Nanci Santos, "Entry on: 12 Labours of Hercules by Jetdogs Studios , Zoom Out Games ", peer-reviewed by Susan Deacy and Elżbieta Olechowska. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2018). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/337. Entry version as of November 06, 2026.

Jetdogs Studios , Zoom Out Games

12 Labours of Hercules

Online (2015)

TAGS: Amazons Augean Stables Cerberus Charon Charybdis Chiron / Cheiron Council of the Gods Cretan Bull Hades Harpies Hephaestus Hera Heracles Heraklion Hermes Medusa Megara Minotaur Nemean Lion Norse Mythology Pegasus Poseidon Prometheus Scylla Stymphalian Birds Thebes Twelve Labours of Heracles Underworld Zeus



We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	12 Labours of Hercules
Studio/Production Company	Jetdogs Studios
Country of the First Edition	Online
Country/countries of popularity	Worldwide
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2015
First Edition Details	*12 Labours of Hercules* – 23 March 2015, *12 Labours of Hercules II*: *The Cretan Bull* – 5 June 2015, *12 Labours of Hercules III*: *Girl Power* – 7 August 2015, *12 Labours of Hercules IV*: *Mother Nature* (Platinum Edition) – 25 December 2015, *12 Labours of Hercules V: Kids of Hellas* (Platinum Edition) – 17 June 2016, *12 Labours of Hercules VI: Race for Olympus* – 21 December 2016, *12 Labours of Hercules VII*: *Fleecing the Fleece* – Tba.

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Running time	12 Labours of Hercules – 6 hours; 12 Labours of Hercules II: The Cretan Bull – 6 hours; 12 Labours of Hercules III: Girl Power – 6 hours; 12 Labours of Hercules IV: Mother Nature (Platinum Edition) – 6 ½ hours; 12 Labours of Hercules V: Kids of Hellas (Pla
Platform	Windows XP, Mac OS, Linux, Android, iOS
Official Website	jetdogs.com (accessed: May 22, 2018). store.steampowered.com (accessed: May 22, 2018).
Available Onllne	Trailer: youtube.com (accessed: May 22, 2018).
Genre	Action and adventure video games*, Puzzle video games*, Strategy*
Author of the Entry	Nanci Santos, OMC Contributor, nancisantos@hotmail.co.uk
Peer-reviewer of the Entry	Susan Deacy, University of Roehampton, s.deacy@roehampton.ac.uk Elżbieta Olechowska, University of Warsaw, elzbieta.olechowska@gmail.com

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Creators



Jetdogs Studios (Company)

Jetdogs Studios are an independent video games developer. They are based in Helsinki, Finland, and were formed in 2005. They specialise in creating unique, cross-platform games. Besides this game series, they are also known for making other small indie games such as *1Moment of Time*, *Alchemy Mysteries*, *Among the Heavens*, and others.

Prepared by Nanci Santos, OMC Contributor, nancisantos@hotmail.co.uk



Zoom Out Games (Company)

Zoom Out Games are a video games development company founded in 2011. Their headquarters are located in Saint Petersburg, Russia. According to their LinkedIn page, they develop Casual games, Mobile Games, Time-management games and Strategy games (see here, accessed: July 5, 2018). They are most known for this game series.

Prepared by Nanci Santos, OMC Contributor, nancisantos@hotmail.co.uk

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Additional information

Summary

The first 12 labours of Hercules game begins by introducing the main characters, Hercules and Megara, who live happily together with their servants. However, Hades abducts Megara, causing Hercules to set out to search for and rescue her. With the help of characters such as Medusa, Cerberus and Chiron, whom he rescues along the way, he fights the Hydra, saves Prometheus from his golden chains and rescues Megara from the Underworld.

The second game begins in Thebes with Hercules having the idea of using the Cretan bull to help him with manual labour. However, Hera finds out about this and decides to punish him for stealing the bull by making the animal untameable, causing the bull to escape. Hercules decides to chase after the bull, rescuing the Nemean lion, defeating the Stymphalian birds, and gathering the horses from the Augean Stables along the way. Finally, he feeds the bull apples from the tree of the Hesperides, which makes the bull tame once more.

In the third instalment of the series, Hercules finds himself fighting the Scylla. However, he is kidnapped by the Charybdis who appears from the waters nearby. Megara chases after the Charybdis, along with her servants, and finds Cerberus who is also trapped in the lair. Finally, along with characters from the earlier games, they rescue Hercules. However, upon recovering from this, Hercules decides to go explore the forest of the Amazons, where he is put under a spell. The team find and rescue him once again, only to find that the spell came from Zeus, so they proceed to teach Zeus a lesson by making him lose all the thunder power and replacing it with a broom.

The fourth game sees all the antagonistic gods from the previous games gather around, in a sort of council of gods, to discuss Hercules and plot their revenge. Firstly, they make Hercules fall ill for over a year, causing the whole land to become desolate, but once he regains health and begins rebuilding Hellas, the gods decide they need to do something else to stop him. They create an evil clone of Hercules, by using a mirror, and instruct him to stop Hercules from reconstructing Hellas. Hercules manages to rebuild Hellas with some difficulty, but, on his return home, he is taken by his evil clone through the mirrors. Hercules eventually manages to escape, but not before using one of the mirrors to find out who sent the evil clone. In the epilogue, Hercules, Megara and the servants go on a holiday whilst the three

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

gods are left doing the work of the servants. During the holiday, they find an egg which is causing chaos in the hotel they are staying at. The egg then hatches into a baby Scylla, whom they take care of.

The fifth game begins with Ares asking Hercules for his help to enter a battle, in exchange for riches and power. Hercules, however, declines the offer and as revenge, Ares hypnotises all the children in Greece, making them ready for battle. Hercules goes around saving the children by juggling round objects in front of them. On his way, he gets into Ares' chamber and destroys the machine Ares was using to control the children. However, knowing of Hercules' plan, Ares keeps an extra machine on himself and uses it to control golems, before beginning to control children. Having to now also fight the golems, Hercules receives help from Midas and Epeius. He proceeds to go to the factory where the golems are being made and destroys it.

The sixth *12 labours of Hercules* game begins with Hercules looking for Zeus who has gone missing. Since Zeus' disappearance, various gods have started campaigns to take over his rule. Hercules finds a poster for Poseidon's election campaign and decides to question him about Zeus. Poseidon explains that he was not involved in Zeus' disappearance, but that perhaps Hades may have some answers, so Hercules proceeds to go speak to Hades. When he reaches the underworld, Hades also denies having any involvement. However, whilst they are discussing this, an unknown man appears in the distance and after investigating, they discover that it is Thor, from Norse mythology. Thor decides to try to take over Olympus, so they defeat him and send him back to the Northern isles.

Analysis

Story and characters

12 Labours of Hercules is a lesser known game than the games from the *God of War* franchise, but nonetheless, worth playing for the story and immense Classical Antiquity references in its design and characters. It takes an interesting angle on known stories such as the Scylla and Charybdis from the *Odyssey*, Medusa, and Cerberus. For example, instead of antagonising the Gorgon Medusa, the game states that it is a friend of Hercules, and the hero counts on its help to defeat the Minotaurs he encounters throughout the game. This also happens with Cerberus, whom Hercules initially takes on as a foe, but quickly befriends him; Cerberus joins the group whenever there are lost souls

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

blocking the path.

The game cleverly uses known foes from the canonical twelve labours of Herakles* as allies. Other examples of this consist in the use of Geryon to gather all the sheep which Hercules encounters. He also receives help from King Midas, Epeius, Pegasus and the Nemean Lion.

It is also worth noting how the game integrates the twelve labours. Throughout the series, Hercules encounters enemies and similar tasks to those of the traditional labours, except for the Ceryneian Hind and the Erymanthian Boar. Additionally, the games also discuss labours and tasks attributed to Herakles which are outside the twelve labours, such as freeing Prometheus from his golden chains (Apollodorus *Library* 2.5.11) and fighting the Scylla (Eustathius on *Homer*; Tzetze on *Lycophon* 45; Virgil *Aeneid* VI.286).

However, the main focus of the game is on feuds with other gods, namely, Hades, Hera, Zeus and Ares, all the while accepting help from other Olympian gods such as Demeter (so that the player can obtain more consumables), Hermes (which increases the speed the characters walk between objects), and Hephaestus (who helps the characters work faster).

Finally, it is worth noting the involvement of a god from Norse mythology in the sixth game of the series. Thor is introduced as being the Norse equivalent of Zeus, which is why Thor kidnaps Zeus in an attempt to seize the throne to rule “Hellas”.

Gameplay and design

There are a few interesting features in the game which connects the game to other parts of Classical Antiquity, beyond the myths. There are several figurines in the first game that the player can collect: such as the well-known statue of Athena Parthenos, a trireme and the mythical Temple of Zeus. (Figures 1-3) The other games offer the player paintings of the various characters, such as Medusa, Cerberus, Geryon, and others.

Additionally, in the levels themselves, it is possible to observe other interesting features, for example, the fresco on the wall (Figure 4) which appears towards the end of the fourth game, as the team is getting ready to leave for their holiday. Also, when Hercules makes Hades stand as a pillar in the first game, this very much resembles the

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children’s and Young Adults’ Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of “Artes Liberales” of the University of Warsaw.

	Caryatids in the Erechteion. (Figure 5).
	* In this work, the canonical labours are as follows, as per Apollodorus *Library* 2.5.1 – 2.5.12: 1. Nemean Lion; 2. Lernaean Hydra; 3. Ceryneian Hind; 4. Erymanthian Boar; 5. Augean Stables; 6. Stymphalian Birds; 7. Cretan Bull; 8. Mares of Diomedes; 9. Hippolyte's belt; 10. Geryon's sheep; 11. Apples of Hesperides; 12. Cerberus.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Amazons Augean Stables Cerberus Charon Charybdis Chiron / Cheiron Council of the Gods Cretan Bull Hades Harpies Hephaestus Hera Heracles Heraklion Hermes Medusa Megara Minotaur Nemean Lion Norse Mythology Pegasus Poseidon Prometheus Scylla Stymphalian Birds Thebes Twelve Labours of Heracles Underworld Zeus
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Gender, female Good vs evil Heroism Pop culture references Superheroes

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.