

Bill Budge

PINBALL CONSTRUCTION SET™



ELECTRONIC ARTS

The Three-Ball Stacker.

"Maybe the most complicated piece in the game. It makes for a neat madness, catching balls until there are three in there, then cutting them all loose at once. If I had left this piece out, I would have saved myself a lot of work."



The Bumper.

"There are six of these, which doesn't sound like a lot until you try them all and watch things go out of control."



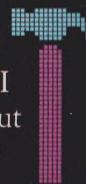
The Paintbrush.

"It makes drawing things easy. It also turned out to be a pretty good primer about how colors work on these machines."



The Hammer.

"Drives nails that you use to pull the board into different shapes. Originally, I tried a crowbar for this, but you could never make out what the thing was supposed to be."



Bill Budge is about to sit for the photo you see below. There are video games here and he's playing one to kill time. You'd think he'd be really good. He's okay.

Black alien ships pursue him. He dodges beams of light. And suddenly, the grown up kid genius—a guy

who changed what we could expect from our home computers, who would rather program than sleep or do anything else for that matter—gets annihilated by a blind side fireball.

"I got blasted." He says this very softly, philosophically even. Here is a man who understands what it feels like at the other end of the program.

What is a construction set? Why would you want one? Budge thinks about things like this.



After all, the world is a construction set of sorts. You grab this and you add that and you make stuff. In a sense, Budge is just taking this process to a certain point and passing it on. He's sculpting this beam of electrons, putting them through the arcane phases of machine language and then handing them to you in the more familiar forms of screwdrivers, hammers, and magnifying glasses.

Icons, he calls them. "They're symbols. Not just symbols for things in the world, but placeholders for the vast hunks of programming behind it all. They make the game accessible, make it *feel* like a construction set."

Move the flippers here. Put a bumper in the mouth of that corridor.

Then shoot a ball through and wonder. With each flicker of light, waves of Budge code flood this way and that. Logic gates traffic bits by the thousands. You don't see it. You don't want to see it. You don't have to see it.

Budge smiles. "In a way, I'm just saving you a lot of time. You can read the manual for a few minutes, go over to the parts box, and get started. Right away, it works. You're doing it.

"That's what makes this thing a toy."



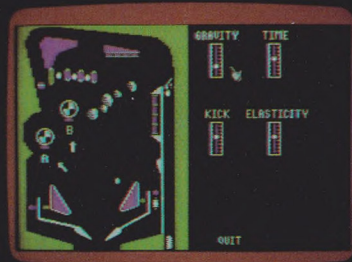
The Magnifying Glass.

"The whole game started here. There was nothing else. No pinball. Nothing. Just this thing that magnified parts of a video screen."



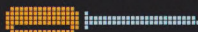
The World Functions.

"You can move these little rheostats and change the way the world works. That's something software can do. It's a way of getting control you don't otherwise have."



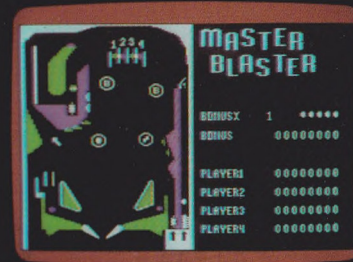
The Logic Diagram.

"This is like being underneath the board, looking up at the wiring. You want to change the scoring or the music, you get your screwdriver and pliers and you come down here."



Master Blaster.

"I sat down and built this in about half an hour. You could make a better one if you spent the time. Maybe."



Pinball Construction Set was designed, developed and programmed by Bill Budge.
Package design by Steinhilber, Deutsch and Gard. Creative direction & linernotes by Goodby, Berlin & Silverstein.
Photography by Larry Keenan. Produced by Dave Evans.

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Power. Pure, sheer and unadulterated. A nearly telepathic link between you and the machine. Here is the promise made good. Here is the reason why you bought a computer in the first place. It's been called the best program ever written for an 8-bit machine. Boot the disk and find out why.

If you love bumpers (so do we), litter the board with them. Pump up their point value. Impress your friends.

This is your hand inside the machine. It works through your joystick. It moves and changes things. It does everything but walk the dog.

Want to change the laws of physics? Be our guest. Liven up the ball. Customize gravity. Thumb your nose at Newton.

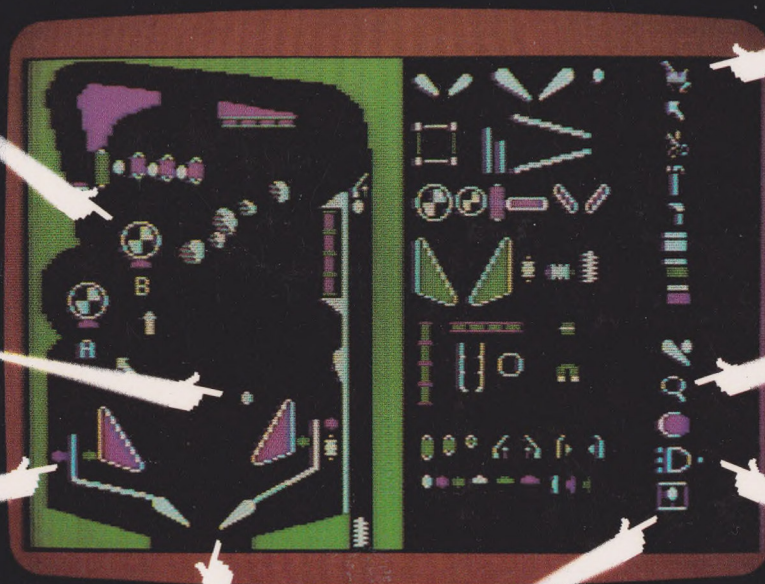
The magnifying glass lets you enlarge and alter every pixel on the screen. Wait till you see what the paintbrush does.

This alley's killing your score? Plug it up. Nothing says this game has to be difficult.

You've probably lost a lot of quarters wondering why there was only one pair of flippers. Well, there are a lot more where these came from. Help yourself.

There are five ready-made games on the disk. Use them for a quick pinball fix when you don't have time to make your own.

Here's where you can sneak into the logic flow and really shake things up. Change the scoring. Change the music. Make strange things happen.



ABOUT OUR COMPANY: We're an association of electronic artists who share a common goal. We want to fulfill the potential of personal computing. That's a tall order. But with enough imagination and enthusiasm we think there's a good chance for success. Our products, like this program, are evidence of our intent. If you'd like to get involved, please write us at: Electronic Arts, 2755 Campus Drive, San Mateo, CA 94403.