

Cotropitorii Review

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Geeesh, it's hard to write about a low-budget game like **Cotropitorii**. First of all I'm taking a gamble here writing about an interesting single-player and MMOFPS, but that lacks some graphics, not much, and physics, totally. Maybe for its genre, that's acceptable, but we'll soon see.

The story

Short: Romania wants to invade USA. Haha. I'm not ironic, no. It's just that the idea is kind of funny, taking in comparison the two countries, their economic power and military development. But nonetheless, an interesting scenario. It's something different from what massive first-person shooters have accommodated us with.

History starts somewhere in 1988, during Ceausescu's reign in Romania, an age of terror and fear. To give some hope to its people, the dictator started building an army. An year later, a war broke between Romania and USA, fueled by the hate that Romanians had for those big-fat Americans that failed in World War II to protect Romania from Stalin, as was the agreement.

Today, 2004, the Romanians have landed in USA, with over 1 million troops, and 200.000 tanks and the USA Airforce is down at 10%, leaving the country only with infantry and tank support. Ceausescu's plan to conquer USA seems imminent.

Ok. STOP. This is where the player comes in. You can either choose to play as a Romanian Mountain Hunter in a single-player, 10 level campaign provided by the game, or go multiplayer. The fate of the game stands in the hands of the player. I enjoyed multiplayer more, a whole lot more.

It will also play good

Yes. 10 levels of heart-racing action seems interesting, but I for once found multiplayer Deathmatch to be more interesting. Why? Cause it doesn't care who you kill, it can have up to 32 players at a time in single or cooperative play and it's perfectly well suited for LAN play, having no support for Internet play as I've seen.

Another interesting shift is that we've been used in first-person-shooters to the first-person view. Cotropitorii brings the third-person view back and allows the player to use whatever view he's more comfortable, by the press of a key.

We only have 10 weapons, including a Med-kit [nice!] - but only usable once in a round, the usual AK-47, pistols,

HE and smoke grenades. Limited inventory in comparison with other games, but, taking in account the development low-budget conditions, it's acceptable.

The game's powered by an in-house engine entitled Zamolxe, used in Cotropitorii and "Romanii in Spatiu", a sci-fi space exploration/annihilation game developed by the same guys. Although a limited engine, textures, shadowing and fog have been the best I've seen in a while in any self-respecting FPS.

Let's end graphics here. It's not eye-candy, it's better than Half-Life, and better than Counter-Strike 1.6 in terms of details, although performance improvements are needed to work well on low-end systems.

Nice, quality textures, nice DirectX 8 shadowing, supported on older video cards, nice overall design. No wonder they call themselves "2 Bad Design", a small studio that managed to develop a rather good shooter.

Pioneers in sound

"Pioneers of 2000" and "Three colors I know ..." are some of the songs you're going to hear throughout the game, patriotic music that still delights my ear, even if Romania is not communist any more, and I was born after the communist era.

Another feature I liked, feature that complemented the lack of others was in-game music, even in multiplayer mode. Counter-Strike, Half-Life and many other first-person-shooters lack a good multiplayer soundtrack that really puts you in the game.

The introduction of a small soundtrack to the multiplayer mode is a proof of concept that even low-budget games can be playable, nice and overall interesting.

Last ideas

It's a **free game**, a **free MMOFPS**, freely downloadable, that works "out-of-the-box". Even if the game's interface is in Romanian and partially English, all English-knowing gamers can make it through the interface and enter an already created LAN game, or maybe, create their own, without too much knowledge.

Finally, I'm going to judge the game in comparison with today's expectations in terms of graphics, sounds and gameplay, even if it's an October 2005 release. So, it may just barely get a 6, or more, but remember, it's a free game, well done in terms of graphics and sound with an extremely low-budget. So yes, it deserves a good mark, and a try.

Category	Mark	Final Mark
Graphics	7	6
Sound	7	

Interface	6
Gameplay	6
Storyline	6
Multiplayer	5
Impression	5

Reviewed on

AMD Athlon64 3200+ CPU, 1024 Mb RAM, Nvidia 6800GT, Creative Labs Soundblaster X-Fi Music Edition, Teac Writer 52x/24x/52x, BenQ FP783 Monitor, Microsoft Intellimouse Explorer 4 Mouse, Windows XP Service Pack 2, DirectX 9.0c

Minimum System Requirements

CPU: 2000Mhz, An 64MB Video Card, 512MB RAM, 1 GB of HDD space, At least Windows 2000 or better, minimum of DirectX 9.0b or 9.0c. An LCD monitor would be better.

Tags: [game](#), [interesting](#), [Romania](#), [graphics](#), [multiplayer](#), [interface](#), [lowbudget](#), [music](#), [comparison](#), [Cotropitorii](#), [game](#), [music](#), [MMOFPS](#), [communist](#)

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