

LARA

THE OFFICIAL LARA CROFT MAGAZINE

DESIGNED FOR LIFE

The inside story of Tomb
Raider's sexy heroine!

TOMB RAIDER EXPOSED!

Lara's secret report • Exclusive pictures •
The real lives of the Tomb Raider team!

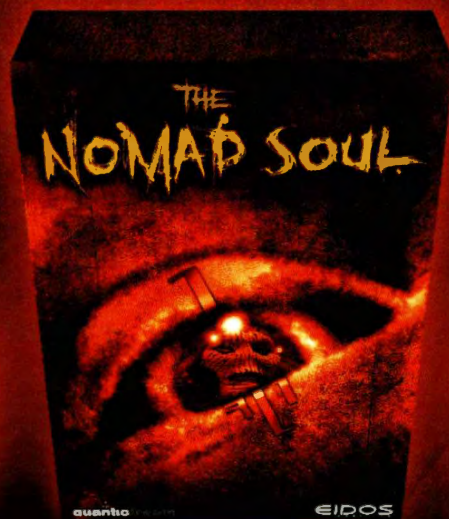
THE LAST REVELATION

Latest news • Win a life-size Lara • How
to get involved in the next Tomb Raider
game • Meet the people who live for Lara!



£5

Have I
been with
somewhere
before?



quanticdream

Featuring an original soundtrack by
David Bowie and Reeves Gabrels

PC
CD

The Nomad Soul™. Developed by Quantic Dream. © and Published by Eidos Interactive Limited 1999. All Rights Reserved.



THE
NOMAD SOUL



It's soul play, not role play

www.thenomad soul.com

EIDOS
INTERACTIVE

www.eidos.com

07 Welcome

It's Lara's official magazine, and the lady herself would like to usher you into its jam-packed pages.



08 What's new for Lara?

The very latest news on *The Last Revelation*, make sure you get the low-down before anyone else.

14 Core tour

Join us in a behind-the-scenes look around the offices of Core Design, as we meet the people who bring the world *Tomb Raider*. Stops on this tour include...

18 Jeremy Heath-Smith

We quiz Core's Managing Director on the subject of all things Croftian.

22 The future

Where will the company that created *Tomb Raider* go next? Will Lara live?

24 Lara pin-ups #1

Just for you, the first of our full-page, full-colour Lara Croft renders!

28 WIN a date with Lara!

That's right, it's your chance to accompany a life-size Lara Croft model to your choice of venue.

32 Lara's year

We've managed to capture a secret report from one of the world's most mysterious organisations. Follow Lara for a year.

40 Marc Klinnert

Model-maker supreme, the man who created the life-size Lara models shows us his latest and greatest.

44 In the media

Lara's been involved in a host of other activities since the world found out what a fabulous character she is. Discover what, where, how and why right here!

Keeping track of the world's greatest videogame heroine can be a tough job. We've tracked her from adventure to adventure and met her friends (and enemies), so that over the next 130 pages you can experience her amazing life. Have fun!

52 Taken to Bits

Lara's not the only woman in videogaming. We ask the presenters of Channel 4's *Bits* what they think of the Tomb Raider.

54 Meet the fans

So you thought that you were into Lara in a big way? Well meet a bunch of fans who *really* know how to express their feelings. Who knows, maybe you're in here?

60 Lara pin-ups #2

More? Yes, more full-colour, full-page images straight from the artists at Core Design. There couldn't be? There are!

64 Life as Lara

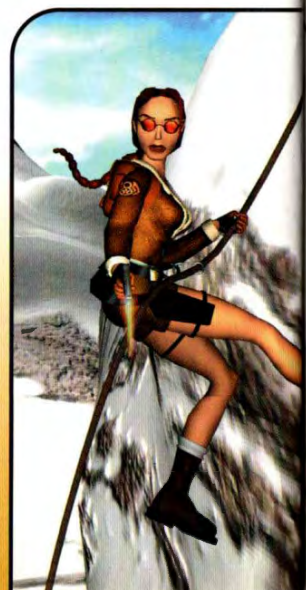
Can you remember how many real-life, super-gorgeous babes have played Lara's lookalike? Well, we'll remind you of them right here, right now!

73 Quiz kid!

Could you - or your partner - actually be LaraCroft? How much like our heroine are you? It's time to find out...

76 On-site in Egypt

Amazing in-game shots. Your chance to see *The Last Revelation* in all its glory. Experience Egypt as Lara will in her most exciting adventure to date, but without having to leave your own home!



Contents

80 Douglas Coupland

The voice of a generation (X), Douglas takes time out to tell us about his passion for the life of Lara Croft.

82 I want your job

One day you could be working on a world-famous, cutting-edge computer game. We've asked the guys at Core for advice on how to get the best job in the world.

88 Luis Cunha interview

We've tracked down the man behind *The Croft Times* Web site. And has he got some fascinating stories to tell...

90 World Wide Croft

Lost in the Web? We've got the sites where you'll find the best information about Lara.

92 Lara pin-ups #3

You'd better skip these pages of intense Lara pix, there's nothing here for you! They're ours, all ours we say!

96 stuff!

Comics, models, toys, books... more Lara-related gear than you can shake a gun at.

100 Egyptian death!

If you're going to survive *The Last Revelation*, you're going to need some inside information on the locale. Here it is.

108 Doctor Evil

We've found a man who spends everyday trying to kill Lara Croft. His name is Phil Chapman. We ask him, "Why, Phil?"

114 A warning

Tomb raiding can take over your life if you're not careful. We look at one England goalkeeper and tell his tale.

116 Raiding gear

Lara's coolest ever clothing range. Go on, wear your heart on your sleeve.

120 WIN - Lara portraits!

Two excessively lucky readers are soon going to own an exclusive piece of *Tomb Raider* artwork. Are you one of them?

122 Lara's stars

What do the mysteries of astrology hold for our lass? Read her chart here.

124 Future perfect

We talk to Core's top man about whether *The Last Revelation* really means *The Last Ever Lara Adventure*.

128 The final word

Heed Lara's advice before you start packing for your next big adventure.

130 FREE STUFF!

Turn to this page for a voucher entitling you to free *Tomb Raider* items and details about the newest Lara Croft catalogue.



Editorial
Future Publishing,
30 Monmouth St, Bath,
Somerset BA1 2BW
Telephone: 01225 442244
Fax: 01225 732291

Team Lara
Editor: Emma Parkinson
Art editors: Frank Bartucca,
Elly Grandison, Traci Rochester
Production editor: Tim Smith
Photography: Pete Canning,
Jude Edginton, Rob Scott,
Rex Features
Contributors: Maff Evans,
Mark Green, Andy Johnson,
Rich Pelley, Matt Pierce,
Tim Smith
Assistant publisher:
Nick Stevens
Group publisher: Rob Price
Managing director:
Jane Ingham
Senior production coordinator:
Charlotte Brock
Group production director:
Judith Green
Overseas licensing:
Chris Power
Overseas tel: +44 1225 442244
Group advertising manager:
Simon Moss
Business development
(London): Paul Lanzarotti
Business dev tel:
0171 317 2600
Marketing manager:
Gill Stevenson

**Special thanks to Susie
Hamilton and Brian Hook**

Printed in the UK by: Cradley
© Future Publishing Ltd 1999

All contributions submitted to Future Publishing are accepted on the basis of a non-exclusive worldwide licence to publish or license others to do so, unless otherwise agreed in advance and in writing. Future Publishing and *The Official Lara Croft Magazine* recognises all copyrights and trademarks. Where possible, we acknowledge the copyright holder. Please contact us if we haven't credited your copyright and we'll correct any oversight. "Lara Croft" and "Tomb Raider" are Trademarks of Core Design and Eidos Interactive. PlayStation is a Trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.



Welcome

Hi and a huge welcome to my magazine,

Yes, I still can't believe it but it's a magazine all about me, which is something I never imagined possible in 1996 when my first game was released.

Of course the team at Core Design realised that my adventures were going to be big – otherwise they wouldn't have put all that time and effort into creating one of the most original videogames ever seen. You can hear all this directly from Core's Managing Director Jeremy Heath-Smith, and some of the other creative wonders at Core in the exclusive interviews in this mag.

There are also loads of chances to win *Tomb Raider* gear – from life-sized models of me, to clothes and even original artwork.

And if that wasn't enough, there's also brand new info on *The Last Revelation*, my latest jaunt, so you can get ahead of the game.

You know I'm a busy girl, so I don't have time to go into everything else you'll find (there's tons and tons of stuff), you're going to have to explore the pages yourself. But it's safe to say that because Core Design has looked over everything in here, you can be sure that this Official magazine is all upfront, hardcore, and a true Lara Croft original!

Have fun and, once you've managed to get through everything, I'll see you at the end.

Lots of love

Lara Croft

Lara Croft



The Last Revelation is the most exciting *Tomb Raider* since the original.

What's new for Lara?

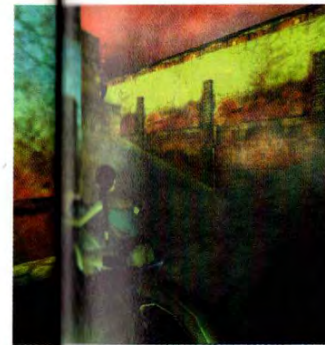
Since the release of the groundbreaking original, each *Tomb Raider* adventure has improved on the last – and *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation* looks set to be no exception to what has been the most consistent series of games ever.

(Above) Dynamic coloured lighting is just one of the improvements made to the *Tomb Raider* engine. It's used extensively in *The Last Revelation* to add atmosphere and realism.

The fourth game in the series: *The Last Revelation* amply demonstrates how improvements in both technology and the creative process have allowed the exploits of videogames' most famous icon to evolve beyond all previously assumed boundaries. Serious work on the game began halfway through the development of *Tomb Raider III*, when radical programming decisions immediately saw 80% of the game engine ripped out. As project manager Adrian Smith explains, "Obviously, we've kept the fundamentals – the bits that worked best – but what we've done should let us push *Tomb Raider* in a different direction."

That new direction is, ironically, something of a return to the philosophy of the original *Tomb Raider* game. Immediately obvious similarities include the setting – like the first game, all of *The Last Revelation's* events take place in Egypt. But most notably, much of the game's structure shies away from the more sprawling, combat-heavy levels that defined the second and third of the series.

In fact, the emphasis is on solving ingenious puzzles – brainteasers that go far beyond the traditional collect-key-to-open-door remit. Lara's acrobatic abilities are still integral to getting to many hard-to-reach places, but the more compact nature of the levels means that rather than traversing vast



The style of *The Last Revelation* is more akin to that of the original *Tomb Raider*, albeit with increasingly sophisticated visuals and puzzle-solving. Intending to appeal to fans and newcomers alike, Core Design has returned the emphasis to intelligent puzzle-solving.

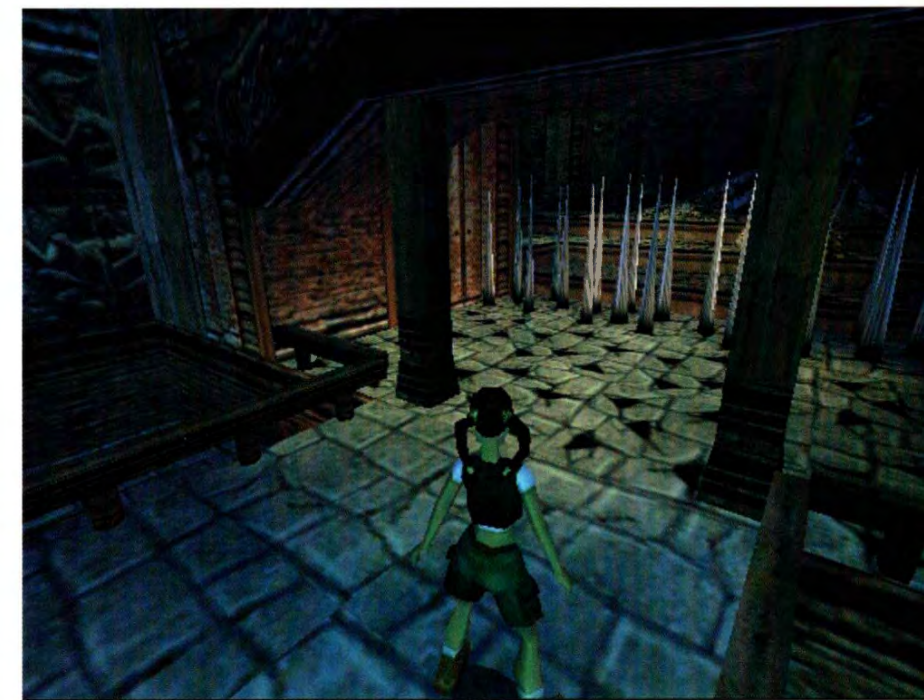
areas in order to find your goal, a multitude of tasks await you in every new room. From solving hieroglyphic puzzles to piecing together fragments of a map and acting on their resulting clues, Lara's moved away from simple block-pushing, and into an adventure that demands a more cerebral approach to problems. The use of binoculars, in particular, to read distant inscriptions, is inspired.

Essentially, Lara's grown up. No wonder Adrian Smith says, "For us, *The Last Revelation* is the most exciting *Tomb Raider* since the original: to all intents and purposes, it's a new game that breaks free of the formula."

In this, and many other ways, developer Core Design has wiped the slate clean. We're treated, for instance, to more of Lara's background. Suddenly, Lara's pre-*Tomb Raider* childhood is revealed to us; and with it, the truth behind her relationships with fellow explorer Werner Von Croy and the charming Jean Yves. Indeed, the revelation that Von Croy used to be Lara's mentor is used to inject extra interest into the game's Cambodia-based opening training level.

In the training level we're introduced to the 16-year-old Lara, who is learning her trade while on a doomed expedition with Von Croy. How she discovered her backpack, and the truth behind Von Croy's grudge against her, are only two of the background secrets revealed during a fast-paced, *Indiana Jones*-style trip through an underground sanctum that's typically littered with traps and pitfalls. These screens also serve to introduce Lara's fantastic new moves, which include the ability to kick down doors, climb and swing on ropes, and carefully inch around the corners of treacherous rocky ledges.

Progress appears in other areas, too. Out goes the circular-switching inventory of past *Raiders*; in comes a far more intuitive and powerful system to both select and combine the objects in your backpack. Similarly, combat has received an overhaul, and the new option of firing certain telescopic weapons from a first-person viewpoint, not only ups the skill quotient, but also allows for



puzzles that rely on sharp-shooting skills.

Skeletons, for instance, are seemingly indestructible foes that brush your firepower away with malevolent chuckles. Choose first-person mode, however, and a single headshot will see the hapless undead lose their sense of direction and teeter over the edge of the nearest precipice.

Even more useful to new and old *Tomb Raiders* alike, however, is the switchable



The training level sees a younger Lara learning the tricks of her trade courtesy of her mentor and friend, Werner Von Croy.

The truth of Von Croy's grudge against her is just one secret revealed.

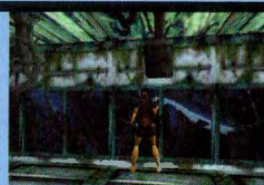
THE HISTORY OF TOMB RAIDER



Looking at them now, the original game's graphics seem slightly crude.



Combat with ferocious wildlife was rife in Lara's first adventure.



Lara donned alternative outfits for certain levels of *Tomb Raider II*.



Improvements in graphics technology enabled parts of Venice to be modelled.



The difficulty was raised for *Tomb Raider III* – providing a huge challenge.



Bigger, Better, More seemed to be the order of the day for *Tomb Raider III*.



Useable vehicles have become far more complex in *The Last Revelation*.



A return to Egypt in *The Last Revelation* sees Lara travel full circle.

target mechanism that finally enables you to choose between multiple enemies during combat. It sounds simple, but many's the time that progress in the previous games was hampered by the original method's insistence on choosing the nearest target for you.

Despite the myriad improvements, though, Core Design is loathe to change our beloved heroine and her adventures too much. As Adrian Smith says, "Developing *The Last Revelation* has been something of a balancing act – giving fans of the previous games something different and exciting, while also making the game beginner friendly.

"People have been asking for something new, and we think we've got the balance right. It's still *Tomb Raider*, the mechanics haven't changed, but we've added loads of new features. After all, how different could we make it? We've always maintained that if we can produce something different, something

we're all happy with, we'll carry on."

As exciting as the game is, *The Last Revelation* is sure to cause just as much of a stir in terms of Lara's more 'well-rounded' aspects. A far more character-led piece, it's natural that Lara's personality has also been refined to a greater degree – something that the increased use of FMV cut-scenes has been instrumental in achieving. Rather than stand-alone cinematics shown at the beginning and end of levels, a plethora of seamlessly integrated clips punctuate the action. Loading times have been kept to a minimum, too, enabling the FMV and in-game engine scenes to motor the narrative along effortlessly, without causing stop-start sequences that might hamper the pace of the game.

The scenes are also used far more as a way of adding detail to Lara's background which, at the time of the first game, was particularly sketchy. There's less emphasis, for instance, on slaying wildlife. Heavy use of scripting also enables Lara's relationships with the other characters to come to the fore.

For example, in the face of Von Croy's arrogant disregard for history in the pursuit of wealth and glory, a moral issue – whether or not to meddle with a sacred amulet – establishes Lara's common sense and her morality during the training level.

"We've never had a problem with Lara's identity," says Adrian. "Her sole motivation is to find lost artefacts. It's not financial; she wouldn't work for a big corporation. We wanted to say, 'Lara's an all-round good girl. Yeah, she takes out the odd golden eagle or leopard, but hey – that's life.' Essentially, she's an adventurer. That's what we revisit at the beginning of *The Last Revelation*..."

Integral to establishing a more realistic feel to both the characters and the adventure as a



(Above) The hindrance of wild animals still features in *The Last Revelation*, but the game is far less combat-heavy overall.

(Above right) Traps litter the levels.

(Right) A new manual targeting feature enables you to select your favoured enemy, rather than being forced to shoot at the nearest one. A first-person mode will also feature.

For the start of the Lara story, you have to travel way back to 1995. In a meeting that was soon to become legendary, members of Derby-based game developer Core Design were discussing the idea of a third-person action adventure that was strong on both combat and puzzle solving.

Once the project was approved, and initial design work began on the original *Tomb Raider*, it was artist Toby Gard's role to come up with a central character. The requirements were obvious: athletic enough to explore the 3D locations, yet unique enough to stand out from the glut of

stereotypically beefy male heroes that were blasting their way through the majority of existing games.

The answer, of course, was Lara Croft; a fit, attractive heroine whose strength of character and down-to-earth sensibilities instantly appealed to both sexes. Placing Lara into the cutting-edge tomb-inspired 3D world that had already been designed, Core hit upon a winning formula. A year later, *Tomb Raider* was wowing journalists and the public alike, and as Lara's subsequent adventures were released, the games' critical and commercial success snowballed.

A succession of real-life lookalike models ensured international newspaper, magazine and TV coverage, too – helping to make Lara one of the faces of the millennium.

Feisty, intelligent, acrobatic, and sexy, the irrepressible pull of Lara and her *Tomb Raider* adventures have changed the way videogames are played and regarded all over the world.

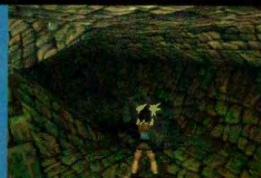
The game is bound to cause a stir in terms of Lara's rather more rounded aspects.



LARA'S CHANGE OF STYLE



With a limited number of moves, Lara's first outing was only the beginning...



Effective, but hardly hyper-realistic, Lara's form began life as a collection of pixels.



Swimming was one of the first things Lara learned. No underwater combat, mind.



A new wardrobe in *Tomb Raider II* complemented Lara's sleeker look.



New weapons meant more firepower in *TR III*. Lara was even stronger than before.



The use of more polygons added ears to our heroine. Finally, she was complete!



Animated hair, and a wet-look Lara continue to improve her realism in *TLR*.



Going back in time, Lara's girl-scout look adds flesh to her history.



The evolution that's seen Lara grow from concept to cultural icon is one that's been mirrored in each of her on-screen

adventures. From the artist's original plan ("agile as a cat, tough as nails, sexy as hell..."), the original *Tomb Raider* introduced a generously endowed, meticulously modelled young lady who, unusually for the time, didn't rely on motion capture

techniques for her fluid animation and movement.

With *Tomb Raider II*, Lara's range of moves was extended. She'd learned to climb hand-over-hand, as well as fight underwater. Better technology saw a even more polygons forming a more well-realised

whole is the quality of the visuals. The overall look of *The Last Revelation* is without doubt, a vast improvement over its predecessors. Textural detail has been upped dramatically, resulting in a whole host of new visual effects designed to show Lara and her surroundings off in their best light(s). True 3D architecture and organic-looking objects are introduced, and it's amazing the difference that a higher proportion of decorative objects can make.

Dynamic spotlights give the tombs and passageways an eerie, unearthly glow, so Lara's immediate surroundings have an authentic, perpetual flicker. The camera system, too, has been radically redesigned, in the face of criticisms that it wasn't always the most intuitive or helpful technique in the world. Instead, the viewpoint switches between the best views available, ensuring that the clipping problems that saw your view of Lara obstructed by walls or tight corridors, are a thing of the past. One special technique that's made it into the finished game involves the use of transparent textures to enable you to see through a partially invisible Lara when



Texture improvements give a real feeling of brooding danger to Lara's surroundings in *TLR*.

the camera needs to be as close as possible. Peering down seemingly bottomless chasms, and peering around potentially trap-filled corners, is therefore rendered eminently possible. Many life-losing mistakes that cropped up in the earlier games have been almost instantly done away with, thanks to this simple system.

More efficient movement around the levels of *The Last Revelation* is also implemented. This is because the artificial intelligence (AI) of your enemies has been yanked right up. It's no longer a case of simply firing, before hiding behind scenery; the improved intelligence of your foes now sees them pursuing Lara to the death. Able to mimic much of Lara's acrobatic range, jumping up to high ledges, crossing wide pits and even swimming through water won't affect the tenacity of your sworn enemies. Human foes will seek out new weapons and ammo if they feel under-equipped for combat, and many of the demons who inhabit the tortuous Egyptian lairs will shrug off your firepower altogether. So alternative methods need to be used.

The scenery is full of clues, but Lara will still need to search carefully in order to discover the secrets that will help her through certain areas of the game.

For the first time in a *Tomb Raider* game, interactive scenery is featured, too, enabling much of it not only to be shot, but also destroyed. Naturally, the collapsing walls and hidden rooms will be packed full of goodies, although the destruction of other walls will be imperative simply to achieve an exit from sealed rooms.

Vehicles play a larger part in *The Last Revelation*, too, proving that while Lara's gone back to her roots of tomb exploration, she's just as out-going as ever before. A jeep and a motorcycle are the additions, and both

Lara, as well as an expansion of her wardrobe with alternative outfits for different scenarios; add to this a dynamically swinging ponytail and you have progress indeed.

The third *Tomb Raider* game brought more improvements to Lara's repertoire. The crawl,

dash and monkey-swing were introduced, and she was finally blessed with ears.

Better textures resulted in more game-enhancing detail, too – a trend that's continued into *The Last Revelation*. The fourth in the series is set to feature double the number of

moves of previous outings, as well as plenty of incidental animations, such as a post-dip Lara dripping water for some time. She is now fully skinned and has a dynamically modelled bum, as well as, excitingly, a girl-scout-style getup for the 16-year old Lara's training missions.

provide a welcome diversion from all the foot-slogging. In fact, constant travel – and the relentless march of time – are major themes of *The Last Revelation*, which begins in 1984, and manages to fill in the gaps in one vast masterpiece of storytelling.

From jumping aboard a moving train and fighting along its length, to watching the game's locations subtly evolve in terms of visual impact and importance, *The Last Revelation* is just that: a surprising journey

through events both familiar and unexpected that sheds more light on everyone's favourite videogame character than ever before. With *The Last Revelation*, Core Design has achieved what many thought impossible; it has made Lara even more believable, as well as making her fantastic adventures even more unbelievable. An incredible achievement.

The final word, though, must go to Adrian Smith, and his thoughts on what *The Last Revelation* will offer, "We wanted to bring new gamers to *Tomb Raider*. There's been growth from one to two to three... but perhaps not the growth you would expect. *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation* is, in essence, an amalgamation of one, two and three into a new game that contains the best bits of all of them. You could say it's the end of the beginning. It points to where Lara could go in the future..."

The Last Revelation is a journey through familiar and unexpected events.

LARA'S PROGRESS

1996

Sept: *Tomb Raider* shown to journo's at the European Computer Trade Show.
Oct: *TR* released on Sega Saturn.
Nov: *TR* released on PSX and PC. Hits the charts at the Number-1 spot.

1997

Mar: Witchblade comics deal signed with Top Cow.
Apr: Lara makes the cover of *Sunday Telegraph* mag, joins U2 on tour and gets David James into trouble.
May: Lara is the new face

on the cover of *The Face*.
Aug: Rhona Mitra lands the job of Lara lookalike. MTV proposes Lara as a new virtual host.
Sept: Eidos/Core scoop five awards at ECTS. *Big Issue* features Lara.
Nov: *TR* wins INdIn game of the year and Core wins developer of the year. Lara takes the cover of *Melody Maker* and features in *Newsweek*, *The Telegraph* and *The Mirror*. *TRII* released on PSX and PC. Debuts in the charts at Number 1.

1998

Jan: The *Tomb Raider* film is officially announced.
Mar: *TR: Unfinished Business* and *TR Platinum* go directly to Number 1 in their respective charts.
May: Nell McAndrew is the new Lara Croft model.
Apr: Official UK PlayStation mag votes Lara 'Best game character'.
Sept: *Lara's Book* released.
Nov: *TRIII* released – it hits the charts at Number 1. *Tomb Raider* and Lara clothes go on sale in M&S. *TR* and *TRII* awarded

Millennium Product status. Lara named as a UK ambassador for Modern Scientific Excellence. 'Lara C' merchandise launched.

1999

Apr: Lara becomes the new face of Lucozade.
May: Lara Weller is appointed the new Lara lookalike. Lara C debuts on the Sci Fi channel. *TRII Platinum* released: enters the chart at Number 1.
June: *TRII: Golden Mask* is released on PC and enters the charts at Number 3.

Eidos sponsors Man City FC and Lara W makes appearances at the ground.
July: The world's first Lara Croft festival takes place in Amsterdam.

Sept: Design Council confirms Lara's presence in the Millennium Dome.
November: *TR: The Last Revelation* released. It's sure to take the coveted top spot by storm.

The future

2000: Lara set to make her cinematic debut in *Tomb Raider: The Movie*.



The Core tour

Imagine a tour around MGM, about the time of its first major hit. Now come forward 50 years for your chance to look around Core where, once again, history is being made...

Step into the quiet reception area of Core Design's Derby headquarters and you immediately feel that something's not right. You get the feeling that you're being watched. That despite the delicate wallpaper and arty prints, you're not safe.

You realise that someone's pointing a gun at you. She's smiling, but she's still pointing a gun at you. "No!" you think, "Don't point the gun at me! Face the wall! Point the gun at the guy down the corridor fixing the photocopier! I don't want to be on this side of the action. I've seen your aim." But it's too late: you're fixed in the sights of Lara Croft.

"Good, isn't she?" chirps a cheerful female voice. Blonde hair and a big smile suddenly block the line of sight between you and the barrel of Lara's 9mm pistol. "We had her put together by the model-maker Marc Klinnert in Germany. Sometimes I think she's even better than the real thing. She's awkward to shift from place to



Yes, the secret of the Croft legend can be told. This small, Victorian pile is the home of Lara's real parents. You wouldn't believe it to look at it, but the packed car park of this Derby building heard the very first cries, and saw the first shots loosed from the infant fists of Lara. Welcome to Core Design.

place, though, and she weighs a ton, so we just leave her here in reception. Tea?"

Saved. It's Susie Hamilton, public relations manager for Core Design, and Lara's right-hand woman. She's in between us and the girl with the gun, and she's talking about getting myself and the photographer a cup of tea. The lightweight gaming flashback's over.

Egyptian philosophy

We've travelled north to get a feel for Core, the company and (don't forget) the people, who created the legend that is the *Tomb Raider* series. But right now, following our life-sized encounter with the world's first digital sex symbol, tea sounds like a fantastic idea.

Nothing like the Henshingly Croft pile of fable, Core's Victorian-built headquarters on the outskirts of Derby is home to around 72 staff. Giant promotional cutouts battle for floor space with crates of Lucozade, and exhausted-looking programmers autopilot their way from room to room, heading around this obstacle course as if on rails.

"People are doing 14-plus hour days at the moment," Susie explains. "We're only a couple of weeks away from getting *The Last Revelation* finished, and everyone's tired. It always gets traumatic close to deadlines, but there's a real sense of team spirit – it's a bit like a second family. Only my family don't swear at me so much!"

Indeed it's clear that the offices of Core are unlike those of many other developers you'll see. There are no *Dilbert*-esque cubicles, with staff squashed in like battery chickens. Instead, there are open-plan rooms and jumbled desks. Pictures and maps of Egypt line the walls. Does this relaxed arrangement extend to the whole of Core Design's philosophy? How does Susie – as someone who's been with Core for years – feel that it's different to other software companies?

"Well I suppose it's unusual, because the working environment is really creative and very relaxed – it's quite a unique set up, really – not corporate at all. It follows that the teams are allowed to be really creative, too, and come up with their own ideas – if somebody has a good idea for a game they're allowed to explore it. If the initial idea is good enough, that person gets to take it forward with a full team, something that I gather doesn't happen in many other places. From



Tomb Raiding ahoy! Images like this will rate up there with some of the most memorable moments from the movies when the rest of the media finally catches on.

"The new year looks very bright for Lara."



a management point of view Core's quite odd, too. We're a very small management team, but we've been working together for years and we all help each other out. It's often fun because you end up doing a bit of everything.

"Core's always had a very 'open-doors' policy towards the press, too, and we're happy to discuss our plans for the future with journalists who take a real interest," says Susie. "I don't think there are many other companies who have such a relaxed attitude. Erm... shall we leave him to it?" she adds, indicating our photographer, who – no longer afeared of the life-size Lara – is perched on an upturned wastepaper bin, sighting down a loaded weapon and muttering about the Regency-stripe wallpaper adorning the lobby.

Members of Core staff thread around this obstruction, as if a man with lights, umbrellas, cameras, flight cases and a determined look are just everyday life in this part of Derby. And indeed, since Ms Croft crashed on to our screens in 1996, the good people of Core have had to cope with a deal of media interest.

Energy drinkers

Up the long staircase to the upper floor of Core, away from the programmers, level designers and musicians, and out of earshot of what sounds like a bungled armed robbery in progress in the testers' room, is Susie Hamilton's office. "Excuse the mess," she says, picking over yet more Lucozade, to reach her desk, strewn with the detritus of someone who hasn't seen enough of their own home lately.

The company was founded by Jeremy Heath-Smith back in 1988. At 27, he had already been at the sharp end of games sales with Activision, Leisuresoft and Gremlin, and with £16,000 in start-up capital and eight staff he'd known at Gremlin, he founded Core.

It wasn't long before the team was turning out quality console products, and the company's first game *Rick Dangerous*, leapt to the top of the UK sales charts. This good omen was followed by games like *Corporation* – the original console first-person shooter – *Chuck Rock*, *Thunderhawk*, *Jaguar XJ220*, *Heimdall*, *Bubba 'n' Stix*, *Battlecorps*, *Darkmere*, *Wonderdog* and *Fighting Force*. Success led Jeremy to reconsider the future of the company and to contemplate life, not just as a developer, but as a publisher of games.

"We quickly discovered that publishing turned Core into a cash-gobbling enterprise," he said in a recent article. "We had to risk millions with every game. The stakes were suddenly very high."

Playing this kind of game proved not to be Core's style, so when an offer of a buyout came from UK-based distributor, CentreGold, in 1994, it wasn't hard to make the decision to move away from publishing. "Selling the company was the right thing to do – and it enabled me to sleep at night again," concludes Jeremy.

Subsequently, Core found itself the property of publishing behemoth, Eidos, who bought the Centregold Group of companies in 1996. Eidos, best known for its cutting-edge work in video compression techniques had entered the videogames market a year earlier with the purchase of UK games stalwarts Domark – a respected games name that had brought us *Hard Drivin'*, *Klaxx*, *Star Wars*, a host of Bond-film tie-ins and *Championship Manager 2*.

With Centregold's distribution division, Centresoft, sold to a management buy-out, Eidos was free to concentrate on what has made it one of the top-earners in the games industry: development and publishing. While Core and Tomb Raider are its top-line assets,

Troy Horton

Producer of *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation*



So how long have you been working for Core, and what games have you worked on?

I've been at Core for just over eight years and have worked on all the *Tomb Raider* games, as well as over 20 other titles. These include *Thunderhawk 1 and 2*, *Shellshock*, *Chuck Rock 2*, *BC Racers*, *Blam Machinehead* and many others.

What do you most enjoy about working at Core?

The best thing is the atmosphere. Even when we are at our busiest it is still relaxed.

And could you tell us about the changes implemented within *The Last Revelation*?

Most people think that whenever we do another *TR* game that most of the changes are cosmetic. This is not the case, though, and in order to make it look better many changes have to be made at a lower level, which to us makes it feel like a total rewrite. The best parts about *TLR* are the new puzzles and inventory system. These gives us great depth, which is what we wanted to achieve when we said we'd go back to the roots of *Tomb Raider*.

And how has the team coped with creating a new Lara adventure in such a short time?

We are always confident and have a great team – each with their own speciality – so we can cope. We've done well this time around, considering the extra work we needed to do. We have basically written a whole new game in less than a year.

Do you know where you'll be working next? Is *The Last Revelation* the last we'll see of Lara?

I am working on some other projects, but can't say anything yet and haven't really had time to concentrate on them since we started going final on *TLR*. As far as the future for Lara, who knows?

So what's the best thing about being the man who runs the life of the world's fave game gal?

Definitely working on a game that so many people enjoy. It's my motivation.

And the worst?

Dark circles around the eyes at the end of a project: they make you look like you've been punched!

a number of hugely successful developers have also benefited from its wide reach. Names like: Crystal Dynamics (*Gex* and *Soul Reaver*), Ion Storm (*Daikatana*) and Pyro Studios (*Commandos*), as well as ensuring the *Champ' Man'* goes from strength to strength.

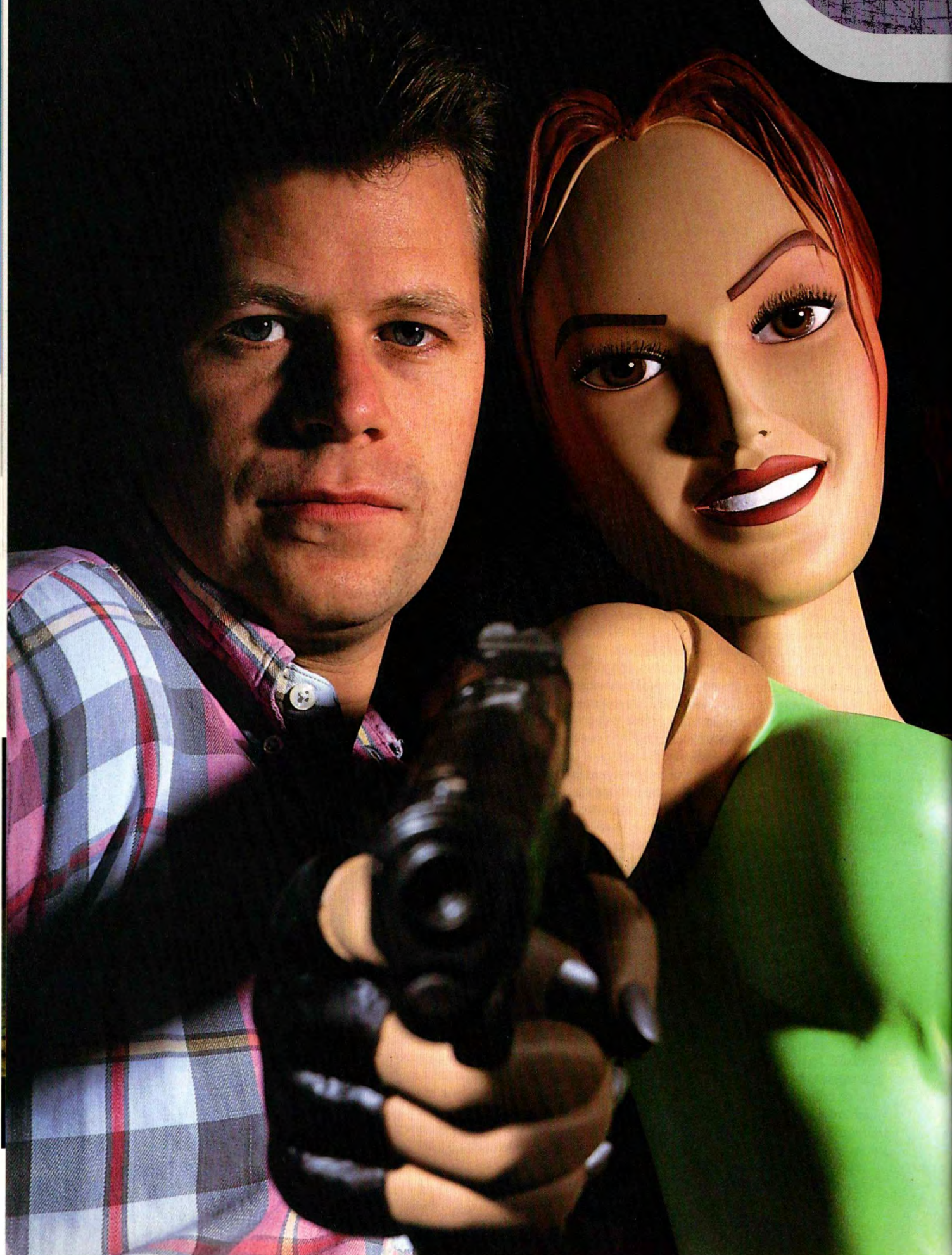
So how does this relationship with a \$500-million super-company cramp Core's individuality?

"Not really," says Susie. "We're a fully-owned subsidiary but because *TR* is our baby we take an extremely keen interest in all aspects of Eidos' involvement. We approve and sign off practically all *TR*-related activity. Jeremy sits on the Eidos board, too, so he gets involved in both sides of things," Jeremy nods in agreement, "I'm really enjoying having a say in the bigger picture."

Core's first project under the Eidos banner was *Tomb Raider*; three games and 17 million units later, the rest is well-documented history. Lara's adventures have been translated into French, German, Italian, Spanish, Dutch, German and Japanese. Industry gongs, including the European Computer Trade Show's "Game of the Year" have come thick and fast. And 1999 saw *TR* scoop one of the first ever Bafta (British Academy of Film and Televisual Arts) awards for videogames – showing the seriousness with which the traditional media now views the *Tomb Raider* phenomenon.

In 1998, Lara and the *Tomb Raider* games were awarded Millennium Product status by the Design Council in recognition of the cyber girl's contribution to Britain as the creative powerhouse of the world. Lara herself was recognised as an example of modern scientific excellence by Lord Sainsbury who said "I want recognised examples of our technological innovation and excellence such as Lara Croft of Eidos's *Tomb Raider* games to become ambassadors for British Scientific Excellence. We must get the message across that we are still a force to be reckoned with." It's clear that, with a whole new set of adventures about to go on sale, the new year's going to be very bright for both Core Design and Lara.





Brothers in arms...

Meet the Smith brothers. Jeremy (right) liked games so much, that he founded Core. He gave us the inside info, while Adrian (left) got on with some real work.

First off, what's the biggest change in the *The Last Revelation*?

I think the major change that people will see is location-based. Also, the fact that we've dramatically upgraded the engine from *TRIII* and the fact that we've changed the way the trap and inventory systems work. For instance, you can now add items to her weapons.

You mean that there's a way you can combine weapons?

That's right. You can combine items for the first time in a *TR* game, and you'll see a huge difference in the gameplay.

What's the change you're most pleased with in the game?

I think the overall look and feel, and the way we've sort of taken it back more towards *TR*, which is much more of a controlled adventure. We actually reveal a whole story line as the game unfolds. We needed a complete change from the earlier games, and we saw games like *Half-Life*, that did the story so well: we had to be able to do that.

And is there a personal favourite bit that you're looking forward to seeing people play?

I think the train section is something that people won't expect. You play one level on a moving train on top of the carriage. It's very different.

Moving on to Core itself. The company has a long history. Is there an element now that you're particularly proud of?

I suppose starting it! That was quite a monumental occasion. I just think that 11 years down the line we're still in business and year-on-year we've actually been more and more successful which is tremendous.

And you've won Millennium Product status recently. What does that involve? And what do you think it means to the company?

I see it as recognition of the hard work that's been done on the whole *TR* thing. I think it just gives us and the industry



great recognition – suddenly videogames are being taken seriously, they're not just the geeky pastime that they used to be thought of.

And Lara's featuring in the Millennium Dome? Is that true?

That's still not confirmed yet. Being awarded Millennium Status is one thing, getting in the Millennium Dome is another. There's certainly been a lot of discussion about having her within the Dome.

What's the atmosphere like in the company now you're approaching the end of the game.

Everyone's a little bit tired. But we've got the light at the end of the tunnel, which is obviously a great feeling. Upbeat but tired.

So you're not fed up with Lara just yet?

Not yet no. No, we're not looking for a divorce right at this moment.

Do you feel yourself surprised by how much Lara appeals to her fans? With her enduring popularity?

Yeah, it's incredible. It's almost like she's got superstar, even pop-group, status. She's got a tremendous set of fans.

Is there anything the fans do that shocks or surprises you?

Gosh. No (thinks) I think the angle of nudity does still surprise me. I'm still quite surprised that people want to see a cyber character nude. I find that still a little bit odd to get my head round. Take her clothes off and you see a bunch of polygons!

How do you feel when you see her appearing out of the game?

The thing that struck me was the M&S boxer shorts!

You know, I feel very proud to be part of it. We've worked hard to keep the merchandise sensible and not get carried away. I particularly liked the Lucozade commercial we've done – that tie-in was fantastic.

Now on to the movie. Is there anything you can tell us?

When do we get to see a giant Lara grace the screen?

We have a script, which is pretty much finalised and is now going from an overview into far more detail. The movie is slated to come out this time next year. There's no news on who's going to play Lara yet, but it is moving forward.

Who is the script writer?

(Long pause) Ummm, I don't know if I can tell you that actually. Not that it's a closely guarded secret, it's just not signed off yet.

So, in an ideal world – if you had a time machine – who would you like to see playing Lara? Do you have a heroine?

(Long, long pause) No I don't really, because I want Lara to play Lara. That sounds bizarre but I don't want someone like Sharon Stone or Demi Moore to take away the awareness of Lara and use their name as a huge tool. I want to see Lara as the main name and Lara's personality shining through.

You can't give us any more clues about the movie?

It's very traditional, with nothing particularly untoward in the storyline – it's just a great live-action plot.

And finally, what about the title of the game – *The Last Revelation*? That's worried a lot of people. Surely this doesn't mean curtains for Lara?

Well, you know *The Last Revelation* can mean a lot of things. The key is to watch the end-of-game FMV.

Cheers, Jeremy!

(For more about Lara's future, turn to page 122.)

THEY SAY THE
DEAD KNOW
NO PAIN...



"Soul Reaver is by far and away
the best-looking game on the
PlayStation"

Total Control

"Truly brilliant...submit to
Soul Reaver"

9/10 OFFICIAL
PLAYSTATION



"This is gonna blow you away!"

PLAYSTATION PLUS

THINGS ARE
ABOUT TO
CHANGE...



LEGACY of KAIN SOUL REAVER



Crystal Dynamics, the Crystal Dynamics logo, Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver and related characters are trademarks of Crystal Dynamics. © 1998 Crystal Dynamics. © and Published by Eidos Interactive Limited 1998. All Right Reserved. "PlayStation" are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

EIDOS
INTERACTIVE

The future...

Your creation is the hottest property in the videogaming world. You're selling millions of copies a year. So what do you do next? Buy somewhere new to live...



Quiz time. Is this:
(a) A computer-generated creation, made by Core's tip-top graphics gurus?
(b) The building site that will soon be Core's shiny new HQ? Or (c) Secretly snapped pix of Jeremy Heath-Smith's private trumpet-making plant? If you answered (b), you're right on the money. For more on (c), turn to page 87.

You've sold over 17 million copies of your latest gaming series. You've finished a new game which is going to knock the public dead. It's coming up to Christmas. Do you sit back? Relax? Contemplate retiring to a secluded Bahamian island on the profits of your exploits?

Or do you upheave your operation to a new building, establish two new games and contemplate your entry into the next-generation console market? It would seem that the people of Core don't like having spare time on their hands.

Core's Derby-based HQ is getting a little on the cramped side. Elegant though the building may be, it's starting to burst at the seams with programmers, designers, artists, producers and testers.

"Yes, we ran out of space!" laughs MD Jeremy Heath-Smith. "We couldn't get a mezzanine level in! Not that we want to go and hire another 100 people, though. We want the same number – maybe ten or 15 more – but we *really* want a more spacious environment."

So how is this new Derby environment going to be different? Are there any flash new features that you're particularly proud of?

"Yeah, we've worked very hard on doing the interior layout. It's not going to be straight, regimented walls and corridors, instead we're making use of a lot of lines and curves – we're giving the interior designers a complete headache. The aim is to create an atmosphere that isn't just sterile. The interior will not disappoint."

So what are Core's staff going to be working on in December, when the removal firm has left them in their shiny new premises? Surely it's time for everyone to take a bit of a holiday? Jeremy certainly doesn't think so; "We already have a couple of new games in development. One is being written by the original *TR* team. Another has been in development for about 18 months for the next generation of hardware, and is very, very exciting."

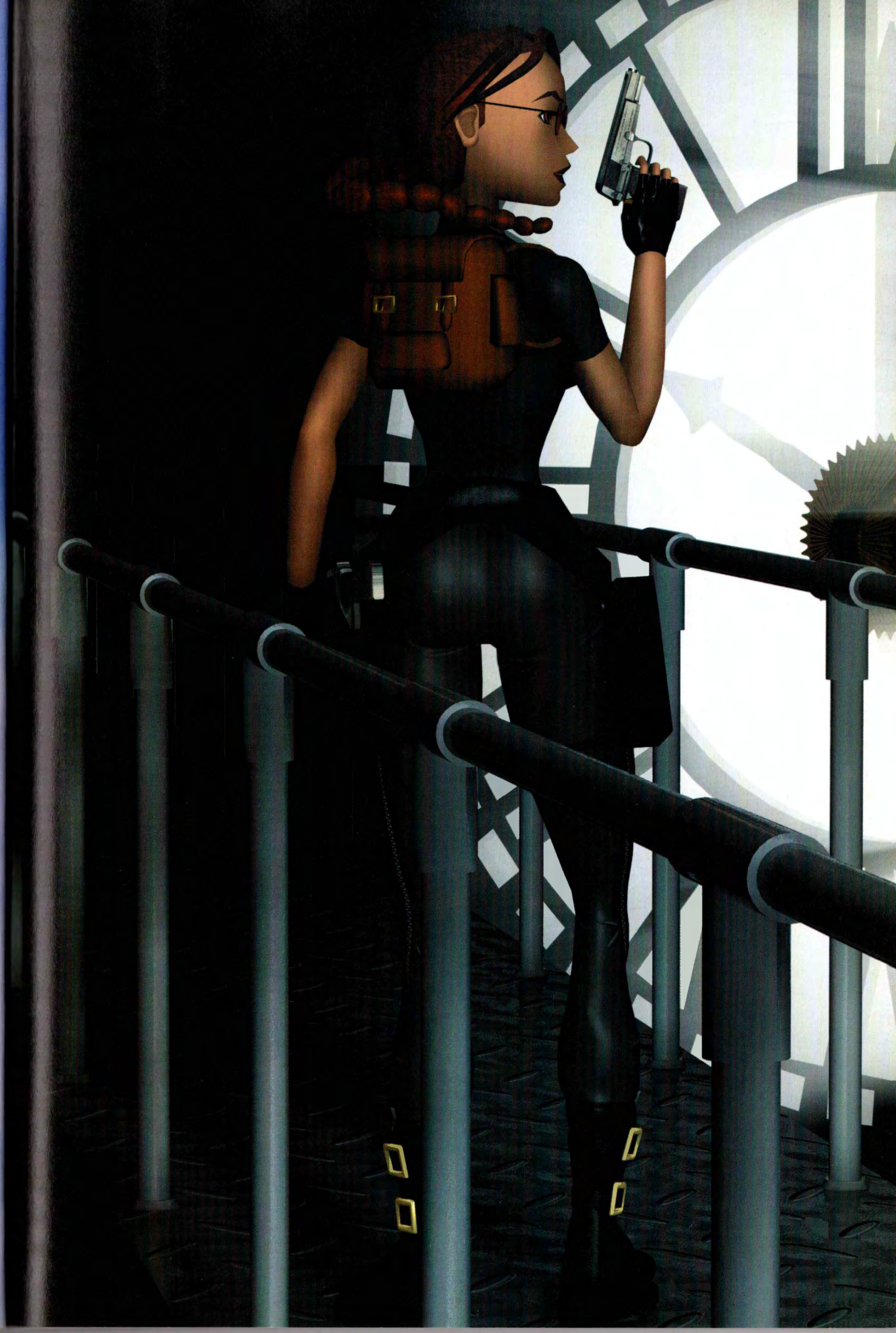
Given that Jeremy has suggested these games are a complete departure from the *Tomb Raider* series, what details can he let slip about them? "I think that at this point it would be wrong to reveal too much," he says. Unable to believe his cruelly withholding such vital information, we press him further. "No, really, I can't say much because they're at least another 12 months away. We certainly are very excited; we'd like to see another kind of game come out and have it be as popular as *TR* is."

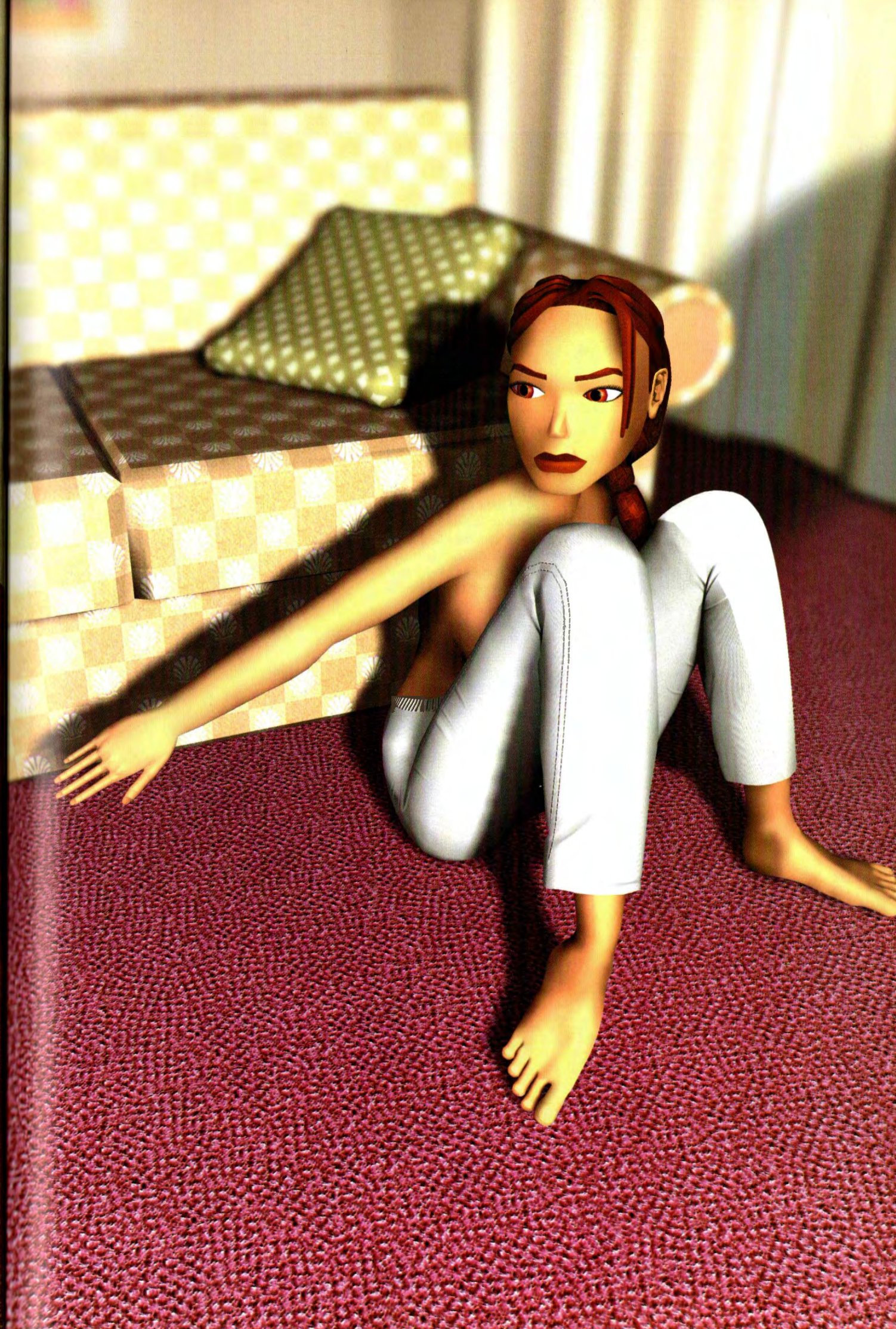
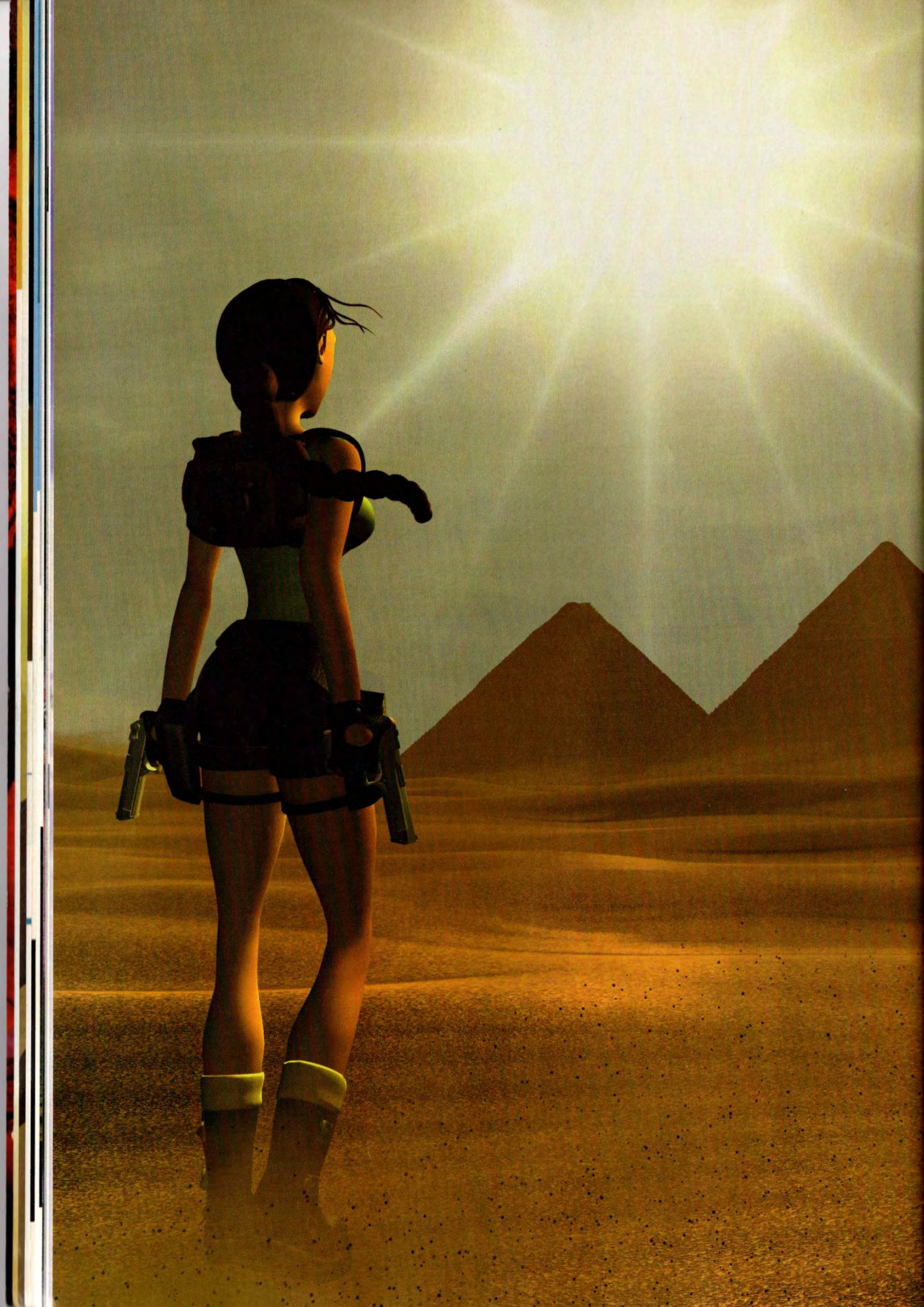
So he's not saying much. But he has established that Core is going to be producing a project for the new generation of consoles. Can we expect to see Lara swinging on to PlayStation2, then?

"Almost certainly. I think it would be wrong for us not to put her on to PlayStation2. So, yes. We've been spending time looking and researching exactly what we'd like to do with Lara and the next generation of hardware."

So, what do you think she'll do that will be different – what features of the new console are the Core chaps looking forward to exploiting? "Its awesome power – I think that says it all, really. As a game developer it's like being at a honey pot."

And what about other consoles? Core's exclusivity agreement with Sony comes to an end with *The Last Revelation*, so are you contemplating bringing Lara and your new games to other platforms? "Obviously, there's a lot of new hardware, both launched and in development, and we want to be there. So, yes, we're considering our options!" he laughs. That's a lot of plans for the future, then, and certainly enough to keep Jeremy Heath-Smith busy.



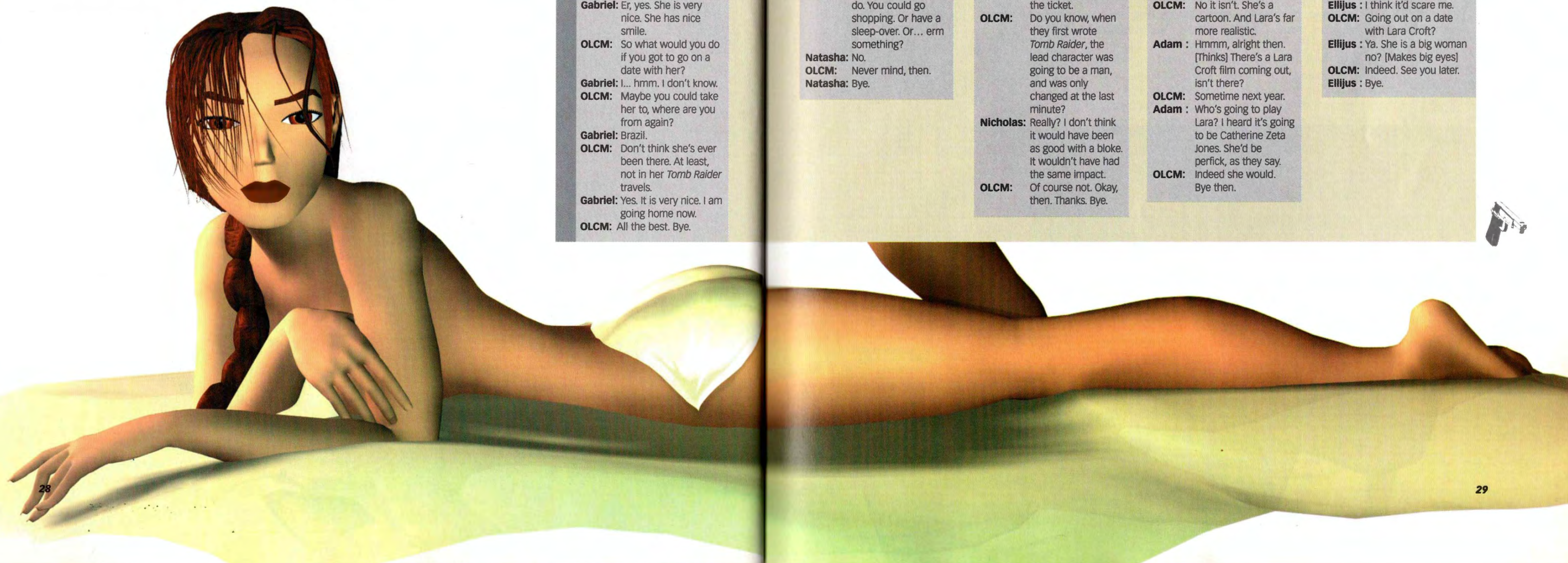


Speak out

To the divine Ms 'C', the most important people in the world are, of course, her public – and the feeling is returned with knobs on. So who better to ask for opinion and views on dating the daring darling of the digital age? And we did...

Lara Croft is a sex symbol. You only have to look at her... well, look at her to know that. Three sequels down the line, Lara's fame has elevated her way beyond that of the tomb-raiding game she started life in. What other videogame characters can you think of who have been paid to sponsor an energy-giving drink, have real-life models employed simply on the premise that they look a bit like her, and are about to be turned into a Hollywood star?

If there is one word that you could use to sum up Lara Croft, it's probably 'phenomenal'. But what do the people think of her? We took a trip to Virgin's Megastore in Old London Town to see what the general public would do if presented with the opportunity to take Lara out on the town for a night. The answers were... well, read on to find out.



The people

Stated name: Gabriel
Stated age: 16
Stated residence: Brazil



Official Lara Croft Magazine:
Hello.

Gabriel: Hello.

OLCM: [Pointing to a console.] What are you playing?

Gabriel: Eh?

OLCM: What game are you playing?

Gabriel: I do not understand.

OLCM: Never mind. Have you heard of Lara Croft?

Gabriel: Yes. She is very nice.

OLCM: That's a nice in the sense of Phillipa Forrester, or Joey from Dawson's Creek, or the female ones out of S-Club 7, right?

Gabriel: Eh?

OLCM: You do fancy her?

Gabriel: Er, yes. She is very nice. She has nice smile.

OLCM: So what would you do if you got to go on a date with her?

Gabriel: I... hmmm. I don't know.

OLCM: Maybe you could take her to, where are you from again?

Gabriel: Brazil.

OLCM: Don't think she's ever been there. At least, not in her Tomb Raider travels.

Gabriel: Yes. It is very nice. I am going home now.

OLCM: All the best. Bye.

Speak out on dating Lara

Stated name: Natasha
Stated age: 22
Stated residence: Clapham



OLCM: Hello! You've heard of Tomb Raider?

Natasha: Yes.

OLCM: And you've played it?

Natasha: [Suspiciously]. Yes. A little bit.

OLCM: So you've heard of Lara Croft?

Natasha: Well, obviously: Yes, of course I have. Who hasn't?

OLCM: Well, the big question we want answered is: what do you think of her?

Natasha: She's alright.

OLCM: So you wouldn't be that keen on going on a date then? You know, like how girls do. You could go shopping. Or have a sleep-over. Or... erm something?

Natasha: No.

OLCM: Never mind, then.

Natasha: Bye.

Stated name: Nicholas
Stated age: 22
Stated residence: Clapham



OLCM: Do know who Lara Croft is?

Nicholas: [Pointing to a copy of TR III] Her?

OLCM: Yes! So what do you think of her? As a person. If she were real, would you like to go out on a date with her?

Nicholas: Well, she is lovely, isn't she? So... of course I'd go.

OLCM: And how about as a character? Do you think Lara does the biz in Tomb Raider?

Nicholas: Well, that's what the whole thing's about, isn't it? Lara's just the ticket.

OLCM: Do you know, when they first wrote Tomb Raider, the lead character was going to be a man, and was only changed at the last minute?

Nicholas: Really? I don't think it would have been as good with a bloke. It wouldn't have had the same impact.

OLCM: Of course not. Okay, then. Thanks. Bye.

Stated name: Adam
Stated age: 30
Stated residence: Shopping (!)



OLCM: Hi, there.

Adam: Yes?

OLCM: What do you think of Lara Croft?

Adam: She doesn't do a great deal for me.

OLCM: [Spluttering] Why on earth not?

Adam: Well, she's just a bunch of pixels, isn't she? How can you fancy someone who is computer generated?

OLCM: Have you seen Who Framed Roger Rabbit?

Adam: Yes.

OLCM: Do you think Jessica Rabbit's attractive?

Adam: Well, yes. But that's different.

OLCM: No it isn't. She's a cartoon. And Lara's far more realistic.

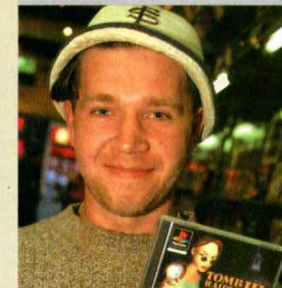
Adam: Hmmm, alright then. [Thinks] There's a Lara Croft film coming out, isn't there?

OLCM: Sometime next year.

Adam: Who's going to play Lara? I heard it's going to be Catherine Zeta Jones. She'd be perfect, as they say.

OLCM: Indeed she would. Bye then.

Stated name: Ellijus
Stated age: 23
Stated residence: Lithuania



OLCM: Hello. Would you like to go on a date with Lara Croft? You know? If you could? Somehow?

Ellijus: [Smiling] She has a good figure, ya?

OLCM: Where'd you take her?

Ellijus: The cinema? A restaurant? Definitely somewhere beautiful.

OLCM: It's a tricky one.

Perhaps the old cinema/pub combo? You know, watch a film so you can go for the old [yawns and extends arm], and then go to pub so you've got something to talk about – the film.

Ellijus: I think it'd scare me.

OLCM: Going out on a date with Lara Croft?

Ellijus: Ya. She is a big woman no? [Makes big eyes]

OLCM: Indeed. See you later.

Ellijus: Bye.

The people speak out... again

Stated name: Anne
Stated age: 23
Stated residence: Wimbledon



OLCM: Hello. What do you think of Lara Croft?
Anne: Well, she certainly managed to get around. She's doing very well for herself.
OLCM: Do you think it matters that she's 'made up'?
Anne: Well, the Spice Girls are all completely made up, aren't they?
OLCM: Eh?
Anne: Well, they are totally manufactured. They could have been any five girls – they were just auditioned.
OLCM: Do you think that Lara should be as famous as The Spice Girls?
Anne: Yes, but she is famous as a character.
OLCM: Would you like to go on a date with her?
Anne: Don't be silly.
OLCM: Sorry.
Anne: Bye.

Stated name: Robert
Stated age: 24
Stated residence: London



OLCM: Hello! Have you ever heard of Lara Croft?
Robert: She's tasty!
OLCM: Do you think she's a good game character?
Robert: Oh, yeah!
OLCM: What about the whole Lara Croft thang? Do you think it's a bit weird that a game character has managed to achieve such a level of fame?
Robert: Er...
OLCM: Sorry. Would you like to go out on a date with Lara Croft?
Robert: You bet!
OLCM: Rrrright. Thanks. Bye.

Stated name: Robert
Stated age: 48
Stated residence: Aberdeen



OLCM: Hello there, have you heard of Lara Croft?
Robert: Uh-hu. She looks sexy.
OLCM: Do you think everyone likes her?
Robert: Well, she appeals to us middle-aged fellows, that's for sure.
OLCM: So you'd like to go on date with her?
Robert: [Hesitating] Don't think the missus would take to kindly to that.
OLCM: But just between you and us?
Robert: Well, yes. Younger blood does a man my age good once in while.
OLCM: Okay, thanks. Bye.

Stated name: Francesca
Stated age: 35
Stated residence: Italy



OLCM: Have you ever heard of Tomb Raider?
Francesca: Yes. I haven't really played it though.
OLCM: So what do you think about Lara as a character?
Francesca: I think she's nice. I wish I could have her boobs.
OLCM: [Studying the floor] Er... Do you think she sends out a good message?
Francesca: Most people see a beautiful lady, and of course it's much nicer playing with a nice lady than with... I don't know, a horrible man with one eye, or the sort of character you get in other games.
OLCM: Good point. Have a nice day.
Francesca: Bye.

Win a date with Lara



Lara's not real. You know she's not real. She's just a gorgeous collection of neatly organised pixels and polygons firmly affixed to one of the loveliest wireframes ever to grace the London Underground. However, it's clear that her not-reality isn't perceived as a problem by the hordes of adoring fans she's attracted from across the globe.

Yup, you'd do *anything* to take the first lady of gaming on the date of a lifetime (that's your lifetime, not hers – she fights off monsters and wild animals for a living in some of the world's most exotic locations; it would have to be one hell of a date to stick out in her mind as anything special. If she had a mind, that is. If she wasn't *not real*.)

Anyway, we digress. Given that you'd do anything to get the not-real Lara on a date, here at the *Official Lara Croft Magazine*, we've got the next best thing: a not-real Lara for you to take on the date of your choice. Granted, she's a mannequin, and you'd have to drag her there on a skateboard. And it might not be too good an idea to take her to the pictures unless you're prepared to sit in the back row. But still, apart from her spectacular inability to bend over and tie her own bootlaces, she's just like the real thing. In the flesh, as it were.

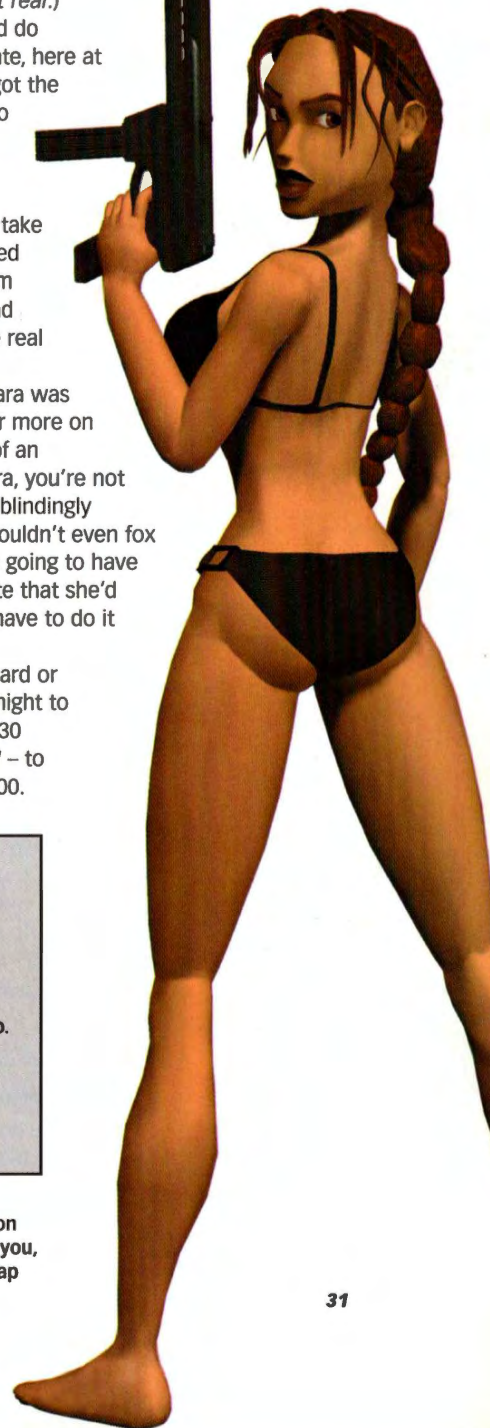
But this is a very special prize. This Lara was created by Marc Klinnert in Germany (for more on him, check out page 38) and she's one of an extremely limited edition. To win this Lara, you're not just going to have to answer the sort of blindingly obvious multiple choice question that wouldn't even fox a *Catchphrase* contestant. Oh no. You're going to have to tell us where you'd take Lara on a date that she'd remember forever. And you're going to have to do it quickly; in 50 words or less.

Describe your dream date on a postcard or stuck-down envelope, and send it to: A night to remember, *Official Lara Croft Magazine*, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, Somerset, BA1 2BW – to reach us by midnight on 29 February 2000.

THE RULES:

- One entry per person.
- Entries must reach us by 29 Feb 2000.
- No employee of The Future Network, Core Design, Eidos UK or associated companies may enter.
- There is no cash alternative.
- No correspondence will be entered into.
- The editor's decision is final.
- The winner will be contacted by Future Publishing.
- The Lara Croft mannequin may differ from the models shown.

Lara Croft putting on her face in preparation for a date with one of our readers; maybe you, maybe a friend of yours who you can kidnap and then go in their place.



A year in the life of Lara Croft

It's not easy being a superstar. The award ceremonies! The trade shows! The photo sessions! Any lesser person might start to tire after a while. But not our Lara, as these extracts from a top-secret report on the life of Lara Croft and her real-life stand-ins makes more than clear. Read on, but keep it to yourself.



Woooah! It's rude to stare but you've got to look back when those huge brown ones are glancing at you from the cover of Arcade mag.

1st January 1999

REPORT FROM OPERATIVE #LCTR/11.9021/Xa

It's been a hectic year for Lara Croft. Travels to Antarctica, the Pacific Islands, Nevada and London have been among her most exciting adventures yet. Returning home to spend Christmas at her family home, the subject appeared both exhilarated and somewhat weary. It was observed that her latest game, *Tomb Raider III*, is riding high at Number One in the charts. Magazine covers, posters, newspaper articles, even the TV has caught on to her popularity, and success is feeding into success at every turn. Everyone seems to know about *Tomb Raider*, even people who as yet haven't played any of the games.

This appears to be a moment in history when the both the Croft family and *Tomb Raider* games are "coming together." We are not yet able to ascertain what 1999 will have in store for Croft, as no papers have been intercepted nor information received from any of our usual sources. Surveillance continues in shifts of several agents.

3rd January

REPORT FROM OPERATIVE #LCTR/11.9024/Xc

The government appears to be involved. Science Minister, Lord Sainsbury, today made Lara Croft an ambassador for British Scientific Excellence! Her picture was featured in *Nature*, one of the most prestigious scientific journals in the world. Sainsbury said, "When people think of this country, they should think of such scientific achievements as the first supersonic car, rather than

Computer game star is science 'ambassador'

[LONDON] Lara Croft (left), the larger-than-life star of the UK-designed computer game *Tomb Raider*, has won surprising endorsement from the science minister, Lord Sainsbury, as an "ambassador" for British scientific excellence. Speaking this week on science and the knowledge economy, Sainsbury argued that Britain should be promoting its contemporary high-tech achievements as much as those of the past. "I want people, when they think of this country, to think of such scientific achievements as Thrust, the first supersonic car, rather than Stephenson or Faraday," Sainsbury said.

Lord Sainsbury is, apparently, a huge fan of Lara!

Stephenson, the inventor of the steam engine, or Faraday, the discoverer of electricity."

Our media sources tell me that this appointment is a testament to Croft's impact on both society and science. I think they're right. This means that not only have people who play games heard of her, but government ministers, too, and they think her to be setting a good example to the country as a whole.

7th January

REPORT FROM OPERATIVE #LCTR/11.7771/Yt

Croft's current real-life lookalike, Nell McAndrew attended the launch party for *Tomb Raider III*. The media-rich affair was held at one of England's top academic and scientific institutions: the Natural History Museum in London.

While involved in the proceedings, McAndrew occasionally disappeared amid the throng of famous and not so-famous people. This led to both myself and the other five operatives on duty losing visual and aural contact with the subject.

10th January

REPORT FROM OPERATIVE #LCTR/11.9024/Xc

The Croft female seems to be becoming even more famous than we had previously perceived necessary to the 'great plan'. According to the new edition of *The Guinness Book of Records*, she is now the biggest cyberstar in the world.

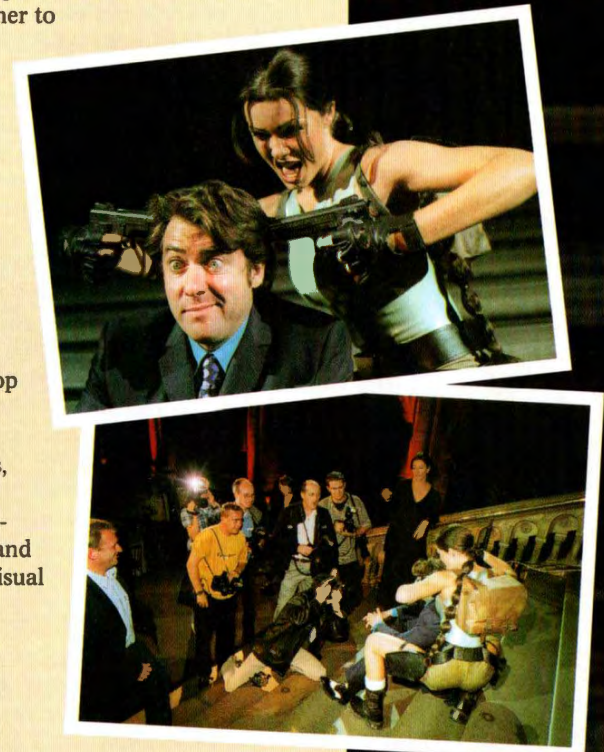
"*Tomb Raider*, starring the fearless Lara Croft, has become one of the best-selling videogame titles of all time," the entry runs, "and Lara Croft was named one of the 50 most influential people by the US magazine *Time Digital*. Last year, it was announced that worldwide film rights to *Tomb Raider* had been agreed with Paramount Pictures. Lara Croft has appeared on hundreds of magazine and newspaper covers around the world."

This kind of media circus for a videogame character – most especially of the female persuasion – is unheard of. Things are getting out of control. We need back up.

17th January

REPORT FROM OPERATIVE #LCTR/12.0000/XX1

Tomb Raider is to be made into a film. Who is going to play Lara Croft? As it's a real-life affair, she can't do it. Our grasses – sorry, sources – tell us that a major Hollywood star is possible (note: call US operatives into surveillance). French movie magazine *Premier* thinks that Catherine Zeta-Jones will get the role.



Her behaviour at the *TRIII* launch should at least ensure that when the movie comes out it'll get a good review from the BBC.

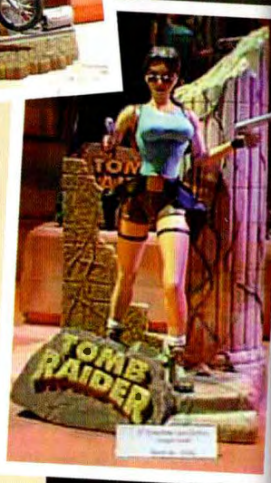


Action figures such as these are in danger of becoming both valuable and seen as positive images for both male and female children!

7th February

REPORT FROM OPERATIVE #LCTR/11.9024/Xc

The Tomb Raider advert for *Brigitte* magazine was aired for the first time in Germany today. Note: it is not Croft's actual voice. Although we know that she studied German, and can speak it quite well, it was decided that she didn't sound convincing enough for the job, so she was dubbed by a German actress.



The 'realism' of these 'toys' is highly likely to confuse, Croft is after all, a 2D videogame character.

14th February

REPORT FROM OPERATIVE #LCTR/21.5551/Yc.2

The subject's 'birthday' was celebrated with, among other things, Playmates toys sending a complete set of the new Lara figures (released today). She appears as a 'positive role model' on a motorbike! Climbing up a statue! Underwater in a wet suit! And there are lots of poses with guns! Have we talked to our people in manufacturing about the kind of outgoing, powerful image this is putting in the minds of young people? It is important that we are aware of the possible repercussions.



Croft's fame means that she's impersonated in other games.

28th February

REPORT FROM OPERATIVE #LCTR/11.9024/Xc

Croft's seen amazing success and, we can now confirm, has A1+ CIA recognisability rating. This means that 'look-a-likes' are being included in other developers' games! Apparently, one of the characters in a game called *Sin* by Activision is the spitting image of her. Having seen the impersonation, she does look quite like Croft, but where are her holsters, that's what I'd like to know? Also, in Italy during the annual Festival of the Italian Song, a famous Italian singer called Eugenio Finardi performed a love song dedicated to Lara Croft (note: inform NATO).

The biggest news of the week, though, is that she's going to be sent on another tomb-raiding adventure. We haven't learnt from our mole in Core Design where she is going next, but you can guarantee that it's going to be her most exciting adventure to date. Get on the case!

7th March

REPORT FROM OPERATIVE #LCTR/13.7771/YY

A rather revealing picture of the subject appeared in *Bikini* magazine this week. I don't remember it being taken, but that's the paparazzi for you. It's possible that the snapper used a long zoom lens, or similar device. Also this week, her fourth commercial for Seat cars was aired in France, again featuring her in a bikini! This European turn could mean that her next game will be set in the EU? Must find out.

4th April

REPORT FROM OPERATIVE #LCTR/00.000/AA

Subject had her horoscope cast today. We 'acquired' a copy: her 'passion' comes from a Scorpio Mars, her high level of activity comes from a Natal Trine to Mercury, and three planets in Pisces makes her a good swimmer.



Important: this image for your eyes only.

18th April

REPORT FROM OPERATIVE #LCTR/00.9999/XXX'

I've just returned from Lisbon, where I attended the Multimedia XXI show undercover, posing as a journalist. Here I observed, Nell McAndrew ('Lookalike Lara' as we have codenamed her) receive, on behalf of *Tomb Raider III*, the award for Game of the Year 1998 from *Mega Score* magazine. This trophy was the result of thousands of readers' votes, which makes it all the more interesting to us. I had to stand around for what seemed like hours watching people from all over the world have their photos taken with the subject; even autographs were taken. McAndrew gave a TV interview, too.

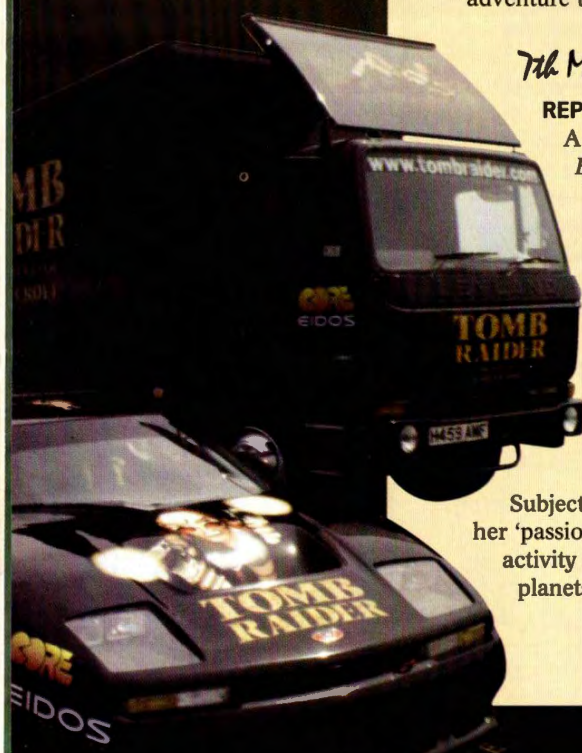
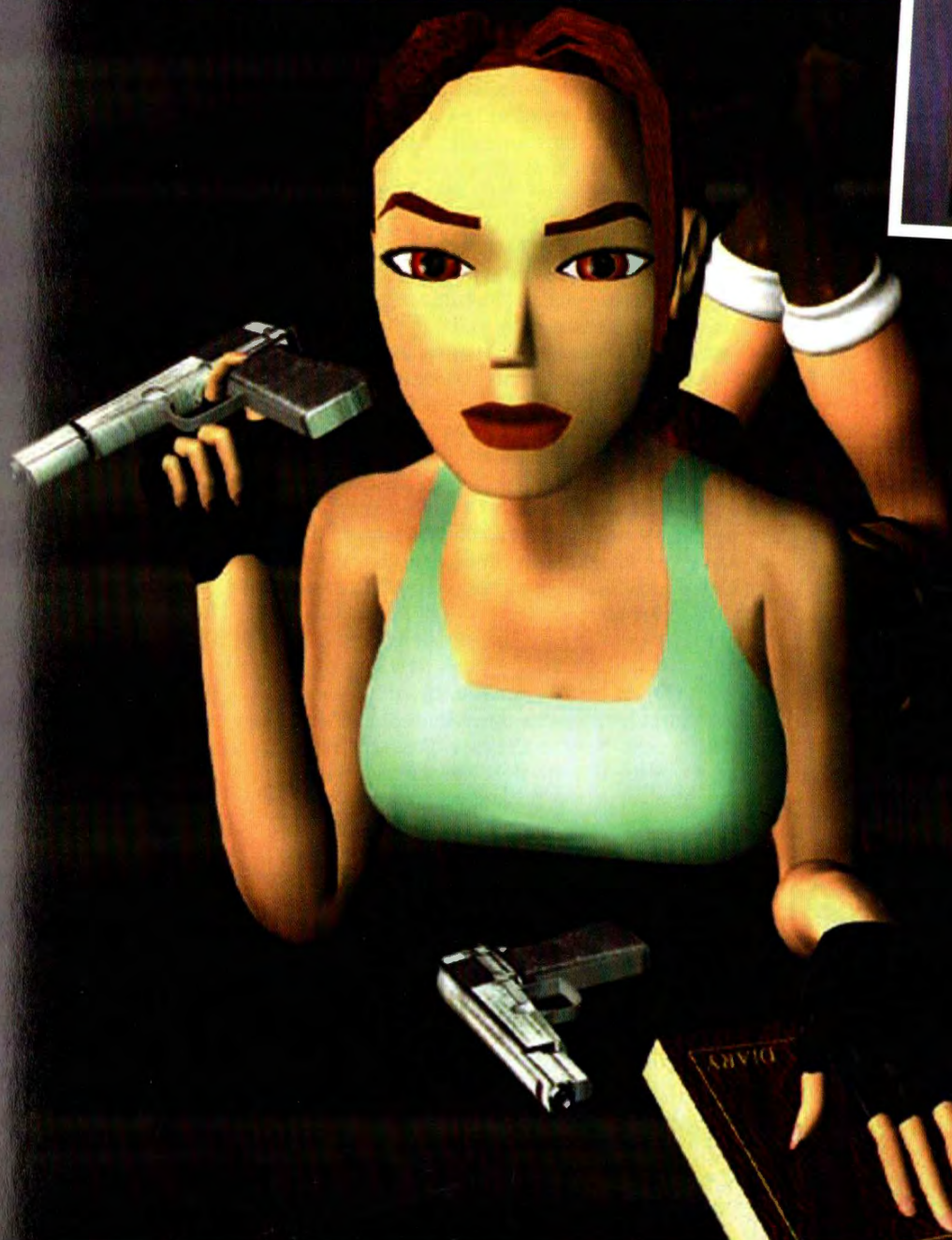
It's a big UK TV week as well. The Lucozade advert is going to be shown for the first time. It's been on already in Australia, where apparently it's crossed the hemispheric culture-divide 'well'. The people at Lucozade told our mole that Croft's 'smart, dynamic, positive attitude, as well as her undeniable "female magnetism" will ensure that she has maximum appeal among Lucozade's target audience.' Right. We need a meeting now! It's true, though, Croft's charisma in both computer and 'real life' is fetching and rather pleasant to be involved in...



Lucozade, a great British product, is being promoted by the subject. This promotion is doing very well indeed.



Nell McAndrew, the 'real-life Lara' is fast becoming as recognisable as the character itself. We should expect changes to remedy this.





The E3 show in Los Angeles, USA. Croft's presence was everywhere – mainly due to this enormous model of her.

Two young girls from Belgium emulate their heroine.

Croft's Norton Streetfighter bike is pictured below.



25th April

REPORT FROM OPERATIVE #LCTR/1111.111/AAAAA

Operative #LCTR/00.9999/XXX' was getting too close to the subject and has been 'phased out'. There is a new magazine dedicated to Lara Croft out today. Who would want to read a magazine entirely about her? Well, Germans, because that's where the magazine's from. It's called *Lara Croft Magazin*. The link with the EU is growing and must be investigated – the *Tomb Raider* phenomenon has now even cracked the Germans!

13th May

REPORT FROM OPERATIVE #LCTR/8987.0112/Fd

Another busy week – a new 'lookalike' Lara Croft, Lara Weller has been to America to the huge E3 show in Los Angeles. When I arrived undercover, I witnessed a huge statue of her on the Sony booth. At least, a huge statue of her top half. What's wrong with her legs that they didn't want to include them? Maybe, the statue would then have been so big it would have caused damage to the ceiling. Anyway, it was an odd feeling, walking around the exhibition with a huge Lara seeming to stick her gun at me wherever I went.

Then there were the parties. Eidos, the company that publishes the *Tomb Raider* games, held the biggest one, and rock bands Everclear and Groove Line played. I noted Lara Croft's real-life stand-in even got to meet rock-god, David Bowie. He is about to star in his own game (*Nomad Soul*) and so he was swanking around the party. I'd heard of David Bowie but was not aware that the success of *Tomb Raider* had made videogames of sufficient import for a star of his calibre to become involved.

20th June

REPORT FROM OPERATIVE #LCTR/8987.0112/Fd

Long time no entry. I have just discovered that the next *Tomb Raider* game will be set in Egypt, which is a return to previous hunting grounds – maybe Croft's intending to dig up something that was left there the first time? (Note: get Egyptian agents on the case now!) Croft has also been doing some filming for the Sci-Fi Channel, for a 20-second mini promo (as they call it) that is aired this week. Alarmingly, she is the only girl from a videogame who is starring. The rest of the people are actors, sports people and musicians. There's actress Traci Lords, tennis star Serena Williams and known rap artist Busta Rhymes.

Her part was straightforward; all she had to do was to sit down and play the old videogame *Pong*! I had a *Pong* unit back in 1974. I was seven. The game reminded me of the lost innocence of my youth.

4th July

REPORT FROM OPERATIVE #LCTR/8474.4122/TS

Operative #LCTR/8987.0112/Fd has been 'reassessed' due to nostalgia affecting judgement. New on the case, I'm back from Amsterdam and the 'Over the IJ' festival. It was a huge event, lasting over ten days. The venue was decked out to look like a level

from *Tomb Raider*, with a rusty shipyard complete with cranes taking centre stage. Finding the entrance was a puzzle, as it was hidden away between more rusty machines and pigeons than I've ever seen. A replica of Croft's Norton Streetfighter bike was suspended from the ceiling, and they even served her favourite food: beans on toast, then Shanghai Duck.

Some fans organised a special Lara dance, which went on for over 20 minutes, with what I was told was a 'pumping' soundtrack. There were also lots of flashing lights. Oddly, the person playing Croft

'seemed' to die in the end. (Note to self: clean pistol.)

There was also a giant floor mosaic (of Lara Croft, naturally), but wearing a halo! On every wall, there were projections of the *Tomb Raider* games. On Saturday night, there was a Lara look-a-like competition. The contestants not only had to dress like her, but also had to prove their intelligence by answering questions, and their accuracy by shooting at balloons. In the end, two winners were chosen: an 11-year-old called Sanne de Vries and a 14-year-old called Geert Woets who had come from Belgium.



The number of people who want to meet Lara Croft is growing by the day. Something must be done.

11th July

REPORT FROM OPERATIVE #LCTR/9811.1231/EP

An interview with one of Croft's lookalikes was published in an American magazine today. As we'd expected, the majority of questions that were asked were about the outfits worn by the real-life Lara Croft model. Here is a precis of what was said:

'So how difficult is it to wear a skin-tight latex costume all day long?' was the first.

The reply from the stand in was revealing, 'I must lose a good few pounds every day. When I sit on seats to do signings, I do tend to leave a big wet patch. It's very embarrassing, actually! At one signing, someone actually suggested that they auction the seat, which I thought was gross, but you know somebody would have bought it.'

'Do the fans ever scare you?' the questions continued.

'Sometimes they want to pick me up. It's only then that they realise how heavy I am and they buckle. Sometimes I get women who come up to me and say, "You've ruined my life. My husband does nothing but play videogames!"'

There's been some more news on the *Tomb Raider* film, too. I read an interview with the movie's producer Lloyd Levin in *Cinescape* magazine. Here he revealed that there are a number of writers working on the script. They still don't seem to have found anyone to play Croft, though. "We truly don't have a notion of who is going to play the role," the interview said. But it looks like the movie will stay pretty close to the videogame. I have also been waiting to find out where the film is going to be set. It's going to be a global adventure, but it should be made in London. The tone of the movie looks interesting, too. "It'll definitely be humorous. Lara's got a fantastic sense of humour, after all. But it's not going to be played for camp laughs," said Lloyd.

1st August

REPORT FROM OPERATIVE #LCTR/9811.1231/EP

More news this week. Apparently, Eidos has signed up to an exclusive six-year agreement with International Sports Multimedia to publish videogames licensed from the International Olympic Committee. It means Eidos can licence games from the Sydney 2000 and Athens 2004 Olympic Games, and the Salt Lake City 2002 Winter Olympic games. Which means that Croft may well get to attend these events, and might even end up as some form of unofficial mascot.





Take care Sir Alex and you Reds! Croft is a City girl!

And there's another sign of her in someone else's game – this time in Take2's *Hidden and Dangerous*. You have to access her by typing 'iamcheater' on the opening screen, and 'laracroft' on your selected soldier. And then he turns into Lara Croft! How peculiar.

8th August

REPORT FROM OPERATIVE #LCTR/3211.3141/ZS

Just back from meeting the boys in blue – that's Manchester City football team, of course. I've been an avid City fan since I was a



young lad (ahh Colin Bell, Franny Lee!) and now Lara Croft has officially signed up with the club. Eidos is the team's new club sponsor, which means that Lara will be a VIP guest when City kick off in the First Division against Wolves. Her real-life stand-in even got to talk to skipper Andy Morrison, who said, "I don't think that my position in the team is under threat."

It's a shame they never asked me to the club. I could have been a professional football player. Still, the 1999-2000 season will certainly see City promoted to the Premier League where they belong!

15th August

REPORT FROM OPERATIVE #LCTR/1-A-1

Owing to his weakness for football, operative #LCTR/3211.3141/ZS has been replaced. I've become intrigued with the new *Tomb Raider* film. I've have found the following on the Web, it's a synopsis of the plot:

'A near-perfect cinematic realisation of the best parts of the original *Tomb Raider* game as Lara makes her way through the cavernous tomb of King Philip to retrieve the King's funeral mask. When Lara returns home she learns that her life may be in danger. During the subsequent exhibition at the British Museum, a foreign minister from Kafiristan (the small Third World country that she took the mask from) explains the mask's significance; it may lead the way to the long-lost library of Alexander the Great.



Man City skipper, Andy Morrison. Looks like the Blues have signed another sharp-shooter.



The Man City squad, and then England stars, Martyn, Dublin and Anderton. All involved with Croft!



Clothes make the man. Watch out for these disguises from the new official Lara Croft range.

Lara's old nemesis Larson (the arrogant Texan featured in the original game) steals the mask from the museum that night, so it's now up to Lara to find the lost library before Larson can. She gathers a small expedition team and sets out to find it, running into many obstacles along the way.

Well that's what I read, but it was taken from the Web, so as evidence it must be treated with some suspicion.

29th August

REPORT FROM OPERATIVE #LCTR/1-A-1

News on the official line of Lara Croft clothing! The character has already been noted as lending her name to a set of Lara©-branded clothing such as jackets, T-shirts and fleeces, plus a separate range featuring the character herself.

But because she lives on the cutting edge of chic, this line is now redesigned, expanded and set to be relaunched at the end of the year.

5th September

REPORT FROM OPERATIVE #LCTR/1-A-1

Lara Croft appears to be in another game! This time it's GT Interactive's *Discworld Noir*, under the guise Larendo Cronk! I always suspected that Terry Pratchett was a fan. It now appears that Lara Croftian images of heroines are becoming endemic within the highly lucrative videogames industry. You can't blame them though, she is highly attractive, erm... valuable as a character.

12th September

REPORT FROM OPERATIVE #LCTR/1-A-1

More game promotion from Lara Weller, this time at London's European Consumer Electronics Trade Show. It's a huge event, with many new products on display, but it's only for the industry.

There wasn't too much *Tomb Raider* action to be seen. The Eidos stand took the form of a mocked-up version of Croft's Surrey mansion, but it wasn't open to the public – just to a select few who were invited in for a preview of what the latest adventure, *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation*, might be about.

1st October

REPORT FROM OPERATIVE #LCTR/1-A-1

My mole at Core Design suggest that it's not just the silver screen, but the TV screen I should be watching for signs of Croft. He suggests she may be taking part in the new Nike advert, and that there may soon be a documentary of her life. All this careful surveillance may be for nothing.

10th October

REPORT FROM OPERATIVE #LCTR/1-A-1

More revelations on the *Tomb Raider* film. French magazine *Télé Star* claims that the French model and singer Vanessa Demouy might also be involved in the film!

"At the end of November," she says, "I'll take part in the casting for the movie of *Tomb Raider*. I think that everything is possible, and that I have nothing to lose. It's true I'm the outsider... but you never know." It appears to me that a movie about this amazing character is an excellent idea. I'm all for it.

17th October

REPORT FROM OPERATIVE B-O-S-S

All agents involved in this case have been removed due to various emotional flaws. Agent 1-A-1 was last seen playing *Tomb Raider III* while booking a flight to Egypt over the Net. "I need to be near where she might be!" he said. We need a strategy now! ENDS.



The *Tomb Raider* movie project – tied in with a major US corporation – is becoming a talking point among the general public.



Yet another incarnation of the world's biggest game star. Staggering.

Gonna make you a star

When you think of a model maker, you probably imagine a militarily obsessed, glue-drenched hobbyist, surrounded by 1:16 replicas of Spitfires. Well think again, and meet Marc Klinnert, the model for all model makers.



No, she isn't cold, this is what a Lara looks like before her delicate skin tones and ruddy great boots are coloured in.

The life-size model of Lara Croft that features so threateningly in our Core Tour (pages 14-17) is the creation of a Swiss-born master artist, Marc Klinnert. We managed to bust into Marc's hectic schedule to find out how long he's been working as a model maker and how he spends his time when he's not recreating Laras (and how any Airfix Spitfires he has in his house). And we discovered a whole lot more. For example, the man runs a studio in Germany, used to destroy his own models by fire (filming them as he did it), owns an animal and produces a sight more than Laras all day.

And, as if succeeding in dragging him away from his work wasn't enough, we've also managed to secure pictures of some of the most excellent replicas you're ever likely to see. So, let's get to the man himself...

Where were you born?

I was born in Basel Switzerland.

When were you born?

The third of May, 1965.

How did you get into model making? Do you have any specific qualifications?

After I left school I studied communication design in Düsseldorf but cancelled after three semesters because I worked as an illustrator and was able to live from my work so didn't see the need to study. I worked as an illustrator for more than 13 years.

I started modelling two years ago. The first model was

The Keeper's Pet (you can see it on our homepage at www.studiooxmox.de), it is the Rancor from *Star Wars*.

Specific qualifications? Books, just books – I'm an autodidact.

Do you have any children?

No, we only have a cat – Bonny. She's a strong character and very special!

What is your favourite music?

I love soundtracks. Specifically those with science fiction and horror themes.

What are your favourite kinds of movies?

2001, *Jurassic Park*, *Zombie*,



OXMOX



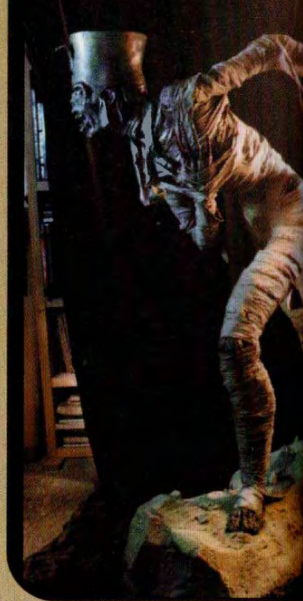
OXMOX



Marc with Lara Weller: he likes to get his research just right. Here he measures the width of Ms Weller's shoulders (ahem).



Here we see one of Marc's latest creations on show in Germany. Lara is attacked by a very scary mummy. Oh yes, as you can see, this mummy is not frightening at all, oh no. We're totally cool about it. Can someone else write this caption please? Please? We're getting freaked, and it's started to move! It's moving... yes, we know it's made of a multi-doodathing polymer base but it's mooohaghhh!



Event Horizon, Blade, Starship Troopers, Cyrano.

What do you do when you're not making models?

Love...

How long has your company, Oxmox, been in business? How did you start?

As I said, 13 years ago. I started at home with my first job for McDonalds – Happy Meal boxes!

Right, so what does Oxmox actually mean?

We don't know, it was just an idea we had. *(We looked it up, and aside from it being a magazine in Hamburg, we couldn't discover what it means either. Clearly it's a 'German thing')*

So whose idea was it to make the first Lara model?

It was the idea of Gaby, my wife – she works alongside me at Oxmox.

How many different Lara models have you designed?

Lara vs. Mummy, size 1:6.
Lara single, size 1:6.
Lara, size 1:1 and the Lara for *The Last Revelation*, size 1:1.

Do you sell your Lara models exclusively to Eidos? Have you ever been approached by a member of the public wanting a Lara model?

Yes. The Lara vs. Mummy kit was under licence from Eidos, so I sold it in a small edition.

Many people called me to get a life-size Lara, they tried in every way, but I didn't sell any.

Which is the favourite Lara model of all you've made?

The first life-size prototype of Lara and the real Lara Weller.

Have you played *Tomb Raider*? Do you have a favourite?

Yes! Yes the first one, I think the next will be the best.

What is it about Lara Croft that makes her fun to work with?

The ears and the hands, because of the fact that the ears are made from Gaby and the hands were made from Christine, my ex-girlfriend.

What is the easiest element when creating a new Lara?

The ears and the hands!

What is the most difficult bit when creating a new Lara?

Always the face.

What was the first model you ever produced and didn't subsequently destroy?

That was the Rancor.

What other models have you made and for who?

Many: Soul Reaver for Eidos, Abe for GTI, Addy for Havas, Link for Nintendo, ShadowMan for Acclaim, Gnarf for Ravensburger, Dungeon Keeper for Electronic Arts (I worked together with Christian Söder – Darkart), The Mummy. First I created the lifesize Mummy for



Fancy having to get up and put this amount of make-up on everyday eh gals (and erm, lads)? At least Lara's getting a helping hand.

"I started at home with my first job for McDonalds – Happy Meal boxes!"

myself and now it has been sold to Eidos.

Is there a character from non-games fiction that you would like to make a model of?

Yes, the ABC robots (warriors) from *Judge Dredd*. Life-size.

Do you use computers at all?

Yes, with my wife, Gabrielle – that is the part that we work on together.

What is your biggest model?

The Dungeon Keeper – he's more than 86 inches tall.

Do you prefer to work on large-scale models or smaller items?

Large-scale models!

And finally, if we were to get you to make the Lara Croft of our dreams, how much would we have to pay you?

Uh oh!

**"Never support
a product that
you wouldn't
drink yourself."**

The Media Loves Lara Croft!


The first time you realise that you've gone from being a good-natured archeologist and general girl-about-the-planet, to a worldwide media sensation must be when you discover yourself drinking fizzy pop from a bottle with your own picture on it. Weird.

It has to be said that Lara Croft is a dab-hand at defending herself from all manner of predators. Place her in a confusing, ancient and highly-dangerous environment and she's quite capable of sorting the menace from the merely boisterous. However, since her experiences became public property she's been discovering that challenges set by the world of product endorsement, advertising, media scrutiny and hype, can't be solved with decent pair of hand-guns and some sharp acrobatics.

The problem facing our best-loved babe-superstar is that to finance more adventures, she's had to learn how to become media-savvy in double-quick time.

We would have loved to show you some of the offers from the land of Big Business – often far more dangerous than anything you're likely to meet atop a mountain in Nepal while being chased by a pack of ravening hounds with girl-meat on their tiny minds – but what would have been the point? It must be obvious by now that any company that needs to add a fresh, alive, active and intelligent image to its products; any newspaper or magazine that needs some star quality to pep up its coverage; and any movie mogul who wants a well-behaved, charisma-sorted leading lady, will obviously, obviously turn to Ms Croft.

The offers just keep coming in, so we thought, "Why not see what she's done so far? Why not stop, take a moment, and examine the way in which a single-minded individual can, by sheer force of cool, force the entire corporate world to kneel down on her doorstep like suitors hoping to be chosen?"

If nothing else, there are lessons in Lara's recent past in how not to let success swell your head, and how to make sure that you only choose the right things to put your name to. Mentioning no names, we reckon a few other "mega-stars" could benefit from taking the same considered route to self-financing that Ms Croft and her team of advisors have opted for. Sure, exposure is a good thing, but being out in the open for too long and in the wrong place, well... as Lara knows, that can get you killed. 

Is she simply full of a whole lot of hot air, or is Lara the biggest star ever to emerge from the videogames industry? This inflatable Lara has certainly made a huge impact in Japan.





Not only is Lara's own official magazine full as usual, but everybody else in media-land seems to want a piece of our favourite lady.

Turn Lucozade into a bangin' bevvy? Call for Lara Croft!

Choosing products worthy of her name is an almost daily routine for Ms C'.

Take, for example, the highly successful Lucozade partnership that saw the Tomb Raider team creating an entirely new environment for

our heroine. TV and cinema exposure of this kind takes some getting the hang of when you've been used to spending time around a geriatric butler and the occasional savage beast. But of course, Lara's adapted to it. It's also lucky for Lara that she's not the vain type, because returning from a Peruvian excursion to find your backside blown up to the size of, let's be honest here, a London bus, and then plastered all over one, can come as a shock to the ego.

The Lucozade gig seems to have worked out well for all concerned though, with the fizzy pop benefiting from the classic Croftian charisma, and Lara getting a lifetime supply of the stuff.

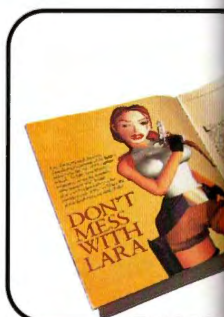


Problem: How do you turn what used to be a medicinal drink that only saw the light of day in the bedrooms of flu victims into a bangin' new soft drink sensation?

Solution: Call for Lara Croft in her many guises. (Left) one of Lara's real-life alter egos, Nell McAndrew, shows that Lucozade is a wild outdoor kinda brew. While below, Lara-proper tips the wink to the raver's fave bevvy.

"Never support a product you wouldn't drink yourself."

Exactly the kind of sensible, honourable advice you'd expect to come from someone like Winston the butler. And it's exactly the kind of advice that Lara follows at all times. It's oh-so-easy to sit back and suck up the cash until you explode from pure wealth, but where will that get you in the long run? Aside from exploded, it'll get you laden down with stuff you don't want and a reputation as being the kind of girl who puts out for anything. Nope, despite the time it takes and the various things you've got to taste, wear, hear, see and swallow, Lara has made sure that the guys at Core weed out all the duff proposals, so that she never has to trouble herself with 'em!



Lucozade

& UK promotion

Pop Gun!

"All men are pigs!"

German band, Die Ärzte's single, *Ein Schwein Namens Männe* (All Men Are Pigs, or as a more direct translation: A Pig Named Men) required a video to sell it. Despite some understandable qualms about whether, philosophically, insulting pigs in this way was ethical, the Core advisors gave the slice of popstasm an 'earring and called on SZM studios in Munich to create yet another world for Lara to inhabit. *All Men Are Pigs* slammed in at the coveted Number 1 spot in the German charts.



No! No! It is not Spanish for chair! It's pronounced See-at for lawk's sake, and it's exactly the kind of nifty little motor that comes with the boot-space in which to store your motorised pedalo before rushing off into the jungle to scrap with a dino or two. The Seat ad aired in France and Germany.

Overseas

"Make sure your magazine is fully loaded with ammo before venturing into new territory."

No, not advice on how to play *Tomb Raider*, this should be what a magazine publisher (the "Top Banana") says to the magazine editor (the "Bottom Grape"). And in the last five years, that ammo has consisted of the lithe and athletic form of Lara Croft.

Mags from England, France, Germany, the US-of-A, Belgium, Holland, Japan, Taiwan, Felixstowe, Mars, Australia and all points north, south, east and west have gained valuable exposure (and have given a little too) thanks to the phenomenon that is *Tomb Raider*.

(Okay, so maybe not Felixstowe.)



Action!

Video, mon Dieu und mein Gott! It's the language of the European Union! Isn't it?

Of course, what the *All Men Are Pigs* video proved was the flexibility and versatility of a videogames star. This in itself is a major change of perspective. Once upon a time, the pop industry looked upon videogames, their creators and even people who played them as coming from planet Geekazoid 1B-12. How times change, and how Lara Croft and the *Tomb Raiders* have managed that change. Ask yourself who is now benefiting more from the hippiness? The German band or Lara Croft? Mmmm, let's get funky ja!



Is it the naked truth? Or just an illusion?

If you turn to page 18, you will find an interview with Core Design head-honcho, Jeremy Heath-Smith. In it he expresses some surprise that people would want to see Lara Croft naked - what with her being a wire-frame character who inhabits cyberspace and all.

Well, from the look of a number of the games magazines that have carried Lara as their cover star, this sense of bewilderment is not felt in editorial meetings.

As you can see (left) Lara has featured in all sorts of provocative poses from bikini-clad to tantalisingly "exposed". But, officially, she has always retained her dignity.

In fact, she's gone from strength to strength without having to flaunt her funky stuff. She is, after all, an action heroine not a posing bimchette.

(Above) German rock band, Die Ärzte who featured Lara in the video for their Number 1 hit.



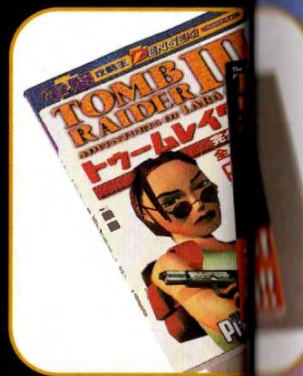
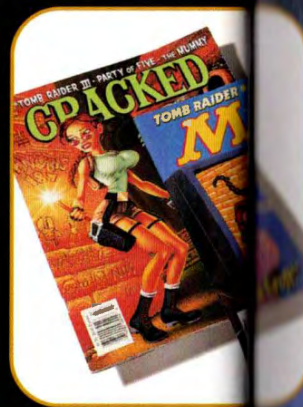


Lights! Camera! Croft!

It's all about making the right decisions...

Once you're a star, you're public property and sooner or later you end up everywhere at once.

No wonder our heroine gets the occasional urge to visit unusual countries and put herself in life-threatening situations. You'd probably feel the same way if everywhere you turned, there you were. Still, getting the message to the public does matter.



(Above) Tooling around the place in a classy little, eco-sympathetic motor let the *Tomb Raider* designers really enjoy creating new action for Lara. Shame you could only see it if you lived in France or Germany, though.

The movie, the myth and the mega-million deal!

Yes, what you've been waiting for, *Tomb Raider: The Movie*. Well you're going to have to wait a little bit longer – quite possibly all the way into 2000 since no casting decisions have yet been made, although rumour has it that the script has now been finalised.

The history of videogame-movie tie-ins has been, shall we say, patchy. This is why Lara's advisors at Core are being very, very², very³ careful before releasing any information regarding the forthcoming cinematic excursion – all the information we do have starts on page 18.

Tomb Raider has always been about quality, consistent style and immersive action, Core is aware of this. So, while we can speculate on stars, script and setting; patience is the way to go.



TOMB RAIDER: THE MOVIE

STARRING: LARA CROFT, PAMMIE HURLEY, SHARON MOORE, KATE MINOGUE, DEMI PALTROW, UMA WINSLETT*

DIRECTED BY: AKIRA ANTONIONI & RAINER WERNER WOO PRODUCED BY: WINSTON SCREENPLAY BY: PENNY NAME

WATCHED BY: MILLIONS OF LARA CROFT FANS, ALIENS FROM UNKNOWN PLANETS, US

MUSIC BY: THE PETCLUB-7 BROTHERS, WAGNER & RONI STEPPES

*SUBJECT TO CONTRACT, CONFIRMATION AND SANITY

"I'd tattoo PaRappa on my butt. But no, I'd never dress up as Lara Croft."

They've had a sneak preview of *The Last Revelation*, and they already know far too much about Lara's previous outings. We talked to Aleks Krotoski, Emily Newton Dunn and Emily Booth, the presenters of Channel 4's *Bits* computer game show, about all things Lara.

So what appeals to you about *Tomb Raider*?

Aleks: I'm always curious about what's going to happen next, in the games, in the franchise and most of all with Lara. Will she go the way of Gail Porter and pose nude on the House of Commons? Will she grow leg hair and become a feminist icon? Will she sag when she's older?

ED: Originally, for me it was the female character, off exploring in an action adventure. Until Lara there had been very few strong female characters.

EB: For me it's the fact that the adventures are hugely deep. They're all quite cinematic, and the new one looks like it's going to be even more so. I think that's

She kicks American butt. She is Cool Britannia. God Save The Queen!

Why is it do you think that Lara attracts so many female fans?

A: She's doing what chicks in the media have wanted to do for ages. The 1950s' Girl Fridays could pretend to do it all without a man, but Lara's the first to follow through.

EB: She gets respect from women because she's her own person – she's independent.

And what do you think of the fans that go to such great lengths to emulate her – dressing up in her outfits, having Lara tattoos and so on?

A: They'll look back and laugh.

EB: Yeah, but it is ridiculous how obsessive people can get. The people that turn up on daytime TV shows for instance. Mad, that people can fancy a pile of zeros and ones.

And what's the weirdest lengths you'd go to in homage to a video game character?

Taking Lara to Bits

We find out what three real women think of the world's most famous virtual girl. Welcome Emily, Aleks and Emily...

important for getting people into the game.

Do you have a favourite TR game?

A: The first one. It's got the best plot, the best action and the smallest bust.

ED: Same here. Number one is still the most fresh in terms of gameplay. I'm hoping that we'll see similar issues addressed in *The Last Revelation*.

And a favourite in-game moment?

A: The ending of the first with the big legless beastie is the most rewarding moment. The thing reminded me of my sixth-grade math teacher. It was pleasure to destroy that memory. Call it catharsis.

ED: Again, from number one, but for me it was that bit when she climbs out of the mummy's head and there's that panoramic scene in front of her. It's breathtaking.

What do you think people find so appealing about Lara Croft?

EB: She's got enough personality for people to get addicted to her, which is unusual. She's almost the post-feminist woman.

ED: I think a lot of people were attracted to her because she was such an exciting and innovative character. She was really cool.

A: Yeah, she was cool, but her games are good, too. She's a saucy lady. She's English.

Would you consider stepping into Lara's boots and shorts?

A: I'd tattoo PaRappa on my butt. But no, I'd never dress up as Lara Croft.

ED: Absolutely not!

What's the strangest thing you've ever had to do in your career in videogames?

ED: There've been so many.

A: We had to dress in Y-fronts and prance about in front of the camera. Then we had to sign them as a prize. That was ridiculous.

EB: The Y-fronts thing was my first *Bits*. We'd just done a 19-hour day, it was 3am, and I had to wear Y-fronts, tights, big boots, a helmet and cloak. I think I was supposed to be some kind of comic-book superhero.

If you could set a *Tomb Raider* game anywhere, where would you set it?

A: The New York Subway's a pretty strange place. There are some nasty old characters and drunken relics down there.

ED: Space!

EB: Yeah! It's time she went intergalactic.

The *Bits* 'Lara Special' airs on Tuesday 28 December 1999, at 6pm on Channel 4. *Bits* the series will return Thursday 13 April 2000. Check out the Web page at www.channel4.com/4later.

From left, Emily Newton Dunn, Emily Booth and Aleks Krotoski.

Meet the fans

For some people, Lara Croft is more than just a character in a game; she's an inspiration. Her strong personality means that people don't need to be prompted to emulate her – they're already doing it in their thousands.

Lara Croft is a remarkable woman, and not just for her agile stunts and drop-dead gorgeous looks. She stands out among videogame characters for the way that her personality attracts just as many fans as her more obvious physical attributes. For every Lara fan attracted to her feminine wiles, there's another who's inspired by her strength of character. She is, perhaps, unique as a role model for a generation of gamers. She's the first truly independent female character to grace our screens, and has enough personality to ensure that she's stayed in the number-one spot.

Videogames have always inspired devotion. Ever since a certain Italian plumber gained a higher recognition factor than Mickey Mouse among a generation of Americans, this new medium has had plenty of characters with star quality. But what is it about Lara Croft, English gentlewoman, and spinster of

this parish, that makes her the biggest star of all? To find out what's truly special about Lara Croft, there's no-one better to ask than the fans themselves. These aren't the obsessive computer geeks of legend, these are day-to-day people, who feel that their lives have been changed by the *Tomb Raider* series of games. The ways that fans express their appreciation and love of the character are as different as the people themselves. The one thing they all constantly refer to is the feeling of empowerment that they get from adopting Lara Croft as a role model.

Whether you've played all the *Tomb Raider* games, or whether *The Last Revelation* is your first Lara revelation there's something in the world of Lara fandom for you. It doesn't matter if you're male or female, school-age or pensionable, married or single, tech-savvy or computer illiterate, if you love Lara, you'll never find yourself alone.



The theme of dressing to recreate the character of Lara was the focus of a major advertising campaign, when the 'Are you sure you want me to wear this?' adverts for *Tomb Raider III* were released in the UK. Not featuring Lara as herself, instead the adverts focused on fans' interest in the character – a first in British videogaming history. By this time Lara was so strong that she didn't need to appear in her own advertisements.

Dressed to kill

In Japan, the true hardcore gamers are known as 'Otaku', and these Otaku go to great lengths to emulate their stars, dressing up in costume, holding parties and entering quizzes to find out who has the greatest in-game knowledge. To us reserved Brits, of course, such lengths might initially seem a touch excessive, but when it comes to Lara Croft our enthusiasm for the character knows no limits.

Ever since the launch of the "Are you sure you want me to wear this?" advertising campaign for *Tomb Raider III* (pictured above), the thought of dressing up

"She looks after herself. It's good to have a role model like that."

as their heroine has obviously not been too far from the minds of an awful lot of people. Lately, fancy-dress parties across the nation have been swamped with Crofts.

But why do people want to dress like Lara Croft?

"Well, she's an undeniably sexy character," said the first woman we spotted hovering around the poster announcing *The Last Revelation* in Electronics Boutique. "But there's obviously so much more to her. She clearly doesn't take any rubbish from people. She can look after herself, too. It's good to have a role model like that in videogames which usually show muscle-bound men rescuing hopeless romantics."

"Certainly if she was as ugly as sin then people probably wouldn't dress like her – I know I wouldn't – but I don't think it's just her looks that attract people. She's a genuine heroine, in an age when there aren't enough of them around."

So you don't ever worry that people who dress up are just pandering to the obsessions of impressionable adolescents?

"If I was dressed as Lara? Are you kidding? With those big boots and guns? All I think I'd feel is powerful. And, of course, a bit chilly, since it's heading towards Christmas. Seriously, though, I don't think the women I know would mind being associated with her image, because – however good she looks – she's so much more than a sex object."

This is obviously a view shared by many of the hundreds of people who entered a competition in the *Official UK PlayStation Magazine*, hoping to be chosen as one of the UK's best Lara lookalikes. The winners are pictured below, and what's really telling is the spread of people who were attracted to take part. With such an obvious age gap between the youngest and the oldest, it's clear that there're a lot of people out there who wouldn't mind being in Lara's boots.



Name: Natalie Fox
Fact: Gloves, guns, and the right attitude. This girl's got it all.



Name: Lucy Spencer
Fact: Lucy has the athletic figure that all good heroines need. Lara wouldn't approve of those blue laces, though.



Name: Heather Hawkins
Fact: Only 11, Heather needs her parents consent to fight wild animals and swim through caves.



Name: Rebecca Ransome
Fact: A strong favourite, Rebecca has taped masking tape round her thighs – an ingenious accessory.



Name: Elena Sansivien
Fact: With her taste in interior design, Elena has to wear shades at all times. Great gun, though.



Name: Richard
Fact: A strange Richard was new to the other boys.



Name: Ospina Rosnagoose
Fact: From Ireland, Ospina is reading archaeology and growing her hair.



Name: Linda Harris
Fact: Another favourite, Linda wields her lightgun with supreme confidence. She needs to sort some holsters, though.



Name: Danielle Smith
Fact: A little star, Danielle's time is still to come we believe. She'll grow in to those socks in a few years.



Name: Chloe Bennett
Fact: More Indiana Jones than Lara Croft in the fashion stakes, Chloe nevertheless looks good with a gun.

Getting it right

Imitation may be the sincerest form of flattery, but good imitation is the sign of a true fan. You can't just pull on a crop top and cut-off combats and expect to look ready to swing into action. If you really want to emulate videogaming's greatest heroine, you need to put in a lot of preparation, but you also need to have the right attitude. Lara is independent, strong-willed, single-minded and brave. If you don't stand tall and hold your gun like you mean it, then you're just not going to cut it.

It's care and preparation that makes the pictures taken by Chuck Brite of his wife AJ very special.

Chuck and AJ spend hours recreating the costumes of a woman they see as, not a sex symbol, but a true heroine. They're careful about the locations of their pictures, and they always ensure that the poses AJ uses will give a powerful end result. AJ always looks strong, capable and in control – the qualities people look for in the real Lara Croft.

If you want to take great Lara pics like these, then you must see Chuck and AJ's guide at <http://network.ctimes.net/cb/lara/larapics.html>. It's packed with all the advice you need.



My Valentine – the winners
Core Design and Eidos ran a competition to see who could write the best poem to serenade Lara on St Valentine's Day. Here are just two of the best entrants.

Lara The Great

'Twas almost three years since you first crossed my path,
With two guns a'blazing you echoed your wrath,
Your curvy physique is a sight to behold,
You're a slender genius of stories untold,
An elegant beauty who fights like a lion,
Lara Croft champion of the mystical Scion.
Your move through the water with effortless ease,
You swing from the rooftops like a high-bar trapeze,
A leaf on the wind as you fly through the air,
You're a virtual gazelle with long auburn hair,
A London-born girl whose looks always stagger,
Lara Croft conqueror of the Xian Dagger.
You're endless adventures you never give in,
The power of women from a greatness within,
A true hero from London of international fame,
A small piece of history which now you can claim,
The best of the lot you now firmly crown,
You're Lara Croft defender of the Meteor down.

Steve Wilkinson
Dorset

Dear Lara...

We've shared many adventures,
We've travelled around the world,
From the heights of the Himalayas,
To the depths of the deep blue sea.
And though you live your life alone,
I've always been here for you.
I've seen the rhythmic movements
as you leap,
The chanting of the gun,
And when you feel the bite of the
Arctic winds,
I'm here to keep you warm.
Whether you train on your course at home,
or leap across the Ganges,
If you wear your wetsuit,
or the flight jacket you do,
I feel like you are the only one,
Who can understand what I do.
My love for you is eternal,
Never let me go,
For only I can keep up with you,
I hope you love me so.

David J Sutherland
Glasgow

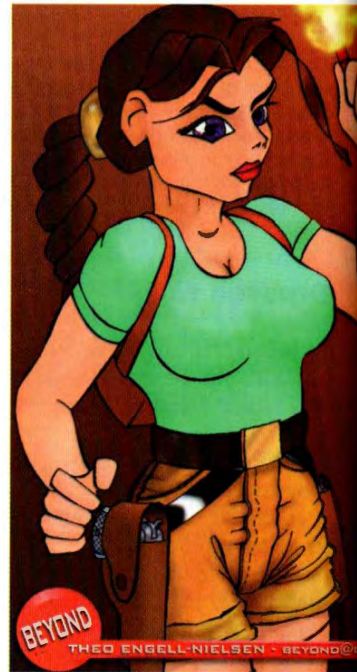
Fantasy art

With loads of thanks to The Croft Times, The Tomb Raider Archive and Tomb Raiders.com (see page 90-91 for these Web site URLs) we present a tiny portion of the fan-art available.

As you can see from these creations, Core Design is never going to be short of graphic wizards to keep the Tomb Raider legend alive, well into the future. Why not seek out one of the many fan sites on the Web and send in your own masterpieces for others to see?

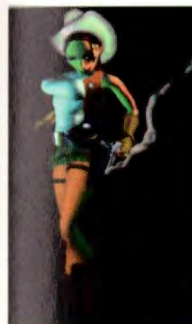


(Above)
By Dan Matansh



(Right)
By Theo Engell-Nielsen

(Below)
By Brian Peddicord



(Left)
By Kate (no second name, eh "Kate"?)



(Left)
By Vincent Radford

(Right)
By Robert DeJesus



(Right)
By Keith Short



Positive postings

Like any star, virtual or otherwise, Lara receives a vast amount of fan mail. Her fans however, seem to be some of the most positive people ever to put pen to paper. Maybe Lara attracts this kind of up-mail, maybe she just got lucky. Whatever the reason, this kind of response is always welcome. You can make up your own mind when you've looked over some of these genuine letters:

Hi there Lara,
I think that what you're doing for women, including yourself, is great.

You just go out there and do your thing, no one to tell you where to go, what to do, when you can do it, or when they want you around!

It just goes to show, if you want something enough, no matter what it takes, you will get it whether you're male or female. You only have to look at yourself and the way you live to see that.
Charlotte Turton,
England

Hi Lara,
I love you for your great strength of character and your amazing ability to be free from the shackles of normal, everyday life.

When I accompany you in your adventures, I can take part in that exiting and fantastic life, too.

Thank you very much.
Markus Ilonen,
Finland

Dear Lara,
I think you are a wonderful digital person. I only hope that someday I'll be half as beautiful, daring, and adventurous as you are. May you and I one day find a perfect date.

Your admirer,
Jamaica

Dear Lara,
I have to ask this. You are not going out with Bond or Turok are you? Because if you are, I am positively sure you will have to teach them a thing or two before they become anyway near as tough and as cool as you.

Sincerely,
Darren,
West Sussex

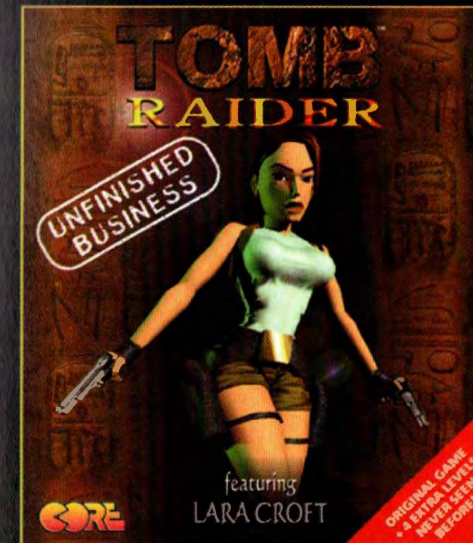
PREMIER COLLECTION

1 DEMAND SUPERIOR QUALITY



AT A SPANKING PRICE!

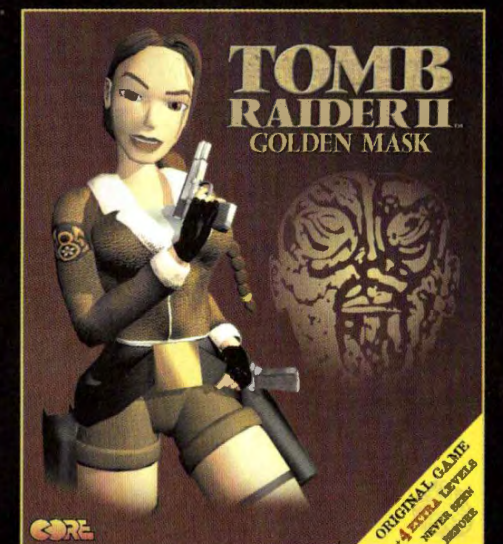
PREMIER COLLECTION



EIDOS



PREMIER COLLECTION



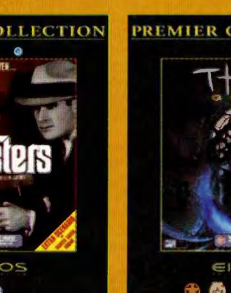
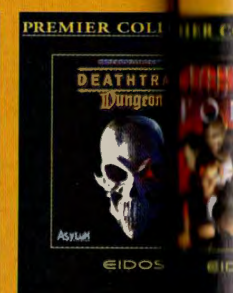
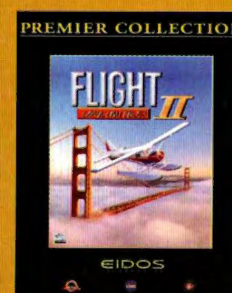
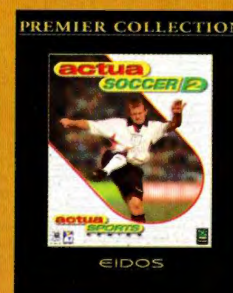
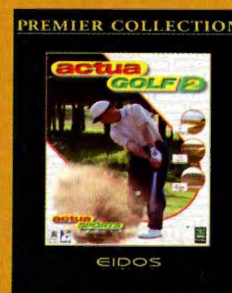
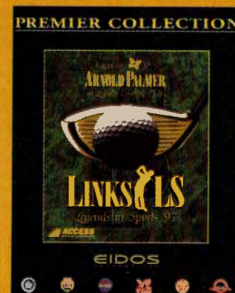
EIDOS



FREE INTERNET ACCESS
FREE, FAST INTERNET ACCESS FOR GAMERS*
*UK ONLY eidosnet.co.uk

EIDOS
INTERACTIVE
www.eidos.com

The Eidos mid-price range is available from all good computer game retail out

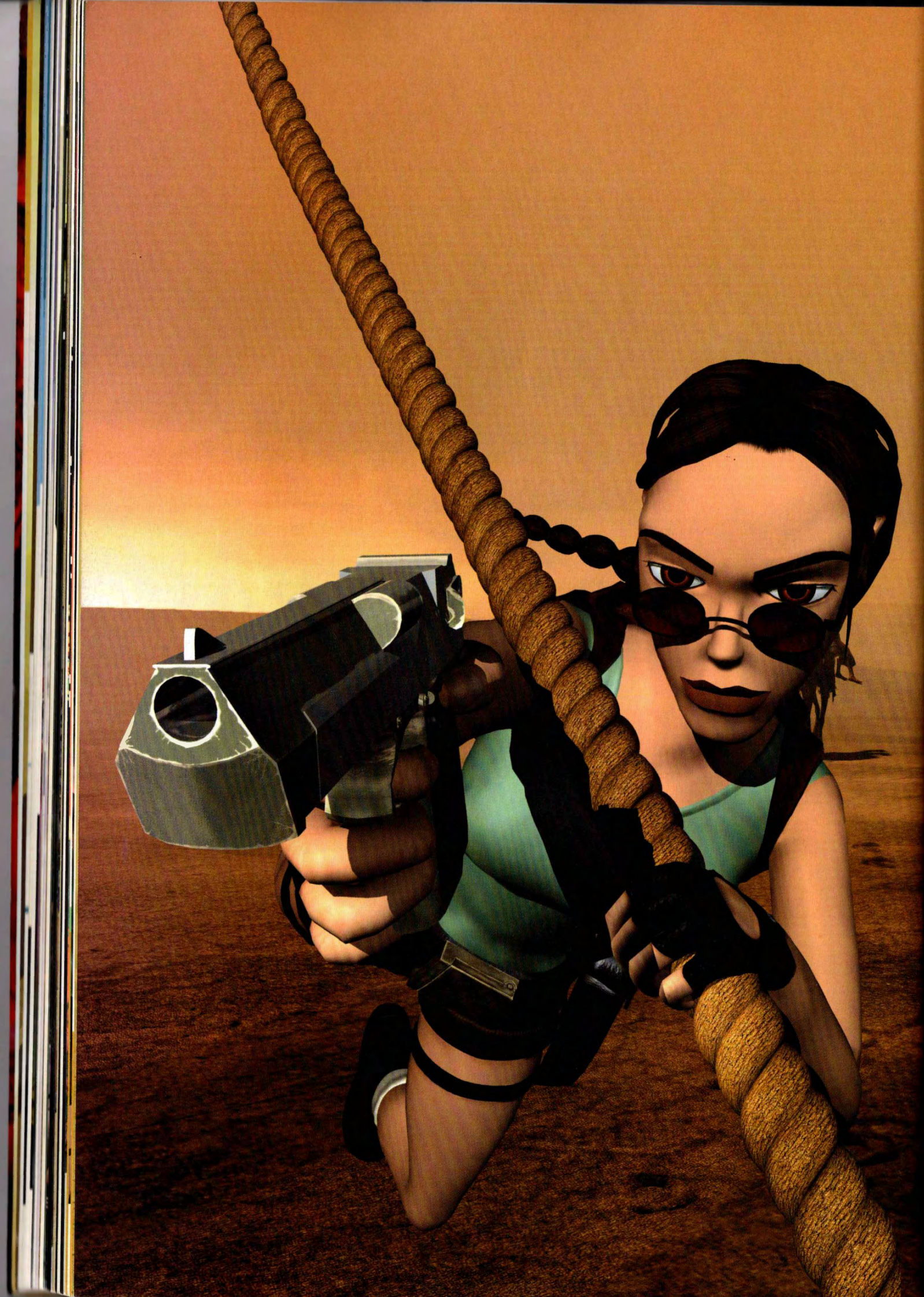


Championship Manager™ All Rights Reserved. Developed by Sports Interactive Limited. Gangsters: Organized Crime. © Hothouse Creations Limited 1998-99. Thief Gold © Looking Glass Studios 1999. Thief and the Looking Glass logos are the property of Looking Glass Studios. © & Published 1997-99 Eidos Interactive Limited. All rights reserved. Premier Collection © 1999 Eidos Interactive Limited. All rights reserved. Flight Simulator II © & TM 1997 Looking Glass Technologies, Inc., Fighting Force © and TM 1997 Core Design Limited. © 1999 Eidos Interactive Limited. All rights reserved. Deathtrap Dungeon™ is a registered trademark owned by Ian Livingstone and is used with permission. © 1997 Grenin Interactive Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Actua® is a registered trademark of Grenin Interactive Ltd. All rights reserved. Published 1999 by Eidos Interactive Limited.

Thief: The Dark Project © Core Design Limited 1999. Tomb Raider II & Lara Croft™ Core Design Limited. © & Published by Eidos Interactive Limited 1999. All rights reserved. Tomb Raider: Unfinished Business © Core Design Limited 1998. Tomb Raider & Lara Croft™ Core Design Limited. © & Published by Eidos Interactive Limited 1998. All rights reserved. All trademarks are the properties of their respective owners.









Body double

Over the last three years, four very different women have worked as Lara Croft's lookalike. The one thing they have in common? They're all drop-dead gorgeous.

Name: Lara Weller

Time as Lara: April '99 to present

The current Lara lookalike, Lara W was born in Holland and is 24 years old. You may previously have seen her in *GQ* and *Men's Health*, and working for Fiorelli.





Name: Nell McAndrew

Time as Lara: May '98 to April '99

Before her year representing Lara, 24-year-old Nell worked for Adidas, Next, Jockey and Babysham, as well as playing Neil Morrissey's body double!

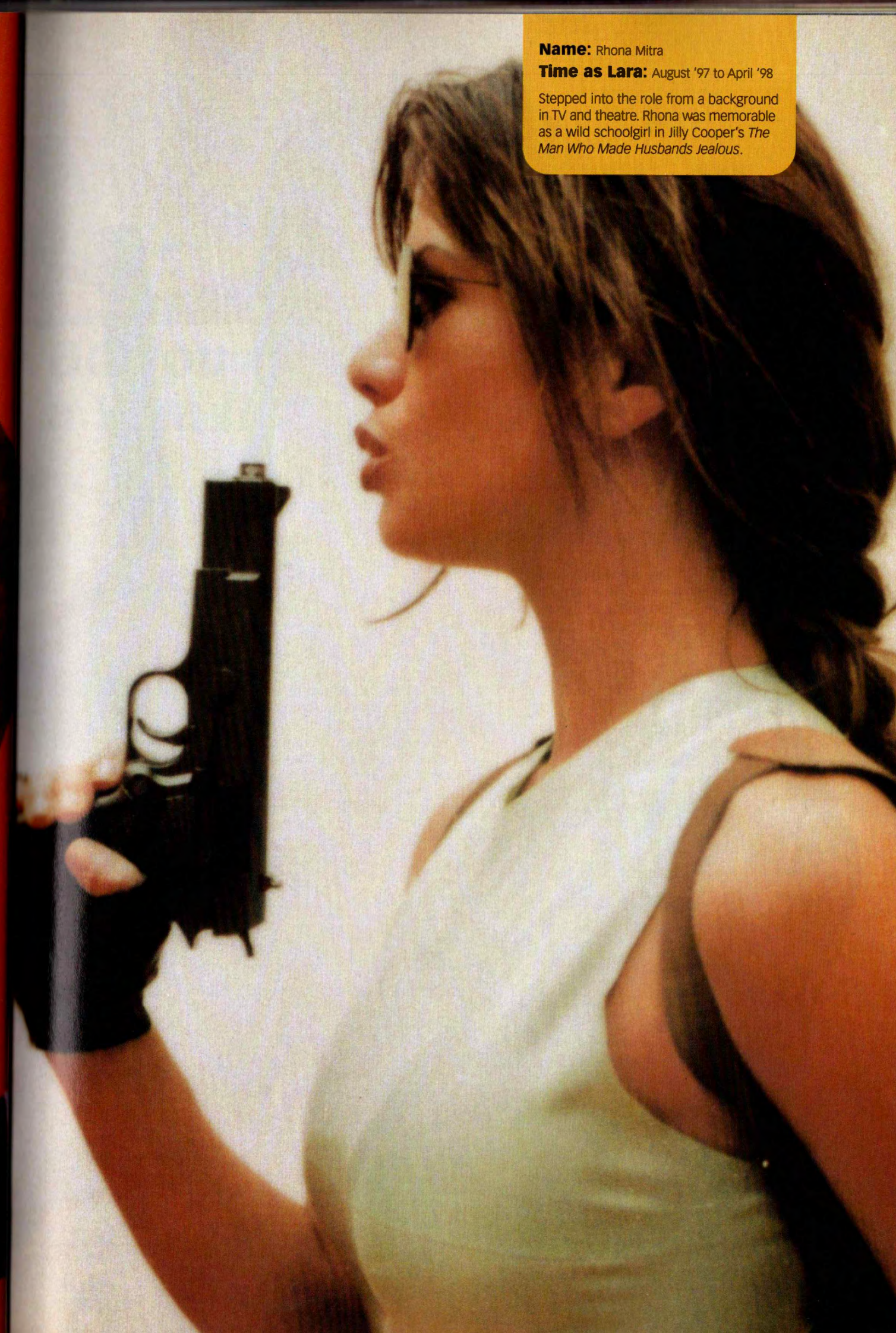




Name: Rhona Mitra

Time as Lara: August '97 to April '98

Stepped into the role from a background in TV and theatre. Rhona was memorable as a wild schoolgirl in Jilly Cooper's *The Man Who Made Husbands Jealous*.



Name: Natalie Cook

Time as Lara: January '97 to July '97

Dubbed 'The Croft Original' by *The Mirror*, Berkshire-born Natalie (23) was the first woman brave enough to step into Lara Croft's boots.



Do you think there might be a Lara-like in your life?

Glance at the previous pages and it's clear that the world is full of women who look like Lara Croft. But how do you tell if you have the real Lara in your life? It's time to ask questions...

You love her. You might like to kiss her. You might like to take her home to meet your mum. You might even like to marry her. Mrs Lara [insert your surname here]. It's got a pretty nice ring to it, hasn't it?

Unfortunately, the only snag is that she isn't real. Oh, she's got nice eyes, and long, sleek legs. And what a figure! But she doesn't actually exist. Lara Croft is a made-up fictional character. It's time to face it – you're never actually going to get to go out with her.

Hey! Come back! We understand that psychologically this could be quite a blow to you but there is an alternative. Lots of girls have nice eyes, nice legs and nice figures. Some girls even have eyes, legs and figures that are nice in the same way as Lara's.

And of course, it's not just looks that count. Oh no. Lara Croft has bags of

personality (and – for once – we mean 'personality' in the sense of 'personality', not "Phwoar! Look at the personality on that!")

She likes a challenge. She's a bit of a tomboy. She likes, er, raiding tombs. Maybe, after all, that girl you've had your eye on has more in common with Ms Croft than meets your love-filled eye. In an ideal world, maybe you're already going out with that girl you previously had your eye on before you plucked up the courage to wander over and say "Hi".

In which case, you'll already have a girlfriend, and perhaps you just don't appreciate her for what she is. Or, worse still, you have a girlfriend, and don't realise that, perhaps, she's more like Lara Croft than you first thought. Either way, it's about time you bit the bullet and found out.

The questions

1) What colour are your girlfriend's eyes?

- (a) Blue.
- (b) Brown.
- (c) Green.

2) You are both invited to a fancy dress party. What is she most likely to wear?

- (a) A Toga.
- (b) A small green top, brown shorts, white socks, brown boots and a gun holster.
- (c) A black split dress. And two machine guns.

3) Around the house, she likes to keep her hair out of her eyes by tying it:

- (a) Into bunches?
- (b) Into a long ponytail?
- (c) Her hair is too short to tie up?

4) Can she drive:

- (a) A car?
- (b) A car, a quad-bike and a jeep?
- (c) A car, a quad-bike, a jeep, a jetski, a motorbike, and anything she comes across?

5) Her name is:

- (a) Laura?
- (b) Lara?
- (c) Neither?

6) What did she do last night?

- (a) Back flipped from the coloured wall to the lattice, climbed up the ladder, leant to the left, killed the ninja, pulled the box, found the secret, jumped to the rocks from where the box sat,



"Mmmm, interesting, now, tell me all about your childhood..."





jumped to the deep crevasse, turned around, jumped into the cave and followed the passage to discover the Gold Dragon.
(b) Stayed in to watch a documentary on BBC2 about archaeology.
(c) Stayed in to wash her hair.

7 Her measurements could best be described as:
(a) 34D/24/35?
(b) 30A/26/32?
(c) 32C/28/38?

8 If you type her name into a search engine on the Internet, you get:
(a) No hits?
(b) A couple of hits relating to other people who happen to have the same name?
(c) Over 30,707 Web pages top chose from?

9 What are the chances of ever actually getting to see her naked?
(a) 100%.
(b) 50%.
(c) 0%.

10 You're about to book your summer holiday together. Is she most likely to be browsing the brochures for:
(a) Two weeks fun in the sun?
(b) A stay in Egypt with ample opportunity to explore the ruins?
(c) Butlins?

11 Where was she brought up?
(a) In the secure world of the aristocracy, surrounded by servants, social events and high society, attending Wimbledon High School for Girls from the age of 11 years, and studying for her A' levels at one of the UK's most prominent boarding schools.
(b) In a loving, friendly family environment –

complete with budgie, hamster and gerbil (Mr Snuffles) – where, in fact, she still lives now.
(c) By a pack of wolves.

12 Her favourite drink is:
(a) Archers and lemonade?
(b) Redbull and vodka?
(c) Lucozade?

13 What is she most likely to have tucked away in her handbag?
(a) Lipstick, tissues, mirror, purse, mascara, receipts, notepad, Biro, chewing gum, hair brush, keys and assorted other nonsense.
(b) Shotgun shells, crossbow bolts, Uzi tracer bullets, grenades (standard, smoke and stun), batteries, torch maps, artefacts, baked beans and assorted other nonsense.
(c) Chocolate.

14 She doesn't get on with:
(a) Most of your friends?
(b) Anyone who is rude to her?
(c) Mummies, skeletons, wraiths, sphinxes, giant scorpions and beetles?

15 When out together, you spend most time staring at her:
(a) Face?
(b) Back?
(c) Bottom?

16 Can she:
(a) Open doors?
(b) Climb ropes; shimmy round corners; kick, shoulder-barge, crowbar or open doors; open trapdoors; search bodies on the ground?
(c) Climb, grab and swing on ropes; shimmy round corners; kick, shoulder-barge, crowbar or open doors; open trapdoors; search bodies on the ground and do anything any human being can do?

Score count

- 1 (a) 0 (b) 5 (c) 2
- 2 (a) 0 (b) 2 (c) 5
- 3 (a) 2 (b) 5 (c) 0
- 4 (a) 0 (b) 2 (c) 5
- 5 (a) 2 (b) 5 (c) 0
- 6 (a) 5 (b) 2 (c) 0
- 7 (a) 5 (b) 0 (c) 2
- 8 (a) 0 (b) 2 (c) 5
- 9 (a) 0 (b) 2 (c) 5
- 10 (a) 2 (b) 5 (c) 0
- 11 (a) 5 (b) 2 (c) 0
- 12 (a) 0 (b) 2 (c) 5
- 13 (a) 0 (b) 5 (c) 2
- 14 (a) 0 (b) 2 (c) 5
- 15 (a) 0 (b) 2 (c) 5
- 16 (a) 0 (b) 2 (c) 5

So how did you score?

0 – 30

Bad news we're afraid. Your girlfriend sounds about as much like Lara Croft as Rolf Harris. It's no fault of her own, so don't blame her. Perhaps Lara Croft is best left as a fictitious character for you to enjoy when your special lady isn't around. Would you really want to be going out with someone that (not who) other people see as a not-really-real set of pixels anyway?

31 – 60

Hey! Looks like your girlfriend has more Lara-esque tendencies than you first thought. Of course, she's probably unaware if it herself, but perhaps the opportunity is there for

you to subtly suggest that maybe she would look good if she grew her hair long, bought some boots and went on that adrenaline sports holiday she's been on about.

61 – 80

Um, hello? What are you worrying about? Your girlfriend is Lara Croft! Well, as near as damn it. Be careful not to abuse your situation, though. Lara, or whatever your girlfriend is called, is a sensitive girl deep down, and just wants to be loved. So next time you see her, give her a big cuddle and tell her how much you love her. Just be careful that she doesn't shoot you in the back the minute you try to leave the house.

VIOLENCE IS THE FIRST ARTICLE OF MY FAITH

"...THIS IS LOOKING SWEET. THE VISUALS ARE LUSH, THE ACTION'S IN YOUR FACE AND IT'S MIGHTY TASTY TO PLAY..."

PLAYSTATION PLUS

"BE AMAZED BY THE LEVEL OF DETAIL AROUND YOU. THIS IS A FIGHTING FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH. A 200% IMPROVEMENT OVER THE ORIGINAL."

4/5 C&VG

FIGHTING FORCE 2



PlayStation screenshots shown here.

GO UNDERCOVER AS HAWK MANSON. THE GOAL IS SIMPLE: INVESTIGATE AND ELIMINATE. AS WEAPONS SPECIALIST AND CLOSE COMBAT EXPERT, YOU HAVE THE ULTIMATE IN KILLING TECHNOLOGY AT YOUR DISPOSAL. EVALUATE AND RESPOND WITH STEALTH, FIREPOWER OR SHEER BRUTE FORCE - WHATEVER IT TAKES. NO COMPROMISE. NO COME-BACK. LIVE WITH THE PRESSURE.



Fighting Force 2 © & TM Core Design Limited 1999. © & Published by Eidos Interactive 1999. All Rights Reserved. Sega, and Dreamcast are either trademarks or registered trademarks of Sega Enterprises, Ltd. © 1999 Sega Enterprises, Ltd. All Rights Reserved. "PS" & "PlayStation" are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

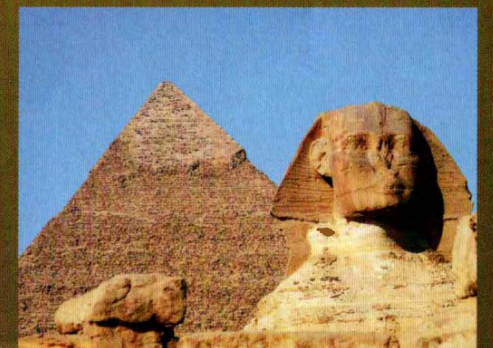
Silicon dreams

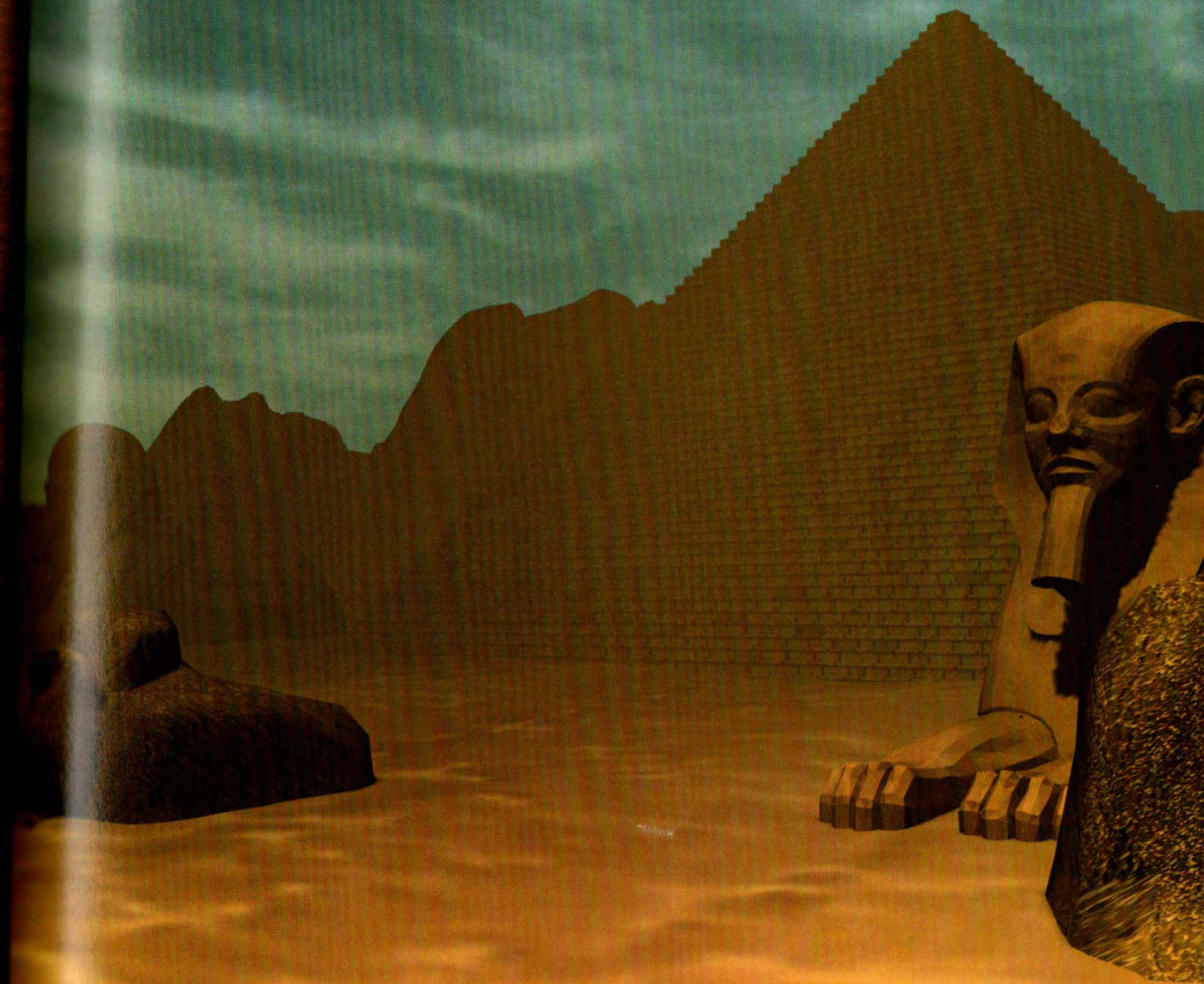
Just how true to life is *The Last Revelation* to the mysterious lands of ancient – and modern – Egypt? Whether you're looking at the sandy desert floor or the vast monuments, the answer is "very". Just take a look at these images from the new game, provided by the sons of the desert at Core Design.



As soon as you see *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation*, you'll be amazed at just how realistic the new Egyptian scenes are – even when blown up to the size of one of our magazine pages. In fact, if you take a look at the picture below, right, you'll notice that the image of one of Giza's pyramid's and the Sphinx from 'real life' somehow don't look as good as the render from the game.

The background graphics from *The Last Revelation* are really stunning stuff, and show just how realistic Core Design's games are becoming. Indeed, the newest riddle of the Sphinx seems to be: "Is it real or is it a screenshot from *The Last Revelation*?"





Female kickass characters have entered the daily lore of the western world. Lara's code name where I live is 'Violence Spice'.

Photo: Lehtikuvu/Rex Features

In his 1998 *Lara's Book*, Canadian author, Douglas Coupland switched his vision from the people who make games (see *Microserfs*, 1994) to the videogames his characters play.

Lara's Book is not only a tribute to all things Croftian (including a Lara-adventure story, *Air Tibet*), it also seeks to explore how *Tomb Raider* and Lara herself fit into a whole new world where games and 'cyber-personalities' are becoming as important as the media stars of old. Here Douglas explains his view of Lara and her impact.

How did you come to be involved with *Lara's Book*?

A good friend from a Vancouver gaming company (Radical... they're hot) knows somebody at Eidos. They got talking and that was that.

Can you summarise the appeal of Lara? Is she the future for the action-heroine – a kind of Ripley/Diana Rigg hybrid?

could have been a troll in *Tomb Raider* and it would still be a good game. But add her charisma, and it becomes a supergame.

With the *Tomb Raider* film currently in pre-production, would you considering turning your hands to the script?

If only the film industry worked as simply as that! I'd like to do the casting and I'd like Neve Campbell to be Lara, and if she couldn't do it, I'd ask Natasha Henstridge (*Species*) to do it in a wig.

In your story, *Air Tibet*, in *Lara's Book*, the influence is very much '50s pulp comics. Is this something you're genuinely interested in? Did you swap comics as a child?

I used to collect the old Disney comics illustrated and written by Carl Barks because they always involved grand adventures in exotic locales. And then I graduated into horror comics. By the thousand. And I still buy anything by Peter Bagge as well as anything from the Drawn & Quarterly family.

We have no free will...

Generation-X chronicler Douglas Coupland devoted an entire book to Lara Croft. Is he obsessed or on the button?

It's hard to imagine a Lara-like character emerging in the 1970s (when I was ten to 20). I mean, she just couldn't have happened then. Hard to believe now, but it's true.

So something has definitely changed in two decades. And I wonder if, yes, Sigourney Weaver as Ripley was first out of the mould. Well, that's academic. At the same time, look around the theatres and magazines and games and there are a thousand Rambo clones bouncing around and that's no big deal.

But suddenly there's a "Fembo", and it's front page news. So I guess we're in that interesting cusp period when female kickass characters enter the daily lore of the western world. Lara's code name where I live is 'Violence Spice'.

How much does wish-fulfilment play in the success of Lara? The image of gamers living their lives second-hand through on-screen exploits comes to mind.

Well, as any gamer will tell you, if a game sucks, it doesn't matter how famous the character is – a game always rests on its quality of experience. Lara

Can you see Lara lasting beyond the millennium or running out of steam?

I can't see her running out of steam, I think it's because the engineered quality of the game's experience always comes first. I sound like a PR flack from Disney World. But it's true.

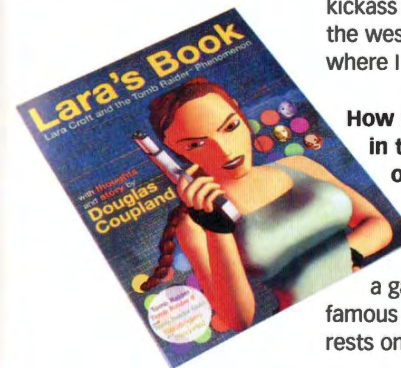
Action/adventures, beat-'em-ups, driving games, endless sequels... has the industry run out of ideas for games?

Nope. That's an alarmist chestnut that's always brought out about ten minutes before the Next Big Thing arrives.

A final word on Lara. She's put games on the front of style magazines, walked off into the sunset with Bono, has appeared in fiction and is currently heading towards the silver screen. Any predictions for the future – and will Doug Coupland be queuing at the counter?

I'm as curious as anyone to see how Lara's going to appear next. Face it – we have no free will in this situation...

Douglas Coupland was interviewed by Mike Goldsmith.



Yes, it's the book of the dame. For *Lara's Book* details head to www.primapublishing.com.



I want your job

How can you get into the games industry? What could you do? How do you start? Expert Maff Evans gets together with *The Last Revelation* team to bring you the answers...

Thanks to the mass marketing of Sony's PlayStation, there are two main types of gamers around these days. First there are the casual gamers – those who get home from the pub or work and play for about half-an-hour if they feel like it. Then there are the dedicated gamers – the ones who queue up on the morning the latest instalment in their favourite series is released; the ones who stay up all night to find that last jade dragon statue.

This latter portion of the gaming community all harbour one desire: no matter what age, what walk of life they come from, every single one of them wants to work in the videogames industry. Some may want to design games, some may want to produce graphics, some may want to write game music and some may just want to script the dialogue, but they all want to work *there* in some form.

Seeing as you're reading this magazine, the chances are that you're not one of the casual gamers, therefore thoughts about a job in 'the biz' must have crossed your mind once or twice. Well it's time to stop dreaming and get pro-active. We've come up with some

recommendations that could help you get on the road to a job in the games industry, and we've also got *The Last Revelation* team to tell us about their routes into the corridors of Core Design.

Level 1: Getting started

If there's one job that most ardent game fans want, it's to be one of the designers of a project. Richard Morton has that role on *The Last Revelation*. He's responsible for coming up with the devious puzzles and intricate environments that Lara will tackle in the latest *Tomb Raider* instalment. But what does his job actually entail?

"It involves scanning in textures from photographic reference and then applying

them to the room system," explains Richard, "Next I place all the enemies and traps within the area and also add the atmospheric lighting. Finally, I play through the whole design and check that it flows correctly."

Once you get past the game's flashy presentation, it's Richard's work that you become immersed in. And his work in *TRIII* earned him quite a reputation.

"The Nevada desert in *TRIII* received quite a lot of praise from the public," confesses Richard, but he doesn't want to rest on his laurels, "It was my best level, until the ones in *Last Revelation*."

He also admits that some previous designs weren't perfect, for

Get into games

There are various ways to get your foot into the door of videogame companies. The route you should choose is dictated by the type of job you want. Here are a few of the most successful methods, but remember that every job and every employer is different – you need to take elements from each to get where you want to go.

Just do it

The best way to prove you can do something is to actually do it and then make sure people notice. If you're a musician, for instance, write some tunes and put them into the public domain. These days that's easier than ever thanks to the proliferation of MP3 sites waiting to showcase new music.

Artists can get their stuff out there in the same way, with animation clips, images and models all distributed via the Internet. Do remember that you have to be professional about your goals and, as with many other jobs, a certain outlay is required before you can start producing stuff. You'll need a decent computer (so PlayStation owners had better start saving), and decent software can also be expensive.

If you want to become a programmer, you have a harder job on your hands, since you'll almost certainly have to produce a full demo to get the attention of the right people. Creating a graphics engine will get most people looking in your direction, but if you team up with others to produce a good (albeit limited) game, then you'll also get the chance to showcase some of your other programming skills. It's time to have words with your artist, musician and game-designing friends – why not collaborate to produce a polished all-round effort?

Related jobs

If you've got skills in areas not directly related to creating games, use them to slide your foot in the door. You don't necessarily have to aim straight for the top, instead why not try to get a job where there are prospects for promotion? In many big companies this means starting out in the play-test department (also called 'game-testing'). Testers play games to death and not just to try and win or complete them. They have to try as many stupid things as are possible in the game-world. Their task is to spot the kind of bugs that can destroy the reputation of a game and a company if they get published. With experience, testers can move on to other aspects of the game creation process – such as an assistant producer or full project management.

Artists and musicians can move into the field from other media (TV, film, radio). If you're determined to get into games, the experience you can gain in these seemingly more glamorous areas is invaluable.

Another popular route is via the press. If you can garner a massive working knowledge of what makes a game good, or can amass a solid background in a subject that relates directly to games then you will generate a good CV and win contacts in the business. Maff Evans, author of this article, worked on a variety of magazines for eight years before becoming a full-time games artist. His time served means that his CV shows a total of over 11 years industry experience, and he's still smiling. ▶

example, the Kayak level from *TRIII*. "Basically we were trying to do something totally different. The game engine was pushed to its limits and we just didn't have the time to make it great," he recalls ruefully.

Richard's interest in videogames goes way back – he started playing games on 8-bit machines like the Atari 2600, the Sinclair Spectrum and Commodore 64 in the '80s. Like many C64 owners, his first brush with games design was Sensible Software's *Shoot-'Em-Up Construction Kit*, before working for a real software company as part of his school's work experience programme.

"You should only do it if you don't mind your life going up in smoke and you're made of stone."

The level designer

Name: Richard Morton.
Job: Lead Level Designer.
Qualifications: O' level in Art and Design.

Time in the industry: Nearly 12 years.

Recognisable work: The first five levels of *The Last Revelation*.

Favourite game worked on: This one.

Favourite game (not by Core): *Half-Life*.

If you didn't work at Core what would you do? I want to design theme park rides, especially roller coasters. I'd love to be an "imagineer" for Disney or Universal.

Favourite thing ever: Islands of Adventure in Orlando. And *Star Wars*.

Interesting fact about yourself: I did an episode of *Rewind* for the BBC. It's a short program about people and their achievement throughout the last 100 years.



The animator

Name: Jerr O'Carroll.
Job: Animator.

Qualifications: Diploma in graphic design, worked at Don Bluth's Dublin studios (*Land Before Time*, *All Dogs Go To Heaven*).

Time in the industry: Long enough to know better!

Recognisable work: It's all got to complement the other pieces that make up the game.

Favourite game worked on: The first *Heimdall* game – it won a few awards, one of them being best graphics.

Favourite game (not by Core): The *Abe's* games – the graphics are simply stunning.

If you didn't work at Core what would you do? Writing. I've messed around with film scripts and kiddy books, and that'd be fun. I'd like to open a restaurant for my wife, and then sit back on a beach somewhere, with her and the kids.

Favourite thing ever: My family, no contest.

Interesting fact about yourself: My wife and I got married in the Seychelles on an almost-deserted little beach.



"The company was called Wise-Owl", he elaborates. "This experience decided my future as I was offered a full time job there. After about a year I left and moved to Hi-Tech software in Sheffield. Hi-Tech was a small budget software producer creating games using the Looney Tunes and Hanna Barbera characters."

About seven years ago, Richard moved up to the big league, taking a job at Core, which has enabled his creative flair to come to the fore. "Creative freedom is something that I really like about Core. Sure there's the odd thing that not everybody agrees on, but mostly it's pretty cool. The other more obvious thing is the money – we get paid well for doing something we love."

Despite the fact that games designers get to be creative, play games, design levels and generally have lots of fun while getting paid, there are still downsides to the job.

"The late nights toward the end of the project," states Richard, echoing the sentiment of many people in any media-related enterprise. "You must be prepared to work long hours and weekends – for the last two months of a game your life is the game. Thankfully the rewards are far greater than the sacrifices."

On the whole, Richard recommends working in the industry if you can, but admits that he has had a luckier time than many: "My start in the industry was fairly smooth, I was quite lucky to get a placement while I was on a YTS."

Level 2: Artful dodging

Thanks to the work of Core artists such as animator Jerr O'Carroll, the graphics in *The Last Revelation* are some of the best the series has yet offered. And this isn't just a matter of good looks, there is hard commercial sense in a pretty game face. The first thing anyone notices about a game is the way it looks. If the graphics don't leap from the page of a magazine review or the animation doesn't sparkle in a TV ad, then you're not selling your work.

After gaining a college diploma in graphic design, Jerr went on to work for Don Bluth's studio in Dublin where the company produced films along with the early Laser Disc games *Dragon's Lair* and *Space Ace*. This is where Jerr got his start in the world of animation. With Core, however, his job goes further than just creating cartoons. So what exactly does he do?

"It's tempting just to say 'animating', but it covers character design, texturing, modelling and the like." Although the visuals in *The Last Revelation* show Jerr's firm grasp of the fundamentals of game graphics, his route into the industry wasn't via the usual fan background.

"I went to art college because I didn't

know any better," he admits, "Then I got lucky and joined Bluth's studio. I heard of a games company near to where I come from [Waterford in Ireland], so I tried that. There's no great 'I saw such and such a great game, I've got to work in games' I just ended up doing it."

You might think that this kind of admission is tantamount to blasphemy to all game fans wanting to get into the business, but Jerr has paid his dues along the way. Being a cartoon animator is back-breaking work, and his subsequent employment was less than glittering.

"My first industry job was working for a small company called Emerald Software", Jerr recalls, "We worked on several games including the abysmal *Running Man* on the Amiga as well as the even worse *Moonwalker*. Truly terrible stuff"

While we're trotting out this sickening graphics' history, it's worth mentioning that Jerr is extremely grateful for the position he now holds, "Not many people get a chance to do what they genuinely enjoy day in and day out," he says. "At times it's serious hard graft, but it's really rewarding to see something you worked on start to come to life in the game, and it's a big buzz to walk into a shop and see your game on the shelves. The work can get very boring, repetitive and tedious, but that's where you have to knuckle down and slog it out."

The changing face of the games industry also means Jerr is a cagey about suggesting that people follow in his footsteps.

"It depends on their reasons for wanting to get in in the first place," he stresses, "There are lots of different jobs in the industry – it's certainly different from a few years ago. Now with it being so business-oriented, you might get as much satisfaction from being a sales rep as you would from actually making games."

That aside, what piece of advice would he offer to those seriously wanting to get into the business?

"Be careful who you work for."
Ah. And if you make the wrong call?
"Leave them."

Level 3: Programmed chaos

So that's the levels designed and the graphics created. Now this needs sticking together to produce a game, and the glue is provided by programmers like coder, Martin Gibbins, who introduces the team:

"I put in the graphical special effects; traps, puzzles and other odds and ends.

Also on graphics is Chris Coupe who puts in Lara's animations, puzzles, memory card stuff, plus even more odds and ends.

Derek Leigh Gilchrist puts in the new inventory system and cut-scenes, and has converted just about every C-code routine into R3000 machine



Get yourself an education

You've really got to have super-talent simply to walk into this highly competitive world. If you don't, then you must realise hard lesson Number 1: no company will be interested in you unless you have a basic education, so make sure you get a few exams under your belt. Once you've got some GCSEs in relevant subjects, your next step is to go on to college.

Should you be blessed with a knack for programming, you have a wide range of choices at universities and colleges across the country, but certain elements are going to be more useful than others. Programming linked to graphics, simulation systems, artificial intelligence and system networks are all going to be useful, since they can be plugged directly into game-writing skills.

Art has a wide canvas (sorry) as far as courses are concerned. Animation (particularly using computer systems) is good to include as part of your course, but other, more general, art skills are also desirable (you need to know about areas such as use of colour, lighting, photography and graphic design). If you're intending to be a concept artist, you may be better going for a degree in industrial design, which will give you a solid grounding in developing and presenting conceptual designs.

Surprisingly it's only in the past ten years that Music Technology has become a recognised course in colleges and universities. This is the subject to look for if you want to produce game sound. It's all very well being able to write and play music, but if you can't record, mix and engineer it in a form that's useful to game programmers, you're not going to get anywhere. Music and performing colleges are the best place to check for technology-led courses. If you're more interested in effects and speech, a course in broadcast media (which covers TV, film, theatre and radio) may be your best bet.

If you're hoping to work as a producer or project manager, you don't necessarily need the skills to produce an entire game, but you will need training in business management. You need to know how to organise schedules, budgets and how to liaise between various departments and companies. There are thousands of these courses, but one with an IT slant will offer information suitable for entering the games industry.

Recently a few courses have sprung up specifically linked to the creation and design of videogames. These cater for the fact that to produce a videogame you have to have more than the initial idea – you've also got to have varied and complex skill-sets to bring that idea to fruition. These courses touch on all the areas you'll need to be skilled in if you want to work with programmers, artists and other members of a full game team.

Of course you can

Whatever skills you want to acquire and whatever course you're looking for, the best starting place to find out about college education is the UCAS (University and College Admissions Service) Web site at <http://wwwucas.co.uk>. This offers links to courses and colleges and unis, as well as providing a handy search engine to find exactly the course you want.

You can also call UCAS on 01242 222444, but remember, they can't give you careers advice or help you decide which course to choose.

code (so he's basically responsible for the game running twice as fast as it ever has).

Richard Flower coded the rope and the cinematic camera systems, as well as coding the PC version. Martin Jensen coded the animation compression routines we use for the cut scenes, and Tom Scutt is responsible for the AI, as well as lots of other bits and bobs."

"I programme general behaviours for the enemies, like route finding, job selection, and so on," Tom Scutt elaborates. "Then I write individual code for every enemy. This links the animations together and gives each bad guy a 'personality'."

Tom and Martin's specialities show a different approach to coding, and indeed their routes into the industry were pretty different. Tom began with an interest in the philosophy of the mind, but as he puts it himself, "AI seemed to be where all the interesting stuff was going on in philosophy and psychology."

His next step was to write a program that could learn how to play a simple board game, "I think my future in AI was decided when it learned how to beat me at the game." He was a lecturer in AI for a while, but the lure of videogames forced him to translate his skills into something more game-tangible – it's a field that isn't always appreciated.

"One pitfall is thinking people will notice subtle touches. For example the monkeys at the start of *TRIII* will actually help you, and show you where switches and pick-ups are, but nobody noticed. People shot them as soon as they appeared!"

Martin's starting point was from the more traditional, game-fan angle, "I tried for several years to get into the games industry by writing games on the C64," he begins, "I sent loads to Mastertronic, Firebird and Hewson Consultants, but never quite got there."

After working in Leicester in the more mundane world of business programming, Martin wrote a game on the Atari ST called *Prensorium*. Some of the guys already working at Core saw it and mentioned it to MD Jeremy Heath-Smith.

"I phoned him every other day for two months," concedes Martin, "He finally gave in and gave me an interview."

Given that the work of programmers isn't always the key to fame in the games industry, would Tom and Martin suggest that you sharpen your coding skills and seek employment in this field? Of course, but they do add certain provisos: "You should only do it if you're willing to put up with the stress, you don't mind your life going up in a ball of smoke, and you're made of stone," Martin says.

"And you should have a high tolerance for coffee and junk food," adds Tom.

Level 4: Sound advice

How many people do you think play all their games with the music and sound turned off? Anyone? Well if you do, try turning it on and see how the atmosphere changes. Musicians are the artists responsible for adding that extra-special sense of atmosphere to a game. At Core, the person responsible for enhancing certain points of Ms Croft's adventures is Peter Connelly.

After dabbling with the school's Commodore Pet (a computer, not an animal), Peter worked for a company in Harrogate called Interactive Technologies Ltd, which folded, leaving Peter with some valuable experience to take to Core. However, the transition wasn't easy, and Peter had some hard work on his hands to get the job.

"Any musician in the industry will tell you it is extremely hard to get your foot in the door, and that musical vacancies are very rare,"

The coder

Name: Martin Gibbins.

Job: Programmer.

Qualifications: I've got a logical mind, a good memory and I can add up.

Time in the industry: Six and a half years.

Recognisable work: *TRIII* and *The Last Revelation*.

Favourite game worked on: *Asterix* and *The Great Rescue* on the Master System.

Favourite game (not by Core): *Captive* and *Microprose Golf* (Atari ST), *Formula 1 GP* (Amiga), *Mario Golf* (Game Boy).

If you didn't work at Core what would you do? I'd probably be a session drummer. If I could get good enough.

Favourite thing (anything) ever: Fave film is *The Matrix*, but the best thing that's ever happened to me is my son, Adam.

Interesting fact about yourself: My Mum and Dad were both extras in the film *Gladiator*.



The AI programmer

Name: Tom Scutt.

Job: Artificial intelligence (AI) programmer.

Qualifications: Degree in Philosophy and a PhD in Artificial Intelligence.

Time in the industry: Less than two years.

Recognisable work: I hope that people noticed the AI changes in *TRIII*. I'd like to think you'll recognise the skeletons in *The Last Revelation* as something a bit different.

And the scarabs – I think you'll enjoy those.

Favourite game worked on: This one.

Favourite game (not by Core): At the moment it's *Mario Golf* (Colour Game Boy). Of all time it's multi-player *Quake*.

If you didn't work at Core what would you do? Just at this moment, with a couple of weeks before *The Last Revelation* is finished, I would dearly love to do nothing.

Favourite thing ever: My girlfriend and my children.

Interesting fact about yourself: I can laugh like Sid James.



he points out. "When one does arise it's usually a case of one of the employees knowing someone who is a musician."

Despite opportunities being few and far between, Peter's perseverance paid off eventually, "I spent a lot of time and effort preparing demos, carefully typing CVs, anything that would give me the edge over other applicants," he says, before adding "One trick I learned was to find out as much about the company I was applying to as I possibly could, and then tailoring my demos to suit that company. I don't think I would have got a job at Core had I not put plenty of orchestral soundtracks on my demo CD."

Just being a talented musician isn't enough to get you by in the games business, though. There are all manner of other problems that don't usually trouble a musician, as Peter realised when he discovered the pitfalls in videogame work. So what concerned him?

"Basically, learning how it's all put together," he admits. "As a musician I could play piano and keyboards, and sample a few noises, but I found that's not all you need to create sound for a game. There are a lot of technical issues."

And how did he overcome these problems?

"Trial and error. It's a progressive learning curve."

So what would be Peter's ultimate advice for getting a foot in the door as a musician? "Join several agencies," he states, "Keep buying industry magazines to keep up with what is happening. And if you see a job opportunity, get your demo sent as soon as possible, because if a vacancy should arise it won't be there for long."

Final level: The Boss

With all this individual talent at every turn, a successful games company has to have someone who can tie it all together – and who can ensure that the longterm picture is in focus. Decisions about what game(s) should be worked on, what dates must be met, and which other companies make sense to the project(s). In the real world, things are still a tad more complex than that though, as Core's managing director Jeremy Heath-Smith points out.

"My job covers a multitude of sins, really," he explains, "in a single day you can find yourself doing anything from making tea to deciding which direction the company moves in."

Quite a spread of responsibilities then, and jokes aside, Jeremy pretty much is the man who decides what games get produced, for whom, by whom and when.

"I'm certainly involved in all the games that Core's working on," he continues, "I guess ultimately, if there's a game that

somebody wants to develop and I don't think it's right for the company to do it then I could say no, but that's very unlikely."

Jeremy's experience in videogames goes back a lot further than Core's 11-year history, having started working for Activision in the very early days of the Atari VCS.

"We were selling games like *River Raid* and *Pitfall Harry* and all those sort of things," he recalls. "I was a games player, saw a job advertised for sales guys selling computer games and thought, 'That sounds like a lot of fun'". (For a more in-depth look at Jeremy's role in the company, turn to page 18.)

So there you have (some of) it. The things to keep at the front of your mind are that the games industry is growing by the hour, that talent is always appreciated and that you have as much right to a job in 'the biz' as anybody. So get going!

The musician

Name: Peter Connelly.

Job: Musician/Audio Engineer.

Qualifications: OND and HND in Music Technology.

Time in the industry: Coming up to five years.

Recognisable work: I'd hope it's the music in *The Last Revelation*.

Favourite game worked on: Got to be *The Last Revelation*.

Favourite game (not by Core): *Zelda* (N64), followed closely by *Tony Hawk's Skateboarding* (PlayStation).

If you didn't work at Core what would you do? I'd like to own a garage selling quality performance and luxury cars.

Favourite thing ever: [Grins and mutters something about amateur dramatics outside Brian Tuck's house while playing the *Sin Min* music.] I've made a vow never to explain this one.



The top banana

Name: Jeremy Heath-Smith

Job: Managing Director

Recognisable work: Saying "Yes" to *Tomb Raider* in the first place.

Favourite game worked on: I've a huge soft spot for *Rick Dangerous*, actually.

Favourite game (not by Core): I'm a real nostalgia nut. I still play *Space Invaders* and I'm a huge *Quake* fan.

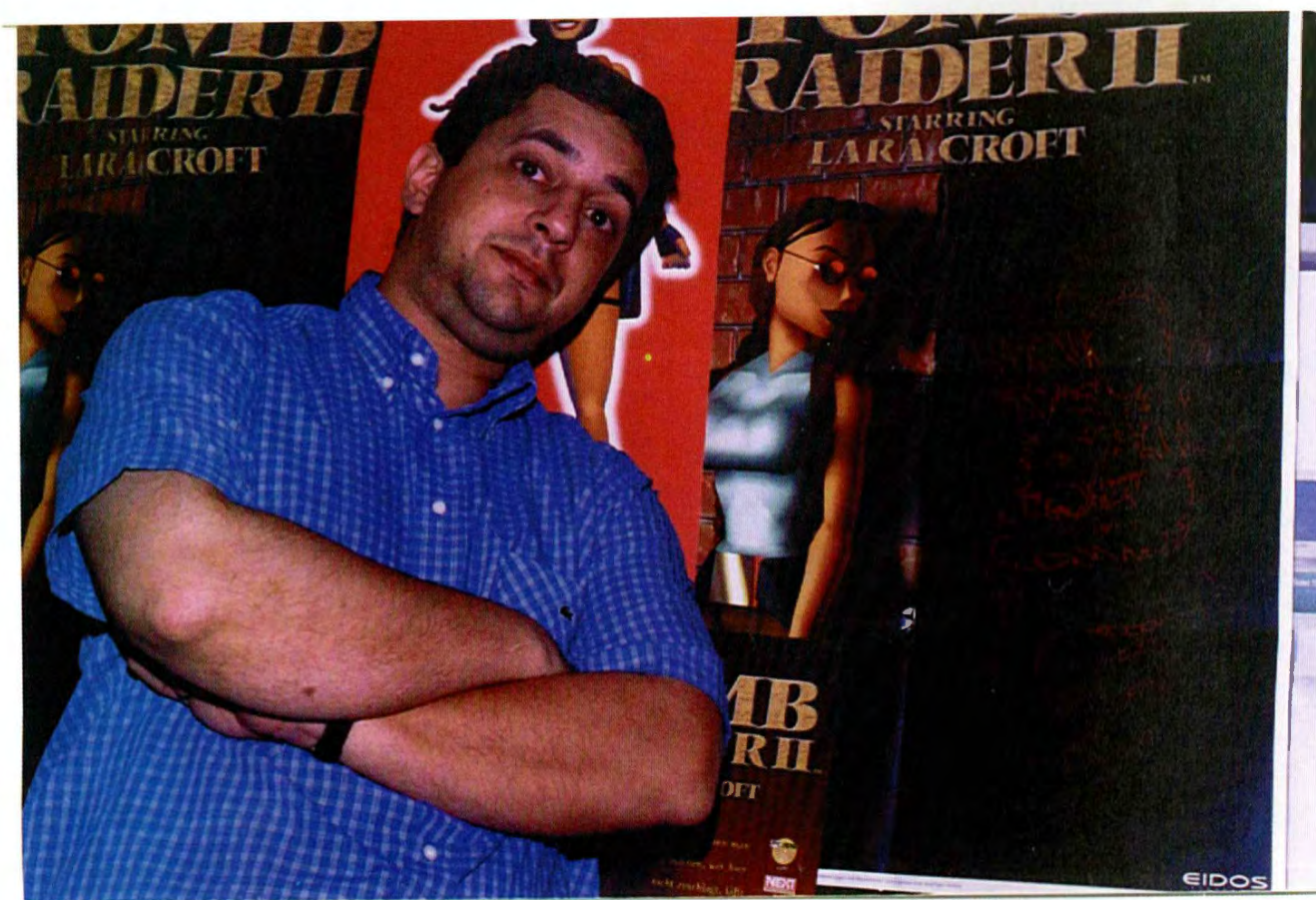
If you didn't work at Core what would you do? I'd probably like to be on a boat somewhere sailing around the world, just slumming. I could easily have just been a bum.

Favourite thing ever: It would have to be my family. Also that I've had the freedom to actually start the business and that people were prepared to listen to me and help set it up.

Interesting fact about yourself: I was going to be a professional trumpet player. I went to music college, but I realised there's no money in it!



THE CROFT TIMES



Not a man short of friends, Luis is regularly visited by upwards of 20,000 like-minded people every week. Pretty good for a 'hobby'.

5 June, 1997 saw the birth of Luis Cunha's Web site. Now it's the most popular in the world.

Hi, thanks for talking to us. So, what got you started on the Web site?

To be honest, I just wanted to show some of my Web-design skills to some customers (I've a small computer company that also does Web design), so I choose a theme I enjoyed. The idea of doing an on-line newspaper was also appealing.

Do you have a favourite TR moment?

Oh yes! My favourite moment, a feeling I will never forget, is when you get to the Lost Valley in the first *Tomb Raider* and that T-Rex comes marching towards you!

What are you particularly looking forward to about *The Last Revelation*?

I prefer the exploration and adventure side so hopefully, *The Last Revelation* will add more interaction, more tombs, more adventure and less shooting.

Are there changes that you hope have been implemented?

Mainly more interaction and better

hard-core who want to know all about *TR*, want to own every *TR*-related item, who always have loads of ideas for new in-game features.

Then there are the fans who just want more and more games to play, to explore, to have fun. There are the Lara fans, who would play or buy any game with Lara in it. There are a big group of female fans who look up to Lara as a role model.

There are what I call 'cooperative fans', who like to be part of a community; they draw pictures, write stories, write music. Of course that there are also fans who belong to two or more of these categories.

What I really enjoy about most fans, is that they (we...) form a very strong and loyal community. Many fans who enter this "universe" stay here.

What's the most obsessive behaviour you've ever witnessed from a fan?

Does spending almost every weekend in over two years producing a *Tomb Raider* Web site count?

Young Father Times...

Portuguese Webmeister, Luis Cunha, talks to us about the thriving community of Raiders attracted to his unofficial site.

integration between the game action and script. Previous games' scripts look more like an excuse to tie the levels together than a real story. Also, some levels – although well designed as independent game levels – include some things that just don't make sense as far as the script is concerned. Like having a zip line in an ancient Indian temple.

What would be your in-game wish-list?

Contrary to many *Tomb Raider* fans, I don't wish for sophisticated weapons – you don't explore an ancient tomb carrying an Uzi. I think vehicles should be used only if necessary in the flow of the game. I would love to see an aerial sequence, maybe with helicopters, though... I favour any new move that adds to the game atmosphere, making Lara look more natural, but that doesn't require any change of controls or complicated key sequences. Locations... there are still many places in the world that Lara could visit. Of course I'd like to see her taking a trip to my native Portugal.

Moving on to the fans. Is there a 'typical' *Tomb Raider* fan?

I think there are several types of fan: the

And what do you think it is about Lara that attracts people of all different sorts to her in their millions?

She appeals both to male and female players and non-players – I know a lot of people who don't play but really enjoy seeing other people play *Tomb Raider*. She also appeals to every age group, from very young to seniors. I know a little three-years-old girl who is a terror – doesn't keep quiet for more than five seconds – but I've seen her keep still for two hours watching a rolling demo of *Tomb Raider* on a PlayStation... How can someone explain that kind of attraction?

What would you predict for Lara's Future?

There are a wide range of possibilities for Lara, both in and out of videogames. The movie could bring Lara to a whole new range of fans. More games will be made, and maybe even new types of games. I also believe that we, the fans, demand too much, too fast, and that Core Design is playing safe. The company is probably right.

Thanks very much and good luck with *The Croft Times*.

No problem, it was my pleasure!

A Web of intrigue...

There's something huge out there, stirring in the undergrowth. It could be friend, it could be foe – it's definitely the biggest thing Lara's ever faced.

Want to see something big? Something so frighteningly large that it's hard to take it all in at once? No it's not T-Rex. Big though he might be, he's not as big as a mob of 64,637 people all paying for more of Lara's lithe moves and slick adventures.

If this mob was to flood into Wembley stadium, carrying flaming torches and screaming Lara's name, they'd fill more than 80 per cent of the old venue's seats. If they were to head *en masse* to Core Design's

Derby HQ, less than 1/60th of them would fit in the car park. And that's if you put all of the Core staff's cars in the NCP for the day.

So where are these thronging thousands? Well, fortunately for the staff at Core – hiding behind barricades of office furniture, peering nervously from upper-storey windows – the mob isn't about to descend on the premises and demand the early release of *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation*. Instead, this vast group of people is scattered all over the world.

Yup, whack the words: "Tomb Raider" into the search engine at www.alltheweb.com and 64,637 is the number of sites that you'll see returned (well that's the number we got back in October, so it's probably grown by now).

You'll be able to find tips on how to complete the assault course in 48.2 seconds. That's right!

Even on her tod, "Lara Croft" gets a massive 30,707 hits from www.northernlight.com/

That's only 102 people less than finished 1999's London Marathon, and is a number that's also sure to increase over the coming months as even more people become hooked on Lara's new Egyptian adventures. Numbers of this size also mean that looking for new information about Lara and her travels, finding screenshots, discovering the latest gossip, getting hold of accurate tips and meeting people with similar Tomb Raiding-interests can be a daunting task.

To make this a little easier, here are some prime Web sites run by massively dedicated people, who spend the time to ensure that not only are their *www*-havens easy to use, but they're also bang up to date.

So type in the links, follow some of the Web rings (there are several, and some are more informative) and then join in.

Every community needs people to submit ideas, take place in discussions, swap hints and tips and add a bit of local colour so why not shove in your tuppence worth? It could be your ideas that get included in the next game.

THE OFFICIAL SITE

<http://www.eidos.co.uk/lara99/index.html>



To get the real low-down on Lara, first you need to head into officialdom. Make you way to Lara's own site at www.eidos.co.uk/lara99/index.html where you'll get the real deal about the lady's history. Whether you want to know her blood group, her shoe size, her favourite food or her preferred reading material, it's all here. There's also a comprehensive history

of her Tomb Raiding adventures and loads of background about the company that created her and the people involved in her day-to-day life. You can also pick up patches for games, and get your hands on freebies like brand new screenshots and renders.

There's a fan club here, too, where you'll meet some of the world's most dedicated Tomb Raiders.

Much of this information is reproduced on numerous smaller fan-sites around the world, so stop here to gen up before heading on to explore the rest of the Web.

THE CROFT TIMES

<http://www.ctimes.net>

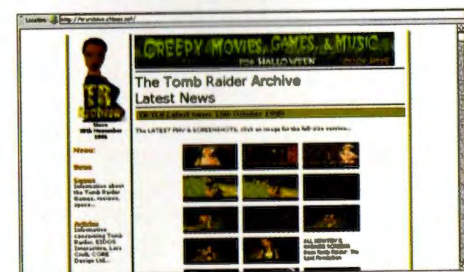
'The Croft Times' is probably the world's most comprehensive Web site devoted to all-things *Raider*-related. It's been running since 5 June 1997, so it isn't the oldest site around, but it's extremely comprehensively maintained by Luis Cuhna (who talks exclusively to us about his love of Lara on pages 88 and 89). This is where fans head to

trade stories, gossip and pick up all the latest inside information. Want to be sure you're the first to hear the movie news or get the inside story on a new game? If this information's anywhere, you can bet it'll be on 'The Croft Times'.



TOMB RAIDER ARCHIVE

<http://trarchive.ctimes.net>



If it's the history of Lara and her adrenaline-drenched excursions that you require, then you can get hold of all the info you need to sound like a life-long fan over at The *Tomb Raider* Archive.

This site has loads of new images and information, and is also a good place to start looking for Croft-based fan fiction. There's also some impressive fan artwork here, much of which is considerably better than the average obsessive's daubing.



OTHER TOP STOPS



Other great sites covering a huge range of material include:

<http://tombraders.com>

<http://tombraders.net>

You should also check out the visually stunning *Tomb Raider* 2000 site at:

<http://network.ctimes.net/tr2000/>

Try the UK's *Tomb Raider* News Network

<http://www.ahooke.freemove.co.uk/trnn/>

Also look at Raider Distance at:

<http://www.raiderdistance.com>

[gamereactor.net/](http://www.gamereactor.net/)

If Ms Croft's sartorial style is more your bag of crop-tops, then trek over to:

<http://www.larasanctuary.com/>

The section you'll find dedicated to outfits here is well organised and beautifully presented.

Want to know who made that wetsuit and where it appeared? Just click over to 'The Lara Sanctuary'.

TOMB RAIDERS TRAVELLERS GUIDE

<http://trinity.westhouse.com/tomb>

So now you know everything you could possibly want to know about Lara, *Tomb Raider*, the movies, comics and spin-offs. You're up to your holsters in information about her outfits, and you're beginning to tire of pictures of action figures. You need solid info about how to get past that trap that's had you foxed for a month. Forget fancy pictures and gossip, you need to head over to: <http://trinity.westhouse.com/tomb> where you'll find strategies and solutions, as well as some comprehensive discussion of *Tomb Raider* storylines. This fantastic collection is run by Ivans Chou and, as he puts it, he's always been a little confused as to how, "my innocent interest in a new videogame has become such a big project."

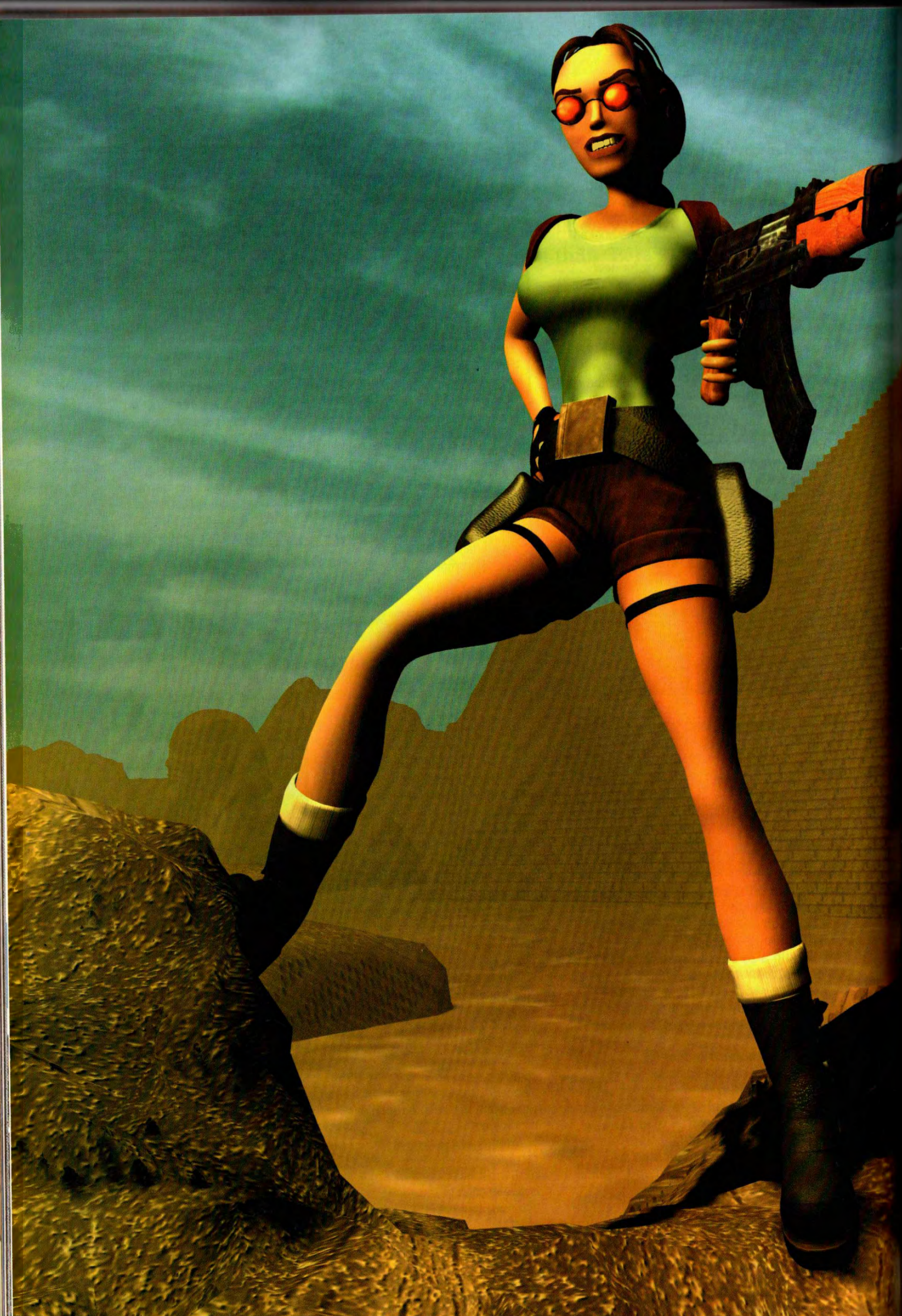
Want to know how far Lara can jump? How fast she can run? The precise differences between each of the games? You need to check out the great trivia site at <http://www.tombraders.com>. Need



compelling reasons why Lara should stand as the next Republican candidate for US president? Then try: <http://www.rightgrrl.com/laracroft.html>

Your final stop on any *Tomb Raider* Web crawl should feature a different character altogether. For a sideways look at one of the most little-known members of Lara's universe, and a story line that will have you laughing for a week, head over to 'Jeeves – The Butler's Tale' at: <http://www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~alexk/jeeves/>

You'll find Croft history, some scandal and tips on how to pull off the assault course in 48.2 seconds! In the words of the old man himself, "She's a 1920 Triumph Winchester De Havilland E-Type Turbo, and she goes like a woman with a bat up her nightdress."





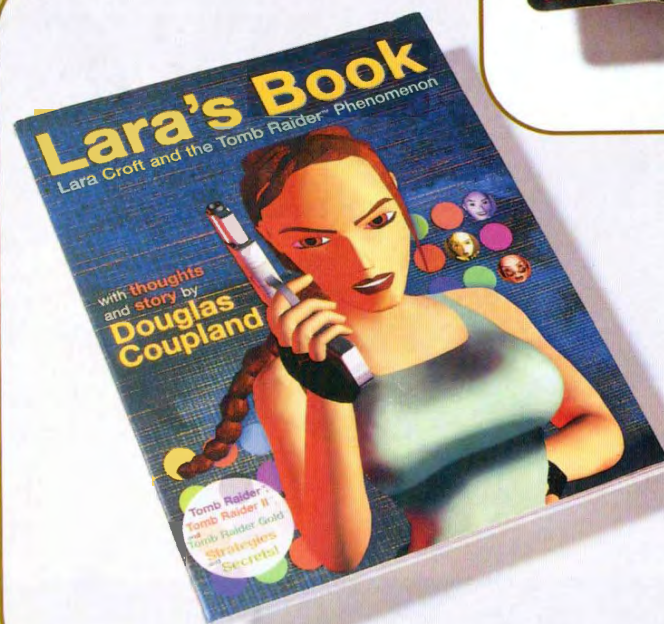
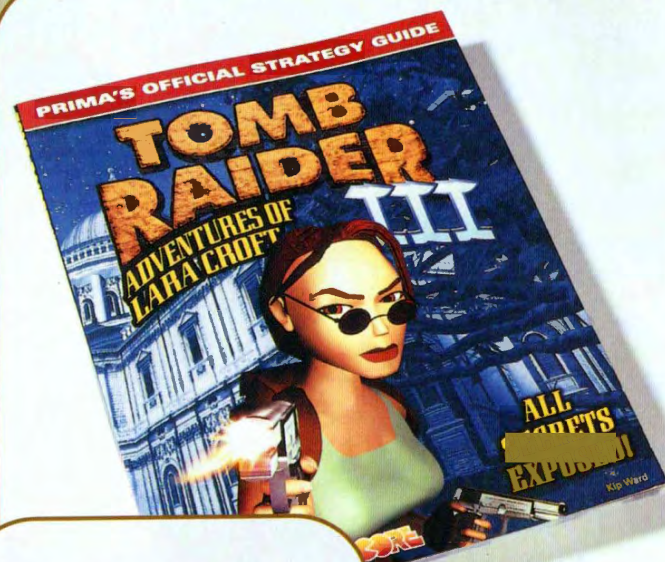
Top stuff!

Loads of collectibles that you just *know* are investments. Try not to get over excited thinking about what they'll be worth on *Antiques Roadshow 2030*!



French dressing
(Above) This hard-to-get item comes from la belle France and was a catalogue for a line of très chic clothing with the quality control and brand excellence that comes from the eagle eyes of Core Design.

Strategy guides
(Right) In our new and accelerated world, taking the time to finish a game is just too much for some people. No probs! Game guides like this can be found in many games retailers.



Beer itself
(Above) Some people will pay loads to complete their beermat collection with these limited edition babies. If you've got 'em, you're in luck.

Lara's Book
(Left) See pages 80-81 of this mag for an interview with Douglas Coupland, the author of this funky, rather strange Lara book.



Action figures
(Above) Action always figures in Lara's life, and these Playmates 'statues' of our heroine really do ensure that you don't ever have to be without the kind of

Croftian adrenalin hits that make the *Tomb Raider* games so compulsive. Collect the set, don't unwrap them, leave them in the attic and watch them climb in value. Investment!



Comic turners
(Right) Just because you can't take the best games ever with you when you travel, doesn't mean that you can't do revision. Top Cow's Witchblade series of *Tomb Raider* comics (or graphic novels if you want to impress the olds) is essential reading if you really want to get into the world of Lara and all things Raidy.





Nice to your mice
(Above) There's nothing worse than missing a jump because your pointing rodent is glugged-up with table-top gunk. Ensure your mousing is as smooth as silk with this range of Lara-approved mouse mats. Not cheesy at all.

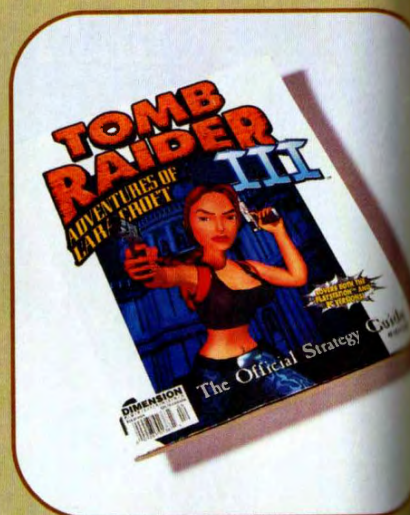
A Lara date or two?
(Below) Can't remember when you last played *Tomb Raider* (unlikely we know, it was probably today)? Well you can lay your hands on this calendar if you look hard for it. Once again, it's an investment for your future.



Nice threads, dude
(Above) These limited-edition French togs are now highly sought-after items. Remember to look for the official Core Design and Eidos trademarks before parting with your hard-earned cash. Pirate merchandise isn't just cheap and nasty, it also takes the wages from the people who work their butts off to ensure that Lara Croft and *Tomb Raider* are always quality products.



More tips
(Above) Like we said, if you can't get through the games under your own steam, there are tips books out there waiting to help you. Although you'd have to get to the USA for this one.



Mighty beats
(Below left) This CD from Italian artist Eugenio Finardi contains a track dedicated to our favourite lass. Thirteen top tracks, including *Amami Lara*, will enhance your *Tomb Raider* experiences.

Even more tips
(Below right) In fact, why not chill out to Eugenio as you read PC Gamer's free guide to tomb raiding. If you got it that is. It's v' rare.



Not pants at all!
(Right) Absolutely not in fact. These Marks and Spencer boxer shorts are the ideal bottom-wear in which to brave the heat and dust of some full-on raiding. Light, airy, and totally inline for as many double entendres as you could produce in one evening. Essential indoor adventure-wear if you want the totally dressed-up *Tomb Raider* experience.



Pen pal
(Left) The Waterman company has been making writing tools of incredible quality for longer than we care to remember. So when it puts its moniker to a classy set like this one, you can be sure that your ink won't run out as you write your requests for "MORE LARA NOW!" to those utterly overworked people at Core Design and Eidos.



The Egypt revelation

The Last Revelation takes Lara back to Egypt. A solid knowledge of Egyptian myths and legends is essential for correct raiding of tombs, so read on for a quick, sometimes spooky, guide...



You are probably going to have to sit down for what follows. It really does make modern-day soap operas look like Teletubby stories. There's death, decapitation, an unfair trial, a fight, demons, and a bunch of family stuff that frankly will make your Gran faint! Here's the plot.

The world was once ruled by gods with the power of life and death over all they surveyed. The most powerful was the creator, Ra. Under him were others, all vying for power. Seth was one of four child-gods born to Nut the sky goddess. His brother Osiris and his sisters, Isis and Nephthys, were pure, but Seth was chaotic. Osiris and Isis ruled Egypt and (despite being brother and sister) were in love.

Grave robbers or Egyptologists?

When Napoleon invaded Egypt in 1798, the Louvre acquired a collection of mummies, and 'Egyptology', the study (and theft) of all things ancient Egyptian came into being. Here are the 'stars' of Egyptology in all their various gory glory:

Giovanni Battista Belzoni

GB Belzoni was an early 19th century Italian whose self-confessed motive was to, "...rob the Egyptians of their papyri." He noted that the locals had little regard for their ancestors, sometimes even using the mummies as fuel. GB adopted a similar philosophy towards their preservation, "When my

weight bore on the body of an Egyptian, it crushed it like a bandbox. I sunk altogether among the broken mummies, with a crush of bones, rags and wooden cases, which raised such a dust as kept me motionless for a quarter of an hour, waiting till it subdued again; every step I took I crushed a mummy in some part or other." There is a £135 book of his grim adventures (see Books, page 105).

Horus (posing as a Falcon), his dad... and, erm... uncle, Osiris (in the sky-sailing boat) and Isis, who is Horus' mum (and aunty) as well as Osiris' wife and, well... sister. Read on to see how this happy family turned the lives of the gods into a plotline from *(Near) EastEnders*.



Being chaotic, Seth plotted to kill Osiris and steal his throne. So he held a banquet where he displayed a god-sized jewel-encrusted casket. He offered the casket to whoever it fit. And, like you'd never guess, Osiris found it to his size. While he was lying inside the casket, Seth shut the lid, locked it, sealed it, and threw it in the river.

It washed out to sea where it was caught in a storm and dashed amongst the branches of a tree. Many years later, the tree was felled to be made into a pillar for the king's palace. Isis found the body of her dead brother (who was also her husband!), freed it from the pillar, returned it to Egypt and hid it in the reeds of a marsh. But Seth found it there, dismembered it and scattered its 14 pieces around the world. Isis and Nephthys now took the form of giant birds and flew off to retrieve the body parts. But they could only find 13; one rather vital organ had been eaten by fish. And so Isis brought Osiris back to life and re-attached a replica organ. She then became pregnant with a son who she called Horus.

When Horus was old enough, he summoned the gods to hear his case for the throne of Egypt. The gods immediately found for him although Ra remained silent. Seth, however, was furious.

Sensing that the creator might take his side, Seth argued that only he was strong enough challenge the serpents of chaos that attacked when Ra's sun-boat voyaged through the under-sky.

Ra expressed his fears that Horus was too feeble to rule Egypt. So Banebdjed, the ram-god, was called to judge. Sensibly considering Ra's temper and ability to destroy people by blinking, the ram-god was afraid to judge against his wishes, so the divine mother, Neith was sent for and, against Ra's wishes, she ruled for Horus. Ra, however, still did not agree.

As the hearing continued, Seth grew angry that his own sister, Isis, was siding with her son Horus and demanded that the case be taken, without her, to the Island-in-the-Midst. So the gods crossed over to the island. But Isis disguised herself as an old woman and after bribing the ferryman, she was taken to the island.

As she approached she took on the form of a beautiful widow.

Weeping, she told Seth that she needed a champion: her husband had died leaving her son to tend the herd, but a stranger had come to turn them out of their farm and when her son protested the stranger threatened to beat him. Seth was outraged that a man could try to take a farm while another man's son still lived. He beseeched the beautiful widow not to cry and declared that he would be her champion. But now Isis flew into an acacia tree laughing, "Cry yourself, mighty Seth. You have condemned yourself! You have judged your own case!"

But Seth still would not admit defeat and he

Amelia Edwards

Novelist and founder of the Egypt Exploration Fund Society, Edwards first journeyed up the Nile in 1873. "Once they (mummies) are lodged and catalogued in a museum, one comes to look upon these things as specimens, and forgets that they were once living beings like ourselves."

Flinders Petrie

An unlucky English archaeologist, Petrie discovered the tomb of King Djer at Abydos. It had been robbed, but Petrie took a mummified arm to Cairo Museum. The arm was thrown away by a curator

who failed to recognise that it had once been attached to the shoulder of one of the earliest kings of Egypt. Petrie also discovered the mummy of the 4th Dynasty King Ranefer, complete with its entrails in a casket in the tomb wall. Ranefer's body was taken for to London safekeeping but was destroyed by bombing in the Second World War.

Howard Carter

Employed by Amelia Edwards at the Egypt Exploration Fund in 1891 and sent to Egypt at the age of 18 to study under Flinders Petrie. Carter later met Lord Carnarvon and discovered the tomb of

Life and death in ancient Egypt

Myth and legend, fear and faith. Here's how the ancient Egyptians themselves saw their world; their way of life... and their ways of death!

The Black Lands of Egypt are abundant. The climate is sunny, dry and warm, but the annual swelling of the Nile ensures that its banks are fertile producers of food. Papyrus grows through the river's black silt, and its mud is dried into bricks. But though this narrow strip is fruitful, death is never far away.

The Red Lands of the Western Desert contrast suddenly and sharply with the Black Lands. From the Red Lands comes the sand on the wind that finds its way into everything you eat, wearing down your teeth and scratching your throat. In the Red Lands there is no water and nothing can grow: everything there is dead, and only the dead can exist there. This is where the dead were buried.

The ancient Egyptians were constantly at the mercy of famine and flood, and were regularly ravaged by pestilence and disease. Life expectancy was about 20 years and even if a person survived into adulthood, they couldn't expect to live to be 40. With so little time, on earth, Egyptians invested in the afterlife – life in the Red Lands.

The Field of Reeds

The Field of Reeds was the kingdom of Osiris. All that was good about life could be enjoyed there. As in the Black Lands, there was a great river providing abundance. But here there were no floods, no famine, no pestilence, no disease and no sand getting everywhere.

Acceptance into the Field of Reeds, however, was subject to a spoken exam. After death, a person's Ankh – their immortal soul – would set off on a journey over the western horizon to a labyrinth of doors where it would face questioning. It would have to know the names of its questioners as well as the answers to their questions. As insurance, the dead were buried with scrolls of papyrus containing the answers. In the Old Kingdom, only pharaohs could enter The Field of Reeds. They were given scrolls, called the *Pyramid Texts* to help them. As time moved on to become the Middle Kingdom,

led the court back across the river to the Western Mountains where he challenged Horus to fight as hippos (of course), deep in the river. Horus was no match for Seth, so Isis tried to help him by casting a magical spear at the chaotic one. But, not being a top naturalist with specialist hippo-spotting knowledge, she couldn't tell between the two creatures fighting in the murky water, and the spear got Horus, who whooped with pain.

Isis retracted it and threw it again. This time it struck Seth. But Seth yelled, and Isis retracted the spear once again. This made Horus furious. He leapt from the river, cut off Isis's head and strode with it into the Western Mountains. Ungrateful or what?

When Ra saw what Horus had done he sent a party into the mountains to punish him. They returned empty-handed, but Seth had discovered Horus, ripped out his eyes and buried them. Seth did not tell anyone what he had done, but Hathor, the goddess of love, continued to look for Horus even after the search was called off.

She found him in agony with two beautiful lotuses growing from where his eyes had been. Hathor tended him with gazelle milk and restored his sight. Then she told the court what Seth had done.

Now that both parties in the quarrel had done wrong, Ra demanded that they make peace. Seth challenged Horus to one last duel using stone-boats. Horus accepted – and cheated. Seth's boat sank immediately, but Horus's boat was made from pine, clad in plaster to look like stone. His victory was shortlived, however, as Seth – posing once again as a hippo – sank Horus's boat.

Despairing that judgement would ever be reached, Osiris ruled with Horus, but Ra contested his answer. Osiris pulled out the big guns and suggested that maybe the demons that lived in the land of the dead might like to pay a visit.

Even Ra would not argue with that. So Horus was granted his throne while Seth made peace with his nephew and went to live with Ra as the Lord of Storms.

And the upshot of all this nastiness? Horus was the last true god to rule over Egypt, which shouldn't really come as a surprise considering the kind of stuff he had to get involved in to win the job. Seriously though, dear old Christianity came over with the Romans, and a new tale began.

Lord Carnarvon

The noble lord suffered a near-fatal car crash in 1901 and was subsequently advised by his doctors to live in a drier climate. He chose Egypt, and there he became an enthusiastic – and wealthy – archaeologist. In 1908 he was introduced to Howard Carter, and in 1915 the two began to dig in the Valley of the Kings for Tutankhamun's tomb, which was probably nicer than being in the trenches. On the 4th of November 1922, Carter was able to send a telegram to his patron saying, "At last have made a wonderful discovery in the Valley; a magnificent tomb with seals intact; recovered

Tutankhamun, along with its legendary curse, the text of which is, "Death shall come on swift wings to he who disturbs the peace of the King". The pharaoh died at 19, from a sharp blow to the head before his tomb had been completed. The tomb had also been robbed by thieves at least twice, but still it included not only Tutankhamun's mummy and the bodies of two infant girls, but also, "...strange animals, statues and gold, everywhere the glint of gold." Carter and Carnarvon recorded all its contents, and then packed them off to Cairo. The lid of the sarcophagus itself was not lifted until nearly a year later... when the curse really cut in.

same for your arrival; congratulations." His Lordship maybe should not have made the trip nor opened the casket containing the young king. A few months later he died of an insect bite, a bite which was in exactly the same place as the blow that killed the young pharaoh.

The recorded cause of his death was pneumonia but theories of the mummy's curse abounded. Most wise people, however, accepted that the tombs had been designed to assist their occupants rather than to injure trespassers. And furthermore, there is no water in the Valley of Kings, so there are no mosquitos: Carnarvon must have contracted the

fatal bite on a trip he made to Aswan soon after the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb. Mustn't he? Oh, and of the other people connected with the unearthing of the tomb, 21 died unnatural deaths.

Marie Corell

Corell wrote in March 1923: "I cannot but think some risks are run by breaking into the last rest of a king of Egypt whose tomb is specifically and solemnly guarded, and robbing him of his possessions. According to a rare book I possess, the most dire punishment follows any rash intruder



noblemen could enter and were given *The Coffin Texts*. In the New Kingdom, a papyrus scroll called *The Chapters of Coming Forth By Day* – or *The Book of the Dead* – offered opportunity for all.

After negotiating the labyrinth, the Ankh met with 42 gods where it made a series of confessions to show how it had avoided sin. The jackal-headed god, Anubis, then compared its heart with a feather, while the scribe-god, Thoth, recorded the results. Those that passed this ultimate test could dwell in the Field of Reeds. Those that failed were fed to Ammit – The Devourer of the Dead.

As well as *The Book of the Dead*, the wealthy were often buried with pets and servants to serve them in the Field of Reeds. Sometimes, instead of live servants, statues that could come to life (called ikons) were also used. Although the Field of Reeds was free

of hardship, there was still death. The Second Death was final. It occurred if the corpse was allowed to decay, so the dead were given words to protect them from this. They also had a life spirit, their Ka, that could take up temporary residence in statues and in inscriptions of their name. But the Ka eventually had to return to its physical host or it would die. To solve this messy state of afterlife affairs, an artificial means of preserving the body was required.

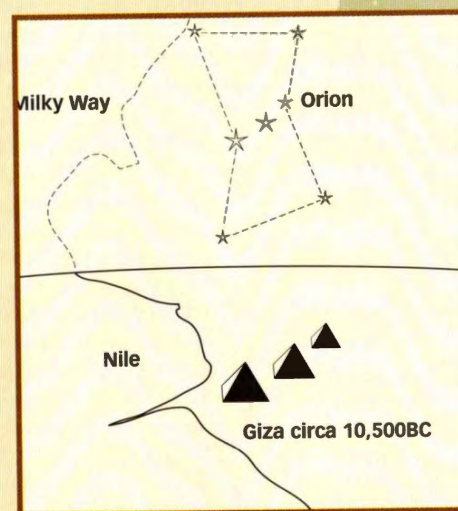
Preservation of the dead

The Egyptians swathed their dead in resin-soaked linen and removed their internal organs. They had discovered that removing the liver, intestines and stomach in particular slowed the speed at which the body decomposed. The organs were replaced with more resin-soaked linen. To help the surgeon, the corpses were laid out in long caskets that often had doors and windows painted on them to allow the Ka to see and move from within the coffin. In elaborate tombs, the caskets were sculpted to resemble the god Osiris.

Although the Egyptians never recorded their processes for posterity, Greek writers did. What the Greeks never managed to explain, however, is why some of the tombs are so perfectly built.

Egyptian tombs contain dead-end passageways, false chambers and secret

If you look up at the skies at certain times of the year, you can see the constellation of Orion. Bet you didn't know that Orion is just another, newer, name for Osiris, the Egyptian death god.



entrances to keep out intruders. But why are their measurements so precise? And why do they tally with the measurements of other structures in precise locations around the world? Why does the Sphinx face the constellation of Leo? Why do the three pyramids at Giza not only face the North Pole, but also coordinate to the positions of the three stars in Orion's (another name for Osiris) belt as they would have appeared in 10,500 BC? And why is the sanctuary of the temple of Amen-Ra at Karnak aligned to the sunrise of the winter solstice as it would look to people in 11,700 BC? Surely a plot must be afoot?

Houses of the dead

Giza lies just outside Cairo and is exactly one third of the way from the Equator to the North Pole. Conventional Egyptology maintains that the first pyramid was built there in the third Dynasty for King Dzoser. His minister Imhotep (you might have seen him in *The Mummy*, recently) built him a 62-metre, six-stepped tomb, riddled with a maze of shafts and tunnels. These same conventional Egyptologists have also agreed that the Sphinx and the Great Pyramid are 4,500 years old.

However, unconventional studies of the erosion of the Great Pyramid's limestone suggest that while it may be this age, the Sphinx has been subject to prolonged, heavy rainfall: and is therefore at least 7,000 years old and may even pre-date Noah's Flood.

The Great Pyramid was built to be 147 metres high, using two million separate blocks of limestone, and took 20 years to complete. The 'King's Chamber' at its core is a perfect 3:4:5 shape. Bear with us – this is important. This means that the sum of the square of the two shorter sides is equal to the square of the long side. And that's a theory developed by the Greek mathematician, Pythagoras.

Still with us? Good? Because the King's Chamber is a 3D space. So if you add up the cubes of the ratios of all three sides (seriously, this gets very, very spooky indeed) the result is 2,160. (So? Quiet or you'll miss out.) This is *exactly* the number of years it takes for the earth to move through one sign of the zodiac! Pure coincidence? Well, non-Egyptian Pythagoras didn't come up with his equation until the 6th Century AD, which you probably realise is possibly some 5,100 years after the Great Pyramid was constructed!



"To get: bread, buns, flowers for Pat, strawberries, ducks". Hieroglyphs might seem like a long-winded way of writing a shopping list, but they worked for thousands of years – until the Romans invaded.



into a sealed tomb." Shortly afterwards, Lord Carnarvon died of the infection caused by that mosquito bite. Go figure.

Karl Drbal

A Czechoslovakian radio engineer who patented a pyramid-powered razor blade sharpener in the 1970s. The device worked by drawing on the power of a small pyramid built and arranged according to the design of the Great Pyramid at Giza. Sadly, it failed to catch on in the West, where there were already plenty of sharp razor blades.

Zahi Hawass

Current Director General of the Giza Pyramids. In 1996, in the isolated oasis of Bahariya, some 200 miles south-west of Cairo, a guard of the ancient temple of Alexander the Great was going to work when his donkey's hoof fell into an undiscovered tomb. Excavation of the area has since discovered 150 similar tombs, "There have been Greco-Roman mummies in every one we excavate. Mummies everywhere! In fact, we've decided to call this place the Valley of the Mummies", says Zahi.

Ancient Egypt: how to find out more

Egypt and its pyramids, statues, legends and myths have provided loads of amazing information. This info crops up in books, both fiction and non-fiction. Films and TV have also used the spooky goings on that make Egypt ideal for Lara's adventures. Here are our recommendations help you to prepare for *The Last Revelation*.

Books

Heaven's Mirror

Graham Hancock and Santha Faiia
Penguin, 1998

A reasonably accessible best-seller that challenges conventional wisdom and proposes that the pyramids form part of an earth-bound representation of the universe itself.

The Mummy

Joyce Tyldesley
Carlton, 1999

The history of the development and processes of mummification. It even shows you how to make a mummy (though you need your own dead pharaoh), and has info on mummies on the silver screen.

If a picture says a thousand words...

...then we want you to fit as many pictures into one word as you can. Yes it's time to win some fantastic new Lara clothing, care of the famous Egyptian quiz show "Hieroglyphus a Clue".

It's clear that Egypt holds many mysteries, and as such is the perfect place to set *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation*. Once of the biggest Egyptian enigmas, and one that survived without solution for thousand of years, was hieroglyphics.

The script of the dead was variously used to carve inscriptions on pyramids, and provide the newly deceased with their necessary guide to the afterlife, and as such figured prominently in a land where anyone reaching 40 years of age could be considered remarkably lucky indeed. In Ancient Egypt, to be able to read hieroglyphics could be your ticket to a life of paradise in the next world.

So long as you were prepared to arrive clad only in bandages.

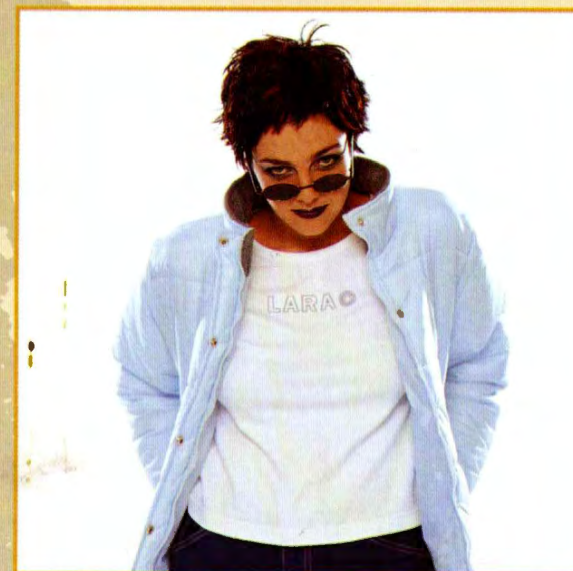
Which would never do. So in return for your becoming skilled in the ancient art of hieroglyphics, here at the *Official Lara Croft Magazine* we are prepared to send you swanning into the next world in some of the best gear available. Yes you can scare the life (so to speak) out of all the residents of your local tombs, as you prepare to go raiding in exclusive clothing from the new Lara© collection.

All we want you to do is study the table of hieroglyphs opposite and then come up with the longest English word possible using the letters available. We'll take any single word (no hyphens) that appears in the Collins Paperback English Dictionary (so you can put away those tomes of Egyptology that Grandad left in the attic after the war), double/repeated letters are allowed and we don't mind plurals. We're being generous, because we could only spell khabtjsh.

Stick your answer on a postcard and send it to the address opposite. The winner will be either the person with the longest word or, in the case of multiple qualifiers presenting words of the same length, the person drawn from a hat after the competition closes.

Happy scribing.

For more details, on Lara's new clothing range, turn to page 116.



THE RULES:

One entry per person.

Entries must reach us by 29 February 2000.

No employee of The Future Network, Core Design, Eidos UK or associated companies may enter.

There is no cash alternative.

No correspondence will be entered into.

The editor's decision is final.

Clothing may differ from picture shown.

The winner will be contacted by Future Publishing.

The winning word must appear in the Collins

Paperback English Dictionary (ISBN 0-00-472208-6).

Send your completed entry on a postcard or stuck-down envelope to:

It's all Greek to me.
Official Lara Croft Magazine.
30 Monmouth Street,
Bath, Somerset, BA1 2BW.

Understanding hieroglyphics

The ancient Egyptian writing system of hieroglyphics was first decoded by Jean François Champollion in 1822.

		
a	m	sh
		
l/a	n	k
 or 		
y	r	k
		
a	h	g
 or 		
w/u	h	t
		
b	kh	tj
		
p	kh	d
	 or 	
f	s	j

The Ring of Thoth

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

Part of *Tales of Unease*
Wordsworth Classics, 1998

From the inventor of Sherlock Holmes in which the master builder Imhotep is brought back to life by an archaeologist reading from a papyrus scroll. D'oh!

The Phoenix Solution

Allan F Alford

Hodder and Stoughton, 1998

Offers a new theory linked to planetary catastrophes as an alternative to our solar system.

Narrative of the Operations and Discoveries in Egypt and Nubia

GB Belzoni

Gregg Publishing, 1971

An hilarious account of Belzoni's hassles in the tombs, including tales of the Black Pharaohs of Nubia. It costs £135!

Films

The Mummy

1932

A classic oldie black and white chiller in which Boris Karloff (famous as Frankenstein's monster)

stars as the master builder Imhotep in the title role of the film based on Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Ring of Thoth*.

The Mummy and the Curse of the Jackal

1969

This movie includes a flashback scene that goes into the details of how corpses are turned into mummies; loads of stuff on how their bits are removed and on how they are actually buried. Watch it with a very good friend. Urghh!

Stargate

1994

Hollywood fun in which a band of adventurers unlock the secrets of the pyramids and journey to meet their creator. Now a TV series using what looks like the same sets and SFX.

The Mummy

1999

A rip-snorting not-quite-remake of the 1939 classic featuring extremely cool SFX and a tiny piece of history. Occasionally frightening, a good laugh.

Dr Evil

Skeletons, commandos and walking Egyptian nightmares; Lara faces them all in her newest adventure. We meet the fiend who puts these adversaries in her path.

Lara Croft kills. It's a nasty fact, but it's true. If she didn't battle the forces of evil at every turn, the game would be no fun and her life would be dull, dull, dull. After all, if a girl just wanted to mistress the art of puzzle solving, she could sit at home with a Rubik's Cube and a book of crosswords.

But the quiet life isn't Lara's style, so she needs adversaries. Bad guys that care not one wit for her alluring looks and British finishing-school charm, and whose only aim in life is to bring her to a sticky end. So she needs someone to create these adversaries. We're talking about a man so twisted that he spends his days planning the death of Lara Croft. What kind of a fiend could this be?

To answer that question we must now introduce you to Phil Chapman, monster creator and animator for Core Design.





"Are you looking at me? I said, are you looking at me?" Auditioning monsters isn't always fun.



"What's my motivation darling? Why am I a bore?"



The auditioning goes on with Ivan from Ilford: "Exterminate! Exterminate!"

Phil interviews over 50 monsters a day. Here, Jane from Crewe does her piece.



Right, the question that everybody wants answered is quite simple: how does it feel to be the man responsible for the billion deaths of Lara Croft?

It's odd really. At the start of the project it seems very nasty... but by the time we reach the end of the project Lara should die, die, die!

Crikey! But seriously, don't you ever worry about the fact that it's at the hands of your fiendish creations that the world's favourite game gal comes to meet so many horrible ends?

Only if her butler finds out it's me and puts a price on my head.

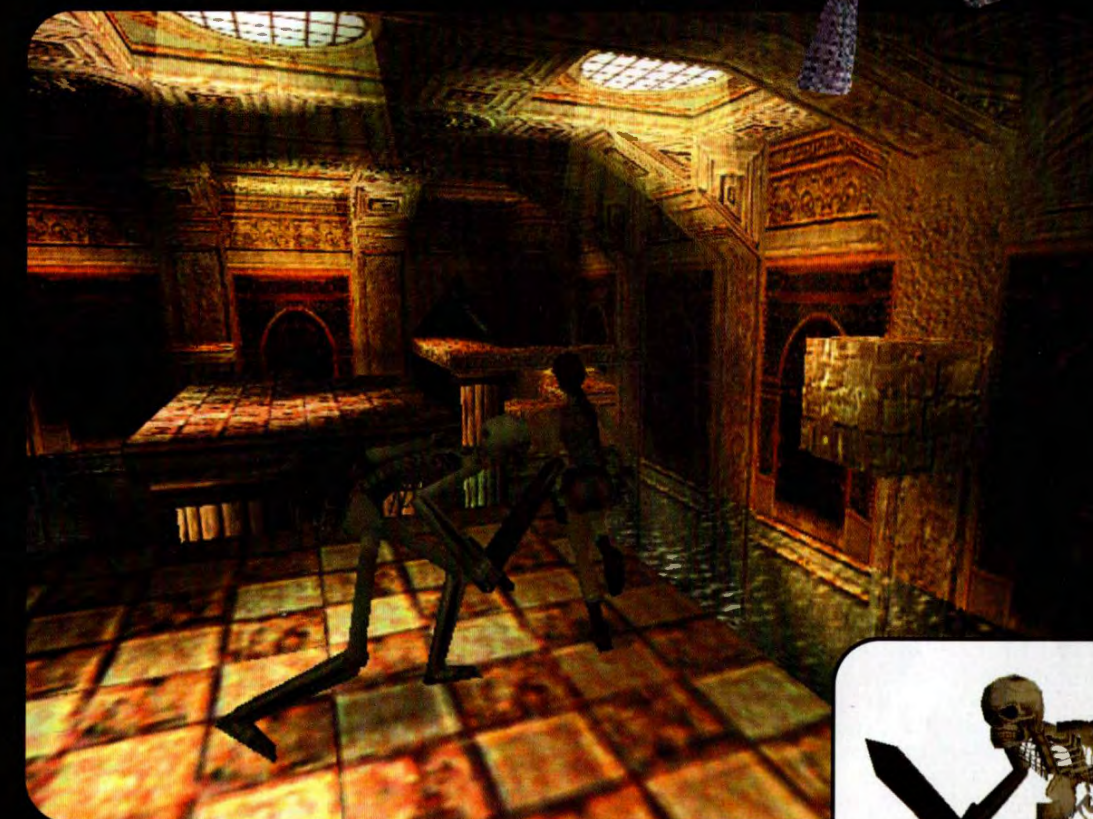
So do you never get the urge to design some of the, shall we say, 'happier', less evil, nicer bits of Lara's worlds?

Actually I do get to create the odd non-lethal 'happy' thing. I dealt with both Jean-Yves and the young Von Croy, as well as several other funny items within the game. When you think about it, though, I suppose these don't really compare to tweaking Lara's finer points.



The Johnsons from Epping, try out. Ron (left) is a shark eating a small lorry, Phil (centre) is evil Lassie, while Fiona (right) is insane Action Man. Grandad Johnson, (far right) wins the part with Richard The Lionheart.

"...by the time we reach the end of the project, Lara should die, die, die!"



Marge from Acton's audition piece as Ally McBeal won her a role as this scary skelly.

So how did you get into the job of monster creation? And which was the first *Tomb Raider* game that you worked on?

Well, I joined Core Design about six months prior to the start of *Tomb Raider III* and was given the chance to help out with some of the enemies. As it turned out I actually ended up doing all of them, which was something of a trial by fire, particularly since it was the first game I had ever worked on.

Was computer game creation something you'd had a long-held ambition to do?

I've always been a big fan of animation and stop-frame animation – I get a real kick out of all the new stuff like *Jurassic Park* – and I've always enjoyed doing creative artwork, so to do this as a job... Yes!

What's your favourite *Tomb Raider* monster? And your favourite in *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation*?

My all-time favourite has to be T-Rex. He first appeared in *Tomb Raider I*, and is awesome. In the new game, I would



There's so much monster skill out there that occasionally, a multi-talent like Slough-born and bred Ravi, can play three parts in one session. The giant K9 (right) is the high spot, of course.



"I am weasel!" says Denzil from West Yorks.

have to say that it's the skeletons. They aren't the most staggering creation, but they are good fun as opponents.

And why do you like monsters? Why not dashing heroines with gorgeous waistlines and a love of baked beans?

Bad guys are always more fun.

So where do you get the ideas for your gruesome creations? Are you a hopeless horror movie addict?

I do months of research, which includes reading all the books I can lay my hands on regarding classical myth and legend. I also watch hours and hours of film. Actually, in all honesty I usually make them up as I go along.

Do you ever dream about your evil creations, or about plotting new ways to kill off Ms Croft?

They only really bother me when I've been drinking heavily the night before. As for thinking of ways to off Lara, well now I'm reaching the end of the project and have a 14-

"I have a 14-hour day every day, so I'm always thinking about ways to kill Lara!"



Here we see Mark from Rhyl's character develop from Budgie the Helicopter, via Red Rum and javelin champ Steve Black, to a beekeeper being held up by gun-toting gangsters. Brilliant, just brilliant!



Like Hitchcock, Phil always tries to appear somewhere in each of his creations.



hour day every day I'm always thinking about ways to kill Lara! At the end of the project so is the entire team!

Are there any monstrous plans that had to be left out of this game? Some new über-creation that we're going to have to wait for another game to see?

No – I haven't been disappointed on that front. Everything I wanted to include in this game has gone in. But that doesn't mean I don't have a whole new batch of ideas waiting in the wings.

Finally, if you could be responsible for creating any bad guy from anywhere and at any time at all – from the Triffids, to the Borg, via the Daleks and the Geiger Aliens... whatever – who would you like to take the credit for? Who do you think is the top boss?

No contest. It would have to be The Terminator from the first film.

Thanks very much Phil. We'd like to leave now if that's okay? Please? Phil?



David James is and was a great goalkeeper. A star and a very nice man. But something happened to him...

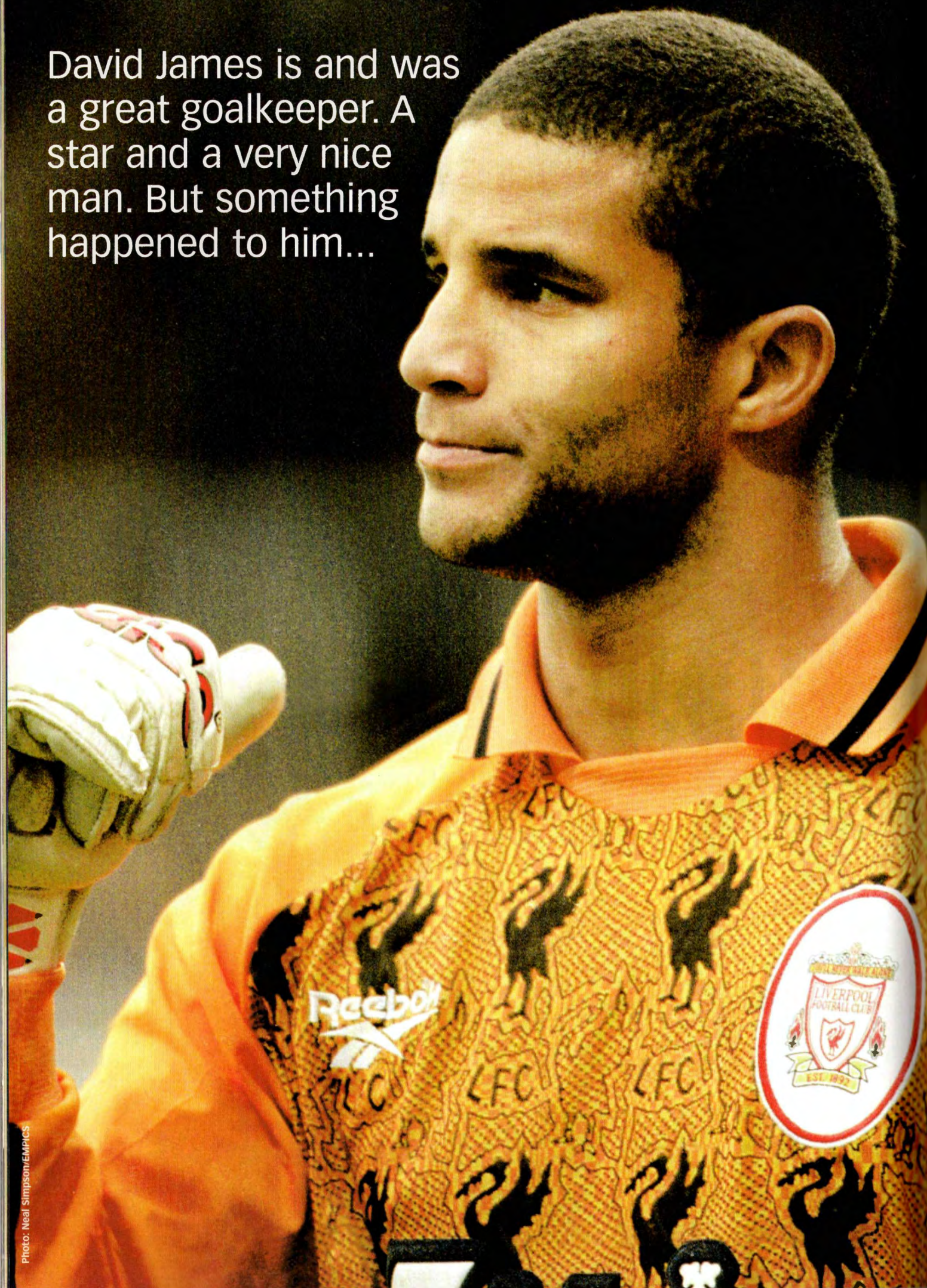


Photo: Neal Simpson/EMPICS

David James is and was a great goalkeeper. He was also a star on the catwalk, and a very nice man indeed. But then something happened in his life, something exciting, something that required all his concentration; something that affected the one thing that goalies need the most – focus. And for a while there was even the chant: “David James, superstar! Drops more balls than Grobbelaar!” Why?

Since moving from Watford, where he had proved to be one of the best ‘keepers outside the Top Flight, David’s career had been thriving both on and off the pitch.

He’d taken over at Liverpool from the equally famous and infamous Bruce Grobbelaar (“the clown prince of Anfield”). Grob’s legendary status is one that will never be superseded, but was equally one that the Liverpool back-four should have been more comfortable without. So David James’ remit was to bring a steadying influence to a defence that was not all it should have been.

When not keeping goal, he was

Then came the admission. The Reds played a staggering – and now legendary – game against Newcastle United at Anfield in March 1997. Liverpool won the 4-3 game with a late goal, but it was generally accepted that the custodian had been responsible for the goals against. Even former scouse great, Alan Hansen was forced into a strange, strangled comment that James, “Is transmitting his uncertainty to the rest of the defence.”

Then came David’s reasoning. He announced that he was lacking in focus due to playing too many videogames, naming *Tomb Raider* as one of the prime culprits. Apparently he’d been staying up late, and concentrating so much on completing Lara’s first adventure, that his ability to rise like a salmon or dive like a striker were radically undermined.

And he wasn’t alone, as erstwhile Newcastle manager – the man in charge during that classic 4-3 game, and current England head honcho – Kevin Keegan said in a later interview, “I remember what David said, and I think that computer

Real life – a warning

Aston Villa and former Liverpool and Watford ‘keeper, David James, found his real life terribly impacted during the 1997-’98 Premier League season. How was Lara to blame?

modelling clothes on European catwalks, appearing on TV and generally acting the heartthrob with great success. He also made sure that he was at the cutting edge of the newest and most hip phenomenon in modern culture. Bet you can’t guess what that was?

Liverpool had been having a torrid time on the pitch, with managerial shenanigans, personnel changes and a very un-Liverpool like tendency to hang around in mid-table and lose to French sides.

And then, astonishingly for a goalie of such great pedigree, mistakes began to creep into James’ game. Silly mistakes, mistakes in the air and mistakes on the ground; a crisis of confidence was, ahem, afoot and at hand.

It was almost as if the giant netminder’s mind was elsewhere. It was almost as if he was in love. It seemed that the formerly rock-steady custodian of the posts was floating around in a haze. Since the event, people have said that they saw his thumbs twitching, when they should have been grasping; others thought that they’d seen his dives for the ball incorporating twists and turns.

games could have that effect if you get sucked into them.”

So let this be a warning to you! If you want to retain your focus when playing *Tomb Raider*, you shouldn’t attempt to become the next England keeper at the same time!



Photo: EMPICS

With one eye on the ball, and the other on Lara, life was getting pretty tricky for David James.

Clobber!

Clothes ripped following fraught battles with skeletons? Knees gone in your combats after crawling along too many corridors? You need some new togs.

After the success of the first Lara C range of clothing, the line is back, revamped and remodelled for spring 2000. Get fresh with the new look, and when you've finished here, turn to page 130 for some free stuff!



(Above) Picture T-shirts

Make sure that you've got Lara's image with you wherever you go – easy with these colourful shirts.



(Above) Girl's scoop-neck T-shirts

For the more feminine adventuress, these shirts are just the thing to relax into after a hard day in the jungle.



(Left) Padded gilets

In sizes to suit both girls and guys, these



cosy sleeveless jackets are perfect if you need to keep warm while you're on the move.



(Far left) Padded jacket

If you're going to be a videogame anorak, make sure you're the right kind of videogame anorak. Be the darling of the geek community with the trendiest parka on the block.

(Left) Digital watch

It's always time to go Raiding with this chunky timepiece.

(Below) Tiny T-shirts

You don't have to be tall to be a tomb raider. Whatever your size, you can make sure you always look your best.

(Bottom) Baseball cap

Keep everything up-top covered with this splendid hat.



(Below) Block T-shirt

Proof that although Lara's world might be a complicated one, some things remain resolutely black and white.

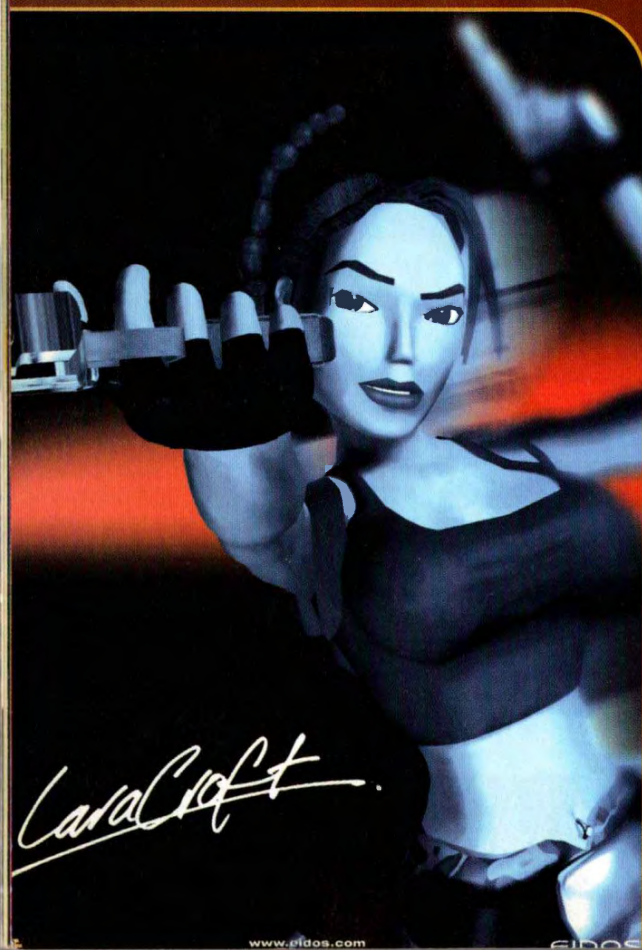
(Bottom) Poster

If you see Lara when you shut your eyes, you need to get hold of this poster and pin it above your bed so that you see her when you open them, too.



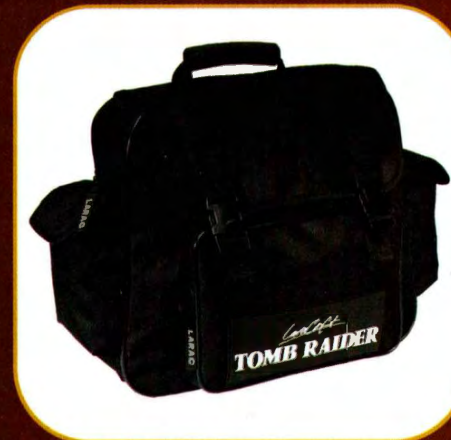
(Left) Girl's skinny-rib T-shirt

Show off your own curves (or those of a loved one) and then adorn them with a picture of your heroine.



(Right) Girl's fleece tops

Soft and fluffy, these snugly tops are just like Lara on her days off from tomb raiding.



(Left) Back pack

A top spot to stash your hard-won booty.

(Above) Key ring

Collect keys to open secret doors, then keep them safe here.



(Above) Statuette

She may be small, but she packs a punch. Don't mess with this diminutive babe.



WIN a portrait signed by Lara



That's right, two lucky readers are going to become the proud owners of actual *Last Revelation* images signed by our heroine herself. And all you've got to do in order to get your name in the hat is answer ten easy multi-choice questions. So get on with it.

- 1) What kind of motorbike does Lara ride?
 - a) Norton Commando
 - b) Norton Utility
 - c) Norton Streetfighter
- 2) What is Lara's preferred semi-automatic rifle?
 - a) Heckler & Koch
 - b) Winchester Repeater
 - c) Uzi
- 3) Who creates the Lara Croft life-sized models featured on page 40-41?
 - a) Marc Almond
 - b) Marc O'Polo
 - c) Marc Klinnert
- 4) What is Lara's favourite energy drink?
 - a) Lemonade
 - b) Lucozade
 - c) FurstAide
- 5) Which company publishes *Tomb Raider*?
 - a) EIdunno
 - b) Eidos
 - c) MsDos
- 6) What is the name of the top boss at Core Design?
 - a) Jeremy Heath-Smith
 - b) Jeremy Paxman
 - c) Jeremy Fisher
- 7) Where is the Last Revelation set?
 - a) Nubia
 - b) Derby
 - c) Egypt
- 8) What football team does Lara support?
 - a) Manchester City
 - b) Bristol City
 - c) Birmingham City
- 9) Where do they play?
 - a) Ashton Gate
 - b) St Andrews
 - c) Maine Road
- 10) Who plays Lara Croft in 'real-life'?
 - a) Peter Weller
 - b) Lara Weller
 - c) Paul Weller



THE RULES:

- One entry per person.
- Entries must reach us by 29 Feb 2000.
- No employee of The Future Network, Core Design, Eidos UK or associated companies may enter.
- There is no cash alternative.
- No correspondence will be entered into.
- The editor's decision is final.
- The winner will be contacted by Future Publishing.
- The Lara Croft Images are not framed and may differ from the images shown.



Future perfect

So what does the future have in store for Lara Croft? We take a look at her specially created, top secret, horoscope, and then talk to the man who really runs her life.

First of all I would like to make it clear that this is a specific chart for a specific person and personality type. Horoscopes are deeply personal in nature and should not be applied to just anybody who comes along with the same star-sign. I cannot stress this enough.

In fact, to preserve personal safety and having read and re-read this person's chart with growing astonishment, I would urge people born on the same date, at the same time and in the same place *not* to adopt the information contained herein. Take heed.

After the initial warning, I am pleased to say that the subject is a fascinating person. There seems to have been a great deal of flux and change in their life so far. In fact, looking back over her chart, it seems to me that this person seeks out experiences that other people – even those sharing the same star-sign – would usually avoid.

This doesn't point to the fact that the subject cares not for their own safety, if anything this constant search for high-octane events appears to be an activity in which they find confirmation of their own abilities.

It seems that the subject is easily bored and so craves excitement. This low boredom threshold makes settling down an unlikely eventuality. However, it seems that a strong bond could form in the near-distant future. Provided the subject manages to stay alive long enough, I am reticent to say romance, but I do see a new relationship blossoming.

Travel features very strongly in the short-to-medium term. As with anything astrological, I can't be too exact on this, but foreign climes are jumping out at me from the chart; travel over water, in the air and in the water. This travel does not appear to be in the form of a holiday or tourist visit, there is definitely business or goals to be achieved.

Heat looms large as well. Lots of heat that somehow dovetails strangely with darkness and enclosed spaces, leading to a lessening of the levels of temperature at important junctures. I see pyramids, too.

Madame Zuzu speaks

With the millennium looming, you must realise that the stars are in a state of some flux at this time period, therefore I cannot – and would not – be overly forthcoming regarding many of the intricate details involved here.

This said, I would warn the subject that perils are lurking in all kinds of places, and in the least likely situations. Concentration is starred in an all-enveloping manner, currently.

The subject simply cannot afford to wander through the future with their psychic hands in their astrological pockets if they wish to firm their grasp on what looks, from my reading, like a soul-searching time.

Despite the subject's activity-centred life-style-option-choices – I can't stress how often adrenaline-producing activities are starred in the life so far. There also seems to be a yearning for knowledge of the past that straddles a line from academic interest to a deep-seated (and oft-repeated) seeking out of secrets. This is common to many Aquarians but in this particular case it is taken to extremes. There are many, many secrets in aspect in the close-to-far-off future scenario. From what I've been able to gather from the subject's existence in this life-cycle, secrets and the uncovering of their key elements has always played a huge role in the their progression from one level of consciousness to the next.

Madame Zuzu



Four years of extraordinary success lie behind Lara and *Tomb Raider*. How much longer can it continue? With a little help from Core Design, we investigate the future.

It's only a word, but it's as scary they come. Four letters long, beginning with 'L', and liable to change someone's life completely when they hear it.

We're not talking about 'Love' – although that little word crops up often enough when people are asked to chat about their feelings towards Lara Croft. No, the word we're thinking of is 'Last'. As in, '*Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation*'. That small word, nestling innocently within the title of Lara's latest adventure, could certainly change the lives of *Tomb Raider* fans worldwide. Because it looks like it's there to tell us that – gulp – Ms Croft is about to lay down her backpack and pistols. For good.

So, is it true? Can Lara *really* be killed off at this stage in her career? Core Design MD Jeremy Heath-Smith doesn't think so, and he

should know; it's his development team that's designed and written all the *Tomb Raider* games to date. He's not just in charge of the games, he's in charge of the girl herself. If he doesn't think the time is right for Lara to wave goodbye, then she ain't going nowhere.

"Lara's following at the moment is huge," says Jeremy. "So I'm not convinced that we'd be wise to kill her off right now."

Phew. Sigh of relief, sleep tonight without waking up in a cold sweat and screaming 'Nooooo!' But it leaves one, final question: why that loaded, four-letter word? "Let's just say that this could be the last part of a certain chapter in Lara's life," reveals Jeremy. "When people see the end of the latest game, they might get the message."

Which leaves another *final* question. If there are to be fifth, sixth and seventh Lara



Lara has changed somewhat since her first adventure topped the charts at Christmas 1996. Her latest look is rather less 'rounded' than before. But she's as athletic as ever.

games, what form will they take? Core has had huge success so far with four very similar titles. The quests have been different, the scenery has changed, even Lara's shape has been modified over time (witness the more – ahem – modestly gifted Ms Croft in *The Last Revelation*). But the games themselves have remained third-person, 3D adventures. Isn't it time for something fresh?

"Lara was created as an adventuress," says Heath-Smith, "and that's the way she'll stay – after all, the world is a huge place, with plenty of adventures left. We've got some tremendous ideas on where we can take Lara, working along the same theme as the other games. As long as we don't deviate too much from the winning formula, I'm confident that Core's talent and ideas will keep people interested in many more similar *Tomb Raider* adventures."

In anyone else, such confidence would seem overly self-assured, even cocky. But Core's winning formula has cooked up an unprecedented four years-worth of success for *Tomb Raider* without any hint of the backlash you'd expect from such a global phenomenon. Only those too young to be allowed into a bookmakers wouldn't bet on the success continuing.

Four games, four years. Since 1996, Lara Croft has been acting like a younger, prettier Cliff Richard, dominating the charts every Christmas. Jeremy, though, isn't sure he can go on like this, "One game a year has worked really well for us," he says, "but turning a game around in nine months is a massive undertaking. With new hardware approaching, it's going to be a far greater challenge to keep that up."





Slinky, foxy, but still dangerous. Lara's been showing more and more elegance and style since her 'youth' in the early *Tomb Raider* games.

He's talking about Dreamcast, PlayStation2, Nintendo's Dolphin: all-new consoles that could well find a future *Tomb Raider* game landing in their lap if Core decides the market is right. "We'll look at all the new technology," admits Jeremy, "and we wouldn't turn our back on any one system. But while this new hardware could open up whole new gaming experiences, it would be difficult for us to keep doing a game a year on it."

What the public wants

So, expect Lara to spread herself around a bit in future, popping up less frequently, but on a larger number of platforms than the two (PlayStation and PC) that she's restricted to now. And if the public demands a return to the past, with one *Tomb Raider* every 365 days? "Then we've got to do it," says Jeremy. "If that's what the people want, and we can pull it off, then we will." What a nice chap.

What the public wants this year are young girls. Britney, Christina, Lolly – being female and still doing homework is officially 'cool'. In *The Last Revelation*, we rewind to Lara's youth and see a courageous chick in ponytails and freckles. But what of the future? Who's in charge of Lara's fine physical form?

Step forward again, Mr Jeremy Heath-Smith, "We will always spend a lot of time working on the look and feel of Lara," he says. "To us, Lara does exist, and real people change their appearance, their clothes, the colour of their hair. There's never a shortage of ideas for new Lara looks from the team, but ultimately I decide what would and wouldn't work for Lara." Have there been any fashion faux pas? "There was a combat catsuit that just didn't work," recalls Jeremy, one of the few men who actually got to see Ms Croft modelling such an item. Lucky swine.

However Lara looks in her new adventures, don't count on her changing too much – she's as much a winning formula as the game itself, and Jeremy admits he "wouldn't want to be too drastic." So, no chance of *Tomb Raider V* starring a 75-year-old Lara Croft, clambering into her Stanna Stairlift for an action-packed adventure to the top of the stairs? "Now, that would be interesting..." laughs Jeremy.

Interesting, but unlikely. Although Lara's a superb character in her own right, she relies heavily on two things: she's a woman, and she's a good-looking woman. If Core had a toothless hag on their hands, upcoming tie-ins, such as the new range of Lara© clothing in conjunction with clothing company Today's Trendz, would be less appealing to Mr and Mrs Consumer. Future Lara-sponsored events will continue as long as companies want to be associated with a drop-dead gorgeous lady.

"We're continually being badgered for licensing opportunities for Lara," admits Jeremy. "The future for her is limited, though,

because her arena is within gaming, and we don't want her associated with any old thing. It needs to fit her image. I'm very tight on what she does and where she goes."

Not so tight, though, that she couldn't stretch her leash all the way to Hollywood. Actresses as diverse as Liz Hurley, Jennifer Lopez and Catherine Zeta Jones are still being touted for the lead role in *Tomb Raider: The Motion Picture*, which Jeremy claims is "pressing ahead", and should see a release "this time next year." Expect an explosion in TR merchandise nearer the time (and – just maybe – a *Tomb Raider V*, seeing as it's Christmas and all). Don't expect a *Singalonga Lara* album. "There'll be no albums," says Jeremy. "Lara can sing, but I don't think a singing career would be right for her."

When's the backlash?

Singing or not, Lara is a phenomenon. Few other girls/women can claim to have occupied the cover of *The Face*, page three of *The Sun*, and a good few double-page spreads in *Bikini* magazine. Whether it's rendered Lara, or real-life pose-in-skinny-bikini-or-even-better-nothing-at-all Lara, the press adores *Tomb Raider*'s heroine. The worry for Jeremy must then be: when will they turn?

"The press has been very positive so far," says Jeremy, "the mainstream media understand her a lot more now – they treat her as a person, rather than referring to her boobs all the time. Lara's an ambassador for the games industry, so we'll always be cautious with the press, and be careful not to portray her in the wrong light. And remember, Lara is only human, and we'd like her private life to remain her own."

Naturally, much hangs on who Core chooses to represent Lara in full, fleshy 3D form. Judging by the last few Laras, expect the latest incarnate, Lara Weller, to last little more than a few months before Core wrestles the trademark cyan top and khaki shorts from her grasp – especially as she'll need to make way for whoever is chosen when the hype for the movie kicks in. It's all hype, of course – a high turnover of Laras means that *Tomb Raider*, Core and Lara are never out of the papers.

More worrying is a possible backlash from the gaming press. The *Tomb Raider* series has had videogame journalists falling over themselves for the *Thesaurus Of Superlatives*, but as soon as better games come along, just watch those pundits turn their backs.

"We're not blinkered enough to say that no-one could knock Lara off her block," says Jeremy. "There'll always be threats to Lara's dominance. Great characters such as Mario and Sonic are the biggest. There's also LucasArts' upcoming *Indiana Jones* product, which, depending on its execution, could stand alongside our games."

"Aside from that, we're not tracking anything on our radar – everyone wants 3D

"It's down to the public to tell us what they want. It's up to us to decide where Lara goes."

adventures at the moment, and *Tomb Raider* fits into that niche very comfortably."

Like most developers, Core plans to make its games better and better. Lara's skyscraper-high list of abilities has grown steadily over the years – she can now climb and swing on ropes, which Jeremy describes as, "quite a challenge", to accomplish – and is unlikely to grow much taller. But new hardware, like PlayStation2, could allow her to slink around more accurately, so her movement more closely matches that impossibly attractive, athletic, gun-toting minx that you know in real life. Jeremy's especially excited at the feasibility of Hollywood-style explosive set-pieces, bringing TR even closer to the *Indiana Jones* feel that it's always striven for.

Wherever Lara jets off to in future, expect her adventures to stay in Core's very capable hands. Jeremy isn't keen on handing over Ms Croft to other developers, and doesn't think Lara should branch out into other genres in the way that, say, Mario has. "I can understand why Nintendo has done what it's done," says Jeremy, "Giving Mario a starring role in *Mario Paint* and *Mario Golf*, and licensing him to other programmers. We're not planning to do that." Ah, but what if the public demands a move away from Lara's familiar 3D platforming? "Then we'll do what the buying public wants. It's down to the masses to tell us what they want, and it's up to us to decide where else we can go with Lara."

So, although Jeremy and Core are remaining suitably ambiguous about the future of Lara, we're not sure there's much to fret about. As long as people like you continue to buy, play and enjoy Lara's adventures, she'll shoot, crawl, roll and clamber her way through many more.

Her lovely fizog will continue to stare out from magazines, newspapers and books the world over, and you'll still be able to wear a pair of boxer shorts with her shapely figure nestling next to your thigh.

Forget that horrible 'Last' word, because there's only one four letter word starting with L that really matters. 'Lara'.



Adieu

So it's goodbye then, but not for long I hope. Before you head off on your next adventures I'd like to leave you with a few words of wisdom.

Always think before you shoot
Always shoot straight
Always reload
Remember to read the manual
Take screen breaks

Your friends may know more than you do
Share your knowledge wisely
Solve puzzles with patience
Don't be afraid, fear affects judgement
Take screen breaks

The light can hide things
Darkness can be your friend
Mummies might not know best
Try to go farther
Take screen breaks

Give your little brother a go –
he'll remember it when he grows
Help your little sister with the leaps –
she'll love you for it
Never swear when talking could help
Wear waterproof boots
Take screen breaks

Travel is good, it broadens the mind
Re-charge your batteries at home
Make maps, don't flap
Save when you can
Take screen breaks

And that's it for me, for now. Don't forget to keep up with the news about *The Last Revelation* and, of course, the movie. The future is bright, so are you, so stay happy and always do the right thing – which is not always the obvious thing.

Right, I'm off to pack my bags and prepare for an Egyptian adventure. Now where did I put that sunscreen?

Lots of love

Lara Croft

OVER ONE MILLION TOMB RAIDER PLATINUM SOLD*

AN OUTSTANDING FIGURE

TOMB RAIDER II GOES PLATINUM ON 19/03/99



Independents please call our official distributor, CentreSoft, for further information: 0121 625 3906



"Never underestimate the power of Lara." The Face

EIDOS
INTERACTIVE

*Sold to date in the UK and across Europe

FREE Lara goodies*

Oh yes indeed, you read that right. We've put together a special deal that means you can get your hands on free* stuff from the fashionable new range of Lara merchandise.

By now you should have already feasted your eyes on page 116 and seen just a small sample of the great new range of Lara Croft merchandise that's available. Want to see the lot? Well that's easy. You just need to get your hands on a copy of the newest catalogue. Want to get either a free poster or baseball cap? Well that's even easier.

To get hold of the catalogue, all you need to do is call 0171 625 7100, and you'll be sent one by post. To get the poster, you need to spend over £15 on Lara Croft gear from the catalogue. To get the baseball cap, you need to spend £50. Should you find that your life is short of both a poster and a baseball cap, you'll have to spend £65 to alleviate the situation - easy to do, given that there's so much great stuff available in the spring range.



When you've filled in the order form in the catalogue, fill in and cut out this page, and enclose it with your order (don't worry, you won't be mutilating any pics of the lovely Ms Croft). When your order is delivered to your house, it will arrive with your free gift. Simple, huh? The only tricky bit is deciding where you're going to show off your cool new Lara gear first.

Name: _____

Address: _____

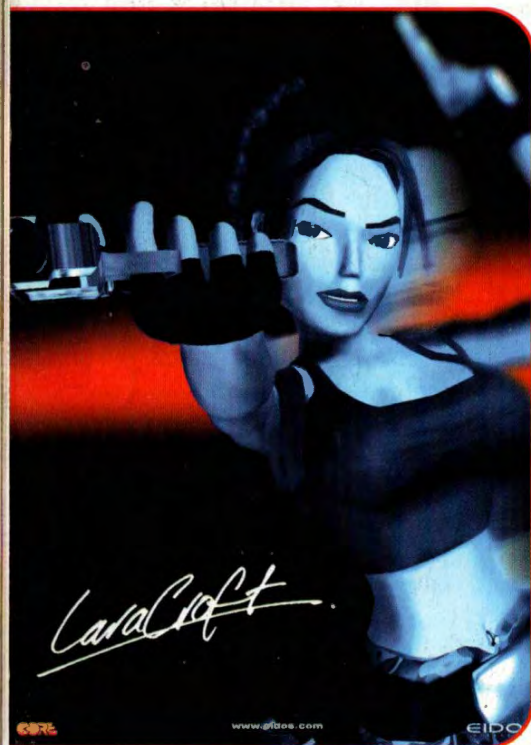
Postcode: _____

Daytime phone: _____

- ☐ I have spent £15, please send me my poster.
☐ I have spent £50, please send me my baseball cap.
☐ I have spent £65, please send me my poster and baseball cap.

Don't forget to include your completed order form.

Order ref: OLCM



Official UK
PlayStation

PC GAMER

"Urban Chaos already dubbed as
the Tomb Raider of the millennium"

"The most atmospheric environment
ever seen on a computer screen"



URBAN CHAOS

Mucky Foot



EIDOS
INTERACTIVE
www.eidos.com

Lara Croft

