Space Gun (video game)

Space Gun (??????, Sup?su Gan) is a first @-@ person , shoot ' em up arcade game released by Taito in 1990 . It was later distributed for various home games consoles in 1992 , and in 2005 , it was included as part of the compilation Taito Legends on the PlayStation 2 , PC and Xbox . It is set aboard a crippled space station that has been overrun by hostile alien creatures ; there are human crew members that the player must attempt to rescue while destroying the alien creatures . Space Gun features simulated gore , giving the player the ability to shoot limbs off the creatures while blood splatters appear on screen . Various weapon upgrades can be found during gameplay . The music from the game is featured on several commercially released compact discs . It was fairly well received by critics both in arcades and when released for home systems . It was one of only a few games that supported a light gun peripheral for some of the home systems releases .

Gameplay

The game is set in a fictional future , in the year 2039 , where humans have begun deep space exploration . A distress call is transmitted from a crippled ship near an alien planet . The game 's protagonist , a special soldier , responds to the call . Upon boarding the ship , the soldier discovers it has been overrun by hostile aliens . The aliens have captured the human crew for an unknown purpose . The story has sections that take place aboard the space craft and on the planet 's surface . The protagonist 's overall goal is to rescue as many human hostages as possible , eliminate the alien threat , and escape the space craft .
Space Gun is an Arcade Rail Shooter in which the player views the on @-@ screen action from a first person perspective . Players use a cabinet mounted light gun to target and shoot enemies . Enemies are either mechanical guns that descend from above the screen or aliens , several of which can only be defeated by first shooting away their limbs . The player must save human hostages from the creatures . Occasionally , a hostage will mutate into an alien . In addition to the standard rapid fire weapon , there are four other weapons : a flamethrower , grenade launcher , freeze bomb , and blade bomb . These weapons require ammunition which can be collected throughout the stages , and are activated by the player using the pump action of the mounted gun . The arcade cabinet features foot pedals (visible in picture) that , when pressed , reverse the player 's direction . This is an essential feature , as it allows the player more time to fire upon an incoming enemy and to also help keep the number of enemies at a more manageable level and thereby keep from being overwhelmed . It also adds an element of strategy to the game , as over @-@ use of the " backpedal " runs the risk of running out of time on the level .
There are six or seven levels (depending on which version of the game is being played) that are split into four subsections , each with its own end @-@ of @-@ level boss . Between levels the story is explained and moved forward through the use of short animated cut @-@ scenes with text on the screen . Players can often choose their own path through the level by selecting a door or arrow using the gun . Several of the home system versions feature light gun support ; however , all of them allow the player to move a crosshair to target enemies . The multiplayer game is identical to the single @-@ player experience , but the Sega Master System , Commodore 64 and ZX Spectrum versions do not feature multiplayer .

Development and history

The arcade game features raster graphics on a CRT monitor displaying 4096 colors and amplified stereophonic sound . The visuals are reflected into view via a mirror in the cabinet . The arcade cabinet is upright , with the marquee bearing the game 's name protruding outward . There are large , blue plastic molds around the cabinet designed to resemble an alien cocoon . The music for Space Gun was composed by Norihiro Furukawa and Naoto Yagishita of Zuntata , Taito 's music division . A soundtrack CD (a split release with the soundtrack for Taito game Liquid Kids) was released by Pony Canyon and Scitron on January 21 , 1991 . This album was also released as part of Taito

1500 Collector 's Box on September 17 , 1993 . A track from the game is on the limited edition CD Zuntata History L 'ab @-@ normal 1st , released by Zuntata / Taito on April 1 , 1999 .

= = = Home conversions = = =

In 1992 , Ocean Software ported the game to home gaming systems , including the Amiga , Atari ST , Commodore 64 and ZX Spectrum . Due to the hardware limitations of the various systems , the graphics and sounds of the ports differ from the original arcade version ; for example , the ZX Spectrum version did not allow the aliens ' limbs to be shot off . Some home versions use a light gun peripheral to simulate the control scheme of the arcade format . Taito 's Sega Master System port uses the Sega Light Phaser accessory . The Amiga and Atari ST versions are one of the few games to use the Trojan Light Gun . In developing the Amiga conversion , the team video taped the arcade machine in operation as a reference for the graphics , pausing the video at relevant spots to take notes before recreating them . Programmer Damien Stones spent four months on the ZX Spectrum version . He kept the graphical detail of the backgrounds simple to allow for more action in the foreground . Taking into account the system 's lower capabilities compared to the arcade hardware , Stones designed the game to handle a large number of on @-@ screen sprites . As a result , Space Gun becomes more efficient the more action occurs on the screen , but will slow down during lulls in the game . In 2005 , Space Gun was included in the compilation title Taito Legends for the PlayStation 2 , personal computer and Xbox .

= = Reception = =

Space Gun was well received by the video game press . In issue 34 of Zero , Amaya Lopex gave the original arcade version of the game four out of five stars . Jonnie Cook of Sinclair User described the arcade release as enjoyable to those that already liked the genre , but stated he preferred other games . Killer List of Videogames called the cabinet design " quite unique " . In March 1992 , Gary Whitta of Advanced Computer Entertainment magazine stated that the sections that scroll into the screen are a lot easier to play than the horizontally scrolling sections . The screen can quickly fill up with enemies , which can lead to confusion as to what the player is shooting at , especially when human hostages run across the screen as they can be inadvertently killed . Neil West of Amiga Format commented that the title has a high difficulty level and that power @-@ ups are a necessity to continue playing . The " not perfect " rapid fire weapon (which needs recharging after prolonged use) contributes to the game 's difficulty , as stated by Brian Sharp of Games @-@ X magazine .
Several publications compared the game 's plot to that of the 1979 film Alien . Simon Forrester of Your Sinclair jokingly referred to Space Gun as the " unofficial game " of the film . Zero magazine gave particular praise to the sections where humans mutate into aliens as they run towards the player . Your Sinclair reviewer Jon Pillar and Chris Buffa of GameDaily said that Space Gun contains graphic violence , citing the visual effect of entrails and blood splashed against the screen . Steve Merritt of CU Amiga described the sound effects , specifically alien squeals and the pumping heartbeat , as " simple , but effective " .
On release for home platforms , the game received mixed reviews in the press , ranging from 69 % in Amiga Format to 84 % in CU Amiga magazine . A preview from Amiga Power described Space Gun as deriving from an " inexplicably popular coin @-@ op , best described as Line of Fire set in space . " Several reviews have stated that Space Gun is an Operation Wolf clone , while it has also been compared unfavorably to Operation Thunderbolt . Sega Power magazine reviewed the Master System version , giving the game a score of 70 % if the player is using a Light Phaser , but only 50 % if a control pad is being used . Paul Presley of The One for Amiga Games also found that using input devices other that the guns mounted to the arcade machine " just isn 't the same " . Prior to the release for the Xbox and PS2 as part of Taito Legends the game was regarded by Gamedaily as being in the " top five " of the games in the collection , and on release the same website described it as " thoroughly enjoyable " .