

● **GHOST OF Tsushima** has an update that can dial down the experience or toughen it up. The catchy Patch 1.05 includes a new lethal difficulty level which

makes enemies more deadly, but can also buff your katana. Or you can lower Insanity, letting you block more attacks than in standard combat and recover if you get hit.

● **MORE CD Projekt Red** and Netflix teamwork as a second season of *The Witcher* is in the works along with a Cyberpunk anime series. *The Witcher: Blood*

Origin will be set 1,200 years before Geralt and will chart the origin of the Witchers. Showrunner Lauren Hissrich tweeted: "This has been the toughest secret to keep!"

MUNCH DELIGHT

toolbox on how to dispatch the poor lab lers and security. You can break down irs and grab them with your tentacles for a ck. Oh, the satisfaction of a job well done, his game changes as you go — once 've grown up, there are ie forms — small, dium and large. Each its own skills that you'll e to juggle. ou need to solve some zles by depositing a l of your alien into a al pool, but that omes a clue that the l placement — often is you a hint of what is ded to solve the puzzle that will be nearby. he developers have created a very detailed l style which fits the game well — it works ou rip bodies apart and leave a red trail ind you. You might think of Super Meat Boy



although there is no prime cut sirlorn here. The sound is used sparingly and mainly to build up the tension. The most frequent sound you will hear is a squiggly wet noise as you move around or the screams of a lab worker trying to flee. It is all well-thought-out, but it does feel like there is something missing.

The people-munching is fun at first but it soon becomes nothing more than a means to an end.

A little backstory would have really helped to flesh things out. That doesn't stop this being a brutal and often disgusting adventure that is certainly not for younger gamers.

If you like movies like *Alien* or *The Thing* then unleash this beast — being bad has never been so good.

★★★★



NINTENDO have already flexed their design muscles with Yoshi and Kirby getting the arts and crafts treatment — so it was only a matter of time before Mario joined the gang.

Enter *Paper Mario: The Origami King*. It is developed by Japanese studio Intelligent Systems and is the latest chapter in the *Paper Mario* series.

There have been six over the years and this is a sequel to the WiiU game, *Paper Mario: Colour Splash*.

It's worth pointing out that *The Origami King* isn't a return to the series' highest point — *The Thousand-Year Door* — when it was a role-player.

This has gone down the action adventure route. But, like *ALL* Mario games, Princess Peach needs to be rescued and it is never going to be as simple as just going to get her.

There are some items to collect but they have been blown to every corner of the kingdom.

And there are a few new, and interesting, twists that add to the whole experience.

One of the neatest moves is a bigger role for the series bad boy, Bowser.

His job has been taken over by King Olly which means Bowser has a deeper part to play in the proceedings. It all means this Mario game is more than just a chase — there is some real heart in the tale.

You find yourself in a Mario land that is fully crafted from paper. It is stunning to behold — from rolling hills to ships at sea. Everything has been given the folded paper treatment, including our heroes. It's a lovely and charming art style that really pops and is full of fun details.

You get to explore a vast world full of sections and packed with secrets and puzzles to solve.

It's well worth taking the time to check it all out because you can find hundreds of hidden Toads all over the place. They can be in cactus plants, inside a stack of logs and everywhere inbetween. It's great fun finding them.

But that discovery

Paper Mario: The Origami King

Switch £49.99

trail will also help when you end up in battle. The Toads fill out the crowd in the arena which is a slick way of keeping track of how many you have found. You can also call on their support if a fight is not going so well — they will mob rush opponents or give you items to swing the battle.

Combat is another interesting move — unlike past games the experience or level system has gone.

That could be a downer for some Mario fans, but the saving grace is that the core has been changed in such a way that it works now.

You battle in a circular arena and you have to move outer rings from the centre to line up your enemies for an attack. It does take a bit of time and effort to make it work, and there is very little depth once you have it sorted, which is a shame.

Fights go from easy to super easy very quickly but things are kept fresh once the origami enemies appear. They are a little more challenging and it helps to pave the way up to the boss battles that flip the circle system around. The boss is at the centre and Mario has to work out a path to get to an attack icon while grabbing bonuses along the way.

These fights are the real stand-out moments — each boss dishes up a new and creative battle — like being made of elastic bands or a box of colouring pencils.

The combat system has been refined to help you want to fight instead of dodging them. That said, you can skip weaker enemies which helps to streamline things.

This really takes time to get going, the first few hours are very story-heavy and this isn't helped by the skip text speed being painfully slow.

This is a fresh take on a once much-loved series, but it faced a huge battle to match the heights of the past.

It doesn't quite pull it off, but it gets so, so close. It is a fun and enjoyable adventure full of "Nintendo" moments.

★★★★

sh-up



● **MORTAL Kombat 11:** Aftermath is getting a new Summer Heat Skin Pack for this month. The DLC p ll include three skins — Off the Bone Bara a BBQ chef in, the tritotic red, rite, and blue- ited Fireworks

Erron Black skin, and the Edenian Summer Kitana skin. The dress-up fun doesn't stop there — the Klissic Femme Fatale Skin Pack is out later in the month then the spooky All Hallows' Eve Skin Pack hits in October.



TOP 5 GAMES THIS WEEK

- 1 *Ghost of Tsushima*
- 2 *Animal Crossing: New Horizons*
- 3 *F1 2020*
- 4 *Paper Mario: The Origami King*
- 5 *Mario Kart 8 Deluxe*

● THE company behind FPGA-driven retro consoles has shared details on the upcoming Pocket.

It is Analogue's first foray into portable gaming and aims to deliver a console capable of playing Game Boy family cartridges by either using its high-resolution internal LCD or via a dock connected to another



display. On top of that, support for Neo Geo Pocket Color, Game Gear and Atari Lynx is also possible with adaptors.

The system is due out in May 2021 but pre-orders will open tomorrow.

The Pocket is priced at \$199.99 — that is about £155 — with the dock being sold separately. That will set you back around £76.



NEW MUSIC

By Jim Gellatly

STEPHANIE CHEAPE

WHERE: Glasgow.

FOR FANS OF: Dua Lipa, Pale Waves, Lana Del Rey.

JIM SAYS: I've been a fan for a while. A few years ago I had the honour of introducing Stephanie on my stage at the Stereofunk Festival at Strathclyde Park.

The singer impressed with a set of acoustic numbers. These days the Hamilton-raised singer-songwriter has moved in an electro pop direction, with a sound she labels "pop music for the goths".

Earlier this year she got together with radio legend George Bowie on the GBX & Sparkos cover of the Bowie classic *Heroes*.

Raising funds for Carers Trust Scotland and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, she danced-up version hit No2 in the Scottish charts.

Stephanie said: "Geo has been so supportive over last year since we met at my headline show in Glasgow. We are both huge David Bowie fans. This was a way of thanking the essential worker heroes in Scotland."

Stephanie had previously written some songs with Sam McTrusty and Ross McNaie from Twin Atlantic, including her 2018 breakout single *Blood Sweat & Fear* and Here I Am which featured on her debut EP *OK Without You* earlier this year.

She's also collaborated with producer Lewis Gardiner (Ellie Goulding, Prides, Be Charlotte), who has again co-written her latest single *Back To Life*. The vibrant pop number seems so apt for these times.

She said: "We wrote it over a Zoom session. I isolated alone for most of lockdown and wanted a song I could dance to even if I was stuck at home. When I play it live, it'll be amazing to dance with a crowd again."

It's been tough going for most of us, but Stephanie has taken some positives out of the Covid-19 restrictions. She said: "It's been eye-opening. I love how I have reconnected with myself and enjoyed the simple things. My music video for *Back To Life* sums up my lockdown."

The 25-year-old's big break came in 2017 as she was crowned the Spotlight with SSE on Capital FM winner at the Scottish Music Awards in aid of Nordoff Robbins.

That led her to a management deal with club guru and legendary promoter Donald MacLeod, who was one of the judges.

It's all a major turnaround for the singer who suffered terrible bullying at school. That resulted in home-schooling for a year when she was 14. It was then she first picked up a guitar and regained belief in herself, going on to make her live debut at the Parkville Hotel in Blantyre, Lanarkshire, as a 17-year-old.

She recalled: "That first gig wasn't planned. Someone asked if I would play and, for some reason, I felt like I had to do it even though I wasn't ready."

As her star continues to ascend, Stephanie is well on her way to making a major impact on the scene.

MORE: iamstephaniecheape.com ● Jim presents a weekly showcase of New Music on Amazing Radio, Sundays 2-4pm.

amazingradio.com
jimgellatly.com

Watch video of Stephanie Cheape at thescottishsun.co.uk