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**Axel (Brainstorm) (25.04.2008) (survey) musician, organizer**

Axel, Sat 26 Apr 2008

#### **Survey of Axel**

**Job: musician**

Survey submitted: Fri 25 Apr 2008

#### **Handle, ex-handle(s):**

Axel of Brainstorm

#### **Name, birthday, origin:**

Alexander, July 25th, 1975, Switzerland

#### **Group, ex-group(s):**

Brainstorm, The Perfects

#### **What was your first group, your role in that group and what did that group produce?:**

I joined a computer club in Basel, the Dial Computer Club, where Brainstorm also was a local group. I joined the club with two friends, and we discussed, copied stuff, made music. And one day a guy named Mr.Perfect (later known as Peace of Brainstorm) patted me on the back and asked if I made that tune which was playing on the monitor. And I said yes. Then he and a programmer named The Fly asked me if I wanted to join their group named "The Perfects". And I did. We made a little "Contact Demo" which basically had our address etc so people could contact us. Secondly we made a little demo named "Ropeet", where I made the track "Hard Perfection". The demo featured some wireframe-vectors. That was in early 1990. Our first demo under Brainstorm was "Metamorphosis".

#### **What motivates you to spend time on the scene?:**

The friends and the competition. I think the main driving factor for the scene is the competition. The desire to beat another group at something. And of course while trying to achieve that, you get to know the people behind each group, and this is a very rewarding experience. Knowing that others respect your work is one of my main motivations, and you get to make new friends in the process.

#### **What is your favorite color?:**



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Tough one. Yellow maybe.

**On what platform(s) did you begin your computing journey, and when was this?:**

Some time in the early 80s my brother got a C64. I mostly used it for playing games though. My switch to actually creating something came with the Amiga in 1989.

**What platform(s) do you use now?:**

PC only.

**What is/are your favorite piece(s) of music(s) - from a demo production or a scener (released outside of a demo)?:**

Oh, this is way too difficult to answer. But probably two songs which had the biggest impact on me were "Occ san geen" by Uncle Tom (Seven Sins demo by Scoopex) and "Cream of the Earth" by Romeo Knight (Cebit 90 demo by Red Sector). In recent years I find all of Reed's work amazing and very inspiring.

**What is/are your favorite picture(s) - from a demo production or a scener(released outside of a demo)?:**

I have to list Uno here. Everything he did in the 90s was nothing but bliss. In recent years I find artists like Visualice, Helge and Archmage absolutely mindblowing.

**What music program are you using the most to express yourself? Why?:**

Mozilla Thunderbird. LOL. I assume you mean musically. That would have to be Renoise.

**Which composer, artist or group of the real life did inspire you most?:**

Probably Pink Floyd, Mark Knopfler, Prince, Candy Dulfer and The Corrs.

**Do you play any instrument? Which?:**

I learnt to play the classic and electric guitar, and taught myself to play the piano auto-didactically.

**Which project that you worked on was the most exciting and interesting for you? And why?:**

I think I have to mention two projects, one of them being ZINE because I simply worked so much on it over the years, first between ZINE 7 and ZINE 11, and then recently again starting with ZINE 12 in 2007. I like writing a lot since I've done it professionally for 8 years in my daily job, so that's why I probably have such major interest in the mag. Plus it's a project I have direct impact on. With lots of our demos it's mostly work between the coders and the graphics artists, so it doesn't need me there all that much. But with ZINE I can shape the result directly, which makes it very exciting for me. The second project I'd like to mention is Brainstorm as a whole. I've never before been involved with the organisation of a group and its productions directly, so it's been very exciting for me to give this a shot - and it continues to be.

**What is your favorite demo, intro, megademo, retrogame, slideshow, musicdisk, diskmag, wilddemo?:**

I can't really pick those to be honest. There's such a variety in productions, both in the "old" scene and in the "new" scene. And I love



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both old and new productions. The older ones have something nostalgic about them, but the newer ones continue to impress from technical points of view, plus unexpected productions turn up from nowhere, like Youscope or Craft which simply amaze me.

**Discuss: minimalistic demos, cracktros, fucktros, joke demos, lamers, compo winners at big parties, demotools, diskmag, chiptunes, glenz vectors, programming languages, photoshop, textmode:**

nah

**What percentage of modern demos are 3d flybys?:**

Actually, the term flyby is one of the most stupid inventions I've ever heard in the scene. You know, I prefer a good flyby to any bad non-flyby anytime. I don't like how the term flyby has some negative connotation, because in my opinion, that's bullshit. Therefore it absolutely doesn't matter what the percentage is.

**What percentage of older demos are the same effects recycled?:**

You could also ask the same question about new demos to be honest. Many effects build on older versions of the same effects. It's only logical. People continue to improve in various areas. Of course it's hard to come up with new ideas all the time, but I think Navis and ASD in general continue to prove that it's possible. It's just that most of us don't try hard enough.

**What platform(s) needs more demos?:**

All of them.

**Which parties do you intend to go to, and which parties would you like to go to? Please describe your personal experiences with your most favourite or impressive party you have ever been at:**

Originally, The Party 1 - 3 were the most impressive parties for me, because they were also my first ones I ever visited. I thought that nothing demoscene-related could ever top this feeling from back then. I was wrong. After my 12-year-break from the scene, I went to Breakpoint 2006. When I entered the hall, I asked myself: "What the hell am I doing here?". I didn't know anyone, and we had not released anything since we regrouped. No one knew us/me except for a few Amiga sceners from the old days (you saved our day, thanks guys!). Breakpoint 2007 already was different. We had released a few prods in the meantime, which were received quite well. But this year, Breakpoint blew me away. All the people I met, the high standards of the competitions and the general atmosphere was brilliant. So yeah, Breakpoint 2008 was the party I liked best to date. What greatly helped was that so many of us Brainstormers were present too, which always is a great thing to meet so many of your own group.

**How did the scene alter since you are taking an active part in it? Can you explain why?:**

It became a lot more dynamic of course, due to the internet. Socializing has become a much bigger part of each party compared to the scene in the 90s, and people generally know each other better, I think. People talk a lot more to each other throughout the year thanks to new communication possibilities, so in general a scener has much more contacts to other sceners than back then.

**What are your dreams/goals in life, did scene help you and have you achieved them yet?:**

I think my goals in life have only slowly surfaced over the last 5 years, while they weren't all that clear in the past. But with age comes



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wisdom (muahah). Also, the birth of my son in late 2007 also logically had an impact on what I wanted to do with my life. I think one of my highest goals is to be there for other people, instead of just being there for a professional career. I've noticed that interpersonal things have become much more important to me than lots of money or a stellar career. I think it could be said that a goal is to create something with other people, like we do in the demoscene. I honestly think it's fascinating. And if these creations succeed in entertaining other people, all the better. That's also a reason why I make music. I love it when other people enjoy my music. It's simply a great feeling. While the scene doesn't necessarily help you in achieving your goals in life, it can absolutely be a part of your goals. It's probably also a reason why I don't want Brainstorm to consist of just five persons, who make one production a year. I want us to be diverse, to try out different things, and to give room for improvisation/experimentation. Some people think we lack an identity, but maybe it's just more difficult to put us in a drawer with a label on. I enjoy that. And I like the diversity of styles within the group. The scene is the most wonderful playground, where you can be active creatively. And contrary to many other artistic communities, the scene is very personalized and I like that.

**Finally, do you have some special greetings? Feel free to add links to your graphics, screenshots of effects, modules or other pieces of your work.:**

I'd just like to send out some greetings to everyone who creatively adds something to the scene, no matter in which way. You're an inspiration to others, and that's what keeps the scene breathing.

If you're interested in checking out some of my lousy old tunes, you can find them here:

[http://www.bitfellas.org/e107\\_plugins/radio/radio.php?search&q=8&type=author&page=1](http://www.bitfellas.org/e107_plugins/radio/radio.php?search&q=8&type=author&page=1)

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