

Komoda & Amiga plus - Commodore computers user's magazine

K & A plus

#1

english version

**CB4 PERSIAN
INTERVIEW WITH PEYMAN
COMMODORE IN IRAN**

**CHANGING CB4 INTO PC
IN LESS THAN HOUR**

**RESSURECTION
MORTAL KOMBAT**

**GAME REVIEWS:
CB4 - C16 - AMIGA**



VICE SQUAD



PEYMAN



CB4PERSIAN



STARS AND PLANETS



HISTORY LINE 1914-1918

The End is just the Beginning

Editorial

So it finally happened - „Komoda“ and „C&A Fan“ are now working together! Both editing teams are now grouped up under the „K&A Plus“ umbrella. We came to the conclusion that our magazines were too infrequent, so we've joined our forces to increase the quality and quantity of our writings. Additionally, we're now targeting a larger retro-scene audience, so the new magazine will be issued in two languages: Polish for our native readers and English for the entire rest of the scene.

The content of „K&A Plus“ shouldn't significantly change from the previous titles and we've also decided to keep some classic sections with their old names. Some of them were especially enjoyable, so they are still going to be part of the new magazine. Our goal is to continuously support the Commodore scene, bring up good memories and refresh dust-covered titles, so that C16/VIC-20/Plus 4/C64 and obviously Amiga computers remain alive.

We also invite our readers to visit our official forums at www.ka-plus.pl, which is going to make our relationship a bit closer. Our editors are looking for your input and feedback, so let us know what you think of the first issue of our magazine. To conclude this brief introduction I invite you to go through the magazine and get some good retro feelings. I hope you will enjoy the content and embrace the spirit from our 3 previous magazines: „C&A Fan“, „C&A Games“ and „Komoda“.

Enjoy,

Komek

translated by Atreus and Tomxx

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Komoda & Amiga Plus

Magazine of Commodore computer users

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Fresh News

C64

GRAVITRIX - PREVIEW

2014, Robot Riot



I see that we have a lot of fun and nights spent by the computer screen ahead of us! I have not seen for a long time so interesting and well done logical game. To be honest not yet finished, because when I'm writing this text I'm using the program in preview version, but I hope that it will be soon finalized. The first level is very easy, you need to place three green squares so that they stand next to the other. The second level is similar but more difficult. We still have squares in different colors and new rules which make the game more difficult. Moreover, we have 3 minutes for fulfilling every task, that's why we have to act quickly. Something more? That's enough, I'm back to the game.

//Komek

C16/116/Plus

TEMPLE OF TERROR

2014, Legion Of Doom



Releasing games for Plus 4, that appeared originally years ago on C64, became quite a popular trend lately. This is the case with Temple of Doom, text – graphics adventure game made for C64 in 1987. The game was an adaptation of an eponymous book (or to be more precise, a one person book role play game) and it told the story of reaching 4 dragon artifacts in the lost city called Vatos, before the malevolent sorcerer Marbordus gets them. The group Legion of Doom decided to make a conversion of this title in the most similar to the original way, while simultaneously removing all the nuisance bugs, because the original game had quite a number of bugs. New titular screen was added(based on the book cover), a possibility of saving the game on the hard

drive, player manual with the introductions and instructions, the procedures of rendering graphics and texts were also optimized. The game needs 64kb memory and because of a high level of difficulty is probably only for fans or really good players.

//noctropolis

C64

JAM IT

2015, Throwback Games



When I watched trailers of "Jam it", I saw a really good successor of one of my favorite sports games "One on One:Dr vs Larry Bird". We can again play a couple of interesting matches in the middle of the basketball court. The game will include a lot of flashy slam-dunks, desperate throws from behind the three point line and pretty cheerleaders during the breaks. Two teams of two players will take part in these matches. The

producers promise support for 4 joysticks and challenging AI of the computer opponent. The playable version of the release was presented on the PAX fairs, which means that the release delay should not happen. I wait impatiently for February 2015 to check how "Jam IT" works in reality.

//*bobikowoz*

C64

VOIVOD ATTACK

2014, RGCD



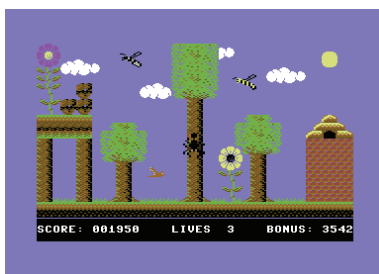
Friends! Achim Volkers prepared for you something good. Fourth part of THE FARM? No, this time it is a shooter against the waves of hostile space-ships in the space, a classic Shoot'em up titled VOIVO-DATTACK. The game is a part of RGCD C64 16KB Cartridge Game Development Competition 2014 and is one of the better releases which take part in this contest. We control a space jetfighter during the game in both directions, just like in URDIUM and TANGENT. There are also some necessary bonuses, which boost the weapons or repair the damage caused by the enemy. The most important are however these that have the bombs needed to destroy the heart of a space base. Now I can only sit behind the steer of a space jetfighter and ATTACK!!!

//*Komek*

C64

HONEY BEE

2014, The New Dimension



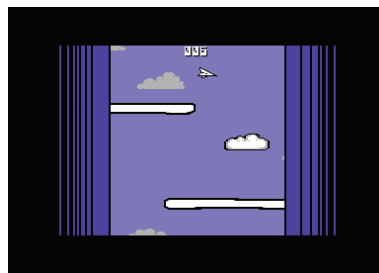
Fresh bun with butter and honey, something really delicious. Have you ever wondered how much work a bee has to do to gather all the pollens from miscellaneous flowers to transform it into a sweet honey? Thanks to Richard Bayliss from The New Dimension and RGCD (RGCD C64 16KB Cartridge Game Development Competition 2014) we can see how it really is to be a hardworking bee. While impersonating her we have to gather the pollens from the flowers and then take it to the hive. During this activity we will encounter various obstacles which are trying to hinder your progress. Colorful and quite nice graphics and the jolly music together with a considerable entertaining ability will give you a lot of fun. It is another example that small and uncomplicated games can provide quite a lot of fun.

//*Komek*

C64

PAPER PLANE

2014, Roy Fielding



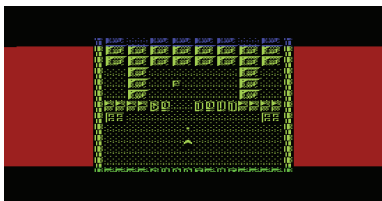
Who did not play during his or hers childhood with paper planes? All you needed was simply a sheet of paper and you could have fun, in your home, on the playground, or what is worse, during the lessons in a school. The difference was that that the released paper plane often flew in an unexpected direction. In this release of Roy Fielding we can control the paper plane. Our goal is to avoid the obstacles by turning left or right while descending. The game works fluently, a small commotion (at least at the beginning) can be caused by the steering. Intuitively we try to steer the paper plane just like in the bird eye view race games, and the requirements here are quite different – you have to see it for yourself. The graphics look nice, animation and music also, the game is an adaptation of a production made for iPhones.

//*noctropolis*

VIC-20

SUPER STARSHIP SPACE ATTACK

2014, Misfit



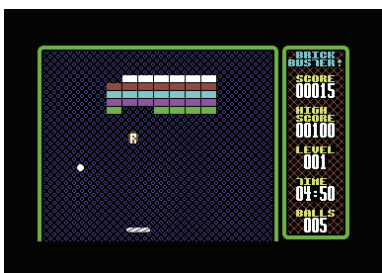
When the weather is lousy and you feel bad, it is nice to play a good arcade game or a shoot'em up. SUPERSTARSHIP SPACE ATTACK is a combination of these two in a good, classic style. While steering a small spaceship inside a huge mother spaceship you have to find assemblies creating huge power. These devices cause that the frequency of fired shots from our spaceship increases and gathering adequate amount (three assemblies) lets us enter another level. If you like this type of games, you should like this because of fast action and simple but clear production.

//Komek

C64

BRICK BUSTER

2014, Software of Sweden



Do you like games from the Breakout/Pong genre? Because I have one here and a pretty good one. We cannot hide that BRICK BUSTER is one of the many ARKANOID clones, but is it bad? Surely not. Even more so that is produced nicely.

Graphics is colorful, simple and clear. The music together with the sound effects is also pretty good. What the game lacks are flying obstacles, such that appear in ARKANOID or BATTY, because there are none of this sort in BRICK BUSTER. There is one more thing, one small accent from SPACE INVADERS. Play it and you will see what I mean. And I would have forgotten, the game participates in RGCD.

//Komek

C16/116/Plus 4

XPLODE MAN

2014, Assassins (ASN)



Attention! A treat for BOMBERMAN fans. A game appeared that is a reflection of this popular arcade game. This time C264 users can play XPLODE MAN. It is because of Hungarian group called Assassins (ASN), which always tries to surprise with an interesting program. Even though the game is not so diversified as other games from this genre, you can have a lot of fun while playing. //Komek

C64

THE ADVENTURES OF ALAIN

2014, wile coyote (wec)



The Christmas of this year brought us also a new interesting SEUCK project: horizontally scrolled arcade game made almost exclusively by Wec – a well-known scene graphic. The quality of his work is striking and I will admit that I did not see a SEUCK game with such a beautiful graphics. What is also good, you have no chaos in this game, thousands of points to achieve, we are not attacked by hordes of opponents and we don't throw anything at somebody. The story is quite funny, even though I think that the author did not know completely where he put his protagonist: we wake up in the morning in the hotel somewhere in the middle of nowhere and we see that we don't have money to pay the hotel bill. Out of unknown reasons we begin to race down the main road of the town and we are encouraged by the hotel owner to perform good. We are supposed to make a lap through the surrounding hotel nature but you will admit that the premises of the game are pretty strange. But we run forward and the surrounding tries to stop us: we are attacked by sunrays, dog feces or the sound of a cow hits our back of the head – these are priceless

experiences, that await you in this beautifully drawn world.

//tomxx

C64

SHOOTIN' PUTIN

2014, Technische Maschinenfabrik



This game released a couple days ago is still technically underdeveloped, but we look at it because of two reasons, the first is the fact that it supports the light gun, and the second reason that it ideally sums up the anti-Russian atmosphere after the last year's Russian incursion on East Ukraine. The concept of shooting at the photo of president Putin is of course pretty controversial and I'm aware that not everybody will like it. Nonetheless not a lot of people thought that 2014 will commemorate Vladimir Putin in the annals of C64 releases and it will become a small addition to the 80's games about the Cold War. //tomxx

C64

TOYZ

2014, Pyramidenkopf



Another good release from last year's RGCD! We add Toyz to

the already long list of logical puzzles and we place it somewhere near our Polish Diamonds from 1992. We look this time for the toys scattered around the garden by our younger brother and our objective is to match the identical elements with each other. The game is thoroughly done, it has a nice graphics and interesting music, it is nice to play it because of the challenging tasks. We have 5 minutes for the solving of the puzzles, and not the time, but the complexity of the puzzles is the problem here. I recommend the game because it is interesting and the genre of logical games for C64 even nowadays can compete with releases for other platforms, including mobile platforms.

//tomxx

VIC 20

TANK BATTALION

2014, Beamrider



Oh boy! So many arcade games in the FRESH, that I will become the master agility and reflex. To write even a short review, you have to play the game first. TANK BATTALION is a tank battle in the maze, in reality one tank fights against whole group of tanks. The projectiles which come out of the cannon have a limited frequency, that's why you have to shoot during the right moment to hit the target. Wall made of bricks, from which the maze is made, can be destroyed by the projectiles, but does it have any sense? The wall protects our

tank from the enemy projectiles. Unfortunately, the enemies will systematically destroy it. What can I say more? A nice, not so complicated game with a simple graphics. //Komek

C64

BRILLIANT MAZE

2014, Geir Straume and Sean Connolly



RGCD C64 16KB Cartridge Game Development Competition (2014) – this event can be easily called a real gift bag, even more so because the majority of the participating games was released close in time to the Christmas. One of these gifts is a game titled BRILLIANT MAZE, in which a protagonist is a nice-looking, green creature. It moves through a gigantic labyrinth to find 4 diamonds. He uses four flickering arrows to find them which show the direction and lead to the entrance to the next level (of course you have to find the appropriate amount of diamonds). You are interrupted in your task by other bad creatures which move very fast. Personally, I like games of this type very much and the fact that it was done properly increases the value of the game. //Komek

C64

TIGER CLAW

2014, LazyCOW



Tiger Claw is from the art side one of the most beautiful releases, that appeared in 2014. The graphics as well as sound made by saulc12 are on a very high level. Just after the first launching of the game it may seem that we encounter the continuation of the classic which is "Bruce Lee", but it is a completely independent production. The gameplay is not one of the easiest because of the peculiar sliding of the characters which makes the steering more difficult, but the variety of the opponents and gathered throughout the locations secret objects do not let you leave the computer even though you die often.

//bobikowoz

C64

BATTLE KHAOS II

2014, Tinnitus



Inactive for a couple of years Polish group Tinnitus unexpectedly releases the sequel of its previous game Battle Khaos, issued over 10 years ago. This released before the end of

2014 successor is a strategic war game, deeply rooted in fantasy theme and made for 2 to 4 players. This game was inspired by Magic.The Gathering, Dark Legions and Chaos – The Battle of Wizards. The objective in BK II is defeating all other sorcerers which can be done mainly by casting spells and calling the creatures ready to fight for us. The game is pretty developed in sense of abilities which will draw the fans of this genre but at the same time may discourage beginners. Fortunately, a lengthy manual was included in the text file which explains in details every part of the gameplay. The game can be praised for its' music, which reminds us of the epic and lofty fantasy atmosphere.

//noctropolis

Amiga

LOVE DUNGEON

2014, Jay Aldred (Jimmy2x2x)



Amiga fans also received a gift for Christmas: mini-game Love Dungeon which takes place in the world of Bruce Lee. This time we do not gather lanterns, but the red hearts scattered around the level. Maybe a debut during the Valentine's day would be more appropriate, even though you can play pleasantly because of the fluent animation and time quickly flying by. The game has something from the old Bruce, it reminds

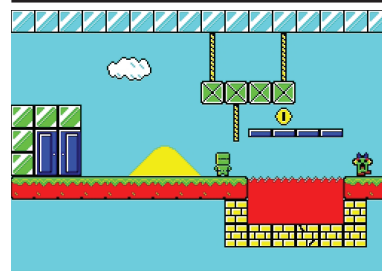
you of Lode Runner, it has a couple of levels and elements to unblock. The more important thing is the process of its development, known from English Amiga Board Jimmy2x2x came back to coding games after a long time and he made a commitment to make a working version in 4 weeks. He borrowed the graphics and the sound from other productions, he worked on his assembler and met the deadline, staying in the 64k memory! We are satisfied with such comebacks to coding retro games and we hope that other programmers from the past will follow his footsteps.

//tomxx

Amiga

BOXX 2

2014, Lemming880



After the success of the first version, the author decided to create the second part of Boxx. After three months of work we have a completely new release. Typical arcade game, where you go forward and gather the coins and try not to lose your life. We have to remember to launch all the encountered levers which will open the blocked entrances to us. Every three levels we meet the boss. A simple graphics (only 8 colours), pleasant, dynamic music (chosen appropriately by the author) are the advantages of this game. //Ramos

C64

ZOMBI TERROR

2015, Kabuto Factory



Nowadays retro-releases are usually prepared only for one platform. Zombi Terror is a complete aberration to this theory, because the game appeared on PC, Spectrum, MSX, ZX81, Sega Mega Drive and during the beginning days of February on our beloved C64. Adventure game full of atmosphere which can be characterized by high level of difficulty was divided into two parts. The objective is simple: to escape from the hordes of undead. If you encounter during the gameplay difficulties, wait for the second issue of "K&A Plus" where we will publish more materials about this game. //bobikowoz



The Picture made by ourEditor in the Krakow bookstore "Fankomiks"

Alter Ego



The Game Alter Ego is the result of the work of a small, currently one-person Retrosouls studio. This studio comes from Russia and is created by Denis Grachev. He has created a couple of projects, but this one is the first on C64. The Alter Ego game first appeared on Pc, ZX Spectrum, Nes (2011), and now the version for C64 appeared. This is a logical arcade game that will not only make your gray matter burn, but will also not let your hands keeping the joystick be bored.

The game doesn't really have a plot (at least I didn't see it there), that's why I will describe what the premises of the game are. Even though we can see two persons on the screen that are controlled by the player, we really control only one person. The second one (the one which flashes which we cannot

see on the screens) is the titular alter ego of our protagonist, which moves constantly on the basis of mirror reflection. The target of the game is gathering of the scattered on the every level here and there squares, which will be possible only thanks to the right planning of route of passing through the given level.

It is not as simple as we can think at the beginning because not the whole screen is available for our main protagonist. For example, the skulls serve as obstacle and are hunting for the player, ponds, gaps in the platforms or them being placed too high or the bridges falling down after the first passing are also the hurdles. To reach some of the squares, it will be necessary to use on the "FIRE" key the switch (I don't know how to better call it) of the character,



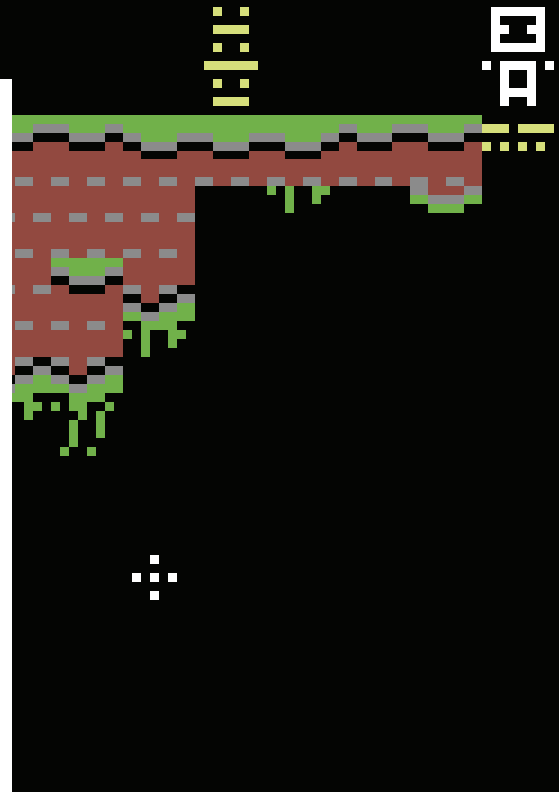
which will cause an immediate change of places. However we must reach these squares first with our "twin", which is easy because he penetrates the obstacles and flies in the air, just like a ghost. It may sound good, but the whole problem (and the main cause of overheating of our brain) that the number of switches of characters is on every level strictly limited.

Another novelty is that during the game the switch of the characters on some levels happens not horizontally but vertically. On the other levels besides the standard, coloured squares also white squares appear which can be gathered only by our blinking alter ego. Generally, the number of levels is 26 and to reach the very end, you have to show a significant shrewdness. About the audio-visual setting we cannot talk

too much, because everything that this game has graphically to offer, we can see on the attached screenshots (not really great, but nice and neat). The sounds on the other hand are simple, single sounds (it is a pity that there is no music during the game).

Generally speaking, I recommend Alter Ego to everyone who likes to think when playing the computer games. The game is really good and let's hope that's not the last project on C64 from the Retrosouls (on ZX Spectrum Alter Ego : Dream-walker appeared, so we can hope that the sequel appears soon on C64). To persons wanting to learn assembler, the source code of the game was added to the game.

■ **noctropolis**
translated by *Slayerpl*



Alter Ego

Graphics: ■■■■■■

Music: ■■

Playability: ■■■■■■

RetroSouls, 2014

Aviator Arcade

"C64 16KB Cartridge Game Development Competition", organized yearly, presents always to the C64 fans a huge amount of interesting games, it was also like this this time. Among other entrants, one of the participating games in this year's competition, is pretty old-school, but at the same time pretty diligently done shoot'em up Aviator Arcade. When we look at the storyline, the introduction to the game is not so detailed or overwhelming, but in this type of games it is not particularly important. The important matter is only that as the good guys we fight the bad guys.

This time, as a military pilot who defends the city of Suburbia, we have to stop the incoming forces of rebels. Our another objective is defending the port, from which the reinforcements of our enemies come from. At the end, we will have to deal a final blow to their desert base.

The most important when playing the game is being in constant motion. It is connected with the fact that the enemies' aircraft, ships and vessels constantly fire their shots at our current position. When we move wildly through the screen, we have the advantage that they

try to fire their guns at the place which we luckily have left (at least we should have left). However, if this strategy succeeds, when we are being attacked at the same time by, let's say 2-3

opponents, when there are 6 of them (such moments also happen in the game), small mayhem begins on the screen and when we dodge one missile, we very often fly into another. Regardless of the situation and with how many opponents we currently fight, the featured autofire proves to be extremely useful, because it allows us to shoot out a constant burst of bullets without getting tired. We have bombs under the space key, which obliterate everything in our line of sight immediately, but it is not so easy, because their quantity is very limited. What can we also mention..... you don't die in this game because of one hit, when this happens, only your level of energy decreases. When your energy indicator is empty, you lose your life and the level is restarted. Good idea of the authors.

There are, unfortunately, only 3 levels in this game, but what I like about them is the fact that they are completely different from each other. We can feel satisfied, when we end one level and we are taken to a





completely different place as a gift, and not to a simple clone of previous scenery. It is important for the game pleasure.

At the end of every level we encounter, instead of a single boss, the situation, where the scrolling of the screen stops and we have to deal with a couple of waves of enemies who shoot at us aggressively. The exception to that rule is the last level, where after the aforementioned waves of enemies we have to defeat the prototype chopper stolen by the rebels (quite durable). Between the levels we also receive promotions in the military hierarchy (depending on the number of points we have) to finally become a general. If you are not able to achieve this rank, when you play the game for the first time, don't get discouraged, because the point results in every game are connected, the achieved result and the military rank will be kept and will increase when you play the game next time.

When we look at the audiovisual design, a lot of praise has to be given to the mu-

sic. Maybe it is not the most sophisticated kind, but it can be associated with the action games from the second half of 80ties and it looks here nice. It is also great that during the levels the author managed to simultaneously play the music and the in-game sound effects, which are not so many, but it is always nice to hear a couple of explosions. Graphically, the game is also good, even though the game gathers here points mainly for the mentioned diversified sceneries than for the general awesomeness. Variety of enemies' vessels and vehicles is also impressive. We can see here a variety of different military vehicles, tanks, ground and sea cannon towers, smaller and bigger ships and jet fighters.

The author of the game is the working in "Hindsbosoft" Mark Hindsbo, who comes back to coding after a 20 year hiatus. What is interesting, he worked earlier mainly with Amiga, but he also always wanted to make a game for C64. The time has finally come and we have to congratulate the author for

a fine game. The programmer was supported in his work by Richard Bayliss, who made the music and Andre Hogbom, who was responsible for the part of the graphics. Generally speaking, if you like the shooters with a pretty classic atmosphere and design, you will have a lot of fun with this game. The game has been met with a good critical acclaim in the C64 scene and the only thing, which some people will miss, is the lack of power ups (even though I didn't notice that). To make the game in 16 KB certain limitations were necessary and the author thinks about working on the extended version soon. Now we can play with pleasure in the main edition.

■ **noctropolis**

Translated by Slayerpl

Aviator Arcade

Graphics: ■■■■■■

Music: ■■■■■■

Entertaining: ■■■■■■

Hindsbosoft, 2014

LITTLE SARA SISTER TRILOGY

I think that there is no C64 user that has not come into contact with the game The GREAT GIANA SISTERS. I can certainly say that this is one of the best and the most captivating games for C64.

Two twin sisters- Giana and Maria (main protagonists of the game) are 27 years old. I suspect that it is more than the age of many of our readers. I mentioned this cult platform game not without a reason because LITTLE SARA SISTER, which is mentioned in the later part of the text, is strongly based

on THE GREAT GIANA SISTERS. I will not make a mistake if I say that the resemblance between these two games is huge, but the entertaining ability of the games varies considerably....

LITTLE SARA SISTER TRILOGY are the released earlier 3 parts of the game - LITTLE SARA SISTER (2004), LITTLE SARA SISTER 1, 5 (2006) and LITTLE SARA SISTER 2 (2012). We can treat the first one as the prelude, because these are only two short levels. The situation changes

in the part titled „1,5” because it was lengthened by 7 levels (in total 9) and the soundtrack was changed. The most important among the adventures of Sara is the one titled LITTLE SARA SISTERS 2, the participant of the RGCD C64 16KB Cartridge Game Development Competition 2014 and we will deal mainly with this. The game has 38 levels, so we are dealing with a pretty extensive gameplay. As far as the music is concerned, it is similar as in the case of Giana, because they used the same division: court – jolly melody (apart from a couple of levels), underground – dark melody, keeping the tense atmosphere. Gathering the scattered around diamonds is the next and not the last common part of both games. Opponents such as owls and wasps, even though they are differently drawn and animated, are still very similar. There are also different kinds of platforms, walls and blocks which look similarly to the ones in THE GREAT GIANA SISTERS.

I started to feel while playing that I'm missing something. I did not have to think long that the missing part is the action, the variety and the flexibility. Exactly, the variety is not so good, because the levels are not diversified and look the same. During some moments I wondered if I was not, by coincidence, taken a couple levels back. And where are the dragons or other huge monsters? It would be nice if one of those giants appeared from time to time on the end of the level. The great change, because of which with the use of punk haircut we can destroy the brick walls, does not happen (and they say „there's

no use in banging your head against the brick wall”). What can we say more? Oh, I know! When I played, I found only two bonuses. The first one means that when you find 15 diamonds (incredibly simple), you receive an additional life. The second one looks like a flower (level 36) and also increases the number of lives by 1. The situation with the defence looks also bad. You will destroy the opponents only when you jump on them (this does not include the snails).

At the beginning of the review I mentioned the significant difference in the entertaining ability of both games, to the disadvantage of LITTLE SARA SISTER. The play is in both cases almost identical, but the animation of Sara is worse and the same problem is with the steering of the character. The difficulty level is pretty similar, but some levels are a little bit shorter. I don't know, maybe I expect too much from a game, that takes up so little of disk space?

To sum it all up, I conclude that, however the game has some shortcomings, LITTLE SARA SISTER is not the worst release and the game is able to keep the player for a moment, or even longer, interested. I know, it is far from GIANA, but it at least tries to give a tribute to this great and cult platform game. Of course, everyone who will play the game, will have its' own opinion about the LITTLE SARA SISTER. For the record, I wasn't disappointed.

■ **Komek**

Translated by Slayerpl



LSST

Graphics: ■■■■■■

Music: ■■■■■■

Entertaining: ■■■■■■

Filmsoft, 2014



THE VICE SQUAD

I tend to divide currently released 8-bit titles into 3 separate categories. First one includes rather simple products developed by inexperienced coders and fresh designers, and usually features quite straightforward audiovisuals. They can obviously steal some of my playtime as long as the idea and concept behind them are interesting and addictive. The second category

contains games created by more experienced programmers, and the results usually present higher professionalism in terms of solutions used, as well as much nicer fx. These titles are still not complex and can be rather simple in terms of mechanics but can be attractive due to the various advanced solutions put in place which make the entire concept highly playable.

Finally, the third category includes the titles that can be half-jokingly, half-seriously described as Triple-A, or 'AAA' (by definition these are games of the highest quality, with the highest development budgets, levels of promotion and an extensive advertising campaign). So what am I referring to while moving this concept back to our retro scene? I'm thinking of the greatest titles

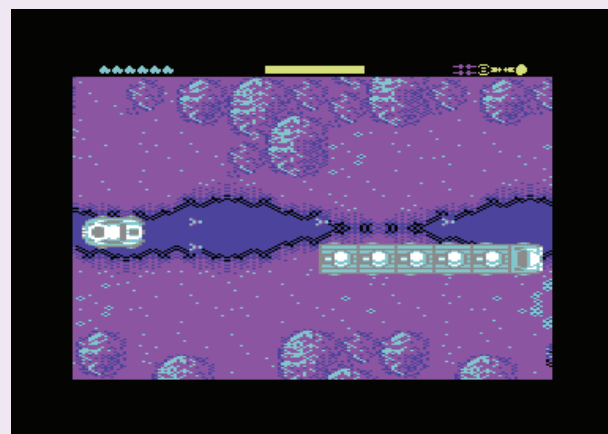
recently created, for instance Knight'n'Grail, that turned in 2009 the Commodore scene totally upside down some. Or Soulless, or the port of Prince of Persia, both being mind-blowing pieces of C64 software and turning into the top entertainers in our small Commodore world! Do not think, however, that I'm that picky to only demand the highest possible quality. Frankly speaking it's quite opposite, but the releases of highest quality titles on C64 scene are still being considered in the categories of top events. They let us get back in time to the old good days, with magazines' front pages featuring new productions and players discussing them vigorously all over again. Don't get me wrong: simple, professionally designed games come out quite regularly, but the high-end titles, carefully planned and in production for months, are the drivers of the gaming scene. They keep our lovely 8-bit machines running at high speeds and don't let them die out of boredom. I apologize for this lengthy introduction, but it's all in order to finally move on with The Vice Squad, another great AAA title for C64!

The game's announcement by Psytronik Software was a good sign that something great is coming up shortly. Psytronik is well known not only for polishing up their products, but in most cases also for focusing on highest quality releases. The game trailer posted on YouTube reveals everything I'm talking here about: the

combined scenes of super-cars street races (not sure if they were taken from existing clips or made exclusively for this trailer, but it doesn't really matter after all) and in-game footage, all topped with well-composed background music by Linus. Intros like this one are not produced for an average game, but only for those ambitious titles, that are about to make an impact on a retro scene. Before going on with my review, I just recommend that you take a look at the official promotional video to get the first grasp on the mood we're facing here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_54HXH-e8-o.

Okay, enough with this quality bar-rising introduction, let's move on to the review itself. For us, the Commodore-users born in 80s, the word „Vice“ is usually associated with both, an awesome piece of software used for emulating our machines, and with an American TV series call „Miami Vice“. The latter one mainly tells the stories of cops and drugs smugglers and distributors. And this is actually the direction we're about to hit in the super-fast gameplay of The Vice Squad: as a cop named James Hutch we're on a hunt of the ruthless local Mexican drug baron, El Guato. It's a risky mission, as due to the high level of corruption in local police departments we can only count on ourselves and on our partner. El Guato is a highly dangerous individual and our cops have to use all possible means for winning the war and claiming back the city.

To get you quickly up to speed with the gameplay, I will bring up the old good and still famous Spy Hunter title. The idea behind The Vice Squad is similar, although much fresher: the screen scrolls horizontally, the variety of in-game elements is much higher, and the audio-visual content is much deeper. Our car is always heading rightwards and your goal is to eliminate bad dudes' vehicles, while trying to avoid and protect the civilians' ones.



The entire game consists of nine separate missions, altogether giving us quite large variety of levels. Initially we're about to get rid of a certain number of black, unmarked drug cars, but further missions bring us some fancy fights against heavily armored trucks, tanks or helicopters. Obviously, El Guato himself is personally awaiting us in the final mission to save the city: fighting against a stolen stealth bomber will be fun! The story nicely develops into an interesting adventure with ever rising level of hazard, and although it might not be a peak of diversity, every other mission brings up some more challenges to beat. Prior



to the start of each mission we can watch the dialogue between our hero cops discussing next steps and tasks assigned to given level (by the way, very cool animation of their faces).

The game comes with a very pleasant and highly intuitive control scheme. Accelerating and slowing down smoothly reflects your joystick movements and make your drive a pleasant experience. It's easy

get up to full speed on wide and less crowded roads, but also to slow down on packed sections to skillfully maneuver between other cars. Our car is initially equipped with single standard gun, but can be easily powered-up with oil slicks, reverse fire, forward and reverse missiles and side beams. Single power-up is dropped after destroying 8 enemy vehicles during a single life. Additionally, at the end of each level we're being awarded with a mission badge (gold, silver or bronze) depending on how well we performed with the civilian cars. Obviously, lower damage to civilians results in more precious badge.

The game features high-quality audio-video: graphics can really impress with the finishing touch quality and

large diversity. The number of vehicles we meet on our way is large, with all different kinds of cars, vans, motorbikes and trucks. In addition to this, we obviously fight against enemy baron's fleet of various military vehicles, on top with tanks, planes, and helicopters. Separately to foreground sprites, I also send a big praise to the background graphics: it's colorful, full of details and most importantly - very diverse. Each single mission not only consists of a different color palette, but also of different approach on roads, buildings, obstacles, elements of the environment, you call it. There are obviously some recurring objects in the subsequent scenes, but after all this is not something that can be avoided in a large, but still 64 KB productions. All of these are wrapped up with an extreme-





ly good scrolling – so smooth, that High Speed Pursuit Syndrome was mentioned on RGCD website as a possible consequence of too much of the playtime. The music and in-game sound effects nicely correspond with fast-paced action and make every mission extremely enjoyable.

The Vice Squad was created by Achim Volkers (Programming and Design), Trevor Storey (Graphics, Concept, Design & Box/Poster Artwork) and Sascha "Linus" Zeidler (Music, Player & Sound effects). There are obviously some more folks listed down in Credits but I'm not going to mention all of them over here. The final product, available on beautifully designed disks and tapes, was released by Psytronik Software back in December 2013. Another

amazing work has been delivered by RGCD (Retro Gamer CD) by preparing a Cartridge version. The game was tested on C64/C128/C64GS in PAL system, but NTSC users report that it's still playable, obviously accepting occasional slowness and refresh glitches. Nowadays the game is also available for free digital download from the BinaryZone.org website: http://binaryzone.org/psytronik/ViceSquad_Download_2013.zip. In my opinion it was a nice player-focused decision, as the game already turned one and whoever planned on purchasing the Premium editions had probably already done that. The remaining players can now try it as well, so the awareness and product visibility has been definitely increased.

Finally, The Vice Squad can be considered to be the 80's police action movie tribute. So if you're often getting back to your childhood times and still miss the uncountable hours spent in front of your TV set watching films about cops and villains, road chases and street shootings, this is the game for you! The quality of work is high and it's definitely worth to dive in and keep it in your C64 games archive.

■ **noctropolis**
Translated by Tomxx

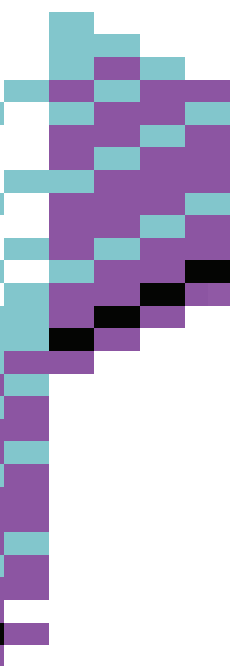
The Vice Squad

Graphics: ■■■■■■■■■■

Music: ■■■■■■■■■■

Entertaining: ■■■■■■■■■■

Filmsoft, 2014



X-Force

"I always dreamt about creating the first, futuristic, vertically scrolled shooter and that dream finally became the reality.... The New Dimension proudly presents the game, for which you all have been waiting for.... And here is the game, X-Force..." We are welcomed with these words in the



intro of the aforementioned game, created by the well-known to us Richard Bayliss, who was busy with the music and code, the graphics were made by Saul Cross. And now I wonder whether they made an exaggeration with these claims? The fact that the author always dreamt about creating this type of game and he is very satisfied with the end result appears to be pretty natural. But the claims that it was the game that we have all been waiting for, sound

a little bit like advertisement slogans used when releasing a real blockbuster, announced for many years and exciting huge amount of fans. Ok, I won't criticize more, maybe the game is really that good.:)

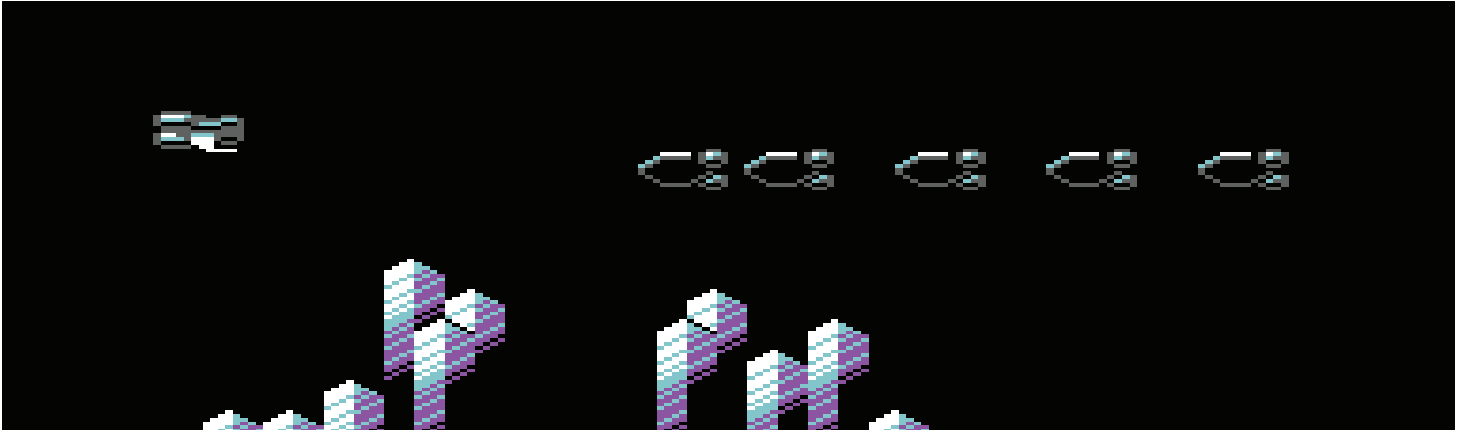
I will start the review not typically, writing about the in-game music. It is a result of the fact that the music "attacks" us during the intro and then is present also in the game. The music is really good and what is important, you don't have to like this type of atmosphere to appreciate that the music is made with a high quality and matched ideally with the game theme. As many people have probably noticed, SID will make the game more pleasurable through emitting extremely technical sounds based on rhythmic bass and certain amount of the trance-like melody typical for this type of games, which, as I have mentioned, sounds pretty good and matches the theme nicely.

The theme of this game is as follows: we play the role of the futuristic miner,

who extracts the precious minerals from the mine under the surface of the planet Darx. After another hard day of work, we go for the well-earned night rest to our ship which also serves as our bedroom. It appears in the meantime that our presence was noticed by the not so friendly aliens. When we wake up in the morning, we immediately notice that something's wrong and we are horrified to discover that we have been abducted, transported to the aliens' headquarters and trapped with something that resembles an invisible shield. We manage to destroy this shield using our laser equipment which helps us during the mining, and additionally we reach soon our taken away jet fighter X-Force.

Our escape route through long tunnels of the bases and mines





is full of hordes of aliens who want to stop us, escaping this place won't be so easy....

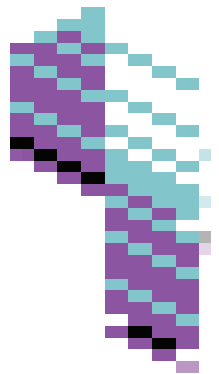
Appropriately matched is the level of the difficulty of the game, which even though is a kind of a challenge, is not exaggerated to the point, that we cannot survive longer than a couple of seconds (which is a weak point of many games). You can control the ship comfortably; the ship is quite manageable and responds quickly to the commands of movement. The weakness involves the shooting, our cosmic jet fighter doesn't have automatic cannon, and we have to push the fire button manually and as quick as possible, when there are many enemies on the screen. What is interesting, the author of the game, as if he noticed this small inconvenience, shared with everyone willing to use them a bunch of POKE'S which introduced autofire (POKE 30057,176 POKE 30058,32 POKE 30059,234 POKE 30060,44 POKE 30063,44 POKE 30065,44).

The opponents who we meet on our escape route, are created nicely, they move in bigger groups and are of a great variety of different kinds.

We can see here the typical representatives of aliens' fleet in the type of various small ships or other, normal for this type of games, not so closely defined interrupters, but also cosmic animals which resemble wasps or medusas. To perform better, here and there await us ready to use power-ups which increase to some extent the firepower of our jet fighter. The whole game consists of 16 levels and it is a pretty big number. There is a boss on the end of every level (whom we can defeat and receive an additional life, or simply pass him by), every level offers a different scenery. Level of development of these sceneries is not maybe particularly overwhelming or breathtaking with the great details, but also in this matter the sceneries are made at least properly (and the whole game has a pretty fluent scrolling). Additionally, the backgrounds are not only the elements of faraway scenography, but also introduce additional obstacles in the way of controlling our ship. Apart from annihilating of the aforementioned enemies we have to be aware of the rock debris or alternately opening and closing gates.

Is X-force, considerably influenced by the titles such as Subterranea or Powerama (which is explicitly admitted by the author), the game we have all been waiting for, as it is mentioned in its' intro? I will answer it diplomatically; it is a good game, for sure, done in a nice way, with a good degree of entertaining ability. Will it be a real hit for someone, remembered after many years, to which he will come back often and regularly? This question has to be answered by everyone of us separately.

■ **noctropolis**
Translated by Slayerpl



X-Force

Graphics: ■■■■■■

Music: ■■■■■■■■

Entertaining: ■■■■■■

The New Dimension, 2014

SEUCK is not so scary

Evil Wizard 2

Ghosts, skulls and specters. Black fields, forests, groves. Castles, dungeons and caves, one who is scared, dies quickly! We have to kill the bad sorcerer to restore the order. Strike with enormous force, as the torch during the dark night.

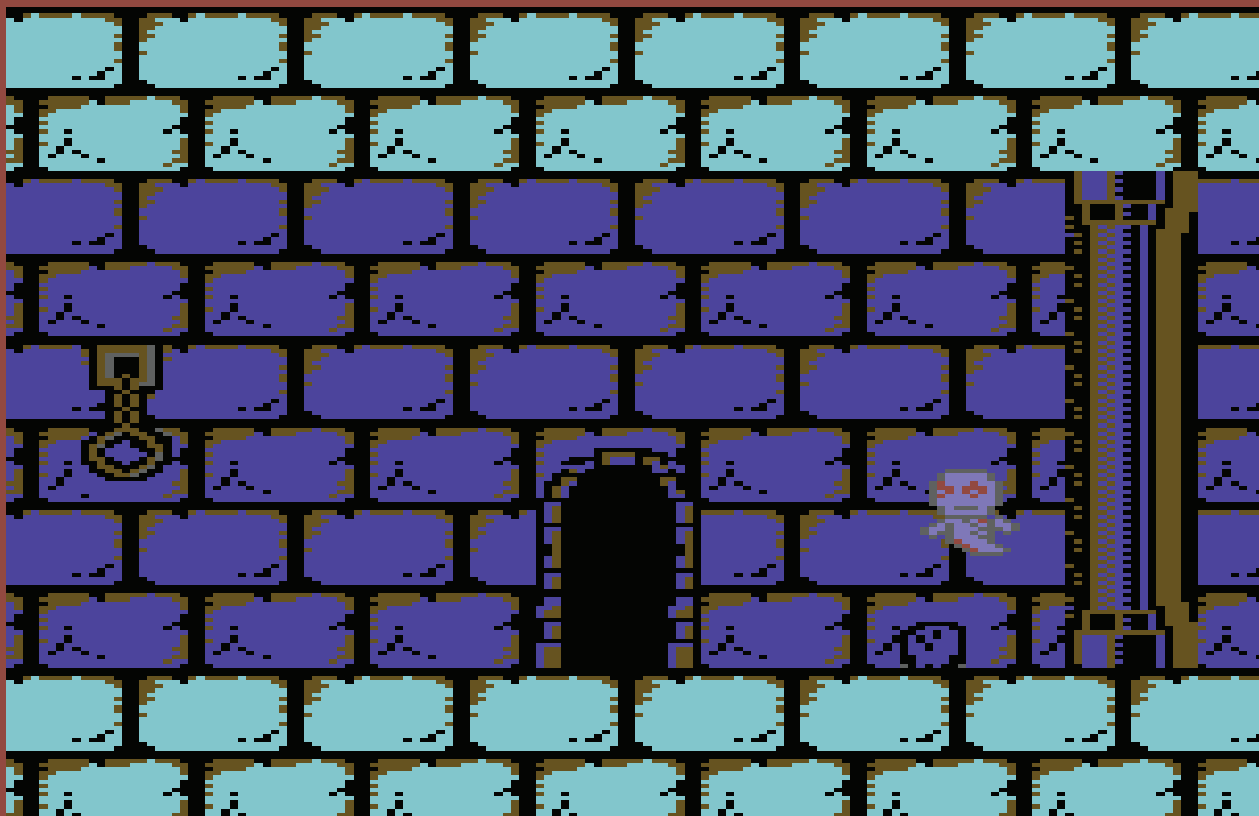
I noticed lately that SEUCK has got more dark and scary. No! Do not think that it haunts me during the nights he he, nothing like this. I mean that

a lot of games came out that were made with the use of this program, which theme are spooky creatures, banshees and other monsters. An example? Here you go: VAMPIRE HUNTER, ANOTHER DAY- ANOTHER ZOMBIE, ZOMBIE BRAIN EATERS, DANTE'S DEPARTMENT STORE, FORGOTTEN FOREST, GOD SLAYER, POLTERGEISTS ON FLOOR 12, SYLPHWYRM, LEGION OF THE DAMNED... brrrr, I'm scared now. The game titled Evil Wizard 2, over which

you will read shortly, is also pretty gloomy and scary.

Angry ghost and the theme of revenge

Surely, when you launch the game, you will ask: "Why a ghost is a protagonist of the game?" I explain. Earlier he was a man, who apprenticed by the benevolent sorcerer who fought the bad wizard. Because the evil wizard had great powers, he changed him





into a ghost. The kind sorcerer got very angry and casted a spell on the ghost and gave him powers necessary to inflict revenge. This is how the adventure in the scary world begins. Furious ghost goes on a journey to the gloomy castle of the bad wizard to defeat him.

And the journey will be long...

We begin the game on the old, secluded graveyard. Blood-thirsty bats and creatures fly around and venomous spiders come down on the thin, barely visible threads. To make things harder, all the opponents throw at us some red balls. The ending of the first level is the duel against dangerous mutant knight. The second level takes place in the dungeons of the aforementioned castle. It is very dangerous here because of poisonous snakes, spiders and quickly moving birds of prey. Look out also for the small cannons which are

placed in the recesses on the walls. The end of the dungeons is the encounter with a dragon which spits with fire. We are getting closer to the objective, because the third level takes place in the halls of the dark, gloomy castle. And what do we have here? Haunted gnomes, moving blades, falling down rocks, snakes and the earlier mentioned cannons. The end of this level is the fight against the mutant knight, the one we fought earlier. Maybe not so interesting, because I expected a new boss and they could have made another monster, or something equally horrifying... It is now the time for the final fight on the top of the castle, in the chamber of the bad sorcerer. We will stand with him face to face, the time of retribution has come, but will we manage to do it?

During the game, you will be able to collect appearing sometimes diamonds. For the gathering of every diamond you will receive additional

1000 points. Unfortunately, you will not encounter other bonuses.

Yo, mate! Does this game kick ass or not?

To sum it all up, I would like to write a couple of the most important issues. The music is chosen accordingly, it creates the proper atmosphere, its' scariness relates nicely to the graphics. The dungeons, corridors, graveyard are drawn nicely, which is a testament to the fact that the graphics are on a high level. The entertaining ability is also pretty high, this way we get a nice SEUCK mixture.

■ *Komek*

Translated by Slayerpl

Evil Wizard 2

Graphics: ■■■■■■

Music: ■■■■■■

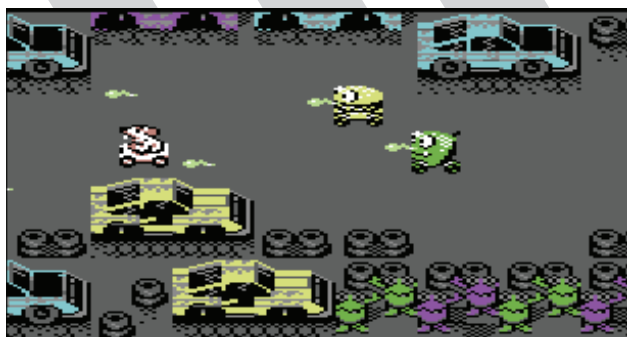
Entertaining: ■■■■■■

The New Dimension, 2012

Wacky

Waste

Seuck, even though it was supposed to be the environment for creating simple shoot'emups, has a second face. Of course we have a lot of SEUCK-based shoot'em ups, sometimes the games appear which break this pattern. We had, for instan-



ce, pointers, pseudoplatform games, pseudo 3d games, and what do we have here? This time around we look at the release, which is a combination of classic scrolled shoot'em up and car races.

Wacky Waste lets us impersonate the persona of an amusing Ratty, who because his greatest hobby are cars, has decided to become the local king of the roads. To

achieve that, he has to take part in 4 races and show to his opponents, that he is the best (and to get, as a prize, his ideal car). To reach a start of every race, he has to take care of opponents blocking the passage to the race start. Practically, it means, as it was mentioned earlier, interchangeability of shoot'em up levels and car racing levels.

Because the whole plot of the game takes part in city called Garbageville, the scenery is full of trash, dirt, metal scraps etc. The opponents adjust to this atmosphere; among them are cockroaches or rotten tomatoes. They are treated accordingly by the protagonist Ratty, which uses as projectiles...his own, green saliva. Even though the game may appear initially as quite simple, this estimation quickly changes. The level of difficulty doesn't depend on the particular special challenge, but a certain level of clumsiness of the game. Our rat moves quite slow and

sometimes even our quick reaction doesn't help when confronted with danger. We cannot also omit our opponents and their bullets while moving vertically, because we can make only forward and backward movements. It is good that we can shoot in every possible direction, even at a slant, which is a very useful solution. Unfortunately, another oversight appears (or maybe it is deliberate), that we can't shoot backwards while standing still, we can shoot only when we make a movement in this direction. If we are being attacked from behind by the quickly moving opponent- we encounter a serious problem (especially when we encounter an opponent that we must shoot at numerous times). The fact that some opponents do not appear somewhere in the safe distance by the edge, and practically next to the player, does not help. To sum it all up, the game is not easy and the levels where we walk on foot can be assigned to this sort of games where the further progress is reached



through the trial and error method, through remembering the patterns of movements and places where opponents appear.

If the player has to struggle during on foot missions, the racing levels are of better quality and are a lot of fun. It is obvious that these are not typical races (because you are not supposed to reach the finish line first, but destroy your opponents), but something racelike (to the extent that SEUCK allows), but it is more dynamic, a little bit easier and more interesting. The circuits are made quite nice; full of the more interesting surroundings, as well as many obstacles (moving banana peels look nice). These missions increase the general assessment of entertaining ability. However there is an

odd solution which involves the changing of joystick port between on foot levels and racing levels. To be honest, I don't really understand what was the aim of this solution. This game is not a typical two players game, and if two players wanted to play alternately, they can pass the joystick to each other. However the bigger number of people will play Wacky Waste as a single player, and then they have to choose between using the second joystick every level, or putting in the plug between ports (if they have one joystick), or switching the active port (in the emulator).

OK and how is the situation with the graphics? Generally speaking, the graphics are not that impressive. Maybe I should say that the graphics

are uneven, because interesting and done nicely locations contrast with the more empty and boring. We can sense an unfulfilled potential in this matter, I think that we could place in this game more "garbage" variety. Over the music, which plays constantly during the game, we cannot say much. It is a quite energetic melody, quite pleasant and fitting the game. There is nothing special to listen to and we often forget during the game about the music.

I will admit honestly that when I saw the screenshots from this game (which provided an incitement to write this review), I hoped that the game would be more unique. The work of Alf Yngve (graphics, project), Richard Bayliss (music) and Martin Piper (SEUCK extensions) disappointed me to some extent. The game is definitely not bad, but, to be frank, I would not put it above an average game. We have to remember that the assessment is increased because of the interesting racing levels (for the sheer presence of them it is good to play this game).

■ **noctropolis**

Translated by Slayerpl

Wacky Waste

Graphics: ■■■■■■

Music: ■■■■

Entertaining: ■■■■■■

The New Dimension, 2014

MID'S 80

Arctic Shipwreck

The group of castaways from a sinking ship shudder from the cold, squeezed on a quite big floe, but being nothing in comparison to the grandeur of the arctic waters. Around them only the hum of waves, whistle of a cold wind and arctic vacuity. Is there a hope for them? The rescue expedition should leave but the floe under the influence of a strong wind moves side to side and often dangerously tilts. What can they do? Wait passively if someone is be able to save them? Wait a minute.... there was one friendly mammoth around somewhere here....

The described game is the first work of Hungarian group called Fş451. I will say immediately that if someone is more interested in the wider background of creation of this game, the lot of the programmers and the general computer atmosphere in Hungary in the beginning of 80ties – I recommend the interview with Viktor T. Toth (if you have not yet read this), one of the members of the group and the creators of Arctic Shipwreck in the C&A Games 4. I will mention here that the idea for the aforementioned game didn't come from them, but

had fun like no other time.

I remember that when I first encountered the game, the physics of the described floe made a huge impression on me. Even though it takes up a huge part of the screen, it is nicely animated and reacts in a great way with its' tilt caused by the mass of the mammoth moving on it. The floe does it with the proper delay, which shows clearly its' enormous, ice mass. The creators were pretty proud from this algorithm and I have to admit that I'm not surprised. Even more so, that we talk about the beginnings of C64 era. If even today it is something to look at, back then it was even more impressive.

what is interesting was the result of a competition. And the programmers, even though they worked on the borrowed equipment and for the ridiculously low remunerations,

The game is based on the fact that, impersonating the aforementioned mammoth, we have to move on the surface of the floe to decrease with our mass its' tilt. When the floe tilts too much, the part of the castaways (and in bad situations even all of them) will fall into the water. We have to be careful not to fall to the ground with the mammoth be-



cause it is an immediate end of game. You have to keep the survivors on the surface of the ice as long as it takes the ship visible on the horizon to reach us. Generally speaking, to end the level the saving of one castaway will suffice, but if more of them survives, the more impressive our result in points will be. Aside from the bonus for the number of survivors, we get additional points for the amount of time we managed to stay on the floe. When the ship of the rescue expedition reaches us, (or when we manage to survive to this time) we see a short sequence with fireworks, after which... we land on the floe with another survivors, in a different colour setting and what is more important, a higher level of difficulty, caused by the stronger wind.

Certain variation in the gameplay is the huge bird which is attacking quite often our colony of survivors. When we not defend ourselves, the bird will catch one of the fellow survivors and will fly away. You can scare him quite easily,

when we get near him with our mammoth. However, this may seem a problem. It happens sometimes that the direction from which the bird flies is completely different in comparison with the direction to which we have to move to tilt properly the floe. Sometimes we have to think what is better for us. To leave one of the survivors to be devoured or to take care of the bird and at the same time create a danger for the majority of survivors to fall in the ice cold water? The choice is difficult, but no one told that the life of the mammoth will be easy.

Sound background of this release is heard the title screen the fragment of popular sea shanty "Drunken Sailor". Even though its' interpretation was simplified and played out on a simple, single sound, but these were the times and it has a certain charm nowadays. During the game we encounter only the limited sound effects and I think that it is a good solution. The hum of waves and single steps of the mammoth show nicely the infinity



of Arctic waters. Besides the praised earlier floe, the graphics is placed nicely in the times when it was done. Even if it is a little bit economical, I like the design of the enormous mammoth, as well as tiny people as the survivors.

Even though audiovisual design from the beginnings of C64 era is not so good for today's standards, the idea and entertaining ability didn't age a bit. Arctic Shipwreck is an ideal game to play to relax and also the kind of game you can come back to often without getting bored. Moreover, the idea behind the game (and the simplicity of controlling the game character) I consider that good that I'm surprised that no remake of the game was made for the contemporary computers (or maybe I don't know about this because I will admit that I do not follow this market). If someone did not play this game, I recommend this game, and if you played... I also recommend to play once again and refresh your experiences with this game.

■ noctropolis

Translated by Slayerpl



Mr. Robot and his Robot Factory

There are things in life, that does not change over the years. As it was in the 80's of twentieth century, as same it is nowadays - if a game has a level editor, it can expand the games lifespan. If the gameplay is interesting and the author would be able to find someone to check his joyful creations, I believe that the authors imagination is the only limit. First game in my life which had a level editor included was „Mr. Robot and his Robot Factory“.

Did the Robot came out of a cave?

After looking at the gameplay in „Mr robot“ you could get an impression that it's another part of Bounty Bob adventures. He was the main character in a short series of games started by „Miner 2049'er“. In both games it is required to

step on every inch of a floor, keeping track of the time constrains and a bunch of malicious opponents. I do not recall calling this kind of inspiration as „a clone of“ at the time when these games were premiered. I will not use that term today, as it would be unfair to „Mr. Robot“, because the game has a lot to offer.

Collecting every power pill on every platform is the goal of every consecutive screen. It sounds like a job for a simple janitor. Why would anyone hire an elegant tin man to do it? The answer is really simple - each room is a gravedanger zone. Do you know anyone crazy enough to clean a warehouse, where some kind of a joker have built the floor with landmines? If you combine this madness with some elevated, hardly available platforms and a group of





self-aware cosmic flames it all becomes clear. Mister Robot is the only choice for this dirty job.

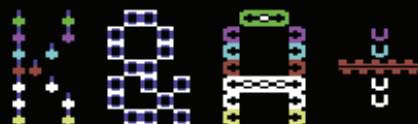
How big is the Robot Factory?

Developers of the game created a set of 22 screens. It is a good number, and it gets even better as it can be doubled with the use of a level editor. In my opinion, the numbers are not as important as the quality of the design of the screens. I find the original set of levels as quite diverse and seems like a thought-out set. The amount of different elements available in the factory is at least satisfactory. There are platforms, before mentioned obstacles and more: elevators, conveyors, trampolines and even a set of magnets. With this amount of diversity all you need is some stimulation to your creative imagination.

As a conclusion I would like to give you a warning about the little note appearing on the first screen. It could be tempting to collect it for a hundred points, but this is also a very special switch. Every time the note is taken by the Robot it switches the sound effects on and off.

■ **Bobikowoz**

THE ROBOT FACTORY BY RON ROSEN



START CLEAR TEST

Mr. Robot...

Graphics: ■■■■■■

Music: ■■■■■■

Entertaining: ■■■■■■

Datamost Inc., 1984

C64PERSIAN



C64 is a computer which doesn't know borders and its' expansion throughout the world resulted in reaching the places which from our point of view seem exotic. One of those places is Iran, where our C64 also appears and was there earlier the most popular computer. We succeeded in establishing contact with Peyman – the creator of a Persian C64 forum, the result of this contact is this interview.

Can you introduce yourself?

My name is Peyman and I'm the webmaster of the Persian C64 forum (<http://www.c64persian.tk>).

Can you tell something more about yourself, what do you do for a living etc.?

I was born in 1976. I work as the hardware technician. I have a bachelor degree in ICT (Information and Communication Technologies). I'm interested in the design of Internet websites and, of course, what I couldn't not mention, the best computer in the world, which still brings the feeling of nostalgia to Iranian users – C64.

How did your interest in C64 begin?

I came across C64 in 1988, when I attended the primary school. There was a newly bought C64 at my uncle's house. My uncle had no games on the tapes and we didn't even

know how to open or record a computer program! We had to write almost 200 lines of the code in BASIC to play a game. When we tried to do it for the first time and we were around 100th line, suddenly, because of an air raid (our country was at war with Iraq during that time) there was a power failure in the whole neighbourhood. All our work was in vain. After some time the electricity was restored and we decided to try again, we have successfully written the code and played the game. I don't really remember what was the name of the game, however I remember that there was a blimp in the game which shot at everyone and that the game was pretty simple. That was my first my game on C64. One month later I saw my uncle playing a ninja game (as we thought, after contacting our interviewee one more time, we confirmed that the game's name was „Last Ninja“). I liked the game very much and this was the moment when my interest in C64 began for real.

In general, during that time, many people began to get interested in IT and computers. A lot of people wanted to purchase the computers, but because our country was at war with Iraq, the ability to buy things was limited. Either case, C64 was during that time the most popular computer in our country.

When did you purchase your C64?

I bought my C64 in 1989 for 300 000 Iranian Rials (I don't really remember how much that was when converted to dollars). Not long later I began programming in BASIC first and then I started tuning the games, to gather the sprites or the music from them, or enable some tricks.

Tell us something about the Iranian community of C64 users, were there a lot of C64 fans? Do you know something about any Iranian productions (games, demos, collections)?

C64 and Amiga were extremely popular among Iranians and a lot of people interested in computers had this type of hardware. I didn't know much about games and demos, you would have to ask this question to the user Amirtava from our forum (this user is Amir Morteza Tavakolnia – one of the programmers of the Iranian sequel of 'Last Ninja' – THE BEAUTY AND THE BEAST (<http://www.gamesthatwerent.com/gtw64/beauty-and-beast>) – editor's note.).

Were there also Atari computers in Iran ?

There weren't many Atari computers, however the video game console Atari 2600 with a game River Raid were very popular and you could find them in every Iranian household in 1986.

What are your favourite games, now and then ?

Currently, I get to know a lot of games, which I didn't know back then. My favourite games back then and now are : The Last Ninja 1, Battleship, Battle Valley, Commando, Turbo Out Run, Heli Drop, ACE, International Karate, Soldier One, Beach-Head, Skool Daze, Little Computer People and many more... My favourite music comes from Jeroene Toel and Rob Hubbard and the best Persian music comes from the Computer Saz demo, whose author is Hamed Ranjbar Navazi..

What was the situation with software in Iran?

Most of the software was cracked, there weren't many originals. A particular Iranian company created programs for the learning of the Commodore use (these programs are currently available and I will place them on CDSB) but there were no Persian games. Another company made cartridges, but we still cannot reach any of the producers. We try to create a complete list of the authors of the hardware and the software on the C64 forum .

Was there a possibility to purchase a legal software in the computer shops?

Yes, I remember that my uncle had 4 or 5 original games and programs. I had the original version of the game Platoon, but without a cover. The purchase of the original software was very difficult, the availability in the computer shops was low and the majority of shops sold copies.

There are a couple of demos on CDSB from Iran. Did the demo scene exist in Iran? Did C64 fans meet at the organized rallies?

I don't know anything about this. I placed on CDSB a couple of demos from our country, however it is only a beginning and we need a lot of time to find all the data. There were only a couple of websites in the Persian language during last 20 years and those websites contained not a lot of information. I thought that I will create this forum and the former users of C64 and A500 from Iran will have a place to meet and we will gather a lot of forgotten information coming from our country

Can C64PERSIAN community be treated as a scene group ?

Yes, we have people who are busy with programming, but we need more time to find somebody for other activities.



Unfortunately, couple talented individuals connected with C64 scene are no longer with us. A graphic designer and coder Reza Shamsian died because of a sudden heart attack, the music designer and coder Hamed Ranjbar Navazi died in a car crash. C64 Persian works currently on the new demo. It will be placed on our forum when the demo is ready.

Do you remember some interesting or funny situations connected with Commodore?

In 1991, one year after I bought my first C64, a friend from my neighborhood Ehsan also bought C64. We wrote the programs in Basic, we recorded them on tapes and gave them to friends, mainly for fun.... One time, when my power supply adaptor was damaged, I was at his place and he came up with an idea to write a certain program for fun. My other friend, Hooman, was supposed to be the butt of the joke. I wrote on Ehsan's C64 a program that was supposed to pretend to check

cartridge's port. It showed on the screen a graphic scheme of this port, it checked all the pins and finally it displayed a message : "Your cartridge port does not work". This message and the whole program was 100% fake. We took this program to Hooman so he can test his cartridge port in his C64. When Hooman saw the message, he, horrified, wanted to take out immediately his cartridge while C64 was turned on! I stood behind him and said that he shouldn't do this because the program was a joke. When we wrote our programs in BASIC (really basic programs such as miniprogram consisting of questions and answers, sprite controlled by the joystick – all of them done in a humorous way) we used safety measures which hid the code of the program during the attempt to see it with LIST command. A couple of our friends from the neighborhood tried to override the safety measures to see how everything works and use the code in their programs. They tried many times but to no avail. When they did not suc-

ceed, I showed them how to do it by POKE and other tricks. When we programmed back then in BASIC, we used only C64 manuals and information from "Home Computers".

What was the main reason for creating C64PERSIAN forum?

I have whole years of memories connected with the use of C64 and I decided to create this forum as a tribute to the golden era of computerization, during which I lived, and also to create a place for mutual discussion between Iranian fans of Commodore. The forum has existed for two years now and I hope it will allow the fans of Commodore in Iran (there were a lot of fans of C64 in Iran, unfortunately during the last years C64 was almost completely forgotten) to meet once again.

Do you have currently C64 ?

Yes, I have. Other users of our forum also have C64, A500 or other videogame consoles such as Spectrum or A1200.



Thank you for the interview!**Word from the editorial staff:**

We are aware that the interview may seem a little bit chaotic. It is a result of certain problems in the mutual communication, which wasn't easy, because we do not know Persian and Peyman doesn't know a lot of English. Moreover, we had to ask additional questions, clear out inconsistencies and sometimes the conversation became even more entangled.... We had to put in a lot of effort to turn the received information into the coherent and logic text. We tried with all our hearts to achieve the end result which would be understandable to the reader. We hope that we succeeded.

When we analyze the answers sent by Peyman, we notice that the computer names such as Amiga and Spectrum have their counterparts in Persian language (Amiga آگیمآ, and Spectrum مورتکپسا), C64 does not have such a counterpart, it is written as رودومک, which can be fonetically transcribed

as Kmvdvr. It can be treated as a curiosity. Another thing is that the forum, even though it is called C64PERSIAN, has a separate section concerning Amiga, however this section is less popular. Peyman shared with us his collection of scans of covers of the aforementioned „Home Computers“. We use some of them as an illustration to the interview. The covers are from 1988-1994 (according to the Persian calendar 1366-1372, the years are counted beginning with the escape of Mohammed from Mecca in AD 622) and it appears that the magazine was regularly issued (every month) - it looks that it was succesful. It proves that C64 and other computers users in Iran is not a folclore but a pretty large group.

■ *Ramos & noctropolis*
Translated by *Slayerpl*



Stars and planets a'la Commodore

Every day, incessantly throughout the billions of years, the night begins. People throughout the ages observed these phenomena, which happen during that time on the sky – stars, nebulae, planets....Probably almost everyone among us is able to recognize the The Plough. For every self-respecting aficionado of the firmament, eyes and the map of the sky (image of the placements of the stars and the nebulae consistent with a given time) are important instruments. It can appear on paper but also on the screen of a computer or smartphone. Other similar, useful devices in researching and discovering the mysteries of the visible Outer Space were also released for Commodore. I decided to prepare a list of these devices and compare them with each other.

Sky Travel



Definitely the most professional from the chosen programs. It was released by the Commodore company in 1984. Its' full name is "Sky Travel: A Window to our Galaxy". The time to load the program completely and launch it is almost 4 minutes, this is an evidence to the abundance of the data, that this program has. After finishing all the necessary calculations we are placed at the sky around noon

in the New York area on 1st January 1985. Of course, it is not a problem at all, because we can easily set the parameters adequate to our city, date and the time. By the use of joystick we can move through the whole sky, even the sky under the horizon, an interesting and concise note is made about every element. We can follow the current positions of such object as the stars, planets and nebulae. The useful option available in this program is looking for the objects on the sky – we can choose this command, the name of the object and wait a moment. Waiting – that is one significant drawback of this virtual map of the sky. Every operation takes a lot of time, even moving the observed area in a random direction takes a lot of time and this decreases the functionality of the program.

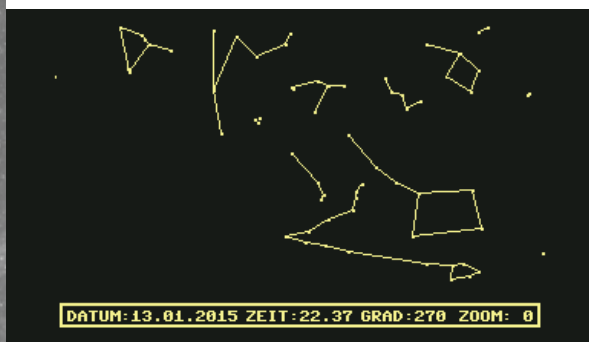
Ocena:

Functionality ■■■■■■■■

Congruity ■■■■■■■■

Clarity ■■■■■■■■

Planetarium



Under this very original name is a release issued by Heinz Heisse and Input 64 in 1985. This program is, as we can imagine, in German, therefore to use it you have to be fluent in German. After loading and launching the program, we see clear, German language menu with four options – instructions, settings, map of the sky and long term simulation. The instructions are written in specialized German, so I had considerable problems with understanding the instructions completely, but

setting the time and date was way simpler. The map of the sky is nice – looking and clear, when you push the SPACE button all the constellations are connected by the lines. We can change the angle of view in the scope of 360 degrees, moving by 5 degrees. The possibility to enlarge the observed area by 3 times is definitely an useful option. The shortcoming of this map is the fact that we cannot change the geographical positioning of the observer, who was limited to some place in the Middle Europe. Interesting option in this program is the earlier mentioned long term simulation. It slowly shows on the screen the chosen fragment of the sky, registering the changes of its' placement during the given amount of minutes (at most 9999), which provides with an effect similar to the photographing the night sky with a long exposure.

Ocena:

Functionality ■■■■■■■■■

Congruity ■■■■■■■■■

Przejrzystość ■■■■■■■■■

Solar system



Unfortunately, I'm not able to find out, in which year and who made this program, but it is not a necessary matter. It is a very precise and praiseworthy instrument, almost scientific. During the launch of the program, we are asked about the precise geographical positioning of the observer and the date with the accuracy to a minute, which promises a good release. There are 16 options in the main menu. The first eleven are the object of the Solar System – all the planets, the Sun,

Halley's comet and the Moon. The choice of these options shows accurate and current information about the chosen object, such as the distance from the Sun, the time of sunrise or the positioning on the sky in the parallel system. In the case of the Moon, the computer draws the current phase, but it takes a lot of time. The other options in the menu allow us to correct the date and the position of the observer, writing in the readable table of the most important observational data of the objects of the Solar System and even showing its' current positioning. It is a very precise tool, which can draw the orbits of all the planets with the one day accuracy, while keeping up their eccentricity. The shown settings can be printed, we need a printer to do it.

Ocena:

Functionality ■■■■■■■■■

Congruity ■■■■■■■■■

Clarity ■■■■■■■■■

Patrick Moore Astronomy Program



Yes, it is connected with this Patrick Moore, English amateur astronomer. This released around 1984 astronomic program is issued with his name and is a pretty useful instrument. The great advantage, distinguishing this program from the two other, earlier mentioned programs is the fact that it works fast and efficiently, probably because of its' pretty simple interface. The creator of this program offered to us 6 options in the menu – the map of the sky from the north and the south, inner planets, astronomic glossary and astronomic test. The map of the sky is useful but pretty simpli-

fied. If the previously mentioned programs used advanced algorithms to calculate the positions of the stars, in this case we deal with a simple map, similar to the paper map, with a constant positioning of the constellations against each other. The only changes that we can make in the areas of time and the positioning of the observer, is the month. The upside is that we can choose the stars from the night sky and read some information about them. The more interesting option is the option of inner and outer planets – it shows the outline of the Solar System, the planets move on the orbits. During this time the information is shown about the currently moving planet. The test is available on a good level, you have to answer in it 20 randomized questions. I will admit that I answered correctly 11 questions. I was disappointed with an astronomic glossary, because it doesn't work, typing even the most basic words crashes the computer and the only solution is resetting it.

Ocena:

Functionality ■■■■■■■■■■

Congruity ■■■■■■■■■■

Clarity ■■■■■■■■■■

Solar System by Scott Talling



This program is a great source of data concerning the planets of the Solar System. The loading of the program does not take long, as in the case of Sky Travel, and we end up

with a clear, simple encyclopedia. There are 19 options in the main menu. The first nine shows the planets of the Solar System with the statistics. Legible view of the planet, the most important data, in appropriate units or in relation to Earth – everything properly done and quite accurately. The remaining 10 options show the same data, but it compares the planets with each other, for example we see at the same time all the planets, one after another. It is a useful and legible device worth of praise, even though it was created in 1984.

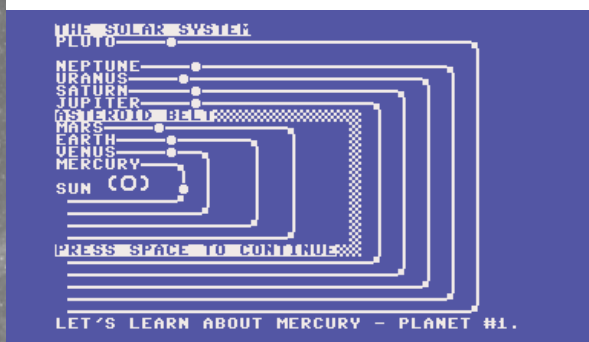
Ocena:

Functionality ■■■■■■■■■■

Congruity ■■■■■■■■■■

Clarity ■■■■■■■■■■

The Solar System



Very creative names... "The Solar System" is an educational program made by Commodore company in 1983. It is not useful for the observations, however the layman with the sense of humor who wants to get to know something

about the Solar System will certainly value this program. The program shows the planets moving on the orbits - it is interesting, even more so because they are drawn using only PET-SCII signs. When we push the SPACE button, the simple information about the additional planets are shown, and after the information about Pluto, who was back then recognized as a planet, the test starts, the knowledge which you got by using the program is being tested. According to the information in the program, The Solar System can be launched not only on C64 but also on PET. If I was supposed to describe this program with one word I would say: you can use it but is it worth it?

Ocena:

The evaluation: I will abstain from it

Visible Solar system



This program is quite interesting. Released in 1982 by Commodore, this program from the very beginning makes an impression with pretty graphics. If we push "P" button, we

can watch moving models of four planets together with its' moons: Earth, Mars, Venus, Jupiter and Saturn. The animations are nice and smooth, the data about the watched objects of the Solar System are shown. Too bad that Mercury and Venus were not included.... When we push the buttons of the numbers, a detailed information about all the seen planets is shown on the screen, and when we push "A" button we can set with which planet the data has to be compared. Maybe this program is not as scientific as previously mentioned "Solar System", but it is certainly more accurate.

Ocena:

Functionality ■■■■■■■■

Congruity ■■■■■■■■

Clarity ■■■■■■■■

This way I reviewed and appraised the most important programs which in the somewhat specialistic approach deal with astronomic scope of knowledge. If they are not useful for you, because you are not interested in the Outer Space, the astral shoot'em ups or other sci-fi adventure games always wait for you.

■ Minimoog
Translated by Slayerpi

MENTO



The human mind is an extremely powerful device, the factory of good and evil, sleeping volcano. Kind, but at the same time dangerous, having a huge influence on our world. How much can we achieve? How great is his power?

Supposedly the human uses only 10 percent of his brain? So the remaining 90 percent is dead? It is a stupid myth, repeated throughout many years. Every day its' range is occupied by work, because we see, hear, feel, think, move so it is a controversial statement that such a huge amount is not used. What would happen if people had supernatural abilities? Probably every one of them would have wanted to rule the world, because the seed of greediness is in every mind and the question if it will grow or not, depends on us. Praise the



ones who have good intentions and use their knowledge, skills and abilities.

OK, so you want to increase the ability of your brain? Meditate hours long, eat handfuls of walnuts, and use lecithin. Oh boy! Let's not get crazy, because too much of something is not healthy. To start I propose to launch from time to time an interesting logical game, which will not only bring great entertainment, but will stimulate our grey matter in our brain.

Memento is a traditional logical game which trains our brain through remembering. It was based on the same idea as the C64 version from 2013 under the title MEM64! The level includes thirty upside down cards, under which different signs, subjects hide. The game-play is based on the premise

that after turning a given card we have to find another card with the same drawing, then the two cards will disappear. We repeat this activity until all the cards disappear. We have four minutes to fulfill the task on every level. If you do not succeed the GAME OVER screen appears.

The creator of this absorbing game is Hungarian group called Assassins (ASN), which has earlier created the adventure game ADVENTURES IN TIME and a very good conversion from ZX Spectrum UWOL – Quest for money. Getting into details, I will add that Memento was decoded by Gabor (Skoro), graphics was done by Robert (Kichy), and the music by Csaba (Csabo). The game was presented on the 12th November of 2013 in the internet website Commodore Plus/4 world.

I will admit frankly that I like the graphics of Memento very much, it is clear and colourful, and the silhouette of a certain lady with a coquettish glance increases it. The music is also very good, because it sounds really nice and does not interrupt you to focus. Good realization and high entertaining ability cause that it is really good to play this game.

■ **Komek**

Translated by Slayerpl

Memento

Grafika: ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Dźwięk: ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Entertaining: ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Assassins (ASN), 2013

HISTORY LINE: 1914-1918

The computer games from the turning point of 80ties and 90ties showed only a small portion of war actions: a couple of good aircraft simulators were issued, but generally it lacked a complete



depiction. This gap was filled in 1992 by German studio Blue Byte who released for Amiga and later MS-DOS History Line 1914-1918. The titular History Line is based on the engine of the popular series Battle Isle; it

carries with impetus the player, like a good book, through the events of the World War One. HL is basically, a history lesson: it involves the skirmishes played in 2 month intervals and the course of the war is shown through 24 missions during the 4 year conflict. They took into consideration the historical background, the units are thoroughly characterized, every mission is preceded by the summary of the course of fights in the last weeks. The player learns about the world events, technological novelties or even the trivial matters described in the newspapers' of this period. Even the intro makes us feel the atmosphere and the historical background nicely: the cutscenes show the assassination in Sarajevo and the animated map of Europe explains the political comple-

xities. The scene showing the lonely soldier on the battlefield titled „Somewhere on the Western front. Summer 1916“ introduces us to the gameplay.

THEATRE OF WAR EVENTS

The first decision involves choosing the sides: France or Germany. It is a simplified choice, because a majority of developed countries participated in the war, but it immediately places us on one of the fighting sides. The gamescreen is divided into two parts, which enables us to play the rounds at the same time, and the gameplay involves two separate rounds: the movement phase and the attack phase. When one of the players starts the engines of their machines, the second player burns the

On the 28th June of 1914 Austrian successor of the throne Archduke Franz Ferdinand Habsburg is assassinated. The assassination was made and done by the group of Serbian nationalists, then citizens of Austro – Hungarian Empire who were trying to incorporate Bosnia to their country. In the result of the attack, Austria –

Hungary gave Serbia ultimatum which is declined by them. The situation in Europe is tense: as the result of many of different agreements and treaties made in the beginning of the Bismarck era, the continent was divided into the hostile alliances. At one side the forces of entente (Great Britain, France, Russia) and the Central



fuse in his cannons. In 1992 it was an original approach, which was copied in the next years by a couple of games of this type. The objective of the game is taking over the hostile headquarters or simply destroying all enemy units. The map is seen from the bird view and is divided into the hexagon fields and different elements of scenery (hills, rivers, lakes, forests, roads), influence the properties of units (combat as well as movement). The time of the year also influences the properties of the units, for example on the winter maps the mobility of our army

is usually smaller. On the maps we can also find depots and factories which can help us repair the existing or create new units. The buildings neutral at the beginning we first have to take over (we sometimes receive as the prize the units residing there), and from their number depends our ability to produce (manufacturing points). AI of the computer is set into an ultra optimistic attack and with a little bit of calculation and cunning we can defeat him quite easily. There is no fog of war in HI and the realism of the strategy decreases because of that.

Graphically the game looks great, the battle scenes are animated. The steering is simple: joystick or the mouse and the use of a couple of buttons from the keyboard.

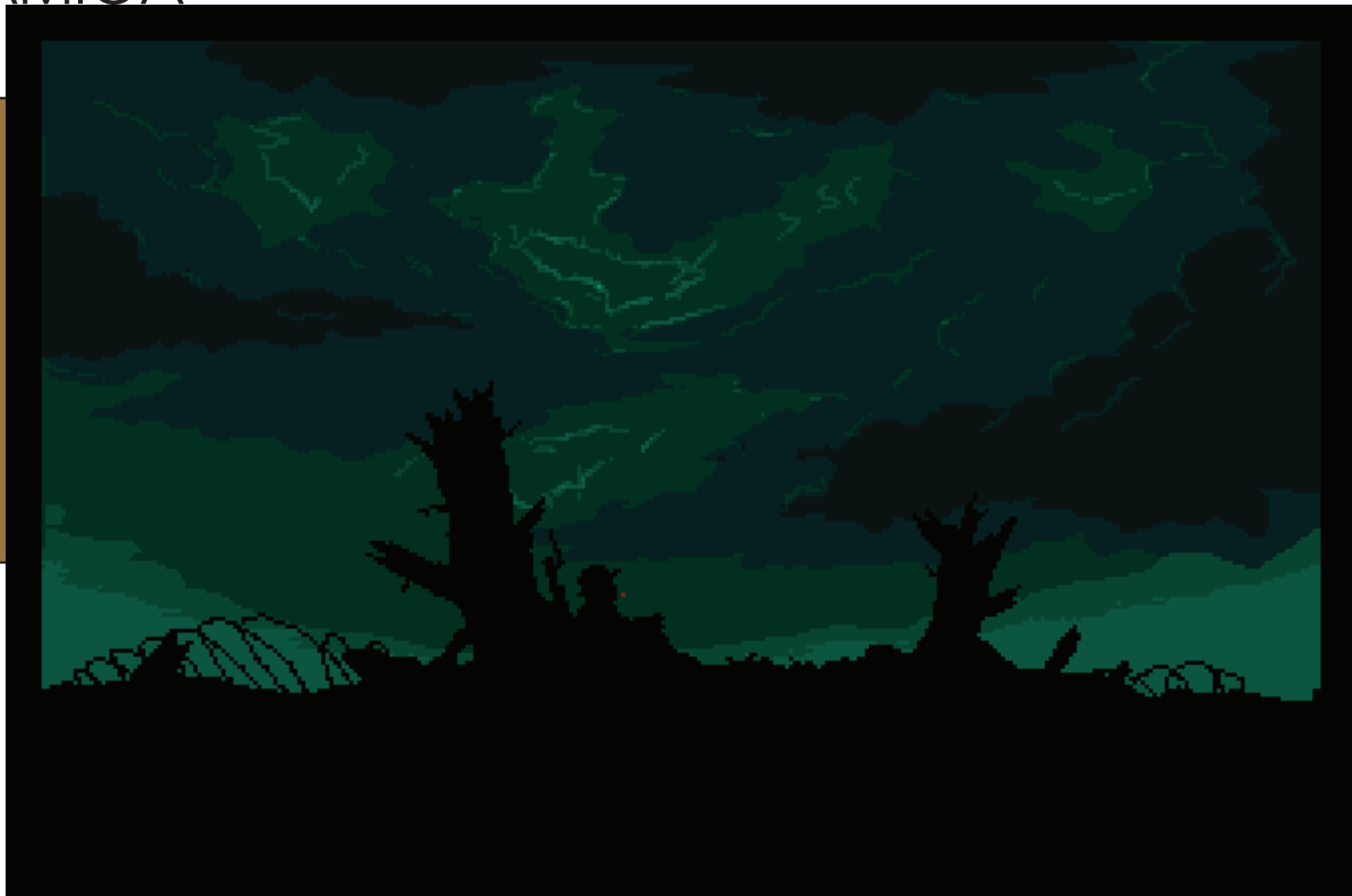
BAYONETS READY!

The game begins In August of 1914 with the attack of Germany against France. In the first months of war cavalry, infantry and light artillery dominates on the scene of war, but with the passage of time armoured vehicles, airforce and navy become the main forces. Consecutive

Powers (Germany, Austria – Hungary and Italy). Europe mentally enters the military conflict and all the negotiations, talks and ways of resolving the frictions does not succeed.

On the 28th July Austria – Hungary declares war to the Serbia, starting the domino effect caused

by the complex system of international alliances. The greatest military conflict starts, which will take 4 years to end and will cause death of 16 millions of people.



missions introduce new formations – we are the witnesses of industrialization of units with early bombers, tanks, airships and submarines in the forefront. The picturesque green meadows and hills from the summer of 1914 in the next months transform into full of bunkers, trenches and ditches the points of fortifications – the conflict was a positional war. When possessing the similar amounts of soldiers and equipment, the key to victory is of course the strategy and the level of training of your army. You gather an experience during the fights, so the important part of our decisions will be removing from the battlefield the damaged units, and then restoring them to use in depots. The experienced units fight more efficient, that is why we should not let



them be destroyed, because the reinforcements created in depots have at the beginning a small fighting prowess. Every unit is characterized by completely different combat features and various mobility. Some of them, for example huge cannons, are slow and they receive a punishment for the move and restore their combat ability only in the next round. It is good to use trans-

port vehicles such as lorries or ships.

GREAT WAR, GREAT JOY

Great graphics, music helping to create the proper atmosphere, good working animations and the whole historical depth make HL a really great strategy. Of course a realism of the game has a big gap between the later releases



from the Panzer General genre, but the entertaining ability is really good and the gameplay is absorbing. For many players from our generation it was the first professional multiplayer game and nothing caused more joy than destroying the enemy cavalry from the hill. It is worth mentioning that for two player mode additional 12 maps were made. The game takes a lot of disk space (7 amiga diskettes) which was a big obstacle in the past, changing diskettes very often (map mode, cutscenes, fight simulations) was exhausting, so the majority of players resigned from the animated fight scenes choosing the simulation in the shortened version. The name of the game suggested the beginning of the whole series of historical games: British magazine CU

Amiga (earlier Commodore User) in their review suggested the possibility of issuing the additional editions placed in the Roman, medieval or Napoleon times. Unfortunately those plans never succeeded. In the USA, because of a greater recognition, this game was issued under title „The Great War 1914-1918“.

BLUE BYTE SOFTWARE

HL 1914-1918 was definitely a good release, but what is more important, considerably made it easier for the Blue Byte studio to develop. Smaller at the beginning developer from Dusseldorf invested in the complex projects – difficult to realize, but ambitious and visionary. This is how the main series of the studio developed, The Settlers, which through

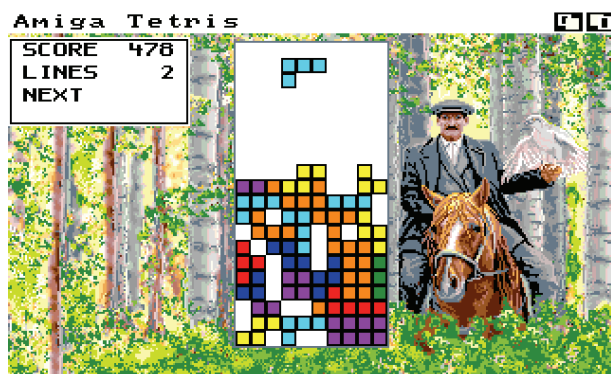
connection and realization of many different ideas was the first that developed strategy for Amiga, setting the standards for next years. Blue Byte exists to this day (the studio was taken over by Ubisoft in the January of 2001) and successfully produces and issues games for different platforms creating the beautiful, almost 30 years long, history among the computer games producers.

■ **general tomxx**
Translated by *Slayerpl*

Tetris 30th anniversary

6th June 2014 was a special day. It was the day during which Internet was flooded with a plethora of information about some seemingly insignificant game. This anniversary was mentioned not only by computer magazines such as Chip or PC World, but also the weekly magazine Wprost. Not a lot of titles are able to bring the attention of the magazines not dealing with computers and video games, as this game which is 30 years after the premiere, no other game can dream about the popularity of the described product. The game works not only on the computer and the video game consoles,

but also on every kind of a electronic device, which has a screen enabling to show more than digits: mobile phones, palmtops, TV-sets, tablets, watches and TV decoders. Not so long ago a group of aficionados organized a session of the game on the walls of 133 meter tall skyscraper. The classic over which we are talking about is Tetris. This logical game was originally created for the computer called Elektronika 60 by the Russian scientist Aleksey Pazytnov with the help of his two coworkers Dimitri Pawlowski and Vadim Gerasimov.



In normal circumstances these people should become millionaires. Unfortunately, they were unlucky, because they were born on the wrong side of the iron curtain. In the end even Pazytnov did not make huge money out of Tetris, which cannot be said about some people living west of Elbe. These people took advantage of unclear legal

situation linked with the obtaining of the profits from the copyrights of the computer games created by the citizens of Soviet Union, they took over these rights. One of the first people claiming the copyrights for the game was the CEO of English company called Andromeda – Robert Stein, who sold the license to the British Mirrorsoft and the American

Spectrum Holobyte couple months before the meeting with Pazytnov. Mirrorsoft issued official version of this game for Amiga.

The game was completely conventional. The titular picture is a compulsory for the Tetris of 80ties Orthodox Church of Saint Basil. After that there is a traditional game with a typical 7 element set of tetromino. Graphics, considering the Amiga capabilities, were not overwhelming.

Another Tetris appeared year later, this time promoted by Infogrames, authors here tried to significantly diversify the game. Even though the titular screen is still an Orthodox Church, later when we pass into another level we can admire the pictures showing the landscape of Russia such as the harbor, launching site, Caucasus mountains, forests etc. Another upside is the fact that this game as one of the not many game from this period works in accordance with an operational system.

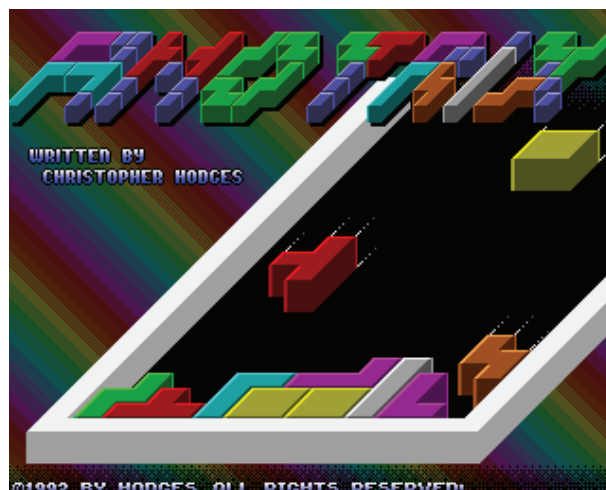
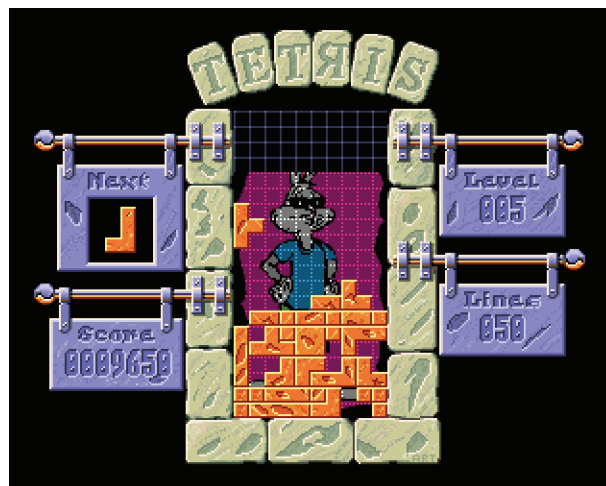
Here ends the official history of Tetris on Amiga, but I am not going to end this text. Tetris, maybe beside Breakout, is probably the most cloned game in the world and the case is not different as far as our computer is concerned where miscellaneous varieties of this title can be counted in hundreds.

We should just mention that in the resources of Aminet there are around 85 Tetris games, and the owners of newer Amigas can find another 30

on OS4Depot. We should add to that commercial titles and these which were included on the various compilations or CD covers and never came into official Amiga servers in the Internet. We have a lot to choose from. Below I will present a couple of examples, that got my attention in different periods of my over 20 year long Amiga use.

Tertis Pro - released in 1993 Logic System game has shown that arranging fallen down elements, has undergone a considerable evolution. Besides the usual blocks, bonus blocks also appeared in this game, which were supposed to make the game easier or harder by, for example, turning the screen upside down. In later stages we begin with a partially built level, because of that arranging every block correctly becomes more difficult. There are also elements which enrich the graphics. Together with the a number of connected lines we discover consecutively a part of pictures which are a background of the level. However the graphics was rendered by using the ECS chip and even though it looked neat, it wasn't very pretty.

Probably even bigger whiff of freshness in Tetris genre was **Blockout**. This game was issued in 1989 in USA, but it was made by Polish programmers. It was without a doubt the biggest Polish hit among the computer games and it has achieved a huge acclaim in the world. The reason for success was moving the Tetris into 3rd dimension. Now the player was supposed to bring





down the blocks into a well while looking into it from above. The playing was because of that more interesting but also more difficult. This game, even though that the Amiga version was way better than in the PC version, did not have a particularly good graphics., we had to wait for a really nice looking Tetris.

The last title issued for A500 that I will present is **Amotrix**, created by Chris Hodges, praised also for other projects. This released in 1992 program was supposed to refer to the golden times of 8 bit computers. The background to the game was a colorful rainbow which reminded of the ZX Spectrum logo. Typical chip music plays in the background. We have to admit that even though it was stylized to look like a game from a bygone era, it had a remarkable graphics, a better one than the previously mentioned games. What is striking, is the fact that the animation of the falling blocks in the game is really fluent (and pretty fast). The blocks are not limited to a standard set of blocks. The player could choose from three sets. The bonus feature was a falling down from time to time water drop, which filled our empty spaces.

In the times of A1200 every possible thing or novelty was created as far as Tetris is concerned. The best way to make your game special between a tens of similar games, was a good graphics. I have no doubts, that in the middle of 90ties there were a lot of

better looking productions than these that I described. Sep Five was one of them, the plot took place in the atmosphere of an old, abandoned monastery. The player saw the table on the screen, the feather used to write, the candles, some tinctures and the book, after the book opens it becomes the main field of the game. This quite nicely created scenery was accompanied by equally good music.

Ineptris shocked during its' time with a completely rendered graphics. When we take into consideration, that the majority of Amiga releases around this time had a hand drawn scenery, rendered graphics on the screen made quite an impression. It was not so good with music. During the game we heard only the sound effects. However, they used a quite interesting solution in the form of a juke box. We could launch it as we made our progress though the game and choose a music fragment which was played through a short period of time.

Petris is one of the many simple games working in the WB window. During the time when the graphics cards were not yet popular in Amiga computers, 99% of workbench games was characterized by a very simple graphics, which used in most cases only 4 default system colors. Petris broke this pattern, it was not only in color but also it had some small graphics novelties. From contemporary point of view it was not something special, but back then it was one of the better looking



visually games for WB.

Tetrys 95 is in my opinion the best Tetris for classic Amiga. Great graphics and music and but above all ideally fluent animation is a main feature of this release. The game offers a couple of types of gameplay, from a very simple junior to classic and fantasy, where the blocks can be destroyed with the use of a shooting bird or a dynamite. They found a very original solution for 2 persons gameplay, they didn't play on separate levels, but cooperated on one level, subsequently putting the blocks in right places. Various levels and huge dose of entertaining ability are additional arguments for the thesis that Tetrys 95 should be definitely installed on every hard drive of an Amiga fan of Tetris genre.

After buying Amiga One, the first Tetris that I played was LTris. The game is characterized by nice graphics, rich in interesting effects and very fluent animation. Not only this gathered my attention, I valued LTris for a rich choice of difficulty levels and gameplay types. Besides the one for he single player, there are some gameplay types for multiplayer, where we can play with a live or a computer opponent.

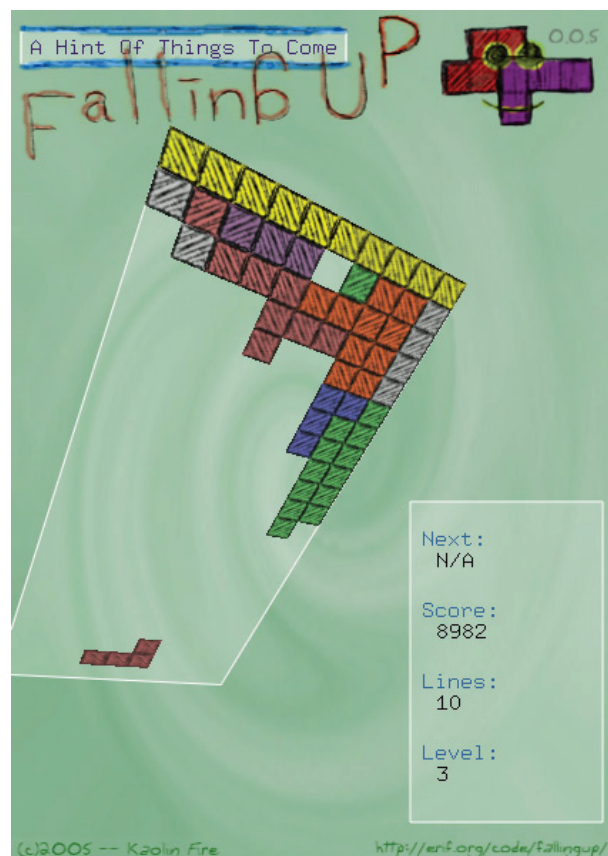
Tetris Queen - This Tetris is a tribute to the legendary British rock band. It does not have a nice graphics or the original gameplay types. The one thing that distinguishes the game is a huge collection of music in .mid files with Queen hits, which are, with an adequate

commentary, played during the game. Even though the works of Freddy Mercury and company is not my cup of tea, for the fans of this band it may be the best Tetris ever...

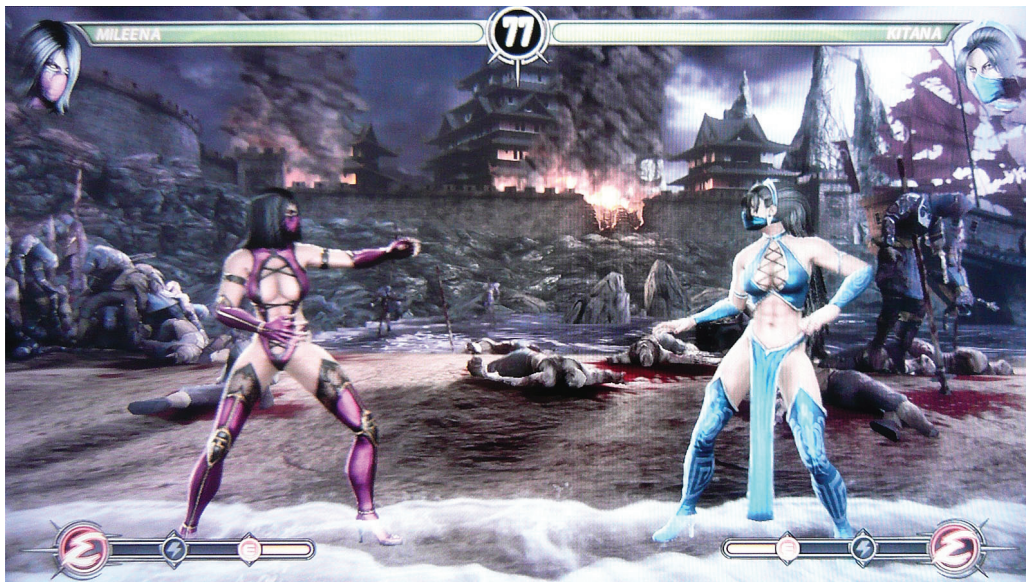
Falling UP - the last title, that I present, environment GL is needed to launch it, it is not however another 3D Tetris. The field of the gameplay constantly changes its placement, because of that the player has to deal with placing the blocks on the level being, for example, in the vertical or horizontal reflection. Not an new idea, playing upside down was offered by TetrisPro, where this reflection was made in a static way, in Falling UP the level fluently rotates around and during that time the blocks don't stop to fall down. During some moments we feel like in a shooting range in a fairground, where we have to aim at rotating shield. As you can see, the game because of this, is not simple. I advise it to the patient players.

The twelve games that I presented, is only a small part of a huge collection of similar games for our platform. As I mentioned in the beginning of the article, the varieties of Tetris for Amiga can be counted in hundreds, I don't doubt that the same is true for C64. Probably everyone of you has their favorite, maybe one not mentioned in the article. I propose to launch our favorite computers and spend the anniversary of the never aging classic actively.

■ Rafal „Mufa” Chyła
Translated by Slayerpl



Resurrection - the old shown in a new manner: Mortal Kombat



giving the food for thought to all "the defenders of morality". It would be extremely harmful to say that it was the only feature that distinguished the game from many others. The huge impression was also made (at least on the players, not on the previously mentioned detractors) by the beautifully digitalized characters, impressive combat mechanics and harsh, overwhelming atmosphere (regardless of the sheer, previously mentioned brutality). The second part of the game raised the bar even higher, becoming the game which is still highly valued by many. I still remember the never-ending conversations about the characters from the game, their storylines, their punching styles, fatalities etc. conducted during the school breaks. Third part of the game

Mortal Kombat is a game which caused a significant commotion during 1990ties not only among the players but also in many other communities theoretically not connected with the game industry. This title defined the concept of a "brutal computer game",

created the image of the trilogy, even though I valued MK2 higher. The Amiga users were also badly treated, because the game was not released for this platform and they did not have the opportunity to play this game.

Ok, it is enough about the history and the short introduction into the climate of beginnings of the dragon series. I want to write about the released in 2011 for PC computers and PS3, PS Vita and XBOX360 ninth part of the game (yes, because even though the game is titled Mortal Kombat, it is sometimes called MK9). Someone may ask: why should we make a big fuss about ninth part of the series, if the MK series was continued throughout the years with a new part of the game once in a while? Because of two reasons: the game is an official reboot of the series and it cleverly defines the three first tournaments (interesting idea about sending by Rayden the telepathic message to the past to himself). The second reason is the fact that according to many fans only this part of the game is a true continuator of the trilogy, after not so successful and depar-

ting from the original atmosphere parts 5-8 (fourth part is in my opinion partially successful). Creators of the game, NetherRealms Studios (with very well-known Ed Boone in a crucial role) also knew that the MK brand slowly dies out and to achieve the old spark, they must make a sudden turn. They decided to return without any concessions to the everything that is the best in the first parts of the series and it turned out that it was a great decision.

What made the fans of the first parts of the game the most was the fact that the producers stopped adding to the roster of warriors new, not influential and not interesting characters to replace the known and loved classic characters. This way, everyone who had a favourite fighter in one of the parts of the trilogy, will find him or her here. Second important matter (and a wink to the classic fans) is the fact that the game returns to fighting in 2D. Of course, the graphics in the game are completely 3D, because it can't be different in the modern times, but the fighting occurs in two dimensions – you cannot go freely around



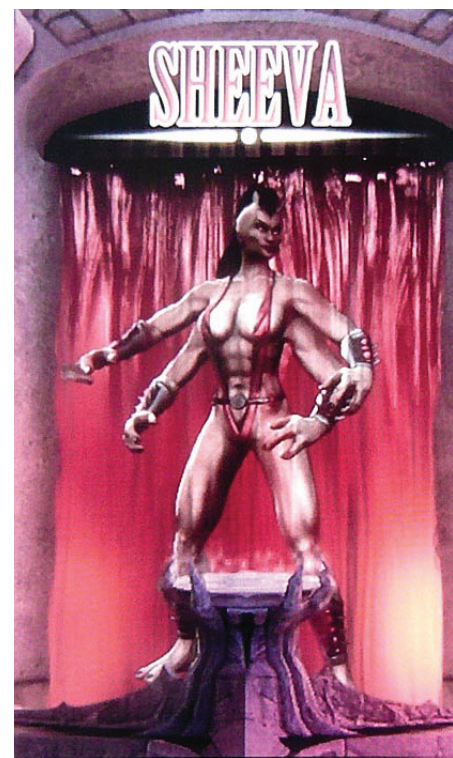
In Resurrection: the old shown in a new manner, presentations of games for contemporary hardware will appear (PC, game consoles, and portable devices) which are continuations, adaptations, remakes of classic games, known from Commodore or Amiga. Of course, we have to remember that we are retro magazine and these reviews won't be complete and contemporary, but more of a referrals written from the point of the beginning of the classic game. A lot of place will be devoted to how a given title relates to its' predecessor and how much he takes from it, but also new novelties will be shown, which will bring some freshness to the old concept. Reviewed games won't be evaluated with points in a standard way, because it would be difficult to use an old range of estimation for old and new games, which may lead to discrepancies. To put it short, we hope you will like this section.

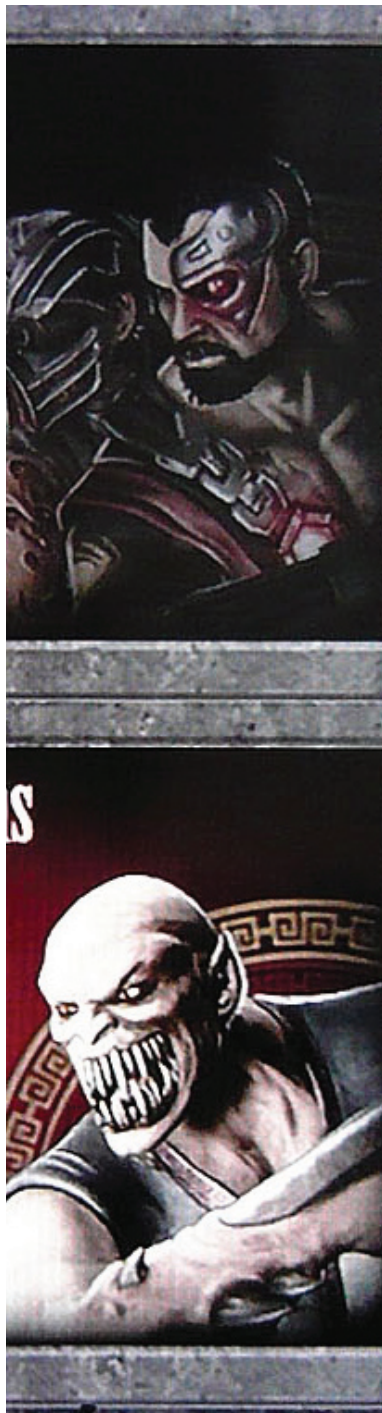


your opponent or even make small dodging movements to the sides. It is a great idea. Regardless of that, the atmosphere of trilogy appears with every second of the game. The characters of the game have their classic attacks and punches, well – known fatalities, the fights take place in the classic, but modernized arenas, classic music with new arrangements plays in the background. Do you want to throw someone in the acid in Dead Pool Chamber or throw somebody of the bridge in The Pit like in the good, old times? Treat your opponent with a Scorpion's lace, Cage's scrambled eggs or cut into pieces by Baraki? Kick horrifying Goro's or the conceited Shao Khan's ass, hitting him with an uppercut precisely in the moment when he laughs at us with a pity or points a finger at us with impudence? This is not a problem. The producers did everything to ensure that the player experiences the new game in an older form. The older games were criticized for making the game less crude, this part is again dark, bloody and brutal like never before.

It is certain that we cannot call this part of the game an old cutlet, because even if the former paragraph may sound as MK9 has nothing new to offer, actually the situation is different. We will find a lot of novelties and new additions in Mortal Kombat reboot, which, what is important, are not added for kicks, but to make the gameplay more interesting. A great new addition to the game is the fact that outside

of standard playing modes known from the previous parts of the game such as VS or tournament brackets (about which we don't have to write), "Story mode" and "Challenge mode" were added. First of these modes is cinematic tour through the first three tournaments' history, where the particular fights are interrupted by the cutscenes. This mode is pretty long and interesting and gives us the possibility to play as one of the character of good side one by one (everyone of them is a separate chapter, in total 16 chapters). The fun is really great and absorbing, the whole mode is viewed like a full of action interactive movie. Second of the aforementioned modes is 300 challenges in the form of tower, on every floor we have to do a given task. They can be pretty ingenious, from fighting with multiple opponents one by one, through the demand to use the given attacks or the need to finish off your opponent quickly, to the completely crazy ideas such as fighting with torn off limbs or with the screen turned upside





down. What can we say more, it is a really great idea, which lengthens the durability of the game. Another interesting matter is The Crypt, in which you receive additional outfits, fatalities, many different concept arts for the points won during the game. Additions also include four mini – games (among them well – known destroying of the wooden planks in “Test your might”), possibility of fighting in tag-teams, X-ray system (brutal and very graphic, X-ray like shown

attacks, which are possible to use after the indicator fills up) and what is nowadays standard – possibility to fight against other players online.

To sum it all up, if someone feels a constant nostalgia towards MK1/2/3, MK9 is a must-have for them. He will find practically everything that attracted to this series during the times of trilogy and a lot more in addition. I value the game the most for its’ atmosphere, which is a great return to dark, gloomy beginnings of MK. This release is a proof that if you really want it, you can make nowadays a game which is a great continuator of the classic game, and not only an attempt to earn money on the old name value and the nostalgia. Additionally, elated by the great approval of the game, Ed Boone announced that Mortal Kombat X is in the works, releasing time from time additional details over the upcoming and planned for 2015 anniversary edition of Mortal Kombat.

■ **noctropolis**

Translated by Slayerpl



About the soul of the retro computer hardware

The statement that we usually idealize the past, because of the longing for the carelessness of childhood and youth, is not so exploratory. Equally obvious is the fact that people with passion have an inclination to overestimate the subject of their interest. We can assume that it is not so extraordinary that, we, declared fans of old computers, still see retro computer hardware as special. Let us be inquisitive and let's think about the uniqueness of this hardware and why we think that these machines have a soul.

To explain the fascination with the old computer hardware to someone, who looks with surprise at a audio cassette or VHS recorder, we have to outline the unique color of the half of eighties and nineties, mention the life which wasn't driven and alienated by the novelties of the electronic line which came later; mention the childlike naivety with which we watched the blockbusters of those years such as Rambo, Predator, American ninja and many others; to mention the unbelievable time for us, when the watch with electronic display was the end of our dreams, desired wonder of technology was the calculator, and the pocket video game console from behind the eastern border with the tireless wolf gathering eggs promised never-ending fun.

In those times and those circumstances, with our heads full of thoughts and hopes so different than current, we watched with excitement



consecutive editions of Bajtek and Mikroklan, we returned time after time to the sections devoted to the computer in Młody Technik, we studied to boredom the advantages and disadvantages of this or that computer, and the weak quality pictures of C64, Atari and ZX Spectrum games captured our imagination.

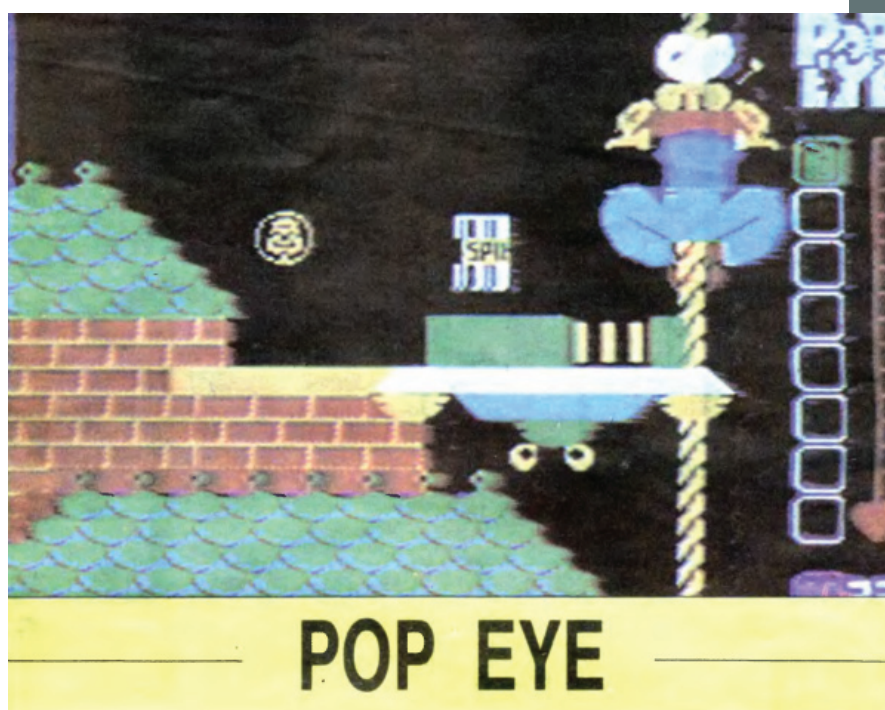
For the very young people, who we were during the half of eighties, the games were the main area of use for microcomputers. We pretty naturally identified with the characters created in the virtual worlds. With all of ourselves we walked in the vast labyrinths, we ventured with our heroes from adventure to adventure. Watching on our screen the cockpit of the jetfighter, we ventured through the virtual skies, we took on the character of F1 driver or submarine captain. Our imagination never before had such a real extension.

Currently, it is more difficult to get seduced with 16 color images with the dimensions of 160 x 120 pixels. But also the virtual worlds created by contemporary computers often fail to seduce us. Simply, we lack our previous trust. Our consciousness of the practical capabilities of computers is also greater. The computers are not unusual boxes, which are capable of generating magical sceneries. We began to treat them more as standard house appliances, such as tv or audio set.

After the satisfaction of the electronic hunger of enterta-

inment, a lot of us discovered that microcomputer is not only an original toy, but also a device capable of doing great things. This is shown by the long, at the beginning mysterious looking programme listings, which – if not not meant only for entertainment, solved real problems. What could be more real for the pupil of 7th, 8th grade of primary school than homework, which made life unbearable? That's why second planned area of computer use was making the computer achieve considerable effects by doing the homework and let people have more free time. Even though these plans were not always successful, the charm of early computers didn't weaken, they were still an amazing discovery, which could replace our mind in the complex work, help out in making decisions or foresee future with a huge dose of probability on the basis of credible premises.

Early computers opened enormous possibilities for the creative mind for the realization of many ideas, that's why they were the means of creative self – expression. Everyone could put life into the already owned hardware replacing the potential of silicon circuits into the shape of calculation or impressive presentation bringing its' author deeply felt satisfaction. A lot of programmes which came to life during that time is to this day a masterful display of algorithm creating, which logic astounds regardless of the capabilities of hardware. Games and demos still delight us. We don't look at them only from the perspective of their historical value. They didn't lose their value, only because the contemporary releases are difficult to discern from reality. Realism is not the only and not the most important criteria of judgment (comics' and cartoons' authors also use significant simplification





Number: 5793

Credentials of Alojzy Babel in „ Journeys of Mr. Inkblot”
(Movie -1986)

and the effects of their work still are very popular.)

In our imagination the computer was not only a device efficiently executing time – consuming arithmetic equations, but also more or less intelligent creation based on the human. People educated on science fiction books and films such as 2001 Odyssey, Star Wars or Star Trek we came to conclusion that the computer has a human face – at least in the sense that it communicates with a human like a human. Almost every history which is in the future shows the progress as far as the changes are concerned, which were brought by the development of digital technology. Even though the dangers of the developing digital technology were shown, it seemed a bright future for us.

Electronic equipment producers did a lot to establish – which is understandable – only the positive image of microcomputers. Since the beginning of its' presence on the market they were shown as an irreplaceable work and entertainment companion (we can guess that the continuation of this marketing strategy was the adoption for the first 16-bit construction the name Amiga, "The Friend" was supposed to make the work pleasant, help people with the responsibilities, it was supposed to become a member of the family). In the contemporary information technology press and literature we could find a conclusion that computer is a universal device, which brings work, learning and entertainment into another new dimension. Because of

the previous, traditional form of education and entertainment microcomputers definitely brought new quality, which favored the high assessment of their value, including the attribution of their extraordinary properties. Finally, we couldn't see computers other than exceptionally friendly devices.

From the eighties to the current times electronic industry made a significant technological progress, which separated even more previous generations of computer users from the sentimental proportion to 8 and 16 bit constructions. Currently, the youth grows up in different social-economic circumstances. For them the computer became a centre of home entertainment and the work utensil. The "spiritualization of computers" happens also now, but it took a different direction. Nowadays about the

computers, and more frequently about the whole computer infrastructure, we say "system", "system generates", "system downloads", "system counts"... There is no previous friendliness in this description, on the contrary, we can feel certain unpredictability in this, unexplained force, the complexity which is cannot be fully subdued. When we hear about the complexity of the contemporary informatics solutions, the thousands lines of code, about the patches immediately improving the bugs, about the patches for patches, about the need for refactoring, technologies which rival, piling up standards – it's easy to get a headache keeping up with the constant chase about the novelties in IT.

We will not recreate the specific climate, in which around 8 bit computers aura of extraordinariness was created.

We will not remake the reality, into which the older games and programmes brought us. The convincement about the uniqueness of our experiences and emotions connected with retrocomputers should not leave us. In our own way we were witnesses of the history and active participators of the historic breakthrough: transforming the counting machines into the personal computers. For us retrohardware is still more than the relic of the past.

Even though we have the consciousness of the emotional background of our opinions, we will not step back to say that the first home computers had a "soul". They had a "soul" – for us, the devoted users.

■ **Hery**

Translated by Slayerpl

*all scannes from Bajtek Magazine (polish computer magazine published 1985-1995).



TALKING HEADS

Emulation or real hardware?

Bobikowoz: I like it very much. The possibility of playing 8bit games on the hardware that I currently have. Computer at home, laptop at work, tablet in the tram – emulator on every hardware, ROM collection and the ability of downloading the saved games from the cloud. When I find a couple of moments of free time, I can try to achieve a high score in River Raid or continue visiting dungeons in Sword of Fargoal.

Tomxx: I inserted C64 emulator on the portable PSP and I am probably the only person in the morning train in Dublin playing Commando and other Bomb Jacks. This device has such a small joystick that is ideal for fast arcade games. On the other hand, I choose for a peaceful playing real computers. The feeling of plugging in the hardware, its' yellowlike physicality and the scent which reminds us of the past, the process of loading programs,

Sid sounds of the loader and finally the fun of playing – these are priceless impressions.

Retro hardware has its' soul which speaks to us with the whole range of feelings and no emulator will ever give us this.

Noctropolis: Yes, it is completely true. Real hardware provides us the good atmosphere which cannot be given by the emulator. For me this atmosphere is completely linked with staring at flickering on the screen red-black stripes and the charming hum and the slow, majestic typing RUN on the brown or creamy keyboard. However with the passing of time people become more lazy.... I will admit without hesitation that I use more often Pc emulators. You don't have to deal with hardware, plug in cables and it is above all comfortable if you only want to launch a given game for an half of hour and do not play half a day. I will

The amount of old computers will decrease gradually, year by year. The moment will happen that they completely leave the hardware market, and if they appear the prizes will be horrendous and the average Joe will not be able to buy it.

- **Ramos**



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source: http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commodore_10#/media/File:Commodore_10_002a.png

not mention a great convenience which are save states, without which finishing any game would be almost impossible.....

Minimoog: Right, for example I would not finish 1985 Day After without save-stats... Emulators are over compatible, I think. They often give us so huge technical abilities and therefore a convenience which are difficult to achieve on hardware. I do not say that it is a shortcoming, why should we give up on something that works better, however we cannot feel the retro hardware fully without the hardware or the software from its' heyday and it is true not only for Commodore. I prefer to play on Pegasus also on real hardware. The pile of cassettes and diskettes looks way better than the humming chest with virtual written data (PC). I heard an opinion that no one creates games or programs on the real C64. It is not true, because for example I do this (or maybe I am nobody then they are right). Besides, what kind of a C64 program is this that works on the emulator but does not work with a real C64? My pc starts loudly and long, while C64 works silently and launches practically with the switch of a button. When I need immediate use of a device, e.g. to write a small program for mathematical estimations, then I use a real C64. For longer

The pile of cassettes and diskettes looks way better than the humming chest with virtual written data (PC). I heard an opinion that no one creates games or programs on the real C64.

- Minimoog

operations or entertainment I use mainly emulators.

Komek: I also created a while ago small C64 post. I bought an ordinary small cupboard for RTV with three shelves, in which there are: TV set, joysticks, cassette player and 2 cables, therefore I have no problems with constant switching of the cables. I launch my C64 and my favorite game and I travel into the past. When I am visited by my friends (not necessarily fans or C64 aficionados), they often ask to launch some games. I often do this and then the party starts and everyone feels great while feeling this unique atmosphere. However concerning the PC emulators, of course I use them, mainly when I need to act quickly to describe a given game.

Bobikowoz: I like your approach to real hardware. The special post, adequate atmosphere from the past, I feel envious that I have only the modern junk in my home. I feel also ashamed that as a retro hardware aficionado I perform halfheartedly, but in today's busy, full of activities world it is very hard to find an additional time to adjust the recording head, waiting for the loading of the game and other similar pleasant experiences. Moreover, I would have to take out every time C64 from

the inside of the wardrobe, which when we take into consideration the limited surface of the panelak building, and this is another thief of the precious time which is meant for the pleasures.

Komek: Yes, the unfortunate issue of time. In my case it is also stretched beyond imagination but I said resolutely "I will not let myself go crazy". Let this C64 post be my oasis. And believe me, I will always find time and small place to create this place. When we take the purchase of new hardware into consideration, it also should not be a problem. So I urge you to work actively, because there is no other as original hardware.

noctropolis: In my opinion, the real solution is using the advantages of emulators and real hardware interchangeably. The former one has a bigger comfort and speed, and the latter better atmosphere and is a more tangible return to the past. The individual

case is the fact in which proportions every one of us needs these two factors. Another factor is the fact that using real hardware becomes more and more expensive hobby. Not long ago you could buy a proverbial Commodore practically for peanuts, nowadays its' price is higher, but still acceptable. However we have to get ready for a situation that with time it will get worse so if someone plans to buy a physical version of our favorite hardware, should not wait long.

I will admit without hesitation that I use more often Pc emulators. You don't have to deal with hardware, plug in cables and it is above all comfortable if you only want to launch a given game for an half of hour and do not play half a day.

- **noctropolis**

Uka: Emulators and real hardware have its advantages and drawbacks. In most cases you can choose between one and the other depending on the preferences and other factors. I will not say how the situation is in my case and from which it results because it would be secondary. The emulation for sure is very useful, makes some things easier and that is why we often use it. For me the most important thing is that it gives us the possibility to launch the machines which I do not have (if it is only a substitute of a real hardware it is still better than nothing). We have to know also that you cannot perform certain operations in the emulators, and



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you cannot do other on real hardware, because for example does the graphics rendered in the Vice window look the same as on the screen of a C64? Are you, in both cases, able to slow down or stop the working of the program during a given moment to decide in which cycle of rastra network the change from white into black appears in your intro? Does the installation of the classic Workbench under WinUEA take the same amount of time as in the case of real diskettes on the real Amiga with a very old HDD?

Ramos: The amount of old computers will decrease gradually, year by year. The moment will happen that they completely leave the hardware market, and if they appear the prizes will be horrendous and the average Joe will not be able to buy it. For young people willing to have some fun with such a hardware the emulator is the answer. The programming on PC is more comfortable for contemporary coders. Of course, nothing will replace launching the demo or a game on the old hardware. Unfortunately, the emulators are not yet perfect, even though they become every year better and better. We cannot hide one fact, the era of 8bit computers domination ended. C64 Direct-To-TV and other gadgets, which appear on the hardware market, are emulations which barely reminiscence the old, cult machine.

Atreus: However I will try to look at the whole situation differently. I try very hard to use old hardware together with new. Because of that, I have in PC (Core2Duo) CatWeasel Mk4 with SIDs 6581 and 8580 and PC Floppy drives 3,5" and 5,25". I use SIDs to emulate C64 and the drives to make images of Amiga and C64 diskettes. To use its abilities fully I have to modify my 5,25" floppy drive. So far I can make one side images. The second PC has HardSID and XU1541. It is PIII 600 Mhz on Win98. I have also Keyrah interface and digital-analog joystick switch for the old joystick PC port (DB-15) and joysticks taken from the attic and a couple of emulators. In C64 I used a couple of add-ons issued not long ago, which expand and make more pleasurable playing C64. I talk here about RetroPlay, SD2IEC and PC feeder to provide

a current for all the drives and C64. There a lot of possibilities.

Minimoog: I would have loved to have such possibilities! I have a lot of Pcs in my home, floppy drives, diskettes, a lot of electronic junk, one thing which limits is my lack of knowledge about electronics (and limited amount of money sometimes). The second thing is the fact that such configurations as SID or MOS we can usually purchase on Western markets for a huge price for shipping to Poland. Because of this shipping I gave up on the idea of buying Apple, because I would have pay 200% of the price of the computer.

Uka: Yo can always buy a decrepit C64 (still available for 15-20zl) on allegro.pl and perform cannibalism.

noctropolis: I, on the other hand, which may surprise us, am quite resentful to the fact of mixing emulation with a real, classic hardware because it is does not match with each other. I use this type of division: either full emulation or the realism, this concept works the best for me. I never felt the need to incorporate into PC elements from the old hardware (floppy drives, SIDs, joysticks etc.) I'm totally against placing add-ons in C64. One thing are add-ons connected with the emulation of data carriers (such as SD2IEC etc.) which are OK, such devices as additional RAM or SuperCPU are a profanation which kills the atmosphere. I do not know if we can join this concept with the concept of emulation, but is without a doubt an emulation on C64 to provide the abilities which it originally does not have.

Bobikowoz: The discussion goes on and on, but we have to close this edition. Our talking heads, as we can see have different approaches to our favorite hardware and software, but regardless of the differences, we can find a consensus. Regardless of the fact if you have home altar with a real hardware, hybrid or an emulator on a tablet, if you read this text you are just like us a fan of retro entertainment. We await your opinion under our editorial staff mail: k.a.plusmagazine@gmail.com

Translated by Slayerpl

LEAVE THOSE GAMES AND START DOING SOMETHING SERIOUS

How many time in your life have you heard such words directed towards you? Sometimes they were spoken by the members of your family while you were practicing one of your favorite hobbies, other times you could hear them from your friends or even completely strange people, who would find out about your ways of spending free time.

Among a big part of our society there is still this notion of video games (without the division into PC, consol or mobile games) being something not serious, infantile and basically meant only for kids. Due to this fact they are treated only as fun and you are expected to grow out of them at certain age. You are expected to do that so that you can be treated as a serious, grown

person by this mythical "community".

On the other hand I, so as not to be misunderstood, must point out that generally I'm completely not interested in what other people think about my ways of spending free time. This text is not written in order to excuse myself from anything. It is created only to show you my point of view and to show how ridiculous the notion mentioned earlier is. I must also say that currently I don't experience such problems but while speaking with my friends I am able to notice that that opinion is not rare. While hearing or reading such opinions I can feel my hair rise (at least what is left of it :)

Ok, but if there is such a notion in our society the question

is where it came from. It can be generally assumed that video games came into Polish homes more or less in the mid 90s. Surely during 80s you could find some Spectrum or Commodore units, but let's be honest, these were just individual cases. A person who owned such a piece of hardware was considered to be lucky and half of the neighborhood visited such a whizz-kid for a chance to play games using that computer. Speaking about the broader scale of this phenomenon we must come back to 1990s when brands such as Atari, Pegasus, Amiga and generic PCs started to appear at our households. As it usually happens with such a novelty, the first people who get interested are the youngest as their minds are the most receptive. For the

older it often appears as something "out of space". At first it often happened that a parent or parents were convinced by their children to buy such a piece of technology and later as it turned out that they had no idea what to do with it, they noticed, with fear I might add, that their offspring wandered inside countless virtual worlds. It must have been at that time that the notion of video games being for the young ones was created. It was probably at that very same time that it started to become considered as a distraction from more serious duties (studying or working).

Let's be honest, it's been almost two decades since the 90s. People who at that time were in their teens today are in their 30s or their 40s. According to a proverb "What youth is used to, age remembers", all those people replaced their old 8bit and 16bit units with modern PC and current-gen consoles (although not everybody, we are an excellent example that you can connect both worlds). The question that arises is why we should give up our hobby if it gave us so many great ways of spending time while we were younger. Only because somebody else, in their limitless wisdom, decided that it is juvenile and senseless? Let's not joke here... Should we convince a cinema lover or post stamp collector who got interested in his/her hobby only because it happened while they were kids? So far I haven't noticed that, so

why should we apply that rule to gamers?

It is quite a characteristic conclusion that mostly people who criticize games as being not serious and childish spend their free time in front of a TV set watching all the TV pulp, filled with all those serious and adult content. Such people prefer mostly highly intelligent programs (where without screams and shouts, quarrels, insults and artificially created controversies there is



no good show), artistic soap operas (where if a character falls down in one episode, it takes them the following four ones to get up and where the romances between various characters are more like football league system – everybody plays with everybody) or other types of shows such as docu-soaps. Those people are among those who, after

a few hours long TV marathon, have a tendency to say “You’re playing that stupid game again”. I’m not really sure if I should be crying or laughing at that. If I applied such an approach I probably should attack all those magazines for women, where you can mostly read about all kinds of diets and glamorous lives of celebrities or magazines for men where you can read all about working out at the gym but where there are more photos done in Photoshop than real ones. In my opinion there is no point in such comparisons and complaints.

Some might say that I generalize too much, because there are also really worthy TV shows and many people tend to watch them as well. From all available magazines and newspapers you are also able to choose some valuable titles. I don’t deny that, but my aim was to show that it can work both ways, when all games are treated as something you have to leave behind while growing up. The idea is that since games are made for fun only and fun is associated with being a child then there is no point in sticking to them when you become adult. Meanwhile among different game titles you can find those that are created for pure fun only (and there is nothing bad about it, everybody, no matter what age you are, has a right to have fun) and those that can teach you something as well. A good example of the latter is a popular series Assassin’s Creed which is strongly based



JAN LOREK
22.02.2015

on interesting historical events. While playing you can learn a lot of interesting facts.

Additionally there is one interesting fact that comes to my mind that the same people who describe games as a juvenile and childish time killer attack them as being too violent and even full of eroticism, which in the end qualifies those as a product directly aimed at the adult person. Here we can witness a big amount of hypocrisy and the will to bend one's opinion to whatever they are trying to prove at the moment. And who cares if it is illogical and contradictory at the same time.

The fact is that the electronic entertainment some time ago made a big leap from being little important to the media mainstream. The commercials for the biggest game titles are broadcast during commercial breaks on the biggest TV networks among other commercials for such products as crisps and washing powders. It also happens that they are mentioned by media normally not connected with electronic entertainment. It is a normal thing that you can buy games in a supermarket or in a shop that sells all kind of electronic equipment. Still there must pass some time before games are treated as equals to movies or TV. The games are growing up today together with their audience who is doing the same. They tend to provide us with not only fun topics but those more mature and difficult as well. They become also more

cinematic (which some players consider to be a disadvantage). So what is a difference between a good movie and a good game, except for the fact that the latter is interactive? For instance a game like "The Last of Us" is a masterpiece of a screenplay which, after finishing the game, is on your mind for a long time (and by the way there are movies to be directed based on that game).

The idea is that since games are made for fun only and fun is associated with being a child then there is no point in sticking to them when you become adult.

To sum up this a bit personal opinion, I just wanted to say that if you had ever had some doubts (be it because of your not so young age as I assume that most of us are over 30) whether you should explore virtual worlds (no matter what hardware you use) I think you ought to put your worries aside. Don't let yourself be told that games are not meant for you because you're too old. If they allow you to disconnect from the real (and sometimes boring) world and you love them than stick to them. Everybody has a right to entertain themselves, no matter the age or the way you do it. Be it

a good movie, a good book or a good game. It is just a matter of personal preferences and not the question of it being more or less serious. It is not a coincidence that the average age of a gamer has risen recently. It keeps on rising together with the people who fell in love with the games in the 1990s and who don't even consider giving this habit up. In the past a typical gamer was associated with a juvenile student who after coming back from school tossed his backpack aside and turned on his C64. Today it is more often a grown up man who, in order to relax, turns on his PC, console (or still the C64) and the fact that some other people have some problems with that...? Well let's not bother our minds with that, it's just their problem.

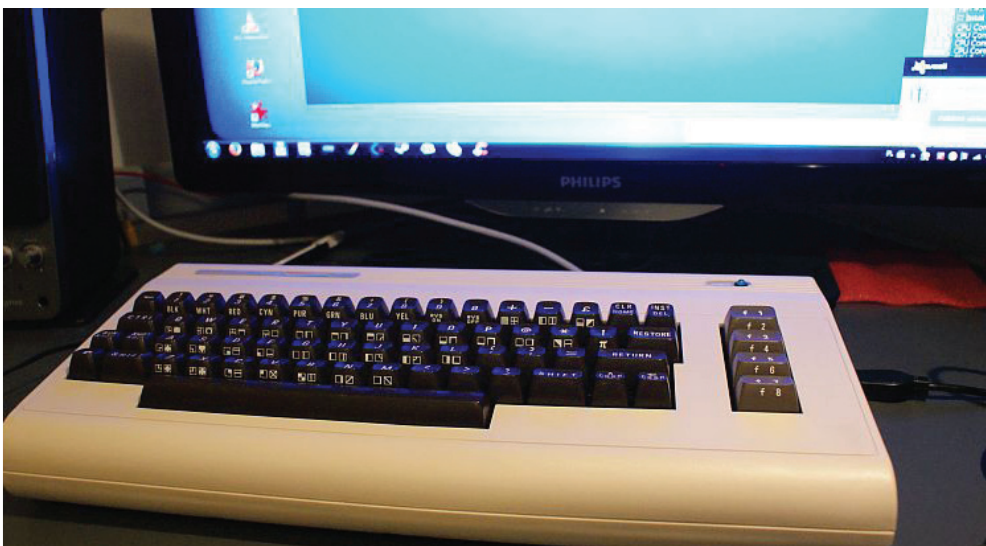
■ **noctropolis**
Translated by MA

Modification of the damaged C64 to the fully working PC in several minutes – how to story

When you have a damaged C64 in your closet, with small chances to repair it, not exceeding the cost of buying used C64 (damaged VIC system – artifacts on the screen). I started to think how I can use the remaining parts. C64 could lie in the closet and keep its' place, I couldn't throw it out.

I will add that the damaged C64 is the C64G version – the popular "breadbasket" with a white keyboard. Finally I used for my modification brown keyboard from the 1st version, but we will talk about it later.....

I thought that it would be nice to see C64 everyday in your living room, as HTPC or a platform to emulate other retro hardware. Browsing the web and the forums I found ready projects which served as an inspiration. Later it appeared that we can buy the KEYRAH Interface and use the original C64 keyboard as a PC keyboard and use classic joysticks. I thought – "I got it figured out", but as we all know the details are sometimes tricky.



I decided immediately that the basis of my modification will be as small interference in the original cover as possible.

The first challenge was finding the right motherboard, which we could place in the small space inside C64. The main problem weren't the dimensions across and along, because we can buy without any problems MICROITX motherboards, but the height of the motherboard. The keyboard in C64 is pretty thick and it does not leave a lot of space at the bottom.

I decided to choose the motherboard in the NANOITX format. I still didn't know that something like this exists but it appears that on the Chinese auction sites we have a pretty big choice. The price of around 130 dollars with the delivery. It is a motherboard with the dimensions of 12 cm by 12 cm and the height of 2 cm. The type, that I chose has an integrated CPU Celeron 1037u 1.80GHz dual core, graphics card Intel HD 3000, one socket of memory SO-DIMM DDR3 and two sockets miniPCI (including one dedicated for HDD mSATA, and the second we can use as e.g. WIFI card – what I did). Additionally the socket for the external SATA disk and what's interesting LVDS socket to connect, for example LCD panel.

Additionally on the motherboard we have of course HDMI 1.4 VGA, USB 2.0

The whole computer works pretty fine. In configuration with 2 GB RAM and mSATA disk Windows 8 starts practically in a matter of couple seconds. Every emulator such as WinUAE and Vice64 and others work without problems. Also playing MKV FullHD Files with the surround sound in the home area network also works without problems.

Someone could have asked why we could not use Raspberry Pi? Mainly because of the efficiency and the compatibility.

But let's look at the most important things, the modification.

The first thing is adjusting the Keyrah interface to connect with the PC motherboard through the external connector. Unfortunately it is not factory placed in the printed board of the interface, that's why we have to do it ourselves. It is not difficult, we can buy the correct connector in the electronics store. The red circle on the screen is the place where I soldered the 4 pin USB connector.

Components that were used:

original cover of C64 with a keyboard (~20\$)

Keyrah interface v2 to connect C64 keyboard to the PC motherboard through USB (http://www.vesalia.de/e_keyrahv2.htm) (~40\$)

Nano ITX motherboard (12 cm x 12 cm) with Celeron 1037U 180GHz CPU dual core i7 on the Ivy Bridge (105\$ +VAT)

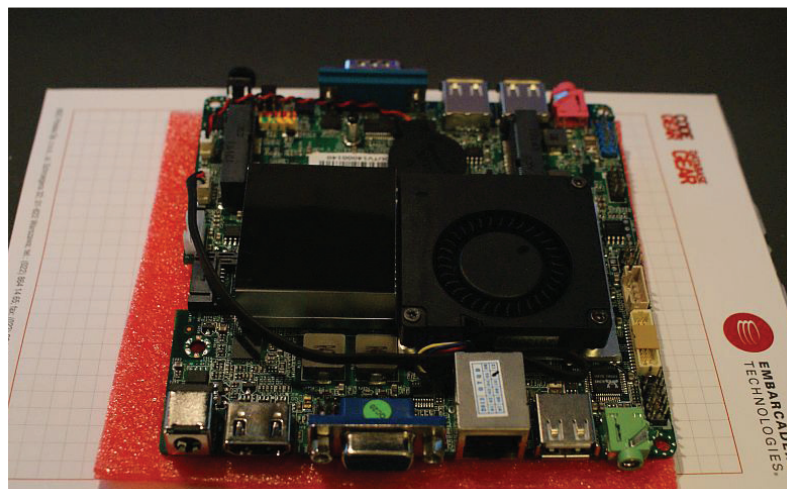
2 GB DDR3 SO-DIMM (~20\$)

2.5' hard disk OCZ 64GB SSD SATA (45\$)

Old USB panel 2x, 2x audio output, from the old PC casing (2\$)

Power supply unit 12V, 3,5A, 35W, I used in this modification the power supply unit for LED tapes (this amount of power is enough) (~15\$)

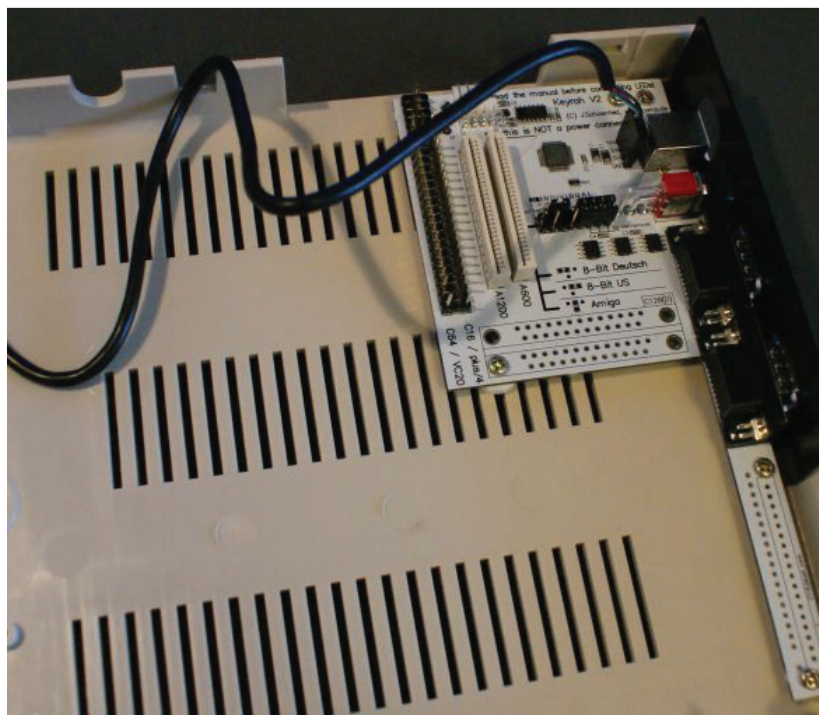
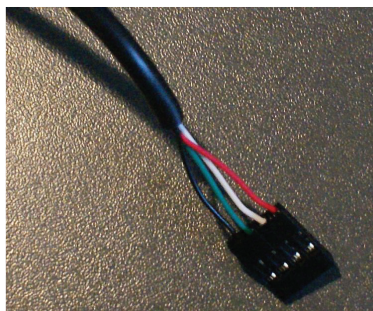
The complete amount is ~270\$. Only new components are the motherboard Nano-ITX and Keyrah interface.



Another step is preparing the USB cable to connect to the Keyrah interface. I made it from an ordinary USB cable. I cut of the cable and soldered the plug to the formerly soldered connector.



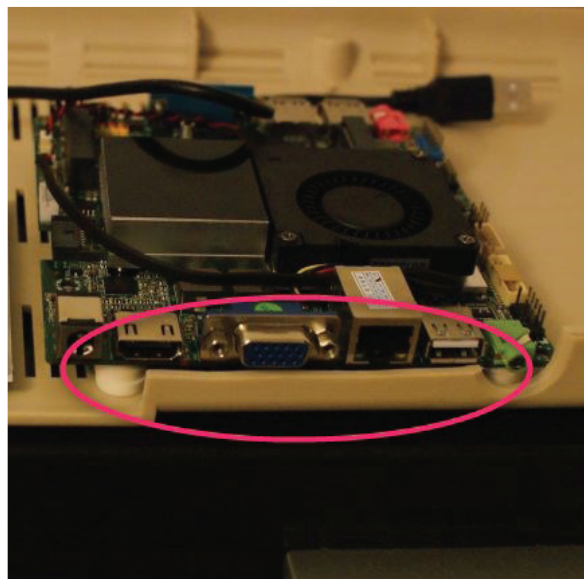
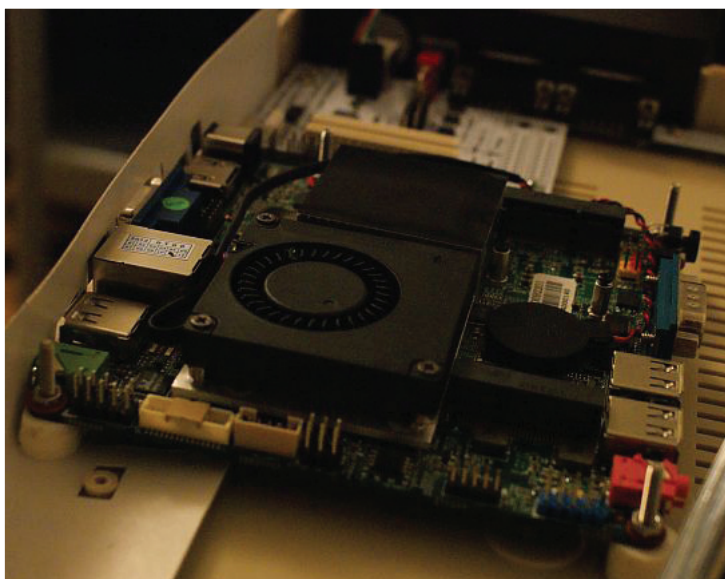
And I connected it to the Keyrah interface.



Quick test – It works!



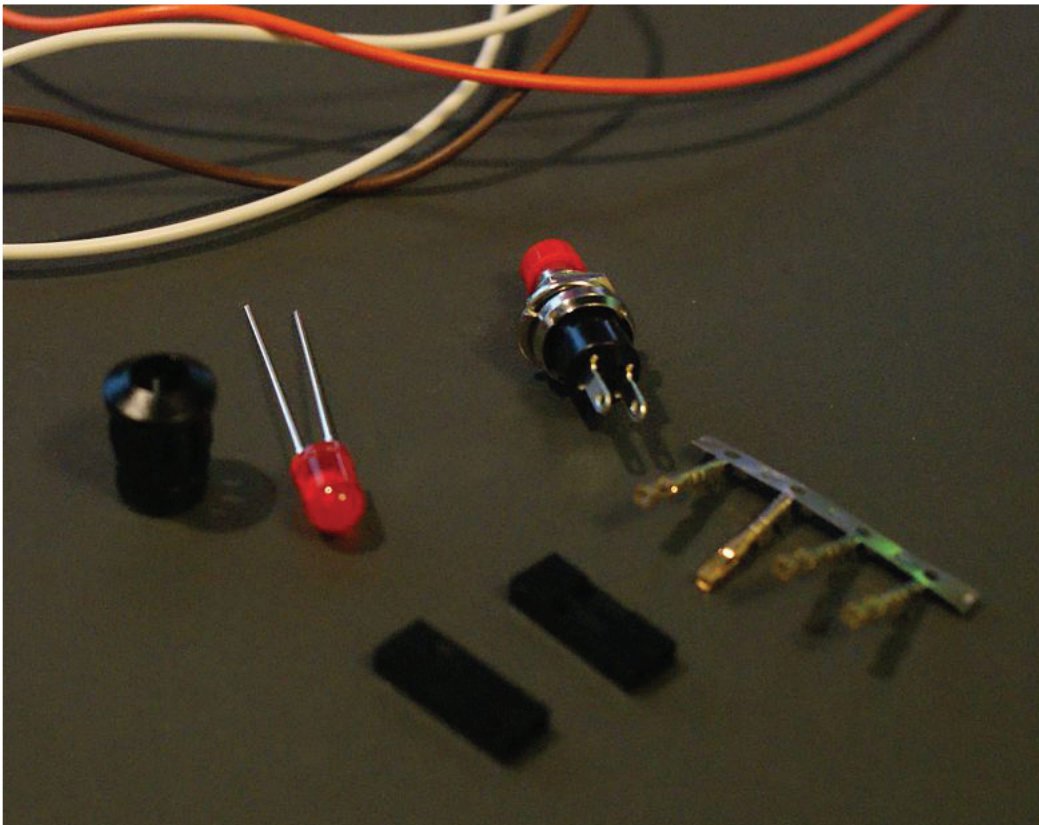
It is the time to place the motherboard in the cover. To create a place for the motherboard connector, we had to cut out the part of the C64 cover. Additionally, I drilled 4 holes with a 3 mm drill. I had to also use gum measures to keep a distance for the motherboard – the place for the SO-DIMM memory and the better cooling of the motherboard.



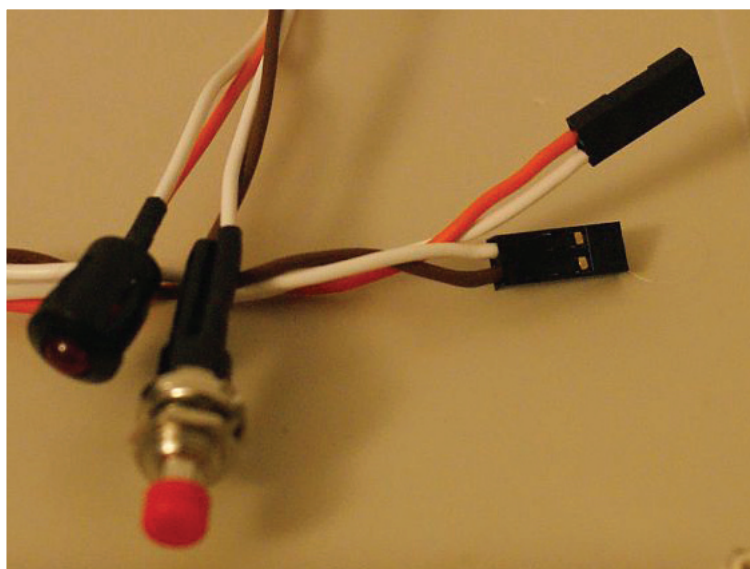
To mask the connectors I used the protecting screen from C64. It is ideal, it is rigid enough, but we can easily make drilling holes. It is the best to use for this purpose the ordinary wallpaper knife.



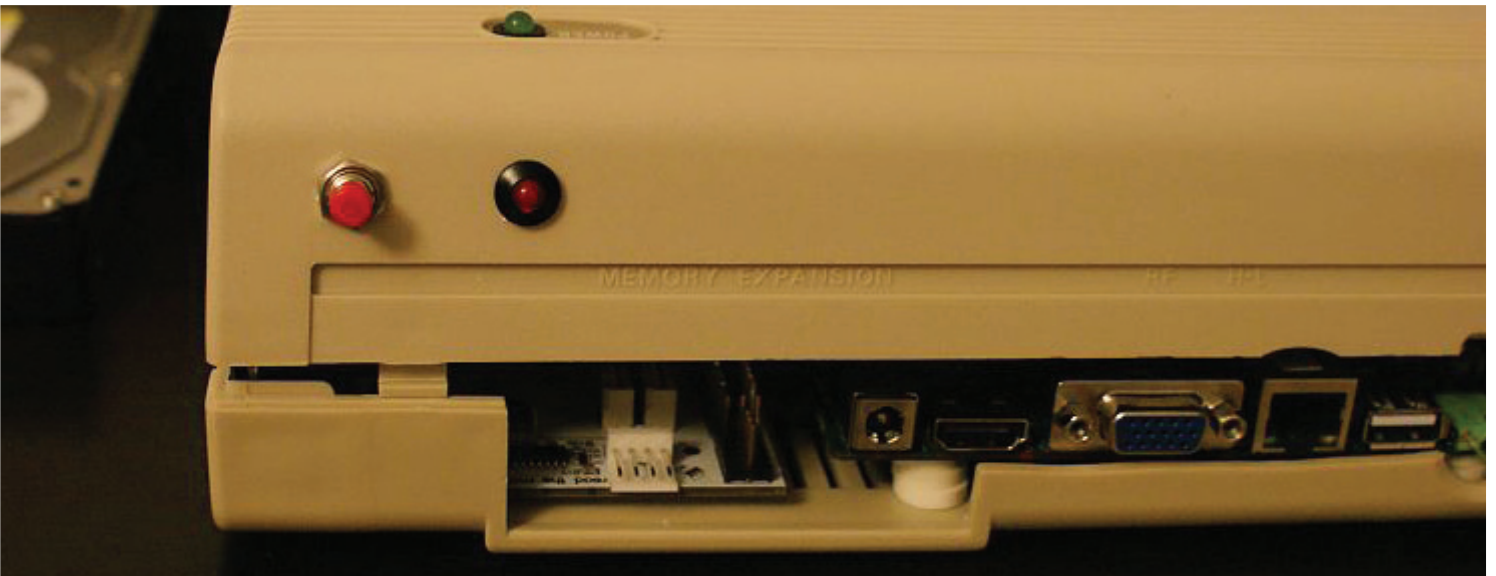
It is the time for the switch and the power diode. To the original C64 diode I connected the HDD activity indicator, that's why I had to add additional diode for the power indicator.



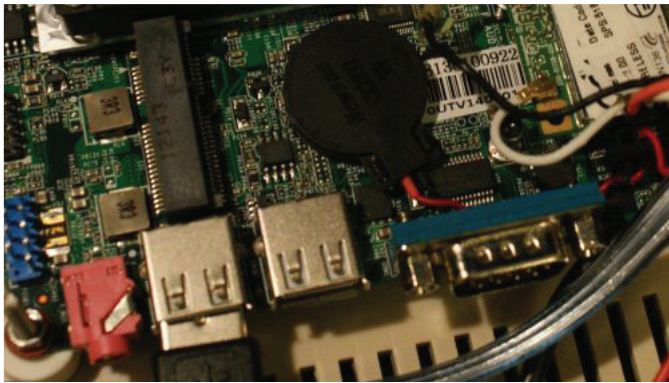
A little bit of work with the soldering iron....



Voila!



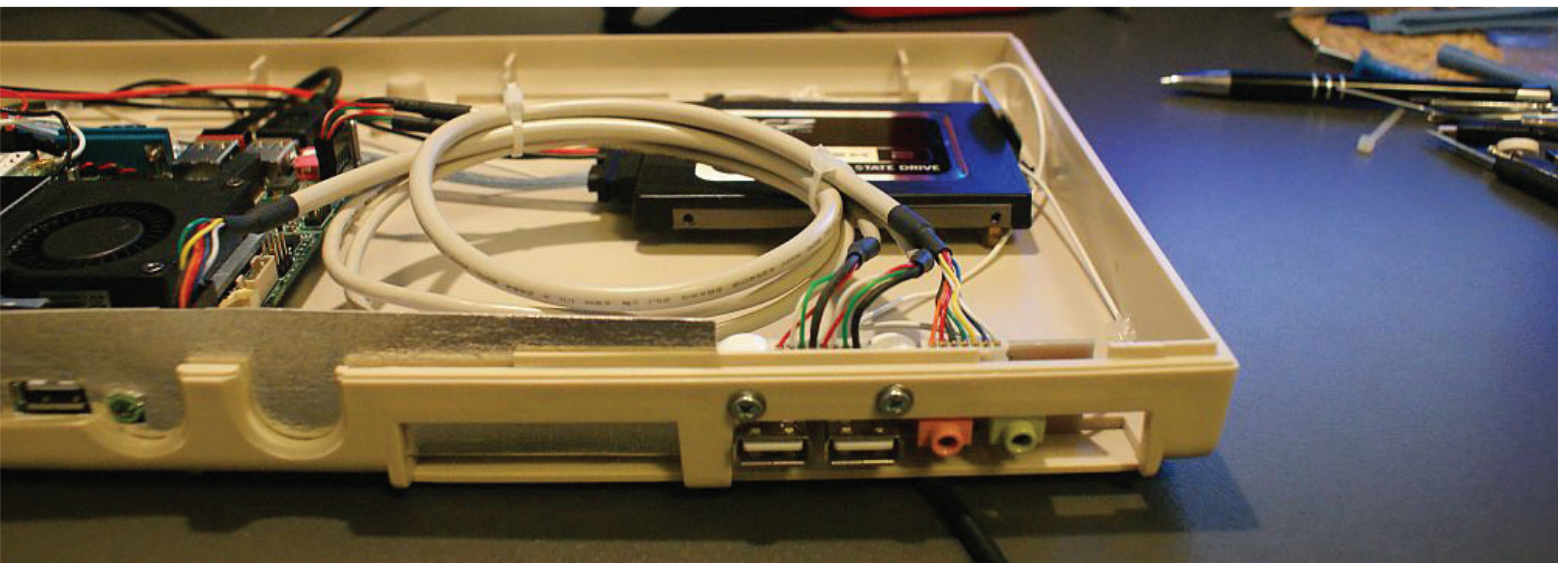
We have almost finished. Let's add the additional USB ports, Wi-fi card on the miniPCI connector.



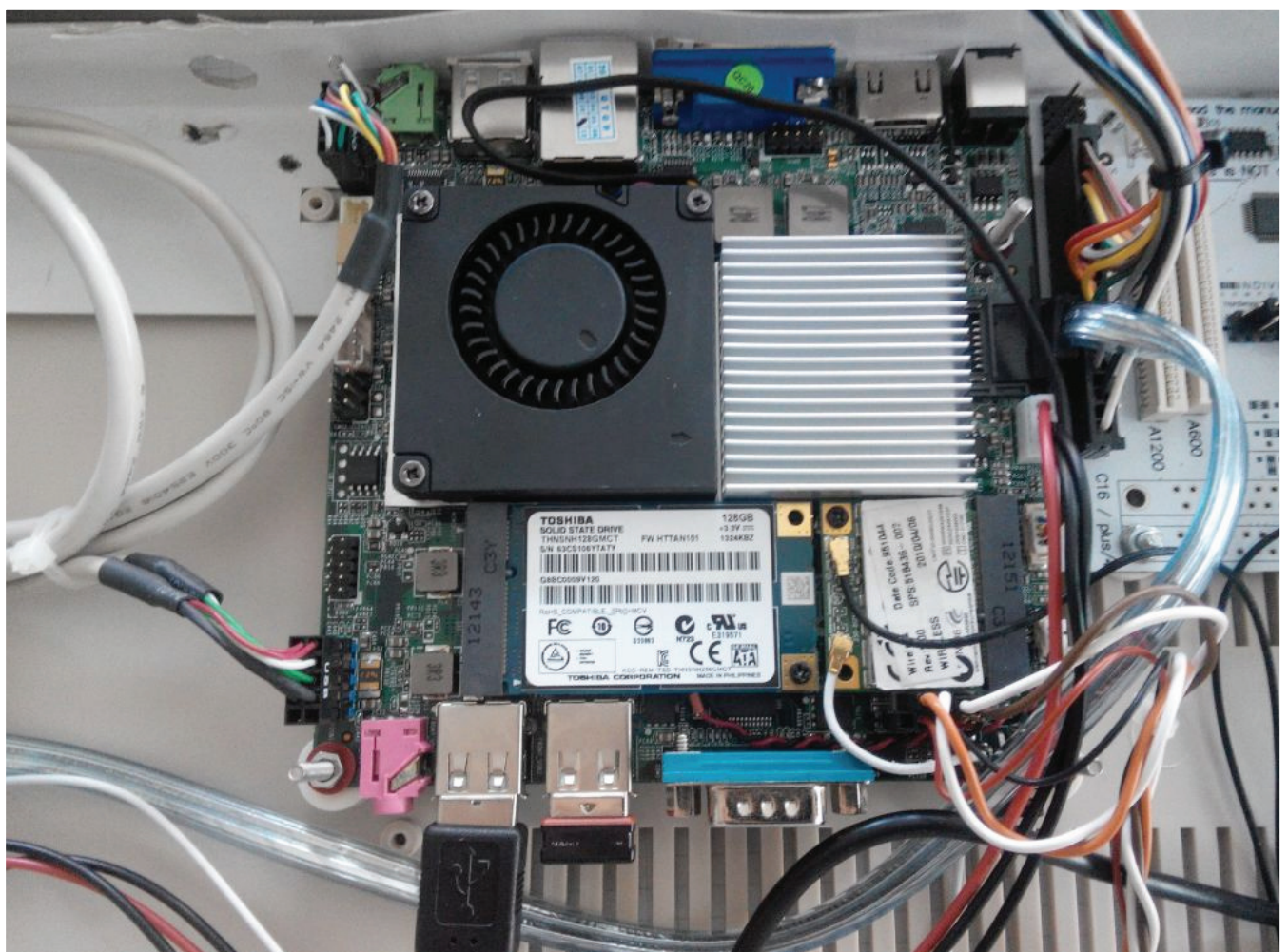
Wi-fi antennae (normal antenna removed from the old laptop)



Additional USB ports



And at last hard drive. Originally I used 2.5" SSD disk, however later I replaced it for the mSATA disk (which at the moment of writing the article are cheaper than the standard SSD SATA drives) – of course nothing stops us from using the ordinary SATA drive together with the mSATA drive.



Finally we achieve the prettiest PC that I have ever seen.



As a summary we can with certainty say that Keyrah in connection with the connected classic joysticks + Vice64 and WinUAE emulators during playing in classic games, give us real retro experiences:)

I managed to buy cheaply the C64 keyboard – brown version – according to my subjective estimation it is much prettier than the white, used for the G version.

As a curious detail, my girlfriend wrote on the modified C64 her Master Degree Thesis. It was nice to see how C64 is used in everyday's work.

Strona projektu: <http://arekneubauer.com/pl/projekty/przerobka-c64-na-pc>

■ *hal*
translated by *Slayerpl*





Lunch

JOHNNY SHOW: LUNCH

How it began? One Day, Arek (Komek) sent me a message on MY SPACE portal and asked "Could You help me with my KOMODA e-zine about Commodore 64?" To be honest I don't like playing video games because It takes too much time, but I had an Amiga once and played in the past. So I wrote that I can share my drawings and they were finally published in KOMODA in the column called "Johnny Show". At the beginning the comics were complemented by my biography. Lately I added some texts. It's very nice that with the passing of time my drawings became an element of the magazine. We decided that "Johnny Show" will be transferred to K&A Plus Magazine. Today I will show You my very small comic from 2014 and picture that I made before finishing the work.

Translation:

She: Is it tasty?

He: So now is it not enough that I eat this?

Jan Lorek

