

Game Review: Defeating the Undead for Fun and Profit

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

Title: Darkwatch
ESRB Rating: Mature
Age Appropriateness: Lots of gore, and the theme's pretty dark. Recommended 17+

Darkwatch is a sci-fi/western first-person shooter for the Xbox and PS2. You play Jericho Cross, a bandit who robs trains for a living. During one such robbery, you free the soul of Lazarus, the son of the Devil (oops!), who turns you into a vampire (double oops!). You then spend the next ten hours collecting weapons, training your vampiric powers, and gallivanting around in an attempt to stop Lazarus' evil scheme.

The overall gameplay is pretty standard FPS fare, taking a lot of its cues from Halo—you can hold two weapons at a time, you've got a forc... I mean... BLOOD shield, which recharges if you stay out of combat for a few seconds. The weapons are pretty standard, running the usual line

of pistol-shotgun-rifle-rocket launcher, with a few others tossed in for good measure; the weapons, while fairly generic, are all satisfyingly huge and covered in blades and gothic ornature. If you get tired of shooting zombies, you can run up and club them with the butt of your armament, usually resulting in dismemberment due to the aforementioned blades. Much fun.

Darkwatch isn't an especially long game (you can probably knock over the campaign in about twelve hours or so); while this is usually a bad thing, in this case it keeps the campaign from getting repetitive and boring. The mission structure changes pretty often, going from horseback riding, to close-quarters fighting in a mine, to open combat in a ghost town. The boss fights are pretty fun, and are challenging without becoming frustrating, due to the mid-fight checkpoints. Oh, and speaking of checkpoints: they're

everywhere. If you die, you usually won't have to go back more than five minutes.

Ultimately, *Darkwatch* doesn't do anything new or innovative, but what it does do, it does fairly well. If you're happy with a pretty standard FPS set in an interesting locale, *Darkwatch* may just be worth

your time.
Score: 3.5/5

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 REVIEWED BY DEBORAH QUAIL

Weekend Comedy Erin's Century Church Theatre production

In a rustic cabin in upstate New York, two unknowing couples confront a generation gap when they find they've rented the same space on Memorial Day weekend. Amidst the entertainment equipment of snowshoes, skis, croquet set, fishing equipment, woodstove and a stocked bookcase, Frank and Peggy, a middle-aged couple trying to rekindle romance - or maybe just lust - and Jill and Tony, 20-somethings who enjoy frequent vacations, decide to share the space, make their own entertainment, and come to some eye-opening conclusions.

Although Peggy had wanted to ensure Frank's undivided attention for the weekend by being alone, she finds that sharing with a younger couple - who pack plenty of champagne and delectable take-out lobster and pasta - isn't so bad. Unfortunately Frank's staid ways and inflexible outlook toward love, sex, and marriage are initially discomfoting when he voices them to Jill and Tony. He also acts in a highly embarrassing manner in front of them, always trying to show the younger man that he's top dog. Tony and Jill think that they have a perfect relationship, but through their encounters with the older couple they soon find that there are ways that they can expand and deepen their bonds.

Frank is an anxious mass of nerves who suffers from withdrawal from his predictable city life, and Neville Worsnop aptly portrays such upset to his audience. He's awkward with the other couple, outraged and somewhat confused over the sudden examination of his comfortable lifestyle. Mr. Worsnop has a long history in the theatre and has been instrumental in establishing the Erin Arts Foundation and Century Church Theatre Company. His wife, Peggy, played by Brenda Barr, is an excellent quick-change artist, who bounces back and forth from being happy with her husband to being irritated with his actions. Ms. Barr's performance proved that she is as adept at acting, her first love, as she is at stage managing, which she has done for a number of shows for Century Church Theatre.

Deb Huggins has performed many roles in local theatre and provided a smooth, polished performance as a young woman who comes to terms with her own relationship and what she would like from it. She continues to act and react even when she is not the main focus of attention, which, it must be noted, is true of all the actors. Lorne Hiro, who played a very fluid, relaxed Tony, brought the younger character to life with style and grace. He perfectly portrayed a man who was comfortable in his lifestyle, but found that he was suddenly being stretched beyond immediate expectations and carefully worked through the new phase of the relationship with Ms. Huggins.

All of the performances were top-rate, as was the directing by John Snowdon, whose work has been reviewed for many years in The Compass through dinner theatre productions at The Arboretum at the University of Guelph. It's a pleasure to encounter such quality in local theatre.

The Century Church Theatre in Hillsburgh is a lovely brick building on the main street that the Erin Arts Foundation shares with the Hillsburgh Community Christian Church. It's gradually being equipped as a performance space for live theatre, children's programs, and other community events. Although some redeccorating, new equipment and cushions for the wooden pews await future funding, the sound projection under the arched ceiling is excellent. It will be a delight to continue with quality entertainment in such a venue.

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 Creating Community with the Arts

Recreation Opportunities in Arts & Culture, Part 1

Recreation: (to create anew, restore, refresh); refreshment of strength and spirits after work; a means of refreshment or diversion.

If you received Arts Milton's Showtime newsletter or noticed our numerous events listings you will have recognized that recreation is much broader in scope than just competitive sports and physical activity. It includes; art, crafts, dance, music, photography, theatre, or involvement with literary or heritage activities.

ART: A dynamic group of artists formed Fine Arts Society of Milton (FASM) in 1998. FASM hosts the free annual Studio Tour, this year on Oct 1 & 2. A brochure with map and description of each artist can be picked up at the Milton Library and local stores. FASM has monthly classes or sketch outings.

DANCE: Studios in Milton specializing in teaching children include: **The Dance Shoppe, Graham School of Irish Dance, Jacqueline Smith School of Highland Dance, and Ronda Copeland School of Irish Dancing.** New member Spanish Interactive offers Spanish Dance lessons.

HERITAGE: Many municipalities have historical societies but virtually none has a working blacksmith shop in the downtown. Our Waldie Blacksmith Shop has been beautifully restored by **The Milton Historical Society.** The facility also includes meeting and archives space. **Halton Regional Museum and Country Heritage Park** are local tourism attractions that also welcome volunteers. Global Genealogy in Campbellville has an extensive book and map collection on display and offers courses in family history research.

VOCAL MUSIC: Milton is particularly strong in this category with long established groups. **Milton Choristers** recently celebrated their 35th anniversary and now performs in the renovated 300 seat Knox Church, which is also home to **Adoramus Children's Choir.** Our women's barbershop group, **A Capella Showcase,** wins Harmony Inc competitions in Canada and USA. Groups rehearse weekly in Milton and are open to new members. **Women of Note** is a small talented choir made up of some of Laura Jeffrey's vocal students. **Kirsten Pitkanen** has recently opened **Canadian Academy of Vocal Arts (CAVA)** and teaches some of the better young singers in this area. **Men II Boys** is a fun group that performs 50's and 60's favourites with guitar accompaniment and a heavy dose of humour. In addition, each of our churches has an adult choir.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC Milton's music stores and teaching studios, include **Academy of Music and Ontario Conservatory of Music.** Individual professional music teachers are represented by **Milton Music Teachers Association (1971),** which features monthly recitals and a bi-annual Music Festival. Performing groups include **Halton Youth Symphony, MacNaughton Highlanders pipe band, popular rock band LTD, and Countryaires,** an old time country band. **The Memphis Meteors** 60's style Elvis rock band has several Milton members, as does the **Steve Kabakos** group.

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