

PLAYSTATION: WINNER BY A NARROW MARGIN

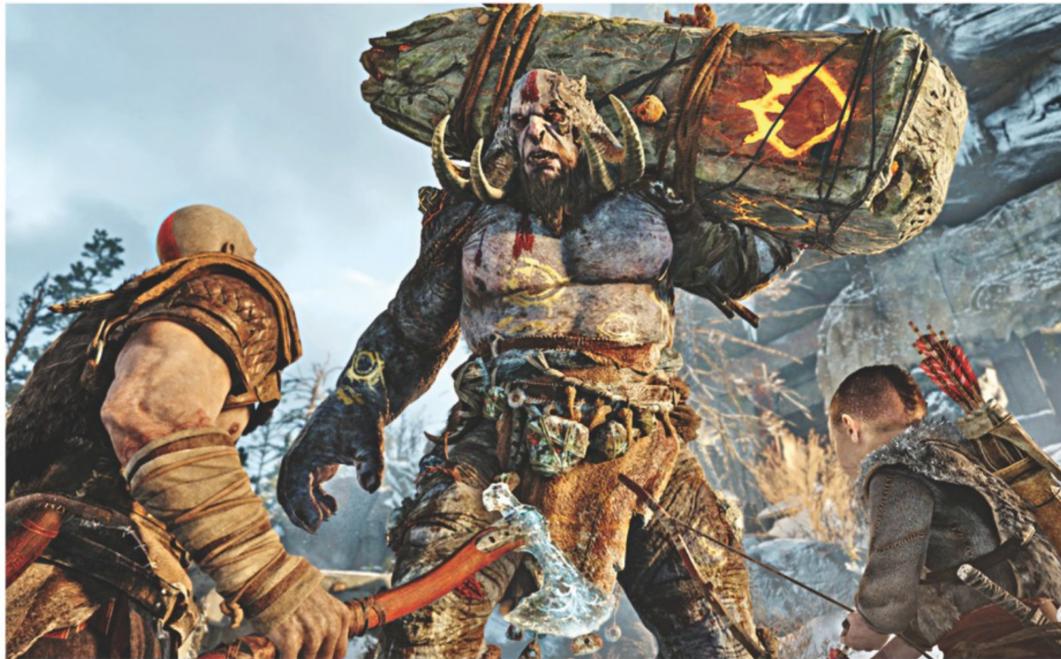
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While PlayStation had a great E3 last year, I was looking forward to something even better this year from them with rumors about exciting titles such as *The Last of Us Part II* and *Red Dead Redemption 2* appearing on the horizon.

The conference kicked off with a story trailer for *Uncharted: The Lost Legacy*. The trailer shows Chloe and Nadine going through ups and downs and episodes of mistrust on their quest to find Ganesh's Tusk. The release date for the game was announced to be August 22, 2017. This was followed by an announcement trailer for a story DLC of "Horizon" titled "The Frozen Wilds" which comes out later this year.

New gameplay footage for "Days Gone" debuted at the conference. The textures and lighting seemed to have massively improved from the previous demo. The gameplay seemed fascinating as well since the game pits the protagonist against a series of increasingly unfavorable events. Two Capcom titles, "Monster Hunter World" and "Marvel vs Capcom Infinite" were also announced.

The biggest surprise of the conference had to be when a 4K remake of the PS2 classic "Shadow of the Colossus" was revealed. The sheer scale of the levels and the colossi paired with the technological prowess of the current-gen consoles shapes



up what promises to be a visual treat filled with nostalgia.

Activision revealed a multiplayer gameplay trailer for *Call of Duty WWII*. The trailer felt quite tame and tepid compared to what EA has already delivered with *BF1*. The game comes out on November 3 this year.

Just like last year, a lot of PlayStation VR titles were announced. Hardcore *Skyrim* fans may be delighted to know that the game has been turned into a first person VR title. A "Final Fantasy" themed

fishing simulator named "Monster of the Deep" was also showcased. Other VR titles include *Star Child*, *Bravo Team* and *Moss*. The only VR title that got me somewhat excited was Supermassive's *Until Dawn* prequel titled "The Inpatient".

The conference picked up its pace again with a new trailer for *God of War*. The visuals are mind-blowing, especially when you consider the fact that the trailer was entirely shot on a launch PS4. I was hoping for the game to get rid of the over-the-shoulder camera but sadly the devs are

sticking with it. For me, it takes a lot of the fun out of the game and it was somewhat apparent in the trailer where enemies attack Kratos one-by-one unlike the previous titles. Even though there were strong rumors about the game releasing this November, the trailer confirmed "Early 2018" as the release window.

Quantic Dream's much anticipated "Detroit: Become Human" received a new gameplay trailer which introduced the final playable character, Marcus, who is leading a revolution against the humans. The trailer mainly showcased how the story branches out depending on the choices you make. No release window was announced for the game. A trailer for Bungie's "Destiny 2" also debuted at the conference.

The conference ended with a gameplay footage of Insomniac's PS4 exclusive Spider-Man game. The visuals are drop-dead gorgeous and the gameplay seemed to combine the navigation of *Spider-Man 2* with the *Arkham* series' combat. Overall, the footage was vastly impressive as it seemed to have solved all the problems of the previous *Spider-Man* games.

With a negligible number of new exclusives and no specific release dates for most of the titles, this year's PlayStation E3 conference did not pack as much fireworks as I was expecting it to. However, it still marginally wins this year's E3 for me.



Microsoft: New console, not enough games

SHAHRUKH IKHTEAR

The past few years saw Microsoft trying their very best to head into the lead in the console wars against PlayStation and Nintendo. They had some very good ideas, razor-sharp focus on gamers, and a will to prove themselves. However, their exclusive games lineup has been less than stellar. So, what did they do in this E3?

Microsoft had arguably the biggest announcement of the entire show with the revealing of the Xbox One X. The console has been built from the ground up to play games at "true 4K" as claimed by Microsoft. Looking at the specs, it does have the potential to run games at either native 4K or checkerboard upscaled 4K depending on the level of graphical fidelity exhibited by different titles. Regardless, this was definitely the boost Microsoft needed to stay relevant in the console sales charts. Now they

have the power advantage over Sony. Thus, more people might be inclined to buy Microsoft's system if they want a more complete gaming experience in terms of multiplatform games. However, we're still holding our verdict until we actually get our hands on it and test out the games that are coming with it.

Microsoft has promised that all their current games and accessories that are compatible with the existing Xbox One line, will also work on the new console. Also, a few of their games are getting 4K resolution upgrades only for the new Xbox One X. This will also be done for other games in the current lineup, as well.

Bioware's new IP, *Anthem*, was announced during the Xbox conference. Based on what we saw, it looks like a mashup of *Horizon Zero Dawn*'s dystopian world combined with *Destiny*'s MMO mechanics. Players con-

trol mechs known as "Javelins" which give them superhuman abilities in the world. The game has the potential to become one of the best titles of the generation if Bioware can pull it off correctly, and if the graphics stay the same it is already one of the best-looking titles out there.

Forza Motorsport 7 also debuted on the show floor alongside the new Porsche 911 GT2 RS. The racing sim has become so popular around the world that Porsche decided to bring their new car to E3. The game features new enhanced dynamic weather, more realistic car interiors, and a host of new tracks.

4A games brought the newest installment of the *Metro* series with *Metro: Exodus*. The gameplay trailer showed off the new graphical capabilities of the upgraded version of their engine. Needless to say, the eerie atmosphere and sense of scale are still intact in the series

and we're super excited to see more of the game.

Middle Earth: Shadow of War had a new gameplay trailer as well. It showed off how Talion can build his own army by recruiting Orc war-chiefs into his faction. Then it went to an epic castle siege by Talion and his new soldiers. The game looks to solve most of *Shadow of Mordor*'s problems in terms of gameplay and story.

There were more announcements as well; *Assassin's Creed: Origins*, about which we are not excited at all since the game does not look refreshing in terms of gameplay and story; the massively popular online game *PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds* is coming to Xbox One; *Sea of Thieves*, a new MMO focusing on playing as pirates with up to 3 friends; *Minecraft* in 4K, we're honestly tired of seeing this game at every E3 and we wish they would stop.