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Written by Macno

Oh, my boy, have I ever told you about the Scene? The glorious Demo Scene where I spent so much of my youth...

I've tried so many times to explain it to your mother, when she was a child like you, but she didn't seem much interested... she preferred to play with her Ipad, which was a totally different thing... but that's another story. Maybe with you is different... I see the sparkle in you, the interest for the technology of the past, I've seen how you watched and touched that floppy disk... It's weird, that object had one billionth of the memory stored in the memory pin you've on your arm, and still was able to stir so many emotions.

You know we used to send these floppy disks all over Europe via mail, plain mail, have you ever sent a mail, a plain handwritten, or even printed mail? Of course not...

You see the signs here? They are the tags of their owners, signs and messages that mark identity and sharing, a track of their voyages across countries in envelopes with faked stamps... "stamps back"... how many memories some simple words unveil... but this is another story.

There was the vibrant smell of discovery at those times... the Scene, it was our Scene... the Demo Scene, you can almost feel its vibes from these old floppies. This bunch of computer fanatics, spread all over Europe and more, the guys from the north were the coolest, "They don't know what to do in the long winter nights...", we used to joke, but, hey, those faked stamps were unifying people, the same people that are almost at war now.

But this is really another story.

At those times it was not so common to have a computer at home, we were somehow pioneers of home computing, we used to communicate, to make music, graphics and code with computers.



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That was art, if you ask me, the most advanced and full featured form of digital art of the times...

Many years ago, more than fifty years ago... I still remember this dude, called Mahoney, after a youth on a keyboard he found Love, or simply smelt the flavor of spring flowers.

He left his computers and the scene behind them, with somehow shocking words: "Life is not made of electricity".

I was new to the scene, that was already "Old Skool" for me, but I still remember those words. I suppose they didn't work for me.

And I remember Mental Hangover, let's see it if we find it... here it is... what a music, good old scrollers and stencil vectors! First time ever... This is history, boy... Hei, wake up! Do respect the art of the ancients!

And listen to this, I almost cry when I hear it, the music of The hunt for seven October, or Enigma's rhythms or the Stardust Memories of World of Commodore or Voyage's musical trip. This has been the soundtrack of my early life.

And watch this! The most desired girl in the scene, one of the first times a demo was shown in the "real world", as we called it, on television or discos, see her dance on State of the Art .

Some demos have become classics, they are history, legend, the name of their authors is fixed in stone, and, trust me, it's not important if that's only for the feeble and sparse minds of old ex-sceners like me.

Demos like Crionics and Silents' Hardwired, Kefrens' Desert Dream, Andromeda's Nexus7 are pure emotion. For me.

You know, everyone had his own nickname and was member of Demo Groups... there were groups wars, alliances, greetings and competitions. People had different roles in groups, but you could do nothing in a big group to earn respect and attention.

Then there were the VIS, Very Important Sceners, the best coders, musicians, graphicicians, admired and envied by everybody.

We used to gather, in demo parties, bringing our huge computers with us, sleeping under tables full of a chaotic mix of electronic equipment, food trashes and beer cans. In these parties there were competitions for the best demo, best music, best picture, best whatever, with people voting and yelling at the most lunatically marvellous ones.



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I remember that party, Somewhere in Holland, I went there with a friend of mine called Parsec and other guys.... I still can smell the environment, the excitement and that crazy Planet M demo that won the main competition.

Parsec... how much time... who knows where the hell is he now... you know we were somehow scientists of the scene... we studied what were the motivations behind all this... why some many young people spent so much time doing these things for free... Basically it was all about Ego-Stimulation, the need to have public recognition and respect via what you can do. You could be the nerdiest and most anonymous dude in "Real Life" and be an absolute SuperStar in the Scene...

Then there were the diskmag... the press of the Scene!

I was rather involved in diskmag... RAW, ROM, Zine, Showtime, Upstream and many others...

I also did my own one, Abnormalia, which tried to be somehow different but had never really been a mainstream one...

I collaborated with some other diskmag editors, Rokdazone, The Ripper, Mop, Posdnuos, Lord Helmet, Astro, Magic... I never saw some of them... who knows what are they doing now...

I started to write a serie of articles for other mags... Abnominio they were called... I lost their count.

The last one was 30 years ago, a sort of revival of the old times... but I was already out of the Scene those days.

We also had charts, Eurochart, the Charts and many other where people voted for the best demos, intros, mags, coders, musicians, graphics and so on...

At my best times I topped the editor charts... it's funny, I've made so many things in my life, but that's one of the things I'm proudest of.

I liked to write, to leave my fingers dance mindlessly on an old qwerty keyboard, morphing flows of words as they sprinkled out of my mind...

I liked to invent new words or adapt them to new fields... Spandimerda, Ego-Stimulation... Scener...

Do you know that I introduced the word "Scener"? I started to use it on an article and other people kept on using it...

I've a place in the scenglish vocabulary, and even if nobody know that, it's a nice sensation...

At some point I "left the Scene"... actually there hasn't been a specific moment... I got older, started to do other things and slowly lost interest in it.



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At times I had back flashes of interest, watched some demos, dived into nostalgic memories... but I was already out of the games.

The scene continued, of course, and grew ... and what we called Concept Demos became more and more common... demos with a story, a point and a message which was something more than just a show of special effects.

One of the most incredible things that was published when I was already an ex-scener has been Elevated. There's is something absolutely outstanding in this video... it's made with 4Kb of code... much less than the image of the thumbnail of your avatar... A world in 4096 bytes, it's not the only 4k intro around, maybe not even the best, but, for my whole life, my backbone has always shivered whenever I've seen it.

You know, the emotions these demos can stir is strongly tied to the memories they evoke... and they are definitively individual.

You might not be impressed from what you've seen and I've surely lost or haven't mentioned so many masterpieces and landmarks of the Demo Scene, this is just what I remember.

What I still remember after 50 years.

But hey, these are all things of the past... foggy remembrances of an old man, this, my boy, is just another story, and we can bury it. Let's see how are demos today, what are the groups around, if there are demo parties.... do you wanna become a Scener?

Macno / Abnormalia