

= Sonic and the Secret Rings =

Sonic and the Secret Rings (??????????? , Sonikku to Himitsu no Ringu) is a video game developed by Sonic Team and published by Sega as part of the Sonic the Hedgehog series . It was released exclusively for the Wii on February 20 , 2007 in North America ; March 2 in Europe and March 15 in Japan . It is the first Sonic game for the console , released in place of an aborted attempt to port the 2006 video game Sonic the Hedgehog . Secret Rings is a three @-@ dimensional platform and action game whose plot follows the series ' main character , Sonic the Hedgehog , on a quest to stop an evil genie named the Erazor Djinn . In addition to the basic platforming gameplay of previous Sonic titles , Secret Rings uses a system of experience points and levels , as well as special moves that are unlocked via leveling up .

Producer Yojiro Ogawa conceived the game to tap into the Wii Remote 's capabilities . He chose the theme of Arabian Nights , using many elements of the stories in the game 's setting , characters , and Middle Eastern @-@ influenced music . Sega changed the title of the game several times , settling on Sonic and the Secret Rings to tie in the theme of Arabian Nights . Upon release , Secret Rings got mixed reviews . Reviewers praised its visuals but said that its controls and inconsistent difficulty take some time to get used to . It sold 83 @, @ 000 copies in its first month and continued to chart throughout the year . Sega released a sequel in March 2009 , Sonic and the Black Knight ; the two form what is known as the Storybook series . Sonic and the Secret Rings was de @-@ listed in 2010 , due to Sega 's decision to remove all Sonic titles with sub @-@ average Metacritic scores from retail stores in order to increase the value of their brand after positive reviews for Sonic the Hedgehog 4 : Episode I and Sonic Colors .

= = Gameplay = =

Sonic and the Secret Rings is a three @-@ dimensional platform and action game featuring an on @-@ rails style of movement . Sonic the Hedgehog , the series ' main character , is the game 's only player character . He is controlled exclusively with the Wii Remote , which is held horizontally like a traditional gamepad . Players adjust his forward movement by tilting the controller . He runs along a predesignated path ; players jump and brake using corresponding face buttons . Thrusting the Wii Remote forwards allows Sonic to perform a homing attack , a mid @-@ air move that targets and damages enemies in his path .

Like in other games in the series , Sonic collects rings scattered throughout levels ; contact with certain obstacles and enemies scatters them away , and Sonic dies if he touches an enemy without any rings . Unlike previous titles , Secret Rings does not feature a life counter or game over screen , but instead Sonic reappears at the last visited checkpoint after dying , although the player will have to restart a mission if they fail a specified objective . The game contains 100 missions (including boss battles) over the course of eight levels . New missions , cutscenes , and sometimes new levels are unlocked by completing missions . Successful missions earn Sonic experience points , which advance him levels .

Sonic has 104 special moves called " skills " that are unlocked upon leveling up or reaching certain points in the story . The player can distribute these skills to four " Skill Rings " , which the player selects before starting a mission . Skills can provide Sonic with improved movement , offensive , and defensive capabilities , as well as special attacks . Skills are generally used by depleting the " Soul Gauge " , which is slowly filled by collecting pearls scattered throughout the levels . Notable skills Sonic can obtain are the " Speed Break " , which greatly increases his speed , and " Time Break " which slows down time , allowing the player to dodge obstacles more easily .

Secret Rings features three game modes : " Adventure " , " Party " , and " Special Book " . The story is played in the Adventure mode . The Party mode features multiplayer gameplay for up to four players simultaneously , in which players spar in a turn @-@ based tournament of motion control @-@ based minigames . The " Special Book " mode displays the game 's 225 unlockable bonuses , won by completing levels quickly and collecting " Fire Souls " ? small fiery objects scattered throughout the levels . These bonuses are development documentaries , interviews , concept art , in

@-@ game cutscenes , and game music .

= = Plot = =

= = = Characters = = =

Sonic is the game 's protagonist , and his sidekick throughout the game is Shahra , " Genie of the Ring " . Their enemy is Erazor Djinn , a genie who aspires to erase the entirety of the Arabian Nights book . He was once the Genie of the Lamp from the story of Aladdin and the Magic Lamp , who was punished for misdeeds and imprisoned in his lamp until he granted the wishes of one thousand people . Erazor did so , gaining a renewed hatred of humanity and deciding to take over the world . Several Sonic series characters appear in the form of figures from Arabian Nights , such as Miles " Tails " Prower as Ali Baba , Knuckles the Echidna as Sinbad the Sailor , and Dr. Eggman as Shahry'r . Though Sonic recognizes them as old acquaintances , they do not recognize him , and Shahra insists that Sonic 's perception is mistaken .

= = = Story = = =

After reading the Arabian Nights , Sonic falls asleep , only to be awoken by Shahra . She explains that Erazor is erasing the pages of the Arabian Nights and asks Sonic to help her , to which he agrees . He dons a ring that makes him Shahra 's master and grants him the ability to ask for any wishes within her power ; he then enters the book . Sonic and Shahra encounter Erazor inside ; he tells them of his intent to search for seven artifacts called the World Rings , which Shahra claims do not exist . Erazor shoots an arrow of fire at Shahra , but Sonic takes it for her . Erazor opportunistically tells Sonic that he will remove the arrow if Sonic gathers the World Rings for him . If Sonic does not do so before the flame goes out , his " life is forfeit " . Sonic and Shahra embark on a quest to retrieve the World Rings . Over the course of this quest , they learn that whoever collects the rings must be sacrificed to create a link between the Arabian Nights world and the real world . Elsewhere in the quest , Shahra gives Sonic Erazor 's lamp to use as a last resort .

Sonic manages to obtain the World Rings , and Erazor convinces Shahra to give them to him . To try to keep them out of Erazor 's hands , Sonic wishes for Shahra to do what she truly thinks is right , and she collapses on the ground as her mind cracks due to her conflicting emotions . Erazor attempts to sacrifice Sonic in order to open the gateway between worlds , but in a move of altruistic suicide , Shahra interrupts the attack , saving Sonic and asking for his forgiveness before dying in his arms . Without Sonic as the proper offering , Erazor mutates into the monster Alf Layla wa @-@ Layla , now intent on remaking the Arabian Nights in his image before moving on to Sonic 's world . Sonic absorbs three of the World Rings and transforms into Darkspine Sonic , a darker , more violent version of Super Sonic , granting him the power to defeat Alf Layla wa @-@ Layla , but Erazor subsequently boasts that he is immortal and will always return . Sonic then reveals that he possesses Erazor 's lamp . Sonic then wishes for Erazor to bring Shahra back to life , restore the book to its original state , and be trapped in his lamp for all eternity . Erazor refuses to do so , but is helpless against the power of his lamp . After granting the third wish , Erazor pleads for Shahra to stop Sonic and save him , but she refuses , leaving him to be sucked into his lamp . Shahra then bursts into tears , and Sonic wishes for a mountain of handkerchiefs to help her through her crying . Sonic then disposes of the lamp in a pit of lava in a previously explored level . Sonic runs through the book until he finds a way home . Shahra states that his story will be forever remembered in the pages of the Arabian Nights , and the credits roll . An image of the title of " Aladdin and the Magic Lamp " in the book then changes to " Sonic and the Secret Rings " .

= = Development = =

Sonic and the Secret Rings was developed by Sonic Team and published by Sega . Sega originally

planned to release a port of the 2006 Xbox 360 and PlayStation 3 game Sonic the Hedgehog as the first Sonic game for the Wii . Citing lengthy development times for a port , Sega switched plans and conceived of a Sonic game that would use the capabilities of the Wii Remote . Producer Yojiro Ogawa , who had previously worked on Sonic Adventure , " already had this basic idea (of Sonic constantly moving forward) in [his] mind " , and immediately imagined its compatibility with the Wii .

He later decided that this could be done by using the Arabian Nights ? a compilation of Middle @-@ Eastern fables ? as the game 's setting . This inspired the use of Sonic characters as figures from Arabian Nights . Sega removed " some of the extraneous elements " of recent Sonic games to " get ... back to basics " . Storyboard director Zachary G. Brown stated that , " This game could put Sonic the Hedgehog in a whole new light . He could reach the top of the charts once more . " The game 's art and setting were heavily influenced by the games Shadow of the Colossus , Prince of Persia , and God of War . Its cutscenes consistently feature hand @-@ painted , static imagery resembling classic art through paint on parchment . On a technical level , Secret Rings uses the PhysX engine . Sega improved the game 's camera system to address criticisms of prior Sonic games .

On January 19 , 2006 , IGN staff writer Matt Casamassina revealed that " sources close to Sega " had informed IGN of an upcoming Revolution @-@ exclusive Sonic game , which was two months in development . Sega officially announced Sonic Wild Fire at Electronic Entertainment Expo 2006 , then as Hyper Sonic at a Nintendo press conference and again as Sonic Wild Fire in its trailers . Sega changed the title to Sonic and the Secret of the Rings , then slightly modified it to Sonic and the Secret Rings in August 2006 . Sega preferred Wild Fire over Secret Rings , but the latter better fit the game 's story and Arabian Nights . The game received a rating of E from the ESRB , 7 + from PEGI , and A from CERO .

= = = Music = = =

The music of Sonic and the Secret Rings was composed by Kenichi Tokoi , Fumie Kumatani , Seirou Okamoto and Hideaki Kobayashi of Wave Master . Steve Conte and Runblebee performed the vocal tracks . The music maintains the guitar @-@ based rock style of previous Sonic titles , adding elements of traditional Middle Eastern music to complement the game 's theme and aesthetic . Sega released a video game soundtrack album , Seven Rings in Hand : Sonic and the Secret Rings Original Sound Track , on March 15 , 2007 . The main theme and album title track of Secret Rings is " Seven Rings in Hand " .

= = Reception = =

Sonic and the Secret Rings received scores of 70 @.@ 71 % and 69 % on review aggregators GameRankings and Metacritic , respectively ; Metacritic classifies its score as " mixed or average " . The game charted well ; it was the eleventh best @-@ selling game of February 2007 worldwide , and third for the Wii . It proved the best @-@ selling Wii game and fifth among all platforms in the United Kingdom . In North America , it was thirteenth overall , and fourth for the Wii , with 83 @,@ 000 copies . In June , July , and August 2007 , the game was the fourth , third , and seventh best @-@ selling game for the Wii , respectively .

Critics felt Secret Rings was a general improvement over recent Sonic games , whose popularity and critical reception had declined . According to Empire , which gave the game 3 / 5 stars , Secret Rings " reclaims the bewildering blend of platforming and racing that made the series famous " while " fixing the erratic stop @-@ start gameplay that marred recent editions " and showcasing " the best graphics the Wii has to offer this side of Zelda . " However , " the occasionally sluggish controls and spasmodic in @-@ game camera mean Sonic 's Wii debut is far from perfect . " Electronic Gaming Monthly stated that it " does a decent job at stopping the bleeding caused by the recent 360 / PS3 / PSP Sonics " , and 1UP.com 's Shane Bettenhausen wrote that the Sonic series was " definitely on the mend " after suffering progressively @-@ worse games after the release of Sonic Adventure . GameSpy 's Patrick Joynt agreed , writing that Sonic had been " reanimated to a lurching existence

" . IGN 's Matt Casamassina , Nintendo Power 's Chris Shepperd , and GameSpot 's Greg Mueller named Secret Rings the best 3D Sonic game , but criticized 3D Sonic games in general . Eurogamer 's Rob Fahey praised the game for employing Sonic as the only playable character .

The game 's level design received mixed reviews . Joynt preferred fast levels and felt that the ones requiring players to " move carefully " detracted from the experience . Bettenhausen praised the visual appeal of Secret Rings and compared it to that of Resident Evil 4 , a game which critics acclaimed for its visuals . Casamassina agreed that the " Sonic Team has done a lot with [the seven levels] " , and praised the varying missions and levels ' aesthetic contrast . However , he criticized the placement of obstacles . Fahey denounced levels ' " avoidable blind spots and leaps of faith " , and found the number of stages and their re @-@ use over multiple missions " a little bit disconcerting " . He conceded that it added to the game 's replay value , comparing the levels to tracks in racing games .

Control and camera movement concerned reviewers . Bettenhausen called the controls " a tad reckless at first ? Sonic 's momentum takes some getting used to , and trying to go in reverse is a pain ? but become more natural and fluid as you get acclimated to the fast @-@ paced , twitchy action . " Casamassina and Mueller offered similar opinions , while Shepperd criticized the game 's low camera angle and arbitrary targeting system . Bettenhausen dismissed the game 's multiplayer mode as a failed adaptation of the Mario Party series . Fahey concurred , adding that a multiplayer racing mode would have been preferable to " lame " minigames . Casamassina compared the games to those in Super Monkey Ball : Banana Blitz : " only a handful of them really stand out and some are downright pointless , but overall gamers will probably be happy that they were included . " Shepperd agreed , but decried the necessity to " play the story mode extensively to unlock some of the party mode 's best features . "

= = Legacy = =

To mark Sonic 's introduction in the 2008 Wii game Super Smash Bros. Brawl , Nintendo used " Seven Rings in Hand " and other Sonic series music as backing for the " Green Hill Zone " stage . Sonic Team and Sega later created Sonic and the Black Knight , a sequel to Secret Rings released on March 3 , 2009 . The two form the Storybook series ; Secret Rings is based on Arabian Nights , and Black Knight casts Sonic into the world of King Arthur . On March 18 , Secret Rings and Super Monkey Ball : Banana Blitz were compiled in a Wii release titled Sega Fun Pack : Sonic and the Secret Rings & Super Monkey Ball : Banana Blitz .