PETSCII Workshop Day

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Today

- What is "PETSCII"?
- A word on text art
- Sample works
- PETSCII tools
- My editor + tutorial
  - Download from here (Win/Mac/Lin): http://www.kameli.net/marq/?page_id=2717
  - Java needed :(
- Lunch break
- Individual and tutored work

What is PETSCII?

- Technically thinking...
- ASCII-variant used on Commodore 8-bit computers
  - PET (1977)
  - VIC-20 (1980)
  - C-64 (1982)
  - C16 and Plus/4 (1984)
- "PET Standard Code of Information Interchange"
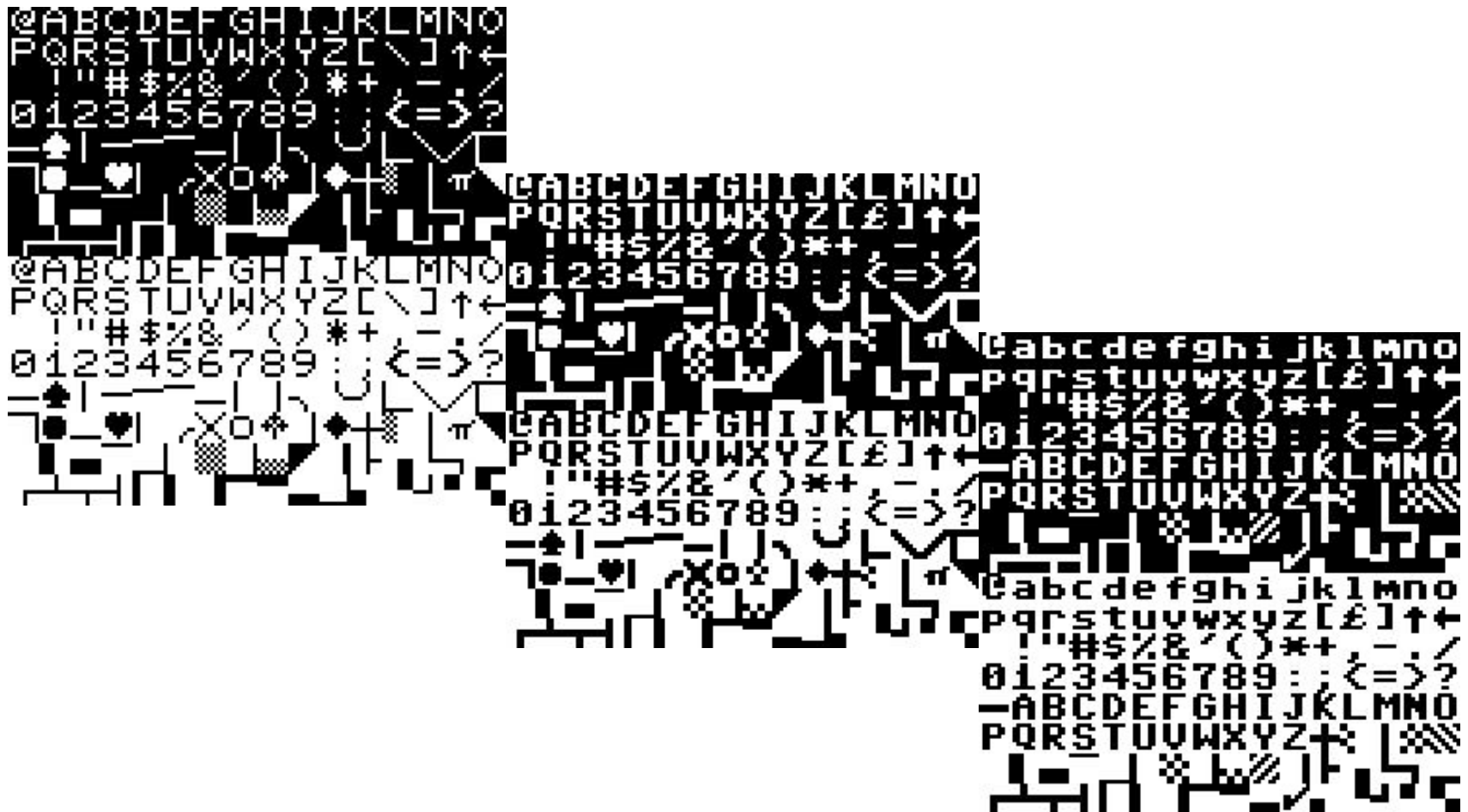- Designed by Leonard Tramiel and Chuck Peddle

What is PETSCII?
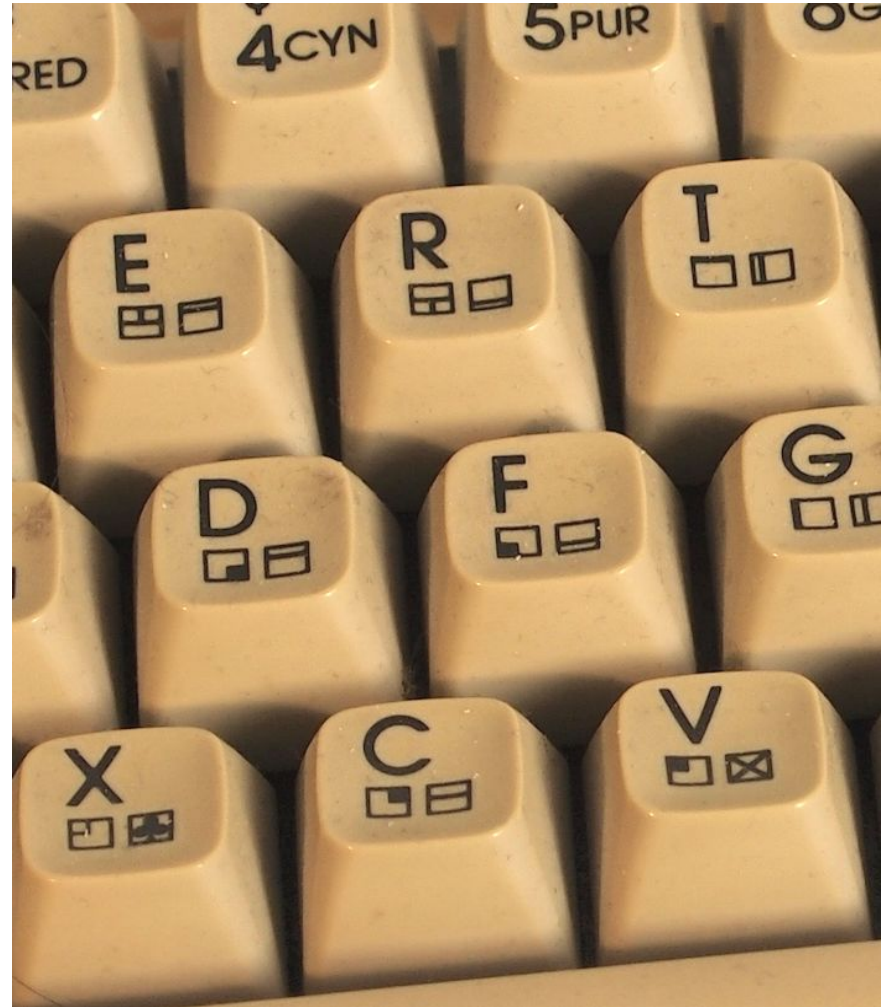
First touch


```
     **** COMMODORE 64 BASIC V2 ****
 64K RAM SYSTEM  38911 BASIC BYTES FREE
READY.
```
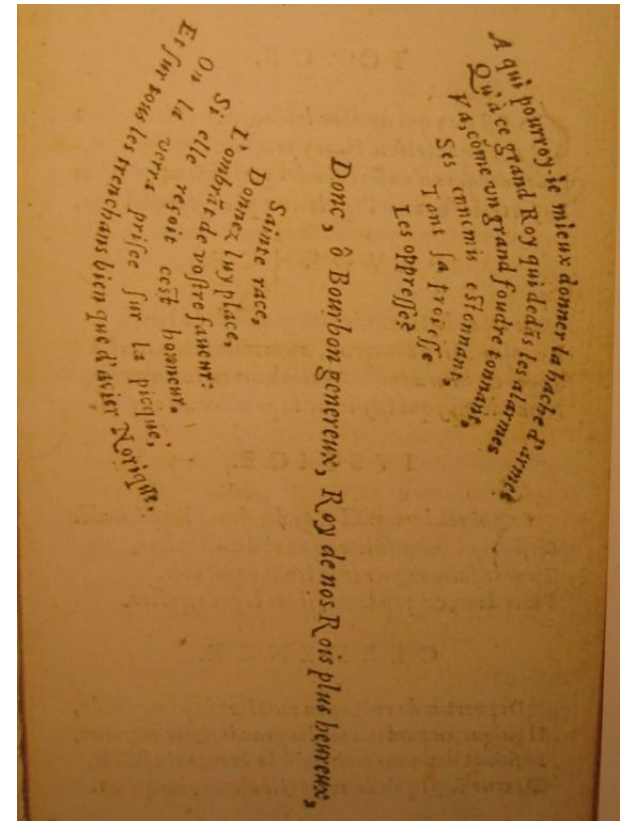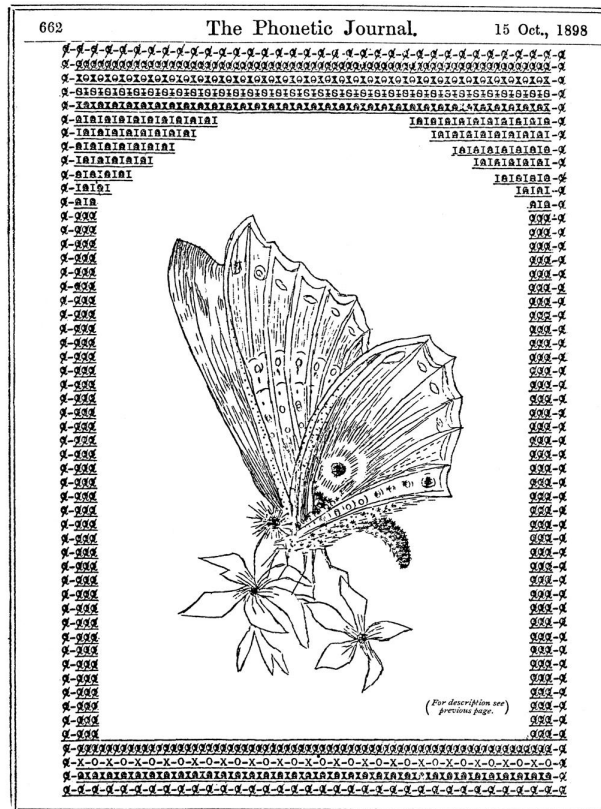
Versions: thin, thick, shifted

Text art history

Peruvian knitting, abt. 1400–400 BC.

Axe, Simmias of Rhodes, 325 BC.

Text art history

Typewriter art, Floria Stacey, 1898.

Copper plate engraving, Christian Gessner, 1740.
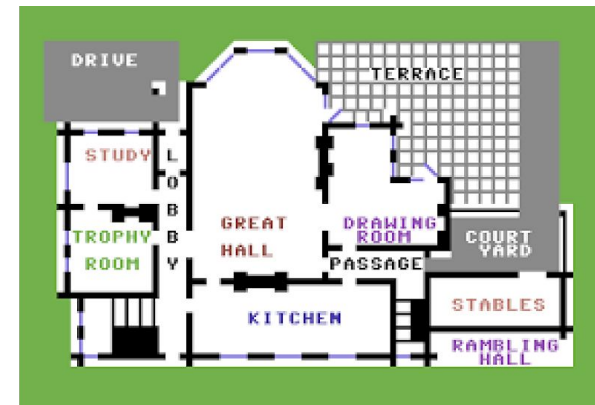
Text art history

Minitel magazine, 1980s.

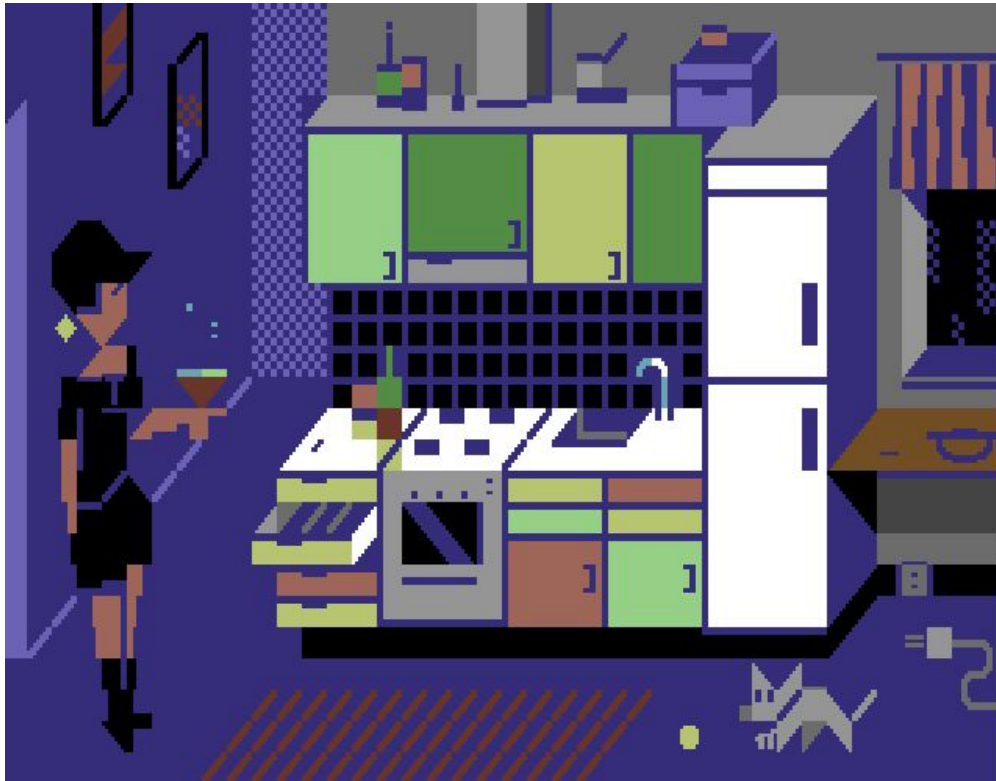Park Avenue, text-tv soap opera, 1980s.

Examples

Dog Star Adventure, 1980, "line graphics".

Examples

Early Commodore 64 games: *Back to Nature, Alien, Murder*.

Examples

Evening at Home, Dr. TerrorZ. Geometrical forms on a grid.

Examples

Skullbot, Dr. TerrorZ. Cartoon-like pixel graphics and technical show-off.

Examples

Six Shots, Electric. Figurative motif.

Examples

Smiley, Electric. Smooth contours, noise hides character borders.

Examples

Genetic DNA, Shine. Geometrical graffiti logo.

Examples

Some of my own works.

Examples

Not just demos, but games and demos too:
Digiloi and *Nothing but PETSCII*

Examples

PETSCII disc covers

Now and in the future

- PETSCII art is alive, in particular among the demoscene since 2013
    - Zoo-party in Akaa every second year
    - X-party
    - Plain PETSCII competition
- In addition to real PETSCII also some "fakescii" online
- Text artist Raquel "AcidT*" Meyers, classic PETSCII and text-tv, but also posters and laser cut pieces – *kybdslöjd*
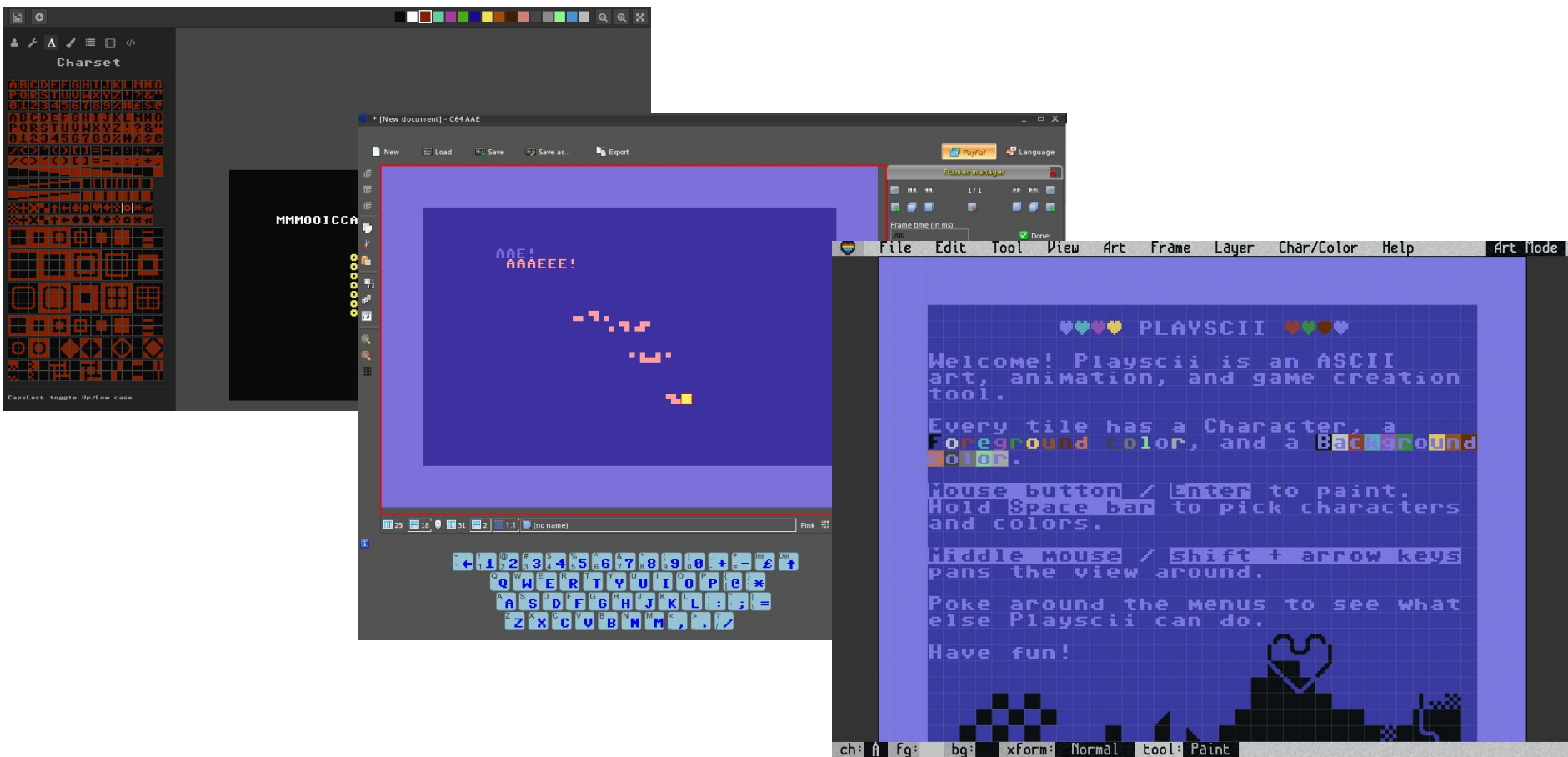
Tools

- The BASIC editor will get you started
- … but not more than that
- Old BBS/text editors for the C-64
- Newschool additions: browser and (usually) Windows based
- Genuine vs. practical
- Image converters
- "Fakescii"

Tools
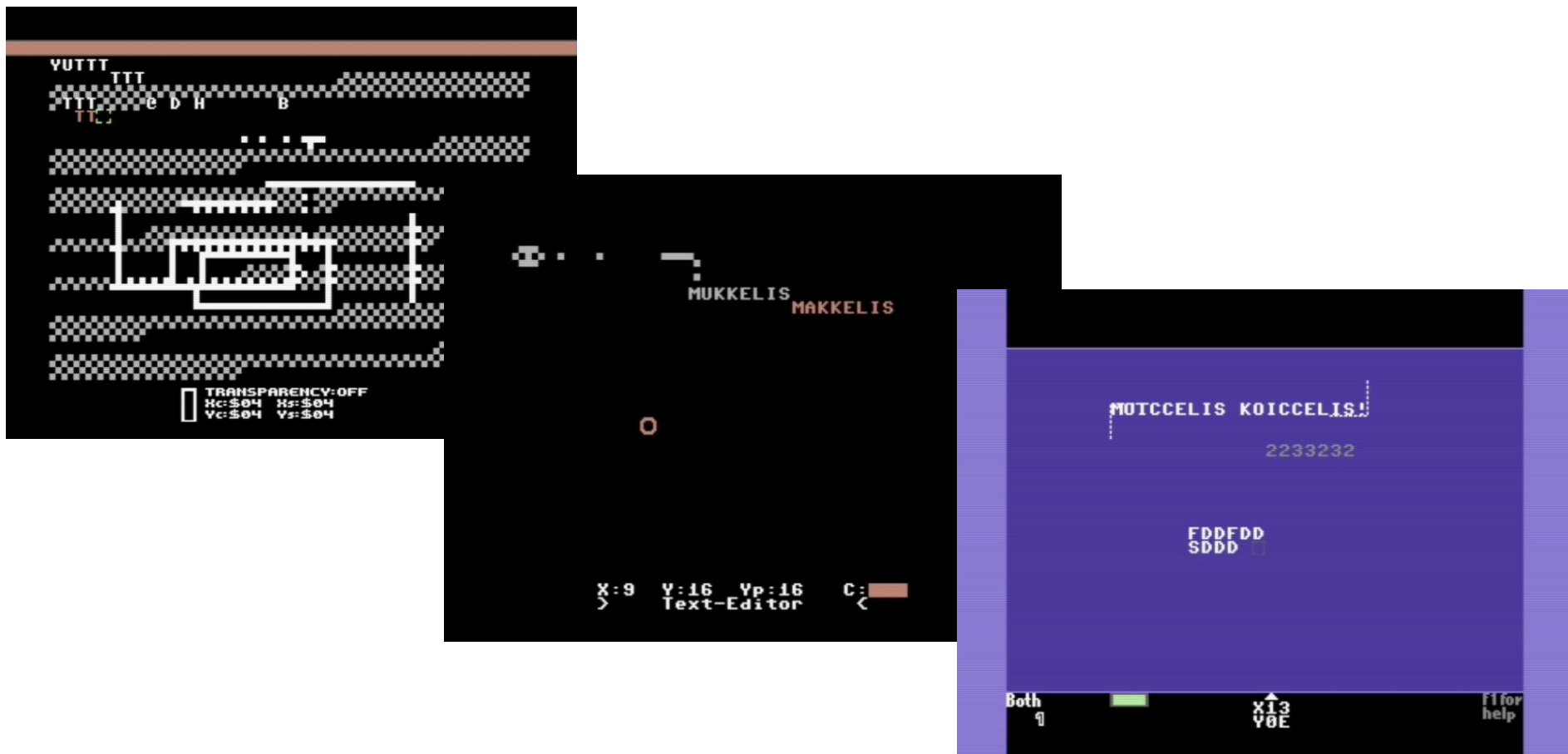
Tyronpaint, Kaleidoscope, PETSCII Editor

Tools

PET Shop Pro, C64 AAE, Playscii

My own editor

- Fall 2013: Plain PETSCII Graphics Competition (CSDb) and Zoo 2013 party
- Bad or Windows-only options
- Paper grids
- One-night project
  - "I'll just call it PETSCII for now"
- Inspiration: Deluxe Paint and Wings 3D
- For own use only at first
- Files are still C code

Wishes, wishes

- Maybe useful to others too?
- Graphic artists don't somehow like running software from Processing
- Graphic artists don't somehow like compiling pictures from source code for the C-64
- They *do* like … png file format, animation, free image size, recoloring tools, default folder preferences, reference images, preview function, image conversion, automatic backups, Mac support, SEQ export, examples, PRG export, freely

Not only C-64

- When basic functionality was in place, it was easy to support other machines too:
  - VIC-20
  - PET lowres
  - PET hires
  - Plus/4
- Loading other machines' pictures
- Maybe one day support for other retro computers

Design thoughts

- Text graphics are not pixel graphics
  - Layers, scaling and shapes less relevant
  - How to select a character quickly?
- Text and colors are two layers, kind of
- Keyboard vs. mouse
- Grid is tricky
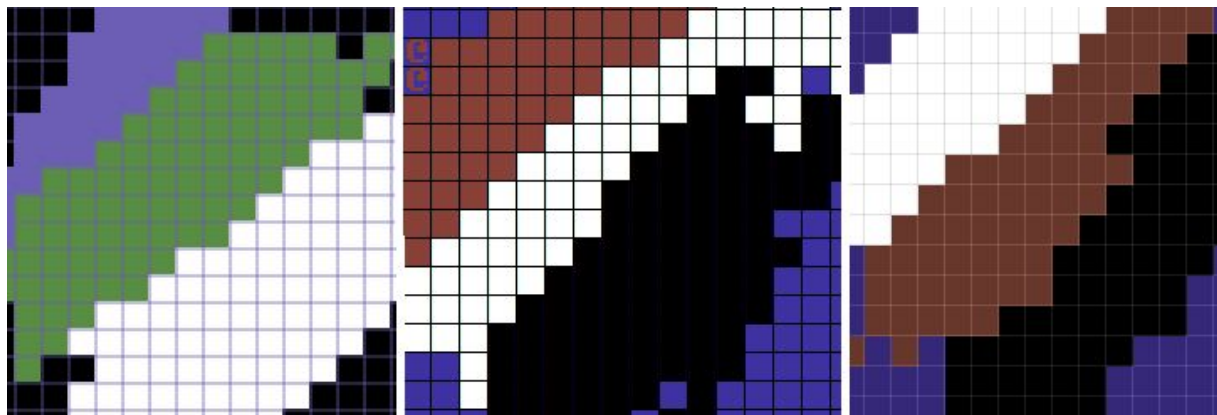
Design thoughts

The default character order is a mess.

Tutorial

Break and then on to drawing!