

›BITJAM - BANGING YOUR EAR DRUMS‹

BY SPECTRAL AND ALIEN OF BITFELLAS

BITJAM, THE NEW DEMOSCENE RADIO?

Simply put; BitJam is an internet radio station, hosted as a part of BitFellas, that streams non-commercial, free demoscene music. Visit us at <http://www.bitjam.bitfellas.org> and tune your players to either:

- <http://hangar18.campus.ltu.se:8086/bitjam.ogg.m3u>
(Ogg/Vorbis ~80kbit)
- <http://hangar18.campus.ltu.se:8086/bitjam.mp3.m3u>
(Mp3 128kbit)

Now we'll take you on a little journey to tell you the story of BitJam.

YESTERDAY - HOW IT ALL BEGAN

BitFellas was born and grew like weed. Then BitFellas asked poor Spectral to code a radio part for it. He agreed and started to work on BitJam. The radio suffered from lame code and wonderful bugs/



Podcast 20 by H2O

features such as BitBot (our robotic DJ who selects random songs to play when nobody is requesting) selecting to play Little Bitchard's Adventures of Agent Mustakallio more often than a currywurst is consumed at Breakpoint.



BitBot, the robotic DJ

An idea for a new feature was born just as often. Poor Spectral lost most of his hair but in the end the most serious bugs were squashed, the code matured and the radio was officially launched. It still suffers from the occasional spasm and still lacks some features (TODO.txt is overflowing) but we're online and streaming.

The idea for a musicdisk was born somewhere along the beta-

testing period. The intention was that its release would mark the launch of BitJam, but unfortunately the musicdisk grew into such a big beast that it was impossible to release it in time. Nevertheless, it was released.

“THE RADIO SUFFERED FROM LAME CODE AND WONDERFUL BUGS.”

Just like with our radio it suffered some problems at first but as with all things good (it's worth the wait) it eventually worked out. Take a look at <http://www.pouet.net/prod.php?which=31658> if you

haven't seen and heard it yet. We would mention and thank all individuals who were involved in making this musicdisk come to life but they are basically too many to mention. See: <http://www.pouet.net/nfo.php?which=31658> for a full credit list (warning, this nfo file is about the size of fr-041: debris!)

TODAY - WHAT WE ARE

First let's stop for a minute and address the question that is echoing in your heads: "What, another demoscene radio station? What for? We already have Nectarine, Slay Radio, Kohina, Polarboing, Tristar Radio, Modcast, BTTR, CGM UKScene Radio, MSX Radio, AYLand, CPC Radio, Plopbox, and so on." Can we just be immature and reply with another question: "Why not?". No? OK, then we will be a bit more specific. All we're trying to do is provide you with another radio stream simply because we love music so much.



Old look

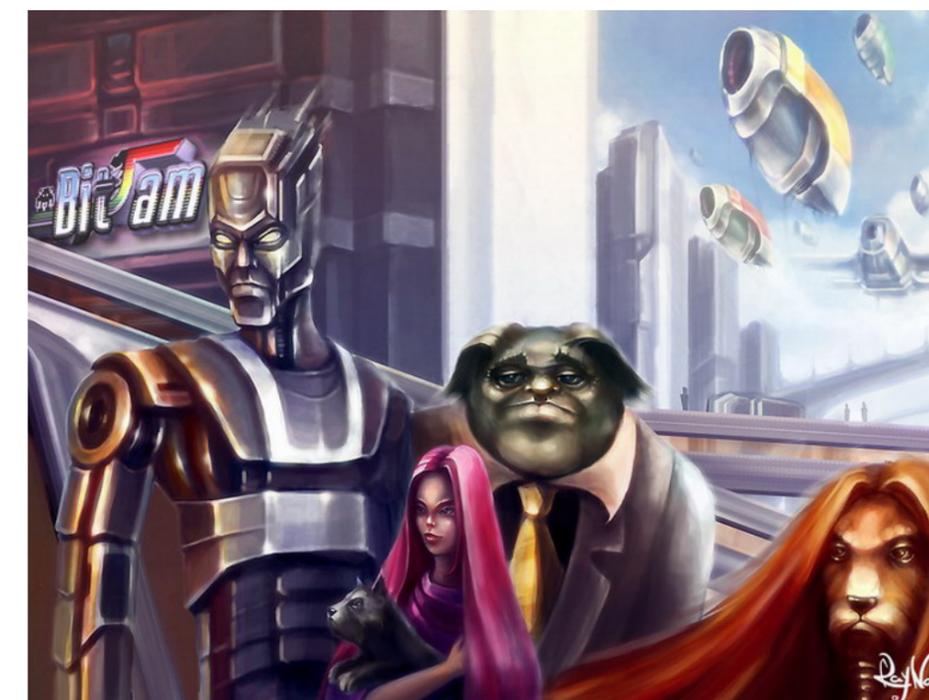
Another idea that we think is a bit different from the 20-30 or so other radios is our approach. We aim to be an interactive mu-

sic scene database (Wow, lots of buzzwords. In other words: We would like to gather as much information about each song and musician as we can - with the help of you, our listeners, in order to have some sort of encyclopedia musica for the scene). The radio bit is just some extra sugar on top. BitJam is intended to be something much more than just a radio. We would like to become the melting pot where a lot of things are brought together: We already tie in Pouët, CSDb and BitWorld, and in the future we intend to stitch a few more things in. There never was a database for music in the scene like there is a Pouët for demos and this is what we hope to redeem.

"WE PROVIDE YOU WITH ANOTHER RADIO STREAM SIMPLY BECAUSE WE LOVE MUSIC SO MUCH."

We are also trying to bring people together. Every musician in the playlist has his/her own guest book where people can leave messages for their long lost scene friend or just say a few thanks for the effort the musician put into his work. A few words of caution might be in place. Music is after all something very subjective: a song you hate can be someone else's absolute favourite. The fact that you don't like the style doesn't mean the quality is bad. Try not

to judge something as "bad quality" just because it doesn't appeal to you. If you don't like a song, give it the lowest vote and leave it at that. The key words here are: Respect for other people's tastes. Have fun, participate, take it easy. It's not a matter of life and death! The information that is submitted is also first checked by a team of admins so there won't be any fake or harmful information in the database - it's not about censorship, just about accuracy.



It's a living thing, creating social interaction as well as a legacy documenting the music scene for future generations.

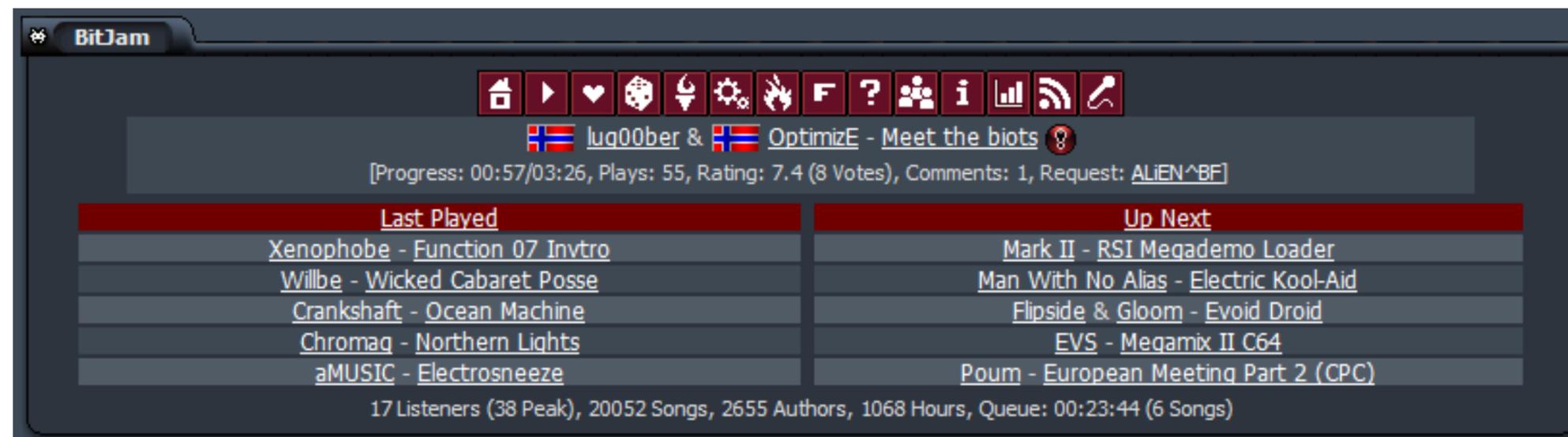


Now that we've cleared that up a bit (or is it still clear as mud?) let's continue and take a look at what we have so far after about a year of lazy development:

- Requests - You decide what is playing.
- Favourites - You can keep a list of your favourite songs for easy requesting later.
- Votes/Comments - You can let other people know what you think about a particular song.
- Supply information - You can submit information about an author: what country is he/she from, what is the author's homepage, and so on.

"WE WANT OUR PLAYLIST TO BE REALLY BIG."

- More information - You can submit download links for songs, links to Pouët, CSDb and our own amiga database "Bit-World".
- Are you a musician? - You can fill out our interview sheet and submit information about yourself.
- Is something missing from the playlist? - You can upload



New look

songs and we will add them. see: <http://www.bitjam.bitfellas.org/?support>

- Shows - We stream the podcast as a featured show every week. More shows like this are planned.
- Multitude - We like all platforms. Not just Amiga/PC/C64/Atari. We like Amstrad CPC, Spectrum, NES, Gameboy, etc. No discrimination!
- Variation - We encourage people to request different things so we won't just become another radio that is repeating the same old tunes over and over again. That's why we have some rules for what you can request and when. See the FAQ at: <http://www.bitjam.bitfellas.org/?faq> for more info.
- Quality - We strive for all tracks to be as good as they possibly can. If you spot something wrong you can submit a report

through our report system and we will try to replace the broken/low quality song. This is part of our biggest focus: "It's more important to grow healthy than to grow fast".

- IRC-Bot - you can ask it what is currently playing, what has been played and what will be played among other things. Again, see the FAQ at: <http://www.bitjam.bitfellas.org/?faq> for details on how to use it.

Inside the walls of BitJam we also have our own weekly podcast: <http://podcast.bitfellas.org>

A few people at BitFellas had the idea to launch a podcast. We loved the quality of the Hardread podcast and contacted them about joining forces. By uniting with BitJam, the hope is that more listeners might get to know scenemusic. It will also be a great

platform for musicians to show their skills outside of compos held at parties.

RSS Feed for the podcast can be found at: <http://www.bitfellas.org/podcast/podcast.xml>

iTunes link: <http://phobos.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewPodcast?id=270710618>

TOMORROW - IMPROVEMENTS

We are like a living organism, slowly evolving. More features will be added, others improved upon. All we want you to understand at the moment is the need to be patient with us.

“WE INTEND TO BUILD BITJAM BRICK BY BRICK, THE IGGY POP WAY.”

What we mostly hope for in the coming years is that we can gather as much information as possible, with the help of users, and add as much good scenemusic as possible. We want our playlist to be really big in order for people to be able to easily experience

music from rare and “exotic” platforms simply by tuning into our stream and requesting the songs. No need for expensive and rare hardware, odd players, or emulators.

One of the major new features we have been thinking about including is the ability to tag songs with a descriptive tag. For example, tag something as “Jazz” and other people can easily find jazz-inspired tracks. More types of information and better options for users to add this information, like date of release, what music compo a song entered and what place it got, and other such goodies for the information-hungry are planned. Further features include the ability to link different musician aliases to one “group”, add information about what scene groups people have been in, more advanced search, improved show handling/live shows by guest DJs, preview songs, more statistics, more streams (which only stream a subset of the songs: one for C64 music, one for Amiga, etc), and so on. There simply are a lot of things in our todo list and we intend to build BitJam brick by brick, the Iggy Pop way.

LAST WORDS - SOME STATS AND THANKS

Currently BitJam consists of 20000 Songs by 2650 Musicians spanning more than 1060 Hours of playtime, 16000 votes, 3000 comments, 2500 songs in users’ favourite lists.

If you are a lover of baseball statistics, check out: <http://www.bitjam.bitfellas.org/?stats> for more statistics.

Thanks to all who have helped us, suggested features, listened, made jingles for us, created graphics for us, etc:

505, ALecs, AlienPDX, aMUSIC, AMI, Angeldawn, Axel, Bobic, Bpoint, BrainBox, BuZz, Buzzer, C-Jeff, Can, Chromag, cK, CONS, Core, CSDB, dalez, Dipswitch, Evil, Flaxo, Gargaj, Genetic Gemini, Ghandy, Gloom, Grim, H2O, Helge, Icecast, Jacorre, JCO, KEiTO, Kenët, KF, Little Bitchard, MadenMann, Menace, Modland, ne7, Pohar, Pouët, pOWL, Raynoa, rc55, SaphirJD, Scamp, Serpent, Skan, SMT, SOASC=, Talus, tEiS, Truck, Ultra, Vincenzo, Virgill, xeNusion, Xiph, Zeg, Zoom, all involved in the musicdisk, and all we forgot (sorry!).