These are Hostile Waters...

Rage

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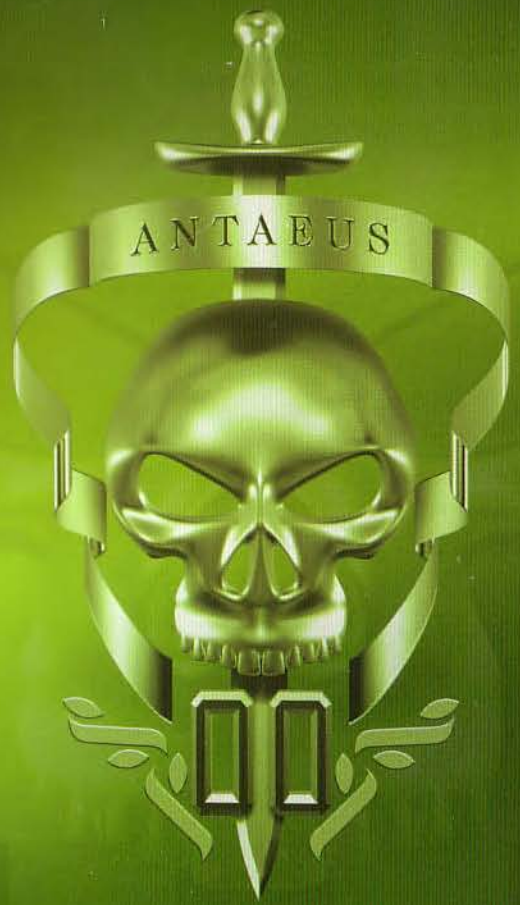
HOSTILE WATERS



Background

HOSTILE WATERS

Peace into War

2032. The entire world is at peace for the first time. Together, the human race is moving to become a world civilisation. Together, we are becoming great.

Until the bombings start.

A cabal of Old World magnates – the now powerless financiers, the despots and Presidents, the death-loving military men – are working together to destabilise the planet and return it to its fractured, hate-ridden war economy past. The past they understand, as opposed to the future they fear.

Humanity has put away war, has put away weapons. The cabal organise their forces from a spiral of twenty artificial islands in the Pacific, and we cannot touch them. We have no weapons...

..but there is something, mouldering at the bed of the Pacific. The last of the Adaptive Cruisers, a carrier armed with an onboard nanofactory capable of generating tanks, attack choppers and fighter planes. It went down with all hands, and no-one recovered the Soulcatcher chips implanted in each crew member's brain, capturing their entire consciousness.

Activation signals are sent to the last Adaptive Cruiser. It uses part of its tiny power reserves to create a single crew member, using the nanofactory to build him a new body around his Soulcatcher chip from ocean muck. The other chips will be used to 'crew' the attack vehicles the Cruiser will generate in this, its last mission – penetrate the chicane of artificial islands and destroy the central base of operations. Save the world.

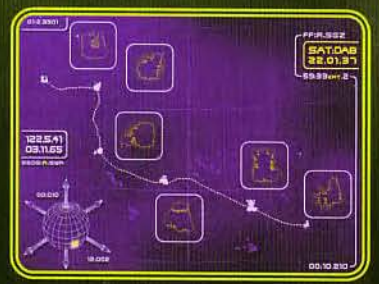
To save the world for eternal peace, humanity must learn how to go to war again... ..to take back the future, they must kill for peace.

Take Control

Hostile Waters is a new action strategy game that pushes the genre to the limit, giving the player an unprecedented degree of control.

Taking command of the nanotechnology on board the last Adaptive Cruiser, the player must build a force capable of taking on the warlike cabal attempting to plunge the peaceful Earth back into endless combat. Over 21 missions, the player builds vehicles and packs them with weapons, then takes control of each one, giving orders and monitoring their progress as they attack the enemy; the intuitive interface allows players to take control of any vehicle at any time, cycling through units and adjusting tactics. With a real time 3D world and stop time construction, planning and briefing rooms, the player can plan their strategy and ensure their forces are committed effectively.

Hostile Waters gives players unprecedented control over their units and sets them the toughest of strategic challenges. The peace of the entire planet is in jeopardy and without expert analysis, deployment and combat, it'll be the last peace we'll ever know.



The Writer

Warren Ellis

Hostile Waters' compelling script has been written by Warren Ellis, one of Britain's foremost comic book authors.

Warren's credits include best-sellers such as Excalibur and DV8, as well as the multiple award-winning science-fiction series Transmetropolitan. This work was recently named Best Graphic Story by the International Horror Guild. He is internationally recognised for his dark, inventive visions – America's influential Entertainment Weekly recently listed him as one of the hundred most creative people in entertainment. Currently continuing Transmetropolitan to its conclusion, Warren has new graphic novels in the pipeline while Hostile Waters marks his move into other media.

Hostile Waters pits the souls of dead soldiers, in the form of Soul Catcher chips, against a cabal of Old World leaders, arms dealers, despots and presidents whose influence has been lost in the worldwide drive for peace. Attempting to regain control and spread the war that gives them wealth and power, the cabal is hidden away on a series of heavily defended artificial islands. Whether an opposing force can be raised against them depends on just one person...

You

Vehicles At Your Command

Hostile Waters demands strategic thinking as well as skillful combat in the heat of battle. Different vehicles have different capabilities, and it's up to you to make sure they're deployed as effectively as possible. Make the wrong decision and you could find your units take a beating.

Scarab Armoured Utility Vehicle

This tough vehicle is one of the only vehicles available from the beginning of the game. Capable of carrying the scavenging unit, the AUV is vital for scavenging metal to be used as energy. And without energy, your mission will prove short lived. Scarab can also later be equipped with a repair unit.

Hornet Attack Chopper

The Attack Chopper is a manoeuverable and fast airborne unit perfect for effective offensive measures. However, these units are also easily destroyed so can prove vulnerable if they're not adequately supported during a mission.

Phoenix Super Chopper

It's bigger and slower than the Attack Chopper, but it's also much heavier and, vitally, it's capable of carrying additional shields. This extra defensive capability gives it added reliability in the thick of combat. It has a larger capacity for add-ons than the Hornet.

Pegasus Lifting Helicopter

Without weapons pods, the Lifting Helicopter has no direct attacking role. However, its strategic importance must not be overlooked as it can carry any ground unit to a specified point on the landscape. Give it some protection as it carries out its orders and it will prove invaluable.

Sentinel Static Platform

This unit can't move around the landscape unless it's carried by a Lifting Helicopter. However, once it's been deposited on the ground, it's capable of effectively defending the surrounding landscape, making sure that your ground teams get the support they need.

Rhino Heavy Tank

The Heavy Tank is large and slow, but when it comes under attack it isn't going to be destroyed without a fight.

Behemoth Super Tank

Even larger and tougher than the Heavy Tank, this unit is a formidable addition to your ground team. It can carry a scavenging or repair unit and a huge number of shields or weapons so you can use it to boost your energy or simply to attack the enemy.

Salamander Hover Tank

Unlike other tanks, this unit is able to travel over areas of water without being carried by a Lifting Helicopter. It's small and light, but its amphibious qualities give it strategic importance.

Vulture Fast Reconnaissance Unit

The Vulture is used to fly over areas acting as your 'Spy in the Sky'. You can't assign Soulcatcher Control to Vulture. Quick, cheap and vulnerable to enemy fire.

Puma Reconnaissance Buggy

The Reconnaissance Buggy is a small, light unit that can quickly travel over terrain, opening up areas of the map and providing important information. However, it can't carry many shields and is very vulnerable to attack. If it gets hit, that's it. The Puma is also radar invisible, ideal for stealth reconnaissance.

Magpie Dedicated Lifter

The Lifting VTOL is controlled automatically from the Antaeus Carrier. As the commander, you only need to specify a drop zone and the Magpie will dutifully carry out your orders.

ANTAEUS Carrier

You analyse tactics, plan your strategy and give your orders from deep within the Carrier. It's the last of the Adaptive Cruisers carrying on-board nanotechnology capable of generating weaponry and craft; use it to build your force from scratch and to put your mission plans into action. In addition, the Carrier has limited direct battle capabilities with four large guns.

The Voices

Tom Baker – The Narrator

As a former monk and probably the most famous of the Time Lords, Tom Baker has become one of Britain's most popular actors. With a voice as recognisable as his familiar features, he took on the role of Dr. Who in 1974, making it his own for 7 years and in the process, laying the foundations for the cult status he enjoys today.

Since leaving his native Liverpool for life in a monastery while still a teenager – a life he abandoned aged 21 – Tom has played major roles in the movies, the theatre and on TV. His parts have included the mysterious Rasputin in the 1971 movie 'Nicholas and Alexandra', Koura in 'The Golden Voyage of Sinbad' (1974) and, of course, as the fourth incarnation of the Doctor in BBC Television's 'Dr. Who'. He fully acknowledges the extent to which Dr. Who changed his life – over the course of those years, he became a household name in Britain and abroad. The full story, told in Tom's inimitable manner, can be found in his 1997 autobiography 'Who On Earth Is Tom Baker?'.

Paul Darrow – Walker

If the BBC has produced any science-fiction show to rival the cult status of Dr. Who, it would have to be Blake's 7, which ran from 1978 to 1981. Paul Darrow appeared in the second episode as the cold, calculating Avon, and subsequently featured in all the remaining 49 episodes.

Despite the character's questionable morals and scheming manner, Avon remains one of the series' most popular characters, as demonstrated by Paul's continued appearances at sci-fi and Blake's 7 conventions. However, his other film, radio and TV credits are extensive, and include Charles Dickens' 'Dombey and Son', 'The Wind in the Willows', 'The Saint' and episodes of 'Dr. Who'.

Glynis Barber – Church

Glynis Barber appeared alongside Paul Darrow in Blake's 7 from 1980 to the end of the series in 1981. She played the character Soolin, though her very first appearance in the show was as a Mutoid in the 9th episode a couple of years before. However, she is probably even better known as Detective Sergeant Harriet Makepeace from the series 'Dempsey and Makepeace' which ran from 1985-1986 and was sold to over 80 countries around the world.

Glynis makes frequent TV appearances, with recent credits including the TV version of Highlander.

The Making Of Hostile Waters

Hostile Waters is a huge, involving game that pits you against a formidable force eager to spread war across the Earth. But how does such an ambitious title make it onto your PC, and what are the unique features that make Hostile Waters something special? Who better to ask than Julian Widdows, Project Manager of Hostile Waters at Rage's Birmingham studio?

What's Hostile Waters about and what's the player's objective?
Hostile Waters is an action title with command and strategy elements seamlessly blended in. We wanted to write a powerful, cinematic, story-driven title with believable characters, totally unique gameplay and stunning visuals, and we're pretty sure we've achieved this.

The player's objective is to work through the 21 story driven missions, gathering new technology and weaponry, meeting new characters, and trying to discover who or what is behind the missile attacks that are devastating cities around the globe.

How long has the game been in development?
We've been in development now for nearly three years with a steadily growing team throughout that period. We had a pre-production period of 3 months in which we had to put together a game engine, a game plan, a concept, a design, and then present it to the directors and senior managers at Rage. We had a skeleton team at that stage, but after it was approved we built the team up to the size it is now.

Was the game one person's vision?
The initial idea was conceived by the then Art Manager and the Technical Director. At that point it was just a sentence; a thought. As soon as the concept document and work on the pre-production demo was started, the game fell into the hands of several people, all of whom have had a strong influence on the game's style and direction.

Why did you choose Warren Ellis to write the script, and how did you get him involved?
There was no competition. Warren's style is so completely unique; his use of language so different, that as soon as I picked a copy of Transmetropolitan (Warren's monthly) I knew we had to have him work with us on Hostile Waters. He also met one important criterion we had for the scriptwriter; he had to be English. Not through any nationalist pride or inherent xenophobia in the team you understand, but because we wanted to be able to meet the writer when necessary, and to be able to have his input whenever possible. Thankfully with Warren this has been possible.

Contact was made through the ever interesting and often hilarious warrenellis.com website. Take a look at it if you ever get a chance and read some of his letters to the fans. He has a way with words.

The story's obviously important.
Of course it is. I think the background story to a game is becoming more and more important as the game industry develops. In a game like Hostile Waters it draws the player into the action. Makes him or her want to play through to the next level; find out what's going on and how the story will conclude.

All our cinematics use the game engine so there's a consistency between story and game. Sometimes the movies hook into the next level, sometimes they're distanced, but it is important and it's very compelling. It's all very high quality and gets a lot darker than most game movie sequences.

So did the story mainly come from Warren?
A lot of the main pillars of the concept came from us, but the background, the movie scripts, the use of nano-technology which plays such a strong part in the story, all came from Warren. It was a very symbiotic relationship.We've tried to let him influence the character speech and briefings as well, but that was such a specialised job we ended up having to manage that in-house. Warren provided a few sample paragraphs for each of his characters, and then I wrote the bulk of the comments. Each of the ten characters has nearly an hour of game speech.

Are the team keen gamers?
Definitely. I think there's probably only one non-gamer in the whole office. Everyone else plays games when they're not making them, which I think's important. It gives people empathy for how games are played.

What other games do the team play?
We still see a lot of Half Life and Quake 3 multi-player action. In terms of single player games, Diablo, Baldur's Gate 2 and Shogun Total War seem to be quite popular. We all play plenty of console games as well: Street Fighter Alpha 3's coming out at regular intervals, Perfect Dark, Soul Caliber, Final Fantasy 9, Zelda Majora's Mask.

Are there any particular non-gaming influences on Hostile Waters?
When you have a team of ten creative people working on a game it's difficult to pinpoint specific influences. Each person is influenced in their own way by different things, whether it be music, film or comics. Warren's obviously had a strong stylistic influence on the game, as have a whole host of science fiction films and books. Blade Runner, Starship Troopers, Star Wars, have all influenced some of the graphical style, as has Apocalypse Now and other war films. Musically John is influenced by classical music, contemporary classical, house and dance music: Hostile really has got one of the most cinematic and emotive soundtracks you've ever heard outside of the cinema.

Do you do a lot of background research into what might be possible in the future?
All the technology's based on future science fact as opposed to science fiction. We don't know the details of course, but nanotechnology should theoretically be possible, and we could potentially have something like the SoulCatcher chips. It might not be possible for 100 years, but is theoretically possible. I think it's best described as science conjecture as opposed to Science fiction.

Can you tell me about the technology used in the game?
The 2 big areas are the terrain/landscape draws, and the physics engine.

Starting with the physics engine, everything's modelled using real physics algorithms. When an object explodes, every single chunk has real physics attached to it so as you see them land and roll down the hills, they are behaving with real physics. To do this properly we've got an incredibly complex collision model, so that no matter what shape an object goes into, it will have collision on every single point of that object, and during every stage of it exploding it'll have collision on every single point too. That's an incredibly complex piece of coding – it's very high end stuff and not something we've seen to this degree before. Even a bullet has physics on it so that it applies a force to objects it hits. Dave has spent many late caffeine fueled nights sweating over his keyboard to create this level of detail, and it's definitely been worth it.

With the terrain draw we use a special technique that's exclusive to 3D accelerator cards. It enables us to have this endlessly rolling landscape so you won't notice any texture joins, unless we've actually specifically created a hard line texture join. It's all very smooth indeed; endlessly changing and rolling.

Do you have people specifically working on things like the physics?
Yes, and we've also got one coder who works full time on the front-end and the editor. The editor's a clever tool because it sits right over the game engine; just by pressing one key on your keyboard you can switch from the editor into the game to see your changes and see what effect they have on things such as the physics.

Are there any new features in Hostile Waters that players won't have seen before?
So much. The physics, vehicle control, the ability to order vehicles remotely from within the map screens, the incredibly detailed weather and day/night cycles, fully deformable terrain, the ability to destroy everything you see, the variety and number of effects... ..the list really does go on, and on, and on.

Who have you got doing the voices?
We've got Tom Baker narrating - that's all recorded and is absolutely superb.

We've got Paul Darrow and Glynis Barber reading each mission briefing to you. Paul Darrow was best known as Avon in Blake's 7, and Glynis Barber's best known as Makepeace out of Dempsey And Makepeace. They play Church and Walker; military personnel who fought in the last war on Earth and now have to save the world from slipping into oblivion.

Is the player going to get to know these characters?
Very much so. We've got another ten SoulCatcher characters – there are American men, English women, Australian females, a very broad selection. Each one is very distinctive so players will really get to know these characters and empathise with them. Each of the characters has special skills as well, so they are better suited to using a certain type of weapon or controlling a specific type of vehicle. They also learn and improve the longer they are kept alive and the more they fight, so there is a definite advantage to keeping your characters alive.

What are the things you're really pleased with about Hostile Waters?
Too many to mention! We're very proud of all aspects of the game including the physics engine, the balance between the action elements and the command/strategy elements. We're proud of the graphics, the music, the cinematics, the voice recordings. The production values on Hostile Waters are so high it's incredible, and this is something we've always been determined to make sure is maintained to the end.

Finally, how proud are you of this game on a scale of 1 to 10?

10!

Words From The Press

"Hostile Waters" will prove to be a truly immersive and believable experience"
– GamesDomain

"Without a doubt – it's the first great game of the new millennium. Buy it, or resign yourself to waking up in the middle of the night feeling as if there's something missing in your life"
– PC Gamer Febuary 2001

"I must say I am overwhelmed with the beauty of the game"
– The Adrenaline Vault

"Rage's ambition has paid off big style"
– PC Gamer

Features

- Unique, powerful interface allowing unprecedented control and monitoring of up to ten heavily armoured helicopters, battle tanks, and eight other unit types.
- Hostile Waters' compelling script has been written by Warren Ellis, world acclaimed comic author.
- Rich voice over with over twenty characters and starring Tom Baker, Paul Darrow and Glynis Barber.
- Modular vehicles with an arsenal of nearly twenty weapons and add-ons allows total player control over both strategy and action.

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Register on-line and you could be one of the lucky winners who will receive a £50 EB/Game Voucher