

MagicBackdrops

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Chapter 1

MagicBackdrops

1.1 MagicBackdrops

MagicBackdrops 3

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Release date 29 Oct 1995

Legal issues ..This package is FreeWare!

DescriptionWell, what's it all about?

Requirements ..What do I need to use MagicBackdrops?

UsageShouldn't be a problem

How was it done? ...Feel like creating some backdrops of your own?

Known bugsIs it possible?

To doIs there something missing in MagicBackdrops?

AuthorHow to reach me

HistoryReference section on earlier MagicBackdrops

Thanks toPeople the author wishes to thank for some reason

1.2 Legal Issues

Disclaimer

This package is provided "as is" without warranty of any kind, either expressed or implied, including, but not limited to, the implied warranty of fitness for a particular purpose. The entire risk as to the results, reliability and performance of this package is assumed by you.

Preface

This package is freeware, this means that you can copy it freely as long as you don't ask any more money for it than a nominal fee for copying. If you want to distribute this creation you should keep this document and the original icons with it. This package cannot be used for commercial purposes without written permission from the author. The copyright does not comprise the actual images except when stated otherwise in the picture **Description** section.

Special permission is hereby granted to include MagicBackgrounds in Public Domain collections such as Fred Fish's Amiga Library, AmiNET etc.

1.3 Description of MagicBackdrops

MagicBackdrops is a set of 720×536 8-colour IFF ILBM pictures whose main purpose is to reside in the background of the Workbench screen. If you feel that there might be some other use for them, feel free to take advantage of that, but this was nevertheless the original intention. And what's so great about them? Well, nothing really, I just like them, and I wouldn't be all surprised if someone else does too. That's why I have bundled them together into this archive, and troubled myself writing these docs.

All the images use the MagicWB 2.0 palette (or, are at least supposed to do so). They all have in common that they are gray-scaled versions of already available pictures fetched from near and far. Because of the scaling that has been applied to most of them, the quality of all images isn't excellent, but most look fair. The worst ones aren't included in this distribution at all, and those who barely passed the quality test are distinguished from the rest in the descriptive texts below. The texts stating that an image is "cropped" mean that only part of the image is left, most of the times this is due to my pickiness about keeping the original pixel aspect ratio (thus getting rid of stretched-looking results). This time all the pictures are plain grayscale (however they all were more colourful before my tampering with them).

In this release, there are only "3-Grayscale" pictures. The reason for this is (mostly) because I felt confident with all the images the way they turned out (which in turn probably is correlated with the fact that none of them is hand drawn this time).

The "3-Grayscale" directory contains:

"040pic"

A shot of the coastline somewhere.

"AmigaLogo"

The new Amiga logotype, found on the AmiNet. Copyrighted to Amiga Technologies inc.

"Debbie3"

A great picture drawn by H R Giger, a great artist.

"Dolphins"

This is the sort of pictures I like the best; decent image quality and size, a nice theme and last, but not least, it doesn't clash with the Workbench.

"DPG-688"

A cropped version of the original DPG picture, featuring Stephanie Seymour.

"Elephants"

Another nice animal kingdom theme picture.

"Emma Sjögren"

A swedish model.

"Horsehead Nebula"

The first astronomical picture supplied in MagicBackdrops.

"Jean-Luc Picard"

Well, this ought to be the second, then :-). As the name suggests, it is a picture of Jean-Luc Picard (from the Star Trek Next Generation series), captain of the USS Enterprise.

"Lake Louise"

A beautiful shot of this lake.

"Seal"

A picture of a seal, perhaps not strikingly good quality, but still here.

"Sorceress"

A fantasy picture.

"Warping"

A great raytraced picture by Tobias Richter, master in his profession.

"Water"

This image could be seen in the first advertisements for the A4000 (shown on the monitor).

1.4 What is required to use this package?

The MagicBackgrounds package requires the MWB palette, and a large screen with a pixel aspect ratio near 1:1. DoublePAL 720×550 is my native screen mode, and it is for this all these images have been designed (720×536 actually, since my border eats 14 pixels vertical space). To use this package in conjunction with OS2.x, the NickPrefs package is recommended. OS3.x users should have no problems setting up WPattern to do the job. Another recommended addition to your hardware is some additional memory; as much Chip memory as possible and preferably some Fast too; the backdrops eat quite a lot of chipmem (especially those in the "Big" drawer), but you don't have to by any means.

1.5 Usage of MagicBackgrounds

Users of OS2.x should get hold of the NickPrefs package and use WPicture to set up the backgrounds.

3.x users don't need additional programs, since WPattern is quite sufficient. Just tell WPattern what picture(s) to use.

1.6 How do I make my own Magic Backdrops?

First of all, you'll probably need a program similar to ADPro; I doubt very much that anyone wants to do a picture like this manually. This explanation assumes you have a copy of ADPro up and running.

This step by step guide shows you how to make the grayscale backdrops (or rather how I made these ones).

1. The first step would probably be to find a picture that you like, and feel that you'd want to use. Preferably, it should be larger than or equal to the size of your Workbench screen. This is the most troublesome step, especially if you decide to draw one from scratch yourself, but that is all up to you.
2. Now load ADPro.
3. Set the render screen to whatever screenmode used by your Workbench screen, the number of colours should be eight. If you have several pictures you consider converting, locking the screenmode and depth could be convenient.
4. Turn on dithering, Floyd-Steingberg should be enough for most people.
5. Load the picture into ADPro.
6. If the image has some kind of border you don't want in the finished picture, it is time to crop it now.
7. In case the picture is smaller than the desired screenmode, scale it up, making sure you keep the pixel aspect ratio intact (or correcting it if necessary).
8. Run the "Colour to gray" operator.
9. Load the MagicWorkbench palette (or grab it from your workbench). If you don't have it, load it from one of the pictures in this archive.
10. Swap the first and fourth colours.
11. Lock the palette.

To make a 3-grayscale picture, keep reading here, for 5-grayscale images, skip the next section.

12. In the Palette Control window, Set the number of used colours to three, and the "offset colour zero" to three as well.

13. Run the "Dynamic Range" filter, setting the Minimum/Maximum values to 123/175.

14. Render the picture.

15. Save your finished picture!

To make a 5-grayscale image, keep reading here.

12. In the Palette Control window, Set the number of used colours to five, and the "offset colour zero" to one.

13. Render the picture.

14. Save your finished picture!

There still remains one step, though. The pictures should be remapped to use the MagicWB palette (remember we swapped the first and fourth colour?), and for this purpose I have used Personal Paint (It @can{ui} be made using ADPro's AREXX scripts too, but I feel that's too slow). The procedure with this program is as follows:

1. Load the picture (making sure you have the page size smaller than or equal to that of the loaded file)
2. Open the palette window and exchange the first and fourth colours.
3. Select "Remap" from the "Colour" menu.
4. Resave the picture.

This procedure might not be necessary, it depends a bit on what program is used to show the pictures/put them in the backdrop of the Workbench etc, but for OS3.0 (v39) users, it is necessary, since IPrefs isn't very good at remapping the images on its own (it messes up the grayscales). If you think that you don't need to remap the images because they work on your system anyway, but intend to spread them to other people, think again. If possible, convert them to the standard palette, thus saving a great deal of trouble for people who maybe don't have the means to.

1.7 Known bugs

Well, any real "bugs" probably don't exist in this package, largely because there are no executable files included. However, someone might notice an incorrect colourmap or something similar, but so far I haven't found any. If anyone does, don't hesitate to contact me. People have already noticed me of fuzzy parts of the documentation of MagicBackdrops 1; the copyrights were not very defined and could be misinterpreted.

1.8 Yet to be done

Well, what is missing in MagicBackgrounds?

All I can think of is additional backdrops of your preference, since I have run out of fresh images... If there is a picture you really like which you would like to have "converted" to this style, contact me! It isn't all unlikely I might do it for you, if you can't do it yourself (ie you maybe don't have the needed software). The size of the finished image could be any size you want, not necessarily that of my preference (720×536).

Still, nobody has contacted me stating that they like (or dislike, for that matter) MagicBackdrops. If I don't get any response, I'm quite likely to stop distributing them; why should I, if nobody uses them anyway. Still, I'll continue for yet a while, but constant silence certainly doesn't encourage me. Send me a mail, you don't have to write much; stating that you use/like MagicBackdrops would do wonders in itself. By the way, I understand English, Swedish and some French as well.

Any other ideas and suggestions are very welcome as well.

1.9 How to get in touch with the author

If you'd like to contact me, here's my name and addresses:

Snailmail:

Johan Sundström, Nyponvägen 210, S-613 38 Oxelösund, SWEDEN

E-Mail:

Johan_Sundstrom@AUGS.se (this address might change in the near future, but it should be correct at least until February 20, 1996)

1.10 The author wishes to thank people...

The author wishes to thank these people for various reasons:

Person in question... for...

Martin Huttenloherthe creation of MagicWB

Stefan Stuntzhis excellent MUI package

Stefan Bobergthe splendid archiver LhA used to compress this archive

Dietmar EilertGoldED, the editor used to create this document

Pauli PorkkaD.A.S ModulePlayer, a truly great MUI application

Jonathan PotterDirectory Opus, the one of its kind

Stefan BeckerToolManager, a truly great program-launching environment

Nicola Salmoria &

Richard Waspetheir StatRAM device who helped me a lot at various times

Peter Stuerthe DOSTrace docs who were used as a model for this file

Chris Hülsbeckthe music of Turrican I&II - both masterpieces!

Douglas Adamswriting great literature!

Roman Patznerhis icons, and recently for RomIcons 10, which, among other things, featured a good-looking font which I adopted and used for the grayscale icon in this distribution. (Looking for a representative postcard right this minute, Roman!)

Mattias Erikssonsometimes interesting chats over the phone

Johan Wärlanderdiscussing philosophy and lots of other topics

Ola Spjuthfriendship ;-)

Fredrik Mellströmsnailmail exchange of interesting software, not to mention occasional chats

Joakim Brostedtsome pics for MBD1

Henrik Dikvallfor his well-assorted BBS (Titanic, +46-(0)11-142017) from which I found several of the best images so far the Amiga community ..contributing to the publicly available Amiga software

...and finally the author of Øyvind Falch for the original idea for this product and all of you who have sent me pictures for future MagicBackdrops. I'm already working on release 4. Chances are it'll be ready pretty soon, but I may be wrong...

1.11 The History of Magic Backdrops

Version 1.0

Initial release.

Featured pictures:

3-Grayscale/ 5-Grayscale/ Coloured/

Artheel AHGP0438 Windows'95.Colour

Charlotta AHGP0439

DPG-920 AHGP0444

DPG-1000 Hajime-69

DPG-1622 Windows'95

DPG-1635

DPG-1933

DPG-2006

DPG-2197

DPG-2531

Elite6

HoseShower

Michelle

Niki Taylor

Paulina Poritzkova

Sanctuary

Schneide

Teri Peterson

Version 2.0

Straightened up the Copyright section.

Corrected the presentation of the procedure used to create a MagicBackdrop.

New type of images: extended height pictures, in the Big/ drawer.

Added History section.

Made an icon of my own for the document (really only a cut and paste operation; the pattern was drawn by Martin Huttenloher, and the template was made by Roman Patzner).

Made some (boring) imagedrawers, and updated the main drawer icon.

Featured pictures:

3-Grayscale/ Big/

BUNNY001 CGPB01

DPG-1370 DS-F-100

Joan Pamela8

Lili&Sussi Pamela9

Pamela6

Pamela7

Pamela11

Pamela12

PumaLizard

ShortHair

Shower

Version 3.0

Modified a little of this and a little of that in the documentation.

Added a paragraph stating that I like response, in the **To do** section

Improved general quality of supplied pictures (in this release)

Made a new icon for the 3-Grayscale directory (using a font drawn by Roman Patzner)

Fixed the History section you're reading right now to be able to show the supplied pictures from the document itself (for this to work, Multiview has to be in your command path)

Featured pictures:

3-Grayscale/

040pic

AmigaLogo

Debbie3

Dolphins

DPG-688

Elephants

Emma Sjögren

Horsehead Nebula

Jean-Luc Picard

Lake Louise

Seal

Sorceress

Warping

Water
