

= Menace (video game) =

Menace is a side @-@ scrolling shooter video game developed by DMA Design and published by Psygnosis . It was originally released for the Amiga in 1988 , and was ported for the Atari ST , Commodore 64 and DOS in 1989 . The game is set on the planet of Draconia , where players are tasked with destroying the planet 's defence mechanisms in order to kill the harmful creatures .

The game was designed by David Jones , and was the first game developed by his company DMA Design . First developed in his bedroom at his parents ' house , Jones began seeking an official development studio and publisher when the game was nearing completion . He eventually settled upon a publishing deal with Psygnosis , who first published the game in 1988 to positive reviews ; praise was given to the game 's graphics , sound and gameplay , while criticism was directed at its ports to inferior hardware . The game was also commercially successful , selling over 20 @, @ 000 copies .

= = Gameplay = =

Menace is a horizontal side @-@ scrolling shooter that uses 2D computer graphics . Players control a powerful alien space fighter , moving through six stages on the planet of Draconia to advance through the game . Players use the ship 's weaponry ? lasers and cannons ? to attack all advancing enemies , and defeat the level 's boss : a guardian of Draconia . The six bosses act as Draconia 's living defence mechanisms ? the planet was created to habituate gruesome and harmful creatures , of which there are over sixty , participating in unlawful tasks . In the game 's levels , players discover space debris , which can be converted into upgrades for the ship . The debris appears as tokens , and grants players additional weapons and upgrades , such as lasers , cannons , and improved ship and weapon power . The ship also has a shield , which provides temporary protection from enemies ; contact with enemies and walls depletes the shields , increasing players ' vulnerability to death .

= = Development and release = =

DMA Design was founded in 1987 by David Jones , Russell Kay , Steve Hammond and Mike Dailly , in Dundee , Scotland . Originally working under the name Acme Software , they began developing games for the Commodore 64 and Amiga . Jones began developing Menace under the working title CopperCon1 , in his bedroom at his parents ' house . He was attending the Dundee Institute of Technology at the time . To publish the game in 1988 , Jones first approached Hewson Consultants , where Andrew Braybrook played the game and recommended it to Hewson . When Jones was informed that Hewson wanted the game to be the " Amiga version of Zynaps " , he realised that sales would be limited , and refused to sign the contract ; despite this , Hewson had already promoted the game in Popular Computing Weekly , before the deal was officially dropped . After signing a publishing deal with Psygnosis , Acme Software was renamed DMA Design .

Tony Smith worked on some of the game 's backgrounds and graphics , while Jones designed the levels . Jones decided for Menace to be a side @-@ scrolling game after playing arcade games such as Nemesis (1985) and R @-@ Type (1987) . Psygnosis could not decide a preference for the design of the player ship ; as a result , Smith often re @-@ designed the ship with many variations . The team found difficulty porting the game to the Atari ST , due to the hardware 's limitations with smooth scrolling . Brian " Biscuit " Watson , who the team met at a computer club in 1984 , discovered a technique to overcome this difficulty . Other limitations included the fewer colours available with the hardware ; Smith adapted his designs accordingly . After completing his own game , Kay was assigned to port Menace to PC . During development , the sound effects were temporarily replaced with those from Salamander (1986) ; Jones recorded the sound effects from the game , as Hammond and Dailly played . Prior to this , the temporary sound effects consisted of noises by Jones . The game 's final sound effects were designed by musician David Whittaker . The cover art was designed by Ian Craig .

At the end of development , the game was known as Draconia , before being renamed to Menace shortly before release , upon discovering that another game had the same title . It was published in 1988 for the Amiga , and in 1989 for the Atari ST , Commodore 64 and DOS . The game generated a considerable amount of money for DMA Design , allowing the company to develop more games . The game sold 20 @,@ 000 copies , reportedly generating around £ 20 @,@ 000 .

= = Reception = =

The game received mostly positive reviews from critics upon release , particularly for its gameplay , graphical design , and sound . Criticism was also directed at the game 's ports , and the limitations met with the inferior hardware . Jason Holborn of ST / Amiga Format wrote that the game " provides some of the best arcade action " in an Amiga game .

Holborn of ST / Amiga Format called the gameplay " exceptional " and " addictive " , stating that players will be " hooked for hours on end " . Ciaran Brennan of Computer and Video Games praised its replayability , writing that it has " enough depth built in to make it last " . Conversely , Zzap ! 64 's Kati Hamza wrote that the gameplay is " rather poor " , disliking the pace and level design , and Maff Evans in the same review called it " dull and unrewarding " , pointing out the lack of excitement and reward . The Games Machine condemned the " jerky scrolling " of the PC version , while Rod Lawton of ACE called the gameplay of the Amiga version " stubbornly 8 @-@ bit " .

The game 's graphics received positive reactions . Lawton of ACE called them " attractive " , and Holborn of ST / Amiga Format named them " beautifully stomach churning " , calling Menace " one of the best presented games available " . While Zzap ! 64 's Hamza felt that the Amiga version was " blessed with nice graphics " , she wrote that the Commodore 64 version has " surprisingly weak presentation " ; Evans similarly called the graphics " half @-@ baked " . The Games Machine was disappointed by the graphics , particularly identifying the limited colour capabilities of the Atari ST version .

Reviewers praised the game 's use of sound . ST / Amiga Format 's Holborn lauded the soundtrack 's appropriation to gameplay , calling it " brilliant " , and writing that the game 's speech and sound effects enhance the feel of the game . The Games Machine favourably compared the soundtrack to Xenon (1988) , however noted that the sounds in the Atari ST version are " less clear " , and the PC sound effects are " pathetic " . Zzap ! 64 called the soundtrack " average " , and wrote that the " pathetic [sound] effects add little atmosphere " .