

reviews: **The Bottom Shelf**

by Robert C. Lewis

What is The Bottom Shelf? It's where the older Mac games are usually found at your local software store. The games reviewed in this section have been released for some time now but are still selling, so you should get the Inside (Mac Games) Scoop.

[3 in Three \(12/91\)](#)

It's been a long day. You have spent the last 10 hours working over a long monotonous spreadsheet. As you proof the fruits of your labor, you notice an extra 3 in a cell that does not belong. Naturally you select that cell and proceed to delete that extra 3. Precisely at the same time as you hit the delete key there is a power surge. As we all know, power surges can have a strange effect on a computer. The surge protector for your machine must have come from the five and dime store. Thoughts of killing your cheap boss comes to mind as the computer begins to go through some very strange paces.

As you hit the delete key the three begins to blink in and out of the spreadsheet. The blinking gets faster and faster as if your machine is saying "why me?" Then, there is a burst of light and the three bounces from one cell to another only to then crash through the spreadsheet leaving a gaping hole on the screen. The three is now falling aimlessly through the bowels of your PC. It falls past the numbers, past the vowels, past the consonants, the explicatives until it hits bottom. Talk about giving new meaning to the word delete! It looks like that power surge did a lot more to the three than just remove it from the spreadsheet.

The three looks around and has no idea of where it has been routed to in the mainframe. The three cries out where am I? A mysterious eye appears out of no where and stares at the three. The three demands to be returned to numbers level of the machine. Instead the three is dropped to a lower level and deposited on a set of lifts that it will have to figure out how to work in order to hopefully find it's way home. Little does our little three know what the mainframe has in store for it. Welcome to the world of 3 in Three by Inline Design.

3 in Three is a collection of brain teasers. It is up to you and our little friend, the three, to solve them. This is the only way the three will find it's way home. Although clues are supplied in the manual and in the game, the answers still do not come easy. Cliff Johnson has had a lot of practice designing this genre of games. First, he wrote The Fool's Errand

(no longer available) which took me over a year to solve even with the hint book. Then he did an unrelated follow up called *At The Carnival* (also not available) which I still have not completely solved to this day!

3 in Three consists of 80 new brainteasers that can be accessed in any order from the menus. Each of these puzzles will lead you to other more challenging brainteasers. Some of these puzzles have extra brainteasers buried within. As you solve each brainteasers more of the puzzles become available to play.

The graphics are sharp and the game fully utilizes the Mac's interface. *3 in Three* also incorporates the most amount of animated action since *The Fool's Errand*. The absence of sound in *The Fool's Errand* is fully made up for in *3 in Three*. *3 in Three* was written more in the style of the *Fool's Errand* than *At the Carnival*. Instead of being just a collection of puzzles, *3 in Three* has a Beginning (prologue), middle (the puzzles), and end (finale). I remember the great satisfaction I got when I solved *The Fool's Errand* and got to view the finale to the game. It may take me a year to work through *3 in Three*, but I am determine to view the finale that has been written for it someday (heavy sigh). Somehow working with spreadsheets will never be the same.

[Glider 4.0 \(12/91\)](#)

I think in one way or another we have all tinkered with paper airplanes. Paper airplanes have an almost mystical property about them because they become an extension of our desire to fly like a bird. As a teacher, there has been many a time where I had to take such devices from some of my little darlings during class (sigh!).

One of my best memories was when a friend and I went to the top of the Empire State building and tossed such airplanes from there. We spent an entire afternoon just doing that! It was almost hypnotic watching the paper airplane catch the rising hot air and glide all around the skies of Manhattan! Although I did not think it possible, Casady and Greene, Inc. has captured the delight of paper airplane flying in the form of *Glider 4.0*.

The object of the game is to fly your glider through a mysterious mansion without crashing. To give your glider a lift are heat vents in the floor and lit candles. Just don't confuse your paper glider with a moth or you are liable to burn up if you get too close to the flame. If you have ever played any other games produced by Casady and Greene, then you know how they love to throw different types of obstacles in your path. Some of these include enemy copters, balloons, vents that blow down, electric wall sockets, and even a paper shredder. Since I have not made it through all 60 rooms yet there is no telling what lurks behind the next door!

Of course, *Glider* is not without heart. There are also other devices you can capture that can help you survive your flight of fancy. If you fly into a battery capture it. This will energize your glider into higher speeds for short periods of time. Other items include rubber bands to shoot down the balloons and enemy copters, clocks for bonus points, additional gliders to extend your life and many other surprises.

This is one game you will not get through fast. Timing is critical as you try to maneuver from one room to the next. My Gravis MouseStick works great with this game. I was able to eliminate the need of the keyboard by programming the function keys into the three buttons on the MouseStick.

If you do manage to get through all the rooms and want more, boot up the room editor and

make your own house. The room editor is pretty easy to use and is well explained in the manual. Be careful about going to this application too soon or you may learn things you may not want to know about yet.

This is Casady and Greene fifth entry into the Mac game library and as usual the graphics are great. There is also some great background animation which helps to enhance the atmosphere of the eerie mansion. John Calhoun really did a great job with this game. Just don't get too lost in the clouds or your feet may never touch the floor again!

[Tesserae \(5/91\)](#)

There used to be a game called Hi-Q. The object of the game was to jump a collection of pegs over each other in such a way so that you wind up with only one peg left. If you were really good your final peg would end up in the middle of the board. Inline Design has created a very addicting variation of this game with the release of Tesserae. Like Hi-Q, Tesserae is a single player strategy game that uses color tiles instead of pegs. On B&W machines you work with different patterns that are embedded on each tile.

The object of the game is to flip one tile over another until you are down to one tile. Each space on the game board can hold up to three different tiles. The tiles can be divided into three groups. Each group consist of three colors (or patterns). The first group is the primary colors. If two different tiles occupy the same space, they then form a secondary color (or pattern). Three different tiles on the same space produces the most difficult and hardest to remove tertiary group.

Tesserae allows you to set the type of game and difficulty level you wish to play at. Type of game allows you to choose from nine different mosaics. Each mosaic has a major effect on how you play the game. There is also a tournament style where you play each mosaic in order. The three levels of difficulty control the ratio of primary to secondary tiles. On level one the ratio is one secondary for every three primary. The intermediate level has a one to one ratio. Inline design considers this level to be the "real" game because it brings out the true strategy and complexity of Tesserae.

Level three is for the true experts and those who like to inflict pain onto themselves. First there are three secondaries for every five primaries. Then throw in a miscellaneous number of tertiary tiles and you have a level that is a true killer. Although game play can be murder, learning how to play is far less painful. All information on how to play Tesserae is on the disk and very well done. The online help uses more than just the written word. The use of animation is added to help you better visualize how the different move work. This is very appropriate since Tesserae is such a visual game.

As far as I know Tesserae is System 7.0 friendly. It will work on a Mac Plus and up. Tesserae has no form of copy protection at all and runs well under MultiFinder. The graphics are very sharp whether you run it on a B&W or color Mac. Inline Design did a very fine job with their third entry into the Mac game library. Just don't get too lost in the game or you may be the one that will flip.