

# **K&A** plus #5

Summer / autumn 2016

English Edition

## **INTERVIEW: SID ADVENTURES: LINUS**

## **RESURRECTION: SHADOW OF THE BEAST PIXEL HEAVEN 2016**

## **NEW RELEASES: THE LANDS OF ZANDOR VORTEX CRYSTALS NIGHT OF THE VALKYRIE**



# Shadow of the Beast

It was the year 1989 when the shadow of the beast invaded homes worldwide. We got possessed by a dark, yet beautiful, world. The constant threat of danger evoked both fear and passion in our young minds. We all fought bravely and those who survived thought it was the end. Time proved them wrong...

That's right, Dear Readers. Shadow of the Beast has returned for the fourth time – not for C64 and Amiga – but for PS4. Isn't that a great topic for our Resurrection? Our editor, Petrichor, has prepared a real treat for you: an editorial devoted to the remake of this classic game. It's not difficult to figure out that the focus of this issue of "K&A Plus" is Shadow of the Beast, since the cover of our magazine shows Aarbron, the protagonist of the game.

Another highlight of this issue is an interview with Sascha Zeidler, aka Linus, an active member of a few C64 demoscene groups. I recommend those with a taste for art check out our gallery of selected works from Marcin Stręka, whose inspiration lies in retro gaming. You can find a selection of his works in this issue of "K&A plus". And as always there won't be a shortage of interesting articles and reviews of newer and older games for our beloved computers.

In the previous issue of our magazine I briefly mentioned that, with your help, I'd like to create a new section. I intend it to be a "Top 10" list of video games in the vein of the one in – now defunct – "Komoda" magazine. This time I suggest a section extended by a few platforms (C64, 16/116/PLUS4, VIC-20, Amiga). You can find more information on the subject on our website <http://ka-plus.pl> and our fanpage <http://facebook.com/KA-Plus>.

Every time we create a new issue of "K&A Plus" or biggest challenge lies in the English version. It's not an easy task to translate so much text. Because of that I'd like to wholeheartedly thank those who devote their free time doing translation work for us. Big thanks to our collaborators: **Michał Rzepka (Slayerpl)**, **Karolina Baranowska (Karo)**, **Mariusz Aniszewski (MA)**, **Michał Sroka**, **Magdalena Piss**, **Grzegorz Sojka**, **Tomasz Kubisztal**, **Jagoda Grabowska**, **Matt Skotarski** and **Matt Knott**, who's our new English native proofreader. Because of these individuals we are able to reach a vast amount of people across the world.

Let me also invite you to check out our coverdisk. This time we present "Łazik" – a game developed by Slavia group that was recently converted from C64 to PET platform. A nice appreciation for all PET fans!

That's all I intended to tell you in this introduction. Now I'd like to invite you to read the fifth issue of our magazine with a hope that you'll like it as much as the previous issues.

## **Komek & The Crew**

If you're a native English speaker and want to help us writing, translating or proofreading texts for our magazine, we kindly encourage you to contact us! We're still looking for people willing to cooperate or even join the editorial crew of *K&A plus*. You can contact us via: [team@ka-plus.pl](mailto:team@ka-plus.pl) or *K&A Plus* -Facebook page. Thanks!



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## COVERDISK



**Komoda & Amiga plus**  
Commodore computers' user's magazine

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# Fresh News

C64

## BUG HUNT

RGCD, 2016



There are certainly some of us that happen to at least once swallow a fly or other insect. In real life it happens accidentally, but in video games the "swallowing" is actually a nice concept! Furthermore, there are no negative consequences for your health ;) In Bug Hunt you are a lovely creature and intend to swallow the incoming insects. Good reflex and efficient joy are both necessary to succeed at this game. Overall, it's pretty good entertainment accompanied by a nice tune and pretty cool graphics.

■ Komek

C64

## SHOTGUN

ZeHa, 2016



The first impulse that triggered me to play Shotgun was a screen with a minimalist, classic graphics found on CSDb. In order to play you need at least 2 people, as there is no single player duel option. As if that was not enough, the game offers us the opportunity to play in three, and even four, human opponents, quite nice PvP, isn't it? And what's it all about? Well, you run through the labyrinth with the gun, shoot your opponents and avoid their bullets. In addition to the previously mentioned selection of the number of players, you can also choose a type and color of the maze at

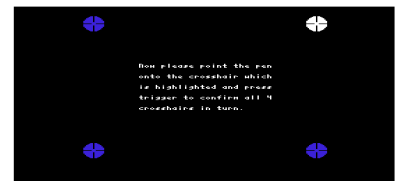
which the duel takes place. The game is obviously free, but you can also purchase a collector version on a 5.25 inch floppy. Overall, very cool simple game, ideal for beer events with your buddies ;)

■ Komek

VIC-20

## MINISKETCH

Mike, 2016



Within all the new VIC productions released last quarter there is an app worth to be mentioned. Minisketch is a drawing software which let you use a light pen. In order to use it you will have to use the 8 kB RAM extension for VIC. Using a smart algorithm, the program can handle a higher resolution compared to the limited one offered by the light pen. ■ Komek



C64

**EYE OF THE GODS**

Psytronik, 2016



Do you enjoy the game Soulless that was released by Psytronik back in 2012? If the answer is yes, I have some good news: they have recently released a similar app titled Eye of the Gods. This is a classic maze game comparable to the famous Draconus, as there are also underwater aspects of the labyrinth. Extensive scenery, good graphics, catchy music and finally high playability make the Eye of the Gods an appealing game that is payable also by people who prefer other type of games.

■ Komek

C64

**EXCALIBUR**

Laddh, 2016



This is another example of small enjoyable retro gems recently released. Excalibur features arcade and platform solutions, and additionally, if you like the fantasy mood of knights, archers, wizards and warriors I guarantee you're going to enjoy this game! Fighting with a sword doesn't need to be another hack'n'slash, and this game will teach you on how to make a timely and deadly blow. Another advantage of this game is a simple but very nice looking graphics. If only the collision detection was better...

■ Komek

C64, Plus 4

**PENTAGRAM**

Rod&amp;Emu, 2016



Adventure games are, at least for me, always enjoyable! The fun is doubled if the game is perfectly crafted. The new C64 adventure app called Pentagram is based on a ZX Spectrum game from 1986. We're leading a sorcerer named Sabreman and our task is to recreate an old pentagram using the runic stones. The game relies heavily on the exploration of the area and the gameplay is presented in an isometric view. Although the original game is from the 80's, it is very addictive, has a nice climate and graphics. The game has a few disad-

vantages though, for instance you have to first learn the controls, and the game speed varies depending on the number of objects displayed on screen.

■ Minimoog

C64

**1917**

Slavia, 2016



SEUCK Compo 2016 is happening right now! For this event Slavia has prepared another game – 1917.

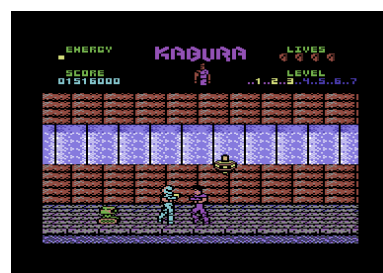
The action takes place in October 1917 in Russia. The revolutionary leader Vladimir Lenin must break through the St. Petersburg Winter Palace to deal with a bad tsar once and for all. His goal is to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat and on the way he have to deal with various classes of enemies – nobles, bourgeois, Jews and priests. It should be noted that the game is obviously facetious.

■ Minimoog

C64

**KABURA**

Sputnik World, 2016



Shoot'em Up games usually don't require too much of our brain cells. The only thing we need is a functional joystick and powerful reflex. Kabura combines fast action with a moderate degree of difficulty. It's a reasonable game concept, as too complicated shooters quite often managed to discourage potential players in the first minutes of the game time. This game sometimes reminds me of the old and worthy Soldier of Light. Varied types of scenery, good graphics, and the above mentioned fast action make this program a recommendable title to try out.

■ **Komek**

#### CBM II

### SPACE CHASE

Christian Krenner, 2016



CBM II is a computer that only supports the text mode. However, with appropriate resources of time, desire and skills one can bypass these limitations and create a game with graphics in it! Space Chase is such a production and although it's still in beta it's already a fully playable concept.

This space shooter features two spacecraft teams. Each player controls the captain of his team and the goal is obviously shoot down the enemies. The author has implemented a simple physics, so that ships are spinning in circles after

collisions and without turning on the engines, the vehicles are drifting in the vast space. You have to get used to control, but after a few moments you can freely chase computer or a friend in space. Low resolution causes the field of view to be very limited, but the markers help in general orientation. It's worth to follow this project, which in the future will get some audio additions and further spaceships upgrades available after hunting down the enemies. <http://www.spacechase.de/>

■ **bobikowoz**

#### Amiga

### SCOURGE OF UNDERKIND

Wayne Ashford, Magnus Tegström, 2016



If you positively recall games like Gods, Chaos Engine or Alien Breed, be sure to check out Scourge of the Underkind project. It is created by two enthusiasts: artist Wayne Ashford and programmer Magnus Tegström, who are the lovers of the above mentioned titles and decided to create their own game on the Amiga. So far not much is known about the game itself, scant information only reveal a bit of the single player "maze crawler" mode. There will only be a single playable character, and we're going to learn his background throughout the game play. The title will

consist of 4 worlds with boss awaiting us at the end of each level. The game's graphics is being entirely created in Deluxe Paint IV and will be available free of charge. Game's development started back in December 2015 and the work is progressing nicely, although we should rather not see the final version by the end of 2016. Youtube channel of user Godzilla7302 presents some first pieces of the game-play. We will closely monitor this project as it really looks promising.

■ **Petrichor**

#### C64

### KILL THE ALIEN

Laddh, 2016



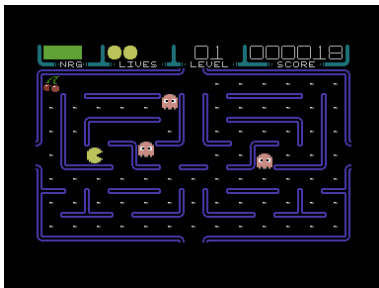
Galaga is one of the most important titles among the classic computer games. History is full of similar games, or even clones, and here we have another example: Kill the Alien. Well, it's far from unique power of Galaga, but I think it's not the worst creation either. Unfortunately, developers didn't implement any special aliens' attack waves – I mean, they simply fall down and fly up. With this in mind everything is just too casual and monotonous.

■ **Komek**

## Plus/4

## PAC-PAC

Assassins (ASN), 2016



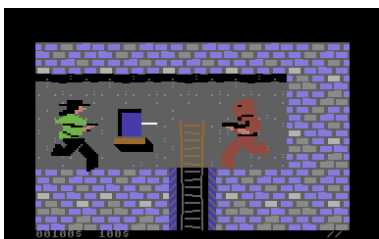
I suspect we'll never be free from the Pac-Man clones, but it's okay as this yellow ping-pong dude has the power to unite generations. Everyone wants to play him: kids, pimply youngsters, people over 30 and even grandpa and grandma. The Hungarian group names Assassins prepared the next version of the Pac-Man game and called it Pac-Pac. In my opinion this reheated chop is quite tasty. Who's up for the round?

■ Komek

## C64

## FORT DJANGO

Dr. TerrorZ, 2016



Fort Django is a specific game featuring very large sprites and high quality pixel graphics. One runs around a spacious building, shoot at the bad guys and collect bags of gold. At the end of the game there are some precious treasures waiting for you hidden in

a huge box. Grab the cash and escape from the dangerous objects. Great fun guaranteed!

■ Komek

## VIC20

## ATHANOR

Majikejric, 2016



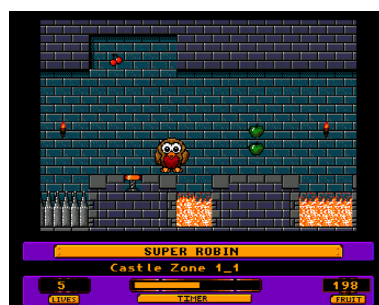
In the third issue of "K&A plus" I posted a short article about Athanor released for C64 platform. Back then I announced the upcoming VIC-20 version and here it is – this great adventure game finally appeared for an old VIC! The main protagonist is a monk belonging to the Franciscan Order who needs to solve a certain mystery in his abbey. So let's do it, dear prayer, ughm, I mean, player.

■ Komek

## Amiga CD32

## SUPER ROBIN

Calvin R Allett &amp; Chris Clarke, 2016



Current review of fresh games ends up with something new

for platformer fans. Super Robin is a nice new production that consists of 31 levels. It's all about collecting every possible fruit you could find and then finding level's exit. There will obviously be some obstacles to overcome and it's a good thing to have 7 lives ;) A nice graphics and high playability turn this game an interesting choice even for non-platformer players.

■ Komek

## PET

## ŁAZIK

Slavia, 2016



Łazik, the game known for some time within the C64 users is now available for PET! Fans of this platform (let's be honest, there are not that many new releases for PET) can now enjoy the newer and better version of Łazik that features more levels and the same playability as known from C64. Penetrate tunnels, collect scattered money and be aware of monsters!

■ Minimoog





## ■ Review: Minimoog; Translated by: Slayerpl

**Many elements of popculture become so popular that they have many adaptations, configurations, interpretations etc. The same happened with the game that was created in December, 1999 by an already great and well-known ID Software. We are talking of course about the marvelous FPS named Doom.**

**A**lmost 20 years passed by before this great shooter appeared on the last expected platform – Vic – 20. It may appear completely surprising that a platform with a 5kbit Ram, with a CPU working with a frequency of 1Mhz and 16 colours graphics could man-

age to work the engine of such advanced program as a FPS. However it was possible with only small tradeoffs.

Doom for Vic – 20 appeared in December, 2013 (the date is probably not a coincidence) and it was made by Kweepa.

Of course, it is not a first release of Doom for other platforms than PC because users of Super Nintendo, Nintendo 64, Sega 32X, 3DO, Atari Jaguar, Amiga or Game Boy Advance, there also versions for smartphones or even calculators (!) or our C64 ( in this instance the port is called M.O.O.D).

We should not omit this game and lose the chance to play it.

I will say that Doom for Vic – 20 is a niche game. It requires certain amount of patience, forbearance, minimal knowledge of the original game and

the constant awareness that we play on Vic to completely enjoy the game. A lot of persons that came into contact with the game on this platform, lacked one of those features, that's why we can encounter many unfavourable reviews, that complain about the smaller or bigger port errors.

To start the game, you need a significant amount of memory – 35 kbit. As we can read on the Internet, Doom for Vic – 20 has 8 levels, 4 different types of enemies, 5 types of weapons, 11 types of music tracks playing the background, 20 sound effects, exploding barrels, artefacts we can find, a map and the codes. It sounds a little bit like a promised 9999999 games on one device, however this are real statistics, translated accordingly for VIC standards.

The procedure of starting Doom takes a considerable amount of time, fortunately we are accompanied by a really good graphics resembling the original game. It is really surprising that the logo of ID Software appears very often in a lot of places in the game what brings to our mind the question if the game was authorized (Doom from 1993 didn't enter the public domain). I will leave this question



unanswered and go further into the review.

When we load all the components, we are welcomed by the neat main menu made to match the original, even the font is the same. We can hear in the background one or two voice music, which can be easily recognised by every Doom aficionado. However, the joystick users will be unhappy – the main menu and the gameplay are controlled only by the keyboard. The steering looks complicated at first sight, we can find out more about it in the options menu.

The beginning of the gameplay contains a real easter – egg. We can choose three scenarios but... there is only one available. When we choose the other two, we receive information about buying them and the game will mention the sentence placed in the shareware version of PC version of Doom "To order Doom, call 1-800-idGames". This tidbit is a testament of the passion with which the port was created and care about the details contained in the original. The names of the levels of difficulty is taken from the original, magnifying the atmosphere of "Doom".

Until we see the screen of the gameplay, we aren't really sure how VIC-20 will manage to work with the 3D graphics engine. After loading the port, we encounter the biggest disappointment – the gameplay is in the small window which takes, read carefully, a whopping 6 percent of the whole screen (when we do not count the border – it will be 12 percent). I de-

ecided to calculate the size of the gameplay screen because I was surprised by it. In the beginning of the review I wrote that we should treat the game in this platform without huge expectations because it is VIC-20 and it is a good result for this type of platform. Even though the graphics are pretty simple, it allows us to differentiate in the small window the most important things such as enemies, artifacts, switches etc. A big advantage of the graphics is a clear interface – you can clearly see, what is the health level, ammo and armor and in the centre of the interface we see the Doomguy.

Because the gameplay plays out in the 3D, and not in its imitation, a lot of resources of VIC are used and the gameplay is not so quick. To increase the pleasure of playing, I decided to use a small "cheat" and I doubled the speed of emulation. It made the playing better.

The game quickly enchanted me. Maybe it was not as quick as PC Doom, but it definitely impressed me – you do not play FPS everyday on VIC-20. Unfortunately, the levels from the ports are not completely identical with the original ones, I would only find small references to the classic levels. Even

though the music tracks are consistent with the ID order, the player feels more involved with the Doom tradition, after listening for a long time you feel annoyed. The cult e1m1 and



the other tracks are in most cases one voice, and when some accords appear, it creates a nice effect. Moreover, those are short fragments, which are repeated continuously.

The game has its disadvantages but I will say it once again – it is only VIC-20. Even though the gameplay is slow, the music is irritating and the gameplay screen is tiny – Doom leaves good memories. I recommend it to those that are not afraid of small disappointments, and at the same time like to get their butt kicked: by the opponents but also by the hardware.

## DOOM

Publisher: **Kweepa**  
Year of publication: **2013**  
Platform: **VIC-20**







REVIEW

# Werewolves of London

Review: bobikowoz; Translated by: Grzegorz Sojka

*Lycanthropy makes my life a lot more difficult. As long as the sun is in the sky I'm a faultless citizen, but when dusk comes so does the change. My body shifts, my hunger grows, the people scream. Another night, another gnawed corpse. Horror. Disgust. Shame.*

Never used to believe in legends. Now I am one. So why not believe?

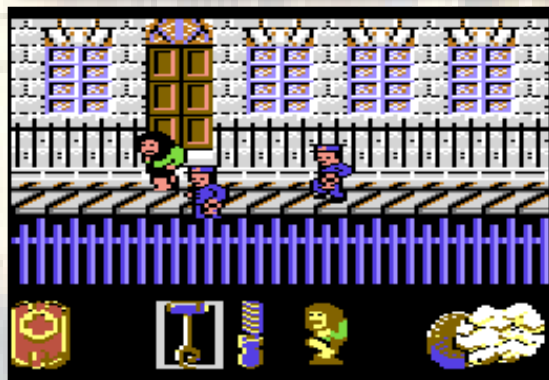
That this can be fixed. Back to before the fur and fangs. So I made a list, checked it more than twice. Eight very naughty

names. People who wronged me. Their lives have to be taken if I want to fix this curse.

London is a big mean city. I need to search every street. Luckily I can sniff out those I need over long distances. Being part wolf has some perks.

to do is feast. Every battle is like a damn buffet.

Can't stop getting lost. Everywhere looks the same in this city. Same backdrops, same sounds and smells. Even the situations. Coppers lock me up, I knock them down. Rinse with blood. Repeat.



Something's wrong with the Underground. No trains roll on by. Could be a strike. Could be something... else. I've spent so much time hunting for a key to the sewers. Who the hell locks a sewer grate? I also need a light, too dark down there even for the wolfman.

Coppers locked me up. Seems they don't believe in legends. After a night with me they do. I have to take it to the rooftops. Streets are too full of people hunting me. They've armed themselves. Think bullets will save them.

Sure, they sting like hell. Enough of them will kill me, but I'm stronger. I've evolved. Now I can devour my foes. All I want

Like an R Rated Groundhog Day. Why don't they just kill me? Maybe they can't. Maybe it's all some sick game.

It's the sounds that scratch at me the most. My own footsteps are the only music I know. It's an ugly beat. Annoying.

Then again the hunt can be thrilling. Last night I crossed a name off my list. I want more. All this suffering will end soon.

For them and for me.

## Extra music

Cassette with version on ZX Spectrum contained on B side a song "Werewolf Rap- Silver Bullet Remix". <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5uZe-k2qgW7M>.

## WEREWOLVES OF LONDON

Publisher: **Viz Design**  
Year of publication: **1988**  
Platform: **C64**

7 2 8





# Blocky Skies



REVIEW

AMIGA

■ Review and Translation: Tomxx



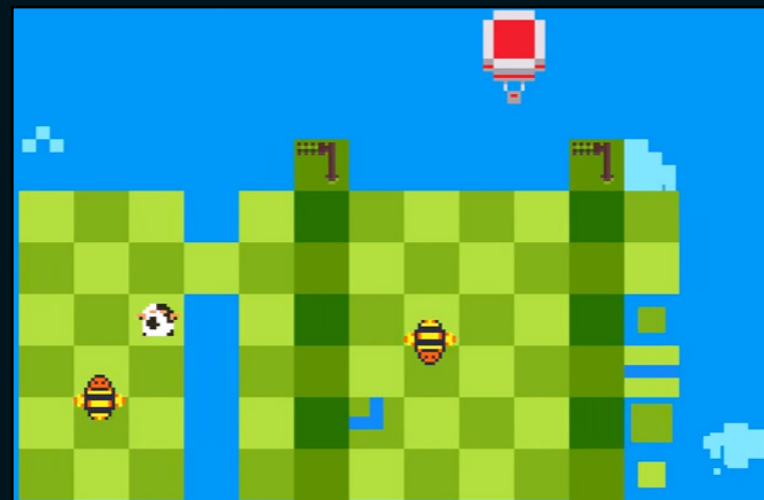
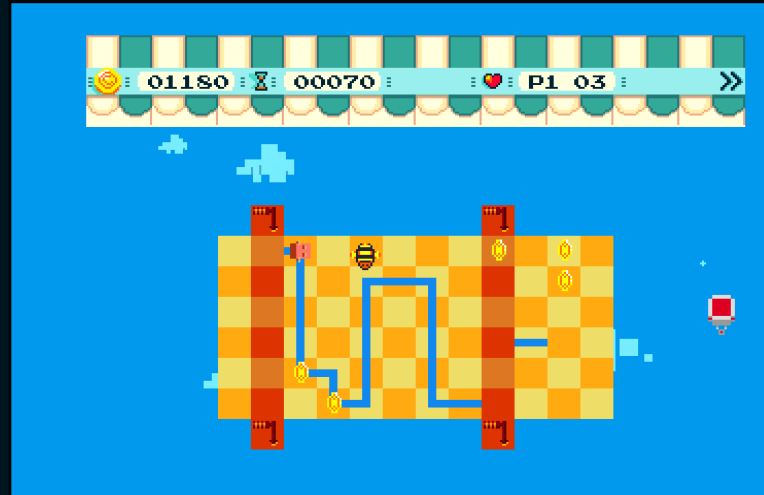
*The start of the holiday season on the Amiga scene was heralded by a fresh arcade puzzler! The game was developed for M68000 and released by alpine9000 from Enable Software Pty Ltd.*

**B**locky Skies is the author's first project ever released on a classic Amiga and its development process was part of the 8-week assembler learning course during which the fully playable game was completed.

The goal of Blocky Skies is to follow the multi directional paths to reach the finish line. The main problem is to remember the grid, as from time to time it just vanishes. Along the way we traditionally collect coins, avoid flying enemies. Doing our best to quickly complete the levels, as floors will eventually drop below if we take too long to complete give puzzle. The game features 10 levels which makes the gameplay more complicated once we progress.

The unusual grid based movement system is fun. Working in tandem with pleasant audio-visuals. The playfields graphics are clear. Independently scrolled on two separate layers, animations are smooth and everything is wrapped with a dynamic effect of

falling floors. It's obviously a homebrew, so by no means is this graphical piece of art, but it still features a decent quality for a non-commercial and solo project. The game music comes from tireless Simone Bernacchia (JMD) – same person who delivered audio for Tanks Furry that was featured in the previous issue of K&A plus. JMD's audio is always of highest quality and this game is no difference. The game only requires 512kb ram memory, is free and downloadable from the official project website (<http://blockyskies.com>) in 3 different versions: boot disk ADF, hard drive install and CD32/CDTV ISO. Source code is open and available from the GitHub repository (<https://github.com/alpine9000/blockyskies>). Be sure to try out this game – we should be all happy to see new authors getting back to code their ideas on our classic Amiga platforms.



## BLOCKY SKIES

Publisher: **Enable Software Pty Ltd**  
 Year of publication: **2016**  
 Platform: **Amiga 68k**

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WELCOME TO BLOCKY SKIES!



REVIEW

# Night of the Valkyrie

Review: noctropolis; Translated by: Matt Skotarski

**Transylvania, year 1942, World War 2 is at it's peak. Could this be yet another, run-of-the-mill commando shooter with predictable gameplay? Quite the contrary. While we will have to single-handedly take care of an entire SS Panzer division, this time we'll do it as a vampiress names Mariska. Quite a surprise, for sure.**

The game tells us a curious story. A member of Royal Marines Sgt Joe Harker attempted to liberate prison camp, found on the Axis territory – alone. The plan was crazy as it sounds; as could be expected, injured and ex-

hausted, our hero was forced to retreat and hid in an ancient crypt nearby. Having reached the deepest tomb, he found a sarcophagus with a painting of a young maiden and a gothic letter M, but before long he collapsed, unconscious.

story narrative. It also takes the reader back to 1492, unearthing long lost secrets and events through which our princess, on her wedding day (which, to put it mildly, she was not happy about, as it wasn't her decision) became a vampire.



Shortly after, the nazis followed. Sergeant was to be taken alive, and so he was captured and bandaged, not without a fight, and taken to the very camp he wished to liberate. Soon however, through unknown means, magic or otherwise, the injured soldier's blood spilled upon the sarcophagus woke a vampiress from her slumber – princess Mariska. After long years spent in the darkness, years that felt like ages past, she felt... free. Tasting the blood let her see recent events unfold before her. Wishing to help her savior, she set off to rescue him from nazi oppression, hoping he could be the one true love she waited for all along...

It's only a taste of the storyline, but for anyone wishing to savor the atmosphere created by Eleanor Burns it is worth to note that the manual PDF attached to the game includes a detailed

The graphics experienced in Night of the Valkyrie are of finest quality. The background, based on different shades of gray interrupted with vibrant colors, creates a unique and memorable atmosphere, one felt from the moment we enter the setting. A good example of this is during the intro, when sgt Harker bleeds out over the tomb, waking Mariska in her long, crimson dress. Sprites are good quality, and not only for the main characters, but also opponents, which are quite varied themselves. The score, composed by Richard Bayliss, is limited to the title screen which is a shame, as it's gloomy, mys-

**“ For anyone wishing to savor the atmosphere created by Eleanor Burns it is worth to note that the manual PDF attached to the game includes a detailed story narrative.**

terious feel fits perfectly with the ambience. It's worth to enjoy it for a while before setting off to the adventure.

While in many productions of this type getting close to the enemies ends our quest rather abruptly, here tables are somewhat turned: our heroine is a vampiress, and as vampires do, she can suck her victims dry, dealing with most privates easily. Most, but not all – generic soldiers, those carrying flame-throwers, rifles or grenades (skillful dodging is still recommended) have nothing on war-priests and exorcists ruining our day with crosses, speedy motorbikes BMW R-12 or powerful tanks, which need to be dealt with exclusively at range.

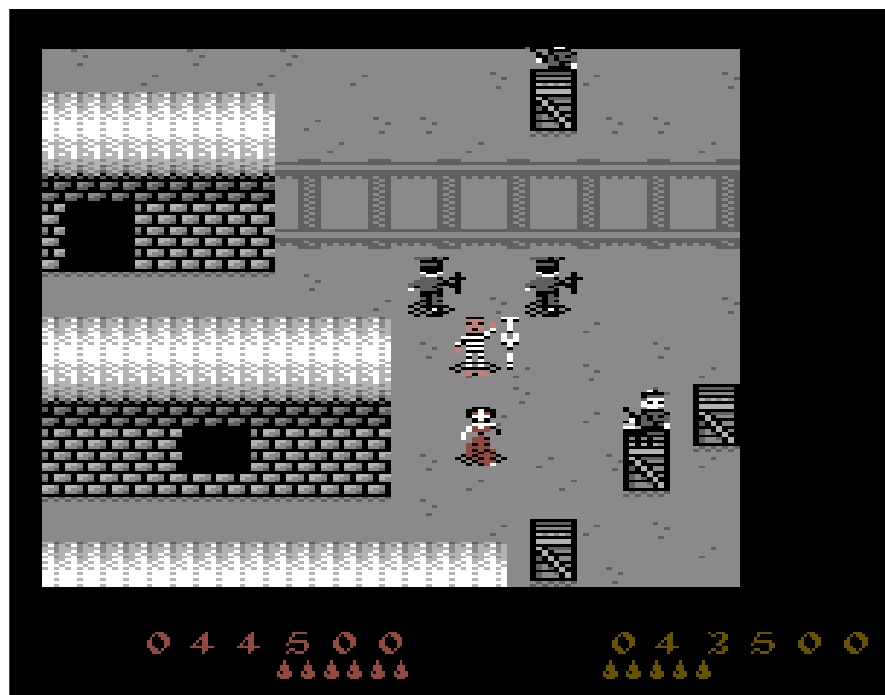
These differing combat styles are part of the core game-play mechanic. Defeating the enemies at range, using our phenomenal pyrokinetic projectiles, fills up red score bar; meanwhile, sucking the enemies dry in melee combat fills up our brown bar. The game takes place on three levels (third of which is the final internment camp, where we have the option to save the prisoners, receiving gifts of much needed blood in return). If we don't take care of our vampire lust, in the final cutscene we'll find the enemy commander escape in a plane. If, however, we take care of our needs correctly, our princess will take flight and follow the enemy in aerial pursuit, turning into a... well, I won't spoil that for you. Only after defeating the commander can we truly save sgt Harker and experience the happy ending. How romantic :-)

In summary – we've got a great story, supported with talented writers; high quality audio and visuals; detailed and thoughtful gameplay elements; and, most importantly, fun (game's accessible difficulty works in it's favor) with a surprisingly well done ending. Some compare the game to Commando and while it might seem odd at first, there's some truth to that comparison, even though the story and ambience are quite different. In the end, Night of the Valkyrie is a high quality SEUCK product and I recommend it wholeheartedly.

## NIGHT OF THE VALKYRIE

*Publisher:* **The New Dimension**  
*Year of publication:* **2016**  
*Platform:* **C64**

 9  8  9







REVIEW

# GAME OVER

■ Review: Minimoog; Translated by: Michał Sroka

*Games like Great Giana Sisters, Flimbo's Quest, or Boulder Dash will always remain at the top of the heap in popularity, greatness and gameplay. In my opinion that's a bit exaggerated, so I devised my own "ranking" of the best C64 games. Way up high, perhaps even at the very top, resides Game Over II.*

Just how popular, ill-fated and preceded by hundreds of hours of suffering

II. Based on the same concept as its predecessor, but richer in gameplay, the game mana-

ged to immerse me and constantly kept me in suspense. I'll try to answer the question: why did the game succeed?



The game impresses in every aspect. The hope for Game Over II being a good game kindles in the player's mind with a simple, but beautiful intro sequence, crafted by skilful hands. Pleasing and catchy music leads the intro with the initial hope becoming something more! The first part of the game is a shoot'em up. Despite the fact that – traditionally – we fly a space ship and shoot enemy vehicles, nice and not-too-flashy graphics along with excellent gameplay keep the player immersed.

and irritation is the phrase GAME OVER! Everyone who has had the faintest encounter with computer games (or more broadly, video games), witnessed this particular phrase. So what if someone named their game Game Over?...

This is a question that the developer of this fine 1988 game might have asked themselves. Because of that, the country of siestas and paellas saw the release of the fantastic Game Over





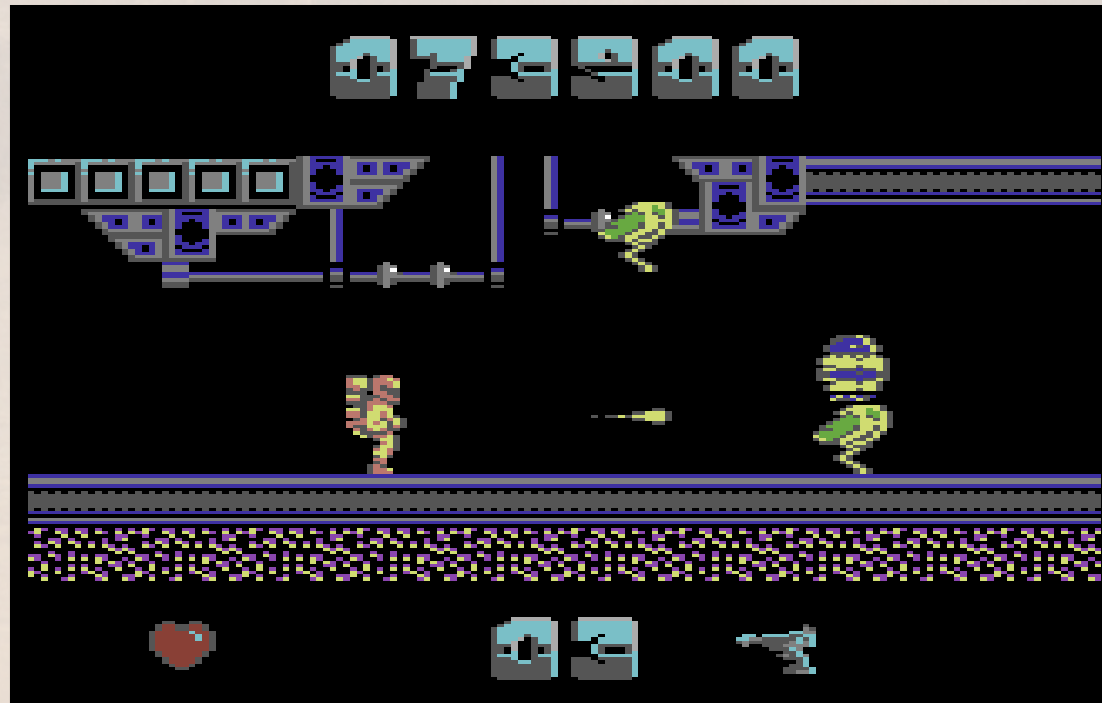
a labyrinth and occasionally collect an item. The gameplay here resembles the likes of Castle and Frankenstein.

Listening to the sound effects makes me think that the game has something in common with SEUCK, but that's not a bad thing in this case.

I recommend the game to those who have like to shoot and are not afraid of surprises or alien planets.

That's not everything, because the game seamlessly transitions to a platformer. After we land on a planet, we can traverse the sea on the back of a weird monster. Here we counter the attacks of incoming enemy monsters. But that's not all! After we reach the land we are given a secret activation code. This is required to load the next part of the game.

This part of the game is solely a platformer. Graphics and gameplay are still excellent. The game opens another plane for exploration. We are no longer constrained to horizontal gameplay, as we have to traverse



## GAME OVER II

*Publisher:* **Dynamic**

**Software**

*Year of publication:* **1988**

*Platform:* **C64**

 **10**  **9**  **10**





REVIEW

# The Lands of Zador

Review: Komek; Translated by: MA

*What if we did away with unpleasant thoughts and brought colour to all the worlds grey spaces? I think it could be a wonderful idea that doesn't require a lot of effort to come true. It is not a big thing, however...*

From my experience I know that most gamers like platform games. During

gaming events, games such as Flimbo's Quest, Creatures or The Great Giana Sisters tend to be among the most popular titles. Some time ago, German group Bauknecht released a really good platform game called Majesty of Sprites. Recently it's follow-up has been released. It's called The Lands of Zador. It is as great as its predecessor.

The game's protagonist is Kate who has been chosen for a dangerous mission. Restore a magical stone into the world of Azur. Each and every level is colourful yet at the same time dangerous. "The adventures begins" is the first level. There you can find a wizard who needs a diamond to build a path to old caves. You can find it on the second platform, so take it and give it to the wizard. Stone tables appear quite often during the game because the wizard will ask you for additional items. He can also present you with magic balls that can be useful in fighting some tough enemies. During the first level you should be aware of jumping monsters and flying birds. You can also find "The Hidden Castle" with flying scary ghosts. The next level is "the Zador's Skylands". There you can find small robots and some unidentified objects that look like molecule made clouds. After that

we have a futuristic stage "The Future" with small machnoids, armed robots and robobirds. At the end of that stage there is a lever that you need to push. After that you will be taken to a space ship. Later you can find stages such as: "The Space Laboratory", "The Seas Of Fortune", "Trithium Mines". All of them are beautiful and colourful.

As often happens in platform games we kill enemies by jumping on their heads (if they have one). It should be remembered that the other forms of contact mean losing your energy. Luckily it can be replenished by collecting little hearts.

As it comes to the graphics I must say that a piece of good work has been done by the people at Bauknecht. All those colours and details are impressive. Music and sound effects go nicely with an overall feel of the game. The playability can be just summarized by saying that I had a nice time during this game. Should you play it, you'll surely not regret it.

## THE LANDS OF ZADOR

Publisher: **Bauknecht**  
Year of publikation: **2016**  
Platform: **Plus/4**





# Following the footsteps of Ghosts'n Goblins



EDITORIAL

COMMODORE

■ Editorial: Komek; Translated by: Slayerpl

*It happens very often that a success of some kind, for example in music, cinema or computer games, breeds imitation. Generally, there are two reasons for that: the first because of being inspired by the original – a great amount of admiration for it, and the second reason – commercial, the will to get an easy payday and profit as easily as possible. The cases mentioned in this article are mainly a result of inspiration or sometimes results of something between those two reasons.*

I think that most of you know the game Ghosts'n Goblins. It is not surprising because it was a huge success in the second half of eighties which caused a lot of conversions of the game for different platforms. The original from 1985 was made for arcade games by Japanese company Capcom. One year later, in 1986, a version for C64 appeared, and the version for Amiga in 1990.

Probably a lot of you wondered what was the reason behind the success of Ghosts'n Goblins and why this game made such an enormous impact on the market? The huge advantage of this game is how it is made (graphics, music, sound effects), which were pretty good for 1985. Playability was also a big reason of success because I would say that this game has this intangible quality, that lures the players. The protagonist of the game is a valiant knight Sir Arthur, who has to save a princess Prin Prin, abducted by the cruel King of Demons. This task is not so simple, because he has to make his way through a dark place, where monsters, zombies, demons, goblins and other horrifying creatures live,

just to name a few. Let's move now to the gist of it all, to the games based on this hit from the eighties.

1988

**Varidan aka Vardan**  
**C64**  
**ItalVideo SRL, 1988**

The first game that I thought about, is Varidan created by Alberto Frabetti. In my opinion, the similarity to G'n G is in this game pretty big, mainly because of its construction and graphics. While steering a courageous warrior with a sword, you are supposed to kill a cruel monster. To reach him you need to wander through the haunted court, dreadful forest and dark caverns. Disgusting monsters live in all of these places. Varidan is not an especially

great game but fans of this genre should like it.

**Thunder Light (preview)**

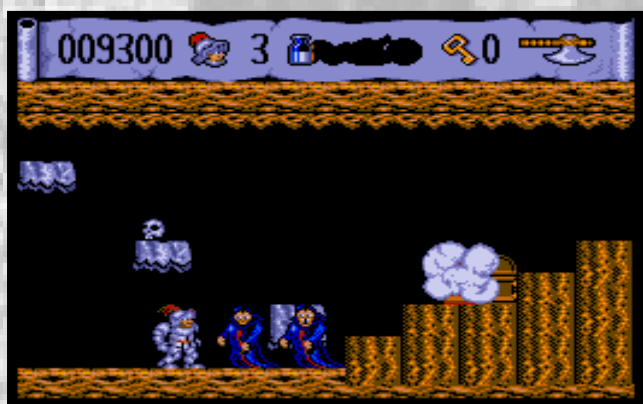
**C64**  
**Xenon, 1988**

Another release from 1988, it was presented on The Silents & Stage 3 Party in Sweden. Generally, it is described as



EDITORIAL

“preview” but it does not lack much to consider it a complete game, however it lacks such elements as music, sound effects and an ending. The game has seven levels and at the end of every level there is a huge



cross, that we need to get. The gameplay takes place in bizarre places such as fields with pipelines and abandoned factories,

a dark, haunted forest and the futuristic buildings. You will meet zombies, bats, monsters, mutated spiders etc. as enemies. To sum it all up, a highly playable preview.

1989

**Ghouls'n Ghosts**  
C64, Amiga  
US Gold, 1989

One year later and here is one of the most important releases using the aforementioned style – Ghouls'n Ghosts. It is a sequel to G'n G with the participation of a valiant knight Arthur and Princess Prin – Prin. This time our protagonist deals with Lucifer – cruel king of demons, who imprisoned the soul of a princess and his servants took control of the castle and the village. The brave Arthur goes in the direction of the Lucifer's castle. Unfortunately, his task is difficult and dangerous and the game is definitely not easy. Apart from nice graphics and high playability, a great sound track is here very important, composed by Tim Follin. I think that it is a very good sequel to G'n G.

1990

**Dragon's Kingdom**  
C64  
Genias, 1990

Another similar release from 1990 is Dragon's Kingdom. Created by Alberto Frabetti who created Varidan. It differentiates itself from Varidan because it has better graphics and music. The game has a very interesting description. One day, a peaceful land Thalax

was thrown into darkness by bad King of Demons, who freed demons from Saggoth swamps. The leader of Thalax – King Duncan chose a brave and strong warrior Darius who has to defeat all the monsters and the King of Demons. Dragon's Kingdom consists of six levels. Before the beginning of every level, we can see on the screen a map showing where the warrior Darius is. Too bad we didn't have this option in G'n G from 1986 for C64, but fortunately this and other shortcomings were corrected years later, you will find out about it in the later part of the article.

**Prince Clumsy aka The Sword & The Rose**  
C64, Amiga  
Codemasters, 1990

Codemasters team also tried an already made formula for a game. It is titled Prince Clumsy in their version for C64 and for Amiga – The Sword & The Rose. Yeah, yeah, it is once again about the princess, very beautiful one who was imprisoned in the castle by her ugly sister. A knight in shining armor goes to save the princess. As far as similarities with G'n G, there are many, mainly the scenery and the opponents but we should treat that as a advantage of this game.

**Deadly Evil**  
C64  
Players Software, 1990

In this case, there are way less similarities. Deadly Evil is a short game consisting of only two levels. Once again we are a knight who is supposed to save a princess and her land. It all



began long, long ago when the hero of the game was a child. He survived back then an attack of monsters who were sent by evil people to invade his land. Fortunately, he managed to survive but young princess was abducted and scrolls from Middle Ages who were protecting the land from the evil. Now he is an adult and a brave man and he decides to save his land and restore the stolen scrolls to its place. What can I say more? A very average game, but it is playable.

the original version of C64 from 1986? I think that it does. I will first mention the lacking earlier element of the game, when the princess is abducted by the demon. Then two additional levels and the fight with the King of Demons were added to the game. Another added element is the earlier mentioned map which shows the level where our hero currently is. The

graphics and the animation were improved. The soundtrack changed because on each of six levels there is a different song. To sum it all up, a piece of nice work, and what is more important a nice rebirth of a game from 1986.

1991

**Hobgoblin****C64****Atlantis Software, 1991**

Is Hobgoblin really similar? Maybe not completely but definitely more than Deadly Evil. The protagonist of the game is Zanock – the son of the king of Altrois who needs to through the land of Goblins and get back the stolen gold sphere which protects the land from the evil. The graphics are pretty good but the lack of scrolling is annoying. Look out for the sound effects! These are really irritating so maybe you should turn them off. Even though the game has its' drawbacks, this release is quite OK and it is nice to play.

2015

**Ghosts'n Goblins Arcade****C64****Nostalgia, 2015**

I left this great game for the very end. In June 2015, Nostalgia published a new version of a game titled Ghosts'n Goblins Arcade. Does it differ a lot from







INTERVIEW

**SID Adventures:****Linus**

■ Interview by: GeoAnas; Proofreading: Tomxx



**Sascha Zeidler – well known as Linus – is an active member of some well established demoscene groups: Artstate, Camelot, MultiStyle Labs, Oxyron, Resource and Viruz. His style was once perfectly described as: “There are C64 musicians. There are good C64 musicians. There also are legendary awesome fantastic C64 musicians. And there’s Linus, king to all of them.” I think it tells a lot about him, enjoy the interview! ;)**

**Hi Sascha! We all welcome you here to “K&A Plus”! Let’s start with a short bio of yours, shall we?**

Thank you! The pleasure is all mine. Sure, my name is Sascha Zeidler, better known as “Linus” among C64 sceners, turning 36 this year. Married, two kids and a dog, self-employed. I run a web-agency specializing in integrating merchandise management into e-commerce systems as well as WordPress development. As for hobbies next to composing I enjoy hunting down obscure music and movies from the 60s and 70s, beers and petting my dog.

**Did you study or took any special courses in music?**

My whole life started to revolve around music one way or another after I got hold of an Amiga and a certain disc labeled “Noisetracker” when I was around 11 or 12 years old. Soon enough, after somewhat grasping the concept of that magic tracker thing, my mother bought me a keyboard and I started taking

music lessons. From there on I used to play in several bands (all sorts of genres from electro to free jazz), trying all sorts of instruments with varying success. Lately I started to take more jazz piano lessons again.

**What exactly does an old C64 home computer mean to you? Had you own any as a kid? Did you enjoy playing games? Could you name your most favorite titles?**

I had one or another all the time since 1989 I think (not necessarily set up, though) and used to play games whenever I could or mom allowed me to. I pretty much grew up on it and it still provides a warm feeling of both childhood nostalgia AND an occasion to artistically express. There is nothing like the sound of a 1541 doing it’s magic, is it?

My favorite games? From the top of my head: Maniac Mansion, Turrigan I + II, The games series by Epyx, especially World- and California Games, HERO, River Raid, Defender of the Crown, Auf Wiedersehen

Monty (probably just because of the music!), Hawkeye, Giana Sisters, Boulder Dash in all its incarnations, The Last Ninja. Too many to mention, really. I haven’t played any of them for at least a decade, though.

**How long have you been active in the scene and how did you start?**

As far as I can remember I became interested in the demoscene around 1992 after buying an Amiga, basically just watching demos my neighbor (an old Amiga swapper) provided. In a local computer club (hah!) I got to know some crackers and soon enough started to compose tunes for their cracktros. The first proper music release occurred in 1995 on the long defunct netlabel ‘phase’d’ after talking to prat/phase’d on one of their bbs systems. Other netlabels such as Mono211, Voodoo, MoPlayaz and Theralite followed and I eventually switched from using Protracker and the PerfectSound sampler to Windows and (yep, you already guessed it) FastTracker II. Oddly enough I never



really got into it (there are just a handful of XM releases by me out there) which lead me to using Buzz and Renoise later on, mostly for the back-then live act "K:inski".

### What sparked your interest to start composing SID music?

It must have been as late as 2004 I stumbled upon Goat-tracker by accident making a child dream come true to actually write sid music. I have always been a fan of the SID chip (even listening to sid recordings on my walkman in the '80s all day) and was more than surprised when I found out there still was a vital C64 scene in 2004.

I started writing some tunes for fun (it wasn't that hard as I knew tracker based systems and had a decent grasp of subtractive synths already) and eventually got invited to join my first C64 groups (Civitas and Jeff's ViruZ). What intrigued me about writing sid music is the low level approach – everything you do you do from scratch, independent from plugins and

sound libraries, you're able to control every frame of the sound. One doesn't need to concentrate on mixing in a treated room either and thus can get tunes done rather quickly.

### Have you been involved to some other systems (8- or 16-bit) demo scene(s) as well?

Yep, I started out on the Amiga until the scene completely dried up towards the turn of the century and also did some VIC-20 music (quite a funky chip, I might add) for a TRSI demo. Regarding the PC scene it was all about net-labels for me, I never did any demo soundtracks at all, nor did I ever really watch any PC production either. I also did some commercial soundtracks for small indie game studios for various consoles, but I cannot remember any titles atm. Oh, and I love playing Atari VCS games from time to time.

### From all these tons of quality SID tunes you released, are any special or favorite ones?

"64 Forever" certainly marks

a milestone as it won the X2014 music competition. It was the very first time ever I put down a tune with "winning" as the main goal in mind achievement unlocked!

**“What intrigued me about writing sid music is the low level approach – everything you do you do from scratch, independent from plugins and sound libraries, you're able to control every frame of the sound.”**

Apart from that Urban Canyon Cruising is something I am really satisfied with. Generally the coops with GH produced a lot of favorites, our album "Pixels", which is hopefully going to be released soonish, even more so. Regarding older stuff I feel like Still Ready was a highlight, as well as Fortress of Narzod. I also released a sid LP with vocals names Mini Melodies: "IF I NEVER CAME HOME AGAIN", where I like both "Vegas" and "Someday Soon" very much.

### Could you please give me your recipe for a well distinguished and memorable tune?

Uh, I guess I am the wrong guy when it comes to memorable tunes. Usually I am not really after catchiness, but like more progressive tunes (abandoning the usual verse-chorus 4/4 beat structure) with a jazzy touch most. Prime examples are Hein Holt and Randall, but it can be anything, really. Tunes by e.g. Ed and Goto80





come to mind.

**How many unfinished projects have you left behind or totally trashed?**

I never actually trash any work tunes and still have everything archived from the early Protracker .mod days on. My C64 work tunes folder currently says 1619 files (one tune can have multiple iterations, though). As for left behind ... most of them, I guess.

**URLs featuring Linus' artistic works**

<http://csdb.dk/scener/?id=10025>  
<http://minimelodies.bandcamp.com>  
<http://multistylelabs.bandcamp.com>  
<https://soundcloud.com/linusvrz>

**Do certain SID tunes reflect your present mood? Did you make any as a reminder for a special occasion?**

Since I am not a professional musician who has to deliver commercial tunes in a given style on time I am free to do whatever I feel like doing. Therefore I guess all the tunes

certainly reflect the mood I am in while writing them. As for my present mood? "Across Tundras", maybe...

**8580 FTW...or not?**

8580 for Kaiser, definitely. Not to say the old chip doesn't have its advantages but my whole sound design approach relies on heavy filter type switching resulting in massive clicks on the old chip. So yeah! 8580 all the way for me.

**Is it easy for a musician/coder to teach an old SID chip some new tricks?**

It's very possible. A couple of years back who would have thought the stuff Jammer and Randall do would be possible? Or the jaw dropping sounds of LMan and Jason Page...

**2X, 3X...multiple SIDs...love or hate?**

Indifferent, I'd say. Multispeed is too much hassle for a lazy ass like me and not really necessary most of the time and stereo feels a bit like cheating. In the end I just prefer stand-

ard mono single speed sids without samples, I guess.

**I always like to ask all fine musicians to describe their studios. I will not make an exception here! Would you please give us a picture of your equipment, programs and trackers?**

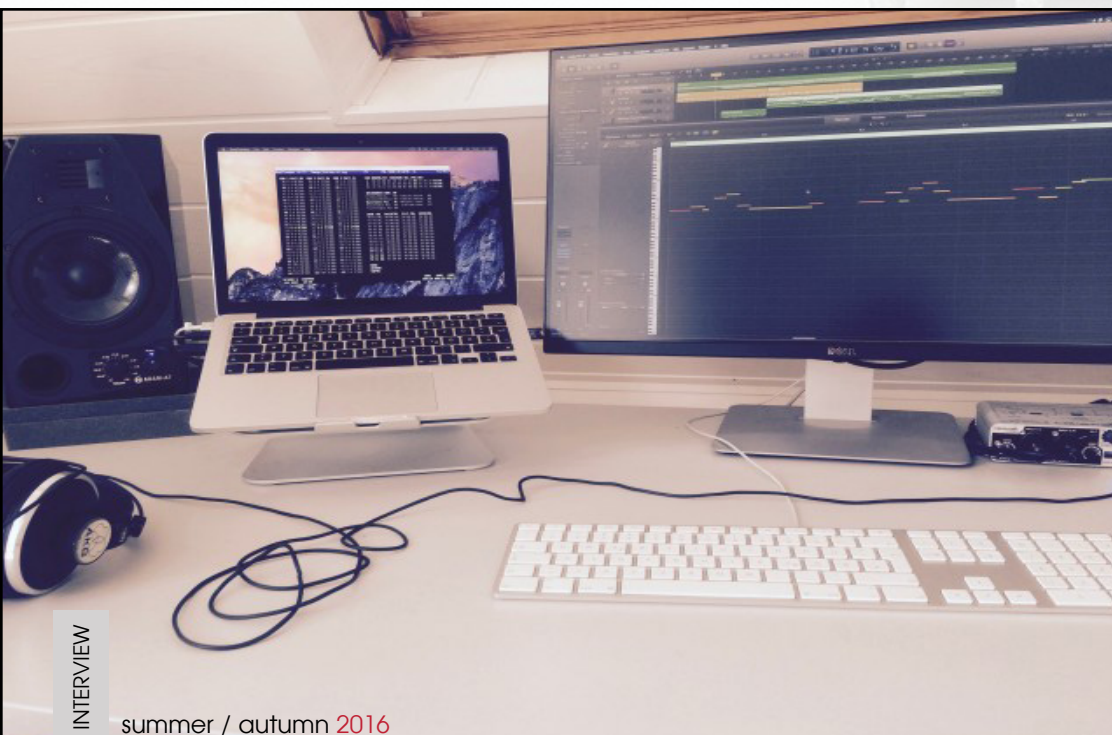
Uhh, nothing too special, I guess. A couple of years back I used to have a treated room with quite some gear, but sold a lot of it when I became a father and moved houses. You probably know that moment when priorities suddenly shift...

I've got my Macs (for both professional and music related work), pretty decent Adam Audio monitors, AKG and Shure headphones, an old Korg XP80 workstation currently being used as a midi masterkeyboard, a Tenori On, a Novation Bassstation and a Fender US guitar I rarely play. I mainly compose on my piano downstairs and record sketches on the fly.

Regarding software there are just Goatracker and Logic Pro X these days.

**Emulation or Real SID? How far have we come? How about when SID chips become obsolete?**

Since I don't have my C64 set up right now I usually listen to sids via emulation, which is pretty darn good by now, at least regarding the 8580 chip. I never encountered bad surprises when I moved from the emu to real sids at parties.







**people in a fine cooperation under guidance from an experienced director to achieve something that will amaze the audience. What's your opinion?**

Next to an artistic disposition passion and dedication (obsession, maybe?) is the key I think. Social skills shouldn't be underestimated either.

**What about DTV? You've been active there as well with "Ghost In the machine" and "2008 – A DTV Odyssey". Seems that 2008 was DTV's year, am I wrong? These were some excellent prods out of a few releases for this platform. Do you like to see more prods released for hardware based emulation, modern system like the DTV?**

From a musician point of view doing DTV stuff can be quite frustrating as there are no filters and the ADSR settings can be very unstable at times (amongst many other problems). To be honest I did not really enjoy doing DTV tracks, although the TRSI demos itself where excellent, of course. I can see the attraction for coders, obviously, and really felt sorry for the TRSI guys when my motivation dropped to zero after 2008 – a DTV Odyssey.

**Originals or Remixes? Could you please name some of your favorites tunes from each category?**

Sorry, but I am not really familiar with the C64 remix scene. Not to devalue the work that

goes into remixes at all but listening to the nth-remition of a Hubbard/Galway/Daglish tune with modern synths isn't particular interesting to me. But then again I might not have heard enough tracks to really say anything about that. As for originals, there are many tunes I really adore. From the commercial heydays Tim Follin and Martin Galway are my favorites by far.

Randall – Vinyl Headz, Unintelligible Disco, A Liquor Store Anthem, Girl from North Carolina ... Oh well, too many to mention, really. His stuff just hits a certain nerve.

Hein – The Jam, Syntax Error, Scott-Land, Ticking Timebomb and many more, similarly to Randall.

Jeff – Dune's K Remix  
Jammer – Big Beat  
GH – Dying Star, Wind Downs  
Laxity – Schmol'd Skool  
Ole Marius – Trick'n'Treat Tune  
Aleksi Eeben  
Goto80

I could easily name a few hundreds more.

**"Demo-ing" is an expression of art. Demos are much like movies, requiring many talented**

**What are your criteria to give a solid 10 to a SID tune?**

Oh, that's hard to tell. It certainly has to hit a certain nerve and be at least somewhat compatible with my own taste, although I can appreciate well executed tunes outside of my listening comfort zone (say, Eurotrance, hah!), too. I cannot quite put my finger on what it is, really. It can be anything from Ed's glitch, GH's wonderful chord progressions to Jammer's amazing sounds.

**Multistyle Labs includes so many talented musicians! Do**

#### *Linus' top 15 tracks based on CSDB rating*

1. 64 Forever (2014) - 9.6
2. Grandma Was a Druglord (2013) - 9.5
3. It's Winter, Winter in Kleve (2015) - 9.5
4. The Vice Squad OST (2013) - 9.4
5. Truck On (2016) - 9.4
6. Composition for the 11th Finger (2015) - 9.3
7. Je suis Linus le salaud (2015) - 9.3
8. Midnight Upon Us (2015) - 9.3
9. Urban Canyon Cruising (2015) - 9.3
10. Establishing Eye Contact with a Squirrel (2015) - 9.2
11. Her Web is the City at Night (2016) - 9.2
12. Summer BBQ Oppression Olympics (2015) - 9.2
13. They Cut the Grass Again (2015) - 9.2
14. I heard it through the Grapehein (2013) - 9.1
15. The Getaway (2006) - 9.1



“**Having never owned a Vectrex the black and white spartanic vector gfx gave me a creepy sort of retro-futuristic lost in space feel.**

**you work on your tunes strictly by your own or assist each other as a team? I see you as a ‘dream team’ of musicians, but how closely do you cooperate with each other?**

Oh, we run a certain infamous, politically incorrect, at times disgusting, often hilarious hill-billy-esque chat room where we meet to trash talk (often) and share work tunes (rarely). Work in progress tunes are also shared via Dropbox. As we are well-grounded characters commenting on and judging the other guys’ tunes is usually not a problem at all, no matter how harsh it gets at times.

**“Fortress of Narzod” - you touched a very sensitive chord here! You know I am very active in Vectrex scene as well. Vectrex is a machine I cherish,**

**is really in my heart...well...beside C64 of course! Have you own a Vectrex machine? How did you come with this neat idea to port a Vectrex game to C64 and compose its catchy tune (with some...hmm...‘Eastern’ sound touch) and sfx?**

Hah, I did not come up with the idea at all, that was Peiseluli whom I met at X2008. Having never owned a Vectrex the black and white spartanic vector gfx gave me a creepy sort of retrofuturistic lost in space feel. If that makes any sense whatsoever, which I doubt. As for the music: Eastern scales (and especially the switching of the whole tone scales in the ingame tune) kind of underline that foreign atmosphere I felt, although I admit that might not work for everybody.

**“Fantasmolytic”, “BCC Faces”, “Cauldron 101%”, “Durch den Monsun”, “Demo of the Year 2013”... So many quality releases! What was the most harsh to complete? Have you got any stories you want to share?**

Most harsh to complete... Well, that must have been the soundtrack for BluReu as I was moving houses at the time and had to compose it during late nights. Also that VIC-20 Demo by TRSI was quite something, as I had to learn the VIC-20 soundchip, its software and limitation very quickly and come up with a couple of tracks.

**“Darkness” (2014) and “VICE squad” (2013) are two very well crafted and high quality commercial game releases from “Psytronik Software” and “RGCD”. Could you please give us a picture of the “making of...” stages?**

The atmosphere of “The Darkness” made me wanna go for a Follin inspired style, of course. As far as I remember Achim provided me with a playable demo with all graphics done already, so it should have been hassle free but I was constantly (up until the \*very\* end) completely unsatisfied with the in-game tune so I started from scratch weeks before the finishing line. The hardest part was to cram something listenable and not too repetitive into two voices without eating too much memory. The third voice is reserved for SFX, but as there can be more than one SFX at

▼ YouTube.com screenshot presenting oscilloscope view of “64 Forever” track.





a time it had to be possible to mute the 2nd voice without actually killing the song. That means no long sustained notes on voice 2. So yeah, several hurdle to overcome.

**C64 scene will continue to flourish for the time to come, with many more wonders to get unveiled out of our beloved C64. Agree?**

I sure hope so, although I cannot see much (any?) young blood. As Randall put it "X parties are parties of old men nowadays"...

**What are your plans for the upcoming future?**

I am looking forward to the release of GH's and mine 12 tracks "Pixels" album (*It was released on July 5th, 2016 on: <https://multistylelabs.bandcamp.com/album/pixels> - editorial note*) and planning to do more tunes/EPs/LPs with GH (an underrated brilliant and better musician than I will ever be and a very nice bloke, too).

I am also starting to slowly build a proper mixing room in the attic again, which is probably going to be the main goal this year. Apart from that? More jazz piano and a proper X2016 tune, maybe a demo or two.

**Do you want to add anything else, important or not, that I have overlooked?**

Just one thing – special greetings to my biggest fans Stinsen and Fanta, keep on practicing, dudes. You'll get there



someday!

**We were so glad to have you here, Sascha! Good luck to whatever you are planning to...**

Again, thank you very much for your kind words and interest. Good luck with the site and mag, keep on trucking!





REVIEW

PLAT



MAN

## ■ Review: noctropolis; Translated by: Karo

*It would be difficult to find a person who doesn't know Pac-Man. It is not only a renowned game but the character also holds a historical position in the electronic entertainment field. It comes as no surprise then, that throughout the years, many similar titles emerged. Drawing from either mechanics, style, or history of the original. Several remained relatively faithful to the style of the prototype, while others took only some elements to fill the rest up with original ideas and create something essentially unique. Platman can be placed in the latter category, for it tries to mix the basics of Pac-Man with – as the name suggests – typical platformer mechanics.*

**P**latman for C64 is the brainchild of Andrea "Wanax" Schincaglia, with audiovisuals designed by

um. What is interesting, at the same time when the game has been released for C64, its port for Atari was created as well (thanks to Wanax's cooperation with another graphic designer). Most of all, it is important to mention that both of this year's productions have been created based on a 1995 game for Amiga, bearing the same title (whose authors are John and Diane Hardie).

background), but all of the locations are very similar to each other. It is not a big shortcoming however, because the game itself is simply packed with action, so one doesn't pay so much attention to the embellishments. So, the very energetic and rhythmic music is an asset here. A lively melody and pulsing base line complement the whole.

Some of you might recall the Amiga oldie, so it would be appropriate to mention that the Commodore version of Platman differs in only a few details of small significance. The most important elements, so the whole construction and character of the game remain the same (together with the map). For those of you who are not familiar with the Amiga version, it is about more or less the same as almost all labyrinth platformers. Find the exit by going through a few dozens of locations. The graphics are really pleasant (as for example the skillful illusion of depth – the platforms seem convex in contrast to concave

An interesting aspect connected to the platform aspect of our hero's movement is the lack of collision with the "ceiling" during the jump – if the upper platform is low enough, he will jump right on top of it. At the beginning it might be confusing but later on it turns out to be a key feature – the unique construction of the rooms requires such an extraordinary solution. Scouring through the locations our pizza-like friend needs some sustenance of course, but here, instead of customary Pac-Man dots, he gets to munch on different goodies. The delicacies are a-plenty: strawberries, cherries, oranges, ice-cream, candy, doughnuts and many



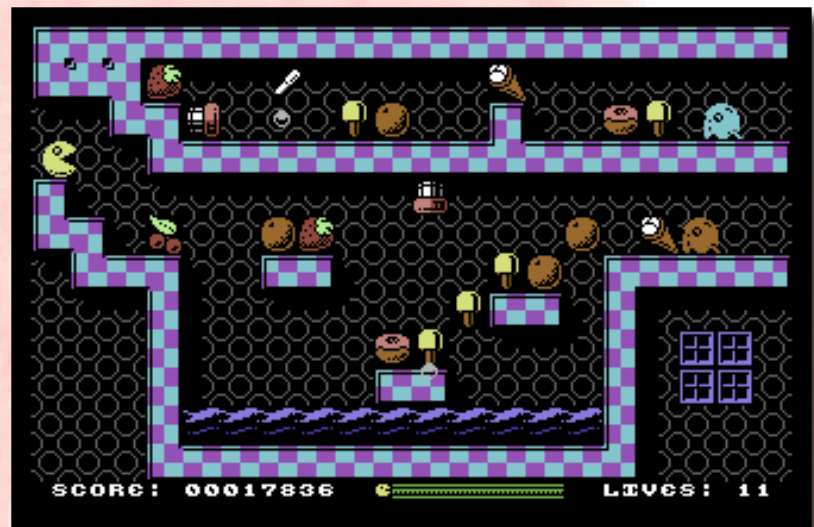
Saul Cross. The game has been submitted to the RGCD Compo 2015/2016, in which it has a good chance for the podium.

similar temptations. I don't recommend this game to anyone who happens to be on a diet! ;) Apart from getting satiated, the most important thing is to look for keys that are scattered here and there on the map – only they will let us open the sequence of doors needed to reach further locations and, in consequence, to finish the game.

Our enemies are of course the well-known colourful ghosts. Here, however, they are moving in a predictable way, either horizontally or vertically, in a straight line. In spite of that, it is anything but easy to avoid them, since most of them move with considerable speed, and in addition, our hero is confined within the walls of the platform labyrinth (it's easy to get caught on something accidentally when you're all hectic).

Sometimes, after gaining a special bonus, you are able to eat the ghosts, just like in standard Pac-Man. But don't get too excited about that, those bonuses are pretty rare. Apart from that, as if we didn't have enough problems with the ghosts, we also have to look out for cunningly placed traps that we can encounter in any place on a given map – automatic cannons, prickles sticking out of some platforms, and pools of water or whatever liquid is actually there. Worry not, however, for we have as much as 10 lives at our disposal! The number seems pretty high, unfortunately illusively so, as we discover soon after beginning the game. Luckily though, by finding special bonuses we can get new ones.

The game is, without doubt, quite demanding as far as difficulty is concerned. And thus, it's one of those games that requires some proficiency from the player. So, if after numerous failed tries you feel discouraged, don't hesitate to use a trainer, for infinite lives (I am mentioning it in connection to this issue's "Talking Heads" topic that explains the point of using such facilities). Even with a trainer the game is really fun to play, as it's a very successful production anyway.



## PLATMAN

*Publisher:* Andrea Schincaglia  
*Year of publication:* 2016  
*Platform:* C64

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REVIEW

# Qwak

■ Review: Komek; Translated by: Grzegorz Sojka

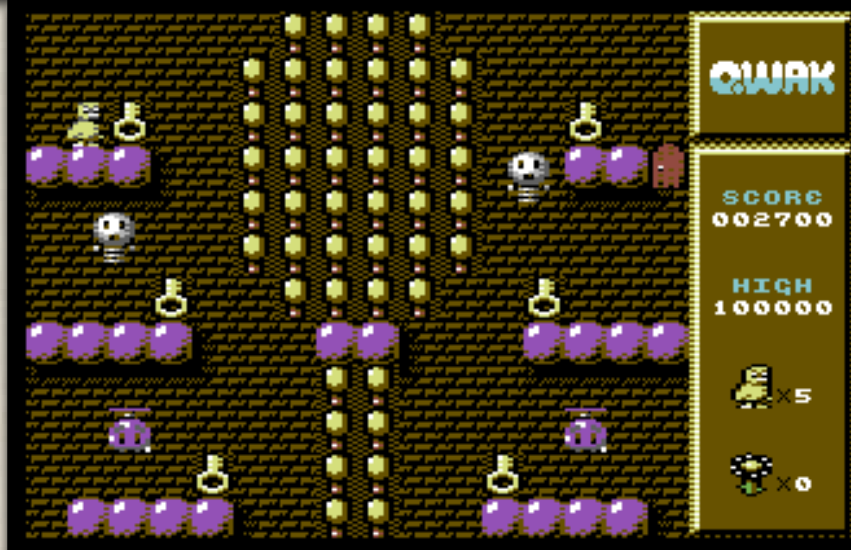
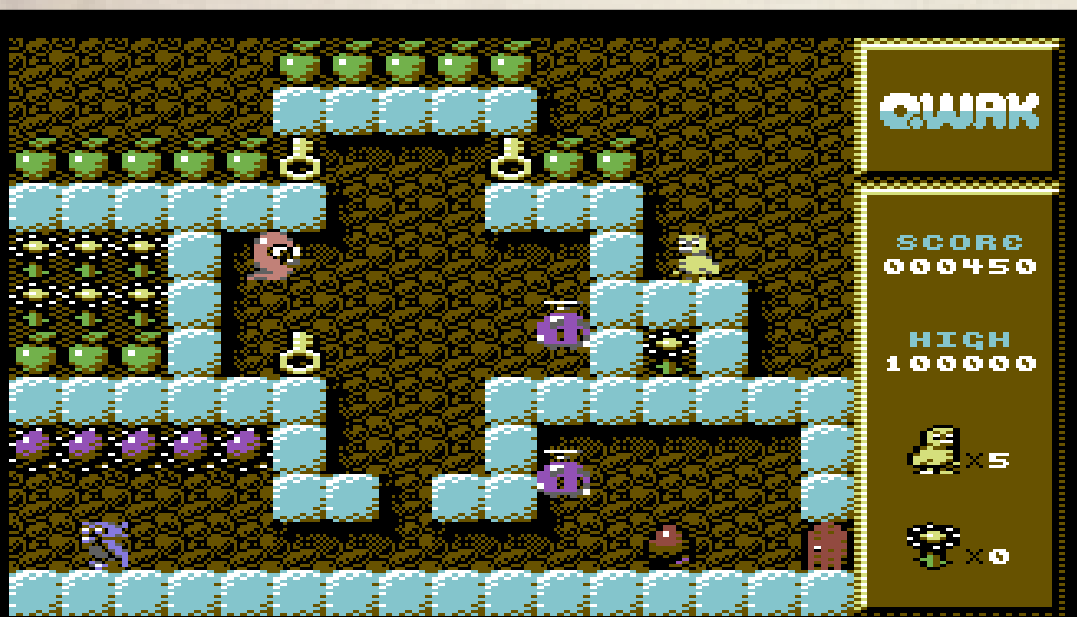
*I run over the fields, swim in the lake,  
Win the competitions for the best beak,  
Turkey gurgles, chicken cuckles and I just quack the best,  
Feathers always dry, for I care about them a lot,  
It occurs, that I'm a weird bird,  
You may be surprised, when you turn on the game,  
For I run, fly, jump and the next level complete there,  
So get the joypad, dear player and let my legs walk me as far as the eye can see.*

**H**ow many years has it been since the premiere of Qwak for Amiga?

The plot is quite simple, survive to the last stage with the largest amount of points. As befits

a good arcade, there is a fast action with many bonuses and objects to collect. The most important are the gold keys. It is required to gather them all, only then will the doors open to the next level. One should also search for fruits, sweets, flowers because they give extra points. On C64 I had found a shield which gave me a few seconds of immortality, meaning every monster can do nothing but kiss your ass. Unfortunately, the Challenge level, a bonus stage giving an opportunity to earn a lot of points, has not been converted from Amiga to C64. Furthermore there are different types of weapons: for C64 are

1993 belongs to a distant past. No one ever expected that, in 2016, it will be possible to play a new version on C64. Well, it happened. The maker of original version launched in 1993 by Team 17 is Jamie Woodhouse and the authors of conversion on C64 are: Daniel Hotop, Saul Cross. These 2 games are slightly different, but most of the elements are alike. Either way, it is the same excellent game.





the bubbles, for Amiga- thrown eggs (what a waste, a ton of scrambled eggs for breakfast would do for that). During the gameplay one can meet with spikey balls (mainly on C64). It is wise to avoid them with great caution. Luckily, there are bottles (with god knows what kind of liquid inside) changing the balls for fruits. Things are different when it comes to Amiga. There are skulls which change into flowers as long as we eat

a mushroom. But there is the catch- it works also in reverse. Every flower turns into a skull when a player eats mushroom first. Better keep that in mind. To make the game more interesting there are bosses to be defeated every now and then and like other enemies they seem to be quite sympathetic, but may be dangerous to our ducky.

A great advantage of Qwak is resemblance to other excellent arcades like Bubble Bobble,



Bomb Jack or Rodland. Such games are very popular among players. Another one is the gameplay- one can be stuck to the computer for hours.

There are many features of

There is nothing to be added about C64 version, it is the same level. But the thing that satisfies me the most is the possibility of playing the game for the users of platform, despite the amount of passed time.



Qwak that it should be praised for and we do. Amiga's version, in spite of the fact, that it has been so many years, still shows beautiful graphics, along with both music and sound effects.

### QWAK

*Publisher:* Team 17 / RGCD

*Year of publication:*

1993 / 2016

*Platform:* Amiga, C64

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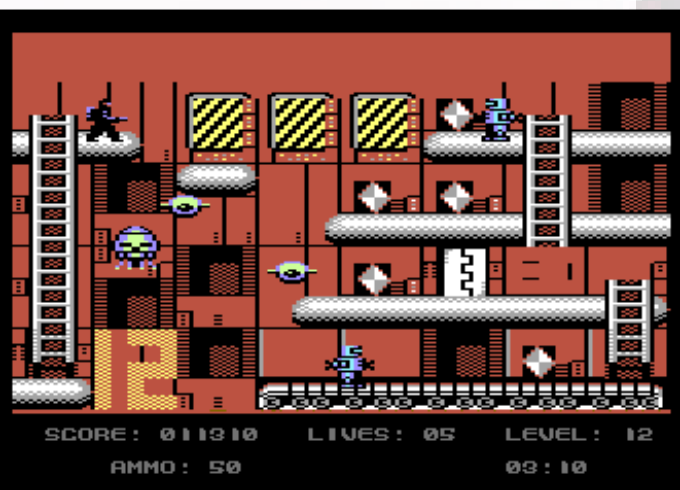


REVIEW

■ Review: bobikowoz; Translated by: Michał Sroka

*My choice of which game to play next is often based on the name of its creator. Vortex Crystals is a production developed by Alf Yngw and Richard Bayliss. These guys have been providing me with sources of entertainment for years. Their new game doesn't disappoint, but is not free of flaws.*

Vortex Crystals entered a RGCD C64 16K Cartridge Development Competition 2015, requiring the game to fit in 16K of memory. The games creators announced that after the contest ends, the game will be expanded



(with loading screens, among other features). In spite of that, the game can be regarded as complete at this of development. At the time of writing this text, the winners of the contest were yet to be announced.

In the future, scientists are going to discover a new source of energy on the planet Vektor. Cosmic crystals will help us defend the Earth from an alien invasion. Unfortunately, one of the scientists was bitten by an alien, which caused a strange mutation to his body. The secret formula for the cosmic crystals gets stolen by an alien and prime

minister has no other choice but to ask you for help. It's time to put your suit on, charge up the laser retrieve what was stolen. Aliens won't stand a chance!

The game can be categorized as a one-screen arcade game. Each of 16 levels requires the player to collect all of titular Crystals and kill an alien that holds the key to the next stage. The task seems easy, but the player is constrained by time and ammo limits. Ammo can be resupplied by killing aliens, but nothing can be done to extend the time. Inaccurate collision detection is another constraint. I often found myself shooting at an enemy moving on the same plane, just to have my shots pass in front of him. Alien robots can also rise from their grave a second after we kill them. I can understand a random interval between respawns, but it definitely is too short and leaves

us no time to react.

In spite of these flaws, Vortex Crystals makes for a pleasant time-consumer. The music is catchy, which makes the lack of sound effects less noticeable. I think that laser shots and other sounds will be included in the extended version. Graphics are diverse, especially considering the memory limitations. New enemies appear every few levels and developers utilize full color palette of C64.

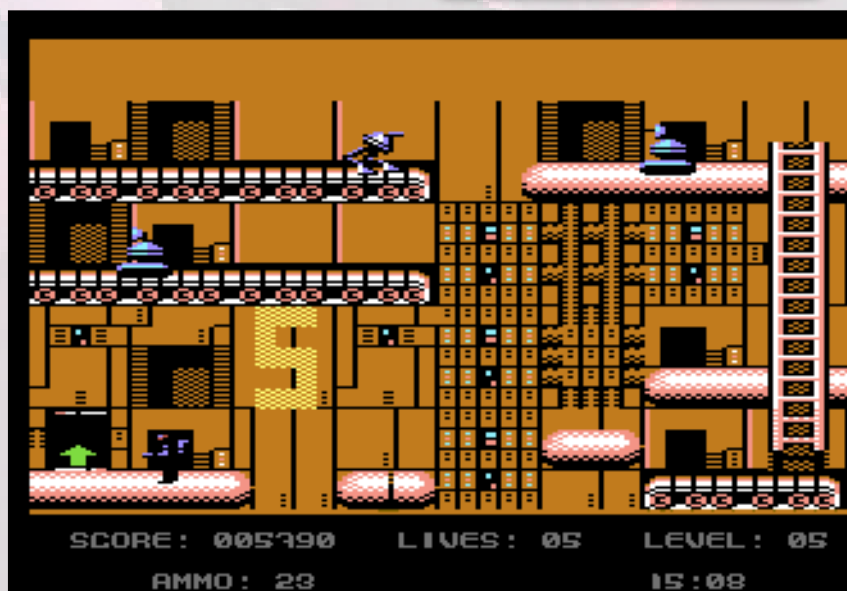
Knowing the positives and negatives of the game ask yourself the most important question: will you answer the call of the prime minister and battle aliens?

### VORTEX CRYSTALS

*Publisher:* The New Dimension

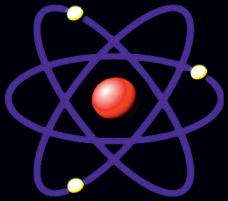
*Year of publication:* 2016

*Platform:* C64





# NEW GAMES FOR THE C64!

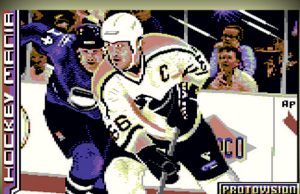
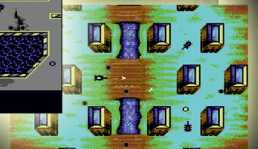
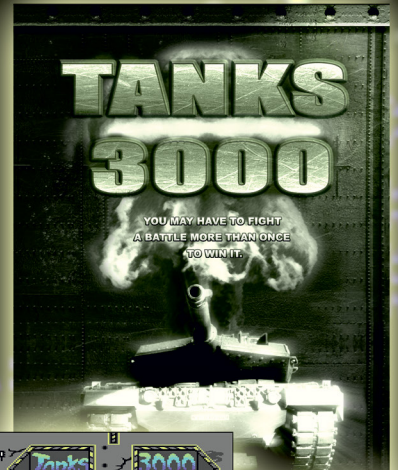
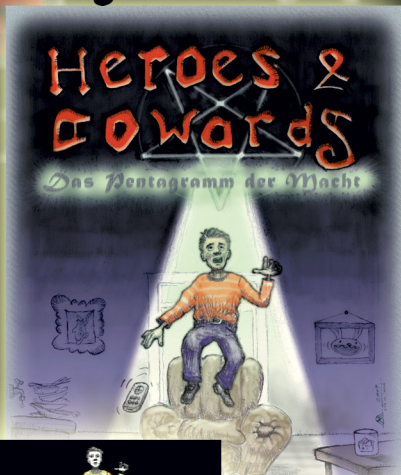


# PROTOVISION

The Byteriders are back!

Roll on and rescue Candy!

Be the last survivor!







# Resurrection: Shadow of the Beast

■ Review and Translation: Petrichor

*I won't lie – A Shadow of the Beast series has a soft spot in my heart, that's why I was super excited, but also bit anxious when I read the announcement that Sony was working on a "remake" of this game. It's been a while since the new Shadow of the Beast was on the market, so it is a high time for me to dive into the world of the Beast to check how the game is doing. Of course, to make it more challenging I will look into this remake through the prism of the original series.*

The Shadow of the Beast trilogy should be well known to the most of Amiga players. The series is quite famous for its beautiful graphics, good animation of the main character and also for so-called parallax scrolling backgrounds to help player get immersed into the world of game. The series also gained plenty of popularity thanks to amazing music



composed by the talented Tim Wright. On the bad note, Beast series gained notoriety for being extremely difficult to finish, the truth is that the production

was not forgiving any mistakes. The player had just life with tiny amount of health that could only be renewed through special beverages, the problem was that there were just a few of them in the entire game.

## Shadow of the Beast

Developed by Reflections and published by Psygnosis in 1989, the first part of the series told a story of Aarbron, who was kidnapped as a child by the evil mage Maletoth. Corrupted by the magic, Aarbron was turned into a titled beast and had become a killing machine serving the above-mentioned mage. During one of the rituals of sacrifice the father of the main character is being killed and through that sacrifice our main hero can see his human form. This moment of truth allowed him to release himself from the evil mage control. Aarbron then swears ultimate revenge and death to Maletoth. He travels through the world of Karamoon in search of the evil mage, fighting his servants, and from time to time by solving simple arcade puzzles. The very first Shadow of the Beast, despite its simplicity, was very well re-

ceived by the players, which encouraged developers to work on the sequel.

## Beast Strikes Back

The sequel to Shadow of the Beast again was created by Reflections and published in 1991 by Psygnosis. Aarbron managed to regain his human form, but his curse weighed heavily on him. Zelek, our main antagonist and servant Maletoth kidnapped sister of our protagonist. The story is being told by super climatic and incredibly well done intro that shows our enemy in the form of a dragon attacking Aarbron's house. The main character roams again through the dangerous land of Karamoon but this time to save his sister. The second part of the series presents an even better graphics and music than its predecessor. The whole atmosphere of the game is even more grim and unsettling. From the very first minute of the game, you can see how sinister and dangerous place the land Karamoon is, this feeling is enhanced by this brilliant music, which again was composed by Tim Wright. The second part of the Beast raises the difficulty



bar even higher than part one. Because of the insane level of difficulty, many reviewers back in the time, reduced the score of the game, saying that the game is just too difficult to enjoy! In fact, the game is not forgiving even the smallest mistake, every drop of energy counts, and with only one life even the smallest misstep could mean that you would have to start the game from scratch! Developers, probably realized that they went a bit crazy with the difficulty, that's why they hid a little cheat in game that could make you immortal. To do this, at the very beginning of the game, when going into right player meets one of the enemy pygmies, to turn the cheat on all you need to do is ask him about "ten pints". Going bit out of subject, if you would like to know our opinion about cheating in games read our "Talking Heads" article that can be found at the beginning of this magazine issue. In the Shadow of the Beast 2 the game play changed a bit, now equipped with a weapon- spiked metal ball on a chain, Aarbron can damage his enemies from the range, increasing his chance of survival. To expand the element of adventure, the game also added a function of chat with the NPCs in game to get some details about and important information about the traps or quest objectives, or simply just to learn something interesting about the land of Karamoon. Unfortunately, the game itself is super short and if it wasn't for the level of difficulty, it would be possible to finish it in about 25-30 minutes. Despite these flaws, the game was a commercial success, which of course meant

that the creators decided to continue the story of Aarbron.

### Beast III

Shadow of the Beast III appeared exclusively on the Amiga platform in 1992, same as in Beast 1 and 2, the third game was also developed by the guys from Reflections and published by Psygnosis, and again the soundtrack was composed by the talented Tim Wright, who has proven himself as a great composer in the two previous games. Shadow of the Beast III is the last part of the Beast trilogy. Aarbron must eventually deal with Maletoth to fully regain his humanity and not just the human form. In the third instalment instead of one continuous world we have four different stages / worlds to choose from. What's important, all four worlds are available to explore and for playing from the very beginning, so you could start with the most difficult of the worlds, even without knowing it. As befits the series, in the third instalment we can again enjoy the at the of audio-visual artistry, the 3rd Beast also changed a lot when it comes to the game-play. Difficulty level has been lowered a lot, and this time the developers focused mainly on the puzzle elements. The game became more complex, but still did not offer the possibility of save game progress, the arcade elements became easier, but the puzzles were extremely difficult and sometimes not intuitive at all. Last, but not least, for some strange reason, the devs used a strange anti-piracy system, making it impossible to install the game on your hard drive. In the end, the last game

in the series got average score from the reviews resulting in the series being abandoned for many years.



### Beast - Rebirth

This condition did not change until 2013, when during the Gamescom event, Sony Interactive Entertainment announced that they started working on a renewed version of the game. All the heavy lifting was commanded to a little-known studio called Heavy Spectrum Entertainment Labs. Since the announcement, until 2016 players didn't get many updates, and some thought that the project was dropped. Surprisingly, one day Sony made an announce-



ment that the game would be released exclusively on Playstation 4 in May 2016.



It's been couple of months since the digital release in the Playstation Store. In the new edition of the game once again we are playing as well known Aarbron and like in the original game from the 80's, we must again regain our humanity and defeat the evil mage Maletoth. I must admit that as a huge fan of the series I was waiting for this "remake", but was truly afraid if the remake would keep the

spirit "of good ol' days"? Luckily, I was not disappointed. The game itself resembles the classic, but is adapted to today's standards. Obviously, game meets all the 2016 standards, but at the same time the tone of the game, and how it looks will bring back many memories in the older fans. The very first stage is particularly interesting, because it is actually a renewed first location from the original version of the game. The music and sounds also meet all my expectations, but unfortunately, it wasn't created by Tim Wright. However, some of you may hear very familiar motives from the original (again, they are very prominent in

the first stage). The gameplay itself has also been adapted to today's expectations. Finally, we can now choose a difficulty level at which we want to play, from the simple, to the "beast" level, which is as difficult as the one you may remember from the old days. The combat itself is now much more dynamic and spectacular. Aarbron has various new skills he can use in fight, for example, he can

now inflict tons of damage on multiple enemies at once, he can stun the enemies, or throw them. Thanks to the new combat moves, we can now hit effective combos, which in addition to the fact that they look like bloody and impressive on the screen, they also give a lot more experience points that you can invest in the development of our hero. In addition to the never-ending combat, from time to time, we will have to solve a puzzle or two, but they are not too demanding and on few occasions when solving the riddle instead of your brains and creative thinking, you will exercise your fingers on the pad, because it turns out that some of the puzzles you have to solve in a specific length of time. The storytelling side of the game at very beginning is quite poor, we get some scraps of memories that we have to sort out and connect. To make it more difficult, all the dialogues in the game are written in strange languages, so to understand the dialogues we have to decode them by learning a specific language. We can only do this by purchasing a special skill using the experience points (the experience points are also used to buy other skills needed in the game). I have to admit that the option of foreign languages is not the best solution,

SHADOW OF THE

BEAST



as it forces players play again and again only to unlock extra options. Experience points can also be spent to unlock and play the original version of the game, or to unlock the original soundtrack, or the old artworks. It's a nice gesture to the fans, but it would be better that these options were available for players right away.

On the bad side, the game is terribly short and with normal difficulty it takes around 3-4 hours to complete it. We can of course extend gameplay time by playing the Beast (and by crying and swearing from time to time), or by replaying each level gain with more experience points to unlock more options.

**The Beast is dead, long live the Beast.**

New Shadow of the Beast is a strange title. On the personal level, I really enjoyed my time with the game and I had plenty of fun playing this remake. This is definitely a game directed to the group of those players who are familiar with the series and they will enjoy this game very much. Younger players or those who are not familiar with the old Shadow of the Beast will probably also enjoy this game. However, they will have to approach the game with a reserve, and treat this title as a kind of a time machine. It will help them to understand that beneath 2016 graphics and audio they will experience what others experienced by playing old Beasts. On the last note, the biggest problem is the fact that you can enjoy this game only if you are a PS4 owner.







# Pixel Heaven 2016

■ Review: c00k; Translated by: Karo

*From the 3rd to 5th of June a big gaming gathering was held in Warsaw and it's obviously the event that our magazine members could not miss. Especially because it was filled with retro highlights. Together with Komek we went to Warsaw, Poland, to see what exactly was going on.*

## Day I

We came to the event and did the reconnaissance. We stood in a long queue and then bought our passes. Everything seemed to be pretty well organized so far: there were three ticket offices arranged in



a bus in front of us. The whole thing took place in an old bus depot, which made an amazingly spacious and accurately atmospheric place. As the representatives of the media, we were given special lanyards with a booklet attached to it, which explains all the "WHAT"s, "WHERE"s and "WHEN"s. Not everything was to be presented that day but the retro zone was fully up and running. Apart from the more renowned hardware, we also found the prototype of Oculus Rift, some non-standard PSX controllers and an Atari device after some serious tuning (on which we played Silkworm). There were also many arcade machines around, unfortunately flippers were the only ones we could play for free. There were even girls from "Unboxerki" YouTube channel, sadly not the full team and we did not manage to take a picture together. We talked to the "Atari Online" squad and were lucky enough to try some lemon moonshine with the C64Power admin. And that's how our Friday went.:)

## Day II

Significantly more people appeared in place today, both exhibitors and visitors. It sadly caused some more commotion

and what follows, some acoustic problems in the main hall. A pity, because some of the movies displayed were quite interesting. And "Unboxerki" did not appear either :( We were up for spending our time actively, browsing multiple stalls and exhibits. The whole area was divided into few zones: retro games, new games, board games and books (mainly comics because as we all know, the art of reading regular books is a dying one nowadays). Apart from that there were some stalls with various thingamajigs, which bring to mind tacky souvenirs from popular tourist places.

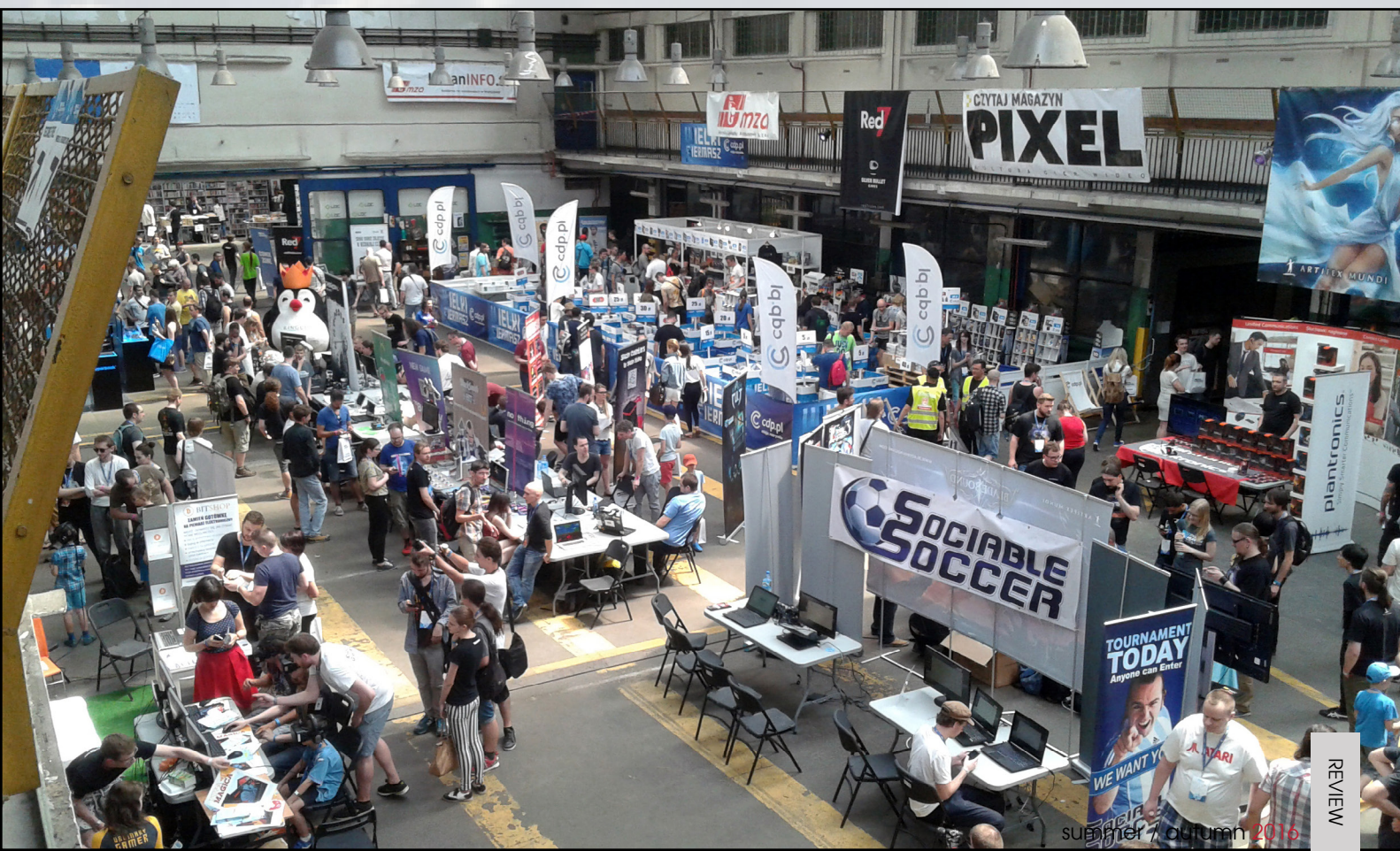
We talked to some game developers and played some of their productions. The most memorable one for me was the "Beat Cop", which was kinda like a blend of GTA and The Sims (the latter comes to mind because of the timer and the tasks that need to be done), but with a cop as the main character. As it usually is with low-rank policemen, nobody respects them, especially when, like our hero, they were downgraded from a detective. Even workmates disregard him, quite openly so. The story is as follows: you get thrown into the city and have to deal with parking duty,



so that's life right here. You also have quests to do, which make up most of the game. Everything fully embedded in pixel graphics. In addition, you have to gather recognition points from the local community, as well as other important figures in your life. And they can get subtracted too. It was a pleasant game, there was not much time to do the tasks, just like in The Sims, but, as I said to the creator: "You'd have to be a complete deviant to like giving people parking tickets" ;) I also managed to use some of the technical novelties and took a roller-coaster ride in VR, which really made me want to hold on for dear life. And then came the dinner time. There was a superb Vietnamese bar in the neighborhood, which everybody fell in love with, especially because they had to choose between this and incredibly expensive burgers (even considering the high prices of the capital).

As a fan of RPG in my youth, I was particularly interested in a board game called "Kryształy Czasu" (Time Crystals). If you haven't heard that name, it was an RPG system created allegedly 30 years ago. I heard about it 10 years later when I encountered it in "Magia i Miecz" (Magic and Sword) monthly magazine, in which fragments of it were printed. Infamous at that time as an unplayable system too difficult to use because of complicated mechanics. Even if the intentions were good (as it meant to depict reality with utmost precision), it made the game too hard. Anyhow, it seemed the world completely forgot about it, only for the author to surprise us with the reemergence of his magnum opus. One has to admit, he really worked hard on the game, it does not surprise then, that he didn't want to let it go so easily and wrote a book that takes place in the same

universe and advertised as the beginning of a great saga. I didn't read it yet but I heard a lot good about it. I cannot give my own opinion but the author claims it's a bestseller. In any case, "Kryształy Czasu" was to be released as a board





game and that's what the lecture was about. Unfortunately, he has been working on it for 3 years now but only about 300 games are released every year. It has some serious titles to compete with after all and the high price (around 250 PLN which is about 60 Euro) certainly doesn't help.

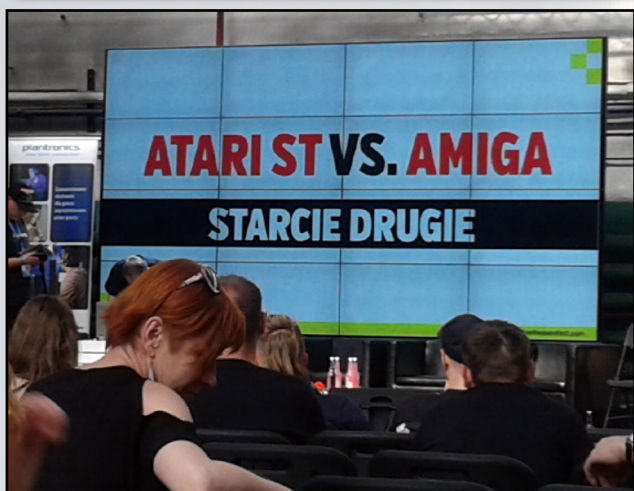
The guys from SPInka studio, who are responsible for the "Blok ekipa" series, brought



a punchball to the event, and you could "test your might", should you feel like it. As I do a bit of boxing from time to time, I decided to try and got myself a "Boar". (the prize or the name of the result?)

The heat was incredible, so we were happy that it was allowed to bring non-alcoholic drinks to the venue.

### Day III



We managed to hunt down "Naczelný" from TOP SECRET (classic Polish gaming magazine from 90's), who posed for pictures and answered the same questions for the umpteenth time with utmost patience. We also met Jon Hare, the creator of hits such as Sensible Soccer or Cannon Fodder. Memorial pics and onwards we go! We even managed to play a game with banana-controllers!

Quite a family day. People came in with their children after the church, the place looked almost like an IKEA on Sunday. We could see the exhibitors closing their stalls one by one, gradually. I took part in the Street Fighter tournament and got to the semi-final. Sadly, only the first place got a prize, so there was no third place match for me. A quick break for a dinner in the Vietnamese bar and then we waited for the Atari ST



vs. Amiga fight. The organizers, as well as most of the audience wanted blood to spill, so everyone suffered a shock right at the beginning. Both sides claimed that ST would not exist without Amiga and

Amiga without ST, so the rest of the debate was held in this mood.

### Summary

If someone expected a truly retro event, they went to a wrong place. I would say it was simply a geek party. The combination of retro hardware, a game fair, and other more or less similar happenstances. The organization itself was brilliant and the place – very atmospheric. Unfortunately, the acoustics in the main hall and the general commotion were a bit disap-

pointing. But the rest was very enjoyable. Oh well and the emulators in boxes which you can normally play for free, here cost 2PLN (0.5 Euro) to use. A slight hillbilly vibe, if you ask me. (Pretty lame, if you ask me)





# Back to the Golden Age

Review: Don Raffito; Translated by: Magdalena Piss

**Creating games for the Amiga market, for both lines - classical and contemporary goes several tracks. One of the most common forms is porting software from other platforms. Currently, for "Friends" are written mainly ports titles familiar with Linux or Windows. From time to time there will be a gem, which already had its debut on some retro hardware, and thanks to the port on the Amiga will survive its second youth. This happens with Back To Golden Age. Classic arcade adventure with RPG elements released in the early 90s on AtariST, which now thanks to Meynafowi is also available on the classic Amiga.**

A long time ago there was a land called Euroland. In the world there were

knights, warriors, mages and wizards. Land was ruled by the priest, which draws power from four Eders. People lived in prosperity and peace. However, the Euroland was invaded by the evil wizard who with the help of his priests enslaved people. Through the ancient religion cast spells and suffering, he invoked to life vampires, half-humans, half-animals. One of the priests fled, taking one of the Eders. He hid in a remote, forgotten village and led the life of a hermit, until they had fulfilled the legend, which said that one day the young man who will be king will rise and he'll end the reign of the evil wizard.

The wizard knew about the legend, and that's why he slew all young men aged 10 to 20 years, but he missed the forgotten village. Village where hid the priest and in which was born Zad, the hero of legend. When Zad over 8 years, he began studying with the old hermit. The man taught him, among other things crafts, combat and wield magic.

One day, when the hermit considered the boy ready, he revealed his identity and gave him the stolen Eders. Zad knew his mission has only just begun. The mission, during which he must get the remaining three, overthrow the wizard and sit on the throne of Euroland to restore peace and good.

Zad, as befits a knight, starts equipped with armor, shield and a sword. But during the game his inventory can expand: crossbows, arrows, better shields and swords, explosive vials. Besides knightly crafts, he can fight using a magic book of spells or magic potions. On his way Zad can also collect the enemies valuable items, for example: keys and money. The last one are very important and needed in the game. Thanks to them - everything you won't find on your way, you can buy it for example: mentioned weapons or food, which is essential for the regeneration of life.

Enemies: from simple warriors waving axes by other knights, on creatures, priests and wizards.







Our adventure is not just waving a sword, casting spells and barter. Wandering the next stage will sometimes make you search, because, for example: in the pocket we have one key, but in front of us there are three doors and five lever in the wall.

Our hero is controlled by joystick and keyboard. It is worth noting that at any moment you can save the game and when something goes wrong, calmly load it later.

Graphics, though somewhat deficient in colors, match the



fighting, explosions and even welcomes from the shopkeeper, it sounds somewhat artificial.

and designed for a specific audience, so I refer to all fans of Action-RPG to Euroland and I guarantee that this will be well spent time.



times, we can say the Middle Ages. Forests, villages, castles, dungeons - everything is accurate and legible. Characters have a sufficient number of frames of animation. The only pity is that controlling our hero instead of liquid scrolling we move from screen to screen. It sometimes happens that after the transition to the next or previous recession, we are attacked by an enemy lurking there.

Binding sound does not knock. It is true that samples are quite neatly done, all the sounds of

Back To The Golden Age is not a simple game. Besides agile waving a sword you have to cleverly dodge. The cool thing here is just a shield that works very well. But beware, it is not indestructible. When it starts to blink, you have to make haste to the store. Besides, the need to master the principles of wielding magic or thinking about the levers gives the impression that the game is designed primarily for fans of the genre. Sunday players or typical arcade players won't play for hours. But this is also an asset because it proves that the title is ambitious

#### BACK TO THE GOLDEN AGE

*Publisher:* Ubi Soft/Power Concept, Meynaf (Amiga port)

*Year of publication:* 2014

*Platform:* m68k, 020

8 6 7







# Boxx 2



Review and Translation: Komek

**What is the key ingredient for a good platformer? Well, the answer is easy: It must be similar to Super Mario Bros. This idea has already been used a hundred times and another example is a game called Boxx 2. It's predecessor, Boxx, was re-released in 2014. The graphics in both of these games are identical, however that doesn't mean that the games have no differences.**

Your goal is to destroy all the baddies and collect all coins on five levels.

Finally you must win the golden cup. Nothing too special so far. Be careful, because in this game you will meet some obstacles: bad piranhas, green and blue monsters, shooting cannons, water, red-hot magma, moving blocks, and a big surprise at the end of each level.

In the beginning of the game you have two lives. When you touch an obstacle your energy will fall. Thankfully you can replenish it with green vials. Sometimes in the game you will be forced to go through the water or magma. Try to do it as soon as possible, because for contact with the elements you will see a big hit to your energy. Throw

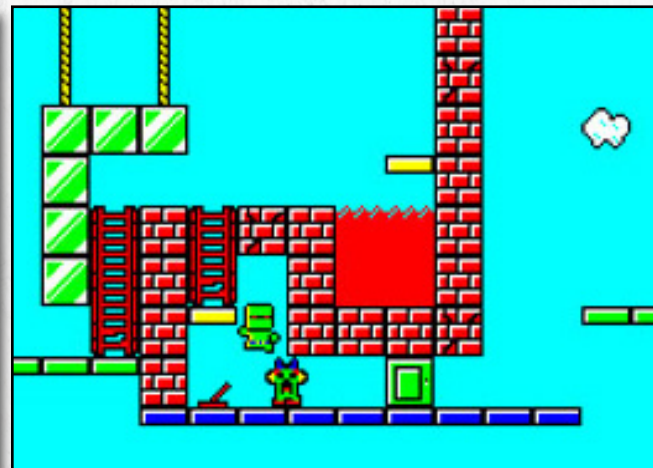
in switches that require you to take out certain creatures and there's some decent variety.

So what's waiting at the end of each level? A big ass, dangerous robot who shoots missiles. Before you begin a duel you need to grab a gun, which is located right before the robot. When you defeat him, you'll move on to the next level and so on until the finale where things change up once again. The game consists of five levels, and the last of them you must defeat two big robots and their sidekicks ;) At the end of the game you have to defeat a strange machine which consists of three guns. When you destroy all of them you will get three keys, so now you can run for the gold cup.

Boxx one was simple. Boxx 2 evolves on that in all the right ways. Bringing in challenges and cool set pieces that should delight platform fans. The pixel graphics are impressive and really give you the sense of going back to a simpler time. Where enjoyable gameplay ruled.

## BOXX 2

Publisher: **Lemming880**  
Year of publication: **2015**  
Platform: **m68k-amigaOS**







# TRY2EMU

[www.t2e.pl](http://www.t2e.pl)

EMULATOR – program komputerowy, który duplikuje funkcje jednego systemu informatycznego w innym, dzięki czemu ów drugi system zwraca te same rezultaty, co pierwszy. Mówimy wtedy, że pierwszy system jest emulowany przez drugi.

# TALKING HEADS

## *To cheat or not to cheat?*

**E**arly games weren't the easiest. A lot of releases were characterized by high level of difficulty, so we could differentiate the champions from the rookies. This also assured the appropriate profit for the owners of the arcade games. Every death prompting the emptying of pockets for coins to spend on One. More. Turn. While human nature is drawn to a challenge, it is always seeking the path of least resistance. The more creators tried to make a game challenging, the more programs appeared which decreased the level of difficulty. Dear editors, what do you think about those trainers?

**Bobikowoz:** Regardless of the fact whether I play new games or retro games, I like to know everything what the authors prepared for me. Nowadays you can easily adjust the difficulty level, so we, on one hand, do not finish the game without breaking a sweat and quickly forget it, and on the other hand, do not sit hours trying to reach the next level. Earlier the only solution for this were the trainers, which I used when I was young, and even today, when I want to

check out a release when I do not want to feel stressed and just have fun. The game is supposed to be a pleasure, and the limited time, in my opinion, forces us to use the cheats, either a trainer or an ability to save the game. We need to finish the game and do not get angry that in a moment, because of our bad move we will need to do everything from the very beginning.

**Komek:** I use also sometimes the cheats. Why? Because it is an only way to create an accurate description of the game, when I need to do a couple of them for a given edition of our magazine. Because imagine if I sit and play every game so long to finish it, this way we would make

probably one edition of "K&A plus" a year! Another situation when someone uses the cheats is when the curiosity wins with the patience and I am defeated by the unstoppable will to know the undiscovered earlier levels.

**noctropolis:** To cheat – of course. Why? Because, for current standards, the retro games are simply too difficult. Back then

Regardless of the fact whether I play new games or retro games, I like to know everything what the authors prepared for me.

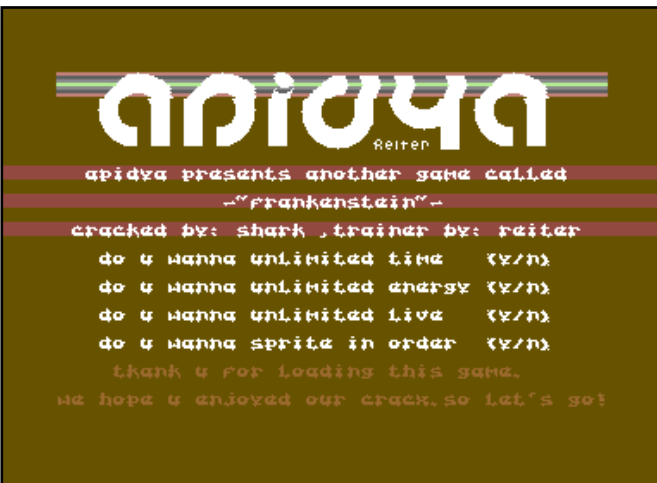
Earlier the only solution for this were the trainers.

- Bobikowoz



the exaggerated level of difficulty was justified, nowadays definitely not – and I prefer to have fun than to get frustrated (I treat playing as fun and not as

irritates me? I'm a supporter of the thing that is happening currently, the adjusted level of difficulty, where the rookie level is simply a carnage with small amount of



a challenge). So on a real hardware the trainers are like a salvation. And on the emulator? Here I have an unusual opinion because most of the time I do not use trainers, but I use very often the option to save/load game at every given moment. I use them when I play the game only for fun and when I am making a review /description of a given release for our magazine. I find it a good solution.

On one hand you cannot deny that it is still cheating, on the other hand you need to put in a little bit of effort because you need to end every level without the cheats and saving a game is only a safety precaution after finishing a given stage of the game.

**C00k:** I'm all for it! Some of the games are impossible to finish without cheating...the creators knew about this and I think that is the reason for the existence of the cheats ;) I won't mention such situations as writing a review but, even when I play a game for fun, what kind of fun is it when I meet such an enormous obstacle that I cannot defeat and it

effort involved. And without it and with no saves? Well... But I never understood people that played the highest level of difficulty and used the immortality cheat. Maybe only when it was intended to find places unavailable for lower levels of difficulty.

Some of the games are impossible to finish without cheating...  
What kind of fun is it when I meet such an enormous obstacle that I cannot defeat and it irritates me?

- C00k

**Petrihor:** No, no, no!!!! Ok, I have to admit, when I was younger I used to use cheats (if you look at my article about Shadow of the Beast, you will see what I mean). But today, in hindsight, I think that I was making shortcuts and didn't take everything that the game was offering, I couldn't say with pride that "after 150 tries and two weeks of struggle, I finally defeated the boss!" For me cheating is something like reading synopsis of the book, we can do this, but we will never have all that the book or a game has to offer... Never...

That is why when I play newer games, I always begin at the highest level of difficulty (that is how I am doing the refreshed version of Shadow of the Beast), while cursing a lot, pulling hair from my head and sometimes I even scream ;) But

what can we do, it is my penance, which I put on my myself. I play game on the very difficult level because when I was young, I cheated and it was too easy.

**Minimoog:** As an editor, I agree with the majority of my colleagues that wrote earlier. Sometimes you just need to check what is at the end, how many levels the game has to offer. Sometimes it is impossible while playing normally. I remember when I launched my first C64 game (I don't remember the title), when asked if I want to use the trainer, I thought: "Hmm.... The trainer probably has something to do with training. I'll practice a little bit so I can play good." It wasn't that way, we know it, but thanks to that, I realized what a trainer is. Sometimes I'm a little bit irritated that the crackers for almost every game provided those settings and I have to answer:

"No, no, I don't want unlimited lives; No, I don't want invisibility; No, I don't want unlimited weapons..."

**bobikowoz:** Oh, I didn't expect that so many of you will overtly admit using the cheats. Good job Petr-ihor! I started also by admitting to use the cheats, but I expected, dear colleagues, that you will criticize me, and here the opposite happens. I am a little bit ashamed for you that in spite of my love to old difficult games, all of us chose the easy way. To defend myself, I will say that not so long ago I finished

without the cheats Knight'n'Grail, and when I was young I was playing The Great Giana Sisters without any help.

**Neurocide:** Ufff, I'm relieved but I have to admit

that you destroyed the myth that I created around you, dear colleagues. To this day thought that you are complete 8bit destroyers. Let me pick up my chin from the floor. But why am I surprised? All those cheats and amenities are made mainly for the testers and yes... the reviewers. I can see how the Zzap64 crew finishes every reviewed game without the cheats, yeah, right... Why didn't I think about it earlier? I'm sitting like a dumbass and try to reach third level of Kamikaze for two years now, just not to seem like a sissy. But there are other things – well known to the readers from Central and East Europe. The trainer

meant that a moment ago you saw an intro of a cracker group and that meant that on your cassette were not one but x amount of games, that you paid for it approximately one dollar and that every game will load extremely quickly. I'll admit it one more time – those were the times.

To answer this question, you have to make another one: what is the objective of your playing?

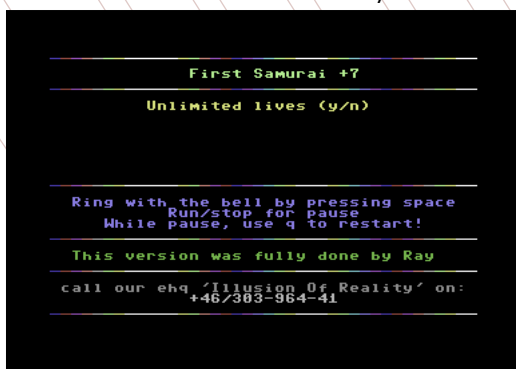
Cheats just like everything are for everyone, but for everyone who knows how to use them wisely.

- MrMat

**Mr. Mat:** To answer this question, you have to make another one: what is the objective of your playing?

The main objective is, according to me, is the entertainment. But, of course, it means for everyone something different. If someone has little time and plays sporadically, the retro games on higher levels of difficulty won't bring him entertainment, only frustration. Because how many times can you go through one level and die fighting the boss? Here "help" is really useful ;) Even the creators of the games decided at one point do not provide only fun for the casual players but also cause a lot of frustration, and they implemented a variety of codes and passwords that make the gameplay easier.

There is also one more reason for cheating that not everybody remembers. The games gradually became more and





more complex, it was harder to test the games and find the bugs. I don't have to explain to anyone how difficult it is to enter a place and cannot leave it. The game over without the final subtitles and without the fault of the player.

The only way to continue the game is to use a code to for a superjump or going through the walls and we can have more fun. You just have to remember to disable those abilities, because they can be an obstacle to a good game.

If someone really likes the game and after finishing the game would like to play some more, using a variety of cheats can make the gameplay even more flashy. But, in this case, we need to use them after finishing the game.

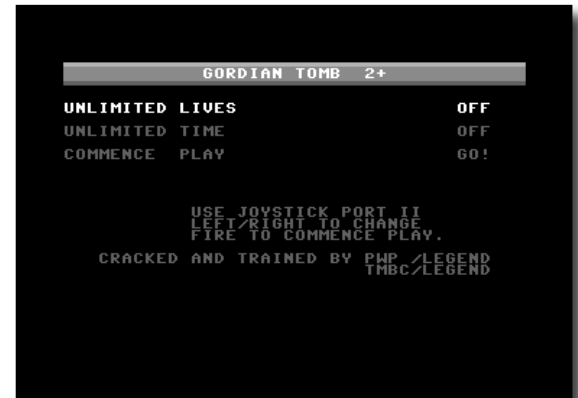
However you need to be moderate with cheats, just like with everything in life, because you can easily transform a nice and good game into a boring one, without potential and atmosphere, and what is more important, without all the emotions relating to the gameplay. The boundary is for everybody different and everyone, separately, should decide what is fun and what is boring.

I think that using cheats is not something you should be ashamed of. I just buy a game and I want to have fun while playing it.

Of course the aforementioned refers only to cheating while playing single player (90% of retro games) because in multi-player cheating is always reprehensible. There are also hardcore players who want to achieve perfection in playing. Here the most important is the challenge and only this provides satisfaction from the well done job. This type of people is like this and you cannot do anything about this. For them, more important than the pure, spontaneous entertainment is mastering the game. Reaching the next level and finding all the bonuses and hidden places – that's their objec-

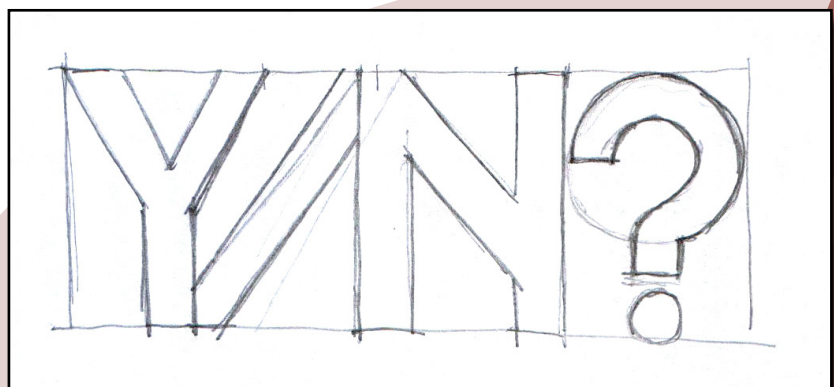
tive. For them cheating is not possible. Finally, we need to conclude that the cheats just like everything are for everyone, but for everyone who knows how to use them wisely.

**Tomxx:** I never cheat. I have an inherent prejudice against using trainers and I've avoided them since a long time ago. The exception can be a review of a given release, but even then I only use the unlimited lives and not all the other cheats that can be used. I think that the game has to be created adequately and I believe in the producers and I want to play according to their rules.



The thing that I like the most about those trainers are the intros which I watch and listen to with passion and admiration. Oh, there is an another exception: I very often invite my 5 year old son to play retro games together who just begins to make first steps in the digital world. Then, to make our game even more entertaining and longer, we use the unlimited lives to make it happen. Last time we played together C64's Bubble Bobble and Amiga's Tanks Furry and I have to admit, that, at least for the time being, reaching together 30th level of these games without any outside help would be impossible...

**Translated by: Slayerpl**





# Cinnamon Writer

■ Review: Don Raffito; Translated by: Slayerpl

**A question for 100 points. What are the two problems of “current Amigas”? Top marks to those of you who answered a good Internet browser and a nice office suite. The first problem can be solved by using OWB and Netsurf. And when it comes to office suite, the situation is way worse.**

I know, you can always start it in the emulator: TurboCalc or WordWorth, but for gods sake, the contemporary Amiga's have a lot in common with Linux. For Android (which is also partially connected with Linux) there are many applications where you can make a presentation, a spreadsheet, or to make a document consistent with the current standards. The another situation is connected with Open Office, which is also available for all the types of Linux software. “And?.....” (as my son says, when he tells about the reproof from the teacher...

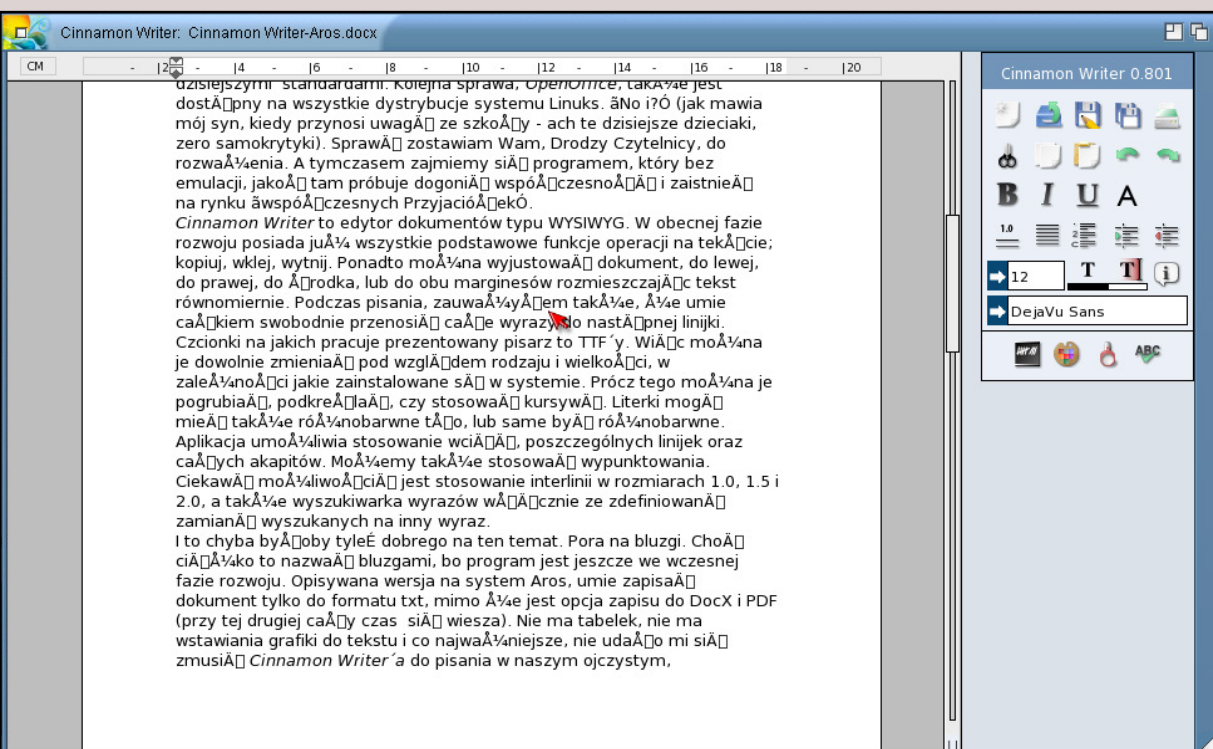
those kids nowadays.... no self – criticism). I will let you, readers, take this into consideration. In the meantime, we will deal with a program which tries without the emulation to reach the contemporary abilities of technology and make a mark on the market of “Amigas”.

“Cinnamon Writer” is a word processor for documents of WYSIWYG type. It already has all the basic functions of text processing: copying, pasting and cutting. Moreover you can adjust the document to the left, right, centre or both margins.

I noticed while using the program that it can move whole words into another line pretty good.

The fonts, used by the aforementioned program, are TTFs. You can change them as you will as far the type or the size depending on the fact which fonts are installed in the system. You can also make the text bold, underline it or use italics. The letters can also have a multicolour background.

The app also allows us to use indents of the chosen lines or







whole paragraphs. We can also use bullet points.

An interesting possibility is the application of interline in sizes: 1.0, 1.5 and 2.0 and the possibility to search for words with the ability to substitute the searched words for another word.

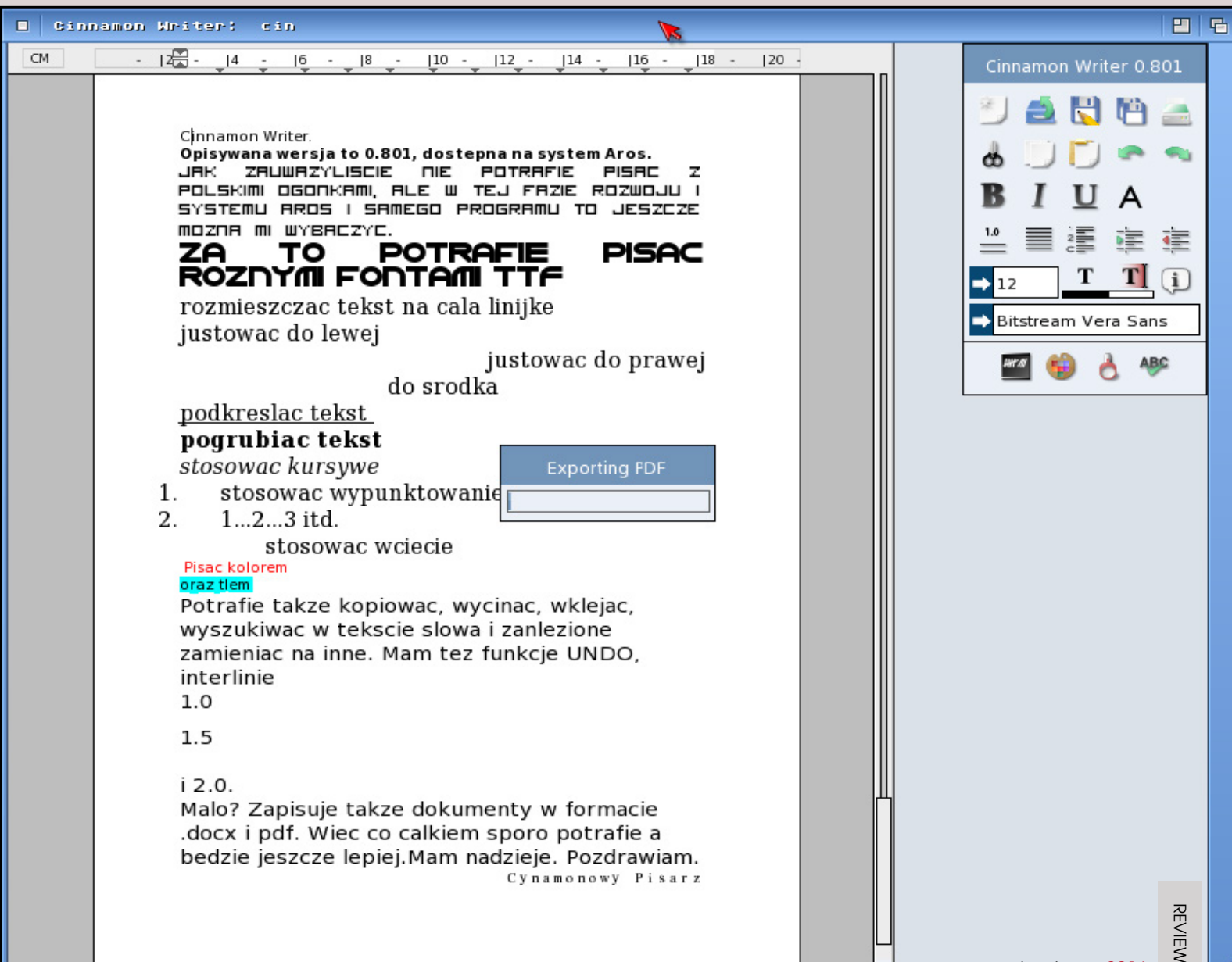
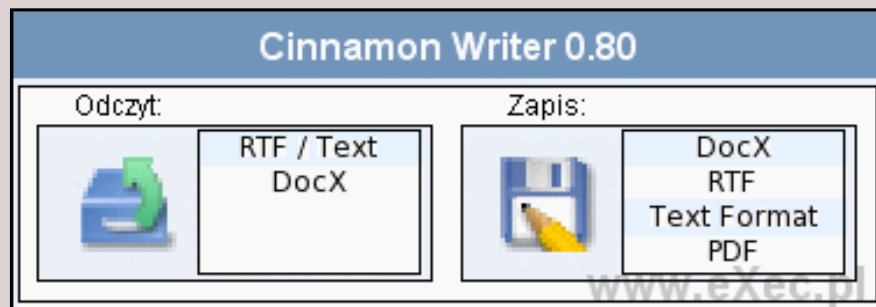
Now comes the time for criticism. I will be gentle because I know that the program is in the early phase of development. The described version for Aros can only save the document to a \*.txt format even though there is a possibility to save it as \*.docx or \*.pdf (it crashes when trying to save as \*.pdf). There are no charts, there is no option of adding pictures to a text

and what is the most important shortcoming: I could not force Cinnamon Writer to write in our language with our letters even though I tried to install the fonts from the outside, for instance Windows, together with the changes of code settings in the system. Our word processor sometimes after going to another paragraph changes the font and our attempts to change it

back fail. One time, during the struggle with fonts, my whole system crashed.

### CINNAMON WRITER

*Publisher:* Claus Desler  
*Year of publication:* 2012  
*(Aros, other OSs – 2016)*  
*Platform:* aros-i386, AmigaOS 4.x, MOS  
*Score:* 3





## ■ Review and Translation: Petrichor

***Dungeon Master is a legendary game that brought role playing games to a new level and defined “dungeon crawler” games genre. Come with me into the world claustrophobic mazes and endless dungeons, and remember at the end is always a reward.***

I hid in the chamber, calming my rapid breath. I just finished fighting Stone Crawlers, my team is exhausted, and one of my warriors is poisoned ...

I just heard louder steps coming from behind the wall ... someone's coming! Am I ready for a next battle? Or perhaps I simply hide myself? Suddenly! The

Master again, and again I would stay until early morning hours, walking between the narrow walls of a dungeons... That's how I remember my first meeting with the godfather of all “dungeon crawlers”.

“Dungeon crawler” is a type of game in which the player seeing the world from the first person perspective, commands a group of heroes and explores narrow labyrinths, always moving up one space in a given direction and fights with various enemies that inhabit these dungeons. The goals are usually the same, and player has to perform one of two tasks: to get out of the labyrinth or defeat super-evil boss that dwells somewhere at the end of the maze. And these are precisely two tasks that we have to complete in Dungeon Master – first, we have to get out of the dungeon and we must confront and defeat ... The Lord of Darkness. That's it when it comes to the story of the game.

Dungeon Master, was released in 1987 by FTL Games. The game was originally released for Atari ST, but shortly it became the most popular title available on the platform, selling up to 40,000 copies in the first year. Almost exactly same version of

the game was released for Amiga in 1988. However, when creating Amiga version, the developers realized that they would not be able to make the Amiga version of the game, which would operate at 512kb memory only, they had to take the hard decision and require 1MB of memory in order to launch the game. By making this decision, FTL Games created one of the very first games with this kind of limitation for the players. Luckily, the game had already established an extensive fan-base, so the sales didn't suffer too much, and in addition, the game boosted sales of memory extensions for Amiga, helping in making this a golden standard among the users. Interesting story - one of the producers of memory chips back in the days, the company called “Tecno” decided to create a bundle where by buying their memory extension, players were getting the game for free. Also, it is worth mentioning that by using extra memory, the creators decided to expand sounds in the game, by adding 3D sound effects to the game, so players could hear from what direction the enemies were approaching! This is something that was not available on Atari ST.

door to the chamber opened and a mysterious person that emerges from the door is ... my mom...shouting! - “Dominik! It's 3am and you have school tomorrow, so turn off your Amiga right now and go to bed!” Yes, this was the kind of battle I could never win, but the next day I would launch Dungeon







Ok, the game itself. As mentioned, in the "dungeon crawlers" players experience in-game world from a first person perspective. Our first task, just after crossing the gates of the maze in Dungeon Master is to go through the "Hall Of Fame", a chamber full of special machines with the souls of the heroes trapped inside. From the 24 available characters, player can choose four characters that will become their team. Like in classic tabletop RPG's each hero represents a different class, we can pick between: mages, barbarians, thieves, priests and even ninjas. After selecting the team, we enter the network of endless mazes and tunnels. During our trip we will have to take care of the whole team, by providing them with food and a good sleep, we must also remember about torches that will light up our way through the dungeons. Managing the team isn't too difficult thanks to the very clear and friendly access to each heroes stats and inventory. Equally easily we can change the order or weapons of our team. The only thing that can cause some problems is the spell system. It is actually pretty interesting and it really allows players to feel like a real mage, but at the same time is super difficult because it requires players to memorize the sequence of special runes, which, if used in the correct order will allow to cast the right spell. Unfortunately, once the spell is used it won't appear on any list, etc. So to cast it again players will need to click on the runes again. It is particularly difficult to manage when in the middle of a battle, where instead of casting a healing spell,

you cast a spell that gives the team magic torch. Or instead of the huge and beautiful fireball spell that could finish the battle, we cast the spell that increases the agility of the team member. So having a quick-pick list of available spells can be a pain, but on the other hand I understand the decision of the developers, as they wanted to introduce a system that would allow players to experiment with spells.

When it comes to the fights. The combat is mini turn-based, although the fact that all fights are based on the sequence is completely invisible. This is due to the dynamics of each battle, during the fight we are in constant motion, we can circle the enemy or try to block them in a place where it will be easier for us to fight, for example we can trap enemies between the doors and crush them. We just have to remember that we fight in the maze and sometimes we can end up in the goat corner with a horde of enemies attacking us. AS for the movement, attacks and casting spells is also turned based but the fights are so quick that the turn-base element is barely noticeable here.

The graphics and sound of the game are very average, the textures of the dungeon walls do not change throughout the whole game. So our progress through the game can be noticed not thanks to the surrounded dungeon, but thanks to the more difficult enemies that stand on our way. The good thing is that the enemies look really good and are diversified. The army of the Lord of Darkness consists of Dragons,

Crawling Stones, huge broods, mummies and other abominations!

We won't experience any music through the whole game, the only sound we hear is the sound of our steps or spooky spider



creaks behind the walls, telling us that the enemy is nearby. During the fight, of course, we can hear the sounds of the sword clashes or fireballs.

Despite the poor graphic and sound, the game makes up for great gameplay mechanics, cool and diverse monsters and interesting puzzles that we encounter on our way to defeat the Dark Lord. The truth is that every self-respecting fan of computer RPGs and fantasy genre will have to play Dungeon Master at some stage, even just to meet with the god-father of "dungeon crawlers". And after that once you fell in love with this game genre, you have to play Dungeon Master sequels (Chaos Strikes Back and Dungeon Master II) and after that, if you want to go deeper into dungeon crawlers you have to try Eye of the Beholder series, Ishar trilogy and many many others.

## DUNGEON MASTER

*Publisher:* **FTL Games**  
*Year of publication:* **1987**  
*Platform:* **Amiga**







REVIEW

# Soulless

Review: Minimoog; Translated by: Grzegorz Sojka

**After many years of war king Rizek finally achieved peace in his country. Not everyone enjoyed it though and evil sorcerer Kalen managed to transform the ruler into a monster, harnessed his soul and eventually locked him in the prison. Only after a century the great earthquake crushed jail's walls and freed the kind up. Rizek is now released but to fully regain his freedom he has to get back his soul as well.**

This is the plot of the Soulless game that was launched by Psytronik in 2012. It's probably not a novelty, but the game is relatively fresh and absolutely worth noticing. Want to experience an incredible adventure? Come with me then!

top quality. Solid and smooth graphics, catchy and pleasant music, every detail well-polished up. Full-blown labyrinth, as befits a good arcade, makes me feel being part of a complex adventure while playing this game.

Indeed there is a lot to do in order to regain Rizek's soul!

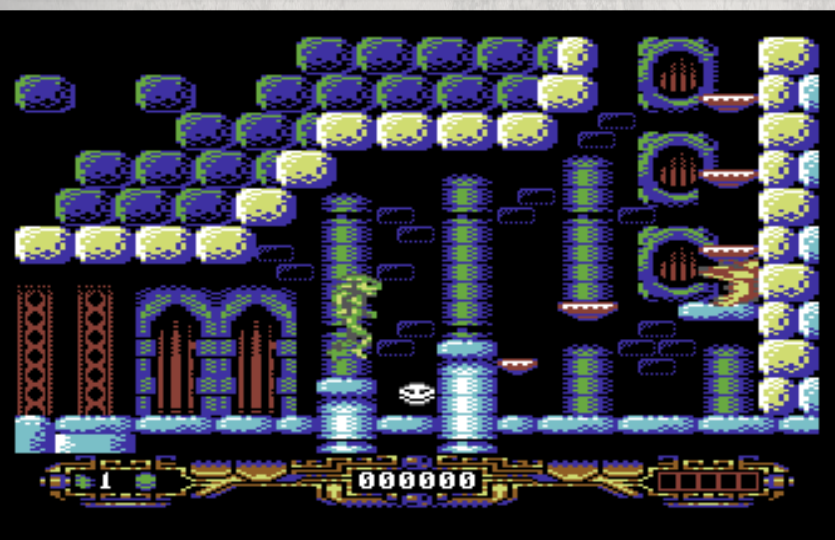
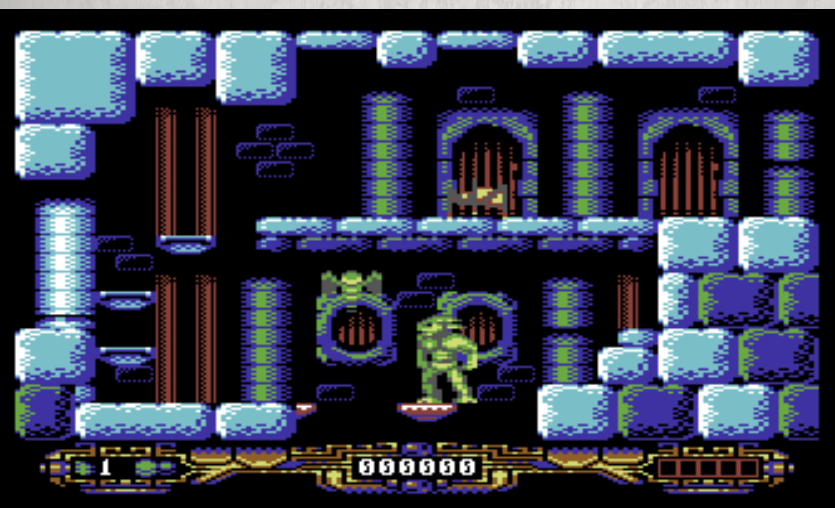
The main mission does not belong to the simplest ones by any measure. It's about finding 12 soul stones and placing them in a specific chamber in a correct order. To make it harder for the cheaters, this order is generated randomly every time the game is launched.

Definitely this game is not to be completed within half an hour - it's rather a longer playtime. With only 3 lives an inexperienced player may in fact leave the party much

the end. The game is difficult and since something called "trainer" doesn't exist, so didn't I make much progress. But it only proves, that the times of demanding games have not passed away, and the spirit of retro is not about selling stuff by Atari for Atari 2600 in the form of Atari Vault platform. There is still top quality here, top retro but also something additional and fresh.

To be honest though, in my opinion has Soulless a single essential disadvantage with the controls. The jump is predefined, meaning that there isn't any way to adjust or modify the height or length of it. If one is not accustomed to such solutions repetitive failures might be really annoying.

I highly recommend this game to platformer fans, connoisseurs of good chiptune and admirers of graphics and interesting adventure - they should be super satisfied.



From the very beginning it's obvious that the product is of the

faster, but proper caution and patience will surely lead one to

## SOULLESS

Publisher: **Psytronik**  
Year of publication: **2012**  
Platform: **C64**

10 10 6





# MHKI

## MUZEUM HISTORII KOMPUTERÓW I INFORMATYKI

**Adres siedziby:**  
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**Zamawianie wycieczek:**  
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**Tel./Fax: 32 413 08 90**  
**Strona muzeum:**  
**www.muzeumkomputerow.edu.pl**



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# Fast *BITMAP* plotting

■ Author: Paweł Król, a.k.a. DJ Gruby/Protovision/TRIAD

*In order to devise a fast bitmap plotting algorithm, we need to first better understand, what does it actually take to plot a single pixel onto a bitmap. We will approach all the necessary calculations step by step, so that we can thoroughly examine any potential complications arising as we move away from the center of a screen's coordinate system with subsequent X and Y offset values.*

I am assuming that a reader is already familiar with the basic concept of plotting dots onto a Commodore 64's bitmap, as I am not going to dive into specific details of a memory map organisation nor to explain why setting specific bits into destination memory locations makes a particular pixel visible on a display screen. Obviously none of the important details is going to remain untold nor omitted, however there are plenty tutorials available on the web that cover the very basics of this topic, so that we can move straight to what is really interesting.

## PLAIN SIMPLE APPROACH TO PLOTTING

Given X and Y coordinates, let us begin with designing our subroutine's body that puts a single pixel onto a hires bitmap. Bear in mind that Y value must not exceed \$c7, because bitmap's height is 200 pixels. We also do not want to slow down our rendering process with unnecessary validations, therefore from now on we will assume that our subroutine

expects two 8-bit arguments provided in X and Y registers, having concrete location values already assigned.

### Constants assignments

Please make sure to put the following two constant assignments at the top of each source code file before attempting to compile any of the examples presented within this tutorial:

```
BITMAP      = $2000
BIT_MASK    = $fb
VECTOR      = $fd
```

Table data generator (explained later) requires prior memory allocation for the following lookup tables:

```
bitmap_y_hi  .dsb $100,$00
bitmap_y_lo  .dsb $100,$00
bitmap_shift .dsb $100,$00
bit_and_mask .dsb $100,$00
```

For X and Y values between \$00 and \$07 things go as simple as:

```
lda #<BITMAP
sta VECTOR+0
lda #>BITMAP
sta VECTOR+1
```

```
lda #$00
sec
ror
dex
bpl *-2
sta BIT_MASK

lda (VECTOR),y
ora BIT_MASK
sta (VECTOR),y
```

We first set a zero-page vector to point at the beginning of a bitmap data. Then we compute a bit mask that will be used to set a pixel at an appropriate position of a selected address. And eventually we use Y register as an index to an operation of applying a bit mask to a current byte value.

Well, that was simple, however it covers only the simplest case of putting a pixel in the top-left corner area of 8x8 pixels.

If you would like to have an accompanying method that clears a pixel, the middle part would have to be modified to generate an AND mask instead, and such mask would have to be applied in the lower part of a procedure:



```

lda #<BITMAP
sta VECTOR+0
lda #>BITMAP
sta VECTOR+1

lda #$ff
clc
ror
sec
dex
bpl *-3
sta BIT_MASK

lda (VECTOR),y
and BIT_MASK
sta (VECTOR),y

```

In order to be able to set pixels for any value entered into an X register, we have to add its higher 5 bits to a VECTOR pointing to a selected byte of a bitmap data, basically like this:

```

lda #>BITMAP
sta VECTOR+1
txa
pha
and #$f8
clc
adc #<BITMAP
sta VECTOR+0
bcc **+4
inc VECTOR+1

pla
and #$07
tax
lda #$00
sec
ror
dex
bpl *-2
sta BIT_MASK

lda (VECTOR),y
ora BIT_MASK
sta (VECTOR),y

```

Okay, this procedure has now got a little bit longer and more

complicated, however it still covers only an area of 256x8 pixels, so in the next step we are going to further extend it into an entire target screen of 256x200 pixels. We will use a value entered into a Y register to move a VECTOR to point \$0140 bytes farther in a memory for as many times as Y's higher 5 bits indicate:

```

lda #>BITMAP
sta VECTOR+1
txa
pha
and #$f8
clc
adc #<BITMAP
sta VECTOR+0
bcc **+4
inc VECTOR+1

pla
and #$07
tax
lda #$00
sec
ror
dex
bpl *-2
sta BIT_MASK

tya
lsr
lsr
lsr
tax
beq **+19
inc VECTOR+1
clc
lda VECTOR+0
adc #$40
sta VECTOR+0
bcc **+4
inc VECTOR+1
dex
jmp *-16
tya
and #$07
tay

```

```

lda (VECTOR),y
ora BIT_MASK
sta (VECTOR),y

```

This is how our normal bitmap plotting procedure would look like. It is clean, it does its job, however it is slow. And for large values of Y even very slow. Thus it gives us some room to make it faster.

Please note that this procedure plots pixels only in a limited area of 256x200. Extending it to a full 320 pixels wide bitmap would not be a difficult task. Consider it an exercise to do at home to enhance it in a way to support an entire visible bitmap area of 320x200.

## TABLES, TABLES EVERYWHERE

And how are we going to optimise all of these heavy calculations, so that they ultimately require a lot less cycles to compute and set a desired pixel? The answer is provided within this paragraph, and tables are the answer! We are going to precompute as much information as we can and store it in a memory to be used as a few lookup tables.

You have probably already noticed a couple of patterns, how all of the computed values change with different X and Y coordinates. These regularities may be used to generate values for our lookup tables easily..

Let us begin with a bit mask used to determine which particular pixel needs to be set in a memory location indicated by a calculated VECTOR. This is a value that is assigned to

a BIT\_MASK variable (which is assumed here to be placed on a zero page). This is not the most expensive computation, but probably the easiest one to demonstrate the use of lookup tables, explain how to populate them with data, and illustrate referring to them inside our procedure.

So, what is the pattern we are seeing here?

```
$80, $40, $20, $10, $08, $04,
$02, $01
```

...which repeats over and over again.

If we precompute a table of all possible bit mask values, indexed by an X coordinate of a target pixel, and then refer to it, our put pixel procedure simplifies to:

```
lda #>BITMAP
sta VECTOR+1
txa
pha
and #$f8
clc
adc #<BITMAP
sta VECTOR+0
bcc *+4
inc VECTOR+1
tya
lsr
lsr
lsr
tax
beq *+19
inc VECTOR+1
clc
lda VECTOR+0
adc #$40
sta VECTOR+0
bcc *+4
inc VECTOR+1
dex
jmp *-16
```

```
tya
and #$07
tay

pla
tax

lda (VECTOR),y
ora bit_mask,x
sta (VECTOR),y
```

The only reason an X coordinate is still put onto a stack and later pulled from it is that X register is used as an index of a loop performed to compute VECTOR position based on a Y coordinate (we are going to fix it soon). Pay attention to the most important change however. We no longer care about permanent calculation of a BIT\_MASK, it is now simply fetched from a dedicated lookup table labelled "bit\_mask", precomputed only once at the beginning of a program execution. This is a source code of an exemplary table generator:

```
ldx #$00
lda #$00
sec
ror
bcs *+9
sta bit_mask,x
inx
jmp *-7
cpx #$00
bne *-15
```

The most significant concept illustrated by this example is that an X value is taken just as it is and used only as an offset when picking up a value from a precalculated lookup table. This is crucial, because we can push this kind of simplifications much farther, and consequently speed up the code.

Moving on... In the next step let us take care of utilising a Y coordinate value to instantly set the correct pointer to a memory location holding a byte with selected pixel information. Here is the pattern you may have already noticed:

```
$0000, $0001, $0002, $0003, $
0004, $0005, $0006, $0007
```

```
$0140, $0141, $0142, $0143, $
0144, $0145, $0146, $0147
```

```
$0280, $0281, $0282, $0283, $
0284, $0285, $0286, $0287
```

There are actually two different patterns to consider, which are superimposed onto each other.

First, every next value is incremented by 1 when compared against its predecessor, with a cycle beginning at \$00 and ending up with \$07, and then repeating over. Second, a base value for each item is incremented by \$140 for every 8th value, it is however not reset, it remains updated over the whole course of table data generation.

Also note the following fact: values we consider for a Y offset table must be split into two separate tables, since target values exceed the range of an \$ff value (they grow above the \$ff). Hence we end up with 16-bit offsets, which can only be stored in two separate bytes. Knowing this, here is how we are going to fix our pixel setting procedure:

```
lda bitmap_y_hi,y
sta VECTOR+1
txa
and #$f8
```



```

clc
adc bitmap_y_lo,y
sta VECTOR+0
bcc *+4
inc VECTOR+1

ldy #$00
lda (VECTOR),y
ora bit_mask,x
sta (VECTOR),y

```

And here is an exemplary script to generate a precomputed lookup table with bitmap offsets (both low and high bytes):

```

ldx #$00
lda #<BITMAP
sta VECTOR+0
lda #>BITMAP
sta VECTOR+1
lda VECTOR+0
sta bitmap_y_lo,x
lda VECTOR+1
sta bitmap_y_hi,x
inx
inc VECTOR+0
lda VECTOR+0
and #$08
beq *-17
inc VECTOR+1
clc
lda VECTOR+0
adc #$38
sta VECTOR+0
bcc *+4
inc VECTOR+1
cpx #$00
bne *-34

```

Keep in mind that each bitmap offset value is already calculated in the context of an actual memory location of a bitmap data, thus an initial assignment of a BITMAP address to a temporary vector generates pointers to subsequent values of actual bitmap offsets, and not just offsets to be added to any potential bitmap's start address.

This allows us to get rid of a previously applied assignment of an initial VECTOR value pointing to the very beginning of a BITMAP, which is then shifted according to X and Y coordinates. With a bitmap lookup table we get all of this information for free.

Finally, let us address the issue of computing how much a VECTOR needs to be shifted towards the right side of a screen depending on a provided value of an X coordinate. First things first, know your pattern:

```

$00,$00,$00,$00,
$00,$00,$00,$00

$08,$08,$08,$08,
$08,$08,$08,$08

$10,$10,$10,$10,
$10,$10,$10,$10

```

...And so on, and so on. We can see subsequent groups of 8 identical values, each next group increased by a value of \$08. Our source code optimisation not only removes the need of calculation of a specific VECTOR shift. It also provides the correct Y index value for the final pixel setting procedure:

```

lda bitmap_y_hi,y
sta VECTOR+1
lda bitmap_y_lo,y
sta VECTOR+0

ldy bitmap_shift,x
lda (VECTOR),y
ora bit_mask,x
sta (VECTOR),y

```

And table data calculation is just as simple as:

```

lda #$00
tax
ldy #$00
sta bitmap_shift,x
inx
iny
cpy #$08
bne *-7
clc
adc #$08
cpx #$00
bne *-16

```

One of the greatest advantages of this procedure is its constant execution time, which allows you to plan execution time of a whole demo effect very precisely. And because it is also very fast, you can put as many as 10-20 times more pixels in the same period of time than you were able when utilising an original put pixel procedure.

We ended up with an extremely simple algorithm, which is not only very fast, but also very easy to read and understand. Only eight lines of code are enough to set a pixel anywhere in a bitmap area of a 256x200 size. Pretty good, isn't it?

**“ Tables are the answer!**

**We are going to precompute as much information as we can and store it in a memory to be used as a few lookup tables.**

## FURTHER EXTENSIONS

This procedure plots pixels only on a limited area of 256x200. As already mentioned earlier, consider it an exercise to extend it in a way to support an entire visible bitmap area of 320x200.

You need to make sure that a 9-bit value representation is assigned an X coordinate before a subroutine call. This may be achieved by using two 8-bit variables, for example placed on a zero page. But you could also stick to an X register alone and use a single bit flag to indicate whether bit 9 is set or not (carry would be a good candidate here). If a bit is set, you will know that a higher VECTOR byte needs to be incremented by 1 in order to point \$100 bytes farther.

Plotting into a multicolour bitmap could be resolved even without this kind of trickery due to the fact that widened multicolour pixels produce a bitmap of 160x200 size.

A subtle difference between a hires and a multicolour mode involves the fact that we are not necessarily only setting particular bits in a bitmap memory area, we might also have to clear present bits of a previously displayed pixel colour in the same coordinate position. That was not the case in a hires mode, where a pixel is either set or clear. In a multicolour mode each pixel might assume one of four possible bit combinations representing different colour values:

```
00 - background colour
($d020)

01 - colour from bits 4-7
of a screen memory

10 - colour from bits 0-3
of a screen memory

11 - colour from bits 0-3
of a colour memory
```

Therefore, a slight modification of our put pixel algorithm would require one additional step of resetting an original pixel value before setting a selected one. We would also benefit from preparing three different versions of a subroutine, one for each possible colour combination:

```
lda bitmap_y_hi,y
sta VECTOR+1
lda bitmap_y_lo,y
sta VECTOR+0

ldy bitmap_shift,x
lda (VECTOR),y
and bit_and_mask,x
ora bit_and_mask_11,x
sta (VECTOR),y
```

Please note that this particular example selects an ORA mask of a colour represented by "11" bits combination. I will leave experimenting with it as well as precomputed table data generation to you as an exercise to do by yourself at home.

## FINAL CONCLUSION

Thank you for surviving this guide up to this point. As you can see setting pixels on a C64 bitmap can be implemented in a fast and elegant way. A final algorithm presented in this tutorial is fast enough for playing around with demo effects requiring plotting of dozens or even hundreds of points per frame. You can use these techniques as a basis for further exploration.

Good luck and have fun! Should any questions to this tutorial remain unanswered, please do not hesitate to contact me, and I will be happy to help you out.



# Mp3info



■ Review: Don Raffito; Translated by: Magdalena Piss



**Aros, as an alternative for AmigaOS to modern and ubiquitous x86 architecture platforms, more and more proves that is going in the right direction. Day to day users of this system have more access to larger amounts of software, which sometimes compete in terms of functionality with “leading brands”.**

For some people their music player (eg. in Smartphone) incorrectly plays songs. Not respecting the chosen playlist or jumping from album to album or musical genres. The fault for all this confusion is typically on the user end, who often checks tagID3 - additional information saved in the music file. Instead the issue lies with the mp3 file. If the data is incomplete or chaotic, our players will play them randomly.

Editing this data allows to track sorting, because it adapts to particular artist, album or musical genre. Thanks to that our player will not digress on the memory card. Instead playing specific songs from a list chosen by us assigned to this specific album or artist.

In some operating systems the “edit” option of tagID3 is available immediately after the call to an additional menu on a specific mp3 file, in others you need additional application.

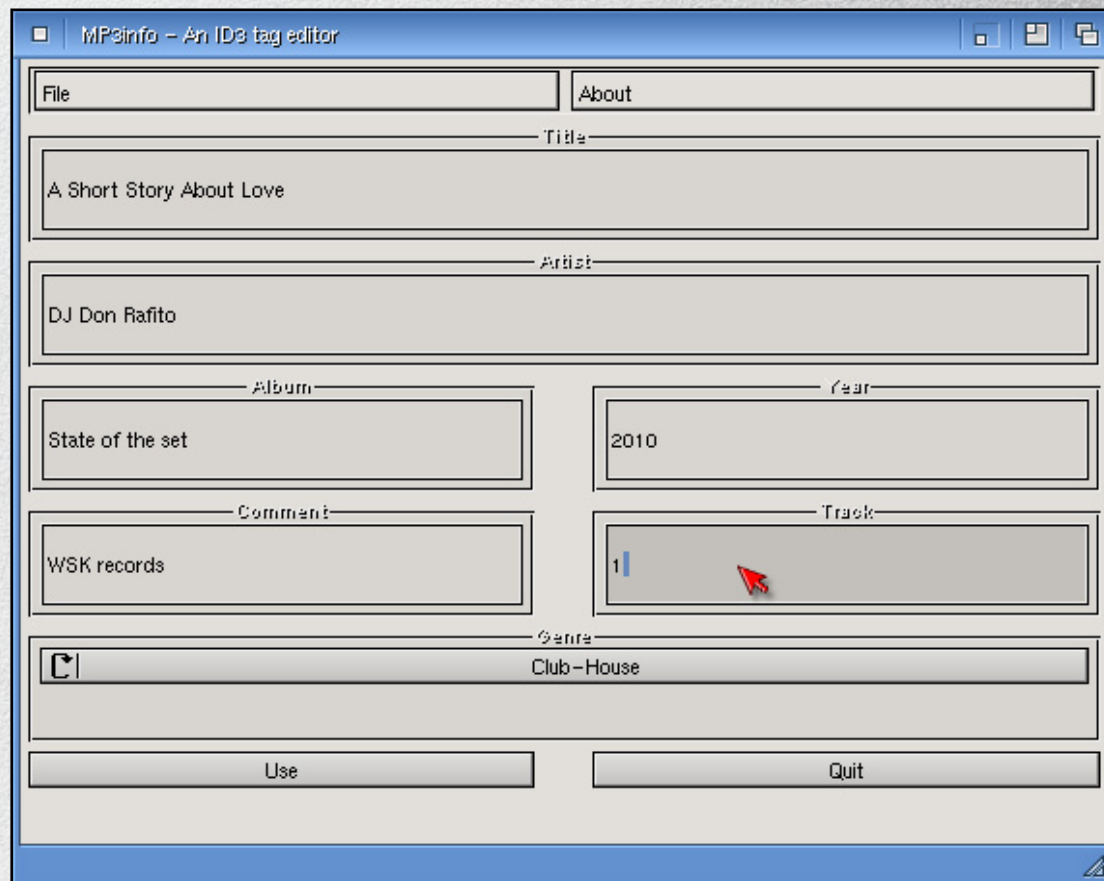
Thanks to Ricardo Cerqueira, Aros users have also the opportunity to edit the ID3 tags on their computers. This is down to the program mp3info, which

is based on General Public License.

After downloading and extracting the program archive we can immediately go to work. After start-up it will open the window selection, in which the application asks us to identify a particular mp3. When loaded it opens a window with a highly intuitive interface. This is divid-

ed into seven parts: title, artist, album, year, comments, track number, and genre. Click “use” and it is ready.

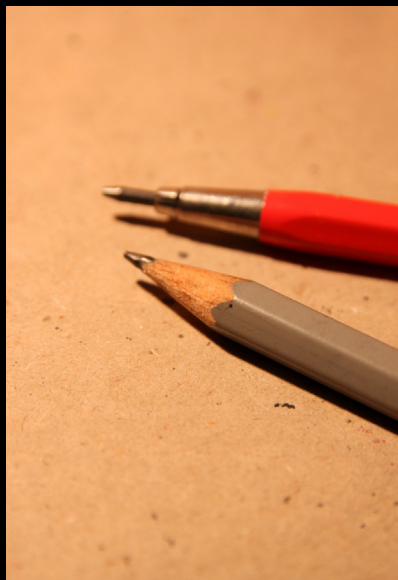
Simple and pleasant to use. The program does not weigh much. After unpacking a little more than 2 MB you’re certain to use it more than once. Making it well is worth keeping on your hard drive.





JOHNNY PRESENTS

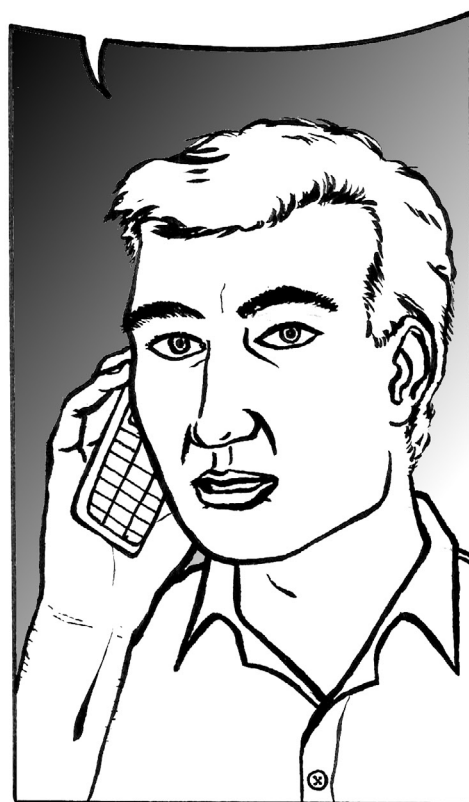
# PHONE CALL



DZIEŃ DOBRY. CHCIAŁEM ZARAZ ZNAJDĘ TERMIN  
UMÓWIĆ SIĘ DO LARYNGOLOGA. A JAKIE DOLEGLIWOŚCI?



SŁYSZĘ GŁOSY.



JAN LOREK 2016

Translation:

- Good morning. I'd like to schedule an appointment to the laryngologist.
- Let me find a free slot. What are the symptoms?
- I hear voices.