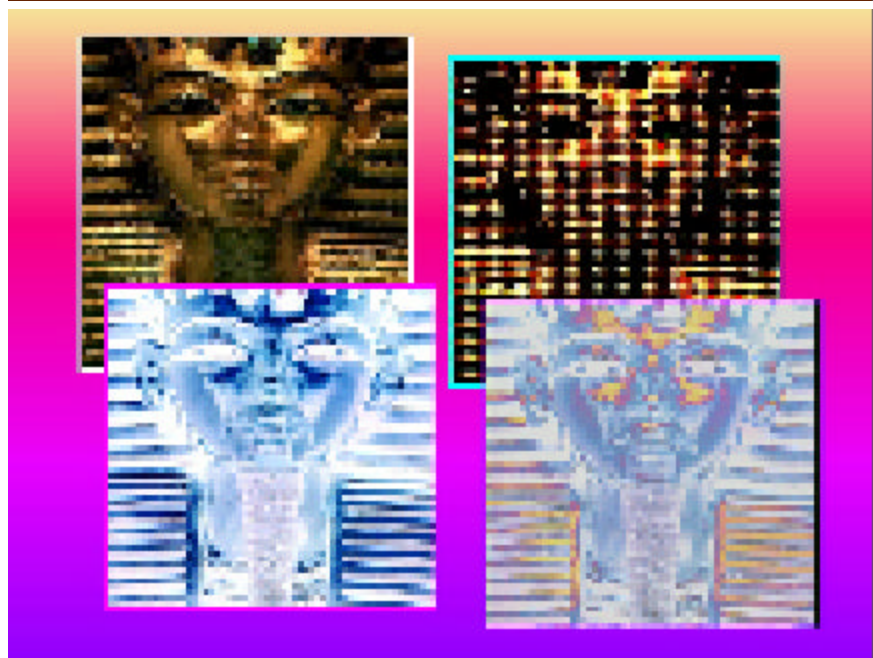
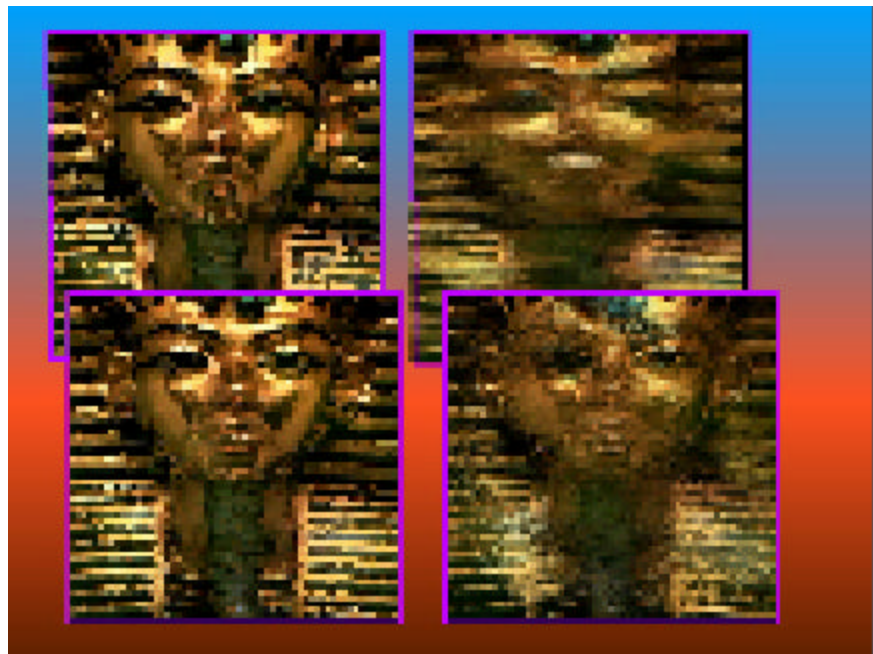


tions and color depths, GRASP/GL and DL animation frames (MS-DOS); SGI RGB, WaveFront, and Softimage (Silicon Graphics); MPEG, X-Windows, Abekas 960, Sun Raster, and even Commodore-64 Koala pad output files (if you're old enough to remember this format).

How about vastly improved font handling? The only attribute missing from this reworked option is the inability to import fonts from other than the native font directory. Otherwise, there is more than the usual number of options here. One of my favorites is the ability to import and export large blocks of text that you may have saved out in ASCII from your word processor. As an aid in the production of quality text slides and graphics, IFX2 has a special toggle that allows you to anti-alias the imported fonts, necessary in the case of jaggy bitmaps, though it's advisable to use the vector type fonts whenever possible. Everything is available at a glance in IFX2's "text generator" requester: Bold, Italic, Underline, Remapping the font colors, adding an "Extra Border", Anti-aliasing, and justification. In addition, IFX2 has a work area in this same space that allows you to add multiple lines of text that you can store on screen, accessing each as your needs dictate. This becomes important in text slides, because often it is the designer's need to use different fonts on interweaved lines of text. Any effect or texture or distortion that can be applied to the graphic can be applied to the text brush as well, giving you all sorts of unique looks.

**Interactive Previews...
the industry standard revisited on
the Amiga**

Applying an IFX2 Effect, Hook, or Distort to a graphic can take a comparatively long time, especially when it represents a complicated list of options. IFX2's competition makes you wait until the effect is applied before you can view the results and then you have to undo them if they aren't to your liking. With IFX2, when an alteration is about to be applied to either the whole image, a selected region, or even a grabbed brush (including a text brush) two associated postage stamp sized views pop up next to your choices. The top one represents the graphic selected before the effect, and the other a comparison after the effect. Often the top view can also be interactively manipulated as well, which causes the numeric sliders to move in turn. As you alter the parameters either interactively or with the associated sliders and choose "preview" (the second postage



**Figure 3 (top). Four IFX2 Distorts: Swirl, Wave, Punch, Polar Blur.
Figure 4 (bottom). Four ARexx examples: Disperse, halftone, Negative, and Solarize.**

stamp sized view), the alterations become visible, allowing you a full view of what will become the final image. This option alone will save you a mega amounts of time and frustration in the manipulation of your images. This feature emulates one found on high end image manipulation programs on other platforms, like Adobe PhotoShop on the Mac.

In IFX2, images are manipulated on a separate "preview" screen, different from their final rendering. Both the Preview screen and final renders may be targeted to standard Amiga, Amiga 1.3, DCTV,

OpalVision, EGS, and "Foreign" selections (the last represents other boards like the Retina). What's useful about this approach is that even the Preview screen can be set up in various Amiga modes, AGA modes, DCTV, OpalVision, "SuperAmiga" modes, or simply at the resolution of the WorkBench screen. Each situation can vary, depending upon the configuration of your system. As an OpalVision owner, I was excited to be able to select the Opal option and see the IFX2 menu superimpose itself over the 24bit OpalVision screen in Preview mode. As part of the process, selections for

ImageFX 2.0

by R. Shamms Mortier

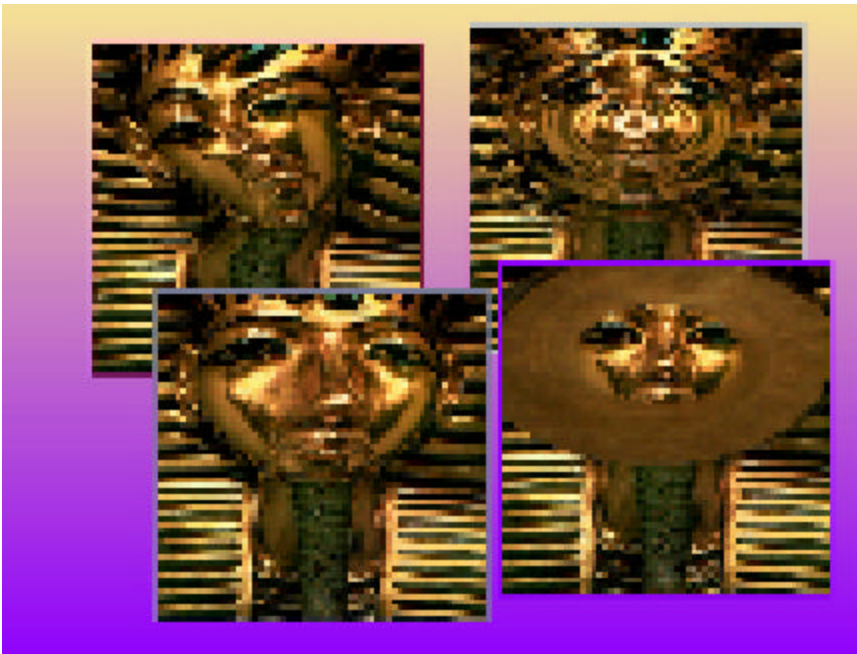


Figure 1. Four Painting Effects applied (L-R, T-B) in IFX2 to the Tut image: Brushstroke, Eye, Dot, Smoke.

ImageFX 2.0 is the most significant upgrade that any Amiga image processing program has gone through in years. Has this edition of ImageFX become king of the mountain, leaving its competition gasping for air on the dizzying heights? My answer is "yes", but read on and allow me to explain why.

The IFX interface

ImageFX 2.0 uses five separate modular screens: Scanner, Palette, Toolbox, Render, and Print) and as many graphic controls spread among these screens as any

professional or playful Amiga user could ever hope to encounter. There is no need to search for hidden esoteric buttons or bland verbal commands, as all of ImageFX identifiable graphic toggles and switches are clearly labeled as to what they do. There are also other little things in the interface that wind up being not inconsequential to professional users. A case in point is the way that IFX addresses the resizing of targeted graphics. Several options are included that are unique to this software alone, like its ability to change the targeted

structure from pixels to "ruled" units, a mathematical comparison of height/width increments. There are also size presets for various resolution applications, from a preset for the FireCracker and Super VGA options to all of the standard NTSC and PAL modes. When it comes to cropping, everything is set before you on an interactive graphics screen as opposed to a separate screen that has to be accessed. That, in fact, is the major advantage that IFX2 offers all around, a graphics display that can be accessed by simple and clear choices.

IFX2 Direct Hardware support

IFX2.0 supports all of the Amiga 24bit environments and than some, including all of the Amiga AGA modes. It has support for the Epson 300/600/800 Scanners and also the VLAB-YC. My tests were an Amiga 2000 (with OpalVision), a 3000T (in standard resolutions), and a 4000 (with AGA modes addressed). In all situations, IFX2 worked flawlessly. Not only does it render very fast to the OpalVision hardware, but you can even choose to have IFX come up with the full Opal screen in the preview mode as well. Every Opal owner is going to lust to add this software to their Opal kits. As an owner of a Primera Pro color printer, I am also happy to see Primera support added to IFX. To access the Pro version of the printer (300 x 600), you have to use the Pro driver that comes with the printer. DPS PAR (Professional Animation Recorder) users will be happy to learn that IFX can now convert images to that format. There is also support for PICT vector and JPEG (for the Macintosh user or Mac emulator owner); PIC (in all resolu-

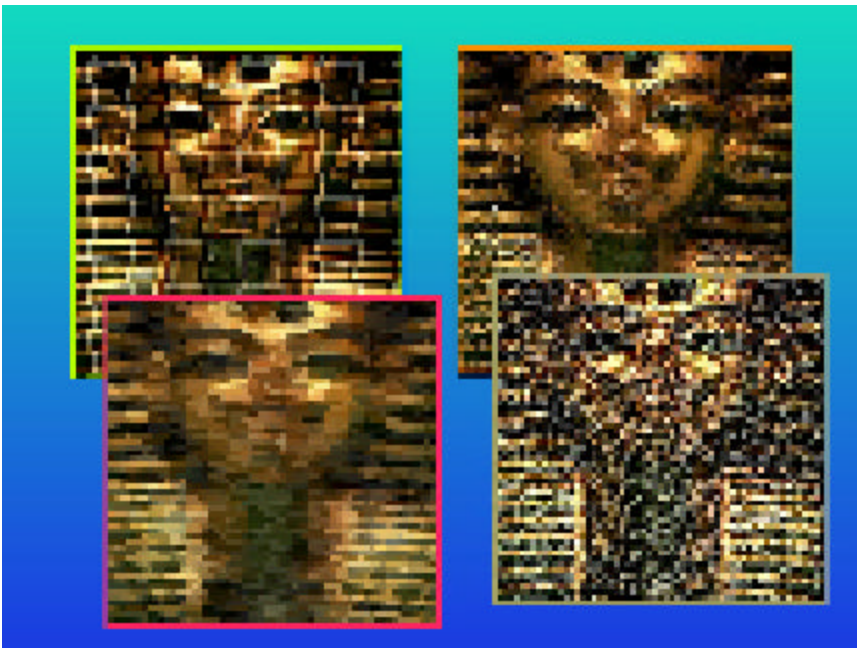


Figure 2. Four more Effects: Bricks, Crystallize, Straw, and Dragon Scales.