

the domain

Issue 4 Sept' 1996

An international Amiga PD and Shareware newsletter



Another month over, and summer is drawing to a close - sort of. That means that it'll soon be winter, and you'll all be spending even more time in front of your beloved Amigas. And some will be spending more time in front of theirs than others, judging by the number of requests we've had for catalogue disks. Don't forget you can return your cat disk at any time for a free update - can't be bad eh?

Who's the character below in the long overcoat? Check out next months issue to find out more. Rest assured he'll be doing his bit to help save the Amiga too. Bet you can't wait eh?

Until next time, stay in Amiga heaven. **KEITH DWD ROB!**



How can this character help save the Amiga?



THE JUDGE

More details next month!

Letters

It's nice to get some sort of response to all the hard work we put in here at the Domain. No matter how small that response is, it makes what we're doing kind of worthwhile. And now, in what we hope will be an ongoing feature here in the Domain, we bring you our new "Readers Letters" section - so grab that coffee and sit back and enjoy....

Jeremy Butler from Australia writes to us with news of some cheap hardware (*Editors note: We cannot validate the claims or prices made by Jeremy, so readers buy from him at their own risk - we at the Domain shall not be responsible for anything going pear-shaped!*)

"Dear Domain AGA, I was looking in the April issue of Amiga Shopper and saw your newsletter advert. Please send me a copy.

The real reason for me writing is to offer your readers the deal of a lifetime. I hope most of your readers own A1200's. This is what I have to offer:- Accelerators, RAM, 68882 processors and HD's, and the cables are free.

Prices and stuff..

Accelerators: Cobra 28mhz 030 - £125, Cobra 40mhz 030 - £160

Processor 68882 - £35

4 meg Ram 72 pin Simm - £70

8 meg Ram 72 pin Simm - £100

Seagate HD's 3.5" 850mb - £170, 1.08 gig - £190, 1.2 gig - £205

Cables and postage are free. Prices may fall, so write to J. Butler, Box 1203, Mt. Gambier, SA, 5290, Australia, or phone +61 87 251494."

... a letter from closer to home next...

"....Thanks for the latest copy of the Domain. It was interesting to read your first column "Is the end finally in sight". I had noticed that the Amiga mag I subscribe to has been getting really thin lately, and has no really new articles - as if they're running out of things to say. The machine has been saved so many times

now, I don't know if Viscorp have bought it for what it is, or just the chipset for their own machine (Hope Not!). I showed my A1200 to a mate yesterday and when I explained it was already set up for use when you take it out of the box, he was amazed. He had been put off PC's because of the setting up they require, but he didn't even know that the Amiga existed. He does now, and he's off to buy one! Keep producing the newsletter - at least then I know there are still other Amigans out there. As long as we exist, they cannot kill off this machine!

All the best, Mr Pete Burgon, Salisbury"

Thanks for your kind words Pete, why not get your mate to subscribe to the Domain. If you introduce him, we'll send you a reviewed item for FREE!

Title: **JADE**
Author: **PIXEL STUDIO**
Type: **SLIDESHOW**
No. Of Disks: **TWO**
Requirements: **AGA, HD**

The slideshow opens unlike any other. An impressive movie-like credits sequence initiates complete with a beautiful swirling fog effect which is background to the list of authors. After about thirty seconds of this, we are straight into the pictures. The fourteen pieces of art are a mish mash of fantasy artwork, team logos and title screens to past Eurocharts (a very popular, but now seemingly dead, disk magazine). All the graphics are seen in low or high/medium resolution, and are all of plausible quality. The music during the show is a very dramatic affair consisting of rolling snare drums and trumpets. Once the slides have all been seen, we are given the chance to see either one of them again via a menu screen sporting Team 17's Superfrog. Accompanying music is very good, which features a soft effeminate voice sighing and deep breathing in time to the slow dance backbeat. And that's about where it ends.

Jade seems very much an excuse to just pile in a load of past pieces of artwork just for the hell of it. Nothing really grabs your attention (except maybe the Casper ones - they are absolutely spot-on), there's no denying that the artist, Geist, has talent, (who's not an unfamiliar name to the demo scene) but you can't help feeling a little empty after viewing the show. It all works very well, the music is smart, and it's presented immaculately, but it's all very uninspiring. A brilliant quality slideshow just let down by aimless pictures.

GRAPHICS: 82%

Very good, but nothing you'll give a second glance to.

SOUND: 91%

Generally very good, decent original tunes.

LASTABILITY: 68%

You may just reload it for the music.

OVERALL: 73%

Could've and should've been a lot better.

Reviewed by: Rob

Title: **LEGIONS OF DAWN**
Author: **A. CAMPBELL**
Type: **GAME**
No. Of Disks: **ONE**
Requirements: **AGA**

Welcome back to hell.... LOD is a Licenseware game, and I should point out that what we're reviewing here is a demo version, with some of the games features disabled. That said, the game is very well presented, and although only playing a demo version, I found myself going back for more.

LOD is a Dungeon Master clone, and it shares much in common with DM, such as the control system for your character, placing objects in his hands, and picking things up. Even some of the sound FX are similar to those in DM.

The game objective? Simple really, storm into hell and kill things. Oh yes, and try to stay alive while doing so. There is a longer plotline given on the disk, but killing things is the name of the game here.

You get to buy more equipment as you precede and get more cash from terminals posted at various stages of the game. But watch out, while buying stuff, the game doesn't pause, creatures can still attack you. Nice one!

Coded in AMOS with GFX courtesy of DPaint AGA, LOD hangs together very well. The coding is solid, and there's some nice touches in the gameplay, like when you kill something, and it 'explodes', blood showers over the screen, and some of it lands on your game controls - very messy!

The overall feel of the game is dark and moody, with the player never really knowing what's around the next corner, or what's following him for that matter. My only main criticism would be that the on screen colours are too dark - I had to adjust the brightness on my monitor to stop me from squinting at the screen. However, the darkness gives the impression that hell is not a nice place to be, no matter how well you're armed!

The start-up music sets the mood nicely, although in game sound is limited. The programmer recommends that you play this one with the lights off, and the volume up high. I'd tend to recommend that too.

The full game costs £4.99, and I think that's a bit of a bargain, given the depth and intrigue of this game. Okay, so it could do with being a little more polished, as it suffers from being a little rough around the edges, but that said, it has a definite "just one more go" appeal to it. If you like computer RPG's, then go for this one! (Details on how to get this are over the page!)

GRAPHICS: 70%

A bit too dark in places, but some nice touches!

SOUND: 65%

Good intro music - in game sparse.

LASTABILITY: 80%

Just one more go?

OVERALL: 80%

Decent all round DM clone.

Reviewed by: Keith

Missing any issue of the domain? If so, drop us a line and let us know.

Title: **DREAMS**
 Author: **CYDONIA**
 Type: **SLIDESHOW**
 No. Of Disks: **THREE**
 Requirements: **AGA, HD**



Dreams by respected group, Cydonia opens like any other. Large, stoney logos grace the screen, and the credits slide in from the top. A very pleasant piano score plays in the background (which I can't help comparing to my very own slideshow's tune), and the sun sets in the background. The main menu appears which consists of a very nice picture of a ladies back and bot against a starry background. A scrolltext slides along the bottom of the screen giving details of how the menu can be used, the features and comments from various artists and coders. A marble effect logo sits above this, which, when clicked upon, cleverly spins around to give as a scrolltext menu. And above this, the main menu itself listing each of the twenty-nine pictures. The music is a rather grating dance tune which doesn't do anything for me, so thankfully it can be turned off, and after doing so, you are given a whole host of sound effects which are used to good effect in various parts of the slideshow and menu screen. The pics themselves are generally impressive. All screen resolutions are used for a wide range of subjects, from famous people, fantasy art, movie scenes, logos, renders, clipart etc etc, plenty to tickle your fancy.

A lot of the art consist of human mediums, painted in greyscale for a very atmospheric effect. These drawings are so god-damned perfect, they could quite easily pass as digitised, but they're not, and the end result is utterly gob-smacking. My personal favorites include 'Lift Off', which unsurprisingly is a picture of the space shuttle lifting off, but within it's flames, seven people's faces can be found if you look carefully. Very very clever. A very moody picture of The Crow in a classic stance, and a witty dedication to PC users (snigger!) are also among my faves. Each picture appears in their own special way, some of which have relevant sound effects, which is an original, ingenious touch. The whole thing is full of brilliant little details, like being able to play with the Cydonia logo, or shooting stars flying thru the sky. It's things like those that keep you hooked that little bit longer. Dreams is a slideshow you actually feel like watching again and again. It's very pleasing, has plenty of pieces of quality art, and the special effects work very well. Thoroughly recommended.

GRAPHICS: 93%

Totally astounding.

SOUND: 84%

Music not stunning, but the six are used to good effect!

LASTABILITY: 85%

You'll be fiddling around with it for a while!

OVERALL: 90%

Top graphics that are brought together brilliantly.

Reviewed by: Rob

Title: **ALIEN FISH FINGER**
 Author: **D.J CRUICKSHANK**
 Type: **GAME**
 No. Of Disks: **ONE**
 Requirements: **1 MEG+**



Written in Blitz Basic 2, which is no bad thing, this unusually titled platform shoot-em-up, is, to say the least, top. I wish I could give you some opening story line to it, but I can't. The instructions simply state; "You guide a little bloke around lots of levels blowing the guts out of lots of aliens". Fair enough then eh? One of the first things you notice of the game is it's sheer fluidity. The graphics fill the entire screen, which represent the playing area being a dark, alien landscape. The sprites are small, but very well animated and responds well to all joystick movements.

Your hero, Frank, is controlled over the scenery, shooting any soldiers or aliens that might get in your way. The soldiers don't just stand there waiting to get blown away, they act intelligently, ducking out of your gunsights or running away if need be, but four or five shots in the back sends a shower of blood up into the air and the victim along with it before hurtling to the ground. Killing your opponent leaves behind either a gun power up, a grenade or one of five letters to spell out the word 'EXTRA', thus awarding you with an extra life. As you advance through the game a simple story unfolds described during a (witty) conversation between Frank and HQ between levels. Sound effects do the job satisfactorily, which consist of your basic blam-blam, ughs, thuds and LOUD kablooes. There's no music, but it doesn't really come expected, it works without it.

This demo is a very generous helping of the full shareware game, which offers more levels. It 'feels' not unlike the classic game 'Exile', which I spent many an hour on in my A500 days, so Alien Fish Finger was wholly welcomed onto my A1200. I must admit, it's very rare I give certain PD games a second glance, the majority of them lack that certain kick, but Alien Fish Finger really did do it for me. I don't think I've ever spent so long on a PD/Shareware game before. I heartily recommend you sending your small contribution to get yourself a copy. Demo version available from us for nowt, but for the full version, see opposite.

GRAPHICS: 83%

Small, but perfectly formed.

SOUND: 68%

Does it's job, but hardly mind-blowing.

LASTABILITY: 89%

You just might be on this for a looong time.

OVERALL: 91%

Cracking! Just what I want to see in a 'free' game!

Reviewed by: Rob

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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.

Introduce A Friend and recieve an item of reviewed PD software for FREE!
 (Obviously excludes Shareware material)



Don't panic!
 You can send for your copy of our catalogue disk now!

Do it NOW!

Everytime an issue of The Domain is released, our catalogue disk, the imaginatively titled 'The Domain Catalogue Disk', is updated. So, if you're smart enough to already own a copy, return it to one of the addresses opposite to get it updated. Just send an SAE and your copy of the cat disk, and we'll do the rest.

If, for some peculiar reason, you don't own a copy of our cat disk (I'm sure there was a perfectly good excuse) you can get one from us for 50p and a 26p SAE, thus making your life complete. Hurrah!

Shareware Info

Legions Of Dawn is third in the series of Black Dawn RPGs, and for the first time, is available as F1 Licenceware. It comes as two versions; A 'fast' floppy version, or a hard drive version, specify either when ordering. Price is £4.99 which includes extra data disks and a printed novella entitled 'Hell & Gone'. The preview version is available from us if you care to 'try before you buy' first, but the full version is available from:

F1 Licenceware,
 31 Wellington Road,
 Exeter,
 Devon,
 EX2 9DU.

Please make cheques/postal orders made payable to Steve Bye.

Alien Fish Finger costs £3.99, which consists of all the levels, a printed information sheet and a printed disk label. It's available from:

D.J Cruickshank,
 58 Aln Street,
 Hebburn,
 Tyne & Wear,
 NE31 1XT.

Please make cheques/postal orders made payable to D.J Cruickshank. Demo version also available from our goodselves.

**That was the domain issue 4:
 What was used...?**

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

CHECK IT OUT!

A new Amiga mail-order magazine is available now. Called *Amiga Review*, it costs £2.95 and is available from this address: *Amiga Review, Mediasoft, 22 Brook Road, Shanklin, Isle of Wight, PO37 7LU*. For your dosh you get 55 pages of news and reviews, PLUS 2 (count em!) coverdisks.

We here at the domain think *Amiga Review* is SMART - full review and comment next issue.....

Late September - That's when the next thrilling episode of the domain emerges!