



Become the modern day equivalent of Constable, Picasso or Da Vinci with Art Alive - the first art package ever produced for the Megadrive!

You are given the digital equivalent of a blank canvas, along with the necessary binary paints and crayons necessary to create a masterpiece. Use your artistic prowess to build up exquisite backdrops and then overlay fine sprites - you can even animate them with Art Alive's comprehensive animation options. Hurrah!

Just think, your "friends" mocked and pointed wickedly at your sad scribblings whenever you tried to draw. Now you can get even with this fine art package. Art Alive: it's art made easier - or is it?



▲ *Andy Warhol would be proud.*

Select the colours you want to use (known as the palette) for your picture, along with the beginning background colour. Only 16 of the Megadrive's 512 colors can be used at one time, but different palettes are available.

The main drawing tools. Lines, boxes, ellipses, erasers and fill options are available. There's even an "airbrush" feature that digitally duplicates the real thing!

The outline option increases the thickness of the lines used in making up your ellipses, lines or whatever. Simple.

This meter is controlled with the C button on the control pad and adjusts the speed of the Art Alive cursor.

These special tools control the sprites, animation and text facilities contained in Art Alive. Read more about these exciting features further on in the review.



▲ *Exciting creations like these are easy... ish.*

## COMMENT



RICH

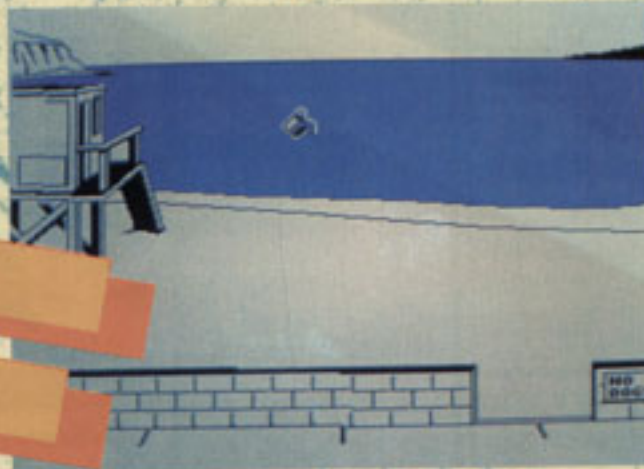
When Jaz told me about an art package coming out for the Megadrive, I could have sworn that his chin was spinning at many revolutions per minute. What is the point of producing such a package when you can't save your efforts for posterity? I thought maybe a battery back-up could solve some of the problems, but Art Alive hasn't got one - it expects you to record your picture onto videotape! This would be bearable if the package itself was of a high quality, but Art Alive is frankly a bungling shambles of an effort. Using only 16 of the Megadrive's 512 colours at once is a sad state of affairs, and each of the tools are so unwieldy that actually creating anything fairly decent is impossible (as you can see from my pic!). The tools themselves are also primitive to say the least - drawing anything more complex than lines, boxes and ellipses is a long and boring process. I'm not a complete ignoramus in the art department (I actually create a lot of the review logos used in this very mag with a PC art package), and I'm sure that even an experienced artist would sneer at this pathetic package. If you're at all into art, I'd suggest shelling out your thirty English pounds on some decent paints and venting your creative urges in the more traditional manner.



▲ *Artistic? Autistic?*



# ART ALIVE



▲ Using the thrilling fill command.



▲ Stipple the sea.

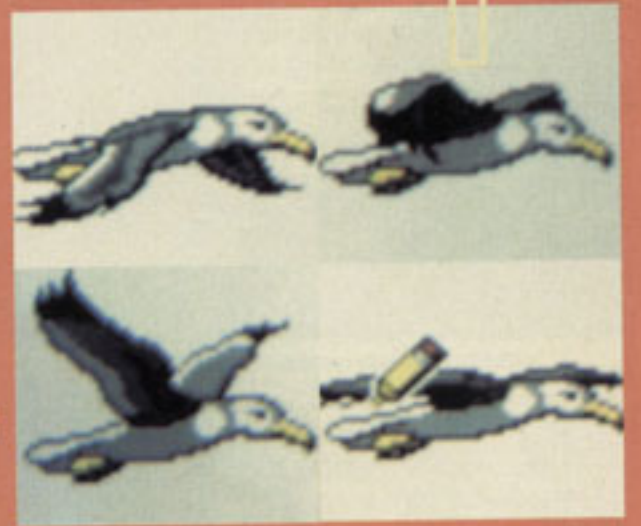
## TEXTUALLY EXCITING



You can even add text captions to your original Art Alive masterpiece. Simply choose a colour for your text and a position and click on the relevant icon. Instant captions are yours for the taking! Unfortunately, only one font has been included and the size of the text cannot be altered - doh!

## SUSPENDED ANIMATION

Art Alive enables you to create your own sprites, animate them, and even let them wander across your chosen backdrop. You can create your own sprites, or use one of the mega presets in memory! Just imagine, you could draw a picture of your house and have Sonic the Hedgehog popping over for dinner (??), or something. The only limit, apparently, is your imagination.



## PRE-DRAWN THINGS

If you're having difficulty drawing anything (which is very understandable with this art package), you'll doubtlessly be heartened to hear of the vast range of pre-drawn backdrops and sprites contained in the package. The backgrounds provided range from haunted houses to seaside scenes. The sprites you get include the infamous Sonic the Hedgehog along with that funky twosome, Toejam and Earl. Other delights include surfers and roller-skating babes!





# Art GALLERY

Clearly showing inspiration from the Basildon School of Infantilism, Jazza's piece elicits feelings of shambling naivete while at the same time explores the rich hinterlands of the child-like soul within us all.



TROY BENDER

Throwing rigorous art school traditions to the wind such as perspective, relative proportion and realism, Richard's study of a bygone hero reflects upon his condition both dead and alive.

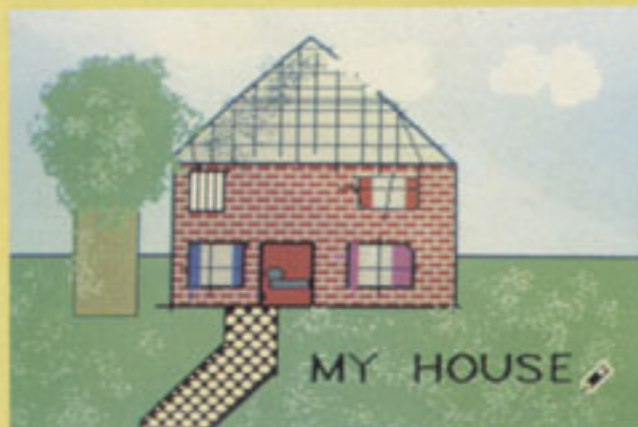


STEVE MCQUEEN

In an echo of his real-life struggles, Gary's work lays bare the dark conflict of his inner-soul as humour, the ability to defend himself and his strong feelings of maternal protectiveness battle for supremacy.



Taking his sphere of influence from the Crewe Photo-Realists, Radion's incredibly accurate study of his home looks straightforward. Yet delve deeper and the sinister aspects of his personality are laid bare for all to see.



MY HOUSE



▲ Sonic with a happy mask chases a girlie.



▲ And lo! The Sea turned red.

## COMMENT



While Art Alive is certainly a noble attempt at trying out something diverse and different on console, it's actually a completely pointless program. For a start you can't store your pictures on cartridge (a very stupid oversight indeed) and storing them on video is irritatingly tricky to set up and ultimately a waste of time - because the art program itself is complete rubbish.

### JULIAN

It lacks flexibility: the palette of 16 colours at once out of a possible 256 is pathetic, the on-screen tools are poor, the animation features are extremely limited and are a chore to use and generally the whole program is very fiddly and difficult to work with. The cursor is so large you can't judge where a line starts and its movement is awful - there's no inertia at all, meaning that it always moves in straight lines and drawing curves is next to impossible. The choice of brushes is dreadful, the spray can option useless and to cap it all, the program itself is really slow. To be honest, Art Alive is a waste of money. If you want to make computer pictures, get a computer and use your console to play games on - after all, that's exactly what it's designed for.

## NO RATINGS? WHY?

Owing to the fact that Art Alive is not a game, we thought it would be grossly unfair to give it the usual MEAN MACHINES ratings, which were specifically created for the purpose of evaluating games. So, to discover what we really think of Art Alive, you're going to have to rely on the reviewers' comments alone.