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Adok, Mon 01 Jun 2009

Heroin

By Adok/Hugi

Heroin was a chartsmag edited by Pyromaniac of Beyond. Its first and only issue was released in December 1998. It is available at scene.org and got downloaded about 600 times. It works fine using the latest DOSBox emulator.

Heroin #1

The interface was coded by Armitage of Beyond, with graphics by Jamon of Hyperopia (title picture) and Sky of Xography (the rest). It uses Indoor Music System 0.6 and runs in a VESA mode, although it apparently could have also been done under standard VGA, as the title picture is 320x200x256 and the background picture (640x480) could have been realized with 16 colours, too. The music was made by Dascon of TRSI.

After the title screen, which slowly fades out, you get to the main menu with a cool transitional effect. The main screen is divided vertically into three parts, as in most diskmag: On the top you see the "Heroin" logo, in the middle the table of content is displayed in a nice box, and on the bottom there are the buttons for scrolling and quitting. What's a little confusing is that Sky has also drawn buttons for selecting the previous/next article, which you cannot click, and a nice-looking progress bar background, which is not used by the interface's code either.

The mouse cursor looks like an injection needle, which contributes to the stylish atmosphere. Having selected a section, the text is displayed. There are two fonts. One of them is used for the adverts; it's similar to the standard ASCII charset. The other one appears in the other texts. It reminded me of the Windows font "MS Line Draw", and to be honest, although it is well-readable, I do not like it because it looks slightly plump and sterile.

What is great is the transitional effects between the text-pages. After all the fading and scrolling effects we are accustomed to in other diskmag, watching them is a cool new experience.

Heroin is a pure chartsmag. That means it consists only of an Editorial, the Credits, Messages, Adverts, News, and the Charts themselves. In total there are 80 kbytes of text.



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The brief Editorial by Pyromaniac tells us that the staff hopes that by releasing this chartsmag, "it will serve as a friendly forum for competition between groups to strive to be number one." They also think about "setting up a section of the charts in which we count votes from people's area of expertise", e.g. by taking all the votes for coders by fellow coders and putting them in their own chart. Depending on the amount of positive feedback, they are also considering programming future issues under Win95/98.

After the Credits and Messages, the Adverts follow, which make up 70% of the total text-amount of the mag. We have the same situation as in most other diskmag: 90% of the swappers are from Poland.

The News (8 kbytes) describe the standings of the scene as they were in June 1998.

Finally let's get to the Charts themselves. In contrast to other mags, whose voter-lists are dominated by one country, there have been 103 voters from all over the world. Even two people from India voted! There are top 10s of the following categories: demo groups, demos, intros, pixelers, coders, musicians, and a top 5 swappers.

Overall, this chartsmag has an excellent atmosphere and a good quality of English (as it was edited by a native speaker).

Adok/Hugi