THE DOOM MASTER
WADAZINE

#12

LULLABY | HEARTLAND
THEN AND NOW OF DOOM 64

CONSOLE CHRONICLES 2: GBA PORTS | INTERVIEW WITH INSANE GAZEBO

ZDOOM WARS • TROOPER'S PLAYGROUND • THE DARKENING E2
LINE IN THE SAND • DOOM 2 THE WAY ID DID • NIMBLE NEWSTUFF EX

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VERY SPECIAL THANKS TO:

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to another edition of the Doom Master Wadazine, your favorite (and only) online magazine fully dedicated to the best FPS ever, Doom! Here you will find all kinds of articles, recommendations and different stories, as well as fascinating reviews and fun sections. This time we bring you a few interviews as well as a bunch of recommendations.

Unfortunately, this month has been a slow one and this magazine won't have as much content as the previous ones, but we still hope you enjoy it. We have worked hard and have thrown as much effort as passion into this issue. Things get hot but we're still just as cool! We hope you enjoy it and that this guide becomes your #1 companion in your experience through the world of Doom.

– Endless

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

HEY! DO YOU LIKE TO WRITE?

DOWN HERE AT THE WADAZINE, WE ARE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR NEW BLOOD REVIEWERS
TO CONTRIBUTE ARTICLES! SOME OF THE KIND OF CONTENT PRINTED IN THE WADAZINE INCLUDE:

DOOM RELATED ARTICLES
WAD RECOMMENDATIONS
DOOM NEWS STORIES
DOOM POETRY
FAN FICTION? WHY NOT
ANGRY OPEN LETTERS TO JOHN ROMERO

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THE WADAZINE IS BURSTING AT THE SEAMS! WE ACCEPT SUBMISSIONS FROM NOT ONLY
WRITERS, BUT VISUAL ARTISTS TOO!

DOOM FAN ART
DOOM COMICS
ARTICLE DESIGN
WADAZINE COVER DESIGNS
HILARIOUS FAKE ADS
OTHER COOL IDEAS WE DIDN'T DO YET

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN CONTRIBUTING TO
THE ZINE, HIT UP THE OFFICIAL DMW DISCORD OR RUTHLESSLY HUNT DOWN THE TEAM
ON DOOMWORLD TO SEE HOW YOU CAN HELP!

Torn aSUNDER - Sitting Down with Insane_Gazebo

For now over ten years, *Sunder* has become a beacon of what I can only describe as one of the most decadent slaughter experiences known to man. From **MAP01**, *Python*, all the way up to **MAP19**, *City at the Mouth of Ire*, at the time of writing this, **InsaneGazebo** has developed a style equal parts beautiful and absolutely terrifying.

I can remember my own first blind playthrough of the set, and constantly asking, "*WHO hurt you, Insane_Gazebo?*" Well, I didn't ask that specific question, but I did get to have a little chat with this incredible slaughter-meister and am incredibly excited to share it with you all!

SUNDER

Well this first one is a pretty obvious one, but how did you get into Doom?

I actually got into Doom twice. First as a kid when it came out. The abstract borderline surreal look of the game was one of the things I remember jumping out at me when I first saw screenshots in a gaming magazine. The other thing I remember was being scared shitless when I got the game proper and instantly putting on **ID-DQD** so the spooky demons didn't eat me.

I eventually tried mapping and modding it a bit, but old Visplanelimits and other restrictions turned me off quickly and I eventually gave up. Even back then I guess I wanted to make giant structures the engine wasn't really built for.

Years later the *Doom 3* trailers appeared and I suddenly found myself hungry for Doom. This made me wonder what the classic Doom community had been up to. Scrolling through the /idgames archives I found something called 'Alien Vendetta' that had a high rating and I was hooked. Eventually I'd dig up those maps I'd made as a young one and start rebuilding them. (You can see these efforts in my Macabre wad.)

So Sunder wasn't the first thing you made- can you tell us about some of your first mapping efforts? Did you always map with slaughter gameplay in mind?

The first maps I remember making as a young kid weren't actually for Doom - but for *Rise of the Triad*. The maps are lost to time, but I remember making a big labyrinth map which slowed my poor computer to a crawl. There were also some little joke maps my friend and I would make for each other, but I think those were just rooms full of cyberdemons and no weapons to laugh at each other's misfortune.

What made you decide to start Sunder?

I'd had a few epiphanies in regard to mapping while working on Macabre and realised I wanted to start over. I knew by now I really enjoyed extremely hard maps and wanted to make my own. The first two maps were cramped little maps which I only found copies of recently. They would be scrapped soon after, but I knew that sort of map was what I wanted to make. Like a lot of other players who got into slaughter, taking out entire screens of demons wasn't something you could get anywhere else at the time. I also realised there weren't many wads like *Alien Vendetta* and *Deus Vult* and I wanted to see more of that sort of thing.

Sunder has become one of the sets people look to as one of the best examples of large-scale slaughter- what do you think sends Sunder apart from the rest of earlier slaughter sets?

Back when I started you didn't have the finely tuned slaughter you do today. There was no *Stardate, Sunlust* or other stuff like that. I'd say when I got into it, slaughter was still in its early days. So I guess what set mine apart back then was, largely, the spectacle of it all. There were plenty of hard, grindy slaughter wads out there, but only very few were nice to look at. Once I eventually got confident enough at making big imposing structures and the like, I realised that was what I wanted to see more of from the community. I wouldn't see much of it in the coming years and that would be part of the reason I left, but maybe if I'd known stuff like *Sunlust* was around the corner I would have hung around!
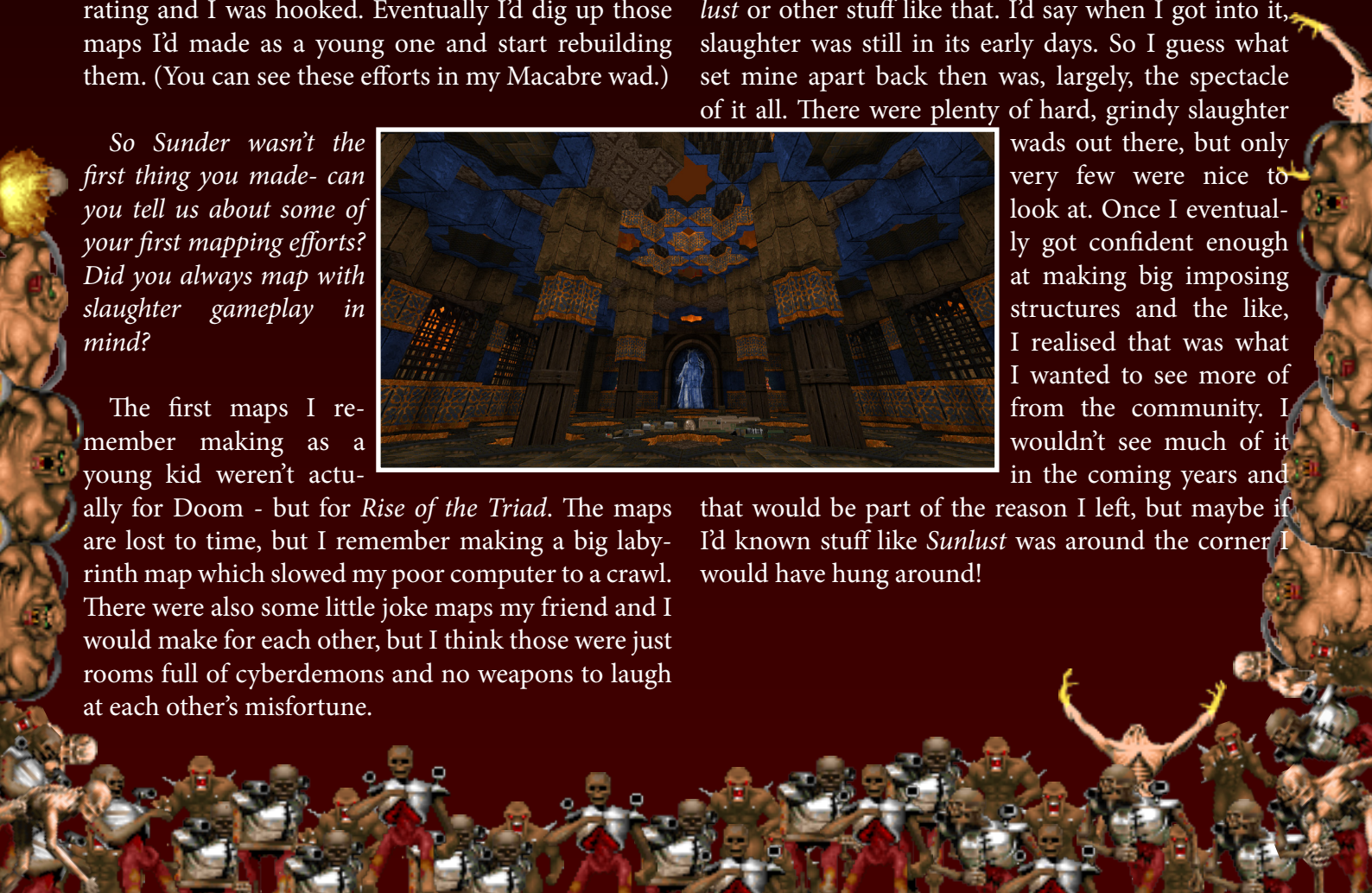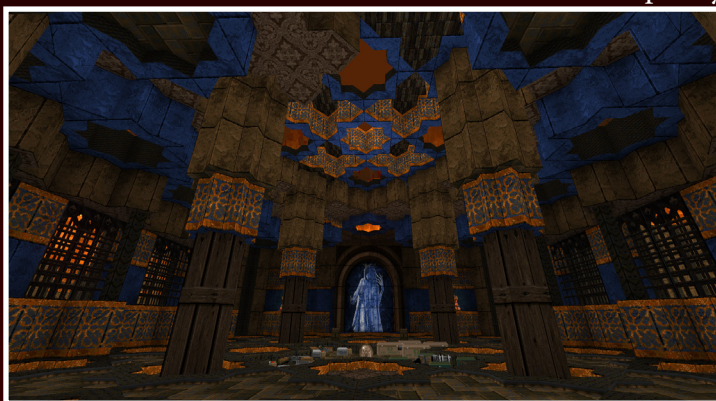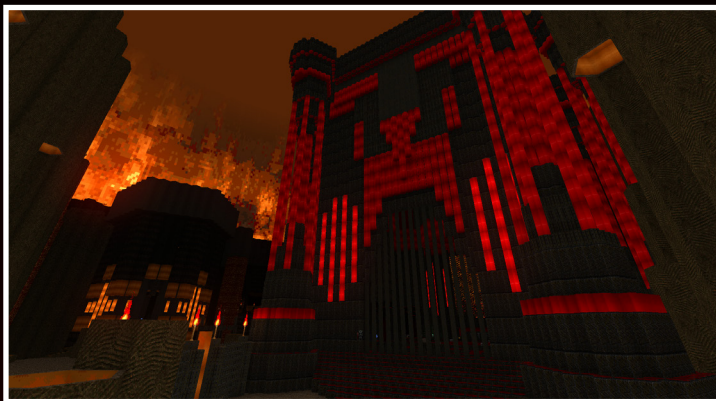
From what I understand, you took a break after completing the first 14 maps of Sunder and then came back- what inspired you to come back?

I was in a small gaming Discord server and I joked to a member there that he should play my old Doom WAD. Eventually, he agreed to do it and streamed it on Twitch. I can't remember how far he got, but part way through I got a PM from someone - Bemused I believe, telling me he was a fan. I was of course, thoroughly confused. I had fans?! We got to chatting and he eventually invited me to the Discord for the development of the WAD known as **Abandon**. Eventually I'd meet others there - B**enjogami, loveless, Nirvana, Scotty** and maybe some others (apologies if I've forgotten someone), each who encouraged me to map again. It worked.

What inspired your previous maps' designs, and what inspires your designs now? Do you think much has changed in the core inspiration between the first map and the last?

I've always been inspired the same way. Images in my head from games, books, movies and various pieces of art. Nothing has changed at all in that regard. I always have too many ideas.

So once Sunder's done, what's next for you?

I honestly don't know! I know I want to do maps for more community projects. But as for me personally I'm not sure. Maybe something I can eventually sell? I've always got so many gaming related ideas I'm not sure which ones I want to commit to.

Thank you so much, Insane_Gazebo, for taking the time to talk to us about Sunder! New maps are in the works as of writing this, and we can't wait to see how you blow our minds and blow us to bits in the next Sunder map!
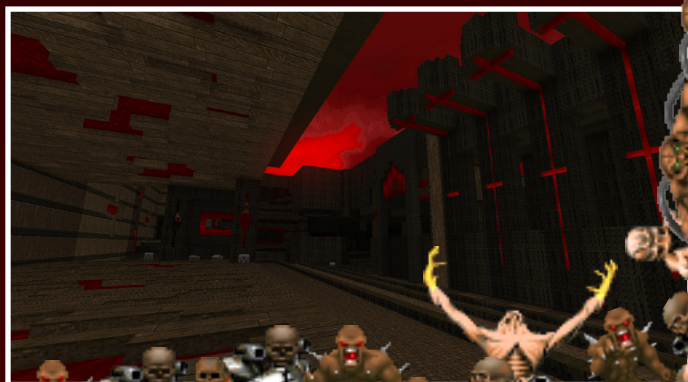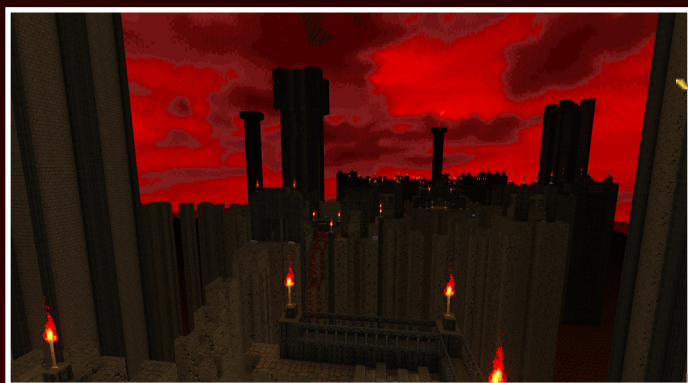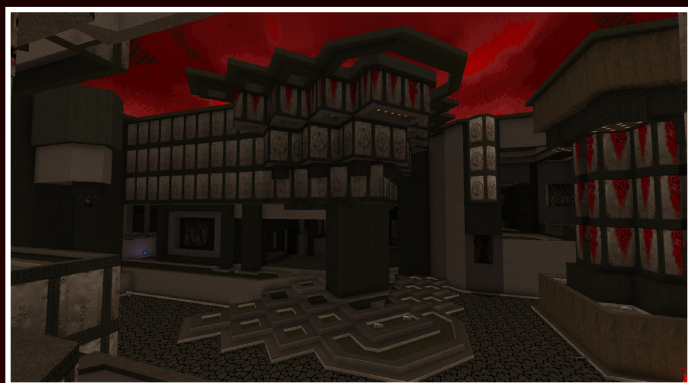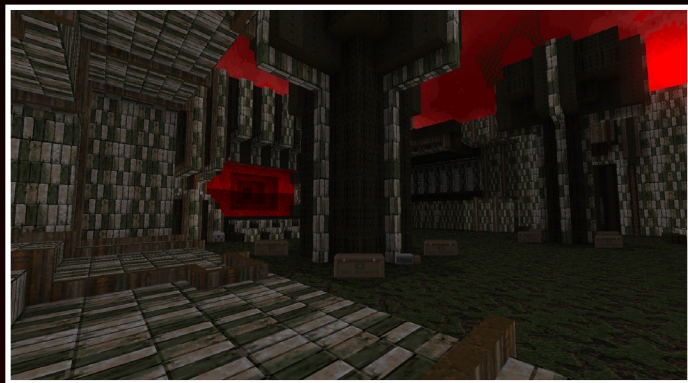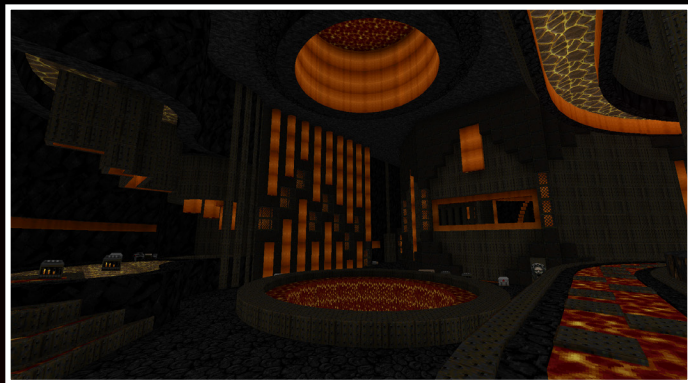
Then and Now of Doom 64

Each year video games are increasingly recognized as art, and within the next few decades their place will no longer be in any doubt. Thomas Kuhn perhaps described it well in "The Structure of Scientific Revolutions," where consensus on such matters is not always achieved through debate, but the demise of the stalwarts who refuse to change their position. Younger generations are accepting video games more than older generations; thus time favors the status of video games as art. But as their status continues to evolve, does the way we judge them also evolve? Like rating art from the middle ages, I am increasingly finding it difficult to rate video games. Perhaps that is a bit of an extreme analogy, but as art evolves with culture, perceptions change. It seems for video games, the way metrics such as graphics and sound are interpreted do seem to be changing. Rather than being benchmarked on pushing the limits of hardware, they are increasingly viewed in terms of cohesiveness.

Perhaps it is an explanation why some games appear to age better than others. One such game whose perceptions seemed to have changed over the decades is Doom 64.

I tend to remove myself from focus when I write, but how I thought Doom 64 was perceived by the public affected how I approached the larger gaming community. The way I thought Doom 64 was perceived can be summed up by Jeff Gerstmann's scathing review. Writing for GameSpot, he scored Doom 64 at 43% while saying it was a "bastardization of the original." Some of his feelings were shared by IGN readers in 1997 as well. The lack of multiplayer resulted in one saying that they would "never buy this game." Then the use of sprites caused three more readers to say "it really sucks", "it really is a letdown" and "I was really upset with the game" respectively. Given these early perceptions of Doom 64 combined with its Nintendo 64 exclusivity, which was outsold by the PlayStation 3 to 1, resulted in Doom 64 having low sales. This is in contrast to Doom 1, Doom 2, and Doom 3 games which were critical and commercial successes. It was more likely that I would come across comments where peo-

ple would say they preferred one of the other **Doom** games over **Doom 64**. By the numbers, games which are more exposed often get more recognized. Ultimately I believed critics in 1997 thought **Doom 64** was a bad game and that it was still thought of as bad by the general public. Is this true?
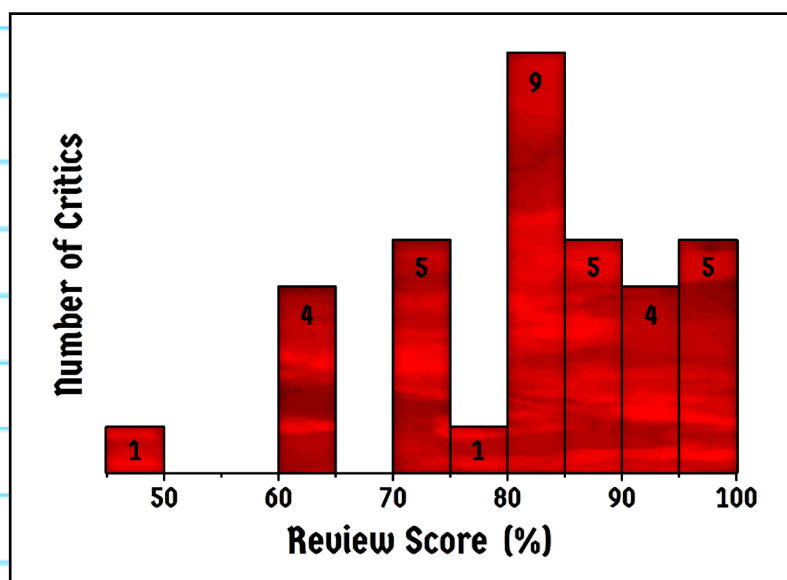
Let's look back to 1997 when **Doom 64** was first released. I gathered all of the magazines from then and collected scores from 34 critics. Surprisingly the mean score of **Doom 64** was 80% which puts the game on the better end of average. Sometimes early games on a console receive unusually high scores as they are being compared to games on the previous generation of consoles. However, **Turok** beat **Doom 64** to release, which is a first person shooter (FPS) featuring polygonal dinosaurs and plenty of gore in a semi-open world. So **Doom 64** had an early contemporary for comparison to earn its 80%. Now there are outliers such as GameSpot's 43% and GamePro's 100%. Plus, there is a generally wide distribution of scores. Critics narrowed in on the missing multiplayer and perceived lack of ingenuity. For example, Electronic Gaming Monthly rated it 3/10 for ingenuity. In general, the critics said they had seen it before and wanted something new from the **Doom** series. Although many were tired of **Doom**, oth-

ers could not get enough of it and rejoiced having more. Overall they did enjoy the transforming levels and the colorful lighting of Doom 64. Eventually more IGN readers would write in it to say how much they enjoyed the game and hoped that others would give it a try, despite the early negative public response.

Looking back at the reviews, Doom 64 fared a bit better than I expected. I would have guessed a 70% would have been the average rather than an 80%. Perhaps it was the power-house Nintendo 64 first person shooter games that followed such as Goldeneye, Turok 3, Perfect Dark, and Quake 2 which overshadowed Doom 64 in the long run. All of these games had multiplayer, which Doom 64's lead pro-grammer, Aaron Seel-er, admitted the lack of killed Doom 64's sales. Plus when you have Doom 64 with the heart of 1993's Doom inside, and com-pare it to these oth-er FPS games which are built on engines designed 5 years later, it seems less spectacular. In 1998

Scott McCall, for Archive 64, wrote that Doom 64 had a hard time competing with the FPS games on the console and dropped in price despite it being quite a fun game. Indeed, the lower-than-expected sales of the game caused a sequel to be canceled despite its decent critic's reception. It seems the rapid advancements in how

"It did not seem like there was a community out there for Doom 64, but there was some appreciation."

FPS games were presented right after it was released hurt Doom 64's public stance more. Likely, a poll of Nintendo 64 fans during 1999 would have sent Doom 64 quite below that 80% mark, more in line with the initial response of IGN's readers.

It was the years that followed Doom 64's initial release which cemented my view that the greater public felt Doom 64 was a mediocre game. I am not alone as I have come across comments from others who thought the same about public perceptions. By 2000 the discussion around Doom 64 would fade. Powerhouse games like Quake 3, Turok 2, Half-Life and Unreal

came to dominate the FPS scene. It felt Doom 64 had been forgotten and thought of as aged before its time. It wouldn't be until the rise of YouTube gaming videos that I started to see some talk of Doom 64 again. Sure there weren't many videos, but more often than not they would state Doom 64 was a solid entry in the series. It did not seem like there was a community out there for Doom 64, but there was some appreciation. The existence of Doom 64 Absolution TC and Doom 64 EX should have hinted to me that there was a small but strong fan base for the game. And unbeknownst to me this fan base built a decent modding scene in the shadows. So there was a community out there, I just did not know that it was there to be found.

"It was crystal clear that many appreciated Doom 64 enough to keep it going 20 years later."

In 2016 the first of the modern Doom games was released. It had enough of a foot in the mechanics of classic Doom that masses of people, including I, came searching for the Doom community to continue the classic Doom fix. The Doom community has always been strong in keeping Doom 1 and 2 alive, but to my sur-

prise Doom 64 was also in the mix. Later in 2016 and in 2017, three Doom 64 adaptations on the ZDoom fork were developed in the form of Brutal Doom 64, Doom 64: Retribution, and GEC Master Edition (DZDoom). It was crystal clear that many appreciated Doom 64 enough to keep it going 20 years later. It was through places like ModDB I would mostly find these projects, but by 2018 it led me to online communities like Doomworld. It felt like Doom 64 was welcomed, or at least worthy enough to be tolerated, by the hardcore fan community. Perhaps it isn't a game for most FPS fans, but it has a small community where it is appreciated and kept going.

A year later in 2019, news of an official Doom 64 re-release was announced. It was pretty exciting for Doom 64 fans, as we would have an easier way to own and share the game on PC and modern consoles. Eventually, it would be tacked on as a pre-order bonus with Doom Eternal as well. This set up Doom 64 to be played more in 2020 than any previous year including its release year. Given how niche I believed Doom 64 was, I was expecting it to have a reception similar to late 1997. That is, modern FPS fans would find it somewhat primitive and classic Doom fans would find it changed Doom for the worse. In mid-2020, Doom 64 would be put under public scru-

tiny one more time. Some of the responses were as I expected, but a majority of reviews called Doom 64 a "hidden classic" and said it "aged quite well." The positive attention was surprising! This increased reception could be due to the quality of life improvements such as increased resolution and updated controls that Nightdive added to the release. But it was also very faithful in retaining Doom 64's core design and limitations. Considering how faithful this release was, it was unexpected to see so many reviews which gave it high praise. Even the wider public rated Doom 64 quite high with a 90% on Steam and 95% with Google users. This second release was quite unlike its first!

What changed between 1997 and 2020, which allowed Doom 64 to receive this newly acclaimed response? To address this, I will start with the article "In Celebration of Perfectly Average Action Games" by Alec Meer for Rock Paper Shotgun. In that article Meer describes two kinds of average-rated games: ambitious games which do not execute their ambitions well and less ambitious games which execute a pre-ex-

Nintendo Acción

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isting formula quite well. A poorly executed game tends to age worse than a game which has well-tested gameplay behind it. In these terms, Doom 64 fits into the latter category. It sticks to the classic Doom engine and does not try to change its core mechanics much except for balancing tweaks. Meer says the tried and true games which are executed well can often receive an 80% score for the amount of fun they deliver. Doesn't

this sound familiar to **Doom 64** in 1997? But also in that year, critics and the public had a different perspective on what they wanted in games. There a few things which meant more on late 90's consoles than they do now, namely: multiplayer, 3D enemies, and innovation.

DOOM 64

IT'S A DOOM YOU CAN'T IGNORE.
IT'S THE DOOM OF THE DECADE.
IT'S DOOM FOR THE NINTENDO 64.
PREPARE OR PERISH.

Someone once said that no one can hear you scream in outer space. It's a good thing, too—part two of our Doom 64 strategies threatens the Space Marines with enough horrors to make a galaxy's ears ring. Fall farther into the burning ring of fire this month with the arsenal of maps and tactics you've been screaming for.

DOOM 64
Doom Never Looked So Doomed Good

"...with many bullet holes in its gut..."

These days there are more-common ways to play multiplayer games than on the N64, so a lack of it in **Doom 64** hurts much less. Then the recent rise of the newly coined boomer shooters has put less emphasis on "realism" and pushing 3D. Instead a consistent art design is of more importance. **Doom 64** definitely has consistent art design with its enemy, sprite, and texture redesigns. Finally, innovation comes into picture. In some ways the past decade has been a tale of "AAA" developers not being able to execute on their visions. It is refreshing in some aspects to find a game which executes an older formula quite well without making it worse.

Since Doom 64 was relatively forgotten, it feels like a new game to many which revives that classic gameplay with authenticity.

However, there is one aspect, among all modern reviews, which seems to be universally praised about Doom 64 and that is its atmosphere. Overall the lighting system, texture work, sound design, and ultimately music is all very cohesive in the mood the game is setting. In fact, its gradient lighting system is still pretty unique to the title. Doom 64 is a dark, depressive, and brooding experience; truly a Doom with mood.

It is incredibly cohesive in that regard. In some ways that could have divided opinion. It did not leave room for much levity and silliness that many classic Doom fans came to enjoy. But for those who are willing to see Doom in a different light (literally) this cohesion helps with the player's immersion. Perhaps

It is not uncommon to find the comment of "Doom 64 is the real Doom 3."

the dark atmosphere was expected in the edgy late 90's for games which took themselves seriously and that FPS games going future would be the same. I certainly expected this future and was disappointed with the

"Gaming culture is becoming gaming multiculturalism. Where specific communities are forming around specific genres and the "general" gamer is becoming less significant."

launch of the GameCube and its lack of gritty first person shooters. So perhaps at the time the dark atmosphere had less weight in public perceptions. Little did we know that the late 90's would be the peak of this atmosphere in FPS games. The genre would move on to gather a more general audience with military and futuristic themes. This means the moody shooters of 1996 and 1997, which include Quake and Blood as well, are now viewed as unique gems. They are the tip of the spear in classic FPS action and horror, which now gives them bonus style points.

PROTIP: TO DEFEAT THE CYBERDEMON SHOOT AT IT UNTIL IT DIES

With this resurgence, where does **Doom 64** stand now in the **Doom** series? I have noticed it has become more common for people to say they prefer **Doom 64** over **Doom 1** and **2**, and it's less frequent that I see people criticized for that opinion. I think for the majority in the **Doom** community, **Doom 64** faces **Doom 3** in their mind's "ranking system." **Doom 3** was critically acclaimed for its ambition in its day but also had mixed reception in the public for diverting from the classic **Doom** formula. Right now **Doom 3** and **Doom 64** both stand at a 90% with Steam users, while on Google **Doom 3** is a few percentage points lower than **Doom 64**. Perhaps by sticking to its guns, **Doom 64** has garnered more recent praise over **Doom 3**. It is not uncommon to find the comment of "**Doom 64** is the real **Doom 3**." **Doom 64** does continue off where **Doom 2** left off, so it is a "**Doom 3**" in that regard. Perhaps this aspect combined with the obscurity of **Doom 64** and the commonness of **Doom 3** has set up a subtle rivalry. But both fan bases have a commonality in that they support games which received a mixed reception. Thus I think it is unfair that **Doom 3** is sometimes downplayed in

favor of **Doom 64**. The future of **Doom 3** could take a similar path as **Doom 64**. It is atmospherically unique compared to modern games, and I can see gamers being pleasantly surprised by it.

Already the virtual reality versions of **Doom 3** are being seen as superior to **Doom VFR**. I believe many are now noticing the cycle of mechanically solid games being sent into obscurity by a general audience for a lack of "ingenuity" in one aspect or another only to be revived decades later by a fervent fan base. Gaming culture is becoming gaming multiculturalism. Where specific communities are forming around specific genres and the "general" gamer is becoming less significant. Thus I don't hold critics' opinions of high value if they don't weigh fans' expectations in a genre or series against their own. There are now multiple gaming cultures to consider and this is true within the **Doom** series. Each game in the Doom series takes a slightly different direction and does it well. Whether it be **Doom 1, 2, 64, 3, RPG, 2016, VFR, Eternal,** or any of the others, I can recognize there is an audience for each one. I have seen others recognize this far earlier than I have, and now it makes me happy to see this phrase becoming more popular: "all **Doom** is good **Doom**."

ARTICLE BY

IMMORPHER
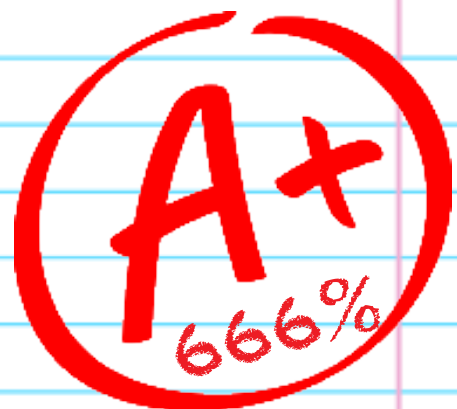
The Unfortunate: Doom 1 GBA

So, last time I talked to you about Doom *32x's interesting development history. Well, this time, fellow refined Console* Doom *enjoyer, I shall take a look at the last of the "Classic," Console* Doom *ports, the* GBA *ports!*

Doom GBA is the last of the Jaguar **Doom**-based ports of **Doom**, and thus the last one to feature the toned down geometry and texture simplification. It also has a few issues unique to it, such as the music being misplaced (The *E1M2* theme playing in *E1M1*, *E1M3* in *E1M2*, etc.) and unlike **Doom 32x** which makes it very hard for speedrunners to clip out of bounds (Even harder than vanilla **Doom**!) this port uhhh…Watch *Alexo's* speedruns. The glitches make this version the fastest version of **Doom**, ever. Oh and did I forget the censored blood?

Still, despite these arguably problematic issues, **Doom GBA** was arguably the best way to bring **Doom** on the go, and probably introduced the game to a new wave of fans through the hottest portable console at the time, Nintendo's **Game Boy** Advance. So in the end, **Doom GBA** was the last time the Jaguar **Doom** engine would be used to create a successful **Doom** port. But, in an alternate timeline, this isn't the case.

It all started in 1999. John *Carmack* approached Activision suggesting them to make a **Game Boy Color** version of Commander Keen. Activision quickly accepted, and recommended David A Palmer productions, who had been proposing to make **Game Boy** versions of id's other games. (Yes, **Doom** on the **Game Boy Color**. Someone did make a homebrew version, but for that check out my Homebrew Port Mini-Discovery) and thus, Commander Keen for the **Game Boy Color** was released in May of 2001. But at the same time, another project was underway. The project to bring **Doom** to not the **Game Boy Color**, but to the **Game Boy** Advance. The game had chiptune-style remixes of the music, and most of the PC content ported over. The first portable port of **Doom** would be the greatest yet. But that's before *Carmack* almost **Doom**ed (Pun intended) the entire project. So a few years prior, Saturn **Doom** was in the works. The port also had the intention of bringing the glory of PC **Doom** to the Saturn without making use of the Jaguar engine. However, this came at the cost of texture quality, which *Carmack* found unacceptable. Consequence: He asked for the PlayStation port to be used instead. Result: A weird mix of the 32x port (For compatibility) with the PSX port's improvements minus colored lighting, minus Nightmare Spectres (Instead appearing as regular Spectres that take more hits for no reason) a cool status bar and HORRIBLE frame rate. And well, the same thing could have happened to the **GBA** port. *Carmack* found (Late at night or whatever) the source code of Jaguar **Doom**, and ignoring all the hard work *David A Palmer Productions' developers* had done, requested the engine to be used instead. While this could have been a disaster like **Saturn Doom**, thankfully working with one port as opposed to trying to fuse two was seemingly easier, as the game ended up being very good. However, it is allegedly caused the music to play on the wrong levels, and locking away a fantastic remix of Hiding the Secrets until very recently. However, the **GBA** port also featured some unique deathmatch maps forn its built-in multiplayer, making them the only official deathmatch maps to be released. Their author is not known however but if you are reading this, the maps were pretty good. These maps are what we are missing from the Unity ports currently. Sadly, the **GBA** port would remain fairly unmodded until 2021.

The Chosen One: Doom 2 GBA

If **Doom** 1 **GBA** was missed potential, **Doom 2 GBA** is the chosen one. The last classic **Doom** port, ended up being the second best. This is the port I discovered **Doom** with however (Aside from the one time my friend played the 32x port, but I didn't really care) so do take my esteem of this port with a grain of salt. This is clearly the "bridge" port that really bridges the modern, straight PC **Doom** port with the original **Doom** ports weird engine limitation and geometry restrictions. The port is almost a straight port of **Doom** 2, with all the geometry and textures right in their place. Oh, and like it's predecessor, multi-player! Although, it doesn't have custom deathmatch arenas. Overall, this port is a league above its predecessor, but it's not much of a surprise. Instead of *David A Palmer*, the development of the port was done by Torus Games. And, much like the **SNES** port, this port does NOT run on any version of the **Doom** engine. Instead, it uses Torus' own Southpaw Engine, responsible for other **GBA** FPS shooters, **Duke Nukem Advance** and **Ice Nine** (Which are excellent games, so I highly recommend you to try them out at least once) adapted to be able to recreate the **Doom** engine's functions.

This, however, would be one of its biggest strengths, and weaknesses. While the other two FPS games that were made for the engine were entirely new (Meaning the developers of the maps knew the limits of the engine really well) **Doom 2** was a straight port and it turns out the game was still too big for the special engine. This resulted in some songs being cut from the game, as well as levels being split in two, (Most notably among them, *The Chasm*) and while not a direct effect of the Southpaw Engine, the lighter palette (Done as a band aid fix to the **GBA**'s overall darkness) causes some enemies using browns to have some unintentional transparent spots. It also made modding extremely difficult, as the engine is not Open Source. As of today, it's hard to replace textures and sounds, and impossible to edit maps themselves. Oh, and the green blood remained. But out of all the bugs, the most crippling is the armor bug. Essentially, when you exit a level, the game forgets you have armor until you pick up more armor, making some levels horrible if you can't dodge properly. Overall, this port was essentially a mix of all the pros and cons of the ports before it: Texture accuracy like **SNES** and **PSX Doom**, but framerate issues like the **3DO**, limitations like the Jaguar ports in general, and green blood like the first **GBA** port. But after that, **Doom** would finally be properly represented on consoles with the release of the **Doom 3 Collector's Edition**, featuring **Doom 1** and **Doom 2** in their unaltered, PC form. And for that, **Doom 2 GBA** is a piece of **Doom** history, for being the first standalone port of **Doom** 2, the first portable port of **Doom** 2, and the last classic **Doom** port before the modern age. And to that my fellow refined demons, is where I am ending this article of **Doom GBA**'s development. This is *Roebloz*, signing off.

*Have you ever wondered how it would be like to play a port of a field level from Space Harrier on the **Game Boy Color**, name the game after a name of a song from that one group that has an Easter egg in E4M1, and featuring a **Doom** skin slapped on top? If you did, you are an extremely weird guy. But it's also your lucky day, because during a homebrew contest in the early 2000's, one of the entries was known as "The Downward Spiral". It's exactly like I described. You are playing as **Doom**guy, running around through fields, deserts and cities killing orange Cacodemons called BigRedBalls, and killing blue Demons called Otakus. Yes, Otakus. Now I know **Doom** can be ported to anything, but calling this **Doom** is an insult. At least, let's check out the positives: It has **Doom** sounds, it has decent controls, and it's on the **Game Boy Color**. So yeah, check it out, you will both hate and love it. Thanks, 420 Studios.*

PLAYING DOOM is very fun with its multiple mechanics, from secrets or powerups to my favorite, infighting, that event that happens when 2 monsters start to fight until the death, it is always fun to see how 2 monsters fight just because one accidentally gave his partner a hit. But what would happen

if we took it to an extreme with combination of real time strategy in first person?, this is the result, welcome to *ZDoom Wars.*

ZDoom Wars is a multiplayer mod developed from the golden days of skulltag, originally brought by *Martin Coll-*

berg with *Doom Wars, Captain Ventris* improves it a lot by bringing a whole new game mode, where strategy and the use of monsters is necessary to defeat to your opponent.

Starting with its default last man standing game mode, players will have a

MOD BY CAPTAIN VENTRIS [2010]

kill the summoner himself until you are only the last summoner.

The strategy comes when you must know the weaknesses and strengths of each unit, not only the monsters, also of your class, from the strength of phantom units where many units are unable to hit them because they are ghosts, to those that can penetrate the invulnerability that some units can gain for small moments.

So, choose your favorite faction of those games that you enjoyed so much, like **Doom!** that is capable of fighting against everything, or **Heretic,** the one who can take the advantage of ghosts to the extreme with cheap and powerful units but weak in resistance, maybe you like more the defense and power of **Hexen,** the one that has a good damage and range with unique heroes like the heresiarch that can turn the game around, or maybe you prefer to go from afar as a sniper with **Strife,** the class where distance is your ally or is it that you prefer to create a sea of cartoonish and funny enemies with a very strong and easy to learn, **Chex Quest,** Or do you prefer to drop your opponents from the skies with a whole sea of aircraft with virus?.

Whatever your decision, you should learn to play each class wisely, each one is different from the other fulfilling a role, and who knows, you can play it with the default mode of Last man standing either free for all or in teams or my favorite and the most recent one capture points.

So, if you are a fan of RTS but in a simple way and you would like to see in-fighting in an extreme way where your strategy matters, this mod is for you.

-Gaia74

number of 6 classes (which can be expanded thanks to custom classes created by fans) of classic *zdoom* games at their disposal to fight against his opponents by summoning monsters, since the player himself will not be able to attack his opponents directly the player will have to use their only 2 resources, the mana and the hero's mana.

The mana can be obtained through regeneration or by collecting the mana bottles that the monsters themselves drop of different amounts each one when they die, making even collecting 1 mana can make a difference, while on the other hand the hero is only possible to obtain it through the slow regeneration of it, but not for that reason it is useless, on the contrary, it is the most important because with this we can summon the strongest units of all until the heroes and all of this to eliminate the opponent's monsters and

THE TROOPERS PLAYGROUND

Matthias Worch - March 1996

The thing that most people will remember about this is a new Dehacked enemy called "trooper.' They have the head of a sergeant but the body of Doomguy with a health probably slightly above that of a Demon and they attack by means of a chaingun FAR more powerful than that wielded by the commandos and gives out roughly zero warning before it starts firing. Truthfully, Worch could have made a serious attempt at increasing their density in the later maps. On the other hand, he neglects pistol start when it comes to maps 07, 08, and 09 because the Super Shotgun is completely lacking, despite the not-insignificant amounts of mid-range enemies like Manicubi and Hell Knight, so we should probably be grateful he actually cared about balance for the most part and not attempting to annihilate unwary players.

Visually, there's not really too much to write home about, other than the use of a dark blue skybox and a dark grey aesthetic used in the status bar, pause screen, and title screen. The progression is a little hard to keep a grip on, but you're basically starting out in something like a commercial/residential area (it's quite abstract) which ends up transitioning to techbase in the last few maps, despite techbase doors showing up as early as Map 01. The maps themselves are fairly small and compact like Worch's MM2 efforts. I really like the sewer sections in Map 06, particularly as it comes to obtaining the blue key. Hiding the radiation suit you might need to obtain a supercharge in a non-official secret was quite dumb tbh.

Matthias Worch might be most known for being the most prolific and consistent contributor to Memento Mori II other than Denis Moeller. But just a few months before Memento Mori II's release, he put out a 9-map set titled The Trooper's Playground. If that name sounds familiar, that's because it was featured as one of Doomworld's Top 100 WADS of all time in 2003 (one of the top 10 of 1996). And it's definitely a fine example of vintage mapping by someone who could legitimately be called among the best mappers of the time(Jens Nielsen might be somewhat better regarding tight design – but he wasn't prolific at all).

But despite this compactness, Worch sneaks in a number of innovations in map progression. Sometimes, rooms will open up further the more you hit switches and somewhat transform their appearance. Often, they have a feeling of non-linearity. And some of the traps are quite nasty, if not to the degree of Plutonia (hitting a switch in a secret contained in one early map unleashes a rather punishing hitscanner trap containing a Trooper). And you find the troopers are now appearing in pairs in the last few maps, which should be manageable when you find the plasma rifle in Map 06, but they don't go down easily, even with one, and you might want to save at least some of it for other encounters. Like the Cyberdemon in Map 07, for instance, guarding a pretty cool time-released exit portal with enough rockets beforehand to make some think Matthias went overboard (I can't aim for anything, so I can't complain). It'

The last battle is against a central terminal Romero head on an elevator constantly going up and down. In one sense, this is easier than the original Map 30 because it's easier to get a hit in, but on the other end, there's also far less space to outmaneuver enemies. Anyway, my aim sucks so it took around 7 to finish him.

Despite some fairly minor flaws relating to texture alignment and slightly questionable design choices, The Trooper's Playground has some of Worch's best ideas, though they probably came together better in MM2. Don't go in expecting a ballbuster or slaughter (so classic to the bone) in any fashion, and you should be fine. Otherwise, don't play anything before S.T.R.A.I.N, I guess. I'm not sure. In any case, but it's hardly less vanilla than other maps of the time. A re-release in 2016 (by /idgames maintainer The Green Herring) allows it to be played in modern source ports without a convoluted process involving running the batch file and getting said source port to recognize a feature called New WAD tools.

-LadyMistDragon

THE DARKENING, EPISODE 2

Developed concurrently with The Darkening's first episode, the Quake 2-styled Episode 2 brings back the veteran mappers Ukiro, Nick Baker, Afterglow, Jan Van der Veken, Anthony Soto, Lee Szymanski, Richard Wiles, and Capellen for a fresh new set of Quake 2 inspired maps, their gritty technicality matched by an original backing score by Peter Tomaselli and Sam Woodman.

It's hard to really describe these maps in a way other than unconventional for their time- while they play like Doom and look like Doom in some aspects, the tone feels quite alien to players used to barrelling their way through maps without forethought. The layouts, while generally linear in nature, loop upon themselves intricately and flow freely, using great verticality as opposed to sprawling and spreading in ways that could tend to confuse the player quite a bit. On top of this, the encounters, while limited on raw monster counts, use the tightness of the layouts to their advantage, making even a few imps feel highly threatening when the going gets tight. Strategic and frugal resource placement keeps the player thinking on their feet, sometimes warranting a more cautious and careful approach- at least the scenery to take in in the meantime is quite incredible. Despite the amount of hands involved in the mapping of this set, the maps feel quite consistent, without feeling so similar that they blend together.

On top of having 12 full single player maps, there's also 12 full deathmatch maps, with layouts and styles in the same tight and consistent fashion as the single player maps. Guaranteed fun fragging with friends to be had, the first deathmatch map echoing the first single player map's layout, and so on and so forth. Quite rarely do WADs these days provide both experiences, so with a quick gamemode change on TSPG or equivalent, you can do a coop and deathmatch double feature (and you know how much we at the Wadazine love our multiplayer experiences!).

I have to say, the music of this set was some of the most alien stuff I'd ever heard- the MIDIs were what I could only endearingly call "trash can MIDIs" because it sounded like EVERYTHING had been thrown into the mix as they were created. Odd time signatures, tempo changes, and switches in styles mid-song were the antithesis of everything I'd learned as a music enjoyer and, at one point, trained singer. But yet, the songs grew on me- their strangeness fit the almost disturbing gritty technicality of the maps, bringing some levity to the sometimes tense environments. It really transported me to a place that was not of Earth, but felt like it could have been if Earth had become dystopian and strained, these big concrete monoliths the only thing left standing to explore.

But of course, one thing that really makes this set stand out is the amazing texture work done by Ukiro. If you're thinking, "hey, this set looks pretty similar to OTEX," well, basically this was OTEX alpha. Back in 2000, it can be found on the Darkening's Doomworld site that people were already clamoring to use the high-quality textures Ukiro had created. Funny enough, it can be quoted on that page from Anthony Soto, "I might as well also mention that I don't think we'll ever see a texture wad from Ola (Like duh, Anthony)." Well, thank goodness Soto was wrong. Many of the textures of this set went on to be cleaned up, brought to higher quality, and became what is now known as OTEX. The triangular triple-barred symbol of OTEX was based upon Darkening 2's infamous insignia scattered across the maps.

So, take a walk down the path of earthy strangeness and give The Darkening E2 a play, either alone or with friends it's guaranteed to be an interesting play. While it was disappointing that there was no episode 3, all of the mappers in this project have gone on to create other great things, and are still making great things to this day. Go forth- face the Darkening.
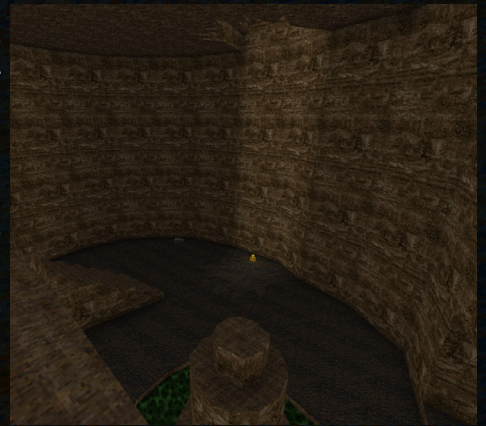
- Major Arlene
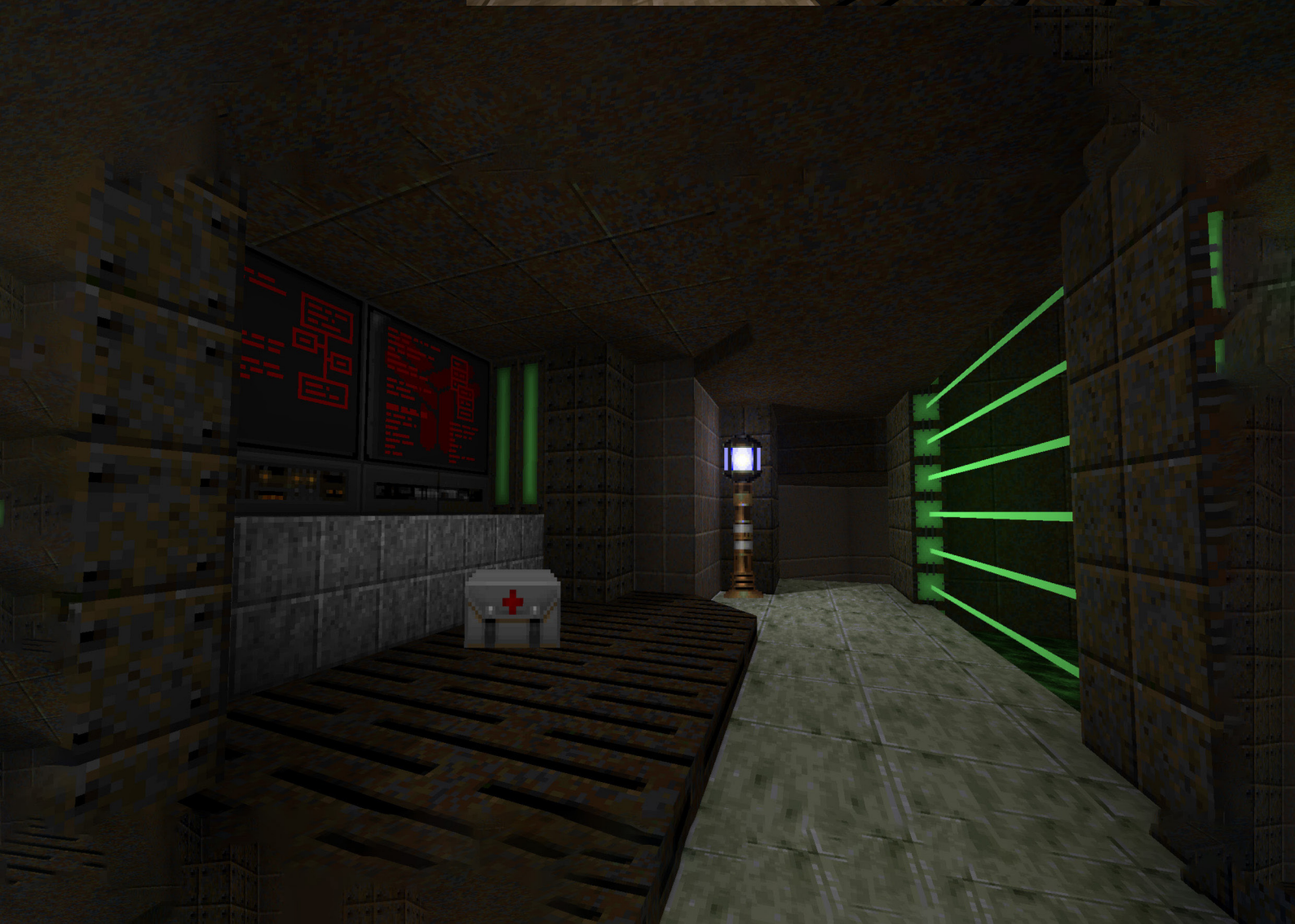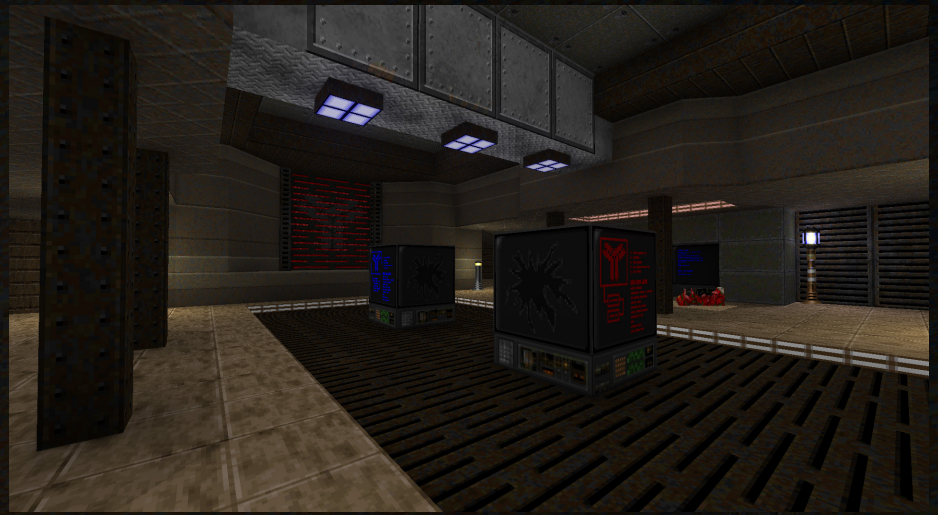
Line in the sand

(2021) by various authors

Maps created by multiple authors is not a new thing to the community. It has probably been done since the beginning, like the Doom 2 maps made by Tom Hall and then finalized/tweaked by Romero or Petersen. A practice that back then was born out of pure necessity to get a deadline or simply because the situation required it. On the other hand, this method of working is one that can also result in a combination of different styles working in synergy to deliver a monument to cooperation and extravagance.

Introducing Line in the Sand, a compilation of 3 maps made by a total of 6 authors, each working in pairs for each map, so each map is made by no less than 2 authors. The main concept of this WAD is that the maps are not only worked in cooperation, but also have a certain distinctive feature: The maps are "divided" by a line, hence, Line in the Sand, and no author should leave his line or retouch the other section. The result? An interesting amalgamation of concepts and visuals that works successfully to deliver something different and entertaining.
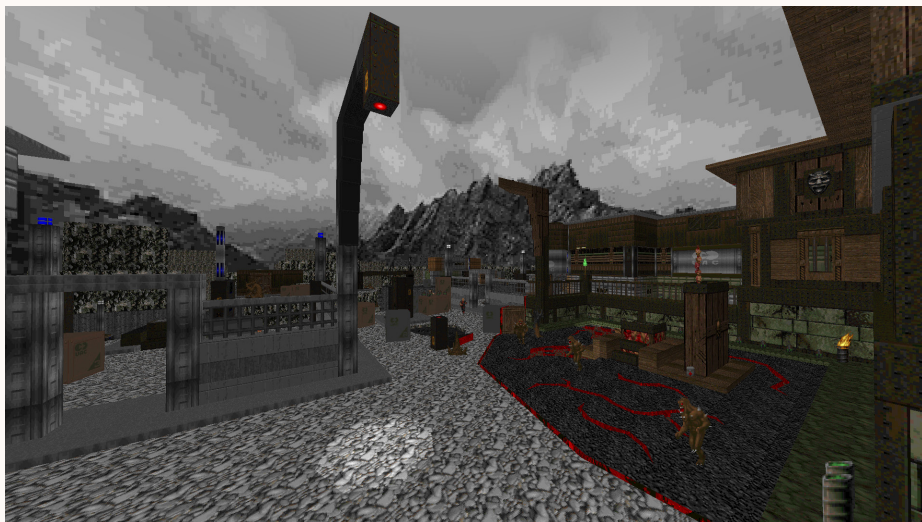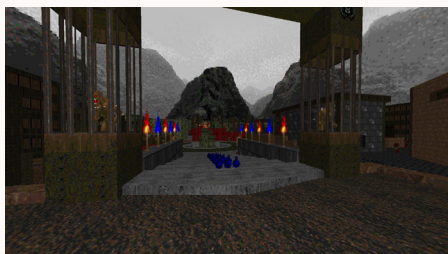
From the beginning we will realize that despite being only 3 maps, each map is a beast on its own terms. These are huge maps that will undoubtedly take you more than 20 minutes to complete, or up to 30 or more if your game mode is that of the patient and explorer. Each map makes incredible use of stock textures to create a design that is appealing to the eye and nostalgic to the heart, designed with great care and attention to detail.

Huge fortresses that expand to the limit of drawing or gigantic hellish caves full of labyrinthine paths and demonic hordes. You have it all. Each map feels like a fantastic adventure; a journey through the vanilla world where we are presented with a set of fantastic art designs that work fantastically well with each mapper's style. Thanks to the simple but interesting rule of drawing a line that divides the maps in half, each author has enough freedom to expand the map to their liking or, if they wish, create a cohesive style that works side by side. This trifecta of maps shows you that under good hands, great things can be created if you set the boundaries well and follow a clear idea.

But of course, as is to be expected from massive maps, we can also expect massive combat. All maps have more than 300 enemies in UV, some reaching twice that. However, contrary to what you might think, this is not slaughter, but a precise form of gameplay where combat is based on a progressive flow of more difficult encounters per turn. Some may throw you into direct combat from the start, but the massive map design will also give you more than enough opportunity to take different approaches to the encounter. Die, revive, repeat, die. Sure, I don't think you die a lot (at least I didn't die more than 5 times in one map) but the idea of it is that even if you die many times, you always have a plan B, C or D for your next attack. Many strategies are open thanks to the set of decisions in the design. Sometimes you can take a different route or completely ignore a certain encounter. As I said earlier, the maps feel like a journey through a battlefield, as you decide where to go and where to fight.

Line in the Sand is a project with enormous potential. While it's sad that the rest of the maps have not been finished, this trio of maps does more than enough to make up for it with their fantastic design and fun gameplay. Just to say that it personally took me over 1 hour to finish all 3 maps, I can tell you that I am more than satisfied with the result. Of course, big also means that if your navigation skills are not very good, you might get lost, but that's the important thing about these maps being so open and promoting exploration: getting lost is part of the fun. In conclusion, a great explosive project.

DOOM II
## THE WAY ID DID

(2013) By various authors

Introducing you, a megawad as iconic as diverse, **Doom 2 the Way id Did** is a complete 33 map megawad that reimagines the original classic with a more modern and sleek touch in a way that feels right at home, and all for vanilla too, as it must be. Lead by the efforts of the great *Alfonzo*, the main goal of the project was to re-create the original maps in a way that felt in touch with the design trends of the year that it was in the making, while at the same time retaining the original spirit of the game and polishing it until shine. Each mapper had the tremendous task of mimicking the style of the original authors in their own respective maps; You have the *Chasm* done by *Sandy*, now imagine *Crushed Spirits* by *Marcaek*. While not all the levels are direct re interpretations or remakes of the originals, all levels have the same spirit and style that make the originals so special in the first place, despite the fact that most of **Doom 2** maps are kind of yucky.

Yet **D2tWiD** is quite pretty to look at from all points of views! From the classic starter map all the way to the secret maps, now being Commander Keen inspired! A modern touch can be felt in the lack of 90s oddities and mistakes, like repeating the same texture in all kinds of places of the lack of a cohesive layout. While most of the maps do tend to be way bigger than their original counterparts, this assures you to have a very long and enjoyable journey through what **Doom 2** might have looked like if it was originally released in 2013. With the original engine, of course.

Another great factor is how welcoming the experience is. With a very steady difficulty curve that increases every so-and-so maps, you'll get used to the challenge fast enough to overcome all the encounters you might face. Don't expect gigantic death traps of a thousand Archviles in your face, but do mind you, this is slightly harder than the original **Doom 2**. Even better! Boredom is out of the window and new opportunities arise for you to enjoy and blast through. A classic is always a classic, my friend, but every once a while you can make a classic even more classic. **Doom 2 the Way id Did** is one of those classics and one you should definitely play.
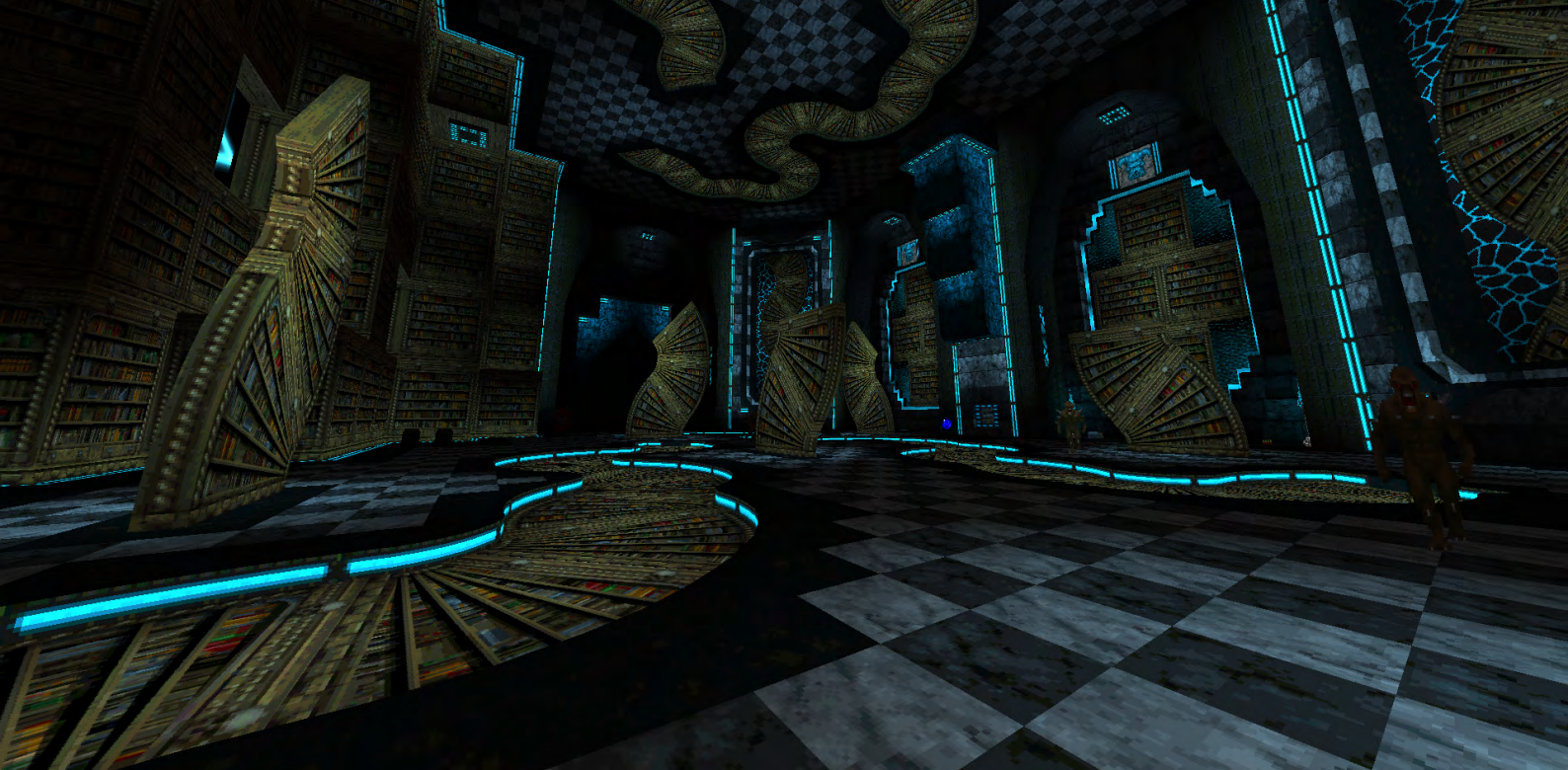
- Endless.
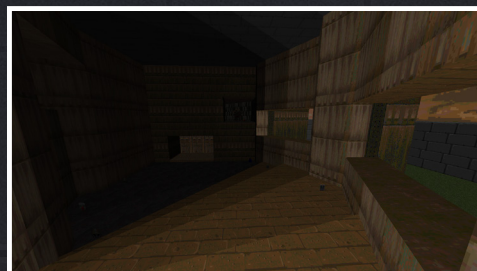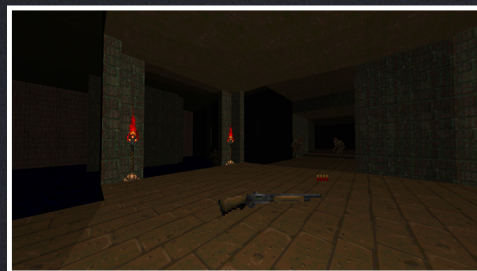
The demons have come.
Entangled in nightmares,
For eons to go.
Death, violence and beauty.
All in one place.
A palace of dreams,
Doomed to never see the light of day.
Let them hear it a last time...
A Lullaby to all those that are about to die.

The Master Recommendation #12 presents...

LULLABY

Danlex (2021)

2020 WAS A TOUGH YEAR full of indirect competitions between a multitude of fantastically grandiose maps that demonstrated incredible visual designs capable of making modern AAA video game levels look ridiculous. Huge surprises that left everyone with their mouths open and sedimented a style that could already be considered a classic within the community.

2021, the sequel to 2020, brings with it equally massive surprises for **Doom** and its fans. In this case, we have the Salvadoran author, *Danlex,* a relatively quiet and silent author who occasionally made us orgasm by releasing fanciful and whimsical images of his maps in the *Doom 2020 Pictures* thread. Such images showed a fantasy world, virtually made up of all the dreams of all the fallen Doomguys, a sort of celestial prison that elevated its dreamlike dimensions beyond human perspectives. It turned out that such images were not mere smoke, but a reality that would reveal incredible things to the community. Here it comes, *Lullaby.* The first standalone 2021 *GZ-Doom* map from *Danlex,* and one of the best maps we'll see all year and possibly the decade.

Created under a very special and fascinating concept, *Lullaby* tries to recreate a dreamlike atmosphere through dimensional spaces that combine the abstract with the real. Like entering a

black hole, you will see places that make no sense at all and demonstrate the beauties of madness at all times. The ground shifts under your feet, portals transport you between different spaces, time moves backwards and stars rain from the sky. And all this under a fantastic celestial color that reminds us of a space scene with an excellent atmosphere flooded in a fantastic perspective altered thanks to the dream-like concept. From the moment you start and take your first steps, waking up from your bed and discovering that you are inside a dream, or a nightmare, until the end while daring hordes of demons in a fantasy world. *Lullaby* perfectly encapsulates a peculiar style of mapping. One where the true essence is centered mainly in offering a visual experience, one where you will

not easily forget the kind of assemblies and work that goes into creating such a tremendous piece of work, and boy, will no one forget it! *Lullaby* was like a beast from the sea emerging in DW, in the community and even in PC Gamer, granting *Lullaby* the honor of being part of the handful of WADs selected to appear in the corners outside the community. An honor that deserves no doubt thanks to the fantastic effort that its author has made to create a work that is as exotic as fun, combining the best of two worlds under a style that *Lovecraft* would admire. That which cannot be described. That which must be felt. That which must be suffered. And that which must be played.

This map is a marvelous pass, visually appealing in every way to the point
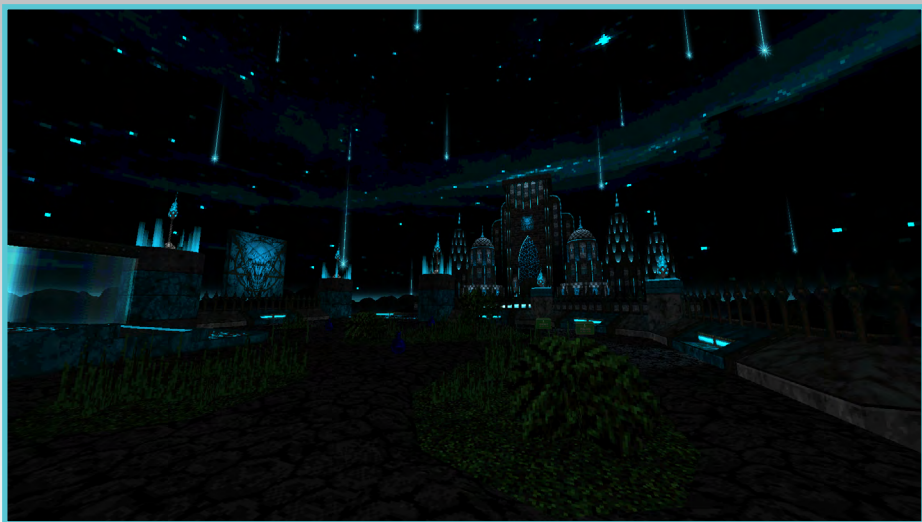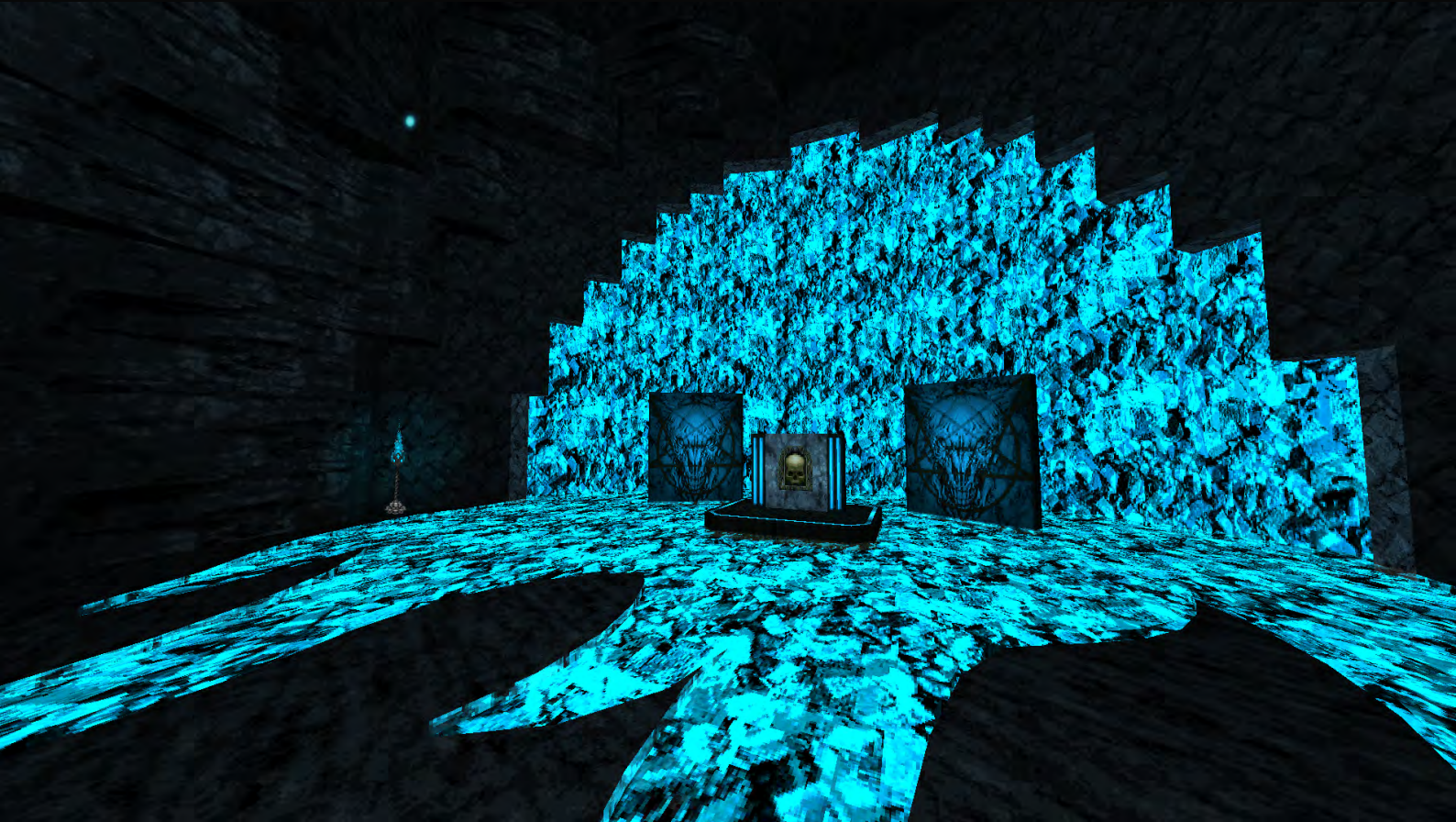
that it could be one of the culprits to make people Doomphiles. But just as something should be beautiful on the outside, it should also be beautiful on the inside, and *Lullaby* delivers with honors! While the gameplay can be considered within the Slaughter genre, *Lullaby* doesn't go completely crazy and leaves some breathing room for those who aren't fully adapted to this style of gameplay. It is difficult, challenging and can take more than an hour for first time players, but it shows an excellent progress curve and the gameplay remains stable thanks to a good balance on all difficulties. Those experts who decide to jump into UV will have a great adventure through esoteric worlds framed in challenging violence, but if you are looking for something a little less punishing, the other difficulties are more than perfect to welcome you, although of course, with a bit of pain. After all, no pain, no gain. And this is **Doom**, you better be ready to face it!

*Danlex* made nothing short of a masterpiece. Visually outstanding, conceptually unique, marvelously designed and rightfully balanced. *Lullaby* takes you into a different kind of adventure, one that you will not forget so easily. Here we have the future of **Doom**, one where the only limitation
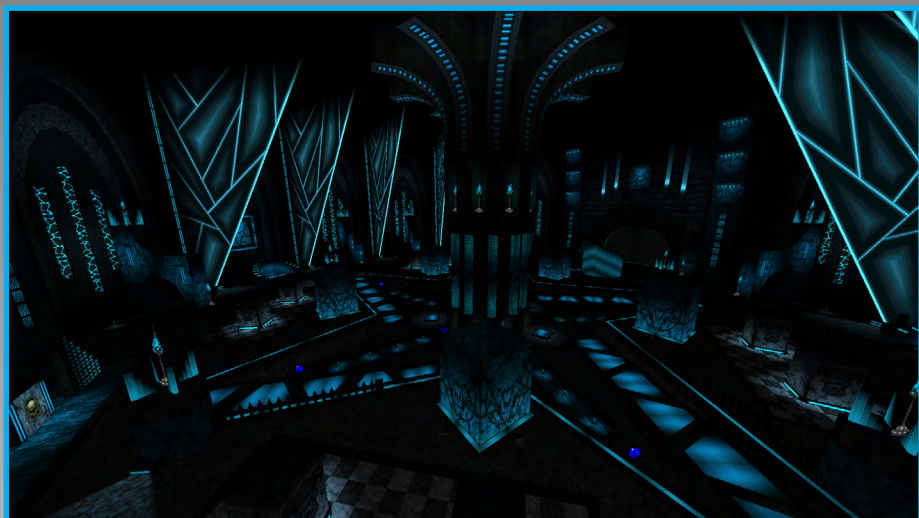
"But just as something should be beautiful on the outside, it should also be beautiful on the inside, and Lullaby delivers..."
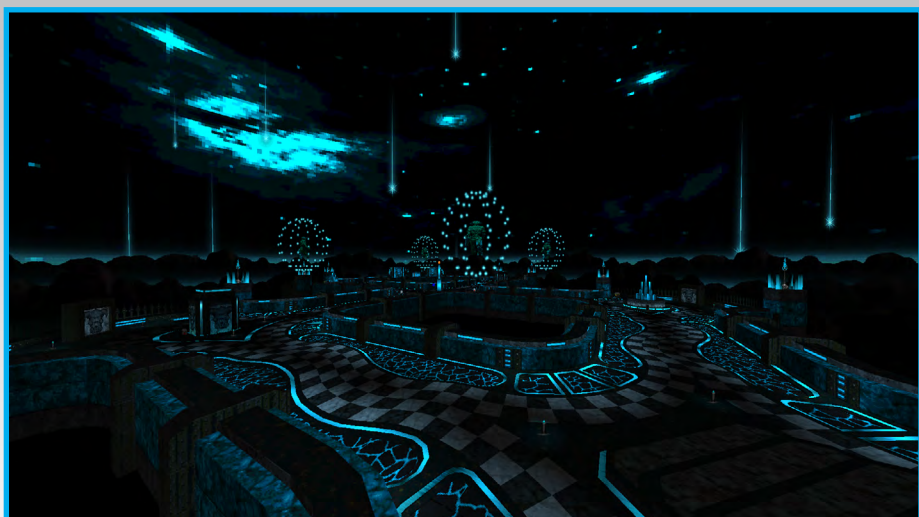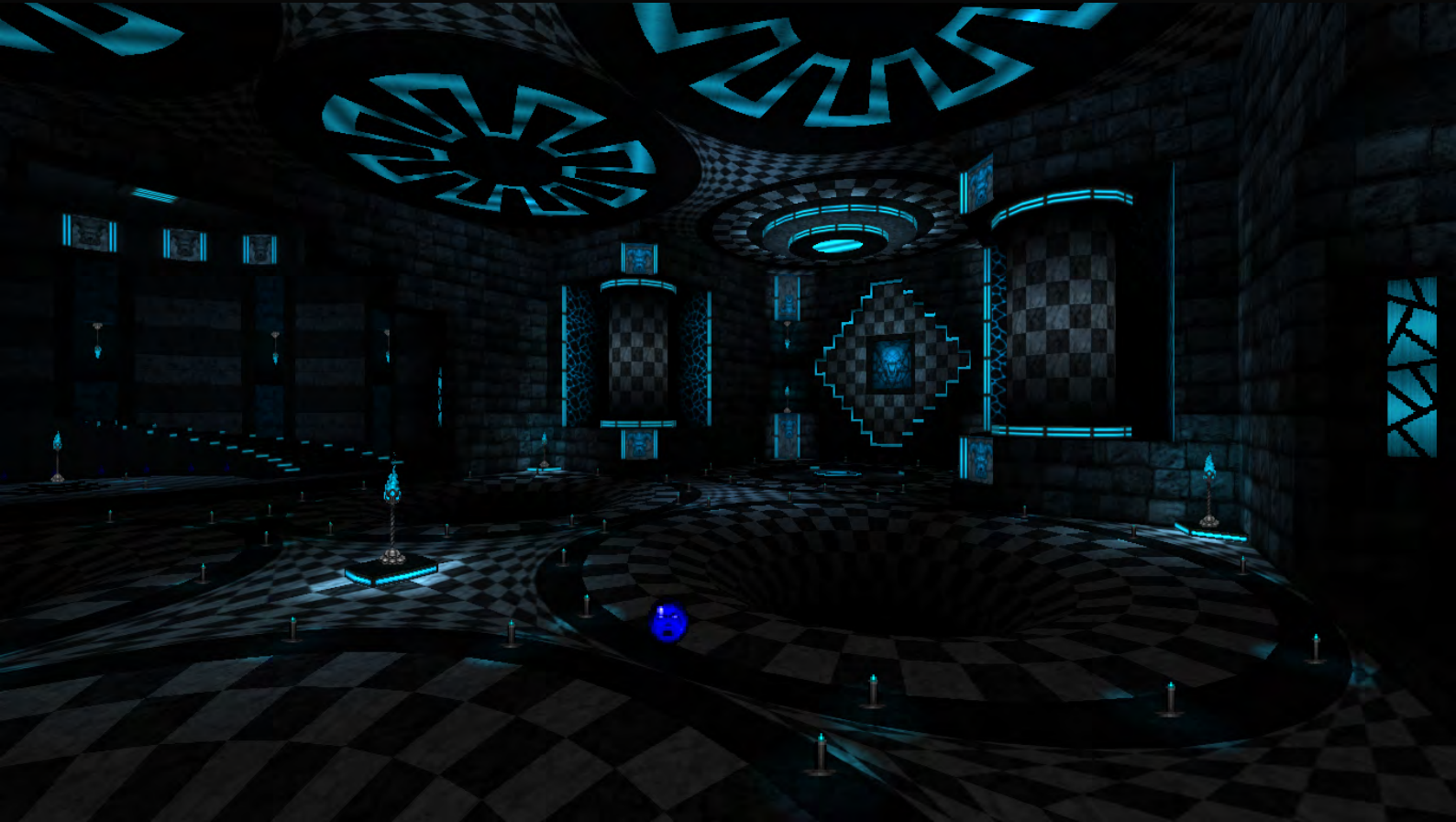
lies on your imagination. This map is a clear testament to the capabilities and skills of a clear mind that aims towards success, and above all, a testament that **Doom** is always ready to blow our minds once again, and let the addiction begin.

If you enjoyed this work, I highly recommend you check out the rest of *Danlex's work*, from his maps for different community projects to the stand-alone projects. The guy is without a doubt a prodigy who will bring invaluable projects to the community. Glad to know that such artists are still with us.

And of course, do I need to say more? Here's your prize, *Danlex!* Congrats on winning our *Master Recommendation Seal of Approval!*

And you! *Reader! Go play it for fucks sake!*

— Endless
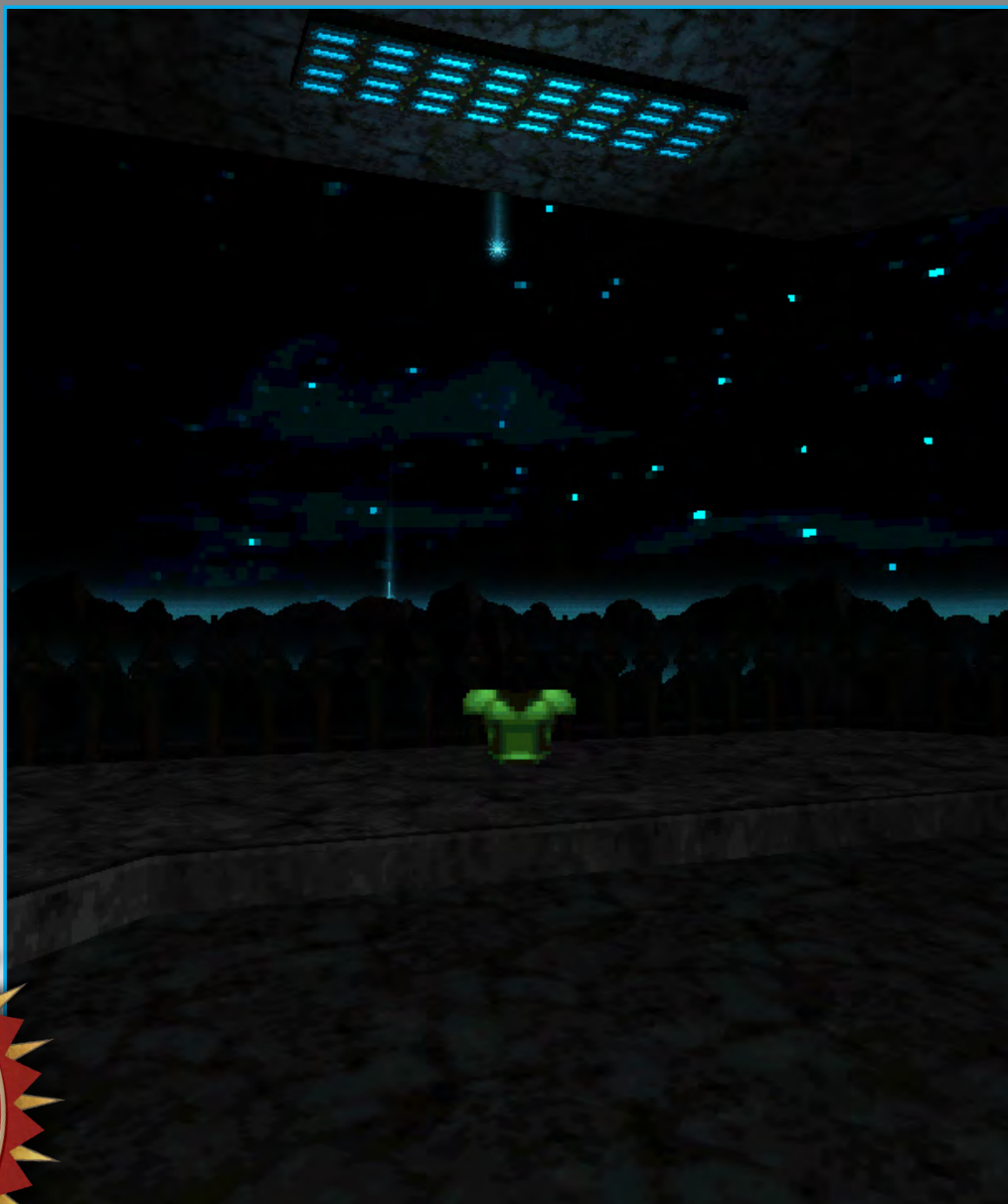
INSIDE THE MACHINE OF INDUSTRY,
DEEP INTO THE HEART OF CORRUPTION,
MADNESS, TERROR, HELL.
THIS IS THE PROMISED KINGDOM,
TURNED INTO A BROKEN, BLOATED LIE.
THIS IS THE LAND OF SIN,
THE HEARTLAND OF DOOM.

HEARTLAND

WADAZINE SEAL OF APPROVAL

APPROVED

We all know skillsaw, don't we? Creator of Ancients Aliens, Valiant, Vanguard and also contributor of BTSX and many other projects. A multitalented mapper who has left a legacy impossible to compare in the community. I need say no more, if you, reader, have not heard of skillsaw or played his WADs, I implore you to do so now. They are some of the best pieces of art we have received in the history of this game.

Heartland joins such a magnificent repertoire. A fantastic piece of work exclusive to the Eternity Engine that pushes it to the max, bringing with it excellent effects that will blow your mind; enhanced particles, realistic geometry and even interactability. Each map is a beast in its own right, bringing a unique and cool touch that you won't find anywhere else. Mixing different visual themes that look like something out of a nightmare, you'll find areas so hellish that they rival the rust of the industry, reminding me of the visuals of Eraserhead. Like a contemporary nightmare come true, a world where demons are just another part of the danger. The combat, combined with an impeccable level of design, is as satisfying as it is insane. New weapons are added to your arsenal, ready to be put to the best use your mind can think of.

While the fact that it is exclusive to Eternity may seem somewhat detrimental to you, fear not, it is entirely worth downloading the source-port and playing it for this WAD alone. The options it brings, the incredible gameplay, the expansive, attractive maps and the simple artwork that skillsaw has created is one that everyone, everyone should try once in their lives. If you haven't, this is the best time. Heartland is an experience you will not forget.
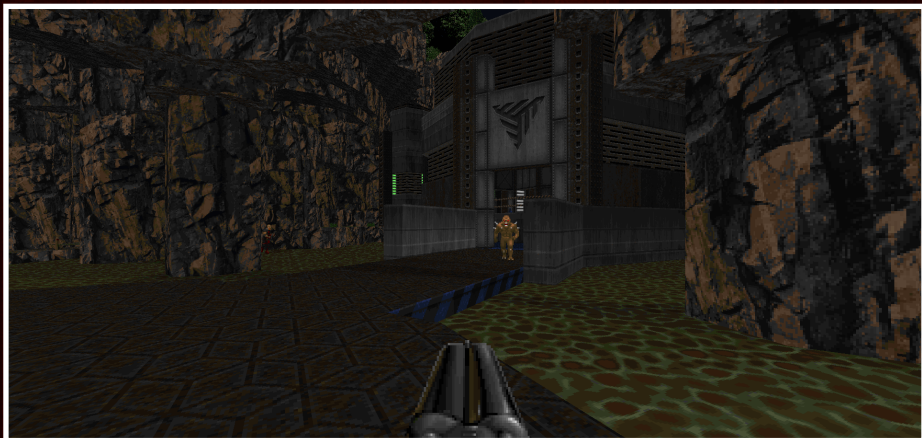
But don't let me be the one to tell you, let's hear it from the author!

WZ: Heartland is a beast that came out of nowhere! Since when have you been working on this WAD and how long did it take you?

Skillsaw: Thanks! I started working on Heartland formally in December of 2018, although MAP04 is salvaged from a 2017 attempt at an Eternity project that I had given up on. Release was in March 2021, so I guess that makes it a bit more than 2 years of formal development, (numerous) breaks included.

WZ: How was the development process?

S.: Heartland easily had the most challenging development process of any project that I've done for Doom. Given that my comfort zone is Boom format, I had a lot to learn making the switch to Eternity. And with the added power of advanced port features, I found that it's very easy for your ambitions to exceed your grasp, which resulted in a lot of painful realizations when I would discover that I committed to making a map much bigger than I really wanted to. I pushed myself through it but the latter maps were exhausting to finish, and as work on them drew to a close, I was very ready to see them done.

But thankfully I had a lot of help and moral support from the team. Altazimuth and Xaser joined pretty much right on the onset -- Xaser set up a git repository for the project so that we could collaborate more easily and got to work on the weapons mod component of the project, and Altazimuth helped us troubleshoot and fix lot of Eternity specific issues, both by making fixes to the Eternity Engine code as well as to the Heartland maps, scripts, and EDF. stewboy volunteered to contribute music in early/mid 2020 and dew joined a few months before release, once I felt like the

project was close to being shipped (I'm pretty shy about sharing my maps before I think they're nearly done). It always kind of stuns me that so many talented and smart people are willing to contribute so much to my projects. Heartland really wouldn't have been the same without everyone's help.

WZ: Undoubtedly, its most special feature is that it is an exclusive work for Eternity, where did this decision come from?

S.: Eternity is my regular driver for playing Doom - if a wad can be played in Eternity, that is where I play it, so I've always taken care to support Eternity in the past (such as EMENUS/EMAPINFO/ACS support in Ancient Aliens and Valiant). So, when I decided I wanted to make an advanced port project, Eternity was the obvious choice. Especially considering that Eternity supported all the things that were the most important for me in an advanced port -- linked portals, polyobjects, a definition language for things (EDF), ACS scripting, the UDMF format, and a focus primarily on software rendering. I recognized the possiblity that part of the playerbase may not be interested in installing another port, but I was going to make what I wanted to make regardless.

WZ: Your most recognizable works stand out for integrating new assets, sometimes weapons or monsters, is this one of your preferences when creating WADs?

S.: Yeah, I like when wads incorporate new monsters and weapons. Not that there's really anything wrong with the base game, but I feel like the extra spice from new monsters can make a wad stand out more in your memory, both for aesthetic reasons and for novel gameplay scenarios that you can create with new monsters.

Beyond just weapons and monsters, when I think about my favorite wads, most of them have a very strong sense of cross-map cohesion and unique themes, and this is largely accomplished through custom texture assets and fitting music.

WZ: What do you enjoy most about the art of creating maps?

S.: When I talk with other mappers, I know some who dislike monster placement, some who dislike doing nitpicky visual work, and some who find that they struggle with layouts, but honestly I enjoy all of this work pretty much equally, so for me, there's something special about the point in time where I being to see these things come together. When I make a map, I almost always struggle to start because the blank page is overwhelming, and it takes a long time and a lot of failure before I have something that actually resembles a modern Doom map. However, I almost always find that there's an inflection point where I see that the components of the map are beginning to come together, and the rest of the work feels very downhill from there. It's very satisfying to hit that point because I can finally let go of the, uh, existential dread and focus on getting things done.

WZ: The music created by Stewboy rocks! Did you let him create freely or was there some kind of cooperative creative process between the two of you?

S.: Yeah, the music is great! Stewboy is extremely talented. Before composing the music, he saw and played the maps (which had placeholder midis) so he knew exactly what the map was like, and also kind of what I wanted in terms of mood and energy from the music -- but he wrote the music independently with only a little bit of input from me (seriously -- I would just get in the way).

WZ: What are you most proud of about Heartland?

S.: Probably just the scale and ambition of the whole thing. I'm not sure I'll ever be able to make maps on the scale of MAP05-MAP07 ever again. Even though those were made (fairly) recently, I have no idea how I put myself in the headspace to actually grind through the mapping process, especially since it took weeks of work before I had anything remotely resembling a map in each case.

WZ: This is your first standalone project in which you make extensive use of OTEX, what is your opinion of the set and do you have plans to continue using it?

S.: OTEX is fantastic and extremely versatile. It's pretty incredible that so many different maps and themes have been created using OTEX as the primary texture resource. It's also become a bit ubiquitious, and because of that I think I'm less likely to use it as my primary texture palette in future projects, but I'm defintely going to continue to use it to supplement other things.

WZ: What is your favorite Heartland map?

S.: MAP05 - Titan of Industry. I think more than any other map in the set, it accomplished the goals I set out for Heartland...
1. Have gameplay that feels like a modern megawad, with cool setpieces, and effective usage of the new monsters and weapons.
2. Have a strong sense of place - the map is still doomy and abstract(ish), but it's also obvious it's a factory, and it makes sense how it's linked together, and it's permeated by a sense of abandonment and decay, which to me was something I really wanted
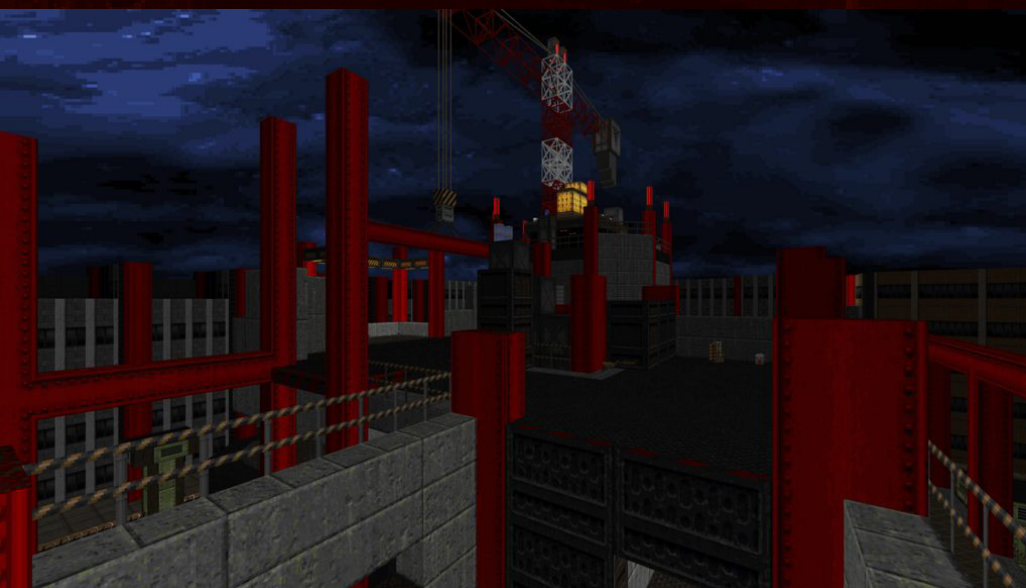3. Showcase Eternity - this is clearly a map that couldn't exist without linked portals, polyobjects, etc. The moving scaffold structure is something that sticks out in my mind here.

There are things in MAP05 that synthesize and encapsulate these three goals really well, I think - take the flamethrower section. It introduces the new weapon and how it plays in a thematic location (the factory furnace room). A lot of careful consideration was taken with the linked portal usage to emphasize the sense of place -- the furnace structure has smoketacks that extend vertically upwards into the rest of the map, onto and above the rooftop, through several layers of portals.

It's also the first map I ever made at such a huge scale -- which, of course, presented its own challenges -- but once it finally came together (which took forever) I was extremely pleased and proud.

WZ: If you had no limits, would you have added anything else? Anything special?

S.: There were plans for two more maps -- an abandoned mansion with an emphasis on weirdness and exploration (with some light puzzles) inspired by Resident Evil and Eternal Darkness, and a big multi-tiered

ruined cathedral map with a cemetery and catacombs, and an adjacent monastic structure -- these would have been placed between the factory exploration of MAP05 and the shaft descent in MAP06. I ran out of energy and decided to cut them. Since release I've wanted to make an abandoned amusement park map (which I think would have been an awesome secret map) but... eh. It's too late now.

WZ: Can we expect a sequel or any other similar project from you?

S.: I'm definitely not done making Doom wads, but a sequel to Heartland (direct or spiritual) is not happening in the near future.

WZ: Did you have any kind of inspiration or guidance for this project?

S.: Specific inspiration is kind of hard to pinpoint. Outside of the Doom community, I spent a lot of time looking at photos on urban exploration blogs, and I was also inspired by the representation of post-apocalyptic urban and industrial decay as presented in games like NieR: Automata.

In fact, MAP05 started as a direct homage to the factory in NieR: Automata (early on, while I was sharing some preliminary screenshots, Linguica even called me out on it in a discord conversation, so it must have been really obvious, though I think it's less so in the final map).

Within the Doom community, I learned a lot during my time spent collaborating with mappers like esselfortium, Tarnsman, Vader, Mechadon, and Xaser on BTSX in the early days, and I've always held the work of mappers like Erik Alm, AgentSpork, Joshy, Darkwave, and the AV team in really high regard and I'm sure that shows in obvious ways.

WZ: How do you see the future of Eternity Engine? Undoubtedly, your WAD contributed to bring a new perspective to the source-port.

S.: Time will tell. A lot of mappers have told me that they're interested in working on Eternity maps, so hopefully we'll see some more releases. There's also some cool stuff in progress on the engine side as well - including Aeon and a multithreaded renderer, but obviously all of these maps and port features are hobby projects -- so there's no ETA. But Eternity, in its current state, is an excellent port and there's no reason to shy away from using it for play or as a target port for your project if it's appealing to you.

WZ: And finally, how has been your experience with the community this year?

S.: Great as always! Most everyone was extremely warm and positive about Heartland and I really do appreciate that and take that to heart. I was actually bracing for a bit more controversy due to the whole Eternity exclusive thing - thankfully there was very little drama, and people were generally either willing to try it out, or if not, kept unconstructive complaints to themselves.

Beyond Heartland, I'm really happy to see the emergence of Doomtubers like MtPain27, decino, and others. The number of comments and subscribers they get kind of makes me wonder how big the Doom scene really is, beyond Doomworld and the few discords I frequent.

I'm also kind of stunned at the amount of quality wads that the Doom community is continuing to produce, and how many new faces seem to be getting involved in mapping and just playing and sharing feedback. As I write this, it's only May and the Cacowards committee already has one hell of a tough job ahead of them...
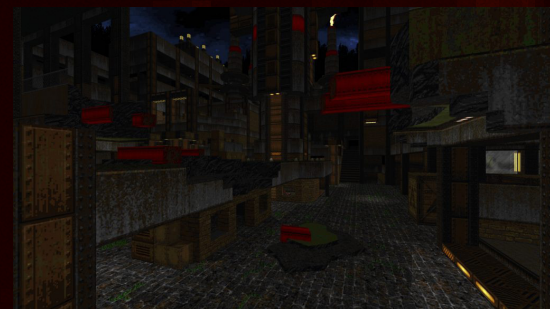
With this, I want to express my sincere gratitude towards skillsaw for being part of this interview, and once again, congratulations on the release!

For your great effort and contribution to this community, the Wadazine grants you the Master Seal of Approval!

DEATHMATCH MADNESS

CHAMPIONSHIP

A *multiplayer event* hosted and organized by the **Wadazine** community for everyone to join!

RECAP

2

DEATHMATCH MADNESS

A new multiplayer deathmatch event produced by the *Wadazine* and organized by me and *@Gaia74*. Each week we'll face off in glorious PVP blaze against each other, looking for glory in the arena while at the same time showing an honorable display of skills and respect. A fun event where blood shall be spilled and smiles shall be forged! *Kinda.*

· A new event each **Sunday**.

· Using **Zandronum**.

· New maps each week.

· Up to **16 players**.

· **30 frags** per map.

· **4 minutes** time limit.

· Sessions lasts for about **10 to 15 maps**, depending on the WAD.

· Deathmatch mods included.

· Player with the **highest frags** wins the event.

· A **leaderboard** to keep track of players and stats.

· An organized **championship** each month.

· And of course, a special article in each *Wadazine* issue summarizing all the events.

The WMD aims to be a fun and graceful event for all kinds of players that want to have a spin at the infamous Deathmatch game mode, one that pretty much cemented **Doom** popularity during the early 90s. Time to get back, back to the arena!

Have suggestions, tips, feedback or want to lend a hand? Please, say so! All help is welcome.

DEATHMATCH MADNESS CHAMPIONSHIP

Every last Sunday of the month, a special *Championship* is played among all players who wish to participate. This event follows the standard *FFA* rules, but with some modifications to accommodate the best players and raise the skill curve a bit. Players must sign days before so they can receive a password and join the *Championships*, this way ensuring participation and a kind of exclusivity to interested competitive players. For this, they must contact one of the event hosts, like me.

Championship Rules:

· **8 players** limit

· **50 frags** per map.

· **8 minutes** per map.

· Championship lasts **6 or more maps**, depending on the map set.

· Deathmatch mods may or may not be included.

· Player with the **highest frags** by the end of the session wins the Championship.

LEAGUE SYSTEM

Taking note from real ranking systems, the League system is a simplified, optional leaderboard that scores points based on a formula of kills plus wins. Because of a lack of an automated system, the League system is done by hand and is mostly optional to whoever wishes to participate on it, since close participation is required for better optimization.

The system is based on seasonal leagues that last for about 6 months, with some days of rest in between.

To calculate points, the system takes into account:

· Player **kills**.

· **Matches** won.

· **Championships** won.

LEAGUE SYSTEM

Each player kill scores 1 point, while won matches score 100 points and Championships score 500 points.

Example:

> Player 1 League Stats:
> **245** Total Kills | **9** Wins | 1 Championship
> **Total Score: 1,645** (245 + 900 + 500)

This way, the system keeps track of a player score while still retaining a simple yet easy to understand formula. Of course, this is not perfect, but it's a fun way to have a cemented league for the events.

DEATHMATCH MADNESS
RECAP

Wadazine Deathmatch Madness #5:
1st Championship TWANGO 1

S T A N D I N G S :

1st place: Xenaero

2nd place: Nexus_6

3rd place: Caze

Candles are lit, altars are prepared, weapons are cleaned and the sound of a shotgun reloading spreads through the bloody arena. Welcome to the death match, where the best players face each other in a violent battle to the death until the ultimate victory is achieved. This is the first Wadazin Deathmatch Madness championship and we welcome you, competitors.

DEATHMATCH MADNESS
RECAP

WDM #6: Fragfest V3

Hobomaster **WINNER**

Another Sunday means another Deathmatch Madness! More shotguns, more violence and more frags. This time we go inside the, appropriately named, Fragfest V3! A 18 fun, classic-style maps by Greenchil. The maps range from medium to small sizes and are designed to give as classic an image as possible with as modern and slick a layout as possible. The maps are fast, intense and made for good combat, so let's see what it's all about and celebrate DM!

WDM #7: 32in24-13 A Thanksgiving Without Burgers
Hobomaster **WINNER**

We return once again to the massacre. It may not have been this Sunday, but it will be this Monday! And this time we will review for the first time a saga/series as classic as recognizable. 32in24-13 A Thanksgiving Without Burgers is a megawad created by the YEDS team, where they set a 24 hour time limit to give a total of 32 complete maps, designed for DM around the theme of... fast food? So let's check out what's coming up here, and maybe share some pizza.

DEATHMATCH MADNESS
RECAP

WDM #8: Gothic DM
Endless **WINNER**

Better get your corpse painting ready and those Warhammer chants ready, we're going to the church, but the special kind of church, one where the shotgun is lord and slaying is the word. Come to Gothic DM, a divise masterpiece designed to give you the best visuals for 97' while at the same time, the best arenas for frag blasting all day long. And it's pretty gothic looking too!

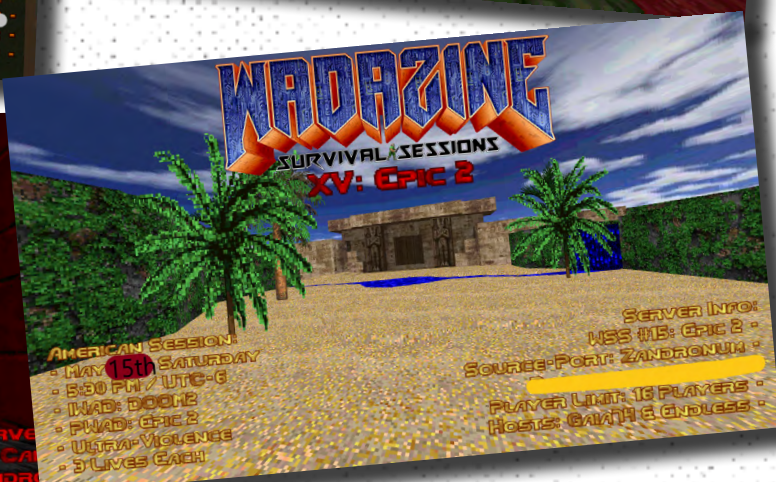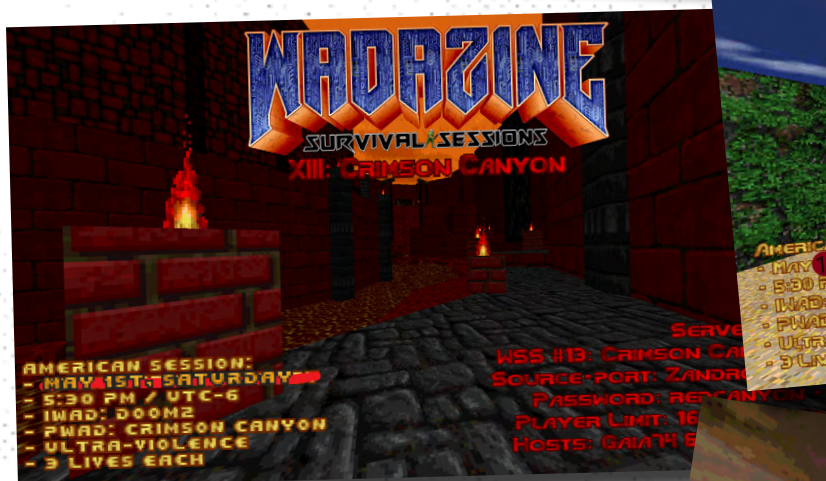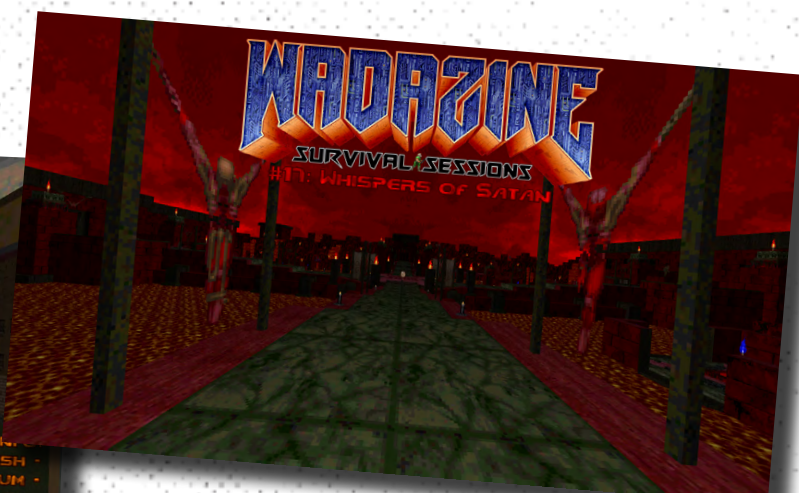### *WDM #9: Championship 2: 32in24-5*
NO WINNER! :(

Sadly, our 2nd championship had to be cancelled due to a lack of slots filling and time schedule problems. But worry not, we'll be back.

WADAZINE
SURVIVAL SESSIONS
RECAP 12-17

WADAZINE SURVIVAL SESSIONS — XIV: Vile Flesh

AMERICAN SESSION:
- MAY [1st], SATURDAY
- 5:30 PM / UTC-6
- IWAD: DOOM2
- PWAD: VILE FLESH
- ULTRA-VIOLENCE
- 3 LIVES EACH.

Server Info:
WSS #14: Vile Flesh
Source-Port: Zandronum
Player Limit: 16 Players
Hosts: Gaia74 & Endless

WADAZINE SURVIVAL SESSIONS — #17: Whispers of Satan

WADAZINE SURVIVAL SESSIONS — XIII: Crimson Canyon

AMERICAN SESSION:
- MAY 1ST, SATURDAY
- 5:30 PM / UTC-6
- IWAD: DOOM2
- PWAD: CRIMSON CANYON
- ULTRA-VIOLENCE
- 3 LIVES EACH

Server Info:
WSS #13: Crimson Canyon
Source-Port: Zandronum
Password: RedCanyon
Player Limit: 16
Hosts: Gaia74

WADAZINE SURVIVAL SESSIONS — XV: Epic 2

AMERICAN SESSION:
- MAY 15th, SATURDAY
- 5:30 PM / UTC-6
- IWAD: DOOM2
- PWAD: EPIC 2
- ULTRA-VIOLENCE
- 3 LIVES EACH

Server Info:
WSS #15: Epic 2
Source-Port: Zandronum
Player Limit: 16 Players
Hosts: Gaia74 & Endless

WADAZINE SURVIVAL SESSIONS — XII: Realm of Chaos

AMERICAN SESSION:
- APRIL 24TH SATURDAY
- 5:30 PM / UTC-6
- IWAD: DOOM2
- PWAD: REALM OF CHAOS
- ULTRA-VIOLENCE
- 3 LIVES EACH.

Server Info:
WSS #12: Realm of Chaos
Source-Port: Zandronum
Password: Chaoszine
Player Limits: 12 Players
Hosts: Gaia74 & Endless

WADAZINE SURVIVAL SESSIONS — #16 - Doom 2 In Name Only

WSS #12: Realm of Chaos

During the 90s, the fever of the PC's was DOS, and then came Windows, but between those systems lay a giant that ironically spent many years asleep in the field of video games. Macintosh was one of the most popular personal systems before the 2000s, and as expected the super fame of Doom ended up jumping to that platform. Introducing Realm of Chaos, a classic megawad created by Mac users and made specifically as a test to prove their skill and quality. Did they achieve their goal? Possibly not! But let's try it anyway.

WSS #13: Crimson Canyon

Crimson Canyon is a 2005 Cacoward-winning WAD known for combining great levels of hell under brutal combat with a dash of slaughter. With 12 levels in total, it shouldn't take too long, right? Well, that's what we're going to find out! Let's see if we don't break this thing in co-op.

WSS #14: Vile Flesh

This Saturday's adventure awaits us with a hidden gem that has gained some cult favor over the years. Vile Flesh is a 2004 one-man-megawad created by Gwyn Williams which also offers its own MIDI OST. With extensive and well done use of stock textures, Vile Flesh represents a great stage where modernism of design was combined with classic visual style, resulting in a great piece of work that we'll see how far we can survive.

WSS #15: Epic 2

Epic 2 needs no major introduction. A fantastic work set in deserted places and Egyptian architecture, creating a fantastic atmosphere of mystery, exploration and oriental horror. What we have here is one of the best WADs ever and it's time to attack it!

WSS #16: Doom 2 In Name Only

Have you ever wondered what would happen if Doom 2 maps were true to their titles instead of being so abstract and meaningless? Well look no further, here you have literal transcriptions of the titles to brand new maps that follow their description in such a way that we have a one of a kind remake. Barrels O' Fun? Checked. Icon of Sin? Checked. Gotcha!? Checked. You better be ready for a few hours of adventure in a unique remake. Time to see what it will bring!

WSS #17: Whispers of Satan

Woah, almost forgot about posting this! Welcome, today we're going to play a modern classic that hit the shelves back in 2009. Whispers of Satan is a fantastic 32 map megawad (with 4 ZDoom secret maps) that, as you might have guessed, has quite the satanic influence here and there. Gore, red bricks, lava, demons and decay, the aesthethic of hell has never looked so good! But does it play good? Come and find out!

NEWSTUFF ON
DOOMWORLD

NEWSTUFF SINCE APR. 17, 2021   RIP AND SHARE.

NIMBLE NEWSTUFF
MENTIONATIONS
EX

RE-Introducing:
Nimble Newstuff
Mentionations EX!

This was previously used on *issue #8*, but due to some changes behind the scenes, has become unused for a while. Now it's back, with a vengence!

Anyway, WADs will be grouped into one of four categories, listed below this paragraph. We hope that this will help you sort the many good ones from the ones best avoided. There will also be monthly awards, which will appear above whatever WAD has to earn them, as well as in a list every issue in this space.

The system is as follows:

Dispensable Paperbag - Any WADS that are either of low quality or are just extremely forgettable.

Serviceable Appetizer - May not be necessarily memorable but are still probably worth a play or two. Just don't expect stunning visuals or calibrated set piece battles (you may fight large mobs, but they don't feel polished).

Polarlizing Cult - Something that may not have traditional gameplay or otherwise anything approaching standard map design or presentation but are still usually worth a look.

Eminently Enjoyable - WADs that can't be called underrated but still stand out in the visual and gameplay aspects.

Evocative Enigma - WADs which stand out from the pack that are often underrated. Definitely worth your time.

The Omnipotents - The very best WADs released each month. Download them and put them in your 'must play soon' folder. By the Doom Masters' words, you are obligated to play them.

In every issue, 1-2 mods from green/red (or even orange!) award family may get a chance to have a proper, full-length review similar to the ones in WAD Corner. These reviews are done as a mean to further recognize outstanding work the author(s) have put in these mods.

Awards - There are different categories for the best wads of the month, probably on an intermittent basis for now. To give different wads a chance, there will be no more than one winner in each category.

Wad of the Month - The single best wad reviewed each month

Runners-up - The next best ones. There will be a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 3 chosen each month.

Most Visually Impressive - The wads with either the strongest or the most striking visual style.

Best Gameplay Mod - Best wads which modify gameplay in some form or fashion.

Best Miscellaneous WAD - The best of wads that are usually made for other **Doom** engine games **(Heretic, Hexen, Strife),** though TCs (*Blade of Agony,* for instance) and other indirectly-related **Doom** source port products may also be eligible. This is the one most likely to be intermittent.

Sweettoothed Brimstone by C3ntralPr0cessing

1ST RUNNER-UP

Fear in Your Memories by Ghost Player

Playable in GZDoom. Quite a surreal sort of map, Fear in Your Memories starts you out in an area filled with damaging lava pools, temple-like textures, lots of verticality, along with some strange black shadows that turn out to be floor textures. This later transitions into a canyon, a series of cube-shaped rooms in a dungeon-type environment, and finally, something like a Wolfenstein building which shortly transition into a frickin' castle straight out of Minecraft! When you get to the massive Heretic-inspired mural, you finally transport into the final area, a pillared arena with tons of huge fight energy.

The combat itself is very satisfying and the melodic music (an X-Japan track titled "Phantom of Guilt", reportedly in the credits either at the beginning or end) very much reflects that. Even though the intensity is somewhat limited when compared to similar maps such as Lullaby, I think some people might prefer it. Things are quite difficult starting out as you're forced to contend against hitscanners and a healthy number of Imps with limited firepower and challenging terrain. Things get easier after you clear this location, as while the encounters ramp up, so do the weapons and weapon supplies. Don't feel afraid to let loose because you'll always have enough, like the average skillsaw map. The difficulty

ramps up noticeably when you enter the main hall of the Minecraft castle and find yourself forced to contend with many dangerous situations. The pits in the floor that'll dump you into a pool of lava you can thankfully escape from make things more hazardous. I'm pretty sure you may need an Arch-vile jump to reach the secret Megasphere in this room, but it didn't seem worth finding out, especially as I didn't find out how to access the other nearby secret. The final fight presents you with an Invulnerbility Sphere right away but you can't access it, and when the pillar it's on finally lowers, you're advised to wait until the 3 or 4 Arch-viles appear in order to have a limited amount of trouble disposing of them. Very explosive and satisfying though.

Personally, this earns a top recommendation, but there are a couple of little irritations (the lava pools below the Minecraft throne room, one spot to the left of a blue torch before you reach the area with the round slime falls on the sides that you can't escape from, and the shadow textures) that I know some people may not like.

2ND RUNNER-UP

Fragor Portum by RivitheWarlock

A project originally released in February, the final version of this was released not too long ago, so I thought I'd review it. If I were to describe this wads' architecture in one sentence it

would be abstract but with a strong sense of place regardless of what map you are playing. The first map is probably the most generic but you start at your bed because of course you do. No music plays until you hit the first switch and are confronted with the first monsters, a very nice touch! One of the first things you'll notice is that your pistol fire considerably faster now (this also carries over to the chaingun). The opening is thus much less tedious than it could have been.

From this location, you then move on to a research laboratory (containing a cold storage room and a green-house-ish hall among other locations) a subway train, a frickin' shopping mall with some potions in the back of what I'm convinced has to be a music/bookstore that sells milk (ok, I made that up, sheesh), and finally, the main base.

Difficulty edges up little by little. Things never quite feel too easy. Then the last map takes a screeching turn into slaughter territory with "slaughter" being a fitting adjective to describe the vast majority of fights. The central room battle is relatively easy despite the presence of several Arch-viles, but later, this map SERIOUSLY brings on the pain. One area is blatantly Stardust-inspired, with purple textures and some seriously dickishly-placed enemies that will completely wreck you if you don't use the pillars for cover. You can collect the six keys in any order, though you should probably pick a route if you want to retain a decent amount of ammo. Case in point, the red key room with Revenants in each of the eight test-tubesque spheres is stupidly hard to begin with, but you may want to leave some of them alive when you hit the switch in this room because a Cyberdemon will be revealed along with the red key when you press it. Definitely could have been better balanced. The yellow key outdoor storage area was just annoying because there was far too much peekaboo for this kind of map. My favorite fight was probably the one where you grab the (blue keycard?) on Mars (yeah, it's one of

Fear in Your Memories by Ghost Player

Sweettoothed Brimstone by C3ntralPr0cessing

thank god. Very thematic, though not all that much like a real-world location. Those crimson rock pillars are pretty nice though, as well as the relatively present water and the red stuff that's probably warmer water? The rows of pillars on some of the sides give this spot the appearance of a Roman or Greek public bath. Combat at the beginning is quite intense, to the point that half of the map's 68 monsters are in this room The Arch-vile that appears when you pick up the Blue Key is quite nastily-placed.

those maps) and end up fighting off a nasty ambush involving Arch-viles that almost certainly WILL knock you back onto the nearby platform containing the Megasphere! Well played, Finally, use all six keys and lower the platform with the BFG and get ready to use it! Though you might need some luck here because you'll likely be running low on plasma ammo at this point, and the only refills are in the massive closets that just opened up, which also contain a Megasphere each. Good luck.

That being said, the synthesis of game play, map design, and soundtrack combine to form a brew that hardly ever got tiring, barring some of the more claustrophobic moments of the last map. There are probably a few right ways to approach that Cyberdemon I mentioned., but I'm just here to review, not master every damn map that gets released.

central pool with coffin-shaped flesh platforms that should probably frustrate you, though no more than anything else in this map. Combat is not exactly a cakewalk with the action taking place for the most part in small, constricted spaces. It's cool how you get the perfect rocket opportunity after you return to the central room after acquiring the red key. The last fight is fairly heart-pounding despite the small monster count. Don't feel afraid to be ruthless and hope the Arch-vile doesn't get through the door. An excellent first effort overall.

Hot Spring
by Orcsbreath

Vanilla compatible. Short, but hard map by Orcsbreath, creator of the somewhat infamous Arcane Archives from last month. Combat isn't all that claustrophobic (comparatively) here,

Sweettoothed Brimstone
by C3ntralPr0cessing

GZDoom compatible. C3ntralProcessing brings us yet another difficult map with a striking visual theme, though ammo is somewhat more present (still should be careful where you use your plasma though). This time, it's a map that draws inspiration from Plutonia's Slayer and thus, Circle of Death by proxy (there's a Simpsons episode with bikers I think of for some reason when I see that name). However, instead of a circle, it's a honeycomb shape, complete with a bright yellow color scheme being used for the 'lava'. It makes about as much sense as the 'dessert' maps Timothy Brown makes and plays, but don't worry, the combat is not circle-strafing bullshit. Be quick at the beginning though, as there are Manicubi on the central platform you start on. Things get quite a bit harder,

Ungodly Dwellings
by Paul814

Limit removing but probably Vanilla-compatible because only Doom II textures are used, first map, it's actually quite good. Some interesting use of teleport textures as the ceiling above the crates in the second room. This map is extremely linear, featuring only one instance of required backtracking when you find the red key. Start out tech-basish, but quickly becomes something about as hellish as you can get in a non-natural environment. There are some cool blood cracks in the floor in the 3rd room, and a large

Hot Spring by Orcsbreath

Luminous Glow by The Doomer Boards

due to increasing monsters and the hazardous moat you have to navigate around and through, but compared to Hate Flow or something, things felt more manageable (though I actually played through this on UV, so there were some stupid deaths).

MOST VISUALLY IMPRESSIVE

Luminous Glow by The Doomer Boards

Plays in limit-removing ports, though vanilla might be possible - The 34th edition of the DBP (40oz, the leader for this month wants to get away from the numerical designations), Luminous Glow features a color scheme best described as Persian lime, with various shades of yellowish-green contrasting with Hexen/Heretic switches in some maps and very dark grey and black textures rounding everything out, one of them being a black retexturing of the lava into something non-toxic(it's probably blood).

The first map, designed by vakiriforce, is actually a strong showcase of the visual themes. Slime pillars shooting out

of the either. A hallway with flowing flesh-walls and a quasi portal at the end which leads to a key surrounded by stairs seemingly nowhere.

Combat is sort of all over the place, tbf. Walterconfetti's contribution, a surreal cavern occupying the #03 slot, was quite easy, due to the presence large rooms not exactly filled with enemies. Even the Spider Mastermind you encounter in the level isn't all that threatening if you're good at side-strafing. Joe-ilya's maps are more challenging but don't throw waves of enemies at you, whilst the ones that have foods in their names love their slaughter and have probably the hardest maps if you're pistol-starting every map (not recommended for Map 08 because a BFG would make the last swarm much less tedious). The Egg Splice specifically seems determined to completely destroy the player. The Arch-vile in the map will be behind some resurrected barons if you don't feel like risking annihilation completely so prepare for much annoyance. Matador turns out yet another strongly thematic map with Swamp Thing which falls in the middle, both in placement and difficulty, with the prolific amounts of rockets and

the high emphasis on fun factor reminiscent of Map 05 from 180 Minutes Pour Vivre. Joe-ilya's last contribution has a Cyberdemon hassling you for much of the map, with the opportunity to telefrag him coming only at the very end. The soundtrack picked is fantastic and fits the surreal, intense nature of the maps perfectly. Would you guess that Map 02's music came from the unused section of a Flintstones game for SNES? I sure didn't, but it works so well here.

Malacoda's Lair by Quaken

Limit-removing, but the skies will display best in GZDoom. Mid-range sort of map very much wood-brown, with a clear inspiration from Dr. Sleep maps if the skybox doesn't give it away, though unlike certain ones (Vesperas, Minos, coughcough) I never died, though I came very close whenever an Arch-vile appeared. Unfortunately, they were able to resurrect several enemies before I discovered them. Running low on ammo, I temporarily retreated.

The combat in this map is quite challenging, all the same. A secret illumi-

nated by some nearby light not too far from the start on the right will lead you to some combat armor and a box of shells will give you some cushion. Because shotgun ammo early on is quite tight. The Revenant count is also quite heavy, though the positioning isn't BS and its easy enough to retreat.

The last fight is with several nasty enemies, including an Arch-vile, a Pain Elemental and a Cyberdemon. Ducking around the pillars and letting the infight process take its course is easy enough though, and you can probably finish this without dying if you're experienced.

Cardinal Sin
by smeghammer

Single Heretic map tested in GZDoom with some interesting outdoor garden setpieces but is an otherwise architecturally unremarkable map. It's kind of cool how you're on a lake though. The stairs might as well be never-ending though. And while the secret teleporter that takes you to a Bag of Holding might kill you the first time due to the Nitrogolem behind you, there's so much health elsewhere that it'll be tough to die anywhere else. I'm not sure why there wasn't a Tome of Power for the garden with the Maulotaur, because the Maulotaur is such a horrible grindy enemy. That was the only serious weak spor though.

Underground Toxicity
by xscavengerwolfx

Boom-compatible An essentially abstract underground map that regardless has some neat touches, particularly the slime detailing and the star-shaped textures you see occasionally on the floors and the ceilings. There are a couple of cool ambushes, like the one near the end where you're surrounded by Barons/Knights and Revenants that'll force some quick ac-

tion. Unfortunately, this still isn't fixed to an appreciable degree because you can't get back after killing all the enemies in a particular room.

The Map
by lokbustam257

A long city street with a lots of monsters and little cover. Really quite bland, though still entertaining for a bit if you really like difficult slaughter maps.

Short Maps for Short People by Roofi (w/Datacore)

Disintegration
by Scorpio

Plays in GZDoom. Fairly short military base wad requiring the OTEX texture wad. The music track has that rocking-arena Sonic Mayhem feel to it. You're generally good just peeking around corners because of how the map's set up. Ammo gets perhaps too scarce near the end, to the extent you should only use a couple of rockets on the Revenant in the water pool room you find the rocket launcher. At least if you want to have enough ammo left for the Mastermind and Arachnotron guardians in the final room. The Archviles you see in the tower not far from the exit unfortunately have to be killed with the Super Shotgun, though try to do it when there aren't any Cacodemons near them.

Short Maps for Short People
by Roofi (w/Datacore)

Vanilla-compatible. Short Maps for Short People was an idea initially con-

ceived by French mapper Datacore in 2017 of maps literally lasting noi longer than a coffee break.. Almost immediately, he started scaling back his involvement and the slack was largely picked up by rising star Roofi. In this collection, Roofi authored all but one of the maps(06, actually has some nice detailing, and I'd say it was a shame, but the only memorable map Datacore was instrumental in was 06, and 23 doesn't count because that was 100 percent because of Wilou), plus a secret one I'm not sure how to access through prboom+ (can't exactly idclev33) but seems to be a map Datacore created in 2019 uploaded separately through idgames. Despite many maps being quite small and containing small amounts of enemies (Map 07 being a glorious exception) Roofi institutes his talent for thematics to create maps that benefit greatly from small touches. Map 01 starts you ae your bed, another early map starts you in a boat, while another one starts you at a town square. At other times, they work with the original re-ordered Bobby Prince music to help evoke a certain mood, like in Map 07 (first Arch-vile map!) with a title that roughly translated to "Depressed Sundays". Sometimes, it'll just be some abstract concept often ironically expressed in the name, like Map 15

The extremely short construction time leaves the maps with some rather..... interesting characteristics. For one, the starting location is often tagged as a

secret. For another, Roofi will occasionally absolutely overload you with supplies when they are certainly not needed. There are a fair share of more abstract ones as well, but while some of them fall flat, they mostly hit(Map 28). Roofi increasingly uses his penchant for Arch-viles the more things progress, but he never intentionally deprives you of resources. Only occasionally felt frustrated, like Map 15 where you have to fight a massive mob of Hell Knights in a tiny circular room if you don't want to be murdered by Revenants that are too far away to hit and can't even be accessed because constructing a medium-sized outdoor map like this required the sort of time that otherwise results in errors such as the rocket-filled platform not raising at any point. I guess this might by among the harder maps, but.... Map 32 is titled "Ramadan 2021" and has a clear Egyptian theme. While Roofi is probably intentionally steamrolling cultural sensitivity by implying you're a jihadist yourself, he probably doesn't intend that anyone take it seriously. yourself, he probably doesn't intend that anyone take it seriously. I think you could set that within the general cultural context of France's relationship with Islam, but that's all I'll say there (I don't wanna make accusations!).

Fire Caves
by Kor

Long-time mapper Kor recently returned. Among his recent works is this pair of Heretic maps. It definitely feels like something done by someone with experience. There's a cool grey floor texture in one location I though might be a damage floor at first but it was kinds nice. These replace E2M1 and E2M2 so don't be surprised to find these maps take place in a volcanic locale. The second map has a cool structure in which a path you open later will loop back to the starting location. Somewhat pointless perhaps, but it's still a decent way to get your Heretic fix.

Bloodbath
by Dunn & Dunn

Boom-compatible. Keagan Dunn is a recent convert to Doom who I can remember commenting in MtPain27 videos that I just recently found out was bit by the mapping bug early. His first wad set, First Blood was finally released on idgames in late February after the first version was released in October. But we're going to be reviewing his successor set today, Bloodbath. 7 Boom-compatible maps with striking hellish visuals, several pushed-through beginnings reminiscent of some going Down maps. containing a surprising amount of variety, and some rather annoying combat in spots. Map 03 drives this home with an outdoor Manicubi trap, an outside area with a BFG you have to open a monster closet with an Arch-vile and a large meatshield in front to escape. The 6th map is truly the magnum opus of the set, a 1400+ monstrosity with architecture clearly drawing inspiration from dannebubinga and ribbiks, Keagan really bares it all here. At this point, he definitely seems like he'll be a consistent above-average mapper. Whether he'll end up talked about in the same breath as bridgeburner56 remains to be seen, or if he'll end up being known mainly for his community works like Danlex (ok, maybe Lullaby might be a game-changer). First Blood was more akin to traditional Doom, whereas this has a clear modernist, heavily slaughter-inspired MO, so it's probably too soon to tell, but we will seem soon enough, be assured.

Techbase 1
by tuturbo1991

Boom-compatible. Surprisingly good for a first map. Texturally, there really isn't anything to write home about, but it's pretty cool how the final area seems to be a completely corrupted underground area, complete with a couple of Barons and a Hell Knight honor guard. It's pretty cool how you can quickly return to the start after getting the red key, but be careful, there will be some opposition. It was pretty annoying how there was seemingly no-radiation suit for the underground slime river, but I ended up handling things ok. Let's hope you've found the plasma rifle by that stage though.

Stonegate
by AustroDoomer

Compatible with ZDoom and replaces Maps 02 and 03. Austro Doomer brings us this two-map set, complete with some custom textures that reference things you'd have to be in the know about. Why are there computer terminals saying Gloom? Why are there red lettering spelling out "Hummi" over the entrances of some of the buildings you emerge from? Doesn't really matter. Austro Doomer does a nice job of using a variety of Doom II techbase textures in a largely outdoor setting. A fun sort of setting to explore, with a Megasphere secret hidden cunningly in a orange-lined elevator shaft you need to enter to progress, with other secrets requiring the use of some judicious straferun-

Techbase 1 by tuturbo1991

ning. The use of related blue textures in the second map is conservative but bery nice, Watch out for chaingunners surrounding the opening courtyards of the maps. though. It's not quite the tight placement of Plutonia, but you learn to watch out though.

Despite AustroDoomer's fears, it's far from impossible to complete. Though there is a an area surrounding a en-closure in the second map you can fall into and not be able to escape if you have trouble distinguishing cer-tain shades of grey that let you know you're next to a lift.

I think the idea of this being "impos-sible" probably is related to Austro Doomer's judicious use of Red Ma-rine Chaingunners in the last section of Map 02. Their health probably falls somewhere between a Demon and a Revenant, but their gun packs a huge wallop that can take off 30 per suc-cessful hit. You might have some trou-ble with their placement near the exit, but doors and corners kid. And some fortunate RNG as well, I guess, but you don't really need that if you're a skilled player. There is an Invulnerbility Sphere at one corner of the room that you can possibly grab if you're obser-vant if you get impatient, but you do have to exert some effort for it.

Overall, this was good, even if you might find the texture use slightly inco-herent in spots. The encounters could probably be a little more polished but they were by and large fun and that's all that counts.

Wayward Depot
by Exit243

Boom-compatible A map badly in need of refurbishing, Wayward Depot has the usual newbie mishmash of bor-ing textures that don't slowly blend to-gether to any degree. Too many long, grey tunnels where there's basically nothing but occasional secrets. In in its favor, the combat's pretty good. I es-pecially liked the double Arch-vile trap in the blue key courtyard.

Quick Buck by Luleta

Quick Buck
by Luleta

Vanilla-compatible (supposedly) Oh man. This one won't take long for the most part, but there are tons of nasty traps and a few attempts early on to push your buttons before you find the super shotgun and no longer have the same reason to be bothered by the sight of Revenants and Manicubi. Be very afraid when you find the rocket launcher though, especially if you ha-ven't found out how to open the way to the secret plasma rifle. I was quite lucky to succeed in the megasphere fight after 8-10 times, partly because of the Arch-viles in the closed-off al-coves near the entrance throwing me to the clear other end of the room and partly due to some stupidly lucky RNG. Picture a relatively small room with some crates and Cacodemons coming through the windows to dis-tract you, all while keeping out of the way of the above-mentioned Arch-viles as well as the massive en-emy wave parked in front of the me-gasphere and you'll start to picture just how difficult this fight can be.

If you find the plasma rifle though, things will be somewhat easier, but I never did, and you don't get many cells at any rate. There are plenty of more explosive and sadistic fights, such as a pair of Arch-viles near the entrance that keep resurrecting the chaingunners you killed not too long after starting, but you'll have plenty of rockets to handle them if you're ruth-less.

Snake Game
by jval

Playable in Delphi Doom. Just a simple snake game. Nice Doom-ish midi that fits what the author is going for but it gets boring kind of quickly.

Production Line
by Orcsbreath

Short, but challenging map. Taking in-fluences from both the Focus and the Crusher, Production Line throws lots of enemies at you almost from the begin-ning. There aren't too many heavies, but they are used well, with a pair of Pain Elementals floating around in the lava-filled room before the exit ac-companying the Imps also scattered around. The Focus homage room will be quite tricky if you're an aggressive player.

School
by nrgrth

Playable in GZDoom with Brutal Doom also required to display the textures properly (and honestly, Brutal Doom DOES do apocalyptic settings fanfas-tically). A semi-abstract map with just enough Doomcute textures to warrant its name, School is a decent map to explore, even if the combat somewhat leaves something to be desired. With the resources available, more Imps would have been a better bet than the Hell Knights. Still, this map shows good commitment to its theme.

Bite Sized Threat

Mod that reduces enemy health to 25 percent but also reduces ammo pickups and storage to 25 percent as well. It works exactly as advertised! Revenants lose much of their annoying character other than in large numbers for one. Fair warning though: it may be a bad idea to play with maps that are stingy with ammo to begin with for obvious reasons, or in maps that like to pack in 300+ monsters in a single room. However, infighting will also last far less longer, so that may not matter apart from cases where you're SEVERELY starved. Sorry I can't say more, but it's something you should try out if you think fights tend to drag out too long.

Archi-tek
by romsu89

GZDoom compatible. 3 large maps, essentially covering the journey from techbase, earth, and hell in 3 large maps (the last 2 being very large, possibly causing lag in spots). First map is very atmospheric, emphasized by the Deus Ex UNATCO island music. There are some seriously nice touches when you pick up important items. On at least 2 occasions, red cracks appear in the floor when you're about to be ambushed. This map isn't too bad, but the next two are much harder, though it really only gets slaughter-y in spots.

Archi-tek by romsu89

Starlite
by rd.

Doomworld moderator and host of the sometime-DW Miniwad club rd turns in this beautiful effort you'll instantly know what you're in for when you see the title, mostly thanks to ribbiks I'd say. While large numbers of enemies aren't thrown at you right away, your confrontation by commandos and Arachnotrons almost from the jump is enough to convey the general hostility of the map. Progression is rather unclear at first, but you'll slowly work your way around the surrounding mountains. While there are a decent amount of enemies to begin with, the vast majority of them come in the form of teleport ambushes. Don't miss the yellow key please. While it may open the way to probably the toughest ambush in the map, the last one will be close to completely impossible if you don't have access to a BFG, if because of the vast Cacodemon swarm which makes up part of the attacking swarm if no other reason. The 4 Cyberdemons at the end should be weakened by infighting enough to where taking them shouldn't be too much trouble, even if you aren't completely overloaded with cell ammo. You get a decent amount megasphere, so it's okay, even if the infamous blue-red color gets used in the last area, but to generally appealing effect. The end of the map has you gazing at some generic Doom town, and really, what else can you ask for.

Evil
by elio.exe

Elio.exe begins their description in the thread with a fake Catholic confession, which actually seems appropriate as this is a Mt.Pain tribute! I do wish some people would figure out that "Into the Beast's Belly" isn't really a fitting track for the map. Anyways, if you were stupidly annoyed by Drake O'Brien's constant overscaling and bits of random self-indulgence, worry not because this map fixes ALL those flaws, while still guaranteed to cause you pain! Shotgun guys always seem to be hiding in red rooms on the sides, there's one hallway that has "Disaster Area" at the end, and the final area is an outdoor arena clearly patterned after the corresponding region in Mt. Pain, only nowhere near as large. Other than the fact that the rocket supply could have been a touch more generous, this was pretty good!

The Chemical Potential
by CarboxylicAcids

An obviously Stardate-inspired three-map miniwad, The Chemical Potential largely proves worthy of its inspiration. The first map is packed to the wall with enemies in the very first room. Fortunately, there are weapons directly in front and to the right of you. Unfortunately, they're guarded by a contingent of zombiemen you'll have to weave around. It's especially strange as the two other starts are nowhere near as intense. As a rule, I don't really like to play ribbiks and his ilk completely unmodified, so I just used the Doomgal's companion mod and saved my sanity. Perhaps I should have tried saving a little more often. Let's just say I'm more a fan of stuff by Nefelibeta, along with Dunn & Dunn. That doesn't mean it isn't worth playing if you're a slaughter fan of any sort because I believe it is. You just might want to dial down the difficulty.

E1M4 remake
by GoatLord

A sort of reimagining of E1M4 in Doom II, only greatly expanded and

with increased creepier ambience, thanks to the frequency of corridors both completely darkened and shadowed. Other than a few of the larger rooms bearing similarity to the most recognizable ones from the original, the structure is entirely different. The path to gain the secret Supercharge in that one window in the open-air room is much longer but sitting in a location that appears to earn the map's original Command Center title. The central area you're familiar with is only revealed after a hitting a switch or two in a remote station containing a Hell Knight, and you might well find yourself in the central building before finding it, which has zero resemblance to the darkened and barrel-filled Imp ambush of the original.

E1M4 remake by GoatLord

Thankfully, despite the fact you're resource-deprived at the beginning, the tougher monsters don't appear in larger numbers, so this isn't a terribly difficult map for the most part. I guess it doesn't quite contain the combat intensity of a Cannonball map, but then, how many Doom-based or inspired maps actually do? The fight with Revenants in the surrounding cages before the exit room is probably the most annoying, and the hardest in any case.

The secrets all feel quite satisfying to discover, as they often contain unique architecture and things you wouldn't see normally. There's this not- remote one accessed by a hidden elevator with shiny red pillars that contains a few stimpacks and a decently danger-

ous challenge. There's a rather remote blue door which allows you to pick up the plasma rifle much earlier than you would otherwise. Finally, there's an alcove with a BFG not far from the Supercharge secret mentioned above, though you won't get much effective use out of it, save with the opposition in the exit room.

Omniarch's Slag Heap
by Omniarch

A collection of Omniarch's non-community maps that were never quite finished up because of rampant perfectionism, these maps contain a surprising consistency. There's a mishmash of similar techbase textures bearing some similarity to Doom Zero until it transitions into a more temple-like look by Map 04. The tougher monsters are used rather conservatively. You're under fire from the very beginning. And there's always combat armor not too far from wherever you start that you should be able to acquire without sustaining too much damage if you're quick and ruthless as you can. Esecially as the chaingun and pistol variants are the speeded-up ones I believe were originally in Rowdy Rudy's. Expect to have low health for the first few minutes of gameplay though. And you also forcefully pistol-start each map as well because Omniarch hadn't really been thinking of making these maps a megawad and probably didn't want to spend the time adjusting the ammo balance. Map 05 comes close

to downright unfair as a claustrophobic arena-type map that teleports in 3 and possibly 4 arch-viles towards the end that you're somehow expected to know the location of beforehand in order to have pretty much any chance at all. The next few ones are much fairer. Despite Map 08 (like Map 06), containing a Cyberdemon, it's arguably one of the most unique of the set, taking place entirely in a large vine maze not exactly dissimilar in structure from the other maps, but decently fun to explore.

Eggboy's 2 maps
by Eggboy

Short, brutal, claustrophobic, and a resource saver. I believe Eggboy is a frequent community contributor, but in any case, you can't get bored with these maps. Turn the difficulty down if you must (ITYTD has been amusingly retitled Killiterate) because you're never gonna feel completely safe, as the dark green skybox that I known I've seen somewhere else underscores). The first map sports some heavy techbase aesthetics with the fence at the edge giving Scythe Map 01 vibes. Ammo is incredibly tight, but things will be fine if you remain cool under pressure. Once you grab the rocket launcher, you'll have to deal with a nasty Revenant ambush with little room to maneuver around. Second map starts out going to hit a switch which lowers a Super shotgun but also causes Revenant pairs to teleport in on each side, along with an Arch-vile. And things only get worst from there. Entering the next area, you're faced with large numbers of monsters without nowhere near the ammo to handle them. Further exploration will end up unleashing a Cyberdemon and opening up a central courtyard that hopefully, you'll be able to rush in and grab the rocket launcher when the enemy ranks have thinned out somewhat, along with the plasma rifle. The side area with the zombiemen surrounded by the barrels was a nice spot. You're going to have a seriously hard time getting the blue key because you don't exactly have lots of shotgun ammo to spare. The platform puzzle to get the red key is beyond stupid. Final-

ly, once you've got that, deal with the rest of the enemies the best you can. Killing the Cyberdemon is tedious, but hopefully, he's weakened by Arch-vile and Revenant attacks. Finally, exit and prepare to be spit in the face one more time as you suffer instant death.

Pump Station by Stocki

Boom-compatible and possibly limit-removing as well. Early map with a beginning best described as hitscanner hell, you're initially equipped with scant weaponry to handle the monsters. You can eventually pick up a Super shotgun from a somewhat obscure area in the early part of the map and a chaingun not too long after pressing the yellow switch, but you've got to kill a pair of Revenants with your shotgun in the meantime. Eventually, the combat settles into a groove and you

rock and slime-filled area, which contains a couple of Arachnotrons and a Chaingunner you should have enough rocket ammo for. It's pretty cool how when you see a new area through a window, you know it won't be long until you're able to access said area. A good coffee break map, though not one you can be too reckless in, which it turns out, I hardly am, in any way.

The Hate Flow by Lord Entr0py

Let the hate flow through you..... This Perfect Hatred homage gives you nothing but hate and hate you shall return back 5 fold. Well, assuming that there was more ammo anyway. You'll have enough as a rule to handle challenges, but I felt things were coming too close for comfort. I took Lord Entr0py's suggestion to play on HMP and it (mostly) felt adequately challenging.

est fight so far comes when you reach the platform with teleporters which will take you to their respective positions. Boxed in by a massive hoard of Revenants, Hell Knights, and Barons of Hell, you'll have little choice but to keep moving through the teleporters, not worrying much if you drop into the acidic drink below because there are nearby teleporters that'll take you back to the platforms you were at. After this, a switch raises some platforms that'll create a path from the beginning where most of the Imps that are probably dead you saw at the start. Unfortunately, you'll also be greeted by a pack of Hell Knights that surprise, surprise, you simply don't have the plasma ammo for. Continue forward, shoot the Manicubi that are now within shotgun distance, and run into the Cyberdemon that you saw earlier, along with a whole other heap of enemies. After this, it's not much longer before

Pump Station by Stocki

find yourself in a map with some fairly cool secret, along with some pointless subterranean maze area that happens to contain a Supercharge. The harder monsters are never overloaded, but you end up facing off against 2 Arch-viles at roughly the same time. They aren't too difficult, but sort of serve to curb any desire you may have to charge into the final brown-

What seems a fairly average homage at first quickly turns deadly the first time you teleport back to the start and encounter an Imp ambush. Don't worry too much about them because you now have Manicubi firing at you from a stupidly long distance. You deal with Barons and Hell Knights with little room to maneuver, lest you fall into the poisonous drink below. The nasti-

you acquire the BFG and open the final hallway which leads to the exit. The circular stairway is hard to move through, due to the shape and small objects impeding your movement. Good luck!

Much as I like Perfect Hatred, I can't say I really enjoy maps that do the same thing but harder (see Chris Lutz' The Dying End for another example

of what I mean). It has a decent challenge, even on HMP, but much of it comes from your limited tactical options. Finally, the cat Palpatine Easter egg is funny and cute, and if you disagree, you're a terrible person (also, you may be mad you missed the reference).

Stimulants
by Breezeep

Justin "Breezeep" Kelly has contributed to a number of community projects for a while now, most notably Akeldama. Here's a solo outing of 5 challenging, yet somehow, distinctive speedmaps. One map is in a brown temple sort of location. Another is in an urban area. The rest can be thought of as largely outdoor and incredibly abstract tech-base textures.

All the same, Justin does bring on the pain rather severely with a variety of interesting challenges. You're confronted by a massive Revenant mob almost immediately after starting Map 04 and you'll find yourself having to scramble for some rockets. In Map 02, you're forced to punch TWO Arch-viles at once, and also a Revenant pair. in an incredible display of sadism, at least if you pistol start (these enemy pairs ARE triggered by different linedefs if you're having trouble). Map 03 has some cool (and annoying of course) placement of Revenants and Chaingunners that really force you to work out a decent strategy.

The main problem, as Justin acknowledged in the Doomworld thread, are some balancing issues. Map 05 has seemingly no rockets in sight and thusly, proves a little bit more annoying than it has to be (like taking on a dozen Revenants in a rather tight space sucks no matter how you slice it). Despite the fact that all the maps are certainly possible from a pistol start, that doesn't mean you can always find adequate weaponry in every map, so you might be better off playing continuously to minimize the annoyance.

UAC Whacky Base
by Opercot

Plays in GZDoom. Now this is the kind of WAD that divides people! See, there are a number of times where you'll enter rooms and be teleported mysteriously away to another one. Thankfully, revisiting the teleporter location will not teleport you a second time. Thankfully, you're provides with enough ammo that veterans should be able to handle this. I died twice in the room with the Pain Elemental/Arch-vile combo but otherwise was able to survive quite handily. The combat puzzles are all pretty fun and I never really felt annoyed. One person complained about the jumping required in one spot (it's in a very dark room with a switch at the end) but this doesn't last too long and you're walking much of the way). You are perhaps a little bit overwhelmed with supplies. At the same time, weapon balancing, and particularly rocket ammo, could use a little bit of work, and the last main combat at the end (Two Spider-Masterminds, Two Cyberdemons, a moderately-sized swarm of Cacodemons and possibly some other assorted trash not worth mentioning) feels needlessly tedious without a BFG. The pool at the end is kind of cool, but the nearby exit is unmarked and a door texture which...sucks

Crimson Temple
by FrankieSmileShow

Plays in limit-removing ports (Frankie said it was vanilla-compatible but there are some visplane errors if you attempt this in vanilla Doom). This is actually a revised edition of an earlier map that never submitted anywhere outside the author's own website. And I'm here to say that was an absolute tragedy! I agonized on whether to give this a red ranking, but eventually I decided the secret cramped caves weren't really that impressive. All the same, if you like maps with an air of mystery and packed to the absolute gourd with secrets (the majority of which are accessed via a room with the plasma rifle) don't pass this one up!

So starting out, you'll see a Cyberdemon off to your right a ways and a boat that you probably came here on. But since most mappers find open space to be messy for the most part (or so I assume, I haven't mapped much) you'll have to enter the temple. Not too long after, you'll be confronted with three different paths. The open one will lead you to a large, well-made courtyard vaguely reminiscent of New Doom Community Project's Map 09, but considerably larger containing an altar in the middle and (thank god) only 1 Arch-vile. You won't have the weapons to take everything on though, so explore around a bit, likely finding the red key which opens up the caged, red-wall room with the rocket launcher, and discover some fairly obvious secrets (well, one that's downstairs from the red key door might be slightly tricky, but there's not really all that much inside, save for a Backpack...wait, I guess they are nice to have, right? Blehhh)

If you are in a particular hurry to handle the courtyard like me, you may not think too much of 200 enemies being left in the map by the time you enter the throne room and kill the Spider Mastermind until you get to the last hall and the message "The way out?..." Did I mention that the way back from the courtyard appears to be inaccessible? Maybe there's a switch somehow that lowers the bars of one of the other rooms bordering this place on the south, but I just noclipped and immediately went to the blue-walled, plasma rifle room that seems so out of place when compared to the aesthetics of the rest of the map, and found a secret wall cunningly hidden by a lack of light! Eventually, you find yourself back outside. Deal with the opposition, hit the switch somewhere outside here, pick up the BFG 9000 and use it on the Cyberdemon (god, this map REALLY likes Cyberdemons) you originally saw when you started. His death will cause the silver bars below his platform on your opposite side to drop down, allowing you to enter the aforementioned red caves. After collecting plenty of goodies and passing by a shrine with yet another Cyberdemon,

Prison Heck by Dwimepon

you'll find yourself on top of the outside hills. One way will lead you to a number of secrets in the green marble area you access through the left hallway near the beginning. The other will lead you to a secret exit! Tragically, I didn't find the backpack until I was nearly done and all but finished.

Overall however, this was an excellent experience. Few maps I've seen that are heavy with exploration and secrets also bring a healthy amount of combat and some nasty ambushes.

Prison Heck
by Dwimepon

Boom-compatible wad. Start you out in a cell and you have to find out how to get out. The door opening sound effect is pretty cool. Eventually, you make your way outdoors and are on the ramparts of a castle straight out of some old JRPG with the selected Jimmytrack proving the perfect complement. You end up exploring actual modern prison areas (there's at least one front-desk like structure and a conveyor belt that has contraband smuggled on it sometimes). When you finally make your way into the central courtyard after passing through an intimidating flesh-lined hellish portal, you then have to face off against Romero's head. Excellently-detailed, but unfortunately, the enemy cubes are not coming out of the eye on the platform as it first appears. Turns out there's a Cyberdemon stuck in the middle somewhere behind the wall, and your best bet is finding a way to access the

BFG you see in the courtyard, which I never did. I wasn't a huge fan.

Extra Crispy
by Dyshoria

Should be vanilla compatible. Author's first wad and it shows. Pointlessly large rooms that bear seemingly zero awareness of the amount of monsters placed. Tons of ammo and powerup overload for the last map. Cyberdemon practically placed right behind a door with the Arch-vile and Barons also in the room that may not show up until he's nearly dead. And basically no character in certain maps besides. I did like the hellish visuals of Map 02 and the mini-volcano where an Arch-vile in Map 03 was kind of a nice touch but not much to say otherwise.

Crepitations
by Soulless

Plays in GZDoom A very good sort of mansion/warehouse map with lots of secrets and using many Otex textures, such as the flags you see scattered around, both of human and demonic origin. The music track "Crow's Nest" sounds like something from Mission:Impossible, but at any rate it's pretty groovy. Wonderfully detailed with lots of paintings, beds, shootable switches, large outdoor courtyards, and other things that'll make the map fun. While essentially linear, it's pretty cool how different areas link back to each other. Makes it fairly easy to pick up any health you may have left behind. There are also many cages with Doom ma-

rines scattered around the map that you lack the ability to rescue. Make of that what you will.. I never found out how to get the outside soulsphere or the map on the crate, or the one inside one of those pillars in the outside courtyard with the Cyberdemon but I found every other one. Combat is adequately challenging and really not that frustrating, and you'll be particularly thankful for the BFG you find later on when you meet the Caco swarm at the end. Don't worry, though, there's enough Arch-viles, Cyberdemons, and Revenants for you to feel thoroughly uncomfortable throughout the rest of the map. The crushing pillars you see in the one hallway when you're ambushed by Revenants will probably force you to reevaluate your normal strategy.

Dead Signal
LoneAlpha2401

Plays in GZDoom. A Techbase map that draws influence from a variety of sources (like Doom 64, for one), Dead Signal has a strong visual aesthetic. Striking without being ostentatious and creates great contrast between its light and dark areas. While I'm not sure why a power station exists side by side with a water treatment plant, it's fine. The music's groovy enough for me not to complain. It's not too difficult if you keep on your toes, but the rocket soldiers from Realm667 can take you apart very quickly (some are rather sneakily placed). You get the rocket launcher quite early, near the blue key, so the occasional Revenants, and Hell Knights should nbe little trouble. I don't quite understand the inclusion of that one Dehacked enemy in the sewers that's basically a ceiling pod. The Nightmare Imps are a decent addition though. I somehow was able to access every secret, including the one with the Supercharge sitting next to the truck. The GZDoom fog effects are quite nice. Grabbing the plasma rifle was kind of a pain though. Not to mention I didn't think that one pipe in the pump station was big enough to block off a rocket. It has to be lifted from somewhere nearby......

Estix
by 00_Zombie_00

GZDom compatible. Now here's something more people might want to use with their wads! Essentially, this takes the traditional FPS-view of Doom and transforms it into a side-scrolling platformer. One map is included as a demo, and definitely works as a demonstration. Took forever to realize the controls functioned the same, and then, things got easier. I still never found out how to shoot at enemies on the sides because movement that's not forwards or backwards is far from self-explanatory but can be figured out if you experiment a little.

Chain
by 1Destro3456

Limit-removing. Your average starter map. Right off, you're attacked by Lost Souls which left the sort of taste in my mouth you'd expect. Very basic and a limited amount of enemies. Key placement is very basic and is often 2 feet away from where the door is. A trick Cybderdemon is located in the same room as the red key. There is a hidden BFG in the same hallway, which you get just enough ammo to take out a Cyderdemon with. Unfortunately, I'm not good at shooting a Cyberdemon in close quarters but you can avoid him entirely as he's facing away from you.

Splinty
by Zan-zan-zawa-veia

Vanilla-compatible. Intrigue, mystery, danger, and doom all combine in this killer-ass track by Zan-zan-zawa-veia(aka yakfak), of which this map is essentially supposed to be an album cover of. Yes, ZZZV is once again employing their talent for avant-garde artistic design in a notable way along with kicking your ass a la BPRD. Supposedly, the shape of this map is supposed to be said cover, though it sort of looks like just another collection of squares. Anyways, you essentially in a maze of flesh blocks and yellow lava-like split ceiling textures with a nearby Berserk Pack after you hit the first switch. Try to keep moving though because Cacodemons will soon appear and wreck you if you're not quick. Grab the Shotgun and the shells, keep firing and try to pick up the chaingun and rocket launcher as well because there are many, many cacodemons. It's not easy terrain to move around though, and you might get frustrated When you're done, hit the switch at the other end which seems to do little but drop the walkways in the middle down to a sort of dark lava surface, but there are more enemies, along with a teleporter. This teleporter takes you to a very dark room with some floor shapes in the middle and just enough boxes of rockets to take out the Cyberemond once he's taken care of his idiotic bodyguard. You can just hit the exit switch, but if you hit another switch to the right, you get to fight another Cyberdemon with an accompaniment of Cacodemons.

This is a map I can say I enjoyed if not as much as the music. Like all of ZZZV's map though, it's definitely not for everyone.

Comp
by player_skat01

Vanilla-compatible. A starter map that doesn't exactly wow in visuals or presentation but is a solid techbase map overall. I liked the secret you can open near the starting location by shooting an anonymous panel in the yellow key room that doesn't respond to your touch. Otherwise, you get the chaingun much later than the vast hordes of Imps you encounter throughout much of the map would suggest, and you don't even get enough bullets to take out everyone in the last group. An awkwardly-placed Manicubus (in front of a window that seems to overlook a garden) and a rather nonthreatening Hell Knight can't change the feeling of this as an E1 replacement.

Hell Awaits
by nrgrth

GZDoom compatible- An arena map with a rocking tune? Oh yes! Starting out, there's a teleporter which takes you to a strongly-detailed hell arena, filled with lots of overhangs, a rock ledge and fence surrounding you and enemies seemingly teleporting in all the time. If you fall into the lava pools here too many times, you may find yourself unable to transport out. You'll likely want to save the rocket ammo for the pair of Arch-viles you have to fight at the end. After, this, you'll gain access to a teleporter that'll transport you to a more closed-cavern area with pools in the middle and dark rocky pillars throughout the length of the rectangular room. There's more room here than in the previous one but it's also harder to move. You may also find the Arch-viles which show up at the end up resurrecting more enemies. But once they're dead, the exit lowers and that's the map! Very hard, but I only died twice, so definitely do-able for veterans. Everyone else should dial the difficulty down though.

Bunker Buster
by Kami

Limit-removing. So, not sure why this light-purple aesthetic that usually shows up when your video card's having a seizure is here, but no matter. While the author says they were inspired by Stardate, it has none of that wad's difficulty and I never died, not even at the red key fight. The little purple waterfalls near the central computer not far from your starting location were quite nice. There is this new Dehacked enemy resembling a harpy that probably has slightly less health than a Revenant but more than a demon which makes a regular demon pain noise but whose death scream is that of an Arch-vile and it isn't too bad. The pistol now has a more rapid rate of fire. Progression is satisfying, and the secrets are largely easy to find (no secrets beyond the boundary of the map!). I found all of them, which definitely says something (and there weren't even any misaligned textures, really). The only serious flaw is when you have to travel to the clear other end of the map when you get the yellow key to open the yellow door that is isolated from basically anywhere you'd have to backtrack to. That's too bad because the above-mentioned

red key fight (set amidst a hell-temple that doesn't really fit with the rest of the map) is the highlight. You should probably try to trigger at least some infighting as long as you keep the pressure off yourself (and let yourself get completely distracted from the secret with the BFG that would make things go much quicker as a result).

This is a very strong first map with nothing very strange, and only shows that has many great maps in front of them.

Old Storage Facility
by elio.exe

Limit-removing. Generic Doom II techbase. It's kind of nice how the map structure continuously loops back outside, but its all quite linear, and I somehow died more times than in Hell Awaits, which is, one, embarrassing, but two, sort of a mark of how easily I get bored. Some of the combat is quite good, I guess (the yellow key fight where you're ambushed by closet Revenants and an invulnerability sphere nearby), and Elio.exe still puts in some strong detailing in common with their other maps but yeah. Many on the forums found to be decent and an engaging challenge, and elio's talent for detailing can't be denied but this was probably my least favorite elio map so far. Crates and brownness just suck.

Waterworld
by iUsuallyDie

Limit-removing. Jimbo Bu....I mean iUsuallyDie puts in this map that honestly feels far less ambitious than their previous effort. The consoles in the room right in front from your starting location are probably maintenance, the maintenance section with the darker-lined green walls and the blue door containing a switch are kinda nice and begging for more detail, the fountain in the middle with the teleporting Revenants is...certainly nice but I don't completely get it, and the control center building in the east is...nice but rather empty at first, with only a single shotgun guy receptionist at first, along with a couple of Imps upstairs.

Speaking of the combat, it's actually mostly adequate. Quite easy, though you do get to tear through at least 3-4 moderately sized mobs. There's no rocket launcher though, so you'll have to make do.

Do Marines Dream of Techbase?
by FriezusChrist

Plays in GZDoom. Forum spaz FriezusChrist turns out this surprisingly strong effort. An essentially linear affair, this map nevertheless blends together different techbase textures in such a way that you'll never be sure just where the heck all the secrets are! I never found out how to get inside the closet at the end of the outside brown hallway. A cunningly hid shootable switch will reveal a key that will open up a path to the outside courtyard where you can find a rocket launcher and Supercharge!

Next, the music is.....kind of different. A melodic sort of rock that's definitely not metal, and what the ignorant would call emo or something, Title Fight's "The Secret Society" is a hummable and personally enjoyable bop that made enjpyable what is largely a humdrum sort of E1 affair until you get to the end. After overpowering some scattered Cacodemons, Revenants, Hell Knights, Demons, and some other enemies attack and the pressure's on!

Good map, and I hope FriezusChrist has something in store for the future!

Iron Keep
by Knightoftherealm

Plays in GZDoom. I'm not sure if this uses Hexen mapping format or whatever, because much of the map is quite cavernous with a strong Hexen vibe (not to mention Hexen-style ambient music, but that's immaterial, because this map is a true work of art.

Starting out, you're in a mansion. The second room from the start has a Supercharge in a cage, but I never found out how to access it, along with another secret at one end of a long room with columns. After grabbing the red

key and passing through an outside warehouse area with a mysterious symbol on a door and an appearance I'm certain was inspired by Lost Civilization (the human habitations gave me slight Shadow Warrior vibes) you then exit into an absolutely beautiful and wonderfully detailed and vegetated mountain area. A cross-shaped pole with four corpses is a creepy complement to this scene. Once you take care of the opposition, turn behind and pass through a fake wall into a sewer tunnel which then leads into a silver-walled room on the other side of the door with the symbol, containing combat armor along with Medikits, a Revenant, and a trio of test tubes behind them. The suggestion the Revenant was the product of some Resident Evil-esque virus experiment is a fascinating one to contemplate.

Anyways, return to the grotto, climb the mountain and decide which path you'll take. The right path enters a blatant box canyon with a drop-off at the end. Fall down in the right spot and you'll pick up some Megaarmor, which you'll need for the mob facing you down below. The left path is mostly easier and passes through a canyon with a secret Supercharge contained in the waterfall on the left before entering a cavern of a steeply sloping volcanic nature.

At some point, you'll encounter an Arch-vile. They've been modified from their original form to attack in a manner that's more tangible than inflammable line of sight of the original. It's probably somewhat easier to dodge, but not so much if you're too close to them, and in any case, you'll have to reevaluate your strategy.

Anyway, you'll eventually enter a temple and the corrupt heart of the demons' local and regional operations or whatever, again not unlike Shadow Warrior. The lava in the middle has a seriously bright color. Eventually, you'll reach the last room, only difficult because you'll likely be running low on ammo at this stage (though the Chaingunner/Pain Elemental placement is, uh, quite annoying) In the middle will

be the demon captain, a winged Baron I think I've seen in Realm667 who hardly takes any more hits than the standard one. Kill him and the block in front of the exit teleporter will lower.

This map honestly has among the best detailing of anything I've seen this month. All monster placement seems quite intentional and starts to provide at least a decent challenge before too long. The early pickup of the rocket launcher doesn't exactly hurt matters either. Maybe it could have slightly more 'oomph' but this is still a strong recommendation.

Metabolized
by Soul less

Plays in GZDoom. A unique situation with a strong challenge. Supposedly, the UAC was conducting experiments involving pinkies and radiation, but that provides zero explanation as to why the area got infested with demons or why you're collecting keys or pressing switches a la per usual. In any case, there's a giant ugly dude in the outer section of a treatment plant, and you've got to clean out the infecting hordes.

The first map is slightly above moderately difficult. You've got to take care of some hitscanners and some pop-up enemies starting out but it's not quite overwhelming. If you end up in the boxes above the berserk pack, you might want to turn back because picking it up causes three hell knights to teleport in, the path you used to access the berserk pack closed temporarily and the gate in front of you to open up, revealing an Arachanotron. Hopefully, you'll find the secret Supercharge, located on a ledge not far from here. Anyways, continue moving so you don't get struck by Imp and Revenant fire from the head and eventually, you'll reach it. Enter it through a watery lift and then plunge down into the hole to finish the map.

Second map steps up the challenge some. Try to take care of the hitscanner enemies so you don't have to do so either. You are now inside those beau-

tiful pink intenstines and have to make your way through. I never figured out how to access the secret Supercharge. The ending fight on the elevator is quite intense. A six-circled affair demanding judicious rocket use, you probably shouldn't target the Arch-vile right away when there are still a number of places to move around.

Third map is easily the hardest. You soon find yourself in a central control/throne room of sorts in the same textures as Map 02. There are Arachnotrons on the right and Imps on the left. Head too far into the Archnotron room and you'll also have to fight revenants at the same time. Much later on, you'll run into a Cyberdemon you may not have the ammo for.

Metabolized by Soul less

BEST GAMEPLAY MOD

The Return of Zan
by Ketmar

Plays in K8vavoom. Based off the universe of an indie shooter called Hedon, Doom's regular weapons are replaced with a set of weapons that are all incredibly fun to use. The Crushbow is an excellent rocket launcher replacement with a wider range of effect. The Crylance replaces the BFG, and while certainly less powerful, it fires at a far higher rate. The only weapon that didn't feel that fun was the acid potion launcher. Despite having quite the satisfying sound effect, it could be more effectively utilized. Still, there's no doubt this is a seriously fun and satisfying mod.

Jungle Boogie
by Cheesewheel

Cheesewheel is a mapper with a strong reputation for some reason but his contributions have come mainly from community projects, many speedmapping, such as PUSSV, where he made a map called Dour that I unfortunately can't remember very well, but I think it was the one where you first encounter a Spider Mastermind (this was either 03 or 04) and meet a Baron of Hell in a throne room with an accompanying bodyguard. There was this one secret I think involved a Supercharge you had to be nearly stupidly fast to obtain. But I don't think it was quite THIS obnoxious.

Now these are all maps Cheesewheel ultimately decided not to use but they have a consistent visual theme, a Plutonia-inspired aesthetic of jungle-green textures and also vines along many of the walls, along with many industrial/warehouse type textures.

Map 01 of this set could sure use more ammo. If I had just one more box of bullets, I would have felt much better taking on the Pain Elemental that appears when you get the yellow key. As it was, I had to use a bunch against the helmeted, black-suited troopers. These guys shoot plasma rifle shots and Cheesewheel does NOT hesitate to use them in large numbers, so you can guess how annoyed they made me. After that though, 02 and especially 03 felt a lot fairer to me. (well, 02's beginning I annoying thanks to the plas-

ma troopers at a relatively far distance from you, but it could be worst).

That said, it's actually pretty good. I just have a bit of an issue with Cheese-wheel's style of combat and probably would have been advised to play it on HMP instead. But in any case....

WAD OF THE MONTH

I don't normally review wads of over six maps in length in the /newstuff guide because #1: they take too much time, and #2: features will probably be written on them in the future if they're distinctive in any way. But I'm not sure if there's any reason that someone would want to do a feature on this unless it's to say something about Pavera, because trying to pick out how this wad has any particular visual or gameplay distinctions that anyone would want to do said feature is something I can't quite do. So I'll just review this right here!

Pavera is a mapper that's been around for at least 12 years, and I admit being careless enough to dub him one of my favorites when I'd played precisely

three of his maps (his contributions to D2WiD, Back to Saturn X Episode 1, and Hymn: A Heretic Community Project). Until last year, when he worked on 4 of the 7 maps for Syringe (now an official add-on for Unity!), he was mainly a community contributor. Yet, his flair for verticality as well as a mapper whom you're not gonna feel safe with starting out was too distinctive to ignore. And, finally he strikes out completely on his own with Arrival, an 11-map(8 maps, plus 1 combat-less map and a secret map) set, that from the title screen, seems as if though it wants to convey otherworldliness. Surely, this wasn't inspired in any way by Charlie Sheen's best movie by a country mile that he solely starred in? Well, I don't think the demons are planning to accelerate global warming, Doomguy just want to live on an alien world or something like that.

The entirely original soundtrack is composed by A.D 79. He's apparently been around for at least a few years, but in my limited wad career so far, I'm only aware of two of the tracks that he did for the Raven community pack that I used with my last replay of Heretic (sorry, but I really don't like E5, and particularly 4) with "Tightrope" the one that stood out the most, even

though E3M7...doesn't really feel like one.(Viscera Maelstra was probably my favorite composer for the pack, imo). His style can best be described as strongly atmospheric, yet energetic. "Inhabitants" and "Dream Dweller" were my favorites because of their mood. Honestly, I'm pretty sure I've heard parts of "Pressure Cooker" and "Dream Dweller" elsewhere, but that's fine.

Finally, a word about this wad. Basically you start out in a techbase, travel through a canyon, another techbase, some temple areas set amongst the mountains, and finally, a crimson-red fortress filled with lava just before you reach a wooden fortress with tons of vines on the walls and verticality extreme even for Pavera (and this comes after playing maps like 02 and 05 that also make noticeable use of it). This last map might be a little too open-ended for its own good (can you get the red key before the blue and yellow keys? Idk, but the Cyber-emond that appears after you grab the red key seems to suggest otherwise) but regardless, it's a fitting finale, with the map's final section taking place in what's a fully alien world.

Iron Keep by Knightoftherealm

Difficulty is respectable for the most part. In many portions, you'll be under attack from the sides by Archnotrons and Manicubi that can be avoided for the most part but will still cause many players anxiety. Thankfully, Pavera is quite generous with the health, with several areas being absolutely stocked with health potions.

And there are Arch-viles. If they are your favorite enemy to fight, jump for joy because Pavera uses them. Oh, he uses them. And not even in a careless way some (or is that many?) mappers do, but in places where you might expect them. At the same time, you should have the tools to handle them whenever you encounter them, so it's

not quite as bad as you might think.

My favorite moment came in Map 04, before I had time to grow tired of everything, after passing through the blue door. I came upon a large group of hitscanners, and behind them were two Arch-viles. At this point, I had more than enough rockets so I just circle-strafed around them into the building they came from, shooting rockets all the while. These sorts of encounters right here are exactly what modern Doom is all about, moving rapidly and searching for cover elsewhere (the next enemies shouldn't attack you until you hit the switch downstair) and they are probably the main reason why I'm placing Pavera just ahead of Roofi in

the list of my favorite active mappers at probably #9 (I do not have a precise list, lol).

This is that irresistible sort of WAD that provides lots of action while being accessible for non-Doom gods (except for the secret map which isn't that much different from something in Sunlust, other than the blood aesthetics). Pavera' distinct use of largely vanilla resources while utilizing verticality, as well as his talent for keeping the player on their toes and crafting satisfying encounters is never better. It's for this reason why this is my personal wad of the month.
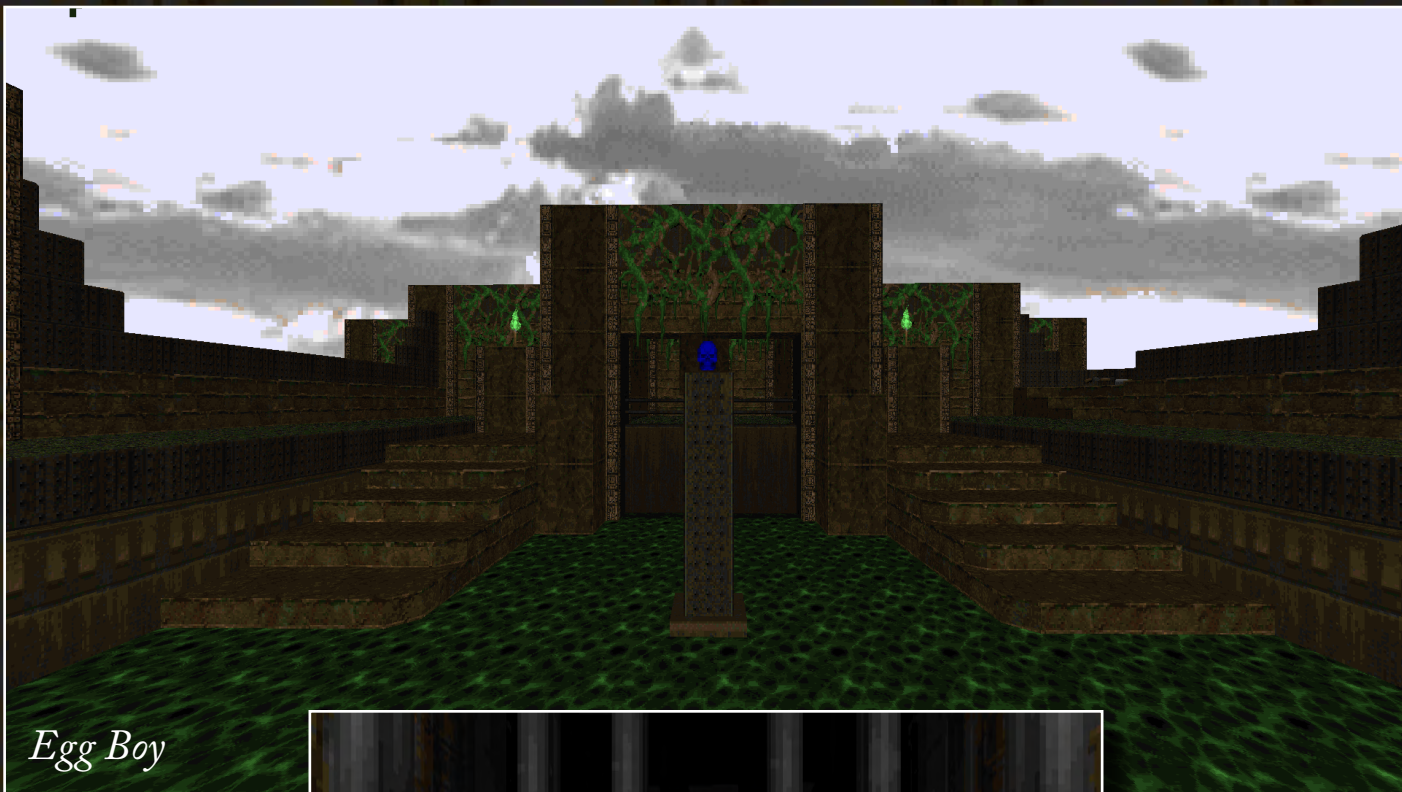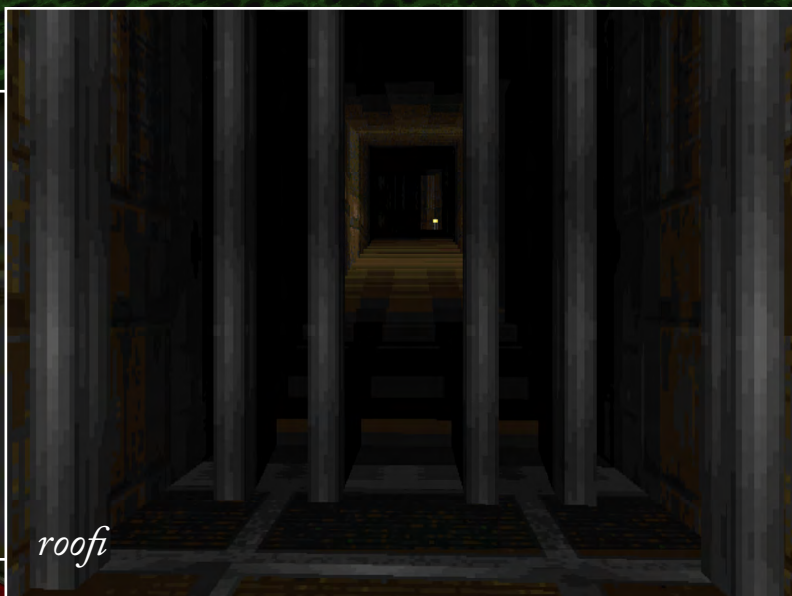

Maledict, artwork by Wereknight
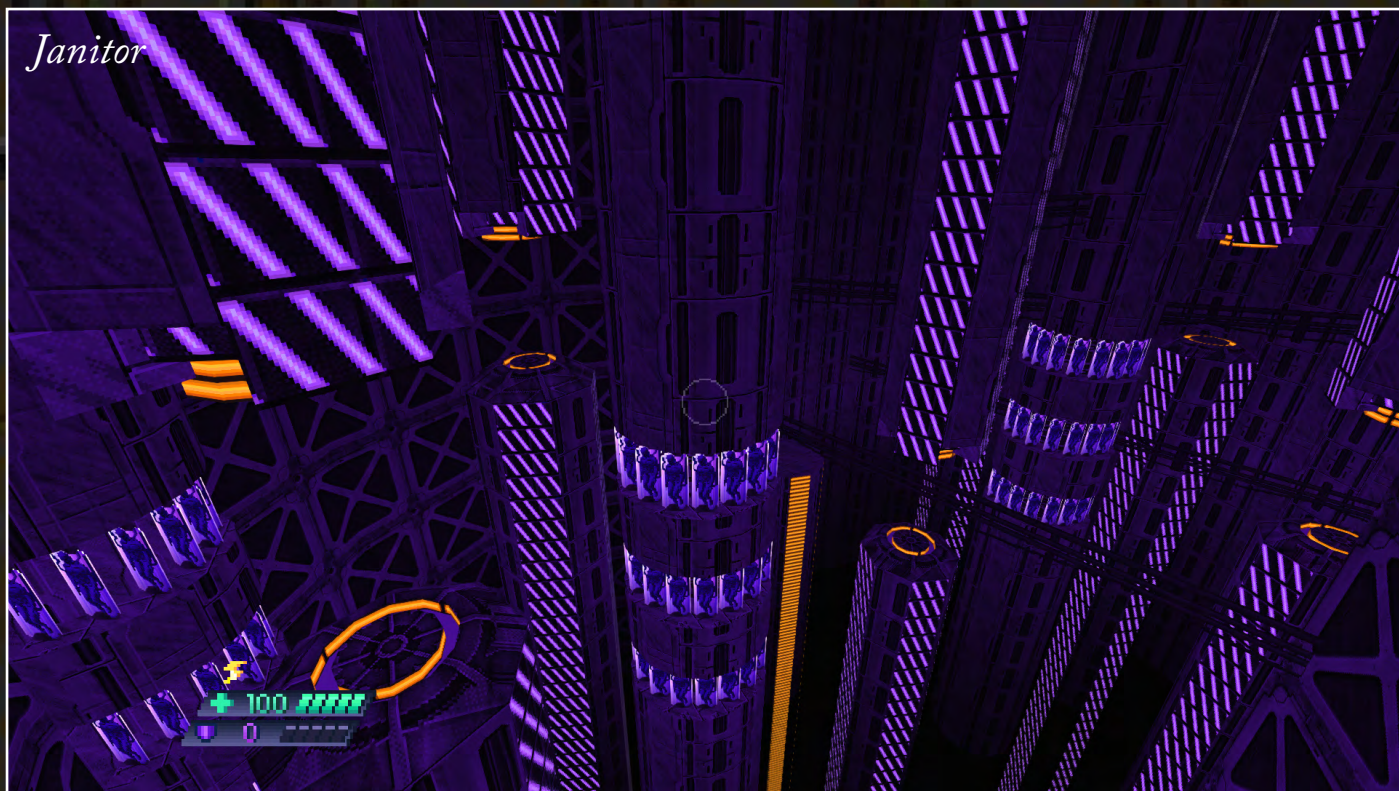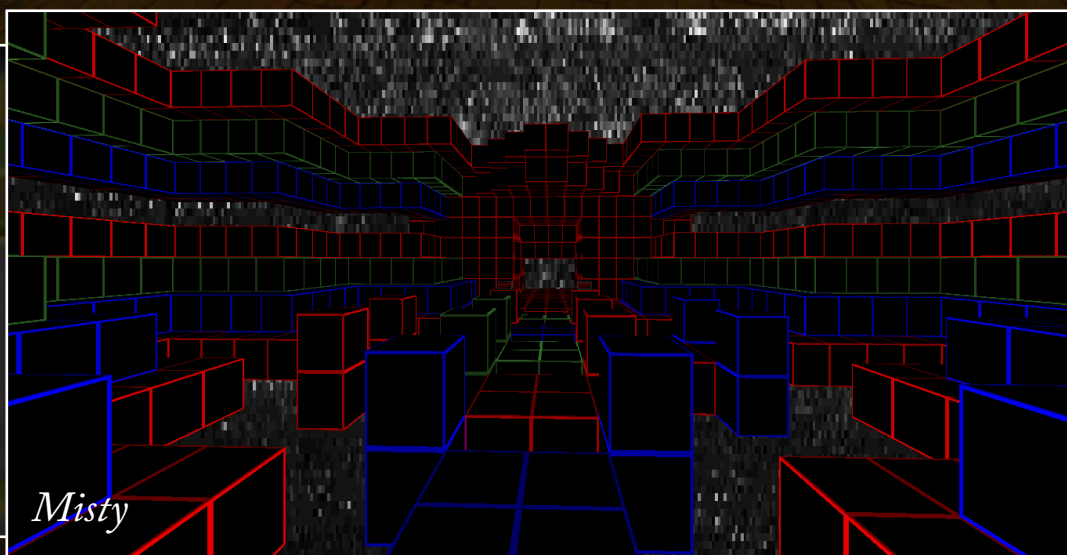
Janitor

PICTURES GALLERY

Jaska

Egg Boy

roofi

Doom_Dude

Aurelius

valkiriforce

Janitor

Misty

Egg Boy

cannonball

RonniesDiner

WH-Wilou84

WH-Wilou84

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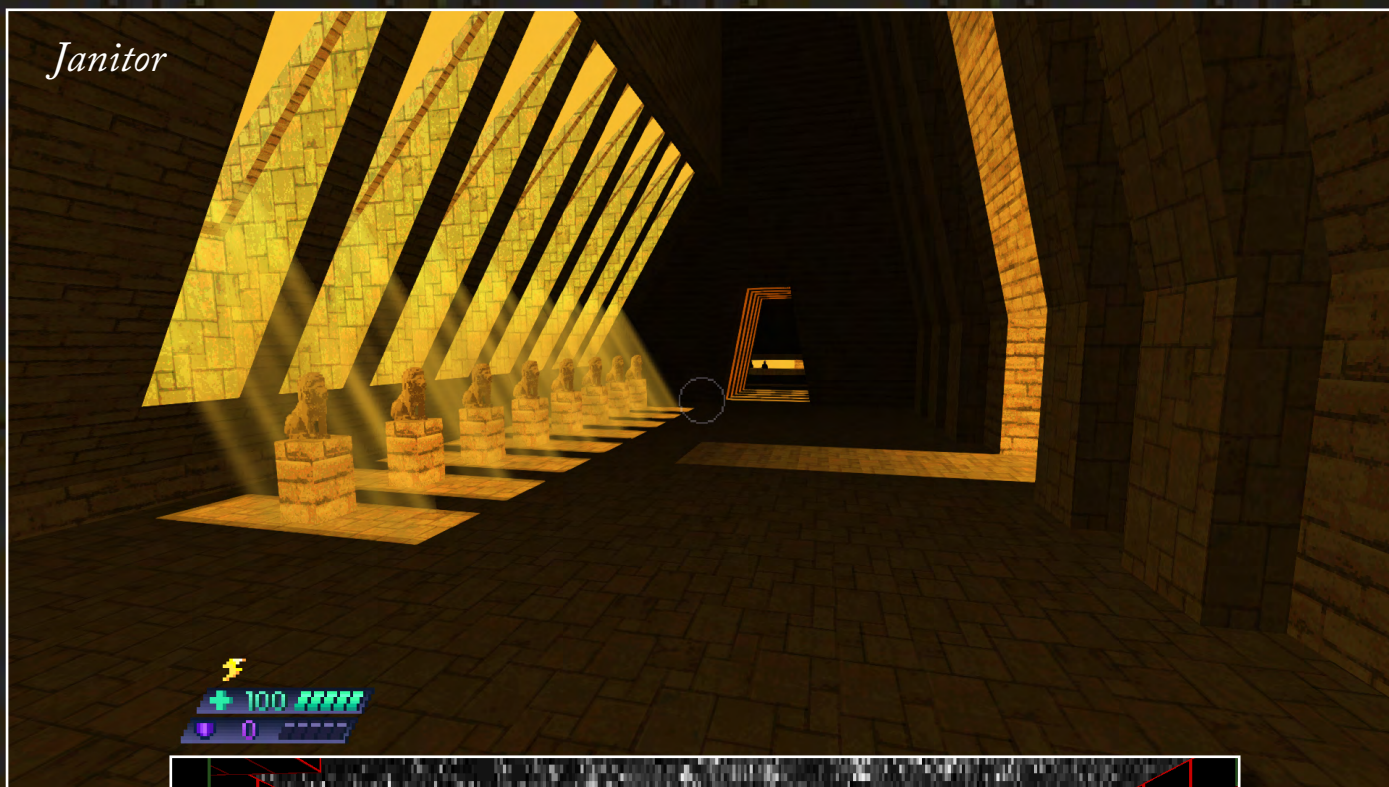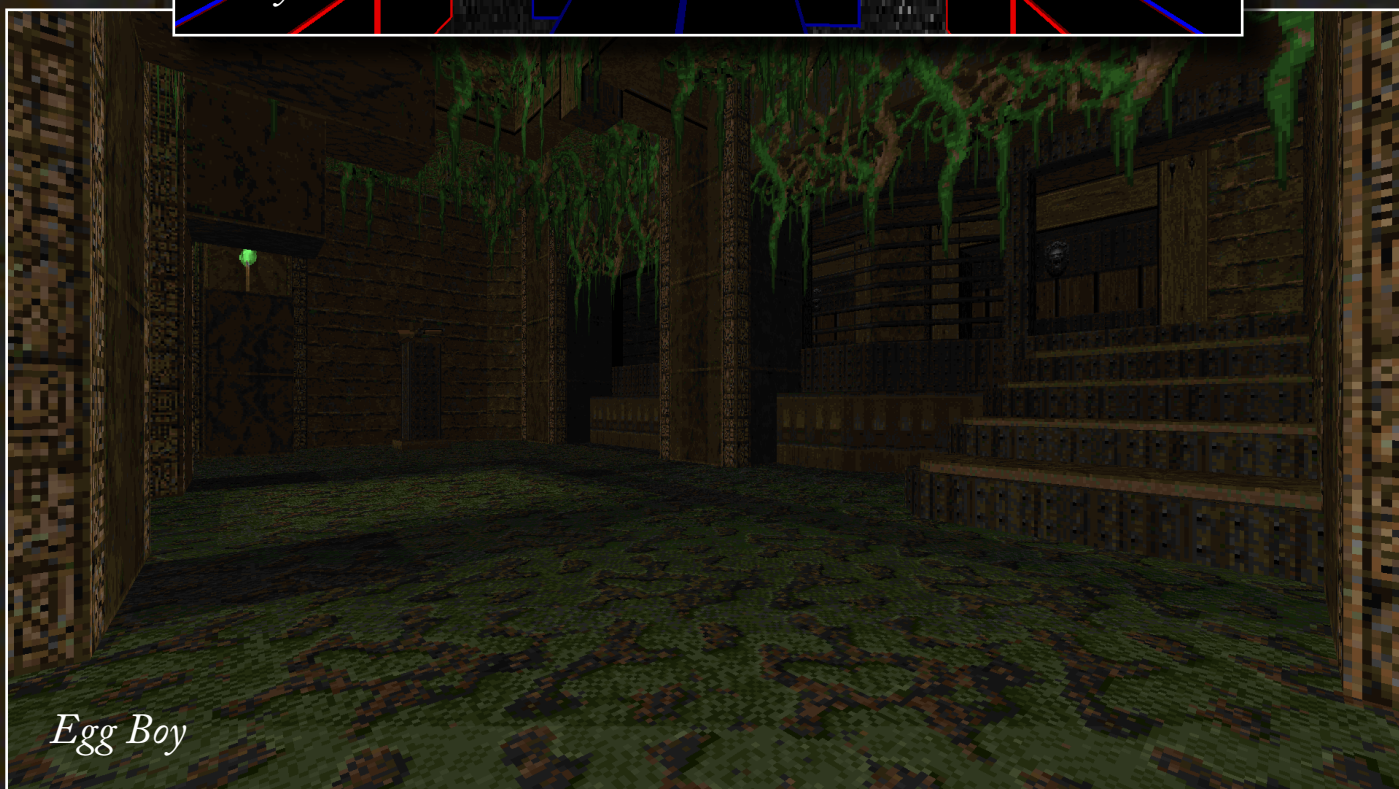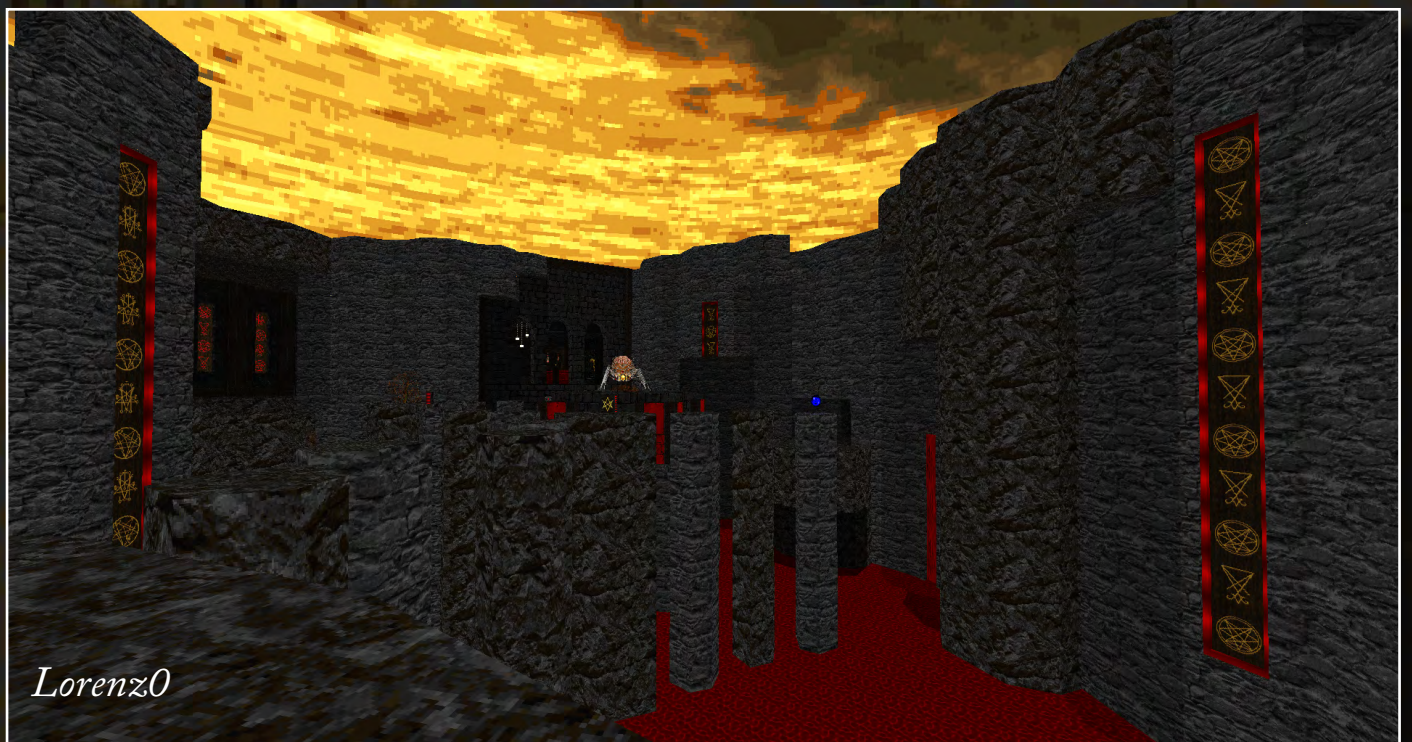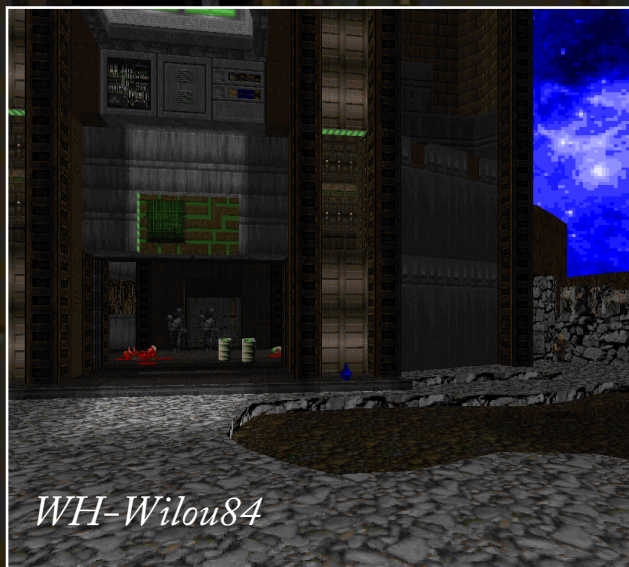
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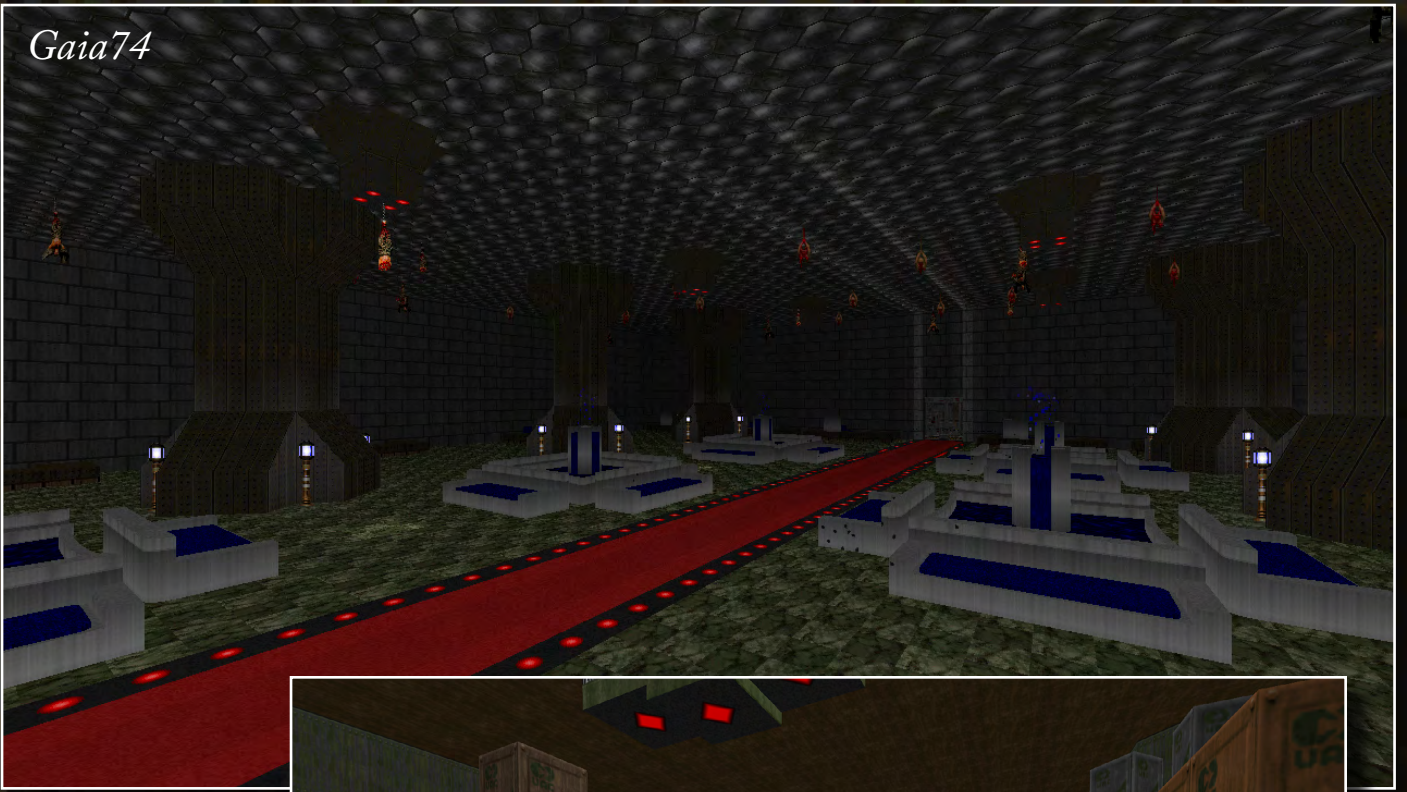
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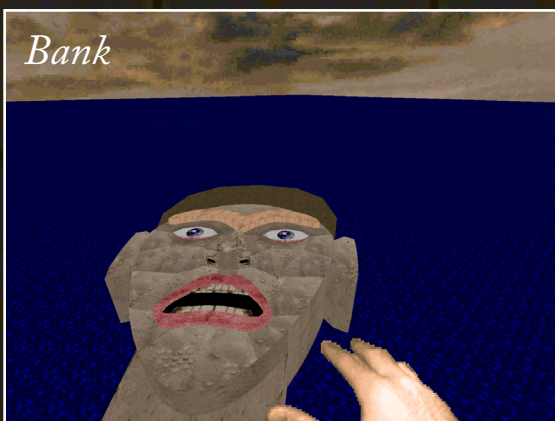
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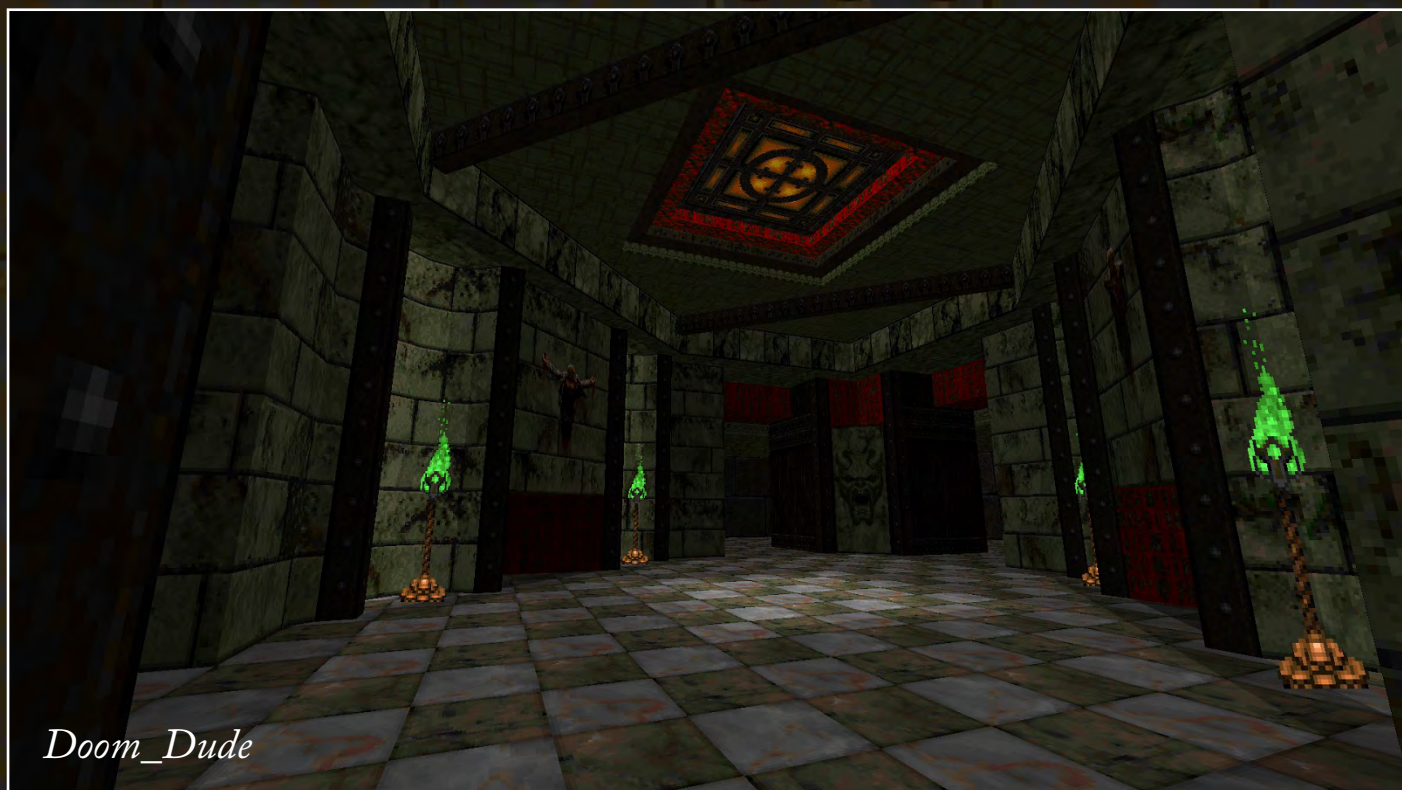
Gaia74

TheGreenZap

Jaska

Doom-X-Machina

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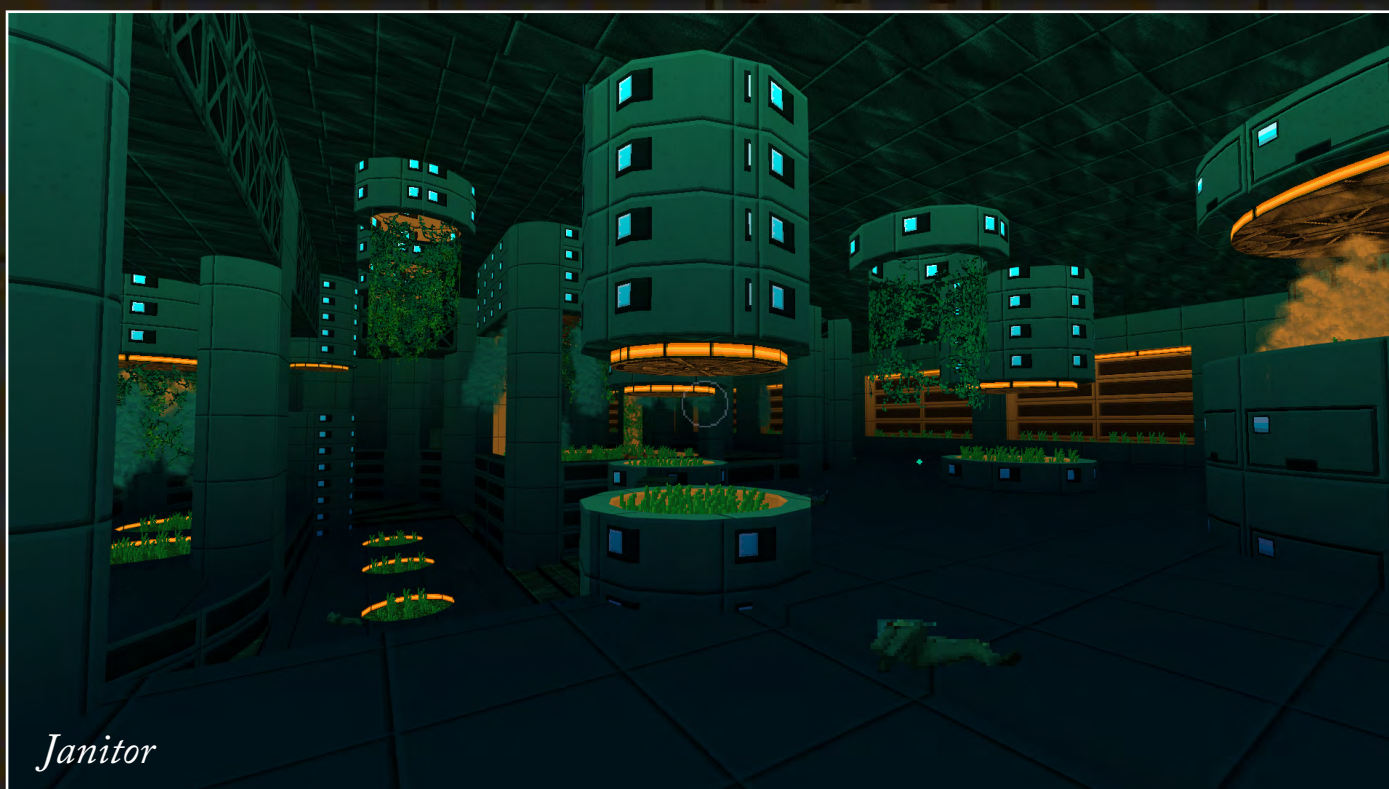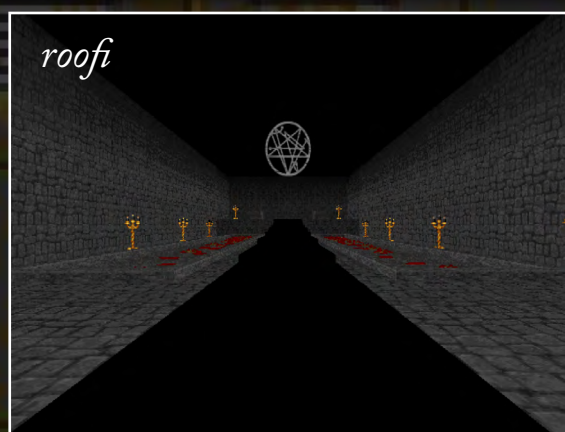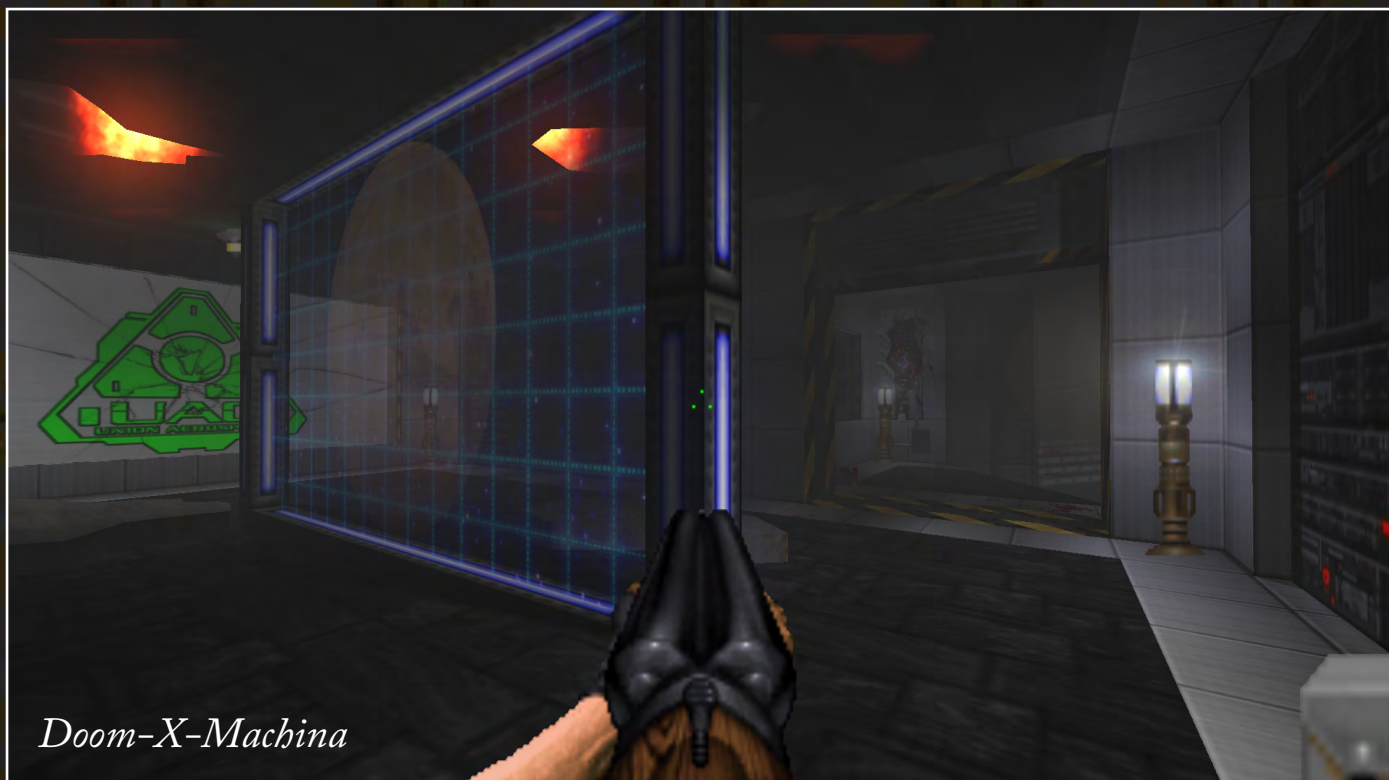
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