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MEWGENICS?

**EDMUND MCMILLEN AND TYLER GLAIEL SPEAK TO US ABOUT THEIR
FOLLOW UP TO INDIE DARLING *THE BINDING OF ISAAC***

WELCOME TO
DEBUG MAGAZINE

WHAT IS
DEBUG MAGAZINE?

Debug is a well established quarterly magazine designed to help independent game developers and publishers get their titles seen by a large, focused audience.

Every issue of *Debug* gives the reader a complete view of the indie gaming community, featuring reviews and previews for modern consoles and PC, retro consoles/computers, and mobiles.

Debug is a professionally produced magazine with high production values, created by a team with years of experience in gaming journalism and publishing. Members of our team have been key in establishing brands such as *Lost In Cult*, and creating highly regarded video game tomes such as the *[lock-on]* gaming journal and coffee table book *A Handheld History*.

WHY IS
DEBUG MAGAZINE?

Debug believes that the most interesting, creative, and experimental gaming experiences are found in the indie gaming sector. Over 1,000 games were released every month in 2022 just on Steam alone*, so gamers need a reliable source to help them find the best titles. Debug is that source.

The *Debug* team love AAA titles as much as the next gamer, but given the enormous costs now associated with game development, it's become harder for publishers to take risks. Online stores are clogged up with remakes, remasters and sequels, while many are asking: where are the original games? The risk takers? The titles that genuinely surprise you? They're out there, but they're not always easy to find.

So how do you make sure these titles get the exposure they deserve? *Debug* is that bridge between independent games and the gamer. A magazine that is 100% focused on indie games and the people who make them.

Debug's previews and reviews not only cover the specific games they're focused on, but also promote other similar indie titles, too – and, whenever possible, a QR code linking to gameplay footage or storefronts. The purpose of this is to expand the readers' knowledge of the indie gaming sector by linking together as many related games as possible.

A BIGGER GAME PLAN…

While the team is largely based in the UK, we look outward at the global stage, with a view to cover games and developers from all around the world. We've already been invited to visit Spain and Sweden to discover new and exciting titles, and intend to keep on shining our light worldwide.

We have also launched our Indie Game Awards, an initiative borne from our desire to showcase the best of indie, and celebrate the people who make it all happen.

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IRL EVENTS
INDIE GAME AWARDS

Our inaugural awards show took place in Nottingham on 2nd February 2024, dedicated to indie games and the people who make them, celebrating the best and brightest globally.

The Indie Game Awards brought together hundreds of nominees from around the world, joined by a common passion for creating unique game experiences.

Showcasing the work of solo developers and small teams has long been an important part of *Debug*'s mission, and hosting this night of appreciation exclusively for indies allowed us to literally shine a light on the sometimes underappreciated work being done in this part of the industry.

Designed in collaboration with the team at Frame-A-Game, a total of 20 physical awards were given out on the night, which was made possible thanks to the generous and highly appreciated sponsorship of Press Engine.

Winners on the night include John Riggs and Alastair Low for puzzler *Chew Chew Mimic*, OutOfTheBit for their retro side-scroller *Full Void*, and Geometric Interactive who took home several awards including special recognition from Everyone Can for their attention to accessibility in *COCOON*.

Our first ceremony was a resounding success and plans are currently underway to bring the awards back for a second year in February 2025.
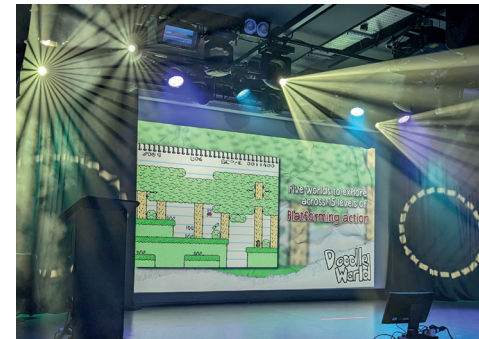
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DEBUG U + SHOWCASE

Taking place on the same date and at the same venue as the Indie Game Awards, Debug U is our spin on the games industry networking event and is welcoming to newcomers and established names alike

Learn from the best with in-depth talks and panels from indie success stories and industry legends on the Debug U stage. Our February 2024 event saw Harry Potter developer Simon Phipps and Bullfrog alumni Alex Trowers wow the crowd with tales from their decades-long careers in the games industry.

Join us in the Indie Showcase area to play work-in-progress and recently released games from students to established studios... And then meet the people who made them!

Our Indie Showcase events are completely free, and are funded by sales of Debug magazine and the generosity of our sponsors and partners.

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Antonblast

World Of Horror

Broken Sword Reforged

Snufkin

WHO IS
DEBUG MAGAZINE?

Debug is published by Daniel Crocker and edited by Andrew Dickinson.

Daniel Crocker
Daniel has been closely involved with the world of indie game development since the early 2000s. After two decades of appreciating what lesser-known developers are able to bring to the table, he founded WAVE Game Studios (**www.wavegamestudios.com**) with the goal of spreading the indie love to a wider audience.

Andrew Dickinson
Andrew has worked in gaming journalism for several years, with pieces published by the likes of Wireframe and TalentHouse. He became editor-in-chief of the [lock-on] gaming journal in 2021, and soon after was appointed Operations Director of Lost In Cult (**www.lostincult.co.uk**). He took over as editor of Debug magazine in late 2023, starting with issue 4. Andrew has a wealth of experience in all aspects of creating and distributing print media.

WHEN IS
DEBUG MAGAZINE?

The first issue of *Debug* was released in April 2023, and has continued to be available quarterly ever since. The decision to release on a three-monthly basis was a deliverate one to maximise the strengths of print media. Feedback from our readers reveals a crystal clear picture; the modern print audience appreciates having time to digest the content within. It also means our content stays current for several months, giving games a longer exposure time.

2024
Issue 4 January 21st

Issue 5 April 21st

Issue 6 July 21st

Issue 7 October 21st

2025
Issue 8 January 21st

Issue 9 April 21st

Issue 10 July 21st

Issue 11 October 21st

Debug magazine ships worldwide and is available to buy online at **www.teamdebug.com**

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Quintessentially Nordic

How SNUFKIN MELODY OF MOOMINVALLEY was born

Written by Andrew Dickinson

© Snufkin: Melody of Moominvalley. Developed by Hyper Games. © Moomin Characters™

With Special Thanks to James Barnes from Raw Fury

ARE YOU AFRAID OF THE THEME PARK?

RELEASED
TBC

NIGHTMARES COME TO LIFE IN LOW-POLY CROW COUNTRY

ROAD TRIPPING

BEWARE OF SLOWING DOWN IN THIS ALLURING MIND F*@K

Developing a game solo has its fair share of difficulties — and that's putting it mildly! Where to find the funds is often one of the largest road blocks. Paying out of your own pocket or finding an investor are often the only real options.

Ondrej Svadlena, however, turned to Patreon, and has been steadily working on his game BEWARE ever since. It's clearly a platform that can work well, as at the time of writing the project has over 500 paying patrons, bringing in over $2,500 every month.

So what does everyone see in this title? At first glance they certainly use a beautiful game. In development for well over five years already, the title has always had a captivating visual style, with rain-flecked windscreens and detailed tarmac looking almost real.

But the allure goes beyond looks. Concepted following a childhood incident that involved running from the Czechoslovakian secret police, your time on the road sees you being chased by other cars, and speaking to a mysterious woman in the woods.

Andrew Dickinson

INFO
Developer
Ondrej
Svadlena
Publisher
Ondrej
Svadlena
On
PC
Demo
Via Patreon

THE BACK CATALOGUE
The people who made this also made...
Time Rodent (short film)
Ondrej has created many animated shorts.

WATCH IT

Q&A
CROW COUNTRY

It's a shame that the physical medium doesn't afford us more space as Creative Director for Crow Country, Adam Vian, had plenty to say about the game's creation.

What is it about low-poly, PSX style graphics that works so well for horror, do you think?
When the world of your game is veiled behind a layer of abstraction the player is required to use their imagination to fill in the gaps, which opens the door for a more intense horror experience. In my opinion as soon as you go beyond, let's say, PS2 graphics, you lose that little bit of magic, and you just fall into the uncanny valley, or even worse, dull photorealism.

What was the inspiration behind having each area be a diorama?
Building little room dioramas has basically been the most fun thing about making Crow Country. Each room starts out with an intention to capture a certain vibe through props, colours, textures and lighting, and I'd endlessly tweak each one until they felt right. I actually found it much harder to make the larger, more open areas. Resident Evil and Silent Hill have their share of small diorama-like rooms, but the biggest inspiration for me was the small interior rooms in Final Fantasy VII. The choice of camera angle, the level of detail, the way they float in a black void, they're so inviting. My favourites are both in the Ghost Hotel area in the Gold Saucer, the lobby and the item shop. They're just incredible.

If you could give one piece of advice to aspiring developers, what would it be?
Get started with smaller, simpler games, just so you can (at least some of the time) see your projects through to completion. Don't get stuck trying to make your magnum opus dream project before you're ready. My brother Tom and I used to make small Flash games for browsers, and sometimes we'd make an entire game in a week or less. They weren't the changingly good, but it's really important to get the experience of planning, designing, building, finishing, and releasing a game — even if it all goes wrong. Also, it's not just your skills you'll develop, but it's your taste. In my opinion, artists can only develop good taste by being able to look back on their older work and feeling slightly ashamed of it — and wanting to improve next time.

INFO
Developer SFB Games
Publisher SFB Games
On PC, PS4/5
Demo Yes

Andrew Dickinson

A FARMING SIM WITH SURPRISING DEPTH, YOU CAN SINK HOURS INTO MY TIME AT SANDROCK

In My Time at Sandrock, your job is to build. This desert town needs improving, especially now the local (and forebodingly exhausted) builder is retiring. You'll work your way into both the structures of the town, and the hearts of the people, if it all goes to plan.

Being thrust into the role of a builder is slightly overwhelming to begin with. At your workshop, you can craft small items at your worktable, but you'll need to use your assembly station to create bigger items [1].

Materials can be found by foraging, mining, or shopping at one of the local stores. You can take on jobs from the Commission Board to earn some cash; these pay well and allow you to fund the larger community projects to improve the town.

This is the main draw of My Time at Sandrock: the town itself. As the player, you can decide how much you want to engage. Do you want to tell jokes, only emerging to deliver newly fixed structures before disappearing back into the night? Or do you want to visit the saloon every evening, building up friendships [2] and looking for love? It's up to you.

It's worth talking to the locals, however, because they're so full of character. They're always around, doing their own thing, sometimes pulling you into side quests against your will (watch out for Burgess from the local church) but it somehow gives you helping tidy up the garden). The voice acting is fun and exuberant without being annoying, and you can even pet the local dogs and cats [3]. Always a bonus.

The game has a traditional day-night cycle, and it has that deliciously moreish feeling akin to Stardew Valley; it's easy to convince yourself to do 'just one more day', only to find yourself still going an hour later.

The bigger story threads make it worth pushing through the significant UI issues in the Xbox version. You can't easily see the names of items, which makes shopping a chore. Plus, if your softs isn't right next to your television, you will need superhuman eye strength to read everything clearly. It feels like a game designed for PC.

Having said that, My Time at Sandrock is a lot of fun. It's cosy, but not sugary-sweet. The character creation is surprisingly detailed, giving you a ton of options to work with. And the romancing, despite being formulaic, is quite fun.

If you're a farming sim fan, the mechanics will feel very familiar. What makes it stand out is Sandrock itself. It's so richly detailed that it genuinely feels like a community that lives and breathes alone, whether you want to join them or not. But because the people within it are so compelling, you will want to keep playing. Just one more day. Okay, maybe two. [

★★★★☆

Andrew Dickinson
Reviewed on Switch

INFO
Developer
Publisher
Price
Released November
On PC, PS4/5, Xbox One/Series

SECOND OPINION
My Time at Sandrock is another example, like Palia, of the fact that the Switch is coming to the end of its life cycle. Games like this, which can run on modern platforms, simply can't keep up on Switch. And that's a shame, because what Pathea Games offers here is a world that is begging to be explored — one perfect for taking on the go with you. If you do want My Time at Sandrock on the go, you'd do much better served by playing the Vita or Steam Deck.

Megan Bidmead

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE...
Coral Island — A pretty, tropical island twist on the classic farm sim game.
Stardew Valley — An unbeatable farming sim, and the epitome of cozy gaming.
Dinkum — Build a new life down under with this Animal Crossing-inspired sim.

THE BACK CATALOGUE
As well as the My Time series, Pathea developed Planet Explorers, an adventure RPG, and Ever Forward, an adventure puzzle game.

AT A GLANCE:
DEBUG MAGAZINE

- **The world's biggest print publication focused on indie games**
- **Covers new releases for PC, consoles, mobile, and alternative platforms**
- **A strong, well respected brand with a very focused objective**
- **Professionally produced with the highest production values**
- **Veteran games journalists with decades of experience**
- **Meticulously planned to cover the most titles in the best way**
- **A physical gaming publication for the modern audience**
- **Affordable opportunities for promotion and advertising**

WORK WITH DEBUG MAGAZINE

So that's *Debug* in a nutshell. We're incredibly proud of what we've achieved so far, and we're only just getting started. You may have questions, and the team are always contactable to give you the answers.

Got a game coming out that you think we should know about? Want to ensure the maximum exposure? Speak to us about how we can put together an editorial/advertising package at very competitive rates.

To discuss advertising or sponsorship opportunities contact Daniel Crocker (Marketing Director) via **daniel@teamdebug.com** For magazine and editorial enquiries, get in touch with

Andrew Dickinson (Editor) via **andrew@teamdebug.com** And for enquiries relating to our in-person events contact Alex Hunt (Events Manager) via **alex@teamdebug.com**

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ADVERTISING IN DEBUG MAGAZINE

If you're looking to showcase your game or product to a focused and highly engaged market, there's no better advertising option than *Debug* magazine. *Debug* is the only publication that covers the indie sector to such a wide degree, meaning that our readers expect and receive a completely unrivalled view of the market that no other magazine can offer. One of the key strenghs of print media is the high ROI; everyone viewing your advert is not only a fan of video games, but they're committed enough to purchase a magazine on the subject.

Debug reaches around 4,000 people each quarter, and that number increases with every new issue we publish. We've worked with companies such as Team17, Raw Fury and Revolution Software to bring exciting games to the cover of *Debug*.
In addition to our regular readers, our covers are also seen across social media and at events, with an estimated reach of well over 100,000 per issue. We believe this makes being on the cover a great proposition for ensuring the right people learn about your game. Get in touch to discuss - covers book up fast!

Over 2,500 people read our digital version, and we're always exploring ways to increase our digital readership through subscription platforms. We're also happy to discuss ways that we can help promote your game via our social media platforms - just get in touch for details and pricing.
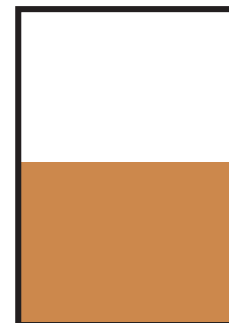
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