

recreation & entertainment

YOUR GUIDE TO WHERE TO GO & WHAT TO DO IN HALTON

Jade Empire

GAME REVIEW BY DAVID TIERNEY (00760@MICROPLAY.CA)

ESRB Rating: Mature

Age Appropriateness: Contains little gore and no language, but many of the plot elements are quite disturbing (cannibalism, torture, murder). Recommended 16+

I'm not qualified to review this week's only notable release (Madden 2006... I don't play sports games), so instead I decided that I'd look at a recent game that hasn't gotten anywhere near the attention it deserves. Jade Empire is an action roleplaying game set in the ancient China of myth. In a world populated by demons, sorcerers, and magnificent flying machines, you must rescue your kidnapped Master and ultimately decide the fate of the Jade Empire itself. The story's pretty awesome all the way through-I won't ruin it for you.

Jade Empire was made by Bioware, the same people who produced Knights of the Old Republic, and it has a lot of similarities to KotOR. The basic "wander around, run errands, be good or evil, save the world" formula is the same-the difference is that in JE, it doesn't feel like busy work. The writing is solid and the scenery breathtaking, so even the fact that you're playing errand boy (or girl) to the world never feels tedious; each sub-quest has real value and is entertaining in its own right. The main divergence from KotOR is the combat system. Whereas Knights used

a variation on the Dungeons and Dragons mechanics to resolve combat in a turn-based environment, Jade Empire uses a fully real-time martial arts system that stresses timing and constant variation of the many available combat styles, from Thousand Cuts' lightning-quick punches, to Ice Shard's ranged freeze, to the raw power of the Horse Demon transformation. Each of the twenty or so styles has its uses, and it's up to you to train the ones that suit your personal style.

I just can't say enough good things about this game. The plot is fantastic, with many twists and revealed secrets, and is fleshed out by good dialogue and really solid voice acting (see if you can spot John Cleese!). The combat is an endless thrill, as you switch styles constantly to fit the moment-to-moment needs of a fight. The graphics are some of the most beautiful I've seen on the Xbox, not in a technical sense, but in an artistic one-the sunset landscapes and sprawling cities are incredible, and always remind you of where and when you are. Jade Empire is my favourite game released yet this year, and hasn't been getting anywhere near the attention it deserves. The upside of that is that you can probably find a copy pretty easily. Go ahead, do yourself a favour... get your hands on the best RPG yet released for the Xbox.

Score: 5/5

microplay 393 Main Street, East, Milton

halton happenings

Please note: Halton Happenings is a free editorial service to non-profit groups, churches, schools, and charities. Other events may be inserted at the discretion of the Editor. Deadline for submission is Tuesday at noon prior to insertion on Friday. Please restrict information supplied to include the date, time, venue, organization and contact details for your event. The Halton Compass reserves the right to edit each submission for brevity. Inclusion is at the discretion of the publisher and is dependent on space. To submit an event for Halton Happenings call 905-854-3333 or email info@haltoncompass.com

Fall Mom-to-Mom Sale at St. Alban's Anglican Church, 19 St. Alban's Drive, Acton, on September 24 from 9 am to 12 pm. Rent a table to sell your infants' and children's toys, games, clothes, cribs, strollers, high chairs, playpens etc. For vendor information call Susanne at 519-853-0390

Till August 29

Shades of Summer Art Show and Sale, in the Gallery of The Halton Hills Cultural Centre, 9 Church Street, Georgetown. For more information about Gallery hours, please call 905-877-7915, ext. 2517

Till end August

The Milton District Hospital Gift Shop Summer Sale. Baby clothing, home accessories, jewellery, purses and wonderful giftware. Drop in and Save! For information call 905-876-1239.

Till August 27

Century Church Theatre, Hillsburgh. "Weekend Comedy" by Jeanne and Sam Bobrick. Directed by John Snowdon, starring Neville Worsnop, Lorne Hiro, Brenda Barr, Deb Huggins. Sparks fly when "staid and middle-aged" shares a weekend cottage with "young and freewheeling" in this hilarious battle of the generations. Best value in summer theatre. Group discounts for 10+. Matinee and evening performances. Box Office 519 855 4586.

August 19

2nd Annual Victorian Luncheon Tea hosted by Sarah Priscilla Waldie. Talk on Victorian Dress (wear your Sunday best - hats & gloves are recommended). Friday one sitting @ 12:30pm. Tickets cost \$10.00. 905-875-4156 (Carriage Room, Waldie Blacksmith Shop -air condition).

August 20 and 21

Country Heritage Park presents Brawler's Farm, An American Civil War Re-enactment. Come experience authentic military camps, battle re-enactment, cavalry, and artillery. Also watch a fashion show, medical demos, and listen to period music. Event takes place from 10am until 5pm. For more information call (905) 878-8151.

August 25

CVC's Canoe Hike: Paddling the Park. Join us at Island Lake Conservation Area from 4pm - 6pm for a unique guided hike opportunity where participants learn about the natural and cultural heritage of the area while canoeing or kayaking. Limited boat rental available. Please call Lindsay at (905) 670-1615 for more information and to reserve a spot for this event.

August 26

Join us for Poetry Night in the Espress Yourself Cafe, 220 Main Street, Milton at 7 pm on Open mic www.federationofpoets.com/halton.htm

August 27

Bake Sale Plus at St. John's Church, Main St. Rockwood from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Great values for your money!!

August 27 and 28

Country Heritage Park presents Discover Farm Animals. Come see horses, cows, pigs, goats, cats, sheep, dogs, rabbits and even a llama! Look for their names and bring your camera! This event takes place from 12 noon until 5pm. For more information call (905) 878-8151.

September 5

Ballinafad United Church will host a Chicken BBQ from 5:00-6:30 at the Ballinafad Community Centre. Quarter chicken dinner \$9.00; Half chicken dinner \$12.00. Tractor drawn wagon rides for the kids. Silent Auction for the adults! Limited tickets. To reserve your tickets call 905 877 4072. Bring your lawn chairs.

September 8, 15, 22

Learn to Square Dance! Waterdown Village Squares, Classes start Sept 8, 15 or 22, Dancing starts at 8 pm. Your first session is FREE! We dance at: St James United Church, 306 Parkside Drive, Waterdown. Forget your cares when you dance with the Village Squares! Call 905 525 0333 for more info.



www.ARTSMILTON.com

Creating Community with the Arts

We are pleased to resume the regular listing of events for our members groups and member corporations. In addition to this events column we will be featuring profiles of artists, groups, and corporations, who have contributed to the health and vibrancy of the Milton community. Profiles will run alternate weeks and submissions are now being solicited.

Arts Milton is an arts council, a non-profit umbrella organization, started in 1999. We support our many non-profit arts, dance, literary, music, and theatre members and provide a valuable service to the public. We are supported by member corporations, such as dance studios, music shops, and our tourism and hospitality industry partners. If you or your group would like

to add your support please consider membership. Application forms can be downloaded.

Our yearly Arts and Music Festival is supported by Corporate Sponsors, such as the Town of Milton Community Fund, Woodbine Entertainment, Tim Hortons, Home Hardware and many others. In 2006 our festival will be held at the Milton Fairgrounds on Saturday June 10th.

We also fund a very successful web site with information about our groups, links to their web sites, and a comprehensive Events Calendar. Please consult the web site for last minute changes to the following events.

Greg Nelson, President, Arts Milton, office: 905-854-4028

Sunday, August 28, 11:00 am - 5:00 pm

Halton Museum Foundation: BRITISH SALOON CAR CLUB DISPLAY. It's your chance for a close up look of British saloon cars from the pre-war era to the present-day displayed on the Halton Region Museum grounds in Kelso Conservation Area near Milton. Call Tony Fox at 905-632-0479 for details.

Sunday, August 28, 1:30 pm

Milton Historical Society: A HISTORICAL WALKING TOUR IN VICTORIA. Do not miss the opportunity to explore your community, soak in the rich history and legacy of Victoria Park and area. Meet at Victoria Park. Tour lasts approximately 90 minutes. Cost: \$3 RSVP to the Milton Historical Society. 905 875 4156

Friday, September 9, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Milton Players: NEW MEMBER RECEPTION. Join us for an informal get together to celebrate the start of our 26th season in Milton. Past, present and potential members, and your friends are all invited to visit our rehearsal and set building space off Alliance Rd in Milton. Members are reminded to bring their membership fee as usual. RSVP 905-875-0629 for details.

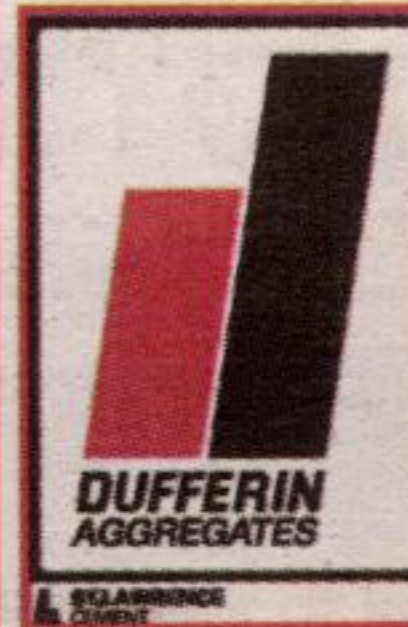
Friday, September 16, 8:00 pm - 10:00 pm. SOLD OUT!

Just Milton Folks: NANCY WHITE IN CONCERT. Nancy White, who kicks off the year along with her piano man Bob Johnston, has already generated lots of interest - her reputation as a queen of comedy makes her a popular performer wherever she appears. Her shows at the Oakville Centre for the Arts sell out every year. Hugh Foster Hall. 905-876-2645 rose.brooks@sympatico.ca, www.justmiltonfolks.ca

Saturday, September 17, 7:00 pm approx

Halton Museum Foundation: ALFIE SMITH. Experience the true origins of today's music with Alfie Smith. Blending Blues, Folk, Ragtime & Jazz, and using his amazing voice as an instrument, Alfie will draw you into his deep abiding passion for his unique brand of "Roots" music. A true master of the Dobro and Laptop guitar. \$45/person. Cash bar. ADVANCED TICKET SALES ONLY. Tickets call 905-875-2200 ext. 21.

This feature is generously sponsored by:



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