

# Something borrowed, something BLUE

DC's 'Blue Beetle' does what other superhero movies have already done



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Although the latest movie from DC, "Blue Beetle," is an OK film it has the potential to be something much more.

The film stars Xolo Maridueña, an actor previously known for his role in the Netflix show "Cobra Kai" as well as his role in the NBC show "Parenthood." Maridueña stars as recent college graduate Jaime Reyes, who, upon returning home from school, seeks out a job at Kord Industries to help his family and accidentally comes into contact with a piece of sentient alien technology that transforms him into the superhero Blue Beetle.

Frankly, Maridueña's performance in the film is nothing to shrug off. He definitely took the role of Jaime Reyes seriously and gave us a great performance that fits both the comedic and dramatic parts of the film very well. George Lopez was also another stand-out member of the cast who absolutely steals every scene that he's in and really helps the movie to be funny.

However, these two great performances do not excuse the film from having

flaws. One of these flaws is the writing. Although the story is funny most of the dialogue is passable at its best and at its worst sounds like it was generated by AI.

Speaking of AI, most of the scenes in this film draw clear parallels from other comic book films, whether that be 2008's Iron Man, 2021's Shang-Chi, 2002's Spider-Man, 2018's Venom, or even 2011's Green Lantern, and this is certainly not by accident. Some of these parallels are so heavy that it seems as though the writers fed 100 hours of comic book films into a computer and asked it to generate a "Blue Beetle" movie.

My main complaint is that everything in this movie has been done by another superhero movie already, and even the parts that the film does a better job at like the scenes with his family or the inventive fight choreography are spoiled by the fact that 20 other films have done those concepts to death twice over.

This isn't to say that the movie is bad; it honestly was pretty good and I enjoyed the film as a whole. It was a nice breath of fresh air for this genre and it was nice to just have a solid origin story for a fun,

lighthearted hero. But I also think this film would have been much better if it had been released 15 years ago before all of the superhero fatigue set in.

Nonetheless, if you're looking for a fun movie about what if Spider-Man had Iron Man's suit and Green Lantern's powers, this is the movie for you. 6/10

**Xolo Maridueña stars as Blue Beetle in DC's new superhero movie. Maridueña gives a great performance that fits both the comedic and dramatic parts of the film well.**

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
DC STUDIOS

# 'Armored Core' back with more features

Sequel 'Fires of Rubicon' allows players to customize their giant robots for battle

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After over a 10-year absence, FormSoftware the creators known for the "Dark Souls" series, "Demon's Souls," "Elden Ring" and "Bloodborne," have returned to one of their original works with "Armored Core 6: Fires of Rubicon."

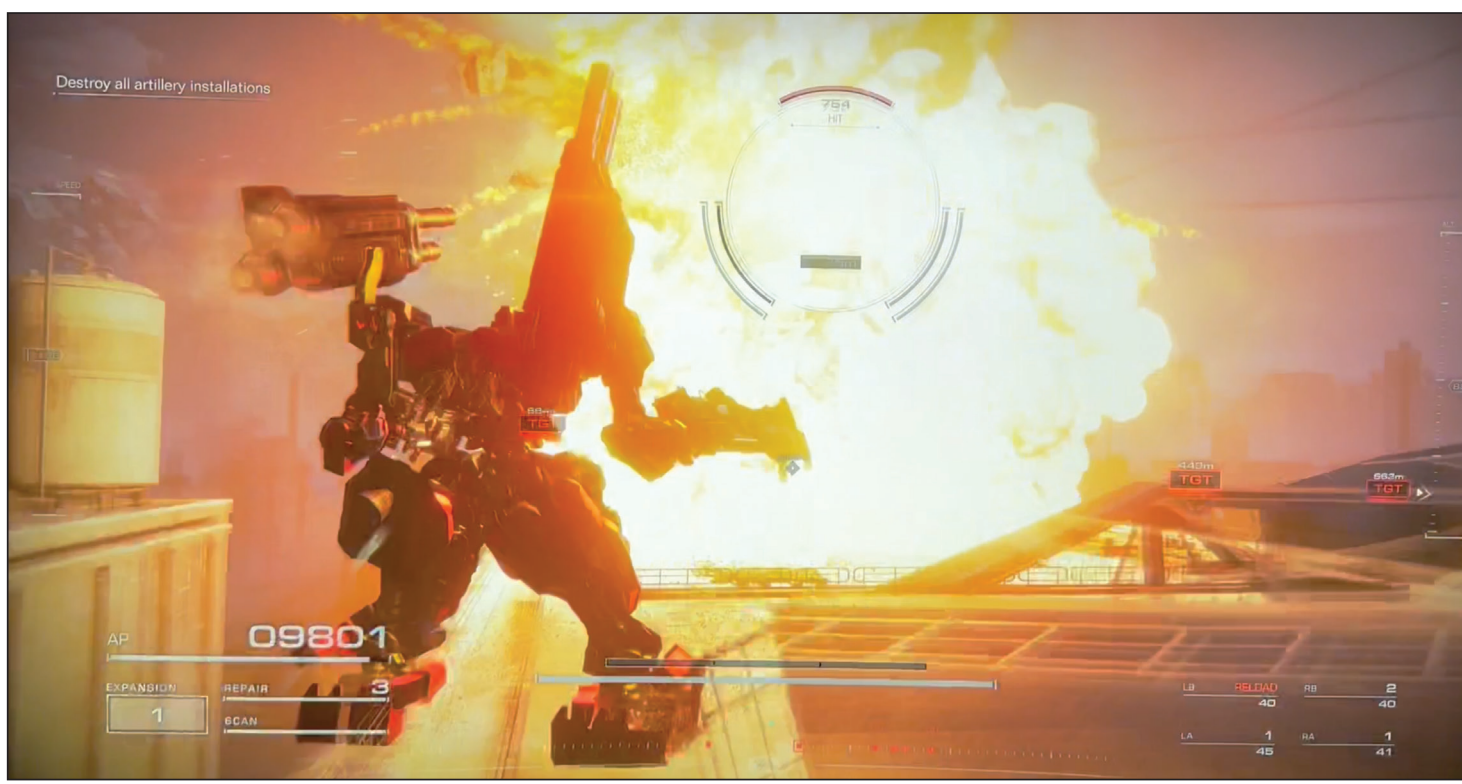
Released on Aug. 25 on PC, PlayStation and Xbox consoles, "Armored Core 6" puts players into the cockpit of an Armored Core (AC), a giant customizable robot. "Fires of Rubicon" is an amazing return to the series, providing plenty of mercenary mecha action.

In "Armored Core 6: Fires of Rubicon" players control an augmented human mercenary on the planet Rubicon. Being a Dog of War, the player takes on different missions with their AC, which is a fully customizable weapon of war. The game is broken into chapters with individual missions that run from 10 to 30 minutes. These missions have various goals from defending targets to collecting information to destroying a target or objective.

Overall "Fires of Rubicon" is a great game. It does have a high difficulty level, but the gameplay is fast rewarding and gives the player options. Learning to defeat the bosses and achieving those wins is extremely satisfying.

The story plays out as audio logs with some cut scenes, but the player does need to pay attention if they want to follow the story. Spoiled for customization is the best part and probably one of the areas of the game where you will find yourself spending the most time.

While the overall game is great, "Armored Core 6" does have some negatives. The difficulty of the game can really peak especially with bosses. The boss battles can be massive affairs with players needing to learn patterns and having to capitalize on the boss' movement and openings left from attack patterns. The game offer respawns at checkpoints and even allows the ability to switch equipment



PHOTOS BY MANUEL ALVAREZ | FOGHORN NEWS  
"Armored Core 6: Fires of Rubicon" lets players add their own decals and paint scheme to the actual construction of their AC with parts and weapons. While the game has a high difficulty level, it is also fast and rewarding.

at bosses and difficult encounters, but these battles can be very frustrating for more causal players.

Additionally, some players have complained about the quality of the graphics. While I feel they provide a dark gritty look, a player who is expecting the most cutting-edge graphics may be let down by the look and textures in the game. Finally, the online portion of the game is limited only to a multiplayer arena which lacks cross platform play and experiences lag and queue issues that can diminish the experience.

The positives of the game definitely outweigh the negatives. First, the game offers many customization options, from designing your own decals and paint scheme to the actual construction of your AC with parts and weapons. The game also features an upload function to allow players to see those designs and download them. The emblem creation process can be fun, and you can create raster images that can be as complex or simple as you want. Being able to combine the different decals on an AC to help further customize a color scheme can be quite satisfying and many players on the online community have created replicas of Mobile Suits from Gundam or other famous mecha.

The average game play is based around a control scheme that gives players excellent control over their AC's movement and ma-

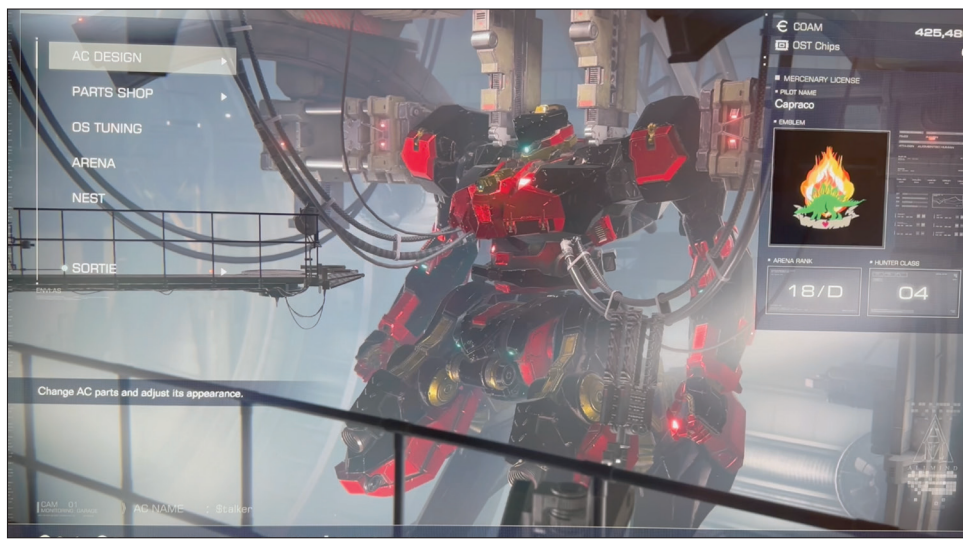
neuverability. The weapon controls are quick to learn, with the biggest challenge actually being how weapons work and what weapons are best for each situation. Picking your weapons and building different loadouts including gatling guns, shotguns, missile launchers and other weapons can help deal with the difficult bosses. The auto targeting and target lock can be seen as an easy mode by some, but in reality, it is a complex system that rewards excellent players and helps causal players. The control scheme comes together and makes one feel like they are a massive zooming mech able to destroy an entire enemy force.

"Armored Core 6" also features many reasons to continue playing the game after its first completion. "Fires of Rubicon" has two base story endings and one additional hid-

den ending and uses a New Game plus feature which allows players to replay the game with all items and equipment from previous completion. Additionally, the follow-up play-throughs also feature new unlockable missions and equipment that cannot be found on the initial play-through, giving some pieces of fresh gameplay.

The online community has also started making timed speed runs and specialized runs of the game, with one example being a no-weapon-use run and another being a take-zero-damage run. These runs are in addition to the online arena modes, which offer one-on-one combat and three-on-three team arena. With these options players can increase the hours of enjoyment "Armored Core 6" offers.

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"Fires of Rubicon" has two base story endings and one additional hidden ending.