= Time Gal =

Time Gal (Japanese : ?????? , Hepburn : Taimu Gyaru) is an interactive movie video game developed and published by Taito , and originally released in Japan for the arcades in 1985 . It is an action game which uses full motion video (FMV) to display the on @-@ screen action . The player must correctly choose the on @-@ screen character 's actions to progress the story . The pre @-@ recorded animation for the game was produced by Toei Animation .

The game is set in a fictional future where time travel is possible . The protagonist , Reika , travels to different time periods in search of a criminal , Luda , from her time . After successfully tracking down Luda , Reika prevents his plans to alter the past .

Time Gal was inspired by the success of earlier laserdisc video games , most notably the 1983 title Dragon 's Lair , which also used pre @-@ recorded animation . The game was later ported to the Sega / Mega @-@ CD for a worldwide release , and also to the LaserActive in Japan . The home console versions received a mixed reception .

= = Gameplay = =

Time Gal is a FMV @-@ based game which uses pre @-@ recorded animation rather than sprites to display the on @-@ screen action . Gameplay is divided into levels , referred to as time periods . The game begins in 4001 AD with the theft of a time travel device . The thief , Luda , steals the device to take over the world by changing history . Reika , the protagonist also known as Time Gal , uses her own time travel device to pursue him ; she travels to different time periods , such as 70 @,@ 000 @,@ 000 BC , 44 BC , 1588 AD , and 2010 AD , in search of Luda . Each time period is a scenario which presents a series of threats that must be avoided or confronted . Successfully navigating the sequences allows the player to progress to another period .

The player uses a joystick and button to input commands , though home versions use a game controller with a directional pad . As the game progresses , visual cues ? highlighted portions of the background or foreground ? will appear on the screen to help survive the dangers that occur throughout the stage ; more difficult settings omit the visual cues . Depending on the location of the cue , the player will input one of four directions (up , down , left and right) or an attack (shoot the target with a laser gun) . Inputting the correct command will either avoid or neutralize the threats and progress the game , while incorrect choices result in the character 's death . Reika dying too many times results in a game over . Specific moments in the game involve Reika stopping time . During these moments , players are presented with a list of three options and have seven seconds to choose the one which will save the character .

= = Development = =

The game uses LaserDisc technology to stream pre @-@ recorded animation , which was produced by Japanese studio Toei Animation . The game features raster graphics on a CRT monitor and amplified monaural sound . The protagonist 's appearance was derived from the main character , Lum , from the Japanese manga and anime series Urusei Yatsura . Several factors prevented an overseas release : a decline in the popularity of laserdisc arcade games in the mid @-@ 80s , the expensive price of laserdisc technology , and difficulty to translate . Reika was voiced by Yuriko Yamamoto .

= = Release = =

Since its release original release to the arcades in Japan in 1985 , Time Gal has been ported to different home formats . It was first released exclusively in Japan by Nippon Victor on the Video High Density format ; it could be played on Microsoft 's MSX via a Sony laserdisc player . The release of Sega 's Mega @-@ CD console in 1991 spawned numerous games that took advantage of the CD technology to introduce interactive FMVs . Among the new titles , Time Gal was one of

several older laserdisc @-@ based games that were ported to the system . Renovation Products acquired the rights to publish Time Gal on the Mega @-@ CD , with Wolf Team handling development . They released it , along with similar games , as part of their " Action @-@ Reaction " series . It was first released in Japan in November 1992 , and in North America and Europe the next year .

American press coverage of the Japanese release prompted video game enthusiasts to contact Renovations about a Western release . The number of requests persuaded Renovation 's president , Hide Irie , to announce a release in the USA . In addition to being dubbed in English , a few death scenes in the US version were censored . The Mega @-@ CD version uses a smaller color palette than the original , includes a video gallery which requires passwords to view each level 's animation sequences , and features a new opening and ending theme by Shinji Tamura and Motoi Sakuraba respectively . Time Gal was ported to the PlayStation in 1996 as a compilation with Ninja Hayate , another laserdisc arcade game developed by Taito . This release lacks the Mega @-@ CD version 's additional content , but features a more accurate reproduction of the animation . The compilation was also released on the Sega Saturn the following year . The game can also be played on the Pioneer LaserActive via the Sega Mega @-@ LD module . The LaserActive version is the rarest home release of Time Gal , as well as one of the most expensive on the system among collectors .

= = Reception and legacy = =

GamePro magazine noted that " Japanese players ate it up " when it first released in Japanese arcades . However , GameSetWatch 's Todd Ciolek believed it was released too late in the life of LaserDisc games , and that players " were getting tired " of the genre 's gameplay . He further commented that , despite its gameplay , it was unique and charming . GamePro 's reviewer referred to the arcade game as a " lost , laserdisc treasure " , and was enthusiastic about its Mega @-@ CD release . He called the death sequences " hilarious " and felt they reduced the tediousness of dying . MEGA magazine rated the Mega @-@ CD version the number five CD game , commenting that though it lacked difficulty , it was a good showcase of the system . Prior to its Mega @-@ CD release , Electronic Gaming Monthly praised the use of CD technology and felt it would be followed by titles with similar gameplay .

Critics praised Time Gal 's visuals . GameFan magazine , in praising Wolfteam 's port of the game , complimented the Mega @-@ CD version 's graphics and short load times . GamePro said the animation is " great , with bright , vivid colors , and fast @-@ paced , exciting movement " and praised the " funny gameplay " and " nonstop action " . Shawn Sackenheim of AllGame complimented the animation , calling it " high quality " , but criticized the Mega @-@ CD graphics , calling them " downgraded " . He commented that , though Time Gal offered a good thrill , it lacked replay value . Author Andy Slaven commented that , though the animation is nice , it can 't really be enjoyed while playing . Ciolek echoed similar statements , saying it is more enjoyable to watch than to play . He further commented that the game is frustrating and rigid when compared to more contemporary standards . Electronic Gaming Monthly 's group of reviewers praised the Mega @-@ CD version 's graphics quality . Three of the four reviewers lauded the gameplay , specifically the challenge and format . The other reviewer stated he didn 't care for this type of game , referring to the gameplay as " nothing more than memorizing " .

Author Masaru Takeuchi attributes the origin of the quick time event game mechanic to laserdisc games like Dragon 's Lair and Time Gal . IGN 's Levi Buchanan listed FMV games like Time Gal as one of the reasons behind the Mega @-@ CD 's commercial failure , citing them as a waste of the system 's capabilities . Ciolek referred to the protagonist as one of the first human heroines in the industry . He further added that Reika was an appealing lead character that Taito could have easily turned into a mascot and featured in other games and media . The character was later included in Alfa System 's shooting game Castle of Shikigami III ? Taito published the arcade version in Japan . In the game , Reika features similar attacks and personality but the character 's visual design was updated . Reika 's most recent appearance was in the Elevator Action remake Elevator Action Deluxe as one of the few free Taito DLCs .