

# Video Game Review: ‘Silent Hill: Book of Memories’ Makes Odd Addition to Franchise

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on November 1, 2012 - 7:26pm

- [Brian Tallerico](#) [2]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [3]
- [Konami](#) [4]
- [PlayStation Vita](#) [5]
- [Silent Hill](#) [6]
- [Silent Hill HD Collection](#) [7]
- [Silent Hill: Downpour](#) [8]
- [Silent Hill: Revelation 3D](#) [9]
- [Video Game Review](#) [10]

CHICAGO – With “Silent Hill: Revelation 3D” sucking rotten eggs in theaters both critically and at the box office while “Silent Hill HD Collection” gets more quality gameplay out of old titles remastered than the new “Silent Hill: Downpour” does out of a brand-new experience, it’s an odd time for this legendary franchise. Into the questions about the vitality of its future comes “Silent Hill: Book of Memories,” the first PlayStation Vita game in the series and, technically, the 9th game overall.



One realizes quickly that this really isn’t a “Silent Hill” game in the traditional sense. It’s not an atmospheric title in any way and was developed by WayForward Technologies instead of the team behind classic “SH” games. It shares some of the imagery and style of past “Silent Hill” titles but that’s about it. It’s a hack and slash arcade game more than a horror one and that’s both a good and a bad thing. There is some honest action entertainment to be found here but one can’t help but think that the first expansion of “Silent Hill” to Sony’s newest handheld should have stayed in line with what worked about the franchise in the first place.



Silent Hill: Book of Memories  
Photo credit: Konami

“Silent Hill: Book of Memories” is an arcade-style, co-op RPG, the last genre classification anyone would use to describe landmark games like “Silent Hill 2” or “Silent Hill 4: The Room”. It is off-putting at first to realize exactly what this game is. You wander from room to room (alone or with friends) through a dungeon-like landscape that you see from the top down. You fight enemies, which earns you puzzle pieces that you then use to leave the dungeon and do it all over again. As you progress through the dungeon, you earn points which are used to level up skills. And you find various weapons which can be destroyed through combat and even find stores to buy new ones. It’s really not a “Silent Hill” game.



Silent Hill: Book of Memories

*Photo credit: Konami*

And yet it kinda is. There are those creepy nurses. Creatures that look familiar. The air of a lost memory mixed with a walking nightmare. "Book of Memories" is a game caught between styles. It's not unlike when a rock singer tries to rap. Sure, they may hit a few beats but it's not what they're best at. The world of "Silent Hill" doesn't really lend itself to a game like "Book of Memories."

It's not just that I think all franchises must stay in a particular rut. There are elements of "Silent Hill: Book of Memories" that would be ineffective no matter what name was in the title. The mechanics are oddly jerky and the animations are inconsistent. The environments are boring. Before you say that I'm being too hard on a handheld, take a look at some recent Vita titles like "Silent Hill: Book of Memories" and "Uncharted" and realize the notable graphic capabilities of this machine. It's almost as if "Book of Memories" was designed for the graphically inferior Nintendo 3DS and just ported over here.

Ultimately, the irony is that "Silent Hill: Book of Memories" will be pretty quickly forgotten. It's not a horrible enough game to raise critical anger too highly and the game has been shuffled so many times that fans probably don't even know it's out. Wait until it's super cheap and check it out if you're a true "Silent Hill" fan. But we'll have to keep wondering if this franchise will ever turn it around and find the creative success that's been missing for eight years now. It's getting hard to remember.

*"Silent Hill: Book of Memories" was released by Konami exclusively for the Sony PlayStation Vita.*



[11]

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