

DEVELOPER	→ Sierra Studios
PUBLISHER	→ Sierra Studios
REQUIRED	→ P166, 32MB RAM, 4x CD ROM, 400MB hard drive
IDEAL	→ P11 266, 64MB RAM, 3DFX or D3D compatible video card, 32x CD-ROM

King's Quest: Mask of Eternity

Resident Medieval

ACCELE-RATED

KQ:MOE (as it's known to its friends) seems designed for software first, with 3D acceleration added as an afterthought. The characters are not particularly well detailed or shaded, and the shadowing effects look fake up-close.

SLI VOODOO 2



VOODOO 2



RIVA TNT



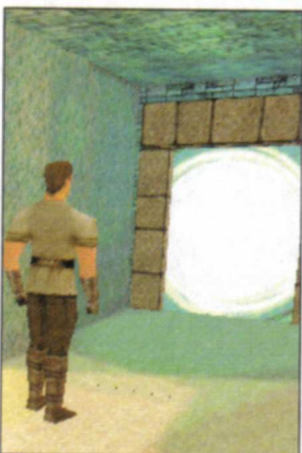
MATROX G200



API SUPPORT: Glide, D3D



Connor getting ready to kick some mummy ass.



This portal doesn't take you back to a 2D adventure.

Forget whatever you thought you knew about the *Kings Quest* series in its previous seven

games. With *Mask of Eternity*, the rules have changed. Roberta Williams' latest foray in to her pet fantasy world is a first-rate action/adventure that elevates the long virtual history of the Kingdom of Daventry to the realm of a living, breathing 3D world full of detail, mood and ambient life. Despite *Mask of Eternity's* radical new take, the setup is pretty standard fantasy-fare. Horrible forces with even more horrible fashion sense have shattered one magical mask-thingum, scattering five pieces of said thingum to the far nooks and butt-cracks of the land, verilee, and, well, you can see where this ox-cart is rolling. For some inexplicable, perilous reason, the entire populace of Daventry has been turned to stone... and that's where you come in, as the lone hero Connor, who must, starting from nothing mere moments after the onset of the curse, set things right.

This pre-game calamity conveniently allows *Mask of Eternity* to open in a familiar yet dramatic setting – oh, it's Daventry, all right, but it's dark, ominous, and filled with monsters now, and haunted by the silent presence of once-lively town-folk turned cold and mute by evil magic. From the first minute of gameplay, there's an ambient tension that can only be described as deliciously creepy. Daventry is blanketed in an unnatural nighttime, buildings and terrain features



The added action in *Mask Of Eternity* is a welcome addition, as is the impressive 3D engine.



When the game starts your friends resemble statues, cool huh?

swim up out of the dark mists as you begin to explore. Things come out of the shadows (or sometimes right out of the ground).

Mask of Eternity plays, in its third-person mode, like a greatly expanded *Resident Evil* or *Alone in the Dark* – you maneuver a polygonal Connor around a landscape in a dramatic, cinematic manner – but there's much more here. First, the graphics feature all types of visual niceties like dynamic lighting, creature/object shadows, articulated bodies and even enhancements to your character's wardrobe as he accumulates gauntlets, boots, armor and the like. You'll start the game dressed like Ye Olde Towne Schlube, and end it pimped out like something out of *Excalibur*.

Second, the settings are true 3-D environments, with hills to be ascended, bodies of water to be crossed, buildings to be seamlessly entered and explored, and, of course, enemies to fight in real-time. To these ends, you're not restricted to fixed viewing angles, but have free control of the camera. You can even switch to a first-person mode, handy when exam-

ining a room or picking off targets at long range with a crossbow. Details are everywhere, from scripted sequences to the use of grappling hooks to such fine touches as the specific epitaphs on tombstones, and *Mask of Eternity* fulfills that highest duty which all games should aspire to: Rewarding the curious. ➤

—CHRIS HUDAK *keeps a sword in his hallway, and is just waiting for someone to try to break in.*

GRAPHICS

Dynamically lit graphics make for mood up your ying-yang.

SOUND

Excellent ambient sounds and context-sensitive music.

DEPTH

A strange bird indeed – mechanically simple, but with lots of detail.

DESIGN

Excepting one or two weirdnesses, solid and impressive – this is not your little sister's *King's Quest*.

RATING

+ Pluses

- KQ in 3D with non-cutesy style
- Ominous look
- Smart camera work

Minuses

- Dialogue script is god-awful
- No freelook in first-person
- Disturbing King Graham nude code