

Quest for Glory V

Sierra wraps up the successful series

Take one familiar gaming universe, add equal parts RPG and Adventure, stir in Internet multi-player goodness — and you've got *Quest for Glory V*, an immersive final chapter.

— Colin Williamson

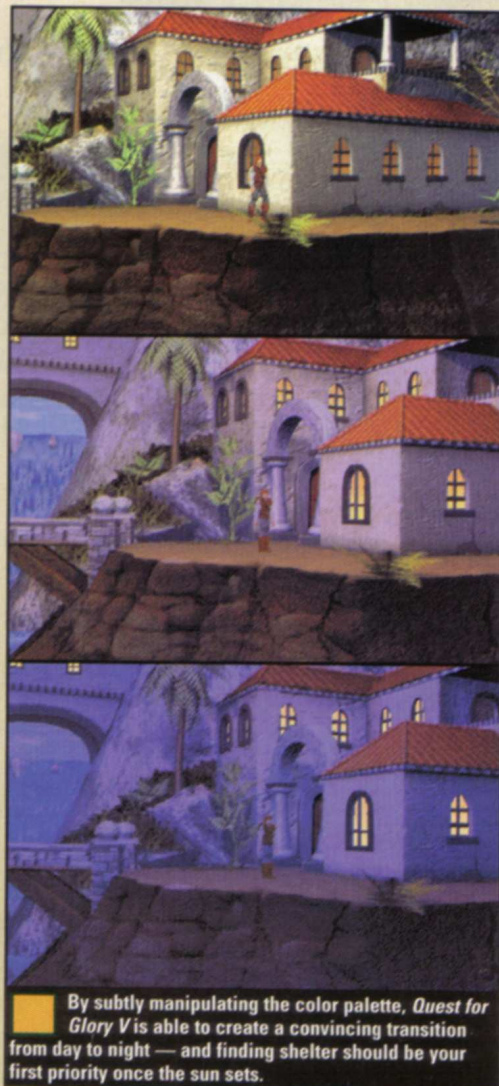
PC gamers following the *Quest for Glory* series have been rewarded with a delicate but appropriate mix of RPG and adventure genres that has seldom been matched. With four successful chapters in the series, there's been a mysterious lull in development since the release of *Quest for Glory IV* — and every week, PC Gamer's mailbox is bursting with a deluge of requests for info on whether or not a fifth *Quest for Glory* will be released. Thankfully, fans of the series can rejoice, since original *Quest for Glory* lead designer Lori Cole is hard at work on *Quest for Glory V*, which looks to be one of the most immersive action/adventure RPGs since *Diablo*.

Picking up where the sequel left off, you've been summoned to an island kingdom to participate in a Rite of Rulership contest. The previous king is pushing up daisies due to a mysterious act of foul play, and if your detective skills and questing can manage to uncover whodunnit, you'll be set for life as the new ruler of the land. Your previous reputation from past games precedes you, and new friends will aid your quest along the way. "In the earlier games, you were just a beginning character, and you were just finding yourself," says Cole. "Now, you're an established character, and you have friends from previous games. This game will be a challenge in trying to figure out who you can trust and taking control of your leadership abilities."

Cole also says that this new chapter will stick to its RPG roots. "It's much more traditionally structured, and there's a greater emphasis on the combat aspects," she says. Cole is also enthusiastic about some of the additions to the combat sequences, such as the ability to freely switch between different weapons, and call upon character class-specific skills like acrobatic flips and cartwheels. "The combat is real-time and very maneuverable — you can run

around, try to get behind your opponent, and you can move behind things to get them in the way, so there's a lot more strategy involved," she says. And there are no restrictions on places where you can fight — combat is possible wherever and whenever you feel like it (though it may not always be the best idea, since killing off innocent people will get you arrested, making you unable to finish the game).

Casting spells will also continue to play a major role in this episode. "You



By subtly manipulating the color palette, *Quest for Glory V* is able to create a convincing transition from day to night — and finding shelter should be your first priority once the sun sets.

F.Y.I. FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Game: *Quest for Glory V*
Category: Adventure/RPG
Developer: Sierra
Publisher: Sierra, 3380 146th Place, Suite 300, Bellevue, WA 98007 (800) 757-7707
Projected Price: TBA
Percentage Complete: 20%

In a nutshell:

Merging aspects of the traditional adventure and classic roleplaying game, *Quest for Glory V* is the fifth — and quite possibly final — chapter in this epic tale of a newfound hero's journey.

What's so special?

By injecting numerous technological improvements into the standard adventuring formula (including online multi-player support), Sierra may find itself the forerunner of the next-generation RPGs.

Why should I care?

With the *Quest for Glory* series accumulating a large following, designer Lori Cole's turbo-charged epic may outshine every other game in the series.

And when's it coming out?

October

RSX

Intel's Sound Advantage

With so much emphasis placed on visual presentation, it's common for developers to overlook the sonic side of things and throw together a half-winded audio effort at the last minute. Such is not the case with Sierra, which is using a sophisticated sound-positioning technology from Intel, dubbed *RSX Audio*. With the ability to accurately position 3D sound effects based on a player's location, *RSX* allows Sierra to go gung-ho on *Quest for Glory V*'s ambient sound layer and musical soundtrack.

While the camera is the focal point in the typical first-person 3D shooter, the view in *Quest for Glory V* is a stationary camera that pans through panoramic vistas. A little tweaking on Sierra's part was required to create sound that worked from an external perspective instead of from that of the character, and the results are well worth it—the dramatic effect of a waterfall slowly fading in from the right and escalating to a roar as you get closer is notably impressive.

Sierra will also be delivering a stellar musical performance from multiple award-winning composer Chance Thomas. "Our in-house musician has been spending an incredible amount of time composing incredible music that has never been done to this level on a game before," Cole says. "We've never had a musician this early in the team." Cole goes on to reveal how a musician is generally brought in near the end of the project, and is ecstatic about the musician's ability to design the score as the game is designed. "Now, from the very beginning, the musician is in on the design and feel, and has a real opportunity to create," she says.

If you'd like to hear the musical samples of *QFGV*, check out www.sierra.com/entertainment/qg5/music.html.

the game with a different character—and sure enough, there are plenty of different alter-egos to play as. Aside from the standard fighter, thief, and magician, you may be able to play as Elsa Von Spelberg (from the first game) or a new character named Magnum. You can also play as the Paladin, if you opt to import your character from the previous games.

A day and night time cycle has also been put into place, which ever-so-subtly darkens the screen and makes the transition to night every twenty or so minutes. "There's a different feel at night," explains Cole. "Monsters come out at night that don't come out in the daytime, and you have to watch



As you cross this bridge, the camera will smoothly pan across and zoom in. With panoramic vistas and shifting views, this will be the most cinematic *Quest for Glory* yet.

can expect every spell that we've had before, of course," says Cole, "and we have one that we promised for the last game called Whirlwind, which spins your opponent around until he gets dizzy and falls down." Magic users will also have access to a spell that can put their opponents to sleep, allowing them to sneak around any would-be physical threats that might pose a problem. The magic user will also be able to heal (a first for the series), and a water-breathing amulet will enable access to some of the aquatic areas of the game.

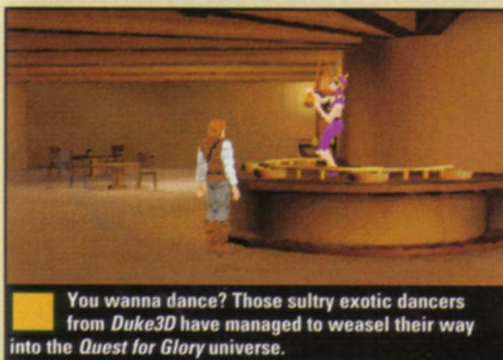
This new adventure manages to keep the graphical style of its predecessors, while blending several sophisticated new technologies into the mix. Though the backgrounds look like they've been hand-painted, they're the result of Alias rendering software on high-end SGI workstations, followed by graphical touch-up from Sierra's talented team of artists. Your hero has also been liberated from the flat two-dimensional plane, and is given complete freedom of motion as a real-time 3D character à la *Alone in the Dark*. However, *QFG5*'s gameplay is an



Hold your breath! Our valiant hero dives into the water for an aquatic adventure, not even taking the time to change into a bathing suit.

even more cinematic experience. As you move around, the entire screen scrolls left and right in a panoramic fashion, and even zooms in when you walk in and out of the screen. "There's a much more fluid motion to it," says Cole. "It's like what *Tomb Raider* was doing with the vector characters, but we're using pre-rendered backgrounds, so we have this look and style that's rather unique. This really brings the immersion into the world closer to the player."

Bringing this *Quest for Glory* to a happy ending will take a good deal of adventuring on your part. Cole is quick to state that while the average casual player could complete the previous *Quest for Glory* games in approximately one month, *QFG5* will take much, much longer. A series of small islands off the mainland will provide plenty of sub-quests, and even after you complete the game, there's still plenty of motivation to go back and try again. Cole reminds us that around 95 percent of *QFG* players re-play



You wanna dance? Those sultry exotic dancers from *Duke3D* have managed to weasel their way into the *Quest for Glory* universe.