

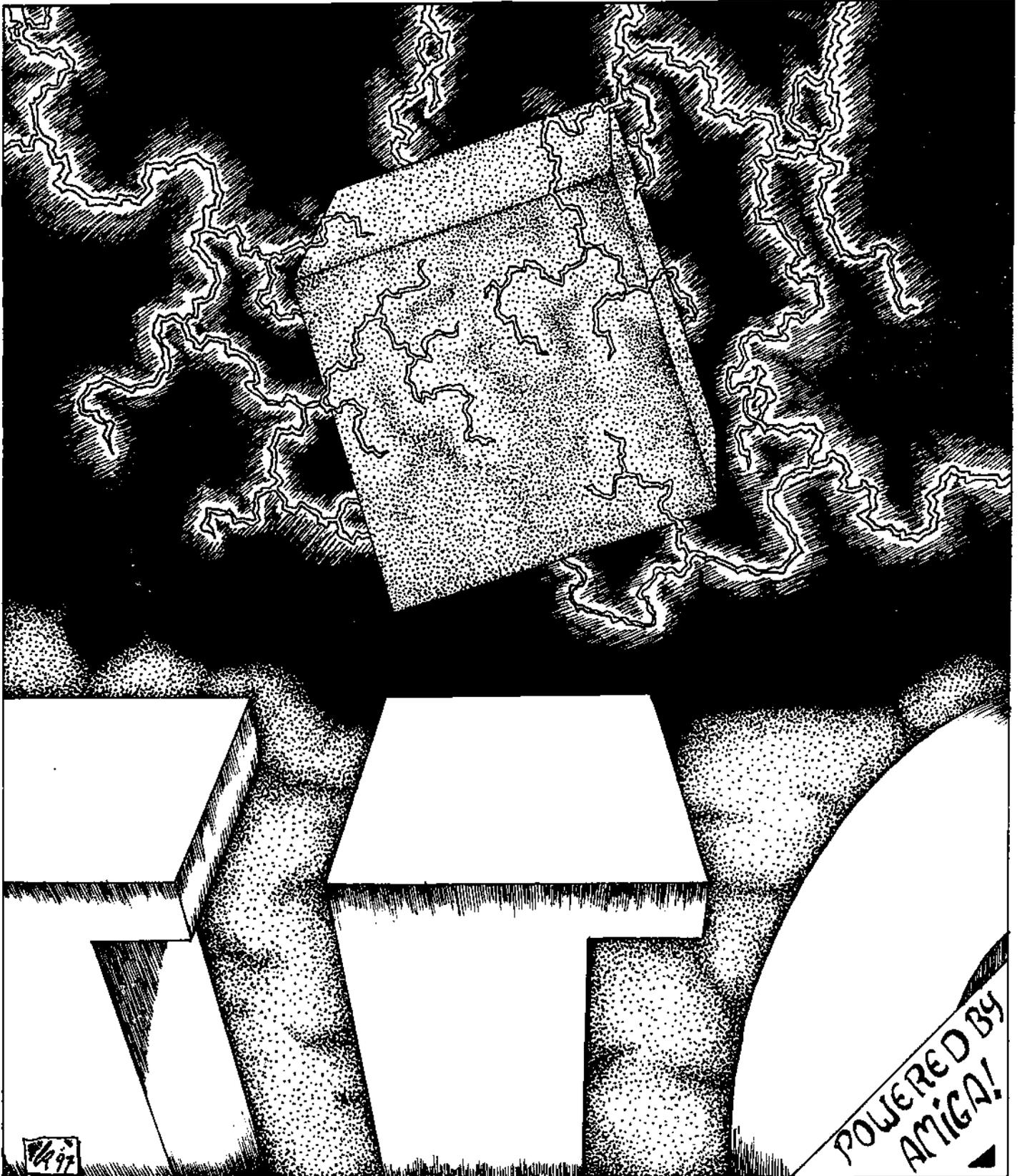
# Australian Amiga

February 97

# Gazette

Issue No 3

rrp \$3



# Who said that there are no *Amiga* dealers left?

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# *Editorial*

# *Dribble*



Personally, it is my belief that the chicken came before the egg. You may argue to the contrary, but such a debate holds no value because we have both the chicken and the egg. If you remove one of the elements from this equation an entire poultry industry would fall into disarray - worse more, your bacon would be lonely on a Sunday morning. The Amiga market exists within such a scenario.

You have most likely heard the saying "necessity is the mother of invention". In 1985 someone needed a computer that was easy to use, multitasked, had good graphics, stereo sound and great games. So the Amiga was created.

The need was met and the crowd rejoiced. The problem was that the designers of the Amiga were driven by inspiration to build the world's most advanced home computer and the accountants were not allowed to help.

The Amiga is unique in that it doesn't have built-in redundancy- it was not designed to become obsolete after a given period of time. The result is that many people who bought a A500, A2000 etc. wayback then, are still happily using it to play games, draw pictures, write letters, etc and it continues to meet their needs.

The PC dominates the market place, not because it meets a need by creating a better system, but because it has created the need by forcing the PC owner to constantly replace their system. Quickly turn to page 29 and have a look at the comic. In comparison to our A500 owner, a PC owner would have replaced their system four times.

Let's have a closer look at the lack of need in Amiga owners. We use a host of programs in preparing AAG; one of which is Dpaint 4. Why not version 5 ? No need, version 4 does everything we need. Let's say I own an A500 with Workbench 1.2 and would like to upgrade the operating system to the latest version. Do I have to replace my computer? No need.

This lack of need by Amiga owners to upgrade is part of the reason why the machine has been orphaned for so long (a company will not invest in a product if a consumer need is not recognised) and why it has endured in the wilderness (my Amiga continues to do all I require- I see no need to change).

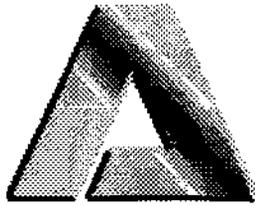
I have heard many opinions as to what would have to take place to germinate a need within the Amiga community.

Perhaps a new cutting edge Amiga to rival the PC, eg the A/box. This would work as long as its not too different from our beloved Amiga.

The Amiga could be refined even further by enhancing the current system, better graphics, sound, etc, eg Viscorp strategy for the A1200 & A4000. This one is closer to the mark.

In today's commercial environment a product's level of success relies greatly on how well it is promoted. It doesn't matter if you sell the world's best corkscrew Ktel could sell more solely because of its promotion. As we all know Commodore never promoted Amiga as it should have and expected the system to promote itself. Microsoft, on the other hand, created such a demand (a need) for its Windows95 package that people were lining up outside Harvey Norman's at midnight to buy it. A few of these people didn't even own a computer.

No matter who owns the Amiga in the future if a need for people to buy it is not generated the Amiga will remain a shadow of its former glory.

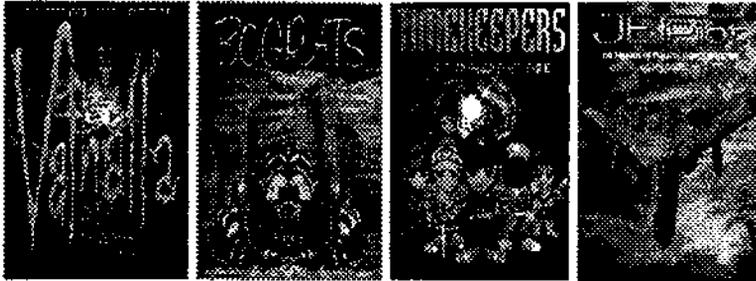


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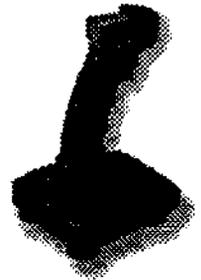
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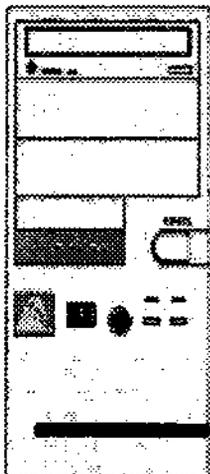
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# NEWS

## MasterISO v1.25 UPDATE

On December 5th 1996 AsimWare Innovations announced the release of MasterISO version 1.25, a maintenance update for the MasterISO V1 package.

MasterISO is the Amiga's only commercial CD authoring and recording system. MasterISO allows the user to control a CD-R recorder to create custom CD-ROM and CD-Audio discs. CD-ROM discs are formatted in the universal ISO 9660 format which is compatible with Amiga, IBM, Macintosh and virtually any other CD-ROM equipped platform.

For CD-Audio discs, MasterISO formats to the Red Book standard which offers universal compatibility with standard CD players.

The previous version of MasterISO supported the following CD-R drives: Yamaha CDR-100, CDR-102; Sony CDU-920; Pinnacle RCD-1000, RCD-202, and RCD-5040; Philips CDD-522, CDD-521 and CDD2000; Pioneer DW-S114X and the HP 4020. The new version of MasterISO incorporates support for the TEAC CD-R50 CD-R drive and the Sony CDU-924 CD-R drive.

Support for Kickstart v2.0-based machines is also included. According to AsimWare, this makes it possible to write to a CD-R disc on a 68000 powered A2000.

## ASIMCDFS V3.7 UPDATE

AsimWare have obviously been busy beavers because on December 6th 1996, AsimWare Innovations also released version 3.7 of its AsimCDFS, CD-ROM control system for SCSI and ATAPI CD-ROM drives.

AsimCDFS allows access to ISO 9660, High Sierra, Rock Ridge and Macintosh HFS CD-ROM formats; it supports CDTV and CD32 emulation, complete with autobooting from CD-ROM discs, and supports Kodak and Corel PhotoCD discs.

AsimCDFS also includes AsimTunes, an audio librarian providing advanced librarian and playback features; support for direct digitizing from standard audio CDs and playing audio via the Amiga hardware. AsimCDFS incorporates full ARexx command set available for all programs.

The upgrade includes support for Amiga protection bits and file comments; support for new CD-ROM drives, including the Plextor 12Plex, Pioneer 10X, Panasonic 506 and TEAC series; improved Raw Sector volume handling, and updated French and German catalogues.

AsimWare's current product line includes AsimCDFS, MasterISO, Texture Heaven 1 & 2, PhotoCD Manager and Audio Thunder. Contact your favourite Amiga dealer for the current price and availability of these and other AsimWare products.

Registered users can obtain either of these updates via AsimWare's BBS, WWW or ftp site:

<ftp://ftp.asimware.com/>

<http://www.asimware.com>

BBS: (905)332-9207

## CINEMA4D V3 UPDATE

Following our review of this ray-tracing package in the January issue, Maxon Computer GmbH and HiSoft have just released version 3. The version includes a number of the features found to be lacking in version 2.1.

Cinema4D now includes improved render times and editing speed; the addition of visible light effects which can be used to create spotlights, floodlights, engine exhaust etc; highly customisable lens flares; improved Inverse Kinematics; and enhanced raytracing dialogs.

Maxon and HiSoft have also released CinemaFont and CinemaWorld, two modules which although sold separately, vastly expand the capabilities of Cinema4D. CinemaFont allows the use of type 1 fonts with Cinema4D screens either as splines or as objects, while CinemaWorld allows the user to create landscapes, mountains, worlds, sub-worlds within a Cinema4D screen. AAG hopes to obtain review copies in the coming months.



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# Amiga News Continued

Upgrades from Cinema4D 2.1 to 3.0 are available. Contact your favourite Amiga dealer for price and availability of these packages.

*HiSoft may be contacted at:  
+44-(0)-1525-718181  
sales@hisoft.co.uk*

## HAAGE & PARTNERS RELEASES

German developers Haage and Partner GmbH have quickly established themselves as one of the most significant Amiga developers in the post-Commodore era, and their commitment to the Amiga and its future were demonstrated by two ground-breaking releases in 1996, StormC++ and ArtEffect. Now Haage and Partner have not only just released significant updates to these programs, but they have also released a new structured drawing program, DrawStudio, which is reputed to be one of the best structured drawing programs on any platform by those who have seen it.

StormC++, the award winning 68k C/C++ compiler for the Amiga, has gone to version 2. StormC now includes a new Profiler which makes speed optimization easier. A second editor has also been included in the package, the shareware editor, GoldED 4.0. StormC also now includes hierarchical projects, external ARexx control, persistent break points, disassembler, CPU register display and stack checking.

Haage and Partner are also working on StormC for the PowerPC and for pOS (see our feature article). The PowerPC port is currently at the beta stage although it should be ready for the

imminent release of Phase5's PowerPC accelerators. Haage and Partner also claim that the port of StormC to pOS will be complete within the next few weeks.

ArtEffect has also undergone a significant update with the release of ArtEffect 1.5. ArtEffect is a 24bit paint and effects package to rival PhotoShop. The latest release includes HAM8 support for AGA Amigas which lacks a graphics card. The previous release, although working in 24bit previewed images were only in 8bit (256 colour) on AGA Amigas. Due to the modular design of ArtEffect, a number of plug-ins have been incorporated into the latest release: MotionBlur, Tile, MakeTile (this module creates a tile that can be used with the module tile to create an endless texture), and ScanQuix (this module calls the external scanner software ScanQuix if it is installed on your computer).

Two modular extension packages for ArtEffect have also been released, AE PowerEffects and AE SuperView. AE PowerEffects adds new effects like PageCuri, Wave, Wobble, Rippie, Polar, Warp, ObjectMorph, Smear, Blur, Prism, Alien, Shift and Lightchange. AE SuperView incorporates 32 new loaders and savers including PhotoCD, IFF-ILBM, IFF-ACBM, IFF-YUVN, IFF-DEEP, IFF-PBM, PCX, GIF 87a/89a, QRT/POV Raytrace, BMP (Windows, DS/2), JPEG (JFIF v6), TIFF, PNG, PNM (PBM, PGM, PPM), IMG, WPG, MacPaint, C64, and PostScript(TM).

DrawStudio 1.1 is a new structured drawing program for the Amiga. DrawStudio allows for the sophisticated combination of

bitmap and vector-based graphics. All vector objects can be filled with a colour, a gradient, a pattern or a bitmap. Graham and Andy Dean of ImageStudio fame are the developers.

Haage & Partner are also reputed to be working on a new Word-processing package which will certainly add an interesting twist to the Wordworth/FinalWriter duopoly. At the time of press, no distributors have been announced for Australia and New Zealand.

Demo versions and patches of StormC 2.0, ArtEffect 1.5 and DrawStudio 1.1 are available on the home page of Haage & Partner.

[http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/Haage\\_Partner](http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/Haage_Partner)

Haage&Partner can be contacted on:

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*Fax: +49 - 6007 - 7543*

*100654.3133@compuserve.com*

## AQCVID AMIGA CAMERA ADAPTER RELEASED

Omnilink Corporation have made their first expedition into the Amiga market with the release in December of the AQCVID, a hardware and software interface which allows Amiga users to connect and use the Connectix Corporation's PC QuickCam(tm) digital camera.

The AQCVID is a parallel port adaptor for the PC version of QuickCam. Power is supplied by the Amiga and there are no modifications needed to be made to the host Amiga or the QuickCam.



At present, the AQCVID supports several file formats (JPEG, IFF, ANIM and CDXL animation formats, AVI, MPEG and Datatypes) and may be used in a number of applications such as desktop publishing, games, multimedia, Internet (home pages, etc.), image processing, family digital picture albums, video-conferencing, etc. The AQCVID also incorporates an ARexx Commodity whereby the QuickCam may be controlled by other applications.

Omnilink intends to add support for other QuickCams and support is tentatively planned for a more recent QuickCam model which has a resolution of up to 640x480 in 24bit colour. At present AQCVID supports only the greyscale QuickCams. Omnilink also hopes to incorporate 16bit audio sampling and playback support for 16bit Amiga audio expansion cards. Also planned is an ImageFX module which will allow direct control of the QuickCam through ImageFX. Omnilink is committed to supporting future developments and advances in the Amiga hardware, including new models.

The AQCVID works with all ECS/AGA Amigas, and includes CyberGraphX support. AQCVID requires 1MB chip RAM or greater, AmigaOS 3.x and a hard-drive. Omnilink state that support for 2.1 is forthcoming.

At the time of press no distributor for the Australiasian region had been announced. Vance Schowalter, Director of Sales at Omnilink told AAG that interested parties should contact him. Until such time as a distributor is announced, Omnilink are happy to take direct orders and enquiries.

Omnilink also invites developers interested in supporting the AQCVID for their software and hardware Amiga applications, as well as interested Amiga users, to contact them at: [omnilink@olnk.com](mailto:omnilink@olnk.com)

Sales or ordering information please send Email to: [sales@olnk.com](mailto:sales@olnk.com)

Other enquiries may be addressed to Vance Schowalter on: [viking@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca](mailto:viking@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca)

**QUIKPAK ANNOUNCES NEW AMIGAS INFORMATION COURTESY OF STEVE COLLINS.** Quikpak, the Leading contenders for the Amiga certainly appear to be living up to their slogan, "Now things are happening with the Amiga" for in December 1996 they announced the release of two new Amiga models.

The A5050 is a 4000 tower with a Pentium CPU card, Zorro, PCI, and ISA slots. A button controls the switching from the Amiga to the PC side. The model displayed at a recent AmigaFest incorporated a LCD monitor which flips out of the side of the tower.

The second model is the A4060L, a luggable 4000 with an attached LCD monitor, keyboard and powered by an 060 processor. From the pictures we've seen the A4060L appears to be marginally smaller than an desk-top A4000 minus the monitor of course.

No announcement has been made about the price or availability of these models in Australia and New Zealand. Contact your local Amiga dealer regarding price and availability. Quikpak may be contacted at:

[QPInfo@ix.nextcom.com](mailto:QPInfo@ix.nextcom.com)  
[Sales@CChannel.com](mailto:Sales@CChannel.com)

## COMMODORE BORN AGAIN

Like a door to door evangelist it seems that the old chicken-head logo refuses to go away. AAG has received an unconfirmed report that the Commodore brand name and logo has been acquired by the Dutch division of Escom.

Apparently, despite the collapse of Escom last year, the Dutch division survived the break-up and is now trading under the Commodore name and logo. Although the Amiga is no longer associated with the old chicken-head logo, it is nonetheless interesting to see what has happened to a once great name in the computer industry. Why anybody would want it now, however, is anyone's guess, although I suppose that I wouldn't want the Escom name either!

## WE'RE THREE!!!

Hooray for us, we're three! After a short but difficult birth, things here at AAG are finally beginning to run smoothly. Thanks to the support and encouragement from you, our readers and fellow Amigans we plan to unveil a number of improvements over the coming months.

*If you have Amiga-related news contact Grant Regan at: [moebius@acay.com.au](mailto:moebius@acay.com.au)*



# Image FX 2.6 Review

by Darren Robertson and Grant Regan

Ever since its release in 1992 ImageFX has consistently grown and developed to become the Amiga's premiere image processing package. ImageFX began as a product of that once illustrious Amiga developer, GVP (Great Valley Products). Sadly, in 1995, the uncertainty and decline in the Amiga market forced GVP to close their doors. (Later, the GVP name and hardware development were purchased by Power Computing of England and M-TEC of Germany who now continue the product line). ImageFX and Cinemorph were salvaged by the development team, headed by Kermit Woodall who founded Nova Design Inc.

## 'PUTA STUFF!'

Unfortunately, for those Amigans running anything less than a 4MB machine, ImageFX is not for you. Nova Design claim that ImageFX will work on any Amiga with AmigaOS 2.04 or higher, 2MB of memory and 7MB of hard-drive space. Yes, ImageFX will run, but who wants to spend just under \$400 Australian dollars on a system kludge? For less powerful Amigas I would recommend a combination of Photogenics 2 and Personal Paint 7: both excellent and powerful packages in their own right.

ImageFX is a powerful resource hungry package. Therefore, my recommended minimum requirements would be AmigaOS 3.0, 6MB of RAM, AGA (or equivalent) and at least a 68030. With the price of RAM so low at the moment my advice is to avail yourselves of the fortuitous circumstances. Even with my A4000/040 which has 10MB of RAM I find myself occasionally

running out of memory. Fortunately, ImageFX comes with a life-saving and very quick Virtual Memory handler to turn your hard-drive into much-needed RAM.

Incidentally, although AGA is fine, when using ImageFX you really begin to crave for a graphics card (Donations anyone?). Lucky Darren is the proud owner of a CyberVision equipped A4000T/060 which has ONLY 140MB of RAM and copious quantities of Virtual RAM drive space (and no, he's not going to donate it you - I've already asked). Of course, ImageFX runs like a dream on this little baby.

## INSTALLATION

ImageFX comes on 5 double density disks. Installation is a long but straight forward process and utilises a variant of Commodore's Standard Installer routine. Once installed, ImageFX consumes approximately 6 to 7MB of your hard-drive. ImageFX allows you to install versions of the program which directly address a variety of graphics cards including of course the Picasso, the Retina, and the CyberVision cards among others. Support for CyberGraphX has been substantially improved under version 2.6.

Recently we have seen more Amiga software released with CD-ROM versions. Nova Design should certainly consider this as an optional release for Image FX.

## WHAT DOES IT DO?

Maybe this question should be rephrased: what doesn't ImageFX do? ImageFX may have a price tag just shy of 400 dollars but with ImageFX you get of lot of image processing power for your money.

Comparing the price to power ratio with similar packages on other platforms, ImageFX 2.6 is a real bargain. ImageFX incorporates the power to modify and manipulate images for just about any purpose: printing, publishing, art, video, animation, web-design, anything that requires serious image manipulation power.

ImageFX also comes with two batch processors, IMP and AutoFX for the automated processing of multiple images. These can be launched separately to ImageFX, or internally through 'Hooks' modules (scripts). AutoFX creates processing scripts without having to be familiar with AREXX.

Just as a point of interest, Darren has discovered that ImageFX can handle images to a maximum of 32,768 by 32,768 pixels (providing you have the memory). ImageFX also provides internal software-based MPEG 1 encoding and playback. This is impressive stuff indeed and a testament to the power of ImageFX.

## INTERFACE

Upon loading the main ImageFX program the user is presented with an interface not too dissimilar to that employed by the paint package Brilliance. A small, clean innocuous bank of buttons and gadgets sit at the bottom of the screen. To the left are the Load, Save, Preference, and Quit buttons, and a distinctive status indicator which informs the user of the progress of a any process



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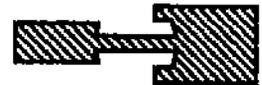
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**[www.pnc.com.au/~mother/AAG.html](http://www.pnc.com.au/~mother/AAG.html)**

underway (such as loading, applying an effect etc). Saving and Loading can be performed through a thumbnail preview screen rather than the usual ASL requesters. However, if memory is at a premium it is advisable not to use this feature.

Next to these are five buttons: Scanner, Palette, Toolbox, Render, and Print. These are the Panel Selectors which control the primary panel.

The Scanner button brings up the controls and preferences for scanners and other external sources of image data. ImageFX 2.6 supports Epson, Hewlett-Packard Scanjet and the Sharp JX-100 scanners; it also supports video frame-grabbing through the Video-Toaster, Digiview, the FrameGrabber, the GVP IV-24, and the VLAB Frame Grabber. The Scanner panel gives the user extensive control over the preferences of these devices.

The Palette button brings up the Palette preferences. Image FX supports the standard RGB (Red, Green, Blue), in addition to CMYK (Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, Black), HSV (Hue, Saturation, Value), YIQ (for NTSC video), and YUV (for PAL video) colour spaces.

With Image FX the user can have up to seven separate palettes of up to 256 colours. Colour adjustment is performed with sliding gadgets or inputting direct numerical values. Both systems are somewhat primitive by today's standards of palette control.

The third button controls the Toolbox which contains the drawing tools and the effects modules. Along the top are the palette and a standard set of drawing and editing tools. Double clicking on these icons opens a

menu to edit their functions and parameters. ImageFX provides a number of so-called 'traditional media' drawing tools such as crayon-like effects.

Beneath the Drawing tools are an array of buttons which are the true heart of ImageFX: they control image manipulation and the application of effects. To describe their functions in detail would take a review the size of ImageFX's manual. Clicking on any of these buttons will bring up a button bar with further options.

The Buffer, Brushes, Alpha, Size, Balance, and Filter buttons on the ImageFX Toolbox provide the controls for multiple image and brush buffers; custom brushes; alpha channels for the merging of images; size, scaling and cropping control of images and brushes; colour controls for fine-tuning an image or brush; and a filter control for fine-tuning an image's quality or appearance.

The 'Gee-whiz' effects are contained in the Effects, Displace, Transform, Convolve, and Color button menus. The Effects button allows the user to apply effects such as Oilpaint, Lensflare, RadialStar, Sparkle, Fire, Apply Texture, Crystallize, and Lightning to name just a few. The Displace button provides the controls for distorting an image. It includes effects such as Spherize, Liquid (distorts the image in waves), Swirl and Mosaic. Transform controls the rotation of the image in 2 and 3 dimensions. The Convolve button includes Sharpen, Mask, Gaussian Blur, and Motion Blur. Finally, the Color button includes Negative, Solarize, Posterize, Grey to Color, Antique among other effects.

The Hooks and AREXX modules are also loaded from this panel.

Hooks are modular 'add-on' scripts from launching external programs or providing increased power and functionality to ImageFX.

The Render button which is under the Toolbox button provides the controls for adjusting the image output to the appropriate display device such as AGA or a graphics card. The Render panel also creates images to be displayed on other machines such as PCs, Macintosh, and workstations.

The Print button is the last button. This provides the printer controls and preferences. ImageFX supports 24 bit image printing through a number of printer makes.

#### **WHAT'S NEW IN 2.6?**

Plenty. ImageFX now includes improved CyberGraphX support which now allows the incorporated Cinemorph morphing software to support 24 bit output. Additionally, the improved CyberGraphX now allows for 24 bit brushes in ALL paint modes.

Fargo FotoFun printers are now supported and the Printer module has been improved substantially with the new SuperPrefs Printer Module.

The Lightning module is updated and is mightily impressive. Also the new effects modules in 2.6 are Bubble (a 3D bubble effect), Colour Balancing, Film Grain effect, Fire, Gaussian Blur, Liquid (Image Distortion), Remove Grain, and Sparkle effect. All these effects work brilliantly and for sheer quality of effect you can't beat ImageFX.



## GRUMBLES

Despite its power ImageFX does include a number of flaws and quirks. The speed of operation is probably the number one complaint. ImageFX can be slow loading a file or applying an effect, much slower than similar packages.

For this reason also, ImageFX should not be relied upon as a true drawing program. Extensive use of the drawing tools is not recommended as they are suitable only for minor alterations to an image, image cropping, or applying a localised effect. ImageFX's strength lies in image manipulation and processing.

Another complaint is with the general approach taken to the application of an effect to an image or brush. The preview of the image is often too small to be of any use in applying and previewing effects. (ImageFX does support multiple levels of UNDO fortunately). The previews need to be larger and the effect should be altered in real-time, that is, as the parameters are being adjusted.

The interface, although logical can be clumsy and some people may not like its non-Amiga style compliant approach. Swapping tool panels for every function can

be frustrating and the custom cycle gadgets are cumbersome: often they take two or more clicks on the mouse button to work.

The magnification support is poor. The interface includes two clumsy zoom gadgets which simply zoom in at the centre of the image. You can't select an area to zoom in on. This is a glaring oversight in such a package.

ImageFX supports a vast array of image-file-types including ALIAS, GRASP/DL and Rendition among the more popular file-types. Unfortunately, with UNYSIS now charging for commercial use of the GIF file-type, ImageFX 2.6 has lost internal support for this popular file-type. Still, the GIF file-type is available from Nova Design directly at no further cost.

## THE WORDY BIT

At approximately 500 pages, ImageFX's manual is impressive and comprehensive. Unfortunately, the quality of the printing is not up to standard for a package of this calibre. The pages of this manual have the appearance of having been produced on a good-quality photocopier and the images which are meant to demonstrate an effect in action are often grainy and indecipherable. Moreover, the addendum to the versions

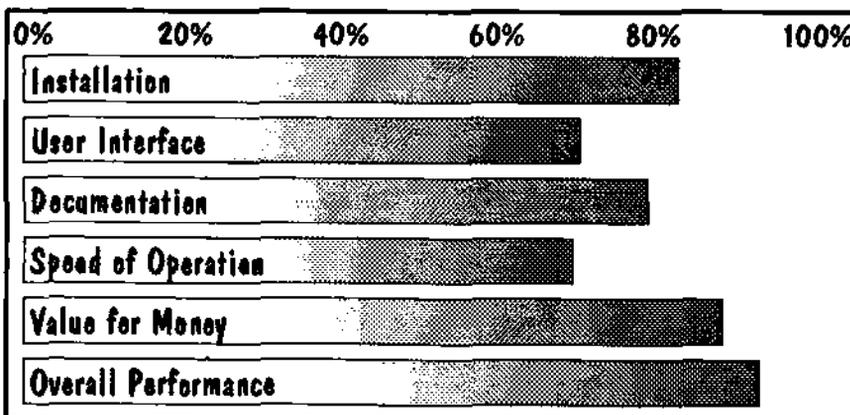
following release 2.0 come in a woeful, flimsy paper-bound supplement.

These gripes aside, ImageFX's manual is virtually flawless in its detail, its comprehensiveness, and its intelligibility. The language is clear, concise and often entertaining. The manual is divided into a 'Quickstart' section and the more comprehensive 'Program Reference'.

## THAT'S ALL FOLKS!

ImageFX is without doubt the flagship image-processing package on the Amiga, despite a number of flaws and idiosyncrasies. As ASDG's Art Department Professional has been acquired by MacroSystems of DraCo fame we may see the re-emergence of its old-time rival on the Amiga. ImageFX has stood the test of time, and is supported and updated regularly by a very proactive Amiga developer.

ImageFX is an indispensable tool for the serious and professional graphician as it excels at what it does, which is virtually everything! Considering its power, ImageFX represents value for money although its considerable recourse requirements may prevent it from being everyone's choice of image-processor.



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# Dear AAG

Dear AAG

I have received both issues of your mag and think it's great. I really like the Connect to the Internet article and would like to see more from that great writer.

Anonymous

*Dear Anonymus*

*Thank you for the email and I am glad that you like the magazine. Yes Michael Gruber our internet writer puts a lot of work in his articles. By the way you wouldn't happen to be his mum ?*

Ed

G'day

Just a short note to say what a great magazine. I am spreading the word as much as possible. Most Amiga owners are glad to have a local magazine they can call their own.

Keep it up. I look forward to the next issue. Can you please update your user group listing with the following.

Mutual Amiga Computer Enthusiast (MACE) meets 1st & 3rd Wednesdays each month Beresfield Bowling Club 7:30pm Contact Ken Woodward on kenw@compsys.com.au or 59 Carnley Avenue, New Lambton 2305. All Welcome.

Thankyou.  
Ken Woodward.

Hi Ken

*Thanks for the encouragement. Things are going well here at AAG headquarters and with each issue comes new improvements. Thanks for spreading the word. With everyones help and a heap of work we hope to see AAG available in newagents in a few months. We will update your user group details.*

Ed

Hello AAG

I do not live in a cosmopolitan area or in a very well developed city. I do not belong to a user group although I could definitely start one as there are 7 Amiga users that I know of in my town, as well as many of my friends who also think highly of the Amiga.

Also unfortunately due to South African ignorance and very small and very limited knowledge of computers they are suckers for salesman, and if you tell them that you are getting a pentium and 8 speed cd rom and 3d this and 3d that, they will buy it, even though they don't know what the heck the salesman is saying. The Amiga used to be popular a few years back but I do not know about the situation now. I personally know of about 20 other Amiga users in South Africa.

I also only know of 4 Amiga dealers in South Africa and the main Amiga dealer is called Mikrolab Systems, in

Johannesburg which are the official AT and Phase 5 dealers for South Africa.

I do not know of any Amiga dealers in my region, but I also do not travel anywhere in my region so I wouldn't know.

The Amiga at the moment is not too good in South Africa. There are few of us around. But fortunately the S.A. population is, how do I say,..... Stupid!!!

I am positive that all you need to do is have a small advertising campaign and advertise properly and you will sell hundreds of them. That is what the South African computer market is like. I also know of quite a few companies that will be switching to selling the A/box. This is going to really kill the pc market here. People are already asking about it over here. So all we have to do is wait and see.

Best wishes  
Paul Andrews

*Hi Paul*

*Thanks for letting us know the Amiga situation in South Africa. It is always interesting to hear about Amiga users in other countries. Yes the A/box should stir up the PC market a fair bit, as long as the A/Box isn't too different from the Amiga we all know I'll be happy.*

Ed



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# FTPS, IRCS AND YOU

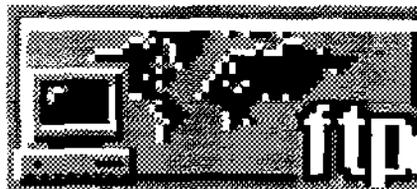
BY MICHAEL GRUBER

Last issue we showed you how to install some software on your Amiga to connect you to the Internet. I hope the installation went OK and that you're now "Surfing the 'Net". If you did have any problems just write in to AAG and we'll see what we can do.

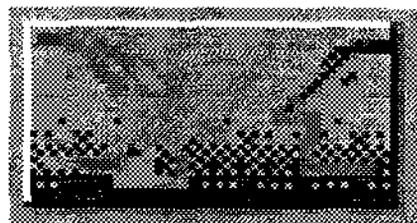
If everything did go OK, then you should have your TCP/IP, web browser and email program running nice and smoothly.

This month I'm here to help you install two more programs.

The first one is an FTP (File Transfer Protocol) program. An FTP program allows you to upload or download programs easier. The archive file is called



"AmFTP165.lha" which is version 1.65 of AmFTP. It is 298 kilobytes in size. The other, an IRC (which stands for Internet Relay Chat) program, allows you to log on to chat groups so that you can talk to other Internet users via your computer. The method of communication is text based, so you type what you want to say and read the output from others. We'll be using version 1.1 of AmIRC for this and its archive file



is called "AmIRC11.lha".

It is 836kb in size. Again I'll try to walk you through the whole process as simply as possible. This time I won't bother with the step numbering though.

I'm going to assume you all know how to unarchive programs and use the Amiga Installer program. First thing I want you to do is install version 40.16 of "Setpatch" into your "C:" directory as it fixes some bugs which AmFTP will encounter.

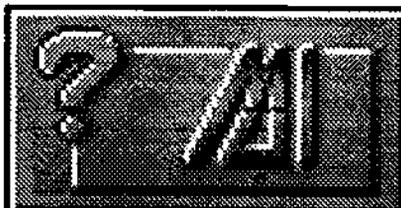
Then unarchive AmFTP to a temporary directory. Those who have two or more megabytes of free RAM can use their Ram drives (RAM:T) to unarchive the program, else you can use the T: directory on your harddrive. From Workbench open the drawer which you unarchived the program into.

If you don't see the directory in the window you opened, move your mouse to the top of your workbench window and hold down the right mouse button. A menu bar will appear. While still holding down the right mouse button move the mouse to the word "window". This will display a menu list below "window". Still holding down the right mouse button move it to the word "Show". This will display a sub-menu. From this select "All Files". Workbench will now display all the files and drawers in the window you opened, even those without icons. Locate the "AmFTP" drawer and click the icon to open its drawer. In the AmFTP drawer double click the "Install\_AmFTP" icon. Click the "Proceed" button until the installer asks you to select a drawer. At this point locate the "INTERNET" directory we created

last issue and select that. Or for those who missed it, create a draw which you want to keep all your Internet programs in (but you will need to have a TCP/IP program installed to run these programs, we installed Miami last month). We suggested one called "INTERNET" and select that one. Next the Installer verifies with you that the processor it found on your system is correct. If your machine has no accelerator card then it's a 68000 (with the exception of the Amiga 1200, it uses a 68020). If it does have an accelerator then consult your accelerator card owner's manual to find out which processor it is. Once you have confirmed this, click "Proceed". Next the installer will give you a selection of icons to choose from to replace those you saw when you unarchived AmFTP. At this point my machine kept crashing when I said "Yes", but it worked OK on my friend's machine. "Yes" will give you a choice of three sets of icons for the AmFTP programs and display them using Multiview. If you have troubles at this point (i.e. crashing), select "No" and click proceed. Continue to select "Proceed" until you reach the end of the installation. Note: AmFTP will not run unless your TCP/IP program is running in the background. The documentation provided is well laid out and explains every function clearly. I urge you to read this before running AmFTP. Now we'll install your IRC program. Again decide



where you want to unarchive AmIRC, either to RAM or a temporary directory on your harddrive. Once AmIRC has been extracted from the archive open the AMIRC11 draw and click the "Install\_AmIRC" icon. "Proceed" through the AmIRC install and you'll find that it too checks your processor. Verify it and continue. Keep "proceeding" and you'll find that AmIRC will ask you about sounds. This is because AmIRC has the ability to trigger samples when different actions occur. This allows you to keep track of several activities by listening. "Proceed" to the end and you're done. Now it's all installed. All you have to do is activate your TCP/IP program (Miami) and activate your FTP or IRC program. As I mentioned last month, the Amiga's ability to run multiple programs makes it ideal for the Internet, its only limitation being memory. But how much do you need? Basic connection to the Internet will require that you have



MUI (Magic User Interface) and your TCP/IP program (Miami) running. On a fairly stock system this will take about 300 kb of Chip RAM and 1.5 megabytes of Fast RAM. Now you're connected but have yet to run any programs which allow you to interact with the Internet. Programs like browsers, emailers, FTP or IRCs. I'll give you a quick rundown of memory usage regarding the programs we have installed. Running MUI, Miami and Voyager (your web browser) will use about 320 kb of Chip RAM and 2.25 megabytes of Fast RAM.

MUI, Miami and YAM (the email program) take about 310 kb of Chip RAM and 2.2 megabytes of Fast RAM. MUI, Miami and AmFTP (the file transfer program) use about 320 kb of Chip RAM and 2.2 megabytes of Fast RAM. MUI, Miami and AmIRC (your chat program) use about 320 kb of Chip RAM and 2.2 megabytes of Fast RAM. As you can see, running each of your Internet programs one at a time requires less than half a megabyte of Chip RAM but about two and half megabytes of Fast RAM. If you run all the programs at once, that is MUI, Miami, Voyager, YAM, AmFTP and AmIRC then this will use about 550 kb of Chip RAM and four megabytes of Fast RAM. All these figures are while the programs are running but not actively being used. If you do try running all these programs at once you will find that your Workbench screen will become very cluttered.

Unless your Amiga has a graphics card (which will allow you to use very high screen resolutions) the "PAL: High Res Laced" screen mode is best utilised with only one or two of your Internet programs, thus keeping the number of windows on your Workbench screen to a minimum. One final note in regards to memory usage. Browsing web pages can be graphically intensive. On the Amiga, graphics and Workbench windows are displayed using Chip RAM. The more Chip RAM you have, the more graphics and windows you can display. If you only have one megabyte of Chip RAM then reduce the number of windows running on your machine. There are two ways you can do this. Either close those programs you're not using which create windows. Or if the program is MUI compatible then you can iconify it. To do this click on the button which is located at the top

right corner of the program's window. This will open a small menu. Select "Iconify" and the program's window is replaced with an icon. This frees up the memory used by the program but doesn't close the program. In fact it's still running in the background. To open the program's window again, just double click its icon. Those of you with two megabytes of Chip RAM won't have as many memory problems, but it's a good idea to conserve your Chip RAM just the same. And you people with graphics cards, well the rest of us will just envy you. I ask you again to read the guides provided with the programs as they explain their use in detail. This will be a continuing project. We'll continue to install other software for use on the Internet and keep you updated with any changes made to the current ones. I'll also inform you of ways to customise this software to get the most out of it. If you have any questions regarding this project or about the Internet in general, contact AAG via snail mail or me by Email;

Michael Gruber  
[michaelg@dot.net.au](mailto:michaelg@dot.net.au)



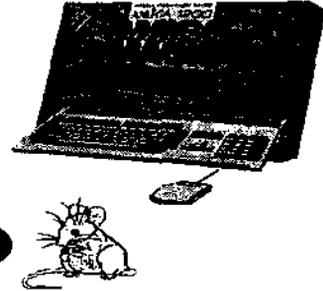
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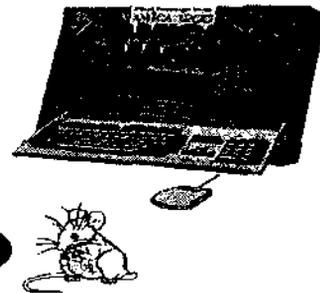
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# DISCOVERING REAL3D CLASSIC

by Geoff Milnes

## Some Conventions

Commence drawing object - ONE LMB Click and let go  
Complete drawing object - ONE LMB Click and let go

Cancel drawing an object - RMB click  
Menu Access - RMB

Don't forget to save all your projects as you go along and use PROJECTS/ANIMATIONS/SAVE even though it may not be an animation. If you save as an object, you won't get any colours or materials you may have attached, just the object itself.

Hierarchical directory type structure allows larger objects to be composed of many smaller ones - think of it akin to the drawers on Workbench.

complete the drawing. Again press the 'n' key and rename the cylinder TOP RING. The cylinder you have drawn needs to be only about 1/4 inch (5mm approx. for the modernists amongst us) thick so LMB click in the top left window (top view) to activate it and press the 'g' key.

'FIX A POINT' will now appear in the menu bar and this is to set the sizing point for stretching the object. LMB in the centre of the top line of the cylinder, hold down the Right Amiga key (RA) which limits the mouse movement to vertical only, and shrink the front view of the cylinder until it is about 1/4 inch thick. Now press the 'm' key, LMB click and move the TOP RING down until it is central in the window.

Press the 'c' key to create a copy (TOP RING1) and rename this CUTTER. You won't be able to see this object straight away as it is directly over the first object - leave it there for the moment. With CUTTER selected (highlighted in white in the selection window bottom right) press the 'g' key again, LMB click in the centre of the top line exactly as you did last time and stretch the second object until it is twice

Amiga owners these days are more likely to have accelerated machines even if this is only a standard RAM expansion (which is capable of around doubling the speed of an out of the box machine) but even so, I have limited myself to describing operations which are not particularly complex. The reason for this is rendering time. If you have an 030 or greater, you will be able to carry out the routines far more quickly than a standard Amiga can but I also have to bear in mind that not everyone can wait 36 hours or so for a 180 frame animation to render. So, if you are the proud owner of an 060 you will be able to add more detail to the following project. Let your mind run riot!

I have been using 3d renders for video work for some five years now on machines from a humble A500 to my current A1200 030 FPU (and hopefully in 1997 - an A/BOX - what a machine eh!) and the hardest part of an animation is in the original idea. Once you have your idea, you will be able to find a way to carry it out - honest!

Right, down to brass tacks.

LMB click on the button OBJ - press the 'n' key and rename the 'obj' as RINGS. Click on the CYLINDER tool (second row down - fourth from left), LMB click in the centre of the top view window (bottom left window) and draw what appears to be a circle so that it's size nearly fills the window. LMB click again to



as thick as the first and LMB click to complete and position the rings

Now LMB click in the top view window (bottom left) and you need to find the exact centre of the top view of the cylinder (a tip here is to follow the grid line left across from the top of the cylinder until it meets the grid line which goes down and touches the left hand side, click and hold down the LMB at this grid 'corner' and drag a box to just cover the cylinder. When you let go the LMB a little cross will appear and be in the exact centre of the cylinder).

Press the 's' key (to size) and LMB click on the little cross in the centre of the cylinder to select the sizing point - now LMB click again and holding down the R ALT key (limits mouse movement to horizontal) and size the second cylinder until it is slightly smaller than the first one (about 5mm again) and LMB click again.

Make sure the CUTTER is selected and go to the MODIFY/OPERATIONS menu and select AND NOT - then LMB click on TOP RING in the select window and click OK. This will use the selected object (CUTTER) as a tool to cut another object in this case the TOP RING. Make sure the cutter is selected and press the 'd' key which will delete the CUTTER - select menu item EXTRAS/REPRESENTATION/RETHINK which will re-draw the objects on screen and remove most of the CUTTER.

If you wish to see what has happened, go to Wireframe, use the positioner block to move the object for a view which shows other than a side view, LMB click REC and go to the render screen. Leave all the settings as they are and click render. This should

show you a ring instead of the cylinder.

Return to the editor, activate the front view, press 'a' key, LMB click on the top right hand corner of the TOP RING, move your cursor to the left hand side of the ring, LMB click again and move the left hand side of the TOP RING upwards to an angle of about 45 degrees.

Having got the ring into the correct position, if we copy ('c' key) the first ring, rename it BOTTOM RING we can now position this one easily by pressing the 'h' key (HIERARCHY/MIRROR) and drawing a line horizontally just touching the bottom RH corner of the ring (use the R ALT key to limit movement) and when you click your mouse button to complete the line, the BOTTOM RING will be a mirror image of the TOP RING.

If you wish to re-render again to check, please do so at any time (it's up to you - you're in charge!).

LMB click on the title bar of the select window to go back to the root and LMB click OBJ. Rename object as BASE, select and draw a rectangle in the top view window so that it completely covers the rings. Check for position in the top and side views (the bottom of the BOTTOM RING should just be sat on it) and should it require moving, press the 'm' key and move to the required position.

For a fairly simple result, make sure the rectangle is selected, press the 'f' key and select a colour from the PALETTE menu. When you have your selected colour, LMB click in any view window to accept it.

Select the RINGS and do the same with these (you can use the

RINGS object to change the colour of both TOP and BOTTOM RINGS at the same time) using a different colour.

Re-render to make sure your colours have been accepted. Now, in the editor window, go to the PROJECT/ANIMATION/SIZE and in the requester, enter 50 frames and click OK.

Without selecting an operation, LMB click and hold down to draw a box around the top view of the RINGS just touching the sides which will place the little cross in the exact centre. In the select window, make sure RINGS is selected and using the menu, select PROJECT/ANIMATION/ROTATION and in the resulting requester accept the defaults by clicking OK. After a short pause, the screen should refresh leaving it looking exactly as before.

Press the SHIFT key and 'P' which will animate the objects on the edit window. You can also see this on the wireframe screen by clicking PLAY. It doesn't look much in either the edit or wireframe screens but will look totally different when rendered as an animation. Stand by to be amazed!

Move to the Render screen and select LAMPLESS - de-select SINGLE by LMB clicking on the button and at the top right, LMB click by the side of the words NAME root to place a cursor. Delete the word root and replace it with a complete path name to where you would like to save the animation



just use them to make the animation.

Then in the next requester, enter the full pathname of the pictures as saved from Real 3d but without the frame number at the end. You will be then asked for the first picture number which should be zero and then the last picture number being 49. After you have entered the last number the software will begin to convert all the pictures into Anim5 format for replay in DPaint or Scala etc. Once complete, click on ALL DONE in the requester (not OK otherwise it will start to convert again) and you can view your animation in all it's glory.

quit Delta Convert otherwise the conversion is not complete and you won't be able to find your animation to load into a player.

That's it for this time, folks - perhaps in the near future I will show you the easy way to tackle orbits for animation and how to make more complex objects at the click of a couple of left mouse buttons (or even two clicks on the SAME mouse button).

Geoff Milnes.  
Huddersfield - England. 18th  
January 1997.  
e-mail  
geoff  
<http://www.geemil.demon.co.uk>

Don't forget to click ALL DONE to

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**Next Month**

plot fly-bys or drive-throughs of a VistaPro landscape. GeoMorph is another tool for VistaPro that allows the user to project and analyse Land form changes, and erosion effects on the landscape. Terraform is a visual DEM file editor. DEM stands for Digital Elevation Mapping. It was originally devised by the US Government for storing Satellite landscape Imagery. It uses colour to show changes in altitude. Terraform allows you to paint in a pseudo 3D, X and Y being the limits of the file and the Z being the intensity of the colour.

Another program that Clint has been writing for a while now is GeoForge. This will be a grand daddy of a utility for VistaPro. It is a Planetary Fractal editor and designer-basically the Genesis project from Star Trek on your Amiga.

Clint has given me a rough schedule and package details. The upgrade kit for anyone with VistaPro or VistaLite is to VistaPro 4 plus Makepath, TerraForm, GeoMorph and about 3500 landscape files. This will only cost \$39.95US for the floppy version and \$49.95US for the CD-Rom. The expected arrival date for VistaPro 4 has slipped back a couple of months due to financial juggling. It is still due before June. Further information can be obtained by reading through the details on the Chaocity Web Pages. WWW.CHAOCITY.COM (It contains sections for questions and answers, tech support and a contact e-mail address). If anyone

wants to show their support for a long standing Amiga developer, it might be an idea to send a short message to Clint to encourage him to keep producing great software for the Amiga. For people who have never used VistaPro, have a look at the Aminet CDs or Aminet Site-these contain some fantastic rendered scenery. The price for new purchasers of the CD set is approximately \$180US, which is less than what I paid for VistaPro 3 four years ago. It also includes the extremely powerful add-ons at no extra charge.

VistaPro 3 is available now in the same sort of configuration, so buy that now and upgrade in 2-4 months. The biggest advantages for VistaPro 4 are for people with 24bit Graphic cards as there will be direct support for most of them. The other new features that are in VistaPro 4 are reflective water surfaces on lakes, stratified cliffs and some improved clouds and trees, (with possibly new types of trees if he can come up with some that look good).

One famous person who has been hooked on VistaPro for a long time now, is Arthur C Clarke. He started out using VistaPro on a small Amiga and got hooked into the virtual realms he could create. A book that he is currently close to completing is a science fiction novel called the Greening of Mars. This whole storyline came from Arthur C Clarke deciding to see what the Mons Olympus DEM file from VistaPro would look like in blues and greens rather than the red dust of Mars.

Just to show how involved in the computer industry Clint is, Clint and one of his brothers formed VRLI. I have also noticed that another brother does the Web Mastering for the Chaocity site.

Clint also plans to complete an upgrade for Distant Suns some time into the future. I know a few people who have used it on both PC and Amiga and say that it is great. It's probably as good as stars as VistaPro is at landscapes. As I don't plan to travel to the stars I have never really looked at the program. GeoForge sounds more along my line of thinking, World Domination all to myself and I don't have to answer to anyone about the way it looks.

I haven't heard of a confirmed month for GeoForge to be released. It is a way off yet, but maybe with some e-mail sent to him, Clint may find some more time in his Chaos.

As for the future, Clint will develop for the Power Amiga if he can afford one. He is waiting, just like the rest of us, to see what the future of Amiga will be.



# AMIGA and VIDEO PART 2

By Paul Graham

Hello video makers and welcome to part 2 of AMIGA and VIDEO. This month we will be putting a title or graphic onto video tape. You probably took videos of the family and visitors during the Christmas and New Year period- Ahh,... didn't we all (those of us with a video camera, that is).

If you have ever looked at the end titles of a movie on T.V. you will notice that the text is usually white on a black background. This is because it makes it easier to read, even though it scrolls (moves across the screen), too fast or is too small to read anyway.

The most common and most widely used method of putting titles on video is to use the method below. It doesn't require any special hardware or software to do this. The only thing you will need is a good Paint package, eg: DPaint- any version will do. Any other paint program can also be of use for this exercise.

**WARNING TURN OFF ALL**

## EQUIPMENT FIRST BEFORE YOU MAKE ANY CONNECTIONS

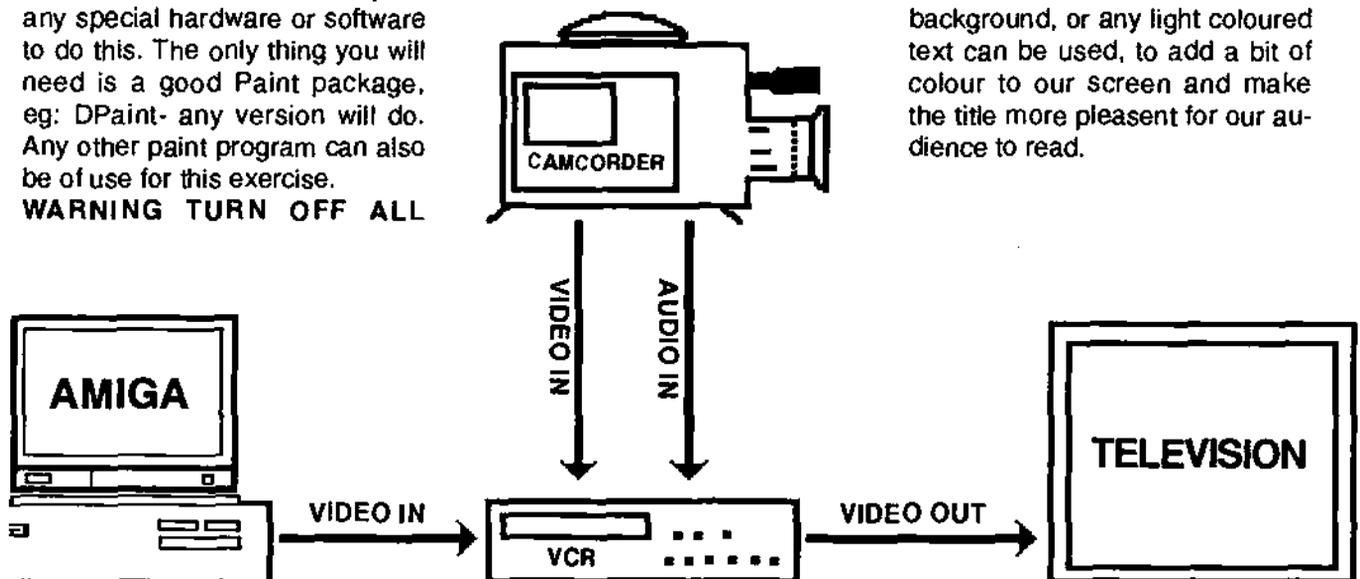
O.K..... first plug the video out on the AMIGA to the video in on your V.C.R. (called the composite out jack on your AMIGA and video in on your V.C.R.).... Next plug your monitor or television into your V.C.R. (R.F. out or aerial out for a television and video out to video in for a monitor.)

Now we'll get our paint or titling program up and running, making sure we can see the out-put of the AMIGA on the television or the monitor; which ever is connected to the V.C.R.

The best resolution to use for this purpose is HI-RES Interlace mode (if using D-Paint), but any resolution will do because all can be recorded to video tape. If you are using D-Paint go into Anti-AIaise mode for better results because it takes away the jagged edges from the lettering

By now you should have on your T.V. or Monitor screen, the screen of your Paint program. If not, check the conections and make sure they are firmly in position and make sure the signal is running the right way, as per Setup 1.

Let's make our title- first by selecting our font and letter size...OK. A font size of 30 is good because it allows us to read the text easily. The colour of the text should be white on a black background, or any light coloured text can be used, to add a bit of colour to our screen and make the title more pleasant for our audience to read.



*This is the most basic desk-top-video system that there is. The record video (VCR) can take it's input from either the Amiga or the camcorder, (you can use a second VCR if you don't own a camcorder) in this set-up the Amiga and camcorder are kept separate. Whenever the Amiga is connected to the VCR the camcorder must be disconnected because domestic VCRs only have one in-put for a video source, unless you are using a video switcher.*

In this exercise, let's write the words

**AUSTRALIAN AMIGA GAZETTE.**

I've slanted the words because of the size of the font. To make it all fit on one line, we would have to make the letters or font size smaller, but then it makes it harder for our audience to read.



The next step is to take away the border of our Paint program so that there are no tool boxes on the screen with our title, so that all we're left with on screen is our title. (We don't want our audience

to know how we created our title, do we?) The Pros don't tell us how they make their's, do they? (For D-Paint press F10). Now that our title is the only thing we should be able to see on the output screen, be it monitor or T.V, you can now press record on the V.C.R.

Record this segment for about ten seconds then press pause; now playback the tape from your camcorder or V.C.R. with your original footage of your home video and record for about one minute on the out-put V.C.R. (The one your monitor or T.V. is connected to.) After one minute press stop, or pause on the record V.C.R., then press re-wind to review what we have just recorded to the tape. Press play on the V.C.R. to playback the sequence we just recorded.

Well everything looks fine, but are we going to have all our videos with just a title at the front of the movie? Why not have some titles at the end, or, in the middle of our production as well. It's only a matter of creating a new title, and pressing the record and pause button on the V.C.R.

That's all from me for this month. Next issue we will be looking at connecting a Genlock to our set-up and mixing the title with live video.

Bye for now, Paul.



# THE BEST OF PUBLIC DOMAIN

BY DANIEL HAJDUK

**THE BEST OF PUBLIC DOMAIN IS DEDICATED TO PROMOTING EXCEPTIONAL PUBLIC DOMAIN AND SHAREWARE PROGRAMS.**

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## MagicMenu

OK now we've done it. The programmers of Magic Menu must have heard our complaints. What is Magic Menu, for those who missed our first issue, Magic Menu is a Workbench enhancement. Some Workbench enhancements are system friendly and some of them are dangerous- this one can be classified as dangerous as it modifies some of the intuition events that happen when you use Workbench. When you hold down the Right Mouse Button the whole of Workbench waits to see what you want to do next. Magic Menu can bypass some of this and allow updates to continue while using the menu. This can cause some weird problems, so if your system starts playing up, first disable Magic Menu. That said, I have always found ways of keeping the system happy and still using Magic Menu. One of these ways is to allow blocking of updates.

You can now use your menus in two new ways as well as having colour and style in your menus. You can use the old fashion RMB at the top of the screen and the menus will drop down from the top of the screen. You can access the menus at the top of the screen using only the keyboard, but it doesn't seem to work for sub-sub menus. You can

also click the RMB anywhere and a verticle version of the menu will pop up under the mouse thus Saving a lot of mouse movement.

So, what's new? It now is Fab menu aware so if you are using lbrowse or any other program that uses Fab menus, you can now leave the pop up anywhere menus are on. If you are pointing to an object that Fab menu is aware of it will take over from Magic Menu. If there is no special object under the mouse it will just call up the top menu and put it under the mouse.

The archive is now 170kb which includes an 020 version of the program and a prefs program. The prefs program can be called up at any time by pressing Control+Alt+Space.

You can experiment with your own prefs. One feature that is documented but not given due credit is the CONTROL key. If you press CTRL after selecting a menu it reverts back to workbench two colour menu. If you hold down CTRL before selecting a menu, Magic Menu will hide itself. Interestingly, by pressing CTRL twice when trying to select a Sub-Sub Menu you can get past the hangup by then pressing the down arrow. Therefore, if your mouse is totally stuffed you can use keyboard menus.

**Programmed by: Martin Kordorfer & Olaf 'Olsen' Barthel**  
**System Requirements: OS 2.0 or higher.**

## WB Startup Plus

This one is not just a WorkBench Patch, it is nearly essential. Ever tried to boot your Amiga and it keeps crashing, you suspect it is a commodity but there are so many of them you don't know which one. You could keep rebooting with no startup and move them out one by one. What happens if you don't have a 15khz capable monitor?

Workbench Startup Plus is the answer. As usual, it is simply a case of expanding the archive and double clicking on the install icon and answer the two or three questions and you're done. What did it do? Well by default it creates two new sub directories in your WBStartup drawer. One for Enabled and one for Disabled. The first thing you should do is move Exchange from WBStartup (Enabled) to WBStartup as this one sometimes has a major spack attack. All other programs and commodities work fine- in fact Power Packer Patch no longer has a software failure.

You can use the prefs program that was installed in your prefs drawer to switch on or off any program you want. All new

programs should be dropped into the enabled drawer. The prefs program will find it automatically. Now for the good bit. If your machine has a wobbly hold, down the Left SHIFT key and all WBStartup programs will be disabled, (this is the standard on MAC's). If everything now works you could reboot and hold down the Left ALT key- this will ask Yes or No for each program whether it should be allowed to start. If you hold down the CTRL key it will bring up the WBStartup Prefs. You could get really smart and set up a group of programs that you know always work. Save them with a group name, and when you need to, select the group after pressing CTRL when booting. You should have the CTRL, ALT or SHIFT key pressed just before WBStartup Plus would run. This little program can make life so much easier for people who like to experiment with new software.

**Programmed by: John Hughes Available From: Aminet System Requirements: OS 2.0 or higher.**

#### **BrowserII**

BrowserII is a multi-window file management utility, which unlike other utilities of the same nature is not limited to two scrolling lists, but in-fact can have as much scrolling lists open as you like. BrowserII can be best described as combining version 4 of Directory Opus and Workbench together. Throughout the windows BrowserII's information status is quite in depth and will let you view all information about a file such as the size, date, time, protection, file type and comment. BrowserII will install onto your computer's hard disk courtesy of

the installer script which as per usual is easy to use. If you require help on any of the functions, there is a well featured help file which documents help on areas ranging from running BrowserII, customising BrowserII's work environment and menu options. BrowserII is easy to use, however I would strongly recommend that you read the manual as this will document ways of personalising BrowserII to work according to your personal tastes. BrowserII operates on the Workbench screen, however if you don't want to clutter your Workbench screen with a lot of open windows, you can have BrowserII operate in its own environment. Personally I don't mind having the windows on the Workbench screen as with BrowserII you eliminate the need to click on icons and open up drawers to guide your way around the computer as this can all be done using browserII, and in fact BrowserII can be used as a total replacement to the Workbench. One excellent feature of BrowserII is that it lets you create a menu with short cuts to commands that are frequently used. For users of Arexx, BrowserII will allow you to import your Arexx scripts. One overall aspect of BrowserII that will be noticed almost immediately is its speed. Performing some tests, I found browserII to be faster than other utilities. This combined with its easy use will make all your file management tasks faster and less demanding.

Overall, BrowserII is an excellent file management utility which is worthy of replacing commercially available packages. BrowserII is a must have program especially for those users who still do a lot

of work with the shell.

**Programmed by: Pierre Carrette & Sylvain Rougier Available From: Public Domain or Aminet System Requirements: OS 3.0 or higher.**

#### **PopPhone**

PopPhone is a simple program which lets you create an address book, PopPhone is installable onto your computer's hard disk via the standard Amiga installer. There is a help system included with the program, however I was unable to get the guide file to load so I am unable to comment on this. This didn't cause too much of a problem as PopPhone is quite simple to use. I was able to work out all the functions immediately. Once the program is executed using the icon, you will be presented with a window that lets you enter data on your friends or contacts. There are several buttons that are available, each having a specific and self-explanatory task. One of the features which first got my attention is the program's ability to dial a number that is stored into the database. This is done by highlighting the number that you wish to dial and then clicking on the dial button. If you wish to dial a number that is not stored on the database, it is possible to dial a number manually. PopPhone is not an example of programming masterpiece, however I did find PopPhone to be a useful program for storing details, whether it be friends, clients or internet addresses.

**Programmed by: Pierre Carrette & Sylvain Rougier System Requirements: OS 3.0 or higher.**

# A Spouse's Perspective

## By Dianna

As the new school year approaches, the excitement builds. I am to be a first-time school mum. All the anxieties are surfacing. Will I be able to help with my child's homework? Will my child freak out if I am running a few minutes late at pick up time? Will my child make new friends easily? But most of all ... is my child academically inclined?

One aspect of my child's new school is their belief in the traditional three R's. What bothers me about this is just that - the R's. O.K., so there is Reading ... but Writing starts with "W" and Arithmetic (maths) starts with "A". So much for the traditional, basic building blocks of education. The teachers can't even spell!

Super computer guru husband won't be involved here. Like many of his computer colleagues (programmers, technicians, columnists and plain old internet junkies alike), spelling, grammar, punctuation and reading fiction is about as relevant to them as the truth is to the daily tabloids. It's nice, but not necessary.

Don't be so harsh you say! I am not the first one to notice that avid computer users are usually very poor spellers. Last year a computer educationalist commented on the poor spelling and punctuation in a senior high school students programming chart. Notice the way I spell programme!

Yes, that's right. Programme is spelt programme. However, since the age of the computer has heralded mass communication trans-globally, one must accept that the English language will change. Perhaps even for the better. Being an old-fashioned career secretary has caused some friction in our household in regard to spelling and punctuation (and oral reading skills). However, I give in. Change is inevitable and unstoppable.

Our English language is already full of silly inconsistencies - so why not change them? Who decides this? Well, for now, the mass communicators are. (Newspaper and magazine publishers, internet users of all levels and telecommunication giants) - in other words, the Yanks.

When I was young (I am now thirty-something), a gig was a rock concert. Now say the word "gig" and most people will assume you are talking about a hard drive. Mister (abbreviated to Mr.) is now "Mr" as the post office sorting computer does not like "."s everywhere. We have changed our punctuation to fit in with computers. Programme is now "program" thanks to our American friends dominating the programming (oh there I go again) programming scene. We no longer put commas after clauses in sentences and many computer users can't seem to construct a sentence at all.

So what is to be done? Well, in my opinion, nothing. With the information revolution and pressures on young people to perform well at school, digesting information and processing it into useful material will take up most of their time. There has to be casualties. I think spelling and grammar are these casualties.

So, until next month mind your p's and q's. If anyone can tell me where the saying "mind your p's and q's" comes from (by March 31, 1997), the first correctly drawn answer will win the game "Vahalla & the fortress of Eve" courtesy of Vulcan Software U.K.





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# Directory Opus 5.5 Review

by Grant Regan

Directory Opus is the most famous and widely used utility on the Amiga: and it's Australian. Directory Opus has always been regarded as: "The most powerful file management solution on the Amiga", or on any platform for that matter. For many Amigans (myself included) Directory Opus has proven to be an indispensable addition to Workbench- once you have used it, you'll wonder how you ever lived without it. The latest incarnation is so powerful that it actually sets out to replace Workbench!

## THE CONCEPT BEHIND DIRECTORY OPUS 5.5

With the release of Directory Opus 5, many Amigans have been reluctant to upgrade. Conceptually, Directory Opus 5.x is a significant departure from the linear approach of other file managers and of DirectoryOpus 4.x. Instead of one source and one destination window, Directory Opus 5 and above provides a true multitasking, multithreaded file manager which allows for multiple source and destination file-windows (known as listers in DOpus). For those Amigans comfortable with DOpus 4, the approach taken by DOpus 5.5 may take some getting used to. Some Amigans however, may never approve of the new approach. In the end it's all a matter of personal preference. However, in terms of features, configurability, and the power achievable through the new interface, I have no hesitation in stating that DOpus5.5 is a vastly superior package to DOpus 4.

## REQUIREMENTS

DOpus 5.5 requires at least 2MB of RAM and nearly 3MB of hard-drive space (a far cry from earlier versions of DOpus). AmigaOS 2.0 or better is required. The ideal system should have a 68020 or better, at least 4MB of RAM and AmigaOS 3.1. DOpus 5.5 is not suitable for floppy-based systems. For this reason, it is probably a good idea to keep a copy of DOpus 4 on disk as I once found it essential for retrieving files during a freak event. As I was defragging a partition on my drive a power failure occurred! With DOpus 4.6 I was able to salvage most of the files to the other partition.

The shareware archive programs LHA, and possibly LZX, ARC, and ZOO (although the latter two are rarely used nowadays) are required if you want to perform file archiving and extraction through DOpus as these are not supplied. To see if you have them, go into your 'C' directory in your Workbench partition. These programs are readily available from all good Public Domain suppliers and from Aminet.

DOpus 5.5 was tested on my A4000 which has a 25mhz 68040 processor, 2MB of Chip RAM and 8MB of Fast RAM.

## INSTALLATION

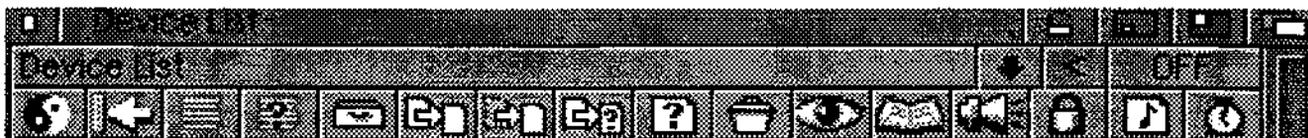
Clearly, DOpus 5.5 was developed with the express purpose of being a complete Workbench replacement. It has been designed to seamlessly merge the file managing

capabilities of DOpus with the functionality of Workbench and Intuition. However, the installer provides a number of installation options.

I tested a number of these installation formats: as an upgrade to DOpus 5.11, as a complete installation from scratch, as a Workbench replacement, and as a separate file manager to be launched from Workbench.

DOpus 5.5 utilises the perennial Commodore Installer routine. If updating from a previous version of DOpus 5, the installer provides the option of backing up your old configuration files before upgrading. If you are upgrading from version 4 of DOpus, it is advisable to manually back up your configuration files and delete DOpus 4 before installing the latest version. DOpus 5.5 accepts version 4 configuration files for the environment, options, buttons, menus, drives, file-types, and hotkeys (yes, hotkeys are back!). However, as DOpus 5.5 is far more configurable than DOpus 4 I recommend that you avoid the temptation of importing old configuration, or if you must then do it as a temporary measure until you have become accustomed to the new interface. Otherwise, you may not be getting the most out of this program.

When installing as a Workbench replacement, DOpus 5.5 replaces the original 'LOADWB' command in the 'C' directory with a new one and backs up your old command as 'LOADWB\_old'. Therefore, it is



quite easy to revert to Workbench and, if you want to access Workbench directly this may be done by holding down the shift key during booting.

### THE MANUAL

The manual supplied with DOpus 5.5 is a vast improvement over the pathetic booklet supplied with DOpus 5. The previous manual went into lavish detail describing the features and the configurability of the new version without ever fully explaining how these features could be implemented. The latest manual has been almost completely rewritten and it shows. The new manual now includes a large section on configuring and optimising DOpus and handy tips and pointers are listed throughout.

DOpus also includes extensive AmigaGuide help support which is activated by the 'HELP' key.

### WORKBENCH REPLACEMENT?

The first version of DOpus 5 with its ability to display multiple source and destination listers and its internally multitasking, object orientated, modular design; its Amiga-style compliant intuitive approach; and its comprehensive drag and drop facilities introduced the concept of DOpus as a Workbench replacement. However, I was never really comfortable in running DOpus 5 and 5.11 as a Workbench replacement.

With DOpus 5.5 I am more confident in running it as a complete Workbench replacement, although the approach stills takes some getting

used to. DOpus 5.5 integrates the intuitive concepts of Workbench with the file-managing power of DOpus. DOpus' configurability, its intuitiveness, and its features are an improvement over Workbench. Moreover, unlike the previous releases of version 5, your Workbench configurations are not overridden by DOpus 5.5.

One of the features which gives the user increased functionality and power are the new pop-up 'sticky' menus. These enable the user to set the properties to an icon, file or lister with a simple right-mouse button click. For example, it is possible to snapshot the selected object, alter its properties, or extract an archived file to a destination through these menus. The pop-up menus differ according to the type of icon (tools, project, disk, trashcan etc) or window.

However, these pop-up menus do conflict with the Magic Menu commodity. If you are using a two button mouse it is advisable to disable the pop-up menu function in Magic Menu as this conflicts with the 'sticky' menus. Otherwise set the 'sticky' menus for the middle mouse button or remove it from your WBStartup completely.

Also new to DOpus 5.5 is the incorporation of an FTP (File Transfer Protocol) module. This feature blows me away by this feature. If you have your own internet account or if you have access to one, the FTP module allows the user to open a lister window to the remote FTP server as if it was simply a directory on your hard-drive. Connecting to Livewire mirror of Aminet I was

able to view remote picture files and play MOD files as if they were located on my hard-drive!

The power of this FTP module and of DOpus is demonstrated by the following example. I have configured DOpus to extract LHA files to the destination lister when dragging the file from the source lister. I was able to do exactly the same thing with the FTP module. LHA files on the remote server were extracted to a destination on my hard-drive simply by dragging and dropping! The FTP module allows for the integration of Workbench, of file-manager and of remote server. Impressive stuff indeed!

DOpus5.5 also incorporates a scripts feature. Essentially this allows you to execute a predetermined function or command when a event or action is performed. For instance, you can create a script which will display the contents of a disk in a lister when it is inserted, or you can have DOpus play a sound file when you select a lister's close gadget or if you click on an icon. DOpus5.5 allow allows the user to attach Arexx, AmigaDOS, Workbench, or internal Opus commands to a script function.

With the release of DOpus 5, and the cessation of a publishing contract with the now defunct Inovatronics (alas!), Jon Potter and GP Software lost the rights to the routines and libraries that DOpus 4 incorporated to support a large array of sound and image file-types. Lacking these routines DOpus 5 internally supported little more than ASCII, IFF (8SVX and

# Directory Opus Review Continued

ILBM), and Datatypes. Internal file support was replaced with support for external players and viewers. For many users of DOpus 4 this lack of internal support was a backward step.

DDopus5.5 attempts to get around this problem with the inclusion of an Automatic Filetype Creator. This system attempts to create usable filetypes for files that DOpus fails to recognise. Still, the results are often limited and for the novice user the Automatic Filetype Creator can be confusing and frustrating.

## ALMOST PERFECT...

DOpus 5.5 is a powerful Workbench replacement (and a powerful file-manager otherwise) and yet I wouldn't go so far as to claim that DOpus 5.5 'seamlessly' integrates the concept of file manager with a Workbench GUI.

The fundamental problem is that a file-manager and a GUI such as Workbench serve entirely different functions. For each lister, DOpus 5.5 has a 'Name Mode' and two 'Icon Modes' (Icon and Icon Actions Modes). The Name Mode presents files and directories as a list as with any file manager. The

Icon Modes list files and directories as icons in a similar fashion to Workbench. The problem is that for file-management and manipulation nothing beats a file-manager and hence for this purpose I tend to use the Name Mode. However, when launching programs, file-managers tend to be clumsy and time-consuming. Therefore, for this function I tend to flick over to the Icon Mode or Icon Action Mode. Of course you can leave the icons for your favourite programs 'out' on the screen or incorporate them into toolbars but this tends to create a cluttered mess especially on low resolution screens. Maybe GP Software should consider including an option which displays thumbnail icons next to the file name listings in the next update.

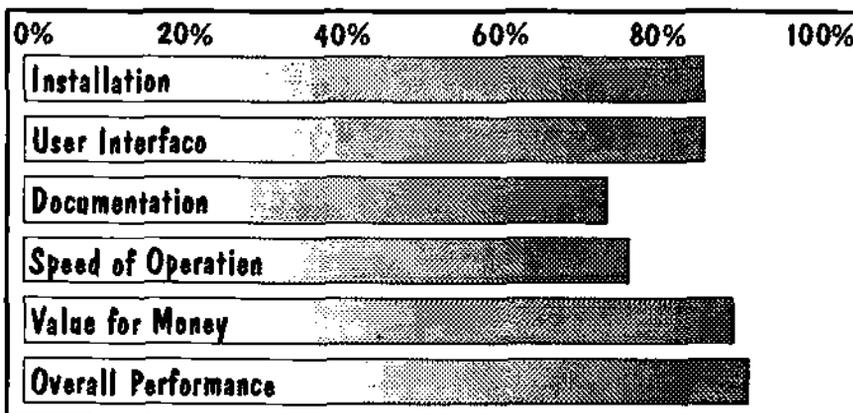
My other concerns are that DOpus 5.5 tends to devour 200K more Chip RAM than Workbench itself on my machine. Moreover, DOpus 5.5 isn't entirely happy with Magic User Interface, as I found that the pop-up menu window gadgets on MUI-based programs don't work. You decide whether you can live with this.

## CONCLUSION

DOpus 5.5 is a considerable update and this review has only touched upon its many new features. Some Amigans may never feel at home with DOpus 5 or find simply too powerful for their needs. For them there is DiskMagic, DirWork, DOpus 4 and a vast array of public domain and shareware file-managers. But for a file-manager which does everything except make a pot of tea, you must choose Directory Opus 5.5. Maybe GP Software will incorporate that function into the next version?

DOpus costs \$129 and \$69 to upgrade from version 5.

Thanks to Paul David for supplying the review copy.



QUICK REFERENCE	
MADE BY	GP Software
DISTRIBUTED BY	GP Software
H/WARE NEEDED	2Meg Ram/HDrive
S/WARE NEEDED	Wb2.0 or greater
RETAIL PRICE	\$129.00
OVERALL RATING	83.5%

# Amiga Class 101

By Darren Robertson

Things and widgets. That's what we will be explaining this month. Well not precisely, but that's what they appear to be to some people. The widgets are those funny little Icon Default tools and Tool types.

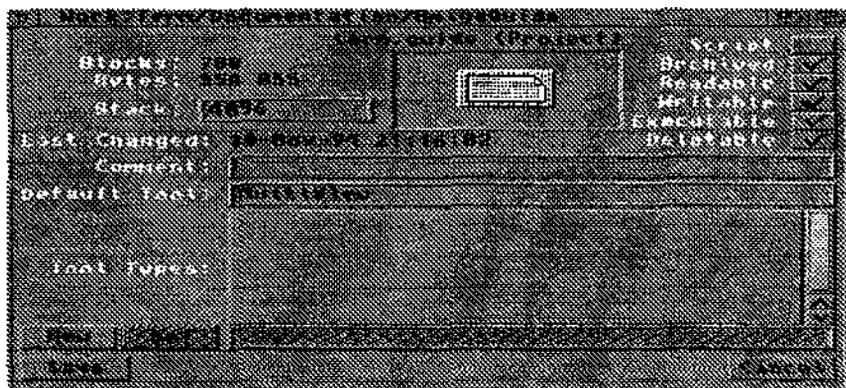
Have you ever double clicked on an Icon for a picture or text file, only to be abused by the system. It keeps asking for you to insert volume Dpaint. Or it tells you it is unable to find your tool AmigaGuide. This action is controlled by the Icons Default Tool-it is a setting that tells the system which program created the file and where to automatically run the program when you want to use the file. This is excellent when using you own files created on your own machine. You can click on any file you have created and the program will load and then load the file into itself ready for work. But when you get a file from someone else that you want to access, or even if you get something off the Aminet CD's or FTP site, these files could have been created using a program you don't have.

Using the Amiga means that most files will load into another program with similar features. So how do you tell the system to do this. Well it is a little tricky but you can't do much harm trying. When you click on an Icon once it goes into a

selected mode and will possibly display a slightly different Icon. Now if you use your Right Mouse button with the mouse pointer at the top of the Workbench Screen a menu called Icons can be seen. If you move down the list to an item called Information, a window will appear telling you what the system knows about the Icon. If the Icon you have clicked on is a file you have created It will be called a project.

problem is a text file that wants to load PPMore. This is a program that is not part of Workbench and is not used as much as it was. It is a substitute for Workbench MORE text display program. Its Advantage was that it could read a compressed text file.

So how do we tell the system what it should use instead? In your Project Icon's Information window you will see a line that



One of the more common problems is a text file or a help file that won't open. For workbench version 2 there was a hypertext display program for help documentation called AmigaGuide. Its formatting was incorporated into MultiView in Workbench 3. Any help file written for a Workbench 2 program will insist on trying to load AmigaGuide. Another common

says Default tool: next to this will be a program name. If it is a system program it will just be AmigaGuide or something similar. If it is a picture from Deluxe Paint it will have a Volume name followed by a program name. For example Dpaint:Dpaint, or if it



wants PPmore it might have C:PPmore. The C: is an automatically reserved volume that is part of the Workbench volume. The main thing to remember is that every Machine has a C: Volume that stores all the Workbench Command Line tools. These are the ones available in a NewShell window. For example Dir or Copy. Not everyone has all the same tools in this C: Volume but the workbench ones are the same. If a program is asking for C:PPmore you can always change it to More, as More is a standard program for Workbench. Once you have replaced C:PPmore with More click on the Save button. The Icon will now be double clickable, and will load the More program successfully.

What is More I hear you ask? It is just a simple text display program that can read any readme files text files, or update notes. It will pause every time it gets to a full window of text. Once you have read the displayed text press space and the next page full of text will be displayed.

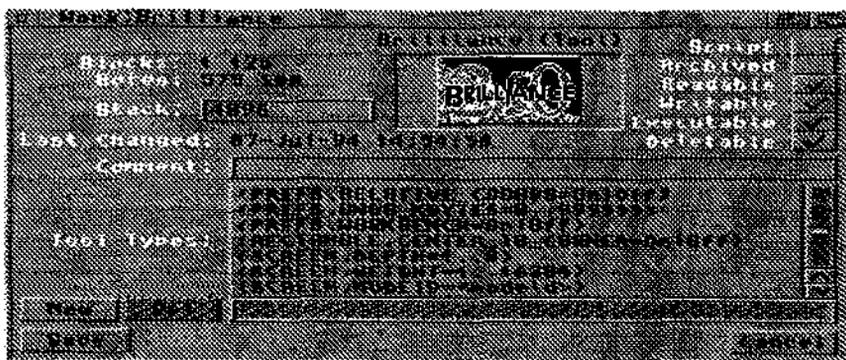
What happens if the text file really does need PPmore to read the file because it is compressed? Well, the best thing to do is to set the Default Tool back to PPmore and then try and get a copy of PPmore from the Aminet CD's or Aminet FTP or maybe someone who does already have it. Then copy it into the Workbench:c directory.

If you get a picture that wants Dpaint, you can safely change Dpaint:dpaint to Multiview if you are using Workbench version 3. If you are using Workbench 2 or less you should get a copy of a program like Viewtek that will display pictures. For Viewtek you should copy the file VT into the WorkBench:c directory and then set the Icon default tool to VT. How does the system know which Volume VT is on? It doesn't at first, but when you don't specify a volume ie: C: the system has what is known as a path. This is a sequence of Volumes and Directories that it should check in if a program is not found in the directory you are currently in. It's just another way the Amiga saves on hassels.

The Tool Types in a project should be left alone as the program that created the Project knew everything that it had to before saving the Icon. So these setting will be correct.

ToolTypes for Tools (Programs) are different. These are available to allow you to make settings to your liking. They customise the way the program will work. I will use Brilliance as an example because it has quite a few tool types available. Brilliance is a graphics painting program similar to Deluxe Paint. I don't know whether either of these are still available for purchasing, but they are very good

for simple hand drawn artwork. If you are going to change any of a Tools tooltype setting I suggest you read the manual to check that what you are about to do is safe for your system, ie: don't enable Graphics card support if you don't have one. Most Tooltypes that you are allowed to use will possibly be already typed into the tool types box. Any tooltype that is surrounded by brackets eg: (tool) is available but switched off. If the program has a help file or AmigaGuide file this will be able to explain all of the settings you can use in a program. In the Brilliance there is about 60 Tooltypes that can be set. They control the size of the default screen, number of colours and the size of the Undo buffer. As you can see from the screen dump I have not set any defaults yet. If I wanted to set up a undo buffer of 500kb in size. I would change the line (PREFS.UNDO\_KBYTES=0..999999) to PREFS.UNDO\_KBYTES=500000. Press the save button and the next time I double click on the Brilliance Icon the program will allocate 500kb of memory especially for Undoing the changes I make to a picture.



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Liverpool	\$66.95
Mean Arenas	\$66.95
Napoleoni	\$59.95
Napoleonics	\$24.95
On The Ball	\$69.95
PGA Euro Tour	\$66.95
Pinball Illusions	\$66.95

## NEC SCSI 4x CD-Rom Drives

Internal drive unit only (A2000 & A4000)	\$179
External drive (suits all other Amigas)	\$349
Note: To use the above drives you need a SCSI interface:	
Squirrel SCSI (A600/A1200)	\$159
Surf Squirrel (includes serial port A1200)	\$229
DKB SpitFire SCSI (A2000/A4000)	\$179

## A1200 Accelerators

We sell DKB Cobra accelerators in two speeds, 33MHz or 40MHz. Both boards accept standard 72-pin ram, have a connector which allows you to add a SCSI-2 interface later and a socket for a math co-processor.

33MHz board	\$269
40MHz board	\$299
Ferret SCSI-2 interface	\$179
68882 Co-Pro	\$ 59

## Zip drives and disks

Iomega Zip drive (SCSI)	\$329
Individual Zip disks (100Mb Sony)	\$ 25
5-pack of Zip disks (100Mb Sony)	\$110
Zip & Jaz Tools software for Amiga	\$ 39

## Jaz drives and disks

Internal Jaz drive	\$699
External Jaz drive	\$849
Individual Jaz disks	\$199
Zip & Jaz Tools software for Amiga	\$ 39

## 50MHz 060 Accelerator boards for the A2000

The boards include a SCSI-2 interface, and has both 72-pin & GVP 64-pin sockets for ram expansion. \$Call for pricing

## EPSON Colour InkJet Printers

The Epson printers represent the best colour inkjet printers. The printers can be used on the Amiga with the Studio II package \$99.

Stylus II (clearance special)	\$489
Stylus 500	\$569
Stylus 200 (colour upgradable)	\$279
Stylus Pro	\$799

## Laser Printer

Hewlett Packard Laserjet 5L Laser	\$759
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