

Commodore 64, Instrument Of Computer Music

The Cultural History Of Sound Interface Device (Sid)

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Commodore 64

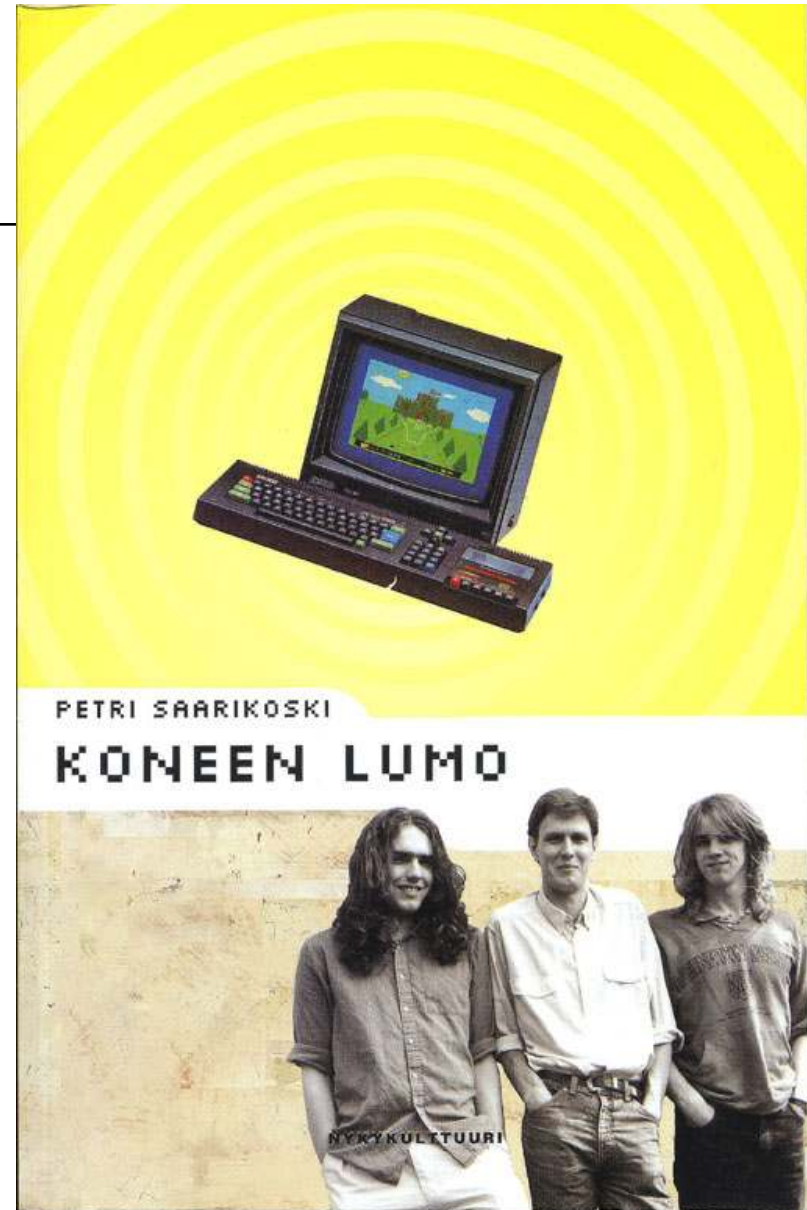
– world's best selling home computer

- available 1982 – 1993
- one of the first “multimedia” home computers (sounds, music, color graphics)
- marketed mainly as a hobby computer for youngsters (young men and boys)
- popularity largely based on computer games (some 15.000 titles)



"The Lure of the Machine. The Personal Computer Interest in Finland from the 1970s to the mid-1990s"

(Published by The Research Centre for Contemporary Culture, Jyväskylä, 2004)

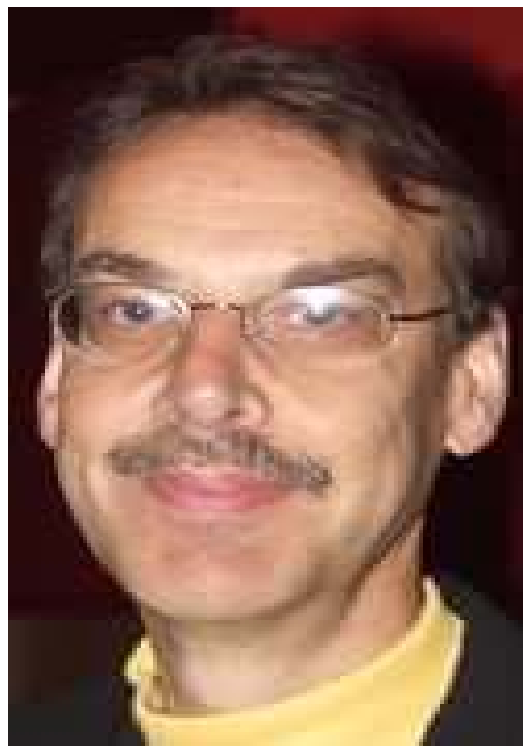
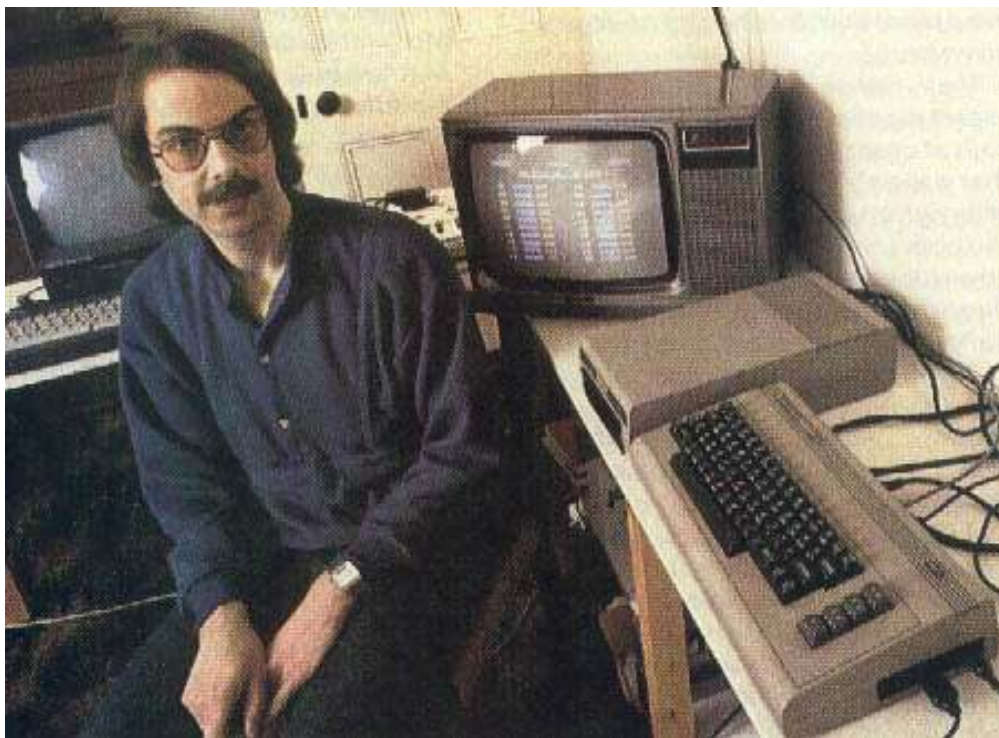




6581 Sound Interface Device (SID)

designer Bob Yannes

(over 30,000 SID tunes available – more added almost daily)



Rob Hubbard (1984-1988)

(mm. *Monty on the Run*, *Commando*, *International Karate*, *Lightforce*, *Master of Magic*)

Martin Galway (1985-1988)

(mm. *Parallax*, *Wizball*, *Ocean Loader*,
Miami Vice, *Arkanoid*)



Ben DGLISH (1985-1987)

(mm. *Firelord*, *Krakout*, *Future Knight*, *Trap*)

David Whittaker, Jeroel Tel, Mark Cooksey, Chris Hlsbeck...

The Sound of SID

- Tune is very simple (remember: only 4 channels and couple of kilobytes!) + some complicated variations
- No samples or any modern data storage technics
- Played during game play + "loaders"



Influence in Finland (1980s)

- The rise of Demoscene in 1986-1987 (programming of computer demos) as a starting point for Finnish SID-culture
- handful of SID-composers, but very few commercial tunes available (for example Jori Olkkonen (Yip), *Netherworld* 1988)
- Commodore 64 was also used as a device for composing of electronic music



Sound & music hardware and software for Commodore 64
(1986)



Otso Pakarinen (right) (1986)

”We thought that the making of computer games might be a good way to learn programming. As it was... Before we could even start to work we actually first have to program all software tools. Like I said: it was very interesting”

Otso Pakarinen, interview (2001)



Commodore 64 of Byterapers (a famous Finnish demoscene group) from Assembly demo party



Summary: background for SID music culture

- Emergence of computer gaming industry in 1980s
- Subcultures of home computing (Demoscene, game programming etc), “hacker cultures”
- Nostalgia for old SID tunes SID remixes and chip tunes (1990s – 2000s)



Music samples (SID/Remix)

Comic Bakery (1986, 2004)
(original score by Martin Galway
Remix: o2, Mahoney & Marcel)



Links

- [The High Voltage SID Collection](#)
- [HardSID](#)
- [Remix64](#)
- [C64Audio.com](#)



Presentation

- <http://users.utu.fi/petsaari/sid.ppt>