Final Fantasy III

Final Fantasy III (???????????III , Fainaru Fantaj? Sur?) is a role @-@ playing video game developed and published by Square in 1990 for the Family Computer as the third installment in the Final Fantasy series and the last main series game for the console . It is the first numbered Final Fantasy game to feature the job @-@ change system . The story revolves around four orphaned youths drawn to a crystal of light . The crystal grants them some of its power , and instructs them to go forth and restore balance to the world . Not knowing what to make of the crystal 's pronouncements , but nonetheless recognizing the importance of its words , the four inform their adoptive families of their mission and set out to explore and bring back balance to the world .

The game was originally released in Japan on April 27 , 1990 . It had not been released outside Japan until a remake was developed by Matrix Software for the Nintendo DS on August 24 , 2006 . At that time , it was the only Final Fantasy game not previously released in North America or Europe . There had been earlier plans to remake the game for Bandai 's WonderSwan Color handheld , as had been done with the first , second , and fourth installments of the series , but the game faced several delays and was eventually canceled after the premature cancellation of the platform . The Nintendo DS version of the game was positively received , selling over one million copies in Japan .

It was also released for the many other systems : the Japanese Virtual Console version (Famicom version) on July 21 , 2009 (Wii) and January 8 , 2014 (Wii U) , an iOS port of the Nintendo DS remake on March 24 , 2011 , an Android version on March 12 , 2012 , a PlayStation Portable version on late September 2012 (Downloadable only version outside Japan via PlayStation Network) and Android @-@ based Ouya console on April 11 , 2013 .

Gameplay

The gameplay of Final Fantasy III combines elements of the first two Final Fantasy games with new features . The turn @-@ based combat system remains in place from the first two games , but hit points are now shown above the target following attacks or healing actions , rather than captioned as in the previous two games . Auto @-@ targeting for physical attacks after a friendly or enemy unit is killed is also featured for the first time . Unlike subsequent games in the series , magical attacks are not auto @-@ targeted in the same fashion .

The experience point system featured in Final Fantasy makes a return following its absence from Final Fantasy II . The character class system featured in the first game also reappears , with some modifications . Whereas in the original game the player chooses each character 's class alignment at the start of the game and is then locked into that class for the duration of the game , Final Fantasy III introduces the " job system " for which the series would later become famous . Jobs are presented as interchangeable classes : in the Famicom version of the game , all four characters begin as " Onion Knights " , with a variety of additional jobs becoming available as the game progresses . Any playable character has access to every currently available job and can change from job to job at will . Switching jobs consumes " capacity points " which are awarded to the entire party following every battle , much like gil . Different weapons , armor and accessories , and magic spells are utilized by each job . A character 's level of proficiency at a particular job increases the longer the character remains with that job . Higher job levels increase the battle statistics of the character and reduce the cost in capacity points to switch to that job .

Final Fantasy III is the first game in the series to feature special battle commands such as " Steal " or " Jump " , each of which is associated with a particular job (" Steal " is the Thief 's specialty , whilst " Jump " is the Dragoon 's forte) . Certain jobs also feature innate , non @-@ battle abilities , such as the Thief 's ability to open passages that would otherwise require a special key item . Final Fantasy III is also the first game in the series to feature summoned creatures , which are called forth with the " Summon " skill .

Plot

= = = Setting = = =

 One thousand years before the events in the game , on a floating continent hovering high above the surface of an unnamed planet , a technologically advanced civilization sought to harness the power of the four elemental crystals of light . They did not realize that they could not control such fundamental forces of nature . This power of light would have consumed the world itself had the light crystals not had their natural counterparts : the four dark elemental crystals . Disturbed by the sudden interruption of the careful balance between light and dark , four warriors were granted the power of the dark crystals to recapture the power of the light crystals . These so @-@ called Dark Warriors succeeded in their quest , and restored harmony to the world . But their victory came too late to save the doomed civilization , whose culture was reduced to ruin , though their floating continent remained . On that continent , the circle of Gulgans , a race of blind soothsayers and fortune @-@ tellers , predicted that these events will ultimately repeat .

= = = Characters = = =

 Final Fantasy III focuses around four orphans from the remote village of Ur , each starting off as an Onion Knight in the original game , but as Freelancers in the Nintendo DS remake , which also individualized the party members , giving them unique appearances (designed by Akihiko Yoshida) , backstories , personalities and names :
 Luneth (???? , R?nesu) who symbolizes courage , an adventurous orphan boy raised in the village of Ur ; Arc (???? , Aruk?) who symbolizes kindness , Luneth 's childhood best friend and a timid yet intelligent young man ; Refia (????) who symbolizes affection , a girl raised in the village of Kazus who tires of her father 's blacksmith training and often runs away from home ; and Ingus (???? , Ingusu) who symbolizes determination , a loyal soldier serving the King of Sasune , with a (mutual) soft spot for the princess Sara .
 Xande (??? , Zande) is the antagonist the party seeks to stop for most of the game , though he is eventually revealed to merely be a pawn of the Cloud of Darkness (???? , Kurayami no Kumo) (DarkCloud in the fan translation) : a malevolent and vicious deity who wishes to push the world into a state of chaos and destruction by upsetting the balance between light and darkness , allowing the Void to consume the world . Appearing in a female @-@ like form , the Cloud of Darkness refers to herself in first @-@ person plural because her two tentacles have minds of their own . Although she initially defeats the Light Warriors , they are resurrected with Unei and Doga 's help , and , with help from the Dark Warriors , they defeat the Cloud of Darkness .

= = = Story = = =

 An earthquake opens up a previously hidden cavern in Altar Cave near the village of Ur on the floating continent . Four young orphans under the care of Topapa , the village elder , explore the earthquake 's impact and come across a crystal of light . The crystal grants them a portion of its power , and instructs them to go forth and restore balance to the world . Not knowing what to make of the crystal 's pronouncements , but nonetheless recognizing the importance of its words , the four inform their adoptive family of their mission and set out to explore an overworld outside the area in which they were brought up , in order to bring balance back to the world .
 Their adventures lead them to discover that there lies a whole world beyond the boundaries of the floating continent upon which they were living . In the world below , they discover a warlock named Xande , one of three apprentices to the legendary Archmage Noah , is trying to possess the crystals of light , so as to bring forth chaos and disorder . The four warriors eventually arrive at the Crystal Tower where they discover that the Cloud of Darkness is the source of the recent events . The Cloud attempts to create a similar situation to the Flood of Light a millennia earlier so that the world is pulled into the void . The Light Warriors traverse into the domain of the dark crystals to free the imprisoned Dark Warriors and defeat the Cloud of Darkness , thereby restoring the crystals and

balance to the world . In the DS remake , there are also several " side quests " that can also be completed .

The story is virtually the same in the DS version , but with some major differences in the introductory sequence : Luneth goes to the Altar Cave alone , but while exploring he trips and falls into a hole created by the earthquake . He is then beset by goblins , and while he is frantically searching for a way out , he comes upon the wind crystal . It tells him that he has been chosen as a Warrior of Light , destined to restore balance to the world , and there are three others like him , but before Luneth can ask it to elaborate , he is teleported to the surface . He returns to Ur , but Elder Topapa does not elucidate much on the matter . Going to a corner of town , Luneth finds his friend Arc being bullied by some of the kids . When Luneth intervenes , Arc runs away , heading for the village of Kazus .

Luneth chases Arc to Kazus and , upon reuniting with Arc , discovers that the rumors of a curse on Kazus are not false . The people there are see @-@ through , and one such person , Cid of Canaan , instructs the two boys to take his airship and look for Refia , the mythril smith Takka 's adoptive daughter . They find her on the airship , and accompany her to Castle Sasune as per her suggestion . There , they meet Ingus , a soldier of Sasune who has somehow escaped the curse . He joins the trio after an audience with the king , who instructs them to find his daughter , Sara . They catch up to her in the Sealed Cave , and with her , battle the monster who cast the curse : the Djinn . Just as Sara seals the Djinn away , however , Luneth , Arc , Refia and Ingus all disappear before her eyes . As it transpires , the wind crystal had summoned the four youths in order to grant them a portion of its power . After this , Luneth 's party reunites with Sara at Castle Sasune . She completes the process of dispelling the Djinn 's curse , but becomes depressed when Luneth reveals that he and his companions must leave at once . After Sara stops crying long enough to see them off , they go back to Kazus , where Takka drags Refia home . The three boys consult with Cid , and then Takka , who builds a mythril ram on the ship . It should be noted that Refia is not with him when he returns , and when the party once more finds her aboard Cid 's airship , the player would be able to piece together why : she had told Takka that she is a Warrior of Light like the boys , and therefore has to leave . The new introductory sequence ends with the airship being used to demolish the boulder in Nelv Valley .

= = Development = =

Director and story writer Hironobu Sakaguchi , designer Hiromichi Tanaka , character designer Yoshitaka Amano , scenario writer Kenji Terada , and music composer Nobuo Uematsu returned from the two previous Final Fantasy games to contribute to the development of Final Fantasy III . As with the previous two installments of the series , Final Fantasy III was programmed for the Famicom by Nasir Gebelli . It was the last original Final Fantasy title on which Gebelli worked . Midway through the development of the game , Gebelli was forced to return to Sacramento , California from Japan due to an expired work visa . The rest of the development staff followed him to Sacramento with necessary materials and equipment and finished production of the game there . The completed game was one of the largest ever released for the Famicom , published on a 512KiB cartridge , the second @-@ highest capacity available for the console . Like many console role @-@ playing games of the era , Final Fantasy III is noted for its difficulty .

Square developed and released Final Fantasy III during the same period that Nintendo released its 16 @-@ bit Super Famicom console , intended as the successor to the original 8 @-@ bit Famicom . Designer Hiromichi Tanaka said that the original game was never released outside Japan because Square was focused on developing for Nintendo 's new console .

Square planned to localize and release the game outside Japan , but the game 's localization 's plans were scrapped .

= = = Music = = =

The music of the Final Fantasy III was composed by regular series composer Nobuo Uematsu .

Final Fantasy III Original Sound Version , a compilation album of almost all of the music in the game , was released by Square / NTT Publishing in 1991 , and subsequently re @-@ released by NTT Publishing in 1994 and 2004 . A vocal arrangement album entitled Final Fantasy III Y?ky? no Kaze Densetsu , or literally Final Fantasy III Legend of the Eternal Wind , contains a selection of musical tracks from the game , performed by Nobuo Uematsu and Dido , a duo composed of Michiaki Kato and Shizuru Ohtaka . The album was released by Data M in 1990 and by Polystar in 1994 .

 Selected tracks the game were featured in various Final Fantasy arranged music compilation albums , including Final Fantasy : Pray and Final Fantasy : Love Will Grow (with lyrical renditions performed by singer Risa Ohki) , and the second and third albums from Uematsu 's progressive metal group , The Black Mages . Several tracks from the game were subsequently remixed and featured in later Square or Square Enix titles , including Chocobo Racing and Final Fantasy Fables : Chocobo 's Dungeon . Several pieces from the soundtrack remain popular today , and have been performed numerous times in Final Fantasy orchestral concert series such as the Tour de Japon : Music from Final Fantasy concert series and the Distant Worlds - Music from Final Fantasy series .

 The score was arranged for the Nintendo DS remake by Tsuyoshi Sekito and Keiji Kawamori , working under Uematsu 's supervision . The soundtrack was released as an album by NTT Publishing in 2006 as Final Fantasy III Original Soundtrack , with revamped versions of the tracks plus some additional tracks .

= = Versions and re @-@ releases = =

 There are two distinct Final Fantasy III versions : the original 2D Famicom version , which was released only in Japan , and complete remade 3D version , which was released worldwide .

= = = Cancelled WonderSwan Color remake = = =

 Bandai unveiled their WonderSwan Color handheld system in 2000 and had immediately headed up a deal with Square to release enhanced remakes of their first three Final Fantasy titles on the new console . Although Final Fantasy and Final Fantasy II were both released within a year of the announcement , Final Fantasy III was ultimately delayed from its late 2001 release date , even after Bandai picked up the game 's publishing rights . While a port of Final Fantasy IV was eventually released for the WonderSwan Color , Square remained silent regarding Final Fantasy III . Although the game was never formally cancelled , the official website was taken offline once production of the WonderSwan Color consoles ceased in 2002 .
 In 2007 , Hiromichi Tanaka explained in an interview that the WonderSwan Color remake had been abandoned because the size and structure of the coding of the original Famicom game was too difficult to recreate on the WonderSwan Color :

= = = 3D remake = = =

 Following the failure to remake the game for the WonderSwan Color , and Square 's merger with former competitor Enix to form Square Enix in 2003 , the company posted assurance that the game 's promised remake would not be completely forgotten , and there was speculation that it might find its way to Sony 's PlayStation or Nintendo 's Game Boy Advance as its predecessors had . Square Enix considered porting the game to the PlayStation 2 , but was eventually convinced by Nintendo to develop the title for their new handheld system , the Nintendo DS , a decision that would later be positively reinforced by the commercial success of the Nintendo DS . The Final Fantasy III remake was first announced on October 24 , 2004 , but detailed information did not emerge for a year . Hiromichi Tanaka headed the project as both the executive producer and director . His guidance and supervision were needed because the remake was not a mere graphical update as Final Fantasy and Final Fantasy II 's remakes were , but a total overhaul using the Nintendo DS 's 3D capabilities . Along with 3D graphics , a full motion video opening scene was produced for the game , similar to those found in the ports of the 2D Final Fantasy games for the PlayStation .

Programming was handled by developer Matrix Software .

The remake was produced by Tomoya Asano and co @-@ developed by Square Enix and Matrix Software . Ryosuke Aiba (Final Fantasy XI) served as art director , and Akihiko Yoshida (Final Fantasy XII) redesigned the original characters for use in 3D , and designed the look of the new playable characters . The formerly generic and nameless party characters were replaced with more concrete characters with new personalities and background stories , and additional scenes were added to develop their individuality ; however , the main storyline was not altered significantly . Along with these four , additional characters (called " sub @-@ characters ") also join the party temporarily , like in the original . Unlike the original , however , these characters may randomly participate in battle .

The remake features a redesigned job system , which rebalances the classes , adds new abilities and adds a new " Freelancer " class which replaces the " Onion Knight " as the default job at the beginning of the game (Onion Knight is retained as a secret class) . It also includes new events , a new crystal and dungeon , and the removal of capacity points . Unlike the original Famicom version , most of the jobs remain useful for the entire game . The ultimate jobs ? the Ninja and the Sage ? and some of the lesser @-@ used jobs , like the Geomancer , were redesigned to have the same level of abilities as the Warrior . Another addition are special job @-@ specific items available only if a character has fully mastered a certain job .

In place of capacity points , each character incurs a small temporary penalty for switching jobs . This penalty decreases the character 's statistics for the next zero to ten battles . This period is called a " Job Transition Phase " and its length is based on how similar the new job is to the old job , and how proficient the character already is at the new job .

The remake takes advantage of the Wi @-@ Fi feature of the Nintendo DS in the form of a Mail / Mognet system similar to Final Fantasy IX . Various moogles in the game allow the player to send email to others . Players are also able to send mail to various characters in the game as well as to other players . Side quests can also be unlocked using this system , such as the quest to unlock the Onion Knight . An interruption @-@ save option is also available that lets the player turn off the DS and continue when turning it back on . Like in the original , there is no way to make permanent saves while inside a dungeon .

An iOS port of the DS remake was released on March 24 , 2011 on the App Store . Both the gameplay and graphics were improved , and the sound was remastered . However , the Mail / Mognet to other players was removed , with the Onion Knight job available via another quest .

An Android port of the DS remake was released in June 2012 on Google Play . A PlayStation Portable version was released on September 20 , 2012 although it was to be a downloadable only version outside Japan where it was released later that month . In April 2013 , Square Enix released a high @-@ definition port of the remake for the Ouya console , as a launch title . A Windows Phone version was also released on December 27 , 2013 . An HD release for Steam , based on the Nintendo DS version , was released on May 27 , 2014 .

= = Reception = =

Upon release , Famicom Ts?shin (now Famitsu) gave the Famicom version a score of 36 out of 40 , based on a panel of four reviewers giving it ratings of 9 , 9 , 10 and 8 out of 10 . This made it one of their three highest @-@ rated games of 1990 , along with Dragon Quest IV and F @-@ Zero , both of which scored 37 out of 40 . It was also one of the magazine 's six highest @-@ rated games up until 1990 , along with Dragon Quest II , Dragon Quest III and Zelda II : The Adventure of Link . Retrospectively , the Famicom version of Final Fantasy III is considered a typical RPG of its day , with a high degree of difficulty requiring a significant amount of grinding .

In Famicom Ts?shin 's 1990 Game of the Year awards , Final Fantasy III was voted the runner @-@ up for the Grand Prize , with 37 @,@ 101 points , behind Dragon Quest IV . In 2006 , readers of the Japanese gaming magazine Famitsu voted the original Final Fantasy III the eighth best video game of all @-@ time , above Dragon Quest IV . As of March 31 , 2003 , the original Famicom game had shipped 1 @.@ 4 million copies in Japan .

The DS remake met with high sales . IGN notes that " interest in FFIII should come as no surprise given ... the popularity of the DS . " The game sold 500 @,@ 000 units within the first week in Japan , beating Square Enix 's original prediction that they would only sell 350 @,@ 000 . According to Enterbrain , by the end of 2006 the remake sold over 935 @,@ 000 copies in Japan . As of August 6 , 2007 , the game has sold 990 @,@ 000 units in Japan and 460 @,@ 000 units in North America . As of August 8 , 2008 , it has sold 480 @,@ 000 units in Europe . This adds up to total worldwide sales of 1 @.@ 93 million units for the DS version , and 3 @.@ 33 million units for the Famicom and DS versions combined , as of August 9 , 2008 . The PSP port sold over 80 @,@ 000 copies in Japan by the end of 2012 .

Reviews of the DS remake of Final Fantasy III have been mostly positive , with the game holding an aggregate score of 77 % on GameRankings . 1UP.com described the gameplay as " an RPG for dedicated RPG enthusiasts , " and noted that while the job system had been heavily improved over the original title , it still felt at times " very limiting . " The review however stated that it was important to remember Final Fantasy III as " a slice of history and a missing piece of a blockbuster series , " citing that " hardcore RPG players " may enjoy the title more than other Final Fantasy games and calling it " one of the best portable RPGs to date . " GameSpy argued that one 's enjoyment hinged " entirely on your desire to play a game with decidedly archaic game mechanics that may seem primitive and uninviting " compared to other recent Square Enix titles , noting the game was " quite challenging " and adding that " some people live for this stuff , but others may be annoyed at the game 's often unfriendly nature . "

GameTrailers noted that while the plot was simple and the party members generic , the game 's scenarios were " top notch . " It additionally noted that while players should expect to have to do some grinding , the game offers " lots of little areas to explore . " IGN described the game as one that may be " amazingly frustrating for the now mainstream Final Fantasy fan , " and noted that while the unique concept of the job system was one that " simply blew gamers ' minds " at the time , in the contemporary environment , comparing it to Final Fantasy XII 's license board system was " literally no contest . " The review additionally argued that the remake hampered the game , citing that battles that would take " mere seconds to scroll through " were now " lengthened to nearly a minute . " Another complaint was in the game 's presentation on the Nintendo DS , noting that the handheld 's top screen was inactive for " 75 % of the game , " and that even displaying only artwork on the screen during those periods would have been a preferable outcome . However IGN described the game as " graphically phenomenal and ... set to a simply beautiful musical score . " They also stated that the transition from 2D to 3D was " a good call . "

= = Legacy = =

From 1991 to 1992 , Kadokawa Shoten 's Famicom gaming magazine , Maru Katsu Famicom (????????) published Legend of the Eternal Wind , from Final Fantasy III (?????? ??????????III?? , Y?ky? no Kaze Densetsu Fainaru Fantaj? Sur? @-@ yori) , a manga serialization of Final Fantasy III illustrated by Yu Kinutani . Based on the original story by Kenji Terada , the manga chronicles the events that take place throughout the course of the game . It was subsequently collected into three tank?bon under Kadokawa Shoten 's Dragon Comics imprint : Legend of the Eternal Wind 1 , 2 , and 3 .

The Onion Knight and the Cloud of Darkness are the respective hero and villainess representing Final Fantasy III in Dissidia Final Fantasy , where they are voiced by Jun Fukuyama and Masako Ikeda , respectively , in the Japanese version , and by Aaron Spann and Laura Bailey , respectively , in English . The characters reprise their roles in the sequel , Dissidia 012 Final Fantasy .