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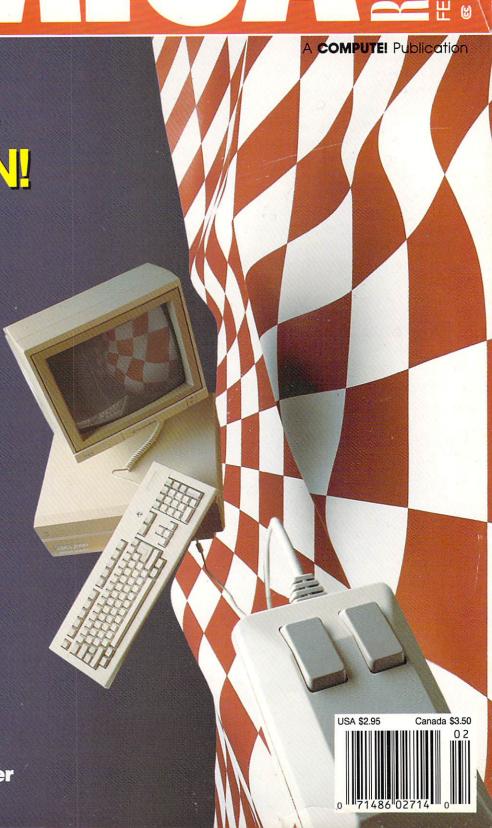
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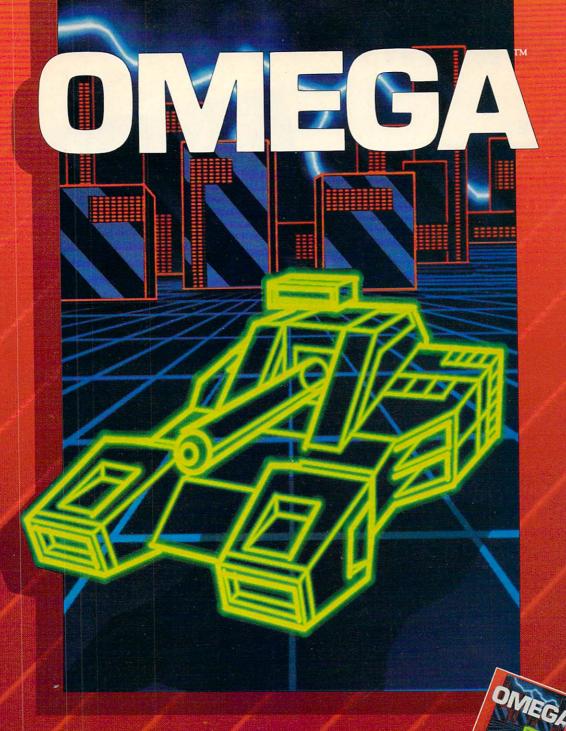
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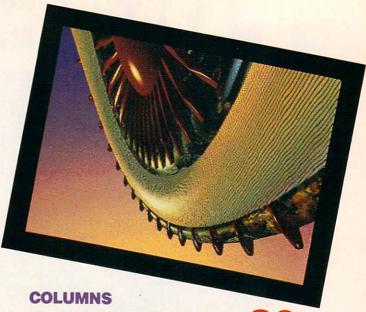
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Cover photo © 1989 Mark Wagoner

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# Perspectives from the Editors

Welcome to the first Amiga Resource of the new decade. Our hope is that the Amiga, a child of the second half of the 1980s, will become the home and professional computer of the early 1990s. Our goal is to grow with the Amiga.

This issue came together in the usual fashion, except for the distraction of two national disasters. Hurricane Hugo romped up the East Coast while we were planning our features. We made it OK through that one (although the wind and rain were pretty scary here in Greensboro). Oddly enough, we were more affected by the disaster which beset the West Coast. Columnist Rob Peck had the bad luck to live a few dozen yards from the fault line. His house and computer were both rendered inoperable. And columnist Arlan Levitan (along with the entire computer industry) lost a dear friend to the earthquake-John Anderson, features editor of MacUser.

It's been about a year since we started working on the first Amiga Resource. In that time, we've moved from a quarterly to a bimonthly. Many of our readers have called or written to us, encouraging us to move the magazine up to a monthly. We appreciate your enthusiasm. We're constantly discussing how to better serve you, by going monthly, by offering special products and disks, and so on. We'll be sure to keep you posted.

The North American Amiga magazine market is a crowded one when you consider the number of Amigas that have been sold here. That's good for you, the consumer. First, because you have a choice. You can read Amiga Transactor if you're interested in programming or Info if you like to read reviews and features. Second, because competition makes all the magazines better. And third. because if you're a real Amiga nut, you can read more than half a dozen magazines from dawn to dusk.

We, along with everyone else, are working hard for our fair share of that market. That's why we appreciate your input. Please fill out the Readership Survey you'll find on page 9. The Readership Survey comes directly to our offices. We're also establishing a Reader Research Panel. You can apply to participate by filling out the form you find on page 74. If we select you, you'll receive several survey forms over the next

# Looking ahead

The scanners are coming! Next issue, Sheldon Leemon takes a look at the swarm of scanners that is invading the market. Find out what they mean for desktop publishing, desktop video, and art.

Commodore continues to push the Amiga into the desktop video market, but what exactly is it? Fred Hurteau, a professional video producer, defines the terms and tells you how to get up to speed in this exciting field.

Think you know everything about Amiga graphics? Think again. Associate editor and Sliced Ham author Rhett Anderson explains HAM, Extra Half-Brite, hi res, interlace, sprites, dual playfields, and copper lists. He'll even explain the theory behind Sliced Ham and NewTek's new Dynamic Res modes used in Digi-View 4.0.

You'll also find a report on the Canadian Amiga market—which traditionally has been very strong-as our editorial staff makes a visit to the Great White North.

We didn't have room for our feature on Amiga telecommunications in this issue, but you'll see it in April. Four sysops will tell why they think their own telecommunications service is best.

year. These two surveys are entirely separate. Respond to both, if you like.

If you've been working on a program for our \$10,000 Amiga Programming Contest, keep an eye on the calendar. We must receive all entries in our offices by February 28, 1990. If your program just plain isn't working right at the deadline, submit it to us when it has been fixed. As far as we know, we pay more for top-quality software than any other Amiga magazine does.

Hardly a day passes when we don't get a submission to "Amiga Art Gallery." Remember, you don't have to be a professional artist to have your art appear in the gallery. Our panel of four art reviewers is quirky enough to give everyone a chance.

Finally, we've noted a surge in back-issue sales. Our guess is that new readers are rushing to complete their collection of Amiga Resource and the Resource Disk. Be forewarned: Our stock on some of those issues is running low. If you're one of those readers who prefers a complete collection, we suggest you order soon. It looks as if our -Rhett Anderson Summer 1989 issue will be the first to sell out



# Rough Road to Respectability

Commodore has actually gone ahead with its \$15 million Amiga advertising campaign, as reported in the last issue, but things aren't going quite as smoothly as planned. It may be stretching things to suggest that the San Francisco earthquake occurred just because

an Amiga commercial was scheduled to air during the third game of the World Series, though psychic spiritualist Clare Voyent had predicted that "the ground would open up" before Commodore started to promote the

Amiga.

But great shakes weren't the only fly in Commodore's ointment. The company had hoped to make a big splash with a glitzy seven-page, full-color insert in the October 30 issue of *Time* magazine. As it turns out, however, that same issue featured a story in the business section about stagnation in the once-dynamic computer industry. And who did the article single out for abuse? IBM maybe? Compaq? Nah—*Time*'s new patron of the publishing arts, CBM.

The article called Commodore's Amiga ad campaign a perfect example of how companies are repackaging old technology instead of pressing for innovation. The article implied that, at age 4, the Amiga is a hasbeen "whose sagging sales and fading image the company is trying to repair," and it compared Commodore's press gala to a benefit for an aging star. One can only imagine what might have been written if the company hadn't just finished plying the editorial staff with champagne and caviar—and dropping a small fortune on ad space.

On the television front, the ads that LucasFilm produced look pretty slick, but Commodore may have been a bit optimistic in estimating that 90 percent of adult Americans will have seen the spots 20 times before Christmas. In my area of the country (Detroit, if you must know), Commodore paid for over 200 TV ad insertions in the fourth quarter of 1989. Of these, however, about half were scheduled on small, independent UHF stations, appearing at the end of shows like "American Gladiators," "America's Most Wanted," and "Nightmare on Elm Street." Network shows on which the new spots are airing include "Rescue 911," Saturdaymorning wrestling, "Freddy's Nightmare," and "Doogie Howser, MD." Looks like they have the influential insomniac serial-killer segment of the market covered. but there may be some gaps in other market segmentslike young professionals and marrieds with children.

Hot News and Insider Gossip by Sheldon "The Ear" Leemon

New Products edited by Mickey McLean



# **Professional Text**

With TV\*Text Professional from the Zuma Group, you can produce lettering and graphics for video titling and desktop presentations. The program applies special effects to text, shapes, and IFF objects.

With the click of a mouse, you can add stylistic effects such as outlines, shadows, strobes, edges, and three-dimensional extrusions. Color animated effects include sheens, glints, glows, and cycles. The program also generates backgrounds with color gradients and grid patterns. You can create your own

styles with the program's builtin editor.

Because it's IFF-compatible, you can use TV\*Text Professional with a variety of graphics and animation programs including TV\*Show, Zuma Group's special-effects slide-show program.

The TV\*Text Professional package includes Zuma Fonts, Volumes 1, 2, and 3. A minimum of 1MB of memory is recommended to operate the program, which has a suggested retail price of \$169.95.

Zuma Group, 6733 N. Black Canyon Hwy., Phoenix, AZ 85015

# The Revision 6 Scare



-S.L.

It seems as if every time Commodore makes a slight change in the design of its computers, rumors begin circulating about serious new problems. The latest scare concerns the Revision 6 motherboards on the 2000. People started worrying when they heard that

some machines were having problems coping with multiple expansion boards.

As it turns out, the problem sounded much worse than it actually was. It appears that Motorola sent Commodore a batch of 68000 processor chips that had slight timing flaws (the flawed chips are all marked with the code 0B26). The problem can be fixed either by replacing the 68000 chip yourself (a \$10 plug-in part) or by taking the computer to an authorized service center for some board modifications. As for new buyers, not to worry. Current versions of the 2000 are being shipped with Revision 6.2 boards, which incorporate design changes that allow the expansion slots to work properly even if the processor timings vary a bit from batch to batch.

—S.L.

# New Niche for COMPUTE! Books

Among the most successful of the new titles being introduced by COMPUTE! Books are the companion handbooks designed around computer simulations. Typical of the new genre is 40 Great Submarine Simulator War Adventures, by Richard Sheffield, a book written to be used with the submarine simulators Silent Service and Up Periscope!. The adventures are true stories based on submarine combat in the Pacific Theater during World War II. Maps and detailed maneuvers let you duplicate the battles. Historical backgrounds add even more enjoyment to these excellent games.

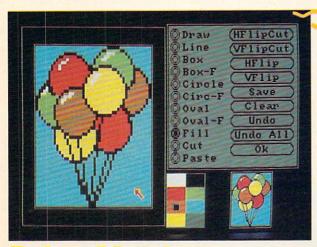
Other simulation books include *The Official F-19 Stealth Fighter*, also by Richard Sheffield, and *Realistic Commercial Flying with Flight Simulator*, by John Rafferty. More books, including one for *Falcon*, will follow.

The books are available for \$14.95 each. Ask for them at your local bookstore or call (800) 345-1214 to order.

# **Lattice C Upgraded**

Lattice announced that it shipped free upgrades of its *Lattice AmigaDOS Compiler* to all registered users. The new version 5.04 includes more than 50 enhancements to the compiler, libraries, *CodePRobe* debugger, and utilities.

All registered users of the compiler received the upgrade automatically. Anyone who did not receive the upgrade because of address changes or failure to register should contact Lattice. Lattice, 2500 S. Highland Ave., Lombard, IL 60148



# **Print Mania**

DeluxePrint II version 1.1 has been released by Electronic Arts. The upgraded personal creativity program designed for home, office, or school use now supports Workbench 1.3.

Included with the program are seven predesigned formats—signs, greeting cards, banners, letterhead, calendars, four-panel signs, and labels. One hundred fifty multicolored graphics and borders as well as a variety of fonts are also included.

You can control designs by replicating, moving, resiz-

ing, flipping, and rotating text and graphics. A full-featured graphics editor allows for the creation of your own clip art or customized graphics.

DeluxePrint II can also import DeluxePaint II or other compatible programs to used as background images.

Version 1.0 owners can receive a free upgrade by sending in their art and program disks to Electronic Arts, P.O. Box 7578, San Mateo, California 94403-7578. *Deluxe-Print II* version 1.1 has a suggested retail price of \$79.95.

# As Luck Would Have It



Friends of Dale Luck, original Amiga design team member and sometime-consultant with Commodore, figured that his association with the company wouldn't last very long after the publication of an interview last spring in which he slammed the company

and its management. In particular, he took Commodore to task for failing to develop a network strategy and for taking little interest in the XWindows software that he had developed for the Amiga (XWindows is a UNIX standard for operating a graphics interface over a network). As luck would have it, however, a whole new management team was hired by Commodore soon after the interview was published. When the new director of Educational Sales heard that a third party had ported XWindows to the Amiga, his first question was Why isn't this guy working for us? The result is that Dale is moving to West Chester, where he will be developing that networking strategy he wanted.

—S.L.

# Amiga Outline Fonts



The Font Wars have begun to heat up in earnest. Adobe's near monopoly on

outline-font technology, used to create smoothly curving text characters at any size or angle of rotation, appears to be at an end. And it's about time, say many observers, since Adobe's downfall appears to be a direct result of the company's greed.

When Adobe developed the PostScript pagedescription language and the outline-font technology to go with it, it was the only game in town. Taking advantage of its position. the company charged exorbitant licensing fees that pushed the price of Post-Script laser printers to over double that of non-PostScript models. While those hefty fees generated a lot of revenue for the company in the short term, they also provided a strong long-term incentive for the development of competing products.

How does this impact the Amiga? Well, the company has stated that it

plans to incorporate outline-font technology into the Amiga operating system sometime after the release of Workbench 1.4. Although no decision has been announced, it's no secret that there are close ties between Commodore and Gold Disk, maker of the Professional Page publishing software and supplier of the new "Appetizer Software" package that Commodore has been bundling with the Amiga for Christmas sales. Since Gold Disk has licensed the Compugraphics Intellifonts technology for Professional Page, insiders believe that Commodore will also adopt this technology for use by the Amiga operating system. There is speculation that Commodore will supply about eight fonts with the system, but since Gold Disk holds an exclusive license to market additional Intellifonts on the Amiga, that company may have its own monopoly on additional system fonts. Let's just hope that it doesn't follow Adobe's example.

-S.L. ▷

# **Three Products in One**

AmiTech Computers' AmiSound peripheral box provides three functions in one handy unit.

As a power controller, it can control the computer and up to four additional peripherals with front-mounted lighted rocker switches. It's completely surge-suppressed for protection from dangerous AC-line voltage spikes.

With six watts per channel, it also operates as a stereo amplifier with regulated power supply and separate left and right front-mounted volume controls. It also acts as a monitor stand, bringing your monitor up to eye level.

AmiSound is designed to work with all Amiga computers and has a suggested retail price of \$99.95.

AmiTech Computers, P.O. Box 65, Boystown, NE 68010

# Commodore Appoints Education Marketing Manager

Howard Diamond, director of education for Commodore, announced the appointment of Ingrid Wallace to the new position of manager of the K–12 education market. Wallace will develop and coordinate education marketing programs and initiatives for K–12, including programs for youths at risk.

In addition, Wallace will work with third-party educational software publishers to increase and enhance existing Amigacompatible education programs.

"Ingrid will play an integral role in Commodore's reemergence into the education market, specifically K-12, where Commodore first established its reputation as the vanguard in computer education," Diamond said. "Ingrid's blend of experience in educational technology and her comprehensive knowledge of educational software development makes her an ideal addition to our team."

Previously, Wallace served as Educational Channel Marketing Manager at Brøderbund Software, where she was responsible for planning and development specific to the K–12, higher education, special education, at-risk, and adult-literacy markets. She also held the position of public relations/school marketing manager for Davidson and Associates, an educational software publisher.

# Supra Expands Hard Disk Line

Supra has announced two new additions to its Amiga hard disk line: the WordSync SCSI Hard Disk Interface and the WordSync-based Supra-Drive Hard Card, both for the Amiga 2000.

The interface is as fast as Direct Memory Access and eliminates DMA's conflicts with sound, video, and serial I/O operations. Every SupraDrive Hard Card for the Amiga 2000 comes with the interface, and it can be purchased separately in WordSync Interface Kits.

The interface gets its speed by transferring two bytes of data on each transfer cycle and by using custom hardware circuitry to synchronize the data transfers. It features a one-slot, half-card design; a SCSI expansion port that allows you to attach additional SCSI devices to the system; and a jumper that allows you to turn autobooting on and off as desired.

Compatible with the Amiga Bridgeboard, RAM boards, digitizers, and other boards, the interface supports

# Relive History

Joan of Arc: Siege & The Sword from Brøderbund combines strategy and action with historical fact. The game includes Joan of Arc's battles against the English and Burgundians in her campaign to have Charles VII crowned King of France.

You can't change history, though, as Joan is eventually captured by the British and burned at the stake in 1432. However, the game continues until 1456, as Charles VII carries on his fight to drive out the English and unite his country.

As Charles, you can choose from 20 options in any given turn, including raising armies, collecting taxes, negotiating for towns, ransoming prisoners, dispatching spies, and dispensing royal justice such as making arrests and calling for executions.

You'll visit 73 authentic locales and encounter 31 characters who have different weaknesses and strengths. The game features five action sequences including largescale battles in open countryside, hand-to-hand struggles with individual English soldiers, and assaults on fortress walls with boulders and scalding oil raining down.

Joan of Arc has a suggested retail price of \$44.95.

Brøderbund Software, 17 Paul Dr., San Rafael, CA 94903-2101

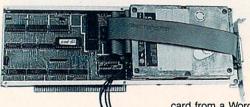
# No Bugs—Guaranteed!

New Horizons Software has guaranteed its word processor, *ProWrite* version 2.5, to be bug-free. The company agrees to correct any verifiable discrepancy between the *ProWrite* manual and the program's behavior within 30 days of purchase. If New Horizons cannot correct the problem within 30 days, it will refund the purchase price.

Brian Sarrazin of New Horizons stated that the reason for the guarantee was because bug-free software needs to be developed in order for Commodore to successfully capture the business and education markets. "We're confident that *ProWrite* will do all we say it will, with no surprises," he said.

ProWrite features color graphics, multiple fonts, a 105,000-word spelling checker, print merge, headers and footers, search and replace, text-wrap around graphics, and the capability to print near-letter-quality text. Version 2.5 requires Kickstart 1.2 and has a suggested retail price of \$124.95.

New Horizons Software, P.O. Box 43167, Austin, TX 78745



the new
Commodore Hard
Block Specification, Workbench 1.3, Autobooting, and
the Fast File System.

Both the SupraDrives and WordSync Interface Kits include Supra's SupraBoot and SupraTools disks with hard disk-formatting, file-management, and utility software.

SupraDrive Hard Cards are shipped formatted and can be installed by plugging the card into any Amiga expansion slot and connecting two cables. To build a hard card from a WordSync Interface, you must put a 3½-inch SCSI drive in the WordSync frame, connect two cables, and plug in the card. All screws and cables are included.

A 30MB SupraDrive with the WordSync Interface has a suggested retail price of \$649.00. The 45MB version sells for \$749 while the 80MB drive and interface retails for \$1,299.00. The separate WordSync Interface Kit is available for \$199.95.

Supra, 1133 Commercial Way, Albany, OR 97321

# WordPerfect Maintenance Update

WordPerfect is now shipping a maintenance update to WordPerfect for the Amiga, providing several new enhancements for current users of the program.

You can now access files through a standard Amiga file-requester system that provides improved file-management capabilities each time a file is saved or retrieved. The update also allows you to import WordPerfect 4.2 PC files directly into WordPerfect for the Amiga. Improvements

have been made to the List Files and Timed BackUp features in the program as well as the spelling checker. The update also supports automatic edit-buffer sizing.

Reed Hainsworth, WordPerfect's manager of Amiga Product Marketing, said that the new update was developed in response to customers who wanted *WordPerfect* to be more Amiga-like.

The word processor features macros, merge, footnotes and endnotes, a 115,000-

word spelling checker, and a thesaurus for more than 10,000 words.

The update comes on three disks and is available for \$12.50 by writing to Word-Perfect Amiga Update, 1555 North Technology Way, Orem, Utah 84057, or by calling (800) 222-9409. Users with problems in an earlier version and who report it to Word-Perfect's Amiga Customer Support Department are entitled to receive the maintenance update at no charge.



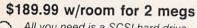
# DR. OXIDE SLICES PRICES!

Comp-U-Save's cost-cutting clinician is at it again! This month Dr. Oxide, a bargain-basement surgeon if ever there was one, offers the industry's lowest prices on hardware and software, plus special deals on products available only through Comp-U-Save!

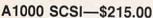
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# **FEEDBACK**

Send questions or comments to Amiga Feedback, Amiga Resource, P.O. Box 5406, Greensboro, North Carolina 27403. We regret that, due to the volume of mail received, we cannot respond individually to questions. We reserve the right to edit letters for clarity and length.

### **More Is Better**

I visited England over the summer and noticed some very good games that are not yet in the U.S. The games are *Kick Off*, by Anco (the best soccer game I ever played); *Honda RVF750*, by Microstyle (a *Super Hang On*-type of game but much better); and *Weird Dreams*, by Rainbird. Do you know if these will be sold in the U.S.?

I think you should give the magazine about 30 more pages like the new *COMPUTE!* or make the magazine monthly. If possible, you could do both.

Wade Holmes Orlando, FL

Thanks for the tips on the hot games. Mindscape will be selling Weird Dreams, and we'll be on the lookout for the others. It's encouraging when readers tell us they want the magazine to get fatter or to increase in frequency-it means we must be doing something right. Unfortunately, a magazine's page count depends upon many factors, including the amount and type of advertising, the cost of production and mailing, and the size of the staff. The rules are pretty much universal, so you'll notice that other Amiga magazines are approximately the same size-there are no BYTE-size magazines in this market. But don't worry, when the Amiga catches on the way that we hope it does, you'll get your wish.

### **Too Much Memory**

I recently purchased the A510 memory expander for my 500. I was expecting enhanced performance from my software, especially things like *Sculpt 3-D* and *Deluxe Video*.

These programs, and others, like *ProWrite*, did work better. I was very annoyed, however, when I found out that *Instant Music* and *DeluxePaint I* are impaired by it. *Instant Music* doesn't even work at all.

I am on a budget, and I cannot afford to purchase updated versions. I have tried running NoFastMem before them and from the startup-sequence, the CLI, and the Workbench. Is there anything I can do besides removing the expansion board and resetting the clock every time I use these programs?

I am not too surefooted with the CLI, and I may have made a mistake writing my startup-sequence.

Geoff Simms Clayton, CA

Frankly, we've always been astonished that the early Electronic Arts programs don't work properly with more than 512K of memory. Part of the problem is that EA often develops its Amiga programs on another computer, then downloads the object code to an Amiga for testing. If the program had been developed on the Amiga, the developer probably would have had more than 512K and you wouldn't be having trouble. On the other hand, EA was one of the first software houses to back the Amiga wholeheartedly, so it's no wonder that its programs, which were developed quite early in the Amiga's history, had trouble as the Amiga evolved.

Before trying anything else, contact the companies that sold the software with which you're having trouble. They may have very reasonable upgrade policies. Remember that the upgrades usually have more features and work more dependably than the older versions.

If you're stuck with the old version, NoFastMem may be of some help. It can be found in the System directory of your Workbench disk. To operate NoFastMem from the Workbench, simply double-click on it. Double-click on it again to restore fast memory (the memory above 512K).

The obvious solution to your problem is to double-click on NoFastMem before you run your application. This solution works in almost all cases, so we're not sure what exactly you're doing wrong. You may be rebooting after running NoFastMem. NoFastMem is disabled when you reboot or turn off your machine.

If your application runs automatically when you boot it, you'll have to modify its startup-sequence. Unfortunately, you run the risk of destroying the disk if it's copy-protected. Add a line at the beginning of the startup-sequence that reads Workbench:system/NoFastMem, where Workbench is the name of the Workbench disk you received with your system. When you boot with the program disk, you'll be asked to insert your Workbench disk. After NoFastMem has been run, you'll be asked to insert the disk you booted with.

Another alternative is to get a copy of the public domain program Fixhunk, which modifies the program so that its variables are kept in chip RAM. You'll have to do some sleuthing to find out the filename of your program.

If possible, always work with a copy of the program disk, not the original.

### **Issues That Aren't**

I was surprised that two of your "Amiga Maniacs" (to quote from "Perspectives" in the October issue) should show so much ignorance. I mean, of course, "Taking Sides" on the subject of AmigaDOS 1.4.

I've always thought that downward compatibility is one of the key aspects in all Amiga upgrades—either those already issued or those to come.

Rhett Anderson talks about "1.4-specific code" when he should be saying "Amiga-specific code." Any code which is specific to a given version of the OS is almost certainly not code which conforms to the programming conventions—and which should never have been let loose on the users in the first place. The only people bothered by the changes are the game developers whose nonstandard use of the sys-

tem has caused problems with each upgrade so far.

If the programmers stick to the rules, it should be irrelevant which OS is in use. So why waste good magazine space raising issues that aren't?

David Twigg-Flesner Gronau, W. Germany

With the exception of 1.3, none of the operating system upgrades have been downward-compatible. The powerful 1.4 will add new data structures and new functions. If programmers choose to use these new capabilities (which are perfectly legal and, in fact, encouraged), their programs will not work on an Amiga that is not equipped with 1.4. We'll be seeing word processors, desktop publishing programs, and paint programs, all of which will work only with 1.4. The new operating system will score well in upward compatibility but poorly in downward compatibility.

As an aside, most game programs (which often bypass the operating system entirely) will probably not break under the new software. This is because so many of the authors and game companies (including biggies like Electronic Arts) learned to avoid jumping directly into system routines when their 1.1 games broke under 1.2.

The point made by Rhett Anderson was that the changeover may not be painless. Instead, it has the potential for being very painful, especially for Amiga novices, who will spread word of their displeasure with the situation to those who may be considering the purchase of an Amiga.

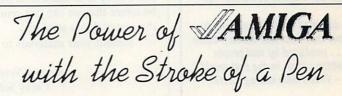
# A Letter to Our Readers from Commodore's Advertising Firm

Dear Amiga Resource Readers:

Many of you may have seen the new advertising campaign which Commodore Business Machines recently launched to introduce the Amiga computer to people unfamiliar with its capabilities. Perhaps you have seen the television commercials, in which an avid young user of the computer, "Stevie Palmer," solves some pressing

problems with his Amiga for some well-known people. Or maybe you've seen the print advertising which features a number of professional people who use the Amiga in their businesses, offset against people who use the Amiga at home. Which leads me to my point.

I represent the advertising agency which created these commercials. We are interested in learning other creative ways people use the Amiga on a



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# FEEDBACK

day-to-day basis. Send us disks or printouts of your artwork, music, graphics, screen shots—anything which would help you animate your applications of the Amiga for us. Your work need not be professional; everyone's story is of interest to us. (Please be aware that we can not return any of the material you send us.)

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A Faster Bridgeboard

In Neil Randall's Fall 1989 feature, "Bridging the Gap," he mentioned that a technician had suggested that he replace the 8088 with the faster 8088-2. I have tried this, but it produced a software error message on boot-up. Has anyone had more luck with this chip?

Michael Shievitz Northbrook, IL

How about it, readers? Do you know how to get the 8088-2 to work with Commodore's original Bridgeboard?

When Artists Disagree

Let me tell you what I think about Lee Noel Jr.'s article "Lively Arts: Graphics" in your October issue. At first, I was glad to see that the focus of the article leaned toward HAM because this is an area of Amiga graphics information that demands all the illumination possible. I want, and *need*, to learn a lot more about HAM. I appreciate the couple of very basic HAM tips I gleaned from the whole of Mr. Noel's article, but frankly, and regretfully, I found the article flawed in a number of ways.

First, has Mr. Noel ever heard of flicker fixers and/or multisync monitors? For my system, I chose the MicroWay card and a NEC Multisync II monitor, a combination that *totally* eliminates interlace flicker.

When I read of how "sick at heart" Mr. Noel became after looking at a few "florid and lumpy" examples of lo-res art, I began to suspect that he was, in thin disguise, one of those unfortunate people who are actually intimidated by a machine as powerful as the Amiga.

As I read further, my suspicions about his motives became concrete as he "explained" the Extra Half-Brite mode thus: "Unfortunately, 32 of these colors are just half-intensity versions of the colors established in the 32 regular-color registers." Unfortunately? I welcome the addition of 32 colors to a non-HAM screen. The number of actual onscreen colors is doubled! What is unfortunate about that? To label this powerful mode as merely "an unsatisfactory approximation of HAM" is patently absurd.

By far the most incredible thing about this article was Mr. Noel's denunciation of *DeluxePaint*, in all its forms! The statement about the interface in *DP III* being "downright gruesome" simply astounds me.

Obviously, Mr. Noel is a relative newcomer to the world of computer-generated graphic art. Everyone who has ever worked with the medium of Amiga art knows that it is *substantially different* from traditional artwork, both in execution and result. With the exception of HAM, he basically trashes *all* of the Amiga's color modes. Yet, the fact is that anyone who has ever taken the time to work extensively with all the color modes knows that *each one of them* has certain strengths which the others do not.

John W. Covington III Savannah, GA

As Mr. Noel stated in his feature, everyone is entitled to his or her opinion. Our goal in printing the feature was to present one artist's opinion of the Amiga. Is he a newcomer to computer-generated art? No. Mr. Noel has worked with just about every popular computer, from the VIC-20 to VGA IBM PCs and 24-bit color Mac IIs. He has worked professionally as a graphic artist for many years, and his Amigagenerated art has appeared on several

magazine covers, in article illustrations, and on the pages of our "Art Gallery" section (see Roots & Rats, Spring 1989).

We agree with you that Extra Half-Brite (EHB) is an important addition to the Amiga video modes, but it is indeed unfortunate that the colors are only half-intensity versions of the first 32 colors. The problem is that all of the Half-Brite colors tend to look the same. Much better palettes could be designed if the Amiga had Extra Double-Brite (with wraparound) instead. For instance, the Double-Brite version of the color 15,8,0 (an orange) would be 14,0,0 (a bright red). The Double-Brite version of the color 8,8,7 (a gray) would be 0,0,14 (a bright blue).

### Where to Write

Question, comment, problem, or submission? If you want to get in touch with us, here's how.

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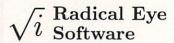
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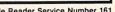
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# SPOTLIGHT

John Foust

# The Sculpt Series

Some of the more complex Amiga programs have so many features and options that it's easy to fall into the habit of relying on a small set of operations to get things done. There's one foolproof way to recognize when you've fallen into a rut: Watch other people use the same

program. By looking over their shoulder, you'll learn new ways of doing things because they've settled into a different set of habits.

This month in "Spotlight," I'll reenact a few tricks for building scenes in the *Sculpt 3-D* modeling program. *Sculpt* is one of those complex programs. Every time I watch a pro use it, I learn a few more tips. Most of these tips work with all the programs in the Sculpt series, including *Sculpt 3-D*, *Sculpt Animate*, and *Sculpt 4-D*.

Like most 3-D programs, every object in *Sculpt 3-D* is made up of points, edges, and polygonal faces. In *Sculpt*, polygons are limited to three sides. Triangles are the only entities that show up in *Sculpt*-rendered images. Points and edges are invisible. They're only seen in the triview object editor and in wire-frame renderings.

You can take advantage of this in many ways. Points and edges can be used as guides to the alignment and positioning of the camera, objects, and lamps. Pointing the camera in *Sculpt* requires positioning two objects, not just one. Both the

camera and a target must be placed in *Sculpt*'s world. The camera looks toward the target. This camera-pointing scheme isn't perfect for all situations. In the real world, pointing a camera is more complex than picking a center point.

It's easy to place the target in the middle of the subject. Framing the subject is crucial, too, especially across the sequence of frames that make up an animation. It's more realistic to have the camera pointing at a spot on the horizon, not at the object, but this is more difficult to do in *Sculpt*. A small displacement of the distant target can lead to a larger error in framing the subject. What if we could draw a nearly infinite line that passes from the camera, through the object, and off into the distance?

Place the *Sculpt* cursor in the middle of the object, away from any points in the object. Make a single point there by holding the left mouse button and clicking the right button. Now position the camera so the object is framed correctly. Make a test rendering in wire-frame mode to verify this. Then make another lone point at the

camera position. Be sure that only the two lone points are selected, and click the Triangle gadget to make an edge between the two points.

Next, expand the edge using the Edit Do Expand menu item. Expand it by clicking on the "2" gadget eight or ten times. Zoom out the triview until you can see the far end of the edge. Now you have an accurate way to position the target in the distance. Move the cursor near the far end. You may need to zoom and center several times to position it accurately. (At any given zoom level, an edge is always drawn with a one-pixel line. To see how inaccurate the positioning can be without zooming, place the cursor directly on the edge at one zoom level, then zoom in several times to see how much error was made in your first attempt.) Render the scene in wire-frame to verify that the

framing is still correct.

You can leave this edge in place or delete it. It won't show up in ray-tracing or painting modes. There are other tricks you can do with invisible edges. You can make an edge between a lamp and an outer edge of an object to see where shadows will fall in ray-traced images, without waiting for the full results of a ray tracing. By examining the edge in the triview, you can see where the shadow will fall.

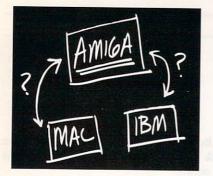
Or, use edges as invisible alignment marks for positioning objects, such as buildings along a street or alphabetic characters in space. You can cut up the edges of an Edit Add

Circle to make perfect yet invisible arcs and curves. Or use edges as stand-ins for other objects. Without moving the camera, and without time-consuming manipulations of complex objects, you can place edges in a scene to "rough out" the scene's composition, to mark the frame of the visible image as seen by the camera.

The least-expensive item in the Byte by Byte product line might be the most useful for many users. It's a videotape titled 3D Cookbook and costs just \$24.95. It's well produced and contains a number of useful tips.

Just to prove what you can learn by peeking over someone's shoulder, here's an update to a previous "Spotlight" suggestion. In my tips for *Pro Page* two issues ago, I described a procedure to retrieve formatted text from document files. There's an easier method: Click on the text-entry icon, click in a text box, press F4 to select all of the text, then choose Save Block from the Edit menu. This brings up a file requester, and the selected text is saved to a file. My method was more complicated but had the minimal advantage of saving all the document text at once.

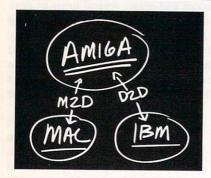
Watch over someone else's shoulder to learn new ways to solve problems.



# PROBLEM

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**DOS-2-DOS** uses your Amiga's floppy drives to read/write IBM/Atari 3.5-inch disks • Reads/writes 5.25-inch IBM disks (using an external 5.25-inch Amiga drive) • Converts ASCII text files both ways • Supports international character sets • Formats IBM/Atari disks • Use with IBM program HIJAAK (from Inset Systems, not included) to capture/convert IBM graphic images to/from IFF.

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# JUST FOR FUN

Shay Addams

# Life of the Party

Almost as an afterthought, I moved my Amiga downstairs and set it up in a living room corner moments before my latest party. Then I stacked a variety of games on the table and returned to mixing the Jello pudding in the Jacuzzi. After the pudding-wrestling event later that eve-

ning, several dozen partygoers were soon squaredancing to Weird Al's latest album, entering and judging a

Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker lookalike contest, and watching "Godzilla and King Kong Meet the Three Stooges" on a 50-inch TV, so I was amazed when my Amiga emerged as the life of the party.

Despite my Amiga's festive party hat and the "Kiss Me I'm Irish!" button affixed to its screen, few people paid any attention to it at first. But in less than an hour, the crowd growing in front of the table turned enthusiastic enough to push all the kids entirely out the door and into the yard (two of them have never been seen since). It started with *Tetris*, the Russian game that looks like brightly colored pieces of a Rubik's Cube tumbling through the air.

I'd just returned from the roof, trying in vain to talk down a jumper, when I saw a score of people cheering, screaming, and jumping up and down as a guy jabbed madly at the keyboard and the little yellow thing on the screen wheeled around in midair on its way to the bottom of the screen. "Eeeeeaahaw!" he yodeled when his final results qualified him to enter his name on the game's vanity board,

which records the top ten scores and displays them at the end of each player's turn. The crowd cheered almost as loudly while he typed in his name as they had during the action.

I recognized the victorious contestant as a computergame veteran, but the next player was a woman who I knew had never sat down at a computer in her life, let alone played a computer game. (Yes, there are people like that; you just have to accept it and get on with your life.) She didn't score as high as previous players, but she had just as much fun and the crowd cheered her on just as exuberantly.

Never before had I seen a computer game turn into

such a spectator sport, for the people gathered in front of the table acted as boisterous as a bar full of basketball fans during the playoffs. Yikes! I nearly dropped the bucket of live eels as I suddenly envisioned a way to recoup every dime I had spent on this shindig: I'd write my next column on how to make your next party more fun by inviting your Amiga (they actually pay me to write this stuff, you know).

What kind of party, what kind of games? Whether you're planning a birthday party for a ten-year-old or a

bachelor party for the local Leisure Suit Larry, the best party games share certain characteristics. They feature easy- and quick-to-learn interfaces, a lot of action underscored by good music and sound effects, and a high-score board to promote competition. It's a plus if the game autoboots, in case no one at the table knows how to start a new game and you're busy resuscitating the guests inadvertently fried in the Jacuzzi by a short circuit in the extension cord.

With games that play fast and quick, everyone gets to play as well as watch. The easiest way to spot such a game is to look at the program's documentation: If it's only a page or two and doesn't include a 48-page reference manual like Ye Olde Booke of Magic-type Stuff, it's a good candidate for party entertainment. (This rules out almost everything with the word quest or odyssey in it.) Though plenty of shoot-'em-ups qualify for this category, these aren't going to go over as well with the women at your party as they do with the men, so look for games with interesting or unconventional scenarios as well as

a few "blast the aliens back to Xenon 4" games.

Tetris is an exemplary party game. The goal—to rotate a falling shape and make it land neatly atop a row of others that have fallen previously and piled up in odd configurations—is simple to grasp (though perhaps a bit easier when you see it than when you read my description). Even people who had never typed a word in their lives found those same untrained fingers nimble enough to master the few keys that rotate the falling shape left, slide it horizontally across the screen, and so on. And no one—not even the best Lego-manipulators of the lot—managed to retain possession of the keyboard for long, so there was frequent



Despite my Amiga's festive party hat, few people paid any attention to it at first.

turnover at the controls. Best of all, the sense of competition that emerged as people vied for higher scores turned the game into a genuine sports event, complete with impromptu cheerleaders.

Accolade's *Grand Prix Circuit* racing game went over well but drew a different, smaller crowd. It turned out that two people had played it, and those who were interested picked up the basics in no time. The problem was that each person's turn took too long. You had to clear the time trials

before the actual race, and "most of us crashed on the first lap anyway," said one would-be Parnelli Jones.

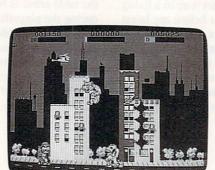
Rampage, an arcade game converted for the Amiga by Activision, demonstrates yet another, more successful kind of party game—one that lets several people play simultaneously. Controlling monsters like George the Giant Ape and Lizzie the Lizard, gamers knocked down buildings, swatted helicopters from the sky, and engaged in other monster-movie activities, competing to see who could do the most damage to the skyline. This, coupled with the vanity board, made Rampage an exciting, if less than socially responsible, diversion.

Bubble Ghost arrived too late for my party, but I saw right away that this new Accolade title would have been perfect. Not only is it easy to learn, but this is also one of the few action games where it's easier to use the mouse than a joystick. You guide your ghost by moving the mouse in the desired direction. By clicking the left button, you can tilt him a bit to the left; you can hit the right button for the opposite

effect. This changes the ghost's angle, which determines the direction he blows a bubble through an obstacle-lined maze and through an exit into the next level. *Bubble Ghost* combines the easy-to-learn advantages of *Tetris* with the one- or two-player option of *Rampage* and lets up to five players record their scores.

A Sega conversion from Mindscape, *Paperboy* is just out and looks like another good party game with an unusual theme—to deliver papers on a bicycle while avoiding cars and other hazards.

Amiga Party Themes. Specialty parties can also be a lot of fun. These are usually smaller affairs in which all the guests are already familiar with the game and in fact love to play it more than they like to watch television. Some adventurers I know in New York occasionally host *Bard's Tale* parties. Instead of watching one person play all four roles in the game, however, each participant makes the decisions for his or her bard, sorcerer, or other member of the questing party, and one person handles the keyboard, typing in their orders.



Rampage allows partygoers to perform monstrous feats of destruction without putting a single scratch on your coffee table.

It's a lot more like being a member of a real questing party than when you play alone, and with several people trying to unravel an adventure game's toughest riddles, you may finally complete a quest that has been driving you mad for months. Electronic Arts' new Swords of Twilight is the best bet for such a party, as it allows three players to control individual characters simultaneously via two joysticks and the keyboard. With such a theme, you could even delve into decorating the place to look like a dungeon

(fortunately, mine already does).

Sports games like Epyx's California Games, though not the best choice for a large group, lend themselves well to a specialty party, as do sports simulators like Grand Prix Circuit. Flight simulators are too slow for fast-paced, thrill-a-second entertainment, but a sports-car rally attended by Out Run aficionados would work. Converted from a Sega arcade game and recently released by Mindscape, the cars in Out Run are more easily mastered than those in a full-fledged racing simulator.

The Amiga as Party Animal. The Amiga likes to have a good time as much as anybody, but it's still no Spuds McKenzie. So, to make sure no one spills a Bud Light down the disk drive, set up a table specifically for the computer and ask people not to put drinks on it. Someone at the table will soon start telling newcomers, freeing you to wander back to the keg, where a conscientious host belongs. (Even so, be prepared to drop everything and dash for the Amiga the minute someone yells, "Hey! What does Guru meditation mean?") If you

have a couple of smaller tables, put them alongside to hold drinks, ashtrays, and so on.

Make a special set of boot disks solely for the party, just in case one of your rambunctious friends spills a Bud Light down the disk drive anyway. Do the same for the game disks if possible. In fact, duplicate the house and everything you own; then have the party there, thus eliminating the need to clean up afterward.

Put on a game with a catchy theme or an animated title screen before guests arrive, but don't expect most of them to head straight for the computer. Do be ready to get things off the ground, though, especially when someone grabs the mouse and asks how to play the game. If you've picked out the right games, your explanation will take less than a minute and enable the person to explain it to someone else. In fact, inviting your Amiga to the party can be a good way to introduce your friends to the world of computing, or it can just give you a good excuse for a party. Now if you'll excuse me, I've gotta find the wire cutters and get this lampshade off my head.

# **ABSTRACTIONS**

Arlan Levitan

# And Now, a Word from Our Sponsor

Celebrities may be

fine for selling light

beer, but they just

don't cut the mustard

with computers.

Last issue, I predicted that Commodore's new megabuck ad campaign would finally lodge the Amiga into America's computing consciousness. I also bet heavily on the Giants in the World Series.

I had a lot of hope for the new ads. According to Commodore, they would saturate the market; the average American would see at least 20 Amiga commercials before the end of 1989. At four days into the campaign, I had only seen one 30-second spot, a pointless piece in which the magical computing aura of an Amiga 500 lifts a two-story home a couple of feet off its foundation. To paraphrase the hundreds of local Count Scarys that host stupid TV horror flicks across the country, "Ooooohhhhhh . . . that's powerful!"

I consoled myself with the fact that it could have been worse and patiently waited for the other ads in the series to pop up. Two weeks of moderate television viewing passed without nary a mention of the Amiga. By word of mouth I heard that my local Amiga dealer had all of the ads on tape. Since I had a feeling that they might be good fodder for the next installment of "Abstractions," I hightailed it over to my dealer for a look-see.

After 20 minutes of fast talking, I left the premises with videotape in hand. I went home, watched a couple of hours of "Doctor Who" to soften up my brain cells, and

then viewed the Amiga ads a dozen or so times. For those of you who have been spared exposure to the ads, here's a brief synopsis of one for grins.

It's a quiet evening in an average upper-middle-class 'burb and in true nuclear-family style, Mom and Dad Palmer are eating dinner while teenage Stevie is secluded in his room with an Amiga. (Subliminal message: Buy your kids an Amiga and you won't have to worry about interacting with them yourself.)

Dinner is interrupted by an endless stream of personalities clamoring for help from Stevie. Since NASA was having a fire sale on retreads, we get not one, not two, but three full-fledged astronauts (Aldrin, Carpenter, and Cooper). A frantic phone call for baseball advice from Tommy Lasorda is followed by in-person appearances by the Pointer Sisters, Burt Bacharach, Little Richard, and Tip O'Neill. The tag line we are left with is this: "The Commodore Amiga. The Computer for the Creative Mind."

The commercial is slick, mildly entertaining, and as forgettable as a stump speech. I showed the ads to friends and family alike. They were more confused than informed: Why would I want an Amiga? Is the Amiga just for teenagers? Do all of those famous people use Amigas?

Night of the Living Celebrities. Using celebrities in commercials may be fine for selling light beer, but it just doesn't cut the mustard with computers. Or does it? Maybe a more careful selection of big names would have been more effective. . . .

"Madge, it's the doorbell. Will you get it please?"
"Sure honey." [Opens door.] "You're a financier!"

"Yes ma'am, I'm Ivan Boesky. Is Stevie at home? I need to see him about some inside information he may have picked up." [Cut to Stevie hacking the mainframe of a Fortune 500 corporation.]

"Upstairs and to the left, Mr. Boesky." [Telephone rings.] "Irving it's the phone."

"Got it dear.... Evening.
Palmer residence."

"Hi, this is Charley Hustle. I gotta talk to Stevie." [Cut to Stevie analyzing baseball stats.] "Stevie, I need a new line on the Reds/Phillies series. I'm thinking of cutting the spread to two runs to increase the action."

"That'll work out just fine. Just cover the risk by side bets on Franco's ERA staying under 2.34. Anytime, Pete."

"Honey, it's the door again."
"Ciao baby, I'm Rob Lowe.

Stevie's expecting me." [Cut to Stevie with genlocked Amiga and cam-

corder.] "I've got some tapes he's supposed to work on."

"Excuse us, I'm Zamfir, master of the pan flute, and this is world-famous unknown pianist Richard Clayderman. Stevie is helping us with some special recordings."

"Will you all just go upstairs. My husband and I are trying to eat our dinner. Irving, I can't stand it anymore! Since we bought Stevie that computer, there's been a constant stream of second-rate, publicity-seeking knownothings in and out of this home."

"Did someone call me? I'm Dan Quayle, vice president of the United States. Young Steven and I were supposed to be working on bringing me up to speed on foreign policy tonight."

[Cut to Stevie's room where occupants are comparing the size of the checks they received for their endorsements while Dan and Stevie are immersed in an intense round of *Rambo III*. Picture fades to an Amiga printing out reams of full-color fifty-dollar bills with voice-over.]

"Amiga advertising. Maybe it should be creative, but Commodore doesn't mind."



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# \_ CLIPS

Jim Butterfield

# **Escape Codes**

This issue's quick tip: Try the command PROMPT "\*e[33m %S \*e[0m \*n> ". This command will make some interesting changes in your CLI or Shell prompt. The current directory will be displayed in orange, and the prompting character (a greater-than sign, but you can change it if you wish) will appear on the follow-

ing line. You might find this "next line" feature to be useful if you have long directory paths that use up quite a bit of the CLI line.

How it works. PROMPT is of course the command to change the prompt message you see on the command line; the rest of the line is enclosed in quotation marks. These quotes do more than allow you to type space characters

within the string. They also make available special features which are triggered by the asterisk character.

Within quotation marks, the asterisk turns into an escape code that signals that something unusual will follow. The most important combinations are \*n, which represents the new-line character; \*e, which stands for the Escape character; and the combinations \*" and \*\*, which generate character quotation marks or an asterisk.

The first piece of data in our prompt string, above, is \*e[33m. This changes the printing color to orange. The first three characters, \*e[, form what is known as a CSI,

or control sequence introducer. The CSI signals that a control sequence (numeric data followed by an alphabetic character) will follow. The character here is the letter m be sure it's in lowercase. The letter m is the command Set Graphic Rendition, and code 33 will select the color orange.

Continuing with our sample prompt line, we now see %S. As documented in the 1.3 manual, this causes the prompt command to display the current directory. Following this, we see \*e[0m. By now, you may recognize \*e[ as the CSI, and m as the Set Graphic Rendition command. A value of 0 means put everything back to normal; it's a generic way to return conditions to their defaults. In this case, the printing color returns to white.

Moving along the line, we arrive at \*n, the signal for a new line. Finally, we have the prompt character, >, and a trailing space.

The whole sequence can thus be described as "switch to orange, print the directory path, switch to normal colors, go to the next line, and print the prompt characters." Quite a job for the seemingly simple PROMPT command.

Printer setup. From time to time, you may want to output a document to the printer. There are many ways to do this. A file may be printed with a simple command such as COPY FILE PRT: or TYPE > PRT: FILE. If the material you want printed is output from a program, you can often use redirection: The command PROGRAM > PRT: will redirect the output of PROGRAM to the printer instead of to the screen. Here's another method: Within many text-editor programs, or even in Amiga Basic, you may ask for your document to be saved as a text file. If you supply PRT: as a filename, your document goes out to the printer rather than to a disk file. For example, if you are working in Amiga Basic and have a program you want listed, SAVE "PRT:",A or LIST ,"PRT:" will produce a

hardcopy of the program just as

easily as LLIST.

I like to add a title to documents, giving a name and perhaps a date; it helps keep the various pieces of paper in order. Sometimes I direct the output material to a ramdisk file, edit it there, and then send the "prettied up" document along to the printer. But it's often just as handy to zip a quick title directly to the printer just before sending the main text there. Do this by typing ECHO >PRT: "Title information, date, whatever". The line is printed; the file or other information can now follow it.

Now that we know about the

CSI, we can do more. The boxes on these two pages show some of the commands. I particularly like to use the following features when appropriate: italics, underline, boldface, and condensed or expanded printing. And occasionally I find a need to switch into national fonts: French, Danish, Spanish, or U.K., perhaps.

Try delivering italics to the screen by typing ECHO "This is \*e[3m very \*e[0m interesting!". Then follow up by sending italics to the printer with ECHO >PRT: "This is \*e[3m very \*e[0m interesting!".

The same codes cause the same effects on quite different output devices. You can do the same thing with boldface or underline mode. Here's the marvelous thing about the way the Amiga handles printer codes: Although each make of printer might need to receive a different code sequence to trigger, say, italics mode, you type the same thing no matter which printer you are using! Data sent to device PRT: is translated to the correct custom code by the printer driver that is selected in Preferences. Once the correct printer driver has been set, all programs that send

Control Codes

\*n Newline

Reset printer/clear screen

CSI m Commands

\*e[1m Boldface on

\*e[3m Italics on

\*e[4m Underline on Foreground color black \*e[32m

\*e[33m Foreground color orange \*e[42m Background color black

\*e[0m Restore above defaults

\*e[32;41m Foreground black, background white

to PRT: will have their data customized to suit your printer. Note that this effect is only true for the PRT: device; if you send directly to PAR: (or, for a serial printer, to SER:), the information will be passed along unchanged.

Check the features of your printer by trying some of the following commands:

ECHO >PRT: "\*e[2w Elite pitch! \*e[0w" ECHO >PRT: "\*e[4w Condensed! \*e[0w" ECHO >PRT: "\*e[6w Enlarged! \*e[0w" ECHO >PRT: "\*e[4\*", Testing double-strike

ECHO >PRT: "\*e[4\*"z Testing double-strike! \*e[3\*"z" ECHO >PRT: "\*e[2\*"z Testing NLQ printing! \*e[1\*"z"

ECHO >PRT: "\*e(Z #[!]? \*e(B"

In the above examples, I've been careful to cancel the selected effects. Each feature is switched on, tested, and then switched off again. You don't have to do it that way.

Workbench 1.3 upgrade. Commodore has recently released a new edition of Workbench 1.3, this one num-

bered 1.3.2. Changes from the original 1.3 system are mostly directed to hard disk users.

Revision 1.3.2 first became visible when Commodore made it available as a downloadable module on certain computer networks. It came with a license agreement allowing individual users to download the package but prohibiting further distribution in any form.

There was some curiosity among the Amiga user community as to why Commodore was so generous with widespread electronic distribution and yet so apparently stingy in restricting further distribution. The reason: In these days of

computer virus problems, the company wants to have a clear path from the supplier (Commodore) to the user (you). Extra handling between these two points might open the door to abuse.

It is expected that authorized Commodore dealers will have the current version of Workbench 1.3.2 for those users (mostly hard disk owners) who need it. Earlier versions of Workbench 1.3 are still usable, although version 1.3.1's DISKCOPY command is said to contain bugs.

You may recall that I wrote a program, SysCheck, to confirm that key items of the Workbench disk were known versions. A new release means, of course, that a new version of SysCheck has been produced. It's included on this issue's Resource Disk. See "How to Use the Disk" for more information.

Hard disk vs. floppy. All Amiga systems, regardless of age and configuration, have a great deal in common. But there may be differences in the way hard disk and floppy disk users organize and safeguard their storage systems.

Users whose systems are based on 3½-inch floppy disks tend to create a set of "customized" disks, each one especially tailored to start up the system in a certain way. There might be a disk for word processing, one for graphics drawing, and another for programming in Amiga Basic, for

example. To conserve storage, the user will often carefully tailor each disk's contents.

The Preferences drawer will generally be removed from all such work disks, once the colors have been set up and the appropriate printer has been selected. Most of the contents of the Utilities drawer will go, along with some of the less-used items in the System drawer. The disk used for BASIC programming is likely to lose the extra fonts. The graphics disk will probably drop the "speech" elements LIBS:TRANSLATOR.LIBRARY and DEVS:SPEAK-HANDLER.

Each disk is likely to contain its own customized startup-sequence file. An important part of the setup will be assign statements that identify special areas used by each application. A word processor might assign the path where its spelling checker may be found; an assembler or compiler might assign the location of its include files. In this way, the floppy disk user customizes the system at startup with each boot disk.

The hard disk user, on the other hand, can load up everything at one time. A jumbo collection of fonts will often be on hand, plus all the extra libraries that might be needed by various programs. All the assign commands that might ever be needed are piled into the startup-sequence.

This sounds convenient—no more hunting for that certain floppy disk before you start a job—but it has a few pitfalls. The biggest problems facing the hard disk user are clutter and file safety.

Clutter is a problem that sneaks up on the hard disk owner. There's so much space on a typical

hard disk that there seems to be no need to get rid of old stuff. The old, unwanted files stay on the disk, but they fade from the user's memory. When the disk finally starts to get crowded (yes, even a 40-megabyte unit fills up eventually), the user often can't remember what most of those old programs and files were for.

File safety is similar in nature. Hard disks are very reliable and often work for years without trouble. But when trouble does strike, your disk may lose a large number of programs and data files. It can be hard to rebuild a couple hundred lost programs; it's virtually impossible to reconstruct that many lost data files.

You need a schedule of backup procedures, and you need to follow it conscientiously. This will help both the safety problem, since your files can be brought back if lost, and the clutter problem, since you can confidently discard unused files, knowing they can be recalled.

The user without a hard disk may see the computer in a different way, but the same problems exist. The user's library can quickly grow to hundreds of floppy disks. The prospect of a bad disk causing a loss of data or programs is still important to keep in mind. For the floppy disk user, an archiving system is still important. Make backups, or keep those old disks in a special storage area.

### CSI w Commands

\*e[2w Elite font on
\*e[4w Condensed font on
\*e[6w Enlarged font on
\*e[0w Restore normal font

## CSI "z Commands

\*e[4\*"z Double-strike on \*e[3\*"z Double-strike off \*e[2\*"z NLQ font on \*e[1\*"z NLP font off

### **CSI National Character Set Commands**

\*e(B U.S. \*e(R French \*e(A U.K. \*e(E Danish I \*e(Z Spanish

# **ASK** ROB PECK

Rob Peck

# What Is ARexx?

Recently I've received several questions about *ARexx*, so I thought it would be a good idea to group them together and answer them here. It's important to understand *ARexx* because it will be part of the Amiga's upcoming 1.4 operating system, and many programs al-

ready use it. It's also a very useful tool—for programmers and for users.

Q. Just what is ARexx?

A. ARexx is what many people call the missing link in the Amiga's operating system. The Amiga has always been able to run several different programs at the same time using a technique called *multitasking*. And, thanks to the

work of various companies early in the development of the machine, several standards have evolved that allow different programs to exchange data. These standards, such as the IFF file format, allow you to create a picture using one paint program, touch it up using another, and then load it into your graphics word processor and combine it with some text. But until ARexx came along, there hadn't been a standardized way for different programs to communicate with each other directly. ARexx is that missing link.

ARexx is a language, similar in many ways to BASIC, but more

versatile. In addition to its ability to interpret commands and read and write files, *ARexx* can also send messages to programs that understand its commands.

You communicate with ARexx using ordinary character strings. Internally, ARexx handles your commands using a powerful set of string-processing routines. For example, when it comes time to perform math functions on two strings, ARexx converts the characters into actual numbers, does the math operation, and then produces a string of characters as the output. That makes math operations somewhat slower than they'd be if ordinary numbers had been used in the first place, but it also makes things much easier for the ARexx programmer and for the programs that use ARexx. When ARexx is passing information to and from other programs, there is only one format to worry about: that of an ARexx string.

Q. I write AmigaDOS scripts that use parameter substitution. I can create a script that calls another script, that calls another script, and so on, passing the values from

one script to another until I have the result I need. These scripts communicate with each other, so what's the advantage to using ARexx?

A. AmigaDOS script files rely on slow and restrictive external commands (program files found in the c directory of your system disk). For example, if you want to perform arithmetic from within a script, you have to use the EVAL command, which must be loaded from disk every time you call it (unless, of course, you copy it to the ramdisk or make it resident using Workbench 1.3). *ARexx*, however, has several features, including arithmetic, built right in.

For example, say you're creating a script file to control your C compiler. You want to be able to type CC MY-FILE.C to compile and link your program. You also want the script file to be able to extract the MYFILE portion of

the filename so you can create intermediate files, such as MY-FILE.Q and MYFILE.O. With the EXECUTE command, you can't do this. It can take the filename MYFILE and add the .C, .Q, and .O extensions, but scripts cannot extract portions of strings. With ARexx, you get substring capabilities and much more.

Consider yet another case. Assume that you have a program called FOO and it runs from the CLI with the command

The missing link in the Amiga's operating system, *ARexx* allows programs to interact and communicate.

### FOO A B C D E

where the letters A-E represent the names of the files to be processed. Now say that you want to create a script that uses this program to process all the files found in the directory MYSTUFF in alphabetical order. I had to do this once, and I used the LIST command with its LFORMAT option to generate a list of filenames with preceding spaces, the SORT command to sort them, the JOIN command to join the FOO command with the list of filenames, and finally the ED command to remove the line breaks, placing the whole command on a single line. It would have been considerably easier if ARexx had been available.

The nice thing about ARexx is that you can intermix ARexx and AmigaDOS commands, using ARexx to substitute parameters for an AmigaDOS command if you wish. And by using ARexx's ADDRESS function, you decide what (ARexx, AmigaDOS, or some other application) will receive the command for which parameter substitution has been made.

Someone who switches back and forth between an MS-DOS environment and AmigaDOS could create

ARexx commands that would not only respond in a way similar to that of MS-DOS, but would even reformat the output of the AmigaDOS command so that it would look similar to the form found on other systems.

Q. What does it mean to be ARexx compatible?

A. Amiga software can be compatible at several different levels. The simplest level is when a program implements a one-way communication path between itself and ARexx. With this setup, ARexx (or any other application that sends ARexx messages) can send messages to the program, and the program would reply with a status code that indicates whether or not the requested action was performed or even understood.

At another level, an application would include the ability to generate *ARexx* messages that are sent to other applications, such as *ARexx* itself.

Q. Is there a way to extend ARexx?

A. Yes, by telling ARexx to add function libraries. REXXARPLIB is one such library; it adds functions from the AmigaDOS Replacement Project and Intuition (for menus, windows, and file requesters) to ARexx. Normally, when you write a program in C, the Amiga generates a menu event when an item is selected from a pull-down menu. Your program must evaluate that event and then decide what to do. When you program with the REXX-ARPLIB functions, you simply create menu items using

ARexx commands and then specify what ARexx command string is performed when the menu item is selected. The nicest part about extending ARexx with libraries is that they actually add commands to the ARexx interpreter, thus increasing your programming vocabulary.

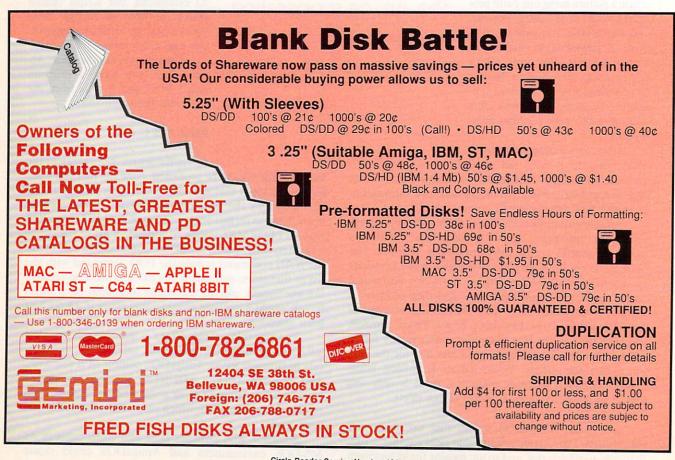
Q. The people I write programs for don't like to type. If I tell them that they'll have to use the CLI, I don't think they'll use an ARexx script. What can I do?

A. With Workbench 1.3's IconX program, you can execute scripts by double-clicking on their icon. So once you have a script working, just add an icon to it and make C:IconX its default tool. The *AmigaDOS 1.3 Enhancer* manual gives a complete description of IconX.

Q. How do I get ARexx now, before the release of Kickstart/Workbench 1.4?

A. ARexx was developed by William S. Hawes and is currently available through him for \$49.95 plus \$2.00 shipping (\$8.00 for overseas airmail). You may contact him at P.O. Box 308, Maynard, Massachusetts 01754; (508) 568-8695.

If you have a programming question or problem that you'd like answered, write to Ask Rob Peck, Amiga Resource, P.O. Box 5406, Greensboro, North Carolina 27403. We regret that, due to the volume of mail received, we cannot respond to every question.





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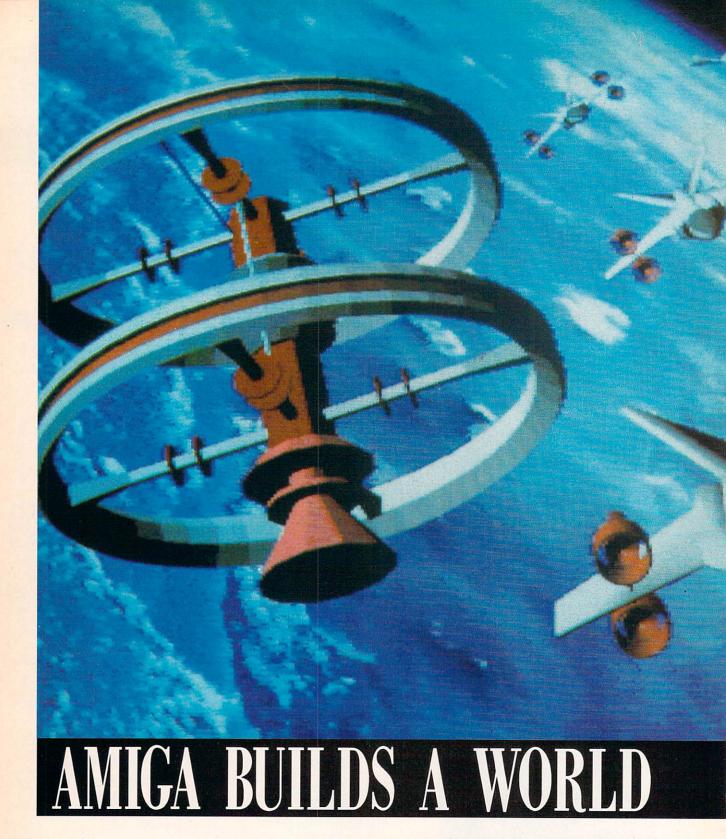
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Circle Reader Service Number 106



Ben and Jean Means

Meet Joseph Conti. He uses 3-D software and he models the future. oaring in from the north, we bank west and look down as beautiful Gothic spires flash by. We complete the turn and dive directly toward the Mediterranean-style opera house. . . . The Amiga gives us wings to fly over this imaginary

landscape of a Japanese theme park that is years into the future and thousands of miles away.

Before one spade of earth is turned, wary investors have an intimate look at what they are building—an island of fantasy in a busy world.

For Joseph Conti and his two Amiga 2500s, creating an alternate reality is just another day at the office, and his office is an Amiga home

studio just

outside L.A., with 50 miles of national park wilderness right outside his back door.

# Amigaland

Today, he's building a theme park designed by John DeCuir Jr., designer of Disney World's Epcot Center. "I'm modeling this severalhundred-million-dollar project in the computer," says Conti, looking out the window at rose bushes and the stretch of distant hills. "The project is very similar to the Epcot Center but, taken a step further, like a whole new generation of theme park. There are several different themes: futuristic, a combination of French, Italian, Mediterranean, and different pieces from all over the world, so it's world-class. This is the first time that the Amiga has been used on a project of this scale."

Planning a world-class theme park is a massive undertaking with a cost to match. Three-dimensional

modeling and animation on the Amiga lowers this cost while providing vivid images of the future. Conti sends the park's blueprints out to a scanning house, which digitizes and saves them as IBM AutoCAD files. Then he calls up the AutoCAD files on his 286 IBM clone and changes them into Amiga Sculpt 4-D files with Auto-CAD translation software. He extrudes the two-dimensional plans to the heights indicated on the blueprints and adds windows, cornices, spires, and parapets. With the finished Amiga model, he can output 3-D stills from any angle or elevation or do thrilling animated flybys.

Conti explains: "A conventional architectural model would cost about \$250,000 and would probably take about nine months to make. The Japanese *love* computer graphics, more than anything else, and these graphics will probably have the most impact in sell-

ing the whole project. That's how important it is. These computer graphics may be only 2 percent of the actual design budget, but they may have a 50-percent impact on whether the project makes it or not.

"The best part of the business with the Amiga is, and this happens constantly, that I won't even have a section modeled yet, and I'll get a phone call that they need pictures in Japan in two days. It's like, there's no way, but that's no excuse. You have to get it done! I'll model what I can, take pictures, develop them at 1 Hour Photo and Fed Ex them to Japan the next day. That happens all the time, and you would never find that on any other computer system."

# Making It in Hollywood

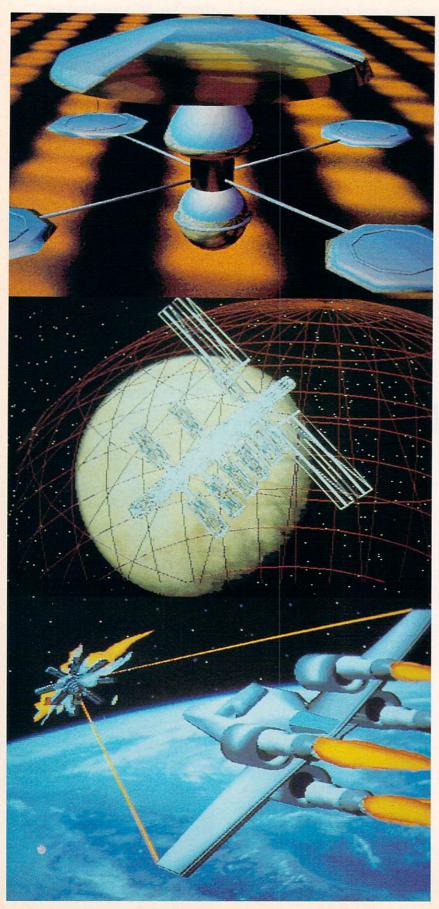
With the Amiga's low cost and ease of use, Conti can show a tailor-made presentation to each prospective new customer. Disney wanted graphics for a new pilot similar to what Video Image, an industry leader, had done for the space epic 2010. So Conti picked out the best computer animation in 2010, which was a wire frame

where you fall away from the spaceship *Discovery* through a series of red triangles. He says, "Video Image produced the original effect for about \$6,000, and I reproduced it in ten minutes exactly. I brought it back to Disney and said, '2010, here it is; I did it in ten minutes. If I was going to charge you, it would be \$600, and this is what you would get.' It got their interest!"

With his reputation buoyed by the innovative Amiga, Joseph Conti has risen far and fast in Hollywood. Just two years ago, he arrived with a 2.5-meg Amiga 1000 tucked under his arm and his cinematography degree from the University of Bridgeport, in Connecticut, under the other. Two weeks and a thousand phone calls later, Mark Stetson of Boss Film Studios called him in for special-effects work on *Die Hard*. It was Conti's lifetime dream come true, and soon he began to see ways



# AMIGA BUILDS A WORLD



that the Amiga could improve the time-honored special-effects techniques. Unfortunately, the Boss crew wasn't ready for his ideas.

In May 1988, Conti left Boss to strike out on his own as an independent effects producer and found a ready partner in John DeCuir, a production designer whose credits include the films 2001, Earth Star Voyager, and Top Gun. "I introduced him to the Amiga, and it was love at first sight because the Amiga could handle everything he needed to do and could not solve. He needed slides for presentations but couldn't add color titles. They had to rub titles down on cards, photograph them, and still only got black-and-white titles. I whipped out DeluxePaint, did some fancy logos, and-BAM!-I had computer graphics. When I dumped it to slide, it was the greatest thing he ever saw. It blows his clients away and is extremely inexpensive. Places in L.A. wanted to charge him \$600 a slide, and I was doing it for \$15 a slide." Conti went from slide presentations to two-dimensional animation and then to 3-D graphics and animation. Soon the Amiga was doing everything for DeCuir, and Conti found a secure job as his key graphic artist on the Amiga.

# Today's Tool for Tomorrow's Toys

Mattel Toy wanted a graphics computer system to do its toy prototyping, and everyone from WaveFront to Alias wanted the account. From this wide selection, Mattel chose Joseph Conti and his Amiga system, which immediately began to save the company time and money. Conti explains: "Traditionally, Mattel hired animators to hand-draw animation cels and then dump them to video. Animation took months of work and cost thousands of man-hour dollars. But DPaint animation advanced the company about 1000 years ahead of its time. Mattel uses the animations in product design to show children how a toy will work, or the company can digitize

a prototype with Digi-View and then animate it dancing around.

"Executives use tapes from the Amiga to start planning marketing strategies. So it's really filling a lot of cracks for them, and schedule compression is the most important. A toy takes two years from concept to completion; so they're planning toys for Christmas two years from now. They need to compress that as much as they can, and the Amiga is really doing that. They can do the animations now in a couple of minutes instead of a couple of months. And with 3-D modeling, they can really plan the product out before they even finish drawing it."

# The 3-D Advantage

Conti paid \$300 for a used Amiga 1000 in early 1987, and it earned him \$30,000 the first year. Conti freely admits, "I'm one of those artists who can't draw anything freehand, but I can build it with the building blocks of a 3-D pro-

gram. I can visualize things in 3-D, add color and texture, and then let the computer worry about the shading, lighting, and perspective.

"You don't have to be an artist to do 3-D; you have to be a film person or a director to know the setups, the movement, and the motion. But in 2-D you have to be a cel animator and hand-draw each piece to some extent and then move it. But in 3-D, I build it, and the computer generates everything."

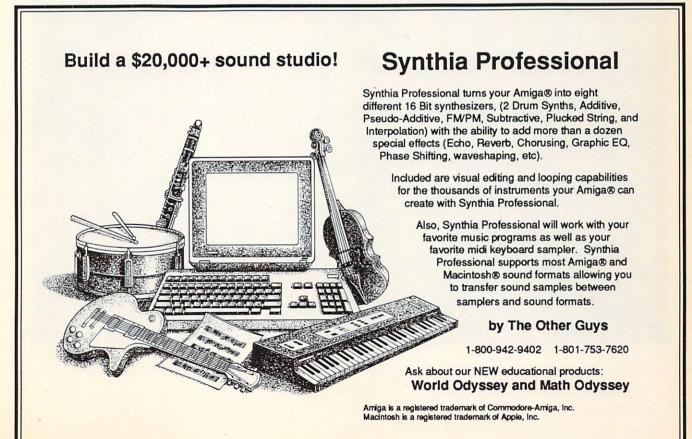
# The Future

For now, Conti is happy with his Amiga but he has strong thoughts about where it needs to expand. "The Amiga needs a graphics board that supports 16 million colors and has 2K × 2K resolution. The only problem is that there has to be a standard. Apple has a standard with its QuickDraw environment for graphics. So everything works—if it's 4-bit, 8-bit, or whatever, it is all supported

in that standard. If *DPaint* had 2K × 2K resolution and 16 million colors, everyone would use it all over the world as the number 1 paint package."

Will Commodore respond to this strong advice from a graphics professional? Let's hope so, because if it does, we'll all continue to benefit from the computer that helped Joseph Conti turn his dreams into Hollywood gold.

Conti, whose overnight success is charted in the pages of Forbes and PC Weekly, shares his vision: "I can tell you for sure that within the next few years, 3-D will be the major design tool for everybody. 3-D will implement production design; it will implement the prototyping of everything from doorknobs to nails. Designers will use 3-D in building houses, in building cities, in building worlds. It will be the number 1 design tool, and the people who get in on it now will be the design leaders in the coming years."



Circle Reader Service Number 108

# PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

John Foust

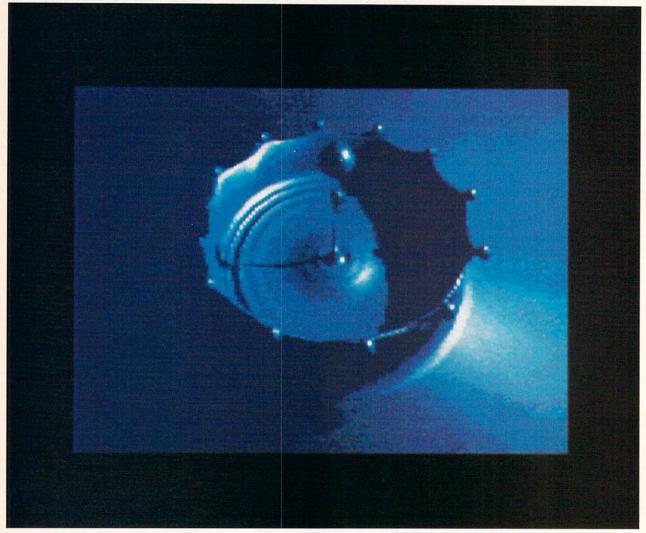


Illustration by James Shook. Rendered in Turbo Silver.

Modeling and animation programs have played a big part in the Amiga's success. In the past, flashy 3-D demos attracted both hobbyists and professionals to the Amiga. Now, they flex the Amiga's muscle like no other type of program. And in the future, they might propel the Amiga to greater commercial popularity.



ore than four years ago, the first and most influential Amiga demo made its

debut in the Amiga booth at the Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago. A 3-D redand-white-checkered beach ball danced across the screen, accompanied by perfect digitized stereo sound.

Known simply as Boing, this simple animation captured the hearts and minds of future Amiga owners everywhere. It certainly gave the impression that the Amiga had the horsepower to animate a 3-D model in realtime. In fact, the Boing demo was only a programmer's trick, not a true 3-D graphic—the spinning ball used color cycling, not highspeed math—but it sure looked good.

Just a few months after the Amiga's release in 1985, a second demo animation influenced almost every one of today's players in the Amiga 3-D market. In January 1986, Juggler showed a robot juggling three mirrored balls that "boinked" as they were thrown into the air. Created by Eric Graham, it was a fine example of ray-traced animation merged with digitized sound.

Graham released his animation as a demonstration of a modeling and animation system he had in development. Soon Graham was involved in negotiations with a number of Amiga companies, including Electronic Arts, Aegis Development, Impulse, and Byte by Byte. Each company hoped to turn Graham's public domain demo into a commercial product. Byte by Byte eventually published the program as Sculpt 3-D.

# Part Science, Part Art

What does it take to design a 3-D program? The theory behind translating the mathematical description of an object into an image on the screen is well known. Academic computergraphics journals describe many variations of current theory but rarely print actual examples of code.

At this point, programming becomes part science, part creativity. The programmer must translate theory into practical Amiga program code. For example, no academic journal tells how to make clean HAM images. User interface, speed, memory, and the limitations of the Amiga also affect the program design.

Constraints imposed by graphics theory can percolate to the very top level of user-interface design. In Sculpt 3-D, all objects are made of triangles. Sculpt gains speed by optimizing graphics calculations to operate only on triangles. Aegis Development's VideoScape 3D allows polygons of any number of sides but introduces other constraints on the shape of polygons in order to make the program execute quickly.

All modeling programs have

# No academic journal tells how to make clean HAM images.

three basic parts: a way to create objects, a way to compose objects in scenes, and a way to control the final production of images. Usually a program has several levels of quality for final images, ranging from simple wire-frame outlines to full ray tracing. HAM and high-resolution images take more time, because there are more colors or pixels in these modes.

Unfortunately, there is no graphics algorithm that refines an image over time. To render an image, a 3-D program must pick a target level of image quality in advance and aim for it. A fixed amount of time must elapse before the image is ready for viewing.

All other things being equal, the most realistic images take the most time to produce. Ray tracing gets a lot of press. It certainly produces the most realistic images, which are great for slide shows or reproduction in a magazine. In real life, ray-traced

animation is difficult because it takes a lot of time and disk space.

Three-dimensional programs try get the edge on each other by decreasing the amount of time it takes to produce a given level of quality. When making animations, rendering time is even more significant. The math shows why: An animation might contain hundreds of frames. If ray tracing takes 30 minutes per frame, and simple shaded images take only 5 minutes, practical limitations of Amiga animation become clear. At 30 minutes a frame, 100 frames will take 50 hours, or more than two days of continuous rendering. Even at 5 minutes a frame, 100 frames take almost 9 hours to render. Add another part of an hour to compress the separate images into an ANIM-format animation file. All the files involved might consume several megabytes of hard disk space. This explains why 3-D animators make up a large segment of the 68020 and 68030 speed-up board market. Even a small increase in rendering speed quickly translates into greater throughput.

While some programs aim for perfect images, others use "tricks" to create apparently difficult effects using a small amount of time and computer power. For example, VideoScape 3D has a "darkening" polygon color that can give the effect of shadows cast from objects, without ray tracing. When these polygons are added to the screen image, instead of covering up polygons behind them, they only darken those areas. Another polygon setting makes shapes that lighten the background, giving the effect of a bright light shining through atmospheric dust or fog. Without the time and effort required for ray tracing, VideoScape pictures can have realistic details.

# Words of Wisdom

To trace the history and predict the future of 3-D on the Amiga, what better place to go than to the companies themselves? Several common themes emerged in these conversations: the companies' dreams for what 3-D can do, stumbling blocks with Commodore and the Amiga market, changes in their marketing and product price, and hopes for future Amiga hardware that can meet all these concerns.

"User interface is going to be the issue of the 1990s," said Roman Ormandy of Octree Software, maker of *Caligari*. "Apple and Microsoft



are battling it out over a 2-D interface, and there is a limit on what a 2-D interface can do. That's why Caligari's interface is dedicated to immersing the user in the 3-D environment. We think that this new form of interface will be used for everything, not just for 3-D design,

but for entertainment, for business. for presentations—for everything."

Caligari was one of the first 3-D applications to be demonstrated for the Amiga, but one of the last to appear. It took more than two and a half years for Caligari to come to market, after an initial appearance

on videotape at a SIGGRAPH graphics convention. Ormandy blames the delay on difficulties in creating the user interface. Caligari comes in two flavors, a \$249 consumer version that includes the object modeler and simple rendering. and a \$1,995 professional version

### James Shook on Turbo Silver

"I've gone through my spheresover-checkboards phase," began artist James Shook, of Amherst, Massachusetts. For him, 3-D programs are simply part of the collection of tools he uses as an Amiga artist. "I sometimes make an object in a 3-D program, render it, then cut it out and use it in a paint program."

He splits his time equally be-

tween both two-dimensional painting programs and three-dimensional modeling programs. "They are very different ways of working. With 3-D, it's a lot more like photography. You need to think in terms of lighting and camera angles, as opposed to [when you're using] Deluxe-Paint," he said. "3-D is a struggle in that you have to make everything that you see. It's tough making objects that don't look like they were composed with basic primi-

tives. They need to be complex enough to resemble real-world objects in such a way that they are

satisfying to look at."

With 3-D programs, Shook adds an element of unpredictability. "I see ray tracing as being like digitizing. A digitized image brings with it some qualities that you can't draw by hand. I think of ray tracing as a mechanical, somewhat impersonal, way of creating an image. When I ray-trace an image, I don't feel fully responsible for it. It feels like a collaboration between the program and myself. There are assumptions built into the software about the way the world looks. A certain visual quality remains, no matter what you do with it." A 3-D image is somehow convincing; you can tell it wasn't drawn.

He draws other comparisons between paint programs and modeling programs. Three-dimensional programs take more time and give

less immediate feedback about the image. "The work that I do in paint programs tends to be more exploratory. Out of a lot of experimentation, the image develops. I'd like to do that in the 3-D programs, except there's this time delay in rendering things. I can spend an hour creating a scene in wire-frame, but then I have to wait for the final image."

For example, in one image, Shook used a Turbo Silver stencil



object for a window frame. (A stencil is a flat IFF brush that can be positioned like a 3-D object in Silver's world.) It took many time-consuming adjustments and ray tracings to arrange a light source so that the shadows fell in a pleasing pattern on the other objects in the room.



For this reason, Shook doesn't do much animation. "Once I've got an image rendering correctly, I'm already thinking of two or three more I'd like to do.'

Moving past shiny balls and

checkered surfaces, Shook is now developing his ability to create organic-looking objects. "My ultimate goal is to create something as rich as what I can do in a paint program. Since you can move around in the 3-D world or can map a new texture to an object, it would be better than a paint program."

He is now reading a book by naturalist Stephen Jay Gould, called Wonderful Life. In it, Gould de-

> scribes the fossils of certain soft-bodied animals found in Devonian-period shales in Canada. Their bodies were flattened in rock, but because they had many examples of the animals, scientists were able to synthesize their three-dimensional form. Shook said, "I'm not a scientist, but I thought it would be fascinating to recreate those animals, to turn them around in different directions to see what they looked like." He is recreating some of the

animals with Turbo Silver. In the book, Gould discusses how some people have the space-relationship skills to do this recreation, while others find it very difficult.

Shook is also experimenting with the PAGErender program to create organic-looking objects. ARexx programs can communicate with PAGErender to create objects algorithmically. The program can change polygon colors and place polygons in very methodical ways. For example, the ARexx program can generate a curved surface, like the shape of a reptile's body, and then place spines at regular intervals and orientations along its surface. Such fine placement is difficult or impossible in other 3-D programs. As the ARexx program executes, Shook can watch the object being assembled. If something goes wrong, he erases the object, tweaks the program, and runs it again.



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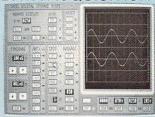
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# Shalom Kelman on Sculpt 4-D

Shalom Kelman is an assistant professor of ophthalmology in the School of Medicine at the University of Maryland in Baltimore. Several years ago, he saw an animation of the interaction between nerve impulses and eye motion running on an instructional computer system called Plato, developed at the University of Illinois. Attracted to the teaching potential of this animation. Kelman hoped to recreate it on a conventional personal computer. He wasn't satisfied until he found the Amiga.

Also a neuroophthalmologist. Kelman uses the Amiga to model the complex eye movements found in neurological eve disorders. As a teacher, he found it difficult to describe the complex, multiaxis relationships between head move-

ment and eye movement. It is very difficult to videotape the eye motions of a human subject, so Kelman recreates the motion using Amiga 3-D modeling programs, particularly Sculpt

"Very simple animations can convey the information you want. Things don't need to be complex," he said. He attributes this theory to Walt Disney: If you imitate life too closely, it doesn't look natural. Instead, if you exaggerate some motions

and simplify others, the result is much more pleasing. His schematic versions of eye motion are accepted on their own terms, even though his images are simplified. They convey the true nature of the

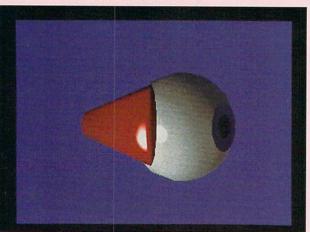
eye's motion, without any distraction from real-world detail.

Kelman's work saw wide exposure on WJV-TV in Baltimore as part of a week-long series on opthalmology. Each segment

opened with one of his animations. The television production crew was amazed with the power of the Amiga, Kelman said. 'They loved the Amiga. They said, 'You did this, on that machine?' "

Kelman uses both Sculpt 4-D and Turbo Silver for animations, depending on the type of motion he wants to represent. To model contracting and expanding muscles. for example, he uses Sculpt 4-D's key-frame animation feature. In one key frame, he shapes the muscle to look contracted, and in a later key frame, expanded. The program interpolates the shape of the muscle in all the frames between the two key frames, resulting in a smooth transition in the final animation.

By using Sculpt 4-D's methods for naming a hierarchy of objects,

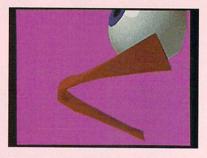


Kelman can quickly select and move groups of triangles that represent a single muscle. By making the object-creation process much easier, this feature alone has saved him hours of work.

In another animation, he used Sculpt's Expand option to imitate the dilation and shrinking of the iris of the eye. A ring of triangles served as the iris. By expanding only the inner ring, and leaving the outer ring in place, the iris appeared to open and close. Kelman used the tape measure in Sculpt 4-D to give the opening a precise size.

To take advantage of the best features of both Sculpt 4-D and Turbo Silver, Kelman will often move an object back and forth between the two programs. For example, he might first create an object in Sculpt 4-D, then move it to Turbo Silver for an unusual editing

operation, and then move it back to Sculpt for final rendering. He converts between the different file formats using InterChange. He also uses InterChange's Point Reduce



Tool to make an object look smoother when rendered in Turbo Silver, after he has designed it in Sculpt 4-D.

For particularly complex rotations. Kelman prefers to animate in

> Turbo Silver. This program allows two types of rotation. One type rotates an object relative to the rest of the world, and one rotates it with respect to a local frame of reference. These two rotation systems make it easy to represent complex motions where both the eye and the head are rotating at the same time.

> Kelman's animations will culminate in the presentation of a computer teaching system at a meeting of the American Acad-

emy of Opthalmology. Kelman is part of a team that developed a system that includes an IBM PC running an artifical-intelligence program and an Amiga 2000 with an Impulse VD-1 frame buffer. The Amiga displays 3-D models and animations in cooperation with the diagnostic program on the PC. Digitized images from medical journals and textbooks are also used.

Kelman's enthusiasm for the Amiga extends to his free time, too. He said, "3-D modeling is very addictive. This stuff was made for me." As an Orthodox Jew. Kelman is interested in creating models of ancient religious vessels such as the menorah. He hopes for a future hybrid between the Amiga and the Macintosh, so all computer users can have a common language for graphics and animation.

-J.F.

with animation abilities.

Octree is about to release a new broadcast-quality system centered on the Caligari software and an expanded Amiga 2000 system. Again, Octree's prices are some of the highest in the Amiga market. The new software sells for \$3,500. It features texture mapping, transparency, metal textures, shadows, antialiasing, and several types of smooth shading. According to Ormandy, the software can produce realistic images without the extra time involved in ray

The system requires a 68020 coprocessor, at least three megabytes of memory, and a Bridgeboard that communicates with a high-resolution PC-based Targa graphics card. This hardware alone might cost \$4,300. The hybrid system allows the Amiga to access the full broadcast-video quality and high-color resolution of the Targa graphics board.

### The Sculpt Series

First released in July 1986, Sculpt 3-D was the first 3-D modeling program to ship for the Amiga. Ironically, the original Sculpt 3-D didn't include the ability to make the shiny spheres that were the sole objectbuilding element in Graham's Juggler. Only a recent version of Sculpt 4-D added this type of sphere. Sculpt 3-D was followed by Animate 3-D in January 1987, which brought animation to Sculpt, and Sculpt Animate 4-D in November 1988.

Actually, the original Sculpt 3-D is no longer a product, but older copies of it can still be found on dealers' shelves. Byte by Byte's product line is composed of Sculpt 3-D XL, which has ray tracing but no animation abilities, priced at \$179.95; Sculpt 4-D Jr., with animation but no ray tracing, at \$149.95; and full-featured Sculpt 4-D, priced at \$499.95. In October 1989, Byte by Byte released the Macintosh version of Sculpt, priced at \$1,495.00. Such a price isn't unusual for the Mac, where several low-end 3-D programs are \$395.00.

"It's a lofty ambition, but we view 3-D animation in terms of human language," said Scott Peterson, president of Byte by Byte. In terms of software, said Peterson, "a big missing piece is a visual word processor. If you're a videographer, and you want to talk about the Eiffel Tower, you now have a way to make footage of the Eiffel Tower.'

Byte by Byte eagerly awaits

higher-resolution displays. Without more colors and higher resolution, the company has found it difficult to sell to video professionals. Peterson said, "We've been frustrated in some ways on the Amiga. We've always had the ability to render at any resolution, with any number of bitplanes. If you're going into the broadcast market, you must have it. I haven't seen a solution yet on the Amiga that addresses the problem.'

Peterson also mentions difficulties with finding support for everything needed by the animator. "There is a lot of support involved, not just in regard to our product, but all the other pieces involved. All the pieces aren't there yet for the Amiga. The pieces are support, service, and reliability. We supplied our piece, but the other pieces aren't there. The software is only part of the solution. Our program is just a tool." This isn't an indictment of the Amiga or Commodore, however. Peterson claims Byte by Byte is encountering the same obstacles in Macintosh distribution channels. He said, "For example, the Mac version of Sculpt doesn't have animation yet, because the traditional Macintosh dealer doesn't understand video and animation. We need them to support the other pieces necessary for professional video, too."

### The Boing demo was only a programmer's trick, but it sure looked good.

Paraphrasing a well-known business educator, Peterson explained another problem the company has had with the Amiga: reliability. "Quality is not goodness. We all know the Amiga is inherently good. Quality is conformance to specification. I can't sell a sophisticated workstation if I can't get it to work reliably." If these problems are solved, Peterson believes the Amiga can be a good workstation, but the bottom line is that an Amiga product must be profitable.

How do new features get added to the Sculpt line? According to Peterson, Byte by Byte and Graham get hundreds of letters requesting enhancements to the program. Graham tries to distance himself from the features in other 3-D products on the theory that if he's forced to come up with an alternative idea, it might be better. Often, the most difficult problem with adding a new feature is finding a way to integrate it with the existing user interface.

Maintaining consistency is important but can be balanced by the benefits of a new feature. These concerns were paramount in creating the Mac version of Sculpt, because the Mac market is very sensitive about interfaces that don't resemble other Mac programs.

### VideoScape 3D

Among 3-D programs, VideoScape 3D is the most animation-oriented. Programmer Allen Hastings wanted a program for making computer movies. Using quick and simple polygon shading methods, it can generate large numbers of frames very quickly and compress them using the ANIMfile method.

When it was first released by Aegis Development in March 1987, VideoScape had only rudimentary object editing. Objects had to be created by hand in a text editor or with simple object-creation tools called Egg and Oct. Later, a companion object editor called Modeler 3D, written by Stuart Ferguson, joined the Aegis product line. Modeler can build objects, camera and object-motion files for VideoScape.

The future for Aegis products by Hastings and Ferguson looks dim, due to an impasse in their negotiations with Aegis. However, Aegis's support for VideoScape hasn't stopped. The company plans to release a product called *ProMotion*, a set of tools for designing VideoScape motion files, giving effects such as gravity, wind direction, and magnetic force.

Hastings is now developing a 3-D program for NewTek. It uses the frame buffer of the Video Toaster to produce broadcast-video images. According to NewTek Vice President Paul Montgomery, the company hasn't officially announced this product, but Hastings has shown some of its images in the NewTek booth at shows.

### Silver and Turbo Silver

Impulse was formerly known as a Macintosh software and hardware company, most notably for the MacNifty audio digitizer. In early 1986, company president Mike Halverson saw the Juggler animation on a computer network. He was so impressed by the demo that within



### James Robinson on VideoScape 3D

Not content with short and flashy demo animations, James Robinson of Mount Prospect, Illinois, is intent on making a full-length movie with *VideoScape 3D*. For the past year and a half, he has been creating models for the film, tentatively called *Automated Light*. The film is set on the planet Mars and in outer space.

"Do something more than 15 or 20 minutes long, and you've got to make a lot of models," said Robinson. "They're basically props, like in a movie." Using Modeler 3D, the object editor designed for use with VideoScape, Robinson has created hundreds of models and sets for the movie. All the objects have the same basic decorative style and have specific color palettes to compose the mood and setting.

Although he has already ren-

dered several thousand frames, Robinson considers these only test animations for the movie "in order to get the choreography right." Some of his test animations have been distributed as public domain demo-disk sets.

To perfect a scene, he moves the camera around in it and then refines the objects by adding more detail. Modeler serves a dual purpose here: It can also create camera and object-motion paths for VideoScape. His level of

detail is astounding. For example, in the walls of one spaceship cockpit, there are indentations that contain miniature wire-frame objects that rotate. The end result makes it look as if there are holographic computer display screens in the walls.

Using DeluxePaint, he can adjust the color palette of a sample frame. This demonstrates one reason why Robinson prefers Video-Scape to other 3-D packages. Once a color palette is chosen and a sample frame is rendered to his satisfaction, he knows that the rest of the animation will have perfect exposure. He wouldn't have this precise control if he used Sculpt 4-D or Turbo Silver.

While creating an object, he must consider the camera angles from which it will be viewed, avoid-

ing overlaps and intersections that will look incorrect when viewed at certain angles. The extra effort pays off in rendering time, according to Robinson. "It takes longer to build the models to work cleanly in this mode. But when it's done, they are rendered a lot faster. The extra time

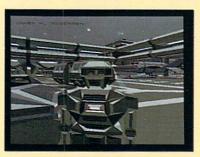


you spent is easily made up in the savings in rendering time." For example, the cockpit mentioned above contains more than 3500 polygons, but it is rendered in about 35

ASSINSON/

seconds.

"VideoScape lets you do a lot of neat little tricks like that," Robinson explained. One example is the way he takes advantage of Video-Scape's hierarchical object controls.



Inside a spaceship, a certain sequence has 30 levels of hierarchical control. A robot walks into the room, sits in a chair, and picks up

an object. By making the robot a part of the hierarchy below the chair, when the chair is rotated, all other parts of the robot are automatically rotated in the same direction. The robot, named Tellarc, is the star of the film. It has more than 20 separate levels, so it can rotate its arms, its legs, and its torso in realistic ways.

Obviously, managing this many levels of motion is very difficult. Robinson uses a very strict system for naming object parts and cameramotion files, and he stores them in subdirectories.

Another trick involves the use of negative scaling to make blinking lights on the sides of spaceships. First, he creates two polygons of the same shape, pointing in different directions. One is dark; the other is light. By scaling these polygons by -1 during the course of an animation, the polygons appear to

change places, creating an effect like a blinking light.

For postproduction editing, Robinson uses Sparta Software's ANIMagic software. It allows him to edit ANIM files and introduce special effects, such as fades, shatters, and color cycling. Changing an animation's color palette can turn a daylight scene into night, allowing Robinson to reuse sequences in ways impossible with conventional film or video.

After a sequence is perfected, he copies it to movie film, frame by frame, with a Beaulieu movie camera. "This gives me the best of both worlds," according to Robinson. "It gives me the clean quality of RGB images, plus I get fantastic storage and frame-by-frame access to my films."

What will he do with the finished animation? The answer came quickly. "Show it. Show off the Amiga computer and what can be done on the system. I'm doing this right now for fun," he said. "Modeler and VideoScape have proved to be a very reliable and powerful combination. Together, they helped me turn a dream into reality—which was to build a universe and then take everyone along for a ride through it."

—J.F.

two weeks he decided to change the course of the company toward the Amiga. Impulse sold the digitizer to another Macintosh company. Halverson talked with Eric Graham, but it was apparent that Graham was deeply involved in negotiations with other companies.

Believing this kind of software could be written by someone other than Graham, Halverson went to the physics and computer-science departments at the University of Minnesota. "We asked them if they knew a wirehead who could write this stuff. It seemed like a logical place to go." Why didn't he hire an established Amiga programmer? "It's my opinion that the Amiga programmer community is kind of uncreative. Why aren't there 20 programs like Turbo Silver? The Amiga is a video machine, not a desktop publishing machine."

The first versions of Silver were written by Don Sidoroff, followed by Zach Knutson on Turbo Silver 3.0. Silver 1.0 was first released in October 1986, at the first AmiEXPO in New York City. In November 1987, Silver 2.0 shipped; it was more like today's Turbo Silver than Silver 1.0. Finally, Turbo Silver 3.0 arrived in January 1988.

What was the driving force behind the evolution of *Turbo Silver?* According to Halverson, it was all the people who bought it. "Everybody's helped it, even Byte by Byte has helped it. We're trying very hard to understand what the user wants. We can't deliver everything. People wanted IFF wrapping and 24-bit rendering, for example, so we gave it to them."

How has Byte by Byte helped *Turbo Silver*? Halverson explained. "The competition between *Sculpt* and *Turbo Silver* has been nothing but good for both products. Some people like the *Sculpt* editor better than ours, and I think that's wonderful." Using the *InterChange* program from Syndesis, 3-D users can create an object in one program and convert it to a second program's format for final rendering or further editing.

Voicing concerns similar to those of other 3-D developers, Halverson hopes Commodore's marketing will improve. "They haven't addressed the whole video market. Roughly 87 percent of homes in the U.S. have 1.6 VCRs. A lot of those people have camcorders, too. They aren't paying attention to the obvious. There is a market that

interfaces to all that hardware, like guys doing weddings and baby videos, and people at home who spend \$2,000 on a VCR. That's almost the price of the Amiga 2000, but they don't know about the Amiga. Here's an enormous market; why aren't they addressing it? We don't have *Microsoft Word* on the Amiga, so why try to compete in that market? They should be like Joe Isuzu, driving past the IBM store and yelling, 'Ask them if it has realtime animation.' This would make things better for everybody, not just Impulse."

In the future, Impulse hopes to break the *Turbo Silver* system into separate modules. Halverson hopes the first two modules will be available early in 1990. The first is an object editor that shows the objects in a natural perspective, similar to the way *Caligari* does. "People like the projection that it uses, so we're making our modeler like that," said Halverson. He expects the modules to sell for about \$300 each. The second module will compose object motions in new ways, using such procedures as tweening and morphing.

# Caligari's interface is dedicated to immersing the user in the 3-D environment.

Along with the common desire for a faster, more powerful machine, Halverson would like to see the elimination of the HAM video mode. "Although it's interesting, it's what's holding back the machine. You can't get enough colors on the screen to make realistic images. It's funny, HAM pushed the machine to the forefront a few years ago, but now it's holding the machine back. Frankly, we're bored to death, just as everyone else who does graphics software must be. We've pushed the envelope to its limits. The software

### Update

Since this feature was written, we have been informed of the following changes regarding the products and companies mentioned here.

The Amiga Sculpt series is now distributed by Centaur Software.

Aegis has been acquired by Oxxi. As of this writing, the fate of *VideoScape 3D* is unknown.

might get more creative in the future, but we've done as much as we can do with the final output."

Instead, he hopes Commodore will add more colors at higher resolutions and restore the composite-video output jack on the back of the Amiga. "If the machine doesn't go in that direction, the Amiga will be relegated to being a game machine," he said.

Impulse is considering entering the Macintosh market. According to Halverson, if the company does, it would be with a \$300 rendering program based on the *Turbo Silver* technology. The program won't be an object editor. Instead, it will accept objects made by other Macintosh 3-D programs. "There are enough programs out there that generate objects, so there's no reason to make another object editor," Halverson said.

### Who's Next?

A share of the future of Amiga 3-D belongs to the newcomers, the products released in recent months. It remains to be seen if these products become as popular as the stalwart *Sculpt, Turbo Silver,* and *VideoScape*.

MindWare's PAGErender holds great potential, being the first 3-D product with strong ARexx programming abilities. Along with a traditional object-creation interface, users can create objects from programs written with the ARexx language interpreter.

Progressive Peripherals has been working on a modeling and animation program tentatively known as 3-D Pro, written by the same programmers as its Animation Station ANIM-editing software. Some programs make the leap from public domain to commercial software, as Incognito's Opticks ray tracer has done.

Other new programs may come from across the ocean. Gold Disk's *Design 3-D* is a translation of a French program known as *CAO 3-D*. West Germany's *MasterCAD* is an example of a program that hasn't seen North American distribution. "Programs like these may prove to be the future of Amiga animation."

John Foust is an Amiga Resource columnist and a busy feature writer for COMPUTE! Publications and other magazines. His company, Syndesis, produces the popular Interchange program, which allows 3-D objects to be transferred between Turbo Silver, Sculpt 3-D, VideoScape 3D, and other formats.

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# 

EVER WONDER
HOW YOUR 500
WORKS OR WHAT
IT LOOKS LIKE WITH
ITS CASE OFF? THIS
PHOTOGRAPHIC
JOURNEY INSIDE
THE AMIGA
REVEALS ALL.

Dan Shein

What makes your Amiga tick?

Hidden inside the 500's plastic case is a powerful ensemble of hardware. To find it, you have to remove the computer's six Bristol flutescrews, pry apart the plastic case's two side latches, unplug and lift out the keyboard, disconnect a grounding wire from the disk drive, take out more screws, bend several metal tabs, and remove the metal shielding

that encases the motherboard—and this is exactly what we did.

What follows is a complete description of what's inside the Amiga 500, where the major components are located and what their main functions are—in other words, what makes your Amiga tick. (Don't let Intuition creator R. J. Mical fool you: Your computer does not run on blue smoke.)

The Amiga's Brain

The brain of any home computer is its CPU (Central Processing Unit). It's here that most of the computer's data processing takes place. The Amiga 500 uses the 68000 CPU, a commercially available "off the shelf" chip designed by Motorola. It is the same microprocessor used by the Atari ST, Macintosh Plus, and Macintosh SE.

The 68000 chip is mounted on the left edge of the 500's circuit board near the expansion bus. Some people replace their 68000 with the newer 68010 for a 5-percent speed increase. It's also possible to upgrade to a 68020 (the same chip found in the Amiga 2500's accelerator board).

Memory: Chip vs. Fast

All computers rely on some form of RAM (Random Access Memory) to store data and execute instructions, and the Amiga is no exception. Found in the lower left corner of the motherboard are 16 RAM chips, each providing 32K of storage for a total of 512K. With Commodore's A501 RAM expander, you can add another 512K and increase your RAM to one megabyte. (Future Amiga 500s are being designed to hold one megabyte of RAM on the motherboard—no expansion module will be necessary.)

Amiga RAM can be classified as either *chip* or *fast*. Chip RAM is the memory that is accessible by both the 68000 CPU and the Amiga's custom chips. This is the only RAM that the custom chips can use, thus the name *chip* RAM. (The 512K of RAM found on the 500's motherboard is all chip RAM.) Fast RAM is usually defined as anything that is not chip RAM. Generally, fast RAM takes less time to access because the 68000 microprocessor does not have to share it with the custom chips.

Custom Chips

Almost all Amiga owners have heard of the computer's custom chip set. These specially designed components give the Amiga its creative edge, providing most of the spectacular sound and graphics capabilities that make the computer so popular with artists, musicians, and game aficionados.

The Amiga 500 contains four custom chips: Agnus, Denise, Paula, and Gary. You may be wondering just what it is that makes these chips custom. Most of today's computers

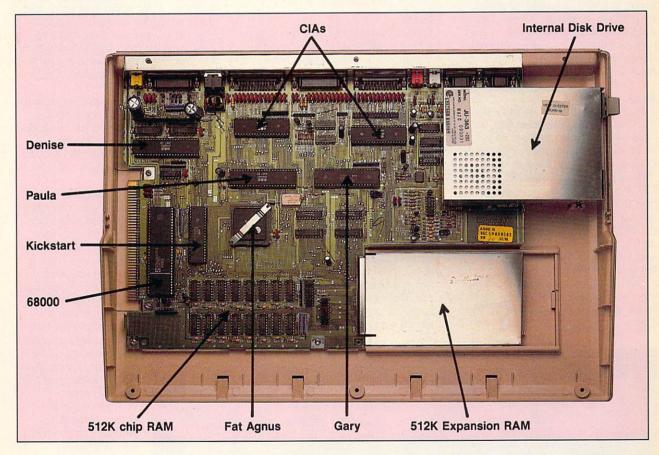
use a set of commercially available chips—components available to anyone who wants them. The Amiga uses chips made by Commodore's own chip division. These chips were designed by Amiga engineers exclusively for the Amiga; no other computer uses these chips.

Three of these chips are actually coprocessor chips. A coprocessor is a separate chip that assists the main CPU (in this case, the 68000) by handling one or more specific tasks.

the blitter and copper. The blitter (block image transfer) is the part of Agnus that manipulates bitmapped data, performing such feats as as quick area fills, rapid line drawing, and the movement of objects. The portion of Agnus known as the copper (for coprocessor) takes care of the screen display by executing a specialized program known as a copper list. Copper lists are responsible for such things as telling the computer where in RAM the screen's bitmapped im-

shipped in the Amiga 1000. It was a rectangular chip, similar to the shape of Denise or Gary. Agnus version 2 was introduced with the Amiga 500 and 2000. This version is known as the *Fat Agnus* because it has a wider, square shape. Except for its shape, however, the Fat Agnus is functionally the same chip as the 1000's Agnus.

Commodore made this shape change to prepare for the introduction of Agnus version 3, the new



Coprocessor chips are used because they can perform certain functions, such as moving graphics and playing digitized sound, better and faster than the main CPU can. And in most cases, the coprocessors perform these functions independently, allowing the CPU to continue working on something else.

Let's take a look at each of the custom chips, starting with Agnus.

Agnus

Agnus, the Amiga's animation coprocessor chip, is located near the middle-left portion of the circuit board. It contains some very important functional units, including age is, where sprite data is located, what the current screen resolution is, and when the monitor's video beam reaches certain positions.

Agnus also contains several memory-control functions. It allows the 68000 to communicate with the RAM chips and the custom chips by acting as a RAM address generator and register address encoder. It also controls DMA (Direct Memory Access), which is a means by which different chips can read or write directly to memory without the use of the CPU.

There are three different versions of the Agnus chip. Version 1 is the original Agnus, which was

1MB Agnus. The square shape allows for more pins than the rectangular Agnus, thus giving the chip access to more address lines. In turn, this new chip can now access up to 1MB of chip RAM, whereas Agnus versions 1 and 2 can each only access up to 512K of chip RAM. Commodore is currently shipping the new 1MB Agnus in all new Amiga 500 and Amiga 2000 machines. (For those of you who own a 500 or 2000 with the older 512K Agnus, you may purchase an upgrade through your local Commodore dealer or by contacting Commodore directly at 215-436-4200. Suggested retail price for the new Agnus chip is \$130.80.)

# 500

Denise, Paula, and Gary

The Denise chip, found in the upper left corner of the motherboard, can be described as a video coprocessor chip. It assists the 68000 in many screen-control functions. It handles screen display and supports sprites.

The Amiga's super audio abilities are the result of Paula, the audio coprocessor chip. Paula is located near the center of the motherboard. It controls many of the Amiga's audio functions, including digital-to-analog conversions (this is what makes sound digitization possible). In addition, it handles several I/O tasks, including handling the mouse/joystick ports, the serial port, certain floppy disk operations, and interrupt control.

Gary, which sits just right of Paula, was once described to me by a Commodore engineer as "basically a glue chip." This is because Gary contains whatever Commodore couldn't fit in elsewhere. It's the Amiga's traffic cop, responsible for generating chip selects for the RAM, ROM, and I/O. It generates the /DTACK signal for the 68000 in response to DMA activity, controls the buffers between the 68000 and chip data buses, and performs some floppy disk logic as well. So as you can see, Gary glues the system together.

A final note on Gary: This chip was not in the original Amiga 1000. It was introduced along with the Fat Agnus.

boot. Kickstart ROM is found on the left side of the 500's motherboard, just right of the 68000 CPU.

The last two important Amiga chips are the CIA (Complex Interface Adapter) chips, located near the top of the circuit board. These chips perform many different functions, but their main job is to handle the I/O ports—serial, parallel, mouse/joystick—and certain disk drive functions, such as moving the drive head and selecting which drives are currently active.

### Ports

Like all Amigas, the 500 is equipped with a wide range of ports and connectors. Let's take a look at each one.

Starting at the left side while facing the rear of the computer, you'll find the game ports, also known as the Controller Port Interfaces. These ports, labeled *1 Joystick* and *2 Joystick*, are female 9-pin D-type (DB9) connectors. They are normally used for mouse or joystick input, although other controllers can be used, such as trackballs, proportional controllers (paddles), and light pens (only Port 2 supports light pens).

Moving to the right, you'll find two RCA connectors used for audio output. The Amiga is unique in that it has four-channel stereo audio output. It's common for people to connect these outputs to their stereo amplifier or to two separate amplified speakers. male DB25 connector. This port is used to interface the Amiga with RS-232C devices. Normally a modem or another computer is connected to this port. However, other devices such as a serial printer can also be connected to this port.

Right of the serial port is the parallel port, another DB25 connector, only this one is female. It's normally used to hook up parallel printers via a standard PC-style printer cable. This port can also be used for input or bidirectional data transfers. Most audio and video digitizers send data to the computer through the parallel port, and a recent program from the Software Distillery uses this port to connect two Amigas to form a small Amiga network.

The power connector, of course, is where you connect the output from the 500's power brick. Since the 500 itself has no power switch, you must turn your computer on and off using the switch found on the power supply itself.

Video output is supplied by the last two ports found at the rear of the Amiga 500. The first video port is a DB23 connector that provides three color outputs—one for red, one for green, and one for blue—and a sync signal. These outputs, along with the Amiga's custom chips, allow the Amiga to display up to 4096 different colors on the screen simultaneously. This port is also used with

genlocks and splitters (for supplying video to two monitors). The second video port provides monochrome composite output through an RCA connector. This port is great for connecting the Amiga to a VCR or an in-

expensive composite monitor.

On the left side of the Amiga (facing the keyboard) is a plastic cover that hides an 86-pin expansion port. This port is a relatively straightforward extension of the 68000 bus. It's here that you connect memory expansion, hard disk controllers, and so on.

### Closing the Case

Well, there you have it, a quick look inside the 500. It's not as mysterious as it might seem, even if it is hard to open. Now let's hope we can find all the screws we removed so we can put this thing back together!



Kickstart and the CIAs

Another new chip that appeared with the Amiga 500 and 2000 computers was Kickstart ROM. Originally, Kickstart was available on disk only. Amiga 1000 owners still use Kickstart disks to boot their computer, inserting it into the computer prior to Workbench so that system code can be loaded into memory.

The code found in Kickstart is best described as the part of the Amiga's operating system that's needed to boot the Amiga and run any program. I say *any* program because Kickstart is required even for those commercial games that auto-

Extra floppy disk drives can be added to the 500 via the External Disk Interface Connector, located to the right of the audio jacks. It's a female DB23 connector. The Amiga can operate up to four floppy disk drives at one time (that's including the internal drive mounted above the upper right corner of the motherboard). Be warned: The 500's power supply is not strong enough to supply power to more than one external drive. A third and/or fourth drive must have its own power supply. The Amiga supports both 3½- and 51/4-inch disk drives.

Next comes the serial port, a

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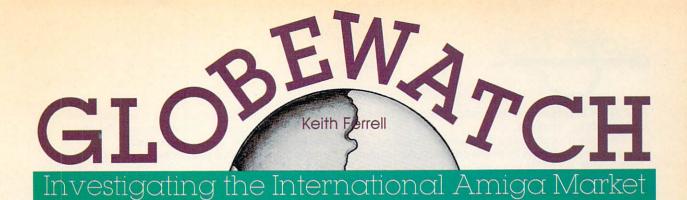
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fast-and-furious three weeks, our features editor jetted around the world in search of Amiga news. Here's what he found.

### **English Enthusiasm**

How

universal

is the Amiga?

It depends

on what corner

of the universe

you're in.

England, long a bastion of 8-bit, cassette-based computing, has embraced the 16-bit age and, at its heart, the Amiga. Nowhere was that more evident than in London, in the crowded aisles of October's Personal Computer Show. The first few days of the show are devoted to the business community; the final days are open to the public, attracting crowds measured in the tens of thousands.

The show, one of Europe's key computer ex-

hibitions, offered Commodore a chance to strut its stuff. And Commodore took advantage of it. With a booth that seemed to stretch for acres, the company touted the Amiga's versatility. Separate wings showed off the computer's abilities at education, business, creativity, and entertainment. The multitasking, multipurpose exhibit matched Commodore's current campaign to present the Amiga as a sort of computer for all seasons.

That approach earned a somewhat wintry response from the business community at the show, however. Many attendees I spoke with felt that Com-

modore is doing too much, too late. There's a sense that the Amiga is being marketed too broadly—not even the

Amiga can be all computers to all people.

Additionally, there was a noticeable absence of software for some of the applications. Instead of educational software, for example, Amiga's potential as an employee training machine was hyped. That sort of application generally requires custom software, and one has to wonder how many professional installations are willing to acquire both Amigas and a staff to write software for the machines. On the business front, Commodore's solid line of PCs captured more attention than its sexier and more powerful line of Amigas.

On the entertainment side of the show, however, it

was quite a different story. That point was clearly made by the fact that the business wings of the Commodore booth could be freely traveled, but you had to pay admission to enter the game wings (proceeds went to an English charity). The entertainment wing was crowded; the business wing was not.

In England, as virtually everywhere else on earth, the Amiga is seen as the preeminent interactive vehicle,

bar none. A solid Amiga product might sell as many as 50,000 copies in the United Kingdom (about the same as in the United States, which has almost four times the population). All the major software companies are developing for the Amiga and, judging by products on display at the show, all of them are giving it their very best efforts.

Some of the companies are familiar to North American readers. Psygnosis unveiled its latest, Shadow of the Beast. Not only does the game boast graphics and scrolling that are likely to set standards, the package comes complete with a T-

shirt! It's not every company that will give you the shirts off their backs.

Amidst a host of new releases, Grandslam Entertainment sees renewed life for one of its old games, Hunt for Red October, an expected benefit from renewed interest accompanying the release of the movie early this year. (Speaking of movies: Ocean Software's huge booth was mostly Batman. Look for a software version soon.)

The strength of the U.K. Amiga market was confirmed by the number of American firms making strong showings at the show. Activision's U.K. arm was there, as were those of MicroProse, Origin, Mindscape, and others. As far as entertainment goes, the Amiga is already a successful transatlantic machine. Right-oh!

### High Marks (but Lower Sales) in Germany

With aggressive promotions, solid sales, and an exuberant market, West Germany has offered Commodore the brightest spot on its corporate map over the past few years. German sales of the Amiga, some analysts claimed, were all that kept Commodore from deeper

financial trouble than it experienced.

Even as the company comes out swinging with a new marketing campaign in the States, though, something has gone wrong with the German market. Reporting on Commodore's anticipated first-quarter losses, the



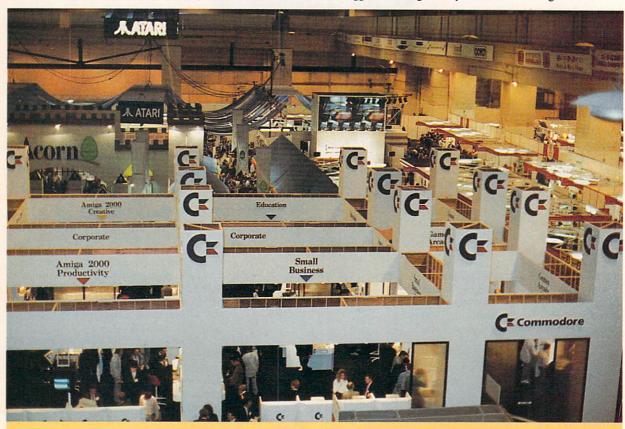
Wall Street Journal noted that, even in West Germany, Amiga sales are dropping.

The villain? Inexpensive PC clones is my guess, although there are rumors of problems in the distribution channel. Still, the PC is as ascendant in West Germany as everywhere else. Some analysts feel that, by this time next year, the PC will have eclipsed the Amiga as the top personal computer in West Germany.

The downturn hasn't stopped German game developers, although there are some unusual challenges involved in developing for the German market. The government's tight restrictions on violence (MicroProse's *Gunship* was labeled pornographic) place severe restric-

tions on content. Developers must seek innovative ways of providing excitement without crossing the government-drawn bounds of acceptable taste.

Rainbow Arts is a good example. The Düsseldorf-based developer was showing *Oil Imperium*, a game that takes the high-stakes international oil industry as its venue. The game is fast-paced and exciting but uses currency rather than bullets to deliver its bang. Also upcoming from Rainbow Arts is *East vs. West: Berlin 1948*, a political-intrigue game that uses an audiocassette to add clues and details. Then there's *X-Out*, an arcade game which, according to Rainbow's Marc Ullrich, "has the biggest moving enemy ever on an Amiga!"



Commodore's multipurpose booth was one of the largest at England's Personal Computer Show.

### Flat in France

Ask a French software publisher about the French Amiga market, and you're likely to receive a Gallic shrug worthy of Chevalier. There is no French Amiga market, I was told by several distributors—at least no bigger a market today than there was a year ago. A successful Amiga product in France might sell as few as 2000 copies. (Still, that's better than the Commodore 64 market, where a hit is measured in the hundreds!) France is PC territory, dominated by Amstrad.

The slow market hasn't stopped French developers, although they count on foreign sales for the bulk of their business. Chief among the French software houses is UBI Soft, which debuted three ambitious and different products at the London PC Show.

Pro Tennis looked, at first glance, to be as good a

tennis game as I've seen on the Amiga, or on any other computer for that matter. Realistic graphics and animation, as well as a good feeling for the rhythm of tennis, make this one a standout. *Iron Lord* is an ambitious role-playing game.

Then there's B.A.T., which stands for Bureau Affaires Temporal, a hugely ambitious time-travel game on three crowded disks; it lets you voyage up and down the time continuum, encountering different cultures and problems. The preliminary version I saw at the PC Show was polished and impressive.

UBI Soft's games will be appearing in the United States early this year, distributed by Electronic Arts.

As far as future growth in the French market for Amigas goes, one can, in the French manner, only shrug.



Hand-held digital cameras—smaller cameras for smaller hands than the ten-foot model shown here—are big business in Japan. They could provide a big opportunity for the Amiga.

### No Sunrise in Japan

In Japan, everyone seems to know the Amiga, but few seem to know where to find one.

According to the editor of one of Japan's leading computer magazines, the country is filled with "Amiga maniacs." His magazine—Log-In—devotes a few pages every issue to coverage of Amiga hardware and software, and those pages earn an enthusiastic if not maniacal reader response.

It's easy to understand why. Japanese personal computers are dull. The leading computer is NEC's 9801, a PC-like machine with a proprietary operating system; it's essentially an MS-DOS computer, and it performs like one. Then there's Fujitsu's FM-TOWNS, a new 16-bit computer with a built-in CD-ROM drive; unfortunately, there's little software available for the FM-TOWNS. Farther down the CPU food chain, you'll find the old MSX home computer and Nintendo's Fami-Com, about which the less said the better. There are about 50,000 Macintoshes in Japan and probably the same number of true PCs.

But where's Amiga?

Where's Commodore? might be a better question. A major Japanese software publisher literally choked on his coffee when I asked him about Commodore Japan. He did not know it was still in business. His impression was that Commodore came arrogantly into Japan several years ago and has maintained a profile that has

grown lower every year since. The company makes occasional noises that hint at emergence from hibernation; then the long snooze begins again.

It's not too late for Commodore to wake up in Japan. For one thing, there are not a lot of home computers of any flavor in Japan—no more than 2 or 3 percent of the population has a true computer at home. For another, the entertainment audience in Japan is becoming increasingly sophisticated, outgrowing Nintendo and looking for larger challenges. Amiga software might be just the ticket.

Perhaps the greatest potential for the Amiga in Japan lies in the increasing digitization of Japanese culture. Digital is *in*, with CD-ROM museums, computerized home theaters, and, most notably, dramatic growth in digital cameras. Sony has already introduced a Mavica that digitizes ten seconds of sound along with the image it captures. (For more on digital photography, see "Amiga Zapshots" in the Summer 1989 issue.) Toshiba attracted large crowds at the Japan Electronics Show with its line of digital cameras.

And digital cameras are only the tip of the phenomenon. The Japanese are exploring the interface between computers and imagery, computers and music, more thoroughly than anyone else at the moment. If ever a market existed for the Amiga, it's this one. Now, if Commodore will only wake up and go after it.

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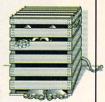
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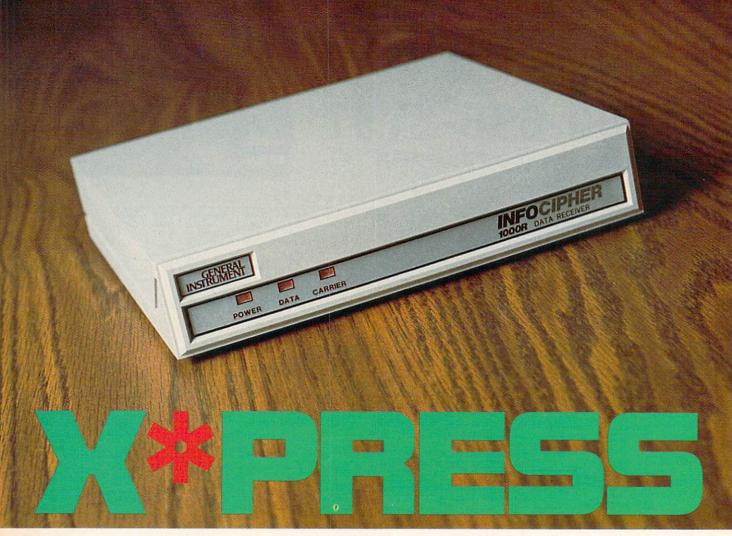
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# for the Amiga

John Foust

Quick! How do you get up-tothe-minute news, sports, and weather into your Amiga? From your cable TV, of course. There's no doubt about it—the Amigas of this new decade will be data-hungry. Still images, video, sound, text, and numbers—your computer will demand and create more data than ever before.

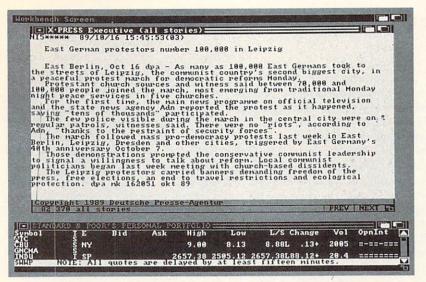
While today's data hounds dream about faster modems to carry more data over the phone lines, they're overlooking the highest bandwidth transmission in the home—the television cable.

X\*PRESS Information Services of Denver, Colorado, offers a service that broadcasts data using television signals. The price is affordable, the hardware and software are available now, and the potential is mind-boggling.

Cable and satellite television support many hundreds of channels. With broadcasting space to spare, it's easy for X\*PRESS data to ride the ether disguised as television signals. Most cable stations broadcast the X\*PRESS data along with the regular television signals. Unlike traditional telecommunications services, there's no additional charge for the data. You can grab as much as you want, 24 hours a day.

For \$125, you get a special InfoCipher cable-television modem along with software for the Amiga. (Software is also available for the Atari ST, IBM PC, Apple II, and Macintosh, if you'd like to use the InfoCipher with a spare computer.) The cable mo-





X\*PRESS software finds the news you're most interested in.

dem connects to both your television cable and the Amiga's serial port. Using a simple splitter, it doesn't disturb your current television signal. (But if you do run into any problems, the X\*PRESS staff will be glad to help you solve them.)

Suddenly, 960 characters per second of data arrive inside your Amiga—more than four times the speed of a 2400-baud modem. In one time trial, more than 600 stories arrived in less than an hour. Much of the data repeats during the course of the day. One particular story might be broadcast every hour. Running the software for an hour or two collects enough stories for many hours of reading.

Consider the potential of this device: If the data wasn't repeated, the cable modem could deposit more than 80 megabytes of pure, error-free data to your computer every day. (An Amiga floppy disk holds just ninetenths of a megabyte.) If the data was compressed, the X\*PRESS system could conceivably deliver more than 300 megabytes of data each day.

What sort of data appears? The bulk and variety is overwhelming. Imagine an electronic edition of the Sunday New York Times arriving in a steady stream. There are AP and UPI news feeds; television schedules; up-to-the-minute sports scores; hobby articles; entertainment and political news (lately, of course, these are the same thing); music and television articles such as movie reviews and the Billboard Top 100; social gossip; news in French and Spanish; National Weather Service forecasts and statistics; stock

news from Standard & Poor's, McGraw-Hill, and Invest/Net; technology and computer news from the Best of BIX (including the Amiga conference); and clippings from *USA Today*.

If you're addicted to C-SPAN and CNN on cable television, X\*PRESS will give you a fix like you've never imagined. Suddenly you can read all the newswire stories ignored by most newspapers, like the latest developments in Sri Lanka, or the full text of stories only covered in brief by television stations.

The X\*PRESS software runs in the background, gathering stories and storing them in memory. At any time, you can start *Viewer* to read the stories. If a story looks interesting, you can print it or copy it to the Amiga clipboard, ready for pasting into documents in your word processor.

To manage this flood of data, Viewer lets you specify categories and keywords to narrow the types of stories you want. You can view current stories in memory one by one, by category (such as weather, sports, or news), or by subcategories and keywords. How's the weather in Kansas City? Just search on weather and Missouri, and in a few seconds you'll know.

As memory fills up with stories (up to a preset limit you can change), the oldest will be discarded. A *clip folder* mechanism automatically saves messages for you on disk, selected by combinations of keywords. For example, while you sleep, the program could save all stories that contain words that start with *comp* and in-

clude the word Japan.

X\*PRESS sends program and data files, too. The *Xfer* program lets you specify the category of files you'd like to receive, and, over the course of the day, the files are saved to your disk.

Essentially, the X\*PRESS service is like a premium cable channel that most people can't receive. X\*PRESS is split into two levels of service. The basic level is called X\*CHANGE. It's included in almost all cable areas at no extra charge. You can even get it by satellite dish, if you subscribe to the Net/Link decoding service, and it's carried in Canada by the Rogers cable service. X\*CHANGE includes all the news, weather, and sports mentioned above, plus entertainment and lifestyle news. You do get some stock information with X\*CHANGE: tickers on 2000 of the most popular stocks, updated several times a day. Once you've bought the X\*PRESS system, there are no more charges to receive this data.

If you're an investor, the Executive service brings more financial news than X\*CHANGE does. Executive service costs \$225 to start, and \$19.95 a month thereafter. It covers 13,000 market tickers, including American and Canadian commodity futures and options, on a 15-minute delay. The data for this service is encoded, so it requires a special decoding module that plugs into the back of the cable modem. Executive service receives everything found in X\*CHANGE, of course, plus extra software that saves and manages information about the stocks in your portfolio.

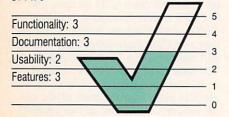
On the downside, the communication is only one-way. You can't enter a message and send it back to X\*PRESS over the television cable. Transmitting data from homes to the local cable station is theoretically possible, but it would require a more complex modem. Until two-way cable arrives, X\*PRESS has a bulletin board computer you can call to upload messages for broadcast. After your message is approved, it will be sent out the next business day. At this time, you can reach the BBS for free, on a local call, through the Tymnet national data network.

To find out if X\*PRESS data is already streaming into your house, call X\*PRESS at (800) 7PC-NEWS, or (303) 721-1062. Tell them you heard the news in *Amiga Resource*.

# revievos

### Amiga Logo

Commodore Business Machines 1200 Wilson Dr. West Chester, PA 19380 (215) 436-4200 Requires 512K Dutch, French, Italian, German, and Spanish versions due out soon \$99.95



hen the Amiga was introduced in mid-1985, one of the first products promised for the new machine was TLC-Logo. The ads for this product promised that it wouldn't be "just another Logo, another weak introductory graphics language," but rather that it would have advanced features like object-oriented programming, multiturtle operations, and the artificialintelligence power of LISP. Unfortunately, TLC changed its mind and never produced an Amiga Logo. This may have hindered the Amiga's ability to compete in the primary-education market, since Logo, an interpretive programming language that was designed to introduce children to the power of computers, plays an important part in the computer curriculum of some elementary schools.

Now, over four years later, Commodore has seen fit to remedy the situation by introducing its own version of Logo for the Amiga. The very fact that Commodore decided to create this product is significant; Amiga Logo is the first new piece of software that the company has released since Text-Craft Plus. Unlike the product TLC proposed four years ago, however, Amiga Logo is "just another Logo." While its introduction does make available a standard version of Logo for the Amiga, it is a version that does little to distinguish itself from the crowd or to demonstrate the unique abilities of the machine on which it resides.

Amiga Logo's greatest strength is its adherence to the syntax and operating environment of earlier implementations of the Logo language. Like most Logo versions, Amiga Logo features a text (command) window and a graphics window. The text window is where you enter and edit program instructions and where Logo displays its messages and prompts, while the graphics window displays the output of the language's turtle graphics system.

Turtle graphics is a system in which you command an imaginary turtle with a pen tied to its tail to go forward, backward, or rotate through a given angle in order to produce a picture of the trail it leaves. By default, Amiga Logo uses a four-color 640 X 200 custom screen, but a menu selection allows you to use any of the Amiga's resolution modes and up to 32 colors (in  $320 \times 200$  mode only). The language automatically scales the turtle's movements to the current screen resolution, so a picture drawn in one mode looks about the same as a picture drawn in another.

Amiga Logo is compatible with most versions of Logo, so it runs almost any Logo program. And, when compared with standard Logo, you'll find some nice improvements: Amiga Logo uses a sprite in the shape of a real turtle rather than the triangle that

usually represents it, and the Amiga's tortoise acts more like a hare. Because of the computer's custom graphics chip, the little critter zips around the screen at a pretty fair clip. Another difference is that you can use the Amiga mouse to position the turtle on the screen, and you can even do some freehand drawing by dragging the mouse around.

# It's everything Logo should be, and a just a *little* bit more.

Although the text window has no scroll bars, you can use the cursor to scroll up or down through the window, so any previously displayed text may be recovered. You may also reenter a command that you previously typed by moving the cursor up to the line and pressing the Return key. The text window works double-duty as a text editor in which you compose your programs. You use the EDIT or TO command to enter editor mode, and the Control-C or Control-G key combination to return to command mode. Once in edit mode, a number of Control-key combinations are available for cursor movement and the insertion and deletion of single characters and entire lines. These commands are identical to the ones found in popular Logo versions like Apple Logo. This means that Amiga Logo users may follow along in any of the popular books about Logo and have their program respond in the manner described in the book.

While Amiga Logo's compatibility with existing Logo implementations will no doubt endear it to the Logo community, it will not win it many friends in the Amiga community. In the name of compatibility, Amiga Logo has abandoned the modern user-friendly Amiga interface in favor of



the clunky Apple Logo command structure. Amiga owners will have a hard time accepting a programming language whose built-in text editor doesn't use scroll bars, doesn't use the mouse to mark blocks of text, doesn't provide pull-down menus, and doesn't allow search-and-replace or cut-andpaste operations. Nor are they likely to approve the other user-interface elements that the program has borrowed from the ten-year-old Apple II. For example, while you can obtain syntax information by typing the HELP command, the Help key on the keyboard does nothing at all. There are no provisions for embedding explanatory

you can't even edit a program while a command is executing.

In its quest for compatibility, Amiga Logo has limited its list of commands to the bare minimum set of standard Logo commands. As a result, the language has fewer features than PC Logo or Atari ST Logo, fewer even than Logo versions on the less powerful, older-generation machines like the Atari 800 or the Commodore 64.

There are literally no bells or whistles in *Amiga Logo* outside of the SAY command, which allows text to be spoken using the computer's builtin speech synthesis. There is absolutely no support for sound or music.

AHIGA LOGO

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Garage
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comments within programs. The function keys aren't used at all. There are only a few token pull-down menus in *Amiga Logo*, and these don't have keyboard equivalents (though I was able to discover a few hidden keyboard equivalents that aren't mentioned in the documentation). The program doesn't even warn you about exiting without saving your work.

Amiga Logo's outdated user interface also makes no provision for multitasking. If the program provided multiple command windows, it might be possible to run several Logo programs at once, perhaps with different-colored turtles for the turtle graphics. As things stand, however, Amiga Logo can only execute one command stream at a time. And since the same window is used alternately for program editing and command execution,

Many modern additions to the language are missing. There are no WHEN-demons in Amiga Logo, even though the Amiga's operating system provides the perfect platform for supporting this form of multitasking. There is only one graphics turtle, although current versions often allow the use of multiple turtles. There is no manipulation of sprite shapes as in Commodore 64 Logo. Amiga Logo does not support saving or loading graphics screens to disk, thus ignoring the benefits of the IFF standard. Aside from graphics screen dumps and program printouts, there is no support for output to the printer or for reading or writing disk files. Unlike most Logo implementations, there is no access to native operating system features. There is no support for graphics operations like pattern fills, for example, or for

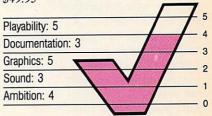
user-defined menus. While a menu item allows you to change graphics modes, there is no provision for mode-switching under program control.

To be perfectly fair, however, if Amiga Logo is no better than the versions on competing systems, it really isn't any worse, either. Logo's popularity as an introductory programming language seems to have peaked a few years ago, and, as a result, nobody has been rushing to develop more advanced versions. That's too bad because it's an interesting language that combines the simplicity of turtle graphics with the power of list processing. Carl Sassenrath, author of Amiga Logo (and of the multitasking core of the Amiga's operating system), is considering developing a more advanced version of Amiga Logo that would take better advantage of the machine's multitasking and graphics capabilities. In the meantime, however, Amiga Logo provides a satisfactory, if not exciting, introduction to the language.

-Sheldon Leemon

# Lords of the Rising Sun

Cinemaware 4165 Thousand Oaks Blvd. Westlake Village, CA 91362 (805) 495-6515 Requires 1MB \$49.95



ith this product, Cinemaware deals from familiar strengths and, more impressively, from strengths we never suspected the company possessed.

To give just a hint of how different this game is from "typical" Cinemaware products, I played *Lords* for more than an hour without encountering a single "typical" Cinemaware arcade sequence. The sequences are



there, of course, sporting the company's customary high standards of graphics and playability, but they are not central to this game in the way that they have been to Cinemaware products in the past.

### Artistically, the game is a complete triumph. Attention has been paid to every detail.

Lords of the Rising Sun takes as its backdrop Japan's era of the Gempei War during the twelfth century. This was a time of great ambition and bloodshed, one of the epic ages of the samurai. Lords is the story of two brothers, Yoritomo and Yoshitsune, who must vie against the ambitious Taira family as well as each other in hopes of unifying Japan and restoring honor to their name. That name is Minamoto, and the brothers are White Minamoto (Yoshitsune) and Black Minamoto (Yoritomo.)

The game begins by prompting you to select which of the brothers you wish to play. There are particular advantages—and disadvantages—to each. Yoritomo is a born leader, able to inspire his troops and, more importantly, gather neutral clans into his camp with relative ease. Yoshitsune, less comfortable and adept at politics, is the master of the battlefield. His skills at combat leadership may outweigh his brother's political leadership abilities. Yoritomo, on the other hand, may build alliances huge enough to crush his brother despite Yoshitsune's combat craft. Thus, there is more of a role-playing element, more carefully and believably integrated, in this game than in earlier Cinemaware productions.

Once you've chosen the character you'll play, you're presented with a map of Japan. The map is gorgeous, rendered in vivid colors that nonetheless communicate a period feel. Scroll icons, for instance, are cranes, their beaks indicating the direction in which the map will scroll.

The scrolling itself is effortlessly smooth. It's nice to see a company take advantage of the capabilities Amiga hardware makes available and use those capabilities to heighten gameplay and its illusions. (Some of Cinemaware's technical work just makes sense: The more memory you have, the more of the game that's loaded into memory, effectively creating a Lords ramdisk.)

Scattered across the map are castles, towns, monasteries, and ports. Japanese battle flags represent armies and allegiances and at first can be disconcerting. The army flags are oriented vertically and, according to the kibitzers watching over my shoulder, look like moving lighthouses. I say that's chauvinism—Cinemaware has done a good job of designing flags that communicate at a glance both a Japanese sensibility and the allegiances of the flag bearers. The sensibility extends the game's verisimilitude. Those allegiances can be vital to your success.

That success depends on capturing the castles of your enemies, defeating opposing armies on the battlefield. and finding and rescuing an abducted

an army besieging your castle, and use your sword to deflect shuriken (throwing stars) hurled by a ninja assassin. Both events are challenging and handsome, revealed from the protagonist's point-of-view, yet I tired of both fairly quickly.

The other arcade-esque sequence occurs when you lay siege to an opponent's castle. An overhead perspective is used to good effect as you hew down castle doors, do sword battle with enemy troops, search for the main guard-upon whose death the castle falls into your hands. While I might wish for a greater variety of castle layouts, this sequence is still among the most impressive in the game.

The most impressive sequence, to my taste, takes place outside castle walls, on the field of battle, where opposing armies meet. These battlefield sequences deliver something I've wanted for a long time: a living army. Or at least a convincing likeness of one.

Choose to go to battle and you're



princess. Achieving these goals requires a combination of strategic and tactical skills, as well as some arcade ability. (Even here, Cinemaware's flexibility is greater than previously displayed. Choose to play as Yoshitsune, and you can opt out of the arcade sequences, with the computer settling scores for you.)

There are two types of arcade sequences. Those closest to the "classic" Cinemaware experience are defensive: use a bow and arrow to ward off

transported to the battlefield, armies arrayed before you. Armies consist of archers and swordsmen. The cursor enables you to control both types of troops, maneuvering them into the best tactical positions, guiding them into fierce combat, steering them into retreat when necessary. This is a knockout sequence that brought back to me all of the childhood pleasure I derived from playing with toy soldiers. Cinemaware would be well advised to use the engine from this sequence to



power other war games; there's a dynamite Civil War game waiting to be created.

To be honest, control of the soldiers does take some getting used to. And when the enemy retreats, you're presented with the option of pursuing the general on horseback. This is another arcade sequence and the only really unfortunate one in the game. It inspired laughter from my audience, although the laughter may have been caused more by my poor horsemanship than anything else.

There are subtler ways of dealing with enemies. When visiting your home, you can dispatch ninja assassins to, in turn, dispatch a foe. This is a dishonorable act; if your treachery is discovered, you must commit seppuku, ritual suicide. It's best not to attempt assassination until your skills have climbed at least moderately high. And once your skills have climbed, you may not need assassination at all.

Artistically, the game is a complete triumph. Attention has been paid to every detail. The cursor, for example, assumes different forms depending upon the particular sequence. Each cursor—an arrow, a sword, a folded war fan, and so on—is both appropriate to the action at hand and also serves further to enhance the game's Japanese atmosphere.

Documentation is perhaps too brief for so ambitious a game. Historical details are barely sketched, although, commendably, there is a bibliography to guide further reading. I also would've appreciated a larger reproduction of the game's central map to make reference easier.

On the whole, though, I am mightily impressed with Lords of the Rising Sun. Cinemaware has long touted itself as a producer of interactive movies, some of which I've enjoyed immensely. But before, I always had the feeling of being part of the audience, invited into the picture for a few exciting frames, and then banished to my seat until the next interactive session.

With Lords, I was able to suspend my disbelief from the beginning, participating in the creation of history and historical fiction simultaneously.

Cinemaware, you've grown up.

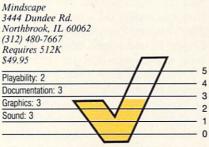
Domo, arigato.

-Keith Ferrell

### **MINI-REVIEWS**

Mini-review contributors this issue include Rhett Anderson, Denny Atkin, Kelly Baughman, Ervin Bobo, Russ Ceccola, Jim Fuchs, Steve Hudson, Scott May, Dale McBane, and Troy Tucker.

### Fiendish Freddy's Big Top o' Fun



Fiendish Freddy's Big Top o' Fun breaks new ground. Unfortunately, it just doesn't dig up enough dirt to establish a foothold.

How's that for a nice set of clichés? You ain't seen nothin' yet. Boot up Fiendish Freddy's Big Top o' Fun and break the spine on its documentation. As you'll soon find out, Fiendish Freddy is all hype and cliché and no fun at all.



Fiendish Freddy's Big Top o' Fun is a cartoonlike game for the Amiga. Unfortunately, if Fiendish Freddy is taxing the Amiga's hardware (which I doubt), then the Amiga is just not capable of such a game.

In the game, you play the performers in a circus. You must perform their acts adequately to earn enough



Circle Reader Service Number 195



money to keep the circus from falling into the hands of Freddy. The graphics are pleasing, even if the animation is meager. And the masochist in me enjoys the graphic results of my failures in these endeavers.

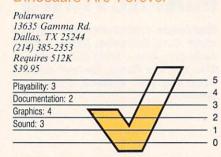
But the big problem here is disk access. Even if you like the various segments of the game, you're sure not to enjoy the time it takes for those segments to load. You'll blow your top after you've waited three or four times for the judges to rate you. (I've found a nice little bug that makes the judging a bit more enjoyable. Try typing on the keyboard when the judges come up. Press Return a few dozen times for some real fun.)

While the elements of the game are charming enough, the effort is not worth any of the fun which you may eke out of it.

Worse (or better?), I've found a few Amigas here at the office that the game will not run on. My advice: Buy one of Mindscape's other games, maybe *Gauntlet II*.

-R.A.

### Dinosaurs Are Forever



Children seem to have two built-in affinities: one for dinosaurs and one for coloring. If you combine the two, you have guaranteed kid appeal—and *Dinosaurs Are Forever*, an Electric Crayon Deluxe release from Polarware, is a program that does just that.

Dinosaurs Are Forever is built around coloring book-style drawings of 26 different dinosaurs, which serve as starting points for several different activities. It also features ear-catching digitized sound designed to add aural pizazz to the onscreen pictures.

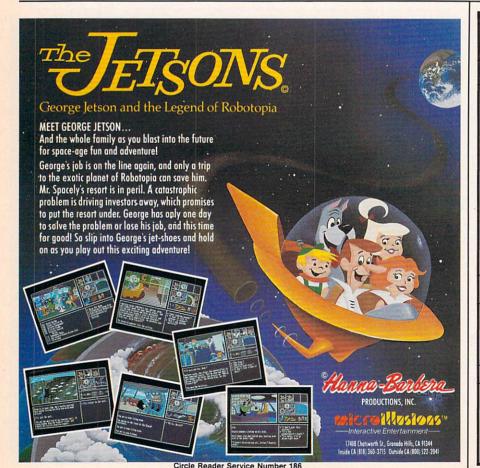
Most kids will start by coloring the dinosaur pictures onscreen, using a

crayon icon to specify colors and fill areas. There are 24 basic colors; children can also mix any color with the other 23. The result: an extensive palette sure to stimulate young imaginations.

Color selection is easy: Just click on the desired color. To fill an area with color, click the tip of the crayon on the area to be colored. This generally works well, although some areas are so small that children may become frustrated while trying to properly position the icon. Completed pictures can be printed on a color printer; uncolored coloring-book-style pictures can be printed, too.

Other options allow children to print the picture with a short description, with a calendar showing any desired month and year, or as part of a banner. The banner message (which can be printed in three sizes) is entered on a pop-up screen.

Children can also print their pictures accompanied by a text message, although, in that case, the message must be entered from NOTEPAD.



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Circle Reader Service Number 187



NOTEPAD message entry is cumbersome at best, particularly in a program designed for kids. I found it intimidated some children to the point that they avoided the option or called Mom or Dad at message-entry time.

Calling a parent might encourage family interaction, but in the case of a program designed primarily for kids, it's a pothole in the road to user friendliness. I hope future versions will include a more straightforward text-entry provision, perhaps something like the banner message entry system. That would make it simpler for children to enter messages themselves.

According to the package, *Dinosaurs Are Forever* is designed for kids ages 3 and up. It should prove enjoyable to kids through at least fourth or fifth grade; however, 3- and 4-year-olds will probably require some parental help.

-S.H.

### MouseStick

Advanced Gravis 1602 Carolina St. Suite D12 Bellingham, WA 98226 (604) 434-7274 \$120



The Advanced Gravis MouseStick has to be one of the most expensive joysticks available for any personal computer. But, then, how many joysticks come with 16K of memory, an LCD screen, an 80-page manual? How many joysticks are programmable?

An analog joystick can detect how far and how quickly you move the stick handle. While the Amiga hardware supports analog joysticks, almost all Amiga games only support simple switch-type sticks, which can only sense which direction you've moved the stick handle. The problem with bringing out an analog stick for the Amiga is that little of the software already on the market will support it.

The MouseStick gets around this problem by sending the same signals to the computer as a standard mouse.

It will perform like an analog joystick with any Amiga software that supports the mouse, even Workbench.

The MouseStick has four preprogrammed modes of operation, and you can save up to three custom programmed configurations. Reconfiguring the MouseStick is easy-just tap the fire button in a special sequence to enter the editor and then follow the instructions on the LCD screen. The preprogrammed modes are Auto-Centering, which centers the pointer on the screen: Vectoring mode, which continuously moves the mouse pointer in the direction you're holding the stick; Combination, which combines Auto-Centering and Vectoring modes; and Joystick, which emulates a switch joystick. You can also set any of the buttons to a rapid-fire mode, great for fast-action games.

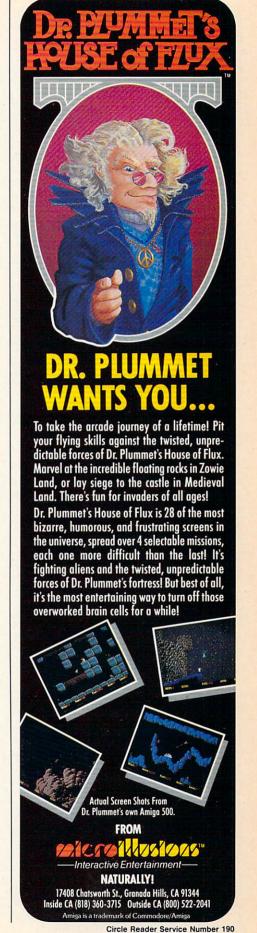
Physically, the MouseStick looks like a standard pistol-grip joystick, with two buttons on the large base and one at the top of the grip. The joystick cable plugs into the Gravis Mouse-Stick Power Unit (GMPU), a small box that contains the 16K ROM and LCD screen. The GMPU plugs into either joystick port on all Amiga models. The padded grip makes it comfortable to use, although people accustomed to ergonomic joysticks such as the Epyx 500XJ or Wico ErgoStick may find it bulky.

I tested the MouseStick with a number of programs. It really shines with flight simulators—*BattleHawks 1942*, which doesn't support a standard joystick, was much easier to fly, and I shot down my first bogey in GEnie's *AirWarrior* simulation while using the MouseStick. Although Spectrum HoloByte recommends the MouseStick for use with *Falcon*, I actually found that program easier to control with a switch joystick.

While I found playing Hybris and Powerdrome with a real mouse almost impossible, both programs were easy to control with the MouseStick. Some games just work better with a real mouse, though, such as ShufflePuck Cafe and Populous.

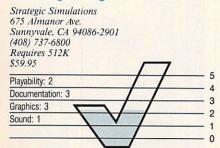
Oh yeah—it works with the Atari ST, too.

—D.A. ▷





### Red Lightning



Dateline: the future. For years, the Russians have been negotiating to eliminate strategic and tactical nuclear weapons. With the fall of the Iron Curtain, all seems well. Unfortunately, we overlooked the Russian buildup of conventional weapons. Lulled into a false sense of security, NATO is unprepared for the devastating assault unleashed by the Warsaw Pact armies. Well, almost unprepared. It's your duty, as commander of the NATO forces, to stem the invasion.

This is the basic scenario for *Red Lightning*, a new war game from SSI. You can command either the Warsaw Pact or NATO troops against either a human or computer opponent.

There are three different scenarios included with *Red Lightning*. Each scenario has a number of different options including the use of chemical weapons, the strength of the Warsaw Pact troops, and control of the air force and navy.

Anyone who has previously played an SSI war game will be familiar with the basic layout of the game: a hexagonal grid superimposed on a map. Pieces have a certain number of movement points for each turn. Moving into another hex costs a certain number of movement points, depending on the terrain. The terrain also determines how well a piece can defend itself.

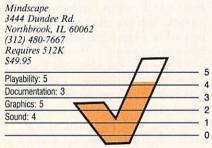
I dislike the method used to move pieces in *Red Lightning*. To move a piece, you first select it by clicking on it with the mouse. Depending on whether the piece is moving or attacking, you then either click on one of the adjacent squares or on a directional gadget on the upper right side of the screen. Why not click on a piece with the mouse and then, while holding down the mouse button, simply drag it to its destination? Even better, when a piece is selected, why not highlight

every position the piece can move to?

If you've played and enjoyed a previous SSI game, you'll find the computer opponent in *Red Lightning* a worthy adversary. If you're not used to SSI war games, you'll probably be disappointed in the game's lack of graphics and sound. *Red Lightning* is like a second baseman who hits 0.211 but commits few errors in the field—he may not be very exciting but he gets the job done.

-J.F.

### Gauntlet II



OK, *Gauntlet* fans, the game you've been waiting for is here. Mindscape has created a nearly perfect clone of this arcade megahit. No need to plunk any more of your hard-earned money into *this* arcade machine. Now, for a one-time fee of 50 bucks, you can take Thor, Thyra, Questor, and Merlin home with you. There are over 100 new levels to plunder, each deviously designed and guaranteed to challenge the most seasoned *Gauntlet* players.

When arcade games are ported over to the home computer, you generally lose a lot of the good stuffcolor, sound, and so on. The final product merely carries the name of its arcade cousin. Gauntlet II breaks this barrier in a big way. After playing the game for a few minutes, you forget that you're even using a home computer. It's that good. Remember the ghosts, grunts, demons, and sorcerers from the original? They're all here, and they've been perfectly duplicated in both appearance and personality. The digitized sound effects are equally as good. You'll hear the old familiar alerts, "Warrior is about to die!" and "Elf needs food, badly." It's the same voice, too.

The gameplay is exceptional. The best feature of the game is its ability to

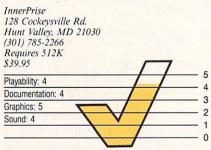
accommodate up to four players. Two players control their characters with joysticks, while the other two use the keyboard. But wait, there's more! If you elect to purchase the optional four-player joystick adapter, all four players can use joysticks.



I've never seen an arcade conversion done any better. The animation is fast, the sound effects are incredible, and the gameplay is second to none. If you've played *Gauntlet* in the arcade, you won't be disappointed with this sequel. If you haven't, don't bother—just buy *Gauntlet II*.

-T.T.

### Battle Squadron



If you liked *Hybris*, last year's classic Amiga shoot-'em-up from Discovery Software, you'll love *Battle Squadron* from InnerPrise. While the same programming team produced both games, *Battle Squadron* is the more entertaining and challenging of the two.

What's not to like? The graphics are stunning, the sound is wonderful, and the gameplay is ideal for this kind of game.

The biggest breakthrough is in weapon control. Although the weapon you start with won't get you far, shrewd playing will earn you new weapons. For example, if you shoot every member of a horizontally flying squadron, you'll acquire explosive



missiles that can take out all nearby enemies.

There are four classes of weapon: red, green, blue, and vellow. If you destroy a certain heavily shielded enemy, a flashing square will appear. It will cycle through the four colors. Pick up the square when it's the color of the weapon class you desire. Every time you pick up a square, the power of your weapon increases; but every time you die, it decreases. Different weapons work best in different parts of the game.

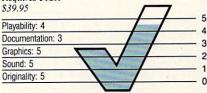
Contributing to Battle Squadron's playability score is its two-player option. You and a friend can cooperate to shoot down the nasties. Any combination of joysticks and mice can be selected.

Add Battle Squadron to that short list of games—Datastorm, Hybris, Shadow of the Beast-that deserve to be arcade machines. It's a game that any shoot-'em-up lover will love.

-R.A.

### Archipelagos

Britannica 345 Fourth St. San Francisco, CA 94107 (415) 546-1866 Requires 512K



Imagine a future Earth where almost all life has been wiped out by pollution. The polar ice caps melted after the ozone layer was depleted, turning the planet's continents into thousands of barren archipelagos. The only remaining life forms are strange mutated plants that pollute the land with a bloodlike toxin.

Now imagine this scenario wrapped around one of the most original, engrossing computer games released in recent memory. Archipelagos is a programming masterpiece with strangely addicting qualities. Perhaps it's the colorful, 3-D graphics that create an eerie otherworldly effect. Or maybe it's the dramatic soundtrack that changes to reflect what's happening onscreen. Whatever it is that creates the fascinating alien mood, it actually may keep you coming back to finish all 9999 levels.



You've been sent back to Earth to disinfect the land and make it inhabitable again. To do this, you must deactivate the nuclear power systems on each of the planet's archipelagos. On each level, you start by finding and destroying a network of nodes scattered about the island. Exploring the island



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is easy—just click on the spot you want to move to and you float forward. Watch out for the viral trees and other pollutants, though. If you touch an infected area, you're out of the game.

Destroying the nodes is as easy as clicking on them with your mouse pointer. The nodes have to be connected by a strip of uninfected land to the central power obelisk, and on higher levels you'll need to build land bridges to connect them. When all of the nodes on the island have been deactivated, you must destroy the obelisk. Do it quickly, though—if time runs out, the archipelago will be destroyed in a nasty meltdown.

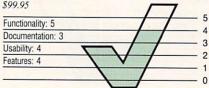
On higher levels you'll need to deal with nasties such as out-of-control whirlwinds and necromancers, disembodied souls that eat away parts of the island.

If you're looking for a change from the drudgery of shoot-'em-ups, buy this program. *Archipelagos* is more than a game, it's an experience.

-D.A.

### **AmigaCOMAL**

COMAL Users Group 5501 Groveland Terr. Madison, WI 53716 (608) 222-4432 Reguires 512K 890 95



What's wrong with Amiga Basic? Plenty. No structured variables. Slow execution time. Lack of structure and expandability. *AmigaCOMAL* solves these problems and more.

COMAL was a long time in coming for the Amiga, but now that it's here it should pick up a devoted following. It's an ideal learner's language, and it's powerful enough to keep the great majority of programmers satisfied.

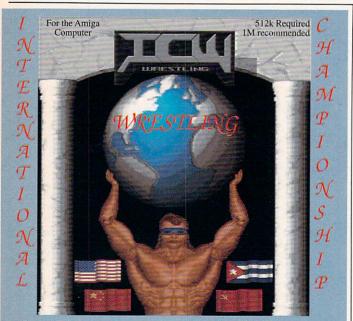
AmigaCOMAL is an interpreter, so you can develop programs quickly. The integrated editor is a plus, but you'll be annoyed to discover that

your AmigaCOMAL program lines must have line numbers. Even Amiga Basic doesn't force this indignity upon its users. If you prefer your own editor, be prepared for the hassle of swapping the file back and forth between the two editors.

AmigaCOMAL is not going to steal many programmers from the compiled languages—C and Modula-2—that have prospered on the Amiga. For one thing, its executable code doesn't match the speed or small size of programs compiled in those languages. It's not a good language for small utilities, but it shines as an applications language. If you've tried C and given up, you're sure to love AmigaCOMAL.

If speed is a problem, consider the \$34.95 Developer's Package, which includes a compiler and additional documentation. This package also lets you write extensions (called *packages*) in machine language or C. The interface is quite nice.

For those who haven't yet found their ultimate Amiga programming en-



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vironment, and for amateur computerlanguage collectors, I recommend *AmigaCOMAL*.

-R.A.

### ExpressCopy

Express-Way Software P.O. Box 10290 Columbia, MO 65205-4005 (314) 474-2984 Requires 512K



It's the stuff of nightmares—a requester pops up onscreen as you're booting your Amiga. Error Validating Volume HardDisk: Key 85272 Not Set it says, and you're more terrified than you were when you saw Friday the 13th, Part XXIV. Half of your hard drive is unreadable, and you never backed it up. A backup program is like insur-

ance—it seems like a lot of trouble until something goes wrong, and then you're glad you have it.

What differentiates *ExpressCopy* from other Amiga backup programs is that it saves backups on standard AmigaDOS disks. If your hard drive does grind its way into becoming a \$600 paperweight, you can still directly access your files and programs while you await a replacement. You can save your backups on standard format disks or on FastFileSystem floppies. FastFileSystem (FFS) floppy disks won't be directly supported by the operating system until WorkBench 1.4, though, so you'll have to modify your mountlist to use FFS backup disks.

ExpressCopy is fairly speedy. With write-verification turned off, the program backed up my hard drive in about the same amount of time as *QuarterBack* 2.3, which uses a custom disk format.

ExpressCopy can utilize up to four floppy drives for a backup. This speeds the process considerably, because the program can be writing to

one drive while you swap the disk in the other. Alternatively, you can have the program make as many as four backup copies of your hard drive simultaneously. However, *ExpressCopy* will only save to floppies, so you can't back up to a streaming tape drive or second hard disk.

You can select which files you want backed up by date, by archive bits, or by pattern matching. Unlike most backup programs, however, you can't click on a group of files and back up just those files. If your hard drive is cluttered with a lot of files that you don't really need backed up, you may find this a serious limitation.

You won't find a program better at multitasking than *ExpressCopy*. Not only can you adjust the program's priority while it's running, you can also pause in the middle of a backup sequence if you need to use the floppy drives for another purpose.

If you like the security of backups on standard AmigaDOS disks, *ExpressCopy* is the way to go.

—D.A. ▷





### Paperboy

Mindscape 3444 Dundee Rd. Northbrook, IL 60062 (708) 480-7667 Requires 512K



It's the classic case of too little, too late. Five years after a moderately successful run in the arcades, Mindscape's Paperboy finally arrives for the Amiga. The only question is, why?

Assume the role of a trusty paperboy and pump your pedals through a vicious suburban jungle. Your goal: Deliver the daily news to local subscribers. Press the fire button to send the paper sailing; with luck it will fly into the correct receptacle. There's more to this job than simply flinging newsprint, however.

Obstacles abound along your route. Barking dogs nip at your heels.

Drunks and joggers stumble into your path. Speeding cars rule the streets, and skateboarders terrorize the sidewalks. Cut across lawns to avoid hitting kids at play, but watch out for that fence. It's a papercarrier's nightmare.



Simple avoidance is the key to survival. You must learn to anticipate danger and maneuver around it. Since time isn't a factor-apparently your paper attracts a very sedate readership—you can slip your bike into low gear and take your time. Given the

horrendous steering and braking capabilities of your bicycle, you don't have much choice. Slow joystick response makes every turn a potential disaster.

As your character edges up the diagonally scrolling screen, obstacles stand frozen, as if they're waiting for a cue to spring to life. Although this gives you additional time to react, it also creates a static, lifeless feel. This is strictly pattern play, with no random elements. In other words, there are no surprises.

Points are scored for landing papers in each subscriber's paperbox. Additional points are earned by tossing papers through nonsubscribers' windows and at trash cans, birdbaths. and gravestones. Let's just hope the circulation department has an unlisted number. Reach the end of your daily route in one piece and you get to take a quick ride on the practice track and hurl papers at targets for bonus points. No big deal.

Paperboy boasts crisp, colorful graphics and a bouncy jazz sound-



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track. Unfortunately, gameplay is both repetitive and outdated. Five years ago this game might have caused a sensation. Today it merely takes up valuable retail shelf space while other, more original software designs struggle to survive.

-S.M.

### Downhill Challenge

Broderbund 17 Paul Dr. San Rafael, CA 94903-2101 (415) 492-3200

Requires 512K \$34.95



Just because I don't know how to ski, it doesn't mean that I can't enjoy participating in a good skiing competition on my Amiga now and then. Fortu-

nately, I now have an outlet for my undeveloped abilities on the slopes.

Downhill Challenge is the first skiing game I can remember for the Amiga that doesn't have other sporting events on the same disk, and it's about time. Despite poor documentation, I had fun gliding down the courses available.

Downhill Challenge has four skiing events: Slalom, Giant Slalom, Downhill, and Jumping. The addition of cross-country skiing would have made this a complete skiing game. Brøderbund probably just wanted to capture the skiing events in which you try to go as fast as you can and still maintain your balance, coordination, and finesse. To that end, it has succeeded.

In one aspect of the game, Brøderbund has failed. The manual is poorly written and doesn't describe what you have to do in each event. It only describes the joystick movements, not how to win an event. It took me a few minutes to figure out how to get scores in the jumping event, but, despite this shortcoming, Downhill Challenge is a very exciting game.

As on a real slope—according to a friend who skis—you can't see too far ahead and must be able to respond quickly to changes in direction. Your joystick will definitely get a workout with this game.

Graphics are what make a skiing game interesting. In *Downhill Challenge*, they are flawless. From the scrolling background to the little touches such as rolling into a snowball when you crash, the artwork is beautiful.

Fans line the course and, if you don't stop, you may crash into the finish line at the end. The attention to detail is well appreciated. Although sounds are minimal, the *whooshes* of

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The book is written with the beginner in mind, assuming no previous knowledge of the Amiga.

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the skis come off well. Overall, *Downhill Challenge* is a fine effort. Put a decent manual in the game, and the package would be complete.

-R.C.

### Powerdrome

Electronic Arts 1844 Gateway Dr. San Mateo, CA 94404 (800) 245-852 (800) 562-1112 (in California) Requires 512K \$39.95



After reading the package blurbs, as much as I wanted to like *Powerdrome*, I was unable to arouse any enthusiasm for it. Since this is a normal state when I find a game I'm unable to play (let alone win), you should take my opinion with a grain of salt.

A racing game of the future, Powerdrome allows you to select from several tracks on several planets. Since the tracks exist in three dimensions rather than the usual two, and since the planets have different gravitational forces, you'll find that techniques developed for one track do not necessarily apply to others.



Your race vehicle is more aircraft than auto. It skims over the track and banks sharply in turns. As it does with aircraft, a sharp bank tends to drop the nose of the vehicle, plowing you into the track unless you also pull back on the joystick or mouse.

The track itself is best described as an open tunnel: You can see the sky but are penned in at the sides by walls that seem just far enough apart for the passage of your craft. It's illegal to fly above the walls and more than easy to fly into them, although your craft will take about 20 crashes before it becomes disabled.

You can make practice runs on an empty track or pit your skills in a race against four other opponents. It seems unfair that they can whiz around the track, lapping me unmercifully while I bump into walls and floor. As a remedy, you can activate a repeller field that keeps you from crashing into the walls; this makes the plane 50 times easier to fly.

Alternatively, you can link with another Amiga-using friend through use of a connecting null cable. While this means the Amigas must be rather close together, the advantage is that you compete with someone on your own level.

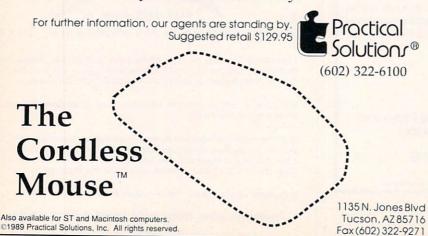
In spite of good graphics, good sound, and adequate documentation, I find *Powerdrome* requires more skills than I am willing to spend time developing. Also, I found the joystick made control more difficult than the mouse.

-E.B.

### Case No. 05734

# AMERICA'S MOST WANTED MOUSE

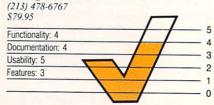
Wanted for over 200 counts per inch and operating without a cord. Also wanted for being the smoothest mouse available for all Amiga computers. Armed with features and dangerous to all other mice, it has eluded capture for even a mug shot. In the event that you come in contact with this mouse, be sure to purchase it immediately.



Circle Reader Service Number 193

### SuperBack

The Disc Company 11022 Santa Monica Blvd. Suite 440 Los Angeles, CA 90025



SuperBack is an exceptionally fast backup program for Amiga hard drives. It doesn't have all the features available on some of the other Amiga backup programs, but what it lacks in complexity it makes up for in usability.

Unlike most other hard drive backup utilities, *SuperBack* never requires you to remove your hand from the mouse (except maybe to swap disks, but you have another hand for that). The user interface is well thought



out and understandable—so much so that you never need the manual. Both the gadgets and the file selectors are well designed and very functional.

Two of SuperBack's features may seem small and unimportant, but they really help make the program easier to use. First, SuperBack, like any good backup program, estimates how many disks will be required to back up the selected drive. Simple as this feature is, several Amiga hard drive backup programs don't have it. Second, SuperBack uses all free RAM to buffer the files it reads from your hard drive. This buffering allows it to continue to read from the hard drive while you swap backup disks. This feature can cut the backup time by several minutes.

SuperBack isn't perfect. If you ask it to verify data while writing files to the floppy and you insert a bad disk, SuperBack aborts the backup instead of requesting another disk. It also backs up files only to device DF0:, so you can't back up your hard disk onto streaming tape or a videotape.

One rumored flaw with *SuperBack* is that you can't use it to back up your hard drive if the drive has an error that prevents you from writing to it. This rumor is simply not true. You can't do a full backup in this case because *SuperBack* must be able to set the archive bit of each file it backs up. But you can use the incremental backup to save the files that have been changed since your last full backup.

Several hard drive backup utilities are more complex and offer more features than *SuperBack*, but none are faster or easier to use. I highly recommend this program.

-D.M.

### The Enigma Device

King Publishing 5300 Greenvillage Rd. Chambersburg, PA 17201 (717) 261-0512 Requires 512K \$39.95



The original Enigma Device was a German machine built for encrypting and decrypting secret messages during World War II. It used mechanical wheels that had to be placed in exactly the right position to encode and decode messages. Today, King Publishing has turned the concept of the Enigma Device into a captivating strategy game for the Amiga.

The Enigma Device is a game in which you must decipher encrypted messages. The word puzzles are solved in much the same way as you solve a cryptoquote that's found in the comics section of a newspaper—through letter substitution. You can use the program's built-in messages, or you can add your own for friends to try.

During play, a scrambled message appears with the proper punctuation marks already in place. Using the mouse or keyboard, you select a letter that you feel should replace a letter in the scrambled message. Letters are replaced on a one-to-one basis. In other words, D can only

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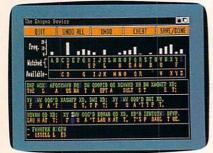


Deluxe Paint II is a trademark of Electronic Arts; Amiga and Amiga-Dos are trademarks of Commodore Amiga.

Circle Reader Service Number 185



replace an E and not both an E and a Q. When a letter is used, it disappears from the list of letters that you choose from.



There are 11 categories with different puzzles that you can select. The categories are Beginner's Luck, Definitions 1 & 2, Easy Does It, Easy Humor 1 & 2, English Proverbs, Great Thoughts, Humorous Quotes 1–4, Miscellaneous Proverbs, Murphy's Laws, Who Said That, and Wisdom 1–4. Both my wife and I tried puzzles from different categories and enjoyed them all.

Up to 20 people can play, and the program will save to disk the results of their performances. The program multitasks nicely and can be run from the Workbench or the CLI. I recommend this game to people who are more interested in stretching their minds than in blowing away aliens.

-K.B.

### Joe Blade

DigiTek Software 8910 N. Dale Mabry Tampa, FL 33614 (813) 933-8023 Requires 512K



Joe Blade proves the adage that there is nothing new under the sun—or in computer gaming. Yet, it also proves that even clichés can be enhanced to seem fresh and new—especially when wrapped around a time bomb.

The scenario is simple and is briefly stated on the half-page documentation: Six world leaders have been kidnapped and are being held for ransom. Enter Joe Blade, who must infiltrate enemy headquarters and effect a rescue. We've all seen several variations of this plot, most recently in *Rambo III*, the game and the movie.

Wearing combat fatigues and carrying a light rifle, Joe Blade bops into the fortress, which, as is soon apparent, is a maze. This one, however, is seen from eye level, so only one room is visible at any time.

Stupid sentries (how else can you explain that they are oblivious to your presence?) patrol various corridors and aren't really a problem until you run out of ammunition. You are always quicker on the draw than they are.



Various tools, large scale so they can be found easily, lie about; you pick them up by moving past them. These include cell keys, enemy uniforms, hostages, and presumably extra ammunition—though I've never found the latter.

One "tool" you'll wish to avoid is a large hand grenade. Pass over it, and the screen instantly changes to show an alphabetical access code. Similar to the multiple-dial combination locks found on luggage and briefcases, the five dials display letters of the alphabet. Your task is to arrange them in alphabetical order.

It's almost a no-win situation: If you don't solve the code, the bomb explodes and the game is over; solve it and the clock starts running, giving you 20 minutes to effect the rescue. Since I've never encountered a hostage prior to the bomb, I must assume this step is a necessary evil.

In the final analysis, it is this complication, combined with the graphics and animation, that provides the reasons for playing and enjoying *Joe Blade*. There is enough action, enough puzzlement, and enough frustration to make it a game you won't soon stop trying to win.

-E.B.

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# ON DISK

### Your Guide to This Issue's Programs

Amiga Resource Volume 2, Number 1 February 1990





# Se Famerange ...

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### Boomerang

Kevin Dixon Amiga Version by Troy Tucker

You may already know that the boomerang is a lethal weapon. But the odds are that you don't realize just how lethal it can be. Once you play Boomerang, a great twoplayer arcade game for your Amiga, you'll know-and you'll never forget the lesson.

the game on an Amiga will need two joysticks.

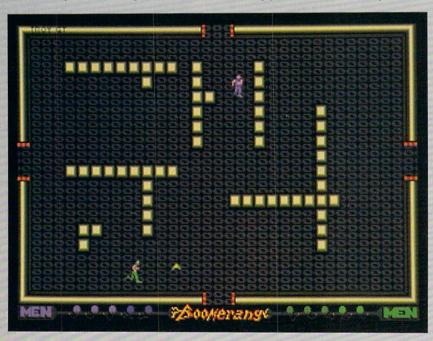
To play, double-click the Boomerang folder to open it, then double-click on the game's icon to get started. When the game screen appears, plug in two joysticks. If you wish to copy the game to another disk, be sure to drag the entire folder to the other disk.

### **Choose Your Arena**

Boomerang is typically played in a maze of randomly placed walls, but when you first

ang, just move the joystick in the direction you wish it to go. With practice, you'll be able to send your boomerang out for a visit and bring it back.

Time to get nasty. Hit your opponent with your boomerang. Your opponent will lose one of five lives and you'll both return to your respective corners. Lives are indicated at the bottom of the screen. Each lit balloon indicates a life held in reserve. A dim balloon indicates a life lost. After you've done in your opponent five times, the game is over-you've won.



Boomerang takes place in a cold and deadly arena. Besides the walls, there's just you, your opponent, your boomerang, and his or her boomerang. Although the requirements for the real-life version of Boomerana are only two boomerangs, mortals playing

load the game you have the option of playing in an empty pit. If you'd like to play in this pit, press Return. Otherwise, press the space bar. Each press of the bar will place you into a new room with randomly generated walls. When you're satisfied with the playing field, press Return. Press Esc to exit the game.

Before your opponent gets his or her bearings, take a moment to soak in the environment. The green player begins the game in the bottom left corner of the screen. The purple player begins in the top right. You move by pressing the joystick in one of the four cardinal directions. The pit is surrounded by four walls, but each wall has a hole in it. You can run through this hole and end up on the other side of the screen.

Now brandish your weapon. To throw the boomerang, press the joystick's fire button. The boomerang will fly through the air until it hits a wall. Go pick it up. Throw the boomerang again, but this time steer it as it flies through the air. To steer the boomer-

### **NameBase**

Denny Atkin

You have an important phone call to make, but you can't find the phone number. Let's see. . . . Did you write it on the back of the phone book, or is it scribbled in lipstick on that napkin?

Now you can end the "Where did I write that?" confusion with NameBase, the address-book program that lets you dig your monitor out from under a sea of Post-it

### **Features**

NameBase is an electronic address book that keeps track of people's names, addresses, phone numbers, and up to two lines of additional information for each person. The number of entries is limited only by available memory and disk space.

If you have a modem, you can use NameBase as a phone dialer. It's as easy as finding the name of the person you want to call, clicking on Dial, and picking up the

And if you have trouble remembering how to spell the name you're looking for, NameBase comes to the rescue with its SoundEx search routine, which can find names that sound like the name you enter. For example, typing Forrester will find Forster and Forester. Or you can type Ret

Of course, because the Amiga isn't quite a portable computer, NameBase isn't always as convenient as your little black book. No problem-just use NameBase to print a complete address or phone list to take with you.

### Boomerang

PROGRAM SIZE: 10,976 bytes

SUPPORT FILES

14,254 boomer1.pic boomer2.pic 12,108

samples/

9.262

boom.snd footsteps.snd

1,339 1,364

spin.snd MINIMUM CONFIGURATION

**512K RAM** AmigaDOS 1.2

ENVIRONMENT Workbench

> Double-click icon CII

RUN BOOMERANG

### ON DISK

### **Getting Started**

NameBase works from the CLI or the Workbench. The program opens on its own screen, so you can keep it in the background for quick reference without cluttering up your Workbench screen. To start the program, open the NameBase drawer and double-click on the NameBase icon, or type CD RESOURCE5:NAMEBASE and then RUN NAMEBASE from the CLI.

When you start NameBase, it looks for a default file called NameBase.addr, first in your current directory, and then in the S: directory of your boot disk. If the file is found, the names and addresses that it contains are automatically loaded into the program.

On the NameBase screen, you'll find an address window and a number of gadgets. Below the address window are two arrow gadgets that move you forward and backward through the list of names. The list is always kept in alphabetical order, based on last names. The program's other gadgets, top to bottom, are listed below.

Add. Click on this to enter a new address. A cursor appears in the first line of the address window. Enter the first name of the person whose address you are adding and press Return. You can continue to enter the rest of the fields this way—Last Name, Street, City, State, Zip Code, Phone, and Comments—until you reach the bottom of the window. If you make a mistake, just click on the line you want to change, make your corrections, and hit Return.

Delete. Selecting Delete brings up a requester which lets you delete the current record or all the records currently in memory (so you can start a new file). Clicking on Cancel aborts without deleting anything.

Find. This gadget lets you search for a specific name. Just type the first or last name of the person you're looking for in the requester that pops up onscreen. Find checks the Last Name field first, and if it doesn't find a match there, it checks the First Name field. When NameBase finds a

match, that record appears in the address window. If this is not the person you are looking for, click on Find again and reenter the name of the person you're searching for. NameBase will display the next matching record.

**Print.** This pulls up a requester that lets you print reports or mailing labels. Selecting the This Label option prints a single mailing label for the address that's currently shown

on Cancel to exit this option. If you click on Yes, you can still abort the Load option by clicking on the file requester's Cancel gadget.

Save. Click on this to save your address list to disk. If you name your file NameBase.addr and store it in the current directory or the S: directory, NameBase will automatically load your file every time you run the program.



on the screen. Selecting All Labels prints labels for everyone on your mailing list. Name-Base is designed to use  $3-1/2 \times 15/16$  inch one-across labels, such as Avery #4410 labels. Clicking on Phone List prints names and phone numbers only, and Full List prints all the information for each entry in your file. Click on Cancel Print to abort without printing anything.

Call. Clicking on this option dials the number shown in the Phone field of the current record if you have a Hayes-compatible modem attached to your Amiga. After clicking on Dial, pick up your phone receiver and click on the OK gadget in the requester that pops up. Make sure there's a valid phone number in the Phone field. Valid characters include numerals, parentheses, hyphens, and commas, which cause a half-second pause before dialing the next numeral. For example, to get an outside line on an office phone, you might enter 9,555-1234.

Load. This brings up a file requester, allowing you to load a new address list. If you've made changes to the current list and haven't saved them, NameBase asks you if you really want to load a file before saving the current one. Click on Yes to continue or

Close. To exit NameBase, click on the Close gadget in the top left corner of the screen. If you've made changes and haven't saved the file, NameBase will let you abort so you can save your file before leaving.

### **Moving NameBase**

To install NameBase on another disk, copy the entire NameBase directory to that disk. This directory contains both the NameBase program and a picture file called NB.PIC. The program will not run if NB.PIC is not found in the same directory as NameBase.

NameBase also requires arp.library in order to run. It must be located in the libs directory of the disk that you boot with. You can find the latest version of arp.library in the libs directory of our Resource Disk. To copy it to your system disk, boot with that system disk, open a CLI, and enter the following command:

COPY RESOURCE5:LIBS/ARP.LIBRARY TO LIBS:

You may also double-click on the InstallArp icon (found on this issue's disk) to copy arp.library to your system disk. ▷

### **SPECS**

### NameBase

PROGRAM SIZE: 18,904 bytes SUPPORT FILES

arp.library 1

17,100 12,740

NB.PIC 12,740 MINIMUM CONFIGURATION

512K RAM AmigaDOS 1.2 ARP 1.3

ENVIRONMENT

Workbench

Double-click icon

CLI

CD NAMEBASE RUN NAMEBASE

### ON DISK

### Req

### Michael Paul

The Amiga operating system has one glaring omission—the lack of a file requester. While most major programs now provide file requesters, many older programs do not. Amiga Basic is a prime example. Small programs designed for CLI use (like ED and MORE) also lack file requesters.

Req to the rescue. Req brings up the popular ARP file requester, waits for you to select a file, and then feeds the file to the program you wish to run.

Req is designed as a CLI user's utility, but by using IconX, you can make it work with the Workbench. For instance, you could make an icon for a script that contains the single command REQ "C:ED %%". You now can run ED from the Workbench. This trick works great with the many public domain utilities that require a filename to run.

If you have last issue's Resource Disk, you can use Req in conjunction with Hot-Key!. For example, you can enter REQ "TYPE >PRT: %%" for the F5 function key. From then on, just hit Left Amiga-F5 to bring up a file requester and print out any file.

### **CLI Usage**

For ease of use, copy Req to the C directory of your boot disk. You can find the file REQ in the C directory of the Resource Disk. Now make sure that the file ARP.LIBRARY is in your boot disk's libs directory. You can find ARP.LIBRARY in the libs directory of the Resource Disk.

Here's the syntax of Req:

REQ [Ddir] [P] [X] "string"

The optional parameter D lets you specify the directory that the ARP file requester will display when it opens. For example,

REQ DSYS:S "ED %%"

SPECS

REQ PROGRAM SIZE: 2372 bytes SUPPORT FILES: arp.library MINIMUM CONFIGURATION 256K RAM AmigaDOS 1.2 ARP 1.3 ENVIRONMENT CLI lets you select a file from the S directory on your system disk for editing.

The optional parameter P is a switch that lets you specify that you're only interested in a pathname, not a filename. This is useful if you'd like to pass the name of a directory or disk to a program, for example:

REQ P "DIR %% OPT A"

The optional parameter X is a switch that removes any file extension (such as .txt, .c, .mod). Some programs generate files with extensions but "hide" the extensions from you. These programs don't ex-

lab show REQ DPICS: "superview3.0 %%" if not warn skip back show endif

### **Workbench Usage**

If you have a copy of Workbench 1.3, you can create Workbench script files with lconX. Just use a text editor or word processor that saves icons with files. Be sure to save the script file as ASCII text.

Here's how to make a Workbench version of ED, the text editor located in your Workbench C directory. First, type in the



pect to receive a filename with the extension on it. Use the X switch if you encounter such a program.

The parameter "string" (which must be in quotation marks) is the CLI command just as you would type it from the CLI. Just place two percentage signs (%%) where the filename would go. Req will replace the %% with the filename you select with the ARP file requester. If you need to use quotation marks in the string, use a pair of apostrophes instead. For example:

REQ P "COPY ' 'RAM:MY FILE' ' %%"

This example copies the file RAM:MY FILE to any directory you choose.

You can also use *Req* in script files. The following example is based on the fact that if the ARP file requester is canceled, *Req* returns a WARN to the calling CLI. The example calls the program *SuperView* 3.0 until the user hits CANCEL.

following text using your editor or word processor:

REQ "ED %%"

Save this file as EDITOR. Exit the text editor or word processor. Click on the EDITOR icon and select Info from the Workbench menu. Change the default tool to C:ICONX and click on SAVE.

From now on, double-clicking on EDI-TOR will bring up a file requester and then call up ED. You'll find this example on the Resource Disk in the Reg folder.

See the Enhancer 1.3 manual that comes with Workbench 1.3 for more information about IconX.

### HotKey! Usage

Last issue's HotKey! is an ideal vehicle for Req. Simply call up SetKey!, enter a command (like C:REQ "C:ED %%") into one of the function-key definitions, and you're set. Left Amiga-function key will call up the command instantly. >>

RUN REQ [Ddir] [P] [X] "string"

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# ON DISK

# **Amiga Bulletin Board List**

Compiled by Joe Rothman

Do you have a modem? Are you thinking of getting one?

If you answered Yes to either of these two questions, here's a list of phone numbers that should keep you busy for quite

some time. This is A.M.U.G.'s "BBSlist," compiled especially for Amiga Resource. It lists all known Amiga-supporting BBS phone numbers located in the United States and Cana-

A.M.U.G. **PSA-BBS** Tunnel-Vision The Cockpit The Beach

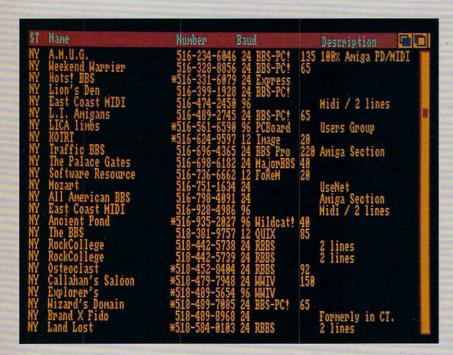
"BBSlist" was compiled with the help of the Amiga BBS sysops listed below.

All of these people like to spread the word about Amiga telecommunications. Going online can open up a whole new world of useful utilities, games, and information.

The latest version of A.M.U.G.'s "BBSlist" is available for downloading or capturing on the BBSs listed above as well as on other boards across the continent. Need Amiga information and help? Give us a call. If you'd like to help me update the list, contact me on A.M.U.G.

A.M.U.G.'s "BBSlist" is 100-percent confirmed. That means I made a modern connection at least once on every number listed and that I read each board's log-on

Sysop	Loc	BBS Number
Joe Rothman	NY	516-234-6046
Dorothy Dean	WI	414-278-5390
Greg Bastow	BC	604-538-3839
Larry Edwards	TX	512-496-5433
Randy Bradakis	MI	616-349-5887



da. Revised June 15, 1989, it's one of the largest lists available, containing 1680 phone numbers.

Unlike the telecommunications services offered by CompuServe or GEnie, these bulletin boards are free-the goal of their operators is simply to serve the Amiga community. With the cost of a phone call, you can link up with Amiga owners from around the country and share in the wealth of public domain software.

As a special bonus, we've provided this listing on the Resource Disk for you to read and/or print out.

screen. Every number has been called at least once in a given 12-month period, but I don't spend much time on each system. All boards listed were reported to me as being Amiga boards. If you know otherwise, please let me know. The statistical information included in this list was collected from postings on each respective BBS.

# **Disk Update**

Here's where to turn for bug fixes, operating notes, and news updates for the programs on the Amiga Resource Disk. Readers experiencing difficulty with a disk should first read "How to Use the Disk," found in every issue of Amiga Resource. If you're still having trouble, write us (see the section "Where to Write" in "Reader's Feedback").

#### December 1989

The enhanced version of V found on our December 1989 disk was released a bit too soon, we're afraid. Version 2.0 occasionally refuses to remove pictures from the screen. You can still use the Workbench and run other programs; you just can't close the errant screen. This usually happens when you're viewing a series of pictures using V's new wildcard features, because if V encounters a file that has a length of 0 (such as the Workbench 1.3 Shell file) while searching the disk for pictures, the program gets confused and locks up. Certain IFF files that contain color stencils or masks can also cause problems.

To remedy the situation, author Tim Midkiff has fixed the program and is providing his latest version (version 2.1) on this issue's disk. Using the Workbench, you can simply drag this new copy on top of your old one.

Checking to see which version of V you own is simple. First, V 2.0 is found only on our December 1989 disk; previous versions of V do not have any of 2.0's problems (nor do they have any of version 2.0's new features). Also, the program's version number appears in the screen's title bar whenever you double-click on V's icon without selecting a picture file. The buggy version of V is version 2.0. The upgraded V touts the number 2.1. Really old versions don't show a version number at all.

If you have V 2.0 and bought this issue without the disk, you can still get the upgraded version of V. Send us your original copy of the December 1989 disk, a note that explains that you wish to have the upgraded V, and a self-addressed, stamped envelope. We'll copy V 2.1 onto your disk and send it back. Send your December 1989 disks to Amiga Resource-V 2.1, 324 West Wendover Avenue, Suite 200, Greensboro, North Carolina 27408.

#### **New Wildcard!**

V 2.1 isn't just a debugged version of V. This issue's V 2.1 has a new wildcard: the exclamation point (!). Now, by entering the

from the CLI, V will search the entire disk for IFF pictures and display each one it finds. You can also enter the exclamation point in V's file requester.

-Randy Thompson

# ON DISK

#### A Note to Sysops

When sending me information about your BBS, please include baud rates supported, number of megs of storage on your system, hours of operation, and special features in the message that greets your callers. If that's not possible, make the information available on your system's main menu. If you run a public domain board, let the public know. Also, one way you can help people recognize your board as a legal BBS is to require that people use their real names. Handles should be left for the pirates. Honest people have nothing to be ashamed of.

To all BBS sysops who endeavor to provide a good source of information and support to the Amiga community, I dedicate this version of "BBSlist."

#### **Important Notes**

All numbers that have been added or changed since the last "BBSlist" are marked with an asterisk (\*) to the left of the phone number. Each system listed operates 24 hours per day, minus down time for system maintenance, unless otherwise noted. Multiline systems that use sophisticated switching equipment to control incoming calls have only one phone number listed.

Please delete, discard, or ignore old copies of "BBSlist" as many of the numbers are no longer used for bulletin board systems. Keep in mind that any number can become inactive at any time. New BBSs pop up and disappear, and longtime systems go offline all the time. It is not unusual for the phone company to give out a former BBS number to a voice customer within a very short time after a BBS has gone down. Please contact me and let me know about any changes in the name, phone number, operational status, hours, baud rate, or features of these BBSs. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

Send BBS information to

A.M.U.G.'s BBSlist P.O. Box 148 Central Islip, NY 11722

If you prefer, call A.M.U.G. and fill out the online questionnaire.

#### **Software Piracy**

With so many numbers in "BBSlist," there is a possibility that some of them might be pirate boards. If you come across any pirate BBSs, please do not get involved with them. Sysops who use their boards for piracy are putting their systems at risk. Someday all their equipment will be confiscated by the police-it would not be to your advantage to be listed in their user log when that happens. Even if you use a handle, the sysop probably has printed or electronic records that show who you really are, as well as your address and phone number.

If you feel as I do about pirate bulletin boards, there are several things you can and should do if you happen to come across one.

- · Call your local FBI office and file a formal complaint. Tell them why you think it's a pirate board. (Get the FBI number from the telephone company's directory assistance.)
- · Call your local telephone company's security office and file a complaint with it, too. (Ask directory assistance for the security office's phone number.)
- · Contact any software publishers whose programs are being illegally distributed and give them the pirate board's name, phone number, and baud rates. The publisher should file a complaint with the same FBI office that you spoke with.

Pirate boards hurt the Amiga; let's shut them down. Patronize only public domain and shareware boards.

## **Using the List**

To access the BBS list, simply boot with the Resource Disk and double-click on the BBSList icon. The BBS file is loaded into a special file reader that lets you both read and print the list. To scroll through the text, you can use either the cursor keys or the mouse. To scroll text with the mouse, hold down the left mouse button and move the mouse up or down (depending on the direction that you want the text to scroll). You can also use the file reader's scroll bar. This list is saved as a standard text file, so you can load it into your favorite text editor if you prefer.

The information in the list is arranged in the following manner: First, the two-letter postal code for the state or abbreviation for the Canadian province is listed. The bulletin board name follows. Next comes the telephone number, the maximum baud rate (in hundreds), and the software used by the board. The number of megabytes of storage on the board and special notes complete the list. >

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If selected, you will be contacted accordingly. Thank you for your cooperation.

# RSVP

CO

Media Research Associates 230 Park Avenue, Suite 1567 New York, NY 10169

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	ADDI IOSTIGNI FORM		
	APPLICATION FORM		45-49
I	MPUTE! Magazine Reader Research Panel		50-54
	ALL INFORMATION WILL		55-59
	REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL.		60-64
	Are you Male		65+
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			\$25,000-\$34,999
	Single		\$35,000-\$39,999
	Widowed		
	Separated or Divorced		
			\$50,000-\$64,999
	What is your age?		\$65,000-\$74,999
	Under 25		\$75,000-\$99,999
	25-29		\$100,000+
	30-34		
	05.00	5.	What is the highest level of education
	40-44		that you have attained to date?

	Graduated High School
	Graduated College
	Post-Graduate Study
6.	What group below best describes your occupation?
	Professional/Technical
	Manager/Administrator
	Clerical/Sales
	Craftsman/Foreman
	Other Employment
	Student
	Not Employed

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# **HOW TO USE THE DISK**

very issue of Amiga Resource has a companion disk that features the exclusive programs we offer each issue, as well as the "Best of the Boards" program and the "Art Gallery" screens. You can get this disk in three ways. First, you may buy Resource with the disk in a poly-bag at your bookstore or computer dealer. Second, you may subscribe to the magazine with the disk. Third, you may order single copies of this disk (see the backissues/disk-order ad elsewhere). If you experience a problem with the disk. even after you've read the programs' documentation, please contact us at (919) 275-9809 between 9:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Eastern standard time, Monday through Friday.

To use the disk, insert it into your disk drive and then turn on your computer. (Amiga 1000 owners must boot with Kickstart first.) You may boot with your own Workbench disk, but the icons will not be as colorful as they are when you boot with the magazine disk.

You run programs by double-clicking their icons. Some programs may be found within drawers (icons that resemble file folders). Please look into each drawer on the disk. We recommend that you read the "On Disk" section of the magazine prior to running any of our programs. If you wish to move a program that is in a drawer to another disk, be sure to copy the entire drawer so that you can be sure that you copy all the support files that the program may need.

Most programs on the disk are accessible through the Workbench environment. Some programs, however, are designed to work only in the CLI and work with these programs.

Artwork from "Amiga Art Gallery" may be found in the ArtGallery drawer. To view a picture, double-click its icon. When the painting appears onscreen, simply click the mouse once to return the the Workbench.

Our disk is not copy-protected. We encourage you to make a backup of the disk as soon as possible. With the exception of the program in our "Best of the Boards" column, the contents of the disk are copyrighted and may not be used by anyone other than the owner of the magazine. Artists who appear in "Amiga Art Gallery" hold the copyrights to their own work. Amiga

Workbench version 1.3 is copyright 1985, 1986, 1987, and 1988, Commodore-Amiga, Inc., all rights reserved. All other disk contents are copyright 1990, COMPUTE! Publications, Inc., all rights reserved. We ask that you respect the copyrights of the works on the disk and of the disk in its entirety.

We suggest that you write-protect the disk by sliding the write-protect tab to the open position. This will cause programs that attempt to write to the disk to fail. You can slide the write-protect tab to the closed position to allow writing, but there may not be enough room on the disk for any more files. If this is true, copy the offending program to another disk to use it.

#### On Disk This Issue

There are three programs on the disk that run from the CLI only. These programs are FullPath, from the "Programmer's Page"; SysCheck, from Jim Butterfield's "CLI Clips"; and the "On Disk" program Req. All three of these programs may be found in the c directory of the magazine disk. To use any of these programs, you'll need to boot with a Workbench disk that has a CLI or Shell. (Because of space reasons, we did not have room to support a CLI or Shell on our disk.)

SysCheck checks any system disk to see if it contains the latest versions of key system files (the latest version is 1.3.2). To run SysCheck, boot with the Workbench disk that you wish to check, open a CLI window, make Resource5:c your current directory, and then enter the command SYSCHECK. A window opens and a list of all system files, along with each file's version number (if known), is printed to the screen. SysCheck's complete documentation may be found in the c directory of the Resource Disk. Again, you'll have to use the CLI to access this file.

This issue's NameBase and V programs require arp.library, a small system file that goes in the libs directory of your Workbench disk. We've included arp.library on the Resource Disk, so the programs run fine as long as you boot from this disk. You must copy arp.library onto your own Workbench disk if you plan to boot with that disk and then run these programs. For your convenience, we've included an install file that automates this process.

Open up the Resource Disk icon

and you'll find the file InstallARP. InstallARP copies arp.library to your Workbench's libs directory. To use it, you must boot with the Workbench disk that you want the files copied to; then double-click the InstallARP icon.

With the exception of Khalid Aldoseri's *Scripit* program, Tim Midkiff's updated version of *V*, and Jim Butterfield's *SysCheck* programs, the source code for all of the programs on disk may be found in the disk's source directory. Within the source directory are separate directories for each of the programs. For example, the source code for *Boomerang* may be found in source/Boomerang. The source directory does not have an icon and cannot be accessed via the Workbench.

If you own a sound digitizer or a sound-manipulation program, you may be interested in the digitized sounds that accompany *Boomerang*—there are three sound samples in all. These digitized sounds may be found in the Boomerang/samples directory. These sound samples are stored in raw format, not in IFF format.

# **On Disk Directory**

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(dir)
AddBuffers
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Colorbench
Else
EndIf
IconX
LoadWB
                           endCL:
PullPath
NewCLI
NewCLI
Run
Syscheck.doc
Wait
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(dir)
DiskCopy
(dir)
DiskCopy
idir)
prices
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NameBase.info
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BBSList.info
Disk.info
InstallARP.info
Scripit.info
V.info
         info
BBSList
Boomerang.info
InstallARP
NameBase.info
```

# PROGRAMMER'S PAGE

Rhett Anderson and Dale McBane

# Finding a File's Full Pathname

he Amiga's dos.library contains several useful functions for manipulating files and directories. One function, however, seems to be missing—a function that takes a filename or a lock and returns that file's complete pathname.

For example, say you have a character string that contains a filename or that you have a lock on a file or directory; it was passed to your program from the CLI or the Workbench. Now, using the Execute() function, you need to pass the complete pathname of that file or directory to another program, such as ED or MORE. But if all you have is a filename, you don't know what disk the file is located on or what directory it's in. And if all you have is a lock, you don't even know the filename.

The example program FullPath, listed here in both C and Modula-2, contains two functions that allow you to find the complete pathname of a file or directory. Lock2Path() is useful for programs that run under the Workbench, since the Workbench passes arguments as file locks. Name-2Path() is useful for CLI programs, where arguments are taken directly from the command line.

#### **Finding the Path**

Finding a file's pathname with Lock-2Path() is easy. In C, call this function using the following syntax:

error = Lock2Path(lock, path);

In Modula-2, the syntax is

success := Lock2Path(lock, path);

In both cases, *lock* must be a valid file lock obtained by using AmigaDOS's Lock() function, and *path* must be a pointer to an array of characters large enough to receive the file's full pathname. If successful, the function returns the length of the pathname (in Modula-2, it returns the Boolean value TRUE) and the array pointed to by

path receives the pathname. If the function call failed—because the file wasn't found or a read/write error occurred—the C version returns a -1 and the Modula-2 version returns a FALSE.

With Name2Path(), all you have to supply is a pointer to a filename. Here's how you call this function in C:

error = Name2Path(filename);

The Modula-2 syntax is

success := Name2Path(filename);

The filename parameter is returned with the complete pathname added to it. Name2Path() returns the same error codes as the Lock2Path() function: in C, it returns the length of the pathname if successful or a -1 if unsuccessful; in Modula-2, it returns a TRUE if successful or a FALSE if unsuccessful.

FullPath provides an example of how these functions can be used. The source code for FullPath may also be found in the Source/FullPath directory on the Resource Disk. The program's executable code is located in the disk's c directory. To use it, boot with your own Workbench disk, open a CLI, enter CD RESOURCE5/C, and then enter FULLPATH filename, where filename is the name of a file or directory found in the current path. FullPath will print that file or directory's full pathname. If you do not provide a filename parameter, FullPath displays the path to the current directory.

To use Lock2Path() and Name-2Path() in your own programs, simply copy these functions along with the FullPath() function into your program.

#### **How It Works**

Name2Path() begins by getting a lock on the file specified by the filename parameter. Lock2Path() skips this step since a file lock is passed to it. Both functions allocate memory for a file info block, initialize it with the Examine() function, and then call another function, FullPath(). It's FullPath() that does most of the work.

FullPath() is a recursive function that traces the path of a file back to the root device on which it is stored. Upon reaching the root device, Full-Path() follows its steps back to the file, building the pathname string as it goes. The C and Modula-2 implementations of FullPath() are slightly different because of the way each language handles strings.

To trace a file's path, FullPath() first checks to see if the current directory has a parent. If so, it calls itself with the lock of the parent and the process repeats (this is where the recursion takes place). If the current directory doesn't have a parent, then it must be the root directory. At this point, FullPath() checks to see if an error has occurred. If not, it releases the lock to the parent directory and clears the pathname. Next, it uses the Examine() function to put information about the directory into the file info block and then copies the filename from the file info block into the character array.

Every device has a name except for one: AmigaDOS 1.2 doesn't give its ramdisk a name. So if the pathname is empty, FullPath() assumes the device is a 1.2 ramdisk and fills in the name manually. Finally, the function adds a colon or a slash as a separator character and returns. The previous call to FullPath() releases the lock on its predecessor, adds the name of the current directory to the pathname, and then returns. This continues until the entire pathname has been stored into the character array.

#### FullPath.c

#include <libraries/dos.h>
#include <libraries/dosextens.h>
#include <exec/memory.h>
#include <exec/modes.h>
#include <exec/nodes.h>
#include <exec/lists.h>
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/\* prototypes \*/
long Name2Path();
long Lock2Path();
long FullPath();

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```
struct DosBase *DosBase:
 void main(argc, argv)
 int argc;
char *argv[];
    BPTR lock;
    char path[256];
char file[256]:
    if (argc == 1)
        (void *)strcpy(path,argv[1]);
(void *)strcpy(file,argv[1]);
       f ((DosBase = (struct DosBase *)
    OpenLibrary(*dos.library*, LIBRARY_VERSION)) == NULL)
exit(10);
    if ((DosBase =
    if (Name2Path(path) == -1)
  printf("Name2Path couldn't get path for %s\n", file);
else
  printf("Name2Path: %s\n",path);
   /* Get a shared lock on the directory. */
if ((lock = (BPTR)Lock(file, ACCESS READ)) == NULL)
    printf("Couldn't get a lock on %s\n", file);
else if (Lock2Path(lock, path) == -1)
    printf("Lock2Path couldn't get path for %s\n", file);
else
        printf("Lock2Path: %s\n", path);
   CloseLibrary(DosBase);
/* end of main */
long Lock2Path(lock, pathname)
BPTR lock;
char pathname[];
   struct FileInfoBlock*fib;
longsuccess;
/* Allocate memory for the FileInfoBlock.*/
if ((fib = (struct FileInfoBlock *)AllocMem(sizeof(struct FileInfoBlock),
MEMP_FUBLIC | MEMP_CLEAR)) == NULL)
    return(-1);
    /* Examine the directory requested. */
(void)Examine(lock, fib);
   /* Get the pathname. */
if ((success = FullPath(lock, fib, pathname)) != -1)
/* Put terminator byte on end of string. */
if (pathname[-success] != ':')
pathname[success] = '\0';
    PreeMem(fib, sizeof(struct FileInfoBlock));
return(success);
/* end of Lock2Path */
long Name2Path(filename)
char filename[];
   BPTRlock;
struct FileInfoBlock*fib;
    longsuccess;
   /* Get a shared lock on the directory. */
if ((lock = (BPTR)Lock(filename, ACCESS_READ)) == NULL) return(.1);
    /* Allocate memory for the FileInfoBlock. */
if ((fib = (struct FileInfoBlock *)AllocMem(sizeof(struct FileInfoBlock),
MEMF_PUBLIC | MEMF_CLEAR)) == NULL)
      UnLock(lock);
       return(-1);
    /* Examine the directory requested. */
(void)Examine(lock, fib);
   /* Get the pathname */
if ((success = FullPath(lock, fib, filename)) != -1)
/* Put terminator byte on end of string. */
if (filename[-success] != '\0';
filename[success] = '\0';
   UnLock(lock);
PreeMem(fib, sizeof(struct FileInfoBlock));
return(success);
) /* end of Name2Path */
long FullPath(lock, fib, pathname)
BPTR lock;
struct FileInfoBlock *fib; char pathname[];
BPTR Parent;
long BufPtr;
                                 /* struct FileLock * */
    /* Check to see if we're at the root yet. */
if((Parent = (BPTR)ParentDir(lock)) != NULL)
       /* If not, keep going back. */
/* If FullPath returns -1, there was a problem somewhere. */
if ((BufPtr = PullPath(Parent, fib, pathname)) < 0)
return(-1);</pre>
       UnLock (Parent):
      * We're at the root. */
       BufPtr = 0;
```

```
/* If we can't examine the directory, return -1. */
if(Examine(lock, fib) == 0)
  return(-1);
        /* Copy the directory name into the path buffer and increment the */
/* buffer pointer. */
strcpy(pathname + BufPtr, fib->fib PileName);
BufPtr *= strlen(fib->fib PileName);
          /* AmigaDOS 1.2 doesn't give the ramdisk a name, so we will. */
if(Bufptr == 0)
              strcpy(pathname, "RAM");
BufPtr = 3;
      /* If we're at the root, then the directory is a device and we */
/* follow it with a colon. Otherwise, follow it with a slash. */
if(Parent == 0)
   pathname[BufPtr++] = ':';
else
              pathname[BufPtr++] = '/';
       /* Return the current position in the path buffer. */
return(BufPtr);
/* end of PullPath */
  Path.def
 DEPINITION MODULE Path:
  PROM DOSIMPORT FileLock;
  PROCEDURE Name2Path(VAR filename: ARRAY OF CHAR): BOOLEAN; PROCEDURE Lock2Path(lock: FileLock; VAR pathname: ARRAY OF CHAR): BOOLEAN;
  END Path.
  Path.mod
  IMPLEMENTATION MODULE Path.
 PROM DOS IMPORT AccessRead, CurrentDir, Examine, FileInfoBlock, FileInfoBlock, PileInfoBlock, Pi
 PROCEDURE FullPath(lock: FileLock; VAR fib: FileInfoBlockPtr; VAR pathname: ARRAY OF CHAR) : BOOLEAN;
  VAR
Parent: FileLock:
BEGIN

(* Check to see if we're at the root yet. *)

Parent := ParentDir(lock);

IP Parent # NIL THEN

(* If not, keep going back. *)

(* If FullPath returns FALSE, there was a problem somewhere.

IF PullPath(Parent, fib, pathname) = FALSE THEN

RETURN FALSE;

END,
        Unlock(Parent);
ELSE
(* We're at the root, so start building the string. *)
pathname := **;
END;
        (* If we can't examine the directory, return FALSE. *)
IF Examine(lock, fib) = FALSE THEN
RETURN FALSE;
END;
        (* Copy the directory name into the path buffer. *) AppendSubStr(pathname, fib fibFileName);
       (* AmigaDOS 1.2 doesn't give the ramdisk a name, so we will. *)
IF LengthStr(pathname) = 0 THEN
    AssignStr(pathname, "RAM");
END;
       (* If we're at the root, then the directory is a device and we *)
(* follow it with a colon. Otherwise, follow it with a slash. *)
IF Parent = 0 THEN
AppendSubStr(pathname, ":*);
ELSE
        AppendSubStr(pathname, "/");
END:
 (* Return the current position in the path buffer. *)
RETURN TRUE;
END PullPath;
 PROCEDURE Name2Path(VAR filename: ARRAY OF CHAR): BOOLEAN; VAR fib: FileInfoBlockPtr; lock: FileLock;
      success: BOOLEAN;
Length : CARDINAL;
END:
      (* Allocate memory for the FileInfoBlock. *)
fib := AllocMem(TSIZE(FileInfoBlock), MemReqSet(MemPublic,MemClear));
IF fib = NIL THEN
UnLock(lock);
RETURN FALSE;
```

(\* Examine the directory requested. \*)
success := Examine(lock, fib);

```
(* Get the pathname. *)
success := FullPath(lock, fib, filename);
Length := LengthStr(filename) - 1;
IF filename[Length] # :: THEN
DeleteSubStr(filename, Length, 1);
   UnLock(lock);
FreeMem(fib, TSIZE(FileInfoBlock));
   RETURN success;
END Name 2 Path;
PROCEDURE Lock2Path(lock: FileLock; VAR pathname: ARRAY OF CHAR): BOOLEAN;
VAR
fib: FileInfoBlockPtr;
    success: BOOLEAN;
Length : CARDINAL;
   Length
   (* Allocate memory for the FileInfoBlock. *)
fib := AllocHem(TSIZE(FileInfoBlock), MemReqSet(MemPublic,MemClear));
IF fib = NIL THEN
UnLock(lock);
        RETURN FALSE;
    (* Examine the directory requested. *) success := Examine(lock, fib);
   (* Get the pathname. *)
success := FullPath(lock, fib, pathname);
Length := LengthStr(pathname) - 1;
IP pathname[Length] # ': THEN
DeleteSubStr(pathname, Length, 1);
FUND.
END;
FreeMem(fib, TSIZE(FileInfoBlock));
RETURN success;
END Lock2Path;
```

# path: ARRAY [0..255] OF CHAR; IF argc = 1 THEN path := ""; file := ""; ELSE AssignStr(path,argv[1]^); AssignStr(file,argv[1]^); IF Name2Path(path) = FALSE THEN WriteString("Name2Path couldn't get path for "); WriteString(file); WriteLn; WriteString("Name2Path: "); WriteString(path); WriteLn; lock := Lock(ADR(file), AccessRead); IF lock = NIL THEN WriteString("Couldn't get a lock on "); WriteString(file); WriteLn; ELSIF Lock2Path(lock, path) = PALSE THEN WriteString("Lock2Path couldn't get path WriteString(file); WriteLn; t get path for "); WriteString ("Lock2Path: WriteString(path); WriteLn; END; END FullPath.

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# FullPath.mod

MODULE FullPath;

FROM CmdLineUtils IMFORT argc,argv;
FROM DOS IMFORT AccessRead, FileLock, Lock;
FROM Path IMFORT Lock?Path, Name2Path;
FROM Strings IMFORT Assignstr;
FROM TermInOut IMFORT Assignstr;
FROM TermInOut IMFORT ARG

VAR file: ARRAY [0..255] OF CHAR;

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- 6. Entries must be submitted on 3½-inch Amiga disks with both the runtime and the source code included.
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WB3: General - This disk is crammed full of programs, including; FastDisk - optimizes the chaotic disk structure, Introducer - create your own scrolling demos!, Plans - Plans is a high speed, versatile drafting program, Zerg(v1.00) Zerg is an Ultima type clone with a nominal plot, WB4: Telecomunication - This disk contains several excellent PD comunication programs designed to get you on line quickly and easily

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Atree - similar to UtilMaster but has a hierarchal tree display. Also MachII - A must have mouse and keyboard enhancer, and Go - An ancient chinese game.

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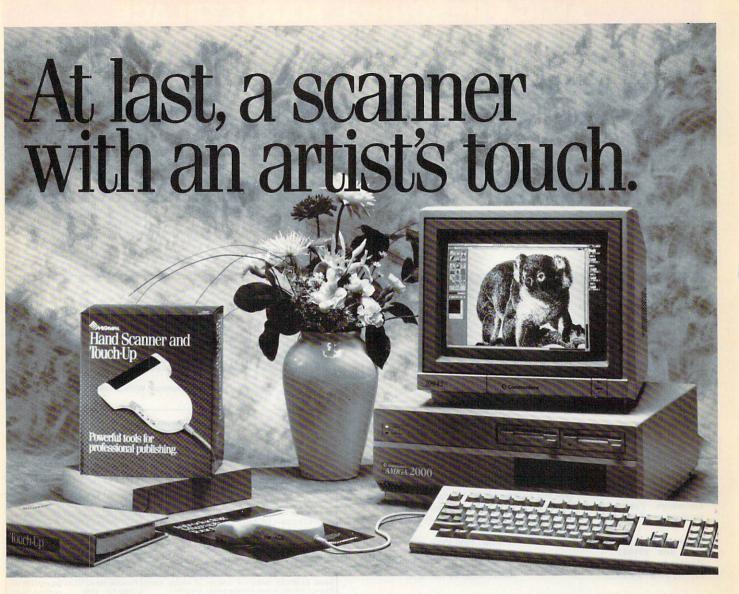
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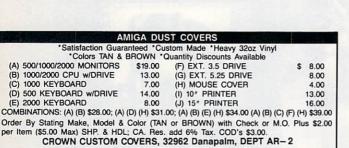
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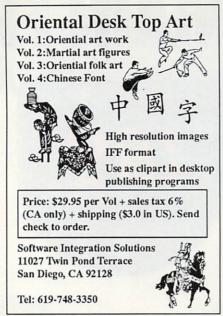


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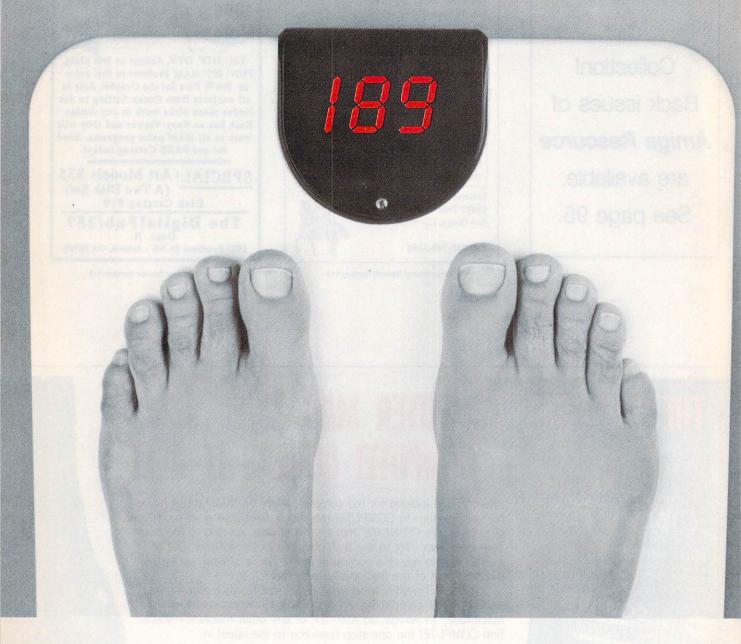
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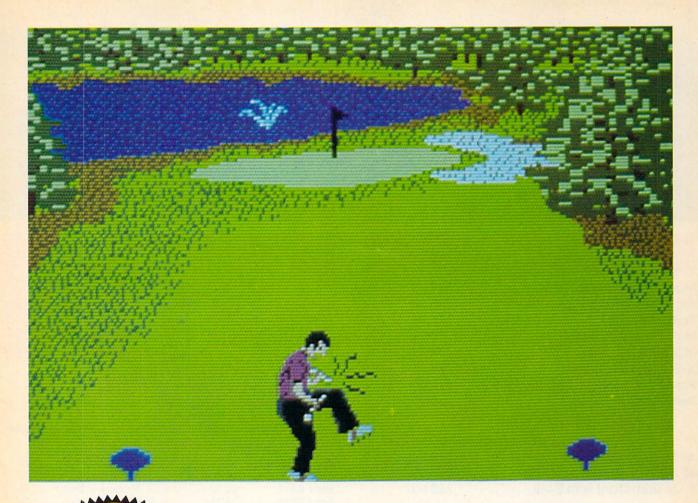
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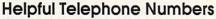
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# BEST OF THE BOARDS

Sheldon Leemon

# Scripit—Phantom Fingers on Your Mouse

Little things can add up. It used to be, for example, that every time I started my computer, I opened the Telecommunications disk icon, opened my Terminal drawer, and ran a terminal program. Then I closed the drawer window and the disk window. I didn't run the program

from my startup-sequence because it wasn't necessarily the first thing I wanted to do every time, but eventually I did it just the same. "What's the big deal?," you might ask, but I repeated this series of mouse movements and button clicks every day, sometimes two and three times a day. The same sequence of events 400, 600, maybe 1,000 times a year. And this was the computer that was supposed to save me from the drudgery of mindless repetition?

All of this has changed recently, however, thanks to a program called *Scripit*. *Scripit* is one of the most useful and powerful freely-distributable programs for the Amiga.

But until you start to use this program, you may not appreciate how much it can do for you. For one thing, *Scripit* is unique—there really aren't any programs that you can compare it to. Simply put, it's a programming language that allows you to send a series of Intuition event messages to any other program, according to a written script.

Intuition event messages are the messages that the operating sys-

tem sends your program to let it know when you've moved the mouse, clicked the mouse button, selected a menu, and so on. Anytime that a program performs one of its functions, it does so in response to one of these event messages. Therefore, *Scripit* allows you to operate any program under automatic control, just as if you were manipulating the mouse and the keyboard manually.

Scripit allows you to send the full range of Intuition messages to a program. Some of the Intuition-related commands are listed below.

- Menu commands. These allow you to select any menu item or subitem under script control.
- Gadget commands. These allow you to click on Boolean (on/off) gadgets, type text into string gadgets, and move proportional gadgets like slider bars.
- Mouse commands. A wide range of mouse commands let you tell the program that you've clicked or double-clicked the left or right mouse button or that you've moved the pointer. Additional commands allow you to

actually move the pointer (not just simulate movement), and combine movement with button presses for DRAG and DRAW operations.

- Keyboard commands. These allow the script to "type" keys from the keyboard.
- Window commands. Script commands allow you to move or size a window, send it to the front or back of the screen, activate or deactivate it, and ask the program to refresh the display or close the window.
- Screen commands. These allow you to send the screen to the front or back, to slide it up or down, and to flash the screen.
- Workbench commands. Special commands allow you to select, shift-select, and deselect Workbench icons, and open, shift-open, or close these icons. They also allow

you to drag icons from one window to another or over one another. Finally, they allow you to select Workbench menu items, such as Snapshot, Cleanup, and Info.

• Console commands. These allow you to manipulate any console window, such as the CLI or Shell window. You can print text, position the cursor, scroll the screen, insert or delete characters, and change type styles.

Scripit is not limited to sending Intuition messages, however. It shares many features with fullfledged programming languages. It allows you to use arrays and string and integer program variables. It

can manipulate those variables with a full range of math operators. It has IF/ELSE/ENDIF commands for conditional execution, WHILE/ENDWHILE for looping, and GOTO/GOSUB for flow control. PRINT, PRINTF, and FORMAT let you print formatted output.

Scripit includes commands that allow a script to run another program, as well as execute other Scripit scripts. It even has graphics commands that allow you to draw lines, circles, boxes, and text within any window. To top it all off, it has a set of commands that make it work cooperatively with ARexx.

Some people may confuse *Scripit* with *ARexx*, since both programs can be used to communicate with other programs and run other programs under remote control. *ARexx*, however, controls other programs by sending them special *ARexx* messages. Although this is the most direct form of control, the target program must be listening for these messages and must know how to interpret them when it receives them. This means that only programs that

Khalid Aldoseri's

Scripit is unique—
there really aren't any
programs that you
can compare it to.

have special ARexx support can interact with ARexx. Scripit, on the other hand, controls programs by sending them normal Intuition messages, the kind that they would get when the user clicks on a gadget or moves the mouse. Any program that can be controlled by the mouse or keyboard, therefore, can be controlled by Scripit, whether that program has an ARexx port or not.

Since Scripit itself has an ARexx port, it allows ARexx programs to exercise indirect control over programs that have no direct ARexx support. Scripit's ability to control any program without special coding may seem to make it more powerful than ARexx, but it does have a couple of drawbacks that ARexx doesn't have. First, Scripit can only communicate in one direction. It can send messages to other programs but can't receive any information back from these programs, except in a very indirect manner. Second, Scripit's control of other programs isn't very straightforward. You often have to issue a number of script commands to get the program to perform one of its

functions, and the exact order and timing of the commands can be tricky. It's very easy to hang up the computer with an ill-chosen *Scripit* command.

In those situations where you need to recreate a repeatable sequence of Intuition events, however, Scripit is the only program that fits the bill. Take my initial complaint about having to open drawer after drawer to get to programs on my hard disk that I use every day. I now use Scripit to automatically open the drawers that I need, drag the program icons to the top of the Workbench screen in a neat row, and close all of the drawers. As a result, whenever I need one of these programs, the icon is ready and waiting on the Workbench screen. For example, the listing in the center of this page shows part of the script that I execute on startup to move the program Super-

Base out from its drawer and onto the Workbench screen. As you can see from this example, Scripit is one programming language that isn't very hard to learn. But to make your life even easier, it comes with Recorder, a program that records your actions as you manipulate programs and saves them to a script file. When you play this script back with Scripit, it will duplicate your actions exactly.

Although *Recorder* scripts may be unnecessarily long (they include your mistakes and pauses, for example), they provide an excellent model to work from, so you don't have to painstakingly figure out the coordinates of each mouse move, for example.

The longer you use *Scripit*, the more uses you'll find for it. After solving the problem of excessive Workbench window manipulation, I started to think of some other instances of unnecessary mouse-play.

For example, my Workbench screen is  $672 \times 460$  pixels, so I usually size the application windows so that they are as wide as the screen, but only half as high. With *Scripit*, I can run these applications and automatically size and position the windows when the program comes up. There are some programs that I load a project file into every time I use them. I have *Scripit* run the program and then automatically bring up the file requester so that I can choose the project.

Scripit is by no means restricted to these kind of uses, however. It can be used as a teaching aid, for example, to give beginners a step-by-step demonstration of how to use a program. Or it can be used to perform repetitive tasks within a program, or very exacting tasks.

For example, when I try to draw an intricate repeating pattern in *DeluxePaint*, I will often pick up a single example of the pattern as a brush, and then stamp down copies where needed. No matter how careful I try to be, however, I usually stamp down at least one copy in a

location that's one or two pixels away from where I wanted it. With Scripit, it's fairly easy to place each part of the picture precisely where I wanted it and to duplicate the picture or change it slightly without starting all over again. This ability is even more valuable when it comes to animating with Deluxe-Paint III, since you may need to repeat a drawing with slight changes over dozens of frames.

Scripit is a complex program. Before you try to use it, be sure to read the document files that accompany the program. Open the Scripit folder on the Amiga Resource Disk and double-click on the text files to read them. You'll find more text files in the Docs folder, which is located in the Scripit folder.

You'll have to boot your computer with the *Amiga Resource* Disk if you want to read these files by double clicking on their icons.

They are standard text files, however, so they can be read using most any file reader program or text editor.

If you use the file reader provided on the magazine disk, you can print the text by choosing the Print option from the file reader's pull-down menu. Be sure that your printer is connected and online before selecting this option.

After you've read the document files, try some of the demos. Double-click on the Scripit icon. A file selector appears. Click on Scripit, then on Demos, and then on one of the programs. *Scripit* will run the demo script.

The entire Amiga community owes a debt of gratitude to Khalid Aldoseri, author of *Scripit* (and the most accomplished Amiga programmer in all of Bahrain), for developing a program that adds to Amiga's already-considerable multitasking abilities. He doubly deserves our thanks for making it freely available for every Amiga owner to use.

Sample Script Script BEGIN :: Used to start ever

;; Used to start every Scripit script WB OPEN Apps

;; Open the Apps disk on the Workbench WB OPEN Superbase

;; Open the Superbase Drawer

WB DESELECT
;; Deselect all icons

WAITFOR "FastBench" "SuperBase"

;; Wait for the Superbase window to open WB DRAG SbPro 27 -61 1

;; Drag the program icon out of the

window onto the Workbench screen
WB CLOSE Superbase

;; Close the Superbase window

WB CLOSE Apps

WB CLUSE Apps

;; Close the Apps window

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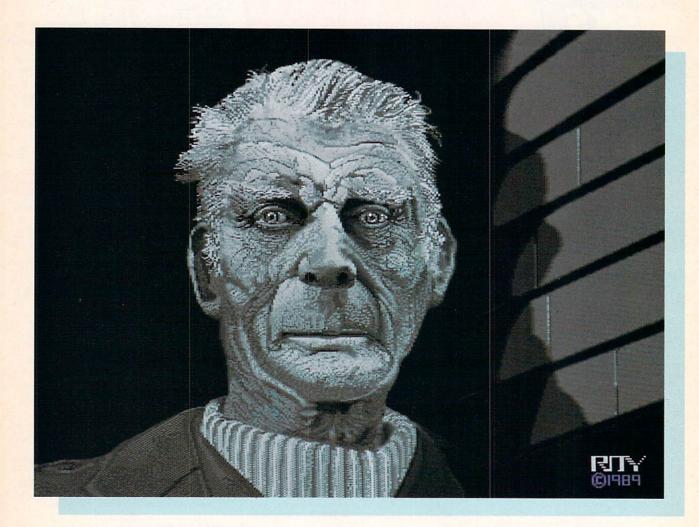
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# art gallery



elcome to "Amiga Art Gallery." On these pages, in each and every issue of *Amiga Resource*, you'll find the best Amiga artwork around. The pictures in this issue may also be found on the magazine's accompanying disk.

# Nantucket Native

Christopher P. Roy

Norwich, CT

"Nantucket Native was originally a color photograph. My thoughts when I saw it were that the wrinkled texture of the old man's face would be a good test for the Amiga and my own skill." Nantucket Native was drawn using DeluxePaint III in interlace Extra Half-Brite mode.

# Tooth

Gregg Wilcox Minneapolis, MN

The original version of Digi-Paint was used to create this dental patient's nightmare. HAM mode provided the variety of color needed to produce the smooth shading effects.



# **Treasure**

**Brad Shenck** 

Thousand Oaks, CA

This picture was drawn in 32-color 320 × 400 pixel mode using *DeluxePaint II* on an Amiga 500. Brad Shenck, winner of both the 1988 and 1989 Badge Killer Demo contest, is also the artist behind the picture *Tower*, which appeared in our Fall 1989 "Art Gallery."

If you'd like to see your art in these pages, send it to us on disk at the address below. We pay \$100 for each piece of art we accept. Rejected submissions are returned only to artists who enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Amiga Art Gallery P.O. Box 5406 Greensboro, NC 27403

# TAKING SIDES

Rhett Anderson vs. Randy Thompson

# **Mail-Order Amigas**

THINK BEFORE YOU ORDER! For years, Amigas have been available dirt-cheap from mail-order houses. We've been spoiled by low prices; prices too low to sustain a healthy system of Amiga dealers.

If you don't know what I'm talking about, try this exercise. First, find your closest authorized Amiga dealer. If you don't live in a big city like New York, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, or Chicago, pack a sleeping bag in your trunk—you've got a long drive ahead of you.

Odds are, this dealer is hanging onto his or her store by a thread. To make the dealer's day just a bit harder, pull a copy of your favorite magazine out of your pocket, turn to a mail-order ad for an Amiga, and say, "I can order an Amiga 500 for \$550. Can you beat that price?"

The dealer probably can't beat that price. For good reason. The dealer has to pay rent on the store. The dealer must advertise so that the few and far-between prospective Amiga owners can find the store. The dealer must pay the

salaries of the people who work in the store.

If you really want to drive the dealer through the roof, buy your Amiga by mail-order and then ask the local dealer to solve your problems. In case you haven't been reading "Miss Manners," it's tacky to buy a machine from a mail-order house and then ask the local dealer to rewrite your startup-sequence.

For years, dealers have

complained to Commodore about the problem. But Commodore held back, hoping against hope that the Amiga would catch on *before* the dealer system was in order.

Harold Copperman knows that Commodore must start thinking and acting like a successful and serious computer maker. Apple and IBM took steps long ago to ensure that their computers were available only through authorized dealers. If Commodore is going to compete with these giants, it must play the game by the same rules.

Now, Commodore is taking steps to help Amiga dealers grow and expand. Pay the few extra bucks to buy from your local dealer. You'll be the one who benefits.

Looking over at Mr. Thompson's side, we find a classic case of confusing cause and effect. Mr. Thompson complains about our local dealer (who's trying to expand, by the way). Our dealer would be in better shape if he weren't undercut by mail-order ads. Healthy dealerships make more sales. More sales lead to better software. Better software leads to more sales, and so on.

Don't be so cheap, Mr. Thompson. Invest a few bucks to enrich the Amiga community.

GET YOUR CREDIT CARD READY! It's the age of home shopping. People aren't rushing out to the stores; they're rushing to their telephones and ordering everything from lingerie to personal computers. These days you can buy almost anything—through catalogs, magazine ads, and even television shows—without ever leaving your home.

Commodore doesn't want UPS or Federal Express delivering its products, however. The company says that's bad business and that things are going to change—no more mail-order Amigas. I say Commodore is making a mistake.

Let's take an informal poll here. Question 1: How many of you purchased your Amiga through the mail? Chances are, over half of you raised your hand (figuratively speaking, of course). I know I did, and, yes, I know Mr. Anderson didn't.

Question 2: Of those 60 percent who gave an affirmative answer to Question 1, why did you choose mail order? *Price* is the most likely answer. What's the number 2

response? There aren't any Amiga dealers in my area. And that's the real problem.

If you live in a relatively small city, as I do, the closest thing to a dealer is an electronics repair shop that happens to sell 500s on the side. And, unfortunately, most mail-order companies have better customer support than these warehouse-district, Commodore-authorized dealers. Ridding the world of a few



bad-apple mail-order houses is fine. Eliminate mail order altogether, however, and Commodore is in for a serious distribution problem.

Besides, I think people want a choice. If they need dealer support, they can opt to pay the extra commission fees and order from a local computer store—a good dealer is certainly worth investing in. But if they already know what they want and how to use it, let them save time and money with mail order.

Looking over at Mr. Anderson's side, his misguided, bleeding-heart "Rhettoric" proves that he's lost a larger percentage of his brain than I ever suspected. Mail order is not an evil entity, it's part of free enterprise. It provides healthy competition in an industry riddled with overpriced products. Besides, many mail-order houses are dealers, too. They just cater to phone-in as well as walk-in customers.

As for IBM and Apple comparisons: Are "dirt-cheap" mail-order PCs hurting MS-DOS dealers? Hardly. And do we really want Commodore to take on Apple's iron-handed, overpriced tactics? No. My advice for you, Mr. Anderson, is think before you type!

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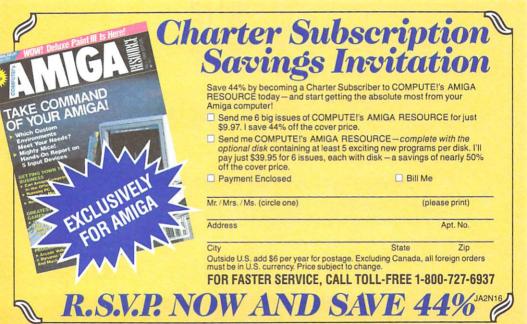
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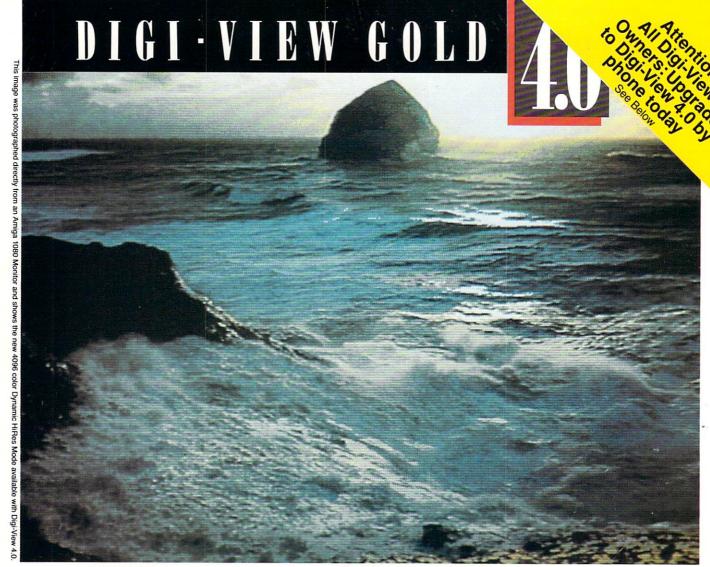
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