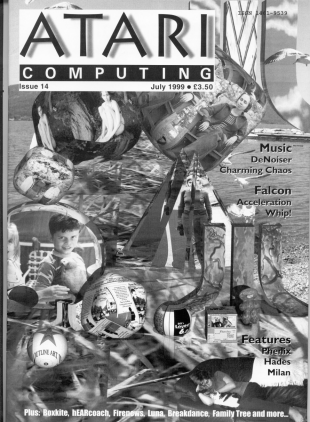




ATARI

COMPUTING

Issue 14

July 1999 • £3.50

ISSN 1463-8539

Music

DeNoiser

Charming Chaos

Falcon

Acceleration

Whip!

Features

Rhetix

Hades

Milan

Plus: Boxkite, HEARcoach, Firenews, Luna, Breakdance, Family Tree and more...



"Summer Sale"

Phone now for special prices!

Veloce+

Bring your STe up-to-date with Veloce+ from T.U.S. Developments, processor upgrade to 68020 32 Bit at 16Mhz, additional 2 or 4Mb FastRAM and TOS 1.06 all on board. Load NYDI into 32 Bit FastRAM for lightning screen updates, along with the program disk to leave 4Mb STe Ram free for data.

Compatible with most high end STe software packages such as CUBASE v3 and Score, Notator Logic, Papyrus, Calamus, Timeworks and many many more. Please call or visit our website for further information. Available for DIY installation (soldering required) with full manuals or fitted by THE UPGRADE SHOP.

- ✓ 68020 Processor running at 16Mhz
- ✓ 0, 2 or 4Mb FastRAM
- ✓ TOS 1.06 on board
- ✓ FastRAM and TOS full 32 Bit zero wait state
- ✓ Switchable between existing 68000 and 68020 for maximum compatibility
- ✓ Compatible with IDEal Hard Drive Interface
- ✓ Fits inside a standard STe case

Veloce+ (0Mb FastRAM)	£ 99.00
Veloce+1 (2Mb FastRAM)	£149.00
Veloce+4 (4Mb FastRAM)	£189.00

IDEal

The IDEal hard drive system from T.U.S. Developments uses the latest 2.5" IDE hard drives found in computers such as the Falcon and PC Notebooks.

The entire hard drive fits inside the standard STe case and is extremely quiet in operation. All kits are complete with fitting instructions, cables and software.

IDEal Interface only	£ 59.00
IDEal Interface and 170Mb Drive	£109.00
IDEal Interface and 340Mb Drive	£139.00

Other sizes available - please call

T.U.S. Developments
01625 503448

<http://www.tusdev.demon.co.uk>
Email: dave@tusdev.demon.co.uk

- ✓ Fully Atari compatible design
- ✓ "New" 2 drive systems - please call
- ✓ Works alongside SCSI-based systems
- ✓ Complete with formatting/partitioning software
- ✓ Very quiet in operation

Veloce+ & IDEal Drives

Veloce+2 c/w IDEal 170	£249.00	Veloce+4 c/w IDEal 170	£289.00
Veloce+2 c/w IDEal 340	£279.00	Veloce+4 c/w IDEal 340	£319.00

Other options available

CHEETAH EXTERNAL HARD DRIVES

The Cheetah external hard drive from T.U.S. Developments brings affordability and style to any Atari system.

- Complete with Host Adapter and cable
- Formatting and partitioning software included
- Small case dimensions
- Built-in power supply and cooling fan
- Dual SCSI external connectors for daisy-chaining extra devices
- ID selector

A fully featured system that can be used on more than 4000 computers. All systems are supplied pre-formatted and partitioned ready for immediate use.

160Mb	£149.00
320Mb	£179.00
640Mb	£221.00

HI RESOLUTION 14" MONO MONITORS

Improve your clarity with T.U.S.'s 14" mono monitor for the Atari ST series. High resolution screen ideal for Cobos, Hazzard and many other programs. All monitors include appropriate connecting leads and a tilt and swivel stand.

Without stand	£34.00
With stand	£109.00
(prices on Gix)	

ATARI MEMORY

STtoMega STs	
1/2 meg	£18.00
2 meg	£25.00
4 meg	£49.00
STtoM Mega	
1/2 meg	£16.00
2 meg	£15.00
4 meg	£15.00

All kits are supplied with comprehensive fitting instructions, testing software and a free disk of useful PCtoSt software utilities.

TOS 2.06

- Enhanced operating system from Atari
 - Improved desktop
 - Full keyboard control of windows
 - Place programs on desktop for easy launching
 - Assign function keys to launch programs
 - Switches give access to old TOS system for complete compatibility
 - All kits supplied with full fitting instructions and TOS manual
- | | |
|--|--------|
| STto Version 2 kit | £47.99 |
| (TOS 1.423.06 supplied) (single solderless installation) | |
| STtoSTto fitted free | £54.99 |

HIGH DENSITY DRIVES

- Easy exchange of data with other platforms
 - True ST read and write high density (1.44Mb) discs
 - Fully automatic switching controlled by type of disk placed in the drive
 - Compatible with software drivers and high density formatting software
- | | |
|--|--------|
| High Density Module | £25.00 |
| High Density Module and 2Mb disc drive | £49.00 |
- Note: TOS 1.4 or above required for high density support

TOS 2.06 & HIGH DENSITY DRIVE PACKAGE

STto TOS 2.06 with HD Drive & Controller	£75.00
STtoM TOS 2.06 with HD Drive & Controller	£111.00

MODEMS

Do you want to send emails, browse the world wide web and join in the internet revolution with your Atari? Using one of our modems and suitable software you can do just that.

T.U.S. 33,600 Voice, Data, Fax Modem	£59.00
T.U.S. 37,600 Voice, Data, Fax Modem	£74.00

BAST approved with "CE" markings, complete with cables and software for Bulletin Board access.

SERIAL PORT UPGRADE

Use a fast modem with any ST machine by installing a T.U.S. ST-68000 Serial port upgrade kit.

STP fitting with full instructions	£21.00
If supplied with any of above modems	£15.00

REPAIRS AND FITTING SERVICE

Fully trained engineers for a reliable repair. All jobs quoted for immediately (no fixed prices), 48 hour turnaround on most machines. Long 4 months warranty as standard. Courier collection and return available for £14.00.

We can fit any advertised product to your machine for a one off fitting charge of £15.00. This means that if you require an upgrade and a high density drive fitted then the charge is only £15.00.

Please telephone for an appointment before bringing your machine or call for courier collection is required. Please ensure all parts collected are adequately packaged.

Replacement internal drive kit

For any ST with internal drive. High quality mechanisms, with stand-offs for old ST's if required. 10Mb or 20Mb drive supplied

Power Supplies

Required and supplied (call for availability)

★ **Summer Sale - special prices** ★
Call for details

The Upgrade Shop

37 Crossall Street, Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK11 6QF

Telephone 01625 503448

Monday - Friday 9:00AM - 6:00PM. Saturday 9:00AM - 12:30PM

ACCESS DELTA MASTERCARD VISA SWITCH

Delivery Charges

Small items under £60.00 please add £1.00 P&P.
Large items and orders over £60.00 please add £7.00 courier charge.
Courier Pick-up for upgrades and repairs 7.00.

All prices include VAT@17.5% but exclude delivery (unless otherwise stated), please see panel above. Orders can be placed by telephone quoting credit card details or by Mail Order, please make cheques and postal orders payable to "The Upgrade Shop".
1 year warranty on all products (unless otherwise stated), 4 months on repairs. Prices subject to change without notice. E&OE

ATARI

COMPUTING

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We'll do our best to help you through the pages of this magazine but cannot enter into personal correspondence.

It would be very helpful if editorial, subscription and general enquiries are sent on separate sheets of paper or separate MS-DOS source files or disk.

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ABOUT THE COVER



Atari Dreams

All but the image on the left and the picture of the two children were taken with my Olympus camera and downloaded into the Atari. The image of the left and my website put on sets were scanned into the Atari using an Epson Expression scanner. In Studio I've the images were rendered with embedded photographs. The scenes were taken using ImageSpace and posted to the Atari. After rendering, the image was posted back to the Atari. The background image was integrated up with Phoenix. The image was then loaded into the Atari, compiled, and executed.

Dave Martin

Email: dave@atari.computing.com

FEATURES

- 12 Photo
- 14 Interview
- 26 Paul Mac
- 32 Backs overview
- 37 Inside CRM
- 48 Maggie



PD/SHAREWARE

- 40 News
- 41 Bookie
- 41 Hearsbach
- 42 Fireware
- 43 Luna
- 45 Breakdance



REVIEWS

- 16 Charming Chaos
- 18 DeFolier
- 19 Super Harvest
- 20 Whipl
- 22 Family Tree
- 23 Falcon acceleration



REGULARS

- 9 News
- 9 Reader offers
- 10 Subscriptions
- 11 Letters
- 28 Suggestive remarks
- 36 Steepest
- 39 Reader Disk
- 40 Q&A



TUTORIALS

- 54 MS-DOS BASIC
- 56 B/P
- 47 Callous Secrets



The fat lady sings

Sally I have to announce the closure of Atari Computing at the end of the year with ACiFi. Our circulation can no longer sustain the huge effort required to produce each issue and the costs involved. Despite our recent success attracting new readers, we're being read on to other platforms faster than we can replace them. We have to accept there are not enough like-minded Atari enthusiasts prepared to buy Atari Computing. Compounding the problem of falling sales changes in the family occupations of Atari Computing staff have recently made putting together each issue and running the office increasingly difficult.

We launched Atari Computing because we believed there was still life in the Atari marketplace and after three years we have the satisfaction of being proved right. We're proud of our achievements but all good things come to an end and we plan to retire at the top. Although ACiFi will be the end for Atari Computing the resources we use to put each issue together are available online for everyone to take advantage of. Internet service providers are taking over themselves to offer free internet access to act now and get online and actively participate in the worldwide Atari scene. There are thousands of Atari webpages and plans to download software and you'll find the Atari newsgroups a rich source of information. Best of all they'll be around the year to come to what are you waiting for?

Don't forget we'll still be working hard producing Atari Computing until the end of the year and produce that millennium issue. The Millennium issue will be launched at ACE '99, as part of our Millennium Party celebrations, so make a hole in your diaries now to join us and collect your caps in person!

Joe Connor

News...

ACC 99 millennium Party at AMS 99



► The System Solutions stand at the Spring AMS '99.

by John D. Arnold

Make a note in your diaries to attend ACC 99, the last UK Atari event this side of the millennium, on Saturday 12th November 1999 at Bingley Hall, Lefford, from 10am to 4pm. We'll be launching our Atari Computing January 2000 millennium issue which we plan to have ready for subscribers to collect - everyone else will just have to wait for their copy in the post after we've reprinted someone in January! We'll be sending out discount entry tickets to UK subscribers next issue.

To book a stand or for more information:

Ref: 0003312115 Fax: 01471 311116

<http://www.shawent.co.uk>

Email: sgamble@sis.co.uk

Ablegation: Synthesis Projects

AMP is dedicated to the survival of the Atari computers as the only sensible MIDI platform for the musician on a budget and can supply:

- Hard-drives (20MB SCSI) from £12
 - CD-ROMs, 6x SCSI for £30 including drivers and software CD-ROM
 - Second-user Atari software and hardware including floppy drives, keyboards and memory SMPs
 - 4x16MB SMPs suitable for STs £18
- Ablegation Synthesis Projects, 45 Exton Road, Abingdon, OX66 1BR
Tel: 01235 524152 after 5pm
Email: choles@netnet.co.uk

CIX keeps going

Internet Magazine in the UK reads and rates UK ISPs and the results are published each month in their publication. The 2000 cover a range of performance criteria. CIX, the home of Atari Computing, topped the poll in April's issue, first out of 113.

Atari Computing is a CIX reseller and you can sign up on-line using credit cards. Using a modem and terminal program dial 0 800 296 1215, follow the on-screen instructions, and remember to enter our CIX reseller code: **ams9916** when prompted. In AMPs p12612 we covered CIX in detail including our

tests.CIX offer which includes a disk and manual containing everything Atarians need to get online for just £4.99. If you'd like to order this or a copy of AMP please complete the Reader Offer form on page 10. <http://www.cix.co.uk>

Titus to the Core



Titus Design has been renamed Core Design although the people and products remain unchanged. Folgate's input in production and anyone who would like one is advised to reserve one now to avoid disappointment. The expected retail price is around £199.00.

Distributors are as follows:
Germany: Austria, Switzerland: AG Computer Technik
Email: AG, Comtech@t-online.de
Tel: +49 (0)11 76171
France/Belgium: ACC Production
Email: atline@maginet.fr
USA/Canada: TBA
All other countries will be supplied directly by Core Design.

Core Design, 6 Wittenberg Platz, Solly-Bek, Birmingham B25 4AB, U.K.
Tel: +44 (0)121 493 4448
Fax: +44 (0)121 494 7630
Email: sales@titus-bek.co.uk
<http://titus-bek.co.uk>

Rational Sounds



Rational Sounds, programmed by Heiko Achilles and Ralf Schneider (Hornof), is a stylish GEMT utility which brings your Atari machines (STs) sound hardware to better, including compatibles and emulators, to life. Using Rational Sounds you can add sounds to most system events including:

- Window opening/closing, icon, unloading, unarchive
 - System "ping" and beep/skip
 - Buttons, OK, Cancel, and others
 - Program start/end
 - Click on the mouse and every quarter hour
 - Menus, RotateGEMT button, file selection, alerting boxes, sounds
 - System start/end sounds
- Rational sounds comes complete with an example soundscape which is installed using the GEMT Setup utility, which copies all the component parts to the correct locations and configures your system. GEMT is used to play the sounds, IT-Guide, GEMTscript and BubbleGEMT support are all included. Rational Sounds comes with 128 pre-recorded CDS and a demo version can be downloaded from the authors webpages at:
Boller Systems, Griesenstraße 3, 18623 Berlin-Schönberg, Germany.
Tel: +49 (0)30 71760388
Fax: +49 (0)30 71760388
<http://www.smlies.com>
<http://www.lalikel.de/~hornd/>
Rational Sounds v1.0 is currently in beta offering many new features including sounds for individual keys, sounds assigned according to window title, on alarm, window alerts and CPU.

System Solutions

The long-awaited English version of James popped onto the scene at US\$99.99. This replacement desktop combines some of the best features from Windows, Mac OS and X-Windows with a bundle of new concepts, offering Atari users a powerful yet elegant MagicC working environment.

MagicC Plus has currently been updated with a version number jump to v6 - to harmonise with the Atari version numbers. Upgrades from v1 cost £89.95, from v2 are £19.95. Return your original disks to the System Solutions mail order centre.

At the Nimes Atari show SoundPool Gold launched the PMAx edition of CD4Share which is now available as separate programs for audio and data (previously the two together were sold as a high-end solution for all CD creation tasks). SoundPool's UK distributor is System Solutions.



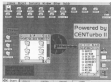
Analyse Software's CD4Writer Plus package, previously last issue, was another important product release at the UK show. This package makes it quick and easy to back-up your hard disk to inexpensive and durable CD-R(W) media. As mentioned in the previous issue this requires ExtendedOS Gold 3.1 to work and there's currently a special bundle deal consisting of CD4Writer Plus and ExtendedOS Gold 3.1, available for £99.95.

Existing CD4Writer users can upgrade to CD4Writer Plus by returning your original package with £19.95 to the System Solutions mail order centre.



Hades workstations just got even meaner with the introduction of a new graphics card.

The ATI Rage Pro Turbo 3D chip set features a powerful object processor and 8Mb VRAM. Furthermore, its firmware has been re-programmed such that the card will always start up in a standard



Atari screen mode (ST high) if no software driver is installed. A specific ATI driver is supplied, which needs to work in conjunction with Hades to access the new resolutions. Now you can run your Hades in anything from 640x480 to an eye-popping 1600x1200 pixels and 1-right up to 14,771,214 colours (even in the highest resolution) at 60Hz refresh.

The card's significantly improved performance over the Turing Labs ET4000+6800 series and integrated hardware 3D functionality should help establish it as the new standard for Hades graphics professionals. Price: £189.00 + VAT (also requires MVD 5). Email: hades@system-solutions.co.uk Tel: 0181 493 3335

The System Solutions' mail order address and changed of "operational focus". The former Windows branch is now fully dedicated to mail-order only (no personal sales). System Solutions (Mail Order) PO Box 3768, Bracknell, Berkshire, RG4 7YU. Tel: +44 (0)1344 890008 Fax: +44 (0)1344 890009 Mon - Sun Monday to Friday

All engineering work is now handled at the London HQ's improved workshop facility, updating the Atari side of approval. More details and advice is available on-line at <http://www.system-solutions.co.uk/> Useful contacts: usinfo@system-solutions.co.uk usinfo@system-solutions.co.uk Mail Order Tel: +44 (0)1753 822252 Fax: +44 (0)1753 828844

MGCC '99

MagicC programming competition MagicC Online, run by Benny Collins, is in conjunction with The X are holding this MagicC programming competition. The

judges will be the Atari community. All entries will be available for download on December 5th, 1999. At this time, voting sheets will be made available to the general public. The winner(s) will be notified on Christmas Day, December 25th, 1999. This means that all nominations must be received by December 24, 1999. The goal is to create the best possible conversion of a classic game. Examples would be conversions of Asteroids, Pacman, Frogger, A-101 of many possible conversions can be viewed on the official MGCC '99 homepage. The catch is however, that the game must be created to run perfectly under MagicC in a GEM window.

The 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes are 1500, 1000 and 500 US respectively. Atari Computing are also sponsoring the event by offering every entrant a free copy of our Millennium issue and magazine CD. Further sponsorship could possibly add more prizes to this list.

The deadline for entries (which just requires an email) is September 15th, 1999. The competition closes on December 5th, 1999 at which time all entries must be received. The deadline for votes is December 24th, 1999. Check out the official English and German Pages at:

English:
<http://benny.atarilab.org/contest.htm>
German:
<http://benny.atarilab.org/contest.htm>
For more information contact:
Jan Beldrup
Email: Jan@atarilab.org
Email: jan@atarilab.org
Benny Collins:
Email: collins@bells.com
<http://benny.atarilab.org>



Centrik merges with Class 4

Centrik's focus on the Phoenix workstation project was recently strengthened by merging with Class 4, one of its main CD4770to 4 distributors in Europe. The move aims to supply important resources to the designers as well as local retail manufacturing, while commercial operations are handled by a dedicated team on the same premises.

Class 4 continues to do business in the Atari market using the Centrik brand name on hardware and software products. Its new 1700m² office will also act as a Phoenix showroom, service and support centre when the machine is ready.

AD: 514 34245 20000

http://www.atari.com/arcade/arcade.html



New address: CLASS 4 (CENTER) 42, rue

Delagrèze, F-67018, COUCOULLENS-LES-

LENS, France

Tel: +33-3-2-1-600-600

Fax: +33-3-2-1-740-449

http://www.atariuk.fr

http://www.atari.com/en/arcade/

english/

Email: esp@imaginet.fr

The Vintage Computer Festival 3.0
October 3rd and 4th at the Santa Clara
Convention Center in California, US sees
the third Vintage Computer Festival,
sponsored by Paradise Inc. and Dr. Dobbs's
Journal. Attracting this time four exhibitors:

- Hosts great speakers and exhibits
- Hosts vendors with cool stuff to sell
- Hosts fun games and contests,
including the Need Trivia Challenge
- Tour the Computer Museum History
Center
- Plus market

■ Some free stuff and much more!
Of particular interest to Atarians will be
speaker Curt Vendel, the founder of the
Atari Historical Society (check out his
website at <http://www.atari-history.com/>)
who has amassed an amazing collection of
Atari artifacts and company history, in-
cluding some crucial old Atari proto-
types. For more information check out:
<http://www.vintage.org>

Cadence Software Sale

Prices valid until August 1999. H50b
BASIC v2.10 (brand new copies) £35 plus
post and packing of £7 UK, £10 ROW.
H50b BASIC v2.10 plus ENOBIANT only
£40 plus post and packing of £7 UK, £10
ROW.

Web Wizard v1.10 is due for release
soon featuring multiple language support,
HTML, tutorial pages and various other
small upgrades. Web Wizard v1.10 will
cost £15 for new users with H50b
upgrades for v1.0.5 so if you buy now
you'll be entitled to the free upgrade.
Web Wizard v4 (WYSIWYG) now in
progress.

Matthew Bacon/Cadence Software
41 Douglas Road, Surbiton, Surrey,
TW9 1RL, UK

Email: cadence@cyberdriver.org

cadence@atari.org

<http://www.cadence.cyberdriver.org>

<http://www.cadence.atari.org>

Circle 885

With so many Atari 885's closing
(including the Tavern, Moon Valley, and
others) it's nice to report a new one. This
group is friendly, and has recently released
its own ST game. The board's main
interest is sound MODs, with a varied
collection, including some I've never
heard before.

Circle is a ring-back board which
works like this:

- ➔ Dial 01670 812190, let the phone ring
once then hang up
- ➔ Wait 15-30 seconds, while the 885 is
loaded
- ➔ Call 01670 812190 again and you
should be connected

Don't just call or you're likely to hear the
upbeat GCR say "hello" through your
modern speaker!

Wizards III

ORO Systems have recently released
Wizards III along with a new product
called Expresso. Wizards now supports
frames, animated graphics and, ORO
Systems claim, is very stable, the email and
newsgroup modules work together
perfectly and is the fastest Atari browser.

Expresso is a WYSIWYG HTML page
designer, which supports multiple frames,
animated and is transparent GIFs.

Updates for existing Wizards users
are free. For new users Wizards now
ships disk, costs £6FF (around £8) or on
CD costs £8FF (around £11).

Expresso for existing Wizards users
costs £6FF (around £8) or for new
users £8FF (around £10). Expresso and
Wizards III together cost £8FF (around
£10).

Also, according to ORO Systems,
HTML 4.0 and JavaScript support features
is forthcoming. Wizards and Expresso
updates.

<http://www.oro.co.uk>

<http://www.imaginet.fr/~oro/>

Calamus News

MGJ, the company which took over
Calamus from DMG, decided in
December 1998 to cancel all development
and distribution of MGJ Calamus Digital
Publisher v1.0 (CP2) for Windows.
However the Atari version of Calamus II,
has continued to be developed and
expanded in Germany and they are
preparing Windows users "crossgrade" to
Calamus II.99 by running an Atari
emulator.

MGJ Calamus 2.99 works with all
relevant TOS systems (Atari, Plus4s,
Hades, Milan), on Apple computers (G3,
PPC or Mac with MacGPlus), and with
Windows95/98/NT.

2.99 features:

- Type 1 Postscript: in addition to CPM
fonts, you can finally use Type 1

PostScript fonts directly in Calamus.
Both PC (alpha PPS) and Macintosh
fonts are supported - TrueType
fonts are not properly supported!

- 2.99 documents can now be stored
with the fonts embedded so no more
wasted time searching for fonts when
creating documents
- Define double clicks in document
windows. For example double-clicking
in a text frame could call the inline
text editor.
- When moving text ruler tabs, a
vertical help line is displayed.
- The module panels are placed in real
windows.
- The Create Frame mode is no longer
the default, so you do not have to click
the right mouse button for mode
changes that often as before.
- Preview available for fonts and some
image formats with documents and
module preview will under
development.
- Images can be decompressed when
flipping documents.
- Help Text color can now be defined.
- Calamus II, no longer has a general
print resolution limit.

The Additional modules/drivers in the
2.99 package are: Text Editor EDOE
light, Control Curve Editor FrankLIN light,
Histogram module, GDPS module,
Clipboard module, H50b Printer module,
Toolbox PLUS preview module, insert
Barcode Generator module, Importer
module light (Output limited to 720 dpi),
Raster CacheGenerator, very enhanced
features and handling Ping module
(optional ball signal after printing), GIF
Bifs, Haggard BUD, JPEG, PhotoShop
EPS and Kodak PhotoCD import drivers,
General Two User License (for 1 & 2 Serial
Number in a single location).

All modules and drivers which are a
part of the Calamus II standard package
are now shipped with the current version.
All additional modules and drivers from
MGJ (DMG), Adequate Systems, PPS and
others registered in Germany for your
Calamus version will be added to actual
versions if necessary. Your old CPN file
can still be used. Anyone owning
additional modules for the Windows
version of Calamus will be offered IL
equivalents, where possible.
insert Software Vertrieb, 181 Buxtel, Alster
Parkweg 6, D-19419 Lüssingen, Germany.
Tel (0385) 6 26 11
Fax (0385) 9 29 74
Email: Sales: sales@calamus.net
Email Support: support@calamus.net

PD/Shareware
News on page 40

ATARI COMPUTING Offers...

Essential accessories for you and your machine - subject to availability. Stocks for some offers are low, hesitate and you could miss out!

BACK ISSUES

Atari Computing Issues 1, 2, 3 and 4 are now sold out but we do have a small stock of other back issues - so get them while we're still got them! £1.00 each including UK delivery.



MOUSE MATS

Atari Power Users and proud of it! Better get one of these top quality mousemats. Their attractive mouse mats are 3mm thick and feature a smooth hard surface and non-slip base. They cost just £4.99 including UK delivery.



READER DISKS

Individual Reader Disks are available separately from the magazine. Each disk includes software exclusive to Atari Computing which is not available anywhere else.

We also have a Specialised 1600K BASIC Reader Disk compiled by Paul Jones, to accompany the tutorials.

All issues are available and cost £1.00 each including UK delivery.

Steinberg PRO 24



Steinberg PRO 24 is a MIDI recording and editing application which offers long life compatibility with Cubase. For many years PRO 24 was the preferred choice of artists such as Midge Ure, Dio, Bonny, Tina Turner, who all produced hit records using PRO 24.

- * 24 Track music system
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LETTERS



Hissing Chris is innocent!

Just a quick note to praise Chris at ASP for his fairly setting-up my CD-ROM with Macintosh. Chris called me into buying a CD-ROM a few weeks earlier and asked me what ID and Drive I wanted to when it arrived it was all set up - all I had to do was to copy the files over to my Atari folder and release.

I recently needed to change the ID from 5 to 4, so my ZIP-drive could run on ISA, which was a non-minute job with Chris's help. Well done Chris, keep up the good work, and to Atari Computing for keeping us all informed.

Rail Smith, by email



▲ Chris from ASP looking after his customers at SMTS'91

Customer always right?

I have been buying your magazine for about a year now and I think it is the best of the magazines re-data for the Atari platform. I find your product reviews and Q&A section very useful.

Your ads have helped me locate products that have satisfied my projects. I have found the manufacturers, programmers, and so on, very supportive of their products. I have recently purchased products from Line Audio and have had great support from Roger (Jason). I recently purchased CD Recorder Pro from SoundPool and am happy with their product. The SoundPackage is a very nice simple DSD recording, editing program. The instructions cover all of one letter size page, and it works very well.

Roger Barrows from Acropolis in Canada has done a great job of improving Beanties to the Gold version. It installs itself in a flash and recognizes almost every brand of CD-ROM reader. Extender Gold now has a recorder function that will

allow you to copy tracks or whole Audio CD's to a hard drive. CD Writer then will allow you to burn a new Audio CD. It works very well and on any system from an Atari ST upwards.

Dave Coppie, Sacramento, CA, via the ataricomputing web pages

Colour blind?

If you're still using a colour monitor with your ST this just will NOT do! I've recently made the change and am here to dispel some of the common misconceptions.

Here is boring - this is complete rubbish, there are plenty of games which run in mono resolutions. My favourite mono games include GPH NightBack, all the laser games and Chryd. If you really miss colour games you can always hook up the tally for a session or run on of the various colour emulators kicking about. Decent new games are a little shy on the ground anyway so why not purchase a games console and play on that, leaving your Atari free to do proper things! I found using a colour monitor to write text would often give me a headache and the mono image is much sharper.

With 640x400 you get a four times the workspace, compared with ST low resolution and you get a much better idea what you're doing.

Attempting to display web pages in colour on an ST is a challenge!

Displayed in mono, they're a lot easier to read - although the images don't look very good thanks to CAA's poor (but fast) dithering routines.

You can always display images in a dedicated file viewer. Check out Team Dream's excellent Speed-Of-Light GIF/PEG viewer which does a wonderful job dithering colour images to mono. You can even save memory running in mono.

You won't need a virtual screen program and you can replace colour desktop icons with mono equivalents using a RSC file editor. Most new releases expect at least 640x400 resolution anyway so you won't be stuck with out of date software.



▲ The ASP VGA monitor adapter, designed by Brian Barrett, enables non-DMSA monitors to be connected to any Atari

Track down a SHI 24 monitor from the AC classified page or pick up any standard PC SVGA monitor and buy one of ASP's VGA monitor adapters - I doubt you'll regret it.

Matt Burton, Derbyshire

Before we used to hang on about getting on-line, switching them using a colour TV to using a proper monitor was one of our favourites

thames so it's nice to get back to our roots - it's a straightforward black and white decision!



GET IT OFF YOUR CHEST!

Got something to say on AC's forthcoming closure, or you just want to have a moan about something?

If so, then Atari Computing welcomes your comments, gossip, news, advice and used tenners!

Send your contributions on paper, or preferably ASCII text on disk, to: Atari Computing, 65 Mill Road, COLCHESTER, Essex, CO4 5LJ, UK.

Or email us at: letters@ataricomputing.com

We reserve the right to edit letters for reasons of space or accuracy without altering the context.

Super Falcon

In search of news about the elusive Phenix computer, Shiuming Lai went to the spring 1999 Atari Messe in Germany...

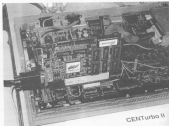
I'll tell you. First thing I saw upon entering the exhibition hall was our editor on the Atari Computing stand, working hard to entice German visitors with the latest edition of the magazine and a big box of sweets. After a brief chat it was straight off to meet the Contek team. Sales of the GINTurbo I Falcon accelerator have topped 100, while the newer GINTurbo II has already shipped 100 units, and I was all the more intrigued and drawn by the little laser show. Strange swirling patterns and dot formations were cast onto the wall, interspersed with words and pictures. It turned out this laser was being controlled by Falcon, and the result was very neat and professional.

Contek has joined forces with a special effects company called Class 4, which supplies industrial strength laser and pyrotechnic display systems running on GINTurbo II powered Falcons. I spoke with the commercial director, Dominique Ceyrante, who has previously worked on the visual aspect of French electronic musician Jean Michel Jarre's concerts (Falcon's for stunning lasers and high-tech open-air imaging).

He explained some of the facts behind a very loud and colorful video recording on show, demonstrating some of Class 4's installations, at concerts and exhibitions using multi-louvered water-cooled lasers and fireworks. If you fancy some really exciting peripherals for your Falcon, this could be it!

Two laser operators/artists explained how the system works with a real-time demonstration. In essence, Class 4's custom software suite can perform event sequencing (including fireworks release) and laser head control for actual image synthesis.

On our screen you can see a resemblance to music software in some respects, particularly the theme of time. As well as animation, the software has powerful text handling capabilities.



▲ Contek's Falcon-PCI adapter card was made purely to test and demonstrate the graphics capability of Phenix, so, in danger of getting held off one even if you have the old GINTurbo II with expansion bus through-port

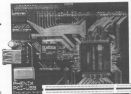
Where is all this leading to?

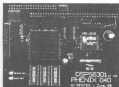
Falcons haven't been manufactured for years, so there needs to be a new computer for the system to run on and develop into something even more powerful. Enter the Phenix workstation, a machine considered by many as a Super Falcon. Originally aimed at meeting Falcon users, the co-operation with Class 4 led to the idea of also using Phenix in embedded and control applications.

We were given a tantalizing preview of the current status of Phenix. Starting with real working bits of PCB and silicon, implementations of two major sub-systems from the Phenix design were shown, in the form of evaluation cards made to plug into the expansion bus through-port of the early Rev. A GINTurbo II Falcon accelerators. One of these was ParICs, containing a Motorola/PCI bridge with a single PCI



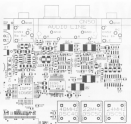
► Phenix is planned to accept devices of the EISA family via this interface, also integrated into the motherboard





▲ The DSP58001 on this card was originally clocked at 50MHz, producing rates of 50 million instructions per second, compared with 16 MIPS at 33MHz in the Falcon's DSP56005. It has now been turbo-charged at 66MHz.

▶ The fully-loading bunch of components is the audio section of the Phoenix.



socket, a USB port and controller IC. The PC socket was occupied by a 53 Vega DX PCI graphics card, which should be the standard card supplied with Phoenix. The Falcon was running some TOS programs under emulation using a developer version of Centek's Golden CD, in a high dimensional resolution (640x480) with 16-bit colour depth.

Next was the DSP58001 and 32-bit audio system. In this up of demanding A/D tasks, dedicated signal processing hardware is essential to any computer living claim to proficiency in this domain. Together with a sophisticated audio system, these are the two most important features of the original Falcon design and will continue to be for its successors.

Centek's CAD version is a CENTARIS II Falcon with 60MHz YDOL, (don't say

this at home, kids). All of its electronic circuit board design is done on this computer using a commercial PCB layout program called Phoenix, I can't think of a more productive use for Atari computers than developing the next generation of machines for us to enjoy.

Redolphe Gaudin, hardware engineer, explained the various parts of the Phoenix motherboard design. Presently there are three PCI sockets, one of which will be for the graphics card. The possibility of a fourth socket depends very much on availability of space in the final stage of completion, and is not a prime concern at the moment. Most important now is to finalize the glue logic and track routing for the secondary CPU socket.

One completed sub-system is the audio circuitry, having passed prototyping.

A CODEC chip houses integrated A/D and D/A conversion, just like the Falcon, albeit with 25-bit resolution and much more consideration given to the auxiliary components. This is no PC game card noise generator! The whole Phoenix motherboard is embellished with EMI (electro-magnetic interference) filters placed at strategic points to ensure it runs on clean power, especially critical if you want to achieve high quality audio.

Meanwhile, Centek's programmers were on hand to show the power of the Golden CD and Phoenix software development tools, like CENTinel, the multi-processor debugger with independent CPU/DSP tracing and inter-processor transaction monitoring. We'll be keeping you informed of progress with more news as it happens. ☺



When Bengy met Ali

Bengy Collins, MagiC on-line recently interviewed Ali Goukassian about Milan Computersystems....



Bengy: I am sorry to begin with such a difficult question, but please answer as fully as possible. In a previous interview with Alexander Claus, I questioned him about the Milan computer. He stated he would not buy a Milan because, for one reason, it offers the same incompatibilities as, for example, MagiC Milan. So I'm asking you to defend yourself. Why should Atari users buy a Milan and run MagiC or NAES on it as opposed to buying a PC or Mac and running MagiC on that?

Ali: First of all I'd like to thank you for this interview and for giving us the chance to talk about the present and the future of Milan computer systems. To answer your first question, which is not very hard for an Atari-fan, from our point of view we expect who believes in the possibility of Atari systems should buy a Milan system. For sure a Milan is not completely compatible with an Atari ST, but the Atari Falcon (when it was released) was not either. We found a way to make it as compatible as possible - the Milan board has two programmable logic chips. Each time Atari software is trying to work with non-current hardware, the Milan system rejects an exception error and the missing Atari chips are emulated by our logic chips. That makes a Milan more compatible than any Mac or PC and we also have the possibility to continue development on the chip-programming, which means the Milan's incompatibility can be optimized continuously without needing to change the motherboard hardware. The reason for buying a Milan would be that people want an authentic Atari feeling based on modern hardware. When emulated TOS is always based on Windows or MacOS and always dependent on the stability of the host OS. The Milan TOS is located directly from a TOS chip just like every former Atari system, which means booting only takes a few seconds, before you have a pure Atari computer.

Many people are wondering exactly how many Milan's are out there. How Milan sales been high, average or disappointing? Could you give us an estimate of the total number of Milan's in circulation?

Ali: Sales have been good. They may have been even better, if we could have produced as many as we needed. Please understand, I cannot give you a definite number. Milan has been on sale since August '90 and we have been able to produce at least 10 per month (but I think that around 200 machines to date). MagiC Milan has recently been released. In what way do you believe this will change the Milan? Could MagiC Milan replace Milan's version of NAES as the pre-installed OS?

MagiC Milan is a big win for both Milan and MagiC users. It looks great, works fine and as you can see from the benchmarks on our webpage it's nearly as fast as Single-TOS. It makes the whole system look even more modern and friendly. At the moment I can't tell anything about the future of the pre-installed OS (OS). Since the interview it appears MagiC has been confirmed as the pre-installed OS. A common complaint of MagiC users and MINT subscribers is that MagiC seems to be unstable on certain, if not all, systems (i.e. Falcons). How does MagiC Milan perform? Is it stable? Have you experienced frequent crashes? Furthermore, what are your first impressions regarding MagiC Milan?

We've been running MagiC Milan for more than one week, continuously and it has been working fine. There are no more crashes than with MagiC on any other Atari, and we only experienced crashes if the user runs old or incompatible software like games. MagiC Milan does not, like the original, totally replace the Milan OS.

In fact, MagiC Milan works alongside it. What is the reasoning behind this?

The reason for this is very easy to describe. Adding MagiC to another platform means re-programming the hardware dependent parts of any new Atari-system. That's the reason why development for the Falcon and HADES machines took so long, and why the HADES version isn't running very well. Our developers have been re-programming the hardware dependent parts of the original TOS to make them PO and ISA compatible. To ensure MagiC Milan is as compatible as possible we decided to only develop the non-hardware dependent parts of MagiC. The big advantage of this approach is that each time we release new hardware versions MagiC will still run with the new TOS-base and always retain its compatibility.

Does MagiC Milan have the same "snappy foot" as the other Atari-systems? Is it that it does which runs on a Falcon or ST?

I would say it's even better because it's incredibly fast. The subjective feeling is similar to running a 386MHz Pentium PC. The Milan has been great for the Atari world. Although it is debatable if the Milan actually converted any PC, Macintosh or Amiga users, there is no question it has prevented many people leaving our beloved platform. What should we expect from Milan Computers in the future? Will we ever see the Milan take advantage of technologies such as PowerPC (or even multiple 68000) processors, built-in USB, Firewire, or even DVD-ROM support?

PCI-FOU WILL! We've been quiet for a while but we have the most incredible news to share with everyone you could imagine. If everything works out fine, in late autumn/winter we will have a brand new Milan, called "XTAR Milan" that will feature 68000, USB, an 680 processor, DVD-ROM support and a big range of good

software. This all will be produced by Motorola and AMD-Graphics in cooperation with Motorola-Computer systems and it will be sold in several hundred (computer) shops! This has all been up since for many months, but there's a range of software developers working on Milan software, games, hardware add-ons, new graphic card drivers and so on. But it will be possible, if we are able to get the name "MILAN" under license from HUGBO. So our brand new Milan OS will probably be called "Milan 200" and it could be the size and only Atari successor! Good news, isn't it?

For a "dead" platform, the Milan446/640 really has quite a bit of competition! Currently available there's the Centurio II which offers incredible Falcon performance as well as maintaining compatibility. There is also the Hades446/640, and, worse, if we are lucky, the Tempest accelerator (which claims that it will offer PowerPC processor's with speeds well over 300MHz). To make things even harder for you, in the near future the Phoenix386 is planned to make its entrance. What is your opinion of the Centurio II, Tempest, Hades, and Phoenix? Does Milan computer welcome a bit of friendly competition or are you guys beginning to feel the heat?

Of course we welcome that lot of friendly competition, but as you can see we're trying to deal in another market. We've been working very long and very hard on that deal, but water and you see the price (which will be published in August '99) then objectively I would say that no-one will ever pay DM 1000 (around £1100) for a (MILAN) system or DM 700/800 (£110/£120) for a hardware add-on. And with the new Falcon compatibility card for about DM 400 (around £110) more, Milan machines will become a very powerful Falcon compatible workstation.

When the Milan arrived, the powerful Hades446/640 was already on the market. What motivated you guys to introduce an entirely new clone, and how long was the Milan in development?

We developed about one year and our motivation was, of itself, to make a much more flexible system that costs less than half the price of the HADES. I think we succeeded on all points.

It sometimes seems the German Atari market is tilted to the needs of the Atari users in North America. Where can Americans/Canadians purchase a Milan from?

Yes, it seems so. Regarding Milan Computer systems we do have a lack of manpower for distribution in North America. But with the new system we'll have a very strong and working partner already used to



▲ The Milan team. From left to right: Ben Schneider, hardware development; Adi Gekker, founder/management; Thomas Goltz, founder/support/graphic card driver development; Michael Schwieger, FDI development

international distribution. We expect the new Milan system to be available in Europe in early 2000 and in America from April 2000.

Do you believe the Milan is the future of the Atari Platform? If not, what is? What are your feelings regarding Magic Mac/PC?

Of course I do believe that Milan is the future of Atari systems. Nothing else can be, because the Milan will be the only Atari clone which will be an original Atari, which will be produced by a big partner like Motorola and which will be built in larger quantities. I like Magic Mac/PC as well as some other emulators, but as I explained already they are all based on existing, far and not always stable OS's.

The Milan website is huge, packed with information and downloads, updated regularly, and is available in many languages. There is no question that it is truly one of the most useful and impressive Atari related sites available to internet users. Since the arrival of Magic Milan, will we see a separate "Magic Section" of the pages, containing Magic Milan related downloads/patches, reviews, and information?

There will be a separate Magic section but not before our webmaster has a Milan computer. Until now we had to use many machines we could build but from January onwards, Joachim Janssen, the webmaster, will continue website development on a Milan running Magic Milan.

I noticed you have a banner on the Milan main page stating "Over 300,000 visits in one month." If this is true, it is very impressive, and proves once again that the Atari Platform is far from dead. How many visits, on average, do the Milan pages receive daily?

To be honest I have not checked the number of accesses for more than six months but I can only assure you that the banner is not lying. I will try to find out the actual number of website accesses as soon as possible. How many cheap questions. What computers, other than Milans, are used in the production of the Milan and the Milan website? Which software is used by the team on a regular basis?

Actually we use a Mac for website development, running Magic Mac, but only until we can open a Milan system for the webmaster. We also work with PCs for the selling system, but since the Milan446 card has been available, we are working with Calixtus on an Atari system again - better that we used a Milan.

Why did you stay with the Atari platform for so long, and why do you continue to support it?

We love it and we love the way people love it!

Do you consider the Milan a success?

Yes, I would say so, and especially looking towards the future it will become an even bigger success! But we have to keep in mind that all depends on our Atari name license negotiations with HUGBO. If they don't agree, we won't be able to launch the system the way we want to.

Finally, is there anything you would like to say in conclusion of this interview?

Yes, we, the Milan team, want to thank you all for supporting Atari systems for such a long time, and we will try to give back what Atari was already not willing to give you back anymore after 1994. We will produce and offer new powerful systems for a low price and with the feeling that they have something very special PCs and Macs do not have!

Thank you Adi Gekker.

Charming Chaos

Mark Wherry tries to tame the Electronic Cow in the china shop...

Never has a program been given such an appropriately British title as Electronic Cow's latest creation *Charming Chaos*, so that is exactly what it is - charming chaos! Based on an earlier freeware release, the program is a MIDI algorithmic composition and performance tool featuring the polished professional front end that has become a trademark of Electronic Cow releases.

An algorithmic composer is a program that creates random music based on pre-defined formulas, or algorithms. It sounds crazy, but it isn't quite as bizarre as you might think.

Then there are chaos...

Charming Chaos can be run either as a standalone program or as an accessory useful for running a alongside your regular sequencer. On launching the program, the main screen is displayed which consists of four rack modules and some global controls. Each rack module represents a separate independent musical generator which can be switched on or off, and all four can play at the same time if required.

The output of these musical generators is based on any one of the ten algorithms that are set up within the package. These are user definable and a default set is provided to get you started. Preset number four on it's own, is the nearest I can relate Pierre Boulez, Pierre Boulez satisfaction...

Each generator has two assignable MIDI controllers which are volume and pan by default, a MIDI patch and channel selector, and the ability to choose which real time MIDI input performance controllers are active.

One of the features that impressed me the most with *Charming Chaos* was the amount of features that could be controlled by an external MIDI keyboard during playback. On each rack you can activate time, pitch, amplitude, and controller modulation controls which determine which aspects of the performance can be changed during playback. The MIDI implementation chart



in the manual provides a full description of how to achieve all of the possibilities.

The controller modulation setting also determines whether or not the controller mapping for the algorithm assigned to that rack is active. Controller mapping makes it possible for continuous controller data to be sent while a track is running, such as volume and panning events.

The Interface

I personally found the interface pleasant and intuitive to work with, though a few brief trips to the manual were occasionally needed to clear something up. I think that adding *BuilderBIM* support should be seriously considered and would be the icing on the cake here.

Everything is controlled by two main dialogs - the main performance dialog for controlling the overall performance, and the DNA Seed Construction dialog for composing your algorithms.

You have complete control over the algorithm via the latter mentioned dialog and this includes rhythms, textures, which notes in the scale are to be used with the range, and how frequently the note changes, velocity maps and more. I think that a preset poppy menu for rhythms would be desirable, and a preset poppy menu for scales highly desirable. Common scales, for example, major, minor, pentatonic, and the various modes could then be called up with ease and without reference.

The overall performance as set up on the main dialog can be saved, including all

of the parameters and the ten algorithms. Each algorithm can also be loaded and saved independently via the DNA Seed Construction dialog and in this way, individual algorithms can be shared between different performances.

Background

Throughout the twentieth century we have seen composers trying to broaden their approach to writing music in a search for new ideas, partly as a reaction to extremes in romantic music of the previous centuries, composers such as Mahler, Wagner, and so on. While we saw composers such as Debussy and Stravinsky broadening the existing language of music, the composer Schoenberg pioneered a new mathematical approach to music called serialism. Simply, all the twelve notes of the scale were given equal importance and arranged in an order, then mutated and this was the piece.

American post-war composers, among others, experimented with so-called abstract music, which is essentially music of chance. Part of the attraction was that a single performance would never be the same as any other, though these pieces were usually based on existing fragments. Some composers recently have experimented with using computers in composition, most notably through IRCAM, a music research centre in France.



Quiet please!

Danny McAleer rids his recordings of a sound parasite...

Noise is a pest. Despite your best efforts it pops up everywhere in sound recordings, from those supposedly oxygen-free gold-plated cables the salesperson at the hi-fi shop told you can't eliminate the size of an S&P-100.

Fortunately, SoundProII have contrived a piece of software to at least alleviate our recording nightmares.

DeNoise is designed to work both as a stand-alone application, or as part of SoundProII's DSP suite, which also incorporates parametric EQ and FFT analysis in other plugin modules for use in Audio Master.



▲ Pick a frequency, any frequency...

It features an "intelligent" de-noising system which, in contrast to the traditional noise gate which simply cuts out all frequencies when the sound falls below a definable level, actually samples

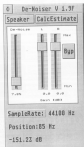
the unwanted intruders, removing just those leaving a result more polished than Mr. Wizard's wiring rig.

Dits and bobs

In addition to the de-noise element of the software, there are also a few off-line processing tools within the shell. These include Normalise (a function that optimises the volume of a selected file), and things to affect your stereo mix including balance left and right channels, swap channels, mix to mono using a choice of left, right, or both signals. There's a normalise function which can be incredibly handy, since once levels of 0.0 noise, a recording can benefit greatly from a little amplitude injection.

Anyone familiar with SoundProII software will be immediately at home with the sample rate options dialog box which provides a choice of frequencies (for recording and playback), including a selection of Falcon sampling rates and, if you have an FDI connected, the more useful 44.1 and 48kHz. From here, you can also select the input source for your audio, using either the Falcon's own analogue inputs, or a digital input (such as the FDI or ADAT interface) using the DSP converter. All these settings, plus all the data pertaining to your working environment (window positions, sizes, and colours, and so on), can be stored in a configuration file.

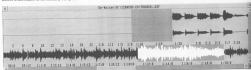
Although no actual editing of waveform data within the DeNoise software is provided, there is a sample view. This window comprises two sections: an overview of the sample



▲ Move the slider as you resort for dynamic de-noising!

before, and a user-definable zoom area in the upper part. Using a combination of keyboard short cuts, mouse clicks, and menu entries, it's possible to negotiate both parts of the sample view, scrolling in and out, and scrolling forwards and backwards through the waveform with relative ease.

As well as setting left and right loop markers (for playing passages continuously), the sample view is also used to define blocks for analysing. Once created, these blocks can be modified using a combination of [Shift] and the left or right mouse buttons, moving the start and end points respectively. As many



▲ Arrange the waves of wonderful working hours the noise. Tada! It's out.

Made as you'd care to highlight can be defined, those that are deemed undesirable can be simply removed by pressing [Delete] when the mouse cursor is above them.

There are effectively two ways to operate the denoiser:

- Using the functions Record and Record Mono, it is possible to sample audio directly into the software, and apply the de-noising process in real time.
- The second option is to perform any processing after the recording is completed (on an existing file), which is certainly my preferred way to work, because I can always return to my "original" if things go awry.

In both cases, the noise must first be "sampled".

Noise pollution

Removing noise from a sample using the Denoiser is straightforward.

- Identify a part of the recording where the noise is prevalent, such as before or after the music, or during a quiet period.
- Mark it using the sample view window.
- The software analyses this section, draws a plot in the EQ transfer function window, and then it's ready to clean up your art, so to speak.

The degree to which a recording is "de-noised" can be controlled using the intensity level slider (measured in percentage). This control works in real-time, allowing you to find the best compromise between your original recording, and one that sounds like it's been squashed by a ten-ton steam roller. It's actually a little more subtle than that, but over-indulging in the denoiser does have applications, particularly if you're inclined to being experimental with your processing hardware and software. To complete the controls, there's even a by-pass button which makes it easy to compare the processed signal with the original.

Finished result

It took just a matter of minutes to clean up some rather incense recordings from a selection of analogue cassettes, compared with the arduous task of manually setting up a noise gate and parameters. EQ, SoundPool's Denoiser takes all the effort out of the unapologetically dull post-processing labour, and would be of substantial benefit to anyone who uses analogue recording materials and sources that can sometimes generate more noise than rock star traffic.

Perhaps the only contentious matter is its price, especially bearing in mind once you have one module, you'll want/need

the others to complete the set. Taking into consideration the price of similar plug-ins on other platforms, the asking price is very reasonable - it's a lot cheaper and more approachable than working with an electronics engineer. ☺

DENOISER V2.9

Publisher

SoundPool
UK Distributor

System Solutions, 17-19 Blackwater
Stream, Dulwich, London, SE12 9NS
Tel: 0181 693 3355

Email: info@system-solutions.co.uk
http://www.system-solutions.co.uk/solo/

Price

£149

Requirements

Palcom32, VGA/RGB monitor, 40%
RAM, hard disk, CPU and non-CPU
versions are provided.

Plus

Modular design. Excellent quality
results.

Cons

Will be perceived as expensive. Flimsy
manual, which lacks detail in parts.

81%

Super Burnout



This is a pure adrenaline pumping racing game with no silly characters, power-ups or wipers to get in the way of the action. You don't even have to prefer motor-cycles to get your kicks because, apart from the graphics, there's nothing in the gameplay to distinguish this from most car racing games.

Super Burnout can be played against the clock on an empty track, or against six computer-controlled opponents, or head to head against a friend in split screen mode. Each player can select from six custom bikes which offer different levels of grip, acceleration and maximum speed and although there's no mention of authenticity with bikes named Biting Thunder, Lightning Racer, Hellcats of

Terror, Baffles, Killing Turtle and Super Rabbit it's safe to assume Yamaha and Honda have spent their sponsorship money elsewhere.

Transmission can be automatic, which makes it easy to follow the racing line flat out with momentary lifts on tight corners or manual where gear changes are performed by pressing the clutch (C button) along with the up/down buttons on the joystick. The enhanced Jaguar controller is supported and enables fingertip steering control using the left/right joystick buttons - quite why this can't also be implemented on the standard controller is beyond me.

There are eight track layouts "from around the world" and although there's no mention of there being the authentic layouts for Japan, Hungary, Germany, France, Canada, Brazil, Australia and America they do provide a variety of challenges.

When you're ready for Championship mode you race against six opponents on all eight tracks during which your start position for the next race depends on your finish position in the previous race. The trick is to punch the accelerator at

exactly the right moment to slip past your opponents then follow the racing line (the darker area of track) which makes you harder to overtake.

The on-screen graphics are well up to FPS standard with individual control over the vid FX, noise FX and music level. Given the choice between 14 AOR (Arcade) style music tracks or uploading up to the sound FX volume I opted for the latter! The game settings, high scores, joystick configurations and sound settings are stored in the cartridge even with the power off.

Jonathan Adams

SUPER BURNOUT

Supplied by: The Carcade Centre,
Haltim Road, Beckenham,
Huddersfield, HD13 8SD
Tel/Fax: 01484 544155

Email: morgan.maj@carcade.co.uk

Requires: Jaguar console

Pros: Plan of track and throttle
on-screen helped, later collection makes
it easy for both beginners and experts,
able to get something out of the game.

Cons: Couldn't find any way to abort a
race or change modes mid race.

85%

Photo therapy

Falcon users can now join in the Virtual Light Machine fun, Shlumming Lai checks out the party...



When Atari had Jeff "Psychodelia" Mixer working as a Jaguar software developer, it was almost predictable that he would channel the machine's graphical power and his past experience into making a pretty impressive sound/light generator. All it needed was some easy way of feeding in sound, just as kids would have it, along came the Jaguar CD unit, for which Jeff programmed his own Virtual Light Machine (VLM) software.

Quite how light can be virtual when you can actually see it is perhaps not relevant. VLM is cool, and now Falcon users can also enter the chill zone thanks to Noctscape's Whip! takes VLM a stage further by being exportable with modules and is supplied with the necessary details on programming your own effects.

It's that effect again. Let's see how long before some other producer at Atari are R&M module...

Fortunately, no instructions are necessary to use Whip!, as a very simple control screen contains all the buttons which are all clearly labelled with text and graphics. The left half of the screen is the sound desk, where some sliders allow you to adjust input gain (aided by a real two-channel oscilloscope) and output attenuation. Whip! basically reads analogue signals coming into the microphone socket and logs it back out to the headphone socket. Somewhere in between, it's in the digital domain, so the COP chip can get its pants on it and do fancy things.



Once we tried it with...

A couple of albums which begged to be used for this system were:

- **Place Safari**, one of last year's most acclaimed releases, from French electronic band Air. The spacy, sometimes eerie aural landscape complements Whip!'s default effects settings wonderfully.
- **Platoon 'Arctic' (1) - Rückkehr Der Kometen Karriere**. I bought a copy of this from the Plaza Atari fair in April, where its producer, Michael Heide of Jure Audio, was using it to demonstrate the sound quality of the Jure Audio Jam PRO Falcon audio expander. The interesting thing is it's also produced with the Jaguar VLM in mind. This one has more rhythmic aggression, and some dark subsonic/bass synth chord passages, making for an emotional VLM show.

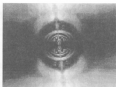
The right half of the screen displays the program information box and the current bank of VLM modules in a scrolling list. Some effects may have variable response parameter settings, to create different words according to the type of music played.

At the time of writing there are already 11 VLM files available for Whip!. Three of these are from that of the prolific Dead Hatters' (see page 10) top Swedish demo team, who have been quick to ply it with VLM versions of some of his trademark effects. Among the other effects, here are some of my favourites:

- **Classic**: Old school kaleidoscope with very high-contrast fluorescent pink, blue and purple swirling and wiggling in time to the music.
- **RGB Split**: Three sub-frame coloured lights (pure pulse and easy with varying superimposed) simple harmonic motion. As the points where they intersect the colour values are summed, giving white when all three (red, green and blue) are nearly



▲ This shaded polygon object has a tendency to blur its mind



From the circles in your mind! ▶

in-line. The motion and colour intensities can be adjusted, giving the impression of lying drunk on a dance floor to regaining consciousness from beer strokes in a dream.

- **Julia:** Using a low-input level, this bean-shaped fractal twiddles like a bodily organ freshly carved out of its host.
- **Stars:** Gas-squeezing 3-D starfield.
- **Rings:** A series of frequency spectrum plots zoom towards the screen, like the "flying the beam" video feedback effect in the bonus stages of *Tempest* 3000 on the jaguar. The signal peaks give in added vertical dimension, and to top it off the lines turn into something resembling comic dust as they come forward. A real sight of fantasy.

Whiplash is very user-friendly and highly enjoyable (although if you suffer any degree of photo-sensitive epilepsy I strongly advise against use). I can think of a few things to make it even better. It could incorporate a CD player control panel to work in conjunction with a CD-ROM driver, it could read music over the SCSI bus (and output on the DSP port to take you have high quality off-board DACs) and actually function a bit more like the jaguar VLM as well. As times there is a delay while the hard disk is accessed,

Top tips

- Don't strain the Falcon into the signal path between the source and speakers, otherwise the sonic fidelity will be degraded. Tap-off either at source (from a spare output like the headphone socket of your CD player) or en route.
- If sound-quality doesn't matter, and you don't have a hi-fi source to hand, but a CD-ROM drive with analogue outputs, use this. Wire it in to the Falcon's microphone input and start a music CD playing using something like CD Player by Alexander Class, or CD Audio (bundled with the ExtendedOS Gold drivers) from Apocalypse Software.

As load the modules, it seems, it makes no difference if you have 4 or 80Mb RAM under your Falcon's bonnet, it will still do this.

Probably the most effective addition would be fill patterns to load in and load out in the random cycle mode, no smooth transitions instead of jumping abruptly with a black screen in between. That would give it real panache.

Anyhow, I'm sure Mo will continue to develop Whiplash, it's a Falcon "must have" -

WHIPLASH 0.3

Author

Mo (Morris Fendley)@scape
Email: mof@le.odenet.de
<http://scape.odenet.de>

Requires: Falcon with colour monitor (RGB/TV or VGA), 4Mb memory minimum

Pros: Well-presented, can produce some relaxation, comes with programming information document

Cons: No digital input, can't read directly from CD-ROM drive

80%

June Audio contact:

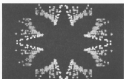
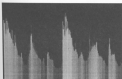
To order a copy of the June Audio CD or used in this review, and a list of other titles, drop a message to: Michael Kuster mike.audio@usa.net



and if you've been looking for a good excuse to buy that massive 42" hang-on-the-wall flat plasma screen television, this could be it. ☺

▶ Sharpish point

Oh, I like this one! ▶



Family Tree v2.2

Reviewed by Glyn Hale

"Atari, that's a games machine isn't it?" is the usual response when I tell people that I keep all my family history records on my ever ageing Atari computer. While it is certainly true Atari Corporation first came to prominence with their arcade machines in the 70's they also produced user friendly and versatile home computers which people are still using today, even though the company itself no longer exists. As a result of its integral MIDI ports it quickly became, and remains, a firm favourite with musicians and it still found stints alongside the mixing desk in many recording studios. Its graphic interface was one of the pioneers in Windows at a time when most PC users were still struggling with the complexities of DOS.

But what of family historians? How well have they been catered for in the Atari marketplace? Family Tree is a user friendly genealogy program which was written by Ian and Mark Baker for their own family history and which uses the Atari's graphics environment to the full.

System requirements and installation

Unbelievably in these days of massive memory requirements and Gbytes of hard disk storage, Family Tree can be run on a 1MB machine with only a floppy disk drive, although a hard disk is preferable. Installation is very simple, since as the program can be run using floppy disks only, it can be loaded directly from the supplied disk. Most users, however, will want to install it on to their hard disk, which is a simple matter of dragging the files to a folder on your hard disk. On-line help is provided as an RT-Reader format hypertext and there is also a comprehensive manual supplied in ASCII text format.

Data entry

When the program starts you are presented with an alert box, or menu, from which you can start a new tree or

Family name	_____	Sex	28 Nov 1871
Surname	_____	Date of birth	2 Dec 1871
Place of birth	_____	Sex	1788
Occupation	_____		
Further	Save		
Print	Cancel		
Save	C:\atari\ft	Printed	28 Nov 1975
Place	_____		
Children		Siblings	
John Hale	1	Henry Hale	2
John Hale	2	Marjorie Hale	3
Elizabeth Hale	3	John Hale	4
Henry Hale	4		
Reference	Further	Save	Print
Cancel			

Figure 1: Initial information is entered by clicking on New Person in the Display menu and you are then presented the Person Entry screen

load an existing one. Clicking on NEW TREE will present you with the file selector which has been initialised with the name Tree1.dat, a further click on OK will create a folder where your data files will be stored. You can have a different file name for each folder. As is usual on the Atari most of the program's functions are accessed via drop-down menus using the mouse and no typing is required other than when entering information. The menus are File, Edit, Display, Content, Print, Preferences and Help, and these then present you with options to perform operations like cut and paste or to open other windows.

New Person (Figure 1): Here you can enter names, place of birth, dates of birth, baptism, death and occupation. There are also fields which store parents, children, siblings and marriage details but these are automatically filled in by the program and are for display purposes only. When entering a new person into the tree there is an additional button labelled Next. Clicking on this stores the data and clears the Person Entry form ready for another person.

Names and places of birth can contain any characters you can type but dates have to be in the correct format. If you know the year but not the month or day the program will fill in the date as zero people by date of birth. If you are not sure

of the year you can use 'xxxx' which can be extremely useful. Placements are used to cover any form of relationship which might produce children.

The authors state the concept of legitimacy has no place in their program but there is space for 20 spaces! The marriage form allows space for ten children although when this is full you can scroll down the list and enter up to forty children of a marriage in all. (The authors say they will allow for more if asked!) Adding new children to a family is, again, a simple process. Clicking on one of the empty spaces in the Marriage form brings up the Person Selector form. If the father's family name has already been entered into the database the Person Selector will already list this, or the assumption that the child will be named after its father, and the rest of the family are automatically listed there too.

When subsequently viewing the child's Person form you find the program has automatically entered parents and siblings correctly and you can then enter further details. It is not possible to delete a marriage without first removing all of the children of that marriage which seems tedious.

Flags, useful for selection, can be set to store information on, say, direct relations there are eight definable flags. Editing is straightforward and it is easy to

move around from one record to another with just a click of the mouse. From the *File* Preferences menu you can do automatic backups at fixed intervals and also customise the way many of the functions of the program work.

Currently, Family Tree can import and export all data in GEDCOM format, except the custom designed flags, and I have never encountered any major problems moving information between Family Tree and programs on other platforms.

Tree Displays

Ancestors and descendants can be displayed and printed as charts with each successive generation indented. However, it is the marvellous Custom view that makes this a "must have" program.

Although this function is only available with the GED4 or SpeedyGED4 graphics loading utility installed. To start a Custom tree you select *NEW* from the Custom menu and the Person Selector opens to allow you to choose the first person in your Custom tree. The program then opens a full screen window with that person's name in a stacked list box at the top left hand corner, if their parents are included in the database there will be a small box drawn at the centre of the top of the box and similarly, boxes appear for children and spouses. Clicking on any of

these boxes will add their names, neatly entered relative to the original person. As you can then position them on the page, compiling drop line charts with this program even easier than drawing by hand with much better printed results.



▲ Figure 3: This sample tree demonstrates the facility of using any mixture of text to produce trees which rank amongst the best computer generated ones I've seen.

Conclusion

It is perhaps the way that the display of trees is handled that, in my opinion, makes Family Tree more than a match for other currently available programs. Oh, and I've left the time bit until last, Family Tree is free-ware!

About the author

Glyn Hale is a Music Technology Consultant and has his own family history website at: <http://www.argent.co.uk/users/gghale/>

This article is a reprint of that first published in the April 1999 issue of the monthly **Family Tree Magazine**, 61 Great Wyches, Ramsey, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE3 7 1HL.

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FAMILY TREE v2.25

Authors

Ian and Mark Wherry
ian.wherry@btopenworld.com

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ATARI
WORKSHOP

It's all in the MEX

Shiuming Lai invites old punk Paul Mex to talk about the heady world of music and his current activities...

My most outstanding recollection of Brighton is a beach with masses of pebbles, and an ambitious plan to build sandcastles raised. It's also home to a professional Atari-based recording studio, literally within sight of the shore and smelling distance of the sea air. Paul Mex is the proprietor.

Paul, what are your company's main objectives and how did you become involved in the business?

Primarily I run three different operations that often inter-mingle with each other:

- *Max One Recordings* is a high quality programming and recording project setup, which also looks post-production digital audio enhancement and CD mastering facilities.
- *Scene Art* is a label I formed with a colleague called Kevin O'Brien, and is designed as a platform for abstract, experimental and eclectic creations. Our aim is at releasing innovative, challenging material.
- I also act as an independent music producer and have over half-a-million sales to credit.

My background originates from being a "live" musician in the late '70s playing either rock or then going to underground punk and post-punk nights. After a succession of first-class and follows with different groups and record companies, the next natural step was to concentrate mostly on the recording side of the industry. Having built up a number of contacts from my musician days, I managed to work in the recording environment with many diverse artists ranging from "top stars" (Wham, as expected) "jazz-rock" musician, Robert Wyatt. Eventually, a high selling music mogul from the early 80s that had produced one of my previous bands, contacted me to become one of his "in-house" music producers for his second label.

In 1989 I decided it was time to go it alone and put together the Max One



▲ Mex with Kevin and Della, now better known as Klok's Affix.

Recording facility, to complement becoming a freelance independent music producer. *Scene Art* was formed in 1992.

That's quite an occupational transition, even within the same industry. It's not so surprising that you adopted the Atari platform when you decided to enter the computer aspect of music technology, was that an unreserved decision or did you experiment and explore first?

I got into the ST scene when I became "in-house" producer for *Sigh Music* (the company mentioned above). The company policy was to create/program the MIDI side of things using Atari exclusively. At that time the main program was Pro 24, which I have to admit, I hated. Having been used to hardware sequencers, and a little dabbling with Commodore computer packages, it was fairly difficult for me to adapt to the ST. Having nearly been brought up on Roland machines, I found that Pro 24 didn't really suit my way of programming or working. However, there were no alternatives open, as the company wanted to keep everything on the same domain so that it was easy for projects to be moved around between the "in-house" producers and remisers. Often

one person would program, another would record, whilst someone else would mix. This way individual projects could remain as fresh as possible and not sound too rigid through only one person's input. However, things did often go off the ball through there being "too many cooks" spoiling it!

Sigh Music had one major studio and a bunch of pre-production programming suites. At one point, Mr Steinberg and some associates came over from Germany to see our operation utilizing the Pro 24 program in full effect. We were told to be extremely nice to him and praise the product accordingly. I was working in one of the pre-production programming suites at the time of his visit and enthusiastically put out bells and shook his hand! It seems many people found Pro 24 difficult and awkward to work with, did you persevere until *Culture* arrived?

When I left *Sigh* in 1989 to start *Max One*, I immediately left the ST behind me and swapped straight back to Roland hardware sequencers. Despite all my contemporaries staying with the ST and the program enhancements, I was never tempted back, until teaming up with my then Art partner, Kevin O'Brien in 1992.

One of our first projects involved producing a pop singer, which we started at Kevin's place. Consequently he engineered



► From tinkering guitars and smashing up drums to computers and software. No glamorous fast cars or swimming pools...

the sessions and used his ST with Cubase. Although I glanced over his shoulder and noticed that the program looked much more serious and interesting, he obviously came a long way from Pro 24. I still stuck with the hardware sequencer for a little longer.

The evolution finally came when I was in a friend's music shop as he was putting something together using Cubase when the phone rang. This was also the point that I had opened the shop. He asked for one of me, indicating that I should answer myself as the phone conversation was going to be a long one! So, there it was, Cubase linked-up to a hard disk. I listened to it dubble and before you know it, was hooked. I suddenly realised the possibilities of manipulation and speed-one had with the program over hardware based sequencing. Within five minutes I had the basics of the program totally working for me. Being a man of action, I immediately (the next day) got my own ST with a copy of Cubase.

After about 10 minutes of being in total Cubase over, I took a review about the C-14B Falcon doing 16 track hard-disk recording. As my old Posix ETR was on its last legs, this seemed like the perfect replacement option. I investigated the Falcon and as a result, ditched the ETR in Cubase Audio M's favour. Of course the Falcon also brought about other options like CD recording and sound processing. It was at this time that I stumbled across System Solutions who lent me out with extra hard drive space, CD writer and SoundPad processing products.

Over though the computer music market has sometimes left the fans behind, the majority of musicians I meet still prefer this platform. I have a friend who is one of Parovoz's top programmers working on all different platforms. He is always telling me how he finds like he is working with a musical instrument when programming on Amiga. He also reckons the MIDI thing on

Amiga is still superior to other platforms. Occasionally I dabble with PC-related music software, but always feel happiest with the Falcon. Despite all the glowing glowing lights of the PC, you always know where you are on the Falcon. Also if anything goes wrong, it's so much easier to sort out on an Amiga as it's as if the machine was made for music.

My motto is: "If it ain't broken, don't try to fix it," and I certainly don't have any immediate plans to replace the Falcon while it continues to do the job at hand!

Have you worked with any (new, then or still) rich and famous artists in your time? Do us, drop some names...

I've worked with a fair few named artists over the years. Probably the most famous names I ever recorded were for Midge! This was back in January 1982, when I engineered the well-documented sessions in Andrew Ridgeley's living room, on a humble 124K J44 Personal. We recorded "Midge Rag" and an early version with the original lyrics (co-writer for the final record) of "Careless Whisper." These were the recordings that landed George and Andrew their record deal, followed by fame and fortune!

At the time I was so poor that I couldn't afford a mixer stand. We recorded this by getting a boom and stuffing the handle down the back of the sofa to keep it in place while the microphones roared on the details. Now there's a sight to envisage - George Michael singing into a boom - I didn't know

him at the time, but on reflection now, it is obviously infamous! Midgey in 1985 (I co-wrote and co-produced some drum and bass tracks for the great English comedian, Frankie Howerd's Song and Dance Collection album. Another crazy scenario to imagine, Frankie Howerd singalonging over jungle tracks. The tracks for this album were supervised with my old M running Cubase.

I have co-produced and co-written tracks on such Kim Peasley (legendary American underground folkie/Trio poet producer) and Toyah Wilcox's recent album releases. These tracks were all recorded and recorded using my current C-14B Falcon.

In 1983 when I was still in Sgh, I spent two years solid working with two artists called Karen and Charlie Poole, whom finally found fame last year under the name of Alltime's Best. Several records that I produced and co-wrote with them at the time, were released in America and Japan, and all programmed on the ST running Pro 24.

The past year has mainly been dedicated to working with new artists that will hopefully make a name for themselves shortly. Recent new releases projects have been: One in a Million by Sound by Zero (Sgh's Records 127), a album and that I co-wrote and produced for using Cubase Audio for multi-track recording and Audio Master for some editing on the material.

Call by Four Shaped Nations (Phoenix Records CD), a trip-hop genre group that I co-produced using Cubase Audio for the multitracking, Audio Master for the creation, and CDRecorder Pro for making the PQ master disc for manufacturing.

Do you have any amazing memories to share?

The high-pointed time I was working on a song called, "Whole Snapper" by an American group called "Mum I Mean Mum Forgive," with an associate called John Hamilton. The funny joke being that John is old and I am deaf! Anyway, we had been



► The Crews, live at Cony Place in Watford, Herts. Left-to-right: Warren Thomas (lead vocals), Paul Rex (lead-guitarist)

Band career highlights

The Crews were Paul's first band, where he was responsible for guitar. His first professional group was The Gambia of Shame, touring extensively and releasing a numerous records. "John Peel on Radio One liked us quite a lot and often played our records... we appeared briefly in a late '70s Hammer House Horror feature film with Christopher Lee and Peter Cushing, which has been shown on TV a few times.

Even though we never found any success, one of our records, No Boards, became a bit of a cult hit, with the added credibility of being produced by Mike Ison, Robert Wyatt."



working hard all day on this mix when one of our (other) colleagues came into the studio and screamed at us, "What the hell is that noise?" John and I looked at each other (innocent), as we couldn't hear a thing. Our colleague pointed out that we had let the drum machine code slip into the mix somehow, resulting in a high pitch tone sounding throughout the song. As it happens, the record went out like this - even the mastering engineer didn't spot the noise and nobody actually said anything until the record had sold around 40,000 copies. It was only at this stage that the record company got cut-out and the record went on to reach number four in the national UK chart. The joke being that it was that high pitched noise that got the record off the ground - despite that song!

The beauty of this computer technology is that it is easy to set up your studio at home without the need for costly premises. As a result, when I first started Max One (back in Weyford, I had my left channel to accommodate the equipment. Practically the first job I got was to help the legendary '60s group, The Troggs, record an album of their early hits. This was all going smoothly and in the middle of it all their manager called me and said that Channel Four wanted to come and interview Reg Presley (the singer) at my place so he was leaving the country straight after the mixing session. He also said it would be great to have a studio backing for the TV interview and so it was the ideal situation while he was mixing. I explained to him that my left channel wouldn't be like one of those "Nasty Road" backing scenes you often see on the screen. "But I've heard the sound coming out of your studio," he said. "It doesn't sound like a left to me."

I explained to him that technology had come a long way since the '60s and a lot of records were now made in people's

bedrooms. Undisturbed, he arranged for the interview to take place on the following day. The next morning Reg Presley arrived followed shortly by a lot of his people. One of the party had a laptop bag that I presumed contained the equipment. I started to discuss with them how technology was becoming so advanced and small nowadays. They explained that they didn't have any equipment and were the production team - the camera, sound and lighting crew would be along shortly in a truck!

So there it was, the small studio that I was trying to keep private within a residential area, so as not to upset the neighbours (it was all sound-proofed so that this episode not happened, as one would have been very fit to hear), was soon to have a far amount of attention shed upon it. Moreover later a large truck arrived and the crew entered what appeared to be rooms of gold! There were people all over the place as there was a crew of around 15 people. To make matters worse, The Troggs' manager arrived with an entourage and began to talk attitude. I had never met him before and he was one of those caricature '60s rock n' roll managers, complete with large pipe and Rottli Ropes. To say that the neighbours were incensed by this stage was an understatement, and I raised curtains, switching off down the road. Anyway, everything went to plan, although when the piece was finally shown on TV, it couldn't have lasted longer than a minute and a half! So my studio that I was trying to keep secret from the neighbours was exposed with practically my first clients. Luckily I had good understanding neighbours who all saw the funny side!

Is that the time? We'd better move on to the competition! On behalf of Atari Computing's readers, many thanks for your hospitality and a

Max One current kit-list

RECORDING: C440 Falcon H93 running Steinberg Cubase Audio 15, Zero-R, SoundField Audio-Master, DeFuser and CDRecorder Pro 2 (digital input/output through Steinberg's DSI, both analogue run using Steinberg's R88, both produced by SoundFont) Tascam DA20 D/A/T recorder, Aes A3-5000 D/A/T recorder, Philips CDDM08 SCD CD recorder, Kamaco DM-3900 MiniDisc recorder, Aes A3-100 cassette recorder and Tascam RS-TR10 cassette recorder.

MIXING: Philips CDDM08 SCD

MONITORING: NAC 423SE powered

Yamaha NS10Hs and subbass

SAMPLING: Sampling DSP in Plus

Workstation

SYNTH MODULES: Yamaha EP8-16

and Yamaha PS-6

DRUM MACHINE/MODULE: Roland MC-301

The range of work that we undertake is extremely varied ranging from day to day. For multitrack recording work, Cubase Audio 15 is the program used.

Often we are asked to archive record tapes that are old or come from a cassette. DeFuser is the program that handles this task, as it is especially good at eliminating hiss. Audio Master is used for digital editing and creating final audio files for use on CDRecorder Pro 2. A lot of our daily work involves producing master PQ CDs, or short-run promotional CDs for small independent record labels, performers and musicians. The Falcon and SoundFont products are available for these types of tasks, and provide the immediate cash flow for keeping the operation afloat.

fascinating insights. Paul, we wish you continued success in the coming years. ☺

The Competition

Paul is kindly offering the complete State Art collection to one lucky reader, all you have to do is correctly answer three easy questions and enter the prize draw. Five runners-up will receive State Art singles, "Ghosts in Heaven" by Lady Kayli and the Assassins CD Sound.

These questions are not my most commercially successful projects (although watch this space for the Sexual Assault project that we have licensed to another company. There is a fair promotional budget for getting this one off the ground, a video is currently being put together that has cost £25,000 to date, so they should show it hard in order to get some of their money back). However, these projects have to be made and represent the sound of the State Art philosophy that we are creatively very happy with!

The rules

Entries must be received by Thursday August 19th 1999 at 44 Hill Road, Colchester, CO1 1LJ, England when the draw will take place.

Regula Publishing accepts no responsibility for entries delayed, lost in the post or with no return address, and no correspondence will be entered into. Atari Computing contributors, their families and pets are not eligible to participate and the judge's decision is final. Answers on a postcard are acceptable, if you do not wish to cut the magazine.

The questions

1. What does Paul use for his sequencing and audio production work?
(a) Falcon03 (b) Roland sequencer (c) Commodore computer

2. When was Max One Recordings established?
(a) 1990 (b) 1991 (c) 2000

3. In which English southern-coast beach resort town is the studio located?
(a) Blackpool (b) Bournemouth (c) Brighton



Turbocharging the Falcon

John Kolak considers his choice of Falcon accelerators...

Prior to the FX board, the standard method for accelerating computers was to add a daughterboard to the computer containing a high performance processor clocked to a higher speed, while the motherboard remained clocked at its nominal speed.

Both Blimpup FX and Nemesis took a new approach by adding faster oscillator components which clock the computer at a higher speed than it was intended to run. This approach opens a Pandora's box of potential problems because the computer is running faster than it was designed to go - a situation made worse due to the Falcon's fixed design (Atari refused it into production when they decided to get out of the computer business). To complicate matters, not all Falcon production runs were identical.

Problem Falcons and Falcon Problems

Both the Blimpup and Nemesis manuals recognise potential problems. The Blimpup manual states "Although we have tested it carefully and it works with the Falcons of our numerous beta testers, there is no guarantee that it will function properly on your special Falcon." The Nemesis manual states, "We see so many differences in the Falcons, it is impossible to say how each installation affects the various areas that exist."

The greatest problem lies in the CPU's chemistry in the SCSI support area. Both products provide troubleshooting instructions. Nemesis provides a hardware patch and FX provides hardware and software solutions. This is perhaps the greatest area of difference in the acceleration aspect between the two products. Nemesis is sort of a "one size fits all product". It is worth noting your machine's great, if

not, there is no means of adjusting the setting for fine tuning. FX offers six buttons on its control panel for fine tuning of the timing adjustments.

As a last resort, both products offer further acceleration speeds to ease your Falcon will not support maximum acceleration. The FX oscillator speeds are 16 and 20MHz, whereas the Nemesis oscillator speeds are 30 and 25MHz. While this appears to indicate Nemesis is the faster product, the issue is more complex than this. The hardware acceleration features of the Nemesis and FX designs are near identical - they both employ faster oscillators and cut into the Falcon motherboard in nearly the exact same places. However, the FX design offers additional features which may make the FX a better choice for non-users.

FX's features

- Falcon memory access logic: The FX bypasses Falcon logic which treats the 68030 processor like a 68000 which yields a 33% speed increase in processor memory write speeds.
- Processor clock doubling: In addition to accelerating the bus speed (like Nemesis) the FX control panel also enables clock doubling of the processor.

- TT-RAM: (Also known as FastRAM or burst mode 32-bit memory) FastRAM is significantly faster than standard memory.
- Resolution enhancement: The Blimpup Screen Expander hardware has been incorporated into the design which overcomes the limitations of the Falcon video system and provides TrueColor at high resolutions, depending on the capability of your monitor. (Nemesis also accelerates the system bus and enhanced screen performance can be achieved using the Velocity software which is available separately).

How fast is fast?

When I first tried a Falcon it felt "sluggish" compared to my TT. At the time I was not aware of the relationship between the performance of the computer and the amount of screen data the computer has to process at higher resolutions and colour depths.

A review of the Crazy Dots II TT video card where the 68Millench results degraded from 400% to 120% at the colour depth increased from 3 colours to 16,777,216 (24-bit) colours respectively, clearly demonstrated how much the computer slowed down as it has to process more video data. This effect is evident in the sluggishness of the Falcon colour video modes. - see the layout at top of opposite page

Clocking Strategies

In recent years the trend has been to increase the clock speed of the processor by doubling or tripling it compared to the motherboard clock. The TT was originally a 16MHz computer, until at the last minute, the processor was moved to a daughterboard and double clocked - a marketing triumph!

Real time benchmarks demonstrate doubling the internal processor clock does not double overall system performance and the performance increase can be as low as 10 or 20%. For example PCs are typically sold based on the processor's internal clock speed. Ratings such as the



▲ the FX Control Panel (OPK) provides fine tuning buttons to adapt the accelerator to the widest variety of existing Falcon production runs. Note the display box also allows selection of processor speed

1008 *Journal of Management Education*

Spring 2006, Vol. 34, No. 2 103

[illegible]

■ All speeds are compared in a single Fusion running in low-value throughput at 100% at close 100% rate. DCP benchmarks are not listed because all products mentioned lack the DCP to 100% which yields a significant 100% performance level.

Cyrix PR386-112 (Pentium II class) chip are obtained by taking a 444P-4 bus and three-and-a-half clocking the internal processor core, then performance rating against an Intel brand 386P-4 chip. Armed with this knowledge, a Pifox FX running its processor at 40MHz doesn't sound nearly so bad.

It's hard to believe the F800 clock situation is opposite to this trend - while the rest of the world is checking the processor faster than the motherboard, the F800 processor clock runs **LOWER** than the system clock! The Motorola 68000 processor runs at 16MHz and the system clock runs at 10MHz!

The FX double-checks the processor chip to 4096-b, which provides considerably more guard than FibreMax, which although it provides a higher 1096-b system clock, actually runs the processor clock at half speed (548-b).

This performance difference is apparent in the benchmark data. The FX, without CPU-sharing benchmarks, illustrates the FX is faster (accelerated) compared to the Niagara. However the last column, which shows the FX running at maximum speed, outstrips the Niagara's maximum performance.

The benchmarks also show the degradation of ST-RAM memory access performance as colour depth is increased, compared to the performance of TT-RAM which remains constant. This illustrates the importance of adding TT-RAM (RefRAM) to the Fabric for maximum

(performance) : even though a few (mostly
older) soldiers still may not support it.

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Installation is not for the faint-hearted. Although both products include illustrated manuals with troubleshooting tips, both products require cutting five grooves in the subfloor, cutting legs on ships, and soldering wires to these points. If you are not comfortable with this level of DIY,

The Pioneer translation process has you install it one step at a time and test each step, with mantras "If you see this, good; if you see this, **TURN OFF YOUR COMPUTER NOW!**" instructions which is better than the FX manual - which merely provides a checklist of things to look for in case of trouble.

How to Reduce the Overclocking Risk

There is some disagreement over this issue. There have been reports of increased Falcon failure rates since the advent of over-clocking accelerators but both Titan and Stratus don't think there's a connection.

Time's David Brill notes, "Heat chips in the Falcon are rated to operate up to 70 C - very hot!" and through's Georg Aker says, "I don't think that you should be much concerned about overheating, since in today's computers this is mainly a heat problem. But the chips on the Falcon (even the CPU) and *Widel* are relatively cool compared to a Pentium 5. The

availability in the Falcons stems from delicate timing, and not from the heat itself." It seems to me it's more likely any increased failure rate is due to lodged upgrade attempts that that's pure speculation on my part.

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The impetus for writing this article was to try to ascertain whether an accelerated Falcon could equal or outperform a TT 500 computer (or to put it another way, did I make a mistake selling my TT to buy a Falcon?) so let's take a closer look at some benchmarks.



• **Quick Index:** provides a useful comparison between Eikon and TT models, because both computers have TT medium installed in common (Eikon 8000 60, 80, 100)

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K4Q 4



Why compromise the very essence of your Atari's MIDI engine, when looking for extra output ports? The HD 4 puts the competition in the shade, its timing accuracy is second to none. Includes power supply and data cable, plus MRCOS driver for Cubase. Plug in, copy one file and go! **ST/TT/Falcon/Hades: £149**

DA Workstation Rack

Take your Falcon on the road in this tough steel 3U rack housing. The internal media tray can take a 3.5" IDE hard disk (much faster than the 5.25" in standard Falcons) or SCSI with additional kit, plus the original 3.5". There is also room for a HD 4, FDI and CENTurbo II accelerator. Serious power. On the front panel is an Atari-standard external keyboard socket, for Mega ST(E) and TT keyboards. **Falcon: £299 supplied and fitted, £349 with keyboard/Freekeys kit**

SPDIF

The Falcon Digital Interface (FDI) is your connection to CD players, DAT recorders and MiniDisc systems supporting the SPDIF format. Exchange audio signals between outboard gear and computer completely in the digital domain. Supports both electrical (coaxial) and optical (fibres) connections for I/O, plus on-board 44.1kHz sample clock, compatible with all professional audio software such as Zero-X, Cubase Audio and DeNotator. **Falcon: £199**

Also available: Falcon ADAT interface, SPDIF patch bay, SMPTE units...

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Spectral analyser	£119
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Falcon and TT comparison					
Resolution	Falcon	640x480	640x480	640x480	640x480
Speed	16/20MHz	16/20MHz	40/40MHz	40/40	40/40MHz
Colours	16	16	16/256	16/256	16
	80,000	67.5,000	80,000	67.5,000	Compare 80MHz 37s
CPU Memory	512	512	512	512	4192
CPU Register	512	512	512	512	4096
CPU Division	512	512	512	512	5096
CPU Int. I/O	491	512	512	512	5740
100 Text	170	1000	50/70	50/50	800
100 3d log	489	1000	50/70	50/50	10/0
100 3d int	170	1000	50/70	50/50	100
100 3d log	100	1000	50/70	50/50	1000

▲ All tests performed using Quick Index. The results, except for the last column, are referenced with a standard TT800 which represents 100%.

QI Continued from page 10

Derek Mitchell's Quick Index is a great way to get a quick comparison to the TT because one of the options allows for percentage ratings of all the systems to be compared to a stock TT.

According to Quick Index only the FX Falcon running at maximum acceleration is able to exceed TT processor speed and keep up with 16 colour TT video speed (with NVDI installed). Running in 256 colours Falcon video performance drops off rapidly and although it's not far to compare performance with a stock TT (which doesn't suffer a decent 334 high resolution colour resolution) the sluggish screen response is disappointing.

The significance of using NVDI is evident when comparing the two columns which compare display performance with and without NVDI. Compared to a TT all other ST models exhibit poor TGS scrolling performance, the Falcon seems to suffer worst of all - even the 17s is twice as fast in this benchmark.

Falcon Reliability

Nonetheless compare your accelerated Falcon to a stock Falcon running in doubletime (essentially monochrome) and indicates the relative speed improvements. However, because the Falcon is a relatively slow computer anyway, the benchmarks are effectively reporting a faster turbo is still a turbo!

The Quick Index benchmarks are interesting because they can also compare the performance of Falcon accelerators to a stock TT - which is much harder to live up to.

It's also worth pointing out screen performance and processor speed should be examined separately. For example if windows open and close slowly, and text scrolls at a crawl the machine will feel sluggish irrespective of the underlying processor speed.

In ball-park terms the Quick Index benchmarks indicate a stock Falcon running in 16 colours feels roughly as responsive as an ST but the underlying processor speed of the Motorola 68000 will perform processor intensive tasks such as ray tracing, image conversion and other tasks performed while the screen is idle, roughly four times faster.

▲ FX board mounted in the Falcon processor direct slot, note the optional cooling fan mounted next to the cartridge port

Again in ball-park terms a stock Falcon running in doubletime resolution offers sloppy screen performance and using the accelerators retained here you can enjoy similar screen performance in 256 colour resolutions.

Enter CeeTurbo II

System Solutions kindly provided Membench results for the TT 800 and the CeeTurbo II Falcon accelerator (also distributed by System Solutions and reviewed in ACPI 12), which appear in the last column of the benchmark table. The CeeTurbo II is similar to the Blowup FX in concept, except CeeTurbo have incorporated a separate 50MHz 68030 processor directly on the accelerator board. This overcomes the 1475s memory limit (CeeTurbo supports 12875s) which exists because Atari did not wire all the memory control lines on the 68030 processor - yet another symptom of making the Falcon to market! One striking indicator is the superior handling of TT RAM in the CeeTurbo and TT Membench results which indicate the FX is fighting against the Falcon's crippled design to add FastRAM whereas the TT and CeeTurbo were engineered to utilise this feature of the 68030.

Summary

The products mentioned in this article cover a wide range of price and performance but the Blowup FX will offer excellent value for money. System Solutions will have a stock to get there while they're 'on fire' ☺

Email: fxinfo@psu.net

BLOWUP FX

Manufacturer

Archer, Brent and Robert Goss

UK distributor

System Solutions, 17-19 Blackwater Street, East Dulwich, London, SE22 8SD
Tel: +44 (0)181 463 3551
Email: solutions@system.solutions.co.uk
<http://www.system.solutions.co.uk/>

Cost: £77

Requires

Atari Falcon 030

Pros

Economical Falcon performance enhancer, well engineered

Cons

File wrap by tape installation testing

80%





The Atari Corporation has long disappeared yet the Atari platform still has life! Keeping this in mind three years ago I went out and purchased a Hades 48000 computer. I was the first on my block (probably in my country) to buy one of these machines. Since then I've conscientiously updated the ROM chips and this machine remains my main computer. Considering I've since purchased a 386 Plus Power PC Mac that's saying something!

I enjoy using the Mac, there's some software for which there simply is no competitive Atari alternative, but software such as Calamus SL, One Page, Das Laptop, Phoenix and quite a few others, make the Hades my machine of choice, especially for final output. So let's take a closer look...

The Hades computer

The Hades is available in a number of configurations. My machine configuration is as follows:

- A hard drive
- IDE floppy drive
- SCSI port
- 4 PCI slots
- 2 RAM slots
- Standard Atari serial port
- High-speed (250,000 baud) serial port
- Mouse port
- Joystick port
- MIDI
- LAN port
- Parallel port
- VME slot
- Standard IBM keyboard connector
- 8 memory slots

The memory slots must be filled with a minimum of 4MB of RAM and can be filled with up to a whopping 1 GigaByte - and if you have that memory you can forget about "out of memory" messages! Over the three years I've had the machine I've slowly increased the memory and currently have 512MB installed. It seems overkill but I needed the additional memory to add 100MB and larger image files. The Hades can be purchased in mini-tower or full tower configurations. You can also save yourself quite a bit of money by purchasing the components and building the system yourself - I'd rather be

stupid by starting today's desktops, but I'm sure there are plenty of masochists out there keen to get stuck with such a job.

How it works

The Hades supports a range of graphics cards. I'm currently using an ATI 1954 board which features 4MB of video memory and is quite a bit quicker than the ET4000 I originally used. My ATI board uses a modified version of the software driver originally written for the MDVA graphics card and supports resolutions from monochrome to 32-bit colour, although (unlike the ET4000) it doesn't support ET-Low (300x300Hz) or ST-Medium (640x350Hz) resolutions. It works well and seems happy driving a 17" monitor at 24-bit resolutions.

The operating system is a modified version of TOS 3.56 (used in TT machines) and contains no four ROM chips. So far I've replaced these ROMs twice, new releases become available to eliminate bugs and compatibility problems. RAM memory is considered as contiguous ST RAM although it acts as high-speed RAM. My machine uses standard 50MHz chips although newer Hades motherboards now utilise 600 50MHz memory modules. 600 RAM is about 15% faster than standard RAM so new purchasers can expect their machines to run faster than mine - although the actual speed increase will be nearer to 1% rather than 15% because overall speed is more dependent on processor speed than memory access speed.

Speaking of processors the Hades can be purchased with a Motorola 68040 or 68060 chips. The 68060, fitted in my machine, is a 50 MHz chip clocked to run at 60 MHz by my machine. For anyone looking at PCs and Picas running at excess of 100MHz this doesn't sound very impressive but in real world terms the machine is a lot faster than it sounds - more detail on this later. I can't think of a



▲ Here's my Hades, positioned in pride of place on my desk sporting a TOS logo - added by the Canadian retailer of imported Hades machines.

good reason to opt for the 68040 variant, if you can afford it. Hades, the extra cost of the 68060 shouldn't be a problem.

Using the Hades

Using the Hades isn't much different to using any Atari. There are some additional programs to place in your Auto folder, one to recognise the built in cache co-processor (CPU) and a few others. There's also a Hades desktop accessory to turn the Motorola cache on/off which is needed because some, mostly older, ST software won't run with the cache on. The Hades accessory reads its information file in which you can easily specify how individual programs use the cache system. This INF file is an editable ASCII file and once setup will automatically configure each program to make optimum use of the system caches. The popular HD-Driver software is used to support hard disks and SCSI driver software will not run on this machine.

Compatibility

Always a difficult question to answer because everyone has different requirements. Some programs like Calamus 1917 run happily at the fastest settings the machine is capable of, others, such as my vintage copy of WordPerfect, need to be set to the slowest settings. Some programs won't run at all - graphical games generally won't run even with a graphics card capable of displaying them. This isn't the place to give a list - if you're serious about buying a Hades check with

your dealer to find out if the software you want to run works, before making your purchase.

Although some of the programs I depend on must be run on the slower settings that statement is meaningless because this is still very fast! Programs I regularly use include Calamus SL (sorry Calamus 3.0/4 doesn't run), Outline II, Das Repro, Photoshop, MacArt, Pagesetter, Das Repro, Studio Photo and Das Vector Pro. Certainly most commercial quality programs written in the last two years should run on the Hades.

Hades versus TT

In general terms the Hades machine is between six and twelve times faster than a standard TT. I'm saving my favourite comparisons against my Mac, but in the exercises here are a few timings (in minutes/seconds format).

```
Soften Filter Das Repro.
One Meg file
TT      0:18
Hades  0:08

Screen Reader Calamus SL
Complex Vector file
TT      0:07
Hades  0:01

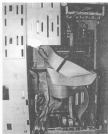
Rasterize in Calamus SL
704 image file
TT      1:10
Hades  0:08
```

Pretty impressive numbers eh! Using a TT I was able to spend my free time learning the intricacies of coffee making! So there's a clear speed advantage over Atari's faster machine but let's take the fight to the Mac...

My Mac 8600 PPC running at 80MHz, Power PC 68030 is around 70% as fast as the current Apple G3 models (according to Norton Utilities) so taking that time consideration let's see how the Hades stacks up. Obviously we can't run the same software on different platforms so we have to software differences too consideration. For example vector redraws are much faster in Outline II or Das Vector Professional than Calamus SL and different again using Adobe Illustrator on the Mac.

Image Processing

Once again bear in mind software as well as hardware is being compared which is especially important when comparing Quark Express with Calamus II because Quark, unlike Calamus, is NOT a WYSIWYG (What You See is What You Get) program - images, text and vector objects are drawn up individually and text is often a special screen font. Calamus draws exactly what will be printed (There is an optional Calamus SL Module which displays thumbnails but because I have enough memory I don't need this). I



▲ Here's the mandatory "guy" picture the editor demanded. What mysteries he made look, but all I can add from a non-technical perspective is the components have a quality "look and feel" about them.

should also point out the Mac is fitted with a very fast A11 Eichen VR graphics card, and is also equipped with 32MBs of memory and consequently isn't set to use virtual memory.

```
Redraw 20MB TIFF file from
1000 to 2000 zoom
Photoshop v6.01      0:04
PhotoLine v2.20      0:01
Das Repro v2.41      0:01
```

```
Rotate 20MB TIFF file
15 degrees
Photoshop v6.01      0:13
PhotoLine v2.20      0:10
Das Repro v2.41      0:40
```

```
Redraw 24MB Vector file
from full page to 1000
Illustrator v2.0      0:03
Das Vector Pro v2.12  0:10
```

These are impressive times for both machines. Exactly what the hardware/software balance is impossible to tell but my overall impression is that the Mac is a faster machine. It's easy to pick and choose times to support any standpoint but, as Mark Train said, "These are test, damned test and statistics." For example I use Photoshop on the Mac, which generally seems quite a bit faster than Das Repro apart from the Zoom function - but I have also compared Photoshop to Photoshop which is the fastest Atari program. There are other plenty of other Mac image processing packages, some slower and others faster than Photoshop but the bottom line here is that the Hades is a competitive machine.



As I mentioned above there are some areas where Atari software is not competitive with what is available on the Mac. This mostly consists of rendering/modelling software. But I much prefer Calamus to Quark and the combination of Photoshop/Das Repro to Photoshop. Das Vector Pro is a much more powerful program than Illustrator.

Problems, rumors and limitations

Over the three years I've had the Hades I've only experienced one serious problem - a factory defect which made using 100% 30MHz impossible. These 30MHz, and apparently only these 30MHz, need a particular connection with the CPU and on my machine this connection was severed and it took a while to diagnose the problem then find a technician to fix it. The manufacturer, Modula Corporation, were helpful in making clear the problem and even offered to repair the machine (if I could get it to them) so full marks to them for that.

I've heard about one person who connected his machine to another computer using the SCSI "Bus Arbitration", which enables two computers to share one SCSI drive, but unfortunately this blew the SCSI controller chip on his machine. Maybe it's a generic fault or maybe it was a faulty controller chip.

The Hades supports PM27 and Genma multitasking but it doesn't support MacG. I've heard there is a version of MacG under development for the Hades, and it can't come fast enough for me.

I was also told, when I purchased my Hades, that it was to offer PC compatibility would soon be available. This turned out to be no disappointment. Various sound cards and other options are available, including one to offer Future DSP compatibility - again, if you're serious about buying a Hades, check with your dealer.

Although there are other Atari clones available and under development the Hades offers raw processing power and TOS compatibility which is what it's all about. I remain happy with my machine. ☺

Basic BASIC!

One of the computing laws of programming is Stockmayer's Theorem. It states "If it looks easy, it's tough - if it looks tough, it's damn near impossible". Stockmayer obviously didn't have HBASIC when he wrote his statement...

Over the past few months I've shown you some of the basic functions of HBASIC. We can now continue with our PDC program adding much more features. This issue we'll concentrate on:

- Adding the file selector for the print/view option.
- Creating a Program Options dialog with the ability to specify a viewing program.
- Checking for a command line and automatically going to the print command straight away.

To leave more space for us in depth explanation the source code listing is only included on the Reader (Click this issue).

The File Selector

The file selector has been one of the nicest features of the Atari platform since the first TOS v1.0 machines sold in 1985 and it's one of the most useful programming tools and is fully accessible using HBASIC. The function comes in two versions, one for AES versions 1.42 or earlier (below TOS 1.4) and another one for later AES versions.

Although the layout of the file selector has changed slightly over the years as extra refinements have been added the pre-AES call only differs in one way, it doesn't include a prompt "message" such as "Please select file to use" and so on.



I've included three extra sub/functions in the PDC source which are SUB sel_version, SUB InitFileSelector and

FUNCTION GetSelector(). Both sub routines are used by the file selector function.

- sel_version returns your AES version
 - InitFileSelector sets internal settings for the main file selector function.
- The selector routine takes in one parameter, which is the message that is to be displayed. The routine first checks if the starting path has been defined (which is what InitFileSelector does) and then decides on which call to make, depending on your version of the AES. The variable typed() after the call is the last path of the program, which the extension of the search field as well. The loop is needed to get rid of this as the path and name (contained in typed()) can be returned by the function.

How can this be used? Well, if you find the ProcessUserMenu routine and find "CASE view", you'll see I've used this function to get the user to select the file they wish to view. If the user clicks on Cancel, the function will return a null string, so this is also checked. Another feature we'll look at more closely next issue is the execution (running) of the external viewer (the "execute" statement). The same thing has also been done in the print file section.

The Program Options form



The code has been inserted as "CASE program". The first thing we do is to get the string for the external viewer is temp_11 so that if the user clicks on Cancel, we can replace the stated address with the old temporary version. The program then goes into a loop, so that no matter what button the user presses, the form will never close until either the OK or Cancel button has been pressed. If the Cancel button is pressed, the file viewer disk address is changed back to what it was. If the Change viewer button was selected, another file selector is displayed + useful eh?

When the routine actually finishes, there is a "global" (shared) variable named global_viewer3 which contains the name of the viewer which is used

when the view file option is called on. Please note that the keyboard shortcut has also been added to SUB do_keyboard.

The Command line

Remember in ACPI3 we introduced the COMMAND\$ command? Well, we're going to use it now - there's going to be automatic print option when double-clicking on a printable file (assuming it's had it's file type registered with the program).

When the program first loads, the printed() variable is set to the command line. If this is null the program will simply ignore it, otherwise the variable commandline is set to 1, and the print option is run. In the print option, if the commandline variable is set 0 (which means a command line wasn't used) the program automatically sets the user for the file to be printed. In this case, if a file has been double-clicked on, the program is executed and the file printed straight away without having to select the file again.

In the next few remaining issues, I shall be covering:

- The execute routine, including the option for the WA protocol (below)
- Using the WA protocol to call the external viewer. That is, in a multitasking system, if the program and the external viewer is being executed, both programs can communicate with each other.
- The Registration validation (including exclusive version of the latest validation routines from ENCHANT) - including generating a real registration key using the check digit idea in ACPI2.
- Using ENCHANT. A full guide to each of the benefits of the using the system, including window dialogs, ST Guide help, BubbleGPM help, program menus, check boxes etc.
- Insights into the Virtual Language project.

ENCHANT

Contact

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Suggestive Remarks

Mike Kerslake with some suggestions for better Atari computing and some ideas for programmers...

First off this issue we have some suggestions from Carl Hether in the USA who writes: "I use a utility on my iMac called CopyPaste which, among other things, allows you to keep and use 100 clipboards. This has saved me a lot of work when submitting my website URL to the various search engines. I don't recall ever finding seen anything like this for the Atari."

I am aware that Katherine Ellis programmed for the Atari a Clipboard utility which gave you some control over Clipboards, and perhaps this is worth checking out first!



▲ Katherine Ellis's Clipboard+ utility

However, if anyone wants to develop the idea further, Carl has helpfully provided a web site address to check out, [Script Forums](http://www.scriptforums.com/):

<http://www.scriptforums.com/>

Carl has also thought the idea of the Atari having a dedicated web site devoted to giving out information on latest versions of software would be useful. The Mac has something like this at <http://www.verbotracker.com/>

Well, there are already a number of Atari sites that provide a similar service, but there is perhaps scope for someone to set up a very comprehensive site?

On to programming suggestions now. Like many people I tend to collect a lot of bits of information from all over the 'net and through e-mails etc. There's no problem saving the files to disk in different folders depending on their content, but often these individual files would be better merged into one file for easy editing, printing and viewing. For example, you have a series of e-mails about the same subject and would like to merge them into

one file. The obvious solution is to use a text editor and merge one file after another - perhaps a better solution is to have some sort of utility that would automatically append one file onto another - preferably using the Clog and drop protocol. Options to append files in order depending on file date, size and so on would be nice.



Playing with text file manipulation I'm rather taken with the idea of a multiple text file viewer. Viewing programs such as ST-Guide and Textmate are excellent, but they restrict you to loading one file at a time. Textmate is better in that you can open files into separate windows, so you can view a number of files, but it would be very useful to be able to select a whole bunch of files from a file selector such as Freedom and load them into a viewer at one go. You could have a keyboard or mouse-controlled way of switching between files to be viewed and various options to copy and paste etc. The Revenge Document Displayer is perhaps a model for this sort of utility, but swapped up in a more modern GEM look. It would also be nice if such a viewer could handle a variety of text formats apart from the usual TEXT and ASCII ones. Something capable of reading Postscript or RTF documents and stripping out everything apart from the text, would be very welcome.

Millennium Mayhem

Following on from John Firth's problems with SYSTEM0 in ACAP12 I've received this response from Roger Barron: In my February column, John Firth reported his problems with the SYSTEM0 missing program (the February issue was my first look at your excellent magazine).

The fact that dates after 1999 occur in the date the program was written (rather

than 1900 for example) helps demonstrate why there is no simple and universal fix to the "TZS bug". Faced with the decision as how to handle dates after 1999, programmers can choose to do whatever they like. If it's just the printed date that's wrong, then it might be possible to fix this by intercepting the print output and changing 1999 to 2000 (assuming no one orders a quantity of 1999, or has a customer number of 1999...). If the date is always in exactly the same format (for example 31 July 1992), then the printer output can look for this, and only change 1999 (to 2000, 2001...) when preceded by the expected string format - which should increase the safety of this approach.

If the date used internally is also wrong, then it's a bigger problem, because the calculation of stock on hand, interest payments, and so on is likely to be wrong. This could be worked around, albeit with a considerable level of inconvenience, as follows:

- Set the system clock back 8 years (if instead of 10 years to keep years are handled correctly) to 1991, with the correct month/day.
- Start a completely new stock control file to avoid the above-mentioned problems with internal date calculations.
- Install a printer-intercept program that will change 1991-1999 to 1999-2001, as described above.
- Prepare to repeat this in 2000! Except the day of the week will be wrong - oh well, back to the drawing board!

Roger Barron, *Academ Software*

You've got a bright idea for a program, but you don't know your C from your Basic!



Well, we have tame programmers wanting these very ideas, so send them in and we'll let the compilers loose!

Teaming With Ideas

Xav finally puts the Team Tap to bed - and there's news all Jaguar owners should read...

Following last issue's over-sized article I'm hoping a few of you have built your own Team Tap clones, or are about to. It's also worth remembering that there are still official Team Taps available from Jaguar retailers such as The Console Centre and 16/33 - but you'll also get a copy of *White Men Can't Jump*, whether you like it or not (and most people don't!).

Even if you don't own a Team Tap of your own, it's so simple to adapt existing code to use them that I would urge any programmer to include the necessary support - even if the game only needs one or two joypads. At least then the user won't be forced to needlessly swap cables around. It's slightly more work, but with careful design it's possible to create reusable code which can be included in every subsequent program.

To start by the way, well, actually it's already been covered in ACP5 and the relevant code is



included on the Reader Disk/retrograde CD-ROM. This issue deals with reading joypads, and the only major change needed is an updated MAJOR.H file containing the individual interrupts for each of the eight potential Team Tap sockets which is included on this issue's Reader Disk/retrograde CD-ROM. The other files from ACP5 were just simple examples, and it's trivial to extrapolate from these into a full set of Team Tap functions.

A little detective work

One of the bigger problems with the Team Tap is actually knowing whether it's there or not! I've mentioned this before, but it's worth reiterating. Because the Team Tap was designed to be transparent to the programmer, it's actually quite



difficult to tell whether or not your program should activate the extra Team Tap features. The best advice I can offer here is to rely on timing tricks:

First, you need to display a title screen, and require that a player presses a button on the first joystick (for example "Press B on the first joystick to continue"). This will involve sending a mask with bit 0 cleared (five buttons B is a group B), for port A. As soon as you register the keypress for button B, test for another combination that has bit 0 cleared.

For example, you could write a mask of 0x7FFF, which has bits 0, 1 and 2 cleared. If there is just a normal joystick attached, this will be decoded as an OR function. The result is that you should still be registering button B as being pressed, since it will register if button A OR B OR C is pressed.

If you do not register button B as still being pressed, then either they began to do very quickly, or they have a Team Tap, in which case the mask will have been decoded to check another joystick. It is possible that the other joystick will also have B depressed, but if your code reacts rapidly enough, you should be able to check several combinations of masks with bit 0 cleared, before the B button is released. Try checking them in reverse order, as the higher sockets are less likely to be in use. This procedure will unfortunately have to be repeated for both ports if your program allows a Team Tap in either. Of course you could always just ask the user whether or not they have a Team Tap (and hope they don't lie, but where's the fun in that?

Any port...

Perhaps the most intriguing question of all is where exactly to plug the Team Tap in? Suppose you are writing a game which requires four players - the most obvious solution is to have a Team Tap in port A, with each player plugged into it. But suppose the user decides to play an older game that isn't Team Tap aware. For two player mode it expects one joystick in port A - no problem there, the Team Tap is transparent - but it also expects one in port B. The user, therefore, has to unplug one of the joypads and plug it into port B.

The solution to this problem - as used in *White Men Can't Jump* - is to put the Team Tap into port B. The first player uses a single joystick in port A, the second uses the first one in the Team Tap, and so on. Should they decide to play an old game, player 2 can still use the joystick in the Team Tap without any unplugging.



...in a storm?

In the next issue we'll begin looking at the new IOP device all Jaguar owners have been waiting for - a Tempest 2000 compatible rotary controller. Once again this is a modification of normal joystick technology, so even if you aren't interested in the Team Tap, digging out that copy of ACP5 will serve you well. ☐

Inside GEM

Mark Wherry puts GEMScript and OLGA theory into practice...

On other platforms the Microsoft Office suite of programs is popular because the component applications work together to provide an integrated solution. OLGA and GEMScript makes it possible for stand-alone Atari applications to work together.

All you need is a multi-tasking environment (Magic, MINT, Gemvee, NARS etc.), so more than one application can be running at the same time, along with a copy of OLGA. A GEMScript interpreter such as Scripscr or Simple Script is also desirable.

ArtWren and Teasel

With Teasel v1.4 and ArtWren v1.4 and above, it's possible to add graphs within your spreadsheet. To do this, check these three entries exist in your OLGA.INP file.

```
[Extensions]
; TEL=ARTWREN
; CWS=ARTWREN
```

```
[ApplicationFiles]
ARTWREN=ARTWREN-0; ARTWREN-ARTWREN.LP
```

Edit the ArtWren path entry so it points to the location of your copy of ArtWren and that's all there is to it - now for some fun!

Load Teasel with an existing spreadsheet, select a range of values, then click the graph button towards the right of the top toolbar. Teasel now launches ArtWren and creates the graph in ArtWren by sending commands via the GEMScript protocol. ArtWren then draws that graph within the Teasel spreadsheet by using the OLGA's implicit drawing features - read on!



▲ A graph based on a single spreadsheet generated by Teasel and drawn by ArtWren. This sheet can be saved within Teasel with no loss of quality because ArtWren creates vector graphics.

To customise the graph simply double-click on it to open the file within ArtWren and edit it as desired. On saving the file any changes are automatically



▲ A tiny snippet of code can create all these values - if only you could see that!

updated within Teasel. Although Microsoft's Excel spreadsheet can create graphs, independently the ability to add graphs within ArtWren gives you total control over the finished result.

ArtWren and Scripscr

Teasel utilizes the drawing power of ArtWren by controlling it using the GEMScript protocol. As we have explained in previous columns it's possible to create your own commands and, using a GEMScript interpreter, send them to GEMScript aware applications.

ArtWren includes some example scripts which can be used with Scripscr, the commercial GEMScript interpreter, which is based on a C-like syntax. Scripscr has recently been translated into English by Peter Wren (TransArtWren) and, hopefully, an English release will be made available shortly. Using this combination ArtWren can be used to plot scientific graphs, create mathematical images, or anything else you can dream up.

ArtWren and CAB

Since CAB v3.0 the HTML <embed> tag has been supported and can be used to embed objects within web pages. Objects can include movies and pictures, and on other platforms it's possible to embed interactive movies such as Shockwave files. For example, entering <embed src="tiger.cws">

within a web browser would show my favourite tiger file at a width and height of 400 pixels. When CAB interprets this tag, it asks the OLGA manager what



▲ In HTML, the loaded in Teasel and displayed in CAB. ArtWren draws the tiger within the CAB browser using the OLGA protocol.

program handles CWS files, in this case ArtWren because OLGA.INP includes the CWS=ARTWREN entry. ArtWren draws the tiger within the CAB browser window using OLGA's implicit drawing abilities.

Conclusion

Hopefully these examples have given you an idea of the power GEMScript and OLGA bring to the Atari platform. If enough programmers add support for these features the possibilities are endless. Finally, if you have any comments or questions please do get in touch with me at: mark@wrencomputing.co.uk

<http://www.wren.co.uk>

Contacts

Teasel, ArtWren and Scripscr
UK distributor: System Solutions
Tel: +44 (0)18 953 0991
Fax: +44 (0)18 953 0993
info.wren@system-solutions.co.uk
www.system-solutions.co.uk
Please note English versions of ArtWren and Scripscr are not currently available. German versions can be downloaded from: <http://cab.wren.net>

SITE SEEING

Richard Gordon Falka Software
83%
<http://www.atari-computer.de/rgfalka/>

Richard's pages are entirely hand coded HTML, and download entirely via Atari connect (a man after my own heart). These pages are a showcase for all of RGF's software, developed using GFA BASIC, which include:

- Loris text editor (reviewed p40)
- Splice: LED Panel clone
- Amibasic
- German <-> English dictionary - excellent
- CSD: Alternative GFA-Compiler user interface
- Bity: MGD-Player
- Psycho: Graphicsbased demo
- Schon-Pla: Screen saver with plenty of loadable modules
- Rookin: Simple board selector
- SAMPlayer: GDD sample player - still in beta

The pages are sensibly organised with an individual page for each software title which provides general information, screenshots and so on. All the software is available for download from a separate



download page which makes it easy to re-visit the website to check for updated versions.

There are no graphical navigation aids and, apart from the screenshots, you might as well browse the pages in text only mode. There's a links page to other Atari sites and a guidebook to send Richard some feedback.

I found the black background, blue links and orange text a little hard on the eyes, but these are easily turned off via the CAB (user document settings) option so you can suit yourself.

Joe Connor

Claes Holmerup
78%
<http://www.holmerup.com>

If you're interested in music, visit these pages! Claes Holmerup, along with other Swedish Atarians, have formed a virtual record company which any musician can join to publish and sell their music on the web.

For Atarians the site offers an up to date Atari news page and anyone using a Falcon for audio or Culture will almost certainly want to add this site to their hotlist.

There's detailed advice for anyone thinking of buying a Falcon to use for digital recording along with a list of hard drives and their suitability for AV use.

If you're experiencing audio problems there's a troubleshooting page covering all the likely symptoms, solutions and



modifications. Claes has been using and repairing Falcons for years and is happy to answer enquiries by email personally.

The site is functional rather than visually attractive but the structure is easy to navigate. The site makes use of frames and CGI scripts (which defeated CAB) but everything else works fine.

Joe Connor

SITE NEWS

Atari IDE Interface DIY

There's a scheme for an IDE interface and brief description at:

<http://members.brednet.com/~plm/atari/atdiide.htm>

English HYP files

Miché Ripley's has recently updated his webpages which included Telex, Pageant and other English HYP files along with his various systems, history, future enhancements, benchmarks and so on.

<http://www.lispmail.demon.co.uk/ATARI/HTM>

Email: mich@lispmail.demon.co.uk

Thanks to Carl Turner, and a copy of GEMTrade, there's now also an English HYP file for CD-Player. This can be downloaded from Alexander Claus's webpages at:

<http://www.bv-damstadt.de/~alexau/>

Email: claus@bvdnet.de

Mountaineering

Last time we gave the wrong URL, for Mountain. The correct URL is:

<http://www.stab-internet.fr/steat/>

Migratory HomePage Penguin

Matthew Japh's webpages and email address have recently changed. The webpages feature:

- HomePage Penguin Atari/C64/Mac/PS
- History of Home Computers

Email: mjap@atari-computer.de
<http://www.atari-computer.de/mjap/>

ICQ for ST/UX/OS/2 available

Clas Adamest has ported mICQ from Linux, and it's a fully working TCH program. Clas has included the source code so someone else can develop a GEM version. Download a copy from:

<http://www.seadn.com/~tsallick/>

MagiC Online

These pages, maintained by Benny Collins, comprise one of the best and most active Atari sites around. Reasons to re-visit include:

- An interview with FVL of the dead hackers society, who explain to us all why he dislikes MagiC.
- First interview with DELUX of Softcore, who has nearly completed his Falcon MP3 player - you can also download his 32bit colour desktop background picture of "an attractive lady" on-air mixed.
- English SIC files for AMH-emulator 2 and iConnect 1.7
- The latest MagiC software, with over 80 locally stored archives.

<http://temp.atari.org>

Email: collins@bunli.com



Around half our subscribers take the Reader Disk. The combination of tutorial files, listings, FD/Sharcware and exclusive software is unbeatable and not available anywhere else. Individual back-issue copies of the Reader Disks are still available. Please refer to page 9 for ordering details.



Whipl! v0.3
Falcon only.
No (Norman Pershke)/Euscape
Whipl! is a Visual Light Machine for Falcon owners which analyses music and creates visual screen effects. To use Whipl! connect a CD player or another audio source to the microphone connector of your machine.



HEARCoach v0.03
All Atari, Sharcware
Joukko Mäberg
For musicians and tests are a necessary evil. HEARCoach offers both an interval and a chord trainer from the comfort of a modern GEM application. These trainers allow you to hear each question as many times as required and will reveal the answer if you get stuck. Remember, practice makes perfect!



BookIt! v1.10e
All Atari, Sharcware
Harold Becker
BookIt! is a compact replacement file selector which incorporates features such as modern operating systems and applications have come to expect. BookIt! is multitasking friendly, supports filenames up to 255 characters in length, BubbleGEM and then selector support.

Enhanced Juggled tutorial EXCLUSIVE
© Dave/Atari Computing 1989
Replacement HARSUB file containing the individual tutorials for each of the eight potential Team Tip tickets.

Heisen BASIC tutorial EXCLUSIVE
© Paul Jones/Atari Computing 1989
POD source code to accompany the Heisen BASIC tutorial.



Luna v1.20e
All Atari, Sharcware
Richard Gordon Paila
Luna is an ASCII editor which boasts many impressive block handling features not available in other Atari text editors. Includes Ding and Drop, CLGA and AV protocol support.

Don't forget that all previous Reader Disks are still available!

See page 9 for more details



CD-ROM Subscribers!

Although there has still been no official confirmation concerning the future of the STreTCO magazine we have now decided to close our STreTCO CD-ROM subscription offer. If future issues of STreTCO do appear we can make them available as separate Reader Offers. This means existing CD-ROM subscribers have a choice to make from the options below.

Please indicate your preference then complete, sign, and return the form and we'll do the rest.

- ☐ Please send me a copy of the **renegade** CD now and refund or invoice me for the difference.
I agree to pay any outstanding balance on receipt of invoice.
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- ☐ Please send me a refund.
I do not wish to receive either Reader Disks or the **renegade** CD.

Please send completed form to:

renegade CD Offer
Atari Computing
75 Beestank Drive
Tucson
Arizona
85705
SCOTLAND

SIGNATURE

NAME

ADDRESS

.....

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.....

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POSTCODE

Shareware and PD

NEWS



InterActive started on May 30th 1999. Joe Garner said "Although InterActive was never run as a profit making

venture early registrations are no longer cover running costs. I'd like to thank everyone who has registered software through InterActive which has put thousands of pounds into the pockets of Atari software authors, from which we have all benefited."

Download links direct to former InterActive supported authors home pages will be maintained in preference to maintaining a central list site which should help ensure the pages remain up to date.

Joe intends to continue to translate German software into English and many of the former InterActive webpages will remain online as part of the Translation crew homepage (of which Joe is a founder member). For more details: <http://www.ia.co.uk/~interactive/>

QUINCY v3



This formerly commercial Falcon II track digital audio recorder, programmed by Gilles Berger, has recently been released as shareware. Here's a feature list:

- 8 track automated mix table + Each track has level, pan, 2 effect send, bass, treble, mute, solo controls. Two effects can be used simultaneously, or bass/treble + 1 effect equaliser + 3 programmable effects modules: chorus, reverb and delay with parameter to adjust recording level. + Total Reverb from 8 tracks (max 1 or 2 tracks + All controls fully automated)
- Tape navigation = Play loops, with one sample accuracy + Patch-in/Patch-out recording +

Non-destructive recording + Fast Forward/rewind while playing + Display by time, SMPTE or bar beats + Immediate positioning with a click + Positioning/Quantise, related to MIDI functions

- MIDI Mixing + MIDI file import (type 0 and 1) + Synchronisation playback of audio and MIDI files, including loops + Can mute MIDI file tracks, change tempo, generate MIDI metronome + Generate MIDI clocks to synchronise an external sequencer
- Sample filter + Six kinds of plotting including oscilloscope, decimation and dual + Zoom down to sample accuracy + Copy/Paste/Import/Export with AVR, AUP, AUP-C formats + Analyse, level correction, fade-in and fade-out functions
- Input/Outputs + Records one or two tracks from analog input + Records up to 8 tracks simultaneously from a digital input (DSP port) + Plays 2 tracks stereo or 8 tracks (stereo to digital output)
- English and French interface and documentation

QUINCY can be configured to only use system calls to access the DSP and/or Falcon sound system which makes it possible for TOS compatible platforms, which offer DSP and DMA support, to support QUINCY.

QUINCY can be downloaded and evaluated for up to 30 days, registration for its unregistered version costs 200 FF (around £21). For more details contact: Gilles Berger
Email: gharage@paris.fr
<http://paris.paris.fr/berger>

Videoity v1.03 new Freeware



To celebrate his employment as an official Gameboy developer Dave Murphy has recently released Videoity, the Falcon screen enhancer, as freeware.

Videoity offers software emulation enhancements for all Falcon screens along with support for the Bitmap and Superbitmap hardware resolution expanders. Videoity used together with Black Scorpion Software's Hercules accelerator allows access to the quarter pixel VGA TrueColor settings.

Also included on Dave's webpage are the latest library files for Videoity which contain a collection of screen settings suitable for most monitor types.

Dave has also updated his Falcon Sample Player PLAY.SMP as it is no longer meant the volume on startup and he has removed the printing of error messages as it can be used as a plugin with CAL, VCA, START support has also been added which means you don't have to stop playback or wait for one sample to finish before starting a new sample - this only works under multitasking operating systems with a suitable AV Server installed.

Email: dave@stari.org
<http://www.stari.org.uk/~dmurphy/>

Asioplayer v2.06

Since v1.83 Asioplayer, the popular AV/MOV media player, programmed by Didier Meugnot in France, has changed status from Freeware to Shareware and now includes a shareware delay timer when screen enhancement is launched.

Asioplayer offers EUC files and documentation in French, English, German, Swedish and Dutch. This release offers the following new features (since v1.83):

- Sound configuration dialog + Direct to disk + Preload sound
 - Display configuration dialog + Delay slide show picture 0 to 99 seconds (PREG) + Don't use GEM + 256 colour dithering
 - Web/without GEM option during movie playback
 - Special 16x240 screen display in Falcon (normally 320x240)
 - Improved HiFiStereo support (CD frequency)
 - MPEG2 bugfixes and much more...
- UK registrations via CyberTriter cost £10:
<http://www.cybertitler.net>
Didier Meugnot
Email: didier.meugnot@wanadoo.fr
<http://asplayer.stari.org>

SUPPORT SHAREWARE AUTHORS

Utility Shareware, all Atari
Email: BookIt!@atari.computer.de

BookIt! is a replacement file selector program designed by Harald Becker. Although BookIt! has been under development for many years has never attracted much attention from English speaking users - partly because alternatives such as Selektor and Freedom have been actively promoted by InterActive and CyberStrike. With Selektor and Freedom no longer under development Harald has taken the opportunity to release a new version which supports all the features users of modern operating systems and applications expect including:

- File selector and dialogs in GEM windows
- Long filename support up to 255 characters
- BubbleGEM support
- Font selector support
- Multiple file selection
- Automatic path history popup
- Auto filename completion
- Re-usable file selection window
- Colour display of folders and programs
- Integral file search
- Integral file copy/move and delete operations
- Sort by name, type, size, date and unsorted
- File creation, touching and info
- Symbolic files displayed in status
- Keyboard operation

- Popup menus
- Scrollable side fields
- Miniwindows and masks
- User-definable file masks

Installation is easy, copy BOOKIT!.PRG to your Atari folder and reboot. There are a few optional extras including an accessory playstation and CFX to call BookIt! on demand, a BubbleGEM help file, some programming examples, and a utility to convert existing configuration files.

BookIt! is multitasking friendly which allows

background applications to continue running while the file selector is displayed - several concurrent applications can even open file selector boxes at the same time.

Loadable file systems under Magic/PMT and Memories with mixed case and/or special characters are all supported and BookIt! intelligently recognises applications which do not support long filenames - displaying only TGS 8.3 filenames for selection. Attempting to load a long filename into an application which doesn't support long filenames (by toggling the Long names option) displays a warning alert. The auto-Path history



popup keeps track of your most frequently accessed file paths - although it doesn't track Memories like the Freedom history popup and is limited to eight files. The interface is functional but feels clunk and I'd like to see the options in the functions popup implemented as icons to keep things up a bit.

Registration costs just DM100 or 18 Euros (around £7.50) which removes the nag boxes and enables file moving/touching and the save configuration option.

Although BookIt! doesn't offer the same refinement as Freedom it's easier to install and still actively supported.

Joe Connor

hEARCoach v0.96

80%

Music/Utility-Joachim Hägberg
Email: joachim@bigfoot.com
<http://applepie.sei.se/Long>

If there's one aspect of music education that all musicians hate, it's aural tests - and just like a trip to the dentist, they're inescapable! Despite common myth, most people can do well in aural exams even if they aren't fortunate enough to be blessed with a sonic ear - it's a simple matter of practice. A computer is the perfect tool for carrying out this practice as it is capable of producing random tones, and won't laugh if you make a mistake, well, not yet anyway. There have been many aural training packages for the Atari over the years including Simberg's The Ear, and C-Lab/Emagic's excellent Aurs. All of which brings us neatly to hEARCoach.

hEARCoach is a simple but effective modern GEM application written using GFA Basic and currently consisting of an interval trainer and a chord trainer. Both trainers allow you to hear each question as many times as required and to see the

answer if you get stuck. The interval trainer provides a statistics error report page so you can see where your weaknesses lie. It would be nice if the number of hearings and attempts per question could be added to this statistics page.

The program allows a fair amount of user configuration that can be saved for next time the program is run. An interval settings dialog allows you to set which intervals are used by the interval trainer. The global settings dialog allows the fastest/heighest note to be specified, the length of notes played, whether the chords are interpreted as flat, MIDI settings and more. hEARCoach can be used with external MIDI playback equipment or can generate basic notes using the Atari's sound system. I would personally recommend a realistic, accurate piano



sound for serious practice. Although the hEARCoach is quite basic, it is still very useful and clearly shows potential if enough people support the author. hEARCoach is shareware, but at just \$3 dollars no register offers excellent value for money. An ST-Guide hypertext manual is supplied and I haven't experienced one crash while I've been testing it - is there a higher compliment?

Mark Wherry

FireNews News Reader

Derryck Croker looks at this usenet client for STik/STinG...

Our tour of FireNews starts with the utility program **Label** - its task is to log on to the news server to collect and deliver articles after we've dialled a connection with STinG or STik. All aboard then!

Our first step is to collect the list of newsgroups your ISP carries - since it's an ASCII file then a list downloaded by another program can be used instead (NEWSfile for example). Label blessed its cookbook by simply copying over its list downloaded the list with no sign that it had finished.

With that hurdle overcome, next step is a visit to Label's ACTIVE file to specify which newsgroups to subscribe to. I'd strongly recommend including the "headers-only" flag in any newsgroup merely subscribed to (to avoid a potentially extremely large download - unlike NEWSfile (previously in ASCII 3) there's no way to limit the number of messages to download). As an alternative you may prefer to try Gary Priest's Newswatch utility (<http://www.the-gap.com/~gary>). If your news server supports the **Newsnews** command then Newswatch will collect message headers from a specified time and date - it's then easy to plug the highest message number from each group into the ACTIVE file, or indeed NEWSfile's **DEFAULT.GRP** file. Newswatch takes no further part in the processing.

Label is a dual purpose utility - its other job is to maintain your off-line message bases. This includes actually deleting messages marked as "deleted". To make this a simple double-click task:

- Press the desktop copy (Label) to install
- Rename the copy as MAINTAIN.PRG
- Install MAINTAIN.PRG as an application with the command line parameter -n

With some messages or headers downloaded Label hands over to FireNews

which is a standard GEM application. It runs happily on a variety of Atari systems (although topping it with the HugsC utility AppleLink calls forth what appears to be a harmless short but with an uncomfortable error report).

There's no mystery operating FireNews, with such a simple interface it's really self-explanatory with a double-click on a message header (downloaded as a result of using the "headers-only" flag) bringing an offer to download the message itself, or if the message is already on disk to display the message itself. There's a facility to set flags on a contiguous range of messages, for example to mark for download later or mark for deletion. Another Macs mark though, there's only one way of counting messages for multiple flag-setting, and that's with a finger or pencil acting as a guide - the tip of one's tongue sticking out is an optional extra!

A variety of configuration options need to be set to use various aspects of FireNews - which may be a result of its non-registered status, but I could only make some settings "nake" by first saving the configuration file and then taking it for a visit to a text editor. No big deal, just another minor irritation.

Firenews's simplicity continues into its handling of replying to newsgroup postings in the form of personal email to the author - the message is copied to the temporary file that your email program uses for editing, and then your chosen editor is called. This is a neat approach, but there's no way to copy your reply to the newsgroup. Supported email clients are Atmail, NEWSfile and Interix, with Mymail on the cards for the future. Listed in the document-

FireStorm



▲ Running Label in maintenance mode enables message browsing - clicking on the arrow next to the message number at the top of the window is your navigation guide

Program	File	Icon	Messages	Services	Setup
Label	Label	Label	Label	Label	Label
News 400	News 400	News 400	News 400	News 400	News 400
News 400	News 400	News 400	News 400	News 400	News 400
News 400	News 400	News 400	News 400	News 400	News 400
News 400	News 400	News 400	News 400	News 400	News 400
News 400	News 400	News 400	News 400	News 400	News 400
News 400	News 400	News 400	News 400	News 400	News 400
News 400	News 400	News 400	News 400	News 400	News 400
News 400	News 400	News 400	News 400	News 400	News 400

ation (there's online help with an ST-Guide hypertext) are some really watering ideas for further development of FireNews. It's a great pity developers cannot to have pulled at the moment, because it shows great promise, but even as it stands it's perfectly usable despite one or two slightly rough edges. ☐

FIRENEWS

Author

Christian Anderson
Email: latemail@bigfoot.com
latemail@earthlink.net
<http://firestorm.start.org>

Pros

- Easy to use compact program
- Messages marked as "Deleted" are still accessible until maintenance
- Server/server and similar server support
- Mailserver support
- Free registration by email

Cons

- Some menu options aren't implemented yet
- No response from author on requesting a key
- No built-in newsgroup search

80%



LUNA

Is it a shooting star, heavenly body or terrestrial text editor?
Joe Connor, our man who fell to earth, tracks its orbit...



Luna, programmed by Richard Gordon Fells, is an ASCII editor and before you start peering at the back Luna offers features not offered by *Emmett*, *qed* or any other Atari text editor. Impressive when you consider Luna has only been under development for a few months!

When I started this review I wasn't convinced the Atari platform needed another text editor, especially not one programmed using CPM-BASIC. However I have had to change my mind to make room for Luna which is an excellent example of what can be achieved using modern Atari BASIC languages and development tools.

Luna does everything you'd expect an ASCII text editor to do, it's ideal for editing configuration files, writing source files or for use as an email client. Aside from its great looks it's the clever stuff only Luna can do which makes it stand out against the competition.

Clever stuff

Luna's block handling features are unsurpassed offering three different block selection modes which can even be mixed and matched as desired:

- **Column blocks:** Ideal for working with tables and lists. Columns can be cut and pasted as columns - even over existing text.
- **Group blocks:** Global cut, copy and paste operations can be performed on multiple selected blocks of text - including Column blocks. Each individual block can also be separately processed as an Object block if the Object blocks option is ticked in the Options menu.
- **Object blocks:** In addition to the conventional cut, copy, paste operations object blocks can also be filtered using a selection of Modules. Luna includes modules to convert blocks to all capitals or all lower case letters or capitalize the first letter of every word. Programmers can add their own modules using the plug-in interface provided. Furthermore mathematical operations can be performed on object blocks. This means columns of numbers can be added up, the average calculated and much more.

Line	Type	Size	Start	End	Value	Mode
0000	Text	10	0000	0009	00000000	0000
0010	Text	10	0010	0019	00000000	0000
0020	Text	10	0020	0029	00000000	0000
0030	Text	10	0030	0039	00000000	0000
0040	Text	10	0040	0049	00000000	0000
0050	Text	10	0050	0059	00000000	0000
0060	Text	10	0060	0069	00000000	0000
0070	Text	10	0070	0079	00000000	0000
0080	Text	10	0080	0089	00000000	0000
0090	Text	10	0090	0099	00000000	0000
0100	Text	10	0100	0109	00000000	0000
0110	Text	10	0110	0119	00000000	0000
0120	Text	10	0120	0129	00000000	0000
0130	Text	10	0130	0139	00000000	0000
0140	Text	10	0140	0149	00000000	0000
0150	Text	10	0150	0159	00000000	0000
0160	Text	10	0160	0169	00000000	0000
0170	Text	10	0170	0179	00000000	0000
0180	Text	10	0180	0189	00000000	0000
0190	Text	10	0190	0199	00000000	0000
0200	Text	10	0200	0209	00000000	0000
0210	Text	10	0210	0219	00000000	0000
0220	Text	10	0220	0229	00000000	0000
0230	Text	10	0230	0239	00000000	0000
0240	Text	10	0240	0249	00000000	0000
0250	Text	10	0250	0259	00000000	0000
0260	Text	10	0260	0269	00000000	0000
0270	Text	10	0270	0279	00000000	0000
0280	Text	10	0280	0289	00000000	0000
0290	Text	10	0290	0299	00000000	0000
0300	Text	10	0300	0309	00000000	0000
0310	Text	10	0310	0319	00000000	0000
0320	Text	10	0320	0329	00000000	0000
0330	Text	10	0330	0339	00000000	0000
0340	Text	10	0340	0349	00000000	0000
0350	Text	10	0350	0359	00000000	0000
0360	Text	10	0360	0369	00000000	0000
0370	Text	10	0370	0379	00000000	0000
0380	Text	10	0380	0389	00000000	0000
0390	Text	10	0390	0399	00000000	0000
0400	Text	10	0400	0409	00000000	0000
0410	Text	10	0410	0419	00000000	0000
0420	Text	10	0420	0429	00000000	0000
0430	Text	10	0430	0439	00000000	0000
0440	Text	10	0440	0449	00000000	0000
0450	Text	10	0450	0459	00000000	0000
0460	Text	10	0460	0469	00000000	0000
0470	Text	10	0470	0479	00000000	0000
0480	Text	10	0480	0489	00000000	0000
0490	Text	10	0490	0499	00000000	0000
0500	Text	10	0500	0509	00000000	0000
0510	Text	10	0510	0519	00000000	0000
0520	Text	10	0520	0529	00000000	0000
0530	Text	10	0530	0539	00000000	0000
0540	Text	10	0540	0549	00000000	0000
0550	Text	10	0550	0559	00000000	0000
0560	Text	10	0560	0569	00000000	0000
0570	Text	10	0570	0579	00000000	0000
0580	Text	10	0580	0589	00000000	0000
0590	Text	10	0590	0599	00000000	0000
0600	Text	10	0600	0609	00000000	0000
0610	Text	10	0610	0619	00000000	0000
0620	Text	10	0620	0629	00000000	0000
0630	Text	10	0630	0639	00000000	0000
0640	Text	10	0640	0649	00000000	0000
0650	Text	10	0650	0659	00000000	0000
0660	Text	10	0660	0669	00000000	0000
0670	Text	10	0670	0679	00000000	0000
0680	Text	10	0680	0689	00000000	0000
0690	Text	10	0690	0699	00000000	0000
0700	Text	10	0700	0709	00000000	0000
0710	Text	10	0710	0719	00000000	0000
0720	Text	10	0720	0729	00000000	0000
0730	Text	10	0730	0739	00000000	0000
0740	Text	10	0740	0749	00000000	0000
0750	Text	10	0750	0759	00000000	0000
0760	Text	10	0760	0769	00000000	0000
0770	Text	10	0770	0779	00000000	0000
0780	Text	10	0780	0789	00000000	0000
0790	Text	10	0790	0799	00000000	0000
0800	Text	10	0800	0809	00000000	0000
0810	Text	10	0810	0819	00000000	0000
0820	Text	10	0820	0829	00000000	0000
0830	Text	10	0830	0839	00000000	0000
0840	Text	10	0840	0849	00000000	0000
0850	Text	10	0850	0859	00000000	0000
0860	Text	10	0860	0869	00000000	0000
0870	Text	10	0870	0879	00000000	0000
0880	Text	10	0880	0889	00000000	0000
0890	Text	10	0890	0899	00000000	0000
0900	Text	10	0900	0909	00000000	0000
0910	Text	10	0910	0919	00000000	0000
0920	Text	10	0920	0929	00000000	0000
0930	Text	10	0930	0939	00000000	0000
0940	Text	10	0940	0949	00000000	0000
0950	Text	10	0950	0959	00000000	0000
0960	Text	10	0960	0969	00000000	0000
0970	Text	10	0970	0979	00000000	0000
0980	Text	10	0980	0989	00000000	0000
0990	Text	10	0990	0999	00000000	0000

A marked block can be Drag and Dropped onto other Drag and Drop aware applications and vice versa. For example, mark a block in a Luna window and drag it onto the jinxes desktop background and it transforms into a desktop widget.

Proportional and monospaced fonts are supported and text scrolling and block

marking operations, although not as fast as *Emmett*, are smooth and perfectly usable.

Although we've all got used to working with black text on a white background it's a combination known to be bring on the eyes. On colour systems the text and background colours can be selected from the sixteen standard system colours which is great but it would be even nicer to be able to select any colour from the available system palette.

Luna supports *pdfEmmett*/Bib style Knut files and includes its own script function which can be used to automate tasks. It makes sense to offer compatible Knut files but it seems to me GEM/Script support would have been more useful than another proprietary script format.

A German IT-Guide format hypertext is included but currently there's no English documentation. However, RSC files for various languages are available, including English, so it's easy enough to get up-and-running.

Luna does occupy more memory than other *Emmett* and *qed* but if you're making use of features only available in Luna that won't be a concern. I did experience a few minor problems which is hardly surprising given the rapid pace of Luna development - no doubt there's bugs



will have been squashed by the time you're reading this.

There's currently no word wrap feature (which as an *Emmett* user I find indispensable) but Richard intends to implement this in a future release depending on registration levels. The unregistered version is fully functional but restricted to displaying a single document so if you find Luna useful and you'd like Luna development to continue, do register your copy. ☺

LUNA v1.2

Author

Richard Gordon Fells

Status

Shareware, registration costs DM28 (around £7.50)

Requires

Any Atari system

Contact

Email: spk@star1.computer.de
<http://www.star1.computer.de/english/BGF/softwaer.htm>, Richard (org) 30r, 34, ICCWF Berlin, Germany

90%

The Console Centre Price List (Jaguar New)

All following games are £19.95:- Club Drive Executive Drive Current Culture Wheelspin Football Jump Big Star Kickstart Flag	All following games are £24.95:- White Horse Cart Race (With Team Top) Soccer Football Ice Hockey Polo Football 93 English Horse Ltd Stars	All following games are £29.95:- Ultra Violence 4-Way Vengeance Riding Driver's Edge From Fish Street Muscle Command 93 Excavation (CD Only)
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Atari Jag 2nd Hand Games		
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PC Price List (Special Offers Exclude VAT)

15" Precision Digital SVGA Monitor	£103.00	4 3 44s Master EIDE Ultra DMA HDD	£78.00
17" Studio SVGA Monitor	£215.00	8 4 44s Master EIDE Ultra DMA HDD	£196.00
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160 Watt PMPO Speakers	£25.00	8 44s AGP Intel 1740 SDRAM	£12.50
44s (Rocknrolla) V90 PCI Win 95/98 NT	£40.00	8 44s AGP ATI Expert (work 98 System	£40.00
3.5 Floppy Disk Drive 1.44MB	£18.00	16 MB-Danmod 2D/3D Voodoo II	£71.00
540 Speed Networking CD Rom IDE OEM	£18.00	32 MB AGP ATI Rage Fury 3D OEM	£110.00
32 Xa 50 Miniata 4800 Reviver	£190.00	Socket 7 Slave Bearing Cooler	£4.00
Serial Mouse	£6.00	Pentium II Cooler	£4.00
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16 MB 72 Pin SDRAM (EEDO)	£23.00	Pentium III Cooler II Olga Cool	£8.50
32 MB 72 Pin SDRAM (EEDO)	£36.00	AT Windows 95 Keyboard	£10.00
SDRAM 32MB (Dimm) PC66	£24.00	6x86 M2 100+ (Cyclo/IBM)	£29.00
SDRAM 64MB (Dimm) PC66	£25.00	6x86 M2 133+ (Cyclo/IBM)	£30.00
SDRAM 32MB (Dimm) PC 100	£27.00	AMD K6-2 (HD New Technology) 13	£38.00
SDRAM 64 MB (Dimm) PC 100	£27.00	Intel Celeron 333a 128KB-Cache Socket 370	£18.00
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PCI Sound Master Live (Value)	£50.00	At/soo 50115 (Super Socket 7)	£65.00

Please ring, regarding any Jaguar or PC item not listed here as there is too much to list. Each item is sent by first class recorded delivery with insurance where needed. Please ring during working hours to check price and availability. Tel/Fax 01484 344926 Mon-Fri 8.00am to 5.30pm. Cheques and Postal orders made payable to The Console Centre. Major credit cards accepted.

Share Link LTD The Console Centre: Halfin Road, Bardsleycliffe, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire
England: H10 3BS

E-Mail Me At mygame.majors@btinternet.co.uk

Breakdance

Shiurning Lai has a few rounds on Paranoia's contribution to the dance 'em up(?) genre...



There is a zany little game on the PlayStation which I'll avoid mentioning because I can't spell the name. It features a groovy cartoon dog and you have to make him rap and do dance moves (you know the one), all in a wibbly Wotbdevision. Quite hilarious and entertaining to play.

I don't recall many such games on any system but the concept has been used many years ago in the 8-bit micro era, and this is where Breakdance unashamedly draws its inspiration. Actually based on a game by Epps, where you have to remember and follow the computer's series of moves in ever increasing complexity, now we can enjoy this simple but fun game on our STs and Falcons.

The Paranoist has worked his STCG coding magic to bring the game up to date with solid graphics and driving trachea music courtesy of PIC Laser of GSC. Up to six players can take control of the demogame scene members on screen, including The Paranoist Himself, all represented by neat caricatures.



Llama, excellent GSC coder from Germany



Saga, coder and hacker from France



Grey, the most famous person of the Polish Atari scene!



A certain Miss Atari performs the dance moves to which each player must follow.



It starts off easy and before long you begin to question what damage all those late nights out must have done to your memory. It gets really fun when you have some friends to play with, as you often lose track of who's playing what, while laughing at the burling antics of the current player, until you realise you are the current player!

In common to the carefully chosen detail of the graphics, their animation is as nifty as a learner driver who has a mastered clutch control. Ironically this adds to the amusement factor, but also makes moves quite clear to remember. After all, this is meant to be a game design first and gee-whiz second.

There's a definite arcade feel to it as individual player's scores are blipped on screen, giving an incentive to thrash your opponents and the absurdity of losing a round by some silly mistake. The session rounds especially in competitive mode where the players are called randomly and have to extend the dance sequence with one extra move. In normal mode, points are awarded to the player completing the moves fastest.

Minor complaints

While giving a polished shine, the fancy transitional graphic wipe patterns cannot be bypassed. Loading them a few times is enough, after which you just want to dance! It's far too easy to lose a round due to the strict vertical nature of moves, which can be frustrating. Also, flicking my Falcon's CENTurbo II into overdrive doesn't make them when some of the code loops are not based on real time, making an excellent demonstration of its power but the game impossible to play. All game programmers should begin to take this seriously as acceleration becomes more popular.

I can see great potential for expansion of this game concept - how about developing it into a generic modular dance sequencer with add-on style packs? Yeah, let's have a funkable!

The disco plugs in. Atom. Never mind. Anyway, download this and invite some mates over, it's free and it's a really good laugh. ☺

BREAKDANCE

Author

Paranoist

Contact

Email: breakdance@atari-st.com
paranoist@atari-st.com

Requires

ST(s) or Falcon, 320x200 screen mode (ST low), 128k memory, French recommended

Pros

Lighting simple but, visually attractive, nice music, a good ambassador of the STCG language.

Cons

No head-up! Lack of sound effects, slightly cumbersome menu system.

Scores

75% Sound
 70% Graphics
 75% Gameplay
 75% Overall

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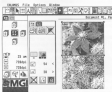
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Calamus Secrets

Dave Barkin insists Calamus SL/98 is the most powerful Desktop Publishing program available for any computer and has decided to reveal some of the hidden secrets he's discovered...

Calamus SL has enormous power. Aside from many of the built-in functions Calamus is designed to be "modular", meaning that aside from the basic program many functions come as modules. One loaded a module behaves as an integral part of the program. In other words, the new functions contained in the module are accessed in the same way as the basic functions. The whole process is transparent to the user.

While many modules are standard with the program there are at least 40 optional ones which do everything from allowing the import of Postscript and Encapsulated Postscript to utilising your monitor. This article will explore one of the more exotic modules, the Star Screening Module.



▲ The Star Screening Light Module and, by adding a screened, the other user definable settings.

Star Screening is a brand name for what is technically known as FM modulation or Stochastic Screening. FM modulation is a way of converting a grayscale or colour image (8 or 24 bit) into dots for printing. Well, you might say he's all printing done via-dot! Dave Barkin not know that with the exception of dye sublimation printers, all printing is done via-dot! Yes, yes, I know about the phenomenon, but conventional screening involves the creation of printer points. These printer points consist of "groups" of dots laid out in a grid (screen).

Since most home printers have a limited ability to lay down dots, they are further limited when they must group these dots into printer points. Even the 1440x720 dpi Epson is not normally capable of printing out camera-ready copy for the purpose of getting professional results. Indeed these printers come with drivers that "dither" the image for better results of home output. Dithering consists of the software simply converting the areas of colour into individual dots of CYMK (or black for grayscale images) against the conventional grid of a screened image. This process is one that I refer to as poor man's stochastic screening. Calamus, along with quite a few other programs on all computer platforms, have this capability.

True Stochastic Screening goes one step further. The software not only dithers the image but it "looks" at each area of colour and makes intelligent (user definable) decisions as to how to make the CYMK dots. Decisions made for one area are then considered for the next area of colour. This results in much higher contrast and definition than either conventional screening or standard dithering. In my opinion I get better results at 720 dpi than Photoshop which prints at 1440x720 dpi. The Calamus implementation of this is of a very high quality. There are two versions of the Star Screening Module. The Light version, limited to 750 dpi and the Pro version, which has no limitations. The Pro version can additionally convert the new star screened image into a conventional TIFF file and allows exporting the resulting file. One other problem with both versions of the module is that they are memory intensive. Both versions of the module can only process small images unless you have lots of memory - in this sense there is no difference between the Light and Pro modules. So apart from this limitation of

the process, the Light version is a viable demo of the Pro version - or is it!

Well, I and others have found that everything the Pro version does can also be accomplished using the Light version. Not only that but there are ways of overcoming the memory limitations. Thus for the price of 50 Euro dollars you can have a program which does what on the Mac platform would cost a minimum of 500 dollars, with a similar price on the IBM platform. Here is this done!

After an image is Star Screened you can simply tell Calamus to "group" the frame. You can now use the optional Bridge module to either export the image or convert it into a CYMK frame. (a star screened image is no larger 24 bit - it is a 25-bit file). You could also use the user definable ring frame and Bridge to export the new frame as a 32-bit CYMK image. The Light version of Star Screening allows higher than 720 dpi screening - you simply can't print the results. But once converted to a TIFF file you can do whatever you want with the image.

Shortage of memory can be overcome using the program Genside. This superb utility allows you to turn your hard drive into usable virtual memory. You must tell Genside to use Calamus.AMD additionally specify the Star Screening module itself. There's also more to getting good results from the Star Screening module, but the above will allow you to make full use of the modules potential at unlimited sizes. Until next time...



▲ The before and after result of Star Screening a flower. The resulting image is a "hard limit", which means it must be printed at the exact size it was star screened. Due to the nature of Atari Computing's printing process I doubt these images will print exactly...

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As promised last issue here's the Error in Line Easter Coding Convention report. We bring you the lowdown on all the releases, big demos, little demos, great demos, strange demos, and more!

Chris Hollowed for the Maggie Team

Error in Line Report



This special report is devoted to the releases from that party. There were a good many of them, with some of the greatest demos ever produced on any Atari computer! This is no exaggeration, but a view consistent with over ten years of critical demo appreciation, from seeing the likes of the Union demo back in '89, to the present time.

Error in Line (EIL) was dominated by not to humble ST. The deserved first prize winner was Chaosmaker's effort *humpit*, which took the ST to new heights of technical excellence, a tour-de-force of bombastful effects which would not look out of place among the High Spec Power PC based Amiga demos showing on the big screen before the competition! Many effects genuinely breached the boundaries of the previously possible, and it is a great to see that, even after a decade or more, the ST can still surprise!

A little way behind, were two rather smooth and good looking ST entries from the Dead Haxxor Society and the Polish group *Mythic Bytes*. Both of these featured modern demo design and flawless effects by both the crews. In places they looked indistinguishable from many Palace productions. Invisibly tunnel effects and jump-mapping predominated with both of these demos.

There was another high quality entry titled *Bumpskammer*, by the temporarily re-named group The Naaghy Bytes (TNB). This was a more determinedly old school effort in its presentation, but with some nice up-to-date effects mixed in, and in common with all the other entries, a really polished look to it. A stunning fractal mountain scope, Wollenstein style reversed dangers, and a Mario Kart sequence spring to mind as the highlights here.

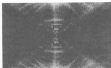
The Palace demos shone in the competition, but this time they were overshadowed by the ST releases. These suffered more noticeably from technical glitches and tended to look unfinished in the competition, when shown on the big screen.

The victory went, perhaps inevitably, the Dead Haxxor Society, but they were followed very closely by a great entry from FUN. A recent of the scene was demonstrated FUN's demo was not shown up at its best on the big screen, and if it had been a little more tame a little polished up, could well have won with its high quality screens, and music effects winning.

A beautiful but slow entry from a relatively new Polish group *Cotors* came next, this one very much in the style of higher end Amiga or PC demos with lots of complex 3-D objects, but needing a speed injection, such as the *Castorbo 2* board on offer as the first prize.

There was an entry from the self-styled latest-time *MacCrew*, the *Ego* demo, a relic of 1981 multimedia style as envisaged by Atari Corp back then. It was left looking strangely in the awkward ground between normal and fake demo categories.

And of the fake demos! These cling on to any self-respecting demo competition like flies to an oily car, but even these were of a higher standard than normal. The mysterious *Pointe of Banbury* group looked at the whole 80s+ club scene through-carry-stained lenses in their *Isaa* demo. Dutch group *Nut* were showing Vatican approved demo effects in time for the Easter weekend, and there was another entry from THS partly taking the same cue from certain Nintendo Gameboy simulations.



The *Reservoir Gods* dominated the 128 byte-size, with three entries to this tiny but nice category.

There were also very good showings on both the pictures and music, with highlights by Agent T of *Cream* winning the *TrueColor* picture category, *Hitler* of FUN winning the ST 16 colour picture prize, and PEG of the *Reservoir Gods* winning the *Protracker* music competition with a last minute entry rescued from his dead folder and spruced up a bit for the competition!

With some interesting Wild card position entries bringing up the rear, Error in Line was probably the last Atari coding party ever, in terms of release activity. Hate that anyone forgets to have a great time there though! ☺



Q&A

"We always have more answers than questions"

Q I'm interested in learning to program. I bought GFA Basic 3.0 and a few books but I can't find any advanced beginner books. I have one called training from camp but I'm nearly completed it and want to know more. I'm wondering if there's someone or something that can teach me from step 1 to advanced use of GFA code?

I'm also having problems with PageStream 3.2a. It used to run it on my 4Mb STs and after loading it reported 87764 bytes of system memory was available which left no room to import large images. I thought my problem would be resolved when I bought a 14Mb Falcon but, to my surprise, I've found that PageStream just took more space for itself and I couldn't even load a 1Mb graphics file. Can you help me?

Gavin, by email

A There are three on-disk guides worth looking at. The first two are on FoT Club disks PR-481 and Your Second Harward, which is very comprehensive, is on disk PR-480.

- GFA Expert 2
- GFA Tutorial
- Your Second GFA Basic Manual



As with all programming languages, you can learn a lot from looking at other peoples source code and playing around with it. There's loads of source code on FoT Club disks PR-483 and PR-484, GFA Basic 2, for which the FoT Club have a distribution license, is available on FoT Club disk PR-482.

Loading PageStream 3.2 on a 4Mb STs leaves less more than 87764 bytes available for creating pages, loading images, etc. If I remember correctly this

System Memory figure refers to the memory that PageStream has left for the system to use, with the remainder having been grabbed by PageStream for creating documents.

I'm not surprised you can't load a 1Mb graphics file on your 4Mb system. Most graphic file formats (GIF, PNG, JG, and so on) are compressed files and the actual image data will be significantly greater than the size of the file that you are loading from disk. A 1Mb PNG file could easily need 10Mb memory or more when uncompressed.

Under multitasking, you can simply load another program before loading PageStream then quit that to free up the memory but this won't work under single TOS. However there are utilities which can limit the amount of memory that can be grabbed by an application.

On disk FoT Club disk UT-378 there's DC RESERVE which saves a pre-defined amount of memory when you execute a program which might just work.

Jeremy Hughes and Paul Glover,
FoT Club PO Box 100,
Northampton, NN2 2NN, England
Email: club@fo.com
<http://www.fo.com.uk/~club/>

PageStream is known to grab all available memory when run but there are a few ways around the problem. Options include using a resizable accessory-based RAMdisk which reserves memory, or limiting the amount of memory used by the application - the Thing desktop offers the ability.

Darryll Croker

There are dozens of third party development tools available to anyone developing with GFA Basic. These range from freeware add ons such as GFA Flydisk to commercial software such as Pixel Vision. Although some of these tools are only available in Germany a webpage search should turn up plenty of sources.

Jon Connor

Similar printer problems

Q I run a laser and Citizen HCP 40 24-pin dot matrix from an Atari ST/HX1040 with 4Mb memory. The Citizen has suddenly refused to print anything from my Atari although it works with my Acorn and PC. I run Protext v.5, Calamus v.7 and Calamus Icons v.2 on my Atari. The laser still works to dots on other I borrowed, any idea?

Sydney Park, East Sussex

I have an STe 4Mb, TOS 1.62, TUS (SE) HD, At ACC '98 I purchased a Citizen Swift 24 printer to use with my STs but

on connecting it to my system the output was complete gibberish. I recommended my old printer (Panasonic KX P-1000) and the output from that was also near gibberish. The Citizen works fine with my PC and the Panasonic works with my other STs. I have heard some printers can put a large load on the printer port. Could this be the case and am I able to use it with my spare STe machine?

C Thacker, BPO 23

A It might be worth trying another printer cable. There are at least eight "earth return" pins in the connectors at both end of equipment connects all of them. If a wire is broken in the cable, it may be that the Citizen is not seeing its earth from the Atari whereas it is from the other computers. I have a similar problem in the reverse direction - one printer lead I use with my Acorn (a simple ribbon cable) doesn't work with a PC, as there are obviously wiring differences.

Gary Bainbridge

I'm not sure about using the Citizen with STs machines but I am aware of people successfully using their printers with ST/HX machines.

Peter West

ST Application Issue 2 published in January 1991 included an interface circuit that originally allowed the Atari serial port. I built one when I bought a 24-pin dot-matrix printer which started to play up and it worked fine.

Kath Jackson



Paul Glover/FoT Club have kindly given us permission to include scans of the article on the webpage CD - thanks Paul!

MagiC 8

I Have Magic 8 users, especially on an 8Mb machine, can speed up the boot by deleting the "disk" and "image" files from MAGIC.INP. Alternatively you can replace the colour boot image and tiled background with more equivalents which saves MagiC delivering them on the fly and delaying the arrival of the desktop.
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