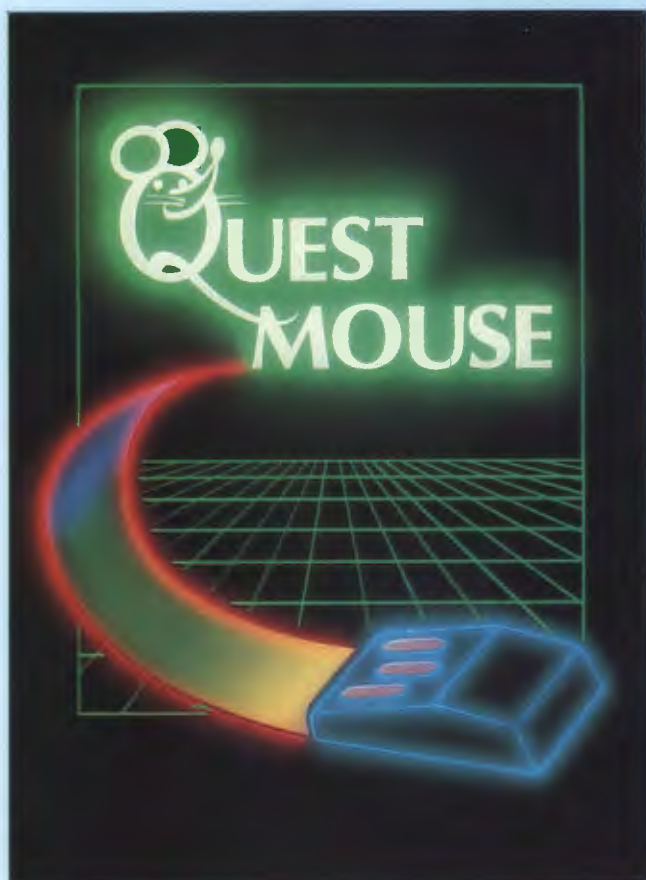




WATFORD QUEST MOUSE



Quest Paint Software

The very latest Pal-PROM technology has been used to squeeze Quest Paint into a 32K ROM. Use of the Pal-PROM has enabled Watford to make this occupy just one 16K area on the BBC Micro; being compatible with the BBC B, the B+, and the Master 128, it will work with Shadow RAM and Sideways RAM. If these are fitted to your machine, then additional facilities can be used; if you own a BBC B with Shadow RAM and Sideways RAM, then you can access all the facilities as if the software were running on a Master 128.

Unlike AMX's Super Art, Quest Paint leaves you the entire screen free to draw on. Super Art surrounds the screen on three sides with icons and message boxes, whereas Quest Paint has two menu displays; one at the top of the screen, and the other at the bottom both of which can disappear when they are not in use, or when they are in the way of the drawing area.

The command menu is displayed in the 80 column, Mode 0 using a split screen method allowing more commands to be put on the screen, thus making commands easily accessible without going through the rigmarole of having to call up half a dozen icons and windows before you actually get anywhere (as is the case with "Mac Paint").

The Quest Begins

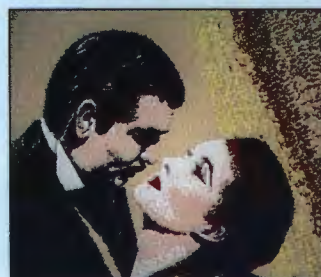
Central to the package is the Mouse; a low profile, high quality RUBBER BALLED device. It comes in a fetching two-tone grey with a strong, but reasonably thin length of cable ending in a substantial edge connector for the User Port.

The Mouse is very comfortable to use, even after long periods of time; it rides on just about any flat surface with ease.

The Quest Mouse has three buttons, its "chunky" feel facilitates an easy handling posture for everybody ranging from young children to the older, more sedate BBC user. The button contacts are sealed units, making them as waterproof as is possible under the circumstances.

The Quest Mouse's tough construction makes it an ideal candidate for the classroom, as does its large keys and comfortable moulded shape for small hands; one feature is that the cable ending in the User Port connector is further strengthened by a locking ramp, making it difficult to maliciously, or otherwise, yank the cable out of the connector.

The Quest Mouse is fully compatible with the AMX, Wigmore, and Nidd Valley mice. It is also fully compatible with AMX Pagemaker, Super Art, the MAX desktop, Extra Extra as well as Wigmore Artist and both NovaCad and TechnoCad.



The bottom menu is called the "Palette Menu" and can be called up in much the same way as the command menu — by putting the pointer in the lower quarter of the screen and "clicking" it on. The palette menu is displayed in the same 4 colour mode used to draw with, and depending on your hardware configuration, you can have either both menus on at the same time, or just one.

If you have Quest compatible sideways RAM fitted then you can have both menus on at the same time. If you don't have this facility, then once a menu is called up, the other will disappear. Whilst having both menus on at the same time isn't an absolute necessity, it is often nice to have both just for convenience — resulting in the peculiar phenomenon associated only with Quest Paint, of painting from the middle outwards!

Drawing with a Paintbox

Quest Paint is primarily a Mode 1 based drawing package, and you have thousands of shades from four basic colours to exercise your creative talents. These colours can be shuffled about so that you can have any colours you like, as well as having fifty shades from your selected colours using a special process called "dithering".

Dithering is a process by which each alternate dot on the screen is replaced by another colour to give a subtle shade change; for instance, if you dithered between red and yellow, you would eventually end up with orange.

Brush Strokes

One important feature of Quest Paint is its ability to modify its own brushes. Any artist will tell you of the importance of using the right kind of brush in a picture, and Quest Paint is no exception — even if your "canvas" does happen to be a glass screen!

Quest Paints many brushes are divided into two different types; there is the solid type, and then there is the Airbrush. Airbrushing is a technique whereby "ink" is lightly "splattered" over a small area on the screen. Airbrushing enables the artist to set up very fine shading and shadowing effects; they can be used to enhance certain aspects of a drawing, and can also be used to add more effective shades and shadows if you are dealing with digitised pictures, or highly detailed illustrations.

Airbrushing is popular with graphic artists, but computers can take the idea even further. With Quest Paint, the user can airbrush in all colours (including dithers) as well as have full access to the "cycle" option.

Quest Paint has a lot of facilities to offer, but the "Digitise" option is probably one of the most exciting. This option provides an integrated real time link to the Watford Electronics Video Digitiser enabling the user to access pictures from a video camera in a format suitable for direct editing from within Quest Paint.

Finishing Touches

Quest Paint is probably the best art package there is for the BBC micro, indeed any 8 bit micro; the Mouse is sensitive and well crafted, the software is chock full of facilities that you will find useful, easy to access and easy to draw with.

Not only is Quest Paint an original piece of programming, it is friendly and well endowed with many useful facilities. "I would comfortably say that it is easier to draw good pictures with Quest Paint than it is with more expensive "professional" art packages for the Atari ST and Commodore Amiga. A recommended buy if you are looking for the best in BBC micro based art packages."

(A & B COMPUTING, JULY 1987)

Prices:

Quest Mouse and Quest Paint £59.00

Quest Mouse£29.00

Quest Paint£34.00

Quest Font Disc £12.00

Mouse Mats£ 5.00

(All prices are exclusive of VAT)



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