

the **Sunday**

MUSIC & GAMES

CHUCHOTER
WHO: Emily Smith (vocals), Owen McAllister (synths/production).
WHERE: Edinburgh.
FOR FANS OF: Chvrches, Bossy Love, Charli XCX.
JIM SAYS: Electro-pop duo Chuchoter (pronounced 'shoo-shaw-tae') were one of the acts showcasing at the annual Wide Days music convention in Edinburgh on Friday.
With industry delegates from across the world embarking upon the capital, it's one of the best networking events for those in Scotland looking to make the next step.
Chuchoter followed an impressive stream of Wide Days showcase acts. Previous years have included Be Charlotte, Fatherson, The Ninth Wave, C Duncan and Honeyblood. Wide Days is further evidence that Chuchoter are on the verge of a breakthrough.
Owen says: "It's a big step up and we're definitely taking it as a signal that we're on the right track."
Originally from Aberdeenshire, where they met while at school, Emily and Owen formed Chuchoter after both moving to Edinburgh to study music.
Emily says: "We met in high school at a Children In Need choir concert and got chatting about music stuff."
"I asked Owen to record some of my own acoustic work, and he then sent me a track he was working on to write lyrics for. That sort of got the ball rolling. We both liked what the other was writing so we just kept working together." Moving

**NEW MUSIC**
By Jim Gellatly

to Edinburgh, they soon got sucked into the city's vibrant scene. Emily continues: "We met our manager at a gig we were playing at and started working with her. That's opened so many doors for us."
Chuchoter gained further ground with last year's Pieces EP, a glorious slab of synth-driven pop. There is also a message to their music, which they've labelled "shouty feminist pop". Owen explains: "Emily always tries to write songs that are true, and I guess of late there's been a lot for her to be angry about because the songs keep coming out that way. We are both feminists and we want to write music that people can relate to and feel empowered by."
Fresh from releasing their stunning single U Can Find, they are at the mixing stage for a new EP Crush. After making their festival debut last year at Electric Fields, Chuchoter have a busy summer ahead. Next up is the Stag and Dagger all-day in Glasgow on May 5.
More: facebook.com/chuchotermusic
● Jim presents a weekly showcase of New Music on Amazing Radio, Sundays, 2-4pm.
amazingradio.com
jimgellatly.com
PIC: Jannica Honey
Watch a video of Chuchoter at: thescottishsun.co.uk

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**An old-school blast**

RACING games can sometimes be a bit too po-faced so it's refreshing to be hit by an over-the-top arcade offering from time to time.
Step forward Xenon Racer, which is developed by Italian studio 3DClouds and aims to blend the vibes of classics like Ridge Racers and Wipeout for some high-speed thrills.
The game is set circa 2030 and looks to bridge the gap between cars with wheels and hover-tech so you get the best of both worlds in this vision of the not-too-distant future. Crucially, this feeds into the core of the gameplay because, to get the best results, you need to know when to boost and when

Xenon Racer
Xbox One, PS4, Switch and PC £39.99
to drift and the fine balance between both.
You can get behind the wheel of 16 different 'cars of the future' as you tackle a number of tracks from around the world.
The campaign mode, which makes up the backbone of the game, will take about 10 hours to complete. Beyond the core campaign there is a handful of the staple racing modes, as well as the multiplayer side of things to really test


your skills. But all of this is easier said than done due to a number of things — mostly the fact the AI is out to stop you at all costs. It means things can quickly stop being fun and become a grind.
If that wasn't enough, your car has a damage meter so you can only take a few dings before you have to respawn which all but kills your race. Also the loading times can be a bit on the long side.
Xenon Racer doesn't reinvent the wheel or even move the formula forward — but it's a solid arcade blast. **★★★**
STUART CULLEN




Gen Zero is Swede and sour


Generation Zero
Xbox One, PS4 and PC £34.99
AVALANCHE Studios is no stranger to making good games. The Swedish developer has been behind the likes of Just Cause and Mad Max and will release the next instalment in Bethesda's Rage series next month so you would think the game experts would have their hands full.
But the firm has also been working on a side project — an open-world survival title set in a fictional 1980s Sweden called Generation Zero.
First, this game is a multiplayer for you and up to three other mates and it's best played this way. If you go solo it's a very lonely adventure.
You play as a teenager in a world where rogue robots roam the countryside. Your mission? Find out what's going on as well and try to find other survivors.
Unfortunately, the game has the same problems as Fallout 76 in that you'll wander the huge world for miles, not seeing any other character beyond the six different types of robots that are out to hunt you down.
Missions are given to you by finding letters and notes and you'll find a few answerphone messages along the way. Gameplay will see you moving from town to town, looting kit and saving ammo as well as gunning down a mix of different robots — and that's it as you'll rinse and repeat again and again over the huge map.
Gunplay is OK. You never feel too overpowered as you get access to a mixed arsenal of toys. The AI isn't smart though — you can outsmart the robots by holing up in a building and picking them off at your leisure.
Graphically, the game has a great look and style while the synth soundtrack has a Carpenter vibe.
Generation Zero is an odd one. It feels like it could be something really interesting but it lacks direction and an ultimate goal as the world. There is just no point to it.
For best results, grab three mates in a chat party. **★★★**
STUART CULLEN



**TAKE aim — Rebellion's Sniper Elite V2 Remastered will hit shops on May 14 on Xbox One, PS4, Switch and PC. It will come with 4K and HDR support, updated environments, characters, weapons and vehicles, a new photo mode, seven new playable characters from Zombie Army, expanded multiplayer up to 16 players and all the DLC.**

**XBOX LIVE**
● XBOX Live users got a shock when were told the service was being hiked by £10 from next month. That means a 12-month subscription will now be £49.99 a year while monthly fees will rise from £5.99 to £6.99. However, the six-month membership stays the same. It brings Microsoft in line with Sony's PlayStation Plus.

BUDS ARE BLOOMING GREAT
WHEN it comes to gaming headsets you too often think of big bulky set-ups with a bunch of cables and mixer amps — the last thing you'd want to use when playing your Switch.
But Turtle Beach has a solution to this issue called the Battle Buds. They are like a standard set of ear buds but with some VERY interesting upgrades.
Right out of the box, you get a number of ear tips to change out so you can get the right fit — which is key to not only your comfort but also the overall quality of the audio. So it's well worth having a play around with the sets to get the buds you feel happy with.
You also get a little carry pouch, which is a nice inclusion as it gives you somewhere to store them on the move. You also get a removable stick mic — it's a little stumpy, which does let in some sound bleed and background noise.
As for the buds themselves, they are a beefy piece of kit and have a nice finish (you can get them in white with cyan highlights or black with silver highlights). They also have an inline volume control, which you can use to mute your mic. On the audio side, the Battle Buds are all about the bass. The 10mm drivers have a real bite with great levels as well as a good sound sphere. We tested them with Yoshi's Crafted World, Mario Kart and Ape Out as well as with The Division 2 on the Xbox One. We also tested the mic and got good clear sound throughout. On the downside, the weight of the buds does take a bit of time to get used to, as they sit a little bit out from your ears.
But the Battle Buds are a solid bit of kit which offers some of the sound and features that you would expect from a much higher-tier home headset. If you're a Switch user who likes playing out and about or a mobile gamer that loves a quick round of Fortnite during a lunch break, you'd do far worse than buy these — especially at just £24.99. **★★★★★**
STUART CULLEN



**Yoshi has a huge art**
NINTENDO Labo may have only just launched but, in a surprise move, it has been announced that it is joining the VR revolution.
The Legend Of Zelda: Breath Of The Wild will be fully playable in Labo VR as will Super Mario Odyssey. It will get a special mode where you will revisit the Cap. Seaside and Luncheon Kingdoms for challenges.
There is no word on how these updates will work because you have to hold the Labo VR up to your face as it doesn't have a head strap. Game control may be a challenge in itself.

TOP 5 GAMES THIS WEEK
1 Tom Clancy's The Division 2
2 FIFA 19
3 Yoshi's Crafted World
4 Mario Kart 8 Deluxe
5 Sekiro: Shadows Die Twice

SAD news for Meat Boy fans — Team Meat has said the long-awaited Super Meat Boy Forever will not make its planned April release. However, they don't expect the delay to be too long.



THERE has been plenty of chat about the difficulty and accessibility of games. Now Capcom have stirred the pot with the latest download for Resident Evil 2. Pay £4 and the In-game Rewards Unlock, which is out now, will grant you instant access to a host of extras — without breaking sweat.
Now it may be nice to have The 4th Survivor or the unbreakable combat knife but this move — dubbed as a time-saver — raises a question about belittling the achievements of those who unlock things the natural way through playing each level as the difficulty increases, or just paying for progress. And discuss. **★★★★★**
STUART CULLEN

NINTENDO are the kings of cute and colourful in the gaming world.
From Italian plumbers to princesses and Donkey Kong — the kaleidoscopic creations have lit up gaming screens for kids young and old.
But Yoshi the little dinosaur blows the cute-ometer off the scale.
Yoshi's Crafted World takes the foundations of the Woolly World series and ramps up the fun factor big-style.
The basic idea is that Yoshi is transferred from a standard gaming world into a land made of arts and crafts materials. It creates loads of laughs and some interesting gameplay.
Crafted World has a charming tale which sees Yoshi and his mates enjoying a dance around the Sun Stone which can do "magic" things.
But it's not long until the big bad team of Baby Bowers and Kamek come after the stone. However, during a fight they end up losing five dream gems which are blasted to different islands around the world. These gems give the Sun Stone its power.
It's up to our brave little green dino to start a grand adventure to return the gems, get the Sun Stone working again and save all the others from Baby Bowers and Kamek.
As far as the tale goes, it's standard Nintendo light-hearted fare that frames the gameplay brilliantly. The core is a 2D platformer which sees you run from left to right, eating enemies to make eggs which you can then shoot, and also hunting for secrets. There are some fun ways to play, like having a dinosaur head fall on yours which you can then use to smash your way through the level, or throwing eggs at targets on a moving train.
It's great because you never know what's coming next — it can change within seconds and that keeps the gameplay fresh and also eggs you on. See what we did there?
The main tale is made up of 43 levels, but in a neat twist, as soon as you have completed them you can replay them in reverse. That allows you to collect any items you may have missed first time around.
You'll also be able to unlock different theme costumes along with the coins. The game has more than 170 for Yoshi and, at first, it may simply look like a cute addition but they actually unlock a series of defences so you can take more than one hit.
Graphically, the game is the visual feast you would expect from the colour kings. You get to run through a land made of cardboard, pipe cleaners and duct tape. It's fun to see what they have used to make certain parts.
However, the soundtrack fails to match the look. It comes across as a bit babyish at times. And that will get on your nerves, especially if you are going for 100 per cent because that can only be achieved by doing many levels lots of times — so you hear that music a LOT.
It's also a bit on the easy side for seasoned players, but younger gamers will have a blast.
It is what you would expect from an easy-going cute Nintendo adventure which has a low skill bar. It deserves credit for trying new gameplay ideas that get more interesting as you rise through the levels.
Fans and youngsters will love it. And even the most hardened gamer will still crack a smile. **★★★★★**
STUART CULLEN



