



BrewOtaku

THE GAMING MAGAZINE FOR NEW GAMES FOR OLD SYSTEMS

Stories

RETRO PUZZLE MAKER
JAMES POND SERIES (AMIGA)

Interview

JEAN-MICHEL GIRARD (ALEKMAUL)

Classics Review

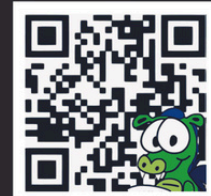
SUPER MARIO BROS. 64 (C64)

Brew Reviews

HERMANO, ULTAR'S LAIR, GOLDORAK, STAR BLADER, ALIENS NEOPLASMA II,
TIMO'S CASTLE, COLD & STARVING, GOOBLER, SHOVEL DUCK II, GRAZERS,
EMU'S MASSIVE HUNT, SNAIL MAZE II, UROK, KIEN, SPACEPROBLEM,
SQUIRREL DOMINO, COURIER, ANZU CASTLE GRACULA, DECATHLON DX,
'ALIENS, PLASMA GUNS & CHEWING GUM', HAYATO'S JOURNEY & MORE...



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Our new catalog is out!
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UNSERE BESTSELLER.



RETURN Sonderheft 2: 40 Jahre Commodore 64



RETURN Sonderheft 3: Die besten Point-'n'-Click-Adventures

SCHON GELESEN?

RETURN
FASZINATION KLASSISCHE COMPUTER UND KONSOLEN

Staff



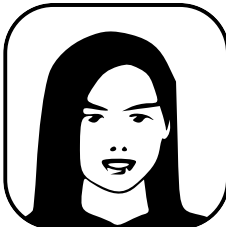
Founder, Main-Editor

SHAHZAD SAHAIB



Editor

USMAN A. KHAN



Social Media & Quality

AREEBA MALIK

Cover Artwork by

ENRIQUE RAMÍREZ



[ilustratio_vramz](#)



[ilustratio7](#)

Editorial

Greetings everyone,

Producing a gaming magazine is challenging. You need to deal with various aspects, with deadlines being a pain. Quality content does not generate itself. Now, some of you will possibly let us know that ChatGPT v4 is already quite advanced. From our point of view, it can maximum act as inspiration, especially when you are low on ideas and can't type a single word on the keyboard.

Where artificial intelligence is really charming is on the visual side of things. 'Prompt Engineering' and waiting for the output has never been so much fun. Here is also the biggest helper of BrewOtaku. Tools such as Tengr.AI allow us to give the magazine an appealing look, making it outstanding from other magazine projects, while keeping the spotlight on the developers' creations, and there are so many of them. Retro game development deserves attention just like any other new-school released new title.

Our current cover strategy is also new. From now on, we will feature a homebrew game instead of sci-fi AI art. Without visual AI, this magazine would have no chance to exist at all. The printing and staff costs did not return yet, and only because of our premium sponsor DragonBox Shop we can keep the magazine going, now in its third issue.

Yours

Shahzad



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Legend:



Free game, donations mostly welcome!



Commercial game

Hermano [2024]

a COMMERCIAL platformer by Pat Morita Team for Game Boy



Screenshot: patmorita.itch.io

Ever had one of those days in the office — or home — where you're so mad you wish you could just lob your own head at someone? No? Just us? We see, but the platformer game we're diving into actually lets you do just that: throw your skull at enemies. If that sounds like your kind of relaxation and a nice attempt at catharsis, keep reading. We're exploring 'Hermano' by the 'Pat Morita Team'.

"THE FAULT IN OUR UNDEAD"

Not all new Game Boy classic games are super slick. Some are rough around the edges, while others feel like they're missing that special cog in the wheel. But every once in a while, a team steps up and hits a pleasing home run. Polished to crispy perfection, a game smartly capturing an authentic charm. Hermano is one of the team's most enjoyable titles. It is a multi-scrolling platformer set in the vivid universe of the 'Day of the Dead'. Hermano enjoyed a successful Kickstarter campaign in January 2024 for its physical edition and was very well deserved.

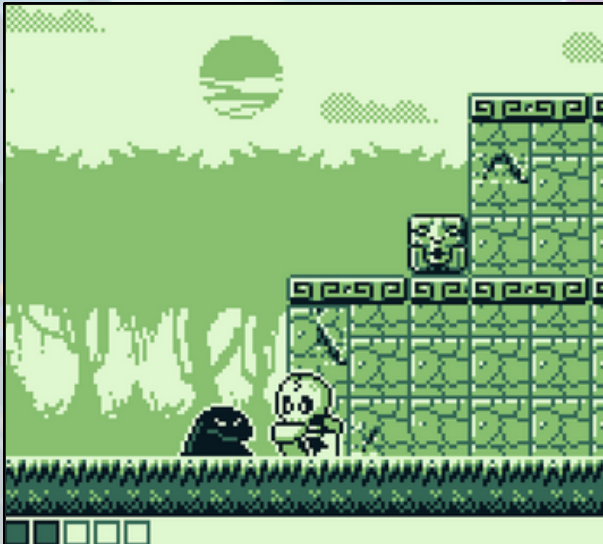
The story kicks off on the Day of the Dead, where 'Mano' visits the grave of his brother 'Nano'. Things take a darker turn when the gates of the underworld swing open, unleashing a horde of lost souls, monsters, and demons into the living world. Just as Nano is on the verge of resurrection, a demon snatches Mano, dragging him into the depths of hell.



Screenshot: patmorita.itch.io

Players step into the role of Nano, now an undead hero, tasked with finding the keys to unlock hell's gates and rescue his beloved brother. And whoever said 'don't fear the reaper' was wrong, because you'll just have to fear the reaper; otherwise, you'll lose your health. Comprene? The beauty of Hermano lies in its simplicity and depth. Its straightforward gameplay is easy to pick up yet offers a tough challenge that keeps you coming back for more. The game's pixel-perfect graphics and groovy soundtrack transport you straight into the spooktastic world of 'Día de Muertos'. You'll traverse 15 main levels, navigating scrolling 2D landscapes filled with traps and over 15 types of enemies, including three epic boss battles.

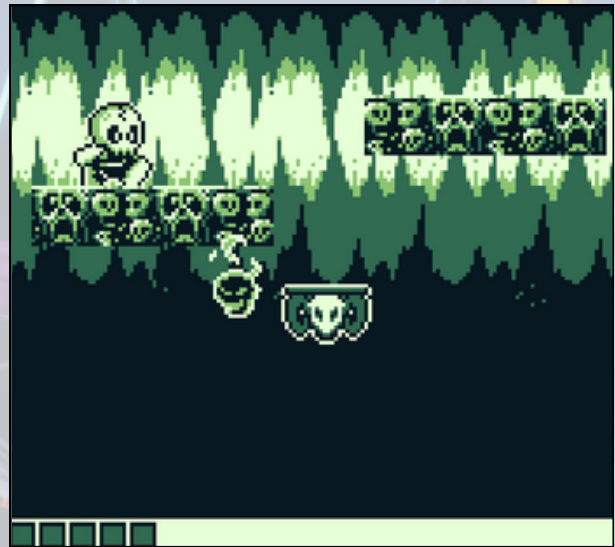
What really sets *Hermano* apart is how it blends classic platforming action with puzzles, exploration, and gravity-defying gameplay. It's like if 'Super Mario' and 'Tetris' had a spooky, undead baby. Not quite, but you get the point, right?



Screenshot: patmorita.itch.io

"ANOTHER GHOUL BITES THE DUST!"

We mean you hop from one platform to another, dodging deadly traps, and outsmarting enemies, all while soaking in the authentic pixel-art style and fantastical themes that make the game so visually appealing. The reception to *Hermano* has been stellar, creating quite a buzz among retro gaming fans. It not only garnered rave reviews from players but also claimed top honours at the 'GB Compo 23', winning two awards and further cementing Pat Morita Team's reputation for delivering quality, engaging homebrew games. *Hermano* is a trip through the afterlife you won't want to miss. It's a nostalgic nod to the past, offering a fun-filled journey with more than a sprinkle — or maybe a hand full — of the macabre. When all is said and done, there's a lot to love about this, especially for fans of the 'Ghosts and Goblins' series. Did I mention the musical reference in the level begin jingle is just masterful? Si, there's that.



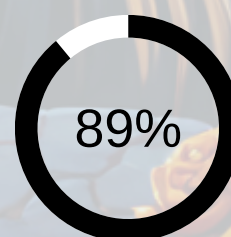
Screenshot: patmorita.itch.io

Even the best games can have a few rough edges, and in *Hermano*'s case, it's the enemy re-spawning. Sometimes, it feels like you're stuck in a zombie apocalypse in a scene straight from 'Night of the Living Dead.' But aside from this minor blemish, the game is nearly impeccable, offering a well-balanced challenge that keeps you on your toes. So, whether you're an avid gamer or a noob looking for something unique, *Hermano* promises hours of entertainment in its tasty, undead world. Grab your Game Boy, embrace the magic of 'Día de Muertos', and hasta la vista, hermanos!

CONCLUSION

Want to get jiggy with the undead? *Hermano* is the way to do it. With its sublime music, playful design, and a cool gravity mechanic, this game is a ghoulishly good time!

BREWScore



LINK



<https://patmorita.itch.io/hermano-game-boy>

News-Corner (One of Twenty)

May 2024 - July 2024



Gates to Nowhere (P1)
by GWI

Amiga ECS



Screenshot: pngcan.itch.io

Follow George in this interactive adventure and solve fun puzzles along the way. Give your noggin a little workout and put your problem-solving skills to good use.



<https://pngcan.itch.io/geos-quest-gateway-to-nowhere>



DIG
by Johnnybot

NES



Screenshot: johnnybot.itch.io

You are a miner, who has to regain his freedom. Collect worthy minerals, as you dig your way through a mine. Fuel and engine are limited, but can be upgraded. Berg Heil!



<https://johnnybot.itch.io/dig>



TankX
by Hippopotamus Design

Amiga OCS



Screenshot: koobo.itch.io

Who doesn't like a tank battle? There's nothing more satisfying than destroying enemy tanks and be the last man... I mean last tank standing. If you want more action, you can pick the scary setting.

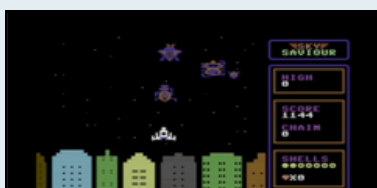


<https://koobo.itch.io/tankx>



Sky Saviour
by Flump Studios

Commodore 64



Screenshot: flump-studios.itch.io

Oh, my! Odd Aliens are attacking. Your job is to defend your city. With only seven shells, you must go to the bottom of the screen to reload regularly. The game is written in pure 6502 Assembler.



<https://flump-studios.itch.io/sky-savior-64>



Chubby Gristle
by Rajcsányi László

Game Boy Color



Screenshot: lacoste42.itch.io

Food, food and more food, that's the code Chubby lives by. So keep the food coming and get Chubby to that one-ton mark. Collect items wisely, and don't bother telling him about the perils of overeating.



<https://lacoste42.itch.io/chubby-gristle>



Enduro
by Albert

Commodore 64



Screenshot: alberto-luviano.itch.io

Enjoy this remake of 'Enduro'. It's a simple but fun racing game. With a nice presentation, the game visualizes day and night really well. Now, race to the finish line.



<https://alberto-luviano.itch.io/enduro-c64remake>

News-Corner [Two of Twenty]

May 2024 - July 2024



Crazy Cavey
by Rajcsányi László

Game Boy Color



Screenshot: lacoste42.itch.io

The elements are totally against you. The air is running out, walkways are collapsing, and then there are wild animals on top of that. Collect all the keys to get the hell out of there!

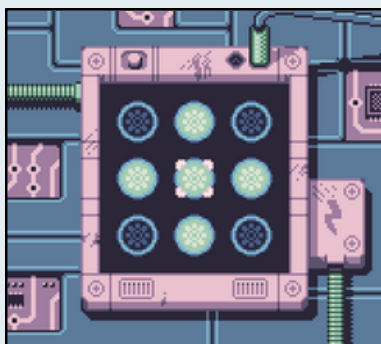


<https://lacoste42.itch.io/crazy-cavey>



In The Dark
by Pearacidic Games

Game Boy Color



Screenshot: pearacidic.itch.io

Trapped on a broken ship, Captain Ikalo must solve 100 'Lights-Off' puzzles. This polished game used to be a paid game. A sequel is in the making.

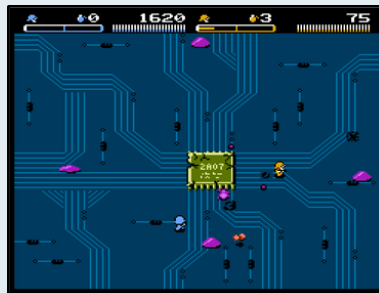


<https://pearacidic.itch.io/in-the-dark>



Data Man
by Darkbits

NES



Screenshot: darkbitsgames.itch.io

If you've ever imagined what it would feel like getting stuck inside an Arcade game circuit board, then you are in for a treat. For 20 action-packed levels, blast through waves of enemies, fend off bugs eating your CPU, and clear the screen. And just when you think you've won, a boss appears! Did you save some grenades? Things ramp up fast in Data Man, so pace your weapon and prepare for chaos. The wicked Master and his annoying bugs won't stop until every kilobyte of data is corrupted. So, roll up your sleeves to debug this mess and become the hero of your precious CPU. You can play solo or join forces with a friend.



<https://darkbitsgames.itch.io/data-man>



Tenebra 2
by Haplo

Atari ST & Atari Jaguar



Screenshot: h4plo.itch.io

Haplo's rouge like puzzle game Tenebra 2 makes its debut for the Atari ST. It's also available for many other systems.

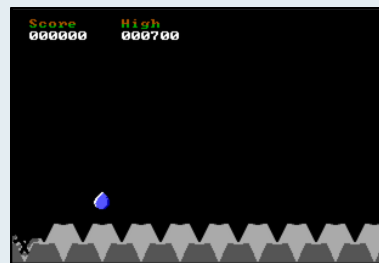


<https://h4plo.itch.io/tenebra-2>



Rain Zapper
by raphnet

MS-DOS



Screenshot: raphnet.itch.io

'raphnet' has been fiddling around in 2018 getting the NES Zapper to work with the Joystick port of a Tandy 1000 computer. The output was displayed on a CRT TV. You simple score by shooting raindrops. The game has added CGA and VGA support and now runs on literally any MS-DOS PC.



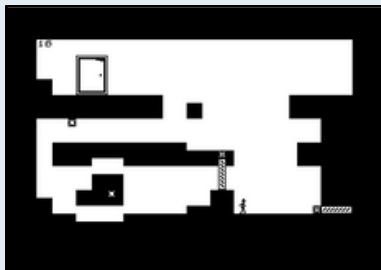
<https://raphnet.itch.io/rain-zapper>

News-Corner [Three of Twenty]

May 2024 - July 2024

 **Shift**
by Haplo

C64 & Atari XL/XE



Screenshot: h4plo.itch.io

'Shift' is based on a puzzle platform game by Antony Lavelle & 'Armor Games'. You can literally invert and flip the whole level, making new things visible and altering the gameplay. It's confusing at times, but once you have the grip of it, your comfortable sofa won't let you go anymore. It's super engaging & fun.

 <https://h4plo.itch.io/shift>

 **PETSCII Wizard of Wor**
by Ko-Ko

Commodore 64



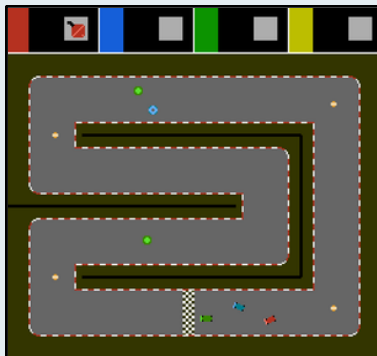
Screenshot: johnybot.itch.io

The classic 'Wizard of War' featuring PETSCII graphics? 'Kornel Kolma' made it possible. It feels a bit different, but still great. Original SFX is used here.

 <https://ko-ko74.itch.io/petscii-wizard-of-war-c64-version>

 **Kart Racer**
by Johnybot

NES



Screenshot: johnybot.itch.io

'Kart Racer' is a top-down kart racer game. It's currently in development and now features a battle mode. Up to four players can compete.

 <https://johnybot.itch.io/kart-racer>

 **Skinny Marley**
by Toolzzi

Amiga OCS



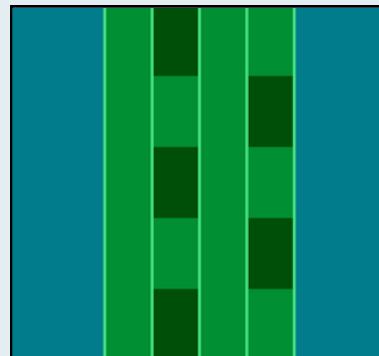
Screenshot: toolzzi.itch.io

'Toolzzi' sets a tribute for his deceased dog 'Marley' in the form of a new Amiga game. Elements of Sokoban along with findings toys will tease your brain.

 <https://toolzzi.itch.io/skinny-marley>

 **Quarti**
by Johnybot

NES



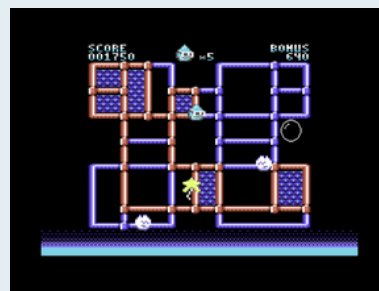
Screenshot: johnybot.itch.io

A music game by 'Johnybot'. The four channels are played with 'Start', 'Select', 'A' and 'B'. The faster you are, the better your score!

 <https://johnybot.itch.io/quarti>

 **Drip 2: The Sequel**
by Vector5 Games

Commodore 64



Screenshot: vector5games.itch.io

It's always a pleasure when enjoyable arcade games get a sequel. Another 15 levels of fun awaits you. Clean all pipes and don't leave out a spot. Avoid enemies. A bonus round is granted every third level.

 <https://vector5games.itch.io/drip-2-the-sequel>

News-Corner (Four of Twenty)

May 2024 - July 2024



Ancient Villa

by Nikita Cojam & Team

PS Vita



Screenshot: cojam.itch.io

'Ancient Villa' is a unique 3D game, which blends elements such as task-solving with exploration parts. Join a female archaeologist and her penguin to investigate a spooky castle-villa. It's a short and sweet game that you can easily finish in one go.



<https://cojam.itch.io/villa>



Jerry's Endless Travels

by Frederick352

Acorn Atom (Mono)



Screenshot: frederick352.itch.io

You'll be treasure hunting on an extraterrestrial planet like a real galactic pirate, then plotting your exit. Fast, they're coming! The second quest needs you to find two hidden treasures.



<https://frederick352.itch.io/jerrys-endless-travels-atom-mono-prototype>



Antics

by Rajcsányi László

Game Boy Color



Screenshot: lacoste42.itch.io

Barnabee, the bee, has to help his cousin Boris. He is stuck in an underground ant nest and can't make it out. Collect pollen to gain energy, avoid ants and thorns. A challenging fun!



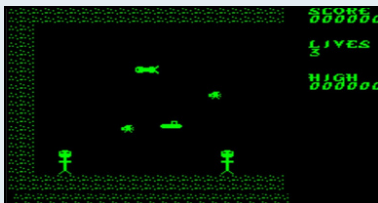
<https://lacoste42.itch.io/antics>



Alien Planet

by Frederick352

Acorn Atom (Mono)



Screenshot: frederick352.itch.io

In 'Alien Planet,' you're on a mission worthy of Tomb Raider — just with lots of water. Dive into an alien ocean to find a treasure, then channel your inner Houdini for a vanishing act... we mean, exit.



<https://frederick352.itch.io/alien-planet-acorn-atom>



Inspector

by KWAYNE

Commodore 64



Screenshot: kwayne.itch.io

'Detective, a heinous criminal is on the loose.' You must apprehend the murderer and deduce the crime's timing. Unravel the mystery through cunning questions and catch the culprit in this text-based brain-teasing game.



<https://kwayne.itch.io/inspector-commodore-64>



Goblin Coffee Break

by Safety Stoa Studios

Sega Genesis



Screenshot: safetystoastudios.itch.io

We all have a pyromaniac inside us, right? In this 2-4 player game, have a blast by blowing things up. The action is reminiscent of the classic arcade game 'Food Fight'.



<https://safetystoastudios.itch.io/goblin-coffee-break>



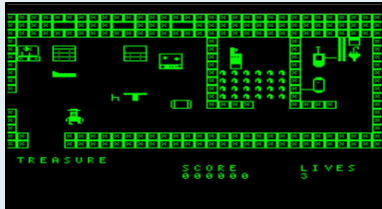
News-Corner (Five of Twenty)

May 2024 - July 2024



Magic Staff
by Fredrick352

Acorn Atom (Mono)



Screenshot: fredrick352.itch.io

In this game, your task is to find a 'magic staff' on an alien world. Easy peezy, right? Think again! It's like finding a needle in a haystack. Clear obstacles by locating 3 items & then use them on the screen with the staff. The items in this game are in different locations than on the Spectrum versions. Well played, Frederick!

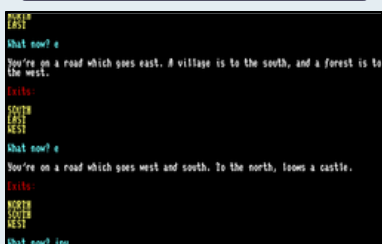


<https://fredrick352.itch.io/mstaffacorn>



Castle Quest
by Ricky Derocher

Commodore 128



Screenshot: rickyderocher.itch.io

'Castle Quest' is an old school text adventure, utilizing the 80 line mode of the Commodore 128. Go and save a (pretty?) princess!



<https://rickyderocher.itch.io/castle-quest>



Sam the Hedgehog
by AllAloneGamez

Game Boy Color



Screenshot: allalonegamez.itch.io

This puzzle platformer let you guide Sam through changing seasons. Each transition adds or removes elements. Can we ask Sam to change the hot summer into spring?



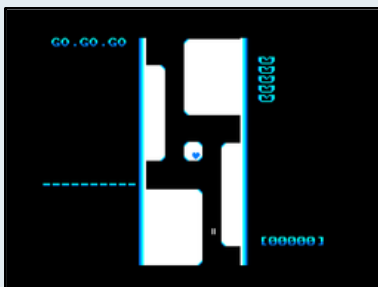
<https://allalonegamez.itch.io/sam-the-optimistic-hedgehog>



ZlaloX
by Snauts



ZX Spectrum 48K & CPC



Screenshot: snauts.itch.io

Simple games can be so darn challenging. ZlaloX is like that. In it, you need to 'slalom' through obstacles without crashing into walls. Test your reflexes!



<https://snauts.itch.io/zlaloX>



Ooze: The Escape
by Haplo & Andy Johns

Amiga OCS



Screenshot: h4plo.itch.io

'Midnight Brew Games' freshly offers a physical release of 'Ooze' since June 2024. If you don't know this action survival game yet, you can grab it for free. There is also a C64 version.

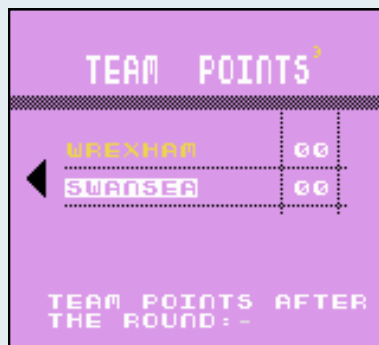


<https://h4plo.itch.io/ooze>



Footballer
by Rajcsányi László

Game Boy Color



Screenshot: BrewOtaku

With Euros recently ending, a soccer game was a must. In this one, you are a footballer, 17, with only £1,000 on you. The goal is to get your hands on the 'Footballer of the Year' title.



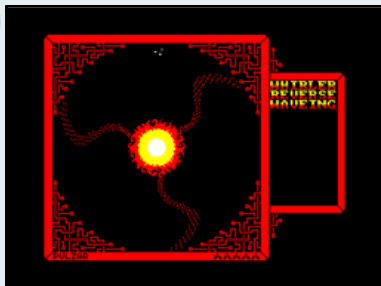
<https://lacoste42.itch.io/footballer-of-the-year>

News-Corner (Six of Twenty)

May 2024 - July 2024

 **Pulzar**
by Snauts

ZX Spectrum 48K & CPC



Screenshot: snauts.itch.io

Are you up for experiencing the thrill of a moth around a flame? Evade solar storms and outsmart galactic police as you escape a beam of electromagnetic radiation in this fast-paced game. 'Pulzar' is like playing a mesmerizing piece of art. You better be fast or else the beam will get ya!

 <https://snauts.itch.io/pulzar>

 **La Casa**
by Carmine Migliaccio

Commodore Plus/4



Screenshot: plus4world.powweb.com

Enter a haunted house, solve tricky puzzles, and find the key to escape. Can you outsmart the malevolent spirits in this text adventure?

 https://plus4world.powweb.com/software/La_Casa

 **FlammenWerfer**
by Snauts

Sega Genesis



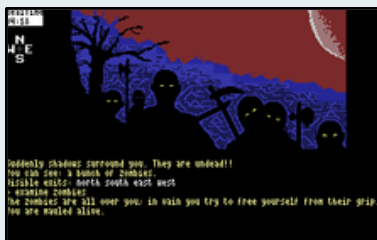
Screenshot: snauts.itch.io

A meme inspired this stylish tribute to 'Contra' and 'Metal Slug'. With a captivating walk cycle and gorgeous animations, 'FlammenWerfer' plays like a charm. You'll love every explosive moment!

 <https://snauts.itch.io/flammenwerfer-sega-genesis>

 **Excalibur**
by Carmine Migliaccio

Commodore Plus/4



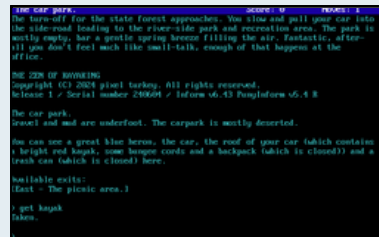
Screenshot: plus4world.powweb.com

Text-based adventure ride 'Excalibur' offers an epic, nostalgic journey! Wander around, face a horde of zombies. Explore ancient land and kick a wizard to finally hold the sword Excalibur in your hands.

 <https://plus4world.powweb.com/software/Excalibur>

 **The Zen of Kayaking**
by pixel_turkey & gamedevjeff

MS-DOS & C64



Screenshot: pixel-turkey.itch.io

You are off and want to spend your day kayaking. This is how your text adventure starts. There is a build for MS-DOS and also for the C64.

 <https://pixel-turkey.itch.io/the-zen-of-kayaking>

 **Chinese Juggler**
by Rajcsányi László

Game Boy Color



Screenshot: lacoste42.itch.io

Is juggling easy? In 'Chinese Juggler,' you need to spin five plates at the same time. Hone your skill as you spin each plate and quickly handle wobbles. This is a fan-remake of Ocean Software's title from 1983. Did you know that?

 <https://lacoste42.itch.io/chinese-juggler>

News-Corner (Seven of Twenty)

May 2024 - July 2024



Cauldron

by Rajcsányi László

Game Boy Color



Screenshot: BrewOtaku

A fantastic fan-remake of 'Cauldron'. You get to play a witch, flying on a broom to find keys to the underworld. Be sure to dodge annoying bats. Land on grassy clearings, open doors with matching keys, and collect spell ingredients. Hocus Pocus!



<https://lacoste42.itch.io/cauldron>



Gopher

by Rajcsányi László

Game Boy Color



Screenshot: lacoste42.itch.io

Protect carrots from hungry gophers. It's a fan remake of a 1982 VCS game by 'U.S. Games'.



<https://lacoste42.itch.io/gopher>



Deeper and Down

by The Red Bayron

Sam Coupé



Screenshot: jswmm.co.uk

If you loved the 1983 classic 'Manic Miner,' known for its brutal gameplay, you'll be thrilled by 'Manic Miner: Deeper and Down'. You know what else came out in 1983? 'Dragon's Lair', which wowed players with its stunning animation and adventure. Much like how this thrilled people, 'Deeper and Down' revives the charm of the original with a fresh twist. After the first 20 classic levels, you'll explore not 5 or 10 but 40 additional stages, adding up to 60 challenges! The Red Bayron utilized JSW64 128K game engine, keeping the spirit alive, with fresh features like trampolines and switches. It says something about this game, that so many people are willing to add to its legacy.



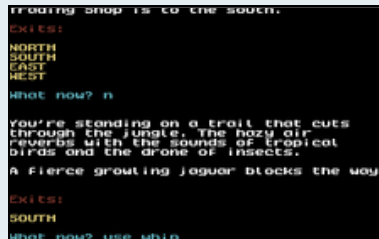
<https://jswmm.co.uk/topic/777-manic-miner-deeper-and-down/>



Crystals of Chaos

by Ricky Derocher

Commodore 64



Screenshot: rickyderocher.itch.io

Inspired by 'Indiana Jones,' this text-based adventure offers a fun, easy quest with no deaths or dead ends, perfect for newcomers and seasoned players alike. Chapter 3 will test you, though. Think you can handle the Schwierigkeiten?



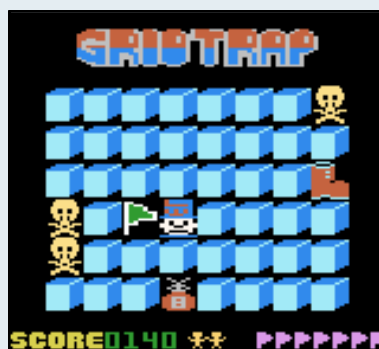
<https://rickyderocher.itch.io/iowa-jack-and-the-crystals-of-chaos-commodore-64>



Gridtrap

by Rajcsányi László

Game Boy Color



Screenshot: BrewOtaku

Move your character across a grid to defuse time bombs before they go kaboom! Avoid skulls and collect flags to level up and earn points.



<https://lacoste42.itch.io/gridtrap>

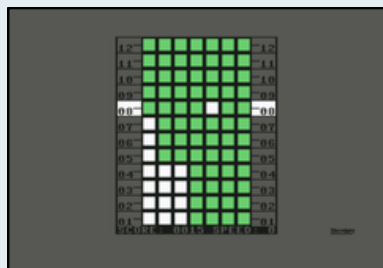
News-Corner [Eight of Twenty]

May 2024 - July 2024



Block Stack Basic
by Steveboy

Commodore 64



Screenshot: csdb.dk

A simple one button block stacking game for the C64 by Steveboy.



<https://csdb.dk/release/?id=243674>



Flood
by Jonathan Cauldwell

ZX Spectrum 48k



Screenshot: jonathan-cauldwell.itch.io

'Flood' is an arcade game. Really grumpy extra-terrestrials blew up a water reservoir. The water level rose badly and people ran in panic to their house roofs. Your job is to rescue them, but also eliminate the approaching UFOs. Jonathan, the author, recommends a play using 48K mode with Currah Microspeech enabled.

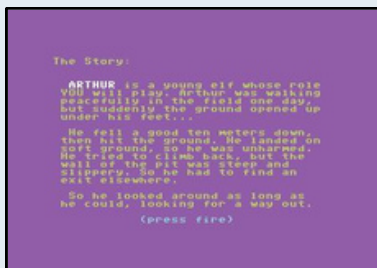


<https://jonathan-cauldwell.itch.io/flood>



Arthur
by KWAYNE

Commodore 64



Screenshot: kwayne.itch.io

'Arthur' is a rather short fantasy text adventure, based upon a story by 'József Martin'. You can play the game in Hungarian and English.



<https://kwayne.itch.io/arthur>



Bazookarrots
by Zhamul

MSX2



Screenshot: zhamul.itch.io

Making carrot juice is a lot of hard work, at least this is what 'Bazookarrots' shows us. Collect carrots, avoid dangerous bunnies (remember 'Monty Python and the Holy Grail'?) and bring the harvested carrots to the juicer!



<https://zhamul.itch.io/bazookarrots>



Goomba BreakOut
by BriG78cx

SNES



Screenshot: brig78cx.itch.io

SNES, Goomba's and BreakOut, in one game? Yes, 'BriG78cx' can!



<https://brig78cx.itch.io/goomba-breakout>



Piggy
by Rajcsányi László

Game Boy Color



Screenshot: lacoste42.itch.io

Help three little guys build their house in the woods. There are a bunch of animals such as wolves, bees, and snails. Occasionally, a ghost will be after you. Collect items to build up the house, but beware, you only have three lives.



<https://lacoste42.itch.io/piggy>

News-Corner [Nine of Twenty]

May 2024 - July 2024



Niplob Adventure 2
by Niplob

Game Boy Color



Screenshot: niplob.itch.io

Are you into crazy hard platform games? Do you like to mess with your nerves and enjoy rage? Guide a young girl in a wheelchair and find all 13 exits. Also, be ready to face some bosses.



<https://niplob.itch.io/game-boy-color-game-niplob-adventure-2>



AMSCII Invasor
by Rayon Studio

Amstrad CPC



Screenshot: rayon-studio.itch.io

'AMSCII Invasor' is a simple space shooter game. Inspired by a 10-Liner BASIC game written by 'V́ctor Parada' in 2022. Collect 1000 points to win the game. Figure out the twist and it gets easier.



<https://rayon-studio.itch.io/amscii-invasor>



Bit Bang
by Studio Guma

Game Boy Color



Screenshot: studioguma.itch.io

A mathematical game, where you need to transform the requested decimal number into a binary one in the least amount of moves.

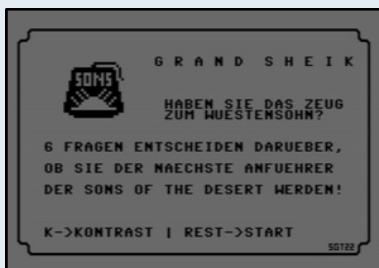


<https://studioguma.itch.io/bit-bang>



Grand Sheik
by Sergeant Deux-Deux

Commodore 64



Screenshot: sgt22.itch.io

A rather simple and short quiz game about the comedy duo 'Stan Laurel' and 'Oliver Hardy' in German language with only six questions. Nothing fancy, but kudos for the efforts, Sergeant.

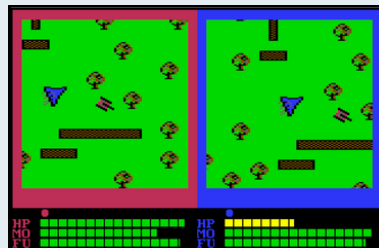


<https://sgt22.itch.io/grand-sheik>



Warzone
by orlof

Commodore 64



Screenshot: orlof.itch.io

'Warzone' is a two player war game. Come up with a strategy, enjoy action sequences and challenge your combat skills on the battlefield to eliminate your buddy player. There are three game modes.

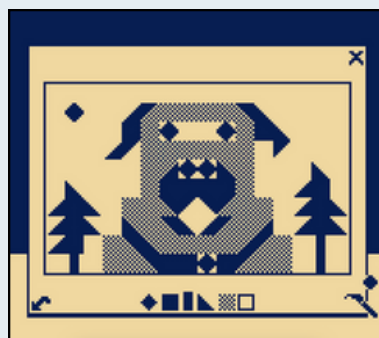


<https://orlof.itch.io/warzone>



Tiledentity
by Robert Dmyn

Game Boy



Screenshot: robert-doman.itch.io

You will need a strong mind playing Robert's 'Tiledentity'. You need to remember what you have seen and place the shapes with your brush. The closer you are, the better you score.



<https://robert-doman.itch.io/tiledentity>



News-Corner [Ten of Twenty]

May 2024 - July 2024



Nemesis War
by YourFurryFiend

Sega Genesis



Screenshot: yourfurryfiend.itch.io

An arcade action shooter with two game modes by 'Dan Jeffery'.



<https://yourfurryfiend.itch.io/nemesis-wars>



Fray Simon
by OI·3

ZX Spectrum 48k



Screenshot: oi3code.itch.io

It's not even dawn yet at the monastery, and strange noises from the closely located graveyard trigger Simon's attention. There is something evil and paranormal going on and this ain't good. There are a few things to discover in this scary adventure game. It's even scarier if you can use your visual imagination, just like the old days.



<https://oi3code.itch.io/fray-simon-english-version>



Turtles in Aqualand
by pavementtz

NES



Screenshot: pavementtz.itch.io

Turtlemen are invading in this platformer. Find their cloning device and stop their reproduction.

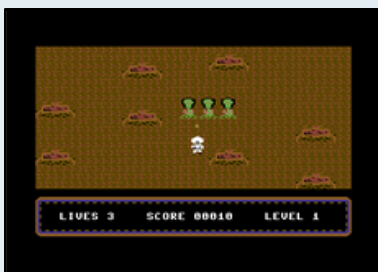


<https://pavementz.itch.io/turtles-in-aqualand>



IO's Enigma
by Laddh & Team

Commodore 64



Screenshot: csdb.dk/

The communication to a base has been cut off. You take your glider and land on the planet's surface. Now you have to find out what happened. Shoot your way through this vertical scrolling game and get to your enemies, before they get you.

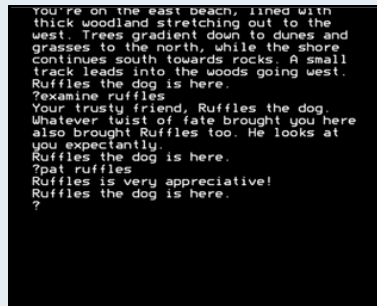


<https://csdb.dk/release/?id=243338>



Ghostship Delgado
by Tony Kingsmill

BBC Micro / Acorn Electron



Screenshot: loftcat.itch.io

You are having a blast on a luxurious yacht, but a mysterious ghost ship is your destiny. A scary text adventure waits for you.



<https://loftcat.itch.io/ghostship-delgado>



Tunagi Kogeikan
by Piano No Renshu

Sega Genesis



Screenshot: piano-no-rensu.itch.io

'Tunagi Kogeikan' is a visual novel coded using SDGK. It's a rather short experience and lasts about five to ten minutes. The initial release was in Japanese, but now we can enjoy it in English. 'Sushi' meets a strange guy and ends up in a museum, and now what?



<https://piano-no-rensu.itch.io/tunagi>

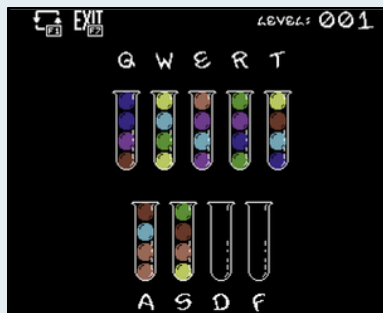
News-Corner (Eleven of Twenty)

May 2024 - July 2024



Huestack
by Sabbi & Team

Commodore 64



Screenshot: c64universe.wordpress.com

Bring together the balls of the same colour. The balls are collected in a cannula, so the balls stack up there until the top is reached, and certainly in the row you have dropped them in there. Tricky!



<https://csdb.dk/release/?id=243547>



Big Tube!
by Iceout

Commodore 64



Screenshot: csdb.dk

Avoid falling blocks and collect shields. Survive as long as possible! Mind that this Arcade style game will increase the speed regular, and at some point, you just won't be able to keep up!



<https://csdb.dk/release/?id=243514>



Kildu
by NICKMANN Studio

ZX Spectrum



Screenshot: nickmann-studio.itch.io

'The Adventures of Kildu the Goblin' is a new ZX Spectrum game, which won an award. It's an adventure game hiding social criticism in a rather sad, but also cute way. Little goblin girl 'Kildu' lived on a farm, but once her protective aunt died, she was on her own. Speculants arrived and preferred new and fancy buildings to make big money. Unfortunately, there was no more space for Kildu, and so she had to head out. The target is the mountains, where she tries to find herself a new home. Collect things, food, and health potions on the way. Keep your eyes open, as there are paths not that easy to find. You will find a key that might be your luck to get into your new home.



<https://nickmann-studio.itch.io/the-adventures-of-kildu-the-goblin-the-new-home>



Mochilo ZX
by rcougil

ZX Spectrum



Screenshot: rcougil.itch.io

Mochilo has to rescue his buddies Pintxo, Gazpacho and Kumba in this little platformer game. All three were locked away in cells by a crazy guy. Prepare to find the keys and free your friends.



<https://rcougil.itch.io/mochilo-zx>



Tron Deadly Discs
by Mr SQL

Commodore 64



Screenshot: csdb.dk

'Tron Deadly Discs' is inspired by various previously released 8-Bit versions. Defeat guards and don't let the deadly discs touch you. There is a lot of action on the screen. Run, just run!



<https://csdb.dk/release/?id=243909>

News-Corner [Twelve of Twenty]

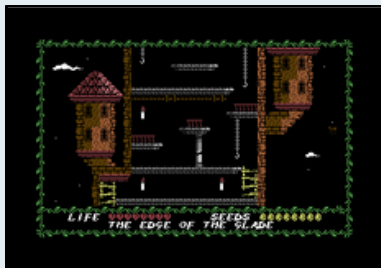
May 2024 - July 2024



Nixy 2

by Haplo & Andy Johns

Commodore 64



Screenshot: h4plo.itch.io

'Nixy and the Seeds of Doom' is the second platformer game featuring Nixy. 'BubbleSoftGames' initially released both Nixy's on the ZX Spectrum. Haplo and Andy Johns are now about to bring the latest Nixy to the C64, where it's already awaited. The developers promised to utilize a few features of the C64 to make it a better experience than on the ZX Spectrum. We can't wait to see the first public release, which might be already out by the time you read these lines. Help Nixy fight corruption and head out on a quest to do so. Explore dangerous caves, avoid ghouls and knights, and beware of obstacles blocking you from progressing further. Will you find all the clues needed for success? We wish, you will!



<https://h4plo.itch.io/nixy2>



Obscure

by Yousu Okashii



Game Boy Color



Screenshot: cobaltaoi.itch.io

Friends of NSFW games are already aware of Japanese developer 'Circle Yousu ga Okashii', who develops his games with the help of 'GB Studio'. He is here again with an awesome action RPG platformer for the Game Boy Color. There is plenty supply like various potions, weapons and a sub-weapon. Special moves include flying and throwing fireballs. Sounds like fun ingredients? There is more! The story is not that creative, but does the job: Aliens invaded a kingdom and someone is sent out to turn the wheel. In our case, you take over the role of 'Leuk', an artificial human like creature. Playing time is about two hours.



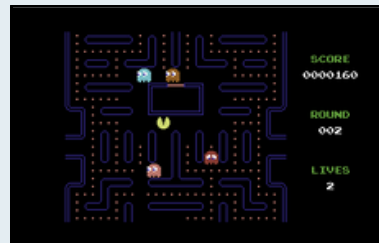
<https://cobaltaoi.itch.io/obscure>



RandomPac

by LC-Games

Commodore 64



Screenshot: lowcarb.itch.io

LC-Games pay tribute to Namco's Pacman, but they improved it a bit. You will love the procedurally generated mazes and bonus rounds! It adds up!



<https://lowcarb.itch.io/randompac-c64>



Quick Draw

by Rajcsányi László

Game Boy Color



Screenshot: lacoste42.itch.io

Do you remember 'Quick Draw' by John P. Shay for the Commodore Plus/4 from 1985? No? Neither do we! Luckily, we have László with a GBC and his pleasure to share. Be a cowboy, try to shoot your enemy. The game is for one or two players! Bang!



<https://lacoste42.itch.io/quick-draw-gbc>

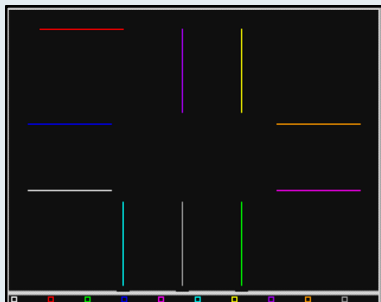
News-Corner [Thirteen of Twenty]

May 2024 - July 2024



The Grid
by LogicalByte

Amiga OCS



Screenshot: logicalbyte.itch.io

While this Tron style game for Amiga OCS is not a visual masterpiece, it allows up to ten human players, if you own the upcoming Octaplayer-adaptor by Alinea Computer. Power-ups and other things are WIP.



<https://logicalbyte.itch.io/the-grid>



Cat Hunts Rats
by Toolzzi

Amiga OCS



Screenshot: tooizzi.itch.io

Sometimes game titles are pretty straightforward and you instantly know what to do. Control a cat, and your meal are the rats running around in each level. Yummy, yummy! Let's have a feast!



<https://tooizzi.itch.io/cat-hunts-rats-amiga-game>



Sky Savior 2600
by Flump Studios

Atari VCS



Screenshot: flump-studios.itch.io

Defend the city of 'NeoCov' from bizarre alien insect invaders! Now also for the Atari VCS!



<https://flump-studios.itch.io/sky-saviour-2600>



Ring Dash
by BriG78cx

Game Boy Advance



Screenshot: brig78cx.itch.io

We could summarize this game here as a Pacman style game, with Sonic characters, on a non Sega handheld. Collect rings, avoid enemies or activate shields and go after them. Enemies do not respawn, and there are warp portals. This game feels so wrong, but positively.



<https://brig78cx.itch.io/ringdash-gba>



Nu, Pogodi!
by Rajcsányi László

Game Boy



Screenshot: lacoste42.itch.io

A soviet clone of Nintendo's Game & Watch 'Egg'. Help the wolf steal eggs from hens. Obviously, the egg should not slide to the floor. Two difficulties: A+B.



<https://lacoste42.itch.io/nu-pogodi>



Galaga 500
by jodt666 & Team

Amiga OCS



Screenshot: jodt666.itch.io.

The arcade shooter classic 'Galaga' trans-coded from Z80 to 68K assembly. It will run faster and better on AGA.



<https://jodt666.itch.io/galaga500>

News-Corner (Fourteen of Twenty)

May 2024 - July 2024



Duck and Cover
by Siddikinz

Atari VCS



Screenshot: forums.atariage.com

Dodge the falling bombs and exploding clouds. Simultaneous multiplayer mode is available.

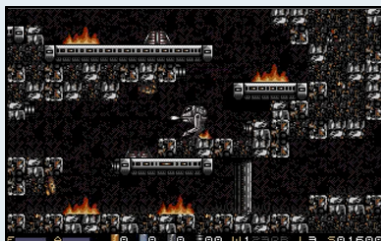


<https://forums.atariage.com/topic/369810-duck-and-cover/>



Droid SE
by junosix

Amiga OCS



Screenshot: <https://youtu.be/dRO23pszzLA>

'junosix' remade Droid from the Atari STE, which was initially released in 1992 with the coverdisk of the 'ST Format' magazine. It's fun to play run'n'gun platform action game and, makes a great addition to the fast-growing library of Amiga games. It has a pretty dark atmosphere with a perfect matching palette, this is art!

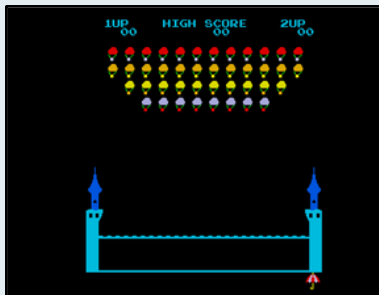


<https://eab.abime.net/showthread.php?t=118152>



King and Balloon
by JoeJoe

Amiga OCS



Screenshot: rmjoejoe.it.ch.io

Namco's Arcade classic from 1980 1:1 transcribed for the Amiga OCS by 'JoeJoe'. Shoot the colourful balloons and keep the king protected.



<https://rmjoejoe.it.ch.io/kingandballoon500>



The Dark Knight
by Mananuk

Amstrad CPC



Screenshot: mananuk.it.ch.io

A fabulous Amstrad CPC platform game. A virus has spread across a city, and the scientists who can create an antidote were kidnapped by a gang. 'The Dark Knight' needs to rescue them, get a sample virus & kick the bad guys.



<https://mananuk.it.ch.io/dark-knight>



Basilisk of Roko 2
by RetroSótano & Team

ZX Spectrum



Screenshot: retrosotano.it.ch.io

Basilisk 2 is an action platformer for the ZX Spectrum. The storyline is a bit excessive but be assured this game rocks!



<https://retrosotano.it.ch.io/basilisk-of-roko-2>



Paloma's Rescue
by InfiniteMSX

MSX2



Screenshot: msxdev.org

Mage 'Morgath' kidnapped Princess Paloma. What a disaster! What is not a disaster, is the gameplay, the music, and the graphical illustration. Everything well done, and also the very first game handed in at MSXdev 2024. The storyline might not win any literature award, but hey!



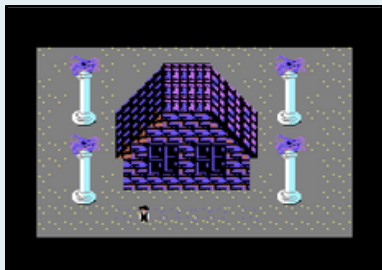
<https://www.msxdev.org/2024/05/03/msxdev24-01-princess-palomas-rescue/>

News-Corner (Fifteen of Twenty)

May 2024 - July 2024



Commodore 64



Screenshot: frodewin.itch.io

You are with your friends, then you aren't. The town looks familiar, but it isn't. What the hell is going on here? Find out in this new C64 adventure game.



<https://frodewin.itch.io/tritopia-c64>



Game Boy



Screenshot: bipedal-studios.itch.io

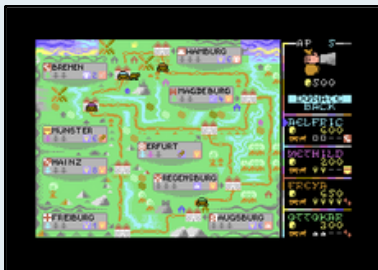
Card games are not everyone's cup of tea, but that's not a reason to not try. Your goal is to be the first player in the turn to get the highest number with a card of the same shape. There are rules and extras.



<https://bipedal-studios.itch.io/>



Commodore 64

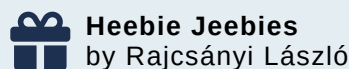


Screenshot: windigoproductions.itch.io

'Windigo Productions' are known for lovely turn based business games. As you possibly recognized, 'Die Kaufmannsgilde' is for sure German, but there is English and Polish language support. A 'Gilde' is a trading association. You start as a little 'no name' merchant in medieval Germany and have to make your way up to the top and to get finally accepted by the 'Gilde'. Travel from town to town, but beware of thieves! Trade your goods to your advantage and come up with strategies. Up to four players can enjoy the game together, but not simultaneously. You will be happy to know that a full-fledged fancy box for money is available from 'Komoda & Amiga plus Magazine'.



<https://windigoproductions.itch.io/>



Game Boy



Screenshot: lacoste42.itch.io

Digger Doc discovered an ancient underground vault filled with treasures. You can't simply collect, but need to push the items out of the vault. Mind the guardians, though!



<https://lacoste42.itch.io/heebie-jeebies-gb>



Atari Lynx



Screenshot: forums.atariage.com

We love it when learning projects turn out nicely. 'jum' brings Paratroopers to the Atari Lynx, fully coded in 6502 Assembler. The game itself is based on the 1981 Apple II game 'Sabotage' by 'Mark Allen'. Defend your base!



<https://forums.atariage.com/topic/368698-lyxass-learning-project-paratroopers/>



News-Corner (Sixteen of Twenty)

May 2024 - July 2024



Tarzan

by James Wickstead DA

Atari VCS



Screenshot: gamehistory.org

Thanks to AtariSpot, AtariAge and the Video Game History Foundation, an Atari VCS game from 1983 has seen daylight. Developed more than 40 years ago by US based design studio James Wickstead Design Associates from New Jersey. We are talking about good old 'Tarzan' here. Not so nice people captured Tarzan's family. Master the dangers of the jungle. Climb onto trees, precisely coordinate your jumps or steer clear of falling stones, avoid crocodiles, beat up the walking beasts. The time pressure is always there, raising the difficulty and stress bar significantly. For a game of its age, it's quite awesome and technically still amazing. Get the ROM and enjoy a game released a little too late.



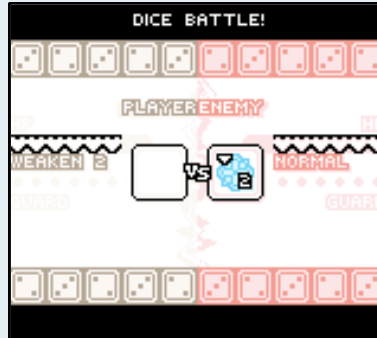
<https://forums.atariage.com/topic/367498-atari-2600-tarzan-released/>



Battle Dice Paradise

by Harley Wilson

Amiga OCS



Screenshot: hwilson.itch.io

Harley Wilson brings us a strategic dice building game. It features auto-battles and a Gacha-style Shop system.



<https://hwilson.itch.io/bdp>



Chew Chew Mimic

by John Riggs

NES



Screenshot: johnblueriggs.itch.io

Four knights with different abilities and three coins to collect. More coins will give you more endings. Use arrows, boxes, and springs to guide the knights to hungry mimics.



<https://johnblueriggs.itch.io/chew-chew-mimic>



Healz

by GalacticInsight

Game Boy Advance



Screenshot: galacticinsight.itch.io

Go on a journey in a dark dungeon in this RPG style game. Take over the role of a 'healer'. This game was an entry into the 'GBA Jam 2024'.



<https://galacticinsight.itch.io/healz-gba-jam>



Space Tonbow

by SteelFinger Studios

Master System



Screenshot: bofner.itch.io

Vertically playable Master System arcade style games are probably not occurring that often in the wild. Take control of Tonbow, a mechanical dragonfly, and destroy orbs. Once an intact orb hits the end of the screen, it explodes and leaves a pressure wave, going back its way. If it hits you, you are gone.



<https://bofner.itch.io/>

News-Corner [Seventeen of Twenty]

May 2024 - July 2024

 **Trasgo**
by 21bloques

Amstrad CPC



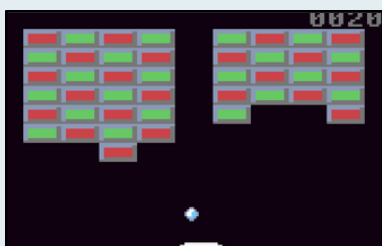
Screenshot: 21bloques.itch.io

Trasgo the elf embarks on a quest to rescue his family. With the ability to control nature, Trasgo must traverse forests, caverns, and ruins while avoiding traps and defeating enemies. Along his journey, he discovers ancient chests that grant him new abilities.

 <https://21bloques.itch.io/trasgo>

 **Powernoid 2024**
by Brek Martin

Atari Lynx



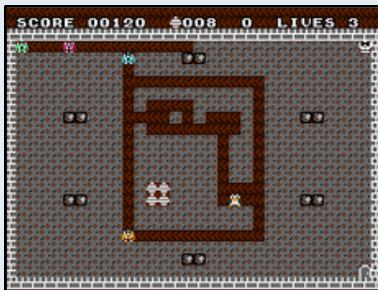
Screenshot: forums.atariage.com

'Powernoid' is a 'Breakout' game with several pinball-like elements, such as having multiple balls. The player gets five balls for a new game, and your task is to destroy all bricks at the top third of the screen.

 <https://forums.atariage.com/topic/368094-powernoid-2024-release/>

 **Boulder Crash**
by BriG78cx

NES



Screenshot: BrewOtaku

Help Penguy collect gems in dungeons and avoid meanies; push boulders to turn them into gems.

 <https://brig78cx.itch.io/boulder-crash>

 **Sky: Sun and Clouds**
by The E-Base

NES



Screenshot: tvs-official-64.itch.io

A game in which you are the sun and your task is to bounce carefully and strategically on clouds, making sure that you don't end up falling in the water. With 25 stages, you are sure to get the hang of it. The game is an unofficial port, the original author is ok with these.

 <https://tvs-official-64.itch.io/sky-fc>

 **Fluid City Musical**
by Mr SQL

Commodore 64



Screenshot: csdb.dk

With multiple soundtracks and neat graphics, the game is a fun shoot'em up by Mr SQL. It has a rating system, and you score by spending time with the throttle on. The game requires a really fast reaction time.

 <https://csdb.dk/release/?id=243428>

 **Secrets**
by Wizbit Games

ZX Spectrum 48K



Screenshot: wizbitgames.co.uk

This fun platform game sends you on a journey to find keys scattered around a castle to open the matching doors. Each key you find will get you one step closer to escape this cruel, dark place.

 <https://wizbitgames.itch.io/secrets>

News-Corner (Eighteen of Twenty)

May 2024 - July 2024



The 6 Emeralds
by Gudatsch

ZX Spectrum



Screenshot: youtu.be/kJ23TLuVZkc

'Sonic the Hedgehog and the 6 Chaos Emeralds' is a platformer featuring Sonic, certainly unofficial. Collect all 6 emeralds!



<https://gudatsch-new.itch.io/sonic-zx>



Mikoto Nikki
by blaqberry

Game Boy



Screenshot: blaqberry.itch.io

Dive into the remake of 'Mikoto's Diary' for the Game Boy. In this RPG game, you are Matarou, who confesses his love to Mikoto and visits her home. As he collects diary pieces, he finds Mikoto's dark secrets. You pick from different dialogues and plot your way ahead.



<https://blaqberry.itch.io/mikotonikki>



Penguin: Sokoban Adv.
by AJP Games

NES



Screenshot: ajp-games.itch.io

This cute gem sends you on a chilly adventure of collecting bones and finding your way to your igloo.

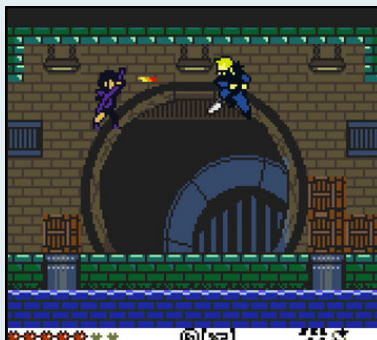


<https://ajp-games.itch.io/penguin-sokoban-adventure>



Lost Phoenix
by Gunsavior

Game Boy Color



Screenshot: gunsavior.itch.io

The game is based on a 2023 indie action movie, 'Lost Phoenix'. It's an exciting ride and offers a fun play through. You battle through a chaotic world ravaged by fanatics. Bring them to justice!



<https://gunsavior.itch.io/lost-phoenix-gbc>



Super Hard Bouncer
by Libra Bits

NES



Screenshot: libra-bits.itch.io

Bounce around the screen, avoid obstacles and collect power ups. 20 levels are available.

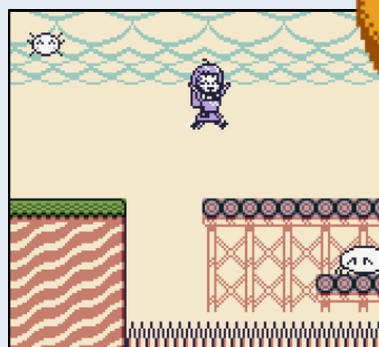


<https://libra-bits.itch.io/super-hard-bouncer-nes-game>



Amiya's Adventure
by VinusSekra

Game Boy Color



Screenshot: vinussekra.itch.io

A baddie has captured several 'Buckos', hiding them across levels. You as Amiya must save them in this title made in GB Studio. With six levels, and three different endings, the game is a sure-fire treat. Overall, nicely done.



<https://vinussekra.itch.io/amiyas-amazing-adventure>

News-Corner [Nineteen of Twenty]

May 2024 - July 2024



The Last of Us: BTY
by Kyle Jussab

Game Boy



Screenshot: kylejussab.itch.io

This is a fan-made game by Kyle Jussab for the Game Boy that explores the 20 years between Sarah's death and the main events of 'The Last of Us'. Also, this project is not affiliated with Naughty Dog. It delves into Joel's character, his grieving process, and the relationships he forms during this time. This tribute captures the essence of the original game without containing spoilers for Part 1 or Part 2. As a proof of concept, the developer says he's passionate about keeping up with the development of the game. The game deals well with the heavy narrative of the original games. It currently has no sound, though Jussab intends to change that in a future update.



<https://kylejussab.itch.io/tloubty>



G-Zero: World GP
by User0x7f

Game Boy Color



Screenshot: user0x7f.itch.io

Take part in the G-Zero World Grand Prix and of course, you should win the race!



<https://user0x7f.itch.io/g-zero-world-gp>



Mummy: Puzzle
by AJP Games



NES



Screenshot: ajp-games.itch.io

Help a mummy collect all keys of life and find the way back to the underworld. There are 40 levels — from easy to difficult. The game itself is created with 'Retro Puzzle Maker'.



<https://ajp-games.itch.io/mummy-egyptian-puzzle>



New World Mechants
by Akimbo Swords

Game Boy



Screenshot: akimbo-swords.itch.io

A trading simulator for the Sega Genesis. Travel from village to village, buy cheap, and sell expensive.



<https://akimbo-swords.itch.io/>



Karpe Diem
by birdup

Game Boy Color



Screenshot: mksf-birdup.itch.io

Karpe Diem is an awesome RGP, where you have to become the Karpe Diem fishing contest winner. Work against your rival, meet helpful people, and solve puzzles. The graphics were borrowed from a famous Nintendo franchise game series.



<https://mksf-birdup.itch.io/karpe-diem>

News-Corner [Twenty of Twenty]

May 2024 - July 2024



Chimney Man
by Gamecast

MSX



Screenshot: msxdev.org

Sweep chimneys and bring the right tools for this important task.

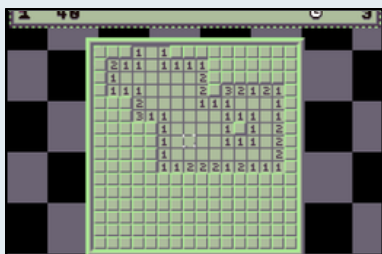


<https://www.msxdev.org/2024/06/21/msxdev24-06-chimney-man/>



Mini Mines
by sbeets

Game Boy Advance



Screenshot: sbeets.itch.io

'Mini Mines' brings Minesweeper to the Game Boy Advance with customizable grids up to 62x60 tiles and 750 mines. Flag mines using the number system, unlock new palettes by completing 16 records, and enjoy a fresh take on a timeless puzzle classic. It's perfect for both beginners and experts.

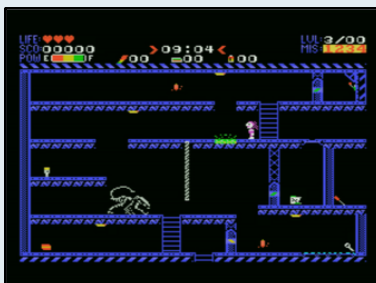


<https://sbeets.itch.io/mini-mines>



Alien
by Rodrigo Siqueira

MSX



Screenshot: msxdev.org

It's an unofficial Alien platformer that tasks players with completing three missions and getting the hell out of an alien infested planet. Beware!



<https://www.msxdev.org/2024/05/07/msxdev24-02-alienmsx/>



Minas
by Jose E. Robayo

MSX



Screenshot: msxdev.org

'Minas' is a time-attack shoot 'em up where you command a cannon to destroy mines while avoiding sea life. Inspired by classics, it offers a single-shot mechanic, adding a cool twist to sea-based shooting.



<https://www.msxdev.org/2024/06/14/msxdev24-05-minas/>



Masarat Khatira
by Altanerus Dog

Amstrad GX4000



Screenshot: altanerus-dog.itch.io

You need to recover scrolls and slay monsters in this simple game, programmed almost entirely in BASIC.



<https://altanerus-dog.itch.io/masarat-khatira>



Whack 'Em
by JessCreations

MSX



Screenshot: msxdev.org

It's arcade chaos everywhere as Byron, the baby bear, gets zapped by a game machine, creating naughty digital clones. Thwack them with the PEEK-0 hammer and test your reflexes in this Whack-a-mole variant. Initially for ColecoVision and SG-1000, it was adapted for MSX later.



<https://www.msxdev.org/2024/06/04/msxdev24-04-whack-em-smack-em-byrons/>

Retro Puzzle Maker v2



Create your very own NES puzzle game with this fun tool

In BrewOtaku #002, we explored 'GB Studio', a fantastic tool for crafting games for the Game Boy, Game Boy Color, and Game Boy Pocket in (almost) a jiffy. Now, let's switch gears to another piece of Nintendo hardware. What do titles like 'Krazy Kreature', 'Sokoban', and 'Adventures Of Lolo' have in common? They're all classic NES titles, but more importantly, they're supremely fun puzzle games that kept us glued to the screen.

Hey, come back from that nostalgia trip and imagine this: It's your day off, and you're eager to create something spectacular to show your friends. Why not design your own NES game?

Enter 'Retro Puzzle Maker', a super cool and free online game-making tool for the NES running in a browser, on Windows, and Linux. It lets you create block-based puzzle games and compile them as playable ROMs. You can even flash your creations onto cartridges and play them on an original NES console. We gave it a go and created 'BrewOtaku's Puzzle-o-Rama' to learn and have fun.



Screenshot: puzzle.nes.science

'Retro Puzzle Maker' has an easy to use code-free interface, a drag and drop level editor, and it offers ready-made graphics to start right away. So, whether you're a seasoned NES aficionado or a complete noob ready to plunge into game development, here you are covered in all 8-bit glory. BrewOtaku's Usman couldn't resist putting on his game-developing hats, dreaming of becoming the next Notch. Maybe that's a stretch, but we just had to dive in for a closer look.

The first thing you'll see when you open your project is a screen where you can give your game a catchy name and add yourself as the author. You'll also get to pick your favourite game style from three fun options. If you're feeling extra creative, you can even add custom sprite-work.

Create a New Game

Use the form below to start building your game! Everything you write here can be changed later, so don't stress over it too much.

Game Title
BrewOtaku's Puzzle-o-Rama
Max 26 characters

Author
BrewOtaku
Names longer than 26 characters may appear unusually

Player Sprite
NES RPG Knight

Preview
[Preview of the selected player sprite]

Screenshot: puzzle.nes.science

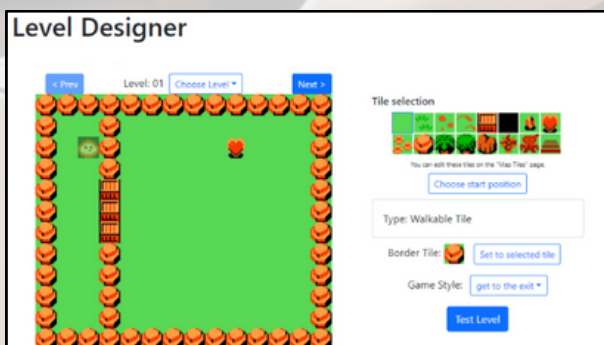
The title and intro screens come packed with all the info you need to get started, including game instructions. But why stop there? Adding your own unique flair is a breeze. You can choose different colour palettes, add extra text. Switching between drawing and typing modes is as simple as clicking on the highlighted box. For those finer details, like adding smaller characters or text, opt for the 8 pixel tile option.



And when you're ready to make a bold statement, the 16 pixel option is perfect for text and sprites. Listen, here's a pro tip: Don't forget to save your progress at this point. A prompt will pop up asking if you want to save, as you switch between menu selections.

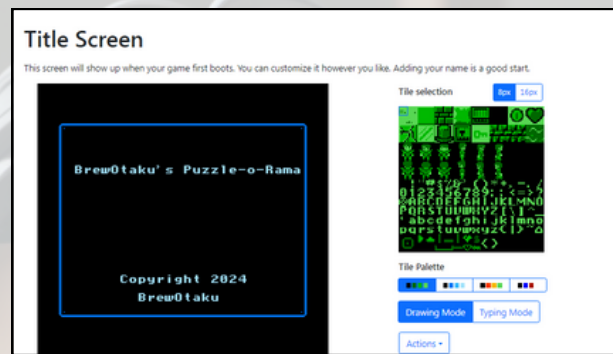
“DESIGN LIKE A PRO”

Entering into the world of level design can feel daunting. From intricate mazes to epic adventures, your imagination will run wild with a myriad of possibilities. As you start designing, you might feel like a visionary game designer, dreaming of your creation becoming a blockbuster hit complete with a movie adaptation, merchandise, and even a TV series. But, before letting your ambitions run gaga, ground yourself in the basics.



Screenshot: puzzle.nes.science

Dive into the design process, as this is one of the key elements of creating with this tool. This hands-on experience is vital for understanding the mechanics and discovering what works best for your game. Though it's tempting to design a complex game right off the bat, it's wiser to start small. Instead of crafting an elaborate maze like the iconic 'Spencer Mansion', focus on creating a concise game with eight to ten well-designed levels. In our game, Usman designed a smooth difficulty curve. The initial levels are easy and the challenges increase gradually.



Screenshot: puzzle.nes.science

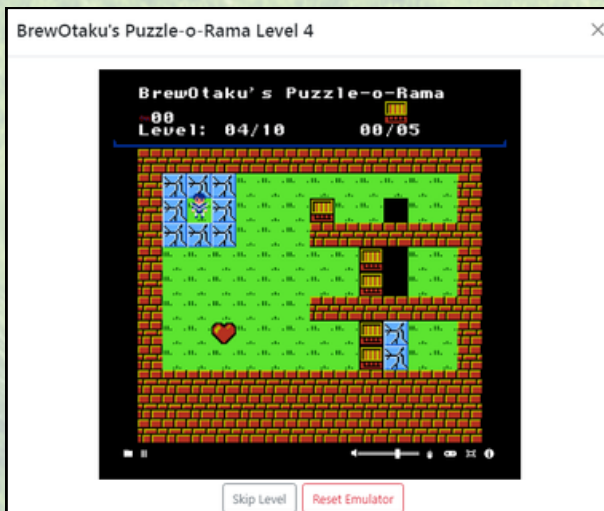
To add elements like blocks, holes, and crates simply click on the tile you want from the selection screen and then click where you want to place it in your level.

“TEST AND SHOUT”

Designing levels is an absolute blast! You can paint a beautiful picture, filling your levels with a wide variety of tiles, crates, and other elements. The freedom to create anything you envision makes the process incredibly fun. However, the real test comes when you play through your level. Suddenly, those exciting designs might reveal some major issues. Your player character might get stuck in a corner with no way out. This could be because you forgot to include the level-ending heart, or because they got trapped by a collapsible tile.

Testing reveals these flaws and is essential for refining your design. Sometimes, what seemed like a challenging puzzle can be solved in a flash. If your level can be completed in 15 seconds, it's back to the drawing board. Add more layers of complexity and introduce new obstacles to make it a true test of skill. You can change graphical tiles and colour palettes to give your level a unique look. This is highly recommended to make your game outstanding. Plus, you can upload and import new NES music tracks to match the perfect mood.

The NES has its limitations, but that's part of the charm! With a limited number of tiles and colours, you have to get creative. The system restricts you to one palette per 16x16 pixel area, affecting all four tiles in that grouping. These constraints turn level design into a rewarding challenge, pushing you to think outside the box.



Screenshot: puzzle.nes.science

Once you've designed and tested your game, seeing the credits roll with your name on them is incredibly satisfying. It's a proud moment indeed. Remember, as the saying goes, "A strong man doesn't need to read the future, he makes his own." You've just made your mark on the NES world!

“EIGHT-BIT LOVE”

Designing levels is a fascinating journey of creativity. Through this process, you'll discover the joy of creating intricate puzzles and enjoyable gameplay experiences, all within the nostalgic realm of the Nintendo Entertainment System (in Japan known as the 'Famicom'). It's not hard to imagine that this tool can easily work for school computing classes, bringing a dose of retro gaming magic to the classroom. There are still publishers for NES titles, so what about having your title eventually be produced commercially?

It's important to note that the level editor can store up to 64 levels for your game. If you are using less, you can set your game to end after fewer levels than that. If you do this, all 64 levels will be saved, and you can continue to edit them.

The way to your own NES game is pretty logical and straight forward. Not to mention it's near self-explaining if you read, understand and follow the instructions. In the rare occurrence of being stuck, there is help as well. At the bottom of most pages, you'll find a FAQ section. One such section even links to software for creating custom assets. Last thing to remember is you can switch between three game styles: box-pushing puzzles, collecting all keys, or simply reaching the end. These can be used strictly, or you can mix and match.

If you happen to be one of those individuals who are very unlucky with pixeling own appealing graphics, make sure to search the internet for free 8-bit assets. There is paid stuff, but also CC0 graphics and music for absolutely free use. Again, mind the restrictions. Don't forget to give credits where due.

So go out there and connect with other talented NES developers and see the incredible games they've crafted using this tool. If you're interested in exploring more of what the Retro Puzzle Maker community has to offer, you can check out the Retro Puzzle Maker Discord channel. Oh, and do have a lookie look at our amazing game 'BrewOtaku's Puzzle-o-Rama' on our itch.io page and share with us if you come up with something on your own.

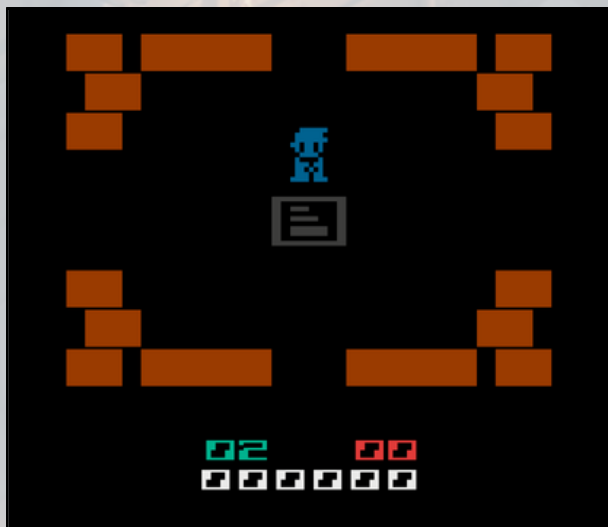


<https://puzzle.nes.science/>



Ultrar's Lair (2024)

a COMMERCIAL game by Oniric Factor for Atari VCS



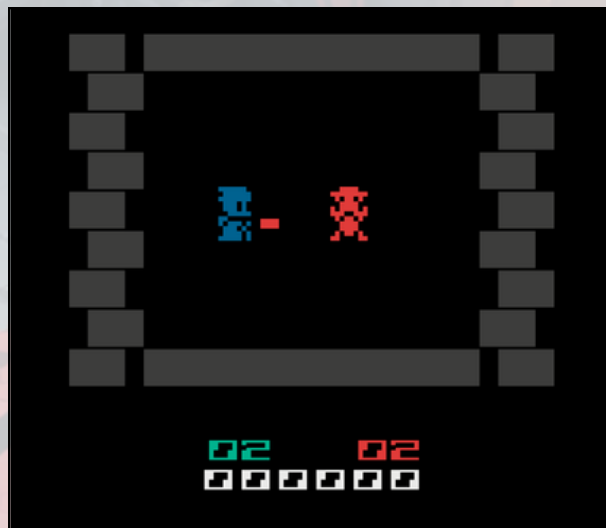
Screenshot: oniric-factor.itch.io

If you thought rogue-like mechanics are a thing of the past, think again. Their imprints can be found even on many modern games, with 'Dark Souls' and 'Dead Cells' just two such examples. The rogue-like we're discussing is a 32Kb gem called 'Ultrar's Lair,' designed to run on the original Atari VCS (of course!).

"SMELLS LIKE 32KB SPIRIT!"

To put it in perspective, some images in this magazine are larger in size than the entire game. Talk about making every kilobyte count! The mastermind behind it, 'Jorge Romero', utilized 'batari Basic' and a couple of Assembler mini kernels for the multi-score and bitmap screens. Romero says it's 'powerful and simple enough to make great games,' and we couldn't agree more. The game plunges you into the darkened land of 'Ekeanor', where a curse has turned its people to stone. A young druid is the only hope. Armed with a handy dagger, our brave hero ventures into the abyss to face nasty demons and break the curse. I could imagine myself playing this while blasting some Teutonic power metal à la 'Blind Guardian' or 'Halloween' to get the blood pumping.

In each dungeon, your goal is to locate the key to open the exit and descend further into the depths. Along the way, you'll find items that ramp up hit points, improve weapons, and boost movement speed. As you delve deeper into Ultrar's Lair, watch out for new enemies that will appear, each more potent than the last. You can write the ROM to a cartridge and play it on an original machine, or load it onto a PC using your favourite VCS emulator.

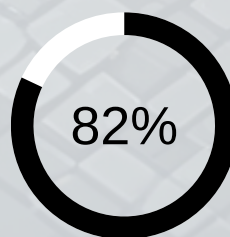


Screenshot: oniric-factor.itch.io

CONCLUSION

Ultrar's Lair is a delightful surprise, with a fine aesthetic and a cute, Nintendo-like bounce to our hero. It's wild that even after its 1977 release, the Atari VCS maintains an active homebrew community and offers modern-day programming tools. Yippie!

BREWScore



LINK



<https://oniric-factor.itch.io/ultars-lair>

Goldorak (2024) 🎁

a FREE game by Zisquier & Team for Amstrad CPC Plus and GX4000



Screenshot: zisquier.itch.io

The thing about shoot 'em up games is that they demand quick reflexes and precise coordination from players. If you're proud of your reflexes and in the mood for a riveting challenge, Zisquier's latest game, 'Goldorak' for Amstrad Plus and GX4000, is the choice of the hour.

“SAUCER RHAPSODY!”

This game pays homage to the classic anime 'Grendizer,' a TV series that aired from 1975 to 1977, produced by 'Dynamic Productions' and animated by legendary 'Toei Animation'. BrewOtaku also celebrates the 40th anniversary of the beloved Amstrad CPC 464. So what's better way to honor this classic system than by reviewing Goldorak? The game is packed with vibrant pixels, awesome electronic tunes, and an impressive amount of data compressed into a 64Kb cartridge only. The developers made tough choices to fit everything in, aiming to create the ultimate shoot 'em up game for the Amstrad console without losing the essence of the anime. As Goldorak, you traverse hostile territories — from lush green plains to erupting volcanoes — to repel the enemy invasion. Action is a guaranteed promise in this free game 'by Goldorak fans for Goldorak fans'.

As for the story, the baddie, 'King Vega', seeks to expand his empire and unleashes armies of flying saucers and giant robots on neighbouring planets. This turns the peaceful world of 'Fleed' into a wasteland. Crown Prince Duke Fleed steals Grendizer, a powerful robot that can fly with Spacer, a flying saucer, to face the fearsome Vega motherships. Only the most skilled will overcome the waves of enemies. Looks like our planet really, really needs us. Bring it on, Vega! After a resolved route, you spend credits for upgrades, supporting your mission further.

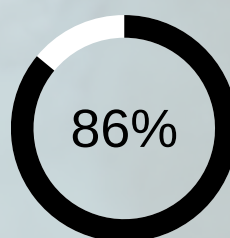


Screenshot: zisquier.itch.io

CONCLUSION

The music by Johan 'Pulsophonic' perfectly adds to the high-octane action. The background graphics are stunning, making the game a visual treat. Goldorak is a must-play for loyal fans of Grendizer.

BREWScore



LINK



<https://zisquier.itch.io/goldorak>

Star Blader (2024)

a COMMERCIAL game by Retroguru for Atari Lynx, published by DragonBox Shop



Screenshot: retroguru.com

'Barbarian' meets 'Star Wars' — this could be the short sum-up for Star Blader. Royal siblings got attacked in their glider during a peaceful and diplomatic mission near planet 'Xanesh 7'. A fancy dressed robot calling himself 'General Luger' seems to be the source of all troubles. Princess Alenia has gone missing, and Prince Elian has to fight odd clones of himself.

"FIRE UP YOUR LASER SWORD!"

The prince is being constantly attacked, and it's serious about life and death. Different positions and fighting moves might help to attack specific body parts of your opponent. Ingame you will find details on these different moves and a training mode. One of the most spectacular moves is possibly chopping off the head of your enemy. The head falls to the floor, a few red pixels appear and a little green robot, passing by the playfield, kicks away this round remain. Is that disgusting or genius? We can't tell, but what we can tell is, that this is nothing new either. UK based pixel-legend 'Simon Butler' has been responsible for the graphics, and you can clearly see his decades of experience, when it comes to pixel art. Every new background and sprite art seen by the eye is pure hand set pixel love.

Gisberto 'nop90' Rondinella picked up the challenge to write the Atari Lynx code, which was quite an intense task. The first demo of this game has seen daylight at the German demoparty 'Revision' in 2021. Michal 'Miker' Szpilowski provided the soundtrack, and especially the scenery in combination with his tunes, raises the overall atmosphere to another level.



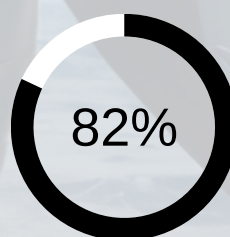
Screenshot: retroguru.com

CONCLUSION



Star Blader is a great but shortwhile hack and slash game, which is difficult and requires dedicated training. Can you defeat Luger and rescue your sister? If you own a ComLynx cable, you can train against another fellow player. Not many new Lynx games have this feature, which makes this title outstanding. Oh, no shit: American-German author 'Mark Wamsler' wrote a short novel about the story, which is delivered with the boxed game as well.

BREWScore



LINK



<https://www.retroguru.com>

Aliens: Neoplasma II (2024)

a COMMERCIAL game by Sanchez Crew for ZX Spectrum 128K



Screenshot: sinc-lair.itch.io

The 1979 movie 'Alien' has a Hungarian title that translates back into English as 'The Eighth Passenger is Death.' This chilling title sets the tone for a series known for its terrifying monsters. Now, fans of the film series can jump into this deadly universe with the unofficial game 'Aliens: Neoplasma II'.

"WRATH OF THE FACEHUGGERS"

The first game generated a lot of buzz and garnered significant love from the retro gaming community. 'Aliens: Neoplasma II' by 'Sanchez Crew' picks up the story of Lieutenant Smith inside a secret Weyland-Yutani laboratory. Facing trained guards, a hostile AI, and the ever so scary Xenomorphs, Ashley has just one thing on her mind: Avenging her team's demise. The game's programming, coding, and level design by Alexander Udotov are impeccable. The platforming is flawless, with smart hit detection for a ZX Spectrum game. The game's expanded design is tight and features fantastically animated alien sprites. Each part of the ship is visually distinct, with some areas having ladders and vents and others dominated by corridors. Besides English, the game is also available in Russian, Spanish, and Ukrainian languages.

Oleg Nikitin's music is a complex and impressive. Avoiding the usual harsh, droning synths, it features energetic sci-fi sounds and an uplifting beat. The nostalgic eighties vibe it creates perfectly matches the game's design and setting.



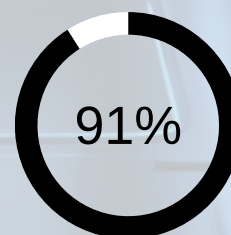
Screenshot: sinc-lair.itch.io

The ZX Spectrum Next version supports 60Hz, making for a far smoother experience. This enhancement is just one example of how modern updates can breathe new life into classic platforms. Dive in and see why this game has thrilled Spectrum fans and Alien fans alike.

CONCLUSION

In an unofficial capacity, Aliens: Neoplasma II stands out as one of the best games tied to the classic horror series. It's an excellent platformer that's addictive, immersive, and impressively designed and presented.

BREWScore



LINK



<https://sinc-lair.itch.io/aliens-neoplasma-2>

Timo's Castle (2024)

a COMMERCIAL game by Pixelbrei Games for Commodore 64



Screenshot: romwer.itch.io

This is a game that went through a few naming changes due to copyright issues before settling on its current title. 'Timo's Castle', produced by 'Pixelbrei Games', is a heartfelt homage to the 1984 classic 'Henry's House' by 'Chris Murray'. Capturing the spirit of the original, it feels like a true modern-day sequel.

"HEY AMBER, ARE YOU OK!?"

The game draws heavy nostalgic inspiration from 'Henry's House', blending modern game principles with a bright and vibrant graphical style. With only eight levels, each distinct in look, the game captivates players with its engaging graphics and personal touches. Music interludes and graphical effects are triggered when collecting specific items, beautifying the game further. We can tell a lot of passion has gone into making this game. A nice touch is the inter-level cutscene showing Timo walking from one room to the next. However, the absence of a graphical introduction is a slight drawback. The story follows Timo, an honourable prince who inherits a cursed castle where his girlfriend Amber disappears. To progress, Timo must collect all items in each level to reveal a key that unlocks the exit.

Gameplay is fun, with spot-on control mechanics, though figuring out which parts of the game world are safe to walk on requires guessing. Few levels also feature light trigger-based puzzles. The inclusion of endless continues allows most players to actually finish the game, but those who finish it in one go are rewarded with a cool end screen.



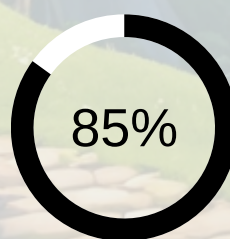
Screenshot: romwer.itch.io

Lastly, two difficulty modes — normal and easy — give players the option to switch things up as per their liking.

CONCLUSION

With its charming gameplay, Timo's Castle is a must-play for every C64 gamer, celebrating the legacy of Henry's House. There's a wide variety of stellar sound effects and the different challenges make this game absolutely unmissable and a top 2024 Commodore 64 game.

BREWScore



LINK



<https://romwer.itch.io/hc>

Cold And Starving (2024) 🎁

a FREE game by Memelvar for Nintendo Entertainment System (NES)



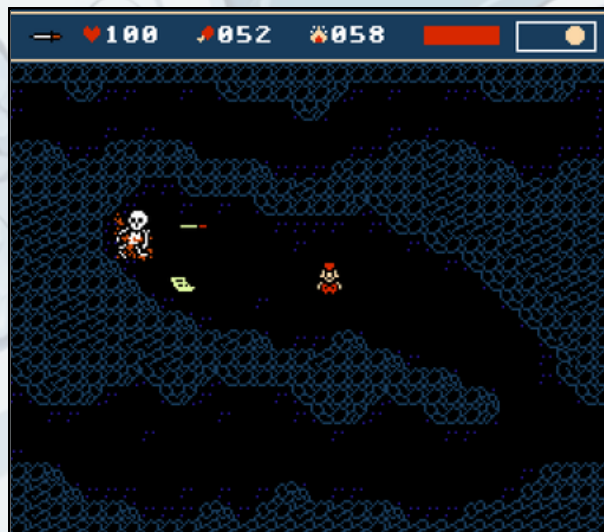
Screenshot: memelvar.itch.io

'Cold and Starving' by Memelvar plunges you into a chilling survival experience reminiscent of 'The Long Dark' by Hinterland Studio. One moment, you're piloting a plane, and the next, you're parachuting into freezing mountains. It is an 8-bit survival beauty for the NES or Famicom.

"COLD AS ICE ICE BABY!"

Though still in development, this game offers a promising, albeit rough, survival experience. You'll find yourself navigating colourful trails and tackling the essentials of survival amidst the harsh, freezing environment. We particularly enjoyed the trail designs, which bring a splash of colour to the otherwise stark maps. The pause menu, while functional, could benefit from adding subtitles to actions to indicate when they're active. Perhaps a nudge in the tutorial about crafting would be nice. The game begins with a riveting intro cutscene depicting the plane crash, setting the mood perfectly. As you walk through the cold wilderness, crafting tools and gathering resources are crucial. Each chilly night brings with it a new challenge.

The nights have a creepy element to them, as there's always something waiting in the darkness. Quite often, you are forced to rush back to your cabin with your heart racing. Memelvar, the game's creator, has documented the development process on his YouTube channel. With 25 episodes so far, viewers are hooked on watching the game evolve. The series is an informative and fascinating insight into the complex challenges and triumphs of game development.

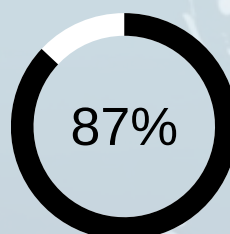


Screenshot: memelvar.itch.io

CONCLUSION

The game is shaping up to be quite an icy gem for the NES, giving you a fun survival experience not common with the system. Can you survive the freezing nights and lurking dangers? Oh, and eat something, will ya. You look totally famished.

BREWScore



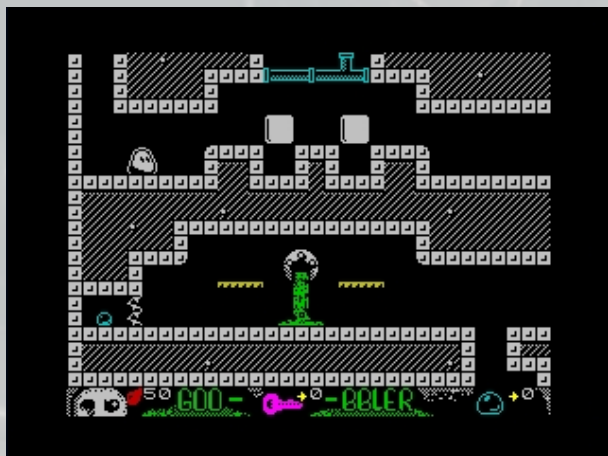
LINK



<https://memelvar.itch.io/cold-starving>

Goobbler (2024)

a FREE game by Kraptol for ZX Spectrum



Screenshot: kraptol.itch.io

Do you remember the lava level in 'Super Mario Bros.'? Now just imagine that level with more details and, instead of Mario, a cute water bubble hero. Enter 'Goobbler' for the ZX Spectrum by Kraptol, a game where you navigate through toxic environments to combat water pollution and save the planet's H2O reserves.

"BRIDGE OVER BLOOPER WATER"

Goobbler immerses players in a sparkling world where our water bubble bestie must shoot water to liquidate enemies and clear obstacles. The platformer's graphics are great for the ZX Spectrum, featuring gooeey, yucky contaminated water that visually reinforces the themes of water conservation and pollution. The gameplay is straightforward yet fun. Players must clear obstacles, eliminate enemies, and collect keys to advance to the next stage. Along the way, various power-ups like water drops and health boosts are essential for your progress. But not all are easy to find, making it all the more fun. The ZX Spectrum, thanks to its distinctive graphics and sound capabilities, enhances the experience, making each level feel unique and fluid. See, what we did there? Wink!

One standout level is entirely neon blue with fish in it, adding a visually stunning yet challenging twist due to reduced visibility. The story is compelling: In a world where water is life, the brave water bubble must save the planet's last pure water reserves from the villain Blooper. Trapped in a toxic maize, Goobbler must retrieve 11 drops of uncontaminated water to purify the waters and defeat Blooper. Each collected drop represents a small victory.



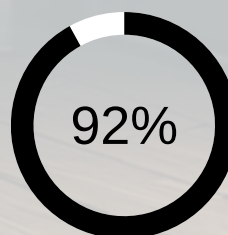
Screenshot: kraptol.itch.io

CONCLUSION

Goobbler is an imaginative game that provides bucket loads of fun, while making sure to remind us of the importance of protecting our water bodies. So, dive into this liquid world and get to saving the planet's water, one drop at a time.

BREWScore

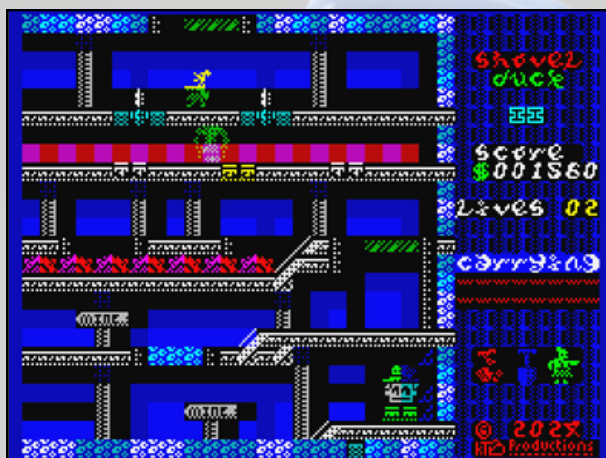
LINK



<https://kraptol.itch.io/goobbler>

Shovel Duck II (2024)

a COMMERCIAL game by KTP RCP for ZX Spectrum



Screenshot: ktbproductions.itch.io

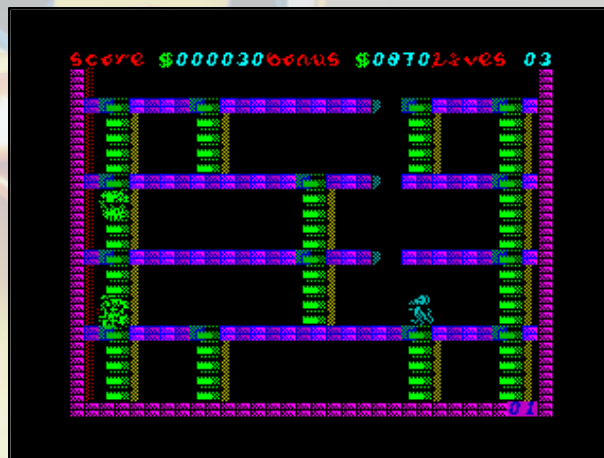
What should you do if you see a duck charging at you with a shovel in its possession? You, our dear reader, have three options to pick from: run, duck, or join the adventure. Picked option three? Great choice, because 'Dollar Bill' is back, and he's got a gold mine from their late uncle. Reaching the mine, however, is just the start.

"DUCK LIKE JAGGER!"

In 'Shovel Duck 2' Bill's adventure takes him deep into a hazardous mine filled with burning rocks and pesky worms. This platforming puzzle-adventure will test your wits and reflexes as you navigate dangerous terrain and search for hidden treasures. Once Bill finds the shovel, they can dig through blue rocks by pressing and holding the jump button upon landing. Some rocks take multiple hits, so stay alert. Time is of the essence because the ground and ceiling close in. Adding to the digging festivities, you can brace yourself for cameos from other miner games, often blocking your path in unexpected ways. The game's difficulty is in its timing, so you need to get it just right. Practice makes perfect, so keep at it and don't throw away your shovel too early.



As for controls, they are fairly simple. Also, Bill's unique duck abilities allow him to bounce up walls, but to stop bouncing you need to hold a directional key and slide down. In the air, you can adjust Bill's direction mid-jump, making tricky platforming sections more manageable. Good news is that the game runs smoothly on most Spectrum emulators, including FUSE and ZXDS, with changeable controls and joystick support.

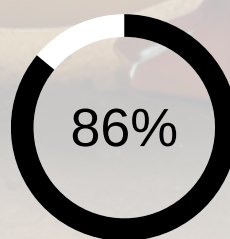


Screenshot: ktbproductions.itch.io

CONCLUSION

The game delivers a challenging platforming puzzle-adventure as Bill explores a mysterious gold mine. With bouncing mechanics and secret paths, every level offers new surprises. Ready to unearth secrets and have a blast?

BREWScore



LINK



<https://ktbproductions.itch.io/shovel-duck-ii>

Grazers [2024] 🎁

a FREE game by Snauts for Sega Master System, MSX and Commodore 64



Screenshot: BrewOtaku

Everyone's always complaining about those annoying invasive species ruining the ecosystem. Well, here's your chance to do something about it, virtually at least! In 'Grazers' by Snauts for the Sega Master System, your mission is to hunt down invasive grazer species to help vegetation recover and thrive.

"THE SILENCE OF THE GRASS"

Spanning 12 challenging levels, each presents a unique task that tests your strategic thinking and quick reflexes. You'll need to plan every move carefully, as moving too far backward can give the herd a chance to recuperate. The gameplay revolves around controlling the grazers' spawn and die-off cycles. Each level is a puzzle where you must figure out the best spots to chase the grazers, as they reappear and get drawn to newly grown grass. The first level alone took us over 25 minutes to clear, and we had to soothe our arms afterward. But hearing that level complete music made it all worth it! The game creator shared: 'I wrote a simulation-like game inspired by Conway's Game of Life, with puzzle elements from Sokoban for ZX Spectrum, but later I was able to port it to the Sega Master System.'

The clever mechanic of managing grazer populations with limited moves makes Grazers a fantastic game. It's amazing how much Snauts has accomplished with just one clever mechanic. This game truly showcases what can be done with ingenuity of the Sega Master System. It works perfectly on Mekaw, a dedicated Sega emulator supporting Master System, and RetroArch, a versatile multi-system emulator with the PicoDrive core.

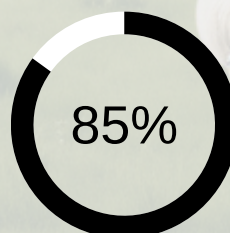


Screenshot: BrewOtaku

CONCLUSION

Originally for ZX-Spectrum 48K and later ported to Sega Master System, MSX, and C64, Grazers is a delightful mix of strategy and nostalgia. It offers hours of engaging gameplay, with a concept that is honestly unique. Are you ready to take on invasive species and save the day? Can you handle the herd?

BREWScore



LINK



<https://snauts.itch.io/grazers>

Emu's Massive Hunt (2024) 🎁

a FREE game by Andy Hewitt for VIC-20, published by 'The Future was 8bit'



Screenshot: hewco.itch.io

'Emu's Massive Hunt' is indeed a massive game, and it indeed features an emu. Are these the ultimate components for a new 2024 VIC game hit?

"THERE'S SOMEBODY AT THE DOOR!"

Emu's Massive Hunt features none other than British comedian Rod Hull's famous (or infamous?) puppet, Emu, who must rescue Rod from the clutches of the witch 'Grotbags'. Hull and Emu were iconic figures in British comedy; they were known for their hilarious and over-the-top antics. This game plays on that nostalgia, placing players in the colourful world of the 'Pink Windmill'. Players guide Emu through 64 locations and have to collect a total of 255 items. These include a snorkel for underwater breathing, a pickaxe, and boots for double jumping. The main goal is to find 15 green jellies to unlock the jelly door and rescue Rod. The game offers three difficulty levels, catering to various skill levels by adjusting lives and jelly requirements. And all of this in a game for the VIC-20? That's pretty massive, considering the system's limitations, my dear friends. To be honest, it doesn't run on a plain VIC-20 and needs a memory extension, but that is more than doable.

The Pink Windmill, now overrun with monsters, serves as the setting where our bird must navigate while collecting items. Dashing into monsters changes their direction, but timing is crucial, as Emu becomes vulnerable once the dash ends.



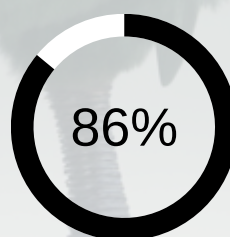
Screenshot: hewco.itch.io

Jumping on monsters can also help reach higher platforms. The game encourages exploration & experimentation, so do that!

CONCLUSION

It's cool to see innovative, fresh games. EMH smartly captures the essence of the VIC-20 while introducing new players to the world of Hull and Emu. Immerse yourself into the Pink Windmill, collect those jellies, and rescue Rod in this great adventure. If you are overwhelmed, don't worry. Even Australia lost a war against emus in 1932. And if you can't get enough, go and buy the tape.

BREWScore



LINK



<https://hewco.itch.io/emh>

Interview with Jean-Michel Girard (Alekmaul)

A legendary 'Papi' coder, active in the homebrew scene since ages.



Hi Jean-Michel. Please let us know who you are.



Hello, I'm Alekmaul, a Papi coder (currently I am 57 years young). My real name is Jean-Michel Girard. I started coding in the 80ies and I still continue to code, because it's my hobby. I like coding games and updating 'PVSneslib' for the community. It's a software development kit.

Photo: Provided by Jean-Michel



Express the fascination of retro game development in one single word.



Alive!



What is your favourite retro system to code on, and why?



Well, my favourite one is the Super Nintendo Entertainment System, because you have enough memory to store whatever you want. The graphic possibilities are gorgeous, and the sound is fantastic. Except the CPU, which is really poor in terms of power and speed. You can do almost whatever you want.



What system is your biggest nightmare, but you still won't abandon?



The same one, the SNES! I can't abandon this console, because I want to push and improve my coding skills. I want to understand exactly why something is not working when you code it, or why the executed code runs too slow. The final goal is also to push the SNES's limits to new heights.



Many of your games, emulators, and development kits are open source. Why do you do that?



My goal is not to make money, but to share my little knowledge with everyone out there. Sharing is caring. I want to help the community to code on SNES and other great platforms. This is the knowledge you don't learn in a school or a university. The only reason where I do make money is to cover the running costs of my webpages and new hardware, where I can test my games on it.



If you recommended a newbie to code on an old system, which one would it be?



Well, I think the first thing to understand is that you **MUST** know how to code. The second point is that you **MUST** know the old system you want to code, after all the CPU will have influence on what you need to learn. With that knowledge, you are ready to code something. Personally, I think Nintendo systems like the Game Boy or the Nintendo Entertainment System are easy to understand, especially with the help of tools like 'GB Studio' or 'NESmaker'.





'PVSneslib' and 'PVColib' offer the possibility to anyone developing for the SNES or ColecoVision. How did this idea develop?

J The first development kit I created was PVSneslib. I made it for a friend who wanted some help with SNES coding using 'C'. The first version has been released on the 20th anniversary of the SNES. PVColib was released shortly after that, as I had to code something on the ColecoVision. As PVSneslib was an easy-to-use SDK, I thought that doing the same thing for Colecovision cannot hurt. I literally helped myself, to code more for this system as well. All my ColecoVision games were created using my own SDK. The ColecoVision is a wonderful console. Certainly, also all my SNES games use PVSneslib!



Your favourite PVSneslib project, which is not yours and why?

J I like Dr. Ludos' 'Yo-Yo-Shuriken'. It's addictive and fun to play — just like a game should be.



Your favourite PVColib project, which is not yours and why?

J Well, I don't think someone is using PVColib for a real project right now. If you do create a game with it, please get in touch and let me know.



Which development scene has the biggest stronghold?

J Without any doubts, it must be the Sega Genesis / Sega Mega Drive scene. My French friend 'Stephane Dallongeville' created SGDK. This devkit is very advanced and basically the up-to-date standard. There are tons of tutorials and even videos, showing how to utilize it best. I could imagine very well that even Sega themselves must be happy with the overall quality and handling, but they had their own tools back in the day.



Some of your own games are physically available. Can you make a living out of it?

J Of course not! I make games for pleasure. For sure, I want a little amount of money for each game and some CIB (Complete In Box) version for the games to sell them during various French conventions.



You work with few commercial publishers. Do you rather prefer the commercial or homebrew aspects in terms of creating and distributing new games?

J 100% homebrew aspects! No pressure, as you code when you want, no release date to stress you during development. As I said, it must stay for pleasure, not a living out. ;)



Thanks a lot for your time!



<https://www.portabledev.com/>



Software mentioned in the interview:



Screenshot: drludos.itch.io

Dr. Ludos' Yo-Yo Shuriken is a commercial SNES homebrew game created with Jean-Michel's PVSneslib. It's an Arcade action game involving Ninja's. There is also a boxed version of this game from Catskull Games. Also pay attention to the devlog 'Making a SNES game in 2020'.



<https://drludos.itch.io/yo-yo-shuriken>



Screenshot: BrewOtaku

State-of-the-Art Sega Genesis devkit!



<https://github.com/Stephane-D/SGDK>



Screenshot: Alekmaul

A ColecoVision software development kit



<https://github.com/alekmaul/pvcollib>



Screenshot: Alekmaul

A SNES software development kit



<https://alekmaul.github.io/pvsneslib/>

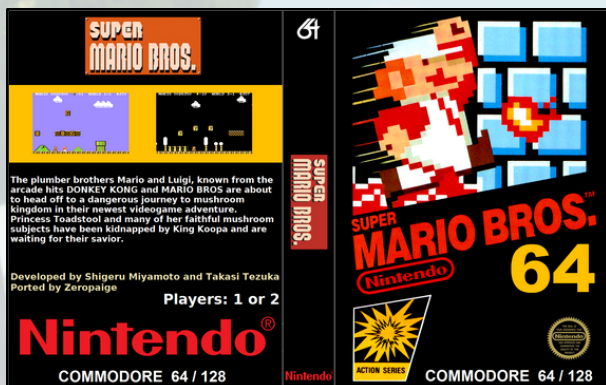


Acclaim's 'Jester' has been just released for the NES by CollectorVision and guess what: Alekmaul works on a classic Game Boy conversion. Above, you see a couple of exclusive screenshots, which were provided to BrewOtaku. Okay, we are cheating a bit. Actually, it runs on the Game Boy Color and even has support for Super Game Boy. Have a look!



Super Mario Bros. 64 [2019] 🎁

a non-commercial fan project by ZeroPaige for the Commodore 64



Picture: c64-wiki.de / Shmendric

In the gaming world, there's a saying: If it has a screen and buttons, someone will put 'Doom' on it. But why stop at Doom, my friends? Why not 'Super Mario Bros.' on everything! Back in the 80ies, the console wars were at their fiercest, with kids and teens debating which system was superior. The NES boasted Super Mario Bros., while the Commodore 64 had 'Ghosts 'n Goblins'. But have you ever wondered if our beloved Mario could make his way to the Commodore 64? The answer is a resounding yes, thanks to a dedicated programmer known online as 'ZeroPaige'. Sharing the same curiosity, the developer decided to create a non-licensed fan project to bring Super Mario Bros. to the C64 and C128. For seven gruelling years, he meticulously worked on this project, aiming to recreate the NES version down to the finest details. How fine, you ask? Let's just say you'll end up with a newfound respect for old Commodore computers.

“LIMITATIONS BE DAMNED!”

This conversion of Nintendo's platforming classic is nothing short of awesome. It's about as close to a perfect replication of Mario on the C64 as you could wish for. Quality wise, it could have been almost an official Nintendo release.

It beautifully captures the essence and excitement of the original game in a new yet familiar environment. Many people take side-scrolling games for granted today, but it's important to note that such feats were once considered impossible on home computers until 'id Software' found a way. Of course, there are some limitations to this adaptation. It runs on a stock C64, but may experience slowdowns during intense moments. However, it does take advantage of several turbo functionalities to enhance performance.



Screenshot: lemon64.com

Supported accelerators include the C128, Creative Micro Designs SuperCPU, and the Icomp Turbo Chameleon 64. For a smoother experience, you can emulate the game through VICE, simulating a C128 or a C64 with an SCPU, so as to avoid slowdowns. The slowdowns are most noticeable in the background music, with a small dot appearing at the top of the display next to the clock during these moments, indicating when the game is experiencing performance issues. Super Mario Bros 64 is packed with technical wonders. It automatically detects whether your computer is PAL or NTSC and adjusts itself accordingly. Considering the 'WOW'-factor, however, we recommend real hardware at any cost.



The game supports stereo SID's and various turbo functions, with built-in auto-detection. This means the program will recognize your hardware and suggest the optimal version for you. If you're playing on a standard C64, the European release will provide the smoothest gameplay. This version reduces slowdowns because the original game engine is optimized for a 50 Hz refresh rate.



Screenshot: lemon64.com

If your system has turbo functionality, the game will suggest the version tailored for your video system to ensure the smoothest scrolling. This means the Japanese/US release for any NTSC C64 and the European release for PAL and Drean C64.

"GLITCHIN' IT THAT WAY"

Completing the game unlocks a new challenge: 'Hard Mode'. In this mode, all easy to defeat Goombas are replaced with Buzzy Beetles, ramping up the difficulty a lot. Enemies move faster, and platforms and lifts are smaller. Zeropaige is testing your skills further and raising your blood pressure level with devilish pleasure. But it gets even crazier: This version includes the famous wall jump glitch, where Mario sticks to a wall for a frame, a detail true fans will appreciate. You can see this glitch in action on the first pipe in the initial stage of the game.

This level of attention to detail is a testament to the dedication of its creator. The decision to animate the water and lava adds an extra touch of creativity.



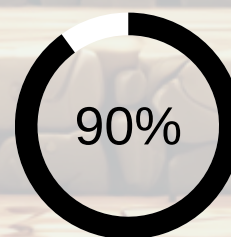
Screenshot: lemon64.com

As with most good things, this tale also takes a very dramatic turn. When the game was released, the retro gaming community was thrilled and gave it a stellar reception. But, of course, the mighty Nintendo was watching already. Just four days after its release, Nintendo began taking down the game, attempting to erase it from the internet like Thanos snapping his fingers.

CONCLUSION

It's the real deal. A remarkable conversion and truly a technical masterpiece. You can play all 32 stages of the game using the C64. Yes, the graphics may appear a bit rough, but the gameplay and jump physics are spot on. The sound and music are perfectly replicated from the NES game. So go and save Princess Peach!

BREWScore



LINK

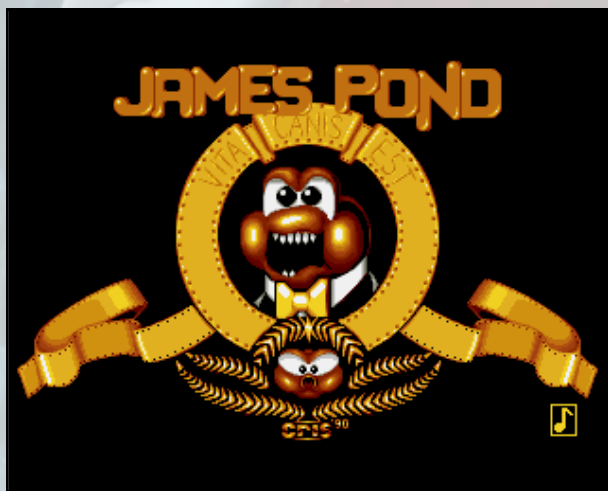


<https://www.lemon64.com/game/super-mario-bros-64>

The "James Pond Series" [1990-1993]

a series of commercial games launched for multiple platforms by Millennium Interactive

Is James Pond less violent than James Bond? Well, that was a question we left our readers within the previous edition. But here's another one for you: If a fish becomes a secret agent, does it carry a licence to gill? Makes you think, doesn't it? As we all know, platformers were all the rage in the 90ies, with 'Sonic the Hedgehog' and 'Super Mario Bros.' ruling the roost. The era was bubbling with various mascots thrust into the spotlight to grab audiences' attention: a squirrel, an elephant, a bat, an ant, a duck, and even a dog. So how about a fish? Honestly, many of these quirky platform heroes would have struggled with the typical platforming environments.



Screenshot: lemonamiga.com

A fish, on the other hand, doesn't even have limbs and digits, and water is its natural habitat, not air! The straightforward answer would be to set the game underwater, but can it still be called a platformer then? One could say since the game spoofs James Bond movies — with levels mimicking their titles — it could very well be the main reason for its existence. But underneath this colourful punditry, our chirpy 'James Pond' has had a solid series of original games built around him.

Interestingly, James Pond was one of the earliest video games to use parody as a central theme. Now we'll dive into the three main games in the James Pond series. We'll also have a brief look at the spin-off sports-themed game, 'The Aquatic Games,' and Pond's blink-and-you-miss-it cameo in 'Rolo to the Rescue'.

"LET THE PUNS BEGIN!"

Our lovely fish first made waves in 1990 with 'James Pond: Underwater Agent.' Developed by Millennium Interactive and published by Electronic Arts, the game featured a blend of platforming and puzzle-solving elements. In a sea of platformers, it stood out due to its unique setting and goofy take on the spy genre.



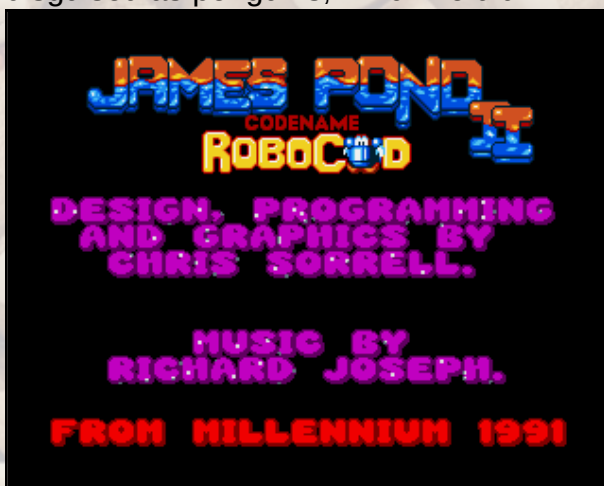
Screenshot: lemonamiga.com

As a player, you guide James Pond on 12 missions to thwart the evil 'Dr. Maybe', saving his aquatic friends from various difficult situations. The game's innovative mechanics, such as the ability to stretch his body and use gadgets, added a fresh twist to the usual platformer formula. Each mission has a specific objective — like rescuing trapped lobsters or leading seals and fish to safety. You find out about these tasks in briefings beforehand.

These tasks must be completed within a time limit or else one of Dr. Maybe's agents will come after you. Missions start from a 'home pipe,' where James can stash collected items. Other pipes are found throughout the stages, which unlock as you progress. The stages are filled with a variety of collectible items for bonus points, including clocks, false teeth, teddies, and other colourful objects.

"WELCOME HOME, DR MAYBE"

The game's creator, Chris Sorrell, was inspired by environmental themes and wanted to create a game that highlighted issues like pollution and marine conservation. James Pond was ported to numerous platforms, including the Amiga, Atari ST, Sega Genesis, and even modern systems through digital re-releases. Each version has slight variations, making them unique in their own right. James Pond was followed by two sequels: 'James Pond 2: Codename Robocod' and 'James Pond 3: Operation Starfish.' The second one expanded on the gameplay and introduced new mechanics. If you thought our baddie Dr. Maybe had been vanquished at the end of the first game, you are wrong, my friend. He not only survived, but had the audacity to infiltrate Santa Claus' toy factories at the North Pole. Only an evil mind could plant bombs disguised as penguins, which he did.



Screenshot: lemonamiga.com

Now, it's up to James Pond to save Christmas in his next adventure, James Pond 2: Codename Robocod. In this game, you'll navigate a wintery hub world, unlocking new areas by completing previous ones. Occasionally, you'll face boss battles, so stock up on lives. James Pond 2 starts easy but becomes more challenging after the first boss, requiring quick reactions and precise platforming skills.



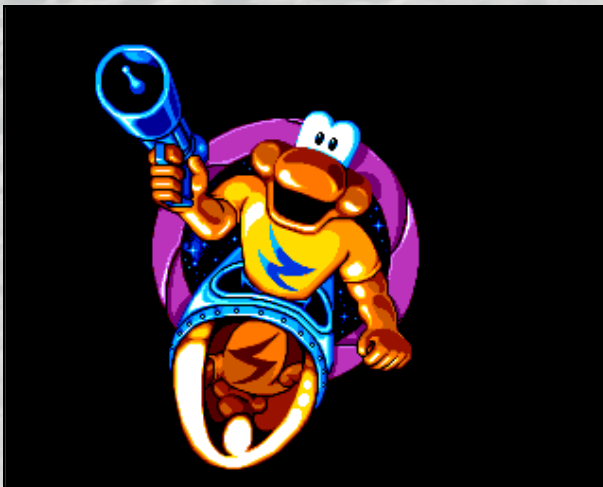
Screenshot: lemonamiga.com

Throughout the game, you'll collect items to improve your score, earn extra lives, and gain abilities like flying or floating. You'll also use vehicles such as cars, aeroplanes, and even a flying bathtub, highlighting the game's wacky nature. Graphically, the game has a unique style with colourful levels and detailed enemies.

"LIVE AND LET SWIM"

However, the backgrounds can feel basic compared to more fancy titles like Sonic the Hedgehog. The music is catchy and cheerful, with memorable melodies and renditions of Christmas tunes. The controls are responsive, but James' movements can feel slippery due to his fish nature. His robotic suit's ability to stretch and grab onto ceilings adds to the fun. James Pond 2 isn't a typical side-scroller. The game sometimes feels like a maze, with paths going in different directions, and some later levels can be

hard as they're not clear on where to go. Overall, this game has all the great features of its predecessor, plus plenty of new ones and a higher replayability factor. When Carly Rae Jepsen wrote her song 'Call Me Maybe,' did she ever think about our nemesis Dr. Maybe? Probably not. But in James Pond 3, this villain has certainly used his evil hotline to call in his rat minions, taking his hijinks to the Moon. After his defeat in James Pond 2, Dr Maybe learns about the high-quality cheese on the Moon.



Screenshot: lemonamiga.com

“THE FISH WITH THE GOLDEN FLIPPER”

He plans to conquer global markets using his rodent brigade. James Pond, with his new sidekick Finnius Frog, heads to the Moon to stop him. This platformer is set in space and has non-linear stage progression. The Robocod suit is replaced by a system for carrying and using objects. Unique features include magic shoes that let Pond walk on cave ceilings, reversing controls, and turning into a giant fruit to roll over enemies. With over 100 levels, Pond must find and destroy beacons, some of which need activating by collecting teacups. Pond now has a gun and can use various foods as ammo. Our biggest complaint about James Pond 3, however, is its awful password system. There are no saves, just a complex

password, with 30 figures in four colours. Operation Starfish is a great game, but they do bring it down a bit with a difficult password system. The game's presentation goes really well with its gameplay. The levels are vibrant and colourful, and it handles many enemies on screen without any noticeable slowdown. The music fits the mood well, though the sound effects are fairly standard. There's a lot to do and explore in this one, with plenty of secrets to uncover. This isn't a game you'll finish in a day or two, so expect to spend a week or more to find and collect everything.



Screenshot: lemonamiga.com

In a humorous twist, players can go on a fun bonus space adventure, piloting James Pond in a spacecraft, offering a unique gameplay style alongside the platforming action. The plot involving Dr. Maybe's scheme to mine the Moon for cheese will make you giggle at the ridiculousness of it all, reflecting a comical take on global domination. Unlike many game series that become repetitive by the third instalment, the James Pond games only got better, which is why they hold a fond place in the hearts of older gamers. Usually all games with Mr. Pond are also totally okay for children of any age, as long as they can hold a joystick or gamepad. The violence is always purely illustrated in cartoon form.

After diving into deep space adventures on the Moon, James Pond trades his spacesuit for swim boots and flips into 'The Aquatic Games'. Released in 1992 to coincide with the Barcelona Olympics, this game featured James Pond and friends competing in underwater Olympic events.



Screenshot: lemonamiga.com

The games comprise eight — plus two bonuses — separate events. Some require timing and forethought, some require lightning-fast reflexes, and some only require quick wrist action. Events include 'The 100-Metre Splash,' 'Kipper Watching,' where you deflect beach balls from sleeping seals, and 'Gymnastics.'

“NO POND, NO CRY”

Up to four players can compete. While the presentation is decent, the events range from mildly challenging to confusing. The graphics are in the typical James Pond style, but a tad larger than usual and a bit darker. The animations are fluid but repetitive. However, the highlight is the beautiful rendition of Beethoven's 'Ode to Joy' playing in the background, which is quite catchy. Is this game as good as Robocod? Well, it wouldn't be fair to compare them. They're both really excellent examples of different genres. The only connection between the two is Pond himself and the loads of puns that fill the game.

After the Aquatic Games, James Pond makes a brief cameo in 'Rolo to the Rescue'. Developed by Vectordean and published by Electronic Arts, this action platformer stars Rolo the elephant, who rescues various animal friends, making them playable characters. Rolo ventures into space for a bonus stage, where players see James Pond piloting a spacecraft and dropping extra lives for Rolo. This scene, taken straight from James Pond 3, highlights the connection between the two games. Steve Bak, one of the designers of Rolo, co-created James Pond with Chris Sorrell, leaving a shared DNA in their visual styles. Rolo's 70 levels on the Genesis offer a lot of gameplay. If you have kids, they would surely love the charming visuals.



Screenshot: tumblr.com/randomisedgaming

All in all, the James Pond series brought a lot of creativity and fun to the platformer genre, with each game having its own unique wit and humour. The puns make it a puntastically enjoyable experience, while the infectious music by Richard Joseph doesn't let the levels get boring. Is it 'one of the chocolatiest' platformers in the world? No, but it's definitely a classic, proving that sometimes a fish out of water can make the biggest waves. Give it a go!



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Pond:_Underwater_Agent



Snail Maze II (2024)

a FREE game by Safety Stoa Studios for Sega Genesis



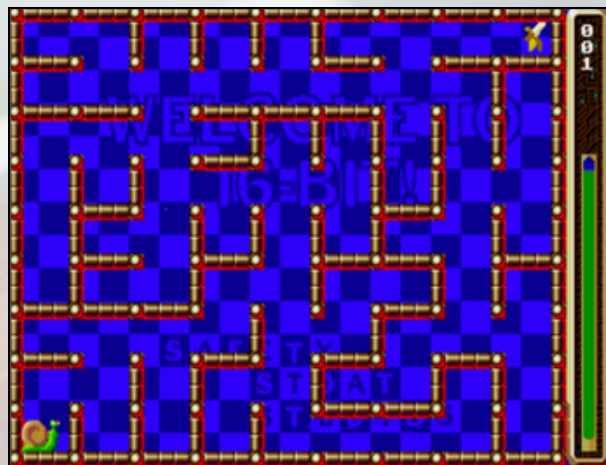
Screenshot: safetystoastudios.itch.io

If you put a snail in a maze, chances are it would get lost and take its sweet time finding its way — just like in 'Snail Maze II' for Sega Genesis by Safety Stoa Studios. This unofficial 16-bit sequel to the built-in classic adds a modern flair with a column-scrolling background, pre-rendered 3D-looking sprites, and even voice samples.

“SNAIL AND STEADY WINS THE RACE”

In Snail Maze II, you need to get the banana, avoid getting exploded, and don't run out of time-slime. Your time-slime, visible on the right side of the screen, depletes as you navigate the maze. The music is infectious, providing a thumping soundtrack that keeps you rocking as you guide your snail. The goal is simple: navigate through the maze, avoid enemy attacks, and reach the banana. But beware — the bombs don't just pose a direct threat; they also destroy parts of the maze, only adding to the overall challenge. Technically, this game is impressive. It's a Sega Genesis/Mega Drive-compatible ROM, which works on real hardware using a flash cart or in emulation. Genesis Plus GX is recommended for the best emulation experience.

For those nostalgic for the original 1986 Snail Maze, the gameplay may bring back memories of navigating a small orange snail with a yellow shell through a blue maze, racing against time. This classic game was simple but not without its challenges, requiring players to be smart. Each level presented a new maze, while the straightforward controls made it an enduring favourite, capturing the essence of early video gaming.

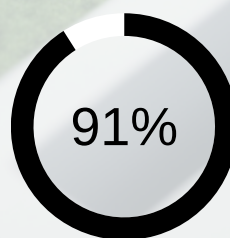


Screenshot: safetystoastudios.itch.io

CONCLUSION

Snail Maze II retains the nostalgic charm of the original while introducing modern enhancements. It offers a trip down memory lane, but a fresh challenge gives you something new to enjoy. And just when you think you're making progress, watch out for that crab-like enemy.

BREWScore



LINK



<https://safetystoastudios.itch.io/snail-maze-ii>



Urok (2024) 🎁

a FREE game by Tartessos Games for ZX Spectrum 128K



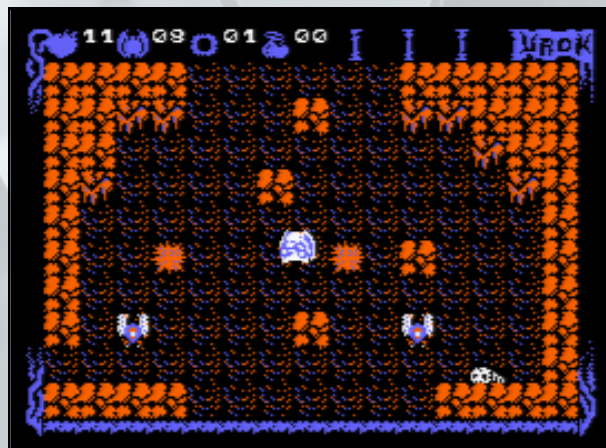
Screenshot: tartessos-games.itch.io

There's peril, and then there's mystery. 'Urok' by 'Tartessos Games' for the ZX Spectrum 128K, plunges players into a legendary world filled with both. Atop the western hill lies a once-dominant multiverse entity, sealed in a nightmare and awaiting the chance for revenge. Can you master the demon?

“THE EVIL IS EVERYWHERE”

This adventure platform game requires a lot of trial and error, but as you progress, the difficulty diminishes, making the experience more enjoyable. It's a game that takes you back to the good old days of video gaming, where advancing was a challenge, not a stroll in the park. In order to help you in the game, we found some key points — if something hits you once, don't come near it again. Also, the demon can fly temporarily, and you must look up if things fall from the sky. The flight control is fine, but it requires adaptation. The demon's jump is sensitive, as you can jump low or high depending on how you press Q. Note that pressing Q twice quickly allows the demon to fly at ground level or higher. If the ceiling damages you on a high jump, the second time you should jump lower or activate a faster

flight to avoid crashing. Mastering the controls is the name of the game, friends. And, once you do that, the first phase of Urok can be passed without taking a single hit. Call this phase jump and flight training if you will.



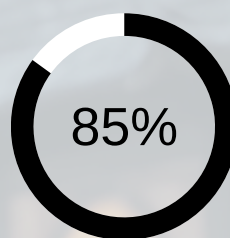
Screenshot: tartessos-games.itch.io

Interestingly, folks at Tartessos Games say an easier version may be uploaded for less skilled players, making the beginning more friendly and accessible. It's a great idea, we reckon.

CONCLUSION

The fact of the matter is that Urok captures the essence of classic gaming with its challenging gameplay and intricate mechanics. Mastering the demon requires patience and skill, but the rewarding experience is well worth it. Retro game lovers are in for a treat.

BREWScore



LINK



<https://tartessos-games.itch.io/urok>

Kien [2024]

a COMMERCIAL game by 'AgeOfGames' for GBA, published by 'Incube8 Games'



Screenshot: incube8games.com

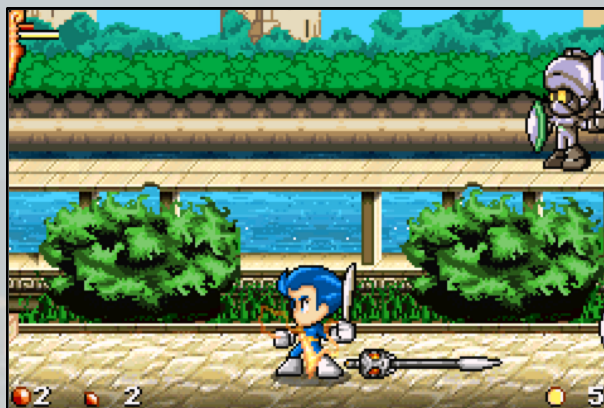
There's game development hell, and then there's Kien — a record-breaking 22-year wait for a game finished in 2002 but never released. Now, this action platformer with RPG elements finally emerges from the cold, not as a remake, but a true resurrection after multiple publishing mishaps and decades of anticipation.

"IT'S NEVER TOO LATE"

Kien offers an engrossing adventure spanning 23 challenging levels. The gameplay is unrelenting, with multiple enemies overwhelming you. Though it's a 2D side-scrolling combat platformer, similarities between it and 'Dark Souls' are aplenty. The game's non-linear structure makes every playthrough unique, which lets players explore Kien's vast universe at their own leisure. Kien allows you to choose between two protagonists: a warrior and a priestess. The warrior carries a mighty sword to defeat the ungodly number of enemies. With that many enemies gunning for you, letting your guard down is not an option. Having entered production all the way back in 2002, Kien endured a painfully long journey to release. Independent developer AgeOfGames conceived Kien as a simple passion project.



The game was finished and shipped to reviewers as early as November 2003. However, it was abruptly cancelled by its publisher right before launch.



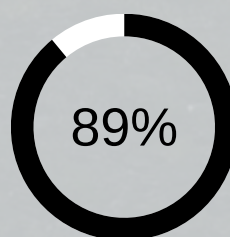
Screenshot: incube8games.com

Within the last few years, the retro gaming scene has flourished, renewing interest in ageing hardware and rare games. Kien's new publisher, Incube8, is now firmly backing Kien. The game is now being sold in an eye-catching translucent gray cartridge.

CONCLUSION

With a non-linear structure and enemies up to your eyeballs, Kien's challenging world is a captivating experience. You'll be dying a lot, but a true gamer never lets that stop him from enjoying the fun, right? The wait is over and fans can finally get their chance to play the game.

BREWScore



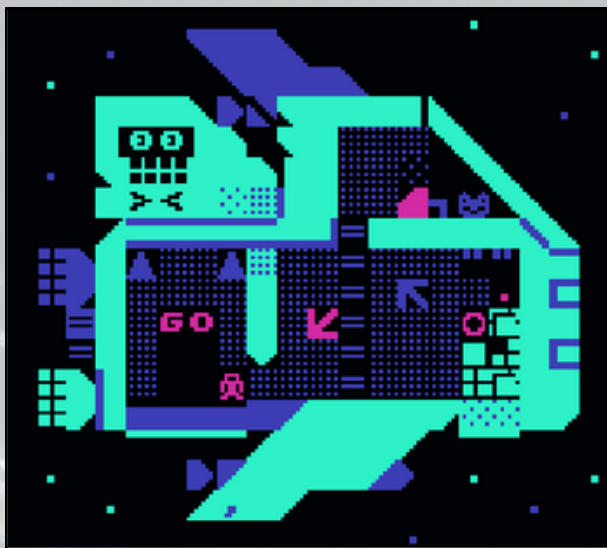
LINK



<https://incube8games.com/en-eu/products/kien-gba>

SpaceProblem [2024]

a COMMERCIAL game by Polyducks for Game Boy Color



Screenshot: polyducks.itch.io

The thing is that the universe is, well, all about 'things'. The more things you have, the more you'll appreciate the charm of Polyducks' latest creation, SpaceProblem. Designed for the Game Boy Color, this looping puzzle-adventure game offers cutesy gameplay mechanics.

“DUDE, WHERE ARE MY THINGS?”

Players take on the role of a delivery pilot stationed in space, orbiting the moon. Your mission? To retrieve elusive THINGS from a massive space station involving loads of interconnected rooms. Armed with your handy spaceship computer, you must navigate the labyrinthine corridors to locate the THING, all the while managing a limited air supply crucial for survival. Each successful retrieval adds to your cache, leading to new challenges and adventures. With the support of the community, Polyducks aims to expand SpaceProblem with exciting new features. Future updates may include advanced navigation tools, thrilling encounters within the space station and even the prospect of a space-city. Sounds good? If you have a spare buck, you may throw it in!

SpaceProblem promises an immersive retro adventure wherever you go. The more you play, the more you start falling for the sounds, graphics and the overall vibe of a delicious puzzle adventure cookie baked just right.



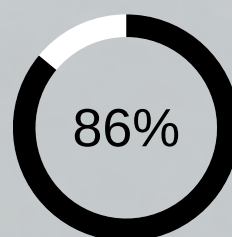
Screenshot: polyducks.itch.io

CONCLUSION



Pack your space suit to enjoy the thrill of a unique space exploration experience with SpaceProblem. Join the mission, explore the intricate structure, and get your hand on all the 'things' needed to progress. The universe awaits your next move, but just don't run out of air. Depending on the current goal funding, we might see updates, making this game even more enjoyable.

BREWScore



LINK



<https://polyducks.itch.io/spaceproblem>

Squirrel Domino (2024) 🎁

a FREE game by Nova Squirrel for NES



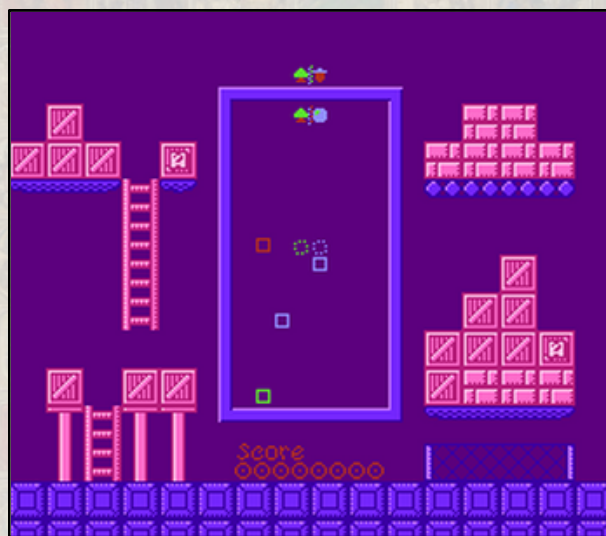
Screenshot: novasquirrel.itch.io

'Squirrel Domino' is in Nova Squirrel's homage to the NES classic, 'Dr Mario'. While paying tribute to its inspiration, Squirrel Domino ramps up the tempo with faster gameplay and many modern twists.

“PIMPING IT UP!”

Squirrel Domino began as a bonus mini-game in 'Nova the Squirrel' but has since transformed into a standalone gem. Packed with enhancements, it offers players a refined experience that can stand tall with the best of NES puzzle games. Players can delve into a variety of gimmicks. On top of that, you can choose from multiple backgrounds, with songs by maple syrup and different colour schemes and themes for pieces. The multiplayer versus mode adds a competitive edge, complete with a win counter and sophisticated RNG for seamless online play. Developer Nova Squirrel shares insights on the game's development journey: 'Creating Squirrel Domino was a natural extension of my love for Dr. Mario. It's simple yet addictive, enhanced with features like hard drops and ghost pieces.'. Love creates projects, obviously.

The game's minimalist aesthetic ensures that players can focus squarely on the strategic thrill of clearing blocks. With music tracks that strike the right chord and gameplay that feels responsive, the coder captures the essence of classic puzzlers while injecting its own spirited charm.



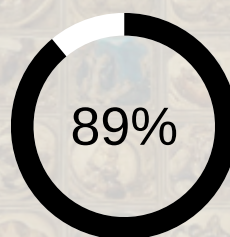
Screenshot: novasquirrel.itch.io

A slight bummer is the fact that Squirrel Domino lacks a high-score board.

CONCLUSION

Squirrel Domino isn't just another puzzle game; it's a beautifully crafted tribute that surpasses its inspiration. With its crisp gameplay and thoughtful design, it proves that classic concepts can still deliver fresh excitement. Squirrel Domino really nails how a puzzler should feel, which is something often overlooked in this genre.

BREWScore



LINK



<https://novasquirrel.itch.io/squirrel-domino>

Courier [2024]

a COMMERCIAL game by 'KHAN Games' for NES



Screenshot: khangames.itch.io

Cyberpunk games have always captivated gamers with their neon-infused aesthetics and dystopian themes. This NES gem, crafted by Jon Piornack and programmed by Kevin Hanley, plunges players into a vibrant cyberpunk world. With striking pixel art and energetic chiptunes, Courier draws significant inspiration from 'Shadowrun'.

"HACK IT LIKE BECKHAM (OR SO)"

In a dystopian cityscape controlled by the nefarious Ankh Industries, players assume the role of Conrad, a rogue Courier battling a devastating virus threatening cyberspace. This virus, engineered to cripple Couriers and corrupt data, has thrown the city into chaos, and Conrad's mission is to uncover the truth behind this digital conspiracy. As he navigates through shadowy streets and high-tech hubs, players will engage in a variety of activities — including pickpocketing and hacking. Courier isn't just about combat; it's a fun mix of exploration, puzzle-solving, and character progression. There's some sneaking around, for sure, but then there are also intense gunfights that will test your reflexes.

Development of Courier kicked off on January 11, 2022. Initially, the developers aimed to release the game in 2023 through a major indie publisher. However, persistent technical issues with the publisher's hardware led to delays. In response, they reverted to their original plan, launching a Kickstarter campaign on January 1, 2024. The campaign proved successful, and physical copies began shipping to backers on May 1, 2024.

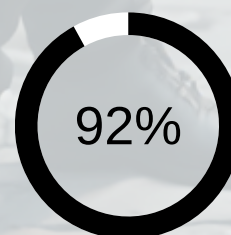


Screenshot: khangames.itch.io

CONCLUSION

Courier is a triumph of indie homebrew gaming, delivering a compelling blend of pixel-aesthetics and varied gameplay. It's a must-play for fans of the genre and an overall entertaining experience. Shut up and take my money!

BREWScore



LINK



<https://khangames.itch.io/courier>

Anzu Castle Gracula (2024)

a FREE game by RainbowCemetery for MS-DOS — Donations welcome!



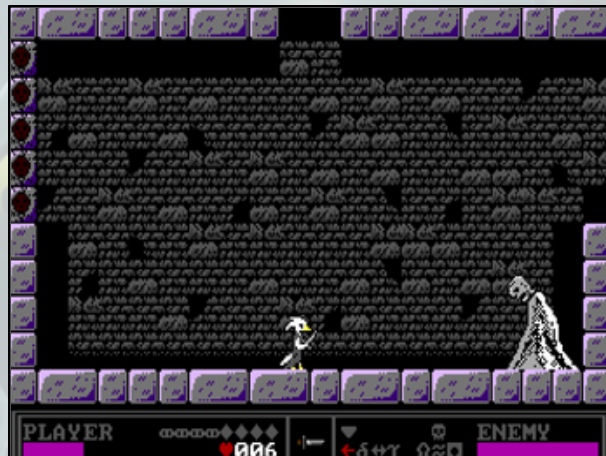
Screenshot: rainbowcemetery.itch.io

When did you last fight undead monsters as a battled-hardened bird in a gothic castle? 'Anzu Castle Gracula', crafted by 'RainbowCemetery', brings this platform action adventure to life with pure VGA graphics and a non-linear experience.

"GONE WITH THE UNDEAD"

The game unfolds in a gothic castle full of eerie charm, where undead enemies and items respawn whenever you leave and re-enter a room. Players possess a metallic chain flail to keep enemies at bay but can also collect secondary weapons like throwing daggers. These weapons require ammo in the form of hearts collected from enemies or breakable objects. Saving progress is possible near large statues, ensuring you can pick up from your last point either from the main menu or after a loss. The game boasts smooth programming, giving it the look and feel of a commercial title from the late 80s or early 90s. The FM synth soundtrack is quite infectious, complementing the polished, authentic retro art. The castle design is beautifully intricate, and the atmosphere is so rich it feels like a character in its own right.

Combat is exhilarating, featuring a variety of enemies with differing difficulty levels.



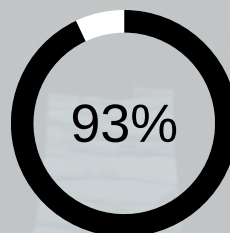
Screenshot: rainbowcemetery.itch.io

Players must be wary of giant frogs and enjoy the thrill of throwing knives at adversaries. While the game shows Metroidvania traits, it lacks item-based progression, offering instead a straightforward yet tough adventure. Boss battles are intense, with Skultopus being the hardest.

CONCLUSION

Written in QuickBasic 4.5, Anzu Castle Gracula is a fun treat, with stunning graphics, challenging gameplay, and a soundtrack that never gets stale. If you're a fan of classic platformers, this game will keep you entertained. Can you survive the haunted halls and emerge victorious?

BREWScore



LINK



<https://rainbowcemetery.itch.io/anzu-castle-gracula>

Decathlon DX [2024]

a FREE fangame by Rajcsányi László for Game Boy Color



Screenshot: lacoste42.itch.io

Decathlon DX for Game Boy Color by Rajcsányi László is a loving homage to the 1983 Atari VCS classic by David Crane. With its authentic VCS graphics and challenging gameplay, this GB Studio creation brings eight gruelling athletic events to life, testing your skills in speed, strength, and precision.

"RUN LIKE THE WIND"

In Decathlon, you can compete in events like the high jump, long jump, 100m dash, javelin, and discus throw, among others. It's up to you whether you opt to tackle all events in a full decathlon or focus on a single discipline. There's also a practice mode that is invaluable for newcomers – like us. The game's difficulty demands precise control, particularly in jumping events where timing is crucial, and in throwing events where you must keep your foot behind the line to avoid disqualification. After completing all the events, your performance is tallied into an overall score. If we had to pick one event, the javelin throw became our favourite, as we had loads of fun thanks to its potential to achieve impressive distances and high scores.

This fangame retains the spirit of the original Activision's Decathlon while offering a streamlined experience for the Game Boy Color. Although this version omits the pole vault and the gruelling 1500m race, it still captures the essence of a multi-event athletic competition. Decathlon stands out as an enjoyable title, offering some athletic fun.

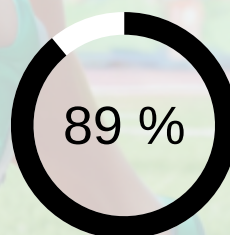


Screenshot: lacoste42.itch.io

CONCLUSION

The game is not just about winning medals; it's about the journey, the competition, and the sheer joy of gaming. Just remember, in Decathlon, it's all about speed, strength, and a bit of luck. So, lace up your running shoes, and let the games begin! It's cardio time!

BREWScore



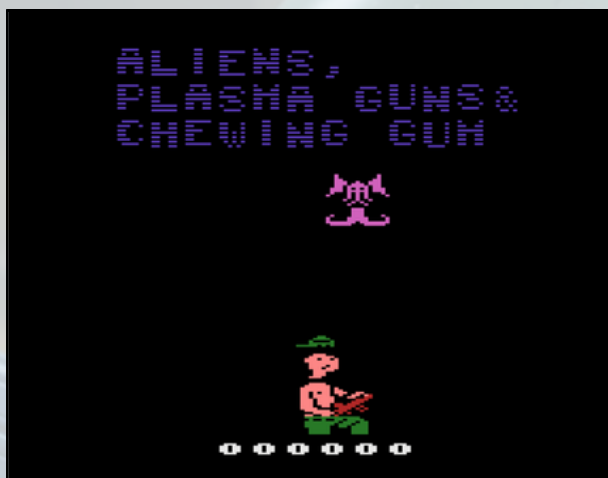
LINK



<https://lacoste42.itch.io/decathlon-dx>

Aliens, Plasma Guns & Chewing Gum (2024) 🎁

a FREE game by 'Magovinna' for Atari VCS



Screenshot: magovinna.itch.io

It's not often that an alien invasion calls for green, glowing chewing gum as part of the solution. But in 'Aliens, Plasma Guns & Chewing Gum' by Magovinna, chewing gum isn't just in the name; it plays a crucial role in the action-packed defence against extraterrestrial threats.

“GRAB YOUR I386 FROM THE BASEMENT NOW”

The game is set in a world where an ancient alien race has started abducting people globally. A specially trained group of soldiers must defend humanity in this shooter for the Atari VCS. Your mission is to fend off these nefarious invaders using advanced weaponry and, of course, green chewing gum. The gameplay is straightforward but demands quick reflexes. Players control a ship, shooting down blue alien vessels while dodging incoming fire. When hit, the ship flashes white, while alien hits are more visually pronounced. Upgrades play a crucial role in Aliens, Plasma Guns & Chewing Gum. You can enhance your firepower, making it easier to take down tougher enemies that require multiple shots. Reaching a score of 1,000 grants an extra life, and power-ups not only improve your weaponry but also enlarge your ship,

though one hit reverts it to its normal size.



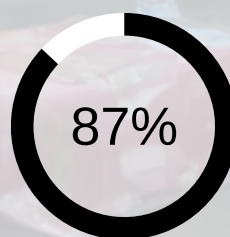
Screenshot: magovinna.itch.io

Variety is the spice of this shooter. Different types of enemies keep the gameplay engaging. One standout mission involves rescuing abducted humans, adding a layer of depth to the action. Magovinna, known for their work on 'Coarse Blade,' have outdone themselves with this title. The game boasts great controls and gameplay that would have been mind-blowing in the 80s. It's a tough game, but the challenge really adds to its charm.

CONCLUSION

As a smooth shooter, fans of fast-paced games will certainly enjoy the learning curve it offers. Remember, when facing an alien invasion, bring your plasma gun — and don't forget the gum. You never know when you might need extra chew power!

BREWScore



LINK

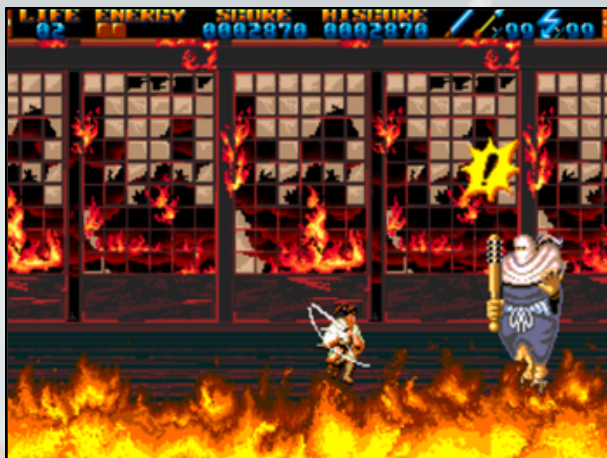


<https://magovinna.itch.io/aliens-plasma-guns-chewing-gum>



Hayato's Journey (2024) 🎁

a FREE game by Master Linkuei for Sega Genesis



Screenshot: master-linkuei.itch.io

'Hayato's Journey,' developed by 'Master Linkuei', is an unofficial spiritual successor to the cult-classic game 'Kenseiden'. Powered by the Scorpion Engine, this homebrew title for the Sega Genesis is essentially a heartfelt love letter.

"HERE COMES THE SWORD"

In Hayato's Journey, players step into the shoes of Hayato, the last descendant of a legendary Dragon family warrior. The story unfolds as Yonensai, an evil warlock, returns from the Demon World, wreaking havoc and seeking vengeance on the remaining Dragon family descendants. Armed with the sword of the Dragon King, Hayato embarks on a dangerous quest to avenge his master's death and rescue his beloved Sakura. The gameplay is a nostalgic nod to side-scrolling action-adventures of years gone by. Players navigate through beautifully crafted levels filled with evil entities, warlocks, and wicked beasts, all while wielding the powerful sword of the Dragon King. The influence of classic games such as Actraiser, Revenge of the Shinobi, and Super Empire Strikes Back is quite evident in the game's art and mechanics. The Scorpion Engine really shines in this

release, delivering smooth gameplay and impressive graphics that rival many official Genesis titles. The dedication to the craft is apparent in every detail, from the intricate enemy designs to the atmospheric backgrounds. Edmo Caldas' music score further enhances the experience, though some players might find the looping music during pauses slightly disruptive. The incorporation of assets from various classic games adds a unique flavour, giving Hayato's Journey a familiar and homely feel.

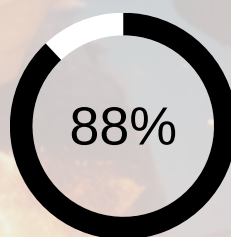


Screenshot: master-linkuei.itch.io

CONCLUSION

Hayato's Journey looks like a game that could have been released in the 90ies. That's really saying something. Even if you're not a fan of Kenseiden, this game will keep you coming back for more until you end up beating it!

BREWScore



LINK



<https://master-linkuei.itch.io/hayatos-journey>

Star Cadre: Combat Class (2024) 🎁

a FREE tactical combat game by Cyningstan for MS-DOS



Screenshot: cyningstan.itch.io

'Star Cadre: Combat Class' by Cyningstan takes you back to the golden age of MS-DOS gaming, combining tactical combat with the thrill of role-playing. As a cadet at the Star Academy, your mission is simple: complete a series of combat simulations and prove your worth as a future commander of elite troops.

“EVERY TACTIC YOU MAKE...”

The game sets you three years into your training at the Star Academy, where your leadership skills have shone brightly. You're close to graduation, but first, you must complete several missions in the combat simulator. Each mission, whether randomly assigned or hand-picked, challenges you to maximize your score across various difficulty levels. The goal is to come as close as possible to the perfect score that no cadet has yet achieved. Star Cadre forces you to really hone your strategy. You command a squad of four units in diverse missions, ranging from easy to hard. Each game is short, which is ideal for quick play sessions. Since progress can be saved, it makes the game perfect for a coffee break. The missions are randomly generated, ensuring something new every time you play. Graphically, the game supports the original 1981 IBM PC specs, requiring only a 4.77 MHz 8088 processor

and CGA or monochrome Hercules graphics. It runs from a 360k floppy disk and works seamlessly on DOSBox. The CGA graphics offer two palettes: a blue/red palette fitting the sci-fi theme and a nostalgic cyan/magenta palette.



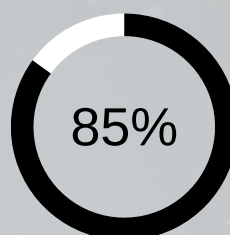
Screenshot: cyningstan.itch.io

Controls are simple and efficient, relying solely on the keyboard. With directional controls and a fire key, the game is accessible on various devices. Cyningstan's dedication to creating new games for old hardware shines bright like a diamond, making it a delightful throwback to the early days of PC gaming.

CONCLUSION

Star Cadre offers a challenging tactical combat experience, and with each mission being randomly generated, you can enjoy the game again and again. Oh and, dear cadet, always aim for the highest score because your graduation depends on it!

BREWScore



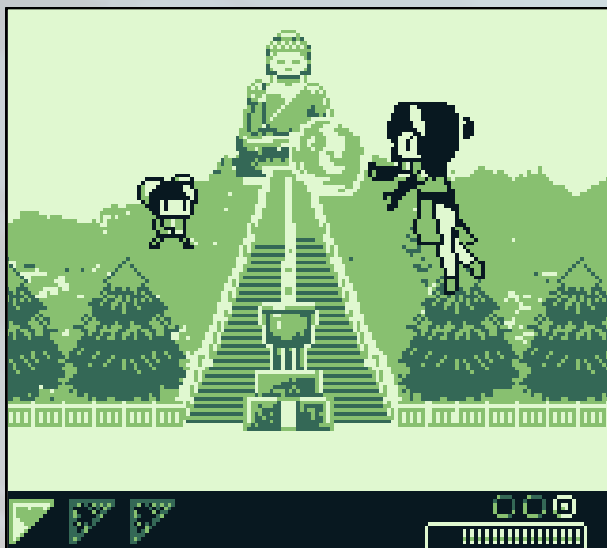
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[https://cyningstan.itch.io/
star-cadre-combat-class](https://cyningstan.itch.io/star-cadre-combat-class)

Song of Morus: Gala of Battle (2024)

a COMMERCIAL game by Sunny Chow for Game Boy, published by 'RetroRoomgames'



Screenshot: sunnychowtheguy.itch.io

In an interesting blend of spiritual warfare and classic shooting mechanics, 'Song of Morus: Gala of Battle' takes players on an intense journey through Hong Kong's mystical underbelly. This one promises challenging boss battles and a captivating retro experience.

“THE BOSSBATTLE REDEMPTION”

Set in a richly detailed Hong Kong environment, Song of Morus casts you as Taoist Priestess Song, tasked with eliminating malevolent spiritual creatures and sinister magic users. The game features eight distinct boss stages, each presenting three escalating phases of attack. Players can tackle these stages in any order, adding a layer of strategic depth to the gameplay. The objective is clear: deplete the bosses' HP across all phases to achieve victory. It's easier said than done. The game truly shines in its ode to classic boss fight mechanics. Each encounter requires precise timing and mastery of Song's abilities. The inclusion of a physical release, facilitated by The Retro Room Games, adds a delightful bonus for collectors and enthusiasts.

This edition includes an additional final boss with double the difficulty and a bookmark printing feature for those with a Game Boy printer. The music, composed by Sunny Chow, enhances the immersive experience. With its engaging boss battles and strategic gameplay, this game stands out. The spiritual side of things and challenging combat promises action.

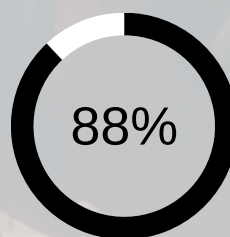


Screenshot: sunnychowtheguy.itch.io

CONCLUSION

Song of Morus: Gala of Battle offers a refreshing take on the boss fight genre, blending traditional mechanics with a spiritual theme not commonly associated with most games. Meanwhile, the music really prepares you for a gruelling boss battle. Get ready to face the spirits!

BREWScore



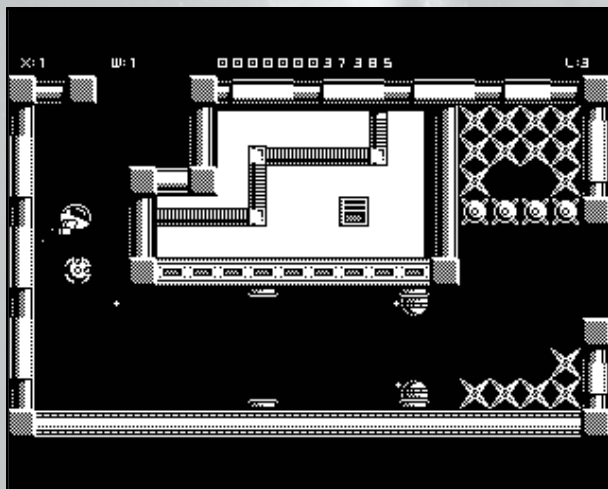
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<https://sunnychowtheguy.itch.io/song-of-morus-gala-of-battle>

Ceconoid [2024]

a COMMERCIAL game by Hoffman & Team for Amiga OCS, published by 'Thalamus Digital'



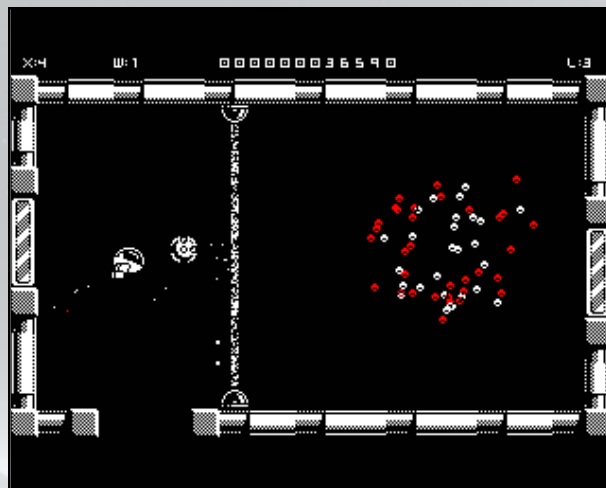
Screenshot: thalamusdigital.itch.io

Does the name 'Ceconoid' ring a bell? Well, it's a tribute to Raffaele Cecco's classic game 'Cybernoid' on the Spectrum. In this 8-bit inspired, twin-stick shooter, you pilot a small spacecraft tasked with rescuing the starship Equinox from hordes of malevolent robots.

"EYE OF THE EQUINOX!"

Originally released for PC, Android, and iOS back in 2019, Ceconoid draws inspiration from classics such as the arcade shooter 'Robotron' and Hewson Consultants' Cybernoid. Programming wise, Ceconoid excels. Everything is smooth: collisions, controls, visual effects — all flawless. Soundwise, with Hoffman at the helm, quality is guaranteed. The modplay routines are clever, squeezing tracks into memory with ease. The monochromatic graphic style is charming, with particle explosions that feel fresh and innovative. The game offers a challenging experience, enhanced by CD32 joypad controls for precise movement and shooting. A system of achievements boosts replayability, though some may find the game a tad short, craving more levels. We certainly craved more.

One standout feature is the particle engine, particularly impressive when unleashing strong firepower in densely packed areas — every pixel breaks down into a satisfying explosion across the screen. Moreover, Ceconoid doesn't stop at one game as it includes 'Eugatron,' inspired by Llamatron, but with a faster pace and tighter controls. Both games go well together, offering a double dose of retro-inspired gameplay and fun.

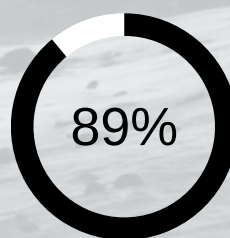


Screenshot: thalamusdigital.itch.io

CONCLUSION

For ones seeking a shooter filled with secrets, an electrifying soundtrack, and addictive high-score challenges, Ceconoid can't be missed. Grab a copy as soon as you can and fasten your seat belts for a rip-roaring journey through retro gaming excellence.

BREWScore

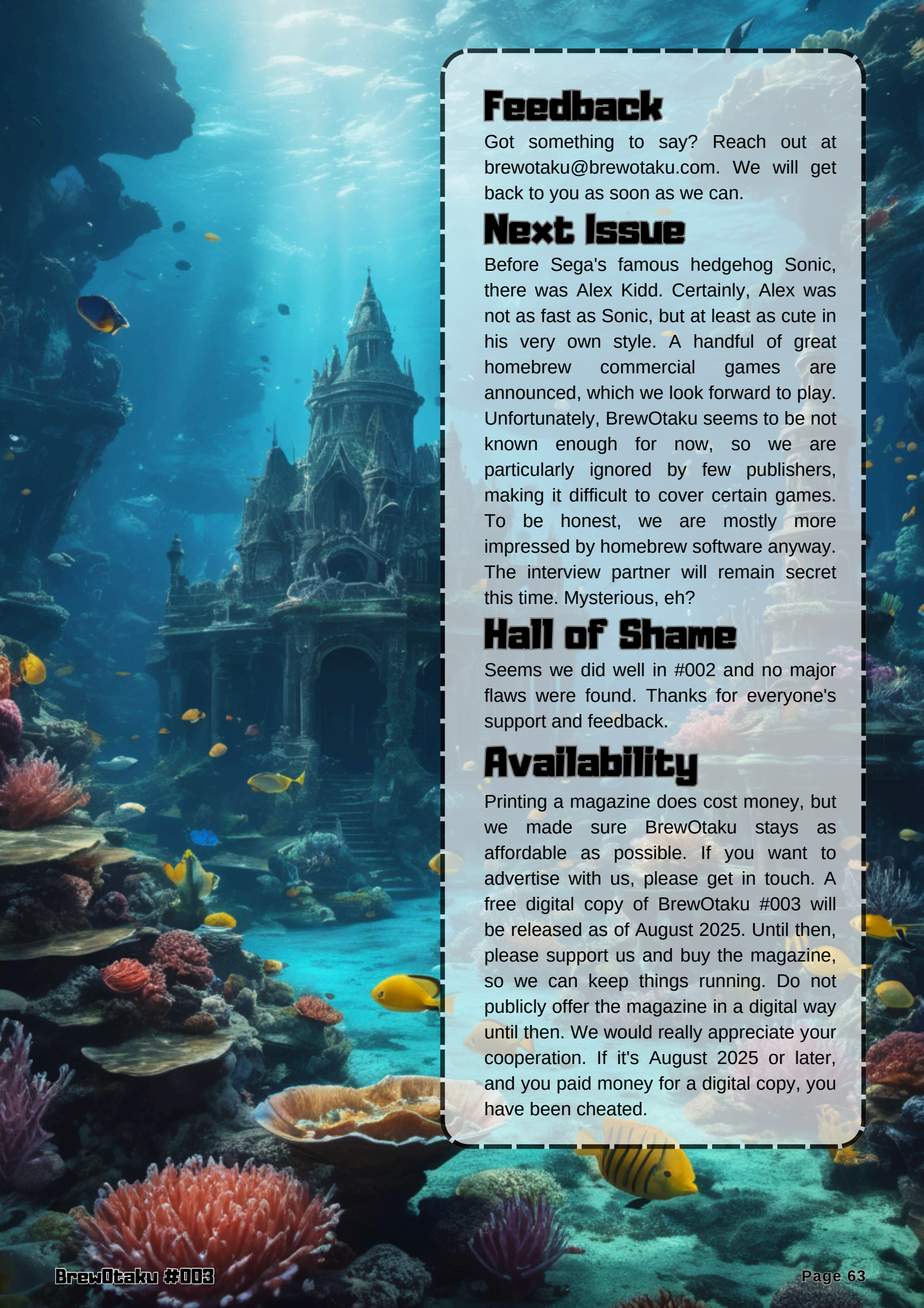


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<https://thalamusdigital.itch.io/ceconoid-amiga>



A vibrant underwater scene featuring a large, ornate stone castle with multiple spires and arches, partially submerged in clear blue water. The castle is surrounded by diverse coral reefs, including large brain corals and colorful sea anemones. Numerous small, colorful fish, such as yellow tangs and blue tangs, swim around the castle. Sunlight rays filter down from the surface, creating a bright and lively atmosphere.

Feedback

Got something to say? Reach out at brewotaku@brewotaku.com. We will get back to you as soon as we can.

Next Issue

Before Sega's famous hedgehog Sonic, there was Alex Kidd. Certainly, Alex was not as fast as Sonic, but at least as cute in his very own style. A handful of great homebrew commercial games are announced, which we look forward to play. Unfortunately, BrewOtaku seems to be not known enough for now, so we are particularly ignored by few publishers, making it difficult to cover certain games. To be honest, we are mostly more impressed by homebrew software anyway. The interview partner will remain secret this time. Mysterious, eh?

Hall of Shame

Seems we did well in #002 and no major flaws were found. Thanks for everyone's support and feedback.

Availability

Printing a magazine does cost money, but we made sure BrewOtaku stays as affordable as possible. If you want to advertise with us, please get in touch. A free digital copy of BrewOtaku #003 will be released as of August 2025. Until then, please support us and buy the magazine, so we can keep things running. Do not publicly offer the magazine in a digital way until then. We would really appreciate your cooperation. If it's August 2025 or later, and you paid money for a digital copy, you have been cheated.

Alte Haudegen wissen was gut ist...



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