

AmigaMAD

1 - 2016 - Issue 60 - 15th year

We celebrates issue 60

Tests of:

- AROS
- MorhpOS
- AmigaOS 4.1 FE

Interview:

jPV of RNO



Graphics: ando

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AmigaMAD was made using an AmigaOne G4 XE @ 800 MHz and the DTP program PageStream under AmigaOS 4.1 FE.

The magazine was printed, folded and stapled on a Canon C5030i copier and we have gotten good sponsorship from Lindbak (<http://lindbak.no>) , Mo i Rana dept. and the ISP Broadnet (<http://broadnet.no>).

AmigaMAD and Amigaguiden (our Norwegian sibling) are issued by Norsk amigaforening with website <http://amiga.zone>.

The webmaster job and technical assistance was done by Vidar Karlsen. Editor: Tommy Strand - tommy@garantert.net

Front page graphics: Ando, aka Mr Ten Dicks, aka Mister Steals-
yo-gurl. The background is made by using imagine for Windows (the grid), pixeling by use of Cosmigo Promotion, and painting and scaling is done using Paint.net.

Graphics page 14: Ando

The front page photo in issue 59 was taken by Vidar Karlsen. By mistake he was not credited until now.

WHAT IS the problem with Amiga today? Well, some has sky high expectations about what can be achieved. And this is a bitter lesson I myself has learnt, just because I have been there myself. We have got a hobby, and this hobby lives for better and for worse. So let it be this way while we are hoping for Miss Fortuna to smile to us in a way so that something unexpectedly positive happens for our beloved computer of choice.

BUT WHAT IF Bill Gates buys out Amiga, I hear some say while their eyes are big from hope. - Then we could be saved? Hmm, let us hope that won't happen, because if it is ONE thing we all should agree upon, it would be we should hope for growing in peace without any interference from heavy duty computer companies. Let us rather hope that we can grow in peace in our own little niche.

WHO HEARD about Amiga of the younger generation, I hear the wolves howl. I believe that there are quite a few Amiga fans out there who let their kids try Amiga. I read all the time in Amiga forums that there are Amiga fans with this attitude

You are gonna get the last chance once more. After your last chance and you have given up on it all, then you will be given a last chance once more. You can say that this sounds like nonsense, but it gives more meaning than you maybe understands. Let me explain.

I started this magazine in 1992. It was produced until 1997 when I got mentally ill. Then I stopped this magazine. But when I got well again, I restarted it. I got another chance. After this a 13 years good period followed for me before I in 2010 was mentally ill again. The magazine was again laid on ice. The last 5-6 years my health has been so-so, but after a longer stay at mental hospital just recently I feel I have the same good, old feeling I had the 13 years I was really well. I got another last chance. And much because of Vidar Karlsen we now have produced AmigaMAD (yes, ironic) and Amigaguiden with one issue per year in 2013, 2014 and 2015.

After a fall, we learn to rise. This life has taught me.

AND THOSE who only look down at Amiga in the community I have learned



WHAT IF everything goes wrong, I hear someone call. The only thing that can go wrong is our hope of a better future for Amiga. And that hope we all carries in our heart together with all the memories from breathtaking and exciting gaming with our Amiga computer during hours and hours of odd hour gaming.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN with our future? - There is no hope, the market is looking for anything but Amiga. This can be heard from some mocking birds. I am sick and tired of all this negativity and dark predictions. Negative attitudes tends to be contagious, and now I will use the rest of my column to tell you what attituess we SHOULD have.

to ignore. The moral here is: You always will have another chance. There is a new day tomorrow. After rain comes sunshine. Smile to the world and it smiles back.

Don't ever give up hoping for a new and better tomorrow, no matter what worries you. Things takes time, be it your health or anything else, for instance Amiga.

AMIGA WILL NEVER DIE!
LONG LIVE AMIGA!
Amigaaaaaaaaaaaaah!

Tommy Strand
Editor

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Test of MacOSX vs MorpOS on slow hardware

Article author: Michal Bergseth, Distrita.com

If you don't know. Apple started its journey on Motorola 68000 CPU's, the same CPU which sits inside Atari and Amiga computers. Then they jumped from 68k to PowerPC and in the end MacOSX got released by Apple. They are known for manufacturing iMacs, MacMini, PowerMacs, iBooks (laptop) and PowerBooks (laptop) with PowerPC CPU inside. The very last one had PowerPC G5 in them. Now Apple focuses totally on Intel. But what about the PowerPC Mac's today?

So, what is MorphOS then?

The best way to tell you about it, is to understand AmigaOS history. MorphOS is a Amiga Compatible OS. It is lightning fast and it's very easy to install on your PowerPC Mac. Hold C key while a burned MorphOS CD or DVD is inserted and follow the process. When it's done after very few minutes with installing. You can use it on your supported PowerPC Mac. It turns your OSX PowerPC Mac into a much faster experience. For now MorphOS supports MacMini G4, eMac G4,

PowerMac G4 and PowerMac G5 (A1047) when it comes to desktop macs. MorphOS also supports iBook G4 and PowerBook G4 models. Make

"After few seconds, MorphOS is done booting into desktop enviroment which is ready to be used."

sure that you read MorphOS Team website for full compatibility. One of the most important notes is to know that MorphOS only supports ATI Radeon graphic card versions. Such as PowerBook 12" which got a Nvidia graphics card will not work.

MorphOS 3.7 is the latest version of this minor operating system. Now the OS got Airport support and supports many more graphic cards than ever before. The development team isn't the biggest, so have patience. You often meet them on morphzone.org if you wonder about something regarding MorphOS.

The differences

I am favouring OSX and MorphOS in each ways. Both of them have ups and

downs when it comes to reviewing them against each other. OSX is a very robust operating system. Installing the latest OSX Leopard version gives you a OS with lots of software. Even though Intel Mac's have much better support. The old OSX PowerPC

versions still have support from coders. Also, OSX got old versions of Photoshop, iMovie and Final Cut Pro to name a few software reasons to keep OSX available on your PowerPC Mac. You can have both MorphOS and OSX on the very same PowerPC Mac that support this. And if you are even more alternative, you can have MorphOS, Linux and OSX installed at the same time. This is for advanced users though.

The main difference between OSX and MorphOS is speed. The difference is huge and you will notice this on slower PowerPC Macs especially. Example is iBook G4 1.33GHz which is supported by MorphOS also. Here all of computing experience is in favour for MorphOS because of the speed.

MorphOS



MorphOS handles slower CPU and less MEM so much that the overall user experience fails for OSX (which is quite fast on Intel). Just by booting your iBook, the differences are already present. After few seconds, MorphOS is done booting into desktop environment which is ready to be used.

Software

Here the big favour goes for OSX still. There are much more useful programs for OSX (even for PowerPC) that is useful at work or home, but this doesn't mean that MorphOS is left behind. MorphOS have programs in all categories. Its got Web browsers, FTP clients, DTP software, painting programs, music creating programs, 3D modelling programs, video programs and lots of games. Many AmigaOS 68k games works directly, but also plenty of PowerPC native games.

A good fact to know, is that the MorphOS ISO file, comes with lots of software which makes it easier for you. MorphOS lets you connect to the net instantly. No need to download any thirdparty TCP/IP stack like you need to on Classic AmigaOS. With the included Odyssey web browser, your MorphOS

journey starts at once.

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Web surfing

With latest MorphOS, you get a webkit browser named as Odyssey, which let's you browse news sites, social networks and even let's you use Google's gmail, documents and YouTube. The browser also supports sites with or without HTML5 content.

"(...), but this doesn't mean that MorphOS is left behind in eternity."

The HTML5 part is fast. So, if you are used on browsing using Firefox or Safari on OSX, then this browser will make the browser experience on slower PowerPC Mac's good again. It's not perfect, but this browser is the closest you get to a fully functional web-browser on any of the AmigaOS-alternatives today. And once the Javascript PowerPC part is done, then this browser will be lightning fast on things that might be tough for it today.

Additionally software that you get with MorphOS is Transfer which is a brilliant FTP client. Also there is Showgirls, which lets you edit pictures,

MorphVNC, Apdf (for reading PDF documents), RemoteShell (SSH) and Flacapella which is a small but useful program for burning .ISO files.

To find newest MorphOS software release, you can visit www.morphos-files.net As for OSX for PowerPC, there is no AppStore that I know of. I tried hard to find, but didn't find. You have to find software on the net here and there. In the end its frustrating. At this point, MorphOS wins because of tidy way of finding software. Yes, there are separate sites with software, but MorphOS software can be found on Aminet also, which is one of world's largest file databases still.

Conclusion

This is not so into depth review of these operating systems. It's an article to guide you into the possibilities and where to find software. I briefly explained the top and downs about these two OS's. If you want an OS with today's software, go for OSX. If you want an fast OS with everyday new software that is getting more and more compatible with today's software. Then choose MorphOS. I personally uses MorphOS on my PowerPC Mac's which is an iBook G4 1.33GHz and PowerBook G4 1.64GHz. Then on the OSX side, I use iMac i7 and MacBook Pro Retina 13".



Review of AROS

Bryan Lunduke began his computing life on a friend's Commodore 64, then moved on to a Franklin Ace... and then a 286 running MS-DOS. This was followed by an almost random-seeming string of operating systems: ranging from AmigaOS to OS/2, and even including MacOS 8. Eventually, Bryan tried Linux. And there he stayed.

Reviewing AROS, the Amiga-like OS

Linux is great. It's fast. It's stable. It's free (in more ways than one).

But Linux (or, depending on who you ask, "GNU/Linux") isn't the only Free and Open Source operating system out there. Sure, it may be the most popular but there are others.

"This would be a perfect system for an old netbook or a lightweight virtual machine"

Standing for the "AROS Research Operating System" (one of those gloriously recursive acronyms, like "GNU"), AROS is essentially an open source Amiga-like system.

And, by "Amiga-like," I mean super-duper Amiga-like. It looks and feels like AmigaOS and has API-level

compatibility with AmigaOS 3.1 (meaning AmigaOS 3.1 applications can be compiled to run on AROS). But, unlike AmigaOS, AROS runs on x86 hardware.

Just like with Linux, there are multiple distributions of AROS. For my purposes, I opted to download and run Icaros Desktop. This appears to be the most comprehensive and frequently updated of the various AROS distributions available. And, luckily, Icaros runs just dandy in VirtualBox (and, from the looks of it, VMware as well).

The full download of Icaros was absolutely huge, clocking in at 1.6GB. That's over twice the size of many

Linux distros. And this is for a system inspired by an OS developed in the 1980s. At first glance, this seemed absolutely crazy to me.

But then I started using it.

I soon realized that Icaros is packed to the rafters with software, including emulators for nearly every platform on the planet (computer and consoles), a 68k emulation environment (for running applications compiled for classic amiga hardware), tons of games (including Open Source versions of classics like Doom and Duke3D), a host of developer tools, networking clients and more graphics/video/audio editing applications than you can shake a stick at.

In a nutshell, Icaros is pre-setup to be a showcase for what is possible with AROS. Which is lucky. Because that's what I needed.

Even more important than any of that is that it comes pre-loaded with a WebKit-based web browser called OWB (Odyssey Web Browser). In my testing, OWB wasn't the fastest web browser in the world, but it wasn't slow either. And it was astoundingly capable. Outside of not being able to natively play YouTube videos (something that support for is supposed to be arriving soon), I didn't run into any problems.

For word processing, there is the lightweight Cinnamon Writer. Not a terribly robust piece of software, but it's fast and has most of the basics. I rather enjoyed writing in such a bare-bones, speedy application but I quickly found that I needed to go to online wysiwyg editors in order to get my job done (and write this article). Luckily, Odyssey Web Browser was up for the job.

Overall, system speed is blisteringly fast, making even some lightweight Linux distributions feel pokey. I gave my Icaros installation 1 GB of RAM. As it turns out, that was pretty liberal. With the full system loaded, along with Directory Opus (the GPL version of the classic file management software), only 38 MB of RAM was used.

That's not a typo. 38 MB. For the entire system and the full graphical environment. Which means AROS/Icaros would be very well suited for machines with small amounts of RAM. This would be a perfect system for an old netbook or a lightweight virtual machine.

When you click on an application, it launches. Instantly. It almost feels like applications are running before you even finish thinking about clicking them. No waiting. Period. At all. And the system itself boots in 3 seconds. 3. Seconds.

You'd think that having such light RAM and CPU requirements would mean that the system would feel old and outdated. As if you were running



“And the system itself boots in 3 seconds. 3. Seconds.”

“Overall, system speed is blisteringly fast, making even some lightweight Linux distributions feel pokey.”

Windows 3.1. And, to a certain extent it does. Some of the apps are clearly pretty bare-bones, visually. And the main interface itself is pretty devoid of any 3D effects (though there are plenty of OpenGL applications that ship with the system). But it's not ugly. And, while some parts of the system look like they belong in the 1990s, most of it looks delightfully fresh and pleasant to the eye.

Before you jump into AROS, be warned: This is, basically, an Amiga. If you've never used an Amiga before they are different than what you're used to. The file structure. The way you interact with the interface. It's all quite a bit different than most Linux desktops (or Windows/Mac). That's not to say it's bad at all. Just different. And different means there is a not-insignificant learning curve. Expect to take a few

hours just to get acquainted with the basics of how to use the system.

Now, here's the real question "could I use AROS (or Icaros) as my primary computer system?"

Yes. I totally could. Without a doubt.

There would be challenges, clearly. And I would almost certainly need to have at least one companion device (like a Chromebook, a Linux laptop or an Android tablet) to fill in the gaps. And I'm not going to be playing much in the way of new games. But, realistically, this is a full-featured, mature system that has all of the tools I would need to get my job done.

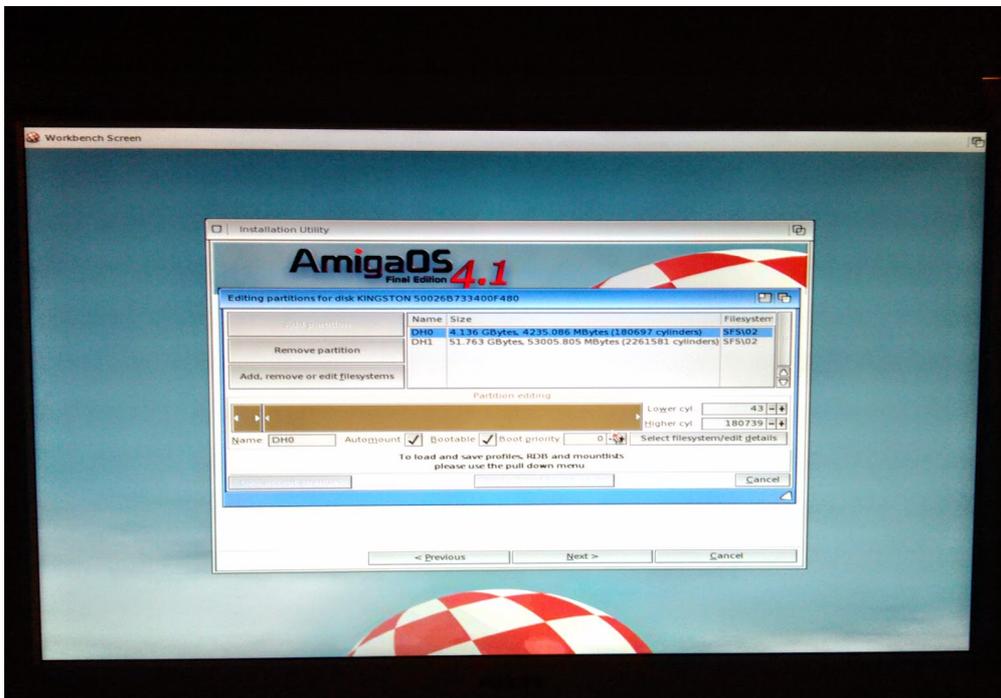
Now, if you'll excuse me, I need to go install another lesser-used Open Source operating system.



AmigaOS4.1 Final Edition

Daniel Hutchinson @
amigaone500.blogspot.com
writes about AmigaOS 4.1 Final Edition

The optical drive's SATA cable connected to the correct port



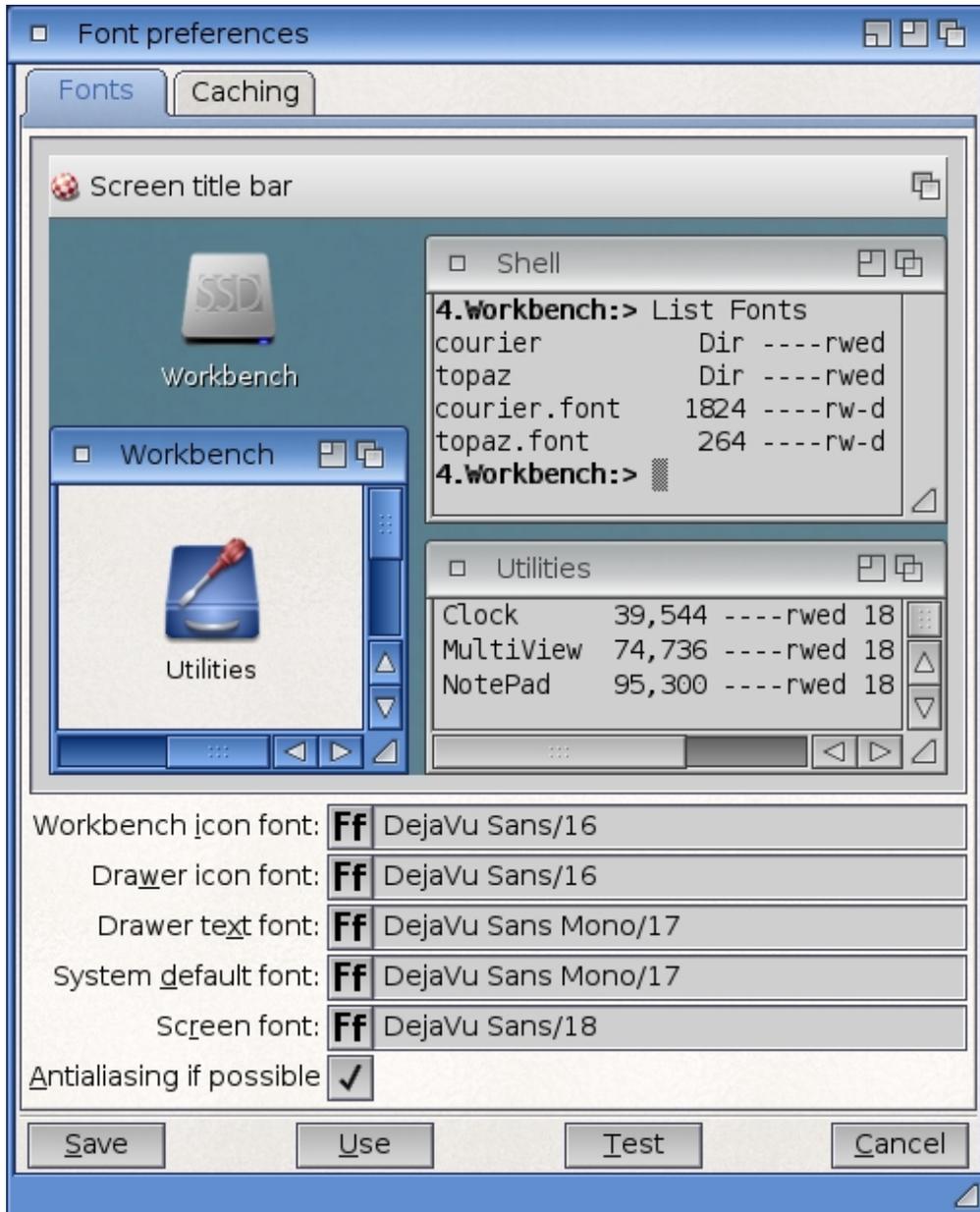
Editing the SSD partitions with Media Toolbox

AmigaOS 4.1 Final Edition Review

I recently updated my AmigaONE 500 to AmigaOS 4.1 Final Edition (FE) and have decided to write this review giving my first impressions of this 'final' update of AmigaOS 4.1.

Installing AmigaOS 4.1 FE must be done as a fresh install, from scratch, there is no update option. With this in mind I backed up my existing system to a CD-ROM and made a start. Knowing that writing to JXFS formatted drives is no longer possible under FE I also backed up the rest of my SSD.

Having backed everything up I inserted the FE disc expecting it to boot automatically, no luck. I tried changing the boot priorities in U-Boot, but to no avail. Next I swapped around the optical and



Font Preferences

SSD drive's SATA cables and the problem was solved. It seems the optical drive must be plugged into the SATA port nearest the motherboard to work as a boot device. Before updating AmigaOS I also added an additional SSD to my AmigaONE 500 and while doing this I must have replugged the SATA cables in a different order.

Once the SATA cables were in the correct order the FE disc booted and I set about the install. I first had to format my two SSD drives, partition and change the file system to SFS for all the partitions. This was all pretty simple using Media Toolbox. While partitioning the

drives I found an oddity, there was no SWAP partition on my original drive. The SWAP partition is used for virtual memory and although you can run the OS without one this can have an adverse impact on performance. I think the original SWAP partition must have been lost during a repartitioning of the SSD sometime ago, an oversight on my part. I set up the partitions and formatted the drives, one thing to note is that you must only format an SSD with the 'Quick Format' option and never the full format. I have a 60GB SSD which I partitioned into SWAP, System and Work and then a 240GB SSD I partitioned into Games and Media.

Installing FE was relatively simple once the SATA issue was resolved, the installation went very smoothly. This was a much better experience for me than installing from the original OS 4.1 Update 2 disc, which I found to be thwart with USB issues on my AmigaONE 500. Once FE was installed I removed the disc and rebooted into the newly installed system, I was pleasantly surprised to find a significantly faster boot time than before.

Once Workbench opened I set about installing all my applications from the backup disc. This was for many a matter of simply copying drawers over to the newly formatted drive. However, for some programs I also had to also find and install third party libraries, MUI classes and in a few cases edit the User Startup file. This is a bit tedious and it would be nice if there was some option in the AmigaOS installer for copying over this stuff automatically. This said it is not often you need to undertake a fresh install like this. I needed to now install the RadeonHD driver to get the screen mode back up to 1920x1080, again it's a shame copying this over from a previous installation isn't better integrated into the install and setup process.

Next I started to configure various Preferences to suit my tastes, here as well it would be nice to have an option to import the old settings. Adding everything to AmiDock again took a while, particularly as I had reorganised and renamed my partitions. In the end I decided not to bother rebuilding my various SmartButton sub docks. This is perhaps best seen as a good opportunity for a spring clean and getting rid of stuff that is rarely used. I also decided not to reinstall LimpidClock as I don't use the calendar and reminder functions much and instead decided to try out DateTime.docky again. I was pleased to find this docky has been substantially updated since I last used it and now has the ability to show reminders and a pop-up calendar when clicked. I added DateTime.docky to a dedicated AmiDock in the top right of



Some icons have been given a make over

the screen where LimpidClock used to live.

The Workbench theme after installing FE was the 2nd look, which I can't say that I am fond of. I changed this to the standard theme which has a more 'flat' and modern look in my opinion. I also made some changes in Font Preferences as I'm not keen on the italic fonts used on the Workbench and in Drawer windows. To me the regular font has better readability than the italic font.

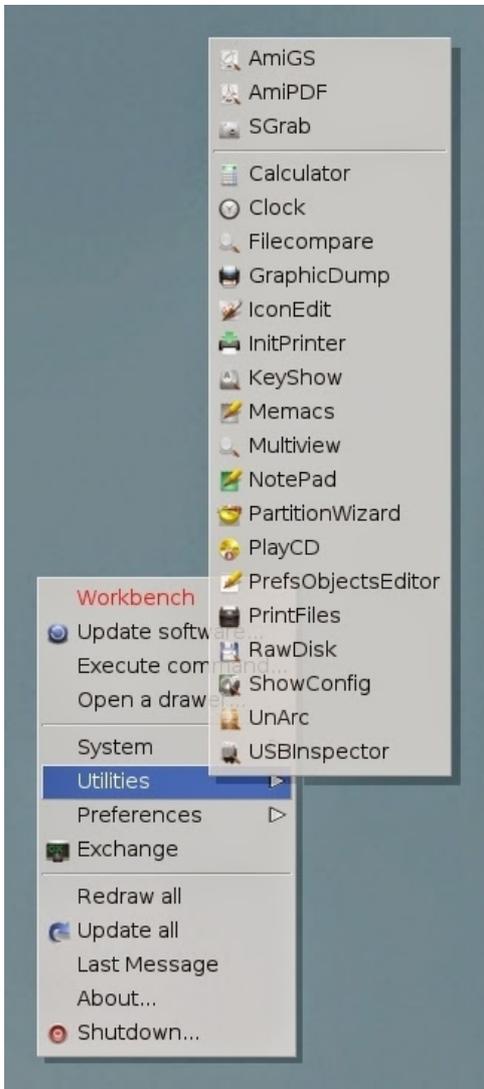
In Amiga OS 4.1 Final Edition there are some new icons that have a more modern look and a shiny new default backdrop. The new icons are great, however it seems that some inconsistency has crept in, for examples the drawer icons in Storage and Devs still

have the old style monitor, key and printer images rather than the new ones seen elsewhere. A minor detail I know, but it would have been nice if these had been updated to match. I also noticed that NotePad has some old toolbar images from way back.

The new tabbed Shell works well and gives a better work flow, making working in Shell much more pleasant than before. There are also new commodities, namely AutoBorderStyle and AutoInfo. AutoBorderStyle allows windows to be re-sized by clicking and dragging any edge, rather than only the gadget in the button right corner. Although hardly ground breaking this is a useful feature I think, but it's good that it was included as a commodity as I don't think everyone would like this behaviour as default. I've added AutoBorderStyle to my WBStartup so it

loads every time the AmigaONE boots. AutoInfo gives some basic information about files when you move the mouse over them and I can see how this could be useful but for now I've not added this one to WBStartup.

ContextMenus have had an overall and now feature small icons alongside the text. Some useful functionality has been added such as 'Extract here' and 'Extract to...' options when right clicking an archive. There is still no preferences program for editing the content of these which is a shame. This said their configuration is stored in a fairly easy to understand text file that can be edited by the user with some care and I've added a 'Shutdown...' option to mine linking to the Poff tool. I found the old ContextMenus to be quite crash prone on my system, I am pleased to find they



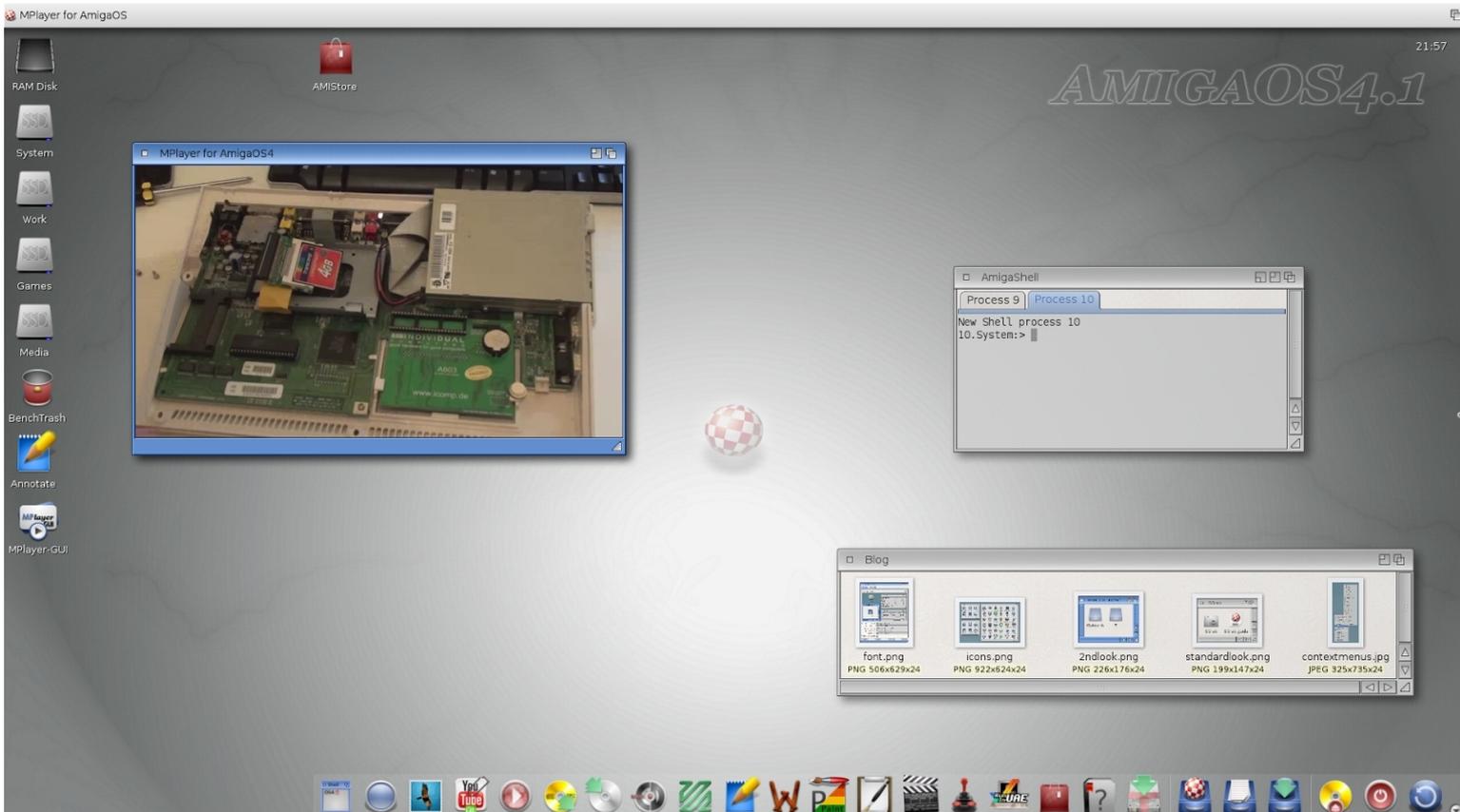
Workbench's improved context menus

are almost rock solid now, however one that always results in a visit from the GrimReaper for me is 'New textfile here'. It would be nice to see these menus become smart, for example perhaps automatically adding third-party utilities the user has installed in the System partition. On a similar note an automatically populated applications menu might also be a neat edition.

Personally one of my favourite new Workbench feature's is the thumbnail previews of images. I did find the feature a little tricky to find at first, as there is no option for previews when going through context menus. You must instead go to the main Workbench menu at the top of the screen. Caching can be switched on in Workbench Preferences and I found the thumbnails load much faster upon returning to a drawer with caching switched on and

would recommend this, the difference may not be as noticeable on an X1000 of course. The ability to switch this feature off or on for specific drawers is welcome. As a bonus previews of text files are also shown, although I'm less convinced about the usefulness of this.

Overall I am very pleased with my upgrade to AmigaOS 4.1 FE and feel it represents good value for money. It is reassuring to know I have a boot disc I can use to emergency boot my AmigaONE 500 without the USB troubles experienced with the original Update 2 disc. The new features are very welcome, for me the AutoBorderResize and thumbnail previews are my favourites right now. Finally, I will leave you with a grab of my lovely new Workbench. Thanks for reading!



ONE DAY IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN



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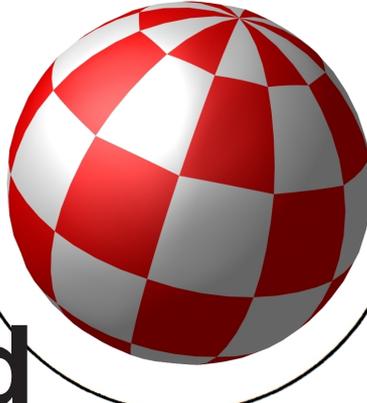
Jay Miner vs Jack Tramiel



AmigaOneX5000



powered by



AMIGA

...in Finland

...an interview with jPV/RNO

Hi, jPV/RNO

Thanks for volunteering to this interview for our magazines and our humble pack of readers.

For starters, who are you? Where are you from? If not personally, then in general tell our readers who you are.

I'm a Finnish Amiga user and demoscener, who has used Amigas since the A500 times, and still counting. I've lived most of my adulthood in Oulu in Northern Finland. Oulu is the fifth largest city in Finland, and also called as the Amiga capital of Finland, because of our activity around here.

Tell us about your first Amiga(s)?

My friend was always quicker to get new computers, so I played with his A500 a lot, and I got the first experiences of the Amiga demoscene there too. I had to beg my parents quite a while before getting my own A500, but finally succeeded at it.

The A500 was later expanded with a 512k memory expansion, an external floppy drive, an Action Replay Mk II cartridge, and a color dot matrix printer.

I was fascinated by the demoscene art and I ripped graphics from demos with the Action Replay cartridge and then I printed them in color to get some wall decorations. I also started to take first steps with programming, but I didn't have enough patience to learn assembly or C back then, but got something made with AMOS at least.

Then the friend went for an A3000 setup, and I was amazed by its

performance. I suffered with the A500 setup for couple years until I managed to get funding for an A1200 system. I bought it with a "huge" 120MB hard disk and a memory expansion card with an FPU chip. FPU was a requirement, because I really wanted to be able to use all the 3D rendering programs I had seen running on my friend's A3000. A1200 still didn't have as much raw processing power as A3000, but AGA was a nice step forward and I was happy with the purchase.

A1200 got upgrades little by little during the years. From Blizzard 1230-IV to Blizzard 1260, a Micronik's tower case, a Zorro II busboard with CyberVision 64/3D and other Zorro cards, etc. In its current incarnation it has both ZorroIV and MediatorZIV busboards, Voodoo3 graphics card, Delfina Lite audio card, 10/100 Mbps network card, Spider II USB card, SCSI stuff, and lots of other

"Oulu is the fifth largest city in Finland, and also called as the Amiga capital of Finland, because of our activity around here."

things. Only motherboard and the base OS installation are from the original setup. I've actually never reinstalled AmigaOS on that system, which served as my main daily computer for over ten years, I've just updated it during the years.

What computers do you own?

Too many to talk in detail here, but I still own my original A500 and A1200, and

then I've collected other Amigas whenever I've found them cheaply enough. The collection contains A1000, several A500 setups, A2000, A600, and several A1200 setups.

Then I have handful of MorphOS compatible computers, from Pegasos 1 to PowerPC Macs, and they are used as my daily desktop machines nowadays.

I also have one Raspberry Pi system as a server and another Pi as a media box. And couple old but free PC setups for occasional needs.

I used to collect some other computers in the past, like SPARCstations, SGI Indys, and Commodore's 8-bit machines, but I decided to stop that and concentrate only to Amigas and Amiga compatibles. I just kept C128D from those times, and got rid of the others.

A quite up-to-date list of my computers can be found here if someone is interested about all the bits and pieces: http://jpv.wmhost.com/jpv_computers.html

Tell us about Amiga in your home country?

Amiga has always been quite popular in Finland. Maybe because C64 was an extremely popular home computer here and Amiga inherited enough users from it. Atari and other home computers didn't really make any real competition for Commodore's machines at any point. The only real competition came from the PC front.



Guestbook and medallions on Vectorama 2016

One of the largest Finnish computer magazines had an Amiga section for suprisingly long, and then, for example, Finnish Amiga Users Group continued to keep the Amiga hobby alive. Amiga demoscene has also been strong and active in Finland and you can run into ex-demosceners everywhere.

So, there are still people everywhere who remember Amiga and have fond memories of it. The amount of active users has been dropping like elsewhere too, but if you take an Amiga computer to any public event, you'll immediately get people telling stories and starting to have fun with the old games on it.

What is RNO? Tell us about RNO? History, the beginning, present activity.

RNO is a demo group founded in 1995. Its name is an abbreviation of Rave Network Overscan, but there have also been other translations for it during the years, although it stands quite well on its own in its three letter form

nowadays. Current group members are mostly from Finland, except some reinforcements from Germany and Norway (greetings to tFt!). All members have Amiga background and most of the released productions are for Amiga. I joined the group at the late 90s as a trader and coder.

We also have an electronic music label called RNO Records, which releases music for free on Internet. For its 100th release we made a musicdisk which works on AGA/RTG Amigas, but also

“We also have an electronic music label called RNO Records, which releases music for free on Internet.”

on OS4 and MorphOS. I was the main coder on it and it's actually the last demo scene production I've coded. Some years have slipped since then, but I'll be back on Amiga coding some day in form or another.

It has been getting pretty quiet with the activity lately, but at least Britelite has kept the flag flying for ten years by his always improving coding skills when older coders have dropped activity. We've also cooperated with other groups occasionally, but everyone is getting busy with other things nowadays and I don't know if the situation changes in the near future. Let's hope for some sudden inspiration. At least many of us are still around in the Amiga scene otherwise even if we haven't released scene productions that

much lately. The latest “group effort” by me, Tundrah, and Britelite was to collect as many MorphOS compatible demos as we could find into one demopack. It includes not only MorphOS native demos, but also 68k, WarpOS,

PowerUP, and even OS4 demos which work under MorphOS without any external emulator.

For newbies, what is a demo group?
It's a group of people who create demoscene productions, or are

otherwise active in the demoscene, together. Traditionally demo groups' aim has been to make demos, which are demonstration programs to show skills of group members.

You told me that you gathered 100's of people for Amiga specific LANs recently. Tell us about this?

Actually it was that we have attended with an Amiga stand to generic PC LAN parties, but then we've also had other kind of Amiga specific events. Let's talk a bit about the history first.

I'm an active member in Finnish Amiga Users Group, which is a registered nation-wide organization founded in 1993. Statutory annual meetings have kept the user group going through the harder times and have given us a base to all kinds of events. We started to bring more and more computers to be

shown at the meetings and the formal part got shorter. Most of the day is spent for gaming, watching demos, eating, and socializing nowadays.

"The big Saku events featured quite high profile venue and foreign visitors like Petro Tyschtschenko, Jens Schönfeld, and Michael Battilana."

The user group also arranged christmas parties and four bigger Amiga events between 1997 and 2001. The big Saku events featured quite high profile venue and foreign visitors like Petro Tyschtschenko, Jens Schönfeld, and Michael Battilana. The activity went a bit quieter in the early 00s, a few years went mainly with the annual meetings, but in the second half of 00s

activity started to rise again and we first resurrected the christmas parties and finally the big Saku events in 2012. At the same time we were also asked to arrange retro gaming activity to some events at Oulu City Library, and the biggest LAN party in the Northern Finland contacted us if we'd like to arrange retro gaming there too. People were happy what we offered and they have kept asking us back to their events every year. With a good reputation and increasing public visibility we have also got invitations to all kinds of other events from smaller LAN parties to National Games Day and Oulu Arts Night events. I could say that we have peaked our activity in the last years.

The recent Amiga specific Saku events were arranged all around Finland





Cecilie

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between 2012 and 2015. The events took place in Oulu, Vantaa, Tampere, and again in Oulu. We also had some other oldskool computers present at some events, but Amigas were the main point always. The events in Vantaa and Tampere gathered estimately 200-300 visitors each, and the events in Oulu a bit less. We even got some familiar foreign faces to join us, as Petro and Michael were our guests at Saku 2014 again, which was pretty cool. The events also got quite nice coverage in the print media in Finland.

Oulu Arts Night is now another yearly event which we organize quite independently, from our point of view. There are all kinds of activities around the city for one evening, but nothing computer related besides us. We have own space on own floor at Oulu City Library where we arrange gaming with Amigas, and it's always crowded with people who typically don't visit any LAN

parties or other computer related events. Dads come to show their childhood games to their children and so on. Many of them get an inspiration to find their old Amiga from storage or start asking where to buy machines. We have had a visitor counter there sometimes, and in 2014 number of visitors was 600. We've also got 100-200 names written in our guestbook usually.

And finally to the LAN parties. We've arranged an Amiga stand at the Vectorama LAN party 5 times in a row now and the stand has got bigger and prettier all the time. This year we had 10 computers and four video projectors with us. There were about 1000 people with their own PCs and another 1000 people visited for free without computers, and they all had to pass our stand if they wanted to go anywhere. Visitors were playing Amiga games all the time for fun, but we also arranged Amiga game competitions with plenty of

prizes. Serial null-modem multiplayer games like Lotus 2, Stunt Car Racer, and Super Skidmarks are always great fun and it isn't any problem to get players for them. Slam Tilt and Worms DC do work always too. Vectorama is a nice success for us every time and we might even be the most popular stand over there. Amiga games are perfect for some quick matches for the visitors, because they are entertaining and easy enough to jump in. Cooperation with this kind of event is actually a good solution, because you don't have to worry about the venue and facilities, and you are getting new audiences.

How popular is Amiga in Finland? Can you give us any numbers?

I can only give numbers related to Finnish Amiga Users Group, everything else would be too much guessing. The user group has an annual fee of 10 euros, and there are a bit under 100 paid members currently. User group's



web forum has got almost 400 registered users since 2009 and there are around 350 likes on the Facebook page since 2011.

Not all Amiga users are active in the user group of course, or even interested about that kind of activity. Many demo sceners do their own thing and don't participate more generally to Amiga scene, and there are lots of other people who just use their Amigas, but aren't loud about it. As we have seen at several public events there's a huge potential underneath and Amiga can be more popular than you could guess or see.

Why do you think Norway is slow compared to Sweden and Finland in

relationship to Amiga events?

I think it's just about individuals. It's a small margin in our hobby if you get something done or not. It really doesn't need more than one or two people who get their hands dirty and kick things going. Someone just have to take the initiative and I don't believe Norway would be any different with the results. The active user group has of course helped us to a certain degree here in Finland, but we still wouldn't have these kinds of events without certain individuals being active with it and a user group isn't a requirement for it either. The quiet times could have very well continued here after 2005 too if nobody would have stepped in more actively.

We have a quite good team in Oulu now, but the events in other cities were organized in a public forum with people who didn't know each other that well

beforehand. We just had one local main organizer and we knew that we can get at least a handful of Amigas to the event if nobody else wouldn't help, and then we just decided the date and booked the venue. Then we asked for help in our web forum and got tens of computers offered by a dozen people. The problem isn't getting enough stuff to be shown, but finding someone to take the small responsibility of being the main organizer and deciding the date and place.

Should we blame Norwegian demo groups for being not too active in promoting Amiga?

Absolutely not. Demo groups tend to stay in their own niches and I don't think that they should be expected to be more responsible for promoting Amiga than anybody else. They create content to show on Amigas and participate to demo parties, and it's

*Lotus2 competition at
Vectorama 2016*





MorphOS computers and Super Skidmark with 8 players at Vectorama 2016



SAKU 2104 in Tampere



Super Skidmarks with 8 players at Vectorama 2016

important work already. It's up to everyone with enough interest to promote Amiga, no matter if he or she is in a demo or user group or not.

Can you give us a list and short description of Amiga demo groups of Scandinavian origin (thinking Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Norway)?

This is too demanding question to be answered in detail with my limited time for this now, because there have been hundreds, if not thousands, demo groups in Scandinavia. I'm not sure if there is any proper statistics anywhere either. Scandinavia has always been a good ground for the demoscene, and we still have quite many active Amiga demo groups around. Although it's a bit hard to say which ones are active, and how do you measure the activity. Many current game companies in Scandinavia have also Amiga demoscene background, like DICE in Sweden. Spaceballs is one of the best known Amiga demo groups from

Norway, and Slummy has kept releasing Amiga demos still. Loonies from Denmark have made many quality productions for Amiga in last years too. Sweden has many active Amiga groups, and Finland has a few too, but I'll stop dropping any names now :)

Is it not so that classic Amiga computers needs care not to be destroyed by time? I am thinking, what should be done with the computer when buying an old, classic Amiga in terms of preserving it?

"The worst thing to do would be to trash any non-working Amiga stuff, because it probably would be possible to get it repaired by someone."

Yes, batteries are leaking and capacitors are starting to get old. If you buy an Amiga with a battery on motherboard, make sure that you check the battery immediately. Leaking batteries can make horrible damage. If

you can't replace the battery, remove it at least.

I personally wouldn't be too worried about capacitors yet, and I'd just let them be as long as the machine seems to work correctly. But if you start getting any symptoms that could match with bad capacitors, replacing them is a good idea then. There are quite nice guides on Internet, and you can even buy replacement capacitor sets or send the whole machine for recapping.

If your machine doesn't work properly, don't lose your hope. There are very capable people around who can fix almost anything Amiga related nowadays. The worst thing to do would be to trash any non-working Amiga stuff, because it probably would be possible to get it repaired by someone.

Do you have any experience with NG Amiga? If so, which experience?

Yes, quite much, because I've been an active MorphOS user since 2004, and I

also have some experience with OS4. AROS, on the other hand, hasn't been that interesting for me yet, because it isn't binary compatible with the old classic Amiga software like MorphOS and OS4 are, and because its development speed was quite slow for a long time.

No matter how expanded my A1200 was in early 2000s, it started to feel too slow and limited for daily use. It didn't play any modern video formats, web started to get sluggish by increasing bloatness, etc. I had been following the progress of MorphOS quite closely, because I have been on same IRC channels with some finnish MorphOS developers since 1996 or so, but I still hadn't made any decision to invest to any next generation hardware. MorphOS felt the most appealing of the next generation operating systems, because it had the best 68k compatibility for my needs. As a demoscene trader I handled lots of files all the time and couldn't live without the great Directory Opus Magellan II file manager, and MorphOS was the only NG operating system that ran it. So, the options were pretty clear, either I'd continue with my aging classic setup or I'd go for MorphOS. Then I came across a cheap used Pegasos 1 and went for it, and haven't regretted that.

I'm still using MorphOS as my main daily operating system. MorphOS 2.0

was a huge step in usability and features, and the PowerPC Mac support gave us a broader and easily available selection of cheap hardware to run it on, even laptops which has been the holy grail of Amiga world in the past. MorphOS just keeps getting better and better year by year and has been a fine continuation for Amiga.

At some point I also played around with an OS4 machine, which I loaned from a friend for some months. It offered a bit more authentic user experience GUI-wise if you compare them to a standard OS 3.9, but as an Amiga power user I still prefer MorphOS approach and GUI

toolkit more. I also bought a copy of OS4 for classics, which I can run under emulation to test my code and play around with the latest OS4 a bit.

What hopes do you have for Amiga/NG Amiga in future?

I hope the things keep evolving in all fronts. There's still the nostalgia factor in classic Amigas and it seems that hobbyist hardware development starts flourishing with different kinds of FPGA solutions.

Next generation operating systems will hopefully be developed further, and although the split to different camps was quite crude, the resulting competition will probably drive the development of each camp more than if they'd be alone.

MorphOS will probably take a step to a different CPU architecture at some point, because PPC options are getting rarer, but I'm not sure how that will affect to the userbase. In theory we'll get newer mainstream hardware supported and more modern features to OS itself, but at the same time we'll lose the 68k compatibility and get another split. Maybe MorphOS is

pages (<http://library.morph.zone>) to help any new users settling down to our platform. I think such activity would be needed more.

Any "famous last words"?

Enjoy what you have now. If you're interested about some systems, be it a retro thing or next generation machines, just get it and start having fun. And don't moan and tell what others should do if someone else is enjoying from something you don't understand, there's too much bitching about different things which can be very discouraging. Participate, do something, don't wait for vapour forever or someone else doing everything. If you want an Amiga event, arrange one!

Thank yo very much to jPV/RNO for this interview.

The logo for AmigaMAD, with "Amiga" in white and "MAD" in red, set against a black background.

"I hope the things keep evolving in all fronts. There's still the nostalgia factor in classic Amigas and it seems that hobbyist hardware development starts flourishing with different kinds of FPGA solutions."

mature enough and has enough native software for that nowadays. I hope it all goes well, but it isn't going to happen that soon anyway and we'll still see some new PPC support coming before that, so let's enjoy the ride.

We'd need more software developers on all flavours, let's hope we don't lose much of them anymore and hopefully get few new programmers on board too. I also hope that remaining users would keep the activity up and participate how they can. I, for example, have written quite much documentation to MophOS Library wiki

The logo for RNO, with the letters "RNO" in a large, red, sans-serif font, set against a black background.

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The logo consists of a solid blue square with the word "LINDBAK" written in white, uppercase, sans-serif font in the center.

LINDBAK

<http://lindbak.no/>

***“Be merciful, just like
your father is.”
Luk 6,36***