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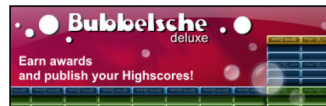
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IMouse Article: X1000 VCF Show

Hallo and indeed a very warm welcome for us here at BlitterWolf.

1. So our readers know who we are talking to, can you state your name, country and occupation please? My name is Guido Does, I live in Germany and my occupation is to run Vesalia Computer.
2. What was your first Amiga ever owned? The first Amiga there ever was, the Amiga 1000 (which was just called Amiga at the time, BTW).
3. What was the first Amiga Software you bought? I believe it was a word processor called Textomat by Data Becker, a German software house. But I'm not really sure about that, it's been a long time.
4. How many Amigas do you own and what models are they? We are proud to actually own every Amiga model ever released. :)
5. Which Amiga Software is under your favourites to use? The software we use the most is YAM, DOpus 4 and DOpus 5 Magellan II, GoldEd Studio, Photogenics 2, ADPro 2, PPaint 7.1, Miami Dx, and IBrowse 2.4.
6. What is your most favourite Amiga game of all time? That's a tough one. If I really have to name only one, I think it must be Deluxe Galaga.
7. When did you decide to setup your online store for the Amiga community? We launched the first version of our online store in 1998, but that was only a rather simple form you

could use to submit an order (which you had to fill in yourself). We replaced this with the software that is still in use today in 1999. Before there was a WWW shop, we ran a Prometheus-driven BBS on a souped-up Amiga 4000T that allowed our customers to place their orders online. It was quite popular back in the day and a lot of fun, too.



8. We noticed you guys stuck through the bad times and remained as an online seller to the Amiga community, were these hard times for you? They surely were. After the demise of Commodore in 1994, things went down steadily. As the user base dwindled, the sales figures certainly plummeted down, too. So we had to adapt and make the operation leaner, unfortunately this meant we had to lay off 9/10 of our staff and abandon our physical store (we're currently mail order only).
9. Has the turn around of Amiga related products been better since the New Generation hardware has come out in recent times? It depends on the New Generation hardware you're referring to. The Pegasos II for example was a pretty good product that sold well. The AmigaOne sales were not bad either, but it was a rather problematic product (to put it mildly, it actually was a nightmare for resellers). Sales are slower these days, but we're happy that there's new hardware around.~ The Sam boards have proven to be reliable products, and we're looking forward to selling the Sam460ep when it is released in September.
10. You guys also sell for many other Operating Systems, was this done to allow you guys to still be able to sell to the Amiga community during tough times?

Let's see, what other operating systems are there? We consider MorphOS and AROS being as much Amiga as the official offerings are, so this is basically only one platform in different flavours to us (and since we support everything Amiga, we'll keep supporting those two, too).

Commodore 8-bit computers mean as much to us as the Amiga does, so it's more a matter of love than profit.

The Mac items you spot in our store are either old stock or game titles that are available for Mac and Amiga likewise (RuneSoft games for example). If somebody wants to have a game for his Mac, so be it, the money goes straight to an Amiga-related company anyway. :) Other than that, there's no commitment of ours (and Mac products are not exactly our top sellers, either).

And then there's Linux, a platform we also appreciate very much. We'd like to extend our product range for Linux in the future.

And last is Windows. We don't feel any love for this platform, so you can be sure we're selling those products just for the money. :)

Thank you kindly for doing the interview with us, hope you have many more years with the Amiga community.

Thank you very much. We hope to be around at least another 23 years. :)

# Vesalia

## UNO KRAEPE

UnoKrappe: Anarchy in the UK That may seem a strange title so what does it all mean? This is the official introduction of BlitterWolf's first game, UnoKrappe. Phillip can explain the seemingly Euro stylings about that title. But as indicated by a straight English reading, our first game may be a bit crap! :-D

UnoKrappe is developed in house by us. That's true since we are making it at a home. ;-)

Philip is doing the graphic designs using Cinema 4d at

the time, music and sounds are undecided.

I am doing the coding and my job is to bring the whole thing together and turn it all into a game. Being our first solo effort we wanted it to be an Amiga only title that would run on all Amiga platforms as was possible. And I wanted it to be a proper Amiga game that actually used AmigaOS calls for the game sound and graphics.

This have been achieved. I am happy to say. For the language I decided to use AmigaE. Because a game can be a complicated project, even a simple one and especially for first timers I wanted a language that was easy to write in and also easy to debug code with. I am familiar with E and find it less harsh than more popular languages such as C where missing a single character can introduce a bug in a hay stack!

Also, by using E I had the opportunity to use one of the more modern variations of it that compiles direct to machine code.

And with an action game that helps to speed the code up. In this case it is using the excellent ECX compiler developed by Leif Salomonsson for a number of years now. ECX is very close to the way the original E worked, from the way it handles and generates binary code, to the way its files are installed. It also means I have access to compiling three Amiga targets already direct from my OS4 command line. PowerPC for OS4 and MorphOS. And 68K OS3! Although BlitterWolf aims to produce titles that only target NG Amiga platforms, this is as easy as compile. ;-) So if a 68k version can easily be created then why not?



It also makes it easier to debug as if something goes wrong or nothing happens at all and I can't see it in the code then I can drop back to 68K AmigaE and run it through the debugger.

Well my customised OS4 version.

E has a source level debugger called EDBG which can quickly help spot a bug. It's certainly easier than putting "check points" in the code with a guess to where and messing it up.

Now I mentioned NG Amiga platforms, so what about AROS? And therefore x86 support.

Well basing my code on E also means I can make use of another compiler, Portable by Chris Handley. Chris has worked hard to implement his own crossplatform portable variant of AmigaE. So when the game is complete and ready for a first release I can tweak it as necessary to compile with Portable so an AROS version can be made. I could also possibly make a Windows version using Portable as well, but I couldn't do that to Phil. Hehe. Plus Windows doesn't have an Amiga API. Too bad. :-)

Okay enough about compilers, what about the game man!? Well UnoKrappe is going to be a top down vertical shoot-emup in the classic SEUCK mould. It will comprise of three levels with various enemies attacking the player and an end of level boss. Each level features it's own theme and scrolling background.

It will also have three difficulty levels and we hope you will enjoy playing it, as short it may be. It will also be a Workbench game and will play in a window on Workbench. It will scale itself and the in-game graphics to be in the centre of the screen.

So what is this anarchy? And in the UK? As you can guess UK is short for UnoKrappe, so let's call it that for now on. The "anarchy in the UK" is the process of making the game from scratch with all the associated turmoil involved. It sure has been an interesting ride, though sometimes prolonged where the anarchy was overshadowing the progress. In the beginning Phil was working on all the graphics before the coding had begun. So once I had started making up some skeleton code I had some images that were ready to go.

First was the background graphics for the levels. I coded a basic scroller that scrolled

a background up the screen inside a window. At first it was a bit of a worry as the CPU consumption was high and scroll speed wasn't that high. Yet I had an 800Mhz machine with 128MB of DDR video RAM! Surely it can match an A500 even without hardware scrolling? As it tuned out this was a datatype issue. It was converting images to the Workbench frame-buffer on the fly as the background was rendered to the screen. Not good for a speedy render.

The next thing that happened was the OS4.1 update. As you can remember calling it an update really was a misnomer as it required a full reinstall and the killing off of a loved AmigaOS feature. But for Phil it meant even more. Not only was it a reinstall but it was a loss of a major work volume for BlitterWolf that was somehow corrupted and destroyed during the update process. Which you would have read in the news on the site.

Along with it were in-game graphics for UK, namely the hero ship and enemies. This was a blow for Phil and a relief as my code up to that point had survived.

In UK we also have small GUI. I decided to make use of a project I was working on once for GUI creation that never had made it into any of my public programs. It was for making simple GadTools interfaces for the Amiga and I called it GadToolsKit. Or GTK for short.

Previous to UK I had actually dragged out the code again to fix it up and make it useable as I did want to make use of it in future. So I added the necessary code to include a simple GUI for the game. That was all well and it came time for testing. Bang! I had taken my skeleton code and had broke it. I introduced a bug and sought to find it. At this point I had access to another feature as well. That is making a 68K version. This can help me discern a bug only in OS4 code and also let me run the code line by line providing it's compatible with AmigaE. So I can at least pin point any bugs to being code related or OS4 related. As it turned out this particular bug was OS4 related and was caused by the new OS4

library system.

Namely, I was missing a GadTools Interface! :-) This was soon fixed.

The next problem was rather strange and also in particular related to OS4 only. I had updated the code and the GUI. After an OS4 compile and test the code just ran right though and I ended right back at the CLI prompt without any error.

:-? I tried a 68K compile and the code worked fine! :-? I reversed the changes I had made from memory and then retested. It still ran right though. I found no reason for it in the main code so decided to leave it and keep going on with the work. I'd already spent time looking and it was holding me back, time to give it a rest. I was away from OS4 for a few days on a holiday so took my code with me. At this point the code had diverged to the point that I couldn't compile it for debugging in AmigaE any more.

I made a few additions to make it compatible during compile time so I could keep debugging.

While doing this I was able to go though the whole code and found a bug in my GTK. This was saved so I could test at home. I added a few extra checks and found the OS4 code was failing in an ECX memory allocation.

Quite an interesting find but annoying at thew same time as well! :-)

Well that concludes the introduction to the "Secret" game we have been working on here at BlitterWolf. Hopefully you will see the result some time none too soon. Until then I be working on it and you can await the next update.

### **X1000 VCF SHOW Report on VCF Sunday 20th June 2010**

We arrived at Bletchley Park, Milton Keynes at 10.45am grabbed a map and headed straight for the Amiga marquee wanting to know what was going on having read and watched videos from the previous day, of course I knew I had missed seeing OMD, the Friedens and the speech by Trevor Dickinson, but of

course we still headed straight for the AmigaOne X1000 to see what all the fuss was about, to be honest at first glance I wasn't that impressed it just looked like any other tower but in a transparent case, very nice looking though, pity I didn't get to see it booting, alongside the AmigaOne X1000 was the new Sam460 unfortunately again I didn't get to see it boot into OS4.1, personally I would choose the Sam460 over the X1000 mainly due to all the speculation on pricing. The iMica was also on display showing AROS but didn't get a good look as Cluster was being interviewed.

We decided to have a look at all the other stalls in the marquee, AmigaKit were there and I was excited to see the Amiga branded keyboard which I thought looked pretty neat and was informed that a matching mouse was going to be released.

We weren't just there to see the

X1000 though as this place is The National Museum of Computers, I have to admit I'm a geek, and also the place where Alan Turing, influential in the development of computer science, worked for a short time.

You name it and I bet it was there, computers through the ages from the 40s to the present. Inside the hall were areas set up for Commodore, Spectrum, Amstrad and Acorn computers and areas for consoles. One of the Spectrums was even running Twitter.

Continuing to look round we found another white tent with some stalls selling secondhand goods, the usual, games and hardware.

Everyone whether into Amigas, consoles, 8-bit computers or computers from the 40s seemed to be having a good time. Our next port of call will probably be the R3play (<http://www.r3play.info/>) which is a brand new show in Blackpool celebrating 4 decades of gaming history.

Note to all Amigans, have fun doing what you do best, whether it's Pegasos, Amiga Classic, AmigaOne, Sam and AmigaOS under emulation.

