

Raw Image

Improve the Raw Image

There is good and bad news about the QX3 digital microscope, bad news first. Because of the lack of a substage condenser lens, many images look washed out. And now the good news - because they are digital images you can restore them. The pictures of a young louse alongside show how one can correct brightness, contrast and colour balance. Auto-adjust, available in many

image packages, can put the life back into your photos. The image-manipulation software contains some weird effects, including skulls and eyeballs you can drop into your pictures. You do not need a good image to start with, indeed you do not even need the microscope to make some interesting pictures. Kill the 'microscope not plugged in' message and carry on

creating. Some of my favourite examples are included, so that you can see how much better you could do.



One member of the development team (type credits on the play menu) not given to cheerfulness.

Easter Eggs

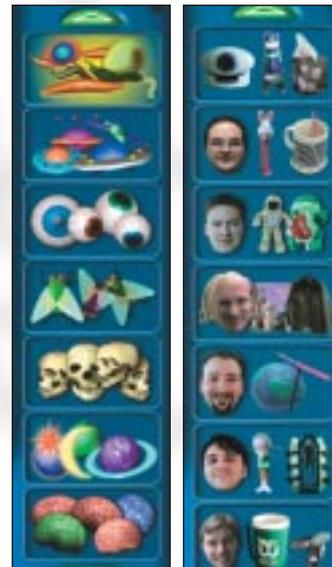
On the F/X screen, type eggs to get more effects. In paint/stamp type eggs to find the developers' effects, and on the show screen type eggs to choose extra tunes. Also on the show screen, type credits to see a video sequence of the development team of over 100 people, one of whom, Gary Ligi, looks very down. Why? I think we should be told. The video lasts (honestly) for 3 mins 33.33 seconds. The extra menus contain some great effects. For instance, type eggs in paint and select the button on the bottom left. This gives you a jigsaw effect across the image. The Russian ballad is the bottom sound-effects button in the Easter egg menu, and very romantic it is too. Probably.



Four useful effects are visible on the paint screen.



Type eggs to access this alternative menu. Highly alternative.



(Left) This is the default menu of stamp effects in the art window. Type eggs to access the additional tasteful items (right).

Sound

Every mouse action is accompanied by a synthesiser sound, and you can always turn it down if it completely does your head in, as it might. When you create a show of videos and photos, a different sound-effect accompanies each image. Holding the mouse over a sound-effect button gives a short sample, but click on the button and you'll hear the full tune. The longest is an extract of a Russian pop song that lasts 16.77 seconds (some of the others last only about a second). Sometimes one or other of the effects buttons won't work; in this state they are greened out and become active when another button is first selected.



[Left] Many of the default sound effects last less than 2 seconds. Type egg for extra options, including that Russian song (right).

Bring your pictures back to life



Photo of young louse.



Increase contrast.



Final correction.

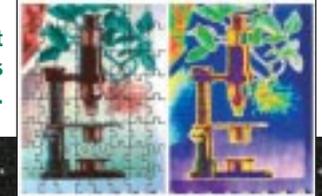
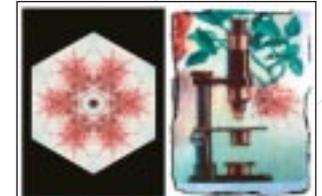
Art Program



The paint software offers many chances for complete silliness.



Fish 'n' chips, the beetle's favourite.



(Right) US microscopist Louise Harner presses the paint buttons.



Night of the terrifying salamanders, or flies.