

Trainers, Cubchoo, Skwovet,
Stuffel, Teddiursa & Pancham

Pokémon

Art By Cosette Moskowitz

University of
California
Berkeley



Konshuu

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Nintendo



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Artist Alley 2019



Anime Destiny 2019

THIS ISSUE'S FEATURED SERIES!

GAME RECOMMENDATION

**MARIO & LUIGI:
BOWSER'S INSIDE STORY**

One of the most imaginative and enjoyable Mario RPG's out there, tying up loose ends from past *Mario & Luigi* games and bringing more life to the Mario world than all mainline *Super Mario* games combined. Not to mention, Bowser returning as a playable character since 1996's *Super Mario RPG* was a phenomenal and wacky addition that I wish we could see more of.

**MARIO & LUIGI™
Bowser's Inside Story™**

Nintendo®

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

February 11, 2009
Directed by Hiroyuki Kubota
Nintendo DS and 3DS

**THE LEGEND OF ZELDA®
MAJORA'S MASK**

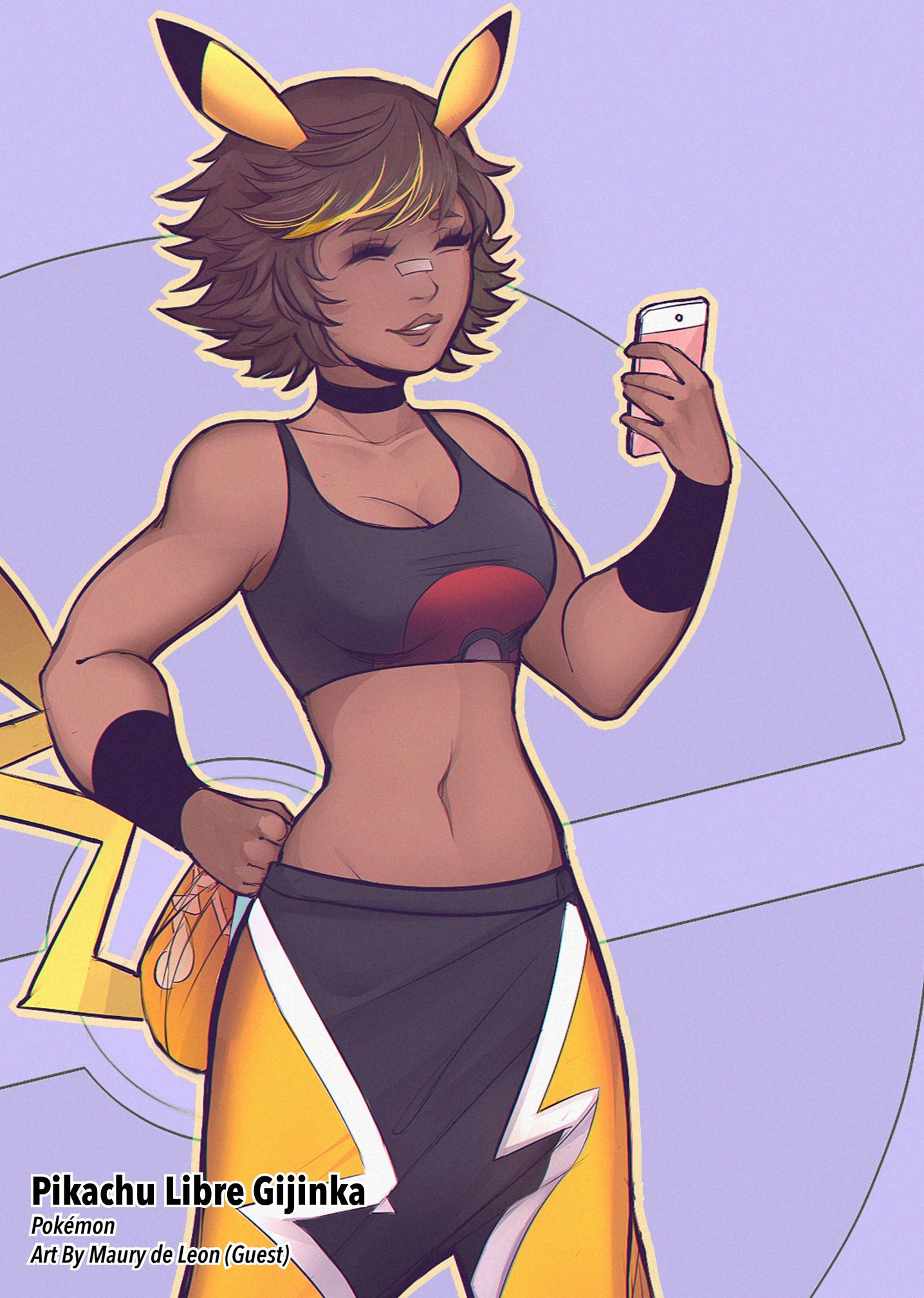
COLLECTOR'S EDITION

April 27, 2000
Directed by Eiji Aonuma & Yoshiaki Koizumi
Nintendo 64, GameCube, and 3DS

GAME RECOMMENDATION

**THE LEGEND OF ZELDA:
MAJORA'S MASK**

Being the sequel to one of the most groundbreaking and influential titles of all time, *Ocarina of Time*, *Majora's Mask* manages to reuse assets in a creative and interesting way which contextualizes a fascinating and oddly dark story. While the game features a surprisingly low amount of dungeons compared to other *Zelda* titles, it more than makes up for it with a wonderful atmosphere and cohesive integration of its main gameplay mechanic.

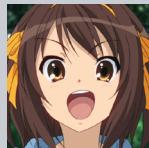


Pikachu Libre Gijinka

Pokémon

Art By Maury de Leon (Guest)

A MAGICAL ENDING TO AN ULTIMATE JOURNEY



Mitch Madayag

2nd Year, Undeclared

"Wait, Sora's in Smash?" *Goes back to playing Aang in Nickelodeon All-Star Brawl*

Editor-in-Chief

I'm not even gonna beat around the bush - I was let down when I first saw that keyblade emerge from the swirl of flames. Not that I hold a personal vendetta against Sora, it's just that I have no connection or experience to anything *Kingdom Hearts* related. It's obvious that you can't please everyone with a single character, but I at least don't have to force myself to be excited for someone I know almost nothing of, though in hindsight, my original disappointment was hypocritical as I was heavily hyped for characters like Terry and Kazuya despite never touching a game of *Fatal Fury* or *Tekken* in my life. The final DLC fighter really could have been anyone, which just goes to show how momentous this reveal built itself up to be. A western rep like Master Chief or Crash Bandicoot could bridge the gap between multiple gaming audiences. Or for a more poetic finale, they could have added a character that embodies the entire *Super Smash Bros.* franchise such as Master Hand or Tabuu. I'd even argue that supposed meme picks like Waluigi or Goku would have made a hilariously fitting conclusion to the countless debates of who could or should get in, but after Sora's reveal, this talk of DLC is now no longer needed. Fighter #82 may not have been someone I have attachment to, but I am more than satisfied that we were even able to get 12 additional DLC characters on top of 6 original newcomers, 5 new echo fighters, and every single playable past character in the base game, an impressive feat I doubt anyone could have foresaw.

My ignorance may have prevented me from enjoying most of the direct during my initial watch, but after looking back at the showcase multiple times, I can at least see how it makes sense for Sora to be chosen as the closing fighter to *Super Smash Bros. Ultimate*'s extensive development cycle. For one, he is the official winner of the Smash Ballot, something we assumed was driving the decisions for *Ultimate*'s newcomers but never getting full confirmation until now. It's also impressive how Nintendo managed to negotiate with stingy media conglomerate Disney, a barrier many thought would prevent Sora's inclusion. Sora's entrance in the trailer has a unique sense of childlike innocence to it. He comes flying in with a trail of shiny dust following his goofy smile as the other fighters are revived from some frozen trophy state. I would probably be able to make some point about the symbolism behind the events of the trailer if I had a better



understanding of *Kingdom Hearts*, but I find it hard for any other character to replicate a similarly magical vibe and pull off that epic handshake with Mario at the end.

Sakurai said it himself that some fans could have finished both elementary and middle school in the time since development first began, a perspective which is honestly hard for me to believe how much time has passed. I remember playing *Brawl* with cousins and siblings in ways we thought were considered a competitive format. I remember watching the original *Smash 4* announcement trailer in E3 2013 back at the start of junior high school and being amazed that *Animal Crossing*'s Villager, an icon from my childhood, would be joining the roster among numerous Nintendo elites. I remember attending my first tournament in Los Angeles, meeting Japanese player Komorikiri, and proceeding to lose to Mr. ConCon and going 0-2. I remember coincidentally visiting New York with my high school band just as the first demo of *Ultimate* was made available at the Nintendo store. I remember getting my first win in a tournament after years of crushing defeats across multiple titles. I remember all the people I've met and all the friends I've made through our passion for one particularly fun fighting/party game. That brings me to where I am now, a second year in college, able to play an astounding number of 43 additional characters since Villager's reveal, which brings the final count to a total of 89 awesome fighters spanning across 35+ franchises. And out of this big cast of famous gaming icons, I choose to main Mii Brawler...

Super Smash Bros. has significantly impacted my life and I honestly can not thank Masahiro Sakurai and the development team enough for working so hard to create a product that celebrates many facets of gaming for all kinds of people. My experience is not limited to me alone and I'm positive that several other fans cherish similar memories no matter if they've been around since *Smash 64* or just getting into *Ultimate* now. It's been a long but wild ride and as sad as I am to see it finally end, I am content with the journey that led up to this dream-like point. Please get a long long rest, Mr. Sakurai. You deserve it.

WHY CAPTAIN TOAD



TONY T.

2nd Year, Intended Economics and Data Science
Aria is literally just Mario 64 but in anime.

Writer

The critical praise offered to 2017's *Super Mario Odyssey* confuses me. Clearly, most gaming journalists and video game players look for something else in a three-dimensional *Mario* platformer game than I do. What is, in other views, a complete masterpiece that recaptures the essence of that particular subcategory of the wider *Mario* franchise, is to me a complete misdirection of effort - a large amount of effort, but misguided. So what exactly do I look for in one of these games? It really comes down to the world or worlds itself. What makes a three-dimensional *Mario* platformer video game fun to me is, above all else, the perception of the contained worlds as complex and nuanced. I point towards one of my favorite games of all time, *Super Mario 64*, for containing all aspects of what I consider well realized and interesting worlds to explore. It is disappointing that, in the 21 years between these games' releases, Nintendo not only did not understand what made *Super Mario 64* so great, but actively forgot the basic lessons they learned in pioneering 3-dimensional platforming, when developing *Super Mario Odyssey*.

First and most obvious, the objectives within *Super Mario 64* have some sort of thought directed into their designs. Regardless of how asinine and perhaps poorly considered some objectives in the game are, very few of the star objectives within *Super*



Mario 64 have the appearance of being copy-pasted, with the notable exception of the 100-coin stars, which by nature of the level geometry, naturally differs depending on the world. Many have pointed out the relative lack of challenge in most of *Super Mario Odyssey*'s equivalent in the moon objectives. But what could perhaps be missed in that assessment is in the reasoning behind the easy difficulty. *Odyssey* objectives, regardless of the world, feel the same - every world has a star from Captain Toad, a star bought from a store using that world's unique currency, and a post-game star obtained by Princess Peach. This contributes not only to the sense of difficulty as is often mentioned, but also (figuratively) flatter worlds - with these commonalities between all the worlds, it becomes harder to distinguish them beyond aesthetic flair. When compared to *Super Mario 64*, there are certain stars which repeat objectives - say, racing Koopa the Quick - but they are few and far between. The majority of the *Odyssey*'s objectives require the player to thoroughly examine that specific world for the unique place it is. This is, by the way, not mentioning the fact that, after completing a certain amount of the game, an endless amount of moons can simply be purchased not just with a unique currency, but with generic golden coins that the player is showered with, thus encouraging a lazier, less explorative, playstyle. In fact, to fully 100% complete *Super Mario Odyssey*, this is downright required.

Building upon that point is the concept of secrets. I feel that a misconception most gamers have is that for secrets to feel meaningful, there must be a large quantity of them. The issue in this line of reasoning is that simply scattering many se-



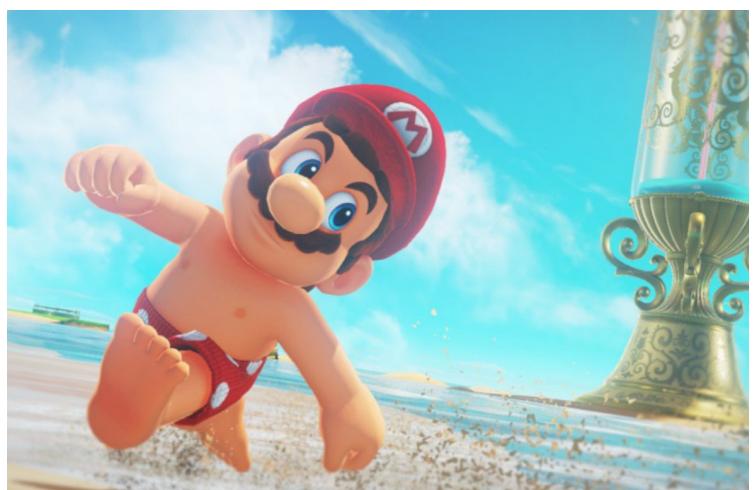
crets throughout with vague rewards doesn't necessarily build one's understanding of a stage. Sure, a world might get more explored by nature of looking for secrets, but in a simple platformer like any of the *Super Mario* titles, none of the worlds are as developed to allow for such expansive worlds. *Super Mario Odyssey* attempts to overcome this limitation by, as mentioned, scattering a large quantity of secrets around its worlds. While this is, on the surface level, interesting, there isn't anything new learned about the world by simply finding a secret tucked away in a slightly obscured corner. *Super Mario 64*, then, takes the far more intellectually stimulating approach by literally building secrets into worlds themselves. For instance, the Lethal Lava Land has a notable secret in the form of a specific volcano which, when entered, transports the player into a separate map with its own objective. This is not necessarily hinted towards through any means aside from mission select flavor text - the volcano is, if anything, uninviting with dangerous fire occasionally spewing out. By diegetically creating this small closed-off mini-world, the game expands the player's imagination of what could be lying in any corner of any map.

Furthermore, the game does not simply reward the player with a star for considering the flavor text and acting upon it - the volcano itself contains its own small platforming challenge to be overcome before the player achieves anything. Subtly, this hints towards the player that worlds can simply include hidden details that may not directly lead to any of the limited star rewards, thus expanding imagination for small, closed-off worlds. A similar phenomenon can be seen in the game's opening



stage, Bob-omb Battlefield, with inexplicable teleporting spots laid throughout the map. As such, overproliferation of rewards can actually be a negative in allowing for players' imaginations to run rampant. With clever use of secrets, *Super Mario 64* manages to tickle its player's imagination despite far greater hardware limitations than its supposed follow up over 20 years later.

And these complaints of *Super Mario Odyssey* with contrasting praise to *Super Mario 64* are indicative of the differing philosophies behind each game which makes one of the games monotonous and the other wonderfully childlike in experience. The newer game attempts to make up for a lack of interesting worlds by peppering rewards throughout the entire stage with far lower barriers for obtaining rewards. In contrast, deliberate use of rewards in specific locations allows the older game to make its worlds appear more alive than they really ought to, being quite technically limited. This dichotomy pervades many aspects of these games, particularly linearity, movement mechanics, and powerups, but at its core, *Super Mario 64* is a game brimming with intelligent artistry in how to properly stimulate players. In contrast, *Super Mario Odyssey* tries desperately to make up for





A SHORT(ISH) FOLLOWUP TANGENT: GIBLE UNDER THE ROAD



TONY T.

2nd Year, Intended Economics and Data Science

Pokémon is cool, but why can't I long jump?

Writer

So, given that earlier article, it should go without saying that I consider *Super Mario 64* to be my gold standard in worldbuilding in video games. Most notably, I believe the greatest inclusion in that game was the seamlessly integrated secrets which were a part of the game's individual worlds. I don't think I'll ever stop using the volcano in Lethal Lava World or the secret town with red coins in Wet Dry World as premier examples of how I feel games should immerse players into their worlds.

Yet, I direct most of this praise towards the intuitive feel of the game, and not as much towards the actual realism or mystique of *Mario 64*. The reasoning for this should be quite evident. As a three-dimensional platforming game, it's kind of hard to expect actual locales from *Mario 64*'s worlds. The worlds feel extremely enjoyable to run through, but in the same sort of way that an amusement park is fun to run through. It doesn't feel real.

Of course, I don't think realism is something that should always be strived towards - after all, my earlier article was extremely critical towards *Odyssey*, a game that, on a purely technical/graphical basis, feels more real than 64. This is to say that I believe that *Odyssey*'s worlds feel like real locales more than 64's, even if this is on a marginal basis and more of the result of moving up four generations of consoles. For realism in worldbuilding, though, I often look towards role playing games for interesting locales and worlds to explore. In particular, I believe that *Pokémon Platinum* has one of the most interesting worlds in any video game. As a region, Sinnoh stands out. It exudes a simple, old-fashioned feel that reminded me of several trips to Hokkaido, its real-life inspiration. The overabundance of snow doesn't exactly hurt this comparison.

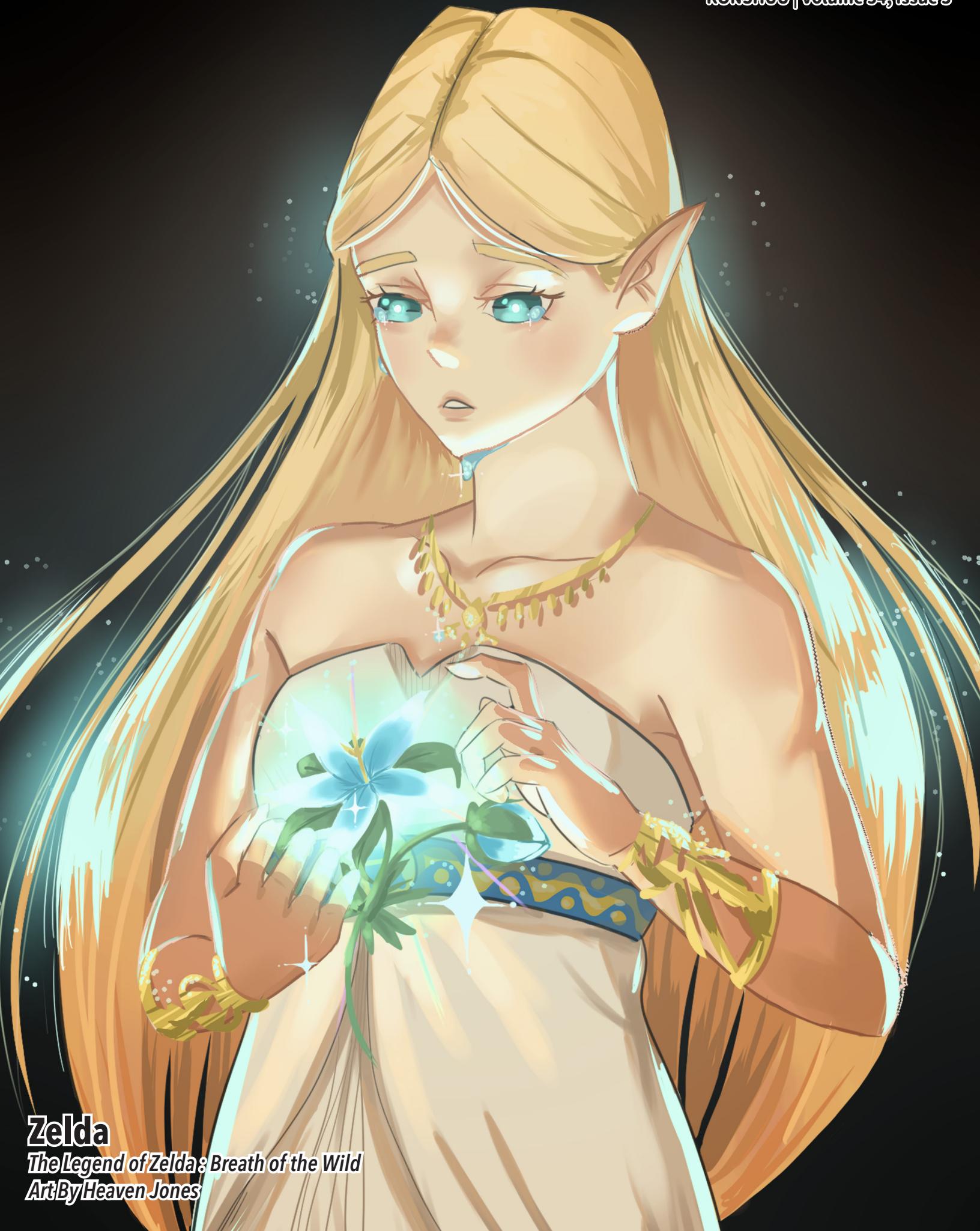
But beyond that, *Platinum* hosts many locations that often have something extra to them that one wouldn't expect. For instance, the Sendoff Spring off of Route 214, featuring Turnback Cave, itself having an entrance to the alternate Distortion World dimension, is just the type of secret one could miss geographically without paying enough attention. The game's plot brings the player to the location, but railroads away from it fast enough for it to be forgotten easily. On a similar note, the game's Victory Road features a completely extra hidden area that, admittedly, doesn't do much unless the player has access to an event

item. Provided the player does hold said item, though, an entirely new, massive route leading to an island featuring a mystical Pokémon appears. Past this random assortment of locations, without mentioning other locations like Fullmoon Island and Snowpoint Temple which feature both interesting lore implications and fascinating secrets to explore, the most memorable part of Sinnoh for me is Wayward Cave.



Said cave itself isn't that important, as it is completely optional and doesn't impact the player's progress at all. In fact, through the normal entrance, this location is horribly boring, featuring only generic encounters that the entire region is littered with. What makes Wayward Cave interesting, though, is the existence of its alternate entrance. Under the Cycling Road, in a specific location, lies an additional entrance to Wayward Cave, wherein the player can encounter Gible, one of the strongest Pokémon in the entire game. This secret is completely hidden. In fact, I only learned about it from an older cousin who, most of the time, told me fake rumors as a joke. It's the type of secret akin to the infamous "Mew Under the Bus" rumor for *Pokémon Red and Green*, only in this case, "Gible Under the Road" is actually real.

In a sense, this secret embodies everything I love about hidden areas in interactive media. In a pre-Internet (or, at least, pre-modern-Internet) world, these types of secrets felt truly secret, like something that you could brag about on the playground to skeptical but intrigued peers. Though this sentiment I'm sharing is fairly biased by way of my zoomer-tinted lens, I think most generations prior to the true widespread use of the Internet can somewhat understand what I'm trying to explain. Obviously, modern games exist in the modern Internet era, where these sorts of secrets are almost instantly leaked after games are released. I appreciate this type of secret immensely, though, as it properly builds the world of Sinnoh - a world that fits within an 8 gigabyte cartridge - into something that feels real and breathing, not fully explored. As such, I very much wish more games would include such details, however simple or minuscule they may seem, as they really do go a long way in building worlds that feel real.



Zelda

The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild

Art By Heaven Jones

GENEALOGY OF THE NEW ERA



NICHOLAS WONOSAPUTRA

3rd Year, MCB: Neurobiology

Still waiting.

Writer

Genealogy of the Holy War, the fourth entry in the *Fire Emblem* franchise, is long overdue for a remake. I've spent years dreaming of what a teaser trailer for the remake would be like. It'd be during a Nintendo Direct at E3, and open with a voice that says, "Seliph. Listen, Seliph..." and slowly, the screen begins to brighten into a blinding white, and fades into a scene of a horse galloping through a forest, a man dressed in white riding atop. As the knight brings his horse to a stop, the camera slowly pans to a woman standing in a ray of light, her hand held up in a gesture towards the leaves. A soft, piano rendition of the *Fire Emblem* theme plays. As the knight reaches out his hand to the maiden, the voice continues, "you must stay humble, no matter what." Then, the camera zooms closer and closer into the man's eye, and as it gets impossibly close, the screen is engulfed by flames as the voice says "remember..." Then, the title is revealed: *Fire Emblem Echoes: Genealogy of the Holy War*.

Having played the original myself, I have a lot of things I'd like to see in a remake of *Genealogy*, many of which I doubt will end up being in the final product. The first of which is evident in my



trailer pitch: keep the original title. Such a powerful, bold, and epic title deserves to be used in a game available worldwide.

Another wish I have is to bring back the animation style of Awakening cutscenes, which thrive on excellent lighting and are tonally fit for the romantic feel of *Genealogy*'s most emotional moments.



To add to my ever growing wish list, I would like to roam around in a variety of different castles between chapters, as every chapter starts in a new castle that was captured in the last. I imagine these castles to be very similar to Garreg Mach, and, to save production costs, awfully similar to one another, save for variation in decoration, music, and backgrounds. It'd be great if all of the amenities of the original castles were there, including the absolutely broken arena, where a sleep sword with one damage can clear out the toughest of enemies.

While these wishes are fun, there is only one that I truly need: the massive, country-spanning maps must make a return. I understand moving units is tedious, and an automatic movement option like in the *Civilization* games may be warranted, but part of what I love most about *Genealogy* is its epic sense of scale, aided by the political upheavals that force you to reconsider your strategies and alliances mid-battle. Though I will rejoice at the news of a remake, I know that, even though it would be more logical that the development team would make smaller maps to accommodate modern *Fire Emblem* design, I will be bitterly disappointed if they did so. I can only hope that writing this article will alleviate that disappointment.

Staff Picks:

FIRST NINTENDO GAME



The remakes need to copy the best part of the original Diamond and Pearl—the oh-so blisteringly fast speeds these games ran at.



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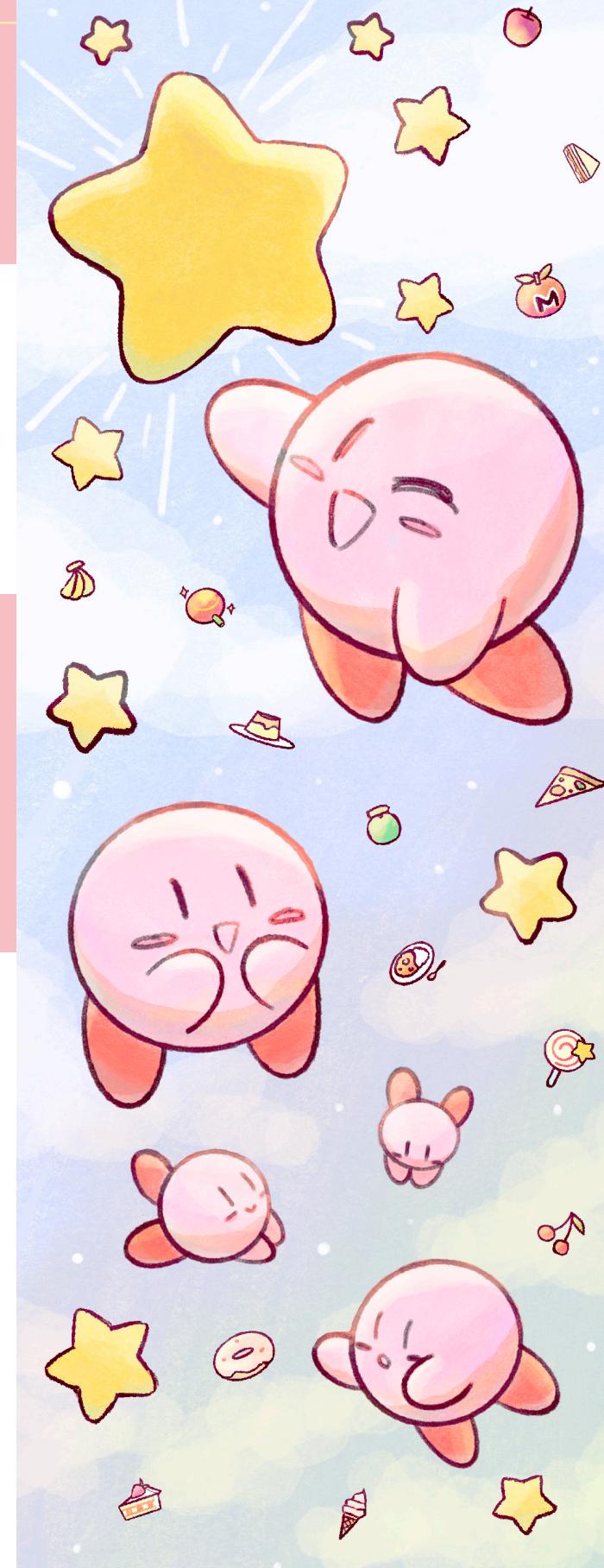
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Kirby Mass Attack
Art By [Miranda Zhang](#)