



the domain

Issue 1 June 1996

An International Amiga PD & Shareware Newsletter



Welcome to issue 1! Rob and I would both like to say a big thank-you to all of you who have subscribed so far! To date we have readers from all over the UK, including Norfolk, Avon, Wales, Wiltshire, Yorkshire, Sussex and London- to mention but a few. It's been a real pleasure putting this issue together, with so many reviewable items to choose from, we've had to leave some stuff out. Fear not, that will appear in next month's issue. We were hoping to bring you a full review of Jack Pritchard's work (Epoch Organiser & Chronicle), but this we've decided to leave until next month when we hope to be able to bring you a review of his new "Organiser 2", and full details on how to get it. Dare you miss out? In the meantime, we hope you enjoy this issue! Until next month, stay in Amiga heaven! **KEITH AND ROB!**



The World of Amiga - April 13/14th 1996

It was great to see an Amiga show at last, after what has seemed like an eternity of not seeing the Amiga in the public eye. This was definitely something to look forward to.

Or was it?

To us, the show smacked of bad planning, lack of enthusiasm by the Amiga industry, and poor PR by Amiga Technologies. It was obvious to all there, as we pushed through the heaving crowds of show-goers, that the venue was too small, and that the organisers had completely underestimated the support the Amiga still enjoyed.

It was obvious too, that too few Amiga related companies and software houses had bothered to show up. As far as we were concerned, the industry that claims to be behind this great machine, was not giving it as much support as could be expected. But on the flip side, we have to salute those companies that were there, and doing a roaring trade selling cut price Amiga goods to attendees (A 1.2 GiG hard drive for £125!!!).

The advertising for the show was misleading - there was no games arcade, and there were no "competitions galore". And there was no "presentation theatre" either. We were not impressed!

Amiga Technologies were there, but in saying that, I say it in the same breath as I would if I was telling you that there was a bar there to buy refreshments from - you expected it, but they were doing nothing that impressive. Functional but not spectacular! We did get to see the new Amiga 'Mindwalker' up and running, albeit showing us what Shell could do! And in amongst the crowd was some poor whelp trying to tell us about this amazing machine. Pity we couldn't hear him! Or were we too busy trying to imagine what the new 'Mindwalker' could really do? Where were the displays showing us what the Amiga could really do?

Where were the stands selling new Amiga software? Where were the discussion forums? They weren't here that's for sure!

In summing up, it was great to see an Amiga show at last, but it really was an opportunity missed in terms of really promoting the Amiga, and pushing it into the public eye. After leaving the show, I really had grave doubts as to this machine's future in the hands of a company that really hasn't got to grips with promoting it. Shades of Commodore UK? Time will only tell.

The Party 95

Many parties are held over the space of a year, the most popular being: "Somewhere In Holland", "The Happening", "Gasp", and "The Gathering" to name but a few. One of the largest was held over the 27th to the 29th of December 1995, slap bang in the middle of Denmark, that being "The Party 5".

Here, demo groups and independant artists and musicians from around the world show off their latest productions, or 'warez' as it's commonly known, and is offered to ridicule from voters, each giving a certain amount of points depending on how good the product on show is.

Although Amiga and PC incorporated, the biggest response comes from the Amiga demo scene. (And why not?)

Many contests are held, including Graphics, Music (Four channel, and multi-channel mods), Fast Intros, 40k Intros (how good a demo can one squeeze into 40k...), 4k Intros (...AND 4k!), Wild Demo, (stupidly large & outrageous demos), and, believe it or not, but also a C64 demo comp. But here we have, in full, the top FIVE winning entrants to the Amiga demo competition.....



Title: *CLOSER*
Author: *CNCD*
Type: *DEMO*
No. of Disks: *THREE*
Requirements: *AGA, HD, 4mb*



The biggest voted demo from the Party 95, hauling in a massive 1662 points, here's the latest and greatest demo from CNCD. We know from the very first effect, that we're in for something special. A colourful, surrealistic logo introduces the show, coupled with a very nice metallic spidery object, bending, twisting and rotating smoothly, with some gorgeous reflective lighting effects polished all over it. The music purrs quietly in the background, an effective, motion-picture like theme, but all this soon blacks out and in breaks some fast plasma effects oozing in time with the hard 'Tricky-esque' tune. After one or two more plasma effects, up crops a very nice hi-res picture of an orchid in very abstract colours. This piece of artwork introduces the nice melancholic part of the demo.

The loud, heavy, industrial tune winds down to a slow, mellow, laid back theme, which suits the current graphics perfectly, which consist of some lovely light-sourced bubbles, with the same, nice reflections as seen in the first effect. It's very relaxing, but it's a shame it doesn't last very long....

Other effects include some long tunnel sequences, which remind me of water down a plughole, floating globules of molten metal and a rather impressive credits page involving some excellent wobbly raytraced words. The whole demo seems very futuristic, high-on apocalyptic, with every screen using the same morbid colours. All in all, a very punchy demo, only let down by the atrocious, demonic shouting in the theme tune, and the whole thing is very 'samey', some of the effects are forgettable. And one thing that did disappoint me was the fact that the sequences didn't blend in with each other, there's no fade ins or outs, just sudden stops with slabs of blackness between each. Still, the whole thing works very well, and you'll certainly be loading this one up again and again. A word of warning tho', the demo really benefits from a FAST computer, it NEEDS to be installed to HD, and to be seen in full effect, a 25Mhz machine does help, but it WILL work on your standard 1200, just slowly....

GRAPHICS: 84%
Dark, moody, and completely depressing.
SOUND: 90%
A corking heavy track!
LASTABILITY: 85%
You'll keep loading it just for the tune.
OVERALL: 92%
Damn fine, damn powerful, one helluva blast!
Reviewed by: Rob



Title: *VISION*
Author: *OXYGENE*
Type: *DEMO*
No. of Disks: *TWO*
Requirements: *AGA, HD*



Oxygene are certainly having their work cut out for them recently, what with this, the 2nd place big demo at the Party '95, and only months previously, they'd only just finished 'Control', which was rated very highly in our preview issue. So, how does this effort fair? Well, the voters at the Party absolutely know how to pick a good demo. The opening credits greet us, on top of a full screen swirling plasma background. Backed to a mellow techno tune, we jump to the first vector effect, much in the same vein as their previous demo, we see a couple of toruses, slipping through each others hole (missus!) upon a very large star field. Out this fades, and in; a fantastic rotating rendered metallic 'claw' within which, up come two vector objects both reflecting off each other. Away it pops, and hey, something new! Next we have various vector animations loosely based on Psychosis' Wipeout on the Playstation. Two spacecrafts chase each other around a very hilly circuit, with plenty of tunnels and bridges. The anims are very smooth, and very effective. After these we have the usual run-of-the-mill tunnel and piece of artwork. The first part comes to an end, and the second soon hits our screens.

A more relaxing tune plays on, and on screen we are given a good rendered looped animation of what looks to be inside a stomach, it's very flesh-like. More vectors approach, this time they seem to be inside a great big mirror ball, with reflections everywhere. Even more vectors crop up this time with a motion blur wiped over it. After these, we are given another nice vector animation, similar to that of the Wipeout one, but this time showing an 'action sequence' of a man running down a corridor and just squeezing through some rapidly closing doors. And that's our lot! A good long demo with lots of new effects, colourful and striking. A demo that 'feels' right. And anyway, my girlfriend likes it, so it must be good!

GRAPHICS: 90%
Colourful and varied, different throughout.
SOUND: 79%
Suitable dance tunes that suffice.
LASTABILITY: 90%
Feels and works well, you'll be seeing it again.
OVERALL: 93%
A welcome to see something a little different
Reviewed by: Rob

Oil! Take Note!....

All the demos reviewed as part of the Party 95 section, are all disk-packed using LZX. The 'No. of Disks' shows how many disks the demo is packed on, and they all NEED unpacking to your hard drive.

ALL Party 95 demos DO NOT load directly from disk, they all require the LZX tool to unpack. If you don't have the LZX program, we can supply it on request (the unregistered version) along with a short explanation on how to unpack the demos.

Introduce a friend to the domain - get a (reviewed) demo of your choice for FREE!!

3rd
1995

Title: **FAKTORY**
Author: **FAIRLIGHT / VD**
Type: **DEMO**
No. of Disks: **TWO**
Requirements: **AGA, HD**

Virtual Dreams and Fairlight are renowned for creating original, and most importantly, decent demos, and this is no exception, getting 3rd place at The Party 95, this is what they call a short, sharp, shock on a disk. Beginning with a movie-like intro, consisting of a colourful logo with hundreds of little bubbles floating over it, we are suddenly bombarded with short, un-nerving messages, the first being; "Am I in control?" Then comes the setup for the rest of the demo.

A colourful digitised pic of a person (possibly a friend or member of VD?), and next to them, a graphical effect, first one being a nice ripply watery effect. Another negative message appears, followed by another pic with effect. The phrase "What are you looking at?" appears, followed by a vectored monitor with a long arm with a claw on the end, and on it's screen, a blinking eye.

Hmm, this is certainly a demo to make you feel uncomfortable about this, the computer age, especially since we are given a picture of a lady with an analyzer for a head, alongside the message - "Machines control the world." Aaaargh! It's frightening! Well, it's certainly not up to the usual standard of Fairlight, I must admit. It starts off promising, but it goes downhill rather quickly. Its just too much of the same, and doesn't last long enough. It all fits together nicely, and definately gets you thinking, but it just doesn't stand up enough on it's own. It's a shame. Oh, the music is quite 'cool' so to speak, it's very thumpy, and is a strength to this disappointing

GRAPHICS: 85%

Psychedelic and obscure.

SOUND: 88%

Bold, bassy and rather good.

LASTABILITY: 69%

You'll watch it the once, then probably be done with it.

OVERALL: 72%

Looks & sounds nice enough, but it's too short, and not what you'd expect from VD.

Reviewed by: Rob

4th
1995

Title: **PASSENGERS**
Author: **3 LITTLE ELKS**
Type: **DEMO**
No. of Disks: **TWO**
Requirements: **AGA, HD**

Now here's something a little different. Before the demo begins, we are actually given a choice of how we'd like to see it. From being 'The best for the basic A1200', right up to a 40Mhz A4000, so whatever your system, you get to see the demo 'as it should be.' This is very welcome, considering the amount of textured vector effects within it. The main demo is rather surreal, what with two guys, a 'hero' type, and a 'professor' type, giving us some very weird messages during each effect. The most memorable effect is the obligatory 'Doom' routine which consists of some full screen scrolling WITH hills! (Ooooooo!) The rest of the demo is filled with the usual tunnel/vector affairs, although they are pretty smooth. A particularly funny part is the morphing of one of the members of 3LE's face. With music being a chart / jungle piece, and end tune being a multi-channel jazz guitar affair, all in all, a very peculiar demo indeed. An added bonus is a humorous 'Elk' animation.... you won't understand it, but it'll raise a smile or two....

GRAPHICS: 83%

Nothing gob-smacking, but nice all the same.

SOUND: 85%

Main tune slightly disappointing, but end theme rather cool.

LASTABILITY: 88%

One or two interesting things in there that'll keep you attached.

OVERALL: 82%

Not overly outstanding, it's your basic demo affair.

Reviewed by: Rob

Title: **CRAZY SEXY COOL**
Author: **ESSENCE**
Type: **DEMO**
No. of Disks: **ONE**
Requirements: **AGA, HD**

Hmmm, now this is nice. This could quite easily pass as a 'demo for beginners.' All the effects shown are coupled with a description of what that particular sequence depicts. Among these effects are some wonderful lo-res pieces of hand-drawn artwork, consisting of the famous 'Einstein with tongue out' pic, a rather pretty young lady and one of a Guns N Roses cover (I think) Each depicting the words 'Crazy', 'Sexy', and 'Cool'. The backing track is extremely funky, a slow, mellow 'jazz-rap' plays throughout. The final few sequences show some nice light-sourced vectors, including the odd chess piece, a fish complete with swishing tail, a face, and a rubber duck. It's short, but it's all very smooth, and it works very well. It's quite calming.....

GRAPHICS: 90%

The static screens are wonderful!

SOUND: 88%

A cool, flowing rap tune.

LASTABILITY: 86%

It's nice to relax to....

OVERALL: 89%

Short, but very, VERY sweet!

Reviewed by: Rob

And the Rest.....

That was the top five, according to a lot of people, but how do the rest fair? Here we have some swift reviews for the rest..... Some of which will be reviewed, in full, in the months to come....

6th	CORONA by Embassy	51%
	Slow, below average 'plasmatic' demo.	
7th	CYBERLOGIK by TRSI & Alcatraz	90%
	Great, an instant 'classic', (you'll see what I mean!..)	
8th	Unavailable at time of going to press.....	N/A
9th	NO by Polka Bros.	87%
	Short and fast, but with beautiful melodic endpart.	
10th	GALERIE by Stellar	80%
	Glare effects a-plenty. Long & drawn out, but still OK.	
11th	MYSTIC, THE DEMO by Mystic	76%
	One or two new effects, polished, but monotonous.	
12th	DREAM WITH ME by Scania	89%
	Totally original 'cartoon' - FAB!	
13th	EXORCISM by Oxyron	71%
	It's one big Doom clone....	
14th	RABIES by Rage	85%
	Powerful Intro, but the demo....	
15th	MIINDPROBE by The Black Lotus	92%
	Cool music, excellent NEW effects - STUNNING!	
16th	SURREAL by Impact DK	73%
	Very H.R. Gigery, and very average.	
17th	Unavailable at time of going to press.....	N/A
18th	PARAKRISHNA by Axis	78%
	Contains a very 'controversial' message. Fab music!	
19th	Unavailable at time of going to press.....	N/A
20th	Unavailable at time of going to press.....	N/A
21st	SLOW MOTION by Focus Design	N/A
	Didn't seem to agree with my machine....	
22nd	Unavailable at time of going to press.....	N/A

Title: **LOVELY GIRLS**
Author: **ANDY**
Type: **SLIDESHOW**
No. of Disks: **TWO**
Requirements: **AGA**

Booting this up and seeing the message "Do not continue loading if you aren't a fan of Penthouse" made me realise this was yet another soft porn slideshow. When the poppy music kicked in and the first young lady was displayed, my worst fears were confirmed.

This is basically two disks full of hi-res GIF images scanned straight from the pages of Penthouse. Young ladies display themselves with various items of clothing and furniture, not to mention the odd sheepskin rug or two. There's nothing here you haven't seen before, but I wouldn't recommend showing it to your mum!

The scanning is VERY good, and cannot be faulted. Andy fails to tell us what he used to get these results, but whatever it was, it was well worth the cost!

Loading each image isn't exactly quick, but it's not too slow either, and using the mouse the viewer can skip onto the next image without having to wait for first one to load.

Okay for a cheap thrill if you can't be bothered to buy your own magazines. Possibly good enough to show your PC owning friends too, but it'll probably stay at the back of your disk box after the first couple of viewings.

(NOTE: Thanks for this Andy! Why not get in touch with us?)

GRAPHICS: 80%

Great Scanning!

SOUND: 55%

Mediocre tune compliments images.

LASTABILITY: 50%

Once seen, quite easily forgotten.

OVERALL: 65%

Nice to have, but not essential!

Reviewed by Keith

Where and How?

Depending on where you live in the UK you can contact us here at the domain by writing to either:

Keith Elcombe, 6 Saxon Court,
Kingsway Gardens, Andover,
Hants, SP10 4BU

OR
Robert Iveson, 83 Rycroft Towers,
Swinnow, Leeds,
W. Yorks, LS13 4NH

To obtain software reviewed in this, or any issue of the domain, simply enclose the required number of disks, and a chq/po for 30p per disk and return postage. Don't forget to include your details.

To obtain details on how to subscribe, or how to submit items to the domain, please write to one of the above addresses, not forgetting to include an SAE.

What was used...?

2x Amiga 1200s, with 6mb each, running Pagestream 2.2UK, and printed on a Canon BJ printer. How very interesting.....

Next Issue
Out mid June. Full reviews of J.Pritchard's software included!

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Programmers wanting their software tested, or any Amiga problems that need answering, contact Stephen Nicolle, 7 Artists Way, Andover, Hants, SP103SU