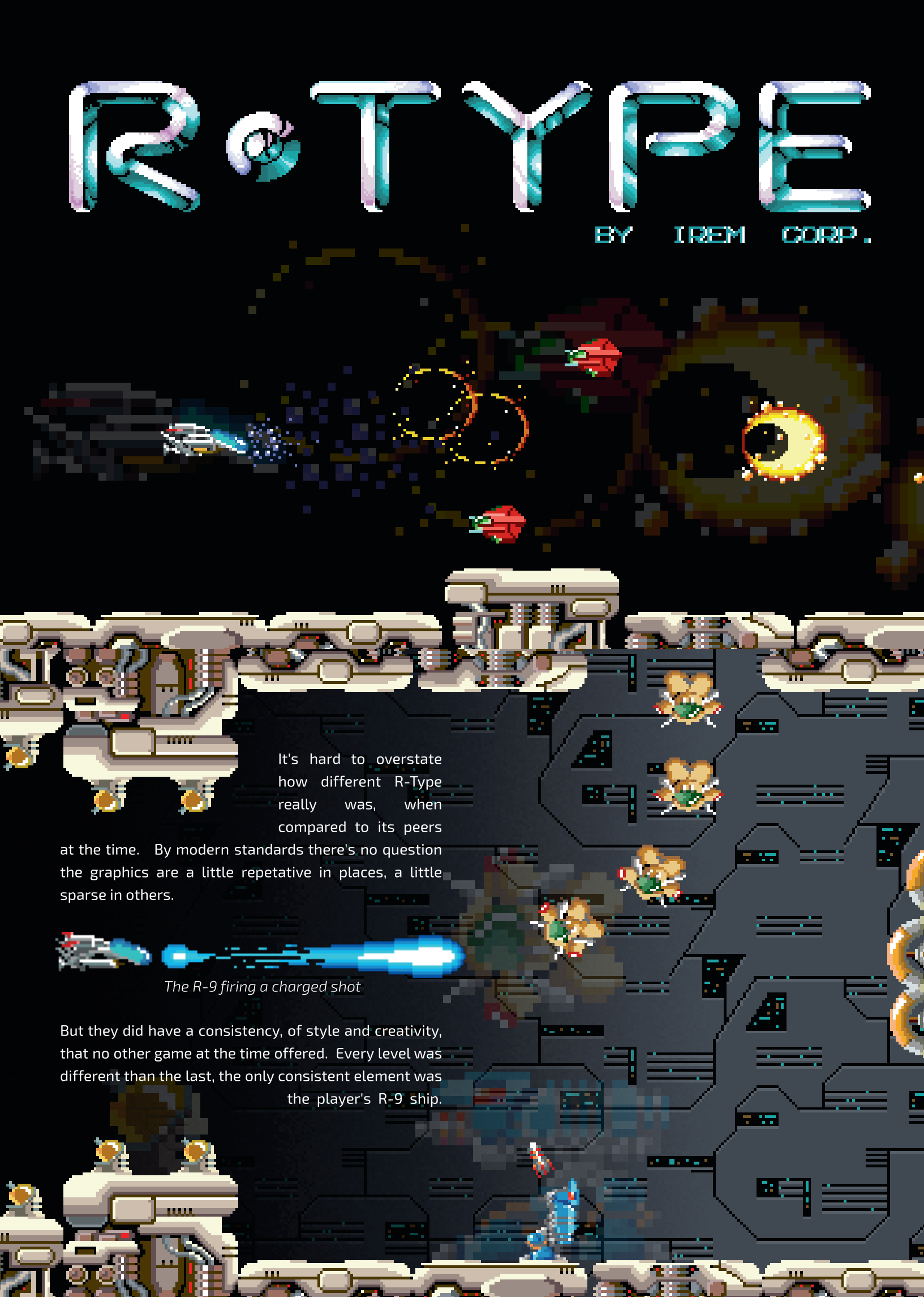


R-TYPE

BY IREM CORP.



It's hard to overstate how different R-Type really was, when compared to its peers

at the time. By modern standards there's no question the graphics are a little repetitive in places, a little sparse in others.



The R-9 firing a charged shot

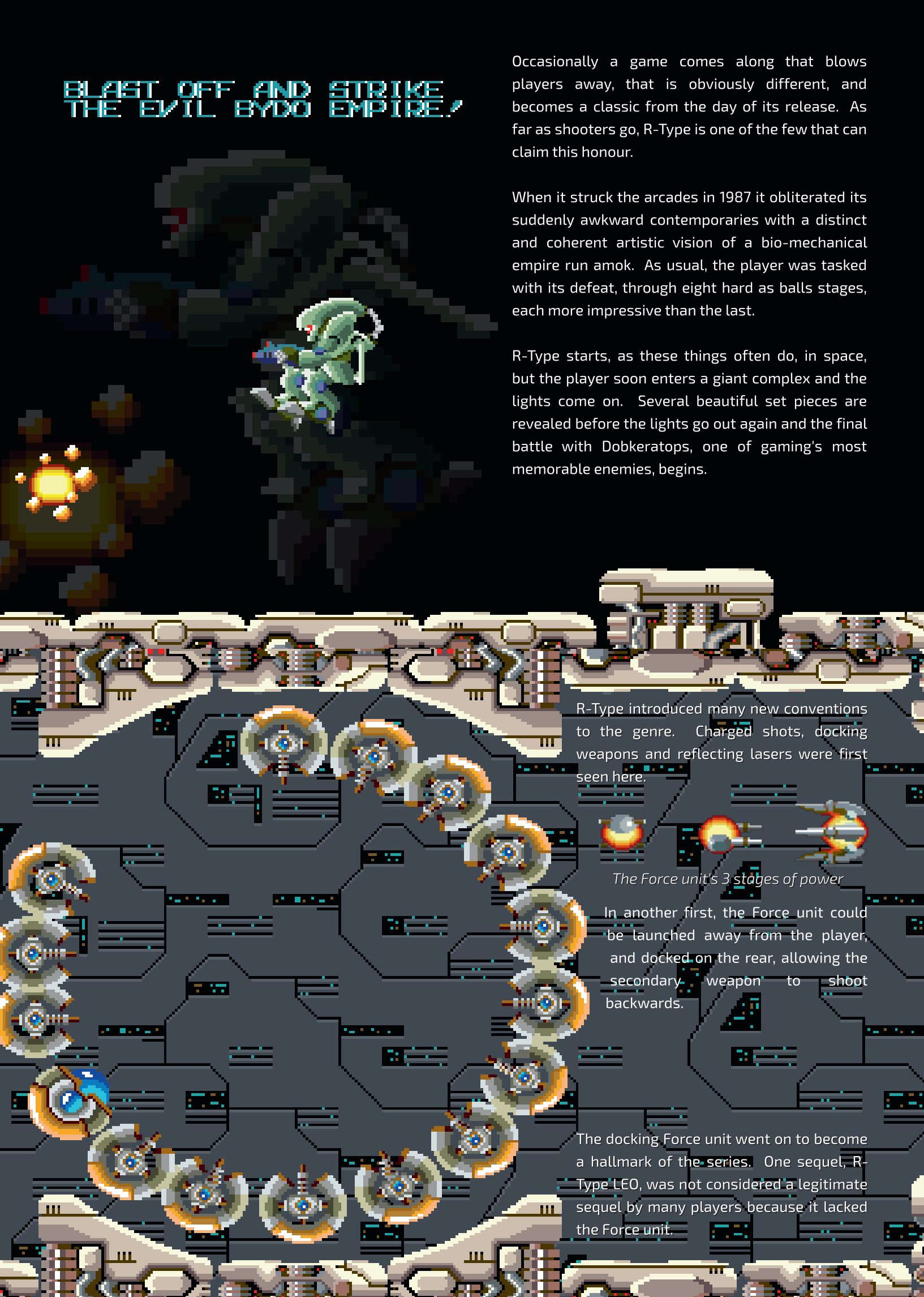
But they did have a consistency, of style and creativity, that no other game at the time offered. Every level was different than the last, the only consistent element was the player's R-9 ship.

BLAST OFF AND STRIKE THE EVIL BYDO EMPIRE!

Occasionally a game comes along that blows players away, that is obviously different, and becomes a classic from the day of its release. As far as shooters go, R-Type is one of the few that can claim this honour.

When it struck the arcades in 1987 it obliterated its suddenly awkward contemporaries with a distinct and coherent artistic vision of a bio-mechanical empire run amok. As usual, the player was tasked with its defeat, through eight hard as balls stages, each more impressive than the last.

R-Type starts, as these things often do, in space, but the player soon enters a giant complex and the lights come on. Several beautiful set pieces are revealed before the lights go out again and the final battle with Dobkeratops, one of gaming's most memorable enemies, begins.




R-Type introduced many new conventions to the genre. Charged shots, docking weapons and reflecting lasers were first seen here.

The Force unit's 3 stages of power

In another first, the Force unit could be launched away from the player, and docked on the rear, allowing the secondary weapon to shoot backwards.

The docking Force unit went on to become a hallmark of the series. One sequel, R-Type LEO, was not considered a legitimate sequel by many players because it lacked the Force unit.



The large arms on the right were impressive at the time, and they became common elements in several sequels.

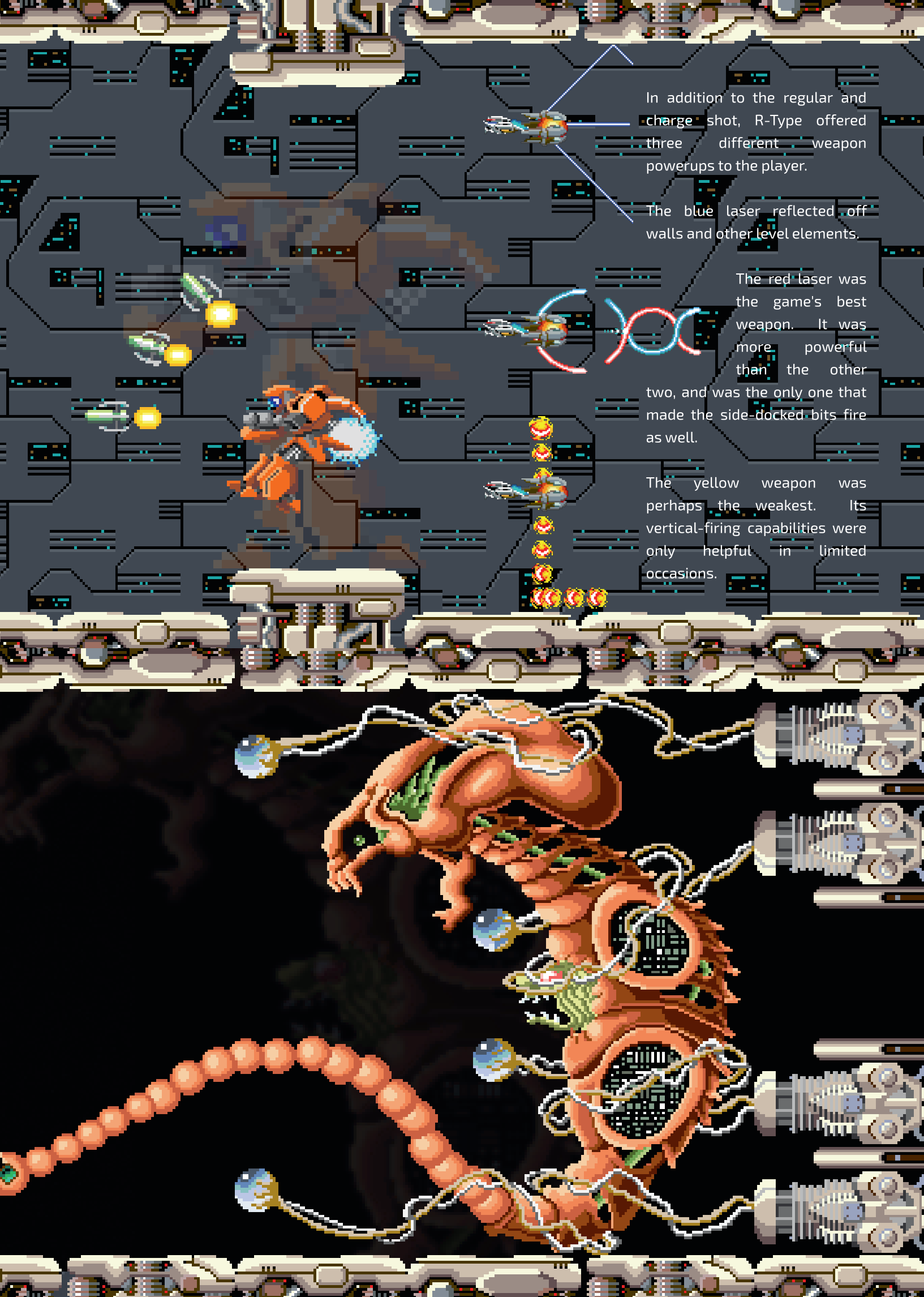
In this image, notice how each arm is the mirror image of the other, including shadow and the specular highlight on the round hinge element.

Storage limitations often forced developers to re-use sprites in this way, and players in the heat of battle would never notice the shadows didn't play with the laws of physics.

Dobkeratops was R-Type's first stage boss. A captive, dismembered thing a little reminiscent of the Alien movie monster, complete with chest burster, he assaulted the player with a whipping tail and curving blasts.

He and similar looking bosses became another recurring theme in most R-Type games. As far as bosses go he was pretty impressive to look at, if not in battle.

Dobkeratops could be beaten with only two charge shots, if your aim was good.



In addition to the regular and charge shot, R-Type offered three different weapon powerups to the player.

The blue laser reflected off walls and other level elements.

The red laser was the game's best weapon. It was more powerful than the other two, and was the only one that made the side-docked bits fire as well.

The yellow weapon was perhaps the weakest. Its vertical-firing capabilities were only helpful in limited occasions.