= Tomb Raider : The Angel of Darkness =

 Tomb Raider : The Angel of Darkness is the sixth video game in the Tomb Raider series , acting as a direct sequel to Tomb Raider Chronicles and The Last Revelation . It was developed by Core Design and published by Eidos Interactive . The game was originally released in 2003 for Microsoft Windows , PlayStation 2 and Mac OS X and was the first Tomb Raider title to be released for the PlayStation 2 console . The storyline follows Lara Croft as she attempts to clear herself of murdering her former mentor Werner Von Croy while investigating the activities of a black magic cult .
 The game 's development began three years before release . The intention was to create a different game from previous entries in the franchise which could compete better with newer action games , and to fully exploit the potential of the next generation of gaming platforms . The production was fraught with difficulties , and the game ended up being delayed twice . When released , the game sold 2 @.@ 5 million copies worldwide , but was widely criticised for its poor controls and multiple bugs . In the aftermath of the game 's release , a potential trilogy was scrapped and development of the franchise was transferred to Crystal Dynamics for the next entry in the series , Tomb Raider : Legend .

= = Gameplay = =

 Tomb Raider : The Angel of Darkness , like previous Tomb Raider games , is a third @-@ person action @-@ adventure puzzle game . Players control the main series protagonist Lara Croft through the majority of the game . The majority of Lara 's basic moves are carried over from the previous instalment , such as walking , jumping , climbing , swinging on ropes and standard gunplay . Her new moves include a small hop , army @-@ crawling , hand @-@ to @-@ hand combat and a " super @-@ jump " that can be performed while running . Lara can also sneak up on enemies and perform stealth attacks , flatten herself against walls and peer round corners . Lara 's ability to sprint , present in the three previous entries in the series , is only available when the player opens a cabinet containing gas masks in the ' Galleries Under Siege ' level . Her weapons arsenal is also modified from previous games , featuring new weapons such as a K2 Impactor stun gun and upgraded versions of weapons like the shotgun .
 Unlike previous games in the series , Lara has a stamina meter which depletes while she is performing bouts of climbing : if the bar empties before reaching her destination , she falls . The rate at which the meter decrease slows if the player performs special actions that increase Lara 's strength . These actions are also necessary to progress in many of the levels . The game incorporates elements similar to a role @-@ playing game , whereby Lara can talk with various NPCs found throughout the environments and chose what kinds of answers to give : early in the game , these answers will directly affect her progress through the story . The game also features a second playable character , Kurtis Trent . Initially appearing to be an antagonist , the player assumes control of him late in the game . He features mainly identical moves to Lara , and his sections of the game are more based around combat .

= = Plot = =

 Angel of Darkness follows on from events in Tomb Raider : The Last Revelation and Tomb Raider Chronicles , where Lara Croft was presumed dead . An unspecified time later , Lara arrives in Paris at the request of her former mentor , Werner Von Croy . The city , and Von Croy , are gripped with fear over a serial killer the press have dubbed the " Monstrum " . The Monstrum steals body parts and leaves distinctive signs made with the victim ? s blood in its wake . During a confrontation with Von Croy at his apartment , a flurry of activity occurs and Lara is knocked unconscious . When she wakes , Von Croy has been murdered by the Monstrum , and Lara is the prime suspect . Fleeing the crime scene with police in pursuit , Lara tracks down Von Croy 's friend Margot Carvier , who agrees to give Lara Von Croy 's old notebook , which he had left with her for safekeeping . From Carvier , Lara discovers that Von Croy had been contracted by a client named Eckhardt to track down

medieval icons called the Obscura Paintings . The next day , it is revealed Carvier has also been murdered by the Monstrum .

Shortly before his death , Von Croy had been in contact with a French businessman and underworld figure , Louis Bouchard . Lara must track down Bouchard through the almost @-@ deserted backstreets of Paris , discovering that Bouchard is now in hiding after several of his associates were killed by the Monstrum . When she does locate him , Bouchard reveals Von Croy had contacted him for assistance in breaking into an archaeological dig beneath the Musée du Louvre . Lara gains access to the Louvre through its storm drains , and is able to uncover more information connecting the archaeological dig to the Obscura Paintings . The paintings concern the Nephilim , a hybrid creature descended from angels and humans , which once lived in Turkey . A single dormant Nephilim now remains , the Cubiculum Nephili or " Sleeper " . The five Obscura Paintings , when connected , form a talisman called the Sanglyph that can be used to revive the Sleeper . To prevent this , an ancient society called the Lux Veritatis stole one of the paintings and hid it in a guarded vault beneath the Louvre . Lara must descend into the Lux Veritatis stronghold beneath the Louvre to retrieve it . While attempting to escape with the painting , Lara is disarmed by Kurtis Trent , the last of the Lux Veritatis , who wields a magical Chirugai blade . Kurtis steals the painting , but both he and Lara are knocked unconscious before they can flee .

Upon regaining consciousness , Lara is met by Bouchard , who informs her there has been a Monstrum killing in Prague . Bouchard then betrays Lara , attempting to have her killed , but Lara survives and makes her way to the Czech Republic . Outside the Monstrum crime scene , Lara meets a Czech journalist named Luddick , who fills her in on Eckhardt , an immortal black alchemist who leads a mysterious local organisation called the Cabal , and whom Luddick believes is the Monstrum . Lara also encounters a captive Bouchard near the crime scene , who reveals Eckhardt 's full plan for reviving the Nephilim . Soon after , Lara rediscovers Bouchard dead . With Luddick 's assistance , Lara infiltrates the Cabal 's headquarters , the Strahov , and in the process accidentally frees the Proto @-@ Nephilim , the Cabal 's unsuccessful attempt to breed a new Nephilim species . Meanwhile , Lara witnesses Eckhardt murder Luddick . She again encounters Kurtis , who locks her in a compartment while he kills the Proto @-@ Nephilim using his two Periapt Shards , daggers capable of killing immortal beings . Lara and Kurtis team up to stop Eckhardt assembling the Sanglyph , with Lara retrieving the final Obscura Painting buried deep beneath the Strahov . However , Lara must surrender this painting to save Kurtis , after he is captured by Eckhardt . Kurtis gives Lara his Periapt shards , but she will need a third lost shard to defeat Eckhardt , which Eckhardt has hidden in his laboratory . While Lara flees to track this shard down , Kurtis attempts to hold off an attack from Boaz , the horribly mutated remains of a fallen Cabal member . Kurtis succeeds in killing her , but is severely wounded in the process .

After retrieving the final Periapt shard , Lara discovers Eckardt in the midst of attempting to revive the Sleeper , using the Sanglyph and body parts stolen from the Monstrum 's victims . She is able to stab him with two shards , but before she can deliver the final blow , she is interrupted by Eckhardt 's right @-@ hand man , Karel . Karel kills Eckhardt with the final shard , revealing that he is a Nephilim himself , and had used Eckhardt to ensure the survival of his species . He had also manipulated Lara , in the guise of Bouchard , Luddick and Kurtis , to retrieve the Obscura Paintings . He offers Lara immortality if she will help him complete the task , but Lara experiences a flashback to Von Croy ? s murder , and sees that Karel , in Eckhardt 's form , was the Monstrum . She refuses , retrieves the Sanglyph from Eckhardt 's body , and plants it on the Sleeper , overloading it with energy and causing it to explode , taking Karel with it . In the aftermath , Lara discovers Kurtis ' Chirugai blade , which directs her towards Boaz 's chamber . Smiling , she heads inside .

= = Development = =

The Angel of Darkness started development three years prior to its release under the working title Tomb Raider next generation . As part of the preparation for the game , the company conducted market research , and decided to create a new setting and story for the main character . One of the main drives behind the game was fully utilising the new platform 's potential and reinventing the

character of Lara Croft , including rebuilding her character model and allowing her to perform melee combat . It was the first game in the series to be made for the PlayStation 2 platform : the previous entry in the series , Tomb Raider : Chronicles , had pushed the PlayStation to its technical limits , contributing to lower review scores and sales than previous titles in the series . Core Design separated into two teams , with a new team working on Angel of Darkness and series regulars on Tomb Raider : Chronicles . After the completion of Tomb Raider : Chronicles , lead programmer Richard Morton came over and found that the new team had gone off the rails , scrapping the entire project once already and completing only the game 's basic story . The developers later admitted to being overambitious . Jonell Elliott returned as the voice of Lara Croft . This would be the last time she provided the voice , with Keeley Hawes taking over for Tomb Raider : Legend .

Among the goals of the team for Angel of Darkness were to create more complicated puzzles and make the character of Lara Croft , together with the tone of the game , darker and more hard @-@ edged . They also wished to compete with some of the newer action @-@ adventure games on the market , which were providing heavy competition , and include gameplay ideas from Shenmue and the Metal Gear series . Many character movements were drawn from and based directly on movements made by real people , similar to later motion capture techniques , and the world design drew from various artists and elements of films from the likes of Luc Besson and David Fincher . Murti Schofield , who had previously worked with Core Design , was brought in to write the story and script . As part of writing the background for the organisations involved in the story , he researched historical secret societies and artefacts , and accurate translations of Latin text incorporated into the game . Schofield created the character Kurtis Trent upon a request for someone who could become the focus of a spin @-@ off franchise . Core spent two years trying to reshape the franchise as well as writing a back story in the form of a book separated into multiple chapters , with Angel of Darkness being the first of those chapters .

The Angel of Darkness was unveiled under its official name in March 2002 , with a fuller demonstration appearing at E3 that year . Problems with the game were sensed at an early stage , as Heath @-@ Smith forgot himself and began swearing at the game while trying to demonstrate the opening level at a buyer 's conference . A release date was announced for November 2002 , but the game got delayed into spring 2003 . Eidos believed The Angel of Darkness would benefit from additional marketing support from Lara Croft Tomb Raider : The Cradle of Life , the sequel to the original 2001 movie . Despite the delays , the company pushed Core Design to release the game in time for the marketing support . In order to meet the deadline , areas of the game containing key narrative elements had to be cut ; one of the losses was the explanation of how the character survived the events of The Last Revelation . Among other concepts that needed to be cut were two further locations , character animations , sound bites , and unique gameplay elements involving Kurtis . Some completed environmental assets also ended up being cut by mistake . Some of those elements were also deliberately left out by the team , who wished to bring them into future games . The team at Core Design later said that they felt Eidos forced them to get the game out before it was ready . The game was also reportedly submitted eight times to Sony before its release . The game went gold on 18 June 2003 , two days before its original release date , although there was some confusion as the game had reportedly gone gold on 2 June . The game was finally released in the summer of 2003 , alongside The Cradle of Life .

= = Music = =

The music for Tomb Raider : Angel of Darkness was composed by Peter Connelly and Martin Iveson . The soundtrack , compared to earlier entries in the franchise , was far more orchestral . It was also one of the few areas of the game 's development that did not suffer setbacks or similar problems . The score was recorded live by the London Symphony Orchestra at Abbey Road Studios , London , in 2002 . It was orchestrated by Peter Wraight and conducted by David Snell . The Europe @-@ exclusive ' Collector 's Edition ' of the game included eight tracks from the game 's soundtrack on the bonus documentary DVD . These tracks were later release as a stand @-@ alone Audio CD .

= = Reception = =

Tomb Raider : The Angel of Darkness received strong initial sales , mostly driven by an aggressive advertising campaign . The game reached 6th place in the UK Top 20 sales charts , but dropped to 13th by the following week . It eventually went on to sell 2 @.@ 5 million copies . The game received mixed to negative reviews from critics . At Metacritic , which assigns a normalised rating out of 100 , the game received an average score of 52 and 49 for the PlayStation 2 and Windows version , respectively . Reviewers praised the game 's storyline , graphics , sound , and environments , while they criticised its large number of bugs and system requirements and its poor controls , combat system , and camera movement . Gaming magazines Game Informer and PlayStation Official Magazine gave it 5 @.@ 5 / 10 and 8 / 10 respectively .

The game 's story received positive reviews . IGN 's Douglas C. Perry praised its " compelling storyline " and " set of intriguing bit characters " , while Gamespot 's Greg Kasavin praised the story as " interesting " , expressing surprise that it did not earn a higher ESRB rating . Eurogamer 's Kristan Reed called it " a cut above most gaming fodder , and an area Core has paid an enormous amount of attention to . " Game Revolution 's A. A. White was less positive , stating that while the game 's darker story was an improvement compared to its predecessors , it never " [managed] to build to a captivating crescendo " , while the reviewer for GamesRadar called it " bountiful but confusing and ultimately of GCSE @-@ standard creative writing . " The music and sound were also highly praised . Perry called it " beautifully scored game , plush with dramatic mood and feeling " , with minimal sound effects adding " a sense of variety and even peculiarity " , Reed called it " excellently atmospheric throughout , and easily the best yet in the series . " while Kavasin praised the game for " excellent ambient effects , a perfectly suited musical score , and first @-@ rate voice acting . "

The reaction to the graphics were mixed to positive . Perry cited multiple examples of good level design , smooth character models , surface textures and lightning , while feeling more mixed about Lara 's unrealistic figure and hardened appearance . White cited the graphics as an improvement , but was unimpressed by Lara 's character model and noted multiple frame @-@ rate dips that seemed " almost like playing the game in slow motion . " The GamesRadar review called the graphics " a measured improvement on [Tomb Raider : Chronicles] , but not a clean break from the [previous] Croft titles . " Karavin called the detailing in textures and models " impressive " , but cited several points where the game suffered from severe framerate dips . Reed praised the game 's graphical polish , with " almost every multi @-@ tiered location crammed with detail and careful incidentals " , but critiqued the frequent loading screens and stylised or low detail for environments and characters .

The gameplay was heavily criticised . Perry said that those aspects of the game " pale in comparison to 90 % of the PlayStation 2 's adventure or action @-@ adventure games , and they actually hurt the rest of the game 's best qualities " , but that the new moves worked smoothly apart from the stealth actions . White criticised the new layout 's negative effect on gameplay and the poor enemy AI , and Kasavin called the experience " frustrating , difficult , and tedious " , though stating that such moments stood out because many areas of the game were " thrilling " . Reed found the controls dated and the stealth mechanics and strength upgrade system unnecessary , while the GamesRadar reviewer cited both the gameplay and control layout as dated , citing the difficulty of effectively controlling Lara at multiple points in the game because of these issues . The camera was also criticised , with White , Perry , Reed , Kasavin and the GamesRadar reviewer all citing it as awkward to control and sometimes wayward or confusing during its scripted movements . In 2010 , GameTrailers placed the game 5th in their " Top 10 Worst Sequels " list .

The Angel of Darkness caused multiple problems for the Tomb Raider franchise . Paramount Pictures faulted The Cradle of Life 's relatively inadequate box office performance on the poor critical reception , and backlash the video game received from its fans . The head of Core Design , Jeremy Heath @-@ Smith , resigned after the release of the game , and plans for a sequel called The Lost Dominion , part of a proposed trilogy created using the game 's engine , were scrapped .

Following the poor performance of both the game and the second movie , Eidos Interactive took the production of Tomb Raider games away from Core Design and assigned them to Crystal Dynamics , noted as the developers of the Legacy of Kain series . In later years , Angel of Darkness has become noted for utilising or experimenting with multiple gameplay features that later became commonplace , such as the RPG elements , stamina metre and mixing atmospheric features from different video game genres .