

MICRO ACTION

AMTIXCPC

THE GREATEST CPC MAGAZINE IN THE WORLD!

ALL THE LATEST CPC
GAMES REVIEWED!

INTERVIEWS GALORE!
WE SPEAK TO ERIC
CUBIZOLLE AKA TITAN
AND ADVENTURE AUTHOR
GARETH PITCHFORD.

THE AMTIXCPC FILES -
GRAEME MASON DELVES
INTO THE ISOMETRIC
BEAUTY FROM ELECTRIC
DREAMS, SPINDIZZY!

GAME COVER CRACKERS - 1987
COMPILATION CORNER
AMTIXCPC ADVENTURE TAVERN
LATEST PREVIEWS

AM-TECH - ZOË KIRK-ROBINSON TALKS
CPC MODEMS

AMSTRAD ART - TITAN GALLERY SPECIAL!



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AMTIXCPC TITAN!



Ready



Welcome, all you lovely Amsters, to Issue #11 of AMTIXCPC Micro Action. The Christmas decorations from last Issue have been packed away and put back up into the attic, but with it being a new year, we've made a little change to the magazine. Can you spot it? That's right, we have a new 'retro' style logo which takes its influences from the original AMTIX! magazine logo.

To kick things off this Issue, we've got the exclusive first play and review of Mananuk's follow-up to *The Mandarin*, *The Mandarin II: Limoncello's Revenge*, and I can tell you all now, it's fantastic! We also have reviews of *Kung Fu Master GX*, *Tenebra II*, *Gold Maze*, *The Cult*,

Shadow Maze, *Prospector*, and *Booty the Remake*. Phew!

As well as the reviews, we have not one but two exclusive interviews for you. The first is with renowned French graphics artist Eric Cubizolle, who you may all know as TITAN. Eric talks to us about his artwork and where his love of the CPC began. Our second interview is with the talented interactive fiction author Gareth Pitchford, who joins yours truly down at the Adventure Tavern for a chat about adventure games and a mug of Zilog Ale.

We have a new feature this Issue, thanks to Graeme Mason, called the AMTIXCPC Files, and in this Issue, he opens the file on a CPC stalwart classic - Electric Dreams' *Spindizzy*.

With TITAN dropping by at AMTIXCPC Towers, Zoë has prepared a special Amstrad Art gallery this Issue that celebrates some of his finest graphical works. Our resident historian Paul Davies is back with us once more to look back at the original Issue #11 of the original AMTIX magazine, while cover connoisseur Graeme Mason is back with several more iconic CPC game covers for you all to drool over. And finally, for AM-TECH, Zoë talks about the art of CPC communication and looks at Modems.

Forgotten Memories

Isn't it great when you come across an old game that you'd completely forgotten about. That's what happened to me the other day while flicking through the pages of an old edition of Amstrad Computer User where I was immediately drawn to the following screenshot:



I recognised it instantly, mainly thanks to the robotic snake like 'mean wheeler' character which I suddenly remembered being fascinated about as a child when I first saw the game load on my then dad's CPC464 with green screen monitor.

The game by the way is *The Survivor* by Anirog which is a maze based where you collect treasure and bombs while being chased by monsters and mechanical robots like the one above. It was also one of the early first tiles to be released for the CPC. Ah simpler times...

Ready?

Colin Bell

RUN "A" - TEAM .BAS

COLIN BELL

Has been a massive fan of the CPC ever since his dear old Mum bought Dad one for Christmas in 1986 to use for his electrical business – that never happened! He has fond early memories of playing *The Custard Pie Factory*, *Super Gran*, and *Rig Attack!*, and has a passion for



adventure games. A serious collector of all things Amstrad, he currently has over a whopping 2,300 games in his collection, along with various CPC systems and hardware. Colin also writes for other publications under the Fusion Retro Books banner and is very honoured to be taking on the role of editor for AMTIXCPC.

GORDON KING

Or Kingy, as he is known in the retro community, is one of the hosts of RGDS Podcast. He's one of those strange creatures that love all of the 8-bit home micros and won't get involved in a 'which is better' debate. He is no stranger to the Fusion Retro Magazine house and currently



writes reviews and some articles for CRASH. His personally owned Amstrad is the 6128, and by the time you've read this, he's modified it with a Gotek drive. No Amstrads were hurt during this daring mission.

ZOE KIRK-ROBINSON

Is a talented artist and comedian who makes games for old computers live on YouTube. Zoë got her first Amstrad when she was four, a decision her parents almost instantly regretted. She didn't stop playing on her CPC until the age of forty, and even then, only stopped to write



something for this magazine. Zoë also produces CPCine, a YouTube documentary series that charts the life of the Amstrad CPC and she very kindly provided the artwork for all the lovely faces you see here. She lives in Bolton, in a cocoon made from retro games.

CHRIS WEATHERLEY, AKA "NOVABUG"

Is a retro gaming YouTuber and writer contributing to various websites such as The Pixel Empire, RetroUnlim and Indie Retro News. A self-confessed CPC fanatic, 'Novabug' is well known for his Saturday live streams where he tests real CPC cassette games on real hardware,



to much amusement and sometimes disappointment. He is also the product of a hybrid breeding project, to splice a human and an alien to create the ultimate Amstrad guardian. Funded by Lord Sugar, the project wasn't a success.

BEN HONEBONE

Spent the late 1980s and early 90s huddled around a green screen playing *Arkanoid*, *Wizball*, and other colour-dependent games on the CPC 464. From this self imposed isolation there emerged a lifelong Amstrad enthusiast and video game connoisseur. Ben can



also be found working at Fusion magazine, making music with bands and as a solo artist, making music videos and content, and generally roaming around the Welsh countryside looking for fighting game players.

SEAN McMANUS

Got an Amstrad for Christmas 1984 and wrote his first Amstrad program that same day. Sean contributed type-ins to Amstrad Action (AA) and Amstrad Computer User (ACU), and wrote the Sprite Definer that appeared on AA's cover tape. He wrote a couple of



tutorials for ACU too, and a BASIC programming book called The Basic Idea. Today Sean works as a technology copywriter and writes books about programming in Python and Scratch to inspire the next generation. Visit Sean's website at www.sean.co.uk to read his Amstrad book and play his games.

GRAEME MASON

A video games fan from a very early age, Graeme Mason grew up in the arcades of the late Seventies before embracing the home computer boom of the Eighties. Today, Graeme writes about retro games for Retro Gamer, Eurogamer, and more, and while a Specy



fan at heart, he will always have a special place for the Amstrad CPC. The colourful graphics and incredible sound of games such as *Sorcery+*, *Tau Ceti*, and *Commando* represent some of his finest memories of the iconic computer.

MANDARIN



Author: **Mananuk**
Released: **2024**

With Disney basically burning the fleshless bones from the corpse of *Star Wars* nowadays, I have a degree of trepidation going into new entertainment based on the Lucasfilm universe. Thankfully, fan media with thematic nods are usually far superior to any Disney product of late, and so, like its predecessor *The Mandarin*, based on the *Star Wars* spin-off series *The Mandalorian*, this surprise sequel appears to pull off the old *Empire Strikes Back* trick; aiming to improve on a solid

foundation and ending with a great deal of satisfaction. Too few multi-genre games have appeared recently for

the CPC, so it's refreshing to see effort put into a game which incorporates variety but also blends the elements to work well as a story. Mananuk has had a busy few years creating new works for the 8-bit classic micros, and I believe this latest title may

be their pivotal moment.

Following up on 2022's release, *The Mandarin 2: Limoncello's Revenge* sees our titular bounty hunter tasked to retrieve the evil general's secret base plans and ultimately assassinate the despotic alien. This time we have various scenarios to navigate, including space flight sequences and platforming exploration, collecting items, and eliminating or avoiding the guard droids and other enemies. To make things a little different, new skills have been picked up by Mr Mandarin this time. He has the ability to hide from indestructible enemies under a cloak and fly his ship into battle facing off against the defence forces of the general. A multi-genre



Above: Platforming perfection! The Mandarin 2 takes things to the next level and showcases Mananuk's growth as a developer.



Chris



A glorious TITAN title screen greets us, as a very professional menu screen and music set an energising scene. The theme is a short but catchy tune. Gradius-like shoot 'em up visuals are welcome, the platforming levels are very well designed and don't feel constrained, and the sprite detailing is good. Smooth movement and controls are on-point, and little added effects produce a smile. Put this together with level transition screens, various SFX, and a level of difficulty just right, and Mandarin 2 is superior to its processor in all aspects. A polished game which will entertain even the most avid non-Star Wars fan.

CRITICISM



here have switched to a more polished world with variation, intrigue, and a higher degree of challenge. While decent, the prior game felt like a grid-based generic platformer,



Colin



It's great to see the Mandarin back on our screens, and what a difference two years makes. This excellent sequel has completely overhauled the original and features improved graphics, smooth animations, catchy music, and spot-on gameplay. The addition of the map/progress screen and arcade shooter levels are a welcome addition, as is the main character's new ability to cloak himself from enemies. The levels are well designed and offer up a good challenge. In my opinion, this is Mananuk's finest game yet, and it's brilliant. I can't wait to see what he brings out next!

CRITICISM



Above: Crazy robots and Stormtroopers, what's not to love!

whereas Mandarin 2 plays and looks original and unique. It may be unofficial, but it's nice to enjoy a high-quality Star Wars-themed product again.



PRESENTATION 91%

Beautiful loading screen and box art, excellent menu screen and layouts.

GRAPHICS 85%

Excellent use of colour and detailed sprite work. Smooth movement.

SOUND 78%

Main theme is catchy but short. Sadly no in-game BGM like the previous game.

ADDICTIVENESS 85%

Controls are sharp and the challenge is high.

LASTABILITY 85%

Five levels of variety with balanced difficulty thats just right.

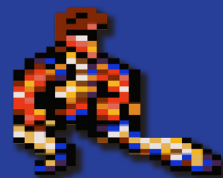
OVERALL 90%



Above: Arcade action! The shoot 'em up sections are great!

game of five levels, each has a different goal and various factors to contend with, such as the inability to shoot or a countdown timer. The graphics and gameplay styles

KUNG-FU MASTER GX



Author: **Ayor61**
Released: **2023**

Considered one of the all-time classic arcade games, Irem's *Kung-Fu Master*, released in 1984, was a smash hit and is regarded as the first scrolling beat 'em up. Proving a major influence on the games to follow, it was ported across many of the home systems in 1986. In fact, I have a personal attachment to this game. It was the first arcade game I ever played as a child, and I was thrilled to have a version on the Amstrad. I discovered this after purchasing *Yie Ar Kung-Fu* in error, thinking it was the same game. That was surprising when that



Above: The new loading screen for the GX version looks absolutely gorgeous!



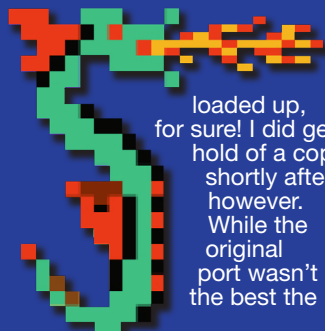
CPC could offer, it did enough to give across the essence of the coin-op and the style of the combat. The blocky sprites and random hit detection did always irk me, so it was exciting to see a reworking of the game in production.

You play Thomas, who is on a mission



to rescue his girl Sylvia from the clutches of Mr X and his goons. Five levels await in the Devil's Temple for Thomas to battle his way through, facing wizards and giants and even the odd dragon. Like I said, the original port had faults, so I had often wondered, like I

Review by Chris Weatherley



loaded up, for sure! I did get hold of a copy shortly after, however. While the original port wasn't the best the

Chris



CRITICISM

While Ayor61 has an impressive résumé on the CPC, I feel more could have been done with Kung-Fu Master. Yes, the graphics have been improved with a lovely overscan screen of the box art, new HUD mirroring the arcade marquee design, and a lovely new Thomas sprite. The speed has been improved and the scrolling is much smoother. But unfortunately, that's it. It really is just a 'reskin', and not actually complete, for my money. Aside from a colour palette shift, enemy sprites and backgrounds are unchanged, there are no added SFX or BGM, but it still has the same hit detection issues from before. In fact, due to the enhanced speed it's become worse, and as a result, very difficult to play.



Above: Punch and kick your way through the seemingly endless waves of baddies

do with many lacklustre CPC arcade ports, if things could have been done better. The plus hardware provides all the tools needed to greatly enhance these flaws, but has it improved the game enough to merit creation? I'm honestly not so sure. Yes, it has a lovely loading screen, and visually it all looks a

whole lot prettier, but overall there's nothing that improves it over the 1986 original, which is a real pity.



Colin



CRITICISM

I was really excited when I saw Kung-Fu Master was getting a remake. Alas, however, I can't help but feel the remake feels half finished. The graphics and sprites that have been updated look great, but what about the rest? I also found that in later levels the game is almost unplayable due to the enhanced speed and terrible hit detection.

PRESENTATION 60%

New loading screen is wonderful. Basic layout identical to original bar the HUD design.

GRAPHICS 75%

The GX colour changes are pleasant, Thomas sprite looks lovely, but what about all the others?

SOUND 32%

The odd bump and thump, with a blip now and then. No improvement here.

ADDICTIVENESS 75%

Still retains the classic Kung-Fu Master feel, but does nothing to enhance the glaring problems of the original port.

LASTABILITY 66%

Not enough has been overhauled to merit a full playing session.

**OVERALL
62%**

TENEBRA 2

Author: **Haplo**
Released: **2023**

The Amstrad excels at single-screen games. *Tenebra 2*'s atmospheric lighting and low colour requirements make it one of those games that takes full advantage of the CPC's strengths.

You play as a generic adventurer who's managed to get stuck in a series of increasingly difficult puzzles; either through your own desire to test your abilities or, as is more likely, because you weren't looking where you were going. Either way, you're here now, and you can't move outside of the lit areas, which is going to make getting home all that more difficult. Thankfully, there are torches you can pick up to bring the light with you, but good luck getting through the other obstacles in your way.

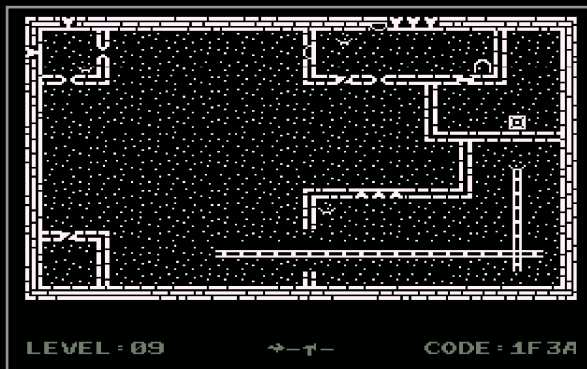
Sound is very limited: a few blips and bleeps are all

you're getting here.

If you're looking for a kickass soundtrack, you'll have to look



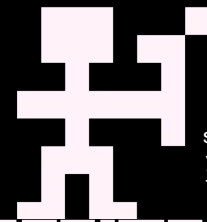
Above & Below: The dark rooms of Tenebra 2, chock full of even more devious levels and puzzles.



elsewhere. If bleeper sounds aren't your thing, you can turn them off with the S key.

The aim of the game is to reach the exit on each of

35 levels. The levels start out easy but quickly introduce devious puzzles like one-way portals (activated with a "Portal Gun", so no points for guessing which games



Zoë

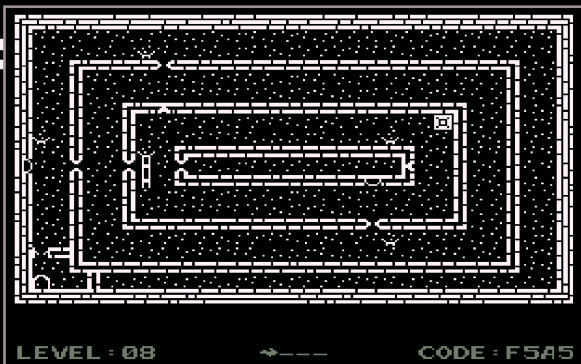


CRITICISM

I adore dungeon crawlers and puzzle games, so *Tenebra 2* is right up my street. The graphics make this feel like a successor to *Adventure* on the Atari 2600, which is no bad thing. While I could have done with a bit more sound to really build the atmosphere, I can't say much else in criticism of this game. The simple sprites make the game easy to understand, and the game runs incredibly smoothly, which is a joy. The levels can be a real head-scratcher at times, especially later on, but once you're comfortable with all the items you can use and how all the obstacles work, the game becomes a joy to play. Just don't expect to finish it all in one night, even if there are only 35 levels. Keep a notepad handy to jot down the level codes because you'll be coming back to this one time and time again.

the developers enjoy playing), passages you can't get through while holding a torch, passages that collapse when you go through them, and more. When these obstacles are combined, the game goes from a quick bit of fun to a devious puzzle that will test your wits to their limits.

The symbols are all very distinct, so you know exactly what's going on at all



Above: Show me the light! As you complete the levels the maze is fully revealed.

times. The screen flashing (to mimic the flickering or torchlight) may cause some problems for anyone with light sensitivity, however.



Chris



CRITICISM

Much like its first outing, *Tenebra 2* brings the gaming joy of the ZX81 to the Amstrad CPC, with its monochrome look, blippy sounds, no music but with clever and fun gameplay that is entertaining. The style creates a mood that suits the setting well, and the addition of new elements to the levels, along with the primary torchlight concept, is very welcome. Sometimes the most basic-looking titles can produce something quite special if the effort is put into solid and pure gameplay, and this underlines that old gaming adage masterfully.

This can be turned off using the F key, but it doesn't always work on some emulators.

This is a very slick, very tricky puzzle game with a lot of atmosphere. An absolute must-play.



PRESENTATION 95%

Well laid out. Simple but effective.

GRAPHICS 85%

Yes they're basic but everything is clear and does the job.

SOUND 60%

It's a beeper. No music.

ADDICTIVENESS 95%

A compelling puzzler. Oh you bet you'll want just one more try.

LASTABILITY 95%

This isn't one you're finishing in one night, you'll be back for more.

**OVERALL
84%**

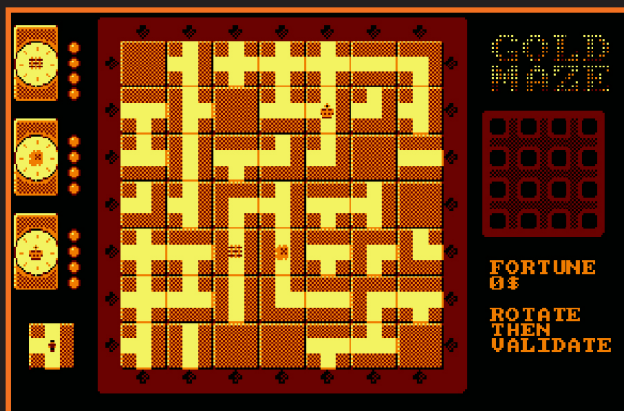
Above: The Gravity Gun! A new feature that adds a new dimension to the gameplay.

GOLD MAZE

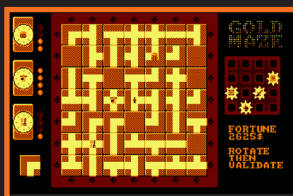
Author: **Retrovynz**
Released: **2023**

Maze games are as old as video gaming itself and are the basis of some of the most classic titles such as *Pac-Man*, *Berserk*, and *Bombberman*. Surely every conceivable gameplay element has been incorporated into a maze game. Several excellent titles like *Fast Food* and *Maze Mania* on the CPC are fondly remembered. So, it comes as a surprise when a new one comes along and presents an original idea which is oddly attractive. Conspicuous at first viewing, and possibly misleading given the title screen, *Gold Maze* blends several tried and tested puzzle tropes to create something rather interesting at least and infuriatingly addictive at best. The theme reminded me of a forgotten Amstrad type-in program called *Treasure Hunt* (gold star for you if you can recall that one!), merged with the type of plastic sliding puzzle which was often handed out as party gifts.

As the unnamed explorer, you have to collect the treasures that appear on screen while

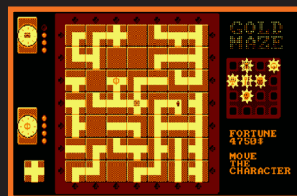


Above & Below: The ever-changing floor tiles of the Gold Maze. Confused? You will be, but it doesn't take long to find your feet.



you plot a course to obtain them. This is done by adding parts of the maze into the sides, sliding that row or column in the chosen direction, altering the paths.

The treasures only appear for four moves at a time, so planning your route and positioning the pieces carefully is



key to gaining the high points and collecting rewards. These are called 'successes' and there are 8 of them to achieve, which reward with bonus points once the game concludes. The combination of plotting a route, rotating the parts, and the timing of when this is done to grab the treasures before they vanish is a complex but highly enthralling concept. At first

Chris



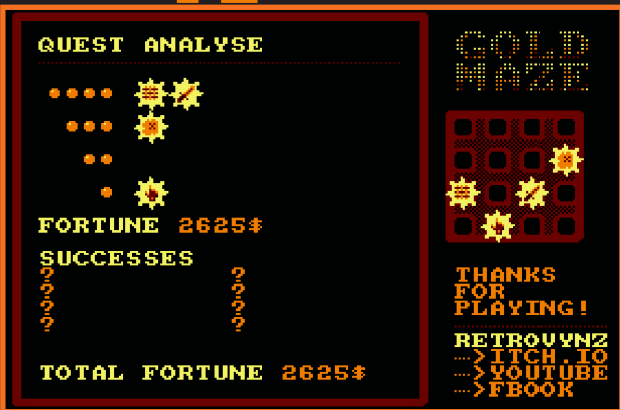
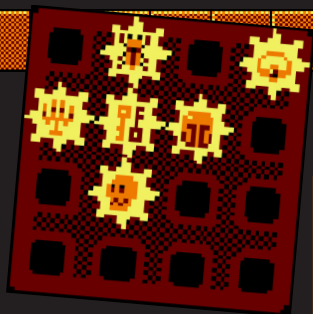
CRITICISM

Detailed and smartly drawn using mode 1 with a C64-like colour palette of gold, yellow, and browns, the visuals are unlikely to give you the wow factor but on the other hand, are perfectly suitable and serviceable for this type of game. A fine 'gold skull' motif title screen with a nice mellow tune to accompany it gives the impression of a 3D maze adventure, but it's a top-down puzzle affair, so try not to be disappointed. Appropriate effects are used in the right amount in game to keep the ears tuned while the addition of navigating the maze with easy-to-use controls and grabbing those treasures takes over. If you are a puzzle fan, this game is addictive. Very addictive. Some may struggle with the concept at first, but stick with it because once it 'clicks' you will enjoy the gold!

glance, this all looks a rather tedious task. I admit I was not inspired on first playing. But once I got the idea, the mechanics of the puzzling



and scoring became clear, I began to delve even deeper, finding myself in quite the lost treasure hole!



Above: A welcome addition - The Quest Analyse screen keeps you fully informed of your progress

Gordon



CRITICISM

With Gold Maze, we have a thinking man's maze game for those who are fans of the excellent - and timeless - board game Labyrinth; you will know what to expect. I adore figuring out the correct orientation of the maze tile and placing it in the right location so my little stick man can reach the glories. It sounds simple and perhaps a little pedestrian - but trust me, it's addictive and engaging - made more challenging with the ever-shifting treasures.

PRESENTATION 80%

Consistent style and a lovely title screen which could be misleading, but overall very nice.

GRAPHICS 72%

Mode 1 throughout fits the theme well, with some nice detailing in parts.

SOUND 75%

Pleasant tune on the title screen with the right amount of effects to add a little highlight to the proceedings.

ADDICTIVENESS 96%

Once you work out the way the game functions, it becomes rather soul-catching to obtain all those reward bonuses.

LASTABILITY 80%

Lots of replay to keep beating your best score.

OVERALL
81%

ERIC CUBIZOLLE

AKA TITAN

For most, if not all our readers, the name Eric Cubizolle will require no introduction. Or perhaps you know him better by his pseudonym, TITAN. Either way, Eric has been an active and integral part of the CPC scene for a number of years now, showcasing some of the greatest CPC artwork, graphics, and loading screens ever seen. So we at AMTIXCPC towers thought it was about high time we caught up with Eric to learn about his love and passion for the Amstrad CPC.

Colin Bell: Eric, thank you so much for taking the time today to join us here at AMTIXCPC Towers.

Eric Cubizolle: Thank you! Especially for your interest in me.

CB: Before we get into the CPC and your graphics, tell us, where does the pseudonym TITAN come from?

EC: Like many children of my age at that time, I was fascinated by mythology and the wonderful world of Heroic Fantasy which

was booming during the 1980s. Given that it was customary in my computer science class to sign your work with a pseudonym, I naturally wanted to find something cool. The idea for the TITAN nickname came to me after watching the film "Conan the Barbarian" on TV. I was already a big fan of Schwarzenegger, and this film only reinforced my desire to opt for a "muscular" nickname (perhaps also to compensate for the abs that I didn't have, lol!). This is how, at the age of eleven, I chose "TITAN", never to part with it again.

CB: When did you first come across the Amstrad CPC, and what systems, if any, did you have before it?

EC: The first time I came across the Amstrad CPC was when a school friend invited me to his home to show me his monochrome

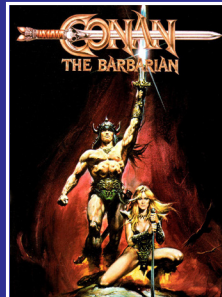
CPC6128 that he had received for Christmas. At that time, I had a Philips VG5000 that was a little sluggish (but which I still really

liked). Needless to say, compared to those of my frail machine, the capabilities of the CPC completely dazzled me! After playing a whole bunch of games that day I was already considering a whole load of creative possibilities, in addition to the fantastic hours of entertainment that this machine

promised! In short, at the end of this day, forever anchored in my memory, it was an Amstrad CPC that I needed! In the process, I sold my VG5000, saved some money, and treated myself to a colour CPC6128 that following Christmas!

The acquisition of this wonderful machine was not without difficulty, however.

The end of year holidays were approaching, and I was rather sick with a nasty flu. But nothing, and no one, could stop me, for



Right: The Philips VG5000

this was the day I had planned to go to the computer store early in the morning to purchase my new colour CPC6128, the one I had been dreaming about for so long. However, seeing my feverish state, my parents insisted that I consult the doctor first. Resigned to the fact, I headed towards his office with the ardent hope that the visit would not drag on. It was around 9:30 am when I was finally able to get back on the road that led to the computer store. As I entered the store, I encountered the blissful smile of a young boy who was holding in his hands the imposing box of a brand-new CPC that his father had just bought him. I was convinced that I would wear this smile in a few minutes until the next sentence out of the store assistant's mouth fell like an axe! 'I'm afraid that was the last CPC, we're now out of stock throughout the region'. I couldn't believe it, the very last CPC had left right before my eyes. Damn flu! I then had to wait another fifteen days while the restocking took place, so that I could finally get my hands on the system I had longed for!

CB: Goodness Eric, that's horrendous! What were some of the first games that you ever played on the CPC? Did they inspire you to write your own games?

EC: The very first games I discovered during that infamous afternoon at my friend's house were *Batman*, *Cauldron*, and *Roland in Time*. I was particularly captivated by the atmosphere emanating from *Batman* and *Cauldron*. *Batman*'s isometric perspective graphics looked so realistic to me! I loved the Halloween atmosphere

of *Cauldron* and being able to twirl



Right: Holy isometric perspective Batman!



underground caves. Furthermore, the number of screens in *Roland in Time*, which seemed endless, gave me a feeling of freedom like I had



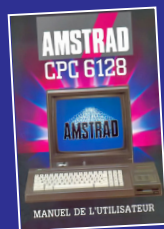
never experienced in a video game. In my eyes, it was like an open-world experience! I can't say for sure if these three specific games inspired me for my own creations, but ultimately I think they must have. In fact, I think it was the whole Amstrad software library that influenced me. For example, when I created the graphics for *Vengeur*, it is undeniable that I had those of *After the War* in mind.

CB: During the late 80s and early 90s you created your own CPC demos, applications, and even some games. Was this achieved utilising the CPC's own Locomotive BASIC, or did you use any specialist programming tools?

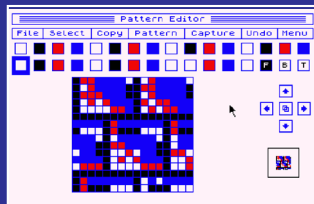
EC: I have always used BASIC for programming. This is actually something I had already adopted on the VG5000. It must be said that, like many kids at the time, I was completely self-taught when it came to computers. In fact, I wasn't very good at programming, I mostly learned on the job. And the only programming book I owned was the Amstrad CPC6128 user manual.

It was therefore quite natural that I turned to

in the air with the witch's broom, as well as exploring all the



other languages existed! If the Amstrad user manual had covered assembly or machine language rather than BASIC then I probably would have programmed in those languages. On the other hand, I also really liked using third-party tools which allowed me to improve or enrich my projects. For example, I used *OCF Art Studio* for graphics, *Echosoftware* for speech synthesis, *Discology* for file manipulation, and even RSX commands copied from magazines, which made my task easier.



Above: Playing with power. The fantastic OCF Art Studio.

CB: Would I be right in saying you also created a disk-based CPC Fanzine called CPC-Mag?

EC: Yes! The fashion for fanzines was very strong at that time and, as an eternally hyperactive creative person, I obviously wanted to follow suit. So, via OCF Art Studio (I knew absolutely nothing about DTP, lol!), I created the pages for the five issues of CPC-MAG that I distributed on floppy disk. I also sometimes used the DART scanner for certain illustrations. From No. 5,

this language, which was very complete for the CPC. Truth be told, I think I wasn't even aware that



the fanzine moved to paper format. Looking back, I realize that his content was actually VERY naive, lol!



Above: Eric's disk based fanzine - CPC-MAG.

CB: With the emergence of 16-bit technologies, like many of us you left the CPC behind and purchased a Commodore Amiga. Did you continue to program and develop games and demos on this system?

EC: The Amiga was a true revolution in terms of capabilities and performance, at every level. And it quickly managed to turn me away from CPC. But even with the likes of Deluxe Paint for graphics and Protracker for music, it didn't have any BASIC integrated. There was, of course, Amiga BASIC, which was supplied on the Workbench floppy disks, but it wasn't very good. Consequently, the graphics and countless musical modules that I created

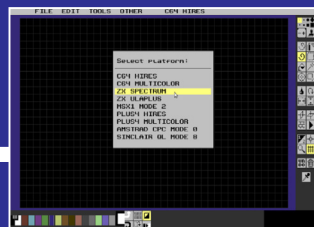
on the Amiga remained mostly orphaned on my floppy disks and of no real use since I no longer programmed. The games for the Amiga, however, offered a more attractive video game experience, and I have to admit that I spent a lot of time playing them! *Shadow of the Beast*, *Unreal*, *Agony*, *Another World*, *Turrican II*, *Monkey Island*, *Worms*, *Jim Power*, *Battle Squadron*, *Moonstone*, and many other titles quickly captured my attention. Despite this, I actually managed to create a Point'n Click type game on the 16-bit Commodore: *Atlantis Machine*. This would not have been possible without the help of Sylvain Martinez, a talented programmer on AMOS. I really enjoyed working on *Atlantis Machine*, I took care of the graphics, music, sound effects, and part of the storyline. The story takes the player across the world to the lost city of Atlantis, in search of his uncle, an intrepid explorer who has gone missing. For the record, this game was an opportunity for me to digitize and integrate the faces of some of my family members into the adventure. I also made a few small, insignificant Amiga demos, but I

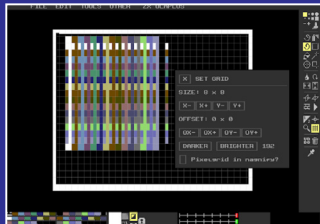
have no idea what happened to them.

CB: What inspired you to enter back into the CPC scene during the late 2010s?

EC: The answer can be summed up in one word: *Multipaint*! Developed by the brilliant Tero Heikkinen, *Multipaint* is graphics software allowing you to draw with the exact resolutions, palettes, and constraints of 8 and 16-bit machines of the time. The icing on the cake is that the results can be used on the actual machines themselves. Mode 0, Mode 1, Overscan,

and even the extended palette of Amstrad Plus / GX4000 are catered for! So I started timidly aligning a few pixels, just to see if I still had the knack all these years later, and then I just couldn't stop! This then allowed me to generate various illustrations, followed by title screens, sceneries, and finally sprites and their animations. After a while, I was able to provide all the graphic material for the creation of a CPC game! So I started





opening web pages where I offered this graphic material in order to attract programmers and musicians. Over time, some people responded to the call, including the ingenious programmer Kukulcan from CPC-Power, the incredible coder Zisquier, and the talented musician Pulsphonic. From these collaborations were born some Amstrad projects, demo's and games

such as *Space Race*, *Octopus*, *Goldorak*, *CPC Bullet*, *Missile Command*, etc.

So, to answer the question more precisely, it was this possibility of creating and offering real Amstrad games to the community, while enjoying the user-friendliness and intuitiveness of contemporary software, which really pushed me to come back into the CPC scene. Because, thanks to *Multipaint* combined with the talent of the team members, I could finally live my childhood dream, namely creating video games!

CB: Looking back over the years at many of the Amstrad CPC games you have been involved with it's clear that your graphics have a unique visual style that has become instantly recognisable. What is your creative process when designing and implementing graphics on the CPC?



EC: I have to admit that I have always been extremely admiring of the work accomplished by Spanish artists in CPC games. The flashy colours and the quality of the execution of their graphics are, for me, as much a visual pleasure as a nostalgic dive into my childhood. I also have a lot of respect for the incredible work of Mark K. Jones on titles such as *Gryzor* and *Renegade*. He is a real

inspiration to me. Even if it doesn't measure up to them, I'd say my style has been directly influenced by all these artists. For example, I really like colour gradients and playing with brightness and darkness, and in this domain, the Amstrad CPC is an inexhaustible source of possibilities! I love placing the pixels which, in the right place, will give volume, shading, shine, or even relief to a subject. This results in compositions that are generally very colourful, with focused lighting, where each subject stands out from the others. I am sometimes criticized for doing graphics from another age, but it is what I love, and it corresponds to my passion for the CPC.

I don't really have a specific creative process because I often operate on instinct and I also tend to experiment a lot. I sometimes create illustrations following a request from a programmer (the title screens of Mananuk's games for example), for the remake of

a title screen, to support a personal game project, or again for no real reason other than



just for the fun and pleasure of creating a new CPC screen. Generally speaking, I need a starting point that will be my source of inspiration. Because without that, I can't imagine myself in the creative process and it inevitably leads to blank page syndrome, or in my case to a black screen, lol! It could be something like an image found on an internet page, or as abstract as a simple idea that sprouted in my head during the night. Then I try to give substance to this inspiration on *Multipaint* (with more or less success, lol!). When the first lines give me satisfaction, I then continue with the

creation.

CB: Is there a particular creative vision you have in mind when creating games, and what do you consider your external influences to be?

EC: It tends to be different depending on the game and what its theme is. From a graphical point of view, I believe that a CPC game should have a title screen, an animated intro (if possible), a victory screen, a defeat screen, and tiles and sprites sufficiently worked so that it is possible to generate different visuals with as little graphic material as possible. This last aspect is probably the most restrictive because you always have to be careful to preserve the memory of

the machine, but it is also a very motivating challenge.

My influences are also



diverse and varied. For example, for *DEVILRY III*, my latest action game project to date, it was only after finishing the superb *Assassin's Creed Odyssey* on

from my desire to combine the board games *Trivial Pursuit* and *Snakes and Ladders* in the world of retro gaming.

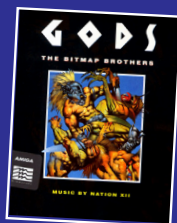
CB: As well as *Multipaint*, what other software tools, if any, do you use to create your graphics?

EC: I mainly use *Multipaint* for drawing, but I also use other tools, such as *Adobe Photoshop* for the composition of certain screens, or *ConvImgCPC* from *Demoniak* to generate a new working base. Finally, I use the rather antiquated but still useful *Microsoft Paint*.

to no longer use the dithering technique excessively. The next would be "Journey to the Centre of the Earth" (2022), which is the remake of the title screen of the eponymous game. It represents what I appreciate most in terms of fantasy adventure novels and imagination.

CB: Tell us a bit about some of your upcoming CPC projects that we have to look forward to?

EC: I am currently carrying out several projects at the same time. For each project, I take care of creating all of the graphic



PS4 that I had the irrepressible desire to create a new game on the theme of Ancient Greece. I then came across several sources of inspiration, including the game *GODS* on the Amiga

and *Roland of Sherwood* by Carnivius, before launching into



Above: *GODS* for Amiga - The inspiration for Eric's new project *Devilry III*

the design of my own graphics. As for *Space Race*, it was born

CB: Do you have a piece of CPC graphic artwork that you are particularly proud of?

EC: Proud is a big word, hehe! That said, there are two achievements which, to my eyes, stand out a little from the rest. Not because I find them more successful than the others, but because they really mean something to me. Thus, "Hackman" (2021) is witness to a certain shift in my style: it is from this screen that I decided



Above: Masterpieces! *Hackman* (2021) & *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2022)



material. One I'm working on at the moment is *Goldorak* for the GX4000, a technically impressive shoot'em up, but whose development has been



put on hold for a while to allow programmer Zisquier to succeed in his professional reconversion. There is also *Frogger Junior*, a remake of the famous arcade



game, *Frogger*, that programmer Redbug decided to undertake. And then there are also two projects for which I have not yet found a programmer (advisory to those interested!). This is *Roland*



Ahoy 2, the sequel to the pirate game and, above all, *Devilry III*, an action game in which the player plays an Athlete whose mission is to collect the treasures of ancient Greece in order to bring them back to the Gods. I put a lot of care into developing the graphics for the latter, and one day seeing

this game materialize would be a sort of consecration for me! Finally, I also have two other game projects with Kukulcan and Pulsophonic which, unfortunately, I cannot reveal anything about yet, but which I hope will see the light of day in 2024.

CB: Teasing there, Eric! We can't wait to see what these two secret projects are. To finish, we generally ask our interviewee their favourite three Amstrad CPC games and why. What would be your three?

EC: To name only three is really torturous, lol! So I would have to say: *Barbarian*, *Target: Renegade*, *Fruity Frank*, *Pirates!*, *Arkanoid 2*, *Ikari Warriors*, and *North & South*. What? What do you mean I mentioned seven?!?!? No really? Are you sure? Ha... sorry, I never knew how to count... otherwise I would have become a programmer instead of a graphic designer, lol!

CB: Not a problem Eric, it's a tough question! Finally, where can people find out more about you, the games you're involved with, and your stunning graphic artwork?

EC: I invite you to come and stroll

through my website: <https://amstradmuseum.emu-france.info> You can find all of my Amstrad projects there, as well as various articles and files about the world of this fabulous 8-bit micro!

CB: Thanks for sharing your fantastic and insightful CPC journey, Eric!

EC: Thank you, and long life to AMTIXCPC!



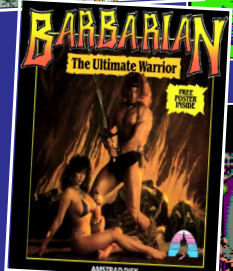
Target: Renegade



Arkanoid 2



North & South



Barbarian

THE CULT



Author: **Tartessos Games**
Released: **2023**

Review by Colin Bell

Set between the high mountains and a dense dark forest lies a mysterious village that contains a dark secret. Seemingly deserted at first you soon find out that the village has been overrun by foul grotesque monsters who upon sight immediately give chase.

The Cult is yet another ZX Spectrum game that has been ported over to the CPC which I'm very glad about because it's great! Thrown immediately into the action you must guide your character around



the village looking for clues as to what's happened to its inhabitants. Clues are found by locating and talking to the survivors who tend to hold up inside various buildings within the village that you can enter and explore. Some are locked and



Above: What's happened to all the local villagers? Crazy purple monsters appear to have taken over.

you'll need to find a key first in order to gain entry. Scattered around you'll find additional ammo for your gun, medi-packs that will replenish your health, and scrolls that reset your timer, which continually counts down to zero and results in game over when it gets there.

Most of the village's inhabitants have been turned into menacing purple monsters who will drain your health if they touch you. Thankfully, a few shots from your gun will destroy them, but they respawn pretty quickly so it's best to keep moving.

Delving deeper into the village, you soon start to unravel the mystery of what's been going on

and who or what may be responsible. You'll uncover what appear to be inner sanctums that contain puzzles requiring you to push ornate blocks into certain positions in order to open a locked door, which is made even trickier by the constant attacks from the pesky purple ones. Don't worry if you mess up, however; simply exit and re-enter the screen in order to try again. Clues also allude to certain items that may be required to help you ultimately stop this mysterious evil, but I'll say no more on that as I don't want to spoil anything for you.

Rest



Colin



It's great to see a modern title of this quality come to the CPC. The Cult is a great mix of several genres ranging between action, adventure, puzzle solving, and shoot 'em up, all set within a seemingly open world backdrop. The Mode 0 graphics look great, with lovely bold and chunky sprites giving you that vintage look and feel of an older CPC title. Musically, there is an in-game soundtrack which is eerie and atmospheric and it fits the game just perfectly. I love the exploration element to the game and the timer which gives an added sense of dread and urgency as you watch the seconds count down. I do agree with my colleague that the monsters spawn way too fast, which can be annoying, but overall The Cult is a great game and a great challenge.

assured, though: if you play *The Cult*, you're in for an entertaining and frantic time as you try to piece together

Gordon



I adore games that allow a player to explore the world created and one that isn't so linear that you are guided right through to the end. The Cult is an example of a game allowing players to discover things at their own pace, unveiling its secrets and taking delight in a mysterious place. I've not had as much entertainment in a mysterious village since Silent Hill. From its locked doors, sliding puzzles, and NPC-led (very concise) clues, there's a compelling desire to remain within the village until you find the source of the malice that engulfs it. The residents, who have all been turned into monsters, are the most frustrating part as they respawn way too fast. The game needs them, but they're more hindrance than menacing.

the mystery surrounding the village and its lost inhabitants.

CRITICISM

CRITICISM



Above: The loading intro screen. Off to the village we go!

PRESENTATION 89%

Great intro screen, good title music. Simple menu screen.

GRAPHICS 87%

Lovely Mode 0 graphics and sprites. Reminiscent of vintage CPC titles.

SOUND 85%

Eerie and atmospheric. Fits the style and tone of the game perfectly.

ADDICTIVENESS 93%

Exploration and a need to know who or what is behind the evil will keep you hooked.

LASTABILITY 92%

A great challenge. Plenty to explore and clues to unravel.

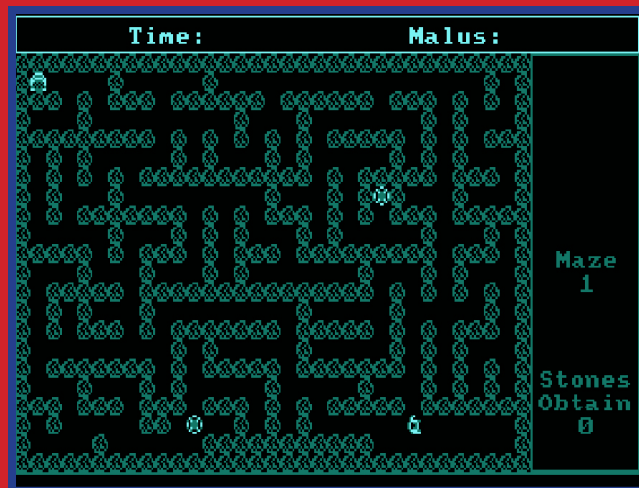
OVERALL 90%





Author: **Rayon Studio**
Released: **2023**

Shadow Maze follows the exploits of a young Celtic magician who goes by the name of Gwydion, who is on a quest to locate a potion of invincibility hidden in a nearby temple. Unfortunately for Gwydion, the evil wizard Merlin (yes, he's evil in this game), has gone and cast a spell on the temple which has transformed it into a dark and terrifying tomb. Time is running out for our Celtic magician, who must



escape the tomb by making use of the level's luminous stones. There are two stones per level, and picking one

up will give you a twelve-second time bonus, as well around five seconds of being able to see the full map again. Along the



Colin

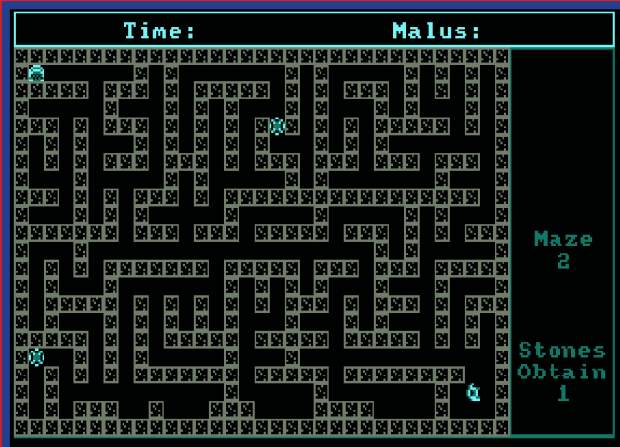


CRITICISM

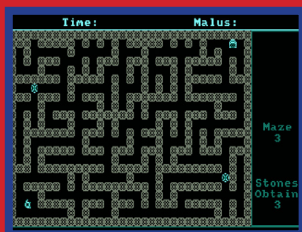
Shadow Maze was completely written in BASIC, so it's a little slow when loading the maze and in terms of the characters' movement. There's a decent tune which plays away on the title screen, but other than a couple of limited SFX in-game, that's about it. Graphically, the mazes are very simple, but there is a lovely loading screen which you see just to the left here. The game is straightforward and should you wish to avoid collecting all the stones and just make it quickly to the exit, but the real challenge with Shadow Maze is to collect all twelve stones, for only then can you truly say that you've completed it.



way, you'll also have to avoid pesky spiders and moving bottomless pits. It may seem easy at first to not bother with the stones, but your time carries over to the next maze, so it's worth picking up at least one along the way. However, should you wish to obtain the complete and best ending, then both stones need to be collected on each level. Having all the stones, of which there are twelve in total, allows Gvydion to carry on happily making his magical potions, and if he's short a stone or two, he can't complete them.



Above: Take a good look, for it's all about to plunge into darkness!



Above: Watch out for spiders and bottomless pits!

Gordon



CRITICISM

Besides the saturation of the lovely loading screen, Shadow Maze is best played on a GT64/65 monitor with a green screen. Imagine your darkened teenage bedroom, long past your bedtime curfew, playing this challenging maze game with its verdant hues slightly illuminating your walls, echoing the limited vision the in-game character has. The game is minimal, and the maze takes an age to be drawn on the screen, but it does have a very old-school charm and atmosphere.

PRESENTATION 70%

Lovely loading screen and nice title screen with back story and instructions.

GRAPHICS 60%

Very BASIC, as one may expect. Not much use of colour.

SOUND 55%

Good title screen tune, but not much else.

ADDICTIVENESS 65%

Has a one more go factor to it, but some may be put off by the slow pace.

LASTABILITY 60%

Easy to complete. Not much playability beyond finishing it once.

**OVERALL
62%**



INTERVIEW SPECIAL



reetings my fellow adventure fans, how nice to see you all once again down at the AmtixCPC Tavern. Today I'm rather excited as we have a very special guest joining us for a chat. Gareth Pitchford is an interactive fiction author who has created no fewer than eighteen adventure games, many of which have been converted for the CPC. As well as collaborating on many more games, he has also produced a fantastic book called *Twilight Inventory* which catalogs a number of forgotten 8-bit adventure games.

Colin Bell: Welcome, Gareth, to the AMTIXCPC Adventure Tavern, and thank you for taking the time to speak to visit us today. Obviously, you're a massive fan of the ZX Spectrum, which is fine by us! Can you tell us a bit about how your love for this fantastic machine began and when you first got your hands on one of Sir Clive's micro marvels?

Gareth Pitchford: The ZX81 was our first family micro, but once we tired of its 1K memory and "interesting" keyboard it was quickly followed by a 48K Speccy. Many of my fellow Spectrum fans think things went downhill with Sinclair when Alan Sugar got involved, but my favourite (and most used) Sinclair machine was our Amstrad-produced ZX Spectrum +3. I always think of it as a

distant relative of the CPC, especially

as I had CP/M for it, so played titles like the CPC/PCW version of Infocom's *Wishbringer*.

CB: What first inspired your love of interactive fiction and adventure games, and what made you want to write a game of your own?

GP: My dad and I were big fans of Tolkien, so we eagerly devoured Melbourne House's *The Hobbit* when it came out. I didn't really get seriously into text adventures until a few years later, and initially it wasn't through playing them; it was through reading and being inspired by the columns of people like Mike





Above: Mike Gerrard's *Your Sinclair Adventure* section.

Gerrard (in *Your Sinclair*), who wrote so enthusiastically and vividly about the genre. When I first started trying to write adventures, I hadn't actually played that many beyond the very old "classics" given away free on cover tapes.

CB: To create your games, you made good use of programs such as *The Graphical Adventure Creator*, *The Quill*, & *PAWS*. Did you find these programs easy to get into?

GP: Not at first, but then my initial contact with systems like *The Quill* and the *GAC* was on "homemade compilations" passed around by friends. Without the manuals, those systems were pretty

incomprehensible!

My first games were all programmed by Scott Denyer, who lived 150-odd miles away from me! I designed and wrote each game out on

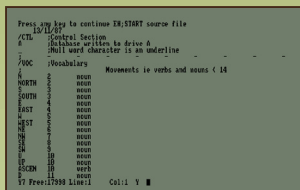
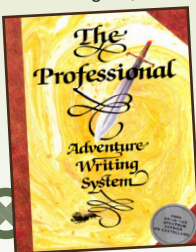
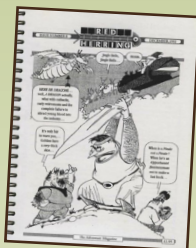
paper, including all the vocabulary, the map, responses, location descriptions, and messages. Then I laboriously copied everything out by hand and posted it all off to Scott. He did his best to wrangle my various scribbles into a playable game, and we then traded cassettes, disks, and letters back and forth by Royal Mail, until we were both happy with the results.

It was a world of postal orders and jiffy bags, and our community was based around fanzines like *Adventure Probe* and *Red Herring*. It was basically a small group of people producing games for each other to play. But it was a very warm, friendly & active community and we even had our own annual convention in Birmingham each year.

CB: Ultimately, you settled on *PAWS* as your favoured program for writing games. Was this simply a matter of progression, or did you find that *PAWS* had more powerful features and fewer limitations than the others?

GP: It was easily the most powerful 8-bit adventure writing tool out there, and by the time I was writing games myself the *PAW* really was the only sensible choice to use on the Spectrum. Unlike the Amstrad original, our version of *GAC* was quite slow and buggy. Gilsoft's *PAW* also

This was the time when text adventures were no longer commercially viable and were instead sold through mail-order homegrown adventure labels like Zenobi and WoW Software.



Above: *PAWS* - the most powerful 8-bit adventure writing tool.

had the advantage of letting you create 128K games, and I could run it from disk on my +3, which was a lot quicker and a lot more reliable than using cassette tapes.

CB: As well as the ZX Spectrum, many of your games are available for the Amstrad CPC. Did you port them over to the CPC yourself, and if so, how did you find the process? Or did you have some help with this?

GP: Around about the time we were writing games for the Spectrum, Anthony Collins (the author of Amstrad CPC adventures such as *Nythyhel* and *Miami Mice*) had started a new software venture called *The Guild*. It was originally focused on porting titles from the CPC and C64 to



You are standing in the office of The Guild. You are looking at the desk. There is a large desk against the right-hand corner of the room and a balcony by the main door. You also notice an envelope that says...

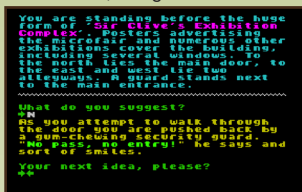
Above: *Nythyhel*, a two-part adventure with excellent graphics.

the Spectrum but moved on to do conversions in the other direction, too. Philip Reynolds helped Tony with a lot of the CPC ports and eventually launched his own venture, *The Adventure Workshop*. Phil was the one who did all the Amstrad disk versions of my games, and he ended up having a catalogue of over 120 Amstrad adventures, many of which started

life on the Spectrum.

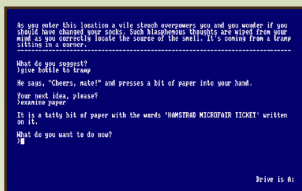
CB: In terms of your games are there any differences between the ZX and CPC versions?

GP: Aside from the simplified presentation, most of the Amstrad disk versions of my games were almost identical to the ZX Spectrum originals. *Microfair Madness* had the Speccy scene references changed to Amstrad ones, which I hadn't realised as I never got to play Phil's CPC ports back in the 1990s. It actually looked at one point like they were lost forever, but in 2019, a large number



Above: The original ZX Spectrum version of *Microfair Madness*

Below: The CPC version with reference changes.

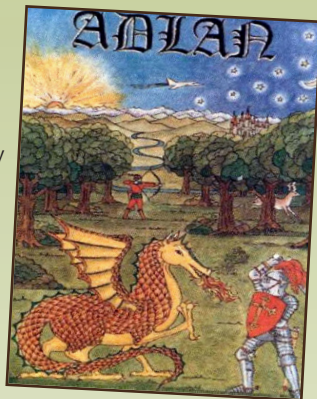


of The Adventure Workshop conversions were recovered from a disk that had been sent from Phil to John Wilson of Zenobi Software.

Creating a CPC disk version of a Spectrum PAWed game was fairly straightforward; you just basically had to transcribe the Spectrum database into a text editor on the Amstrad. One of the issues with the Amstrad version of the PAW was that it

only ran under CP/M. This meant that although you could make versions for both disk-based CPCs and PCWs, the games couldn't be played on tape-only CPCs. To get around this, Phil and his team (which included authors such as Simon Avery and Phillip L. Ramsey) would sometimes make completely different versions on cassette using other adventure systems such as *The Quill*, GAC, or the more powerful ADLAN. Looking back, it now seems a little mad to have gone to all that effort, especially given the low numbers of people actually buying the games!

Sadly, none of the ADLAN tape versions of my games survive or, indeed, many of the tape versions of the Adventure Workshop titles. In general, the homegrown Amstrad text



adventure scene from back in the day is not very well preserved. There are lots and lots of missing games, including a huge chunk of the large public domain collection put together by Debbie Howard (both the tapes and disks). It seems a particular shame that games created on the Amstrad only exist in their later ported-to-Spectrum forms. It would be great to see more of the original Amstrad titles recovered and archived in the future.

CB: By 1994 and after the release of *The Search for the Nether Regions* it would be the best part of 24 years before you returned to the scene

with *Scout's Honour*. What got you back into writing adventure games?



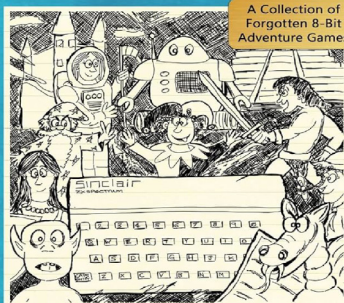
GP: I'd dipped into both the Spectrum & Amstrad scenes in the intervening years through

the various online forums. What really annoyed me was the way that whenever text adventures were discussed it was often the same titles again and again that came up; those early, primitive commercial titles, that were played by a lot of people, but were often just a bit rubbish. It frustrated me that there was not much chat about the games produced locally by the

UK homegrown community that I had fun being part of.

When I was stuck at home for a week or so in late 2017, I quickly put together a collection of "contemporary" reviews of games from the 1990s (published as the book *Twilight Inventory*) just to get the conversation about those old UK text adventures going. I think it ultimately did, especially as there were other people starting to do similar things at the same time, such as Thomas A. Christie with his *The Spectrum of Adventure* book, the late Stuart Williams writing for the *CRASH* magazine annuals, and Mark Hardisty

TWILIGHT INVENTORY



A Collection of Forgotten 8-Bit Adventure Games

Gareth Pitchford

Above: *Twilight Inventory - A Collection of Forgotten 8-bit Adventure Games* by Gareth Pitchford!

with his *The Classic Adventurer* publication.

Around about the same time, I was inspired by what people like Stefan Vogt, Carlos “Uto” Sánchez, John Wilson, and Chris Ainsley were doing with tools like *Inpaws*, *Adventuron*, and *DAAD*, and I decided to start making some new games myself. Some of those first titles I produced, *Scout's Honour*, *Trolley Mania*, and *The Revenge of Moriarty*, were all based on old designs from



the 1990s that I found in a folder. It was nice to finally get those games coded up and finished. It felt like fulfilling a promise to my teenage self.

CB: How does writing adventure games differ today from when

you wrote them back in the 90s? Do you still use any original hardware, or is it all emulation now?

GP: I create the games purely on a PC these days. When it comes to making PAWed games, there are some really nice tools that allow you to create source files in a modern PC text editor (similar to how the old Amstrad version of the PAWs worked). From one source file, I can create both a ZX Spectrum and an Amstrad CP/M version of a game. I get all the benefits

of features like syntax highlighting, spell checking, and time-saving tools such as find & replace, but I can still test the game almost instantly by compiling the database and loading it into the original PAW program running on an emulator.

I always start by making a PAWed game for the Spectrum and then one for CP/M on an Amstrad disk. Once I'm happy with that, I'll often convert the game to run using DAAD, which was a successor to the PAW that Tim Gilberts of Gilsoft created for the Spanish adventure house Aventuras AD. It uses the same basic



language that users of *The Quill* and the PAW will be familiar with, but allows you to target a much wider range of 8-bit and 16-bit platforms, including tape-based Amstrad CPCs.

CB: How have your modern titles been received within the adventure community?

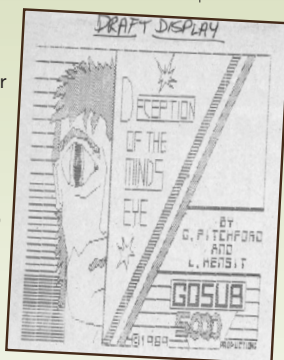
GP: I've had some really nice feedback and reviews but it's not something I go looking for. I'm mostly focused on creating things for my own amusement, and I get a real buzz from seeing a design on paper come to life on the computer. I'm not particularly interested in creating modern “interactive fiction”. The joy, for me, is to be able to create adventures of the kind that our little community was making back in the day.

CB: You have several unfinished games listed on your website: *Deception of the Mind's Eye*, *Destination: Planet of Origin*, *Methyhel 2*, & *Quiz Quest*. Are there any plans to finish these one day and release them for the CPC?

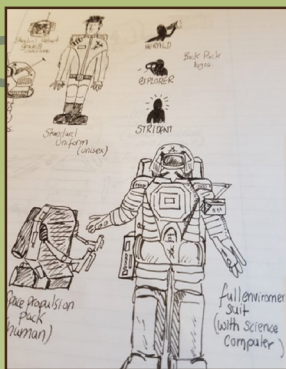
GP: Probably not. It's so much easier to start something brand new than go back to a half-finished design or partly-coded adventure, especially after a thirty-or-so-year gap. I think I'm probably done resurrecting old projects now.

That being said, there's a decent chunk of both *Deception of the Mind's Eye* and *Destination: Planet of Origin* already programmed and available to play, but both of those multi-part games would require whole new sections to be designed to conclude the stories. I

don't think anyone is crying out for me to finish those off. *Methyhel 2* was a sequel to Tony Collins' *Methyhel/Nythyhel*, so that would probably have more



Above: *Initial designs for Deception of the Mind's Eye*.



**Above: Initial designs for Destina-
tion: Planet of Origin.**

of an audience, but it never progressed past the early planning stages.

CB: Do you have plans for future adventure titles?

GP: Yes, I have plenty of projects on the go in various stages of development, but I'm not actively concentrating on anything particularly at the moment as real life is a lot busier than it was just a few years ago. When the mood takes me, I'll do a little more work on them. The 8-bit adventure community is a lot more active now, and there are plenty of text adventures out there, both old and new, for people to play in the meantime.

CB: What advice would you give other developers looking to create their own adventure games?

GP: I'd say spend plenty of time playing games created using the adventure writing system you've chosen. That gives you an idea of what is possible. Find things you like in those games and then go in and see how the author programmed it. Steal their code. That's what we all did back in the day!

Start by making a simple adventure first and build up from there. Having your first

game being an incredibly complicated, multi-part, sprawling opus is not a good idea. Unless someone else is programming it for you... (Sorry Scott). Above all, create something that you yourself would play... so at least you'll know someone will get some enjoyment from it.

CB: I know this may be a difficult question, but being a CPC publication, we have to ask. Favourite three Amstrad CPC games and why?

GP: Oh, I'm no good at making lists of anything, but I'll mention a few authors. We were really lucky in that we saw most of the great Amstrad homegrown adventures ported over to the Spectrum, including some interesting titles from people like Bob Adams, Simon Avery, Frank Fridd, and Stephen Boyd. On the Spectrum, my favourite authors included Jack Lockerby, Linda Wright, Ian S. Brown, and Steve Clay, and a lot of their work was ported over to the CPC.

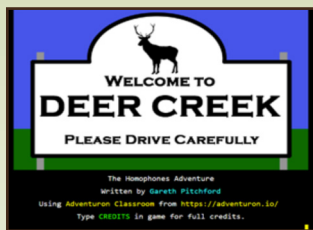
It helps to be in the right mindset when you go back in and play these games. They're not perfect; they're often obtuse and have features aimed at the player base at the time; and they were certainly never designed to be played in one sitting or without restarting at points. What they can be, though, is wonderful little time capsules, almost like diaries written by the author. That's what I hope my old games are, anyway. They transport me back to the 1990s when I play them. And then I get stuck and have to look up a solution.

CB: Where can people find out

more about you & your games?

GP: At the moment, all my adventure games are hosted at 8bitag.com. I tend to tweak and update them every so often, so that's the best place to go to grab the latest versions.

CB: Thanks for your time, Gareth!



From Top to Bottom: The Lone Electron, Personal Computing Whirled!, Man About the House & Deer Creek - just some of Gareth's other adventure titles. Find them all at 8bitag.com



For our first 'Flash Back' this issue, Zoë Kirk-Robinson dons the Helmet of Justice and reminisces about Activision's video game adaptation of hit kids 80's TV show *Knightmare* - Enter, Stranger!



Welcome, watchers of Illusion, to the Castle of Confusion - and you will be confused if you've ever tried playing this devious adventure game! *Knightmare* got quite the reputation back when it was first released, as it began as it meant to go on: frustrating players, and seeing them die repeatedly. The show it's based on had no winners in its entire first season, and the game seeks to emulate that difficulty level as closely as possible.

The thing is, *Knightmare* is a game you definitely can win - and win relatively easily at that. The solution on the CPC-Power

costs.

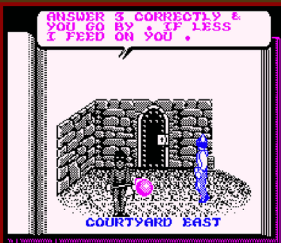
Monsters appear if you go back and forth too often. You can kill them, but they will get replaced.

Despite its flaws, this is a rather well-thought-out adventure game that rewards note-taking and planning. Get some paper and settle in because *Knightmare* challenges you to defeat it. Are you willing?



Above: Yikes! A talking wall monster. Questions three I have for thee!

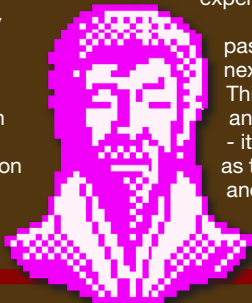
website is remarkably straightforward, and there are only 41 different screens in the game - fewer than *Fantasy World Dizzy*! *Knightmare*'s reputation comes solely from those first two screens, and how



obscure the solution was to get out of them.

Graphically, the game sucks. It's a Speccy port of the lowest order, and that's a real shame because it could have been amazing. Most of the sound effects are simple bleeper affairs too, but that title tune is something you have to experience. It's atrocious!

If you can make it past these barriers, the next one is the candle. This is your life meter and time limit combined - it goes down steadily as the game progresses, and you can't restore it, so avoid the monsters at all



Zoë



I played this game for years, losing every time thanks to the first two rooms and the incredibly short lifespan you get if you don't avoid the monsters. Nevertheless, something kept me coming back to *Knightmare* year after time. Yes, I was a fan of the show, but there was something else about it that made me determined to win no matter what. Play it and you'll see for yourself. Dare you beat the challenge?

CRITICISM



OLIVER FREY



JOHN SMYTH



TREVOR STOREY

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In the latest of this regular series, Graeme Mason looks back at six more of his favourite Amstrad CPC game covers from a particular year. In this issue, we're off to the year 1987.



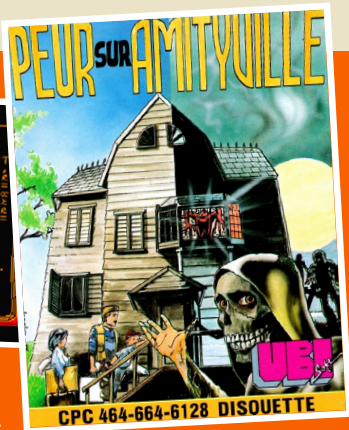
Game: Ace 2 Publisher: Cascade

The ACE series (an acronym for Air Combat Emulator) was Cascade's one genuine quality title and was well-reviewed across each format. While ostensibly simulations, the series focused more on combat, which is no more apparent than in the sequel, pitching two jets against each other in a head-to-head battle. While perhaps unfairly compared to Ocean's *Top Gun* game from earlier in the year, *Ace 2*'s cover is a supremely professional picture that manages to brilliantly portray the excitement of the game. An Eagle jet dominates the foreground, its cannons letting loose against an enemy that's yielded in a fiery explosion. Note the vista below, ships dotting the sea as the landscape curves nicely into the distance. In a nod to the game's head-to-head gameplay, two pilot heads face off against each other just beneath the game's title. Head to head. Geddit??



Game: Peur Sur Amityville Publisher: UBI Soft

Amityville – the house on the hill – Amityville! Anyone old enough to remember Lovebug Starski's hip-hop track will likely recall his catchy chorus rather than the horror movie. Publisher Ubisoft also cheekily tapped into the series with this horror text adventure, translated into English as Fear Over Amityville. The game itself is very good, especially the presentation: its text is in a book style, with lots of intimidating imagery and descriptions. I've highlighted this artist before – whoever they are, they have an excellent comic-book style that evokes those Top Trumps horror cards. An innocent family climbs the steps outside the foreboding house as a crimson demon awaits them on the first floor. What's unique here is how the scene presents in two shades: look at the skeletal figure's outstretched hand – where it hovers in the light side, it is normal, suggesting the forces of evil are disguising themselves to fool these poor people. Appropriately, much of the game refers to two faces, and at the top of the image, the bright blue sky of the light side contrasts with the swirling mists and moon of the dark. An imaginative and menacing cover.



Game: Infodroid
Publisher: Beyond / Denton Designs

I adore the simplicity of this cover. Stark, clean lines dominate it, with a high contrast between its muted colours. *Infodroid* is a racing game, with the player taking control of the title character, charging around its futuristic city delivering packages.

With Amazon apparently trialling delivering its packages via drone, this might not be as far-fetched as this Denton Designs game suggests! Created by the legendary David Rowe (*Knightmare*, *Soft Aid*, *Ant Attack*, etc.), plenty is going on here beyond its primary character. Streets below indicate that

these high-speed highways rise above the city, with the windows of apartments (or offices) nestling underneath. An impressive – and somewhat *Blade Runner*-esque – city rises in the distance, and it's all presented on a dramatic 45-degree slant that imbues a nice sense of speed. Finally, there are the solid yellow letters of the game's name, again at an angle and neatly tucked behind the upper spires of the city.

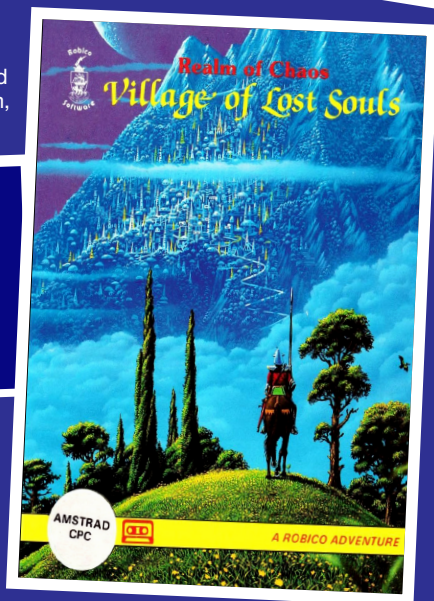
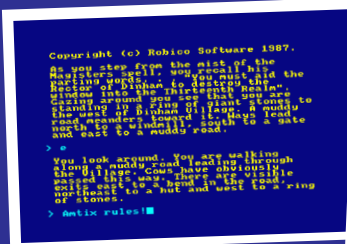


Game: Realm of Chaos: Village Of Lost Souls
Publisher: Robico Software

An aura of doom hangs low over the mediaeval [sic] world of Albion, begin the portentous instructions to this Robico adventure game. It's not wrong, though: a rogue lord is busy trying to prise open the portal to the thirteenth realm, a realm of terror, disorder, and – yes! – chaos. Up steps Nathan, Inquisitor Of The Order Of Leofric,

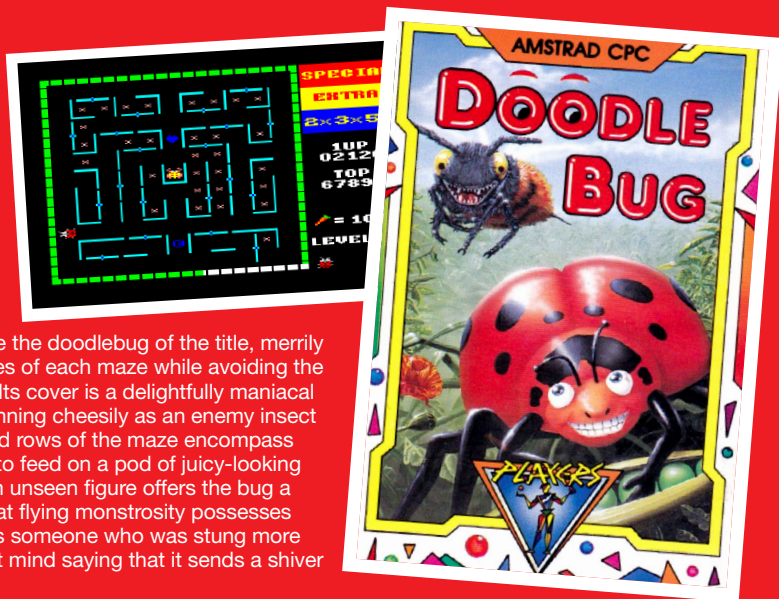
to combat this terrible menace. Overly wordy names aside, *Lost Souls*' cover is another quality picture. A lone figure on horseback (presumably Nathan) stands on a small grassy hill, observing the mountains before them. The contrast of

scenes and colours is expertly painted here: the beautiful and reassuring greens of the foreground lay against the cold and icy blues of the scene beyond. Mysterious clouds help cloak the transition between the two as the figure contemplates the journey awaiting them. I bet they're also thinking, that's surely too big to be a village – I guess *Town Of Lost Souls* doesn't quite have the same medieval ring.



Game: Doodle Bug
Publisher: Players

I'm finishing this month's covers with two bizarrely diverse images. Players didn't have the best reputation on the Amstrad CPC, and this – an uncomplicated and fast-paced clone of Pac-Man and Lady Bug – is probably one of its better games. You're the doodlebug of the title, merrily munching on all the daisies of each maze while avoiding the predators out to eat you. Its cover is a delightfully maniacal affair, the player's bug grinning cheesily as an enemy insect hovers above. The hedged rows of the maze encompass Doodlebug, who's about to feed on a pod of juicy-looking peas. Rather strangely, an unseen figure offers the bug a flower to the left, while that flying monstrosity possesses a wicked-looking barb. As someone who was stung more than once as a kid, I don't mind saying that it sends a shiver down my spine.



Game: Corridor Conflict
Publisher: The Power House

Finally, for this issue, we have another budget game, albeit one with a much different theme. When viewed with its title, this is a peculiar image devoid of any actual corridor. Yes, as often happened back in the eighties, the cover bears no similarity to the game, a bland two-player futuristic racer that lacks excitement, and indeed fun, on any level. However, its cover is an inspiring piece of work to any sci-fi fan with a sense of wonder. Sat inside his spacecraft, an astronaut gazes out impassively as their ship circles around a barren rock. The inky black depths of space are only briefly punctured by (what looks like) a distant planet Earth, yet the craft's control panel shines the most. Ludicrously overstated, this complicated instrumentation even resembles a spaceship itself and continues behind the figure. Look at those screens – is the middle one a rear view, showing a pursuing craft? It's a great cover for what is a mediocre game, even by The Power House's lowly standard.



AMSTRAD *Art* by Zoo Kirk Robinson

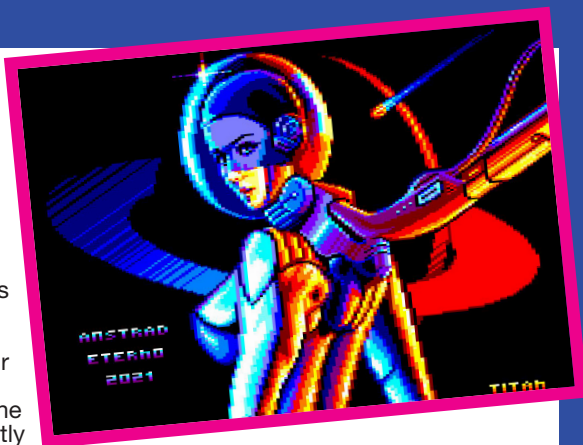
TITAN SPECIAL!

Ladies and Gentlemen, roll up, roll up! This issue, for your viewing pleasure, we have a selection of artistic amusement from a giant of graphics. We are all no doubt familiar with the works of Eric Cubizolle, aka TITAN. He has graced many an Amstrad forum across the Internet with his astounding mastery of shape

and colour. TITAN has been a long-time member of the CPC community, with his work stretching back to software written in 1989. These days he's mostly known for his art however, so let's choose four of his pieces to give them a thorough going-over (oohh-err! Steady on. - Ed). Let us begin!

1 - Amstrad Eterno : TITAN (2021)

To kick things off here's an electric blue offering that uses very cold colours to depict the main figure. This is an interesting mix of styles that shouldn't work, but somehow does. We're torn between the 1950s space helmet and overall pose of the woman, and the 1980s cyberpunk influences of the mechanism she's attached to. The two styles are further visually differentiated by the colour choices: cold blues and whites for the 1950s, then warm reds and oranges for the 1980s. Very stylish, very slick, and perfectly balanced out with the depiction of the planet and comet in the background.



2 - Girl Power : TITAN (2021)

Continuing with the comic art theme, here's Rogue from the X-Men, in a rather stylised pose that helps to balance out the frame. The character herself is left-aligned, but the 3/4 view and flowing hair help to fill out the centre of the image just nicely. In contrast, the right of the image is balanced by the use of violet and purple jagged lines, which admittedly do pull the eye a little. Meanwhile, Rogue herself is depicted in warmer tones that help to tone down the vibrant green and blue of her costume, rendering a balance to the image that could otherwise have been missing. This is an excellent demonstration of both form and composition. Very impressive.



3 - Kong Strikes Back : TITAN (2022)

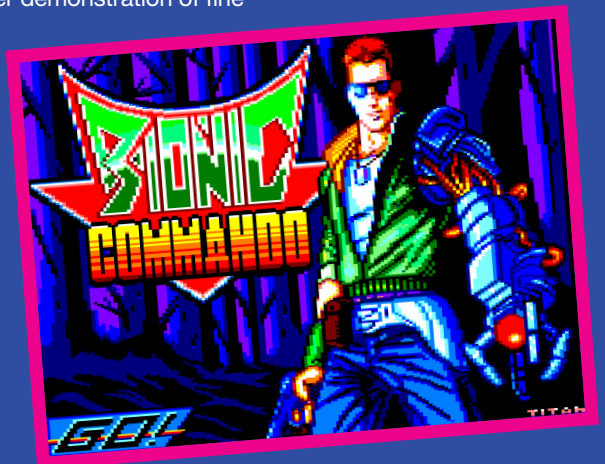
This has to be one of TITAN's most striking pieces: a close-up image of a scowling beast in pinks and purples. The CPC does comic or pop art incredibly well, thanks to its vibrant palette, and TITAN is showing that off to great effect. The face of Kong is depicted with blocks of bold colour,

which makes it pop out of the screen in contrast to the deeper blacks, blues, and purples that are dithered together to give a blended, more natural feel to the fur. It's incredibly effective, as is the use of a subtle white outline around Kong, which TITAN uses grades of lighter colours to blend into. The bold red background helps weight the upper quadrants of the frame against the darker foreground figure, giving the whole piece quite a foreboding feeling. Fantastic!



4 - Bionic Commando : TITAN (2023)

Our final piece for this issue is another demonstration of fine comic art. Here, instead of the stylised female form, we have the stylised male in "action man" guise. The warm greens and oranges used for the man and his jacket balance the cold blues of his mechanical arm - it's balance he probably needs because that arm is ridiculously oversized. Notice how the reds and oranges on the arm itself stand out so much - our commando is practically overloading with power and it literally shines through in his wiring - but his cocky grin tells us he's perfectly in control, nevertheless. Very impressive visual storytelling. As always, the piece is perfectly balanced by the use of huge lettering in vibrant colours on the left of the frame. An excellent composition.



COMPILATION CORNER



Welcome to 'Compilation Corner', where we celebrate the fantastic big box compilations of yesteryear. In this issue, it's Domark's turn once more, as Colin Bell takes a look back at *Heroes*, a compilation featuring some the hardest and most legendary action heroes of the 1980s.

HEROES

There's absolutely no denying that some compilation box sets stand out above others. *Heroes* from Domark is one such box set and a prime example of why we started Compilation Corner. Just look at that box art; if that doesn't stir up 80's nostalgia within you, then I don't know what will. Weapons at the ready and bursting out from the flames are some of the biggest and baddest action heroes from the 1980s featuring, from left to right, none other than Timothy

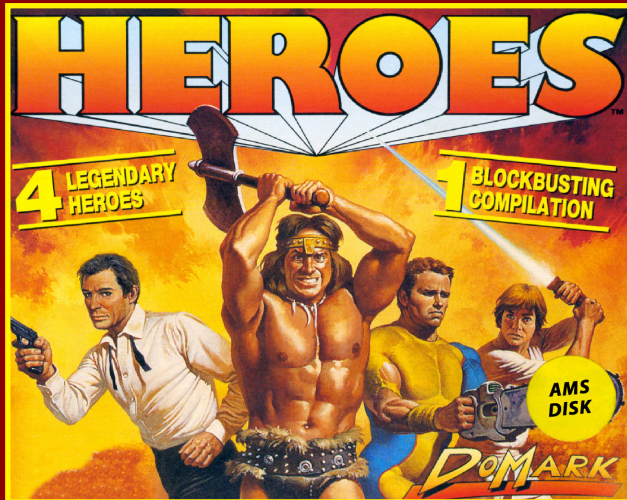
Dalton's James Bond, Arnold Schwarzenegger as Mad Dog Ben Richards from *The Running Man* movie, the slightly more timid Mark Hamill as Luke Skywalker from *Star Wars*, and standing front and centre, the mighty *Barbarian* as modelled by Michael Van Wijk, who many of you will also remember as Wolf from hit 90s show *Gladiators*.

As ever, despite being a Domark compilation, only *Licence to Kill* and *Star Wars* are actual Domark releases. *Barbarian II* belongs to Palace Software, and *The Running Man*, *Grandslam*. Each title was a fine example of what a CPC game could achieve

graphically; all were generally praised by the magazines of the time. The best game of the compilation goes to *Barbarian II: The Dungeon of Drax*, the highly

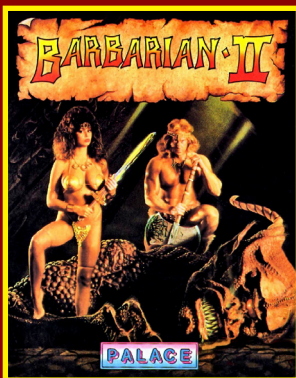


Above: What an advert! Advertising for *Heroes* appeared in just about every gaming mag of the time.



Above: Calling all the heroes! 80s action hero artwork at its finest. How could you resist? Answer - you couldn't!

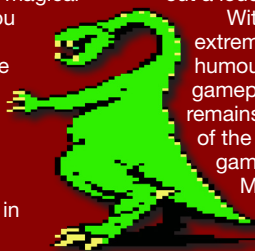
BARBARIAN II



anticipated sequel to Palace Software's bloody brilliant *Barbarian: The Ultimate Warrior*. Having rescued Princess Mariana from the clutches of the evil wizard Drax in the first game, the *Barbarian* must this time team up with the princess,



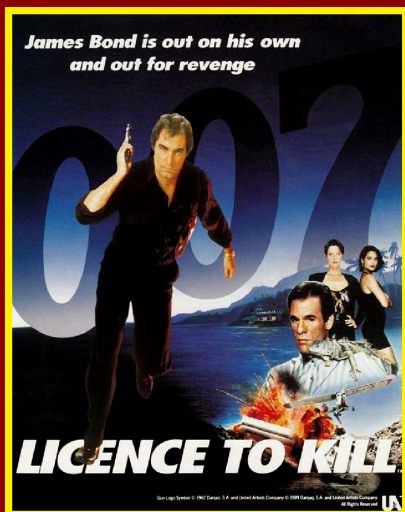
who also turns to be a dab hand with a sword, and put an end to Drax who has fled to his dungeon hideout. Unlike the first game, where two players could go head to head in virtual combat, the sequel is a single-player hack 'n' slash affair taking place over four levels. These include the wastelands, caves, and dungeons before the final showdown with Drax himself within his inner sanctum. Along the way, you'll collect magical artefacts to aid you on your quest, as well as take on the many weird and wonderful monsters, dragons, and downright odd beings that stand in



Above: Why you're a pretty one ain't ya! Many weird monsters await!

your way. All the characters in the game are superbly drawn and feature some of the most realistic movements and animation you'll find in an 8-bit title. Playing the game, you can either choose to be the scantily-clad Barbarian with his mighty double-sided battle axe or the equally scantily-clad Princess Mariana with her slender yet sharp two-handed broadsword. The combat is great fun and features several well-animated moves such as a high chop, low slash, kick, and my personal favorite, the spinning neck chop which, if timed and landed perfectly, will see your opponent's head chopped clean off. Much like the original title, the game features a decent amount of bloody gore, which as kids we all loved while our parents shrieked in horror! There was also a decent bit of humour attached to the gore, especially when you were defeated. Cavemen would turn, look at you, and laugh while dragons would bite your head clean off, then let out a loud belch.

With its fine blend of extreme violence, bloody humour, and realistic gameplay *Barbarian II* remains to this day one of the best CPC fighting games ever. Doesn't Mariana still look great, too?



Above: The name's Bond, James Bond. No-nonsense Timothy Dalton takes on the iconic role for a second and final time.

Licence To Kill

Mr 'Shaken but not Stirred' returns in what is, in my humble opinion, the best 8-bit Bond game. The ruthless drug baron Sanchez is out to corner the world's drug market, and it's up to Bond to track him down. Set across six vertical scrolling levels, the game follows the plot of the movie and sees Bond chasing down Sanchez and his minions over land, sea, and air. First off, you must chase Sanchez, who's in a Jeep, in your Coast Guard helicopter before



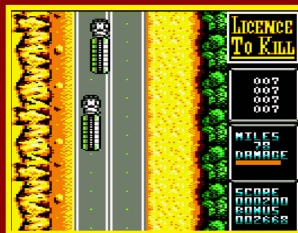
continuing the pursuit on foot. Then it's back into the helicopter as Bond chases Sanchez in his small plane. Just like the opening scene from the movie you must manoeuvre Bond, who's now hanging outside the helicopter on the winch system, over to Sanchez's plane and hook the tail with the winch. Next, it's time for a bit of Scuba diving action as Bond traverses unfriendly waters filled with Sanchez's diver henchmen and their

dinghies. The water action continues as Bond ends up being towed along behind one of Sanchez's drug planes. Here, you must draw the line in order to reach the plane while avoiding rocks and buoys in the water.

The final level again mimics the movie and starts



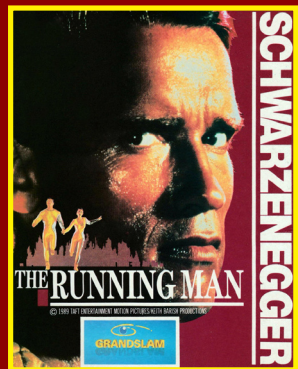
Above: Chase down drug baron Sanchez on foot in the second level of this excellent movie adaptation.



Above: The final showdown! Ram the drug-filled tankers off the road. Watch out for stinger missiles!

with Bond landing on one of the drug-filled tanker trucks, taking control, and chasing after the slippery Sanchez, who ain't going

to escape this time! Graphically, the game looks great, and while the scrolling is a little jerky at times, it doesn't affect the gameplay. Not bad, considering Bond at this point had been in active service for 37 years!





Arnie's back! This time as Ben Richards, a framed soldier who's been selected against his will to compete in the most popular and brutal game show of the future, *The Running Man*. If you've seen the movie, you'll know the score. Help Arnie punch and kick his way across the various game zones, where you'll have to defeat one of the show's stalkers in order to progress. As with the movie, you'll first have to tackle the hockey fan Professor Subzero before

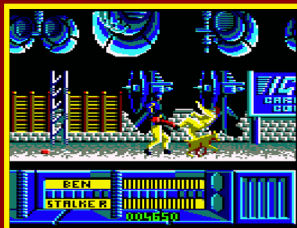


taking on the chainsaw-wielding maniac that is Buzzsaw. Then it's opera-loving Dynamo, followed by Fireball and his flame thrower. Thankfully, there are a few weapons scattered around, which, in some cases, are required to defeat the stalkers.



Above: Killian! I'll be back! - A quality intro animation precedes the main game.

In between each level, you'll get the chance to crack the show's uplink code, which Mick and the resistance need to hack into the TV network. Cracking the code is crucial as it replenishes your health before the next level stage begins.



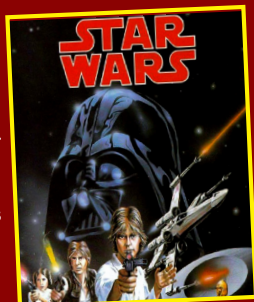
Above: I love this saw, this saw's a part of me. And I'm gonna make it part of you! - Buzzsaw.

The Running Man isn't a bad game, but it is the weakest of the compilation. The intro sequence is a nice added touch, and graphically it's not bad. The collision detection is a bit iffy at times, as is the combat. With a bit more refinement this could have been a great game, but as it stands, it's unlike a can of Cadre Cola - it just doesn't quite hit the spot!

STAR WARS

Our final game of the pack, *Star Wars*, is a rather good port of the vector arcade original by Atari. Take to the stars as Luke Skywalker in your X-wing starfighter as you launch an attack on the Empire's ultimate weapon,

the Death Star. First, take on wave after wave of TIE fighters as you clear a path to the Death Star's surface. From here you must destroy or avoid the turbo lasers before entering the trench for the final run. Make your way along the trench, avoiding the laser fire and

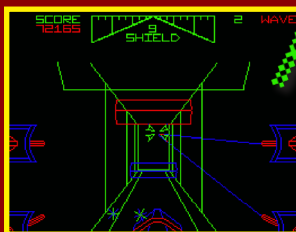


Above: Red 5 standing by! Jump into your X-wing and blast those TIE fighters!

structures until you reach the critical exhaust port, where only a well-aimed shot will destroy the Death Star.

It's an excellent port of the arcade game, complete with fast-moving vector graphics and a good rendition of the *Star Wars* main theme.

So there you have it, folks. What's not to love about Domark's *Heroes* compilation box set? Still readily available, why not treat your collection to a copy now.



AMTIXCPC Files



Welcome to the first edition of the AMTIXCPC Files. We've been doing these features inside the other magazines for a few months now, so thought it was about time we looked back at the story of a few special Amstrad games, as told inside the pages of classic AMTIX magazine. To get us started, Graeme Mason delves into the files of that isometric beauty from Electric Dreams, *Spindizzy*.



The Game



Spindizzy takes place in Hangworld, which, as its name suggests, is a world hanging in space. Unlike other isometric adventures, the objective in *Spindizzy* is simply to explore the world, cataloguing its many hills and troughs inside your Gyroscopic ExplorAtion Landing

Device – AKA, GERALD. Moving GERALD consumes energy, which is topped up by collecting the

numerous crystals in the land of Hangworld. With some of



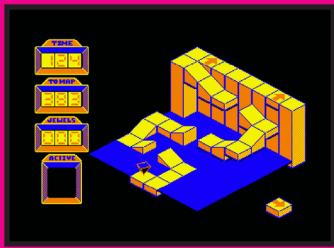
its locations requiring pinpoint navigation and jumps, this is no easy task – and there are a mammoth 385 screens to explore! Inspired by the games of Ultimate, ace programmer Paul Shirley created *Spindizzy* for the Amstrad before Electric Dreams ported the game to other (inferior) computers.

The Advert

Spindizzy's advert appeared in issue six of

AMTIX. Its beautifully clean lines perfectly mimic the game: GERALD teeters on the cusp of a chasm, poised to further explore the game or plummet to its doom. One of those valuable crystals sits to the left, and the artist employs some excellent shadow effects. "A 3-D Game Of Skill" proclaims the blurb underneath the game's title, and how true that is. *Spindizzy*'s reputation as one of





Above: The obscure-yet-challenging world of Spindizzy.

the Amstrad's most challenging games is well-deserved.

The Review

most impressive games I have seen on ANY home micro," proclaimed anonymous reviewer three, and their colleagues were no less impressed. "Spindizzy is a truly outstanding release and will probably be used as a yardstick for future Amstrad releases," noted reviewer two, while reviewer one succinctly concluded: "I've not had so much fun for ages." With no negative comments whatsoever, Spindizzy's graphics, presentation, and gameplay came in for particular praise. Interestingly, the same issue of AMTIX

The Verdict

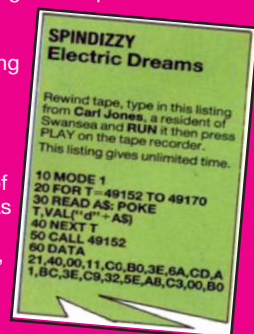
Let's start with the lowest scoring parts of Spindizzy's final scores, Sound, with a 'mere' 88%, and Value For Money, with 89%, no doubt affected by Electric Dreams' premier price point of £9.95. No matter. Scores of 98% apiece for Graphics, Playability, and Addictive Qualities ensured that Spindizzy became our

highest overall scoring game ever with 98%, at least until issue 18's double strike of The Pawn and The Sentinel. Along with the adventure creation utility, The Graphic Adventure Creator, these four titles were must-haves for Amstrad owners.

The Poke

Despite Spindizzy's high difficulty – time was never on your side in this game – tips

and a map were sadly unforthcoming from the AMTIX readers. Fortunately, Carl Jones of Swansea was on hand in issue eleven, submitting a



brought us Melbourne House's Gyroscope, an unsubtle clone of the arcade game Marble Madness. The reviewers noted its similarity to Spindizzy, yet Gyroscope disappointed them, scoring a mediocre 67%. How would the Electric Dreams game fare in the final tally?

GERALD zoomed into the AMTIX offices in time for issue five, and Spindizzy did not disappoint our reviewers. "Spindizzy is quite simply one of THE



nifty POKE that provided infinite time, leaving GERALD free to explore Hangworld at its leisure.

Chart Legend

Spindizzy's popularity with Amstrad owners (well, at least those who read AMTIX) was confirmed over the following months as the game took root in the upper echelons of the reader-voted chart. Debuting at

number 11 in issue seven, *Spindizzy* bounced around the top ten after that, hitting number one twice before settling into third place in the final chart of issue 17.

Interestingly, the month before, we'd put together a yearly chart showing the games with the total votes over the year. Top of the pile was Imagine's beat-'em-up *Yie Ar Kung Fu*; *Spindizzy* came a surprisingly low seventh.

Completed it mate!

So declared Julian Hearn of Aylesbury in the debut of Saffron's Scoreboard inside issue 12. Lagging somewhat behind Julian were Daryl Ward of Wigston and J Fontana

SPINDIZZY (Electric Dreams)
Completed Julian Hearn, Aylesbury.
218 Jewels Daryl Ward, Wigston.
53% J Fontana, Addingham.

of Addingham, and while *Spindizzy* featured heavily in the column, there were to be no further claims of actual completion.

Fancy That...

Meanwhile, issue 14's My Favourite Top 5 Games featured the group managing director of Activision Europe, Rod Cousens. Firebird's *Elite*, International Karate, and *Winter Games* made up the first four games, with *Spindizzy* notching first place on Rod's list.

While this may have raised the odd eyebrow among readers – Electric Dreams was part of Activision at this point – there was no doubting Rod's taste in games. "With *Spindizzy*, you have marvellous graphics coupled with superb gameplay, which is unquestionable," he declared.

Tearful Readers Awards

The final issue of AMTIX, 18, brought our second readers' awards. We predicted *Spindizzy* would perform well at this bittersweet ceremony, and



indeed it did, collecting several accolades. Despite missing

out on the Best Sound FX category (losing to *Elite*'s *Ikari Warriors*), the Electric Dreams game grabbed gold in a trio of prestigious awards: Best Game Overall, State Of The Art Award, and Best Programmer to its creator, Paul Shirley. Here was the confirmation that AMTIX readers adored *Spindizzy* and its loveable explorer,

GERALD.

Final Thought

As part of an elite 98% AMTIX Accolade club, there's no doubting *Spindizzy*'s excellence. But it wasn't just the game that endeared it to Amstrad fans – this was an original piece of software, created on our computer and undoubtedly the best version. Superbly playable, graphically gorgeous and a highly professional product from start to finish, *Spindizzy* was THE game for Amstrad fans to tout whenever the playground computer wars resurfaced.

AMCPC FLASH BACK

For our second 'Flash Back' this issue, Sean McManus travels back to 1986 and revisits the classic sliding puzzle game *Split Personalities*, by Domark Software.

SPLIT Personalities

Reagan's gone to pieces. Thatcher's in bits. Kinnock's all over the place. Yes, it's *Split Personalities*, the frantic sliding puzzle game where you put images of celebrities back together.

The game's original name was *Splitting Images*, and the choice of characters certainly looks inspired by the TV show *Spitting Image*. It's hard to imagine Reagan and Thatcher, let alone Kinnock, being the first choice for an



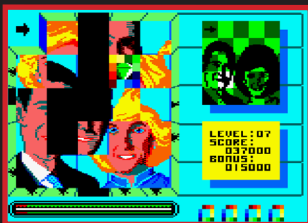
cept the frame starts empty. Pieces come in at the top left when you request them. You can fire them up, down, left, or right. They keep moving until they hit the wall or another piece. Putting the faces together requires both logic and luck because the pieces arrive in a random order.

There are doors around the edge of the screen that you can fire bombs or pieces through. There are also cracks in the wall that bounce the pieces back, and on later levels, the pieces bounce off each other, making them harder to position within the tight time limit.

Some special symbols arrive along with puzzle pieces. The bomb ticks down and explodes, taking one of your three lives unless you can hit it with a water tap or propel it through a door in time. On the

Charles and Diana screen, you get bonus points for combining a pair of big ears with a hair-dryer. There are lots of bonus combinations like that to discover. Smash the match against the fuel, though, and you're another life down.

It's a shame the game has little of the TV show's humour, but it remains a fun time capsule from the 80s.



Above: Slide those tiles - Can you guess who it is yet?



Above: You'd think this was Prince right? Wrong! It's Mick Jagger!

arcade game without the rubbery puppets as a reference point. This game's name was changed following legal threats from the *Spitting Image* team, but publisher Domark went on to release an official *Spitting Image* game.

Split Personalities is a bit like a sliding puzzle, ex-

Sean



AMTIX was lukewarm on this game when it came out, but I've always loved it. With the tight time limit and the bombs, it's a fast-paced game that makes me sweat. The title screen music sounds like a fairground organ, and the mode 0 graphics are colourful and clear. Apart from Mick Jagger, the caricatures are easily recognisable. However, the difficulty is too hard on later levels, with more cracks in the walls and doors that never close. Has anyone ever seen Marilyn Monroe complete?

CRITICISM



ROLAND GOES SURFING

BETTING YOUR CPC ON THE INTERNET



Surfing the internet today couldn't be easier, but that wasn't always the case. Zoë Kirk-Robinson takes us back to a simpler time when the Bulletin Board was king, British Telecom's Prestel service was the future of information technology, and Micronet gave all us computer buffs somewhere to hang out online. But! You needed a Modem first...

Get Online

Getting online in the 21st century is simply a matter of grabbing whatever device is nearest to you and opening a web browser. Back in the early days of home computing, things weren't quite so straightforward. There wasn't a standard for how computers would communicate with one another yet; so even if you managed to connect to another computer, it might not be speaking the right language (or even at the right speed) for old Arnold to understand. A great example of this problem appeared in Amstrad

Computer User's guide to modems in issue 6, where they hilariously state "[there] are two main speeds for connecting to other computers..." before going on to list three common connection speeds (or "baud rates", to use the technical term).

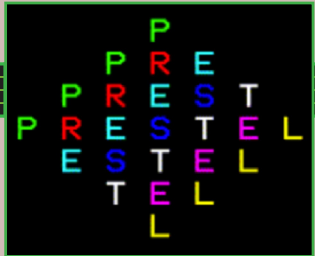
If you wanted to get your Amstrad online in the 80s (or even today), you needed to know the baud rate to use. You can then worry about whether you've got the right software. Yes, there's no all-in-one option like a modern browser, you'll need the correct tool for the job. Thankfully, this is a bit simpler than the baud issue because there are just

two main packages.

ACU recommended "glass teletype" software to connect to a bulletin board, which was a nice way to make readers confused because that term was archaic even when Amstrad was the new kid on the block. These days, we would call a "glass teletype" machine a TTY Terminal computer, which is where the name of the Terminal (or Command) program in modern computers comes from. Back in the Eighties, you had to buy this software separately.

Hey Prestel !

Terminal software wouldn't cut it if you were



connecting to the major equivalents of modern internet service providers, however. Prestel (the big player back then, run by British Telecom) required its own software called Viewdata. Prestel ran a specific set of services and sent data with its own built-in information on what colours to use and how to display text. Viewdata was coded for each of the main computer systems to read that data and translate it for that computer's specifications. Getting Viewdata to run on an Amstrad was a problem thanks to the 40-column



Above: Living by Numbers! The Prestel feature in ACU that tells you everything you need to know about the service.

mode, so Amstrad Viewdata software had to filter a lot of them out. It's a shame really, as a modern demo coder could probably wangle a very nice method of getting all the colour data from the original Prestel to show these days.

Prestel ran in a similar manner to what AOL used to look and act like. AOL provided "keywords" that would send you to pre-vetted web pages, ensuring family-friendly content and bringing you curated news, sports, etc. Prestel did the same thing years earlier, only they used a number-based service similar to Teletext. Most Viewdata users' software defaulted to calling up page 800 by default, so when you logged in you would see Micronet (the computer information section of the service) first.

Get Connected

So you know what speed you'll need to send/receive data at, and you know what software to use. What now? These days, you'd likely just plug a wire

into the wall or type in a Wi-fi password, but back in the Eighties, you needed an add-on to your computer - the modem - and the type of modem you chose would determine how much hair you would have pulled out before you got online, so you had to choose carefully!

Modems came in two forms: the nice little box that plugs between the computer and the phone socket on your wall, and the kind that you attach the telephone receiver onto and hope for the best. This second kind would disconnect you if you sneezed, or bumped the table, or if it just felt like it. If you've ever made a "telephone" with two cups and a length of string, this was the next step up from that. Yes, it was the cheaper option, but you got what you paid for.

The other kind of modem sent and received signals directly via a phone cable, meaning you got a much better connection. Neither was faster, but this second option had much less noise



Above & Below: The Micronet 800 homepage and Micro-mouse.



text mode it required. Prestel's service sent more colours than the CPC could display in 40-column

PROSPECTOR

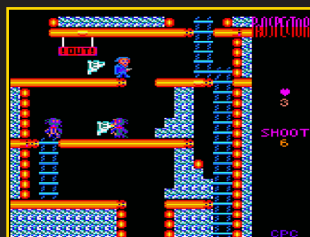
Author: **Ayor61**
Released: **2024**

Review by Colin Bell

A journal has been found by some skiers frozen in the ice way up in British Columbia, Canada. Dated 1912 and initialled with the letter P., the journal details some harrowing information about strange animal-like noises and screams that can be heard coming from a nearby cavern. P., it would appear, has lost his or her friends, and the last entry into the journal informs us that P. grabbed some rope and their pistol and set off into the night in search of the chilling screams. And so begins our story of the *Prospector*.

Originally created for the ZX Spectrum, this action platformer has been ported over to the CPC by Ayor61, who you may know from other games such as *Missile Command*, *Octopus*, and *Yie Ar Kung-*

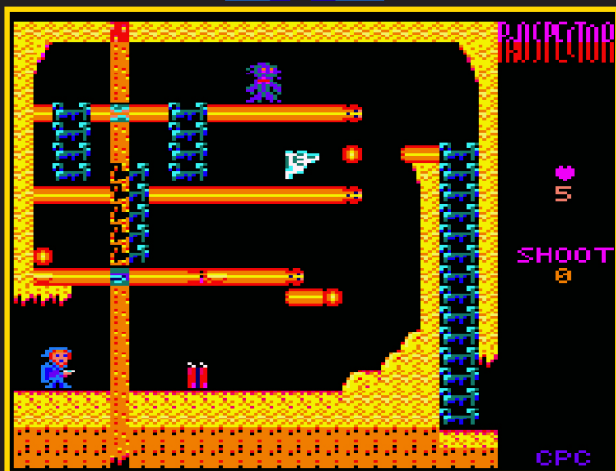
Fu Turbo. Starting the game, you leave your cabin and head into the mysterious caverns. To begin with you have nine lives, which is good as you'll need them, and your pistol, which you need to find ammo for. There's plenty within the caverns, so not much to



worry about there. Making your way through the caverns you'll have to watch out for falling stalagmites, bats who'll steal your precious ammo, and monsters that must be shot or avoided. There are a couple of simple puzzles to solve

which require items in order to work, such as a mine cart and explosive detonator.

Extra lives can also be found scattered around which are a welcome addition as



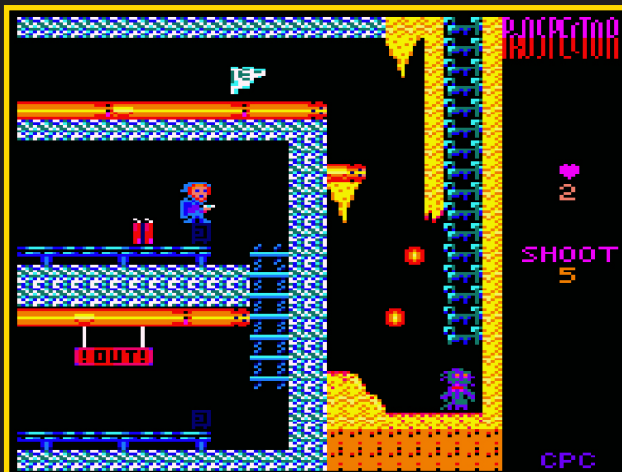
Above: Who left that dynamite lying around? Work your way through the colourful caverns and deal with the strange monsters lurking within.

Colin



CRITICISM

Prospector is a good little platformer with plenty of challenge to keep you coming back for more. Graphically the game looks good, and it reminds me of some of the earlier CPC titles I used to play. There's a decent music track during the title screen, but the game itself is devoid of music and SFX altogether, which is a shame. The game also suffers from slowdown when the screen is full of enemies and then speeds up very quickly once they diminish. The slowdown is frustrating as it affects your pistol shots, whereas the speedup causes monsters who are moving at a snail's pace to suddenly sprint towards you, killing you instantly. I felt the game could do with a few more puzzles and somewhere on screen that shows the current object you're carrying. Prospector is a decent game, but it needs refinement and a bit more polish. It won't take much to make it a great game, and hopefully, if rumours are to be believed, there is a second game planned. So listen up Cyrille & Co! Worth a play if you like platformers.



Above: Watch out for runaway mine carts on the rails!

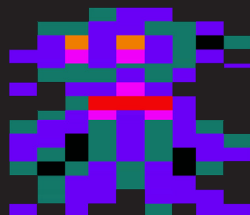
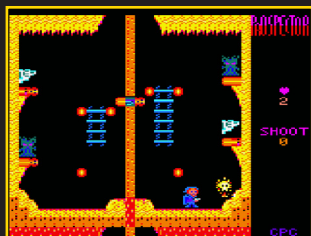
you'll need all you get in order to reach the inner sanctum of the beast that lurks within the caverns. Have you got what it takes to make it?

Gordon



CRITICISM

In a saturated market where flick-screen platformers are ten a penny, the next game that comes along needs to be something special to stand out. Prospector has the visuals and, for the most part, decent level design, but the lack of sound and some very unforgiving leaps drag the game down. The title screen music showed promise, but then there was nothing - it felt very suffocating without audio. As nice as each screen looked, much of the jumping required multiple attempts. There are better ones out there.



PRESENTATION 53%

Simple title screen displaying the logo.

GRAPHICS 75%

Bold and bright CPC colours. Lovely blocky sprites reminiscent of older CPC titles.

SOUND 50%

A decent tune on the title screen but no in-game music or SFX.

ADDICTIVENESS 68%

You'll want to keep playing to see where the caverns lead to next.

LASTABILITY 67%

A decent challenge. Not sure if it will hold everyone's attention.

OVERALL 68%

Author: **Salvakantero**
Released: **2023**

Review by Sean McManus

Once more, the Black Galleon is moored in Port Royal, and cabin boy Jim spies an opportunity. He's out to steal all the ship's treasure, including gold sextants, cutlasses, and bags stuffed with money.

Some of the treasure is booby-trapped with a bomb that explodes seconds after he lifts the loot, so he must be quick on his feet. Pirates patrol the decks, and there are parrots and rats to dodge, too. One touch of any of them is fatal, and Jim has just nine lives.

At first glance, *Booby* is a platform game. But whereas most platform games are about jumping and dodging, this one is about dodging and puzzling. The ship has many locked doors which can only be opened with the key of the same number on the same screen. The challenge, then, is to collect the keys in the

right order to unlock the doors while avoiding your shipmates. Rather



Above & Below: Arrrr, there be nothing a pirate likes more than chests and booty! That's why Jim is subject to multiple restraining orders.



than levels, this game has rooms. They're connected

through doors, often with several exits available from

Colin



As a fan of the original *Booty* I was eager to get my mitts on this remake and it does not disappoint. A huge amount of love and care has gone into what is fine example of how to do things right on the CPC. Graphically the game is a visual feast of well drawn and brightly coloured rooms and detailed sprites. If you're a fan of platformers then the *Booty* remake will be right up your street! Highly Recommended!

CRITICISM



a room. To get all the keys, you'll need to re-enter some rooms through a different door, so mapping is wise.

Some things you might expect from other platform games are missing: you can't jump or fall more than one platform high without losing a life, for instance. There's no way to fight back, either. These pirates are tough; even a bomb blast won't stop them from marching.

The original *Booty* was a Firebird budget game. We rather



Sean



Booty? Beauty more like! This game dazzles with its colourful but detailed graphics. The pirates, Jim, parrot and rat all have character. The treasure looks sparkling, and the backgrounds are rich. The music by A.Pérez is an excellent sea shanty to jolly Jim along. This remake is fast and fun. The game is easy to start but provides enough challenge and variety to keep you playing.

There are a couple of niggles, presumably features of the original game design. As with the arrows in Jet Set Willy, it's annoying if you're at the edge of the screen and a parrot flies in and kills you, giving you no chance to flee. Some of the keys and treasure are hard to collect while dodging the pirates. The new game gives you many more lives than the original, which is much fairer. I'm glad they remade Booty. It's a superb addition to the CPC's game catalogue.

CRITICISM



enjoyed it at the time (see AMTIX February 1987) despite the iffy collision detection. It hasn't dated well, however. The sailor's hornpipe irritates, the pace is slow (and slows further still when a parrot flies in), and the graphics are very much of the time. The pirates look like Father Christmas.

But an entertaining game concept is there, making it ripe for a remake. The updated game follows the original design closely, so you can use maps and tips you find online (though not pokes).



PRESENTATION 95%

Ticks all the boxes. Title screen, music, instructions, demo, and a redefine keys option.

GRAPHICS 95%

Great details. We love how the floor tiles reflect the light from a wall torch above.

SOUND 90%

Excellent music with the option to turn it off when you've had enough.

ADDICTIVENESS 90%

It's a credit to Salvakantero and original game creators John F Cain and Paul Johnson that this is so much fun.

LASTABILITY 90%

The game feels big despite only having 20 screens. Players can probably complete it fairly easily, though.

OVERALL 92%

AMTIX! BACK

Our resident CPC historian Paul Davies looks back at the original September 86 Issue #11 of AMTIX! magazine.

AMTIX Issue #11



September 1986 arrived, and with it came Issue #11 of AMTIX! of which the cover showed a possible image of what one would look like if one were stranded on a desert island. Though, with an Amstrad, of course. The thought that an Amstrad could help alleviate any worries about no one finding you whilst stranded on said island may well be a little far-fetched, though I guess it would

depend on what game you were playing. What would I play? Hmm... well, me being the serious and straight-thinking chap that I am, I'd more likely type out, in large capital letters 'SAVE ME!' and then tilt the monitor upwards for any passing aircraft to see. I mean, who could miss that green beam of light shining into the sky? Who needs flares? Maybe John Travolta. No, not that type. You know what I mean, the little sticks that you whack together, and then streams of smoke bellow out, alerting searchers to your presence. Though, incidentally, if you were wearing flares and cracked out a couple of (the other type) flares, wouldn't you

look sensational on the dance floor? Well, until a helicopter landed on the roof. Think I've gone off-topic here (again), so let's just get inside and see what's going on this time.

that readers would see is the newly designed AMTIX! logo. Some people have grumbled about the logo being too difficult to read - they may have had a point. I mean, sure, shiny reflective lettering looks really nice and

really eighties, but when you style some of those letters in a 'too funky' kind of way, it does make your eyes and brain work a little overtime. So, gone is the shiny metallic font, and arriving is something a little more familiar looking, with bold white lettering

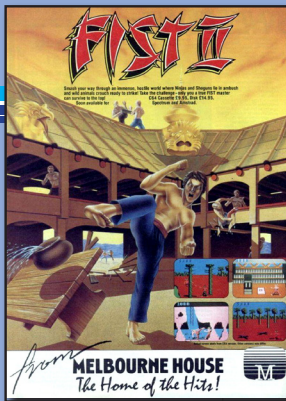
across a red and blue



The hot news in this month's editorial is that change is afoot. AMTIX! is finally getting a makeover. Did it need it? Well, it depends on who you ask, but it's happening anyway. The biggest change



Big Changes are afoot! AMTIX Towers was to be rebuilt.



Fist II - Sadly the game was never released for the CPC

backdrop, which falls nicely in line with its sister mags ZZAP! and CRASH, which makes sense when you think about it. It's much nicer to see siblings have a similar look about them, rather than receiving those awkward sideways glances from passers-by, giving you a telling wink about who they think the 'other' dad is. No, my mum did not have an overly friendly relationship with the milkman - okay?? Other changes will come in the look and layout of On The Spot, the game reviews, and also from the next issue onwards, the Top Twenty feature will now include the High Score Challenge. The times they are a-changing... someone once said. Oh yeah, that was me, just now.

News elsewhere, and everyone's favourite beat 'em up, *The Way of the Exploding Fist*, was getting a sequel - *Fist II*. This one

would be a little different from the first, as there is no one-on-one fighting as our fisty hero instead sets out on an adventure across dangerous lands, swampy forests, mountains, and underground caves. Don't be too disappointed, though, as you still get to use your fists and feet to knock out the bad guys, and you also get some more moves to try out on them too, with no fewer than 21 to play with and master as you battle towards the fortress of the evil lord! I think I remember having a go of *Fist II* on my Speccy a very long time ago, and I also remember coming away from my experience feeling a little 'meh', afterward. Maybe it was the lack of being able to kick people in the crotch.

Maybe it was having to meander around forests getting lost, but whatever it was, maybe it deserves a second chance. Right after finishing this review, maybe I'll go fisting in an underground cave again, and see if I enjoy myself this time.

If you're not a fan of the daytime, you should have a little play of *Knight Tyme*. For those not in the

In the previous game, Gimbal the Wizard accidentally banished Magic Knight and several other characters inside a castle whilst trying to improve his rice pudding recipe, but after solving the many puzzles, casting many spells, and avoiding the odd ball, Magic Knight has now found themselves transported into space, aboard the USS Pisces. Here, there will be a whole new host of characters, puzzles, and hazards to work with, solve,

and avoid, respectively. As with *Spellbound*, the game is not exactly on the easy side of things, and you may find yourself



know, *Knight Tyme* is the

sequel to David Jones' classic arcade adventure *Spellbound*, which again features the character of Magic Knight.

pulling your hair out a little as you try to get a grip on the game. Luckily, AMTIX! had been



HITTING OUT WITH FIST 11

Fist II, the follow up to *Fist*, is on the way from Melbourne House.

Before you all yawn and say 'not another combat game', this is different and the best yet — or so Melbourne House would have us believe. Amongst the goodies promised are 100 screens of action and 700 sprites! I'd rather hit 'em than count 'em. The world of *Fist II* is a sprawling world of dark swamps and dark forests, of mountains and underground caves.

Amongst the chaps you have to beat senseless are Ninjas, Shoguns, warriors and soldiers.

There's the odd savage beastie to stick the boot in on as well. The reward for hacking and bashing your way through all this is a glimpse of the volcano fortress of the evil warlord.

Not content with the usual 16 moves of your common or garden combat game, *Fist II* promises no less than 21. The extra moves are produced by having a limited range of moves depending on which bit of the game you are on.

A snip at £9.95, it should be turning up pretty chop chop, so it could be anytime before Christmas.

AMTIX! BACK

very friendly and printed a few little tips to help you get started. *Knight Tyne* is a massive hit with the AMTIX! team, securing an AMTIX! Accolade. Is there anything David Jones could do wrong? No. No, I tells you! You tell me you could get better games for £2.99 than his back in the day, and I would show you a liar! Ahem. Next.

I'll have a 'P' please, Bob' are the words many

in the eighties and early nineties. Alas, many of them (myself included) never had



the chance to do it on TV. But, now your prayers were (almost) answered! Forget sending your name, address, and interests on the back of a postcard to Central Television, you could now just get yourself down to Boots, hand over £8.95, and Bob's (no pun intended)

your uncle. Was the Amstrad version as exciting as the TV series? Yes and no, it turns out. It looks a lot like the TV show with its hexagon game board and letters (and yes, I'm sure 'P' does make an appearance), and there is an option to load more questions. Options do seem a little limited, as you can either play

against another person one-on-one, or you can attempt to answer the

questions by yourself, as you attempt to get from one side to the other. It would have been nice to be able to take

on the computer maybe, but then again, wouldn't it know all the answers? The game gets quite a low score of 53% overall, which doesn't really get me too excited, and I'm somewhat disappointed, to be honest. Maybe the fun would come from annoying a family member by repeatedly asking for a 'P' please, Bob', throughout the gameplay. To see the look on their face as those words pass your lips for the 89th time in the space of an hour, would surely justify the £8.95 price tag.

If you ever wanted a hero that never rusted, then look no further than

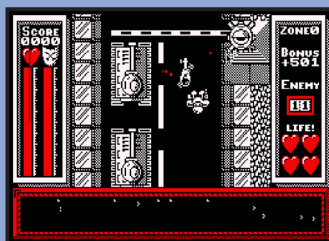
the next game which gets a preview in this issue. His name is Ricky Steel, and his game is *Stainless Steel*, which doesn't rust so we're led to believe, but would this upcoming release from Mikro-Gen come out nice and shiny and solid for many years to come? From the description, maybe it would, as Mr Steel has a few missions to take on and a funky-



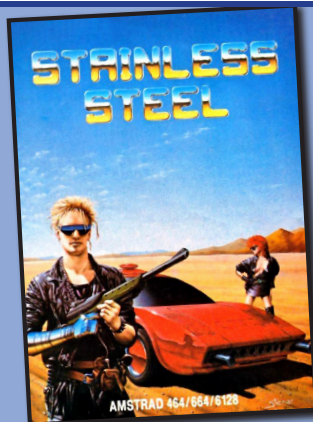
a quiz show fan would have loved to have uttered back



sounding vehicle in which to complete them. He doesn't have a standard boring old car, which would be less than cool for Mr Steel; in this game, he has a skimmer. No, not one of those flat stones



Take on the evil Dr. Vardos and his android army in the Mad Max inspired *Stainless Steel*.



you throw in the river (which incidentally, I've never managed to ever make bounce), it's a vehicle for marauding over big patches of sand and all that... or deserts, as they're more commonly known. The first level will have you try and guide Ricky to his skimmer, which he has inconveniently left down the other end of the road. Is he just too cool to park outside his own house? He'll need to take on the usual enemies to get to his destination, though he is armed with a laser rifle, so that should help. The biggest test of all would be if he had to take to the water at any point, as this would surely prove once and for all if steel rusts or not. The worst he can hope for though, I guess, is that he just ends

up with soggy socks and pants. I can imagine the conversation now, 'Is that rust down there, Mr Steel, or did you just get very scared of being chased and shot at?'. Rust. Definitely rust.

From someone super cool to someone super stinky - *Jack the Nipper*. Gremlin's new release was that little scamp that romped his way onto the Spectrum previously, but now he was up to his antics on the Amstrad. Here was the chance for

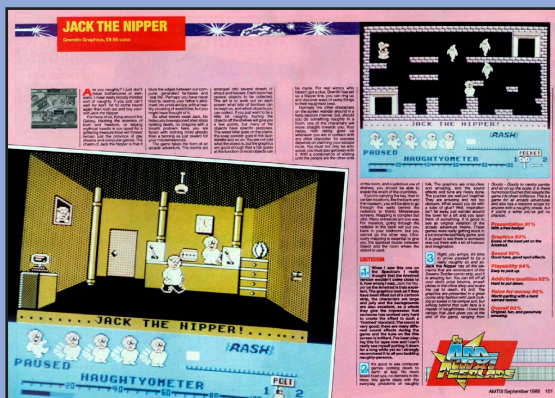
didn't want to get into trouble for again. Killing your dad's plants with weed killer? Check! Lobbing anything you can find on the shelves across the living room? Check! Smashing the windows of your dad's car? Well, maybe not, but *Jack the Nipper* is a fun

is the worst outcome for all your naughty shenanigans, then it's surely worth the effort to crawl down to Boots to pick up some Metanium.

And here it is. The end. My friends. We've a new-look AMTIX! to look forward to next month - new logo, new layouts, and some extra features, so a lot of things to get excited about. Mainly being able to read the logo, but it's a new era and a bright new future for the best

Amstrad magazine ever!

See you all next time for one final look back at AMTIX! Issue #12.



Amstrad owners to get up to the things that they had always wanted to do, but were too scared, or something that they used to do, but

arcade adventure nonetheless. Full of fun and humour, and one of the main aims is to avoid a severe dose of nappy rash. When nappy rash

PREVIEWS

Previews by Colin Bell

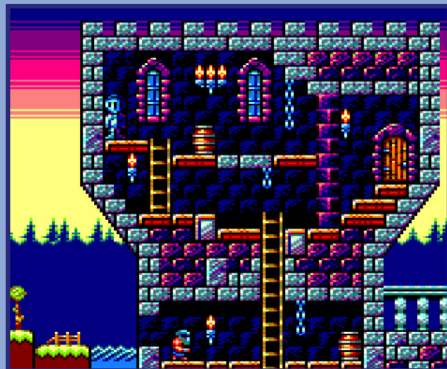
Eric Cubizolle aka TITAN working on new project to bring abandoned game to life.



Devilry III - The Arcade Game is one of several projects that French graphic designer Eric Cubizolle is currently working on. Starting out life as a game titled *Roland of Sherwood*, by developer Carnivius, the project appeared to have been abandoned, but now, thanks to Eric, who was so

impressed by the graphics, it looks like we may finally get the finished article, albeit with a new story, improved graphics and lead character. Sorry, Roland.

Gone also is the *Robin Hood* theme, and players will now guide a Greek warrior around ancient temples and castles, collecting valuable



treasures as they go. Each level will feature a locked door which can only be opened once all the treasures have been collected and the appropriate key acquired. From what we've seen so far the Mode 0 graphics look gorgeous, and with Eric at the helm, I'm sure we're on for a potential Accolade Award.

The Mojon Twins working on new puzzle game



The Mojon Twins are busy as ever working on their next Amstrad CPC title. Called *Johnny Limite*, the game is a single-screen puzzle platformer that, from what



we've learned so far from the recent video footage, involves you having to manoeuvre three blocks in order to trap and destroy a ghost-like character. As ever, the Mojon Twins

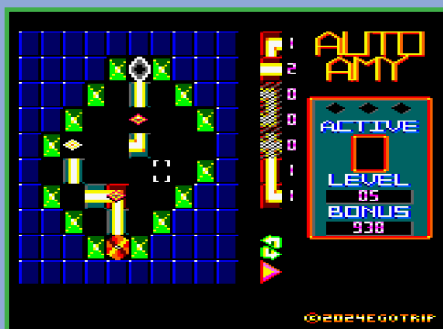
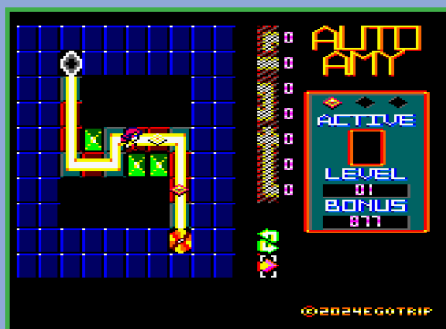
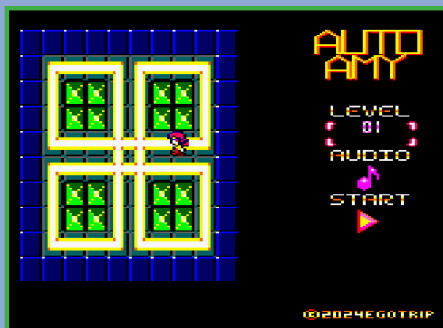


have opted for colourful Mode 0 graphics, and from what we've seen so far, it's all looking rather nice. More on *Johnny Limite* as and when we get it.

EXCLUSIVE!

Auto Amy - Developer Egotrip set to release new 'Pipe Mania'-inspired puzzle game.

Previews by Chris Weatherley



Seemingly from out of nowhere, a new game from 8-bit developer Egotrip (whom I interviewed back in Issue #5) suddenly dropped on my lap this month, and it looks to be a very fine game and a bit of a move in a different direction for the father of Amy. Still to be officially released, with the final touches being added as I type this, *Auto Amy* sees the familiar single-screen level design with a

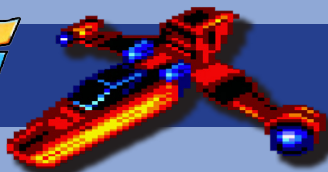
generous dash of Pipe Mania inspiration to guide our heroine out of each cell she finds herself in. You will have to carefully place parts of the road she will follow, collecting as many jewels as possible. Heavy puzzle elements are involved here to work out the optimum path for each stage.

While the general design, themes, and music have that Egotrip hallmark that

we all know and love, this is all done in mode 0, so a lot more colour is in Amy's world this time around. I'm sure more will follow upon its full release; it's been almost three years since we have seen Amy after all, so it's great to see her back in a new adventure.

The game is almost ready for release, so, of course, we hope to bring you all a full review in the next issue.

AMTIXCPC TIX!



Sign Off



What an issue! What a fine selection of new games to get stuck into! A huge thanks to team for all their efforts and of course to Eric and Gareth for their excellent and insightful interviews. I hope you all enjoyed them as much as we did.

All just a little bit of history repeated

Rumours have circulating that AMTIXCPC will cease after Issue #12! Well, I'm sorry

to say my fellow Amsters, the rumours are true, and the next Issue will



indeed be our last. The plan had always been to do twelve issues, enough to fill one of those lovely green binders, and then review where the publication was at. But why! I hear you all cry. Simply put, we aren't getting enough readers to make the magazine viable, so I'm sorry to say that after Issue #12, AMTIXCPC Towers will be closing its doors for good. You could say that it's all just a little bit of history repeated...

Still, we're not quite done yet! I hope you all join us for one more final outing in June, when we'll be back with yet another jam-packed issue full of the latest games, interviews, and features. The AMTIXCPC team will also be picking their favourite game from over the last eleven Issues

and perhaps even share a highlight or two. And on that bombshell, it's time to end! Look after yourselves, and we'll see you all very soon...

Colin Bell



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