new ally. Elika becomes a very important factor in the game since her magic powers help the Prince in a big way. If there is a large gap between two ledges that is too wide for the Prince to jump across, Elika can use her powers to give the Prince a boost so that he jumps farther. The game also removes the idea of the Prince dying, which is mysterious because removing the element of death in the game serves no purpose in the game. Instead, the game uses Elika to save the Prince from a deadly accident. For example, if the Prince is about to be thrown off a ledge by the enemy, Elika saves him and puts him back into the fight. Elika's powers feed off orbs of light that the Prince must collect throughout the game in order to unlock other stages in the game. The addition of Elika adds more camaraderie between the two main characters. Her addition to the game is gladly accepted, but it makes the player feel as though the Prince is powerless against any enemy unless Elika is participating in the fight.

The hallmark of the *POP* series has always been the numerous acrobatic moves that the Prince does in order to reach a certain point. Veterans of the previous *POP* games know of the numerous buttons that have to be pushed in order for the Prince to run up a wall or jumping from ledge to ledge. This game tries to make the controls easier by using only two buttons during the Prince's tightrope actions. While the concept sounds like it could make the game much easier, it actually takes a while to get used to the controls and it could lead to players continually repeating certain parts of the game in order to proceed further into the story.

The enemies that are encountered in the game are very unique from other games because of the fact that every battle consists only of one enemy. The Prince and Elika have to battle Ahriman's four minions numerous times in order to heal each area of the land. It becomes somewhat monotonous except for the fact that all the bosses get harder every time that they are encountered. Other than the fact that the game's adversaries increase in difficulty, the enemies are very boring. Their attacks are easily predictable and there isn't much thinking involved on how to attack the enemy.

The combat in the game has also been simplified in terms of the combinations of attacks that can be done. Elika's magic comes in handy during this time. The transitions between Elika and the Prince during fight sequences make the battle seem intense. The Prince can also make his own combinations without the help of Elika's magic, but his combinations are not as complex as when the two characters fight together. The complex combinations are hard to master so players might find the combat hard at first. The vast amount of combinations open up very different attacks that look great when executed, but this reviewer only used a few combinations because they were found to inflict more damage on the enemy than other combinations.

The most important change in the game has to be the look of the game. Unlike other games that use smooth graphics and life-like cutscenes, *POP* has the look of a painting. It is as if the game's developers told professional painters to paint the landscape and the characters and their paintings were put directly in the game. On a normal television, the game looks like a cartoon but on a high definition television, the game is not only a fighting game, it becomes a game that tempts the player to stop moving and just admire the artwork that is put in the game. This type of approach to a game isn't new, but this game certainly elevates the idea of artwork instead of graphics as a background to a whole new level.

Overall, the game is great. The combat and presentation of the game is unique. There is hardly a time when the controller is put down to watch a cutscene. The game is always in constant motion and that makes the game very enjoyable. All of its elements combine to make a great game and it has the potential to become one of the most popular games of the year.

