he Macworld Expo (and CES) Report

by Tuncer Deniz

This year's MACWORLD Expo San Francisco and Las Vegas Consumer Electronic Show (CES) were held in the same week, January 5th through the 9th, which presented a unique opportunity to kill two shows with one stone. Yeah, I know what you're thinking — poor sap. First San Francisco then Vegas, seesh! All guilt aside, here's what's on the plate for Mac games in '94.

So What's New?

Bungie Software, known for their popular texture mapping game called Pathways Into Darkness showed their upcoming game, currently code-named Marathon. Marathon is a science fiction action-adventure game   and will have more of an arcade feel than Pathways Into Darkness. In the game, you are sent on a mission to investigate the disappearance of colonists living on a hollowed-out asteroid near the planet Pluto. Once you get there, you realize the colonists were destroyed by alien monsters and now you it's your job to get rid of all the monsters before they have you for lunch. Mmmm, good. The new game features a faster graphics engine than Pathways Into Darkness and features better graphics, more intelligent monsters, and of course, more weapons. This exciting game from Bungie Software will be available late Spring for the Mac as well as the new PowerMacs.

isten up V for Victory fans! If you thought this series was over when Atomic Games split with Three-Sixty, you're in for a surprise. The bad boys at Atomic are working on Operation Crusader, which will be similar to their V For Victory series, but with a few notable improvements. They include: improved graphics, a new command toolbar for ease of play, additional leaders, and more. An exciting and way cool feature will be the addition of Play-By-E-Mail. You'll be able to save turns to disk and send them to an opponent. This not only includes Mac vs. Mac players of Crusaders, but also Mac vs. DOS players. You'll finally be able to beat your DOS loving friends at something! Look for Crusader in early March.

Baseball lovers will finally have something to be happy about when Design Depot releases Dynasty League Baseball for the Mac in April.   Design Depot claims that this strategic baseball simulation will be the most detailed on the market for any computer. The game is a direct translation of the Dynasty League Baseball Board Game.   The play results are radio style play-by-play text with accompanying sound broadcast from some of the games top broadcasters. Also featured will be stadium graphics in the form of scanned photographs.

Leviathan Media plans on making a big comeback in 1994 with two games, Zone and Cyberfist. Zone is being touted as the first photo realistically, 3D rendered, networkable, action/strategy game for the Mac. In the game, you control of one of ten inter-galactic species as they fight in the arena of combat for galactic domination.   Combining high-performance 3D rendered graphics for fast arcade play, and a build your empire type strategy element, Zone promises to be one of the most intriguing games of 1994.

Leviathan Media's other title, Cyberfist, is an action fighting game similar to the popular Mortal Combat. Fifteen warriors await your control to enter the battle of the millenia as you clash in bloody hand to hand combat. Using highly detailed rendered graphics and 16 bit sound, Cyberfist has to be seen to be believed.

D-ROMs, CD-ROMs, And Even More CD-ROMs

At the Maxis booth, Luminaria was displaying Wrath of the Gods, a graphic adventure based on the Greek myths. As the hero in this photo-realistic CD-ROM, your objective is to regain your kingdom by fighting monsters, battling the Chimaera, rescuing your mother from the evil King Minos, and flying on the back of Pegasus. In addition to the sixty colorful live-action characters, extensive geography, and intuitive interface, the game features a unique on-line hint system that trades you hints for points off your score. Wrath of the Gods is being developed by Luminaria (415/821-2055), is expected to be released in February, and is being published by the good folks at Maxis.

Now that The 7th Guest has been released for the Mac, you'll be happy to learn that The 11th Hour, the sequel to the best-selling CD-ROM entertainment product ever, is in development for the Macintosh. Scheduled for release this summer (yea, right), this two-CD game features over sixty minutes of live-action video, professional actors, movie-like plot twists, and stunning special effects. In the game, you are once again compelled to return to the mad mansion of an evil toymaker, this time to decipher the whereabouts of missing reporter Robin Morales.

ReadySoft is also jumping on the CD-ROM band-wagon with Dragon's Lair on CD-ROM, to be released in March. The game is a fantasy adventure where you become a valiant knight on a quest to rescue a fair princess from an evil dragon. You'll be able to fight your way through the castle of a dark wizard who has enchanted it with treacherous monsters and obstacles. In the caverns below the castle, your adventure continues until you reach the Dragon's Lair.

Hyperbole Studios, whose previous release included The Madness of Roland, will be unleashing Quantum Gate on CD-ROM in June. The CD-ROM features VirtualCinema™, a 3-D navigable environment, to create the familiar look and pace of traditional movies. The game takes place in 2057 and Earth has only five years to live because of terrifying pollution. You star in the role of Drew Griffin, a medical student stationed on Planet AJ3905, a mining post with a mineral that can reverse Earth's environmental death. Your job is to save Earth from.....well, you know the rest.

Sequels

Prince of Persia fans got their first look at the long-awaited and much-anticipated Prince of Persia 2, The Shadow and the Flame. The sequel once again pits you   against the evil Jaffar as you battle through 15 treacherous levels, encountering serpents, spikes, magic spells, quicksand, skeletal swordsmen, and other bad guys. Due in stores this Spring, Prince of Persia 2 will be another must have! By the way, there's a cool, one-level demo on the Inside Mac Games CD-ROM, so check it out if get the CD.

Amtex officially announced that it would be releasing Royal Flush, the second offering in the Amtex "Pinball Classics Collection" (the first was Eight Ball Deluxe) in April of 1994. Royal Flush is based on the 1977 arcade release from manufacturer D. Gottlieb & Company. The game takes you back to the good old days of electromechanical pinball with no bells or whistles, just plain old-fashioned pinball. The fast-paced action includes shooting the Joker, King, and Queen to acquire the perfect poker hand.

Well, not all the news is good news. It never is, is it? Anyway, if you've been waiting the last 6 months for Strategic Conquest 4.0 from Delta Tao you'll have to wait at least 6 more months for the release. If it is ever released, the game will include a new fractal world generation system (hmm, sounds complicated) and a new handicapping system. Players will also be able to set individual units on auto-play, and set the size of the world. Sounds great, now if they'd only release it...

More In '94

Other exciting titles to look for in 1994 include Western Trailer and Viper from CyberFlix. The former is a western adventure game (check out the demo on the IMG CD-ROM) and the latter will be based on the new Paramount television show by the same name.

Pangea Software, whose previous releases include Bloodsuckers and Firefall, is working on a cool new Nintendo-style game entitled Mighty Mike with Automatic Recoil.   As Mighty Mike, the most powerful action figure money can buy, your goal is to rescue Fuzzy Bunnies who have somehow gone loose in a Toy store. Look for Mighty Mike in the spring.

Look for a few Dynamix titles in 1994 including Sid & Al's Incredible Toons, essentially a wacked out version of The Incredible Machine, and a modernized version of Lode Runner which will include network mode for two player competition, and a full level editor just like in the original Lode Runner.

The Really, Really Good News!

And to wrap it up, there's exciting news from Origin Systems, makers of the award winning Ultima and Commander series of games. According to inside sources, Origin will be re-entering the Macintosh market in late 1994 after years of absence with Super Wing Commander for the Macintosh. However, sources were also quick to point out that at this time there's a 50-50 chance that Super Wing Commander may or may not make it to the Mac, so keep your fingers crossed.

Based on the 3D0 version of Super Wing Commander, this cinematic space-age combat simulator takes you and your wingmen into battle against the tiger-like Kilrathi empire. The plot evolves through a cinematic storyline through 27 thrilling missions. Accompanying the game is an orchestral CD-soundtrack and full digitized speech so you'll feel like you've been dropped right into the middle of a movie.