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Kefrens: We Never Really Left

by Gloom of Excess

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In 1985, three danish teenagers played around with their Amiga home computers, and before they knew it they had formed a demo group. Every demo group needs a name, and these guys were no different: The Starlight Project (TSP) was the name they chose for themselves. You may know them as Kefrens. Despite that introduction, this is not going to be an article about the history of Kefrens, because that is quite well documented as it is (see) and ZINE would much rather like to talk to the people behind the legend about their future plans.

Razmo is now 37 years old, and the father of two boys (aged 10 and 11). He insist they are just as crazy about computers as their dad.

ZINE: Was it hard to leave the scene, and why did you?

Razmo: I don't think I ever really left the scene, or; it never felt like I left. With that said, I believe that Kefrens stopped being active simply because of internal disagreement. The demos started to be more about internal competition rather than the productions themselves, and that didn't really work for any of us.

I truly treasure my time in the scene in the late '80s and early '90s. I can say with confidence that it has had a rather big impact on my life and what I do. I can't boast about my activities back then, mainly because I kept obsessing about a special project of mine, the Kefrens Sound Machine , a tracker that we actually used in a few demos but was never really finished.

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ZINE: What did you do after you stopped being active then?

Razmo: Following the departure from Kefrens I started to work on a RPG game for the Amiga, but before I knew it, the platform was dead in the eyes of the general public, and I never finished that project either.

I was still interested in music though, so I crossed the fence and started using a PC. It was around this time that I started taking music-making seriously. I even entered the Creative Open MIDI Contest in 1997 and actually won the whole competition. The prize was a fully fledged sampler keyboard and it was this piece of gear that led me to abandon the tracking technique and focus on so-called professional music production.

Well, when I say abandon, I'm actually exaggerating the music I do today is still scene-related. I'm active in the C64 Remix and Amiga Remix communities, and I have also remixed a couple of known C64 tunes in my home studio.

Caroon by Maali

ZINE: So, now you are back can we ask why?

Mellica: I guess Razmo and I suddenly missed the old days, and we wanted to see what we could accomplish with more and newer tools at our disposal. With age comes experience, as they say. I don't know how important Kefrens is to other sceners anymore, but then again I can't really say that we are doing this for anyone else but ourselves. As it stands, we are focusing on the Amiga, because that is what we know and love. Who knows, maybe some of our old fans might like our new stuff. For me, it's all about giving the Danish scene some cool Amiga stuff to look at again.

"I want to get in contact with more of the old gang, but I don't want it to be like the last time"



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ZINE: You are serious then, you want to make something?

Mellica: Oh yes. I have started to code in Assembler on the old Amiga 500 again, but I can't commit to a release date, hehe.

Razmo: Yeah, we want to make something again. For me, I'm not really into pushing the computer to it's limits any longer. Ten thousand dots was a cool coder trick back then, but in today's scene that sort of thing is just plain boring. I would much rather create something easy that looks good, and different, than something really complicated that has no real artistic purpose.

ZINE: What about the PC? Other groups have embraced the now dominant platform for demos, so how about you?

Mellica: We haven't really talked about the PC at this point, but who knows what happens as we move forward with our plans. Some day we might try something on the PC, but that is really not the focus of our efforts right now. The main thing is gathering our historical stuff and getting that online, getting in touch with more of the old guys and, of course, starting to code again.

Razmo: For me, personally, waking Kefrens from the dead was mainly done for nostalgic reasons. I miss the good old days of coding on the Amiga and the C64, and I want to see what I am able to achieve on those machines. Like I said earlier, I never really finished any of my projects, and I want to change that.

ZINE: What does the future hold for Kefrens then?

Mellica: Getting the history straight is our first priority. I'm actually in contact with Airwalk, and he has agreed to contribute his historic perspective on our website. In fact, it is probably updated with his info already.

Razmo: I want to get in contact with more of the old gang, but I don't want it to be like the last time around. Not that I think it will, since we're all older and wiser now (laughs), but I would also like to see a different approach to credits. Basically, just putting our handles at the end of demos, instead of individual credits. No more internal competition. I would like Kefrens to be an open group again, to allow any of the old guys to get in touch and contribute if they feel like it; as long as the quality is good enough, of course (laughs). The ultimate reason for getting Kefrens going again is simple though: a bit of fun, a bit of nostalgia, and a dose of curiosity. We miss the old days!