

= Persona 2 : Innocent Sin =

Persona 2 : Innocent Sin (?????2 ? , Perusona Ts? : Tsumi) is a Japanese role @-@ playing video game developed and released by Atlus for the PlayStation in 1999 . It is the second entry in the Persona series , itself a subseries of the Megami Tensei franchise , and acts as a sequel to the original Persona . The game was re @-@ released in 2011 for the PlayStation Portable . The original version was not localized for western territories , however the PSP version was released in North America and Europe under the title Shin Megami Tensei : Persona 2 : Innocent Sin .

Innocent Sin takes place in the fictional Sumaru City , focusing on a group of high school students from Seven Sisters High School . The protagonist , Tatsuya Suou , and a group of friends must confront a villainous figure called the Joker , who is causing the spread of reality @-@ warping rumors through the city . The group are aided in their quest by their Personas , personified aspects of their personalities . The gameplay features turn @-@ based battle gameplay , where characters use their Personas in battle against demons , and a separate Rumor system , where rumors spread around the city can influence events in the characters ' favor .

Development on Innocent Sin began after the release of the original Persona , and retained most of the original 's staff . The game carried over the story themes and basic gameplay mechanics of Persona , while changing and improving on some of the mechanics . The characters were designed by Kazuma Kaneko and Shigenori Soejima . The original release was not localized due to staff shortages and concerns over its content . Reception to the game was generally positive for its original release , but reviews were more mixed for its remake due to its age . A direct sequel to Innocent Sin , Persona 2 : Eternal Punishment , was released in 2000 in Japan and North America .

= = Gameplay = =

Persona 2 : Innocent Sin is a role @-@ playing game where the player takes control of a group of high school students as they explore the fictional city of Sumaru . The camera follows the party from an adjustable angled overhead perspective . The city in general is navigated using an overworld map . The game 's main party holds up to five characters . Whenever the party is in a " safe " area (i.e. a room with no demon encounters) , each party member can be conversed with . The party 's route through dungeons can be traced using the Auto @-@ Map , a basic floor plan of the current dungeon . As the main character moves around , the map will automatically mark new areas . A key gameplay and story element is the Rumor system : if the party hears a rumor from an NPC , they can spread that rumor using the Kuzunoha detective agency , making the rumor become real and creating effects on the environment . These effects can range from making an accessory or character @-@ specific weapon appear , to triggering the appearance of new shops for the party 's use .

Battles include both story @-@ triggered encounters and random encounters inside dungeons : during these encounters , the party is assigned a set of commands and performs them within a turn , then is given the option to change their strategy during the next turn . During battle , characters fight using melee attacks , use items purchased from shops outside battle , and cast a variety of spells using their Personas . Each character has a starting Persona , and each Persona has different elemental strengths and weaknesses . Different Personas can be used for defense , healing or elemental attacks . While a Persona is originally quite weak , if it is used enough , it will achieve a higher rank . In addition to individual actions , the player can align characters to trigger a Fusion Spell : when two or more party members use a certain sequence of spells , they will automatically summon multiple Personas to generate a powerful attack . The party can be manually controlled or act using an Auto @-@ battle option .

During battles , players can converse with most enemies : depending on which character talks with which enemy , they will trigger a different response . If the enemy is talked with in the right way , they will leave either items or spell cards (tarot cards linked to a certain Arcanum or Persona family group) , items used to summon new Personas : certain cards give access to different Persona family groups . After a Persona is summoned and assigned to a character , that character 's stats

and abilities change . Active Personas can also be fused with spell cards to create more powerful versions . These Persona summonings and fusions take place in the Velvet Room , a special location separate from the rest of the game 's environments . In addition to pre @-@ set spell cards , the player can also obtain blank skill cards by forming contracts with enemies through the right conversation . These blank skill cards can be tailored to fit a chosen Persona family .

= = Synopsis = =

= = = Setting and characters = = =

Innocent Sin takes place in 1999 in Sumaru (???) , a fictional seaside city in Japan with a population over 1 @.@ 28 million . Most of the protagonists come from two high schools in Sumaru : Seven Sisters (?????) , a prestigious school which the protagonist attends , and the less @-@ prestigious Kasugayama (???) . During the course of the game , popular rumors of various kinds around the city begin to come true , sometimes with dire consequences . The party wields the power to summon Personas : they are defined in the game 's instruction manual as " another side of [the protagonists] " . The power of Persona is granted to the party by Philemon (????? , Firemon) , a being from the collective unconscious who acts as a spiritual guide and helper . A key element of the story is the Oracle of Maia , a prophecy foretelling of a series of events which will lead to the world 's end during a planetary conjunction called the Grand Cross .

The protagonist of Innocent Sin is Tatsuya Suou , a senior student at Seven Sisters : popular with most students , he keeps himself isolated from the rest of the school . He later joins with other students to investigate the happenings around Sumaru : Lisa " Ginko " Silverman , whose parents were originally from overseas before becoming Japanese nationals ; Eikichi " Michel " Mishina , a second @-@ year from Kasugayama High who is the leader of a band ; Maya Amano , a reporter for a teen magazine ; and Yukino " Yukki " Mayuzumi , a former student of St. Hermelin High and Maya 's photographer . They are later joined by Jun Kurosui , a former childhood friend of Tatsuya 's . Other important characters include members of the Masked Circle , a group influencing the rumors around Sumaru ; and Nyarlathotep , a representative of the collective unconscious who acts as Philemon 's opposite .

= = = Plot = = =

Innocent Sin begins with Tatsuya and Lisa being lured by Eikichi to where his band is rehearsing in an effort to get Tatsuya to join his band . During the ensuing argument , their Personas reveal themselves and Philemon contacts them , warning them that rumors are becoming reality in Sumaru . The group then act out a game where a figure called the Joker is summoned to grant a wish . When Eikichi and his band do this , the Joker is summoned , then drains all the players but Lisa of their " Ideal Energy " (the essence of hopes and dreams) using a crystal skull . The Joker then attacks Tatsuya , Lisa and Eikichi , accusing them of some unspecified " sin " , but leaves when they cannot remember that sin . As the group attempt to learn the Joker 's identity , they are joined by Maya and Yukino , the latter of whom is able to explain their Persona abilities . They are eventually brought into conflict with the executives of the Masked Circle , a cult led by the Joker who are gathering Ideal Energy using assigned crystal skills . They are King Leo (Tatsuya Sudou) , a deranged man whose eye was burnt out ; Prince Taurus (Ginji Sasaki) , a record producer who manipulates Lisa 's budding girl group for his own ends ; and Lady Scorpio (Anna Yoshizaka) , a former student at Seven Sisters who is brainwashed by the group . The group are gradually fulfilling the Oracle of Maia , recorded by Akinari Kashihara (Jun 's father) under the influence of Nyarlathotep .

After defeating Sasaki and Sudou , the group are contacted by Philemon , who directs them into caverns beneath the city 's Alaya Shrine , where the group are gradually told about their " sin " . Ten years prior , Tatsuya , Eikichi , Lisa , and Jun were part of a group named the Masked Circle , where

many of them sought solace from their awkward home lives . After Maya announced that she needed to leave , Eikichi and Lisa locked her in the town 's Alaya Shrine in an attempt to force her to stay . In a tragic twist of fate , the deranged Tatsuya Sudou set fire to the shrine , and it was only Maya awakening to her Persona that saved her from death . Sudou attempted to kill Maya in his madness , and Tatsuya burnt out his eye with his own Persona . These events were so traumatic that everyone but Sudou willingly forgot them . Jun , manipulated by Nyarlathotep into believing Maya had died in the fire , took on the mantle of the Joker to punish his former friends and make people 's wishes come true . Confronting the Joker and the final member of the Circle , Jun 's estranged mother Junko , they and the Circle are attacked by group of rumor @-@ generated Nazis called the Last Battalion , led by a resurrected " Fuhrer " . Junko , realizing what she and Jun have done , dies protecting Jun from an attack by the Fuhrer using the Spear of Destiny . After battling him , Jun repents , causing his " Ideal Father " to remove his Persona ability and take control of the Masked Circle . Sumaru City is then raised into the sky as part of Xibalba , a spacecraft manifested through rumors surrounding Kashihara 's writings , fulfilling part of the Masked Circle 's plans .

After being rescued , Yukino grants Jun her Persona powers with Philemon 's help . With the Masked Circle and the Last Battalion waging war with each other , the party decide to return the city to normal by removing the five elemental crystal skulls being fought over by the two factions , then confront the Ideal Father . As they collect the crystal skulls , all the party but Jun confront Shadow Selves , manifestations of their suppressed insecurities . On the way to collect the final skull from the heart of Xibalba , they are forced to stop Maya Okamura , a former colleague of Kashihara who has been driven insane by events , from fulfilling the Oracle . Upon reaching the heart of Xibalba , they battle the Fuhrer and the Ideal Father , who turn out to be Nyarlathotep in disguise . After their fight , Philemon appears and explains their status as manifestations of humanity 's opposing feelings , and that they have been competing over whether humans can find a higher purpose while holding contradictory feelings . Maya is then fatally wounded by Okamura using the Spear of Destiny , the Oracle is fulfilled , and all the world but Sumaru City is decimated . After Nyarlathotep and Okamura leave , Philemon tells the remaining group that they can reverse Nyarlathotep 's work by willing the day the five first met as children from existence : in exchange , they must give up their shared memories . The group agree , and a new timeline is created where each character 's life has been improved , though their friendship is forgotten .

= = Development = =

Development of Innocent Sin began after the release and success of Persona . The main staff from the previous game returned , including Koji Okada (who acted as producer) , designer Kazuma Kaneko , and writer Tadashi Satomi . From a technical standpoint , the game not only changed to an overhead view from the first Persona 's mixture of overhead and first person navigation , but also made improvements to elements that were criticized in Persona , such as load times and save point frequency . To separate the Personaseries from the Megami Tensei series , the first game 's banner title Megami Ibunroku was dropped . The theme of Innocent Sin , as with the previous entry , was exploration of the human psyche and the main characters discovering their true selves . The central character theme of Innocent Sin was the growth of teenagers and how they overcome their personal troubles . Another key element was the " power of Kotodama " , the Japanese belief that words can influence the physical and spiritual world , with this power manifesting in the world of Persona 2 through the spreading of rumors . Terms and concepts used in the games , including Persona , Shadows and the character Philemon , were drawn from Jungian psychology and archetypes . The character of Nyarlathotep , who had made a cameo appearance as a Persona in the original game , was inspired by the character of the same name from H. P. Lovecraft 's Cthulhu Mythos . Other antagonists and enemy creatures in the games were also drawn from the Cthulhu Mythos and played a key role in the narrative .

The main characters were designed by Kaneko , while secondary characters were designed by Shigenori Soejima . While designing the main characters , Kaneko needed to take the character focus into account . The protagonists of Innocent Sin all wore the same school uniform and were

given personal items to help distinguish them . The character of the Joker was based on a tradition of flamboyantly @-@ dressed mystery men , along with attacks on people by masked assailants . To emphasize his flamboyant appearance and link him aesthetically to the source of his power , Joker was clad in a strangely colored school uniform . His appearance as a demonic clown was inspired by his actions of absorbing people 's dreams . The flower the original Joker holds , an Iris , symbolizes revenge , and connects directly to the Joker 's true identity . The various districts of Sumaru City were based on various regions around Japan , including Shibuya , Yamate and Odaiba . In addition to relationships with the female characters in Innocent Sin , Tatsuya could also foster a same @-@ sex relationship with Jun. This was done as an experiment by the team to gauge audience reaction to such a relationship , and an attempt to appeal to fans of yaoi anime and manga .

== = Port and localization == =

There was a debate at Atlus over whether to localize Innocent Sin : in addition to concerns that American audiences might not understand references to Japanese culture , there were concerns over potentially controversial content including symbolic allusions to Nazis , Adolf Hitler , and the appearance of Nazi Swastikas . In the end , it was decided to not to localize Innocent Sin . Later , it was stated by Atlus staff that the main reason for this choice was a shortage of staff and resources , as most of the team needed to localize Innocent Sin were already working on its sequel Eternal Punishment , though the localization team did attempt to change this decision . Despite this , it was reported in 2001 that there was still a chance of Innocent Sin being localized , with its release depending on whether Eternal Punishment was successful in North America . Years after its release , a fan translation of the original version was developed .

A remake of Innocent Sin for the PlayStation Portable was announced by Famitsu in 2010 . As with the previous PSP port of Persona , the remake was directed by Shoji Meguro . Due to the unexpected success of Persona 's port , the production team was allotted a higher budget to work with , and they decided to use the additional funding to add more features to the game . There were plans to include both Innocent Sin and its sequel in a single game , but they could not fit both games in a single UMD . A new opening movie was produced by animation studio Satelight , who had become famous in Japan through their work on Macross Frontier and Basquash ! . While most game openings were intended as a simple introduction , the team wanted this one to be about the re @-@ imagination the game had undergone , so they decided to have an experienced outside studio work on it rather than internal staff . One of the biggest challenges while creating the movie was remaining faithful to Kaneko 's character artwork while establishing its own look and style . Meguro and Kaneko were both heavily involved with how the characters were portrayed during the opening .

For the remake , the gameplay was adjusted to resemble its sequel , along with adjusting it to a 16 : 9 screen ratio from the original 4 : 3 , and interface adjustments for ease of play . The character artwork was redone by Soejima . The voice work was remastered instead of being rerecorded as some of the characters ' voice actors had retired . In addition to these changes , a new story quest set in Karukozaka High School , the setting for Shin Megami Tensei If ... , was added . The storyline for the new quest was written by Kazuyuki Yamai . The remake was announced for a western release in May 2011 . Until this point , Innocent Sin was the only Persona game not to be released overseas . For its European release , the game was published by Ghostlight . The western release did suffer a few content cuts : namely , the ability to create custom quests in the Climax Theater and additional DLC episodes for the Climax Theater that included several former Persona and Shin Megami Tensei settings . They were removed due to what were described as " a number of challenges ? technical and otherwise " .

== = Music == =

The music for Innocent Sin was composed by Toshiko Tasaki , Kenichi Tsuchiya , Masaki

Kurokawa . Tsuchiya had previously done minor sound work on the original Persona . While he worked on future Persona titles , Shoji Meguro , who had composed music for Persona , was busy composing music for Maken X and so was unable to work on the title or its sequel . Tsuchiya found working on the title difficult , retrospectively calling it his most difficult task until his work on Shin Megami Tensei IV . While he found the CD @-@ based recording medium gave more freedom than the cartridge @-@ based SNES , he had difficulties adjusting the pitches of overlapping instruments and managing memory space . The game 's theme song , " Kimi no Tonari " (????? , " Next to You ") , was written and sung by Hitomi Furuya . Innocent Sin was one of the first Megami Tensei titles to feature voice acting .

The music was remixed by Toshiki Konishi , Ryota Kozuka and Atsushi Kitajoh . The reason for this was that Meguro , in addition to directing the remake , was handling the music for Catherine , so had to give the task to others . Meguro had also asked Tsuchiya due to his involvement with the original version , but he declined . The amount of music that needed remixing was very large , consisting of over 100 tracks . The majority of remixing was to add subtle effects to tracks that could not be included for the original version . Due to player feedback about the music for the Persona port , the team included the option to switch to the original versions . The new opening 's theme song , " Unbreakable Tie " , was written by Japanese hip @-@ hop artist and long @-@ time collaborator Lotus Juice and sung by J @-@ pop singer Asami Izawa .

== Reception ==

In its year of release , Innocent Sin reached # 62 in the Japanese sales charts , selling 274 @,@ 798 copies . The PSP remake reached # 6 in the Japanese sales chart during its first week of release , selling 62 @,@ 721 units . It dropped to # 11 by the following week , selling a further 10 @,@ 400 units . By October 2011 , the game had sold 110 @,@ 000 units in Japan , placing among Atlus ' best @-@ selling titles for that year . During its first week on sale in North America , it reached second place in the sales charts .

Famitsu was positive about the story in both its reviews , saying that it was highly enjoyable for newcomers and those who had played Persona , while the reviewers for the PSP version said that the story " is still innovative even today . " RPGFan 's Neal Chandran was generally positive in his review of the PlayStation version , particularly noting how the characters confronted their past as well as fighting the main threat , and feeling impressed by the game 's ability to move him despite him not understanding much of the dialogue . John McCarroll , writing for the same site , said that the story was one of the few aspects of the game that had not become dated . GameSpot 's Peter Bartholow , reviewing the original , gave the game similar praise , saying " [Innocent Sin] 's story is darker , stranger , and more involving than most of the fluffy fantasy fare crowding today 's marketplace . " This opinion was generally shared by Carolyn Petit in her review of the PSP version , with her saying that despite a very slow start , the story and characters became interesting for her . IGN 's Vince Ingenito , while noting the game 's differences from later Persona titles , called it " a wonderfully original story " , and praised the localization . RPGamer 's Zach Welhouse said that the game " uses its grand , cosmic backdrop to magnify the adolescent concerns of its protagonists until they pop with energy . "

The gameplay was praised by Bartholow , calling the Persona system " Surprisingly simple and well balanced " , and admired the game 's polish despite its limited use of the PlayStation hardware . Ingenito found the gameplay entertaining , saying that it would appeal to fans of the Pokémon series due to its Persona @-@ collecting mechanic . Famitsu , reviewing the original , said that the genera ; gameplay was " quite orthodox " , but found the battle system stood out from other RPGs and praised the Rumor system 's story and gameplay role . Chandran found many parts of the gameplay enjoyable despite noting the lack of its sequel 's more autonomous Fusion Spells , saying that " had loads of fun playing [Innocent Sin] . " Welhouse was generally elss enthusiastic in his review of the PSP remake , citing the battles as slow and dungeons as boring .

The original audio was lauded by Bartholow , stating the voice acting " [added] dimension to the already @-@ excellent characterizations " , and called the music " almost always appropriate and

exciting " with its blending of rock and techno music genres . Ingenito was less positive about the voice acting for the remake , but generally praised the music . Chandran generally praised the music , although noting that some of the game 's looped themes were repetitive . He also called the voice acting " generally pretty good " , despite finding Tatsuya and Maya 's inconsistent .

One of the Famitsu reviewers for the PSP remake was a little critical , saying that long load times when entering battles and the lack of guidance were among minor things that " niggled me " . Despite this , features such as the ability to switch soundtracks and the Theatre Mode were praised . Petit was highly critical of the remake , citing the gameplay as " Tedious [and] repetitive " , referred to the Rumor system as " dull " , and generally felt that the game had not aged well . Ingenito also noted long loading times , along with a very high encounter rate and low @-@ quality graphics carried over from the original . McCarroll commented that many of the remake 's faults stemmed from the expectations for an RPG when the original was released . Welhouse shared multiple criticisms with other reviewers , despite generally enjoying the experience .

= = Legacy = =

During the development of Innocent Sin , the writer Tadashi Satomi felt that the story needed an alternate viewpoint to that of the main hero . This formed the basis for Persona 2 : Eternal Punishment . Localized for the west , Eternal Punishment was released in 2000 in Japan and North America . The game , along with Eternal Punishment , received a spin @-@ off manga titled Persona : Tsumi to Batsu (????? ??? , Persona : Sin and Punishment) , featuring new characters from Seven Sisters . Its 2011 reprint featured new content connecting the manga to Innocent Sin . In 2007 , Atlus and Bbmf created and published a mobile version of Innocent Sin . Titled Persona 2 : Innocent Sin - Lost Memories (?????2 ? ????????? , Perusona Ts? : Tsumi Rosuto Memor?zu) , it carried over the crucial systems of Innocent Sin , including the Persona and Rumor systems , while tailoring them for a mobile format . Maya Amano and Lisa Silverman were later featured in an internal tech demo for the graphics engine used in Shin Megami Tensei : Nocturne .