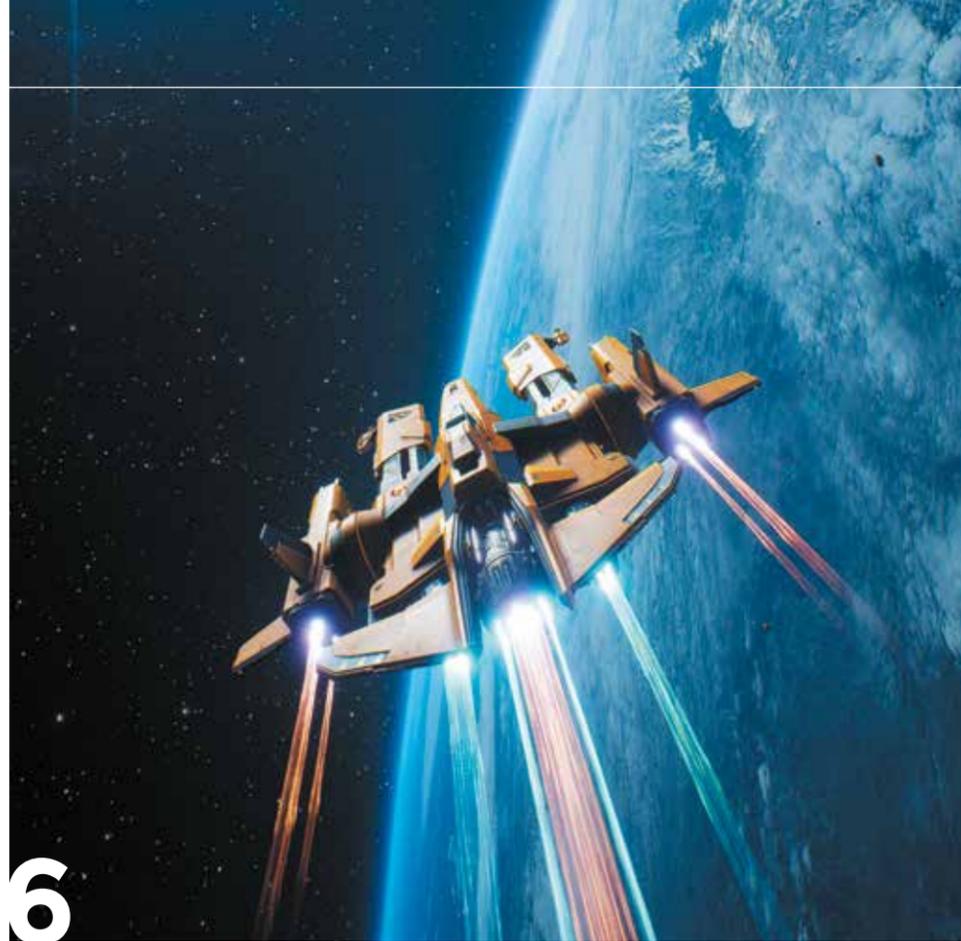


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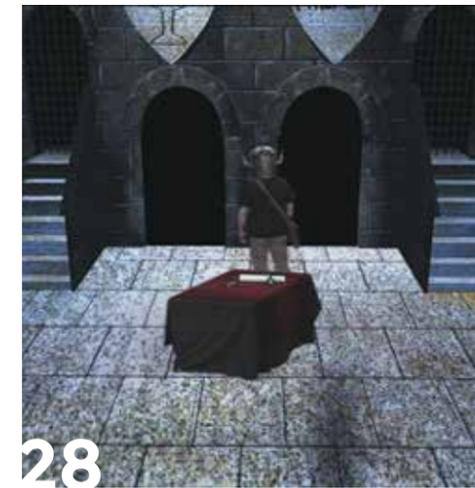


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WELCOME

The cover gives it away: this edition offers a celebration – and exploration – of space-based video games. And as our selection of previews and features hopefully proves, space games can take on a huge number of forms: there are traditional shooters, like *Cygni: All Guns Blazing*, expansive RPG-like hybrids, such as our cover game, *EVERSPACE 2*, and claustrophobic sims about life in a vacuum – see *Ostranauts* and *Starmancer* on pages 14 and 16 respectively.

What that latter pair of games do, though, is reflect some of the darker realities of humanity back at us. *Starmancer* may be set in a distant future of interstellar technology, but its space stations of colonists are still sharply defined by their class and status (though just how different the quality of their living conditions are is up to the player). *Ostranauts*, meanwhile, sees our late-capitalist system migrate from the confines of a dying Earth and take over the solar system. In that game's dark future, corporations reign supreme, while those lower down the economic ladder fly around in their ships, scavenging and trading to make the money they need to survive. Neither game necessarily sets out to make an overt political or social statement, but then, games can't help but follow the dark and sometimes cruel rules that govern our contemporary reality. Even in space, you have to worry about paying your rent.

Ryan Lambie
Editor

