Amiga - for people on the move

#amiga
guide

- News
- Scene: Useless of Spaceballs
- AROS / MOS / AmigaOS news

AMIGA OS 4.0

AMIGA OS 4.0

Don't call me Classic

Amiga OS 4 is coming to your Amiga 3000 or 4000 equipped with Cyberstorm PPC expansion board!
After five years of development the biggest upgrade to the Amiga Operating System is available also
for "classic" Amigas. You will have modern hardware support, an updated interface, completely rewritten
Exec kernel, an internet access suite, new applications and viewers and many other improvements.
Please check www.acube-systems.com/compatibility to see all the supported hardware.

developed by:

packaging developed and produced by:

AMIGA
www.amigaos4.com

HYPERION
entertainment

ACube Systems Srl
www.acube-systems.com

Amiga websites

AmigaWeb.net
http://amigaweb.net

Amigaworld.net
http://amigaworld.net

Amigans.net
http://amigans.net

Amiga.org
http://amiga.org

polarboing
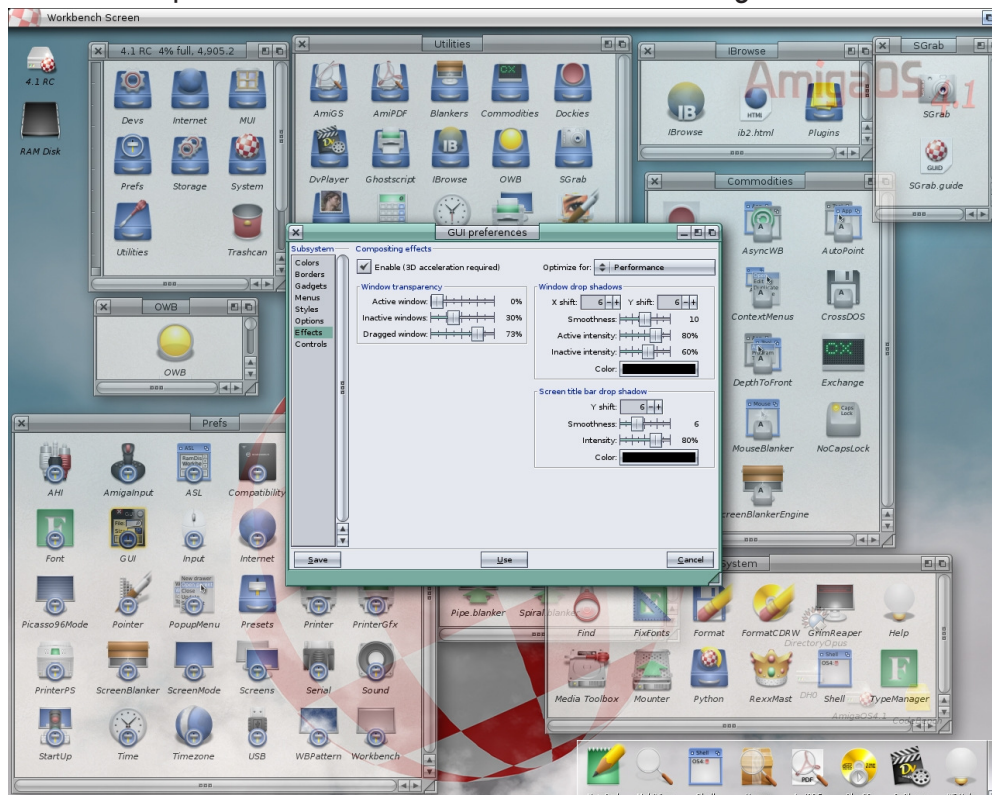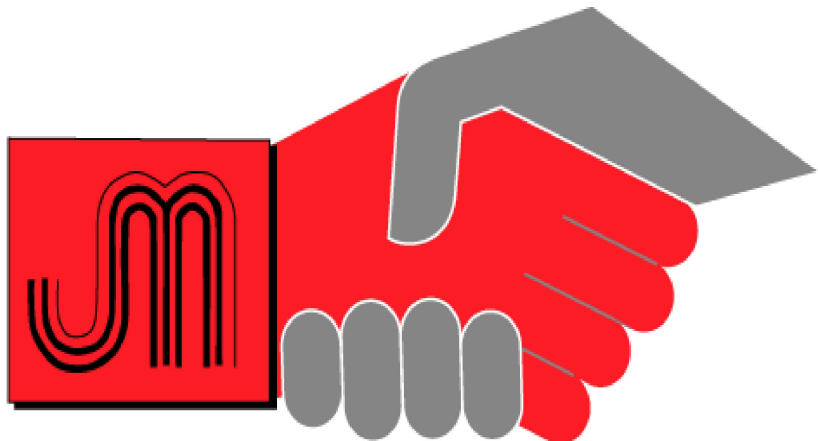http://polarboing.com
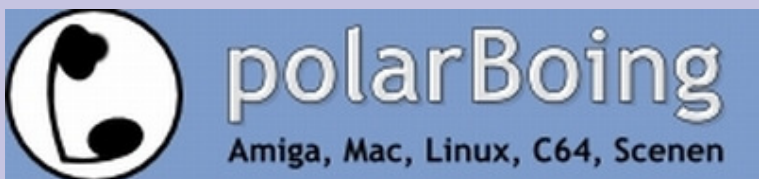
Over: «Amiga OS 3.5 includes an html v3 capable web browser called AwebII. It has the very advanced feature of being optional - a feature so advanced that Microsoft has as of yet been unable to completely replicate it.» | Under: Screenshot from AmigaOS4.1

#amiga guide magazine wants to thank:

http://jm-as.no

Radio Reboot
http://radioreboot.net

What's the point?

Can you swim upstreams all the time? Does fish feel ok with swimming upstreams all the time? Do you always fight the bravest against good resistance? Is a windy road the one that gives the most strength?

No.

You need some luck from day to day, and not just always resistance. Of course I am now thinking of our beloved computer system that these days lives a rather silent life without the big headlines.

Where did yesterday go, those days with glory and honour? Where are those days of silver and gold, when everybody wanted an Amiga, upgraded their Amiga and actually used their Amiga?

What good is a bird in your hand, when the ten other birds sits on the roof laughing of you and your computer? They laughs as crows and enjoys you being humble and patient waiting for things to happen, tease you to your face is frowned, until you almost believe what they tell you: «Your dreams won't come true! Give up!» We should listen to them? We all should buy us a PC with Windows or a Mac with MacOS or a Linux computer with BSD or X and slip into the grey masses of mainstream computer users?

No!

Because it is the grey eminence that is the loosing part in a future not too far away. And we're not gray! We are the colours of the computer world! We are children of the rainbow! Remember the Amiga rainbow logo with pride! We are original, special and colourful. We are Amiga enthusiasts, and pride of it, too!

And this fact is from now on given through #AG magazine to, from now on in brand new colour design.

Amiga - because we are colourful!

Tommy Strand

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#amiga guide facts

Cover page:
Design: Tommy Strand

Produced with: PageStream @ AmigaOne

Content pages:
Design: Tommy Strand

Produced with:
Hardware:
AmigaOne G4 XE @ 800 MHz, OS4.0 final, 1 GB RAM

Printers: HP LaserJet 1200
HP DeskJet 970 Cxi

Software:
PageStream v. 4.1.5.6
DirectoryOpus v. 4.16
Digita Organizer v. 2

No of issues printed: 20

Printed by CompuNor, Norway
www.compunor.no
Number of subscribers atm: 0
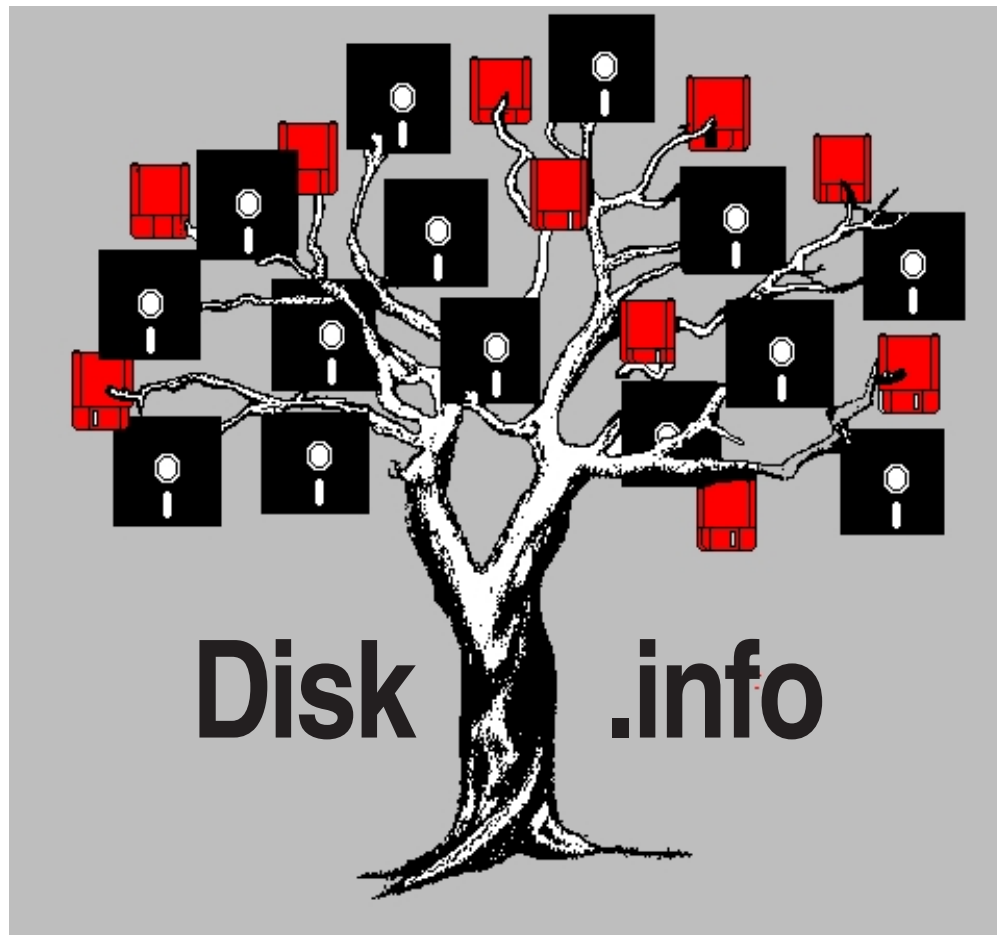
MorphOS 2.3 released

 MorphOS guys hits us again, now with another update of MorphOS.

This update is free for registered users of MorphOS2.x, but the demo version is available for everybody else.

Version 2.3 has among others, the following improvements:
- support for Ext2-, Ext3-, NTFS-, SGI-XFS-, MAC-HFS+ and MAC-HFS-partitions
- Poseidon upgraded to v 4.2, fixing some USB problems
 - Optimalizations and improvements in Layers and Intuition, which among others things leads to a nicer (smoother) handling of windows.

This is of course just some of the improvements. Read more about the other improvements at the release noe for MorphOS 3.2 and download from the same place.
Sources:
morphzone.org
/ polarboing.com

Test av MorphOS 2.3
The magazine Obligement have published a review of the new released version 2.3 of MorphOS.

The article in french :
http://obligement.free.fr/articles/morphos23.php
The article in english (automatic translation) :
http://translate.google.fr/translate‏u=http%3A%2F%2Fobligement.free.fr%2Farticles%2Fmorphos23.php&sl=fr&tl=en&hl=fr&ie=UTF8
Source: morphzone.org

Developer article about the new MorphOS memory system
Harry "Piru" Sintonen wrote a developer article about the new memory system of MorphOS and first introduced in MorphOS2.0. The article gives a deep introduction into the general design goals and the technical implementations.

Read it all here:
http://www.morphos.de/tlsf.html

Source: morphos.de

OWB 1.3 for MorphOS
Origyn Web Browser for MorphOS is updated to version 1.3. This update introduces two most important features earlier not implemented: Configurable MIME handling and a good download handler (with support for resume). Other snacks implemented now is AdBlock functionality and session saving.

Downlaoad OWB 1.3 for MorphOS from here:
http://fabportnawak.free.fr/owb/

Sources:
morphzone.org
/polarboing.com

- **MorphOS: Software News** -

Adventure-Interpreter
ScummVM 1.0.0 rc1

Fabien "Fab" Coeurjoly has published an update downloadable here:
:
http://fabportnawak.free.fr/scummvm/   )

of his MorphOS port of the Adventure-Interpreter ScummVM.
http://www.scummvm.org/

New beta driver
New beta driver for the Epson-USB-Scanner

Michal "zukow" Zukowski has published a new beta version of his scanner driver for Epson units for USB and reqeuests your feedback at this thread at morphzone.org.
http://www.morphzone.org/modules/newbb_plus/viewtopic.php?forum=9&topic_id=6376&sortname=&sortorder=&sortdays=&viewmode=flat&order=0&start=40

Direct download:
EpsonUSB.device (91 KB)
http://brain.umcs.lublin.pl/~rzookol/download/EpsonUSB.device

MorphOS-Skin: Blue Marine
Blue Marine Skin is a MorphOS-skin by Jambalah.

Direct download:
BlueMarineSkin.lha (1,2 MB)
http://www.meta-morphos.org/download.php?op=mydown&did=694

MorphOS: Software News up to 01.09.2009

5

AROS Update problems
AROS-Distribution: Update problems with Icaros 1.1.4, Icaros Live-DVD

According to the developers of the AROS-distribution Icaros there are some problems if you want to update to the previously published version 1.1.4 automatically.

The developers recommend to download the update and to unpack it under a different operating system. Then the ISO-file can be installed without any problems under AROS with the "from ISO"-option of the LiveUpdater.

There is also a bootable "Live"-DVD of the distribution which is called "Icaros Desktop LIVE!" and which does not require any installation on the harddrive but which can be installed additional to an existing Windows-installation on a different partition.
Source: amiga-news.com

Status update AROS
Date:
2009-05-01
Author:
Simone Bernacchia & Neil Cafferkey

Latest updates
Since the last update before Christmas, AROS has gained a lot of improvements, both in system components and applications: AROS is getting really close to being suitable for daily usage.

Oliver Brunner recently released version 0.3 of Janus-UAE, the AROS-specific version of UAE required by phase 1 of the UAE Integration Bounty. Now AROS can open AmigaOS applications in their own AROS screen or window. Oliver is currently working on integrating menus.

But the most important news is that AROS has finally got its own modern web browser! Thanks to the hard work of Stanislaw Sszymczyk, OWB is available for AROS, delivering full CSS and Javascript compatibility, tabbed browsing and a download manager. OWB is at version 0.9.3 Beta, and in order to run correctly requires recent versions of muimaster.library, arosc.library and codesets.library. OWB can be downloaded at its own page at sand-labs. Stanislaw has also finished work on allowing the compilation of multiple versions of AROS using a single copy of the source tree.

Pavel "Sonic" Fedin is still working on the Windows Hosted version of AROS and, in the course of this work, is also trying to solve several problems in the way AROS talks to the hardware, in order to abstract it; this led to his modifying components that require an abstraction layer in order to work in hosted AROS versions, such as file systems and hardware; this includes a packet handling method for SFS. Also, Pavel, together with Jens Langner, is trying to cross-compile the most up-to-date versions of the mcc.BetterString and mcc.TextEditor MUI classes so that they will be taken straight from the mainstream source instead of being included in the AROS source tree.

Matthias "Mazze" Rustler has released an alpha version of the Ignition spreadsheet application. At the moment data cannot be saved but it is still a good occasion to have a look at this application, underestimated on AmigaOS but quite powerful and well realised. There are just a couple of major glitches: the applicaiton is only partially translated from German; in order to be used in English the file ignition_english.prefs has to be renamed to ignition.prefs.

Nik "Kalamatee" Andrews is improving Wanderer: in recent months his work delivered better stability, he added a status bar to windows, and he experimented with a directory tree in the left-hand side of windows. In the future, besides the introduction of the much awaited list view, he plans to make Wanderer more modular, so that various components can be added or subtracted at will and implemented also with third-party modules.

The well known VmwAROS distribution has changed name to Icaros Desktop; version 1.1 (updated recently to 1.1.1) delivers updated system files and better stability. Almost all applications were recompiled in order to use the most recent muimaster.library build - finally getting rid of the old switchmuimaster application. As usual, Icaros is available as both a Live DVD and a virtual environment (VE). The VE version has been installed on top of Windows XP on a netbook, running at a reasonable speed with full audio and wireless networking support. More info here.

Michal Schulz still continues to work on his Efika port and, in parallel, on the USB mass storage bounty. In December AROS was able to mount USB sticks and boot from an external CD-ROM drive. Progress on the Efika port brought a more robust kernel, a detailed debug report and a feature quite similar to Grim Reaper on AmigaOS 4 that prevents the machine from freezing in case of a crash.

Neil Cafferkey has been working on improving the compatibility of the ATA driver, so that it works with a greater variety of PCs and drives. These changes were not ready in time for Icaros 1.1.1, but they will probably be included in the next release.

Some changes also occured in the way AROS boots: it is now possible to install 32-bit and 64-bit versions of AROS side-by-side on the same computer. As a result of this, all bootable AROS partitions are required to have a file called AROS.boot containing the architecture type of the AROS system files on that partition. If you want to upgrade the kernel on a system installed prior to March 20, you need to manually copy this file to the root of your system partition, or create it yourself (e.g. run the command "Echo pc-i386 TO DH0:AROS.boot" for a 32-bit system).

And, last but not least, the coming of Steve "ClusterUK" Jones: a Siamese System developer in the past, he now comes back to Amigaland proposing his AROS box for sale. The iMica is an Intel Atom-based small desktop system with Icaros Desktop pre-installed. iMica currently offers one of the best AROS experiences on real hardware, due to the inclusion of a Creative Labs SoundBlaster card with EMU10k chipset that is supported by AROS, and an RTL8168 Network card, supported by Kalamatee's new driver.
Source: aros.sourceforge.net

Ny SDK till OS4.x
Hyperion announces that they release a new SDK (software development kit) for OS4.x. In the new SDK there are updated .so files and fixes for the SAM440.

http://www.hyperion-
entertainment.biz/index.php?optio
n=com_registration
&view=files&parent=30&Itemid=63

*Source:
safiir.amigaos.se*

Amiga Seeding the Success Campaign from DiscreetFX
The Amiga computer represents a lot of firsts in the computer industry but it also represents many missed opportunities. Since the death of Commodore in 1994 the Amiga has

descended into dark times. They say you learn most from your failures and not your successes and this is most certainly the case when it comes to Amiga. And yet some good things have happened as well.

The Amiga market has branched off into some healthy competition with the arrival of MorphOS, AROS & Amiga OS 4.1. The Amiga emulation scene is alive and well with Amiga Forever 2009 from Cloanto. And lets not forget the hard work of the developers of Minimig, Natami & CloneA. Amiga developers have transcended the need of one company controlling the destiny of Amiga and have forged ahead in interesting ways.

It's this Amiga spirit that DiscreetFX loves and we want to nurture. So from time to time we will donate $100 to great Amiga developers. No, this is not a ton of money but it is a gesture that will encourage positive feelings and development in the Amiga community of families. If a developer or even a user does something outstanding that

pushes forward the Amiga, MorphOS, AROS or Amiga OS 4.1 brand we will send them this little reward. If this program is well received then donation amounts may increase.

Today's winner is Nova Design in the USA. Nova Design has worked tirelessly and created the killer product ImageFX Studio. Congratulations Nova Design! Please support this great developer, we already have by sending them $100 via Paypal. They are not alone and it takes many to change the world. But it is our sincere hope that the Amiga scene can grow again. Thanks again Nova Design for all your hard work and your the winner for August 2009. Who will the next winner be? Feel free to participate in the process and let us know via e-mail who you think deserves to win. They can be

MorphOS, Amiga OS, OS 4.1, AROS users or developers. That does not matter, what does matter is that they worked hard and pushed the community forward in a positive way.

Please order ImageFX Studio from this Link

 http://www.novadesign.com

Best regards
DiscreetFX Team
Source: amiga.org

NAF get grassroot share
Norwegian Amiga Association is now a worthy receiever of the grassroot share from government run betting company Norsk Tipping.

The register in Brønnøysund now has granted NAF to be a member of the Volunteer register and recogniced our user group as a worthy receiver of the grassroot share. This means that 5 % of what you bet goes to NAF

when you have your player card registered with NAF. To achieve this, NAF had to regulate their union law a bit, and amiga.no will be updated with the new union law as soon as webmaster gets the time for this.

Mark our organisation number: 985 256 373

We celebrates this with a Guru Meditation. ;)

NAF with no registering
NAF members magazine Amigaguiden is sent to all paying subscribers in paper format. Until recently we also has published the magazine in PDF format to everyone that registered as members for free at our website amiga.nn. The idea doing this was to get more registered members of our our user group, but also get registered users for the website.

Of course this will lead to a lower download count and less readers of the PDF edition. This is why we now leave the registration part.Anybody can now download Amigaguiden magazine for free without any registration.

It should be noted that the free PDF edition is published several weeks later than the paper edition, and that NAF annual meeting of the spring of 2009 agreed to lower the price of the full subscription from 340 NOK to 290 NOK per year. Also, only a fully paid subscription gives access to our annual NAF Amiga Multimedia Contest with money prices for over 6000 NOK.

Pianeta Amiga 2009

The event you are all waiting for is coming! On 26th of September, at the "Palaesposizioni" in Empoli, near Florence (Italy), will take place the 13th edition of the longest running Amiga Event in Italy.

The event is open to commercial exhibitors, user groups and single users.

If you want to exhibit please contact us at info@pianetaamiga.it to reserve your table!

Confirmed commercial exhibitors so far:

ACube Systems Srl
AmigaKit
Bitplane

Don't miss this opportunity to meet other fellow amigans and some of the developers that are working hard for our community.

Official Website:
http://www.pianetaamiga.it/
Source: amigaworld.net

SAM Flex Package Offer
A unique package offer from HAST-Enterprises. We want to get the Amiga sales in Sweden better, and offers a powerful Amiga package, prebuilt and installed with AmigaOS4.1..

Double memory size, that is an extra 512 MB chip (worth 479 SEK) which in total sums up to 1 GB of memory. Package also includes the game «Exodus, The Last War» on CD (worth 79 SEK) and a keyboard and a mouse (worth 179 SEK).

You don't pay freight in Sweden if payment is done in advance for our account.

Direct link:
http://hast-enterprises.se/shop/index.php?shop&297&82

PACKAGE OFFER

Price: 10629 SEK incl VAT.

Specs:
Chassis: 7KJCBS Compucase 300w
GFX: 9250PCI
OS: 4.1 SAM
Optical: Samsung DVD-brännare 22x
SATA HDD: WD 1TB 3.5"
7200rpm 32MB cache SATA
(3 partitions. 20 GB DH0:, 1 GB SWAP, the rest for DH1:)
Mobo: SAM 440 FLEX CPU
clock speed: 733 MHz
Memory: 512 MB DDR-400 DIMM 100-pin
(Offered: +512MB = 1GB)

Source: safir.amigaos.se

Interview of Wayne Hunt
Wayne Hunt, the creator of Amiga.org, has been doing an open hearted interview about why he decided to sell the website this autumn. You can read a whole lot about his trips around his personal contacts owning different business in the Amiga market.

http://obligement.free.fr/articles_traduction/itwhunt_en.php
Source: safir.amigaos.se
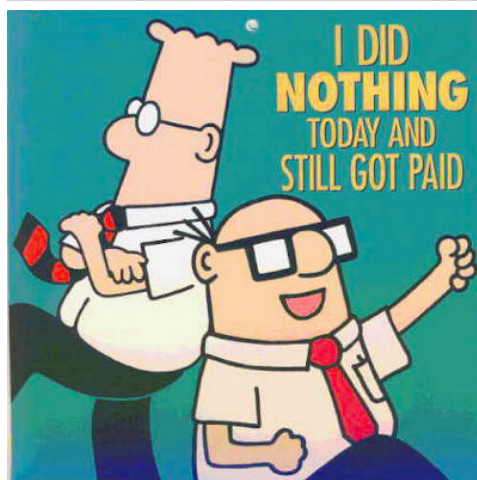
The Demo Scene

We are now sitting in the basement studio belonging to Useless in Halden, Norway, and we have just gone through about three Spaceballs demos and a couple of othhe demos from other demo groups, mostly picked from the EyeCandy Demo CD.

Well, now we have 15 minutes to talk about Spaceballs. We could of course have been talking a whole evening, Thomas, right? Or a week?

Thomas: Well, I think I would have been free for answers from time to time then, but I guess I have to do my very best. It was really fun to look through some old demos again. I have little time doing things like this nowadays compared to earlier days...

Yeah, today is 28th of August 2007, and it has been a while since the last demo from Spaceballs?

Thomas: Yes, a very long time ago, and I guess there will be no more.

You are a pessimist?

Thomas: No, I am no pessimist, I am just being realistic. But why not give in when you are at the peak, if you know what I mean?

When was the last demo?

Thomas sighs and tries to remember...

Tough question?

- Yes, that was a very tough question, but the last demo was «We wear dark helmets». It has been at last about 2-3 years ago that demo (This interview was done in 2007 – editor's remark). Time goes by quickly. I'm not able to count the days.

Close on:

Useless of Spaceballs

His real name is Egil Thomas Hansen, but in this sense his birth name is «Useless» :P

Text:
Tommy Rølvåg Strand

Egil Thomas Hansen

Do you know the number of demos that Spaceballs produced, Thomas?

- Including demos and intros and everything we ever made, I guess we are talking of about 25-30 pieces. Around there somewhere. Much of that is intros, but there is a lot of work behind intros as well.

What role did you do in Spaceballs?

- I am a musician, at least that is what I call myself.

How did all this start, Useless?

- The year was 1987, and me and Paul aka LoneStarr and a couple of other friends decided to make demos, because it was cool. So we started something we called ACT – Amiga Crack Team. None of us could do pretty much, I had myself been looking a little at a soundtracker that I got with my Amiga when I bought it. Otherwise Paul knew a little BASIC from his Commodore 64, but not much above that. And this was our start. A little BASIC and a little ProTracker, then we found a dude who could draw something in Dpaint. This project was wasted after some time, and I and another member decided to go our own way, so Paul & Co were left behind and became

Spaceballs in the end.

Meanwhile I had started playing in a band. Then we got a new guitar player in the band, Thomas Andersen, and he was then known as Yoghurt of Spaceballs. So before a stage gig on the pub Oscars in Fredrikstad, Norway, then I and Andersen stood along in the road doing our business, then Thomas asks me Thomas :) the following: «You won't join us in Spaceballs then?» We had a few beers, so the answer was «Yes, of course, I will join you!», and at that time I guess I had not touched a tracker at least the past 10 years. So I said: «But I can't do anything; I don't remember anything!», but the answer was «Won't matter, there's quite a lot of useless people around there» Andersen replied for fun. «Ok», I replied, «I am in! But then my handle shall be «Useless»». And that's the way it got. I was Useless of Spaceballs.

To describe the room we sit in, it is all but «useless», and I dare to say, that our main guy here is all but «useless». Along a wall here is three synthezisers, there are at least seven guitars here, and a couple of big printers, a big Marshall amplifier, and to the left of me is an office table with a least two computers, and a great number of boxes, some here,

some there, and behind me there is a projector and a projector screen, together with a nice DVD collection, and of course it is possible to play the MindCandy CD, among other DVDs.

Thomas: Yeah, I surely could like the idea of spending more time down here in this basement room than I do, but I have a little daughter and a wonderful wife that needs me. Don't misunderstand me, but I rather use time for my daughter and wife than sit here.

More about Spaceballs?

- Well, we're a bunch of shitheads, all of us, ain't we? :) No, seriously, what's so charming about Spaceballs, is that it is no pressure on us about producing anything at all. With other groups it can be aqquired to produce a certain minimum number of tunes in a year just to hang in, for instance. It has never been this way in Spaceballs, but a more relaxed thing for us.

Still, you got a certain status, and you had some success? Tell us about the success of Spaceballs?

Spaceballs was a great success. In the beginning of the 90ties, Spaceballs was popular on the demo scene with Paul aka

LoneStarr and Sverre aka Major Asshole, that among others did Nine Fingers, State of the Art, Spasmolytic, you might call these the classic demos of Spaceballs, and not to forget Supermonster, Scrimm, We wear darh helmets, Smurf – that was an alternative project from Remi (who was interviewed in an earlier article of Norwegian sister magazine Amigaguiden – editors remark).

Spaceballs was in short on a big carusell, things were smooth, and we boys in Spaceballs could ask whoever we wanted to join our demo group. We could ask clever people around the world to join Spaceballs, and people said yes, because it was great status to be a part of Spaceballs. Louie, Danny, yes a lot of known people joined Spaceballs.

Who are the «original Spaceballs»? A lot of you are from Halden, Norway? But you also had a lot of foreigners in the group?

At present time there are not so many from abroad, but a some still are. We have Hardfire, he is French. We also have XOZ, he is French too. I hope Remi, if you ever read this (if you still are a member of Spaceballs that is, haha, I am not up to date on anything atm... :)), that you forgive me for my bad knowledge atm. =) But Spaceballs is anyway not only people from Norway. I have not met all Spaceballs members irl (In Real Life), but all the original Spaceballs members I have met, because they were all kids from my year at school, we were school mates, all of us. Here we are sitting in the top of Grimsrudhøgda, Paul lived a mile that way, Andre aka Defener lived right up the street here, and so on. Original Spaceballs is a bunch of friends, in fact. All are from Os school. (You might say «The school of Oz» ;) - editors remark.)

Well, then we need to give credits to the principal at that time at Os school for good management then, I guess =)

- Yeah, a lot of good things came out of Os school at that time. Anyway, much of Spaceballs came from Commodore 64 freaks, the Commodore 64 was very popular among us kids. Os school is a elementary school, just to state a fact. So a lot of us used the C64 before we was introduced to the Amiga. I remember Paul aka LoneStarr was the first of us who got an

Amiga, and I also remember I saw Amiga Karate (I think it was that game). I did not believe my very eyes, I did not think something like this was possible. Real sound, you know, among other things, and almost a real picture. That was awesome for me. What more can I say? Well, Spaceballs ruled a lot! Up to the time went a bit down the drain for several reasons.

You told me about something that happened at TG (The Gathering) in Norway one year? Tell us all about it?
- It was some demo we had, that was quite unannounced. There used to be a lit of lobby talk, you know, to advertice for new demos for instance in this way: «Just watch it! This year Epidhrena has some AWESOME demo going!» And this year we in Spaceballs never said anything abuot our demo, we had been going pretty quiet in the doors. But then «Demo number xx» was announced through the

speakers, and the Spaceballs logo came on screen with a bang. And suddenly the whole room was roaring in a choir of cheering from most of the participators, and for us this was great. We got a feeling of being remember for what we once were.

Did you manage to keep at little humbleness in Spaceballs, or was it like you expected to win any contets and sort of be recognized on the street?

- No, for my sake I never looked upon myself as «Useless of Spaceballs», I am Thomas, I know Remi looks at himself as Remi, it is just us lads you know. But when you are into this discussion, it can be added that the whole demo scene most of the time is like a big act. All has an image they'd like to keep, both in ways of nick and behaviour. At times it was in fact quite embarrassing, because we got a name tag you know for events. At that tag stood your handle, and what group you belonged to. And you could hear people wisper when you were in line in front of the kiosk and things like that: «Wow! He is from Spaceballs!» And I am just a normal man, you know, I eat and I drink and I fart like anybody else, it is just the fact that we make demos that makes us special for people in the end. Regarding coding, coding is greek to me, whatever area of that matter. I am a musician. Period. Remi aka Slummy is doing most of the coding in Spaceballs, and I have nothing to do with such things.

You told me that one of the coders of Spaceballs did some special code that was recogniced at top level of the engineers of Commodore? Tell us about it?

Yeah, it was Paul aka LoneStarr, that broke a barriere. What he did, made the great lords of Commodore to utter «this simply can not be done on an Amiga!» Thomas Andersen aka Yoghurt has a diploma at home I have seen, and it is from Commdore to Spaceballs «For innovative use of the Commodore Amiga». At the momen I don't remember if it was Nine Fingers or State of the Art, and I either don't remember what exactly about this 3D thing that was so fantastic (no, Remi, I still don't want to learn coding... =)), but something about that coding got Commodore engineers saying «Wow! This is not possible!»

- scene -

But that is the way with coding on the Amiga. It is all about using every little bit and byte of resources on a computer, anyway this was what demo coding was like in these times. So all credits to the coders!

Do you want to say something to your «ex bandits» of Spaceballs or to people in other demo groups?

- Well....yeah... «Good morning, guys, come back to Halden! =)», and Vision of Death Strike 90: «Get in touch!» =)

In the end: How was the contact inbetween the demo groups? Was there a lot of competition?

- Yeah, about the early 90ties, late 80ties, there was a little teasing and quarreling inbetween the demo groups. We in Spaceballs always had a little fun with Epidhrena, you know, and vice versa. Some demos was in fact sort of public arenas for fighting inbetween the demo groups, but mostly meant in a friendly way. This teasing is in fact more friendly than anything else, you might call it «healthy competition among friends». We all know each ohter, and if we go to the party of Solskogen, everyone knows each other, no matter group membership.

Tell us about Solskogen?

- Solskogen is a demo party that is held in Ås municipal, south of Oslo, Norway, and was to begin with a pure Amiga arrangement. But you are allowed to come with a PC or a laptop, and you also are allowed to come in with a bottle of beer as your only gear. For Solskogen is much about social contact, you barbeque and have a good time, and for instance we had a competition some years ago that we called «run with scissors» contest. You know, we always heard from mum as childre, that you «never shall run with a scissors in your hands», so we bought such small, blue plastic scissors, then we arranged a «run with scissors» contest. Just for the fun of it, you know: =) Solskogen also has a demo compo, but that is not the focus. The social thing has focus above all, and you don't have no focus on what nick you have or what demo group you belong to.

Thomas? I am crossing fingers and toes now and hope to get the answer I want to hear! Is the Amiga demo scene dead?

- I am not the right person to answer that question, but I don't think so. In fact, I think there was a combined demo comp at the last Assembly. That is; Amiga demo and PC demo in same cathegory. And the winner was an Amiga demo, in fact. I think you always will have an Amiga demo scene. Amiga demos are much more effective than a comparable PC demo. You will never be able to compress a PC demo down to 4 KB, for instance, which can be done with the Amiga.

Give the readers a few demo sites internet links?

Spaceballs.no, pouet.net and demoscene.no.

A couple of IRC channels as well?

#scene.no at Efnet, #amigascne at IRCnet, both pretty big channels. Then you've got #trax at Efnte if you need music, the trackers hang out there.

Amiga
Useless: What is Amiga?
- For me Amiga and Commodore 64 is my childhood and at least the early teenage years.

Amiga is a computer?

Thomas: Not for me!

Oh?

- To me Amiga is more a lifestyle. Amiga was a lifestyle for many people from about 11-12 years of age and above. And what is really fun is that people still is nodding recognicing to their Amiga belonging years and years afterwoods. I once spoke to a guitar player over in the States about guitar stuff and so on, and don't quite remember how I got onto the subject Amiga. But when I did put Amiga on topic, he got really excited, he remembered that he had an Amiga 500, and he even remembered what high score he had on certain levels in The Great Giana Sisters.

If you ever had an Amiga, then you were into a lifestyle.

At that time they who had a computer and spoke about computers in the school yard was almost laughed at compared to today, when everybody have a computer, just because it is cool. Back then owning a computer was more of a hobby.

But what is an Amiga, Thomas?

Set straightly, the Amiga is the succedor of Commodore 64, the great hit of Commodore Inc.

These two computers are Commodores biggest hits: Commodore 64 and the Commodore Amiga. It is a standalone computer system.

Tell the readers about the hardware specifications of the Amiga?

Classic Amiga, which are the only Amiga computers I was into, had power about equal to a maths calculator of today, they are equipped with a Motorola 680x0 CPU.

The first Amiga was the Amiga 500?

- No, the first one was an Amiga 1000.

Do you have more than one Amiga?

- I own an Amiga 1000, an Amiga 500, an Amiga 600, an Amiga 1200 and an Amiga 4000.

Why do so many own more than one Amiga? I understand that many do from what I read at the internet...?

- Nobody as of 2007 («today» - editors remark) collects on PC because it is PC. But when it comes to Amiga you get more of an enthusiast, you get a bit «addicted to Amiga». Maybe it is like this: When you was dreaming of owning an Amiga 4000 when you was young, but could afford only an Amiga 500 or maybe an Amiga 1200, then when you grew up and earned more, you fulfill your dream of youth and buys a decent Amiga. I got my Amiga 4000 in Trondheim as grown up man.

How many Amiga computers do you think it is sold world wide, all models?

- I don't know, but Commodore 64 for instance was sold in an incredible amount of many millions, and still has a hardcore,

active demo scene. Creators with among others Proteque, aka Gjøran Sæther, was/is a clever, Norwegian C64 group.

Please describe the user experience using the Amiga compared to PC back then?

Well, the PC at that time was DOS; a text console and beep-beep sounds. Super-Nintendo sounds like Mozart compared to PC from these days. And in this time we were introduced to the Amiga, with full colour screen, 4 separate sound channels, two for each output left/right, 4069 colors on the screen at the same time, and to 1/5 of the price of a PC. We suddenly had a screen with «real» pictures, moving objects with sprites and bobs, and you could loose your breath thinking of these times, how big all was, all that really happened.

EVERYONE had to get this computer.

To summarize: If it was either the C64 or the Amiga, Commodore was my childhood, I am really glad I got to be a part of this.

In the end a little about hardware specifications: Amiga 500 had an about 7,14 Mhz Motorola 68000 CPU, then the Amiga 1200 a little later had a Motorola 68020 CPU, then came the 68030 and the 68040.

At that time we sent floppy disks by snail mail, internet was not built at that time.

The swapping was so extended that if one week you got lots of post in form of floppies, then you could get several bags full of floppy disks if your swapping was a bit developed. People

copied from each other. Long live snail mail!

Music

We are lastly talking nor about Spaceballs neither about Amiga, but about something else that keeps you busy: Music.

I am very interested in music – both to produce my own and to listen to others.

In Spaceballs you made music in Protracker. But it is «real music» you really like to do?
As a performing artist, I like to play an instrument, you might say. I have been playing the guitar for some years now. Yeah, from where I sit now, I can count 7 guitars, of which 5 are electric and 2 are acustic.
You forgot the Fender Stratocaster...

Oh...

- Yeah, that is the good one, don't forget! You have 2 of these great guitar names in the guitar history. One of them is the Fender Stratocaster, the other is the Gibsol Les Paul. Our lead singer, who also plays a guitar in the band, has a Gibson. Now I talk about our group Hoffmann. You can find songs from Hoffmann at nrk.no/urort

I don't know how to play a Gibson. The Fender looks completely different, and has another «feel» when playing. I can play a Fender by putting the palm of my hand on it, but each time I play the Gibson the same way, I end up turning the volume down. Totally hopeless for me... It is similiar to owning an Amiga or owning a Mac, you can do one or you can do the other, but seldom both.

You have been into Hoffmann, who never got any record contract. But now you have a new, exciting project?

Yes, I have a project with my

friend Gea, aka Geir Arne Hansen from Sarpsborg, some miles from Halden, he is originally from Halden and also an ex Spaceballs member. His handle was Loverbee of Spaceballs. We have a little band we call Supercraft, and we play electronica. You can find songs from Supercraft at myspace.com/supercraft.

The Supercraft name comes from a collegue of Gea who is a supersynth fanatic, he said «cool that you started a synth band. You gotta name it Supercraft.» And, well, we thought, why not? :)

What is good is that we make the music at home, and we produce and make studio recordings at home. We don't depend of any studio to play anything at all.

Yeah, then I guess you enjoy your computer knowledge?

Yea, when it comes to audio, the Mac is unbeatable, whether you like it or not. Mac has a really top system when it comes to sound. For those who are interested, I bought an iMac with a 2 Ghz PowerPC CPU, 1,5 GB RAM and a 150 GB SATA HDD, and on this system we run Logic. In earlier days iMagic made Logic, but then Apple bought iMagic, so now Apple are in fact the developers of Logic, which is a incredible stable program on a stable system which Mac OSX is. So now we sit here at my place and do recordings at the Mac. Other software we use include Reason, for making the most of the bodies on the songs, and we also use Renoise, a tracker clone in fact, for some drum loops. And tracking we did learn from the Amiga once upon a time :D

How did it all start?

Me and some Amiga friends got the idea of starting a band. I had played the organ a bit when I was little, and another friend

decided he should play the guitar, even if he barely knew how a guitar looked, he decided to learn how to play it, and then we were a bunch who played together. We grew into a band which played together for 8 years, the music style was progressive rock. We played Pink Floyd and stuff like that, and wrote own tunes as well...

We were hired to play at the prom in our first job, when somehing fun happened. I ended up rigging all the gear, and somebody had been touching the guitar tuning, so it was tuned in «fizz key majestice». So, when we was going to play, we had no such thing as monitors, everything was turned against the audience, so we did not hear the guitars or the music very well. But we saw people got very funny looking faces when we startet playing, and when we listened very carefully, we heard that our backing guitar sounded totally fu*ked up. But we got it alright. We survived. :P

The band name was Texaco Stovner.

Why that name?

There is a gas station with that name. But the name is really taken from a radio program on P3 with private decetive named Texaco Stovner and his female colleague Fina Lambertseter. Towards the end of the time with Texaco Stovner, which also consisted of Tomas Yoghurt Andersen btw., The Norwegian Defense Army took care of the band members, it was a little dry periode in terms of music, and I took up a little Amiga tracking again, up to the point when a working mate of me asked «I hear you play the guitar?». That was Lars Erik Nordgård, the lead singer of Hoffmann. Then Lars Erik and me started a little tracker beats that made a rhythm, and to start with we did not really know what this was

gonna turn out like, if we were gonna be a duo pub thing or what.

But that was the birth of the group Hoffmann.

Lars Erik knew somebody who played the bass guitar, he was a student, and he had access to a training room at the students house in Halden, and then it all developed. And this guy again knew a drummer, and then we were started. In some time we of course we changed a bit on band members, but the last 3 years we had a drummer named Lars Andresen, and he runs Sound on Sound sound studio in Sarpsborg, and that was no drawback. We got to train in a professional sound studio, but that was also a disadvantege, as well as an advantage, because we became perfectionists, we taped it all, and practiced so much we just played and played and played, it was hours and hours of playing.
Yes, you can tell by listening on the songs of Hoffmann, it is really good stuff, in fact all the songs sounds like very high quality songs. But regarding Hoffmann, did you ever make a CD, or was it mostly live jobs?
We finished about 4-5 songs to present ourselves, among others the songs «Rigmor» and «Turbofart». But these are from 2003, and we played together all to last year (2006, editors remark), so this is old stuff.

But Thomas, now our train leaves Halden in half an hour for my travel home to Mo i Rana. For the last 2 minutes: What happened money wise? All you talked about regarding Spaceballs, Amiga, Hoffmann and music is only expenses. Did you earn some money? How did you do?

We got paid for the live jobs in Hoffmann, and for several years we were a pretty known group in Halden that attracted audience

and played for full houses for years. But really, if you count all the hours we practiced and reckon the hourly payment, I guess we end up at about 1 penny per hour. ;P

Then again I gotta say this was/is most for fun. Rather do this than spending watching TV for an evening, you know...

*Say hello to people in the music business?*

- Hi! Please check out Supercraft on nrk.no/urort, on Reverb Nation and also check out Hoffmann. Rock in Norwegian rules! Keep singing in Norwegian! It is fun! Keep on rockin', all my friends!

Some links?

Nrk.no/urort. That is the future of Norwegian music! Rising stars! For Supercraft, check out myspace.com/spacecraft.

Thank you very much for your time doing this interview, Thomas Hansen!

For mp3 files in 3 parts with this interview, download from: http://garantert.net/useless Interview audio files are in Norwegian language.
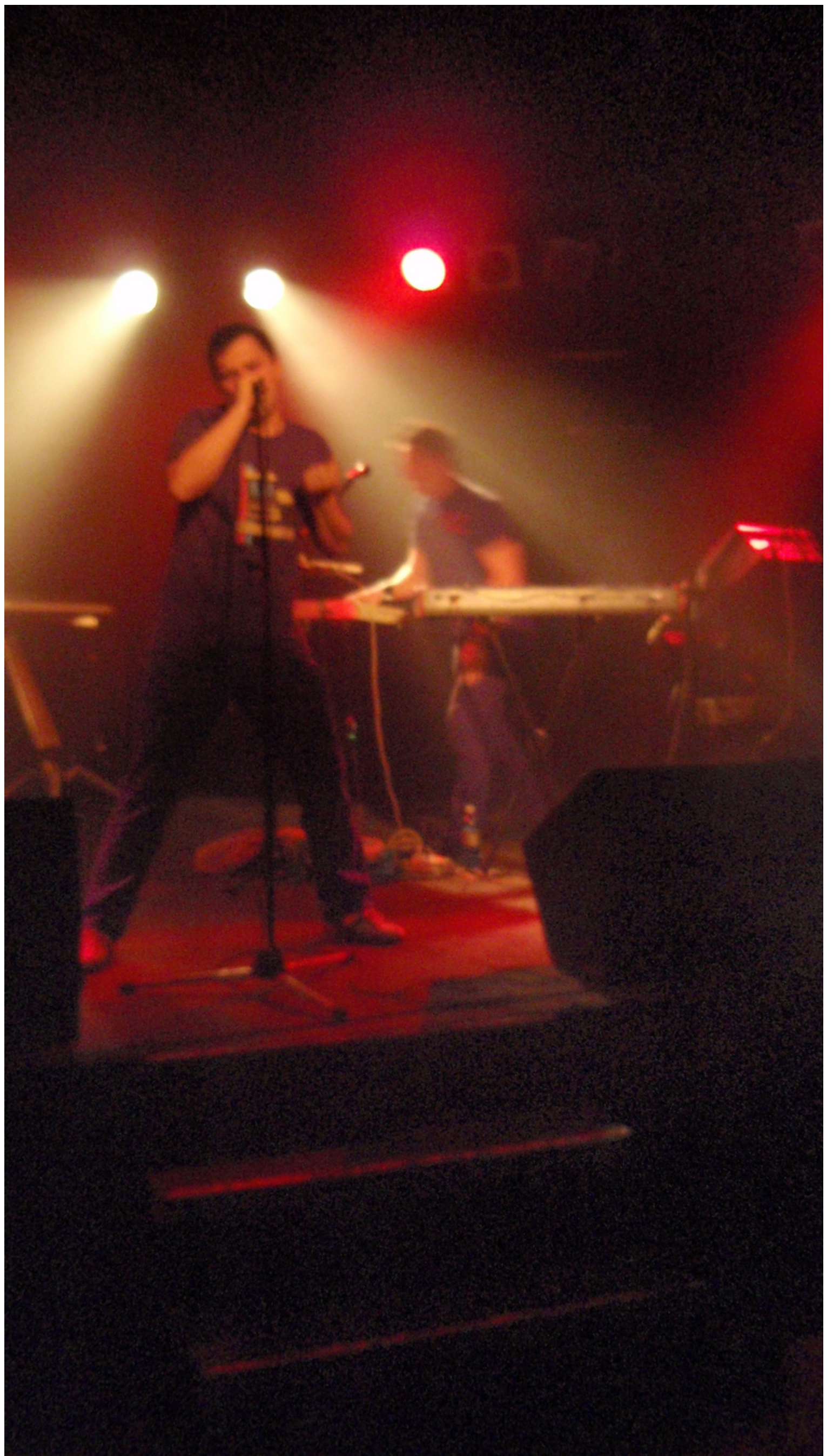
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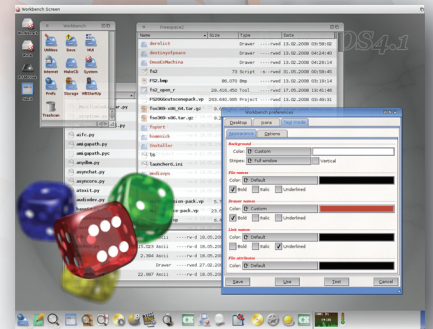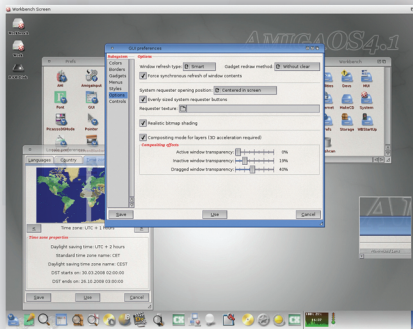
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