

# GAMES



## NEW MUSIC By Jim Gellatly

### MANISTONE

**WHO:** Michael Hyland (vocals/guitar), Marina Natoli (keyboards/vocals), Mat Lomas (bass), Sam Lister (drums)

**WHERE:** London/Aberdeen  
**FOR FANS OF:** REM, The Shins, The War On Drugs

**JIM SAYS:** It was a blast from the past when Mike Hyland got in touch to tell me about his latest project.

He was in an Aberdeen group called Woodbug in the mid-90s.

I remember playing them on my Northsound Radio show. Mike says he was only 14 at the time.

As a 19-year-old he left Aberdeen for London. He said: "I wanted to make a career in music and I thought that would be the best place to be. I did lots and lots of composing, recording hundreds of demo tracks and waiting to polish them up for eventual release."

"I completed a music degree at Goldsmiths and played bass, drums, guitar and keyboards in quite a few bands. Most successful of those was Stricken City.

"We did a lot of fun stuff such as Radio 1 sessions and some great shows around UK, France, Holland,



Norway and Sweden and the US. I co-wrote and produced the last Stricken City album Losing Colour. It was released on the day we split up. It's a great album, but not a good way to release it."

After the band split in 2011, Mike started work on Manistone. The debut album Everyone Has Their Time, released at the start of this month, was already written and recorded before the current line-up came together last year.

Mike said: "I began looking for musicians at the beginning of 2015 after I'd finished writing the album. It's taken that long to find everyone as quite a few musicians I worked with on the way decided to leave London. Marina was the first to join last February, then Sam and Mat the following summer."

Rather than go down the route of releasing singles or EPs, Manistone have launched their recorded output with a full album. Everyone Has Their Time is the first thing they have officially released.

I'm delighted to spread the word. It's an album that deserves to be heard.

**MORE:** manistone.co.uk  
● Jim presents a weekly showcase of New Music on Amazing Radio Sundays 2-4pm.  
[www.amazingradio.com](http://www.amazingradio.com)  
[www.jimgellatly.com](http://www.jimgellatly.com)

Watch video of the band performing at: [thescottishsun.co.uk](http://thescottishsun.co.uk)



SOME games have all the ingredients to be a hit, but it just doesn't happen.

If you are going to play Berserk then make sure you have enough free time to wade through the tough stuff before you find the gems.

This is a classic hack-and-slash based on a 27-year-old manga series. Omega Force know their way around a sword or two — they were the team behind Dynasty Warriors and Attack On Titan.

Berserk follows the stories of the Golden Age and the Hawk Of The Millennium Empire but, beware, there are rivers of blood and it can be a bit brutal at times.

There are more than two hours of animated cut scenes that help a hefty tale and give you a taste of the Ber-

**Berserk And The Band Of The Hawk** PS4, PS3, PS Vita and PC

serk movies. The gameplay follows the Dynasty template so expect to face off against vast armies and have a combo count in at least the high hundreds. But using the Dynasty system means the combat is all too often just a one or two-button affair. It is a mass of the same destroying, rescuing and killing. It wears a little thin.

The boss fights are worth the wait though. You have to be very clear-minded or you will lose.

There are 46 main story chapters. They are broken up by letting you play as other Berserk characters such as Casca and Griffith although

it is a shame that these interludes seem very brief. There is also a free mode for you to try characters you have unlocked and Endless Eclipse mode — a tower dungeon-horde mode where you unlock bonus items. This is where the real challenges are.

The cartoon feel is excellent given the number of enemies on screen and the soundtrack has a real bite to it. The audio is in Japanese with English subtitles and that can be distracting in the heat of battle.

If you're a fan you'll love playing as your favourite characters. Newcomers will also see why Berserk is such a hit. But why is it such a slog to get to the good stuff?

★★★  
**STUART CULLEN**

TO celebrate the launch of Horizon Zero Dawn, Media Molecule have released a character pack for Little Big Planet 3.

You get Aloy Sackgirl, Grazer, OddSock, Stormbird Swoop and Rost Sackboy suits and they all look very cute. Download the pack now from the PlayStation Store for £4.99



# Zero's new hero

**THE gaming world has a new heroine.**

Let's hear it for feisty red-haired Aloy — the enforcer in a tribalistic world that is Horizon Zero Dawn.

Aloy is an outcast but she still aims to save the tribe and unravel the mystery of her past.

As a child she fell into a cave and found a Bluetooth-style headset called Focus — and that is a vital key to the story.

Her world has been reclaimed by nature. It is a beautiful place but packs of huge animal-like robots roam the planet.

The result is an all-action role-player that has shades of Far Cry, Assassin's Creed, Mass Effect and Zelda.

Aloy is armed with an arsenal of primitive but deadly weapons and your Focus lets you scan enemies in the

**Horizon Zero Dawn**

PS4 £44.99

heat of battle. It helps you get the upper hand because it highlights their weak points and best points of attack.

Your firepower evolves as you roam a huge open world. You'll find new ammo types and different weapons as well as a skill tree of abilities to unlock.

You have to smack the robots and battle other tribes as well as tackle side missions like unlocking areas of the map and clearing enemy camps.

But that feeling of being hunted gradually changes and, by the end of the 40-hour campaign, the roles are reversed.

The plot can be a little heavy and political, and even when it is finished you will still have items to find and mysteries to solve.

Aloy has had an instant impact. Horizon Zero Dawn is No1 in the UK

games chart and that is no mean feat for the new IP from Sony exclusively for the PS4. The Guerrilla Games studio may be best known for the Killzone series but this is another star.

Graphically, the game is stunning — the snow-covered camps, dark forests and dusty deserts look amazing. The movement of the robots and the detail on every character is a testament to the Guerrilla Games team. They have crafted a work of art that is backed up by a powerful soundtrack.

If there are any gripes, the heavy storyline in the first few hours would top the list and some of the characters have a dead-eye issue.

But you can't help revelling at what Guerrilla Games have produced. This is a world full of character and a hell of a good game. And we have a super-vixen new heroine in Aloy.

★★★★★  
**STUART CULLEN**



**BANDAI Namco Entertainment UK and ESL UK have unveiled a Tekken 7 tournament which will tour the country in search of the ultimate fighting champion.**

The battle will take place ahead of the official release of **TEKKEN 7** on June 2 on Xbox One, PS4 and PC. A series of qualifying tournaments will

be held across five major cities, with the Glasgow event on April 15-16 as part of Hypespotting 6 at the Hilton Hotel.

The final is on May 26-28 at MCM London Comic Con.

For more on the series, head to [bandainamcoent.eu](http://bandainamcoent.eu) and for Hypespotting 6 info, see [hypespotting.co.uk/](http://hypespotting.co.uk/)

**HYPESPOTTING**

**STREAMING** is fast becoming the go-to way of watching gaming and has led to a host of new stars.

Chris Slight is one of the new heroes — but he is also prepared to look at the heavier issues surrounding the community. He has presented features on Sky News and CNBC as well as being a core team member of the GinX.tv channel in the past. His personal

**ON THE STREAM**



streams are relaxed and fun, but he also focused on mental health issues and gaming inclusiveness.

He streams on a professional format for Devolver Digital & XSplit. Slight said: "We have game previews, giveaways and skulls who read you stories, what more could you want?" Find him under chrisslight or Devolver Digital & XSplit over at Twitch.com



**Just Dance 2017**

Switch, PS4, Xbox One, Wii, PS3, Xbox 360, Wii U and PC £49.99

GOT some friends round? Well, crack open the dance moves and show off your new Nintendo Switch.

If you have played any of the series titles before then you know what to expect — the formula hasn't changed.

You need friends and you need to the ability to mimic a gibbon flinging its arms about.

It builds on the solid foundations of last year's game but adds some classic Queen and hits from the likes of Justin Bieber and David Guetta to the track list.

You get 40 different tracks to fling yourself into and you can sign up to Just Dance Unlimited — a sort of streaming service that lets you into an ever-growing library of over 200 tracks.

You can use your phone as a controller by downloading the Just Dance app. That means up to five different people can play using a mix of controllers and phones with the app and game.

The usual modes are joined by sweat+. It's like a gym workout as you pick a playlist and it shows you in real time how many calories you have burned.

The new Just Dance machine mode has you dancing to fill up an energy tank to help aliens return home. A bit daft, but fun all the same.

Being on the Switch the game is now playable anywhere and you can use the Joy-Cons to have two players which is great fun.

Hardcore fans may feel cheated as the game hasn't moved on very far since Just Dance 2016 and it's a bit pricey on the Switch especially as it is available on other platforms for a lot less. But it is still fun.

★★★★★  
**STUART CULLEN**

