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Max Roberts

Hello everybody and welcome to the max frequency podcast

Jerrad Wyche

- Well, those are heavy words.

Max Roberts

I am your host max Roberts and I have the distinct pleasure of being joined by my friend I'm gonna call him the Xbox expert Jared white chair. Welcome back to the show

Jerrad Wyche

I don't know if I'd consider myself an expert. I do know a little bit about Xbox, but I think also distinct, making me sound very like royalty. I like it.

Max Roberts

It is I have the distinct pleasure of being able to bring my friends and guests to the show I Love it. I feel truly honored every time I do an episode of these and I mean that genuinely For every single person that comes on the show. So thank you buddy for taking the time to talk to me You are the first person I think of when I think and talk about Xbox My brain goes to you as someone like in my life who knows a lot about it So when I call you the Xbox expert, that's what I think of you as so I mean it you do know a lot and I'm excited to have you here because The last time you're on the show is like three years ago same time of year

Jerrad Wyche

You know, it's funny you say,

Max Roberts

June of 21 and we were talking Xbox and Nintendo But a lot's changed a lot has changed in those three years Both for Xbox and personally between the both of us and I just wanted to I've been thinking about you And I wanted to have you back on the show. So I'm really excited to talk about all this stuff today Yeah, I it's

Jerrad Wyche

I come to your mind when you think about Xbox. Unfortunately, it seems like I've been tied to a lot of not so great things recently, you know, previous to the Xbox showcase. So maybe I brought some levity to you when you, you know, were reading about Xbox. Oh yeah, Jared. So.

Max Roberts

When I say a lot has happened to Xbox over at Microsoft, it's truly a lot You know like 70 billion dollars a lot which is Actually, I was looking on the calendar of things and that happened a few months. I think after you were on the show last time in 2021 if I'm if I Remember checking the clocks and timed correctly like it's been this long of a process for them to kind of finalize this

purchase of Activision Blizzard King and I want to know what you think of this because that's obviously not a small chunk of change but huge implications of just what they're burning in from Call of Duty to Blizzard and World of Warcraft Overwatch Candy Crush like those are just the big obvious moneymakers, but there's a lot in that catalog of games from Activision. Um What did you think about that over the last three years or so? You

Jerrad Wyche

So there's like three different perspectives. I kind of have on it. There's the like pure business perspective. There's the like supporter of the industry perspective. And then there's the fan perspective, right? So these are just one is the fan perspective in that as somebody who owns an Xbox, who subscribes to Xbox game pass, I thought it was awesome, right? You're gonna potentially soon in now in 2024 and beyond going to get all the old Call of Duty games, all of the crash games, the Spyro games, potentially the Transformers games if there's no weird licensing stuff on the Xbox catalog, which is huge. And I just like that as a player of video games, I'm gonna have the opportunity to access all of that. Also the whole thing with, you know, Phil Spencer coming out and we'll get to this later when we talk about the showcase, but he came out and talked about how there's gonna be parody across Call of Duty releases, which is also huge, not weird pre-order bonuses and exclusive skins

Max Roberts

Yeah

Jerrad Wyche

and all that, which is nice.

Max Roberts

You

Jerrad Wyche

The supporter of the industry perspective, consolidation is never a good thing. It leads to redundancies, which lead to layoffs. It also is always concerning when via consolidation, there's less publishers out there, right? Everything's kind of under three tent poles. So that's not good. Obviously there's so much more minutia you can get into there, but yeah, that's kind of a weird feeling there. I've heard a rate it, you know, from a fan perspective, 10 out of 10, the support is kind of like a five. There's some pluses and negatives and it's kind of iffy. From a business perspective, I mean, it makes a lot of sense because as we've seen with Xbox, they are still committed to Xbox, but they also are committed to the brand and making sure that they have games everywhere. With a purchase at large, you're looking for profit margins, right? So it's no surprise that the exclusivity thing isn't as bolted down as people would have assumed that Call of Duty didn't become exclusive. It's such a big IP that that's, they couldn't have justified that to Satya Nadella and the rest of Microsoft without saying like, oh, we're still gonna continue to bring in those profit margins you see on this document, but we're gonna kind of implement ways in which it can grow the Xbox brand as well. So that one, I totally understand. That one isn't really rated 'cause that's just like a business perspective. Like it's not a good or a bad thing. It's just the way it is.

Max Roberts

Yeah

Jerrad Wyche

But yeah, those are my overall thoughts.

Max Roberts

Sure

Jerrad Wyche

And you know, yeah, it took like three years for it to happen, but I do appreciate the due process of everyone checking their Ps and Qs. Obviously not everything was altruistic in the desires to get this thing blocked. There was some weird stuff going on as there always is,

Max Roberts

You

Jerrad Wyche

but it is also very weird when these things pass with no red flags or checks. So yeah, it is what it is. It was gonna take that long regardless. And I'm kind of thankful it did for the perspective of, you know, the economy in this country and, you know, employees and all that stuff. Like I just, I think everything was handled the way it should have been handled for the most part, loosely speaking. But yeah, it's, as an Xbox fan, it's awesome. As a games industry person, it's kind of scary. And as a business perspective, it makes total sense.

Max Roberts

I like all that. I really actually that that resonates with me when I look at it. I think of it as almost as this strange justification for game passing away in They the goal is to just bolster that catalog as much as possible with as much in-house stuff and then keep bringing in those second and third party deals as time goes on because clearly the the subscription model for games is Here to stay and not just a game pass Perspective but the same applies to PlayStation Plus and it's massive tears now Nintendo is doing that when Nintendo switch online and subscribing for classic games and that library and catalog Apple arcade does the same thing there are different services that do the same sort of thing It's it's that Netflix model or if we want to keep it in video games game fly model of essentially just renting games with a certain range of access and things come and go as as contracts and the market dictates and things like that and so buying this absurdly large catalog that does fit so well with the Microsoft angle of it's not just Xbox but also PC games like World of Warcraft or What's that other game the really star something I'm totally blanking on it Starcraft they yeah like Hearthstone all these Multi-platform and recurring revenue games that will help bolster that and both help bring back the 70 billion dollar part of things but also help bolster game pass and Get more people to adopt this subscribe mentality but Still give people the option to buy games for their console for their PC having that cross by Move which Sony was doing with the ps3 and the Vita and which is great. So cross by is awesome. You know, I It makes sense in that way I just don't think the price of game pass is currently sustainable And I think it's been bumped up once before but I suspect it will be bumped up again as we go forward into the future but Like you also said when you buy a bunch of teams that have similar jobs as the teams you already have You end up laying off a lot of people there's overlap consolidation This happened when they bought Bethesda ZeniMax and now this is just a much larger scale One article I think from CNBC that I read Talked about how they laid off 1900 people at the start of 2024 and that was before they shut down Three or four studios most notably Arkane Austin and Tango Gameworks Tango I think being the most surprising of the bunch and Arkane more so to me in name in its association with Arkane Not necessarily surprising after Oh Red fall. Yeah, which was just I Don't know that hurt that one hurt Not because I was looking forward to red fall necessarily but more just like the idea seems so cool in the studio is Right, but reading and watching some of the turmoil that kind of just went on in that game's development because it happened during the acquisition And it seemed like all eyes in Microsoft were on starfield that they didn't seem to they kind of got lost in the shuffle it sounds like and uh, it's a it's a shame that that happened that way but You know This seems to be kind of the talk of the town lately is all of these closures because it's not just Microsoft and Xbox I think it's just most notable that they Close these three or four How are you feeling about that? Like, you know, they're they've got all these studios. They're like we have Xbox game studios we have Bethesda and

now Activision like we're really proud of our For lack of better words suite of studios, you know, Sony does the same thing PlayStation Studios We've got all these teams and they should be proud of All of them they you know, they all produce a wide range of games Varying quality and for different markets. So how are you feeling about the shutdown of these teams? You

Jerrad Wyche

One thing I want to preface with is that we've learned from WB that sometimes stuff happens behind the scenes for weird business and tax credit reasons. You know, that aren't necessarily

Max Roberts

I I was gonna say I think that's what the Last of Us online

Jerrad Wyche

cutting stuff to gain profit or, you know, change the receipts at the end of the day. Sometimes there are these weird clauses business-wise that aid in... It's just stuff we'll never understand, or maybe not understand, but it's just stuff that we'll never know about necessarily. Alpha dog. Yeah.

Max Roberts

Like I think that's what happened there Because that's years that was years and years of work Poured into it and they were just like, yeah, we're gonna shut this down It's clearly there's tax write-offs and and benefits Somehow through all of this and Warner Brothers is a good example of that You

Jerrad Wyche

Well, there's also the conversation of like, you know, is Naughty Dog at a point now where

Max Roberts

Mm-hmm

Jerrad Wyche

if they have something released attached to them that isn't so clearly a prestige thing, that Sony would rather eat the money, invest it in it, then deteriorate the brand. You know,

Max Roberts

You

Jerrad Wyche

that's... There's that whole question too. So with these three studios specifically, Alpha Dog is more of a support studio. And by no means am I saying that they deserve to get shut down. I'm just going based off of like what makes sense, right, for things that got shut down. Arcane Austin honestly was just one of those things that it fell under the games of service curse of these studios, you know, trying to make a games of service. Stuff goes wrong also outside of their control, like you said, with the acquisition. But it's just obviously a genre and style of game that people have been chasing. And we're seeing like the end rows of that, especially with Sony, with Concord and stuff that a lot of them are not going to hit. Everyone's chasing that Fortnite

Max Roberts

Yeah.

Jerrad Wyche

bag and unfortunately you're not going to. Honestly, what it reminds me of a lot of is the World of Warcraft chase of everyone coming out with an MMO in the 2000s and everyone... There

were some that survived and were good, like EverQuest and stuff, but there were so many that tried to hit that MMO target because they saw that money and it just didn't work. And it's a shame that Arcane Austin got closed because of that. Obviously Arcane as a whole is very talented. I'm very excited for Blade. Can't wait because I'm a Marvel boy as well. Tango Gameworks is the one that actually makes the least amount of sense to me. And I know most people approached it from HiFi Rush. How can you close a studio that just released that? Totally get that. I loved HiFi Rush. It's one of my favorite games of last year. The thing that doesn't make sense to me is, and this is where I think people misconstrue who's in charge of closing these studios. Not to say that Phil Spencer didn't play a part. I'm not saying he's blameless, but I also don't believe that he necessarily was the one that was like, okay, I'll choose this studio, this studio, this studio. You know, it was more higher up at Microsoft. Anyways, with Tango Gameworks, they've talked about so much establishing a foothold in Japan to some extent. This is their only Japanese studio. So to close them makes zero sense. If we're purely looking at a number standpoint, out of almost all

Max Roberts  
Yep.

Jerrad Wyche  
of the studios they own, they exist in probably one of the cheapest areas to run a video game developer. So that also does not make sense. So the only thing I can think of is, man,

Max Roberts  
Mm-hmm.

Jerrad Wyche  
his name is escaping. Is it Shinji Mikami? Is that his name?

Max Roberts  
Yeah, yeah, from the Capcom fame, Resident Evil 4, 1, all the stuff. Made Evil Dead, right? Evil 10, thank you. Evil Dead is the movies.

Jerrad Wyche  
Evil Within. So many evil things. He left. And I wonder if there was a lack of true leadership

Max Roberts  
[chuckles]

Jerrad Wyche  
available at that studio, or if there was something weird that happened where Microsoft didn't really believe in the leadership coalition there to lead the studio forward. That one is one that doesn't make sense to me at all. I can see arguments for the others. It's just that one is so weird. And it's not even from, like I said, Hi-Fi Rush was a great game. Why? It's more so, like I said, it being in a cheap place to run a game studio, it being their only foothold in Japan. Very odd.

Max Roberts  
Yeah, it's just one of those studios and decisions that, like, I'm sure somewhere on a spreadsheet in a conference room, it makes total sense, right? When you look at it stacked up against everything. But then you get situations where we have Microsoft executives like Matt Booty saying, you know, we want smaller, more darling games. I don't have the exact quote, but it's along those lines of, like, smaller, game-of-the-year type contender games that are unique and frankly help stand out in the space. And clearly, Microsoft saw value in HiFi Rush so much that it's going multi-platform, which is another kind of, it's not crazy decision, but if

you had said this five, seven years ago, it would be a little crazy, but, you know, Microsoft has brought over Sea of Thieves, HiFi Rush, Grounded, those two in particular, Grounded and Sea of Thieves, more of those recurring revenue games, and opening up that player base to an even wider audience. It just makes sense from a business perspective for that type of game, right, chasing that bag as you put it. Those are the games you want to get to as many people as possible, right? So that they keep investing their money and their time into those things back into your studios and into your bottom line from a business perspective. And more people can just play and have fun on those games. So Tango Gameworks was so surprising. And another thing you said, which was, you know, cheap-ish place to run a studio, which just, the timing on this next bit of news was just so poor because it was like right after they shut down these studios. Activision, aka Microsoft, it's so weird because they get to keep their name separate, kind of like Bethesda does, but it's all owned by Microsoft. They announced a new studio, which obviously was in the works well before all these other decisions happened, but they announced Elsewhere Entertainment, which is being set up in Poland, which is where like, or is it Elsewhere? Did I type that wrong? It is Elsewhere. I don't know why I typed Elsewhere Entertainment, but it's being set up in Poland and working on some new IP. They're very excited. They have talent from all over the place. But CD Projekt Red is over in Poland and is my understanding. Some tax credits, government things, fairly cheap place comparatively. Certainly, I feel confident in saying cheaper than the San Francisco Bay area to run a game studio. I would think so. I just, that's cool. New studio is interesting, but it just, it feels, I don't even know what the right word is, but it doesn't feel right to shut these teams down and then go, "And now we have a new team!" Like the order of those just didn't feel right. Could be. Yep. Mm-hmm. It is, that is, it feels like that's the curse of certain studios and teams. I wrote down in the notes major the initiative vibes because when they created that studio, made that announcement a whopping six or seven years ago, they were like, and we've got, we're right in, I think this one was like right in Santa Monica and we're pulling talent from PlayStation, Santa Monica studios and Naughty Dog and Riot and like those, you know, huge prolific studios right there so that they could pull in that talent, which is great. That's a great decision to build a studio and then they've been spending the last six, seven years working on building a team, building games, possibly, probably multiple ideas, but then finally landing on Perfect Dark, which we will be talking about later. But I just kind of get the same vibe of that announcement, that initial initiative announcement, which was like, and we're going to make new IP and we're here and it's this great new studio for us to have into the collection, you know, into the suite as it were. Yeah. Haven. Yeah, and that was, that was a Google thing and then the whole fallout was Stadia. Mm-hmm. Yes. Yeah. And like, I mean, speaking of Ken Levine, his team, Ghost Stories, still owned by 2K, but based off some interviews lately, I think, in particular one with Colin Moriarty over at Sacred Symbols, one of the plus interviews or something, talked about how essentially it was just given time, right, to build out Judas and experiment with this, this Lego block decision type system that is designed, but 2K has to, I mean, clearly they see value in it because they've let Ken Levine do it, they're going to push this game out and presumably keep him around afterward in the studio, in the tech and whatever they built, but when you're just looking at numbers, you look at however it's cost, how much it's cost to have Ken Levine work on this game for the last 12 years. I know he didn't start right after Infinite, but, and then you look at Grand Theft Auto 5 and you're like, well, that printed money, which then theoretically helps sustain Ghost Story. It's Bioshock. Yeah. Oh no, absolutely. I'm not, I'm here for it and it's been so long since we've had a Bioshock game and it makes it even all the more interesting that there is another Bioshock game in the works to have it and Judas kind of like be in the same rough space, really waiting for the announcement of Bioshock officially, but it's, oh, I hadn't heard that. Bring back, right? I hope not. Remember when Bioshock 2 had multiplayer? Yeah. Is there, I wanted to check you talking about this. Bioshock is getting an adaptation. Is it coming? It says to Netflix, Netflix is working on it. Huh. I feel, I was thinking like it could be kind of a fallout-y scenario and maybe they're holding part of it. Let's see. 2K's Cloud Chamber Studios deep in active development on the next iteration of the series and coupled with our partnership with Netflix, we remain highly

confident that Bioshock will continue to captivate and engage audiences like never before. So it could be in part tied to the game in a sense of like wanting some synergy there, which is something that fallout seems to be

Jerrad Wyche

.

Max Roberts

missing and we might talk about that a little bit later as well because I noticed I was talking with this about, I was talking about this with Logan and apparently fallout 76's numbers went up after it and even the resale value on fallout 4 and fallout new Vegas and stuff went up. The resale market, yeah, they just boom shot up because of the TV show. And so I think companies are

Jerrad Wyche

(laughs) Real quick on your mention of the Bioshock Netflix show,

Max Roberts

seeing a lot more of like, let's try and get these kind of close together to be released so that we can... Mm-hmm.

Jerrad Wyche

which I even forgot was a thing. My dream scenario for that would be they recently announced that Arkane season two is coming out in November of 2024. And it's going to be the last season of that show.

Max Roberts

Let me... I'm looking at what to watch.com.

Jerrad Wyche

God, if Netflix could just have that animation studio do a Bioshock animated thing, Arkane is arguably the most beautiful animated thing outside of like obviously like inside and across the Spider-Verse that I've ever seen. Like an animated Bioshock with their art skills would be phenomenal. Did that thing say it feels live action or not? Or did it just said Netflix and Bioshock partnership? Okay, those are a little bit scarier.

Max Roberts

It doesn't seem to set... Oh no, live action. Live action adaptation. Yeah, we'll see. We shall see. There's no shortage of video game adaptations these days,

Jerrad Wyche

Not that they can't be accomplished, but I think it's way easier to deliver an animation than it is live action. So we'll see. And good ones finally.

Max Roberts

that's for sure. Yes, very good ones. Castlevania is killer. Castlevania on Netflix,

Jerrad Wyche

(laughing) - Agreed.

Max Roberts

ChefKiss so good. But with all of that, I mean, it's been a... Tumultis might be too strong, but it's been a busy, we'll say busy, a busy three years for Xbox, but the future is pretty bright, I think, based off of the showcase. And I wanted to guess just like your overall impressions,

overall thoughts on this Xbox game showcase for 2024 here in E3, not E3, don't call it E3, you know, event. The Keelys, the Summer Keelys,

Jerrad Wyche  
Jeff Keighley's.

Max Roberts  
whatever you want to call it. But how are you feeling after watching this almost two-hour showcase? Yeah, yeah, lay it on me, dude.

Jerrad Wyche  
So, you want me to give like a, in addition to my general thoughts, you want me to give like a review, like out of 10? Like a number? Okay, so what I will first say is, I personally believe that like the last three or four years of Xbox showcases have been at the very least good. I think it's been a while since they've had like a bad showcase, which is impressive because there were times there where they weren't great. I mean, you go all the way back to Don Mattrick and the TV, TV, TV stuff. But, yeah, you know what's funny whenever I think of that stuff?

Max Roberts  
Buy a 360. Oh my gosh.

Jerrad Wyche  
It's kind of related now because of Blizzard, but like the, you own a phone, right? The Diablo stuff, oh, so funny.

Max Roberts  
Oh yeah. [crying]

Jerrad Wyche  
Anyways, so this showcase, incredible. I think it even stands out more so because of how lackluster Summer Game Fest, opening night, whatever the hell you call it, and the state of play was. Now, to be frank, I went into the state of play with proper expectations

Max Roberts  
Oh yeah. Oh my gosh. [silence]

Jerrad Wyche  
because they set them that way. I didn't expect to see anything crazy. And unfortunately, the last several years, state of play to me is like, oh, this isn't going to have all the good stuff, right? You might have like one or two good things.

Max Roberts  
Yeah, you got to have the word showcase for it to be cool.

Jerrad Wyche  
Exactly. Now, that said, Astrobot looks incredible. Cannot wait. But compared to those, I think it even made this Xbox showcase look even better by comparison. I would give this like a nine, five out of 10.

Max Roberts  
Mm-hmm.

Jerrad Wyche



That 0.5 is for some nitpicks we might talk about later on. But specifically, I thought it had a good range and variety of games. I think it was mostly centered on Xbox-owned stuff. And if it wasn't, almost everything else, except for maybe a couple of games, launch day one in Game Pass, which is always huge and it's a priority for them, which I love to see because as a person who primarily plays on Xbox and subscribes to Game Pass, it's just the value increases and it makes that subscription, which may even increase as we might talk about in a bit, not that hard on my wallet. You know what I mean? So I thought it was incredible. I do my own show notes during the live events because I'm weird like that. And I like to mark the stuff that I'm interested in.

Max Roberts

No, that's great.

Jerrad Wyche

And out of the 30 things they showed, I was interested in 21 of them to various extents, obviously. But yeah, it was, and you know, going into any showcase or live event, you're not going to be interested in everything and you shouldn't be because it should be well-rounded for and cater to different interests. So I thought it was awesome. Like I said, 9.5 out of 10. And yeah, the future is bright and we'll talk about all the stuff we saw here pretty shortly.

Max Roberts

Yeah, so I went into the showcase... Here's how I'll put it. I thought this was one of their best showcases. Just, it was a good sampling of like what's to come, filled with exciting stuff from their first party. It had this really cool... I feel like I haven't seen this at a major Summer Platform holders kind of like presentation in a while. It had a very cool variety of second, third party games, reveals, or what have you. Not, you know, I feel like the stuff that Sony's been showing in a second party capacity has been fairly predictable in the sense of here's a Final Fantasy game, or here's another Soulsborne clone type thing. This had interesting variety from a second, third party perspective that I appreciated. It felt like an older E3 presentation, and I really actually kind of savored that and enjoyed it. It had... I'm looking at my predictions that I had. It didn't have quite the things that I expected, but that wasn't... That's not like a knock at it. The one thing that I was, if I were to say disappointed, which feels even strong, I just kind of wanted more gameplay. And from games that are supposed to be coming out this year, I just would have liked to see more of what am I going to be doing in them instead of just watching cut scenes and or trailers of things flying by. That was kind of what was missing. I think that's more of just the nature where these things have to be... The pace has to be a certain speed or whatever. You're going to lose people. Gone are the days of a developer on stage doing a demo live for five to ten minutes. That just doesn't happen anymore, which I think is a shame to some degree, at least for some of these bigger games. So overall, a really solid showcase. If I had to throw a number to it, nine, sure. I felt good about it, even with the stuff that I didn't really care for. Yeah. Yeah. [laughing] That Ubisoft forward was something, man. Now that was a really throwback feel of old, old E3. Part of that I love. Yeah. I enjoy that for a different reason. But let's dive into the showcase. We've built out all the things that they revealed, and we've highlighted the things that we specifically want to touch on at some point. I did just want to call out that the showcase does kick off right away with a Call of Duty teaser, which of course it did, because they spent so much money. And it is coming to Game Pass, which was a big question mark for a bit of, well, do they put it on Game Pass, or does it have to be something they charge for? And they're continuing to stick to their guns on if it is an Xbox Game Studios slash under our umbrella, it comes to Game Pass day one. And I admire that, because I'm sure that is a hefty financial decision to some degree, especially the first one. And now it sets an expectation where Call of Duty games just need to come to Game Pass now. So they opened with that, and then they end the show with a direct, like a 25 minute deep dive, which I actually really enjoy that idea for them to pick one game, their big fall game, so far based off the last two now. And really sink their teeth into it. And both games have been games with massive

audiences, so I appreciate that and respect it. But shortly after that, Phil spent... Yeah. Yeah, I agree. Wholly agree with that. And if they want to do a 20 minute deep dive on Call of Duty, they can just do that whenever. They even said during that event, I think, "Check out our multiplayer reveler," whatever, at the Call of Duty event in August. They will have zero problems getting their Call of Duty message out to the people that want to know.

Jerrad Wyche  
Yeah.

Max Roberts

This year, it just makes the most sense for it to be there. So I wholeheartedly agree with you. It has to be a flex. It had to be the one this year, and it helps kind of pad some things out. But Phil then comes on stage and talks about the industry and where they're at and how excited he is, typical stuff. And then he gets to introduce Doom, the Dark Ages. Basically medieval Doom. And the chat I was in kind of popped off from the sense of how cool is it that the Doom Slayer now has a chainsaw shield and can ride a dragon? Just very silly mashup of Doom and medieval goofiness that fits. How did you feel about Doom? Yeah. Yeah. Here's a shotgun. Because you have to have a gun.

Jerrad Wyche  
Incredible stuff.

Max Roberts

That gun in particular reminded me of Insomniac and Ratchet and Clank and just zany weapon design.

Jerrad Wyche  
Oh, for sure.

Max Roberts

That skull gun gives me kind of a hope that they're going to have even more goofy, light, having fun with it gun design. It doesn't all have to just be shotgun, assault rifle. Doom has really cool guns. But just the skull gun is interesting.

Jerrad Wyche  
Like, give me a crossbow that shoots spines. Give me a crossbow that shoots spines.

Max Roberts

Yeah, something like that. Exactly.

Jerrad Wyche

You know, fit the aesthetic. The mech, man, the mech is incredible. That it was very, it was very quick. You barely saw it, but it was him hopping into, the Doom Slayer hopping into a mech, fighting another large beast, and then we saw the dragon stuff. It, it looks fun, and I think Doom is able to walk this line

Max Roberts  
Yeah.

Jerrad Wyche

of being incredibly hyper-violent, action-packed, first-person greatness that people want, but then it's able to add in these stuff that make it more wacky. It's like, if Duke Nukem was respectable, you know what I mean? [ Laughter ]

Max Roberts  
[laughter]

Jerrad Wyche

Like, it's, it's awesome. I can't wait for this game, launching Game Pass, also coming to PS5, which some people are upset about. If you're somebody that ever, ever complains about games coming to other platforms, go to therapy. Like, who cares? I, I just have no, no energy for that, man. It's like, first of all, it's going to be better for id, because more people get to play the game they made. Second of all, it's going to be better for Xbox, because it's more revenue. Like, I am not that caught up, caught up on it. Like, the big thing for me is, is this launching day one in Game Pass to provide value as to why I own an Xbox? Awesome. Cool. Sold. Like, I don't care that it's coming to PS5, man. I don't know why people are so hung up on that, but it is the internet.

Max Roberts

Doom specifically. Starfield, I understand. And actually, I'm now in the camp of I think Starfield will eventually just be ported to PS5, given the recent more games are just coming

Jerrad Wyche

For sure.

Max Roberts

cross-platform from them. I think they will, almost similar to the way that Sony holds onto their exclusives for a good year or two and then puts them on PC, I kind of feel like Xbox might take a similar route to tap into those markets. Makes sense to me. But we'll see. Doom always made sense though, because Doom has a legacy of running on everything and the last two games were on PlayStation. There's no reason to burn that bridge with the community in that sense. It just makes sense for them and for all the reasons you said. So I did want to say, another thing that's happened in the three years since was the whole

Jerrad Wyche

Oh, yeah.

Max Roberts

Mick Gordon situation. Overdue Maternal soundtrack. And I just have to say, like, I don't think, I don't remember what his last name is, but Marty, I can't believe he's still

Jerrad Wyche

O'Donnell? No.

Max Roberts

Marty O'Donnell, I cannot believe, no, that's the Halo guy. Who also has had some issues,

Jerrad Wyche

That's a Halo guy, yeah.

Max Roberts

and I think now is running for the Senate or Congress in a weird world, I don't know.

Jerrad Wyche

Yeah, some political position, yeah.

Max Roberts

Anyway, but Marty, the guy over at id, the fact that he is still in charge over there kind of upsets me based off everything that I've read and I've understood.

Jerrad Wyche

He's never the public facing guy, though, right?

Max Roberts

Yes.

Jerrad Wyche

Because they always have what's his name, the other dude. Ah, I don't remember his name. But, you know, Marty is like a more fair complected guy, and the other guy is a darker complexion. I don't remember his name, but he's the one that's always public facing. He's incredible. He was like in the Noclip documentary. Man, what is his name? He's great. And yeah, I think they kind of understand that Marty isn't necessarily liked. So they make sure that he's not the one out there doing interviews and all that.

Max Roberts

Yeah. I think I would love for that situation to be corrected as best as possible in the favor of

Jerrad Wyche

Handled. [LAUGH] Yeah.

Max Roberts

Mick Gordon based off everything he wrote, all those receipts. So we'll see how they get sorted out. But that definitely was lingering in the background for me. And I know it's easy to, I mean, Doom itself looks great and I don't want that to reflect poorly on the game. There are hundreds of people at id and whoever else is supporting this game, like their livelihood and the hard work that they are putting into this game shouldn't be impacted that way. But in the sense of just, he's still there in a position of power like that kind of irks me. Anyway, I digress. We moved on into the State of Decay, State of Decay 3 trailer. This one felt like a, what is it? I want to say a shoe-in. I was trying to say a shoe-in

Jerrad Wyche

So interesting.

Max Roberts

and something in the bag. And so I came up with shoe-in the bag in my brain. It was a shoe-in and in the bag for State of Decay 3 to show up. This was one of the ones I was a little surprised we didn't see any gameplay of, but I guess State of Decay is State of Decay.

Jerrad Wyche

So real quick, this is a game that a lot of people didn't think was gonna be here.

Max Roberts

Oh, well. Mm-mm.

Jerrad Wyche

Because, I don't know how familiar you are with the Undead Labs situation, but the founder of Undead Labs, Jeff something, I don't remember his last name. Basically, a thing came out, as we've seen too many times in the recent years. Toxic workplace culture, very bad stuff. I wish I had an article to point you to to check it out. But yeah, very bad stuff with Undead Labs. The whole development cycle seemed like it was not doing well. He ended up starting a new

studio. And recently, a thing came out, it was where he fired everybody on one day's notice. I don't know if you remember that story.

Max Roberts

Oh, I'm seeing this now in Wikipedia. He founded Possibility Space in New Orleans, Louisiana. I remember this because it was in New Orleans. I thought that was an interesting location to set up a studio. Working joyfully in an interview with AAA. And then in April,

Jerrad Wyche

Not a good guy.

Max Roberts

so two months ago, Strang closed the studio, citing cancellation of the publishing relationship. Wow. Okay.

Jerrad Wyche

I'll do allegedly for legal reasons, but not a good guy, allegedly.

Max Roberts

Yes, Jeff. Strang. Strang.

Jerrad Wyche

Jeff Strand, right, is his name. I couldn't remember what his last name was. Train, yeah. So basically, Undead Labs had a bunch of stuff going on, which sucks because everyone has been excited for State of Decay 3, because it is the jump from Indie AA to AAA in terms of budget, scope, all that stuff. It's the first game Undead Labs is making under Microsoft with their support, right? Because they were in development on State of Decay 2 when they got acquired.

Max Roberts

Okay.

Jerrad Wyche

So everyone's been really excited about the jump. I have friends who, despite the zombie genre becoming played out, were kind of coming back on it again. And I have friends who love State of Decay 2, and a lot of them will tell you, there's just a couple of things, if they work on these polished, budget, whatever it needs to be, that this can be a really incredible multiplayer zombie experience. So a lot of people didn't expect to see this game at all, Max, because it was in development hell. This is on perfect dark area, to better explain it.

Max Roberts

Because that is one I definitely gave up hope of seeing and then was just flabbergasted

Jerrad Wyche

Yeah.

Max Roberts

that it showed up. So that's...

Jerrad Wyche

And we did see gameplay for State of Decay 3.

Max Roberts

Sure, yeah.

Jerrad Wyche

It was no HUD, no nothing, but there were segments, and there was an interview that came out after the showcase that said it was in-engine rendered gameplay.

Max Roberts

Okay.

Jerrad Wyche

Obviously, it's not the... I would love to see actual gameplay, but that was... Max, for people in the know on State of Decay 3, that was more than any of us expected to see. For it to be there at all was a surprise, let alone seeing hints at gameplay,

Max Roberts

Sure.

Jerrad Wyche

and the themes represented with keeping the memory of your fallen ones and all that stuff. So this is a huge plus for the Xbox community, because a lot of people are like, "Oh, there's no shot. Is it vaporware? What's happening?"

Max Roberts

Okay.

Jerrad Wyche

Because of all of the Jeff Strain situation and all that. So...

Max Roberts

See? Xbox expert coming in providing context. Because to me I was like, "This game has been announced forever. It's got to show up by now." That was my thought process. Speaking of another game stuck in development hell, Dragon Age the Veil Guard was the next game.

Jerrad Wyche

Game of the show for me.

Max Roberts

Game? Okay. So you correct me if I'm wrong, but I was not expecting this art style at all.

Jerrad Wyche

So...

Max Roberts

I recall Inquisition I think looking more like a traditional western RPG a la Witcher type styling. This felt more animated honestly and this is... I don't mean this in a negative way, but it is a negative association. What was that Fable game that was like a Dungeon Master thing where it was asymmetrical multiplayer where Fable people were...

Jerrad Wyche

Legends, I played the Alpha, the one that got cancelled, right?

Max Roberts

Yeah, yeah, yeah. I totally can.

Jerrad Wyche

When Lionhead got cancelled? Yep.

Max Roberts

Yeah. It reminded me of that visually, which I don't know why that popped in my head, but I was just like... I was thrown off by the art style so much that I actually thought that this was maybe a different Dragon Age game.

Jerrad Wyche

Okay.

Max Roberts

Because I thought it had a different name, but it was renamed or something. Fill me in on this. It's your game of the show and Dragon Age was a big get to see.

Jerrad Wyche

Yeah. So by game of the... I guess I should rephrase, it was my game of summer game fest,

Max Roberts

Yeah.

Jerrad Wyche

because after the showcase, 20 minutes of gameplay was dropped by BioWare, which looks incredible, and I'm very excited. And the one thing I want to point out real quick, sometimes, oftentimes these days, it's kind of why I don't have a Facebook account anymore, you read stuff online and you're like, "I just don't understand how people watch the same thing I watch. I just don't get it."

Max Roberts

[Laughs] [Music]

Jerrad Wyche

So to your point, Inquisition was more traditional, realistic, Western RPG looking in art style. The original Dragon Age was more so like this, where it's like kind of off human proportions, a little bit more cartoony. So this is closer in art style to the original Dragon Age. Obviously it looks way more beautiful. People watched that trailer and they were like, "What's with the MCU-ification of Dragon Age? What's going on here? This looks awful." I'm like, "It's a character introductory trailer." Like, it's not like they're... I'll give you a perfect example. Concord, right?

Max Roberts

Yeah.

Jerrad Wyche

Concord showed that trailer that was definitely Guardians of the Galaxy. I was like, "Oh,

Max Roberts

Oh, absolutely.

Jerrad Wyche

it's just literally, I can point character to character. That big dude is Drax. He's Star Lord.

Max Roberts

[Laughs] Exactly.

Jerrad Wyche

It's crazy." But then you see the gameplay and the gameplay does the opposite, where the cinematic

Max Roberts

There it is. [Music]

Jerrad Wyche

pulled you in because there was so much personality. It was fun. Sure, it was a Guardians clone, but it had personality. But then you watch the gameplay for it and it's like, "What makes this any different than any other hero shooter?" And there's a game coming up on the Xbox showcase that I think showed off a reason for that more than Concord. Bringing it back to Dragon Age of the Veil Guard, it was just a character introductory trailer. I don't know how you think like, "The game's going to be an MCU. The game's going to be this. The game's going to be that." It's like, do you want them to introduce all of these characters in a serious tone? Because that sounds awful. I don't know. I just didn't understand that. And people were making all these assumptions as the internet does based on the game. And then BioWare was like, "Yo, chill. We're releasing 20 minutes of gameplay in a couple of days. Just watch it and understand it's classic

Max Roberts

Mm-hmm.

Jerrad Wyche

Dragon Age." And it's classic Dragon Age. There's blood. There's all the gameplay mechanics you'd expect. There is one difference in that in this one, you can't control your other party members entirely. You can go into your menu and control the attacks they do, kind of like turn-based combat, but not really, if you know what I'm saying. Whereas in Inquisition, you could literally change to the character and go through active combat with them. So some people are upset that

Max Roberts

Oh, that's cool. [Music]

Jerrad Wyche

they changed that. I never really used that, if I'm being quite honest. I use it like OG Dragon Age and Dragon Age 2, where primary combat was with my main character, but I would switch to them for strategic purposes of like, "Use this, you know, freeze spell to freeze this enemy," all of that stuff. So that isn't a huge change for me and I'm fine with that. But in terms of the gameplay that came out, that's why it became my game of the show, because I'm a Dragon Age dude. I love BioWare. I hope the next Mass Effect is incredible. But in terms of like the Xbox showcase, I wouldn't say it's my game of the showcase because we really just got that character

Max Roberts

Gotcha.

Jerrad Wyche

introduction. But yeah, you are correct. I just wanted to point out the artistic change. It is

Max Roberts

Mm-hmm. It's different than the last one.

Jerrad Wyche



true to Dragon Age, but it is way different than the last Dragon Age, which at this point is 10 years ago. Yeah. Dread Wolf, which is the... Sorry, which is the name of the bad guy, Solus, who... That story was

Max Roberts

I think the other thing was is the fact that it was renamed, and I miss that news. So it was originally announced as Dragon Age Dread Wolf in 2000. Yeah.

Jerrad Wyche

cool in Inquisition, where basically, spoiler alert, skip a couple of minutes if you don't

Max Roberts

Leave you talk.

Jerrad Wyche

want to get spoiled on Dragon Age Inquisition. Solus was a party member who's an elf. Basically, as the game goes on, I'm going to keep this very top level, he keeps like disappearing and not being at home base as often. You're like, "Oh, that's weird. What is he doing?" Eventually, it comes out that he's like an ancient god, like a bad dude, which is a really cool twist. And he's the primary villain of this game. So he's known as the Dread Wolf. So the game was originally called Dragon Age Dread Wolf and it was revealed that he was going to be the big bad, which got people

Max Roberts

Party.

Jerrad Wyche

excited. Recently, they changed the name and they explained that they don't want the focus of this game being on the antagonist. They want it being placed on what they feel is the core of what makes Dragon Age special, which is your party, which is Bioware in general, right? The parties are always

Max Roberts

Yeah.

Jerrad Wyche

the best parts because you're building these bonds with these characters. So they were like, "Okay, our party is called the Veil Guard. Let's rename it the Veil Guard because we want the emphasis to be put on the game is about building that bond with your party members, not on the bad guy," which I think is a smart choice. Dread Wolf, cooler name. Veil Guard, better name for what the game is. Very much, yes.

Max Roberts

that makes total sense you explaining that and saying that to me. Dreadwolf is a much cooler name. It was way cooler. So that was also why I was a little thrown off I was like,

Jerrad Wyche

Yeah.

Max Roberts

where there's a new Dragon Age game before the other new Dragon Age game but it I was quickly informed that it was just a rename this is the game and it just as someone who isn't following Dragon Age and really I've played Mass Effect 1 like halfway like that's my Bioware

experience. So you know nothing I've no Bioware experience beyond half of Mass Effect 1 on the PS3 and so

Jerrad Wyche  
Not even KOTOR. Crazy.

Max Roberts  
I'm excited for those people and there's a lot riding on Dragon Age for Bioware especially after Andromeda and oh well I guess I did play Anthem. I helped log I well it was not

Jerrad Wyche  
That makes me so upset.

Max Roberts  
I wasn't like ah I want to play Anthem Logan myself and Michael Ruiz were working at Dual Shockers at the time and we got codes and Logan was reviewing it and so Michael and I played with

Jerrad Wyche  
Got it.

Max Roberts  
him to help him review the game. It was really us just trashing the game while we played it so I was not you know out here like let's go Anthem it was more I'll play this to help.

Jerrad Wyche  
Best Iron Man mechanics in a video game. I'll tell you that.

Max Roberts  
This is true I'm curious though how it compares to Iron Man itself Iron Man VR which I played the demo for on PSVR and now it's on Quest which I imagine would feel much better without the cables and the PS Move controllers so I would compare but yes a third person Iron Man mechanics definitely there the rest of it not so much yeah it's not a good time so I am I am hopeful for Dragon Age

Jerrad Wyche  
Awful. [laughs]

Max Roberts  
both for what it means to its fans in that franchise but also to what it means for Bioware and the potential of you know their next Mass Effect game which they've been actively

Jerrad Wyche  
Mass Effect 5, yeah.

Max Roberts  
teasing yeah they've been teasing so we just forget Andromeda didn't happen is what I've been told so from there we get I think some more slam dunks logical things the Starfield DLC which was already previously announced they talked about that gave it a date some new stuff and then a Fallout 76 expansion which felt like inevitable you specifically want to talk about Starfield DLC what's the deal with it give me the hook you

Jerrad Wyche

So the only thing I wanted to mention real quick is Starfield came out last year, obviously. And it

Max Roberts  
mm-hmm

Jerrad Wyche  
was one of those games where I touched when it launched and then something else came up and I

Max Roberts  
you

Jerrad Wyche  
wasn't able to continue playing it. I liked it. I was on the plus side of the reviewers. I know a lot of people were kind of mixed on it. Definitely wasn't perfect, but I do think having a new IP from Bethesda Game Studios is really important for, I think, the game industry and Microsoft, like all of it. Bethesda, I think just sticking to Fallout and Elder Scrolls is not good. And I think them hopping into the sci-fi genre is dope. This is exciting to me because I don't know if you're like me, Max, but the thing that happened with Starfield where I played it and something else happened, it's always hard for me to come back to those games. But when it's a DLC, it makes it easier for me because it's actually easier if like... How would I put this? So Prince of Purge, The Lost Crown came out. I beat that game. The DLC comes out later this year. That's going to be tough to get back into because I've already completed the main game. With Starfield on the

Max Roberts  
yes exactly

Jerrad Wyche  
other hand, I haven't played much of the game. So it gives me an excuse of like, just start from the beginning, play through it, and you have the expansion on top of that. Which is, I don't know

Max Roberts  
no

Jerrad Wyche  
if it's a weird way to think about things, but it... Okay.

Max Roberts  
I'm the same way look at like God of War Ragnarok and then out of the blue they drop this Valhalla DLC

Jerrad Wyche  
[laughter]

Max Roberts  
I'm like that looks dope I forgot how to play that game at a high level and so I haven't touched it, right? and I won't touch it until I decide I want to replay Ragnarok and that that's like a big commitment, right? you know, that's a 25 hour game and then they're talking about this roguelike DLC afterward that has some narrative implications it's like I can't even if it's even though it was free and it's high quality and it's everyone says it's great I'm like I can't be thrown into endgame high level combat again I like my brain isn't in that zone but to your point

Jerrad Wyche  
Yeah. Exactly. Exactly.

Max Roberts  
it's almost like you're picking up the game of the year edition that has all the DLC already included and you're just playing along with it so that is definitely a boon

Jerrad Wyche  
Yeah. And Shattered Space looks dope. They had an update that went live the day of the showcase,

Max Roberts  
in this type of scenario or waiting to come to something later absolutely I totally agree with you there buy a couch

Jerrad Wyche  
which added the creator's hub for mods and stuff, added a new mission. And yeah.

Max Roberts  
[laughs]

Jerrad Wyche  
It's one of those things where you want to support creators who do mod stuff. So I don't

Max Roberts  
hmm

Jerrad Wyche  
mind paying \$2 for a couch from Orando that modded it in, but paying \$2 for a couch from Bethesda. I'm like, "What are we doing here?" But Shattered Space itself, the DLC looks cool. I don't even want to mention it because I don't want to spoil it for people who haven't played Starfield, but there's some stuff that comes up at the end of the narrative that I was unfortunately partially spoiled on that I'm excited to get to when this comes out. But I'm at the point now

Max Roberts  
yeah

Jerrad Wyche  
with this where I was with Cyberpunk where I was like, "Oh, do I hop into Cyberpunk? I never got around to playing that." And then Liberty City. Liberty City? It's Night City, but it's Liberty

Max Roberts  
or no no uhhh I don't remember what that d- yeah something

Jerrad Wyche  
something. The Idris Elba DLC. Yeah, that came out. So now I waited out and I'm going to get to

Max Roberts  
I don't know but yeah cyber yes [laughs] Phantom Liberty

Jerrad Wyche

that this year too with all of that. So like you said, it's like the game of the year edition. And DLC is always much easier for me for a game that I haven't played yet as opposed to one I've beaten. So that's all I wanted to say real quick on that. Phantom Liberty, there you go.

Max Roberts

and it uh that's another great example and that DLC specifically as far as I understand it is like plopped in the middle of the main narrative [laughs] so even more reason to like

Jerrad Wyche

Also now coming to Game Pass. I think that's one thing that people talk about with the

Max Roberts

if you haven't played it yet you're in a much better position to play that and its DLC because it would flow better together it's just oh the DLC is not coming to Game Pass

Jerrad Wyche

sustainability of Game Pass. No DLC has ever come to Game Pass for games. Correct me if I'm wrong,

Max Roberts

oh that's interesting I guess that

Jerrad Wyche

but even the Diablo Vessel of Hatred isn't coming to Game Pass. So I think that's one thing where

Max Roberts

makes sense mhm

Jerrad Wyche

people miss out on the viability of Game Pass of like, "Well, these games just go in there. How do they make any money?" Oftentimes you have to pay for the DLC for these games, which I don't mind doing. You know what I mean? You're giving me a 70 hour experience for 20 bucks. I feel fine paying 15, 20, 30 bucks for a DLC. I totally get that. So that's one part that people miss out on is it

Max Roberts

that that makes sense

Jerrad Wyche

just assumed that the DLC is added and it's not most often.

Max Roberts

that that makes sense I it uh my brain went into two different places I was thinking of Final Fantasy 7 Remake Integrate

Jerrad Wyche

fucking hell (

Max Roberts

where the DLC is not included on the disc um so you have to if you buy a used copy you have to buy the DLC and that's a whole bunch of hoops to jump through because it's not listed publicly on the store it's a whole mess um but also then I wonder like in a year and a half or

whatever because there's two promised DLC packs for Starfield right? like two narrative expansions or something? well I was gonna say like

Jerrad Wyche

I'm not sure if that's what you're going at, but at launch they're not.

Max Roberts

the game of the year edition

Jerrad Wyche

(I'm not sure if that's what you're going at, but at launch they're not.

Max Roberts

right? eventually that will be made

Jerrad Wyche

I'm not sure if that's what you're going at, but at launch they're not.

Max Roberts

it'll be compiled and it'll have all the DLC or whatever in it I assume that comes to Game Pass and then and so if you're just I guess patient enough uh or stubborn enough you could eventually get there I would imagine

Jerrad Wyche

I'm not sure if that's what you're going at, but at launch they're not.

Max Roberts

I wonder like are the Forza games the Forza Horizon ones with their DLC you know like the

Jerrad Wyche

Yeah, but what I'm thinking is like eventually when the Game of the Year edition gets made physically and digitally, do they swap out that version for the Game Pass version? I need to look into that. That's an interesting question. I haven't thought about that.

Max Roberts

oh yeah yeah

Jerrad Wyche

I'm not sure if that's what you're going at, but at launch they're not.

Max Roberts

that's probably something that is something to look into I suppose but we get to our first so they Xbox comes out and they hit you know big first party games uh big third party relationship kind of big Dragon Age I often associate with Xbox as well I think there's just kind of that tie there so it's it's all reaffirming the brand these are big IP from companies people and then we get kind of our first second third party type game that's out of the blue that looks really funky and cool and at least unique in that sense and refreshing which was Claire Obscure Expedition 33 which is the most Kingdom Hearts name I've heard in a while but an interesting concept narratively it sounds like apparently there's some goddess, paintress whatever who puts a number up in the sky and everyone who is that age just dies is the vibe I got but then you are sent in a turn based RPG style combat to fight a bunch of different bosses I got Persona vibes from it in that way but it's very French and inspired and the art kind of reminded me of the Order 1886 it was a very cool and unique looking game and I'm curious what you felt about it what you thought seeing this this interesting game

Jerrad Wyche

First up, Claire Obscure. You're not Sid Meier. No one's ever going to call this game Claire Obscure Expedition 33. Everyone's just going to call this game Expedition 33.

Max Roberts

okay

Jerrad Wyche

So let's start with that. [Laughs] No, I'm just joking. The narrative seems very cool. Shout out Ben Starr from Final Fantasy XVI fame who did the narration for the trailer. Which is cool.

Max Roberts

wait I'm hold on I'm confused now I look I'm searching for this and the Expedition 33 website calls the game Expedition 33 colon Claire obscure but then Steam and Xbox call it Claire obscure colon Expedition 33 I don't know what's real anymore

Jerrad Wyche

Even better reason to just call it Expedition 33.

Max Roberts

[laughing]

Jerrad Wyche

[Laughs] So the thing I like about this game is it's like if... I don't know if you ever played Child of Light, the UBR indie game.

Max Roberts

yes yeah yeah I love that one

Jerrad Wyche

So that game had active turn-based combat, which is... I haven't played many games with that style of combat and I really enjoyed it. And it seems like this game has turn-based combat, but it also has active elements, some quick time events. It seems like the pairing encounter system is active. It looks really interesting. The UI is all awesome. Honestly, it looks like if Square Enix teamed up with the team who's doing Metaphor Rifantasio, the Persona team, and added in the Child of Light combat.

Max Roberts

yeah yeah yeah

Jerrad Wyche

And to me, that's like a dope combination. And the environmental looks that we got of the person running through these worlds looks gorgeous. At worst, I hope this is like a swimming in sevens, which I'm totally fine with. The fact that it's launching in Game Pass makes it a low-risk opportunity to get into a new IP, which is always awesome. It was a neat surprise and it wasn't... as much as I love my Souls-likes, it was nice to see something that wasn't a Souls-like be revealed. Because it seems like we got a lot of those. There's so many this blade, that blade, you know what I mean?

Max Roberts

yeah yeah

Jerrad Wyche

And the combat was the big reveal of this. You see the beautiful environments, like what kind of gameplay is this? Is this going to be a Souls-like? Is this going to be an action game? Like, what is it? And then you see the combat and you're like, "Oh, it's turn-based." And then you see the counters and all that, and you're like, "Oh, there's active elements to it." Very intriguing. It also leads them to be able to do prequels or sequels that are in different years based on the painter and all that. Cool concept. I'm excited about this one.

Max Roberts

yeah it's it's strike to me as a game

Jerrad Wyche

Thank you for watching. Please subscribe.

Max Roberts

that I would give a shot to I think like if I had game pass like this like you said I'd give this a shot or if this was coming I mean it is coming to PlayStation but it like I said it reminds me of the Order 1886 and I have an affection for that game and this seems really cool and unique and I haven't seen a game quite like this before and I that's almost something like I want to support more so than you know the the run of the mill

Jerrad Wyche

The known quantities.

Max Roberts

yeah the known quantities that's a good way to put it

Jerrad Wyche

Same.

Max Roberts

so that was cool and I liked that and it gave it a good energy for the rest of the show I think that was cool to see but moving on we get our first gameplay demo of the show more old E3 energy with a game I frankly did not think we would see simply because they revealed it last year and I kind of thought it'll take a pause we'll see more maybe later this year or early next year but we see south of midnight from compulsion correct I want to make sure I got that studio right it's compulsion right yeah

Jerrad Wyche

Yeah, Compulsion Games. Yeah, developers of We Happy Few and Contrast.

Max Roberts

yes the PS4 PS Plus game at launch I remember contrast very much I thought it was great to see this game in action finally and see that art style in motion I don't think we got a date I don't believe there was a date for this 25 on launch in 2025 it's the art is cool the movement interesting I wasn't expecting this game to be a third person action adventure and I don't even know if that was previously stated that it was going to be that genre of game so I wasn't quite expecting that but cool and really the art style really speaks to me in general so how are you feeling how are you feeling you

Jerrad Wyche

So when there were early rumors about this game, you know, the Compulsion's working on this, you know, gothic southern folktale game, I was like, "Wow, that's like a theme in a world that we don't really see ever in video games."



Max Roberts  
you

Jerrad Wyche  
So that alone piqued my interest. And then we saw the trailer last year and it had so much style and the main protagonist looked really cool.

Max Roberts  
you yeah

Jerrad Wyche  
The character she interacted with, the guy playing the banjo. It all seemed like a world worth exploring. It reminded me a lot of like a Tim Burton movie to some extent in the best of ways.

Max Roberts  
yeah some Tim Burton vibes for sure

Jerrad Wyche  
And then we get the gameplay demo. Yeah, and then we get the gameplay demo and you see that not only are the cut scenes, but the game is like animated on twos. So it has a little bit of a staggering animation to it purposefully.

Max Roberts  
yeah spider verse alligator

Jerrad Wyche  
And we see the combat, which looks, you know, it doesn't look anything special, but that's fine though. I think this game, if it even just has like average combat, that's not what's going to be the strength of this game in my opinion. I think it's going to be like the world building and the narrative and stuff like that. The characters. I mean, even the creature design. We see that giant crocodile, crocodile alligator.

Max Roberts  
alligator

Jerrad Wyche  
I get those confused as to which one's freshwater, which one's saltwater. You're in Florida, so you would know better than I.

Max Roberts  
alligator alligator

Jerrad Wyche  
Yeah, alligator. With the log kind of morphed into like decayed into his mouth and stuff. And obviously the catfish. The whole thing is whimsical. It's fun. I did not expect this to be shown, let alone have a date for next year, which is awesome. We Happy Few didn't review all that well, but what Compulsion Games has always done very good is build a world that feels authentic. And you can clearly see that in this demo of this game. We even saw like some dope traversal mechanics with this spectral scarf or something she has that helps her glide through the air.

Max Roberts  
yeah

Jerrad Wyche

Seems like the bunny is going to be her companion. I'm curious to see if that holds any gameplay value of what that provides. Yeah, I'm also curious about the structure of this game. Like is this a linear, very linear game? Is it like open areas similar to like a New Age Tomb Raider? Obviously it's not open world. I'm more curious about the structure of it, but it is tied with another game we'll talk about later on as my game of the showcase.

Max Roberts

yeah

Jerrad Wyche

Because I kind of, for different reasons, I was stuck on them being, I think this was just a surprise in that, like you said, we weren't expecting to see it, let alone getting the 2025 window, which was crazy.

Max Roberts

this is that's the kind of like that's the pace a game reveal I think should have it the most like it's revealed next year's gameplay and then it could come out a year later like that feels like a good three year cadence of just like big news chunks it's even better obviously if you can do the Fallout 4 style reveal where it's like here it is and it's out in six months you know that's great but on the opposite end of that spectrum you get things like Perfect Dark which we'll talk about where it is announced years ago nothing and then it's essentially re-announced here and we still don't have a date like that dragging of a cycle and the same happens over at Sony like they are notorious for announcing a game and then it never coming out and I think they're starting to shift that a little bit which is good I would like more tighter releases from like reveal to release tighter windows there or I don't know at least know what people are working on but then when we see them I guess is really what I would like to see more of I do remember joking during this particular gameplay reveal that this is essentially like the deep south version of Wind Waker because she's talking to her boat which is a giant fish instead of a lion

Jerrad Wyche

That's funny. That's a good joke.

Max Roberts

but yeah you're talking to your sailing companion so I think this game looks cool and I have my eyes on it especially now that there's gameplay instead of just like a mood piece trailer it looks pretty cool and it's definitely my genre of game and more of that from Xbox I'm happy to look into we

Jerrad Wyche

Speaking of PlayStation real quick, a lot of people are saying it gave

Max Roberts

yeah which is coming to Xbox soonish

Jerrad Wyche

Kenneth's Bridge of Spirits vibes.

Max Roberts

yeah I could see that I definitely could see that vibe I think this art style stands out way more than Kena this is definitely I think a cooler looking game not to knock Kena but this is more compelling to me visually it's unique in that sense so I'm excited about that we get there was a wow expansion but we don't play that so we could see

Jerrad Wyche  
We don't play that here, nerds.

Max Roberts  
yeah get out of here but we do move on to probably my favorite thing from the showcase and that is simply because it's Metal Gear Solid 3 and I love Metal Gear Solid 3 so much so we saw the first like proper trailer for Metal Gear Solid Delta Snake Eater which is the ground up remake in Unreal Engine 5 for Metal Gear Solid 3 I have to say I there's a history of Metal Gear Solid being on Xbox all the way back to the original Xbox with Metal Gear Solid 2 like it's not a new thing for Metal Gear to be on Xbox but I particularly love seeing this game being advertised on Xbox I don't know something in my brain just like seeing that it kind of reminds me of like those it's like those generational transitions where contracts expired and like Sony would come in with more money or Xbox would come in and steal the reveal exclus- I don't know

Jerrad Wyche  
- Yeah.

Max Roberts  
it's just like a mentality even though that's not the goal here necessarily and has no impact on the game really whatsoever but we see proper gameplay and trailer stuff for Metal Gear Solid Delta

Jerrad Wyche  
They're not Bluepoint.

Max Roberts  
and then more stuff came out in the following days as well this quelled all of my concerns with this particular remake which is coming from a studio that doesn't really have the history of it I'm blanking on their name but they don't have like the track record that I would think of to be entrusted with such a prolific game right and then Konami themselves

Jerrad Wyche  
You don't say.

Max Roberts  
not the best stewards it seems of their IP when it comes to remakes and remasters and collections it's very dependent

Jerrad Wyche  
(laughs)

Max Roberts  
Silent Hill 2 not looking so hot for example in my opinion I have not played the original Silent Hill 2 but just looking at the remake doesn't look great but then the Metal Gear Solid what do they call it? Master Collection like the emulation on that is not where I would hope something would be at for especially games of that pedigree but then you'll get the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles collection that came out and I think was done by Digital Eclipse and they are good stewards of making those types of games that's like their bread and butter but like Konami is super hit or miss and so when you hear them they're gonna remake one of the most beloved Metal Gear games right after they released a collection that like wasn't everything that should have been I've been very nervous about this game and I've had tempered expectations and this reveal trailer kind of quelled a lot of that for me from a visual perspective a gameplay perspective they seem to be handling it all the right way but I'm super curious what you think

because as you wrote in our document you have never played a Metal Gear Solid game so what do you think of that?

Jerrad Wyche

So I think it looked awesome. You know, Metal Gear Solid is one of those things that's always looked cool. I've just never played it for whatever reason. Everyone has those franchises. And I was in this weird place where the collection came out and I was like, okay, do I start chronologically in terms of release? So I do I play MGS1 first? And then this got announced. And from the little bit of research I did, and you can totally correct me if I'm wrong. This takes place in the timeline first, right?

Max Roberts

That's correct, yeah. So there's... It's one of those wonky things where there's like prequels coming out later

Jerrad Wyche

So I have a tough time with old game is old sometimes.

Max Roberts

but yeah, Metal Gear Solid 3 and Peace Walker are kind of like the beginnings and then things progress from there but yeah, Metal Gear Solid 3 is chronologically game one Yeah

Jerrad Wyche

I tried playing the original Resident Evil and the remake of Resident Evil. And the tank controls are like a non-starter for me. They're just not. It's one of those things where I totally get, if you grew up with it and you have the muscle memory and you dig it, I have those games too, where I try to sell them to people and they are not getting it. Like, and I totally get that perspective. With these, I'm kind of worried with that. If I go back to the OG games that I'm going to have that time, and I don't want to ruin the experience for myself because I know this franchise is so beloved. So in my mind, I'm like, okay, well, maybe because it is the first game on the timeline and it is being remade, and it's going to have modern sensibilities. Hopefully, obviously it keeps all of the core void, made that original release special. I want to maybe start here. And this will be my introduction to Metal Gear Solid. And I know that sounds super blasphemous to a bunch of people out there, but that's just my logical thinking of why I would go here based on my own personal tastes and you know, the whole situation, so.

Max Roberts

I played the Metal Gear games I think in the order of like 2, 1, 3, 4 I think so you can play them in whatever order you want you will miss just the most Kojima-esque references to other things but like you'll fully... the plot itself is self-contained enough where you will fully enjoy it and I would guarantee that it does sound like they're matching cutscenes shot for shot type thing which is something they did not do in the more infamous Metal Gear remake of Twin Snakes on the GameCube

Jerrad Wyche

Cool.

Max Roberts

so it sounds like they're respecting the source material I think, and gameplay-wise, they have two types of play from a more traditional third person perspective or you can play it with the traditional controls of top-down stylings from the original game so I think that's cool to see that be adapted

Jerrad Wyche

(chuckles)

Max Roberts

it actually almost makes me wish the Resident Evil 2 remake or the Resident Evil 3 remake adopted that where you could toggle it on and have the original perspectives I don't know if that would be possible if it wasn't designed but to be fair, they took Resident Evil Village and turned it from a first person game into a third person game into a VR game so I guess they can do whatever they want over there at Capcom so yeah, Delta is looking sharp and clearly coming out semi-soon-ish in the sense of pre-orders are up for collector's editions and things I think Konami wants to get it out this year, but I would not be surprised if this is a 25 release one of the few games I think from the showcase that is not coming to Game Pass not super surprising there, but it is interesting nonetheless to see it show up here at the event

Jerrad Wyche

Shout out to the weird GameStop tweet

Max Roberts

so I was talking about that with Logan

Jerrad Wyche

mix up with the release date.

Max Roberts

11/17 is the original release date of Metal Gear Solid 3 and so Logan's guess and what turned out most likely to be correct is some intern looked up Metal Gear Solid 3 release date and just typed it in I thought there was a chance, I was like maybe they were just trying to hit the exact day but it's a Sunday this year so it doesn't make sense to release the game because of shipping and people just going to the stores and things it never felt like it would be the 17th, but it was a funny situation nonetheless to see it like that yeah, I was definitely sad, but I did get the collector's edition locked in

Jerrad Wyche

Well then for pre-orders to go live too, it kind of like made it a little bit more believable, right when it initially happened. And then to kind of pull that away from people, make everyone sad, unfortunately. The camp of Amped.

Max Roberts

this is my favorite Metal Gear game, which is why I have such an affinity now I'm amp'd, now you put me in the camp of amp'd for sure there are some things though that like, yeah camp of amp'd I've heard some ideas of what would be really cool

Jerrad Wyche

Oh, that'd be sick.

Max Roberts

so this game takes place in the jungles of Russia if I remember, yeah Russia if they were going the full remake route, but it's that fine line of like man, what if they did re-record the dialogue and it was like just straight up in Russian that would be dope right, and you just have to read it because everyone would be talking that there's cool ideas I feel like could have almost like Ghost of Shusima did, where they were like they were going to go full tilt into this old Japanese with the Kurosawa mode and eventually they even brought lip syncing to the Japanese voice but you could play the game from the beginning in Japanese like if you really wanted to, and I would love to see more of that but I get that they have to dance this fine line with the original and new stuff but anyway, Delta, it's looking really great I really like your idea of starting here,

and I think the only issue you may face if you decide to continue through the series is when you get to Metal Gear Solid 1 and Metal Gear Solid 2 which do have those traditional top down not tank controls, but top down controls and mechanics because Peace Walker is over the shoulder third person and then obviously Metal Gear Solid 4 and 5 also do the thing of playing in third person, so I think your only trouble would be 1 and 2 in that sense I think...

Jerrad Wyche

Here's hoping we get, you know, Konami doing the Capcom thing,

Max Roberts

you would be golden, it would be great

Jerrad Wyche

and we get these remakes every couple of years, and then I'll be golden. Yeah.

Max Roberts

a Metal Gear Solid 1 remake, again, would be great

Jerrad Wyche

100%, yeah.

Max Roberts

but you know, if they just brought Twin Snakes to modern consoles that would be great too but anyway, I digress Sea of Thieves was next, season 13 I think I played Sea of Thieves at launch which with these live service games is apparently always the worst time to play them because they're not there but I did find it a little funny that the Playstation 5 version was not mentioned

Jerrad Wyche

Come on, it's Xbox Showcase.

Max Roberts

the logo wasn't on screen at all, they just didn't put it there which is their prerogative, yeah, no no no, it's their prerogative

Jerrad Wyche

Like, they're not gonna do that.

Max Roberts

they could absolutely do that, but I just found it really funny

Jerrad Wyche

(laughs)

Max Roberts

that it just came to PS5 and they just zip, mum's the word

Jerrad Wyche

That's funny.

Max Roberts

actually if you look on the Xbox Wire blog, anything that is multi-platform you have to, in parenthesis, they say "see developer website for other platforms" obviously, they will not mention the other platforms

Jerrad Wyche  
It is awkward, yeah. It's a little weird.

Max Roberts  
and they absolutely can do that, they're not supposed to do that for me but I just find it really funny did you, did you, you had something I thought about Sea of Thieves? or was it just the...

Jerrad Wyche  
Oh no, we were just gonna talk about, it's nice to see, as always, games that have,

Max Roberts  
mmm

Jerrad Wyche  
are getting continued support as games that service games, because these things can get shut down at a moment's notice, and you never know, right? So, here's the weird thing. It's a monkey's paw situation of, I always want Rare to have success in everything they do. Obviously, no Everwild here, but like, part of me is bummed that Sea of Thieves is so successful, because it means they have less resources for other projects, unfortunately. So yeah, it's a bit of a bummer, but it is nice to see them continue to support it as it goes to other platforms, like you said.

Max Roberts  
yeah, it's a good time we, there was Footlock Siege of Dawn which had probably the most aggressive title cards I've ever seen, I couldn't even process it I felt so old in that moment

Jerrad Wyche  
form, how we're going to design that. So I'm gonna get close to an angle of about 10'm in for each style here.

Max Roberts  
but then the next game, which you bolded here Age of Mythology retold, this is another Age of insert type game here remake from the older games, it kind of seems to be the cycle they're on of remaking and bringing forward the old ones and then putting out a new one at least the last couple have seemed to have been like that so, what's up with Age of Mythology? it's mythology, of course, but what's the deal here?

Jerrad Wyche  
So real quick, I think Flintlock was the only trailer in the showcase that felt like an ad.

Max Roberts  
[laughs]

Jerrad Wyche  
Obviously they're all ads, but I think this is the big difference between something like the Xbox

Max Roberts  
right

Jerrad Wyche  
Showcase and like Summer Game Fest where Summer Game Fest had a lot of actual ads with Samsung and all that, but a lot of trailers that feel like advertisements. And with the showcase,

Max Roberts

mhmm

Jerrad Wyche

I think it didn't really have any of those outside of the Flintlock trailer. So Adrian Mythology retold, the only reason I wanted to talk about this real quick is this is a total nostalgia play. Growing up, I didn't have a home computer, but when I'd go to family

Max Roberts

mmm

Jerrad Wyche

members' houses, they had Age of Mythology. And it was one of those games where you hop on, you put on all the cheats and you just have fun. The difference between Age of Mythology and Age of Empires is that the leaders for your civilizations are mythological gods. So you have Ra, you have Zeus, you have, you know, all of them. It seems like this one had Loki, which I don't remember from the original, but that just might be me being a kid and not Loki wasn't cool back then. You know what I mean? Post MCU, obviously he's yeah. Exactly. It's just a really

Max Roberts

yeah, Loki wasn't cool until MCU, apparently

Jerrad Wyche

fun 4X strategy game. I've always been interested in mythology since I was a kid. Age of Empires didn't interest me that much. I was more of like a Civ person than Age of Empires. But when Age of Mythology came out and I saw like, you can just, like I said, I put on all the cheats, I'd run around destroying all the other civilizations with Ra's like Sunbeam, just having a blast. And it is nice to see, you know, these aren't games that everyone tunes in for, for the Xbox showcase, but like you said, there's a commitment to remakes for them, which I appreciate. I forgot the name of the studio that does these, the first party studio for Xbox. It's called World Something. I can't think of the name off the top of my head, but they've done an excellent job at committing

Max Roberts

I will

Jerrad Wyche

to it for a while now. That's all I wanted to say really, just a nostalgia play for me.

Max Roberts

World's Edge

Jerrad Wyche

World's Edge. Yeah. I couldn't remember the second part.

Max Roberts

they have, earlier this year, Xbox did like this quad game direct

Jerrad Wyche

Developer Direct.

Max Roberts

or three game direct or something and one of them was these 4x games, right?



Jerrad Wyche

Our history untold, which just got a release date the day we're recording this.

Max Roberts

developer direct

Jerrad Wyche

Launching on console too, which is huge for Civ.

Max Roberts

okay, see, because I was expecting to see that at least in some capacity, but we didn't but it does seem like Microsoft has this 4x kind of category they're like filling in the market while games like Civ Civ 7 was just announced last week but, you know yes, at that launch, coming to console is big

Jerrad Wyche

One, because they're closer tied to PC right then Nintendo or PlayStation,

Max Roberts

so it seems kind of like that genre is thriving a little bit it's not just limited to one or two games it's kind of cool to see, I like that Xbox kind of has this little wedge that they're servicing seemingly well

Jerrad Wyche

but that's an avenue they can focus on because they have that attachment there as well, which is cool. Especially recent reports. Yeah.

Max Roberts

yeah, it's cool, it's neat to see then we got the game that I truly did not think would show up because I've given up hope after like three years of hoping that it would show up again Perfect Dark yeah, especially recent reports saying that the game is in development hell

Jerrad Wyche

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Max Roberts

major troubles, setbacks

Jerrad Wyche

Yeah.

Max Roberts

I mean, when they announced that

Jerrad Wyche

Yeah. Yeah.

Max Roberts

when the rumors and then they announced that Crystal Dynamics was being brought in to support the team

Jerrad Wyche

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Max Roberts

I was like, man, there's something wrong with this game

Jerrad Wyche

Yeah.

Max Roberts

and there is something wrong in the back end of development for Perfect Dark and hopefully one day that story will be told and lessons can be learned from it and insight can be gained but Perfect Dark was revealed we got gameplay, we got cutscenes big vibe check, a look of visuals and things no date, which is just astounding but to me

Jerrad Wyche

You can't say I didn't expect it to be here and then be like, I can't believe we didn't get a date. Like, you know.

Max Roberts

alright, that's fair, that is fair

Jerrad Wyche

Fair. Fair. Yeah.

Max Roberts

but the fact that it did show up I just, like, I can't believe there wasn't a date to go along with it showing up but I did not expect to see it so it was a treat

Jerrad Wyche

Yeah.

Max Roberts

and I wasn't expecting the Deus Ex vibes which I was here for so I'm all in on Perfect Dark and I have been hopeful for the initiative itself since it was announced because it, when that was announced it sounded like Xbox was making a studio to make games for people like me

Jerrad Wyche

Yeah.

Max Roberts

who prefer these narrative driven single player type games and that's, everything that they've been saying about Perfect Dark has, like, spoken to that and then it's unfortunately surrounded by all of this development struggles it seems and so it was really nice to see it but I'm very curious what you think of Perfect Dark

Jerrad Wyche

Yeah.

Max Roberts

mhm

Jerrad Wyche

Yeah.

Max Roberts

yeah

Jerrad Wyche

I was shocked that we got gameplay, let alone the game appearing.

Max Roberts

sure, yeah, that was surprising

Jerrad Wyche

The immersive sim aspect of it, welcome surprise. I knew it was going to have stealth elements, but I didn't realize how immersive sim was going to be, which I really enjoyed.

Max Roberts

mhm

Jerrad Wyche

I love that they showcase the gadgets. I love how they showcased how even though this is a first person, quote unquote, shooter, that there are aspects of it that are different than other games like it. The ability to shoot through like three walls, use your covert ops, all of that stuff, I think played really well. The non-lethal versus lethal gameplay. The mirrors edge-esque wall running and stuff like that was neat, a little bit that they showed. I think overall it showed very well. Like you said, it's Deus Ex. It reminded me of Crysis a little bit too in terms of the UI and stuff. I hope this game comes out sooner than later. I hope this game comes out period. I think it showed very well. It's exciting. I think this is a pillar that they can, if it ends up being what they wanted the initiative to be and it ends up coming out as a, you know, it's high hopes, but it is what it is. Like if it ends up coming out on that God of War 2018, Last of Us 1 level, I think that's going to be a huge win for Xbox. And, you know, people might say, oh, those are too steep of expectations. It's a game's first studio. It's like, well, they pitched it as this. Like I'm going to hold them to what they pitched it as. Regardless of the development hell and everything, I think that if Xbox is going to commit to selling it for what it is, it needs a deliver on that.

Max Roberts

yeah

Jerrad Wyche

And that's what I'm expecting and I hope it does that. And yeah, I loved the gameplay of this because it was so different than a lot of the other Xbox first party stuff.

Max Roberts

yeah, I agree, I actually, I was reminded of how like, how little hope I had because I think actually in the last episode of this show during predictions, which Logan predicted that Perfect Dark would not show up at all

Jerrad Wyche

[LAUGH]

Max Roberts

which is very funny, again, we had no hope but I even think, I believe that I said that I feel like the initiative is would be the next studio on the chopping block to be shut down, just because of all the reports of tumultuous development, having to bring in outside help I just really could imagine a world where they just decided that this was too expensive to build their own studio from the ground up, which is a very difficult task I'm not saying that this is easy, but clearly, Xbox also just believes in buying studios as well and that obviously has halted because they just spent an absorbent amount of money but I totally envisioned a world where the initiative

was gonna be shut down I even speculated, maybe the game just doesn't come out and like we talked about at the top of the show, maybe it's just like a tax write-off in some capacity so I was, I mean, that's where I was right before this showcase and so to see it in action really excited me in that sense and this is what I want to play on my Xbox and this is what I want to see from Xbox I want to see them try this, so this is all positive affirming stuff for me to see and so I'm quite hopeful going forward with its release

Jerrad Wyche

Closest thing we're going to get to a Splinter Cell game for the foreseeable future.

Max Roberts

Oh my gosh

Jerrad Wyche

Unfortunately.

Max Roberts

I mean, they're working on a remake, another remake of a beloved stealth game in my life so hopefully Ubisoft doesn't botch that one but, um, man

Jerrad Wyche

This is not a great question to ask. It might be a little insensitive, but is Michael Ironside still alive?

Max Roberts

I believe so, yeah actually he was in, gosh, what movie was he in? and I was like, that's Michael Ironside? Gosh, he, uh, what was it? It was, um, Bob Odenkirk Remember that John Wick Bob Odenkirk movie? Nobody?

Jerrad Wyche

The nobody? Nobody? Yeah.

Max Roberts

He's, I think he's in that and he has, like, gained yes, I imagine he will he was like, he had gained a lot of weight he's still alive, he is 74 years old though he's very old but he, um, was he in? Yeah, he is in Nobody I was like, that's Michael Ironside? The voice is familiar he's also in the next Karate Kid he was like the mean gym coach or something so it is an interesting career that that man has had but yes, Michael Ironside should be the voice of Sam Fisher until Michael Ironside cannot be the voice of Sam Fisher it's the same with David Hader in Solid Snake and it is it is disappointing that Kojima went with Keith for Sutherland not that Keith for Sutherland did not do a good job but clearly Kojima's ambitions of working with Hollywood actors like seeped into the development of Metal Gear Solid 5 and now he gets to do whatever he wants with whoever he wants so good for him but, yeah there are just certain characters that should be voiced by their originals until until death do us part, essentially and Sam Fisher is one of them then we we kinda, what is this? Diablo DLC next which had a very I noticed this, so at the top of the show there was, you know, the the typical viewer discretion advise type warning thing but this trailer in particular got its own of like, this next trailer will display I don't remember the language specifically but scary scenes, violence, the sort of things that did pop up in it but they put it in front of this one in the middle of the showcase which kinda kinda what's the word? like, caught me off guard a little bit? I was like, oh, we're going somewhere and I get it, Diablo, Hell, all that stuff but it was a rather intense trailer for a new expansion, correct? DLC? you this talk. Mm-hmm. Yeah, they've... if there's anything I've wanted to know, it is, uh... or if there is anything I know about Blizzard, it is that their animation is always top tier. So it was well done and animated and definitely metal. Definitely metal! So

yeah, it was a fitting, fitting. And then we get another trailer that light on gameplay, would have hoped for more. This was another one that was like, "We'll get the gameplay demo this time!" And we did not, which was Fable. But as someone who has not played the original Fable games, I still enjoyed the tone of this. It feels very British, which I'm told is what Fable is as an identity, and I'm really eager to see what Playgrounds... because Playgrounds has been making some of the best open-world games of the generation. They just are with cars, not... yeah. And I love the Horizon games, you know, 3, 4, and 5 are the ones that I've spent the most time in. So to see Playground take their open-world design and apply it to a more traditional mechanic style game, presumably, I'm very curious and interested in it. So I continue to be like, "Alright Fable, I see you. I'll check..." You know, but I just... I'm wondering why we're not getting the bigger gameplay story here yet. Like, what's your read on the pulse here with Fable? Mm-hmm. [laughs] They're so good. Mmm. Okay. Alright, all I have. Mmm. [laughs] [laughs] Mm-hmm. Yeah, yeah, especially on the AAA scale. Yeah, I hadn't even considered that being the closer, but that actually makes a ton of sense for them to lean again into that first party. And this is the game... this is definitely a game you would want that deep dive into, to see the different developers talking about it, and how do they follow this legacy of the IP Fable, but bring their own flair and design to it today. So I like that idea. We can... we'll definitely put a pin in that and follow up on it next year. Yeah, I'm excited to see more of Fable, is where I'm at. Then we got the Indie Block. I kind of call it like the Indie Block, makes some sense. With Fragpunk, Winter Burrow, and Mixtape. Fragpunk was this like team-based shooter with cards. Reminded me of Neon White, I think was what that game was called. Winter Burrow, some mouse-looking game. I have to admit, I checked out for Winter Burrow. But Mixtape looked pretty dope, which is from the guys behind that dreamy guitar game that... thank you very much, Jared. Yes, behind the artful escape. So we kind of highlighted all of these. Mixtape was my takeaway from it, and definitely was one. I was like, "Ooh, I would like to play that." So how are you feeling about this like little Indie Block they had in the middle of the show?

Jerrad Wyche

So the first two I'll be quick on and then the third one I want to talk about. So Fragpunk, the only thing I wanted to mention about this is in my opinion, it did more in 30 seconds to sell me on why I should check out this hero shooter over Concord. It's like, oh, why do you compare these games directly? You know, they're different types of games. Well, they're both hero shooters coming out relatively soon. Well, I guess Fragpunk is 2025. But the thing with that is like it immediately showed what made it different, the cards, right? Big head mode, environmental changes.

Max Roberts

Yeah. Big Head was awesome.

Jerrad Wyche

That immediately to me is like, yeah, and it's a strategical advantage, which is cool because like do you play it on a round where you're trying to go up 3-0? Do you play it when you're down around and because it's going to give you an advantage obviously. And that immediately gave me the sense of I want to check this out to see how it feels because I haven't played a game like this, right? Which is what you would want. With Concord, like we talked about before, cinematic, really engaging, really funny, personality, all that stuff. The game plan, like this kind of looks like Destiny PVP, but like I don't understand what makes it special. I don't know. It just didn't work for me. And it seems like it didn't work for a lot of people, unfortunately. And I hope maybe we get that in the future with Concord that it's like, no, this is why this is different. I just wanted to point out that Fragpunk, this game we didn't really know about, sold me in a way that Concord didn't, which I think is hard to do in the hero shooter space. So I just wanted to give it a nice little plug there. Winterborough. I'm not a huge survival crafting guy, Max, so I'm the type of person that would kind of check out on this too. But my favorite childhood novel series is Redwall. I don't know if you're familiar.

Max Roberts

I am not. I feel like I've seen the art of these books before, the covers. I feel

Jerrad Wyche

So Redwall is anthropomorphic animals. It's basically like children's Lord of the Rings with animals, right?

Max Roberts

like I've had to have seen these.

Jerrad Wyche

Yes. They're probably one of the most famous children's novel series. And I fell in love with those and I just anthropomorphic animal fan, like high fantasy is like my thing. Like I love it so much. So when I saw this, I'm like, okay, it's a crafting survival. I'm not really into that, but I like the aesthetic of you being a mouse and your auntie getting taken and all that stuff. And this is launching into Game Pass where this is one of those things we talked about before. If this wasn't launching into Game Pass, I'm going to be honest, unless it was getting incredible reviews, might not give it a second glance. But because it gives me that subtle interest of the Redwall vibes, I like the art style. It's not as beautiful as Pentiment, but it is that like painterly, renaissance-y, like thick, bold lines art style. I'm going to check it out because it's launching in Game Pass, which, you know, I love Game Pass for that because this is a game that I might not give a chance, if not otherwise. And lastly, mixtape. I said there was something tied with, Fable is my most anticipated Xbox game, but I wasn't like, it wasn't the best showing for the showcase for me. South of Midnight, and I said it was tied with one other game, it's mixtape. This looks incredible. I love a good coming of age. Very much the art style is that across the spider verse vibe, which I love. It feels very Wes Anderson, which I also like. It is very unique. Artful Escape is on my to playlist, I never got around to it, but I was very much interested in that. And like we talked about before with Expedition 33, and this is also launching the Game Pass, with Expedition 33 being a new IP that you should give a chance because these, especially in today's industry, these are far and fewer between and we need to support the things we want to see in the industry. I hope mixtape is incredible and I'm going to support it because I want to see more unique stuff like this. So yeah, I was tied for my Game of the Showcase. I hope it comes to fruition because there was also, Mouseguard is like similar to Redwall. I don't know much about it but Gary Witta of Kinda Funny and other more Hollywood stuff. He was working on a mouse, yes, Rogue One, yes, very much so. He was of Kinda Funny. He was working on a Mouseguard adaptation that was like high budget CG. They showed stuff for it and it looked incredibly beautiful but they canceled it. So long story short, I just hope that Redwall thing finally comes to fruition and it's not canceled like Mouseguard.

Max Roberts

Alright, we'll see if that comes to pass. But Mixtape, I was saying during the show with my buddies, I was like, "This is giving me that Life is Strange vibes, kind of, like the first one." Which is funny, because a couple of games later, Life is Strange Double Exposure is announced, which seems to be tying

Jerrad Wyche

[laughs]

Max Roberts

back to that first Life is Strange game, which I found that pretty ironic. I have not played a Life is Strange game. It's kind of like this series that keeps happening, it feels like to me. I'm like, "Oh, there's more for those people who like those decision games with supernatural teenagers

and all that stuff." I do remember the Captain Spirit one coming out, I think during an Xbox event at

Jerrad Wyche  
Captain Spirit, The Adventure of the Captain Spirit.

Max Roberts  
E3, I think it was announced. Yeah, Shadow Drop. And apparently that game is one of those punch

Jerrad Wyche  
Shadow Drop.

Max Roberts  
you in the gut kind of games. I can imagine where it goes. So yeah, Life is Strange on the stage,

Jerrad Wyche  
For sure.

Max Roberts  
not as surprising. Have you played them before?

Jerrad Wyche  
Yeah, so I've played the original Life is Strange, incredible. Might be in my top 100 games of all time. True Colors, really enjoyed. Sad that all of the whistleblowing and all that stuff came out with that studio. Unfortunately, that whole story that came out with the development of that game. I played Captain Spirit, which is a gut punch. Started too, but it was the typical, this isn't telltale, but the telltale thing where all the episodes weren't out yet, something else came up, never got back to it. Unfortunately.

Max Roberts  
Oh, yeah. That's that age-old problem.

Jerrad Wyche  
Life is Strange Double Exposure, Total Monkey's Paw. You get a sequel to the original Life is Strange, starring Max Caulfield, which I'm super stoked for and very intrigued by the narrative plot of it being two separate realities where your friend is dead and one and alive and the other.

Max Roberts  
Yeah, that sounded cool.

Jerrad Wyche  
It's made by Deck9, which not to say Deck9 can't make good games, but it isn't the original developers of Life is Strange, which is always a concern. Kind of like your concerns with MGS Delta, right, being remade. It's not the original developer, so how is that going to work out? I am cautiously optimistic and I'm looking forward to it. Surprised that it's coming out this year. That was a huge shocker.

Max Roberts  
Yeah.

Jerrad Wyche  
But yeah, I'm excited for it. Just hesitant because of the developer, unfortunately.

Max Roberts

It's like Silent Hill 2 with Bloober Team. It's like, "Ah, darn it."

Jerrad Wyche

Yeah.

Max Roberts

Yeah, I'm happy for those people. And the plot did sound actually totally up my alley as far as multiple timelines and solving a murder mystery and trying to prevent it. That narratively sounds super cool and totally something I'd be into. So I think I would just have to get into Life is Strange, I'd have to give it a shot. I want to just jump into Double Exposure. But cool, it sounds cool. Next up, we get to the game. This is like, so I've mentioned a couple of times where I thought we were going to get more gameplay. And this was like the third and final one that I was like, "This is where we're going to get like a gameplay demo." Indiana Jones and the Great Circle, which is a hilarious name. But Indiana Jones and the Great Circle. We get this nice trailer, a little zippy. And then we go into an extended cut scene. And there's a few things. You can hear the Troy Baker coming through just a little bit. And that's got to be such a difficult job, like the pressure I imagine he feels to be portraying Harrison Ford in this way. I'm not knocking Troy Baker at all. He is obviously a phenomenal voice actor and he and he is some of my favorite video game characters of all time. It's just like, it's one of those things like when you know and you hear it, you're like, "It's like just off enough." Or like Rick and Morty and the change in that actor. It's like, "It's just off enough." And you can tell. The scene itself though, felt like an Indiana Jones movie. And I think that's the best compliment I can give it. It made me really excited. I think it was just a smidge too long, not in the context of the game, but just in the context of the showcase. I think the scene just went on a bit too much. But it felt like an Indiana Jones game. And I just really hope the gameplay is nailed. They've said some things that are like a couple of red flags have gone up, like puzzles are optional in the sense of not that a player could skip them, but they're out of the way and off of the main path, which I feel like puzzles in Indiana Jones need to be a bit more intertwined like that. But I am more excited for this game based off of the vibe of the cut scene and how it played out. And so where are you at Jared with this one? Okay.

Jerrad Wyche

So I have literally zero attachment to Indiana Jones. I've never seen a single Indiana Jones movie.

Max Roberts

[laughter]

Jerrad Wyche

I am not a huge Harrison Ford guy. That's probably why I never was interested in watching them. Archaeology, all that stuff is my stuff I'm interested in. I'm not a huge Harrison Ford guy.

Max Roberts

Sure.

Jerrad Wyche

I'm not a huge Han Solo guy because of that in the Star Wars universe. Just not my vibe. I'm excited to play this game. It's going to be my first introduction to Indiana Jones, which might be blasphemous to some people like my Metal Gear Solid Delta thing. But um.

Max Roberts



That's so cool actually. Oh my gosh. I would love to hear your thoughts on playing the game. Because, I mean, how many people... Right. Like how many people actually are coming into this game

Jerrad Wyche

The voice thing didn't bother me. Like I like you know, because I don't have attachment air support.

Max Roberts

never... That are our age, I should say. I'm sure there will be a kid who's never seen Indiana Jones

Jerrad Wyche

Yes.

Max Roberts

that plays it. But like our age, who's never seen Indiana Jones or engaged with it, what would they think? But that is so cool.

Jerrad Wyche

I think most people under like the age of 24 are going to be closer to me. Unfortunately for some people who love Indiana Jones.

Max Roberts

Um, that's probably true. And that just probably means I'm older than I think.

Jerrad Wyche

As.

Max Roberts

[laughter]

Jerrad Wyche

Yeah, yeah, we're getting there Max. We're getting there unfortunately.

Max Roberts

Oh no.

Jerrad Wyche

I wonder if the comments about the puzzles is misconstrued in that.

Max Roberts

I hope so.

Jerrad Wyche

There are main narrative puzzles that you can't go around. But it might be one of those things that's tied to additional trophies or achievements where there's other puzzles to do that are optional. You know what I mean?

Max Roberts

I certainly hope so because I fully could be misconstruing it. I played that with my dad. Well, he wanted to play a game together and I was like,

Jerrad Wyche

Yeah, machine games man, the Wolfenstein games, you know, the last one not included. I'm sorry. I'm just kidding.

Max Roberts

this is cheap and I can buy one copy and we can both play it. So.

Jerrad Wyche

And who's to know if that game co-op is way more enjoyable than it was single player? I can't really even have an opinion on that.

Max Roberts

It was pretty fun to try and teach my dad how to play a first person shooter. So.

Jerrad Wyche

Oh man, I can only imagine. So I have faith in machine games. I wonder how much Todd Howard is dipping his hands in this because that man seemed like he was living out his dream despite creating some of the biggest game franchises of all time. He's like, I get to work on an Indiana Jones game. You know what I mean? He like lost his damn mind.

Max Roberts

It did feel a little bit like... Todd was like, I get to announce this game. Like, I'm going to do it. I've earned this. It also felt a little bit... I don't mean this in a negative

Jerrad Wyche

Yep.

Max Roberts

way, but like Todd was brought out to introduce Fallout 76, right? Because he's the Fallout guy, but he wasn't the one directly working on it. You know, in that sense. It just feels like he was

Jerrad Wyche

Yeah.

Max Roberts

brought out and he's not, you know, he's not in charge. He's not the head of machine games. He's not in the trenches like he probably more so is on games like Starfield or Elder Scrolls 6. But he

Jerrad Wyche

I mean, but in reality, he's also probably the reason they even got the license from Lucasfilm because of his track record.

Max Roberts

still was like, I get to talk about Indiana Jones. [laughs] Sh- sure. Big factor, I'm sure.

Jerrad Wyche

Yeah, yeah. I am a pro Todd Howard guy. I know there's a lot of hate for him online, but yeah, that was weird because it felt like, no, no, no.

Max Roberts

I- I don't have hate.

Jerrad Wyche

Yeah, I'm not saying you're hating. I'm just saying it seems like there's a lot of hate for him online, which some of it's justified her fault 76 and all of that.

Max Roberts  
Sure.

Jerrad Wyche  
But this to me, my one worry and we've never heard about this is if like this was strong arm to machine games of like we got the Indiana Jones license. You guys got to work on it, you know, and that's never been said. I'm just assuming that that might have been a case, which I hope not.

Max Roberts  
Mm-hmm.

Jerrad Wyche  
But yeah, I'm excited to hop into it.

Max Roberts  
It feels like a Spider-Man scenario with Insomniac. It's like, we have a Marvel game. What do you want to work on? It's like, we'd like to make a Spider-Man game. And now look at them. You know, they're- we know exactly what Insomniac is working on for the next

Jerrad Wyche  
Yeah.

Max Roberts  
decade. They're kind of the Marvel team now. And that is cool and fine and great. And they make wonderful games. I'm not- but Insomniac also makes Ratchet and Clank and has made a bunch of other wonderful IP. And I don't know if Sony is even aware of this, but they've made some VR games and it's weird. Sony has a VR headset and it's like, what if we use some of our assets at our

Jerrad Wyche  
[LAUGH]

Max Roberts  
most prolific studio to make a VR game for our VR headset? I don't know if they even know. Gosh,

Jerrad Wyche  
We should let Sony know they have the headset out.

Max Roberts  
what a frustrating piece of equipment and company running behind it. At least-

Jerrad Wyche  
I'd argue Insomniac is PlayStation's most valuable studio in that not like per like per dollar because obviously you can argue Naughty Dog and Sony Santa Monica, but in terms of.

Max Roberts  
Oh no, I think Insomniac is per dollar too, based off Spider-Man 2 sales. [laughter]

Jerrad Wyche

Sure, sure, I guess yeah, that's valid. But what I'm saying is it valuable in terms of their cadence of release and the quality of release to me Insomniac.

Max Roberts

They have held up the PS5, man.

Jerrad Wyche

Yeah, to me, there's only two studios that deliver on a fast cadence with the level of quality and that's Insomniac and from software. Those are the only two studios in the world in my opinion that deliver as quickly and as high quality as those two do.

Max Roberts

Mm-hmm.

Jerrad Wyche

No one are like them.

Max Roberts

It's so- you're absolutely right. And it's so funny that- I mean, if you were talking in the PS3 360 era, I think that list would be a lot longer. Just games were coming out much quicker

Jerrad Wyche

Yeah, smaller scopes.

Max Roberts

then. I mean, if you- all smaller scopes. Look at Naughty Dog. There was the whole- I mean, gosh, they put out on the PS3 alone, they put out Uncharted 1, 2, 3, and The Last of Us, plus The Last of Us' DLC. Gosh, why am I blanking on the name of that? It doesn't matter. Left Behind. You know, they cranked all of that out on the PS3. And then the PS4 was Uncharted 4, Lost Legacy, and The Last was Part 2. And now on the PS5, it's Uncharted 4, Lost Legacy, and The Last was Part 2, with The Last was Part 1 remake as well. But just like, as an example of such a prolific studio with high output and high quality to- the scopes get bigger, and the develop cycles get longer, and well, how do we keep going? Well, let's just remake, remaster, put it out, and keep generating revenue. Insomniac is cranking out the games. And sure, some of them are remasters like Spider-Man for PS4 remastered, which launched with the PS5 alongside Miles Morales, which was one of those, you know, 40, 50, however much dollar expansions like Lost Legacy. But you know, then they put out Ratchet and Clank Rift Apart, and now Spider-Man 2, and Wolverine is next officially. But there sounds like there will be a- I mean, there will be a Spider-Man expansion style game as well, apparently, along with some other stuff. So like Insomniac has the cadence, man, and it's incredible. They are certainly, I think, Sony's most valuable studio at the moment. If they could get Santa Monica and Naughty Dog to output like that, my gosh, they'd be rolling in it.

Jerrad Wyche

Right. You want to hear something crazy real quick in terms of a cadence of release? I was looking something up because I was curious. Assassin's Creed 1 came out in 2007, Assassin's Creed 2 2009 Brotherhood in 2010. That's pretty crazy to look back on. Now we get Assassin's Creed from different studios obviously, but that's still wild.

Max Roberts

Yeah, that sounds- I mean, right. Yeah, Brotherhood is my favorite of the bunch. I have not played in a Santa's Creed game since Black Flag. That's when I dropped off. I did not enjoy the ship mechanics, and I just haven't been back since. But yeah, man, they- no, no, no, I do not- Skull and Bones is the

Jerrad Wyche  
Skull and bones might be your thing then.

Max Roberts  
exact opposite of what I want. I was like, "What?" Oh, no, I did not like the ship mechanics.

Jerrad Wyche  
I must have misheard you.

Max Roberts  
That was what turned me off of Black Flag. So Skull and Bones is- yeah, Skull and Bones is not

Jerrad Wyche  
Most people.

Max Roberts  
the thing I want. Shadows is kind of- maybe? I don't know. We'll see. I just find it hard to get back into that Ubisoft open world mentality now that I've been out of it so long. But anyway, back to the showcase. We got Wu Chang. That is me. Fallen Feathers. A lot of games dipping into these Chinese mythology settings lately, it seems. But yeah, this is- yeah, that- right, yeah.

Jerrad Wyche  
A lot of Chinese studios are now going more global, right? So.

Max Roberts  
And I think that's pretty cool to dig into the mythos of this- I mean, billions of people, man. It's one of the most- now, China itself, not really a huge fan of the, you know, Chinese Communist Party over there and the things that they're doing and TikTok and all sorts of crazy, terrible things that China is doing. Not a fan of that. But the history and mythology of them, them as a people in the history and culture. Cool. I'm excited to see more of these ideas, but I have to be honest, I cannot tell them apart because it seems like they all star some sort of anthropomorphic monkey character as the protagonist. So I am having a little bit of trouble with that. But you wanted to talk about this one. Yes, see?

Jerrad Wyche  
Real quick, yes, you're talking about Black Myth Wukong, which I was surprised to see isn't releasing on Xbox. For some reason I thought that was all consoles at launch, but it's not.

Max Roberts  
I thought I was too. See? I'm telling you, I'm a terrible- I'm so confused. Mm-hmm.

Jerrad Wyche  
Also that one has a lot of development issues in terms of studio culture, which is a bummer. So this one stars a female character with some power. The thing that I was most interested in is I'm always a sucker for a good Souls-like. Liza P was, I haven't played every game that I wanted to for 2023 yet, but so far from what I've played, Liza P is my game of the year so far. I'm obviously a little delayed with that stuff, but I'm always a sucker for a good Souls-like. The interesting thing to me when I went and looked at the description of this game, they labeled it as a Souls-like, which you'd be like, well, yeah, if you're making a Souls-like, you want to label it as. It's weird. Some studios these days are kind of like, no, we're an action RPG, we're not a Souls-like. So I don't know if they do that to avoid expectations or whatever. But the more interesting thing is it says rooted in traditional Eastern culture, which was evident, but it said,

and I didn't get this from the trailer, but it makes me excited for boss fights and more reveals. Infused with visual elements from Cthulhu mythos, which is very interesting because usually it's Eastern fiction thing that includes Cthulhu, or sorry, European,

Max Roberts

That is very interesting. I could have sworn- so clearly I'm getting the Wukong thing from the name, which is just me being

Jerrad Wyche

or Western American that uses Cthulhu in a lot of their stuff. So to see a Chinese developer infuse that into Eastern culture, very excited to see what that looks like. That looks like. . .

Max Roberts

dumb and my brain dyslexia mixing things up. But I could have sworn there was a monkey game at this showcase. I thought there was a game where you played as a monkey, but I'm looking at this list and I don't see it. So maybe I truly have lost- maybe there was something at Games Fest. I don't know. I digress. I'm so sorry. But you are absolutely right. I just looked up this trailer.

Jerrad Wyche

No problem.

Max Roberts

I have re-remembered it. Yeah, it definitely gave the Souls vibes like you were saying,

Jerrad Wyche

.

Max Roberts

but then they're like, "No, we're an action RPG." Which is- it's interesting that it's almost like FromSoftware has claimed this vibe of art style, right? And even if you look remotely like it, people will automatically think Soulsborn or what do they call them now? Is it still Souls-Soulslikes? Souls rings? Sure. Yeah, those are the people that they haven't played Bloodborne.

Jerrad Wyche

Well, yeah, some people, I think if you're a PlayStation primary gamer, you call it a Souls-born, but most general people call it a Souls-like.

Max Roberts

Oh, exactly. Unfortunate. So yes, Wu Chang, Fallen Feathers. Cool stuff. It seems neat.

Jerrad Wyche

Precisely, yes.

Max Roberts

Avowed, next. This was- yeah, give it to me.

Jerrad Wyche

I have a hot take.

Max Roberts

Mm-hmm.

Jerrad Wyche

So I love Obsidian. I really liked The Outer Worlds. I'm very interested in Avowt. Like I've said before, I like fantasy.

Max Roberts  
Yeah.

Jerrad Wyche  
This is something I thought I'd never say. This game is too colorful. And that might sound weird, but I think it clashes with the tone that they're trying to strike with the game. Whereas The Outer Worlds was colorful, but it was a play on corporations and capitalism and all that stuff.

Max Roberts  
[laughs] Yeah.

Jerrad Wyche  
And it was wacky and I get that. This one, though, it does have humor. It is going more towards the fantasy genre. And I think when you go too colorful, you tend to feel more generic, as weird as that is. And this game to me has always just felt like it's too colorful. And I know that sounds odd because remember the days, Max, when we were complaining, why is every game brown or orange or whatever? You know what I mean?

Max Roberts  
Yeah, resistance.

Jerrad Wyche  
But I just think this game is too colorful and it makes a tonal clash for people watching it.

Max Roberts  
I'm looking at the trailer as you talk, and purple, I feel like, is the key color. They have

Jerrad Wyche  
And I think that's been a tough thing for people.

Max Roberts  
purple everywhere. And I did have that kind of opinion with the key art, which is the skeleton wielding a sword, and it's got pinks, purples, greens, blues, all scattered throughout it. It almost feels like, in that sense, that visual style sense, it's trying so hard to disassociate itself with the fantasy RPGs that have come before it, which would- that it's

Jerrad Wyche  
Yeah.

Max Roberts  
drawing obvious comparisons from, right? Elder Scrolls or even things like The Witcher you could see a little bit, not that it's first person in that sense, but it feels like it is trying to stand apart and be different in that sense, and I'm all for new visual styles and trying it, but it does feel a little clashy with just the genre. I'm curious to see what reviews will say, what people will say, as I always look forward to. I want to see what Digital Foundry says about it from a visual perspective and how it runs and handles on all sorts of things. This was like, kind of like Indiana Jones. I thought we were going to get a date for this one too, but they're holding onto these dates so close to their chest. Oh my gosh, guys, come on. They're not quite

Jerrad Wyche

There was also a weird thing with this. There was a day for it in the Xbox blog post and then it got removed.

Max Roberts

giving everything we thought they would give, and mostly just a date in that sense. I guess they just want to maximize new cycles as much as possible. It is good to see it coming in 2024 alongside. I feel like this will- this can have an audience, kind of to fill that space type of game, and I think it's a strong fit for Xbox itself, and it's good to see Obsidian coming back to this type of RPG, especially Pentamint. They just put up Pentamint out of nowhere, which was really cool. Yeah, it's on my list. It's on my list because it's my kind of game,

Jerrad Wyche

Paint Me was incredible. I loved that game so much. Like nothing I've ever played. It's... I love it.

Max Roberts

but I have yet to play it. I think- yeah, so was that the other one coming to PlayStation? Was that another one cross-platform?

Jerrad Wyche

Yes, that was going cross platform. Yeah.

Max Roberts

That was the other one. I knew there was a fourth one, but yeah, Obsidian also did Grounded, right? They're the Grounded team. Yeah, they're funky, and I like that. Keep it up. Keep doing your thing,

Jerrad Wyche

Yes, they are the closest thing to Insomniac in terms of cadence. Now, they're not close in quality necessarily, but in cadence, yes. They're very valuable at Xbox.

Max Roberts

Obsidian. There were a couple other games. Adam Fall, Assassin's Creed Shadow, Stalker 2. Stalker 2 actually got a date, which is good. Really great. Yeah, oh, it has had one?

Jerrad Wyche

It's had a date. It was originally supposed to come out mid last year and then it got delayed because of the war in Ukraine.

Max Roberts

Delayed. Makes sense.

Jerrad Wyche

And then early this year, it got the September date, but people were still worried that it might get delayed again because obviously the war is still ongoing. So it was nice for them to not have to change it or remove it or anything. Exactly, yeah.

Max Roberts

So they reaffirmed the date. Gotcha. It was good to see. Great. Assassin's Creed Shadows was like a tease. It was like, "Check out more at Ubisoft Forward," which I did watch some of that gameplay, and it looks like an open world Assassin's Creed game. I need to pay more attention closely. I was working while it was on, but- sure.

Jerrad Wyche



You should go back and watch it, the thing that they showed at the UB Forward, because it does a really good job at explaining the reason there's two protagonists and their gameplay difference. They literally do two different missions with them and it shows the gameplay difference between the two. It was the best part of that UB Forward.

Max Roberts

Oh, boy. Okay, I will go back and watch that. I want to watch that and the Veilguard thing.

Jerrad Wyche

One of the only good parts outside of Outlaws.

Max Roberts

You piqued my interest to go watch that gameplay as well, so I'll make sure to do my homework there. But then, Sarah Bond shows up, and I swear, I swear, Jared, I thought she was getting ready to do the thing, but she didn't do the thing. They didn't do anything that we expected, so they

Jerrad Wyche

[laughter]

Max Roberts

reveal new hardware. I'm like, "Ugh." They're like, "And now we have an all-digital Xbox Series X." And I was like, "This is it. This is where they're going to reveal that adorably all-digital Series X." Nope. They just put plastic over the disk drive. This is good from a market competitive perspective. It now can match the price of a digital PS5. Makes total sense there. And then they also decided to have a- I want to say it was \$650. It could have been \$600. But they're like, "And here's our super expensive Xbox," and put a 2TB drive in a Series X as well in this beautiful kind of space galaxy style Xbox Series X. If there is one thing that Xbox does well, it is create variants of their consoles and controllers. This one reminded me a lot of the Infinite Special Edition console, if anyone remembers that. It's similar in style. And then I think also a new Series S with a color

Jerrad Wyche

Oh yeah.

Max Roberts

part. Anyway, that was the only hardware. They did not do the handheld like was rumored and expected. They're just like- Oh, and they also name drop next-gen because they've been doing that for this year. They're like, "And we're hard at work on the next generation of Xbox," which makes total sense in the climate of Nintendo Switch successor is out within a year, most likely. It will be announced within a year for sure, and probably is out within a year, would be my guess. And then PS5 Pro is almost assuredly this year as well. And so Xbox just wants to stick in people's mind that next generation is coming and is the most powerful Xbox ever, which is all statements they can say, because duh, that's just how that works. So they just want you to associate next gen with Xbox as early as possible. So these are easy things to say for them. But I was stunned that there was no handheld console at all, especially given that Phil Spencer ostensibly confirmed it in the following interview with Ryan McCaffrey over at IGN. Any thoughts on the hardware side before we get to their closer? Oh, yeah.

Jerrad Wyche

Not at all, but the other thing they didn't mention in the showcase, which was usually in all of them, was a Game Pass catalog update. People were assuming they were going to add some Call of Duty titles or Crash or Spyro or something. And usually they have some mention of it,

no mention of it, which is fine, it didn't make the show worse, but yeah, it was weird not to see it.

Max Roberts

Yeah. I don't have the quote in front of me, but I feel like I thought Phil said at the start of the show when he was introducing Call of Duty and said it's coming to Game Pass. I think he said it's going to, it's the first Call of Duty game coming to Game Pass. And so I wonder if they're intentionally waiting to put the catalog. I don't know if that's the best idea of saying that out loud, especially since those servers are back up for the older ones and the prices for those games went up. I would think just putting the whole collection on Game Pass would be good, but maybe that's something they dole out over time. I'm not sure. Kind of like they did with Bethesda games and things like that. So we will see. But yeah, a little bit of new hardware. And then Xbox does that one more thing. You start hearing a little music, a little mad world. You start seeing the little gears. You're like, Oh, what is this? Gears of War 6? They're like, Marcus, what's this? And then all of a sudden we find out that it is a prequel, a co-op prequel. Marcus and Dom, Gears of War E-Day. I have yet to play a Gears of War game. This is a big gap in my Xbox catalog. I have wanted to play them. I think I got all of them when I bought my Xbox one. Like it was part of buying an Xbox. You just got all of the Gears of War games at the time. I don't think I have four or five. But Gears of War E-Day, the Gears fans in my life popped off. They were like, this is what they wanted to see. It was like coming home for them. Marcus, Dom, prequel energy. It was like the boys are back in town kind of energy. How did you feel seeing E-Day? Did you play Pop? Did you play Gears of War Pop?

Jerrad Wyche

So yeah, I've played every Gears of War game, which shouldn't be too shocking. I'm interested...

Max Roberts

I always, people are like, Logan the other day said, I'm going to replay all the Gears games.

Jerrad Wyche

Thank you for calling me out. No, I have not played every Gears of War game.

Max Roberts

I'm like, don't forget Pop. I just, I love being the guy that won't let that game die, even though it's gone. But I was also, did you play Tactics? Do you play Gears Tactics? I was reminded of its existence. That is not like a shade. You know, like, how have you not played

Jerrad Wyche

Call that again? No, I actually have that downloaded on my Xbox. I've been meaning to get to it. I haven't played that either.

Max Roberts

Tactics? I just remembered it the other day myself. But please continue. You've played all the mainline Gears games that people think of when you say Gears of War, which just totally makes

Jerrad Wyche

Yes.

Max Roberts

sense.

Jerrad Wyche

So the cool thing is the details that came out afterward. We know this is going to be the... I mean, I hope I'm right with this. The first from the ground up Unreal 5 game for the Coalition.

Max Roberts  
Hmm.

Jerrad Wyche  
And they're also actually helping Obsidian with Avowed with some of that Unreal 5 tech. So maybe by the time Avowed comes out, maybe that's why we didn't get a date because maybe they're trying to up the visual fidelity and performance and stuff. Either way, this looks awesome. The details that came out afterward were that it's obviously a prequel. And it's set on Emergence Day and they're going for a more horror-centric vibe where they wanted to feel like Marcus and the cogs are threatened again. Because they felt as if the main dudes, I'm blanking on the name of the base enemy, that they were cannon fodder. That they'd become nothing to really worry about.

Max Roberts  
Mm-hmm.

Jerrad Wyche  
So they wanted to return to a place where players were fearful of them and it's also going to show the origin of the Chainsaw Lancer, which is really cool. And kind of like Mew with Indiana Jones, I'd be very intrigued for you to hop into This Is Your First Gear because chronologically, obviously, it's the first one in the timeline.

Max Roberts  
Mm-hmm.

Jerrad Wyche  
And it seems like it's going to have a different vibe to it in terms of tone and then maybe go into the other ones. I am shocked that Logan hasn't drug you to play co-op with him. Not that it's a bad experience. The best way to experience Gears of War is co-op. It's a blast. .

Max Roberts  
Well, that's kind of, he's always talked about it, but in our little group of like five buddies that we hang out and talk all the time, there are other big Gears fans, and they grew up playing them together, so they kind of always default play together, which makes total sense. And I would love to play with Logan. We've even talked about a chapter select possibly doing Gears. Like, it's on our short list of potential seasons. It makes so much sense, right, of just co-op games to rip Roar through together, and Judgment and Tactics and Pop, if you can even still play Pop in any way. So I do want to play it, and I think in the back of my mind I'm saving it for Logan in a way. Not even if it's not for a show, but just to play it with him in particular, because he loves it so much. Yeah. And we did that with Resident Evil. I had never really played Resident Evil except for Seven and Village, and he dragged me through those games. I see dragged very nicely when we did it for chapter select, and I've come to, it's become one of my favorite franchises, and I feel like a similar way with Gears of War here as well. On the Xbox wire, they have a paragraph about how this trailer was made, which is I think a little funny, but I think this is actually in line with Gears' traditional announcements. But the Coalition teamed up with Blur Studio, who are legendary for CG trailers. They made the trailer with "in-game assets in Unreal Engine 5." It features a version of MadWorld, which obviously that is a huge callback from the 2006 commercial that they mentioned and were alluding to. The trailer is in 4K with 30 FPS and 5.1 stereo surround sound, but these specs, which were optimized for streaming, do not represent the game's final performance. I have a hard time imagining a current Gears game not supporting 60 FPS or higher frame rates in any way. This was just a mood piece of a trailer,

essentially, of establishing the tone. There's no way this game doesn't support 60 and so on and so forth. I don't know if that means, I would also take that to mean though that Unreal Engine 5 is going to be the engine that's used and it makes sense. It sounds like this is typical Gears of War of pushing Unreal Engine 5 to the next level. I think it's typical Gears of War of pushing Unreal Engine forward and doing all that sort of stuff. Mm-hmm. Yeah. That's good. Yeah. It's going to be vital. It's good to have that in-house and be able to share that amongst all your teams. It's cool. I'm skimming these screenshots. They look really nice. Yeah. Then they wrap up with the Call of Duty Direct, more Call of Duty. I did think the Omni movement seemed particularly interesting. I'm curious if that will come to Warzone because it would be very weird to... Yeah. Yep. [laughs] They will. That is how it goes. I was curious about that. I have not played... I actually, when I was at Logan's over in December, I booted up Modern Warfare 3 because he had it. I could not believe how dull the opening of that campaign was. I was shocked. Really unfortunate. I'm sure a lot of that was just a really rushed and cramped development cycle and all the other problems that have plagued Call of Duty development for a little bit. It's no fault of the team, but I was shocked. Anyway, all I have to say is Call of Duty is Call of Duty. That was the showcase. We had a couple more notes down at the bottom, which were kind of nitpicks. You had mentioned a couple of things. No dates, which we've talked about. No silks on. No one's getting silks on. The longer that game doesn't get a date, the more funny I think it is. And then nothing Fallout besides 76, which was odd given the success of the show. Any other nitpicks or things you wanted to elaborate on there? [laughs] I thought that was going to show up. What? Oh, whoa! [laughs] Okay. [laughs] Okay, that makes... I can see that. Yeah, that would be something. Right. Yeah. I see a world where they are working on a Fallout. It's clear based off that Phil Spencer interview with Brian McCaffrey. Again, I think we're going to start seeing more Fallout projects gear up here and be announced. They weren't caught with their pants down, but they also... I think we will see more marketing tie-ins going forward with all sorts of games. I would not be surprised if there is some sort of Last of Us tie-in when season two comes out next year. Whether that's the PC version of part two or they finally announce part three, which is... Yeah, I think so. I think they were caught off guard. Based off what Phil said, apparently what Todd has perceived is I would not be surprised if there is a Fallout RPG spin-off announced or whatever here within the next year or so to line up with some stuff. There's that. You wrote down this list, which I wish I had thought to go look up and write down, but you wrote down the list of known quantities that we're missing this year. There are a lot of games that I am curious about, most notably, of course, OD from Kojima and Jordan Peele. My goodness, sign me up for whatever... Kojima anything, right? Kojima's there, I'll play it. He's also apparently working on an action stealth espionage game for PlayStation. Of course he is. If they can't make Metal Gear, they'll pay him to make something like it. So that'll be interesting. OD, though. Very, very excited to see what that turns out to be. Clockwork Revolution, which I call Bioshock Infinite but not. Yeah, Steam Pump Shock, that's good. That's a good name. In Exile, just like South of Midnight, that was a game I wasn't expecting, but I'm sure we will see more of it next year. The hilariously ironic Toys for Bob situation where they left Activision to stop being a Call of Duty support studio, and then they signed a deal with Microsoft to publish their own independent new game project. I understand that it's separate and different, and they get to make what they want now, but I just find it really funny. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, everywhere. Elsewhere. My gosh, I'll get it one day. Mm-hmm. Yeah, I'm certainly not worried about IO. Not only is them making a 007 game a match made in heaven, but now that Amazon owns a significant chunk of 007, I think they'll get their money needed. IO will be safe. Toys for Bob, this is super funny. I love it. Contraband, I forgot about that game, actually, until you wrote it down, but yeah, that's missing. Everwild was the game I thought would show up, and they'd pop their head up and be like, "Hello." I did because there's been rumors of it reaching a better state and finding whatever it was. I've read that it was soft-rebooted in the middle of it, not dissimilar to a Pikmin 4. They were going one way, they've rebooted, and they're heading another. But I kind of thought they would give Rare the opportunity or ability to show a project that wasn't Sea of Thieves. I thought that seeing the Rare logo outside of Sea of Thieves would be a really good vibes announcement for the Xbox

brand. That's kind of why I would have been thinking there, but I do know that that game is also in some sort of development hell. Yeah, I think game studios in general are like that more. Let's make sure that we are ready to announce, instead of announcing ahead of time so far. Clearly, again, just tapping into my knowledge well, that's what Naughty Dog is doing now. They've done the announced games years in advance, and it's not gone well for them. Just from a dev cycle and delaying things, and then that hack and leak and all that stuff. Everyone's playing things close to the vest now, so I get it. I get why it's happening. But we'll see if Everwild ever comes to be, and all the other stuff. But to wrap up here, I really am looking forward to the future slate of Xbox. I finally, they've been buying all these teams, they've been announcing all these games, they've been doing these things. But I think for the first time, there are multiple games from Xbox, from a first party perspective, that peak my specific gaming interest, whether that's South of Midnight, or Indiana Jones, which is like this big bombastic first party, or well known established IP game, to things like Perfect Dark from a brand new studio, granted it is established, but Perfect Dark hasn't happened out of games since the 360. To South of Midnight where it's being original, or these really cool unique third party games, like Expedition 33 or Metal Gear Solid Delta. This showcase really spoke to me, but then also I can see where it had the games to meet other people's desires and genres. From things like Winterborough with its survival type game, to a team shooter with Fragpunk, or you've got the Titans, you know, Starfield and Avowed, which reached that RPG, or ESO was even there, we didn't talk about it, wow. The service platforms and subscriptions, this was a diverse showcase that had big openings, big closings, a lot of highs. This was really well crafted and it's good, and now they just have to deliver. Mmhmm. Oh my gosh. Well, we had Outer Worlds and Outer Wilds a couple years ago, now we have 33 Immortals and Expedition 33. Mmhmm. Mmhmm. Mmhmm. Yeah. That's really, I would love to see that too, it feels like Sony is really resting on laurels in a way, like the success of the PS4 and the PS5, they're just coasting this generation, it feels like to a degree. And I get that COVID has upset a lot of development and extended cycles and things like that, but I really want a good showcase from them, I really want a solid future, and especially in light of all the live service stuff they were pursuing and now they're backtracking on, like that's a, yeah, that's scary, super scary, so it's interesting. And then you know, you got Nintendo out here, like we're kicking butt too, we just have a different type of thing. So hopefully they actually have it direct, hopefully soon, I think rumors were saying next week or something, so we'll see if that comes. Yeah, it's, summers are weird now, thanks Jeff. It's not Jeff's fault, but thanks E3, PopCo or whatever it is that owns them. Yeah, it's all their fault. They ruined everything. But I think that does it for our conversation about Xbox and the showcase here. Thank you so much Jared for joining me and talking about this stuff. I always look forward to these discussions with you, this E3 just fest, I love it. So thank you so much. You can find Jared online, I'm off Twitter, so I don't know if people are still tweeting over there, but you're @JaredWyche over there, and then Controlled Interest of course, been on a bit of a pause due to crazy wild life things, totally understandable, but you definitely should go check that show out and it's back catalog and all that stuff over Controlled Interest. Is there anything else I'm missing Jared? It's Twitter, I can't, I can never uncall it Twitter, what a dumb, dumb rebrand, thanks Elon. You're the worst, but whatever, it's terrible, it sucks.

Jerrad Wyche

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Max Roberts

As for me, you can find all of my writing over at MaxFrequency.net and my other show, Chapter Select, which I do with Logan Moore, where we pick a series and bounce back and forth between its entries, exploring their evolution, design, and legacy. You can check that out, we are working on seasons 7 and 8 right now, but we've done things like Pokemon or Banjo and Kazooie, Xbox, I played a lot of Xbox that was that year, so you can check that show out in all of its glory. But thank you all so much for listening, and until next time, adios.

