



Hopefully that's an 'ordinary rabbit'...

Since Gray Matter is still in an early stage of development, we had to settle for (albeit beautiful) concept art...



## GRAY MATTER

**Roberta Williams has firmly closed the door to the gaming industry behind her; now Jane Jensen can call herself the new queen of Adventure Game Land. Since her games are known to test your gray matter to its limits, the name of her new game could not have been better chosen.**

The story of Gray Matter is in the best Jane Jensen tradition a mix of facts and the paranormal. After the death of his wife, neurobiologist Dr. David Styles has secluded himself in his English home with the illustrious name Dread Hill House. One day, Samantha Everett calls at his door. She's an American student who travels through Europe, making a penny by performing magic tricks. David sees something in the young lady and hires her as his assistant. Her first assignment is not mopping his dusty laboratory, but finding half a dozen human testbunnies at Oxford University. David's experiments start out innocent, but after a while unexplainable events start to occur and David gets visits from his deceased wife. Hmm, a male and female protagonist and unexplainable events. That sounds suspiciously a lot like Gabriel Knight 4. Jane Jensen: "Gray Matter is a mix of old and new elements. Just like Gabriel Knight, you have to solve a mystery, because this works well for this genre and because I'm very familiar with this concept. The main characters, the subject and the atmosphere are very different than Gabriel Knight though. The game uses themes like neurobiology and paranormal research and plays with the idea that the world we see is filtered by our expectations, that 'reality' is subjective, that the world around us is full of things we can't even sense. The themes are metaphysical, more 'Matrix'-esque. But okay, you can't win; this game will no doubt be compared to Gabriel Knight." In Gray Matter you can control both Dr. Styles and Samantha. An interesting fact is that Gray Matter has been communicated as a series straight away. Jane Jensen: "Gray Matter is, let's say, a pilot to the series. In that regard, you can compare it to the first Gabriel Knight: introducing the characters, the background story, and in the end Gabriel landing himself a new career as Schattenjäger.

Gray Matter has a similar structure, though you play more with Samantha, while David is in fact the central character. He is a mysterious figure, and that's why I want to introduce him from someone else's point of view first - Samantha." Question: do both characters offer a unique gaming experience, or is it just the look that changes? Jane Jensen: "Samantha and David both have a different personality and that reflects itself in their approach to problem solving. The chapters where you play David are more introverted, turning around psychology and science, while Samantha's chapters are more extroverted and focus on the interaction with people and her research in the outside world. To give a little example of the puzzles this provides: in one of David's chapters he tries to recall memories of his departed wife, since they are slowly fading. In a short article you can read that memories are saved by sensory information - scent, taste, feeling, etc.

The player now has to search the house looking for objects that were present at certain key moments with David's dead wife. When you have collected all the objects, the memory comes back. This kind of puzzles is uniquely for David, because he is a neurobiologist and reasons as such." Gray Matter is developed by newcomer Tonuzaba Entertainment. Tonuzaba is settled in Hungary, Jane Jensen in Seattle. How deep is Jane involved in the development of the game? Jane Jensen: "I'm just as involved with Gray Matter as I used to be with the Gabriel Knight games: I design and coordinate the development. We communicate daily by phone and e-mail and I travel regularly to Hungary to sit down with the developers." At what audience does Jane aim Gray Matter, the hardcore adventure gamer or the casual gamer? Jane Jensen: "We aim it at adventure fans; we hope that it will appeal to people who love books and movies as well (and may have never played an adventure game before)." Gray Matter will be released worldwide by German independent publisher ANACONDA. If everything goes well, the game will be in stores in the fourth quarter of 2007, presumably surrounded by a paranormal aura.



Gray Matter makes use of prerendered 2D backgrounds and 3D characters.

Jane Jensen: "It's the style that was most often used in the best adventure games during the last couple of years and works very well, in my opinion. A lot of people just can't handle navigating characters in a real-time environment. Wouldn't I rather use FMV instead, if I had the budget? Well, FMV was fabulous, but it'll take someone more courageous than me to blow new life into it.