Archipelagos

They thought therefore they were...

Sit inside a space and think, "What is this place I'm sitting in?". Picture an island of palm and tropical sea, that's where it is you'd like to be. And if you wonder what's behind that beach, just a little out of reach, just float there and you'll know. You could create an Archipelago!

Floating... Disembodied...

In Archipelagos you are floating just a metre above the ground, as if disembodied, amongst a group of islands known as an Archipelago. Scattered around the Archipelago are stones, and somewhere there is one special stone - the Obelisk. Embodied in the Obelisk, is the power that cleansed the Archipelago of humans in Ancient Times. And the blood of the ancient peoples still comes to stain the land surface. To remove the power you must destroy the Obelisk. The Obelisk receives its power from the stones of the Archipelago, so each of the stones needs to be destroyed in turn by being drained of it's energy. Before you can absorb the energy from a stone however, you must first join it by a continuous land path (not necessarily a straight one!) to the Obelisk sometimes you will even have to build vast land bridges from island to island and only then can you absorb the energy of a stone. Once the energy from all of the stones has been successfully absorbed, the Obelisk will become vulnerable for ninety seconds. During this time, you must return to the Obelisk and absorb it's energy. Failing to do this in time will result in the Obelisk destroying you. This is Archipelago in theory, now lets get some practice...

THE FIRST ARCHIPELAGO...

Once you have loaded the game you will be presented with a screen saying:

'ARCHIPELAGO 1'

'SPACE BAR TO CONTINUE'

'RETURN TO SELECT ANOTHER ARCHIPELAGO'

Don't worry about the coloured 'splodges' behind the text for the time being. Press Space Bar and the computer will say:

'CREATING ARCHIPELAGO 1'

After a short time, a chequered landscape will appear on the screen stretching off into the distance. If you look closely you should be able to see the sea in the distance. The giant structure in front of you is the Obelisk. It looks a bit like 'Cleopatra's Needle' in London or the 'Washington Monument' in Washington D.C.

Each square of the chequered ground pattern has a colour to represent it. The colours vary according to the computer that you are playing the game on:

Using an Amiga the colours are; Green squares represent land. Yellow squares represent sand. Red squares represent infected land. Brown squares represent infected sand. Blue squares represent sea.

To either side of the Obelisk you will see a tree. The tree to the left does not move and is merely an obstruction. The tree to the right is an arboreal tree and is deadly. These trees spin whilst moving upwards and downwards. Every time an arboreal tree reaches the floor, it moves towards you the further it is from you, the greater the movement the tree will make toward you. As an arboreal tree advances, it infects the land around it. Infected land comes from the blood of the ancients and if you rest on a square that is infected, you will die. You will also die if you ever rest on a sea or sand square. More on this later.

Okay, now press the 'F2' key. The landscape will disappear and a map of the Archipelago will appear on screen. The game is now paused so take as long as you want to study this screen.

To the left is an overall map of the Archipelago. Archipelago 1 is very small Archipelago with only one island and is designed to be easily solved. To the right of the overall map is a 'zoom' window of the area immediately about yourself. The black 'dot' in this window is yourself. Notice the red/ purple infection in a cross shape this has been caused by the arboreal tree that you were looking at earlier. Note that stones and the Obelisk are not shown on either map. It is your job to find them!

Now press the 'F2' key again and the landscape will appear back on screen. If you try using the movement keys or your mouse you will see a crosshair / cursor moving about the screen. Try moving the crosshair off of the right hand side of the screen. You will see the landscape pan to the left. This isn't a very fast method of panning so press the pan/cursor mode toggle button and the crosshair will disappear. Now you can pan much more quickly. Make a full 360 degree turn to the right so that you can see the full landscape about you and finally see the Obelisk in the middle of the screen again. Did you notice the planet in the sky as you turned? The planet is always to the north so that you should never get lost.

Okay. By now the arboreal tree is probably getting a little bit too close to you. Time to get out of here! Pan to the right just slightly and you should see a small stone slightly in the distance. Press the pan/cursor mode toggle button and the crosshair will reappear. You can move to any square that the crosshair ca point to note that the height that the crosshair can reach is limited so that you can't move too far in the distance. Place the crosshair on a square halfway between yourself and the stone (about three squares in front of the stone). Now press the action button and you will move to the square that the crosshair was placed on. If the stone goes off to one side of the screen then pan round so that it is in the centre of the screen. When you move in this manner, you are floating so the only square that can affect you is the one that you come to rest on. This is very useful because it means that you can take giant 'strides' over deadly squares like sea, sand or infected land. Also if you try to move to a deadly square then the computer will 'bleep' at you to indicate that you can't move there.

Back to the stone. It is already connected to the Obelisk by land (they're on the same island together!) so all that you need to do is place the crosshair anywhere on the square that the stone is sitting on and press the action button. The stone will collapse in front of you, your energy bar at the bottom of the screen will grow and one of the two stones in the bottom right hand corner will crack. The stone indicator is there to show you how many stones exist on the archipelago and how many have been 'collapsed'.

So why do we have energy? The energy bar shows you how much energy you have left for creating new land and 'disinfecting' infected land. You need energy to create land paths from stones to Obelisks. Move the crosshair up to the edge of the island and press the action button so that you are near to the sand and the sea. Now place the crosshair somewhere in the middle of the sea and press the 'F1' key. A sand square appears and your energy drops slightly. Press the 'F1' key again and the sand square will turn into

a land square which will be surrounded by sand.

Press the 'F3' key so that you effectively turn around and look behind you. Place the crosshair on an infected square near the arboreal tree ad press 'F1'. The infected square will be disinfected. This is particularly useful when you need to be able to move to a location that has been infected. By the way, if you need to get more energy place the crosshair on any square occupied by a spore pod and press the action button your energy bar will rise a little.

In the distance you should now see the other stone on this archipelago. Once again we're very lucky because the stone is already connected to the Obelisk by land this is a very easy archipelago! Move towards the stone until it is in range of your crosshair but don't come closer than three squares from the stone or the Obelisk as we don't want to be close to them. Now collapse the stone in exactly the same way that you did the last one. The stone indicator will now disappear and a long bar should be occupying the bottom of the screen. This is a timer bar and it will count down the ninety seconds that you have to destroy the Obelisk. If you don't destroy the Obelisk in time then the Obelisk will destroy you.

Fortunately on this archipelago it will be easy to destroy the Obelisk. Just enter pa mode and pan to the right until the Obelisk is in your sight. It should be close enough to place your crosshair on the square that the Obelisk is on if it isn't the move a bit closer. Now press the action button and the Obelisk will be destroyed the computer will show you a map for the game end and tell you how long you took to complete the archipelago! Well. that's the first archipelago completed only 9,998 to go!

YOUR SOUL CAST INTO ETERNAL TORMENT...

So how do you die in Archipelagos? Well, if an arboreal tree comes too close to you it will infect the land that you are resting on and your soul will be cast into eternal torment. Also if you don't destroy the Obelisk within ninety seconds of collapsing all the stones the Obelisk itself will destroy you. Altogether everything seems too simple, but there are things that we have not told you about...

TWISTED FORMS OF THE NECROMANCER...

The necromancer first appears on Archipelago Thirteen. A ghost of the twisted and mutilated bodies of the Ancients, the Necromancer rises from the ground and wanders along the shores of islands, taking with him the land of the Ancients piece by piece. Beware that a Necromancer does not claim a piece of land near you for then the land that you rest upon will turn to sand and you will sink and join the mutated Necromancer.

BLOOD EGGS...

The Eggs of Blood first appear on Archipelago twenty. When an egg is ready to hatch, the sky will grow darker and with a mighty clap of thunder and lightning an Egg will hatch. Eggs can spawn one of two monstrosities. From the first kind of egg will pour forth the poisoned blood of the Ancients, spreading like fire until it has covered the whole of an island. The other kind of egg will eat away at the island itself, spreading outwards until it has consumed the whole of an island.

THE ISLAND OF LOST SOULS...

The Lost Souls first appear on Archipelago twenty-five. The Lost Souls of the Ancients manifest

themselves in the form of a whirlwind and roam the archipelago in search of nourishment your soul! Any kind of contact with one will result in your soul being pulled into the Lost Soul for all eternity.

FAMOUS ARCHIPELAGOS OF OUR TIME...

Every fifth archipelago in the first one hundred is bitmapped that means that it is pre-drawn by us and has to be loaded off your game disk. Of course, each of these is worth a visit but we think the Logotron Turtle on archipelago thirty-five and Europe on archipelago twenty-five are especially good.

CONTROLS

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F1      -       Create Land/Disinfect land.
F2      -       Map (any mouse button or any key to leave this mode).
F3      -       U-turn.
F6      -       Toggle mouse left/right control.
F7      -       Toggle music on/off.
HELP    -       Quit game.
Return or right mouse button   -    Toggle Pan/Cursor mode.
Space or left mouse button     -    Action button.
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