

WHAT HORRORS LURK INSIDE THE ZEN ROOM...?



The 'Oh so wacky' CRL team, left to right: Ian Ellery (Creative Director of The Zen Room), Lesley Marnford (Public Relations Person for Crossweiler Publicity Limited), Jon Law (graphics person), Mike Hodges (Assistant Creative Director), Jay Derret (programmer — *Tubular Bells*) and Jeff Lee (programmer — "*Cops and Robbers*")



executed. Expect to see a review around July.

COPS AND ROBBERS

Cops and Robbers is only the working title of this game, and it has nothing to do with Atlantis' Tacky Game of the Year. The programmer of Spectrum *Rocky Horror Show*, Jeff Lee, is designing the graphics and writing the game which casts you in the role of a burglar and has you robbing a multitude of different houses, ranging from derelict and dilapidated to semi-detached, detached and eventually the Police Commissioner's mansion — the ultimate burglary!

A lengthy street scrolls left and

right and any of the buildings can be entered at any time. The view then changes to that of the room you are about to burgle. Obviously the more expensive residences contain richer 'pickings', but they are protected by advanced security systems. So, in order to bypass these successfully, you need better equipment and this is

Gary Penn finds out . . .

Computer Rentals Limited — better known as CRL — was founded by ex-teenage whizzkid, Clement Chambers, now Managing Director. They aren't exactly the most renowned of software houses and certainly haven't released anything outstanding on the 64 as yet. Their list of releases is quite lengthy, although most of them are rather obscure. I mean, do you remember *Glug Glug* (simple, underwater arcade action), *Derby Day*, *Test Match Cricket*, *Tristram and Isolde* (a German arcade adventure set in a castle in which a fat Bavarian hero called Tristram has to rescue his equally porky beloved, Isolde), *Whirlybird* (a helicopter shoot em up), *Show-jumping*, *Handicap Golf*, *Omega Run* (a simple 3D shoot em up based very loosely on Star Wars) or *Highway Code*?

No? How about some of their more recent offerings, such as *Glider Pilot* (flight simulation in a glider), *Journey* (an Australian scrolling arcade adventure), *The Rocky Horror Show* (arcade game based on the musical film of the same name), *Blade Runner* (arcade game based on the music of the film of the same name), *Space Doubt* (zany and wacky arcade action in space, not based on the music of a film of the same name), *Causes of Chaos* (a multiplayer adventure game), *Bored of the Rings* (a text adventure lampoon of Tolkien's classic novel), *Pilgrim* (a quilled adventure) or *The Very Big*

Cave Adventure (a spoof of *Colossal Caves* written by St Brides, marketed by CRL and reviewed this issue).

Ah, yes, that CRL. The CRL who have just started their own budget label, **Alpha/Omega**, whose first two releases are reviewed in this issue. The CRL who recently opened up **The Zen Room**. The Zen Room? Ian Ellery, CRL's resident artist and the Creative Director of The Zen Room, describes it as 'an expansion of CRL, a sort of creative and programming think tank. The programmers have their own working area, but they all contribute to each other's projects.' So, as you can see, it's basically a programmer's asylum. Lock up your 'nova-load' of programmers (well, what else do you call a group of programmers?) for several weeks, give them the occasional 'byte' (groan) to 'nibble' (groan again), something to drink and smoke, and some loud music to keep them quiet, until finally they deliver the goods. Here's what the deranged inhabitants of The Zen Room are up to at the moment, ie a look at some of CRL's up and coming releases . . .

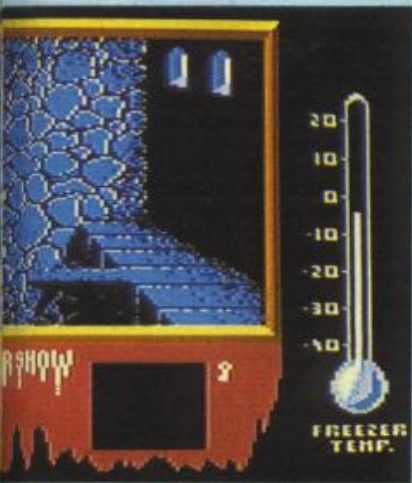
CYBORG

Ian Foster, who previously wrote the 64 version of *Blade Runner*, is currently working on *Cyborg* in conjunction with Andy 'android' Stoddart of *Rocky Horror Show* fame (no, he didn't star in the film,



shows one of the corridors that scroll left and right. Some doors are locked and if this is the case then the corridor beyond cannot be seen. Neat, eh? Below this, in glorious bas-relief, there is the control panel of the player/cyborg interface — a small computer mounted on your right arm from which various icon driven commands can be

right and any of the buildings can be entered at any time. The view then changes to that of the room you are about to burgle. Obviously the more expensive residences contain richer 'pickings', but they are protected by advanced security systems. So, in order to bypass these successfully, you need better equipment and this is



obtained by pawning your ill gotten gains. 'Cops and Robbers' is due for an August release.

ROCKY HORROR SHOW 128

Andy Stoddart and Jon Law are taking advantage of the 128's extra memory and are tarting up the original game. The music is the same as before, but there are more locations, better graphics (courtesy of Jon) and a few extra problems to overcome. For example . . .

In the centre of the room there is a retracting bridge of stone which must be crossed, but the room itself is in near total darkness . . . Until lightning strikes enabling you to see roughly where to cross. Those of you with a 128 will be able to see the enhanced *Rocky Horror Show* this month.

TAU CETI

This classic game is the brainchild of Pete Cooke and only previously

appeared on the Spectrum and Amstrad. But, thanks to freelance programmer John Twiddy, and of course CRL, it will soon be released on the 64.

The small desert planet of Tau Ceti III, the third in the nearby Tau Ceti system, was colonised by man in the mid 22nd century. All went well for 90 years, in which time over thirty huge cities were built. But then a mysterious plague arrived and wiped out a majority of the population. The few survivors evacuated the pox ridden planet and vowed never to return.

It was only several years later when a cure was found that the Federation decided to recolonise the Tau Ceti system. But all was not well; the automatic defence system — which previously protected Tau Ceti III from alien invasion — malfunctioned due to lack of maintenance over the years. The robots could no longer distinguish between friend or foe and subsequently obliterated several groups of colonists who dared to set foot on the planet. Oh dear.

Things were looking pretty dire. Until an unknown pilot volunteered to rid Tau Ceti III of all hostile lifeforms. Naturally the Federation was somewhat sceptical and amused by such a ludicrous suggestion; why should one man succeed where so many had failed?

However, purely out of desperation, they gave the stranger the necessary equipment and information — an armed ground skimmer and maps of the planet — to attempt the monumental task. The robots can only be stopped by shutting down the fusion reactor that powers them, and this is done by collecting the pieces of cooling rod scattered about the planet, reassembling them and inserting them into the reactor core.

The ground skimmer is a highly

manoeuvrable craft with many different weapons and functions to hand, such as high powered lasers, missiles, anti-missile missiles, flares, short and long range scanners and infra-red viewing facilities for when night falls.

One of the most impressive features of *Tau Ceti* is the 3D effect, the likes of which has never been seen on the 64 before. The window to the left of the screen shows a view of the planet; all structures and objects move realistically in and out of the screen, and the shading is relative to the position of the sun and changes accordingly. *Tau Ceti* should be released by the time you read this.

ATTACK ON CENTRALIS

This is effectively the follow up to *Tau Ceti* and work has only just begun on it. The action takes place in the far future, a century after the Tau Ceti disaster, and man has progressed quite significantly since . . . but unfortunately CRL wouldn't divulge any further. Actually, they did mention that they would be using more advanced 3D techniques than those in *Tau Ceti*, and that *Attack on Centralis* is to be released in September.

THE ZIEN ROOM



TUBULAR BELLS

From the author of *Space Doubt* — Jay Derret — and Steve Ganly, comes an alternative form of entertainment: *Tubular Bells*. It consists of a series of lines, or a single 'laser beam', bouncing around the screen to the sound of Mike Oldfield's *Tubular Bells*. The lines can be left to 'do their own thing', ie perform a random light show, or a joystick can be used to manipulate the lines to give you a show of your own; it all looks very pretty. Clever Music, who did the music for *The Rocky Horror Show* and *Space Doubt*, are providing the sound track — an interpretation of the whole of the *Tubular Bells* album. *Tubular Bells* is actually being released under CRL's newly formed Nu-Wave label and should be available now.

