



J.U.L.I.A.: Among the Stars – Review

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Genre: Adventure, Indie, Point and click
Developer: CBE Software s.r.o.
Publisher: CBE Software s.r.o.
Platform: PC, Mac, Linux
Tested on: PC

Site Score
8.2

Good: Exciting storyline, great graphics, the interaction between the main characters

Bad: No autosave function, music is not that entertaining, some puzzles are a bit tedious

User Score
9.3
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Game remasters are pretty much a ‘thing’ nowadays in the world of video gaming. Especially console owners get confronted with another remaster edition of a game that already came out on the previous generation of consoles. PC gamers too, receive a reboot or reworked version of a game from the past once in a while. J.U.L.I.A. came out somewhere in 2012 and now, J.U.L.I.A.: Among the Stars takes it place. This remake is certainly worth your time if you like the point and click genre. If that’s what you like to play most, be sure to keep on reading.



Story

You wake up from what appears to be a cryosleep. Nobody seems to be around but an Artificial Intelligence (she’s called Julia, hence the game title) who urges you to wake up and handle all kinds of trouble in your ship. A couple of fires and an electrical surge later, the AI tells you that you weren’t just taking a casual beauty nap but that you, Rachel Manners, have been sleeping for a very long time. Rachel later finds out that her crewmembers have been killed and she’s the sole survivor. It’s now up to her to find out what exactly happened here. Through personal diaries, she finds out that things were going pretty bad and radiation made a lot of casualties. The fear of the crewmembers can be felt through the sentences they write and it becomes clear

quite fast that there were several trust issues between the team members. Did someone really poison everyone? Why would they do that?

Bit by bit, you'll uncover more and more about what exactly went on and it's a good thing that your character knows about as much as you, the player, do. The story might be a bit confusing at first (but that's exactly the point after waking up when you've been put in a artificial sleep for a long, long time) but the flow of information is quite steady and easy so it's not like the plot will make you even more confused but it'll make you think certain things through.



Graphics

One of the best parts of the game must be the graphics. The environments look very good and the cutscenes are a joy to watch. You can see the creators made a special effort to make every area feel realistic and detailed without bombarding you with thousand things to look at the instant you enter a new room. The user interface is simple yet effective and shows you everything you might need on your journey. For a smaller and lesser known game like this it's pretty impressive how good it looks so rest assured, the graphics are certainly not a legit reason to skip this game.

Sound

The music in J.U.L.I.A.: Among the Stars is okayish but easily the weakest link in the whole game design. Songs feel a bit tedious after a while and eventually, turning the sound down a few notches proved to be helpful.

The voice acting is nothing overly spectacular but it's certainly above average quality and the voices are enjoyable to listen to. JULIA, Mobot (a robot which helps you out in all kinds of ways) and Rachel are the three characters you'll hear the most and the voice actors suit the respective personage perfectly.



Gameplay

J.U.L.I.A. is a point and click game with a bunch of puzzle elements mixed in between. The puzzles range from fitting images together to creating a circuit with all kinds of components which need to be put down in a certain order. The difficulty level is just about right with certainly enough challenge to keep you pondering about the

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solution for a while. However, some puzzles might feel a bit like a chore instead of actually providing fun. Of course, not every task will feel as entertaining, but as most of the gametime goes into solving them, some more creativity and variation would've been welcome.

Besides the puzzling, there's a lot of exploration to do in the area's you visit. First of all, before even being able to visit another planet, you'll have to scan the place where you want to go and if in luck, the computer will tell you that the planet is 'landable.' Next, when Mobot is on site, there's enough stuff to examine and data to uncover, all in favor of finding out what happened to your crew. By searching the environment, you'll find objects or information that'll help you to advance the game. Between puzzles, this is a nice change of pace as, although with a problem solving mentality lurking in your head, these passages feel a lot less demanding than the puzzling parts.

Throughout your investigation, there's a lot of interaction and communication between the main character Rachel Manners, the AI Julia and Mobot and what's really fun about their conversations is that often, humour slips in between the lines. Talking to a computer has never been more entertaining as they react totally different then you'd expect.



On a technical level, I didn't really encounter any bugs or glitches so even though something might pop up throughout your playthrough (this can always happen ofcourse, it's still a programmed video game), the game feels stable enough to get you through the story without a lot of trouble. A small point of annoyance is that the player needs to save the game manually as there's no autosave function.

Conclusion

J.U.L.I.A.: Among the Stars provides an interesting and exciting storyline as you'll really want to know what exactly happened in the years your character has been sleeping. The graphics are very neat and conjure up some great detailed environments. Music wise, there's nothing to get really excited about and some puzzles feel a bit less overwhelming than others but all in all, if you like the point and click genre, this game is definitely worth a shot.



J.U.L.I.A.: Among the Stars - Review, 9.3 out of 10 based on 3 ratings



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