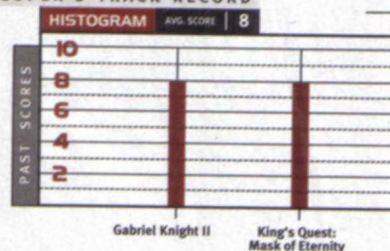




DEVELOPER'S TRACK RECORD



Gabriel Knight III

Two Guys, A Girl, And A Vampire-Infested French Village

They say that good things come in threes. We don't have a clue as to the identity of this nebulous "they," but the smart money says it's Sierra when discussing the *Gabriel Knight* series. After all, the first *GK* game, *Sins of The Father*, was a critical, if not wholly commercial success, while its sequel, *The Beast Within*, sold well and was at the top of most critics' "best of" lists. The third game in the series, *Blood Of The Sacred, Blood Of The*

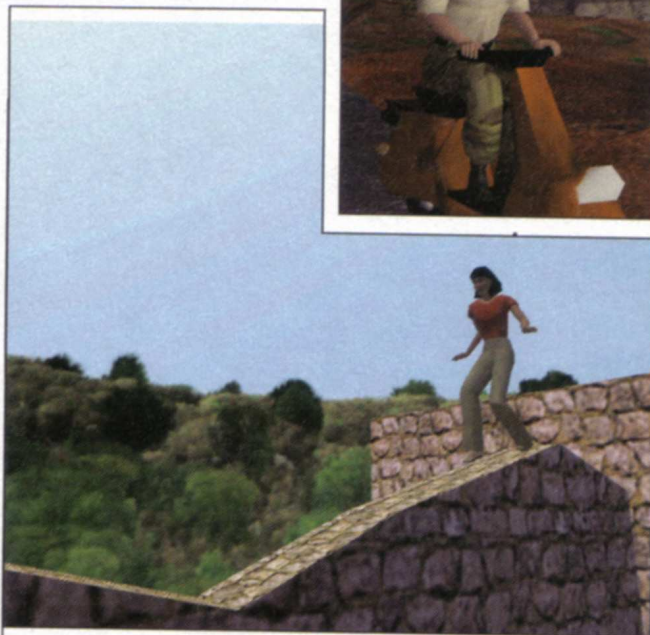
Damned, returns not only Gabriel and series creator/designer Jane Jensen to Schattensjager country, but also witnesses the reappearance of *GK1* voice actor (and erstwhile sweet transvestite) Tim Curry. Is it any wonder that I consider this to be the *Quake III* of adventure games?

From the long mouthful of a title, it doesn't take a genius to figure out that vampires are involved. (Hey, with zombies in the first and werewolves in the second, you had to figure bloodsuckers would show

up eventually.) After beating some werewolf butt in *GKII* and retiring back to Schloss Ritter (Gabriel's ancestral castle in Germany) for some much needed rest and, we suspect, a few choice German brews, Gabriel and his supercilious assistant Grace are invited for a weekend at the home of a dethroned Prince. As expected (or there would be no game), it's not intended as a purely social visit. It seems that the Prince's family has been hounded for generations by a bunch of vampires and he worries that his infant son will become their next victim. Faster than you can say "foreshadowing," Gabriel's babysitting session abruptly ends

when vampires drop by for a quick bite and a tot "to go." Gabriel tracks the kidnapers to the French village of Rennes-le-Chateau, but loses their trail. And then, as "they" say, the real game begins.

As is the norm in a *Gabriel Knight* game, an insane amount of research has been done to write a fantasy tale with a real world slant. Jane Jensen, *GK* writer and designer tells us, "The story is based on a lot of material surrounding the Rennes-le-Chateau area, including many 'legends,' if you will, about the Cathars, Knights Templar, etc." Indeed, the overall plot is very ambitious, leading Gabriel and Grace to investigate a centuries-old enigma about lost treasure, the Holy Grail, and the bloodline of Jesus Christ. And don't be surprised if Gabriel learns something about his own past along the way — his lineage is always somehow entangled in the mystery. Sounding pretty good, huh?



INFO BOX

DEVELOPER → Sierra Studios
 PUBLISHER → Sierra
 RELEASE DATE → September '99
 API SUPPORT → Direct 3D

INTEREST GAUGE



THE HYPE

The first two were literate and scary. *GKII* was a critical and commercial success. We're excited about the next incarnation.

THE HURDLE

The game engine has changed again. Can the series translate into 3D? And isn't that monster schtick getting a little old?

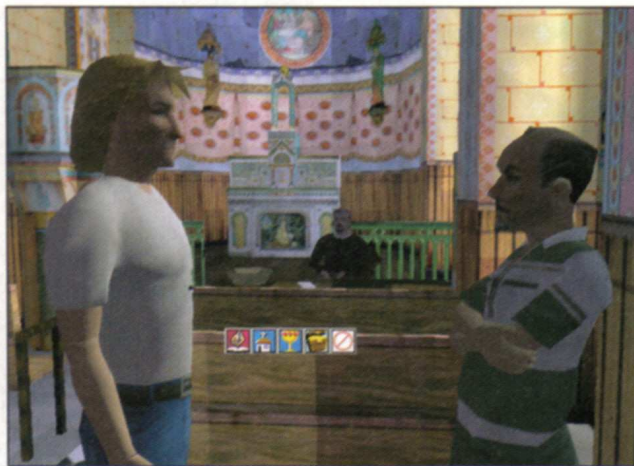
THE HIT

After two great games, we believe that designer Jane Jensen knows what she is doing. Prepare yourself for excellence.

Dynamic detective work, riveting action, and ... motor scooters? It must be a French thing.

Where's the beef? PCXL Art Director Kyle LeBoeuf's last name means "the beef" in French. PC ACCELERATOR August 1999





FIVE QUESTIONS

JANE JENSEN, WRITER AND DESIGNER OF THE GABRIEL KNIGHT SERIES, WAS OFF AMUSED, YET MAYBE MORE THAN SLIGHTLY EMBARRASSED, TO FIND HERSELF ONE-ON-ONE WITH A MEMBER OF THE PCXL STAFF.

Q: Each successive game in the *Gabriel Knight* series has used a radically different engine. Was this planned from the start or just a natural progression?
A: No, it wasn't planned. But with the games coming out several years apart, the technology simply moves too quickly for us to use the same engine twice. So far, anyway.

Q: Are French vampires snootier than American vampires?
A: Way snootier. And, of course, better educated.

Q: So far, we've seen zombies, werewolves, and vampires ... does this mean we can expect mummies in *GKIV*?
A: Mummies? Don't think so. I've been leaning towards ghosts, but who knows? By the time I start to write *GKIV* something else may have taken my fancy.

Q: If a *Gabriel Knight* movie were made, whom would you choose to play Gabriel and Grace?
A: God! I've worked with some great actors in these roles already, so it's not very polite of me to think of someone else. But I can say that when I originally wrote *GK1*, I had Harry Connick, Jr. in mind, because he's from New Orleans and he has that sort of bad boy thing down cold. I still think he'd make a great Gabriel Knight.

Q: Who would win in a fight: Tim Curry as Dr. Frankenfurter or Tim Curry as Gabriel Knight?
A: Hah! Well, Frankenfurter could win a dance contest, hands down. And he's certainly a better singer. But I can't see him fighting werewolves, can you?

This church is an exact replica of one located in the real town of Rennes-le-Chateau. Other real life landmarks are also in the game.

Fans of the series will be happy (or not — depending on what you thought about his attempt at a Cajun accent in the first *GK*) to hear Tim Curry return as the voice of Gabriel. Another familiar face is Detective Mosely, Gabriel's police friend from New Orleans who shows up under the guise of being on a "treasure hunt" vacation package, but whose behavior becomes increasingly suspicious (and if you remember the character, that's saying a lot). "Grace, Gabriel, and Mosely are all in the same town/hotel," Jensen explains, "so there's more interaction between the three of them." Jensen won't shed any light on the future of Gabriel and Grace's close, yet so far platonic, relationship "under pain of death," but says players will still rotate roles between "time blocks" over three days of game time, much as they did in *GKII*.

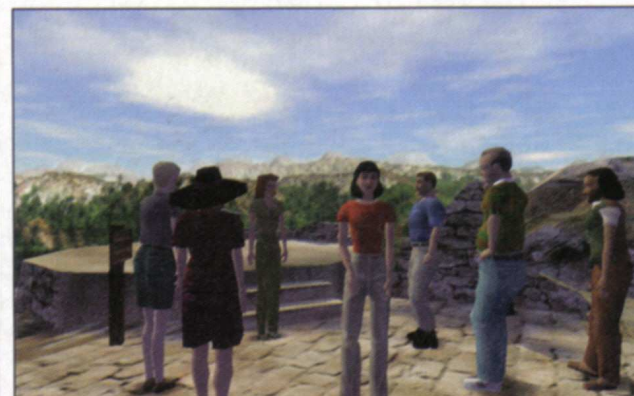
And what would a *Gabriel Knight* sequel be without a brand new graphics engine? Gabriel has gone from being a 2D sprite to a FMV actor, and now becomes (literally) a three dimensional character. Employing a new custom-built 3D graphics engine, the game

world is now yours to explore. Realtime lighting effects ensure that characters and environments look as natural as possible. Graphically, the characters look like a merger between the cartoon-like sprites of the first game and the actors of the second, producing a fresh look that, while not exactly photo-realistic, doesn't make them caricatures, either.

According to Jensen, the challenges of the new engine have been quite different from those presented in the making of *GKII*, specifically the wait for the engine to become stable enough to add content, 3D modeling, and character animation. "*GKIII* has been in development longer and will not be any cheaper. It has turned out to be much more complicated than we'd originally hoped," she adds.

As gamers will surely find out, the effort will be worth it. As the only game released this year to reference both vampires and Jesus Christ, *Gabriel Knight* isn't about to disappoint fans now.

— CHUCK OSBORN skulks around asking people what they know about Voodoo to this very day



Okay everyone, French vampires smell like old socks and week-old Brie. Go get 'em!

KNIGHT MAGIC

In the interest of testing Gabriel Knight's mettle, we've decided to pit him against a few other famous challengers to see how he fares. If nothing else, we've learned that Gabriel may be an over-moussed wuss, but he's still cooler than those other guys



JORDAN KNIGHT



DAVID HASSELHOFF



FOREVER KNIGHT



CAROL O'CONNOR

JORDAN KNIGHT WHO: Former member of sissy boy band (NKOTB)
COMPARES TO GABRIEL: Affinity for hair gel and white T-shirts make this Knight look like Gabe's kid brother
COOL FACTOR: Wuh-Oh Ah-Woooh-Oh, Jordan doesn't have the right stuff

"BAYWATCH NIGHTS" WHO: B-Grade Offspring Of A D-Cup Series
COMPARES TO GABRIEL: David Hasselhoff's man-breasts are much larger than Gabriel's
COOL FACTOR: Watching lifeguards fight werewolves is comedy gold. Unfortunately, it was supposed to be a drama

"FOREVER KNIGHT" WHO: Vampire series rerun ad nauseum on the Sci-Fi Channel
COMPARES TO GABRIEL: Gabe has a swelled head, but vampire Nick Knight's swelled torso has coined the phrase "blood belly"
COOL FACTOR: Nick, the whiney vampire cop, is staked in the final episode. Gabriel is always the stake-r, not the stake-ee

"IN THE HEAT OF THE NIGHT" WHO: TV spin-off of movie about race relations
COMPARES TO GABRIEL: Carol O'Connor does his best to mangle the English language. Cajun Gabriel Knight: Ditto
COOL FACTOR: None — how can it be when all the characters talk about how damn hot it is in the South?

