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B.A.U.G. Newsletter

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From the Editor's Terminal

Well, it's finally done. At least, it better be when you are reading this. This month's newsletter is quite late, but it is getting to the point where I am strapped for the time to do it. The financial matters don't help either. A lot of members owe money, but may not be aware of it. If you payed your dues over a year ago, guess what? We need your \$20 smackers.

Enough about that stuff. This issue is what we might call the "Artsy" issue. I've asked our inspired writers (namely Jim and Gene) to write articles relating to art and or music, and as promised they delivered; they delivered in style, too.

The cover this month is exceptional. I would be willing to call it our best yet, a timely, painstaking work created by Gene Chmielowiec, our art director. Good job, Gene.

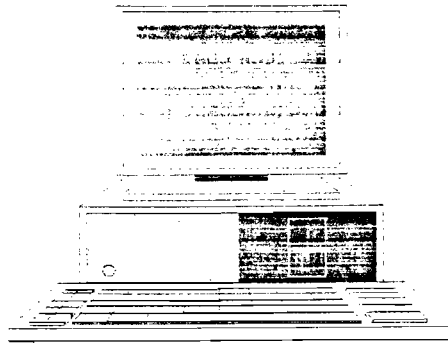
I apologize for the lack of cartoons and/or artwork this month, I finished this issue rather hastily. In fact, it won't be completed until later on this evening, much later. It's Tuesday, day before the meeting.

I also apologize for the lack of a John Bos article: I apologize to him, and to the readership. I misplaced John's article disk and it was too late to try and get a replacement. He will be back next month, however.

This issue is also a "REVIEW" issue, with lots of reviews, mainly by Jim Hassett. I'd like to thank him separately, for all of the work he did in writing articles this issue and to Gene for quickly doing his up.

On to Amiga news. The Amiga is selling like hot cakes all over the world. The Amiga community is doing extremely well; this means that we are doing to get more and more software and new hardware, and so on.

Shows! How can I forget shows. Just as your pocketbook was recovering from December's *World of Commodore VI*, April brings up the *Commodore Expo* show on April 20, 21, 22, and 23 again at the International



Centre in Toronto. It's not exactly where *World of Commodore* was - same building, but it's on the other side, the smaller section. Expo shows cover just about all types of computers, including the Amiga, 64, Atari ST and IBM. Should be interesting, and I am sure there will be lots of bargains there. Look for me to be working for Comp-U-Save again.

Before I forget (or remember for that matter), I have finally started the C column back up! For all of you who were following it, trying to learn the language most common on the Amiga, I decided to try teaching it in a different style. I'm showing you up front how to do things specific on the Amiga (like opening a window for example, instead of dwelling on the inner workings of C the language, which any good, boring book will teach you). We'll start covering opening a window, and then sending and receiving messages through the Intuition IDCMP port, to use gadgets and the like. Then we'll get into opening custom screens to put your windows on, and menus as well. So, keep tuned to that column if you're interested in learning more about programming your Amiga.

OH! I forgot to mention to everyone to have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I know it's already mid-January, but I haven't formally stated it. I hope everyone had a safe and happy holiday, and that you're all returning to us in the new year and that '83 will be your best year yet! So there.

Speaking of good years, not presi-

I hope that my first year goes well. Starting about mid-April or May I will be opening a video store in Radio Place called *The Video Garage*, and I hope you all come down to see me at the store, and rent some movies from me!! Our store will also be offering some other things which I can't just tell you about yet, but you'll see when we open.

Syd in a video store? You all thought I'd be running a computer store, right? Well, no. Dave Shields at Zoez would kill me if I did that. No, but video and computers are quite complimentary pieces of equipment, and I think you'll see them used both together more and more as time goes by. Of course, my co-op placement at Rogers Cable Television has gotten me quite interested in video production, so it seems natural that I will go into some sort of field that combines both video and computers.

Anyway, I hope you enjoy this issue. Sorry it took so long, and see you next month (hopefully).

Syd L. Bolton
Editor-in-Chief

REVIEWS...

FANTAVISION

Reviewed by James Hassett

This review is for all Baugsters who missed my almost live demonstration of this remarkable program at the seasons opening meeting. The program in question is so intriguing that it bears a second look anyway. *FantaVision* is an animation program that does everything that *Aegis Animator* does at least as well and in some aspects better. In addition to this you can now add sound effects to your projects to produce a much more professional and interesting result. Both programs work in a similar way in that you create an object, move it or change it in some way, then the computer draws all the frames between your designated start and finish frames. You can also load objects and back drops created in other paint programs, however, *FantaVision* will accept all modes of pictures including HAM and Overscan (what ever they are). *FantaVision's* tool icons are more appropriate and easier to understand and it seems to accomplish more tasks with fewer tools although I haven't stopped to actually count them. The tool menus are conveniently laid out around the screen borders and can be quickly removed using the "F" buttons in order to view the entire screen. The tools are similar in nature to those in *Animator* and include some special effects that the Aegis program doesn't have such as the "lightning" effect which must really be seen to be understood. (don't I sound like the back of a software box?) To create a two legged walking "thing" with *Animator* I struggled for hours and used many frames and never did get what I wanted. With *FantaVision* it took only two frames and a few minutes. This is because of the superior loop mode which allows

quick and simple loops of any number of frames. You can have several unrelated loops during the course of an animation and, to understand how much memory this saves, you must try it. The basic colour palette in *FantaVision* is about thirty times the size of *Animator's* and although subtle shading requires some tweeking it does provide some interesting patterns to work with. The biggest difference in *FantaVision* of course is the ability to add sound effects. There is a dozen or so sounds saved in the program and each can be modified using pitch control, echoe and sustain to create whole new sounds. The sounds can be installed one or two per frame and will loop as the frames loop. The sustain causes the sound to spill over onto any frame that does not have a sound on that channel. This can save memory as well as effort if you are careful about where you use the effect. The sound files are standard 8SVX IFF files so you can easily add to your library if you have access to a sound digitiser. With the help of our fearless leader (Syd) I am collecting sound samples for a disk which I hope to make available to Interested Baugsters. There are weak points to *FantaVision* however. The playback speed only works globally not frame by frame which could be a bit limiting in some applications. I also don't like the free hand drawing tool which tends to arbitrarily finish an object before I'm ready. Lastly, some of the "flip" and "rotate" tool don't work as satisfactorily as the ones in *Animator*. They seem to shrink the object instead of flipping it. Negative comments aside, This is now my main animation program and I am enjoying it immensely. I think it could be a lot of fun for the amateur cartoonist and, with the right sound effects, have some business applications too.

NAME: *FANTAVISION*
PUBLISHER: *BRODERBUND*
PRICE: \$89.95

3-DEMON

Reviewed by James Hassett

We've all seen examples of great three dimensional animation done on the Amiga. Our fearless leader has played videos of projects done by some talented individuals at our meetings and I for one have been vermillion with envy. One of the first programs that I bought was Alan Hasting's *Videoscape 3-D* because the product it was capable of was very impressive. Unfortunately it proved to difficult for a software soft head like myself to operate without some tutoring from some sympathetic individual (probably you know who when he gets a free moment). Therefore the chances of you reading a review of *Videoscape 3-D* in this space is exactly ZERO. SURPRISE! For those of you who have managed to create an animation with *VS3-D*, *Forms in Flight*, or *Sculpt 3-D* but were frustrated by the difficulty in creating you own custom built object there is good news. *Three Demon* was created to allow you to make objects for all the above programs more easily than their onboard editors. My only experience is with *Videoscape 3-D* so let's compare it with the *Demon*. *VS3-D* creates objects in two ways. First you can type in instructions to make basic objects like cones and spheres to your desired dimensions. You then combine these shapes into whatever you want. Unfortunately you can't see the object until this whole process is complete and if you've made an error in data entry it won't show up until the object fails to res up. For someone like me this is next to impossible since I need something more than text to understand what is going on. The other method is the custom three D mode that presents three boxes in which you manipulate a single cursor which is represented

simultaneously in all three boxes. This is much easier but the objects you can make are more limited in complexity. Because you must really learn to think in three dimensions it takes a lot of practise to create something exactly as you see it in your mind.

Three Demon uses some ingenious tools to make object creation simple and almost enjoyable. First you create a two dimensional shape by adding triangles together and manipulating their dimensions by dragging corner points. This shape is a radial cross section of your desired object which requires a little bit of thought but not nearly the amount required by *VS-3D*. The next step is to select the "spin" mode from the pull down menu. A box will appear to remind you of the instructions and to allow you to choose the number of sides you want. You then touch on all the corner points making sure the first and the last you touch represent the axis or rotation or the inside of the finished object. by double clicking the last point a sub menu appears to activate the spinning or allow you to change your mind and make further changes. Once the spinning is complete you have a three dimensional object that you can rotate around to inspect, modify by dragging points, and change the colour of. It's really as easy as 1,2,3 (4,5,6 maybe 7 but no more than 7). Now move the object off to a corner of the screen and repeat the process to obtain a second object. You can join these two shapes together using the combine item from the pull down menu. The objects do not need to be touching to be combined since this operation simply freezes the relative positions of the objects involved. Another neat tool is the "splice" which is a pretty self explanatory name. With an instructional control box similar to "spin" you can cut a chunk out of an object and still leave the original object appearing untouched. This is handy if you need struts,

antennae, or other features that must join onto the original shape since it takes fewer steps than building an object from scratch. Of course you can copy and delete objects like other drawing programs. You must be careful though. **Three Demon** is so easy to use it encourages you to create objects of such complexity that you can run out of memory in a hurry in which case every thing freezes and you must scrap everything and reboot. Colour control is good. You can change the colour of an entire object or choose one or more of the triangles that compose it. There is a shade control in the view menu that presents the object in a black and white (shades of grey) resolution which some might find easier to visualize the three dimensionality of the object in. When you save an object you must save it from the object menu instead of the project menu. The object save has a sub menu where you chose the program format (*VS3-D FIF Sculpt 3D*). If you fail to carry out this step using a file disk your hard work will not be usable in the very program you intended it for. To reiterate, **Three Demon** is easy to use and produces satisfying results. Even if you've figured out the other onboard object editors I feel certain that you will prefer the **Demon**. Now if I could only figure out how to create an animation.....

NAME: **THREE-DEMON**
PUBLISHER: **MIMETICS**
PRICE: **\$124.95**

MUSIC MOUSE

Reviewed by James Hassett

When your trying to compose a piece of music and ideas just won't come, as if the muse have not only abandoned you, but are actually sug-

hing at you, you usually pick up your favorite guitar (or piano if you have a shoulderstrap for it) and start "fooling around". You randomly even absent-mindedly string notes together while distracting yourself with unmusical thoughts like the T.V. news or your laundry. If things go well you will relieve the self imposed pressure of writing and the ideas will, as they are won't to do, come flowing like spring water into the recesses of your parched imagination. The only trouble is that when the music finally comes to you, you realize it sounds like something you've already written or, worse yet, something someone else has written. The more highly trained you are the harder it can be as you keep running into phrases that you have played a thousand times. This is the time you wish you could throw a few score (no pun intended) of notes into the air and simply read them as they fall. Come to think of it that might work if you didn't mind the mess. In any case this is where Music Mouse will come in very handy. Music Mouse is a music composition/live performance program based on algorithms as applied to music and is designed to add a random element to sound patterns. An algorithm is a formula or method of calculation and Music Mouse is operated on one that can be modified to a limited extent. Because of this limitation the sound patterns that come out of the program are so identifiable as being from Music Mouse that there is a disclaimer on the title screen demanding that you admit that you used the program when you publish work done with it. Don't let this apparently negative aspect deter you from enjoying yourself making some interesting and beautiful melodies with this easy to use system. Once the program has booted up you are presented with a black screen bordered an all four sides by keyboard patterns. Running vertically and horizontally are coloured lines to indicate what keys

are being played by the current mouse position. You are now ready to make music by simply moving the mouse where ever your personal muse suggests. You don't even have to hold a mouse button. The pull down menus display several options that modify pitch, harmonic and pattern content including a cycle option that plays counterpoint to your mouse. As is becoming standard with Amiga programs the menu shows the Keyboard equivalents so that you can make desired changes with one hand while moving the mouse with the other. Once you have familiarized yourself with the controls you can perform some very interesting and entertaining music with great ease. The MIDI implementation of this program is limited but you can plug into certain synths and, I assume, sequencers. In any case, I think the strength of this program is as primer to encourage the creative waters of the mind to flow melodically out to your fingertips where they will do some good. There is one last feature I'd like to cover. There is a series of options that allow you to modify the colour and line pattern on the screen. While this is interesting it doesn't add much to the musicality of the program. My few negative comments aside, this is a fun program with the potential to be very useful to the aspiring or experienced musician.

NAME: **MUSIC MOUSE**
 PUBLISHER: **MIMETICS**
 PRICE: **\$124.95**

DR. T's KCS

Reviewed by James Hassett

Hurray (or Hurrah if you prefer)! I have, after much searching and begging, finally found and acquired a MIDI recorder. If you have been a regular attendee of BAUG meetings or reader

of the newsletter you'll remember that I have made no secret of my desire for one. Now thanks to our fearless leader, who's generosity knows no bounds (well few bounds anyway), I have been able purchase (that's right PURCHASE!) Dr. T's Keyboard Control Sequencer. As you are about to read the KCS lives up to it's claim to being the most powerful MIDI recorder, or sequencer of any kind for that matter, around. You'll remember from earlier articles that a MIDI recorder is a special kind of sequencer that will accept data input from an electronic keyboard or other MIDI instrument. It is analogous to a tape recorder and because of this can record the feel of an individual's performance thus increasing the emotional content of a piece. The Keyboard Control Sequencer can be fed with any MIDI instrument like my Casio MIDI guitar but you will get the most out of it with a keyboard that has velocity and after touch sensitivity. As you might guess, this is not a simple program nor is it the proverbial snap to learn. With patience and an affectionate relationship with the manual however, you can get to the point of recording satisfactory work quite quickly. The manual, saints and hackers be praised, is one of the better examples I've seen. It has some reasonably simple tutorials for the two main modes of operation, track and open, and is written so that a computer novice can make some sense out of it. Even though it is worded for the eye of a musician, the KCS is intended to be a professional's tool after all, the Amy user with a secondary interest in music will still be able to understand it. In an attempt to get the user up and running as quickly as possible the tutorials have been placed second only general start up information. While this is great in theory I would suggest that a quick glance through the related sections will give you a better chance to achieve satisfactory

results. A glaring example is the count in option. You can specify the number of metronome beats you want before recording begins. Without any count in the recorder starts with the first note played. To me this is an important feature and should be included somewhere in the track mode tutorial, if it had, it would have saved me a lot of frustration. As it was I had to scour through the manual till I found the appropriate paragraphs. The same can be said for the instructions on erasing tracks. It's a simple procedure, but not simple enough to devine from simply looking at track mode screen. The manual goes into sufficient detail that you will be able to find the answer to most questions that may arise during normal operations. It has a good trouble shooting section, an appendix dealing with service and support and one dealing with command key references, it also has a chapter called Application Notes which describes how the KCS works with many of the major manufacturer's most popular models of synths and other gear. Now that we've looked at the surprisingly complete manual let's boot up and see what the KCS is all about. The program boots to workbench and from there to a screen that allows you to use a slider to allocate the free memory which defaults to fifty percent. The purpose of this system becomes apparent when you begin multi-tasking with patch editors and the like. If you are using the KCS by itself you can use all the memory for note storage. The program requires that command and data entry be made with both mouse and keyboard. This is not as user friendly as other programs, but considering all that the KCS can do it is an equitable trade off. The next screen that appears is the Track mode play/record screen. This is where you will enter the data track by track. There are forty-eight tracks which can be used in a variety of ways. Naturally it is unlikely that you

would write a piece of music that would require anywhere near forty-eight complete tracks. Instead you can save yourself a lot of effort by recording the repetitive parts of a song, the drums or bass for example, in short segments, say, two or four bars long. You could have two bars of a bass pattern in the E, A and B scales as well as a couple of drum fills. These can be arranged in the Song mode editor to produce a very effective blues rhythm of considerable length after playing each part for only two bars, this saves time by allowing several variations of different parts to be mixed into a finished song with out having to play the song through again and again in real time to effect the required overdubs. It also means a less than great keyboard player can record higher quality work because he or she only has to play a few good bars. It is very frustrating to have played thirty clean bars of a bass part only to be spoiled by a clunker at the end. Of course with the KCS these clunkers can be edited out but it saves a lot more time and effort to have avoided them in the first place. Once you have all the parts to your song finished you can go to the open mode editor to make any changes you feel are warranted. The items that can be changed include note tone and duration values, pitch bend, key velocity and aftertouch among others. The manual states that some values can be changed globally others only a note (or MIDI event) at a time. I have tried to make MIDI channel changes for an entire track and have been unsuccessful. I would have thought MIDI channel was the one category that almost always required global change ability. As it stands now a lot of typing is needed to do a simple job although it really doesn't take much time it is a pain in the posterior. After any change it is quite simple and quick to play the track and, so to speak, test drive the changes you've made. Your satisfac-

tory tracks can be grouped together in segments. For instance, most segments will contain the same drum parts so you copy these parts in every segment along with any bass, rhythm or lead parts you want. The completed segments can be strung together in any order using any segment any number of times (up to 100 linked segments). This is accomplished in the Song Mode editor and it is a simple matter to type in a few characters in order to enter a segment. It is here that the tempo and number of times a segment is repeated can be set. Earlier in this article I mentioned writing a bass part over in three different scales. In many cases this would not be necessary because of the ability to transpose the scale (key) of a part either in song mode or back in open mode. Another method of recording is the Step Mode. In this mode notes are entered using the Synth keyboard. The duration, velocity and other parameters are set using the alphanumeric keyboard. You don't have a score staff to look at like you do in the *Deluxe Music Construction Set*, but you can't control as many parameters with the DMCS. There are many features that are so advanced that I barely understand let alone have a need for, syncing to tape for example. The KCS can be used to record a synchronization tone on a multi track tape recorder. This sync track is used to tie the computer and recorder together so that you can record tracks on tape at different times or places and they will match beat for beat. It will also send system exclusive messages. These are commands such as patch changes that can only be read by one particular brand of synth. This is indeed a powerful program. There are really only a couple of points that I find unsatisfactory. Firstly I find the method of changing tracks for new recording clumsy. You have to be a very good keyboardist and have all the musical

details sorted out in order to play part after part as the program automatically changes tracks for you. Since I very definitely do not qualify I have found the following system works well even if it is more time consuming. Set up a two bar count in then record a blank track to the desired length. Now you will probably have to erase the second track which would have recorded blank data for the second or so before you pressed the stop button. The result is a perfectly sized track ready for new data. Simply repeat this for every track. One other problem is the lack of proper explanation of how to read the open mode edit screen. It takes some study and intuition to figure it out. The ability to listen to selected sections of a track helps you find the note you want to edit, but I would like to be able to find it more quickly than that. Complaints aside, now that I am getting the hang of it I am becoming happier with every recording session. The KCS is powerful and versatile. It can not only record every expression and nuance but can edit those same expressive features. The Keyboard Control Sequencer is a pricey package but I think it is well worth the money.

NAME: *DR. T's KCS v1.6*
PUBLISHER: *DR. T's*
PRICE: *\$249.95*

**DELUXE
PHOTOLAB**

Reviewed by James Hassett

In the past Baugsters have been enlightened as to the various attributes of several impressive paint programs through the pages of this newsletter and by demonstrations by our fearless leader. Each have been good overall. Each have had one or two features that stand out from the

competition. The subject of this review tries to do it all. *Deluxe Photo Lab* supports high and low res, half-bright (which is no reflection on the IQ of either user or programmer) and HAM (ditto). It has many of the familiar brush shapes and tools including a shade option and a stencil-like tool called affects. Now while the shade tool does not work as well as it does in digipaint, this package contains a "Fill Control" which provides a very unique result. Fill Control is controlled in a control box way similar to the shade control. One of the things you can do with it is to cause a filled area to be a mixture of the colours from a selected section of the palette. This mix can cover the whole area or begin at a chosen border. I think it's a neat effect and can see some interesting possibilities for it. Of course since *DPL* supports standard IFF you can meld the best features of several paint programs together. In this way you'll be able transfer an idea from synaptic impulse to MS-DOS more accurately than with a single program alone. Now for the less than artistic Baugster *DPL* has a couple of useful functions. They are really programs in their own right and could be used by, for example, a publisher to use someone else's art. The first is called Colours. You load in a picture and modify the colours in several ways. You can also change the size of the picture. There is a function called mosaic that enlarges the pixels to give that classic mosaic tile effect. The last (but not least) section of the package is the poster section. Its only screen presents a grid onto which you load a picture. You then use the mouse to manipulate the size of the picture on the grid. Since each square of the grid represents a sheet of printer paper the program will cause the required number of sheets to be printed each containing a portion of the picture, then it's paste and bristle board time to assemble the resulting

poster (artistic assembly language). This is the first program package that I have seen to give serious and detailed effort to printing the finished pictures. For that alone I give it high marks. Even though it has a few minor disappointments, like the shade control, the paint program will make a good addition to your collection of like programs. The colours section is a bit awkward in operation since the tools don't respond like I think they should but it is still useful and usable. What more need be said. If you feel the need or desire to share your artistic efforts with non-computer oriented folk that means printing your pictures, this is the program you need.

NAME: *DELUXE PHOTOLAB*
 PUBLISHER: *ELECTRONIC ARTS*
 PRICE: *\$199.95*

DRAGON'S LAIR
 Reviewed by Syd L. Bolton

Every once in awhile there comes along a program that is so outstanding that I have to show everyone I know - whether they own an Amiga or not. I can remember freaking out over the *NewTek Demo Reel* when it first came out, and I had to show everyone. You needed a megabyte to run it, so for people who didn't have that much memory, I had to make a copy onto VHS tape so that they could watch it at home. It's programs like these that I strive for.

And *Dragon's Lair*, from ReadySoft meets these same qualities. I used to actually pump hundreds of dollars into the arcade version of this game. The main reason was that it was neat: it used technology that no other video game did. The basic premise was that you were in control of "Dirk the Daring" who is on a

valiant attempt to rescue the Princess Daphne from the clutches of an evil dragon (sounds a lot like the promo audio doesn't it?). The main reason this game was a hit in the arcade (and also why it cost \$0.50 at a time when all other video games were still \$0.25) was because instead of using blocky computer graphics, this game was actually a "cartoon" done by an ex-Disney animator (Don Bluth) that was simply astounding. You controlled what video was played through the joystick and it was all based on timing. You had a button to activate your sword, and could move in the four basic directions (up, down, left and right).

Bringing *Dragon's Lair* to a home computer is no easy task though. As I mentioned, it was pure cartoon animation, stored on a video disk. Computer graphics have been traditionally blocky and bland compared to what we get on our television sets. That is, until the Amiga came along.

My friend Randy Linden and his crew have done an amazing job of bringing *Dragon's Lair* home to Amiga owners. They have stored more real-time audio and video animation onto 6 diskettes than I have ever seen before. That's right, for your \$80 you get 6 disks. That's not too bad if you consider that some \$60 games only come with one disk.

The animation is flawless, the sound is excellent (both were digitized right from the original video disk) and yet the game retains a uniqueness in that it is not the arcade version verbatim, which means veterans like me don't walk through the game the first time they play.

If you like good animation and want to impress your friends, go for it.

The game requires a minimum of 1 megabyte of RAM, except for A1000 users, who only need 512K. Extra memory recommended though.

NAME: *DRAGON'S LAIR*
 PUBLISHER: *READYSOFT*
 PRICE: *\$79.95*

Renaissance Amiga

By James Hassett

Pity poor me. I have always felt that I possess the soul of an artist, that I understood what artists were trying to say and that I too had something to say about life and the condition of the universe. Unfortunately, from an early age a procession of insensitive and/or incompetent teachers made it a point to discourage me from any such endeavours. My penmanship and drawing were unacceptable (I was left handed), I had no eye for form, I couldn't sing and any attempt at *playing an instrument I made was met* with total indifference. It wasn't until high school that a more conscientious educator encouraged my budding interest in creative writing but by then it was too late. The pattern was set, or so it seemed. It was at this particular point in time that I was fortunate enough to meet our fearless leader who in turn introduced me to Baug's raison d'être the fabulous Commo... well we all know what it is. I was already up to my knees from getting my feet wet in music and I was looking for a computer that not only would further those interests but, after all these years, allow me some hope of satisfying my desire to produce some form of visual statement. In previous articles I have gone on at great length about one program package or another regarding the Amiga's unparalleled graphics ability and I shall not bore you with redundant phrases of praise. What I wish to submit to you is an account of my impressions of what it is like to use this most unlikely artistic tool. Perhaps I can influence some of Left Hemisphere types amongst my fellow Baugsters to use their Amigas for some illogical expressions of the soul. The first step, as it is with any artistic medium, is to become familiar with the tools and techniques at your disposal. When dealing with the Amiga this means playing with all the tools and menus in the relevant program package. This may seem an obvious step but I found that in

addition to suggesting and inspiring ideas, the less time I spend wondering how to create a shape or effect the more time I have for the creative process which, at least for me takes place in my head before I boot a disk or place a cursor. Quite frankly, I am still working on becoming familiar with all the art, animation and music programs I have. Occasionally however, I find great satisfaction in seeing what I pictured in my mind's eye appear on the monitor. Once you've mastered all the tools, menus and controls of your expensive piece of software and are slouching in your chair, staring at a blank screen saying, "So what" and wondering what to do with it, try this simple exercise I learned in public school. Think of how you are feeling at that very moment, happy, frustrated, satisfied or angry and draw a shape that you feel appropriately represents that feeling. It can be any shape, geometric or free form. Usually the first thing that pops into your head will meet your needs. (Very Freudian isn't it). Next, do the same thing again except for a colour. Use any shading or effects tools at your disposal. Now repeat the shape/colour process to illustrate a strong emotion from a day ago, a week ago and so on till you think you have something you like the look of. Chances are others will like it to since you have put a part of yourself into it. If you don't like the result keep trying. I use the cancel menu item on a lot of attempts before I am satisfied. If you've recently acquired *Deluxe Music Construction Set* or *Sonix*, have played all the tunes in the files and are wondering how to get started composing try this technique which I saw Marvin Hamliche demonstrate on the tube years ago when he was still somebody. Each note in a scale has a number from one to eleven (nine ten and eleven being two three and four an octave higher). Take any phone number, yours or a friends and

simply convert the digits to notes. Play around with various combinations of beat values for the notes till you have something you like. You now have a good beginning of a melody. Instead of single notes you could use the phone number to represent a chord progression over which you can build a melody. You could surprise yourself. When you run out of phone numbers try your "SIN" number, drivers licence number, you get the idea. There is a new technique for ear training that relates tones to colours. This might be useful to relate the colour for emotion I outlined above. If any Baugster is more familiar with this system I would like to hear from you. Another hint to remember is that minor chords represent negative dark emotions whereas major chords represent positive light emotions. The same is true for melodic direction. Try placing random notes on a staff for two or three bars keeping a general low to high direction, then do the same for a high to low slope. Note duration is a very expressive factor in music as is loudness (*DMCS* supports loudness control). There are many practical business applications for an animation program, however I have experienced a lot of fun and satisfaction using them strictly for entertainment purposes. Whether you want to illustrate a moral, an actual event or a sight gag the key to an interesting cartoon, like any movie, is the telling of a story. That means having a beginning or set up, a middle which contains a crisis and a conclusion. If you keep this in mind for even the shortest animations you will have good results. The preceding may seem very elementary (I hope not insultingly so) but I found myself becoming so involved with the operation of a program that I was frustrated by having a wonderful artistic tool and not being able to think of a thing to do with it. It is at times like these that it is best to get back to

Music by Chance

By James Hassett

Almost since music first developed any kind of form or discipline there has been someone who has been trying to find a better or simply another way of making beautiful sound. In some instances the alternative has become more widely accepted than the system it was intended to be an answer to. Originally the fifth was considered to be a blessed and holy scale and the octave was the devil's work. On the other hand the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries produced a handful of composers that concentrated on the dischord as a base for their work. You don't hear much of that these days. There is one school of thought however, that has been practised for many years in one form or another and that is the idea of allowing music to occur naturally. Often this has taken the form of imitating natural sound like birds or animals. This requires a lot of input from the composer or musician which really defeats the purpose. The idea of allowing chance to not just influence, but indeed, write entire pieces has been approached from many sides for some time now. One experiment saw a tropical fish tank, containing eight angel fish and having a two bar staff painted on it serve as a natural composer for live performances. As the fish swam in their normal stop and go pattern the musician played by interpreting the tonal value by where they stopped on the staff and the beat value by how close they appeared to each other. Mozart's Musical Dice was a game marketed in the eighteenth century (Mozart's participation is still in question). It provided a collection of musical phrases which the players assembled according to the roll of the dice. In the early sixties composer Terry Riley wrote a series of melodic patterns and left it up to the individual performers to decide how to play them. John Cage, in the meantime, wrote a piece that required the occasional coin toss to determine its

content. How does this translate to the Amiga? Well the computer has been used to create music since the fifties when programmers were feeding in numbers with randomizing factors to produce scores. Today there are a couple of programs available for the greatest machine in the world. There is Laurie Spiegel's *Music Mouse* (Reviewed this issue) which produces music when the mouse is moved around. There is also "M" which is an interactive composing program, whatever that means. If Syd can find out where I can get a copy before deadline you'll see a review of it in this issue too. (Get with it Lorne). If you don't feel like buying or learning another music program you can try this exercise to add some chance to your tunes. Call up Syd or Gene (not me), make sure you have disturbed them in some way then get them to say stop while you flip through the pages of the phone book. Then, with your eyes close run your finger around the open page till your unwilling accomplice says stop again. Write the number your finger is under on a piece of paper. Now repeat the process as many times as either Syd or Gene (not me) will put up with it, cut the numbers out on raffle ticket size pieces and stick them into a bowl or hat or some such thing. Now blindly draw the numbers out and lay them out in order. Now assign note values to the individual digits using the method I have outlined in another article. Play the resulting notes in the order dictated by the draw result. Beat value can be obtained using dice or a board game wheel or like method. You will certainly be surprised at the resulting musical piece whether you like it or not. Music by chance may never find a place in popular culture but it is sure to remain nearby sitting on the fringe of musical existence serving to expand it's horizons and challenge it's practitioners.

Convert!

By Syd L. Bolton

IFF is a wonderful thing. It's a file format that allows Amiga owners to transfer graphics, sound, music, text, etc., data around between programs. However, when one encounters a program like *DeluxeVideo* which only accepts lo-res 8-color pictures, or *Aegis Animator* which only accepts lo-resolution pictures, this wonderful world can become a real pain. For example, perhaps you wanted to take something that you had beautifully drawn with *Photon Paint* and it's amazing surface mapping techniques, and use it with *DeluxeVideo*. Haha, sucker, you burn. You can't do it. *Photon Paint* only saves lo-res or hi-res HAM mode pictures, which can utilize all 4096 of the Amiga's colors. So what do you do in a situation like this?

Fear no more -- *Pixmate!* and the *Butcher* are here to the rescue. These two programs perform the same operations, although I believe that *Pixmate!* does a little more and a little more elegantly. However, the purpose of these programs is to take one IFF image and convert it some home. Convert it to another resolution, convert the number of bitplanes (and hence, the number of colors) or provide a histogram of color usage (a histogram shows you the percentage of one particular color's use in the picture).

Converting HAM (4096 color) images down to 32 colors can sometimes have undesirable results. (ie. the resultant picture looks like hell), however, most hand drawn HAM images convert nicely, sometimes with very little noticeable difference. These programs also let you easily remove the RED, GREEN, and/or BLUE content from your pictures which can be useful for 3-D effects and the like. These programs are a great help when you are stuck in that old situation, so stop bailing your hair out and get some help by all means!

Amazing Amiga

By Gene Chmielowiec--Say "CHEESE"

It's been said that a picture is worth a thousand words. I doubt that the person who first coined that phrase had an Amiga in mind when he or she first said it, but it is one which aptly applies itself when describing the graphic capabilities of the Amiga. There really is no other personal computer that can equal the Amiga when it comes to creating artwork on a computer. The versatility which the Amiga possesses, gives to the budding artist the ability to create pictures and graphics of a quality that were only dreamed of a few years back. Today more and more businesses are turning to the Amiga to create the artwork that their firms require. Whether that business is an advertisement firm or a news broadcast station, the Amiga is the computer which more companies are turning to to produce the professional quality graphics that the Amiga can create at a fraction of the cost of other systems. If you've been following our newsletter for a while then you already know why I got my Amiga. It was because of the graphic capabilities which it possesses. I have always had a love for art and drawing all my life, having taken classes in most forms of art from watercolours, to oilpainting, to photography, to cell animation techniques. - so I guess that computer graphics was the next logical step. The trouble was though, that the first generation of computers such as the Vic 20, Commodore 64, Atari 800, etc. while being "good" machines to play arcade games on or to learn programming with, they just didn't possess the capability to allow me to produce the kind of truly detailed artwork that I could do in on paper or canvas. Then came along the Amiga and now I find that not only can I create artwork of the same level and craftsmanship that I used to do on paper, but that now I find that the works that I create with my Amiga often surpasses my expectations of what I can create on this machine.

Please don't get the wrong impression. You don't have to be artistic to create great looking pieces of art on your Amiga (mind you, it does help) for the features that are found in all of the graphics programs available for your Amiga make drawing such an easy and effortless task that creating a "bad" piece of art becomes the hard thing to do. One of the nicest things that Commodore and the software houses that support the Amiga did was to establish a standard universal format so that any program could read and work with a file created on the Amiga. This format is called "IFF" which stands for Interchange File Format. This IFF standard makes it possible to switch applications without worrying about compatibility. Without IFF we would find ourselves far more limited in what we could do with our Amigas since a file created in one program would be useless anywhere else. But in IFF the data is recognized by virtually any program, and whatever isn't recognized is simply ignored. IFF isn't just for graphics either. This format can also save musical note code, text, as well as a large variety of fonts. No longer need your creative juices be held back, it's possible now to take say a drawing created with an Amiga-Basic paint program and load it into a commercial paint program such as Deluxe Paint II and use features that Deluxe Paint II might have that your basic paint program may lack. You could then take that same picture file and load it into Photon Paint or Digi-Paint to take advantage of any feature which these or any other commercial paint programs have that one of the others may lack. You need not even stop here! Once you have finished creating a character in one of your picture files you could import him into any of the animation programs that are available, add sound (also in IFF format) and produce your own cartoons and videos. Your creative endeavors need no longer be

restricted by your computers incapacibilities, for with an Amiga whatever you wish to create on your computer is now possible. The only limitation which I can see standing in your way could be running out of memory while in the pursuit of your artistic goal. (Remember, Graphics eat up memory like crazy!!) But with memory expansions being available that need be only a temporary setback. So let yourself loose and be creative. You'll be surprised at how good an artist you really are!! Why I've even seen pictures done by people who claim that they have NO ARTISTIC TALENT whatsoever, but who have produced some REALLY AMAZING and INTERESTING(?) pieces of art. Isn't that right Jim? --BAUG

Renaissance Amiga from p. 7

basics. I hope that, perhaps, this little essay might spark some interest, or plant a seed of inspiration that might result in some measure of enjoyment and sense of accomplishment for those of you who would not ordinarily spend much time with an art program. I feel that these "art" programs are important for more than business reasons and that everyone has an artist somewhere deep inside themselves that needs exercise occasionally. Don't give up on your own personal Painter, Musician or Director. Keep practising. I still am.

Next BAUG meeting is Thursday, February 23, 1989 at 7:30pm. same place. Guest speaker Randy Linden will be attending. All of this subject to

C What I mean?

By Syd L. Bolton

At long last, for all you hard core C fans, this column returns. I think that enough time has passed since the original C articles that I am going to finally jump right into actually doing something with the Amiga's *Intuition*. Keep in mind of course that I am going to start out very simply, and we'll progress from there. I'm assuming that you are all familiar with your 'C' compiler and know how to link and compile. The examples I am writing are written in MANX AZTEC C v3.6a, but should work on earlier versions and with little or no conversion to work with LATTICE.

The first thing that we have to do is tell the compiler which INCLUDE files we need. Because we don't have any other segments of code that we've written to include, we simply need the system includes. In this example, all that we will need is the Intuition header (and of course, standard input/output), so we include it like this:

```
#include "stdio.h"
#include "intuition/intuition.h"
```

I like to declare my window structures globally so that all of my subsequent routines can get at them. We also need a type "long" variable for the IntuitionBase. The intuition library must first be opened before we can attempt to call any Intuition functions; in this example, it will be a function as simple as opening a window.

Let's now concentrate on the **NewWindow** structure. This structure tells the Amiga everything it needs to know about the window. The location, height, width, intuition flags, and so on. In the next installment, we will examine each of the variables and what you can set them to. For now, here is a formal definition of a **NewWin-**

```
dow:
struct NewWindow
{
    SHORT LeftEdge, TopEdge;
    SHORT Width, Height;
    UBYTE DetailPen, BlockPen;
    ULONG IDCMPFlags;
    ULONG Flags;
    struct Gadget *FirstGadget;
    struct Image *CheckMark;
    UBYTE *Title;
    struct Screen *Screen;
    struct BitMap *BitMap;
    SHORT MinWidth, MinHeight;
    SHORT MaxWidth, MaxHeight;
    USHORT Type;
};
```

As you can see by the field names, there are quite a few things that the Amiga must know about a window. Now, without any further ado, type the following program into your text editor and compile and link it on your Amiga.

```
*****
Opening a window in 'C'!
Written by Syd L. Bolton
Copyright (c)1989
*****

#include "stdio.h"
#include "intuition/intuition.h"

long *IntuitionBase=0;

struct NewWindow MyWin = {
    169, 71, /* x and y coords */
    308, 43, /* width and height */
    0, 1, /* detail and block pens */
    NULL, /* IDCMP flags */
    ACTIVATE, /* window flags */
    NULL, /* no gadgets */
    NULL, /* no custom checkmark */
    "MyWindow!", /* window title */
    NULL, /* custom screen */
    NULL, /* custom bitmap */
    5, 5, 640, 200, /* min & max x&y values */
    WBENCHSCREEN };
```

```
struct Window *MyWindow;

main()
{
    int i; /* for delay loop */
    IntuitionBase = OpenLibrary("intuition.library", 0); /* obviously don't use hyphen */

    if (IntuitionBase == 0) {
        puts("nSorry, can't open Intuition!!!");
        exit(1);
    }

    /* if we get this far then Intuition was
    opened successfully, and we are able to
    open the window now!!! */

    MyWindow = OpenWindow(&MyWin);

    if (MyWindow == NULL) {
        puts("nSorry, can't open Window!!!");
        exit(1);
    }

    /* at this point, the Window is opened,
    and we'll delay, and then close it up. */

    for (i=0; i<10000; i++) {
        } /* this loop does nothing, just waits */

    CloseWindow(MyWindow);
    CloseLibrary(IntuitionBase);
}
```

Try experimenting with this code. Change the window title, change the width, height, x&y coordinates and so on.

If you find that the window comes on your screen and then disappears real quick, change the 10,000 in the for...next loop to a higher number. And remember, happy hacking! Next month we'll examine everything in much more detail. Again, don't be afraid to experiment.