

Interview with Kris Sum about www.scene.org

This is a text version of an interview that is also on video.
Questions and edit by Will Pollard.

Two sites suggested by Kris for more information.
There are now PDF versions to print out A4.

<http://tomaes.32x.de/text/faq.php> PDF
<http://www.scene.org/demoscene.php> PDF

Q. How did you find out about Scene?

Back in the days of the spectrum and commodore home computers, bought about the age of the bedroom coder

people trying to get the most out of their hardware by coding really efficient routines - from displaying

graphics to playing music. Back then, public domain software (which were games and utilities created by

people and distributed on bulletin boards and on cassette tape) really took off, and you'd start to get all

these demos that people had made showing things that you never thought your computer was possible of doing.

Codemasters, the UK's most established games publisher started life in the 80s with two brothers.

Q. What do you think it is about?

It's about showing off - both the hardware that you're coding on and of the skills that you have.

You're making these full on multimedia presentations run in real time - nothing is pre-rendered, so it takes

a fair bit more skill than just creating a 3d scene in 3dstudio max.

It does directly translate into the computer games industry - lots of coders are at college or uni

and start playing about with microsoft Direct 3D. Some of the big demoscene events such as Assembly (Finland, Helsinki)

and Breakpoint (Germany) are often full with games developers and so on.

Some of the non-coding people are into it for the multimedia aspect - the levels of production involved and

the synching of visausl and audio means that the best demos need a lot of design and planning.

It's also a hobby thing - some people just make music, or create art for the love of it, the same applies

to the demoscene.

Q. How is it done?

Tough one. Typicall you have a group of 3 or 4 people who work on any one production - someone to do the

graphics, 3d models and design, someone to do the music, and someone to write the actual code. Initially

you might come up with concepts for design or storyboard the production on paper, then take a few weeks

to write the demo, then release it at a demo party.

Q. Where is it going?

Beucase the scene is normally populated by students, it's continually evolving - the newest DirectX9

technologies and new graphics cards means that we're now getting things like realtime depth of field effects,

and absoulte huge levels of texture and lighting detail that would not have been imaginable 10 years ago.

10,15 years ago the scene was all about creating optimized starfield effects and creating very optimised code.

Because of the computing power we have now, it's grown into more multimedia type pastures, with demos containing

full on soundtracks and lush realtime generated visuals and lifelike scenes.

Q. Can anyone try it?

Yes! Many of the groups have written their own tools which they use to write their demos. One group,

moppi productions has a very good toolkit called DemoPaja which works like macromedia flash / director.

You can import your own graphics and 3d models, add a soundtrack, assign effects and so on, and manipulate them on a timeline.

Q. How can there be a connection with mainstream animation as in Exeter official event?

(I'm assuming it is more or less underground at the moment)

The words 'mainstream' and demoscene don't normally accompany each other - by its very nature it is underground,

and most students just do it because they have nothing else better to do. The demoscene is pretty unheard of in

the UK, it's mainly a western european thing.

Q. Are the awards intended to get publicity?

covered in the video

Kris suggests two sites to start with for examples-

<http://www.pouet.net/> bottom right is a list of recent interest

look for farb-rausch on files / groups at scene.org versions go back in time