Child of Light – Review



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| Year of Release: 2014  Publisher: Ubisoft  Developer: Ubisoft Montreal  Platforms: PC, PS4, PS3, PS Vita, Xbox 360, Xbox One |

Properties to research:

* Eternal Sonata
* Grandia
* Chrono trigger
* Rime of the ancient mariner
* Golden age of painting
* Ni no kuni

Design

* Crafting
* Skill-trees
* Confessions
* Battle system

Moment-to-moment gameplay

* Flight
* Active time-battles

Presentation

* Music
  + The quality and how it affects the mood of the player
  + What the feel of the music does for the meaning
* Art
  + Water color painting
  + How the ubiart framework ids in the creation of the world and how it comes off

Narrative

The challenge that Child of Light sets for itself is two-fold. First off it wants to be a modern twist on the classic JRPG and secondly it wants to be an interactive fairytale fit for the entire family. Like Ni No Kuni before it, Child Light is an attempt at a love-letter to the classic Japanese role-playing games of the 1980s and 1990s such as Chrono-trigger and Final Fantasy VI. Though both properties have aims and similar story setups, both come out differently.

Child of Light is a 2D side scrolling RPG with some minor puzzle-platforming elements. The game was developed by Ubisoft Montreal in Canada in the vein of the classic Japanese roleplaying games of the 1980s and 1990s such as Chrono-trigger and Final Fantasy VI. Despite the dark tone to the story, the developers managed to imbue the game with a sense of whimsicality throughout the narrative. The narrative of the game is told as a poem. At its heart the core narrative is one of maturity, focusing on the growth of a girl from being a sheltered little princess into being a fearless and self-sacrificing queen. The girl in question is the protagonist Aurora. The daughter of an Austrian Duke and Duchess, Aurora loses her mother early on in life and is raised by her father alone.

The game’s sense of whimsy comes in the form of the way it is told as opposed to what is told. Child of Light presents itself as an epic poem with writer Jeffrey Yohalem taking inspiration from Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s rhyme of the ancient mariner. The prose itself has an AB-CB rhyme scheme which permeates all in-game dialogue. [More analysis]

This rhyme scheme does help with the character development in that one character, Ruebella, always manages to break the scheme to the point where another character Igniculous has to correct her to get the prose back on track.

* The prose – influenced by rime of the ancient mariner.
  + Weakest part of the package
* The overarching story – themes, characters
  + Stronger but the writing does drag it down

The closest point of comparison in terms of narrative and gameplay ambitions for Child of Light is Ni No Kuni. Both properties attempt to be love letters to classic Japanese roleplaying games done through the eyes of a young child trying to save one or more of their parents while trying to be a fairytale.

JRPG’s focus on narrative – divisions between character and player (Player is normally not the main character) Tell the player a story. Emphasis on the group.

WRPG’s focus on fantasy and self-expression. Making the player the protagonist. Allowing for customization of the player. Place the player within a story. Emphasis on the individual.

They share the idea of escapism/ abnegation.