

# ARTICADE

THE BOOK OF CLASSIC ARCADE GAME ARTWORK

EXTENDED EDITION

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# ARTCADE EXTENDED

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Publisher: Bitmap Books

ARTCADE - The Book of Classic Arcade Game Artwork  
by Tim Nicholls and published in 2015.



**Back in 2015, Bitmap Books teamed up with arcade enthusiast Tim Nicholls to publish the first edition of Arcade, a labour of love that was borne out of Nicholls' quest to restore his massive archive of original arcade game artwork comprised of titles from the last four decades.**

Nicholls acquired his collection at a considerable cost from a Hollywood props company that was closing its doors, and made it his personal mission to tend to these neglected and battered cabinets by spending over two thousand hours scanning, restoring and preparing the art so it could be reprinted and refitted to the cabinets – all in the name of making them look as good as they did the day they rolled off the production line. Nicholls noted that it would perhaps have taken less time to redraw each piece from scratch using the original art as a guide, but that simply wouldn't have been in keeping with his core ethos of restoration rather than imitation.

The original Arcade served as a testament to Nicholls' steely determination and heartfelt passion; while serving as a showcase for his painstakingly restored coin-op art, it also charted the incredible history of arcade marquee and cabinet design. The original edition struck such a chord with readers the world over that, here at Bitmap Books, we almost immediately felt the desire to improve and augment the publication to make it even better. Therefore, it is with great pride that we are able to build on the amazing foundation laid down by Nicholls with this second edition of Arcade, which comes massively expanded with new restored artwork and exclusive written content.

Nicholls' efforts to bring the artwork of classic coin-ops back to life remains at the core of this revised version, but it is accompanied by a wealth of additional art which has been kindly contributed to by other collectors, restorers and fans. As well as adding a larger selection of memorable marquee artwork – which looks even more striking now, thanks to the wider format of the book – we've also included a lot more side panel and cabinet art this time around, giving you a better overall picture of the complete machine, and what it would have looked like in its full glory.

While the art naturally remains the main focus of Arcade, there's a lot more written content to digest this time around, including a brand-new exclusive interview with the legendary Larry Day, who worked on seminal titles such as Moon Patrol and the pinball machine Catacomb. Day's insights into the history of the amusement arcade industry help bring these bold illustrations to life, while an in-depth 'how-to' chapter – contributed to by Escape Pod, one of the world's leading creators of high-quality restored arcade artwork – serves as a great taster for those of you who are entertaining the idea of picking up a battered coin-op classic and bringing it back to life.

Once designed to attract players at a time when in-game visuals were crude and blocky, the cabinet art that accompanied titles like Space Invaders, Hang-On and Pac-Man is, unlike the games themselves, in very real danger of being lost to the ravages of time and forgotten, even by the companies which own these franchises. The arcade industry is a shadow of its former self and, without amusement centres to house them, the machines which are adorned with these gorgeous images could potentially fade from view completely.

Therefore, the incredible work of Nicholls, Escape Pod and the many other restorers operating in this niche sector is invaluable, as it allows these striking and culturally significant pieces of art to survive indefinitely, freed from their battered and smoke-covered cabinets to truly shine amongst these very pages.

Bitmap Books

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Python Anghelo  
Larry Day  
Dan Soulsby

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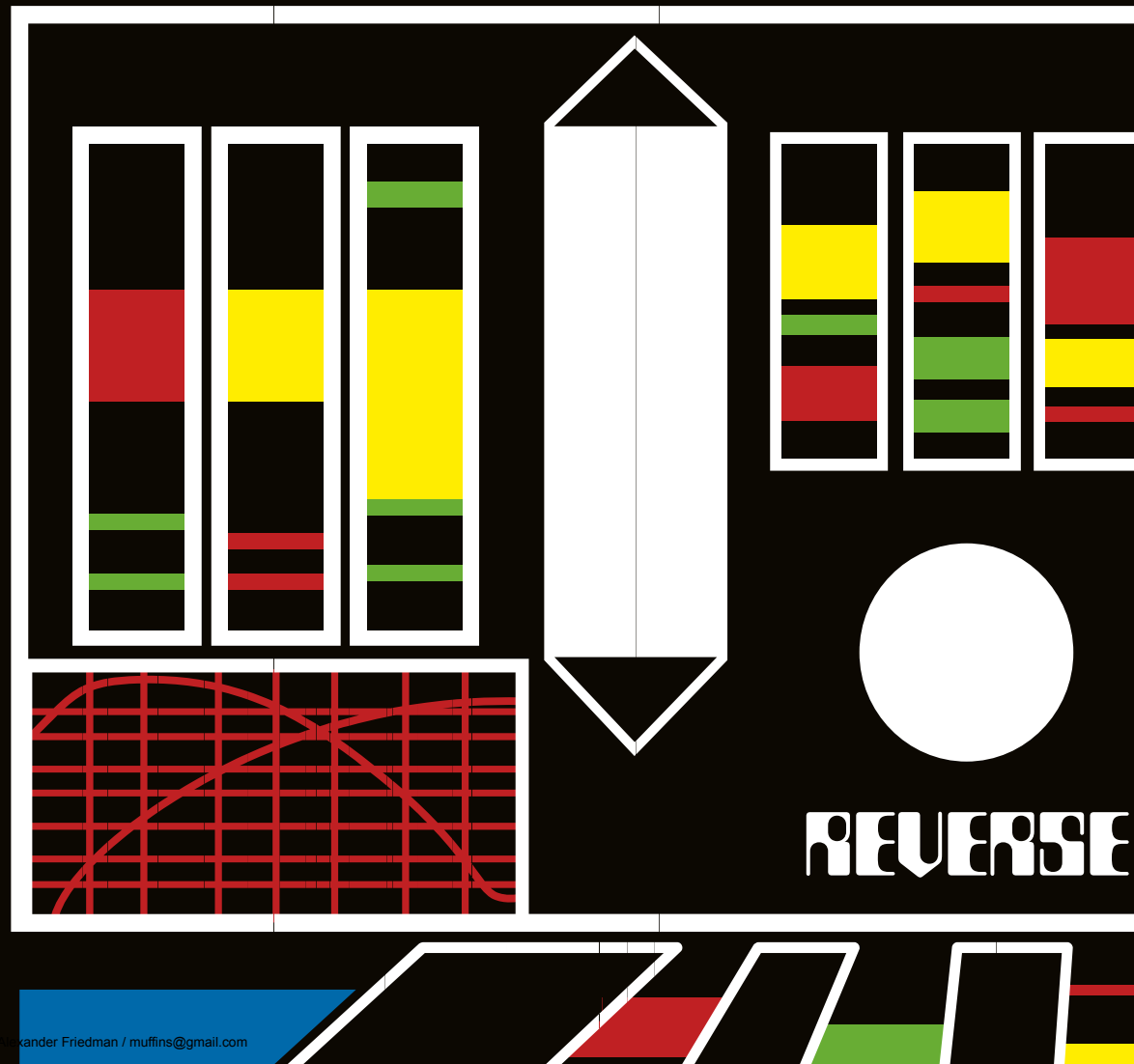
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Defender control panel art  
1981 / Williams

# INTERVIEWS

Showcasing a selection of amazing arcade marquees is one thing, but there's nothing like hearing from the people behind this magic to really take things to the next level. We were lucky enough to speak to legendary artists Python Anghelo and Larry Day, as well as Escape Pod's Dan Soulsby, who specialises in restoring and printing classic cabinet art; you can find their insightful responses in this section of ARTCADE.



GAME  
START

1<sup>st</sup> PLAYER



2<sup>nd</sup> PLAYER



THRUST

FIRE

SMART  
BOMB

INVISI



# PYTHON ANGHELO INTERVIEW

**Born in Transylvania, Romania in January 1954, Python Anghelo showed a talent for drawing at a very early age – a talent nurtured and encouraged by his aunt and grandmother.**

In 1971, Python moved to the USA to study animation, and then became an animator at Disney until 1979 when he left to join Williams Electronics to create the animation and cabinet artwork for the game Joust.

Although Python is well known for his numerous contributions to the canon of pinball artwork, he is also responsible for many pieces of classic arcade game artwork, some well-documented and others less so.

Tim Nicholls spoke to Python in 2014, one month before he sadly passed away.

**Hey Python, thanks for taking the time to do this and for trading all those emails with me over the past couple of weeks. I really appreciate it and I'm sure everyone buying the book will get a real kick out of it too.**

PA: No problem. The fact that anyone's interested in the arcade stuff is pretty great. Most people that contact me really only care about the pinball work I've been involved in and a lot of them are collectors and dealers, interested in what the dollar value might be in the future.

**I guess there's serious money involved in the pinball side of things. Generally, not quite the same sums involved with arcade stuff, but prices are rising as interest grows and machines get squirrelled away into people's collections. The days of the working Asteroids machine for \$500 are gone, but we're still not quite at the \$10,000 deal for single machines that's common in the pinball world. Actually, I should have said Joust instead of Asteroids!**

PA: [laughs] Yes, or Inferno or Bubbles! Actually, you'd be lucky to find an Inferno machine: I think they made around 40 or 50 of those. Maybe one would be worth money!

**What about Sinistar? That's a machine where the gameplay and technology actually lives up to the artwork, and it's available for a lot less than the big five: Space Invaders, Asteroids, Pac-Man, Donkey Kong and Defender.**

PA: That game was way ahead of its time, technically. You may not know that it was originally going to be called Juggernaut because the management at Williams thought the space-themed games had

all been done and they wanted something different. That project didn't really go anywhere and, when it was finally resurrected with a space theme, I got involved as an engineer rather than an artist because John [Newcomer] needed someone to record the voice for the game and I knew how to operate the equipment.

Jack Haeger was responsible for the artwork in the game itself, and I really only did the Sinistar lettering for the marquee and the rest of the cabinet. I'm not often credited for Sinistar except as the guy that recorded the voice. Most video game people only know me as the Joust guy!

**Well, I guess there are worse things to be famous for! Even the most hardcore Joust fan would have to admit that the marquee artwork far exceeds what the game graphics themselves have to offer. I'm going to be in such trouble for saying that!**

PA: That's something I've heard before and I take it as a very great compliment, but the games back then were mostly about the gameplay anyway, not the graphics, and that made the look of the machine itself all the



more important to get people to 'insert coin'. The pressure on game companies to produce the most cash per square foot of space in the arcade was huge. As engineers and artists, we didn't really understand that, until projects got cancelled because they looked like they might not make enough money for the arcade operators.

I've been really surprised by the amount of concept artwork for abandoned projects I've come across during my research for the book. Larry Day shared some incredible pieces with me from his time at Advertising Posters and Mylstar, including a couple that confirm some rumours that have been doing the rounds since the early '80s.

PA: Larry Day? Moon Patrol Larry Day?

**Yep. That's the guy.**

PA: Moon Patrol, I love that marquee! It's probably the best of the period. Well, the best by anybody that isn't me! You've seen Joust, right? [laughs] That Moon Patrol marquee is a work of art. It shows the difference between graphic design and graphic art.

**"The pressure on game companies to produce the most cash per square foot of space in the arcade was huge. As engineers and artists, we didn't really understand that, until projects got cancelled because they looked like they might not make enough money for the arcade operators."**

I'll tell Larry that; it'll make his day! I feel the same way. There's something different about it and it stands up as a piece of art in its own right. Joust has a similarly artistic feel.

PA: That probably comes from my time at Disney. I was never really a pencil-and-ruler kind of guy and that comes through in most of my arcade and pinball work. You can often tell when an engineer ends up being responsible for the cabinet art because it looks too much like a technical drawing full of straight lines and 3D lettering.

Even if they did not exactly reflect the content of the game itself, for me, the machines were their own best advertisement and the artwork needed to capture the imagination of the arcade customers.

That's a perfect description of why I feel that the cabinet art is such an important part of arcade gaming history. I know you've got a medical appointment to get to, so I'll let you go now. Python, thank you so much for doing this – it's been an absolute pleasure. I know things have been tough for you lately and, on behalf of the whole arcade community, I want to tell you that your work is loved and appreciated by thousands of people across the world.

PA: You're most welcome and thank you for those kind words. All any artist really wants is to be appreciated and perhaps remembered.

Sadly, one month after we spoke, Python lost his battle with cancer.

Python Vladimir Anghelo  
January 1st 1954 – April 9th 2014

Buzzard concept sketch for Joust, drawn by Python in circa 1982. Lonnie McDonald – who hit his Joust high point in 1982 when he ran up over 37 million points by playing for 24 hours on one coin, now owns this original artwork.



# LARRY DAY INTERVIEW

**Born and raised in the rural farming community of Gibson City, Illinois, Larry Day indulged his artistic instincts from an early age and embarked on a career which has spanned from the late '70s to the present day.**

Known in the gaming community for his fantastically imaginative and atmospheric arcade cabinet illustrations and pinball playfields, Day is also a successful storyboard and commercial artist, as well as an award-winning illustrator of both fiction and non-fiction picture books. He is the recipient of 3 gold medals from the Society of Illustrators, and won the 2007 SCBWI Golden Kite Award for his work on Suzanna Pitzer's book, *Not Afraid of Dogs*. His most recent work can be seen in *Found* (written by Jeff Newman) which was published in November 2018 by Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. *Found* is exhibited in the Society of Illustrators Original Show (NYC).

**When would you say you realised you wanted to be an artist professionally?**

LD: I think professionally it would have been around the time I was in high school; probably thirteen or fourteen. I took an art correspondence course through my high school years – which was great, because when I got to college, everything I'd learned through the course was a repeat. I got an associate degree in commercial art and graduated in '78. To tell you the truth, the

first paid art job that I can remember having was when I designed and illustrated the masthead for the local town newspaper. I grew up in a small, rural farm community in the central part of the USA, Illinois.

**How did that then lead on to you becoming involved with creating artwork for arcade and pinball machines?**

LD: Well, we had Pong – that was the start of everything, right? And that was from when I was in high school, I think. So, after I graduated college, I was looking for a job in commercial art. I went around quite a few places and couldn't find anything, so I thought the best thing I could do was to go to Chicago, so I travelled to Chicago and found a job – any job I could get, basically. I found a job there, not in illustration, but in managing an art department for a wholesaler; I took it as a temporary thing, just to get up there. I think I was there for about five months when I found a job at a place called Advertising Posters, a screen printer. They printed for all of the big arcade manufacturers – Bally, Williams, Taito, everybody. What they had was a staff of illustrators, and I was hired on as a staff artist. There might have been about six to

eight of us, and the company worked on the same premise as newspapers. We were paid a salary, but we were also part of the package for printing.

**Did you realise how big a deal arcade games were at that time?**

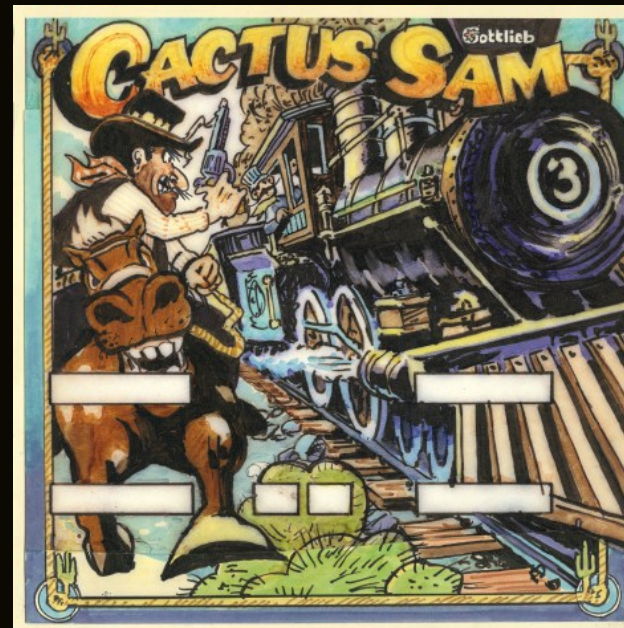
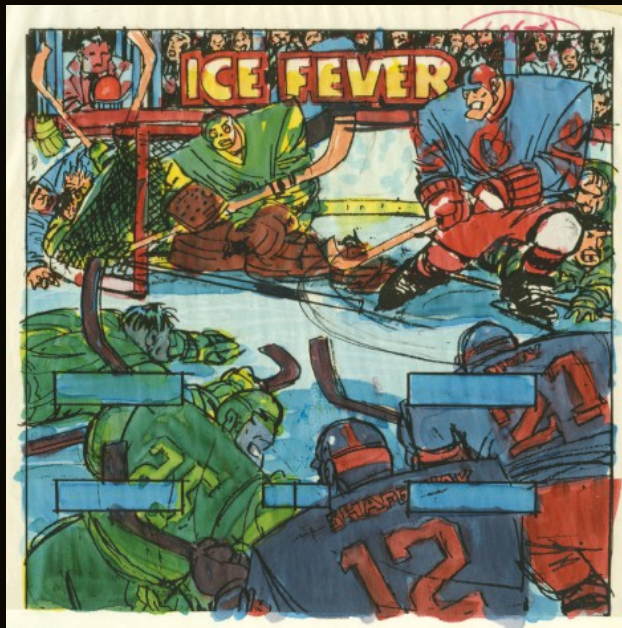
LD: I started in like 1981, or maybe '80. That would have been when the arcade thing was just starting to take off. I had no idea that was happening! I was illustrating so many games that I was just onto the next one. I never focused on the popularity of these games.

**Did you play any of them?**

LD: No, I never played them, I still don't. And now I'm a storyboard artist for TV and I never watch TV, but I make my living off of it! To me, it was just about doing what I really like to do. It wasn't necessarily just a job. I was immersed in illustration, which is what I really loved.

**"Well, we had Pong – that was the start of everything, right?"**

Larry also worked on many artworks for pinball machines during his career. Here is a selection of marker pen visuals for various titles such as Captain Venus (left), Ice Fever (middle) and Cactus Sam (right).





This concept art for the Lazarian marquee was created with marker pens on tracing paper. While very similar to the final marquee that appeared on the machine, the 'multi-armed monster crushing a ship in one hand' started life as a living creature, rather than the trapezoid-headed robot shown in the final artwork.





This is the final version of the Lazarian marquee in pen and ink on a two-ply plate Bristol board with the title text patched in. This shows the fundamental change in the style of the monster from the marker pen concept art to the final artwork.





This marker pen visual for Solar Fox was sadly not chosen as the final design. Larry did however though, create the background jets and the title for the final marquee in collaboration with fellow artist Doug Watson of Scramble fame.



**Back then, video games were largely just blocks moving around the screen, and it fell to your artwork to draw people in. How does it feel to know that the art you've created contributed to the success of these games, and ultimately the massive companies behind them?**

LD: It's very flattering, and I honestly had no idea at the time – absolutely no idea. Because I came from this rural area and I grew up with very little influence around me outside of the letter 'P for Painting' in the encyclopaedia. I had all these different influences that I think weren't typical of other arcade artists. I came in with a different way of seeing things. I was heavily influenced by people like the painters Mary Cassatt and Winslow Homer – and early illustrators, both American and British. Ernest Howard Shepard was a big one, and I was also influenced by comic book artists like Wally Wood and Jordi Bernet. On top of all that, I had a couple of mentors: Gerald Merfeld for painting and Russell Johnson for cartoons. The other artists I worked with didn't have that range of influences. I used all of those influences as kind of a starting point for each game that I worked on.

**I suppose a modern way of saying it is you were thinking 'outside of the box'?**

LD: That's a good way to put it. But, since it was always a big box when it came to arcade games, you could say I was thinking on the box!

**How did each brief go? Did you speak to the designer of the game?**

LD: Early on in my career, I was illustrating break-down parts for farm manufacturing equipment. And I worked directly with the research and development people. So when I got to the arcade job, I wasn't any stranger to working with the people who were actually developing the game; it just felt natural. I oftentimes worked directly with the developers, especially in pinball games. The brief I would get would be: 'Hey, we got this game, this machine shoots down these aliens and blah blah blah.' And a few more details, of course. And that would be about it; I would work on thumbnail concepts, and develop those into marker concepts – and then final drawings and then final ink, and then to the finished product.

**What would the full process be like for a typical job?**

LD: I work on sketching out little ideas. I've always done it this way, and still do – whether I get a manuscript for a picture book or a script for a TV spot. For the games, I had notes on the game itself, and I would draw little side notes – visual side notes, sketches – until I had something that I wanted to develop even further into a thumbnail sketch. And then after the thumbnail sketch I would go into making more of a comprehensive sketch on tracing paper. That would be done pretty much full-size because the marquees weren't that large – except for side cabinet art, of course. I would take those to my boss, and we would talk them through and change things, or not. Then the bosses would present the drawings to the marketing people at Taito, Bally or Williams, and get feedback from them. From there, I would go and make the final pencil drawings and make sure everything fit. Then I would take vellum – that was translucent – and put it on top of my drawings and then just pencil those out. For the final art I used to use a rapidograph, or 'technical pen'. There was an assortment of rapidograph thicknesses; pens with a variety

of thicknesses. Eventually, I just changed to pen and ink because the rapidographs kept clogging up all the time – a real pain. After that's done, I would put another overlay of tracing paper over the final drawing and indicate the colours. Sometimes these things would have three colours, sometimes they could have up to twelve colours. That would be passed on to the printer, who would do the separations. I think printers used to use Rubylith, and they would cut out each colour and everything was always tightly registered. When it went to press, each one of those colours was printed.

**"For the games, I had notes on the game itself, and I would draw little side notes – visual side notes, sketches – until I had something that I wanted to develop even further into a thumbnail sketch."**

**"To me, it's always been about head-to-hand-to-paper."**

**How does that differ from how you would approach a job today, if you were doing a similar job now?**

LD: Oh, wow. I don't know. To tell you the truth, I don't think I would do that much differently. Technology has changed, but I would have to rely on other people; my work is exclusively by hand. I don't do anything digitally. The only thing I do is scan and send. It's unusual, but I think it also creates a big demand for my work.

The way I'm doing it? Same as just after the invention of fire. But we still use fire, so...

**Ha! That's got a quality to it, though – no matter how good technology is, it can't quite replicate that hand-drawn look.**

LD: Yes. To me, it's always been about head-to-hand-to-paper. Some people are amazing at computers, but I think you lose something. There's a cognitive connection that is kind of missing there.

**When you walked into an arcade and you saw your artwork illuminated on the cabinet, what went through your head?**

LD: When I saw those, it was really pretty great. It's a really nice feeling to see it lit, to see how everything fit. I got great joy out of seeing the actual final product.

**One of the games you're most famously associated with is Moon Patrol. What was it like working on that particular game?**

I did that final artwork very large, because I didn't really understand that I didn't have to do it that big. I mean, it's huge – it's a black-and-white painting. At that point, they weren't quite yet reproducing in full colour. There was a lot of freedom to use any medium from pen and ink to gouache to even oil paint. That was a lot of fun. They described the game to me before I started; I didn't see it in action. I had all these things in my head that didn't really look like the final game all that much. But illustration is about bringing things to life.

Looking back at it, I made these things bigger than what they really were. After I had finished and saw the games themselves, all put together

with the final art and everything, I remember looking at them for the first time thinking 'Oh my god, this is what I illustrated?' I thought the electrified machines were super cool.

**Were there any other games that stand out in your memory as being particular favourites that you worked on?**

LD: As far as artwork goes, I remember Jail Jumper. That was fun to work on. I think that might have been Taito. I don't quite remember all of them.

**Were there any other artists that were working in the same field who you admired at the time?**

LD: There was one in our staff, actually. I remember Doug Watson; I don't know if he did Centipede, but everything he did was really classy. He did a pinball game called Barracora, which was based off of H.R. Giger's work, for the movie Alien. I think it was like 12 or 17 colours. And he stippled the whole thing, layers for each colour. It was marvellous, a really marvellous piece of art. There was a guy named Keith Parkinson, who did the artwork for a pinball game called Krull, based

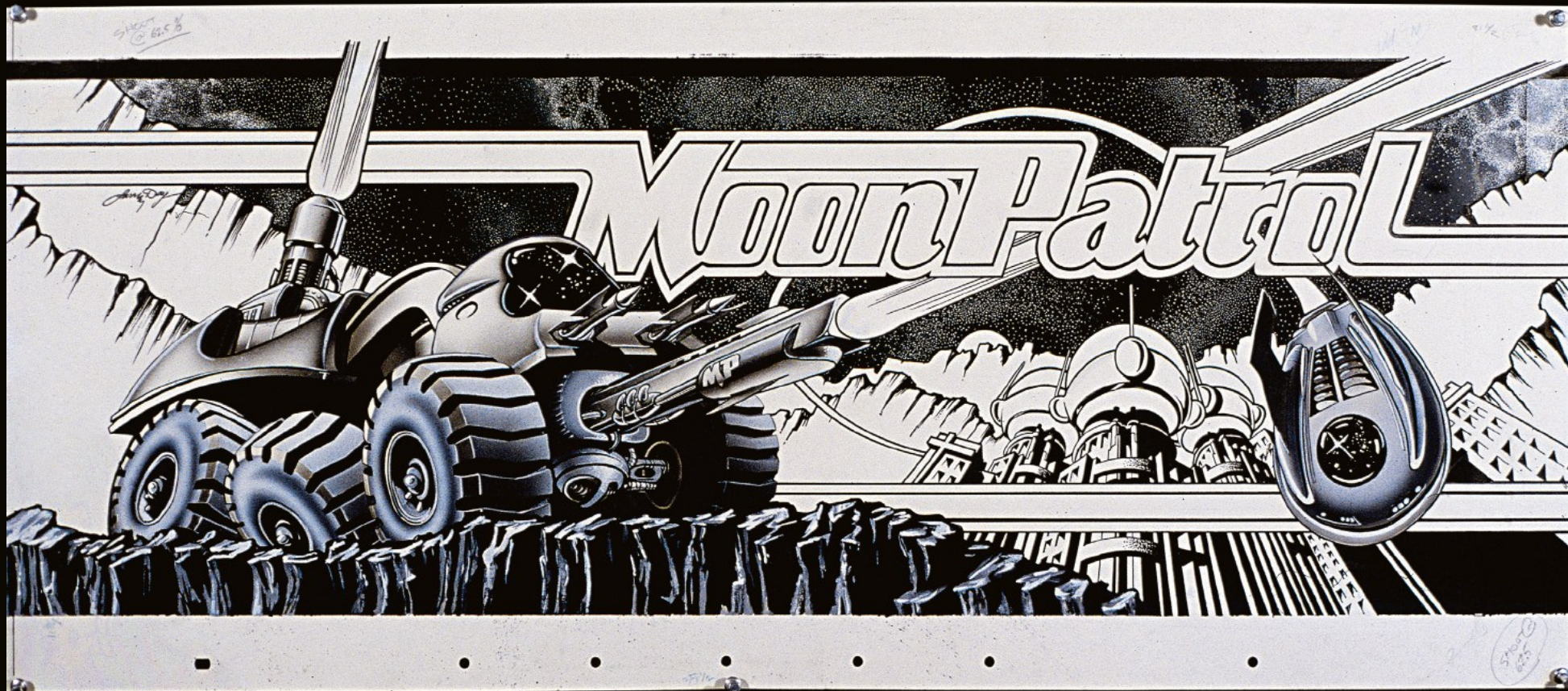
on the movie. He was really good. He helped me on a video game called Dark Planet, which is one that I was really proud of. I think it was a prototype; I don't think it ever made it to mass market. We did that for Stern Electronics.

**What would you say was the key difference between working on the art for a pinball machine compared to an arcade machine? Did you have a lot more freedom to be creative with the pinball games?**

LD: I had quite a bit of freedom on both, but the pinball games demanded a lot more work. The playfield, the bumpers, the art on top of the bumpers and stuff like that. And then the back glass itself sometimes – like in Catacomb, which was the first one I did. It had this interaction on the back glass itself. So, I had to make sure everything fit perfectly – and even the buttons that lit up on the playfields, I had to draw circles around them. I had to make sure everything fit, and that was pretty much a nightmare. But the video games, they were pretty simple as far as demands on the pieces themselves. The marquee is a rectangle, there's art around the monitor and you also illustrate the control panel, and then there's the side art.



Arguably Larry's most iconic piece, the marquee for Moon Patrol is incredibly detailed – something that wasn't commonplace at the time. This original artwork, without colour is almost three feet wide.



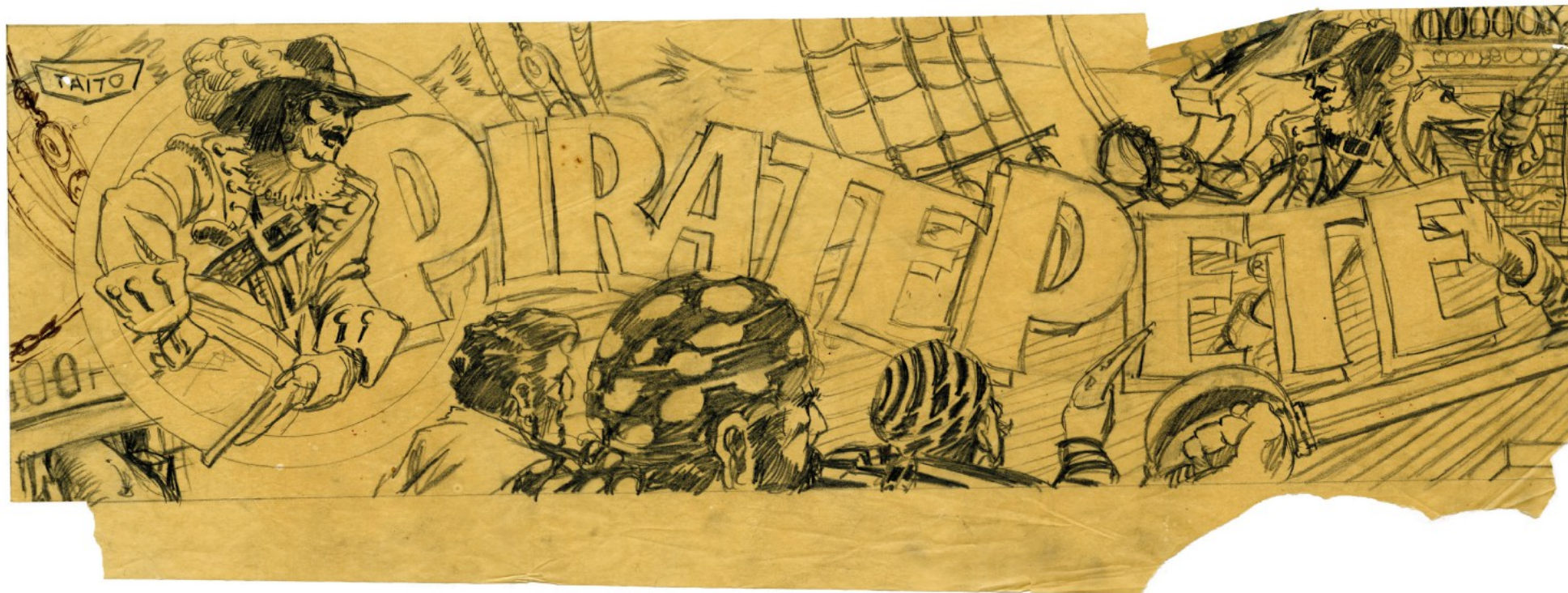


Pooyan (Little Pigs in Japanese) was licensed by Stern for international release and the plan was to rename the game for the US market. The new name was agreed and Larry began working on a marquee for 'PorkChops'. Later it was decided that the pork reference could offend a significant potential market so the name was reverted back to the original - Pooyan.





Released by Taito in 1982, Pirate Pete was essentially a re-skinned version of Jungle Hunt. This pencil sketch by Larry was heavily influenced by N.C. Wyeth's painting of Captain Blood by Sabatini. Sadly, this wasn't used for the final marquee.



**Has it made you sad to see the arcade market dwindle over the years?**

LD: As an illustrator, I don't feel any great attachment to them, because everything changes. Technology puts different demands on illustrators. Even in the ad business, I've seen dramatic changes. I figure while things are changing, I'll just try to adapt. The only thing I didn't adapt to was getting used to working on the computer. I'm still holding out! I think that'll be on my tombstone. 'Just didn't adapt to the computer'.

**"The only thing I didn't adapt to was getting used to working on the computer."**

**But, like you say, that's turned out to be a strength for you? What you offer is unique?**

LD: The style and technique that I use, I think, communicates more directly than work on the computer. Although, there are a lot of people on the computer that are phenomenal at it. But I think one reason I've been successful is because my art seems to link directly with people.

**When did your association with creating amusement arcade games stop?**

LD: The last year and a half that I was in that sector, I worked at a place called Premier. I was doing pinball games there; they didn't do video games. I was also put in charge of doing all the collateral work. I had to get all the advertising ready, on top of illustrating the games. Basically I was just drawing the playfields. The back glasses were done by another team, who took over and developed the themes and did what they wanted. I got some beautiful playfields out of it – I did one called Genesis, which was really great. But it just became so burdensome and time-consuming that, when I got a call one day to join an advertising agency, I took it. They were starting a staff of full-time storyboard artists. This was 1987 – I started there in January. I think I worked up until that point doing pinball games.

**Could you give us some highlights of your career since then?**

LD: Well, when I jumped into the ad business it became even harder than the pinball business! It's very gruelling, and I'm still

doing it, I'm still drawing storyboard art for commercials for companies like Allstate insurance and United Healthcare; I've done Disney – a lot of Disney – as well as Nintendo and Hallmark – those kinds of clients. I also illustrate picture books; I've done some twenty-some books. I've got one coming out late 2018, and two more coming out in 2019.

**Is there anything you would say you miss from working on arcade and pinball games?**

LD: Yes, actually there is. It was the first time that I was given freedom to do what I wanted to do. I could illustrate whatever I wanted as long as it pertained to the theme, in any medium and in any style. I didn't realise how unusual it was to be given that freedom. I just took it for granted; that's just how art is done. I still approach everything I illustrate the same way. I miss working as a team with some of my fellow artists, engineers, and game developers. Seeing those games all lit up and running? That was really satisfying.

**"I miss working as a team with some of my fellow artists, engineers, and game developers. Seeing those games all lit up and running? That was really satisfying."**



When sketching ideas onto tracing paper, Larry would do these at actual size and manually create layouts to present internally.



Hot Shocker only exists as prototype code on a single set of ROM chips running on modified Scramble hardware, owned by a collector in Italy where the game was developed by Bruno De Georgio. It was originally developed as 'SpiderWeb' with insect-themed graphics. This production-ready marquee by Larry was created for the game, but the deal never happened and the artwork was thought lost until now.





The side art for Pooyan was carefully designed by Larry to draw the potential player in by placing the wolf at eye level. They would see that first, then the pigs. He also had the pig looking directly at the viewer, breaking that 4th wall!



Using the same character Larry developed for the Lazarian marquee, the side art meant he could draw Lazarian much larger! For this artwork, Larry was influenced by the early EC Comic artists, mostly, Wally Wood and his Milky Way star flowing in space.



The marquee for Dark Planet in 3D is unique as it's in two parts. The player would look through an 3 inch window to the screen which meant a lower marquee was also required. Larry recalls how this innovative 3D game was made for Stern by a couple of guys fresh out of college in their garage!



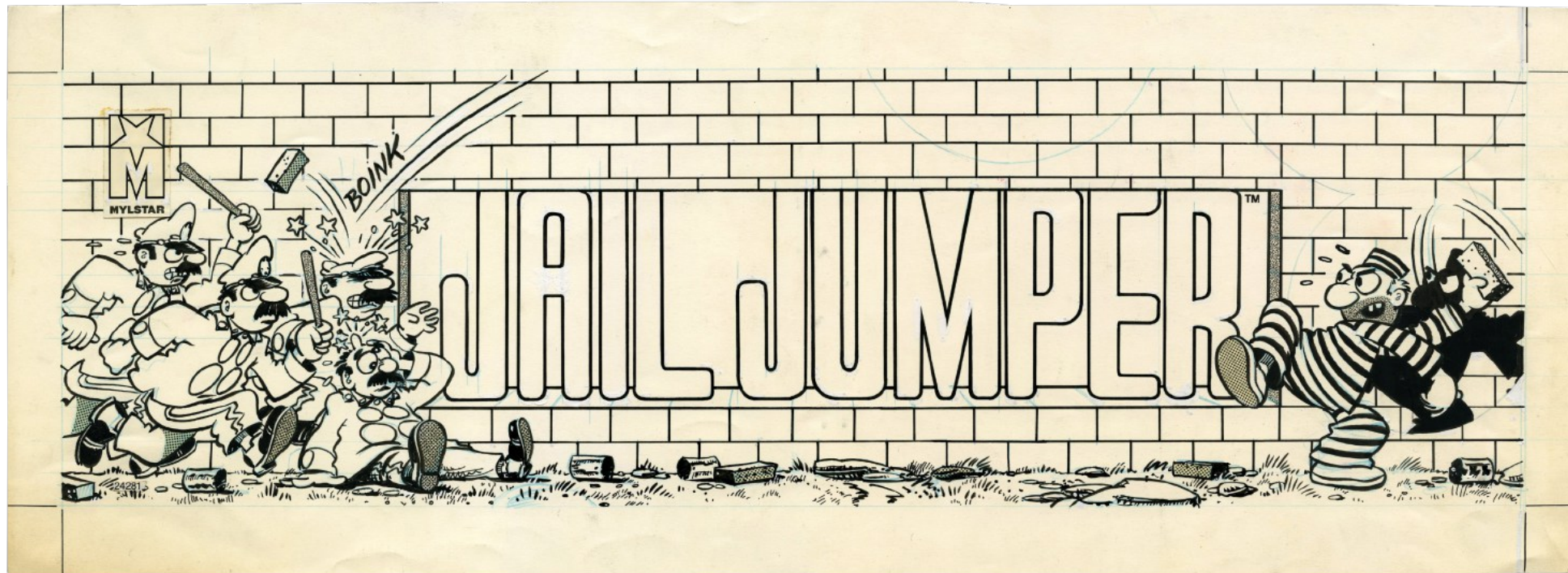


The arcade community has long debated whether a Screw Loose release was ever planned, and the existence of this preliminary marker pen marquee design by Larry suggests that Gottlieb did plan to go into production, before the market changed and the project was cancelled.





This is the final marquee artwork in pen and ink on a two-ply plate Bristol board.  
Jail Jumper is an unreleased Mylstar prototype developed by Steve Pacheco.  
The game was completed and ready to go into production when Mylstar closed.



# DAN SOULSBY INTERVIEW

**Self-confessed coin-op fanatic, Dan Soulsby talks to us about his love for the arcades and his passion for arcade machine restorations.**

**Founded in 1993 as a graphics printing company, Escape Pod moved into creating reproduction arcade cabinet artwork when founder Dan Soulsby – himself a coin-op fanatic – found himself looking for ways to generate business during the slower winter months. Frustrated by the fact that other companies offering this service produced low-quality art which took ages to print, Soulsby made it his aim to become the go-to source for arcade restoration projects.**

**What was the first game you played, and what impact did it have on you?**

DS: The first game I remember going crazy for was Missile Command at Game Trek in Madison, Ohio. I would ride my BMX bike six miles each way to waste 10 bucks in quarters! Afterwards, I would wash it down with a milkshake from Arby's before riding back home.

**"I would ride my BMX bike six miles each way to waste 10 bucks in quarters!"**

**What's your favourite video game of all time?**

DS: Defender. When I was in sixth grade, my dad bought a full-size Defender from some guy and we ended up putting it in our family room. We would battle non-stop trying to achieve the highest score, but my Dad would always beat me. He would mark his score on an index card and slide it into the bottom of the marquee. Whenever I finally beat it, he would top my score and make a new card the next day.

**When did you become involved with restoring arcade cabinets, and what was the motivation behind creating Escape Pod?**

DS: I took a Double Dragon cabinet as partial payment on a sign we made for a customer. It had a Mortal Kombat board inside which wasn't working and we became interested in what was needed to restore it. After some research, we fixed the broken buttons and joysticks, added LEDs for the marquee and printed all new art for it. I posted some images online to show off our hard work and a local collector reached out to us. He needed some NFL Blitz control panel artwork that no one else was selling, so he brought his cabinet to us and our artwork reproduction started from there.

**Could you talk us through the process of restoring and creating arcade artwork?**

DS: It all starts with NOS (New Old Stock) prints or access to a machine that is in awesome shape that we can scan. Once we have the files, we can begin tracing each line and filling in the colour.

**What would you say has been the hardest restoration project you've undertaken so far?**

DS: Food Fight was by far one of the most difficult games to bring back to life. I found an Arch Rivals game in what appeared to be a Food Fight cabinet with painted sides to cover the original art. Sometimes operators painted cabinets black when adding a new game with a conversion board. After stripping off the paint, we found the underlying artwork to be badly damaged. We scanned it at our shop and my wife used her iPad to hand trace the original art. A friend of mine allowed me to match the colours to his Food Fight cabinet.

Luckily, I was able to trade with fellow collectors for the cone buttons and the rare Foodfight joystick. At that point, all that was left was to buy a wire harness and connect it to the board to finish the cab.





Dan, proudly standing next to his Defender cabinet.



Food Fight has been Dan's most challenging restoration to date.





Best part was the actual board was still inside the cab. I love a challenge, and this project took almost a year to come together. It's tremendously satisfying to restore a game when only 1,951 cabinets ever existed.

**Do you have any cabinet art which stands out as a personal favourite?**

DS: I love the Tempest art; it's so complex and frightening, not to mention it's one of my favourite vector games. The artwork took us a long time to complete due to the incredible amount of detail and shapes. It was worth every hour as we're now able to help collectors bring this game back to life.

**Given that the arcade scene has diminished dramatically since its glory days, why do you think the process of buying and restoring these cabinets has become so popular with collectors?**

DS: I think people want to own a piece of their past; it's like putting a time machine in your basement. Every time you lay your hands on the controls and hear the music start up, it's like stepping right into 1983.

Left: The side art for Tempest is a personal favourite of Dan's.

**"I have about 60 cabinets. I'm always buying, selling or picking up cabinets that we need to recreate artwork. The highlights of my collection are the rare gems like Ice Cold Beer, Tapper and Food Fight!"**

**How many cabinets do you own personally, and what's the highlight of your own collection?**

DS: I have about 60 cabinets. I'm always buying, selling or picking up cabinets that we need to recreate artwork. The highlights of my collection are the rare gems like Ice Cold Beer, Tapper and Food Fight. I'm also a huge fan of Nintendo cabs so I love having a Nintendo row with classics like Donkey Kong, Donkey Kong Jr, Popeye, Donkey Kong 3 PlayChoice and some customs we made, like Dr. Mario, Super Mario Bros., Castlevania and Duck Hunt.

**What advice would you give to somebody who is considering investing in an arcade cabinet that may require restoration work?**

DS: Make friends online. The arcade community is filled with fantastic people who are eager to help you out. When I have a question, I post it on one of the forums and I'll get answers back within minutes. It's a worldwide phenomenon and the Internet lends itself perfectly to arcade restoration. Want to re-cap a monitor? Watch a video online. Need to solder a board? There's a step-by-step tutorial. Finally, some advice I've learned the hard way: always discharge a monitor before working on it!

**Like any piece of technology, arcade games aren't going to last forever. Given the advanced age of many of these units – units that were perhaps only intended to be in active service for a few years – do you think there will be a time when it will no longer be viable to restore these machines? Or will we simply see enthusiasts like yourself continue to replace and fix failing parts for the foreseeable future?**

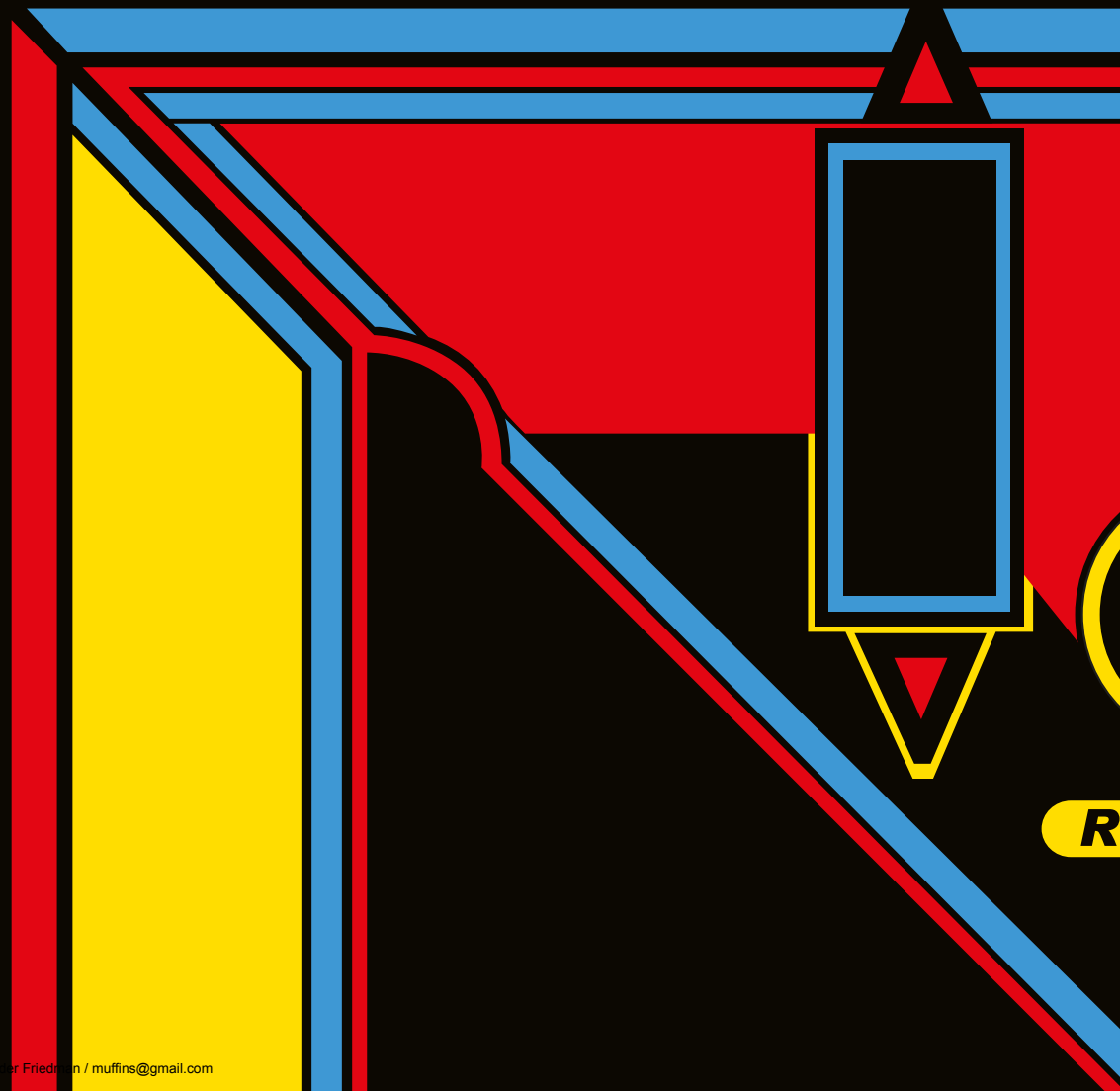
DS: They only made about 132,000 Donkey Kong machines in the '80s, but now, the CNC files are widely available online and collectors are building exact replicas of all their favourite titles. I just built three! The reproduction market, which we're happy to be a part of, is working diligently on finding ways to bring these classics back to life. It'll be sad when the old cabinets break down beyond repair, but that won't stop anybody from being able to recreate the same experience.

**When do you think a game should have new artwork?**

DS: Side art can wait if it's hidden between other games in your collection. CPO, bezel and marquee are a different story since they are easily seen all the time. Your eyes are always on the screen, so a bezel is a definite replacement, especially since they can get scratched over time, making it difficult to see the game, which can therefore affect gameplay. Sometimes, the best thing is to do nothing at all. Leave it worn out and beaten up. I like when the sides of a Pac-Man are rubbed down from years of hands holding on for dear life!

# HOW-TO GUIDE

Ever wondered exactly how you go about taking your favourite battered arcade cabinet and restoring it to a level where it looks like it just rolled off the production line? This process is taxing and challenging, but immensely rewarding and incredibly worthwhile, especially if you want a unit that matches your memories. In this section, Escape Pod's Chas Irish explains how to transform that battle-worn coin-op into a fresh-looking gaming monster.





**1** *PLAYER*

**2** *PLAYER*

*THRUST*

*FIRE*

# STAR TM GATE

*SMARTBOMB*

*EVERSE*

*INVISO*

*HYPERSPACE*

When recreating or restoring arcade artwork, the style of art determines which method we use to make a print-ready file. There are two different methods used to bring artwork back to life. We spoke to Chas Irish – Graphic Designer at Escape Pod who has put together this guide on how to do it.

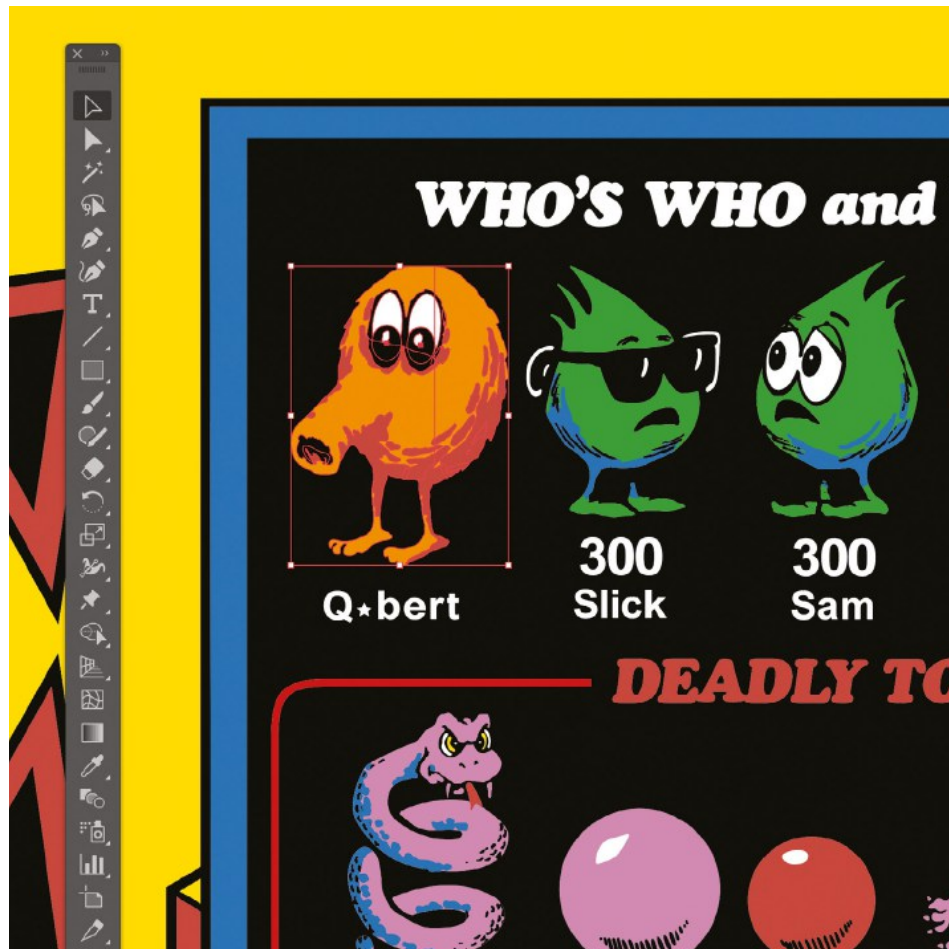


## Recreating the Artwork With Vectorisation

Vector programs, such as CorelDraw and Adobe Illustrator allow us to create shapes that remain editable at any step in the artwork process. The computer holds the values of the lines and colours used. Because of this, vector images are not constrained by size and will not appear pixellated at any point. Primarily, we use this method on games with simplified, cartoon artwork and it grants us the ability to change the image to fit a variety of arcade cabinets. Arcade cabinets with stencilled side art also utilise this process. The machine that creates stencils uses vector artwork to know how to cut the material.

## Restoring the Artwork

Complex images need to be scanned and restored using a bitmap program, like Adobe Photoshop. Certain arcade art was created with photographs, or was painted. Also, there are types of cartoon artwork that made use of halftones to mimic shadows and gradients. Cleaning and restoring the original image is the only process we can use in situations like these.



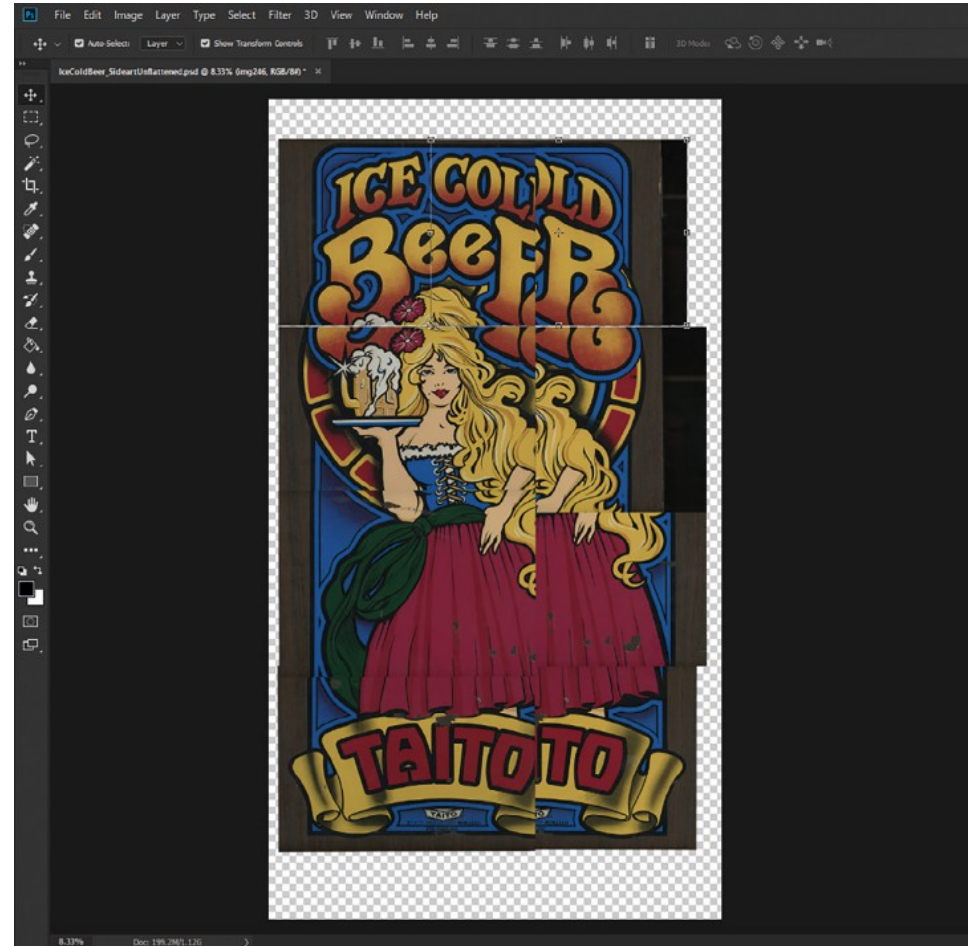
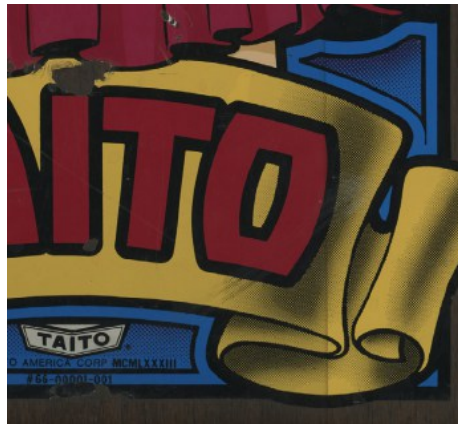
## 1. Scanning

Our first step to restoring artwork is to scan the original image into the computer. Sometimes we have the luxury of finding original artwork that has yet to be applied to an arcade machine. If so, we can use a wide-format scanner to digitise the artwork in one piece. However, this isn't the norm and, the majority of the time, pieces are stitched together using a desktop scanner. Handheld document scanners can't be used to scan artwork because they can't replicate an image consistently.



## 2. Stitching

With the artwork digitised, all of the scans are laid out into the correct locations and straightened in Photoshop. Edges of the overlapped images are erased in order to merge everything into one complete scan. Scanning and stitching are both part of the vectorisation process, although precision is not as important. A new image will be drawn on top of the original scan.





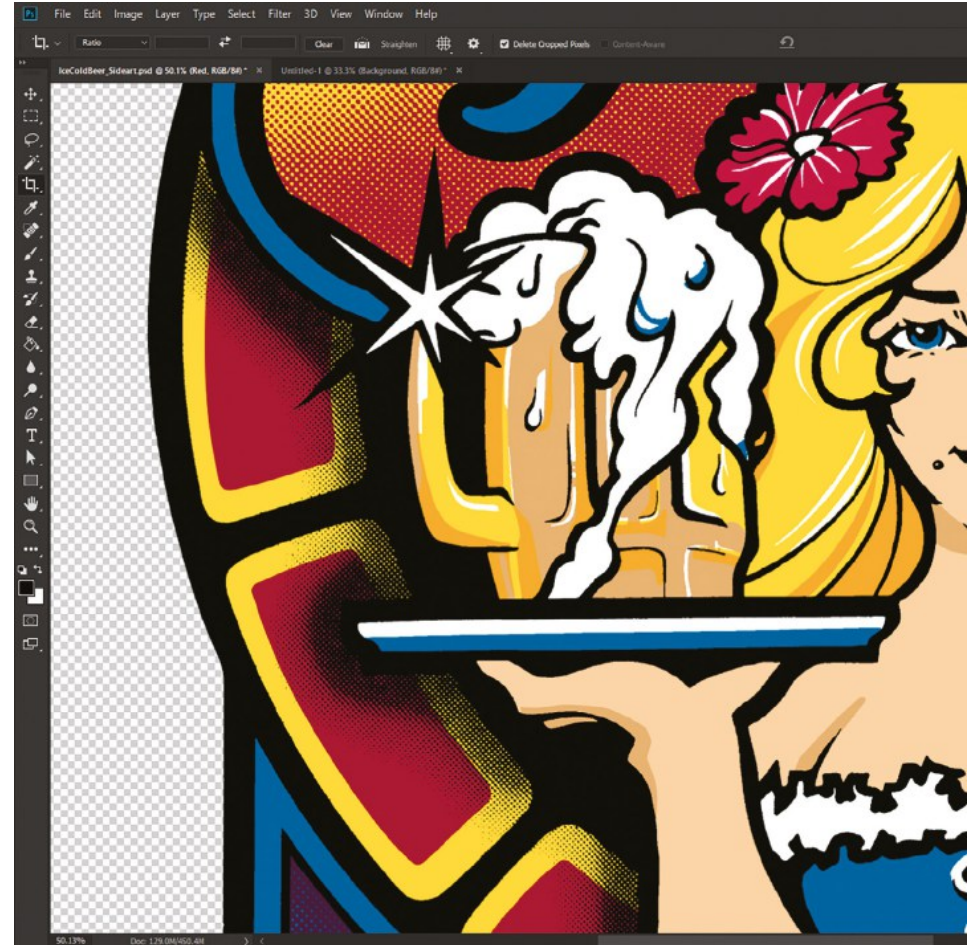
### 3. Cleaning

Once all of the scans are merged into a single image, imperfections, tears and dirty areas are cleaned and repaired. Photoshop has a variety of tools to achieve this. One of the most useful tools is the Clone Stamp; this allows us to grab a spot from an image and draw it in another area.



### 4. Isolating Colours

With a clean image, we can begin the colour separation. Through various methods in Photoshop, each colour is isolated into a separate layer. Every piece of artwork is different, but black is almost always the top layer – this is because it's the easiest colour to isolate. The other colours are laid out in a hierarchy which matches the artwork best. For example, in Ice Cold Beer, the white layer sits above the yellow of the hair.



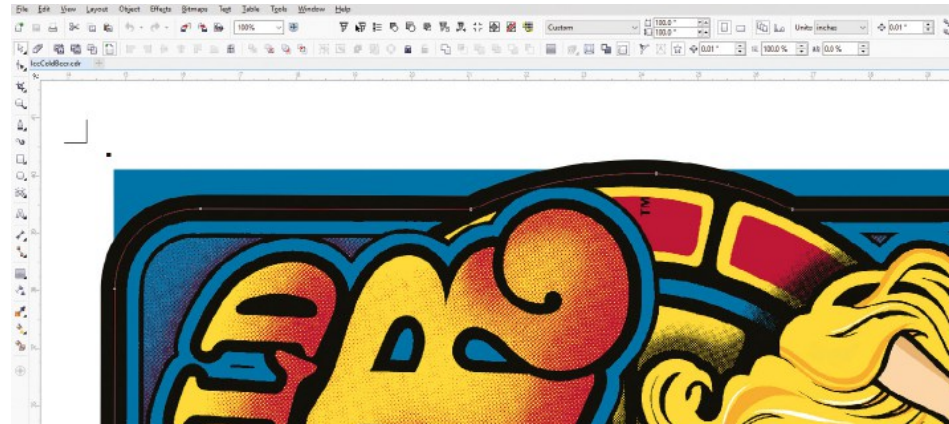
## 5. Colour Matching

After the colours are isolated, they can be matched to the original artwork. We use colour swatches printed on the same machine that prints the final artwork. This way we know our colours are accurate to those we are matching. Test prints are always created to ensure that our file has the correct colours.



## 6. Creating a Cut Line

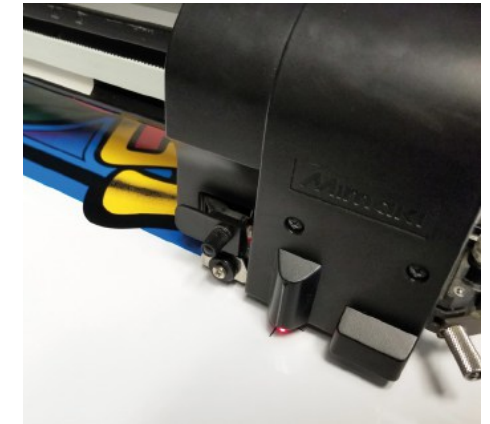
Side art decals need a cut line to be matched to the original artwork properly. A vinyl plotter requires this line to understand how to cut around the printed art. A vector program is used to create this line. Even though we've used Photoshop thus far to restore our art, it now needs to be imported into a program like CorelDraw or Illustrator.



The cut line is placed in a separate layer and is hidden from the print file. We want the plotter to know where to cut, but it's not something that needs to be printed. If the border on the artwork is a colour other than white, a bleed is necessary. A bleed is excess colour on the outside of the cut line to ensure that the border is cut without any white showing.

## 7. Printing

Finally, with the artwork restored, colours matched and cut line created, the file is ready for print. At Escape Pod, we print onto 3M vinyl with a large format printer. After printing, a 3M outdoor laminate is applied to protect the print from scratching and to prevent fading from sunlight for years to come. The art can now be cut on the plotter. Marks are printed in all corners that are read by the plotter, and it then follows the path of the cut line to match the original artwork perfectly.



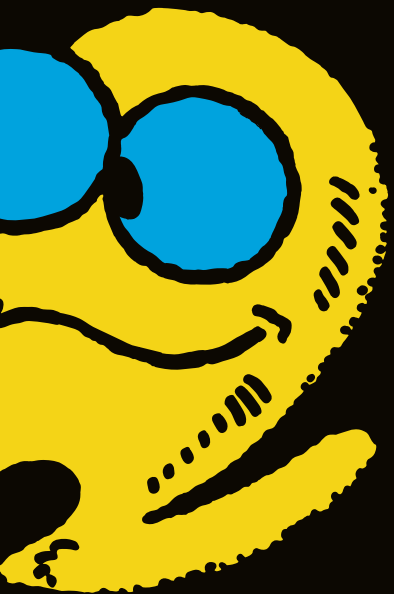
# MARQUEES

Outside of the monitor, the main way arcade machines grab your attention is the marquee artwork – these illuminated panels shine out across the amusement arcade, beckoning players in with stylish logos and attractive imagery. In the early days of the coin-op industry, it could be argued that these small but effective panels were able to make or break a game – especially when the game in question could only muster crude, low-resolution monochrome visuals. Contained within this section you'll find some of the most iconic and eye-catching marquees ever produced.

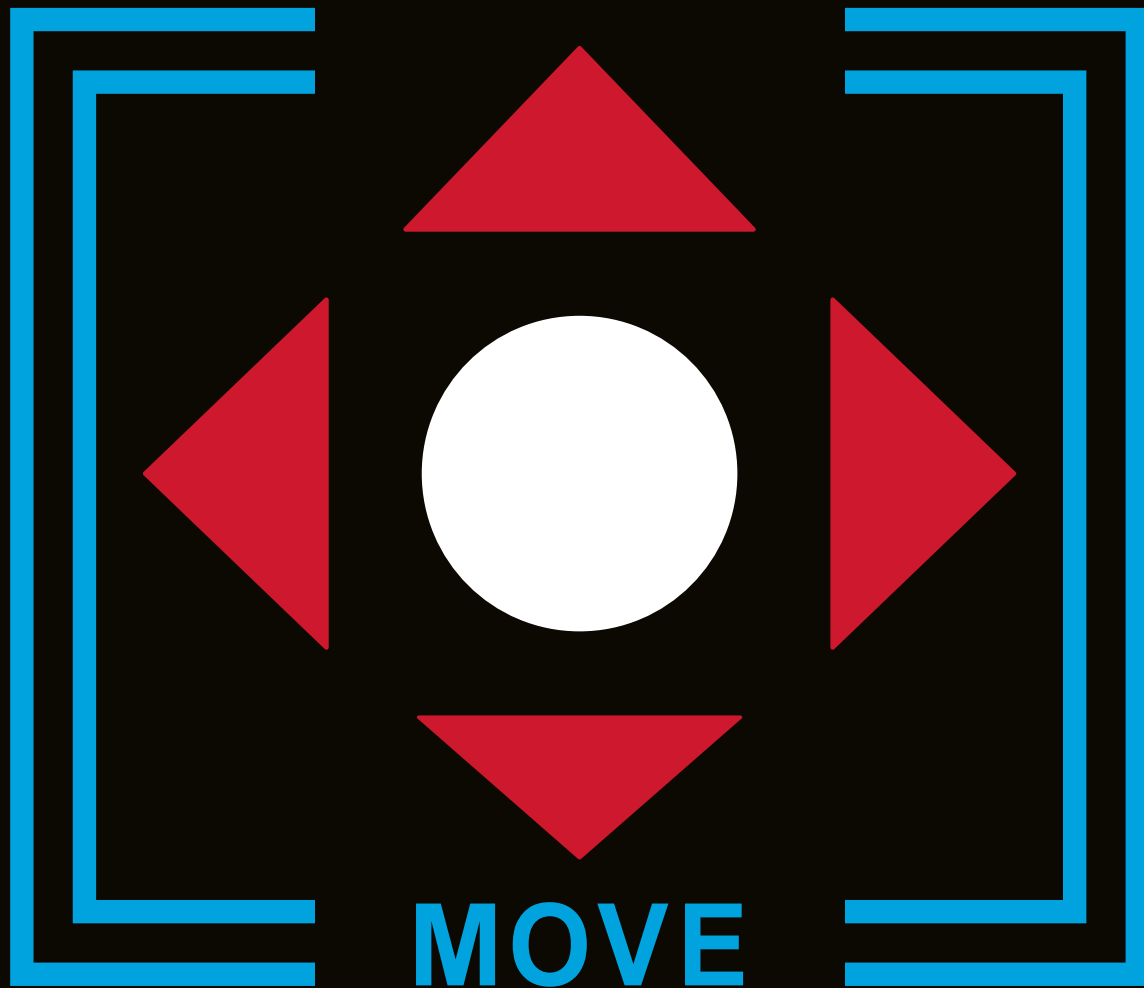


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SERVED



1942 / Capcom

1984





1987

Capcom / 1943: The Battle of Midway







1987

Kyugo / Airwolf

# AIRWOLF™



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UNITED ARTISTS THEATRE AMUSEMENTS, INC.,  
PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA

AIRWOLF™

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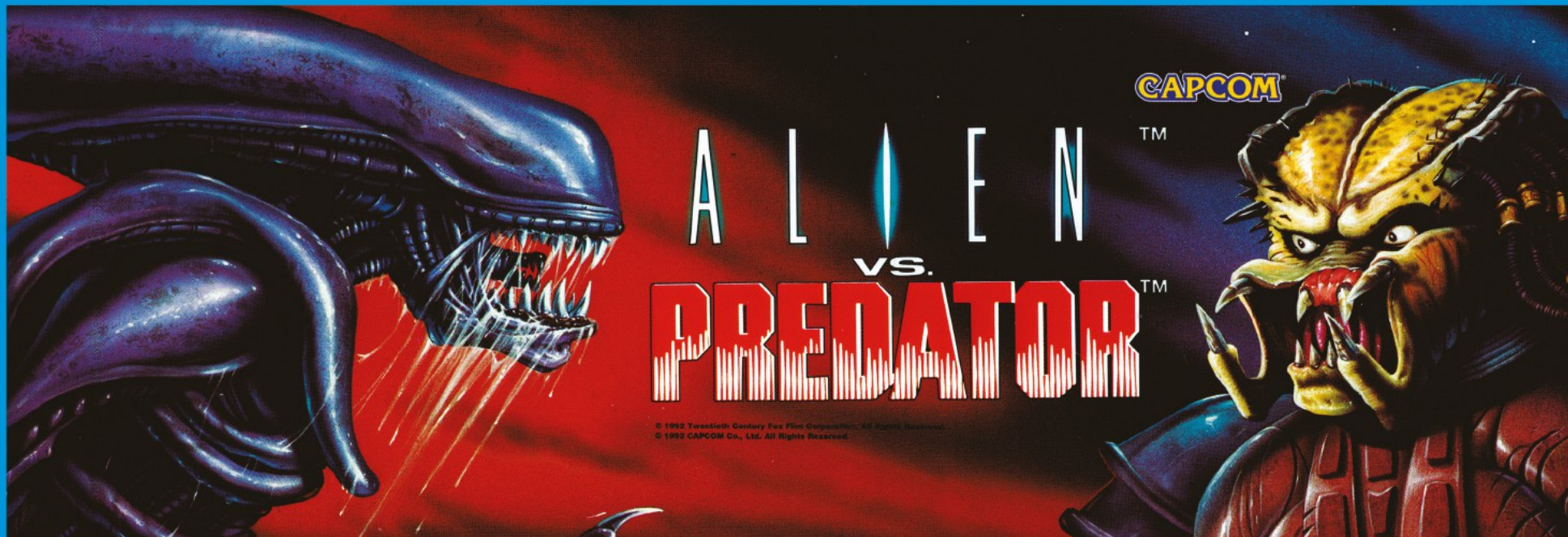






1994

Capcom / Alien vs. Predator







1995

Atari / Area 51



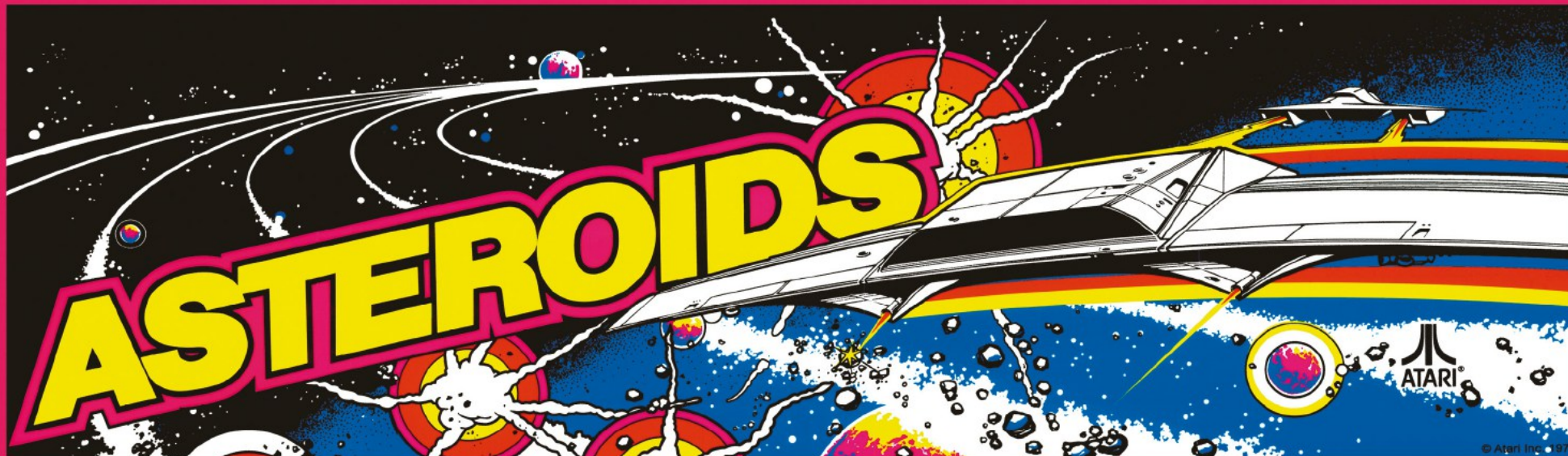


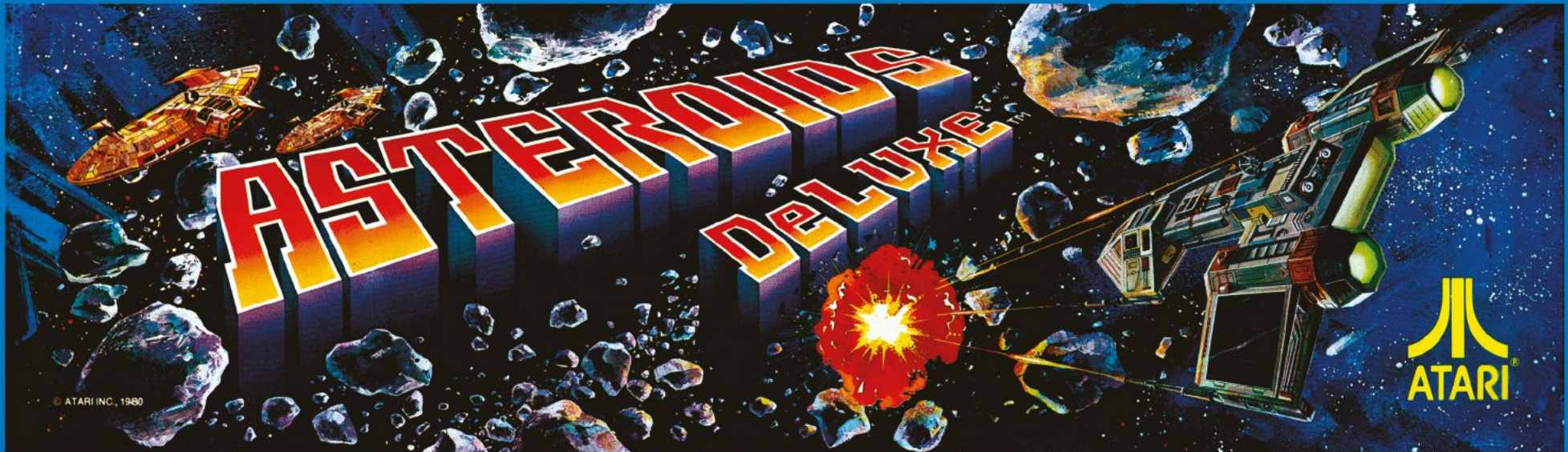




1979

Atari / Asteroids







1980

Konami / Astro Invader

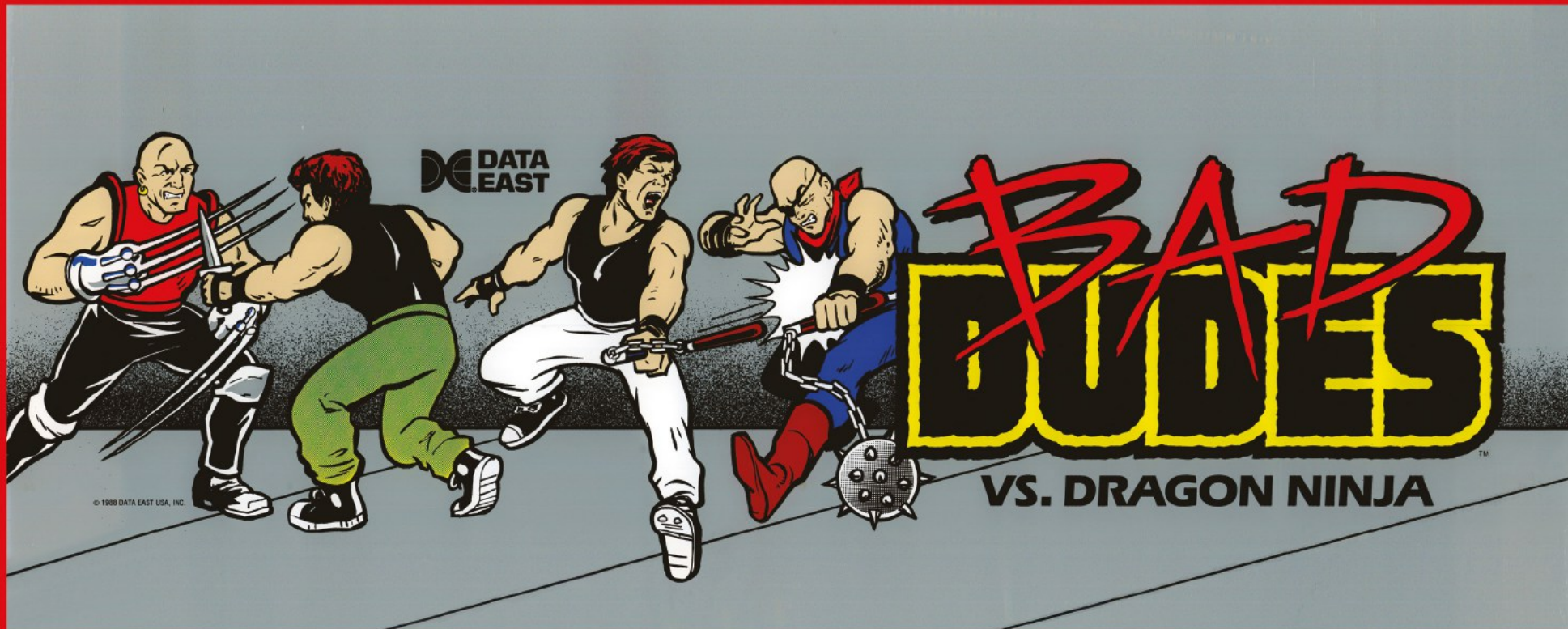




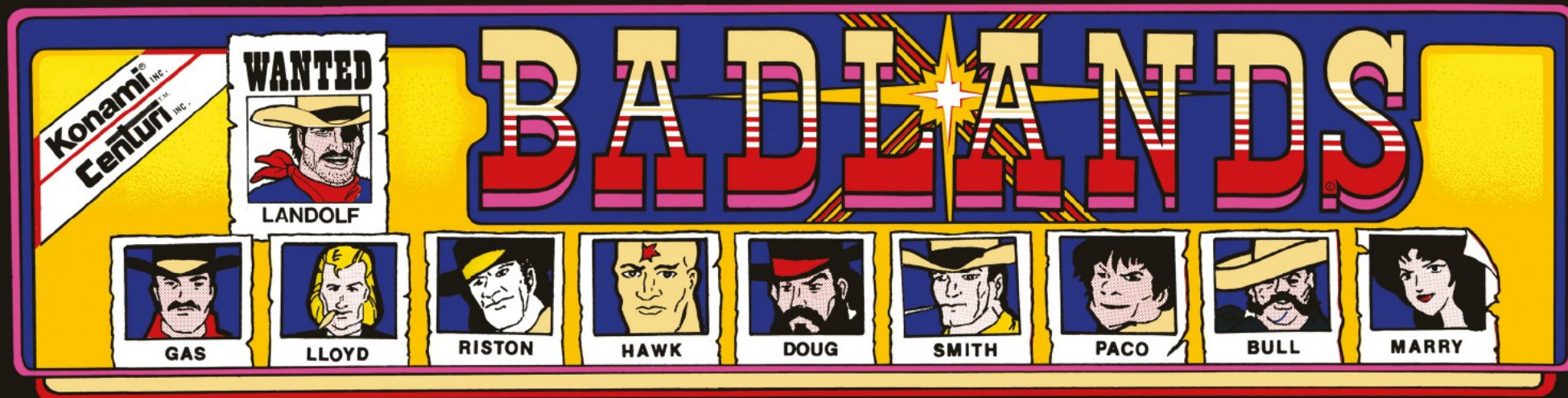


1988

Data East / Bad Dudes vs. Dragon Ninja

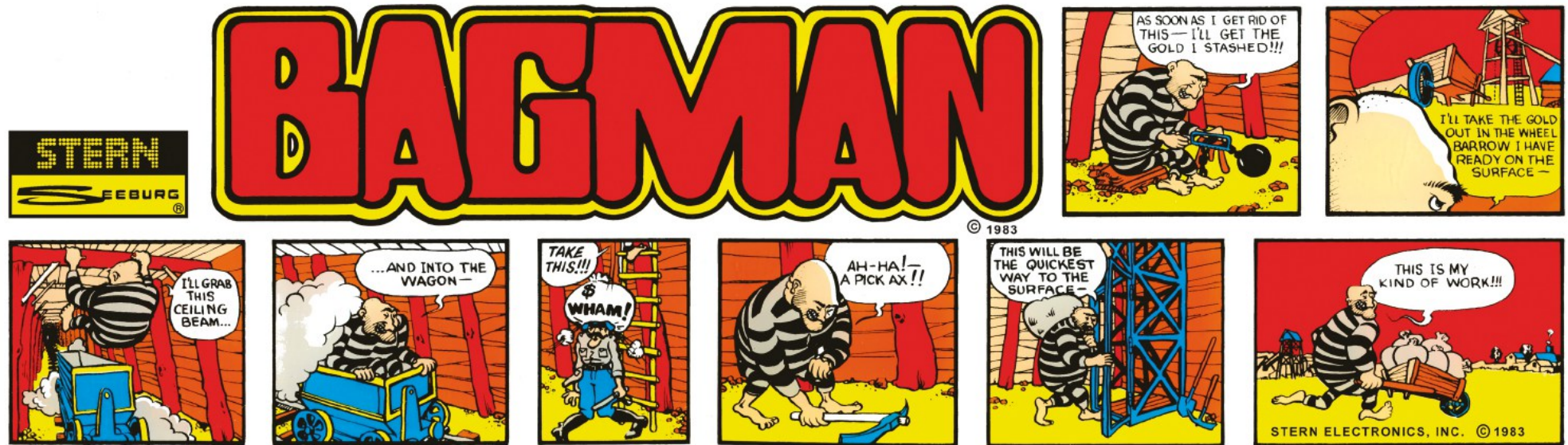






1983

Valadon Automation / Bagman









1980

Atari / Battlezone







1980

Stern / Berzerk



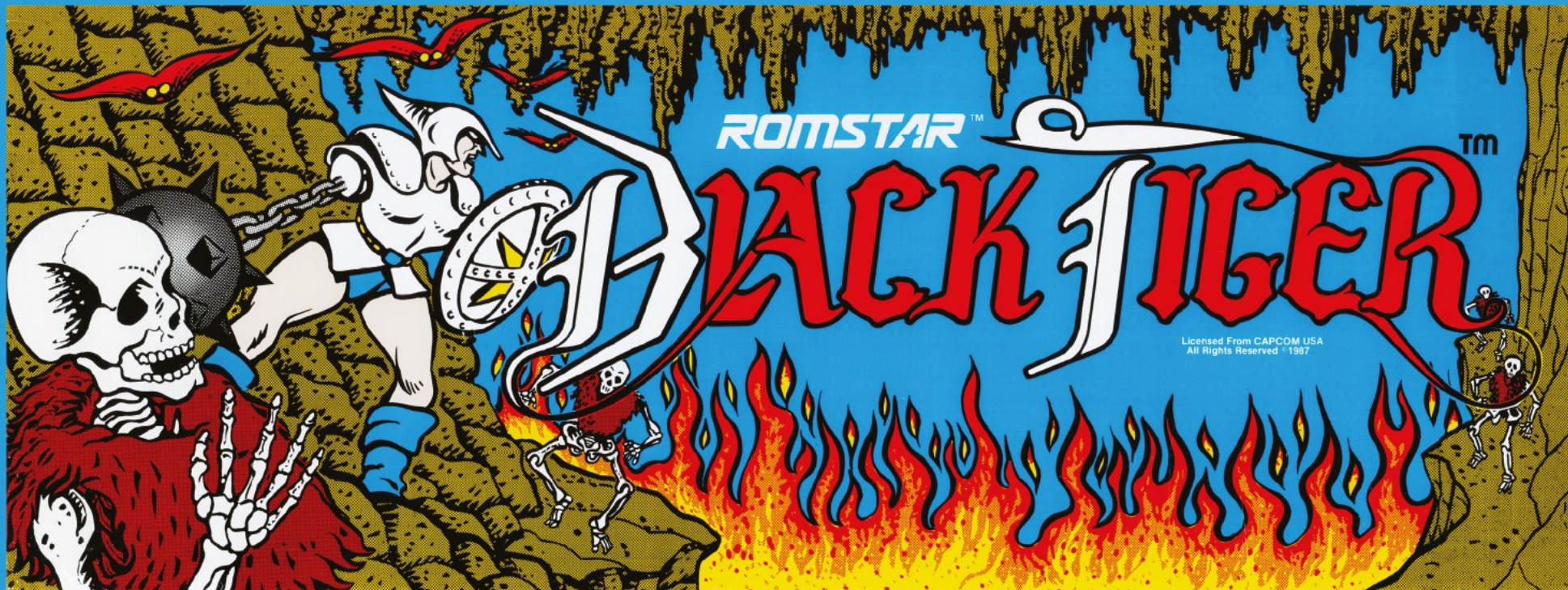






1987

Capcom / Black Tiger



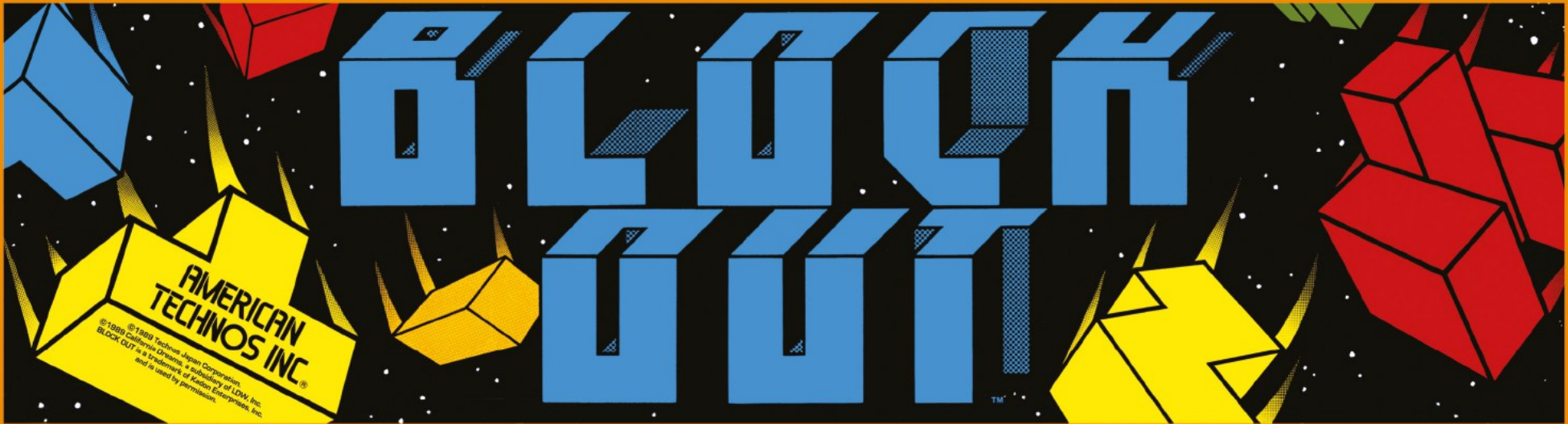




1983

Williams / Blaster



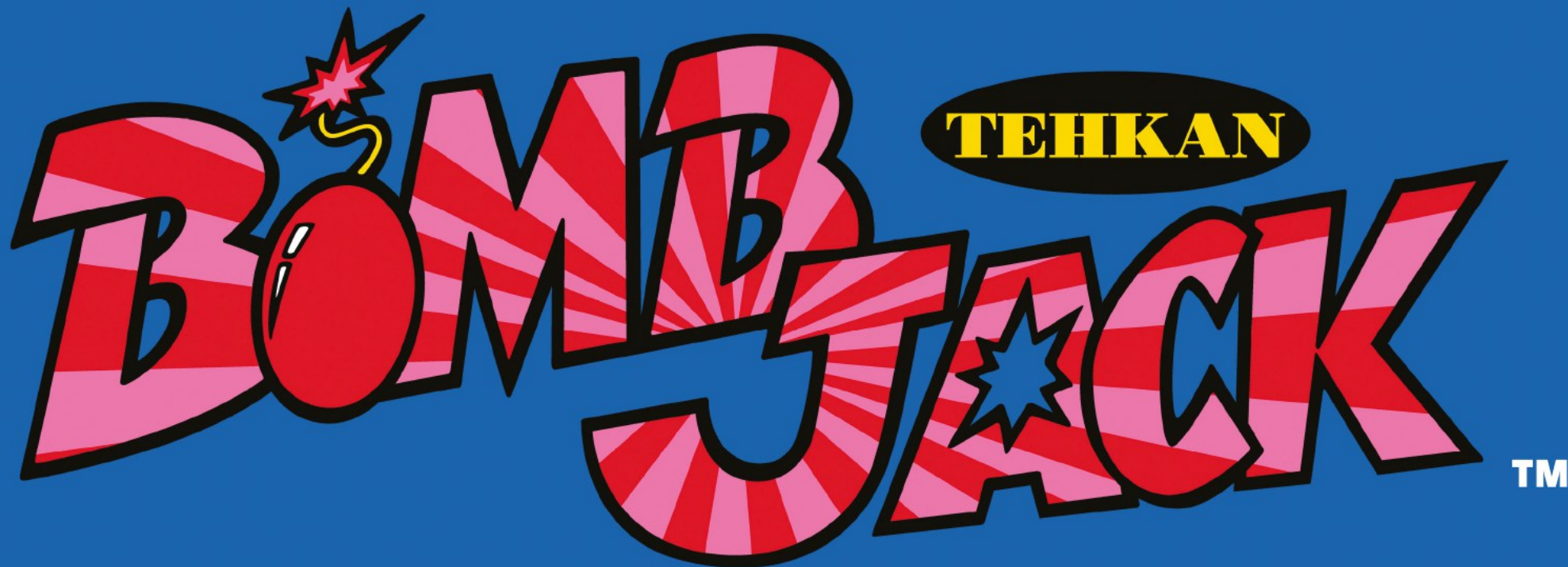




1982

Bally Midway / Blue Print







1990

SEGA / Bonanza Bros.







1991

P&P Marketing / Bowl-O-Rama







1992

Konami / Bucky O'Hare

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**BUCKY  
O'HARE™**







1982

SEGA / Buck Rogers



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1982

Data East / BurgerTime





1981  
SUITABLE  
FOR  
ALL AGES



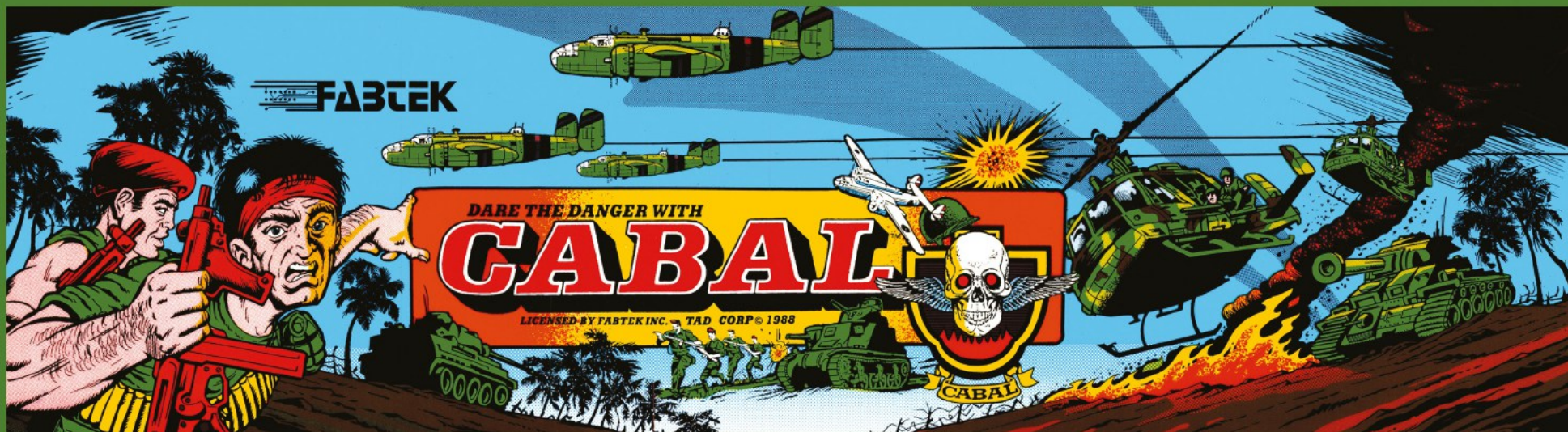






1988

TAD Corporation / Cabal







1981

Atari / Centipede







1988

Taito / Chase H.Q.







1985

SEGA / Choplifter





# CIRCUS CHARLIE



TM





1983

Atari / Cloak & Dagger







1985

Capcom / Commando

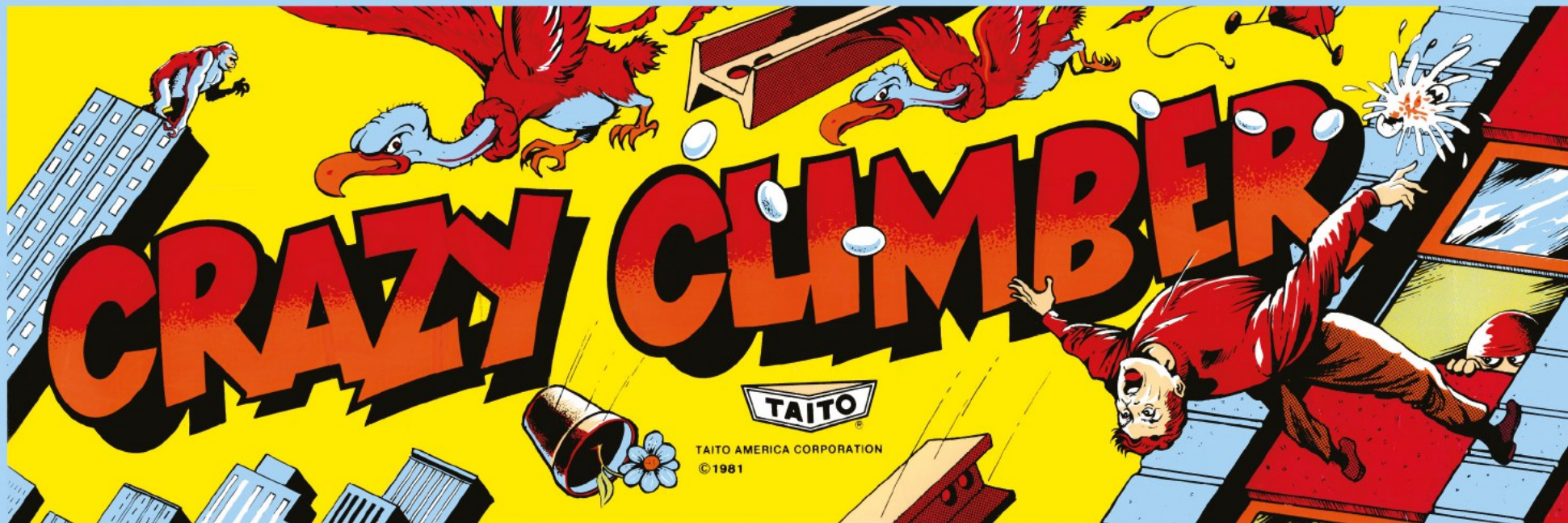






1981

Taito / Crazy Climber



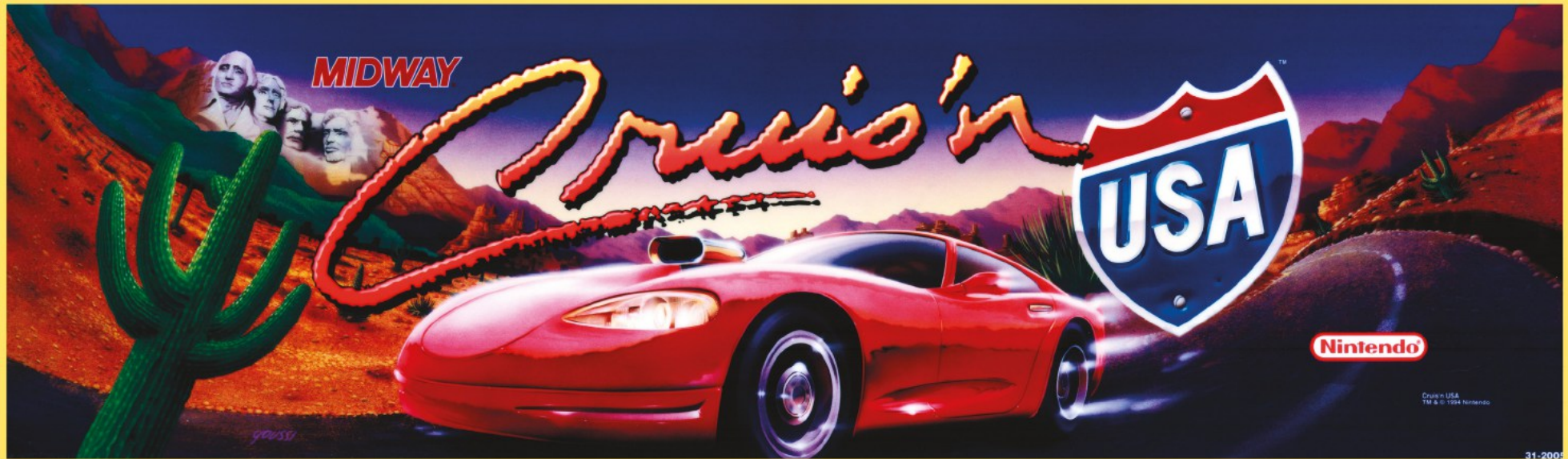




1999

Midway / Cruis'n Exotica







1983

Atari / Crystal Castles







1988

Seibu Kaihatsu / Dead Angle







1981

Williams / Defender







1983

Bally Midway / Domino Man







1983

Nintendo / Donkey Kong 3







1987

Technōs Japan / Double Dragon













1990

Nintendo / Dr. Mario







1980

Centuri / Eagle







1985

Atari / Empire Strikes Back







1989

Capcom / Final Fight







1983

General Computer Corporation / Food Fight







1981

Konami / Frogger







1981

Namco / Galaga







1984

Namco / Gaplus







1988

Capcom / Ghouls 'n Ghosts







1992

SEGA / Golden Axe: The Revenge of Death Adder







1982

Atari / Gravitar













1985

SEGA / Hang-On







1989

Toaplan / Hellfire







1984

Atari / I, Robot



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1993

Irem / In The Hunt

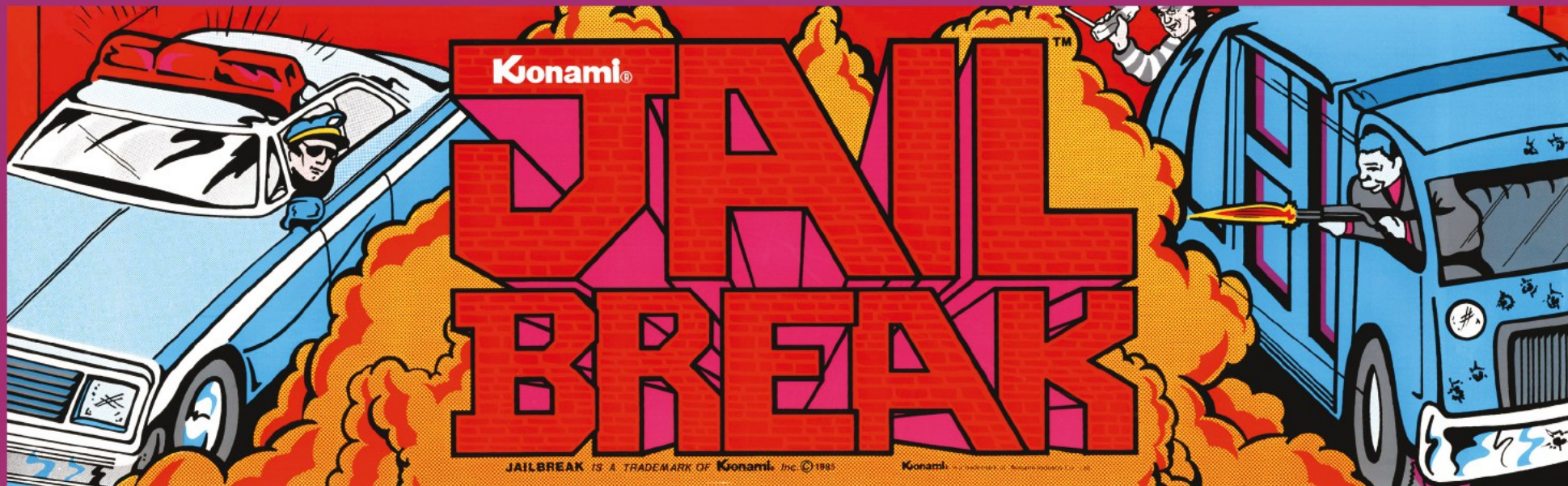


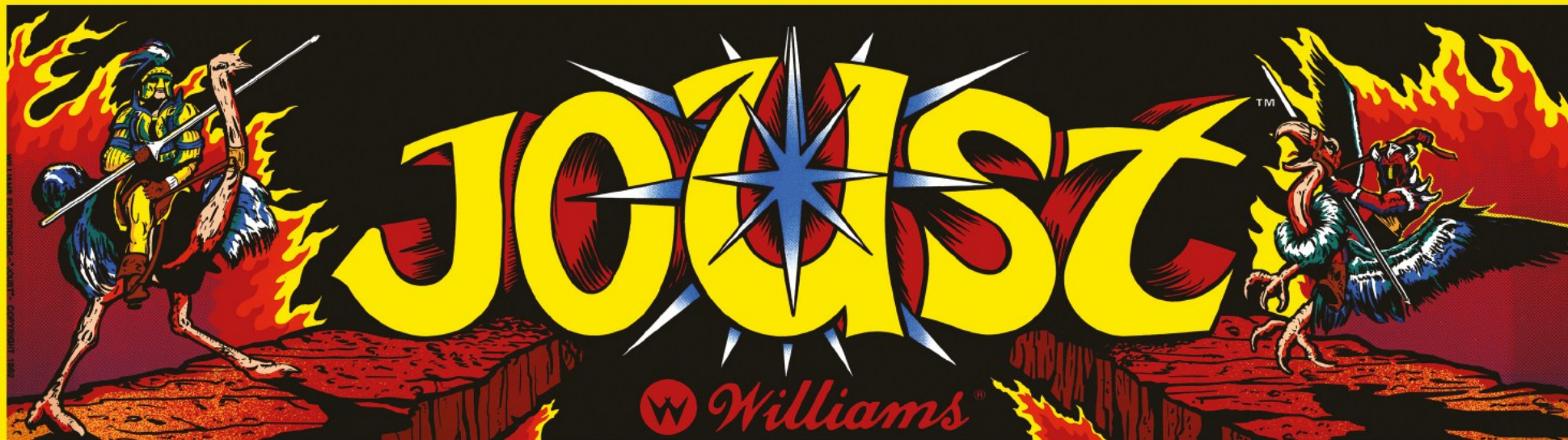




1986

Konami / Jail Break







1982

Taito / Jungle King







1984

Technōs Japan / Karate Champ







1990

Atari / KLAX







1982

Taito / Kram

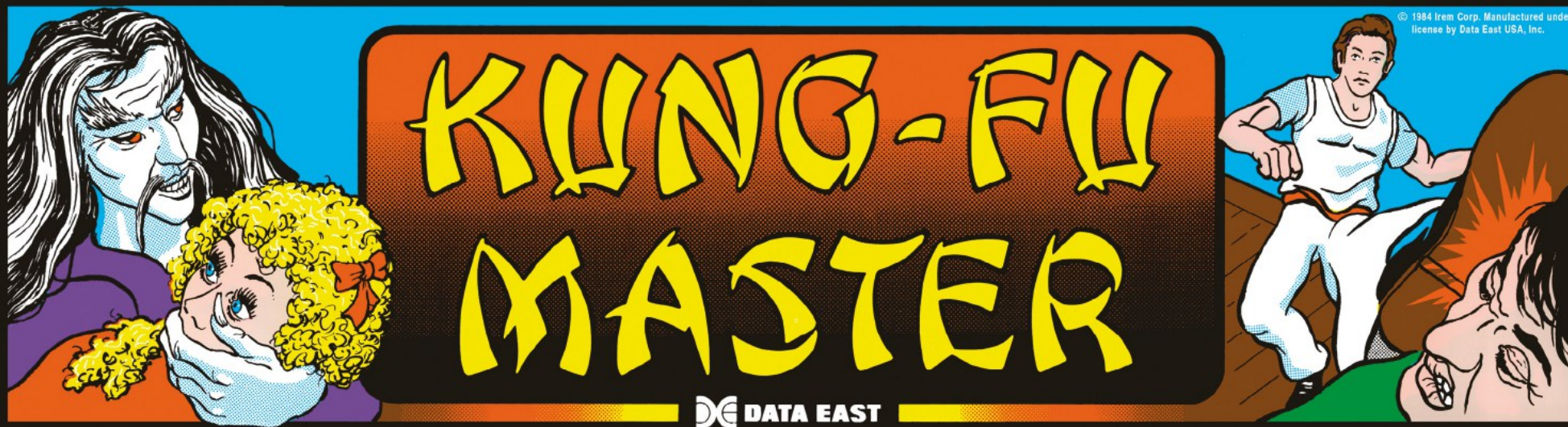






1984

Irem / Kung-Fu Master



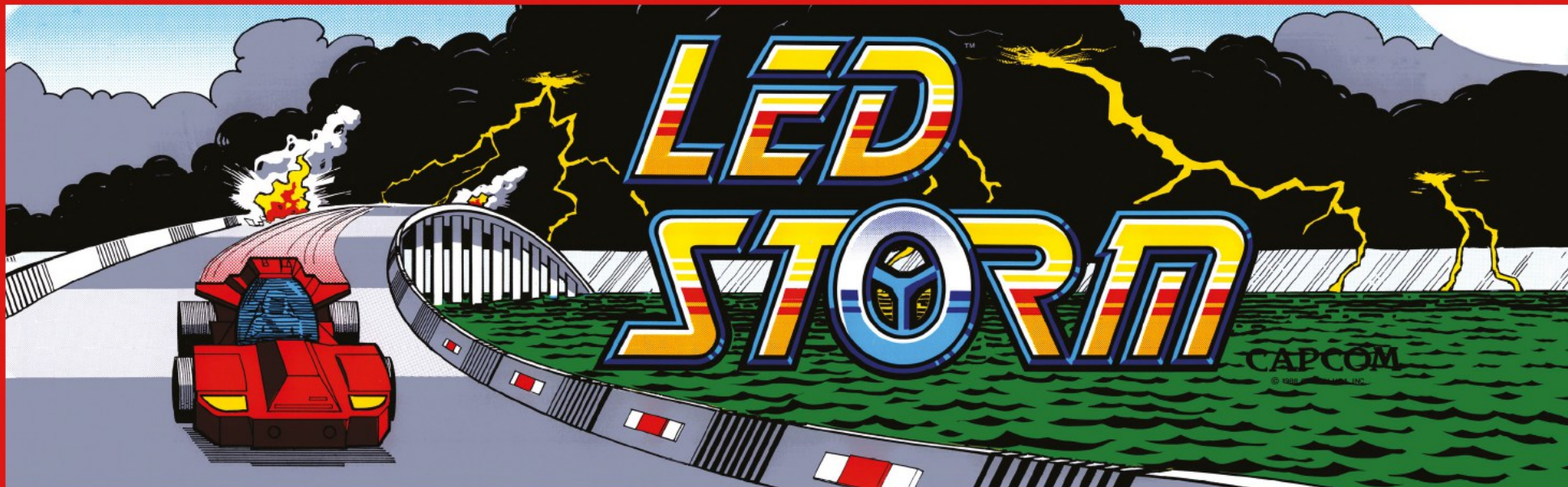






1988

Capcom / LED Storm







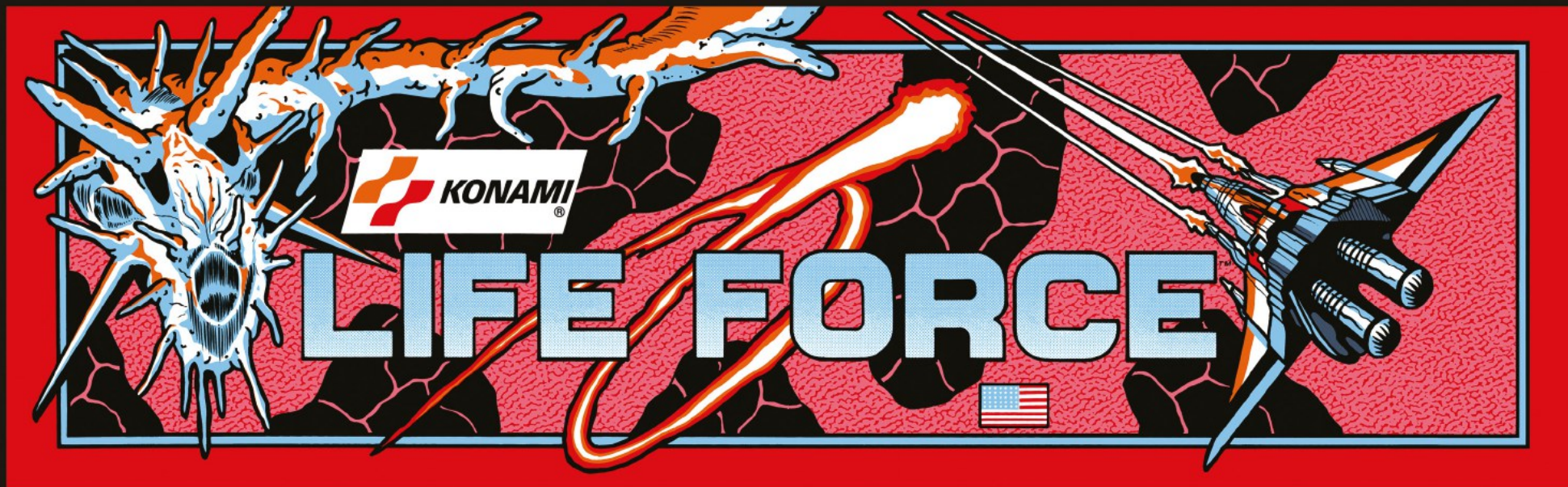






1986

Konami / Life Force

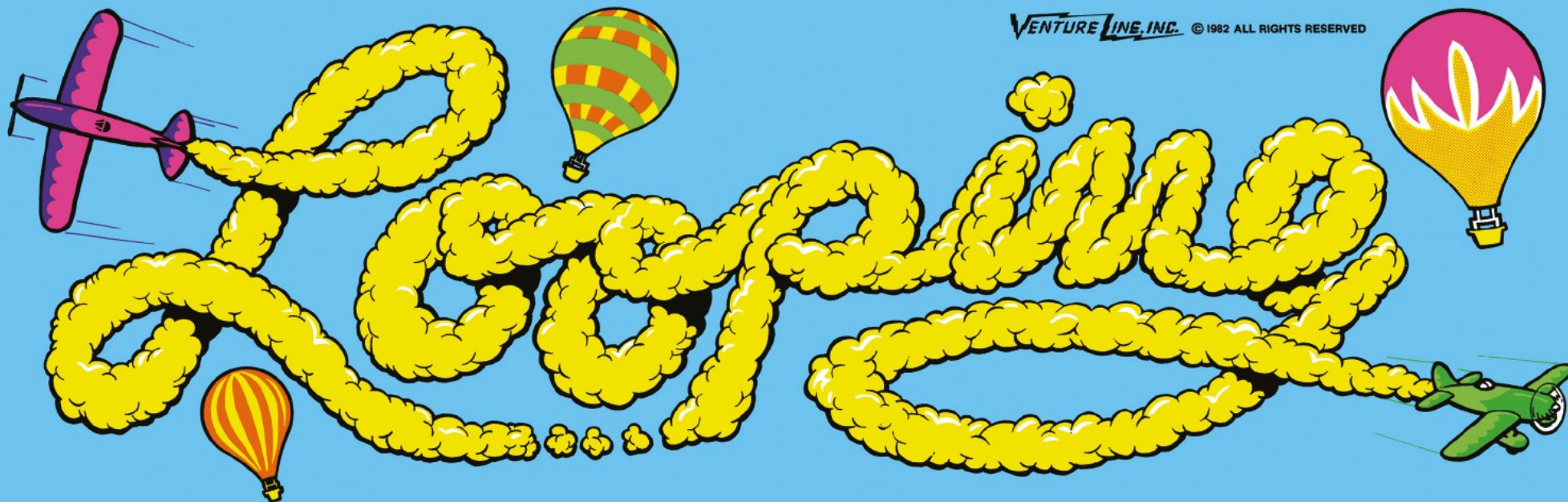






1982

Venture Line Inc. / Looping







1983

Gottlieb / Mad Planets

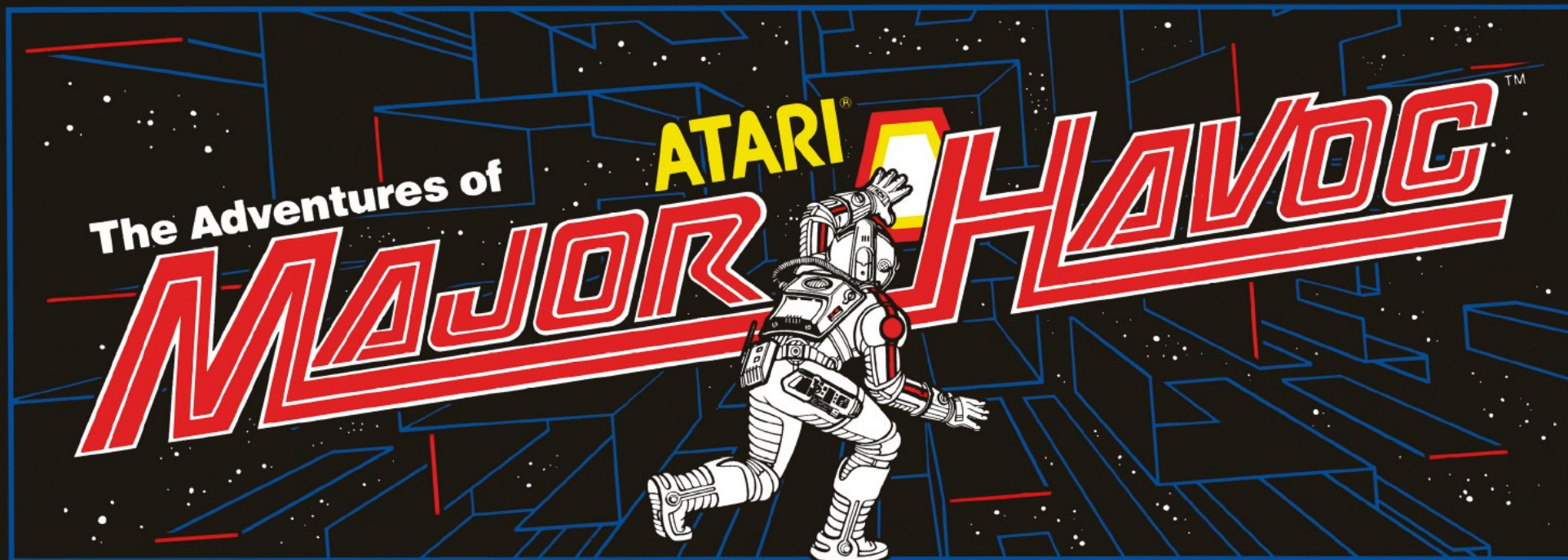






1983

Atari / Major Havoc



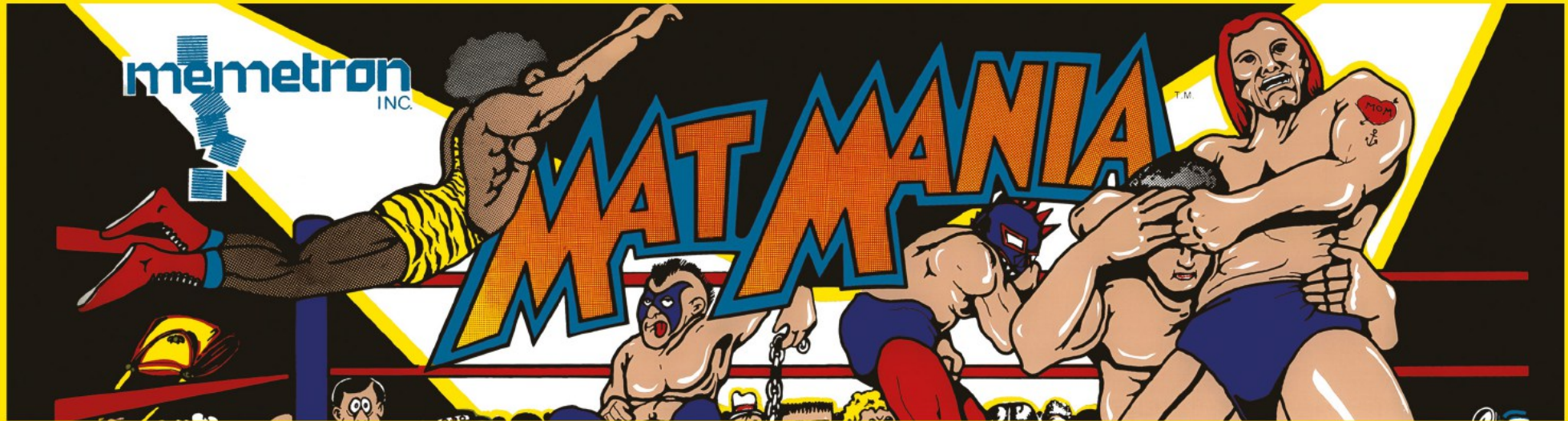




1983

Nintendo / Mario Bros.

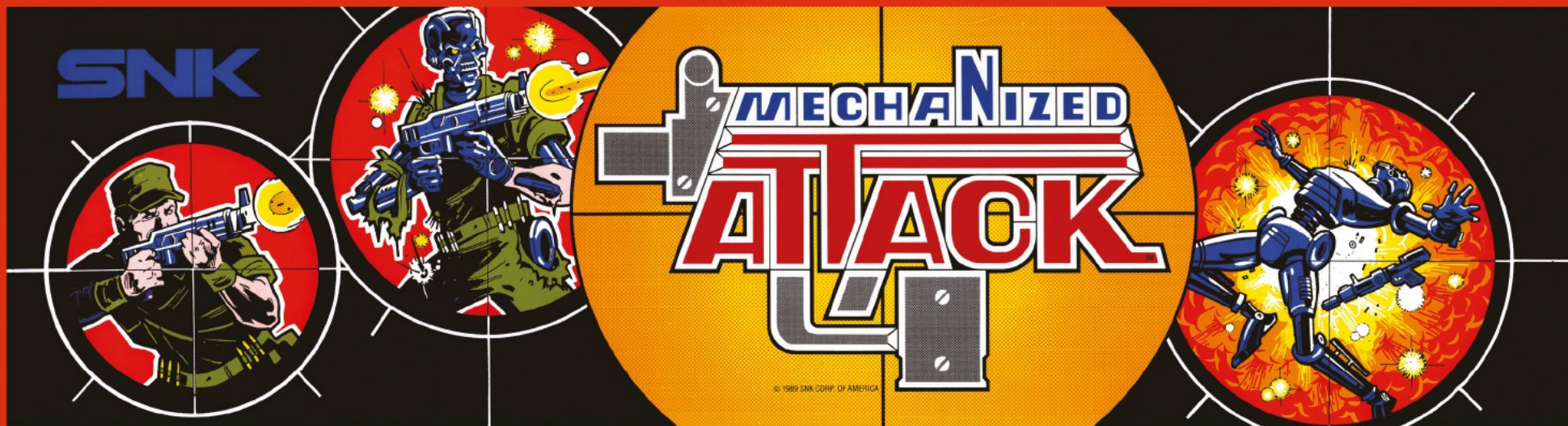


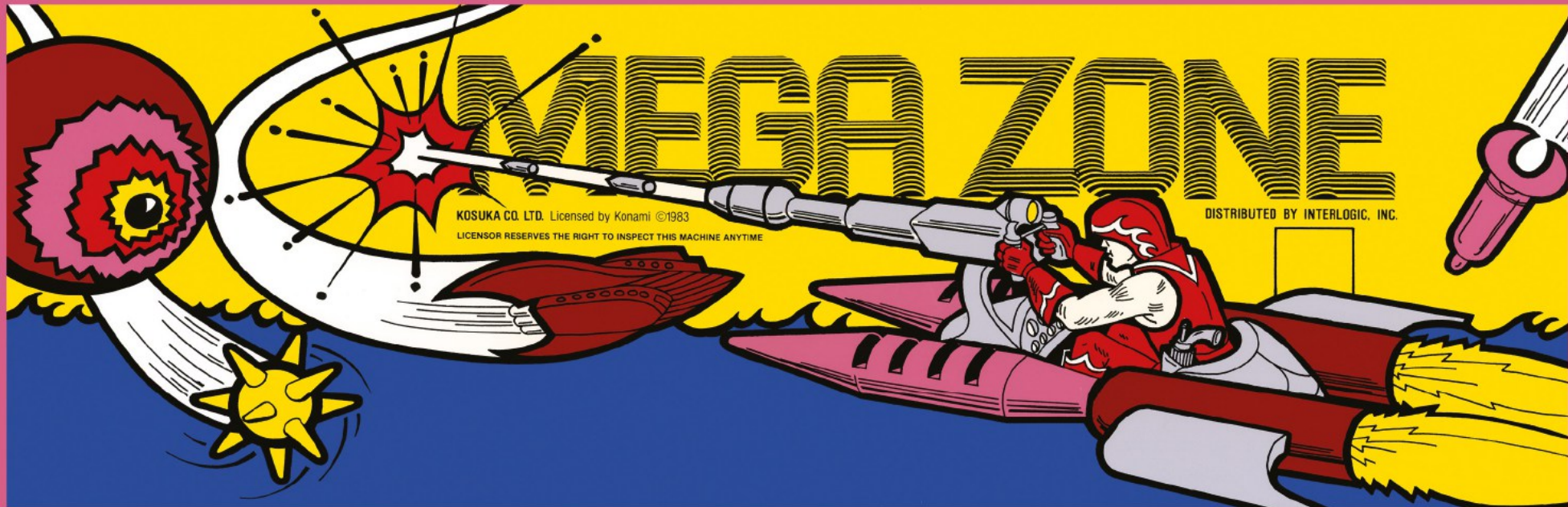




1989

SNK / Mechanized Attack







1989

Data East / Midnight Resistance

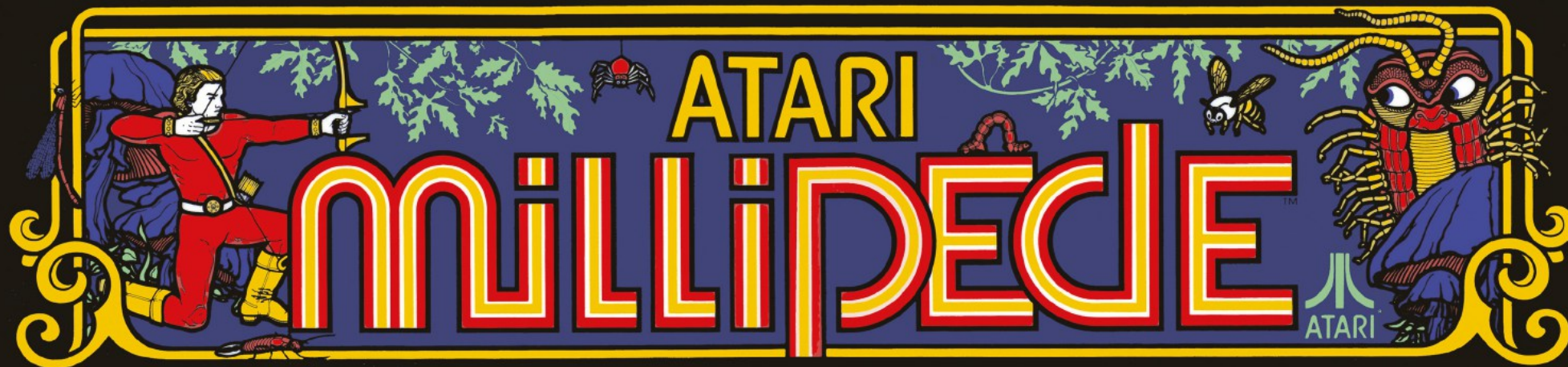






1982

Atari / Millipede







1982

Williams / Moon Patrol









1992

Midway / Mortal Kombat







1982

Universal / Mr. Do!









!#?@!

# Q\*bert

Gottlieb

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## POPEYE



# Mr. Do!'s Castle UNIVERSAL®



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1982

Midway / Ms. Pac-Man



 Williams™



SAY NO  
TO DRUGS!



1993

Midway / NBA Jam







1993

Irem / Ninja Baseball Bat Man







1992

Data East / Nitro Ball







1986

SEGA / Out Run

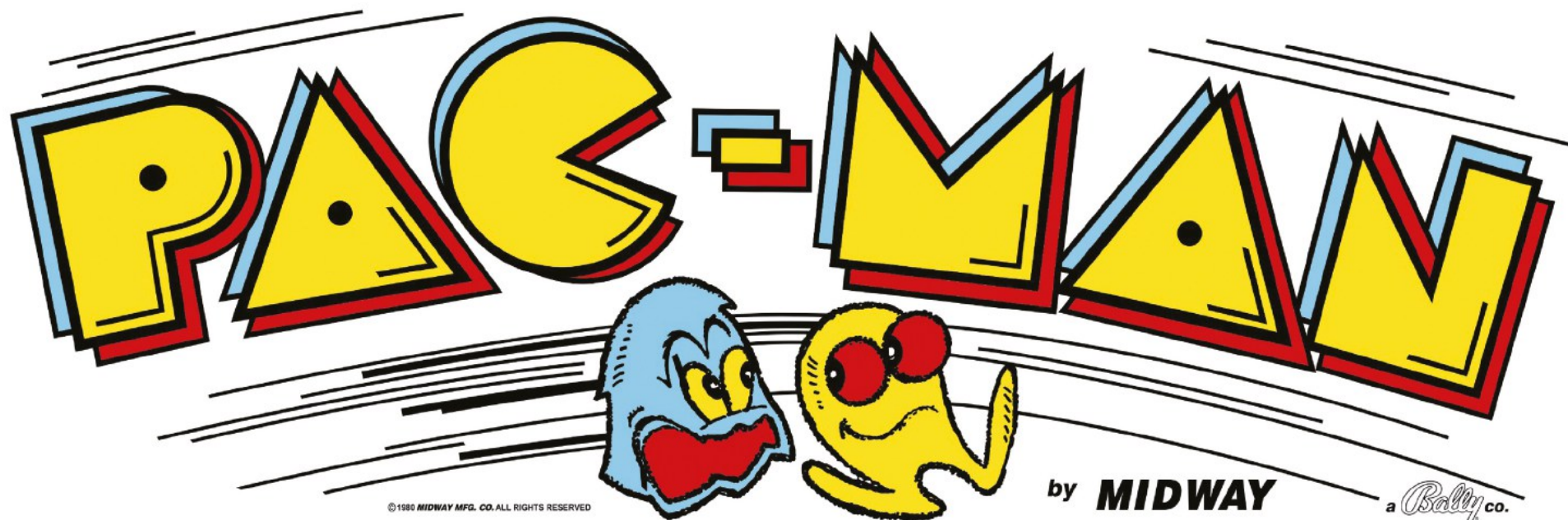






1980

Namco / Pac-Man







1982

SEGA / Pengo







1980

Amstar Electronics / Phoenix



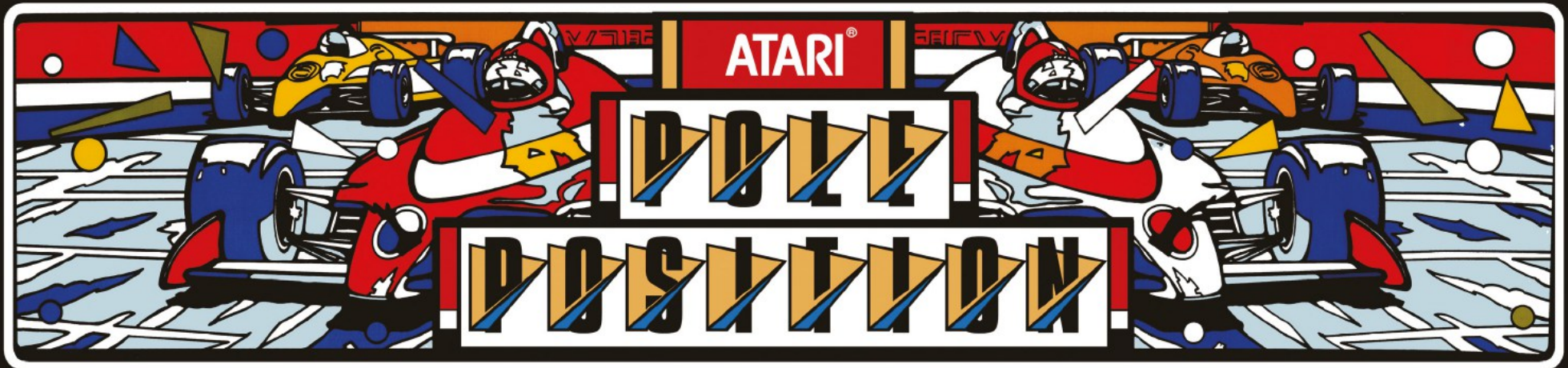




1980

Taito / Polaris





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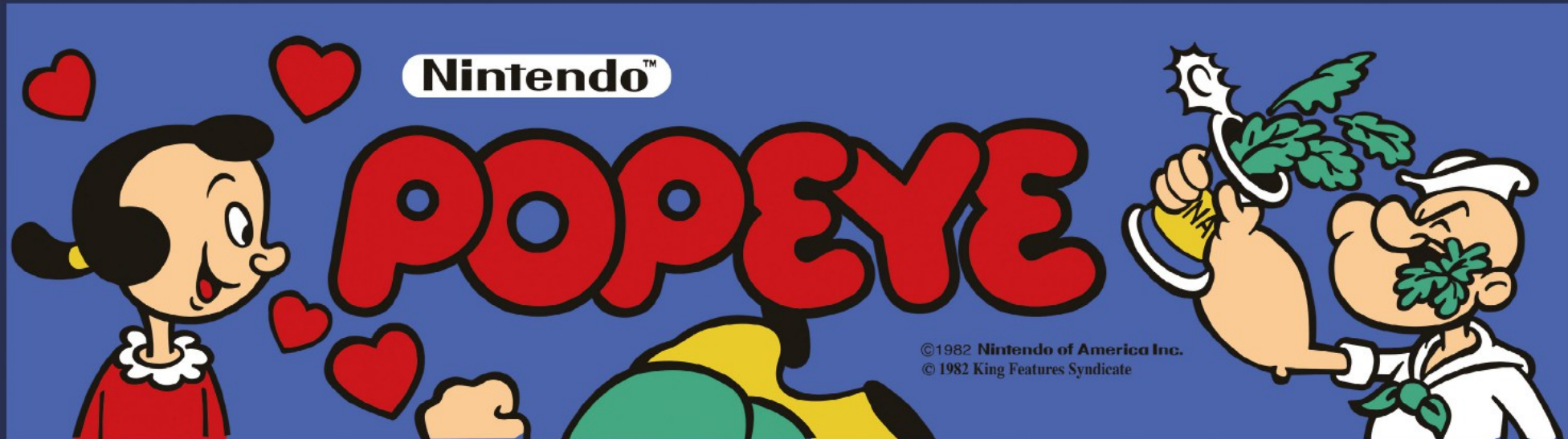




1982

Konami / Pooyan







1994

Atari / Primal Rage







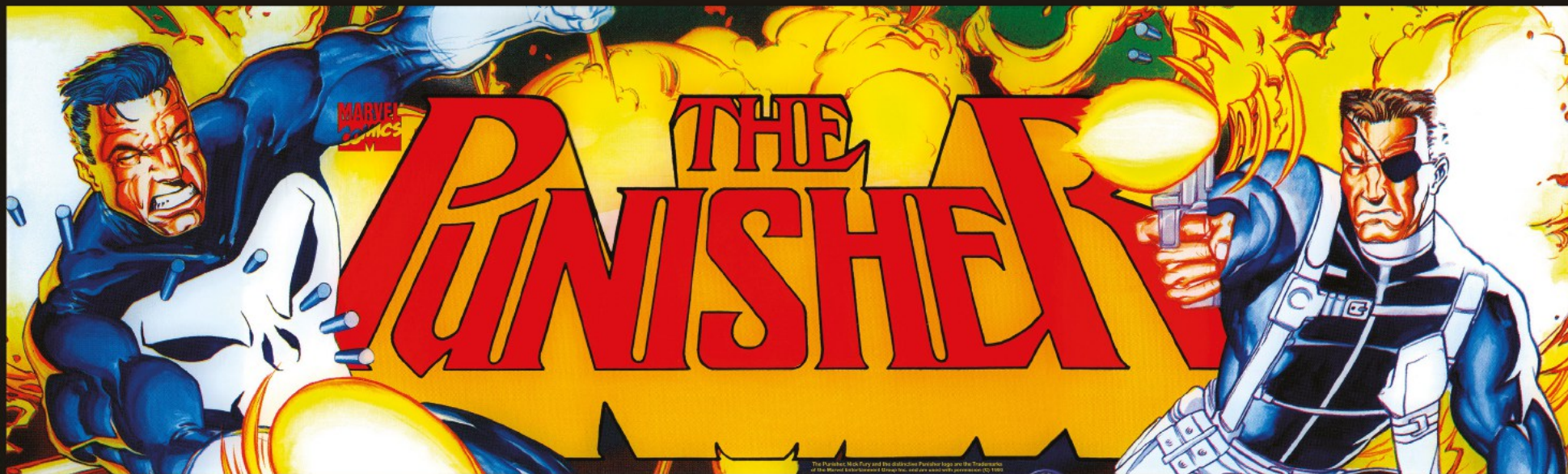






1993

Capcom / The Punisher







1982

Gottlieb / Q\*Bert







1987

Irem / R-Type

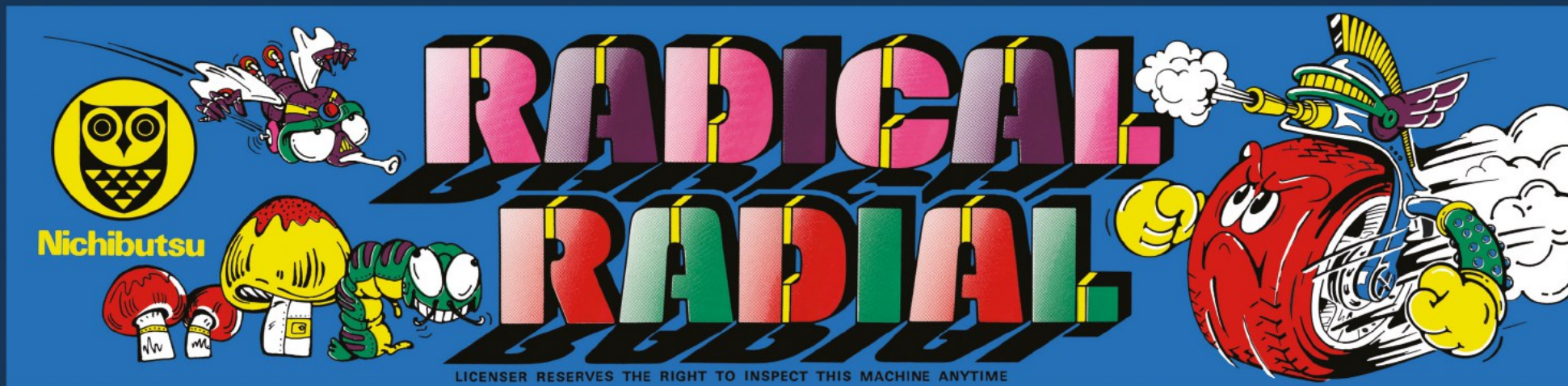






1982

Nichibutsu / Radical Radial







1987

Taito / Rainbow Islands: The Story of Bubble Bobble 2



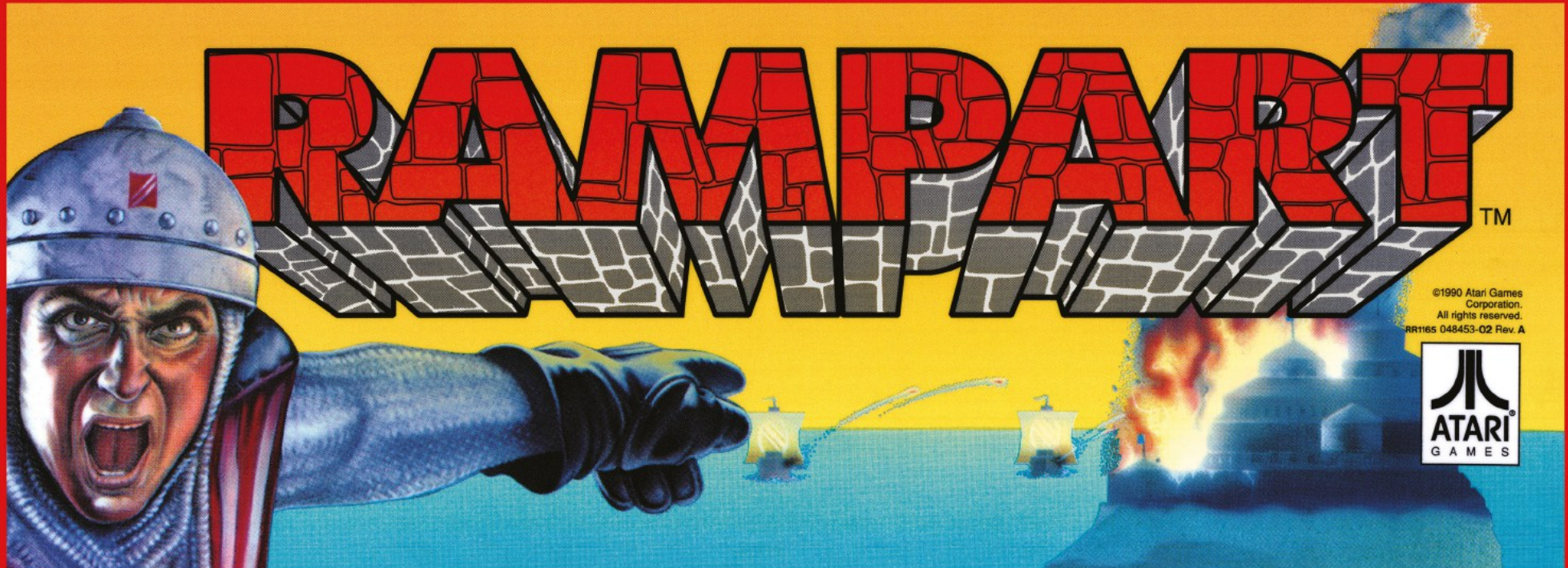




1986

Bally Midway / Rampage





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RR1165 048453-02 Rev. A





1987

Taito / Rastan



# THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS





1986

Technōs Japan / Renegade

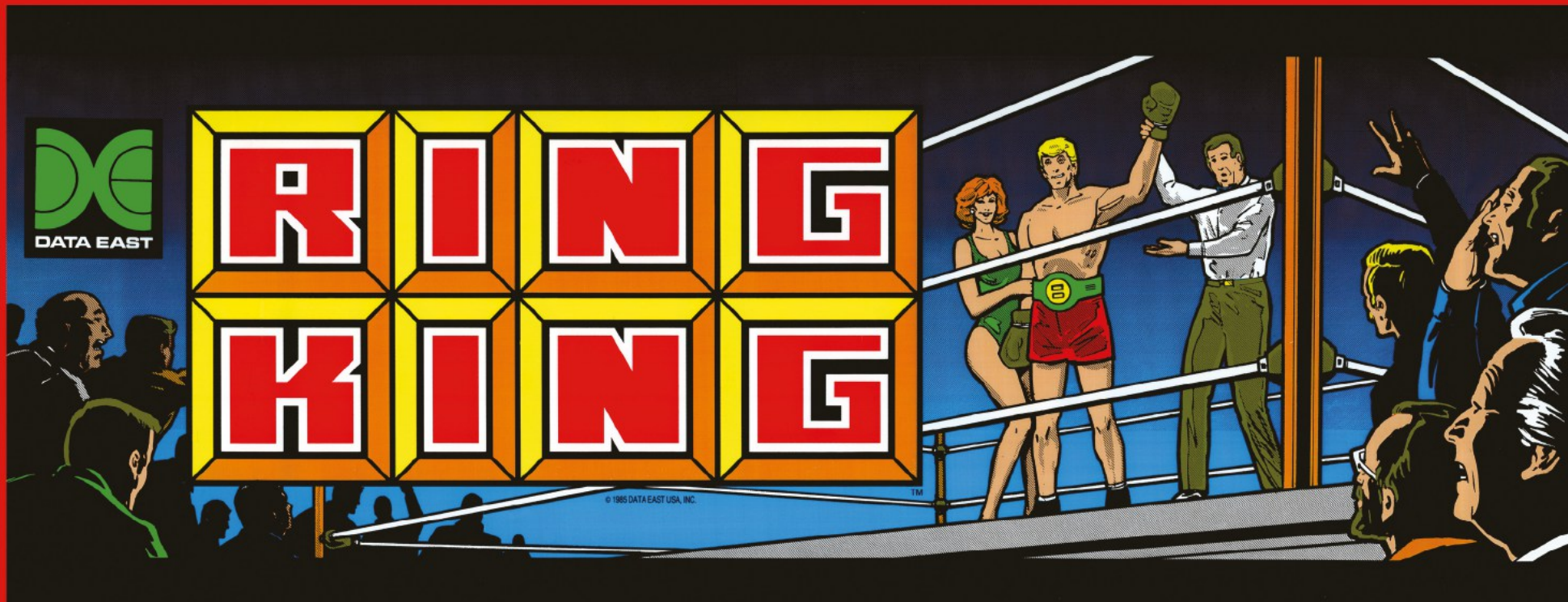


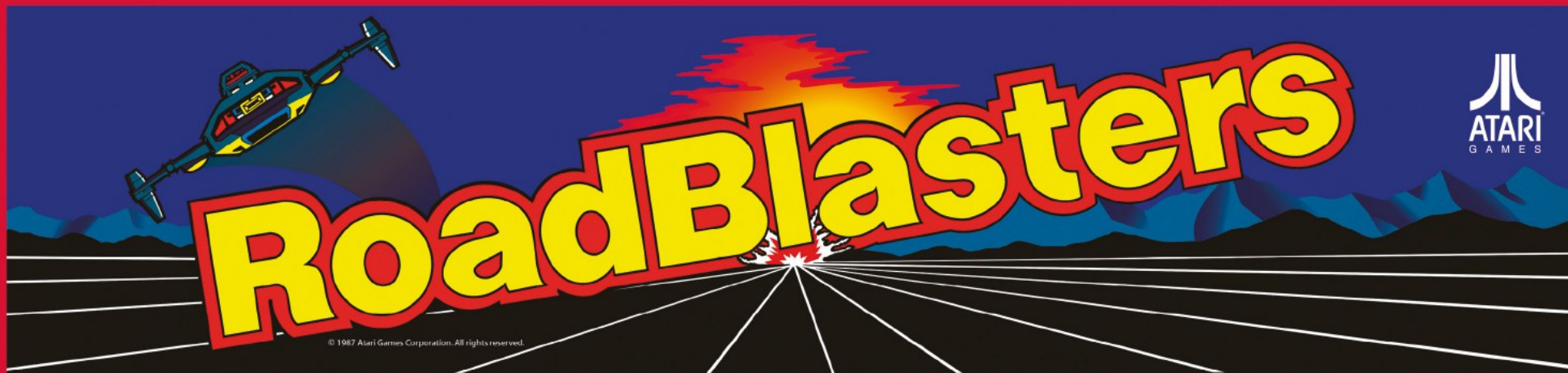




1985

Data East / Ring King







1982

Williams / Robotron: 2084







1986

Atari / Rolling Thunder



ROLLING THUNDER IS ENGINEERED AND DESIGNED BY NAMCO LTD.  
MANUFACTURED BY ATARI GAMES. TRADEMARK AND © NAMCO 1986













1986

Tecmo / Rygar



VIDEO GAME

# SALAMANDER™

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England  
Tel: (01) 429-2446  
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Fax: (01) 429-2069





1994

SNK / Samurai Shodown II







1989

Taito / SCI - Special Criminal Investigation

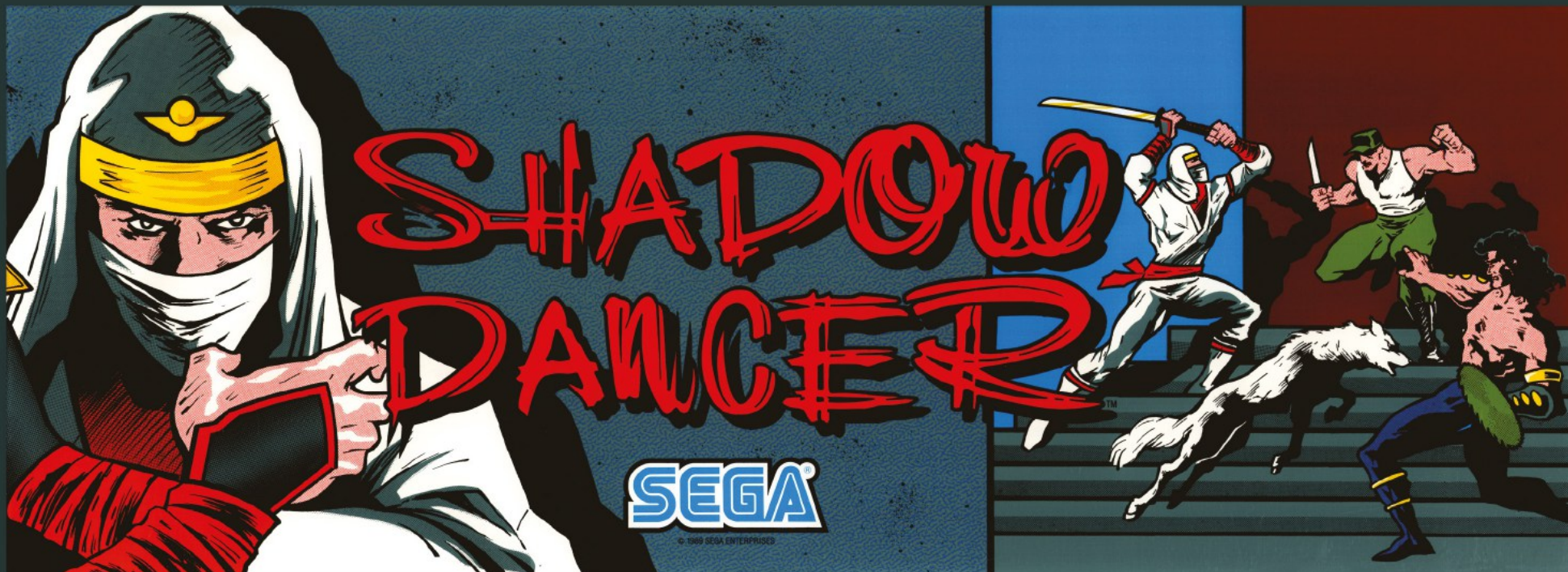






1989

SEGA / Shadow Dancer









1984

SEGA / Shooting Master







1991

Konami / The Simpsons



# THE SIMPSONS™



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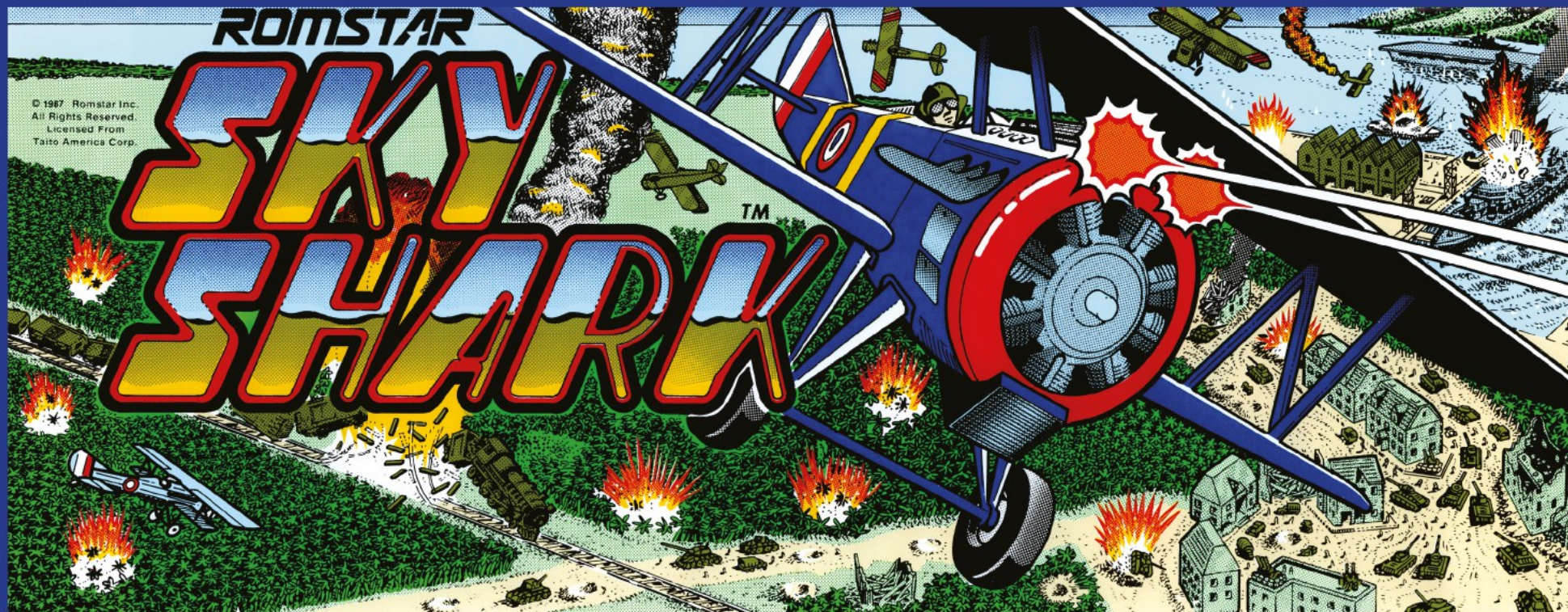






1987

Toaplan / Sky Shark









1984

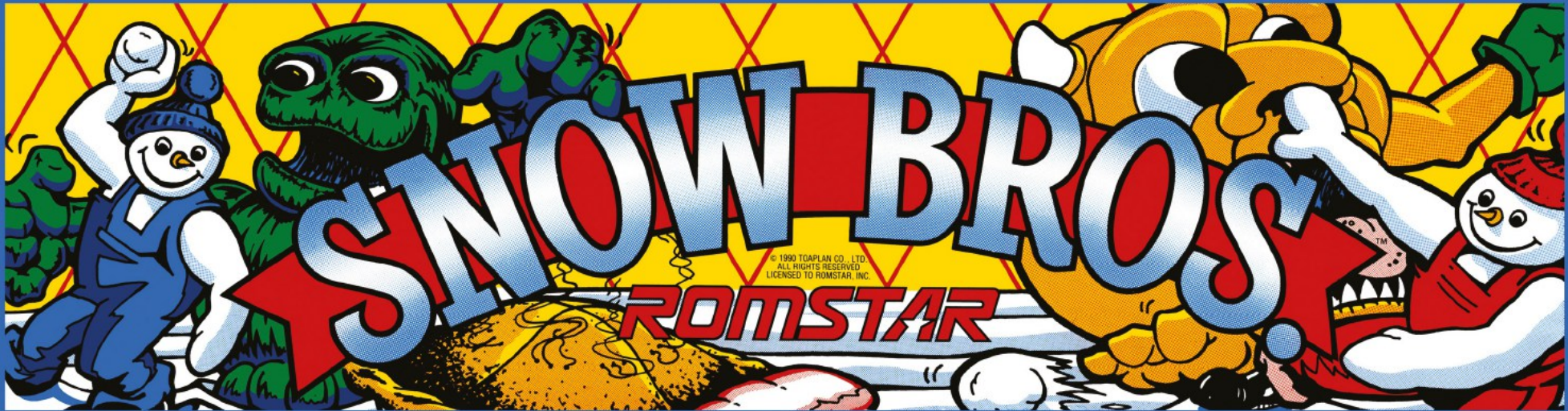
Bally Sente / Snacks 'n Jaxson



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042-8015-01  
REVA







1981

Bally Midway / Solar Fox







1981

SEGA / Space Fury







1995

Namco / Speed Racer



WPA2

IN VADERS









1988

Namco / Splatterhouse







1983

Atari / Star Wars







1987

Capcom / Street Fighter







1995

Capcom / Street Fighter Alpha

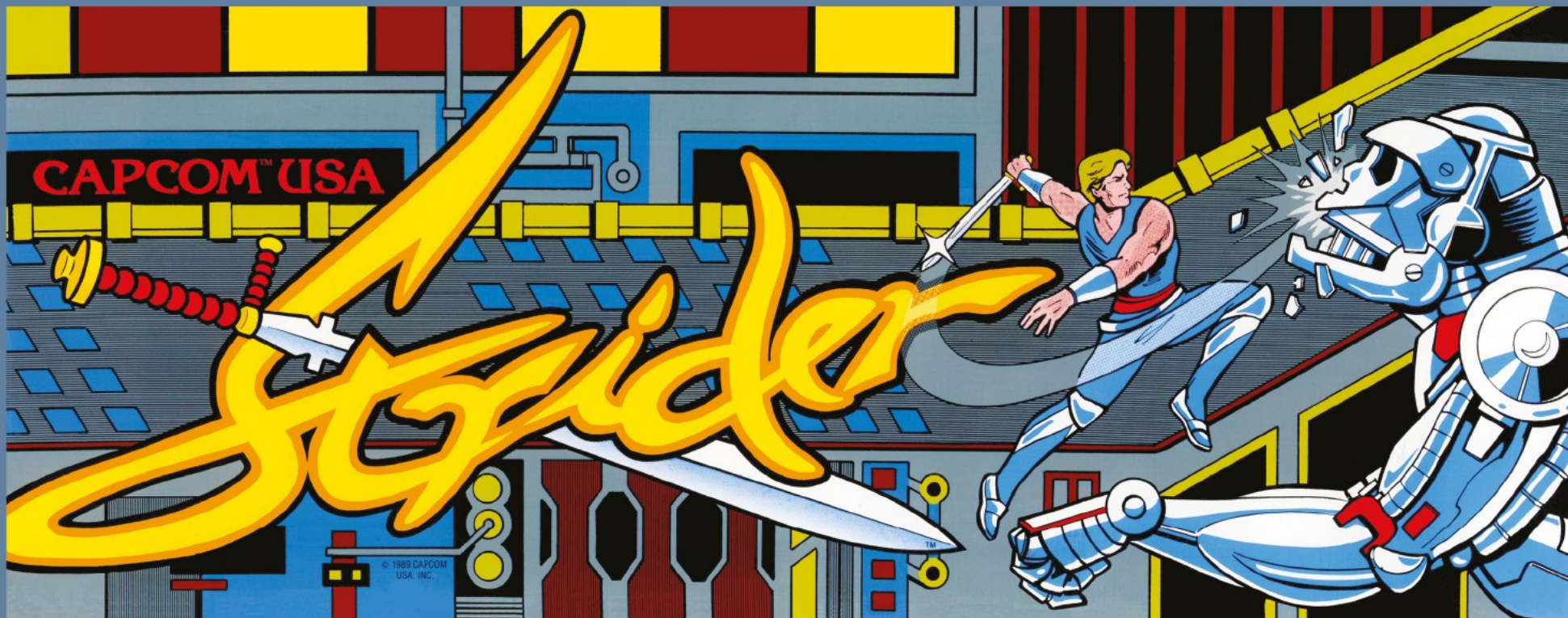






1989

Capcom / Strider







1987

Taito / Super Qix



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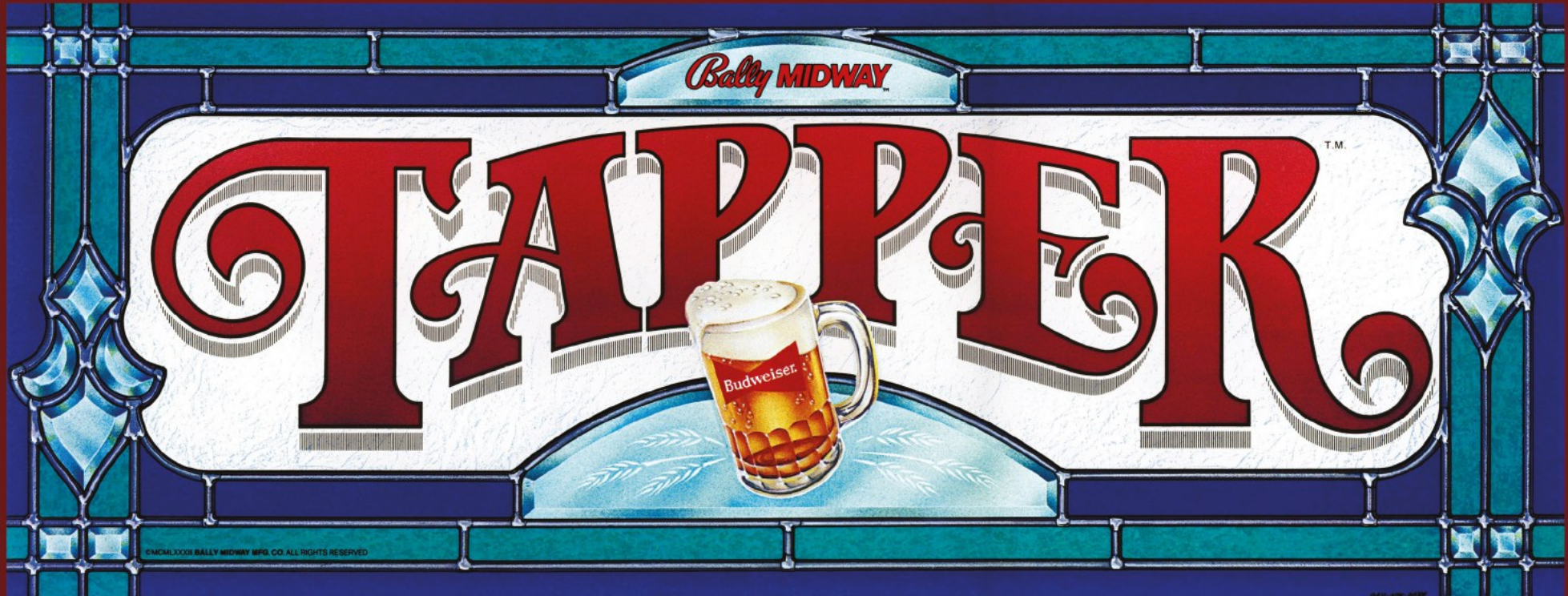




1996

Capcom / Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo

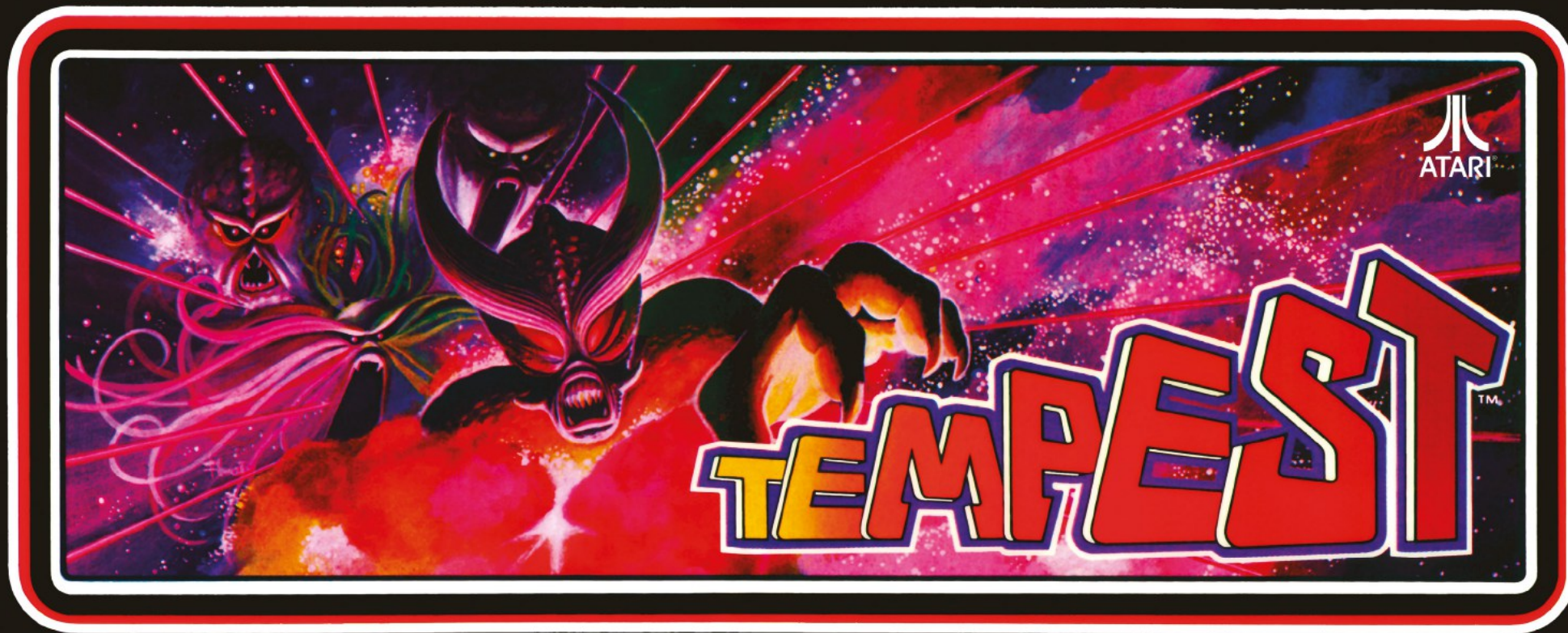






1981

Atari / Tempest



**MIDWAY**  
**TERMINATOR™ 2**  
**JUDGMENT DAY**

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1985

Nichibutsu / Terra Cresta



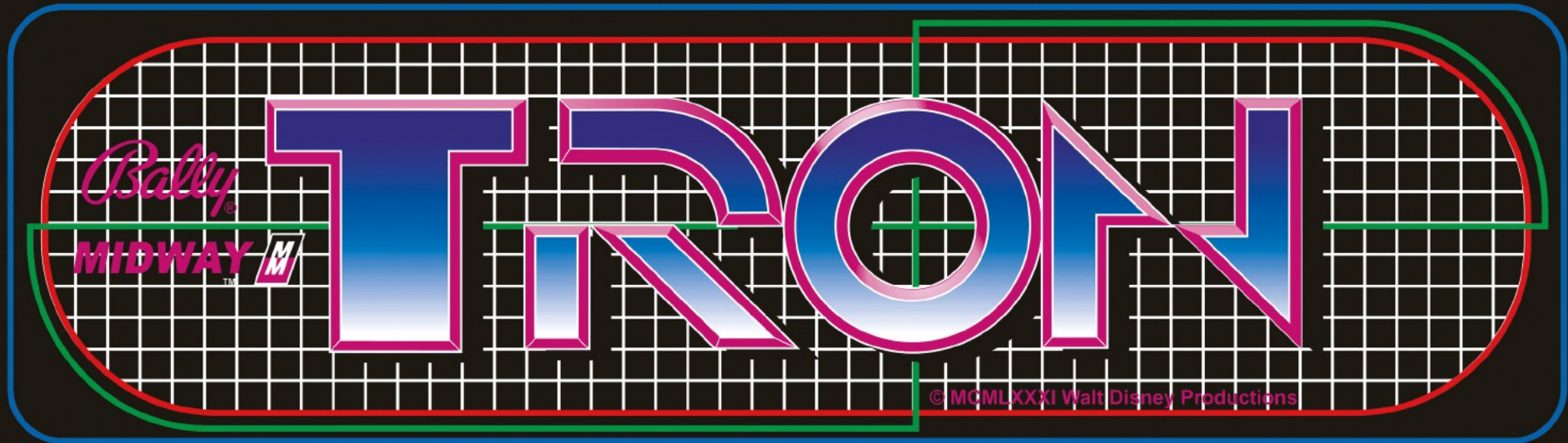




1982

Konami / Time Pilot







1989

TAD Corporation / Toki









1983

Konami / Track & Field







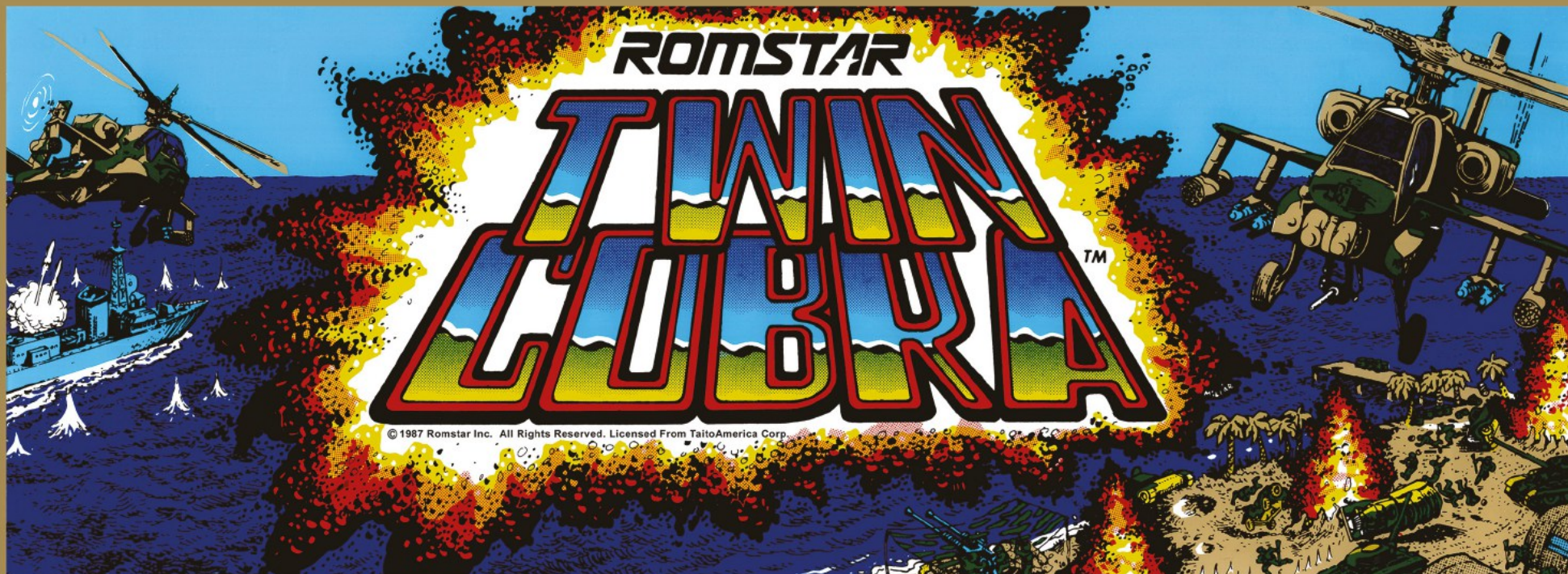




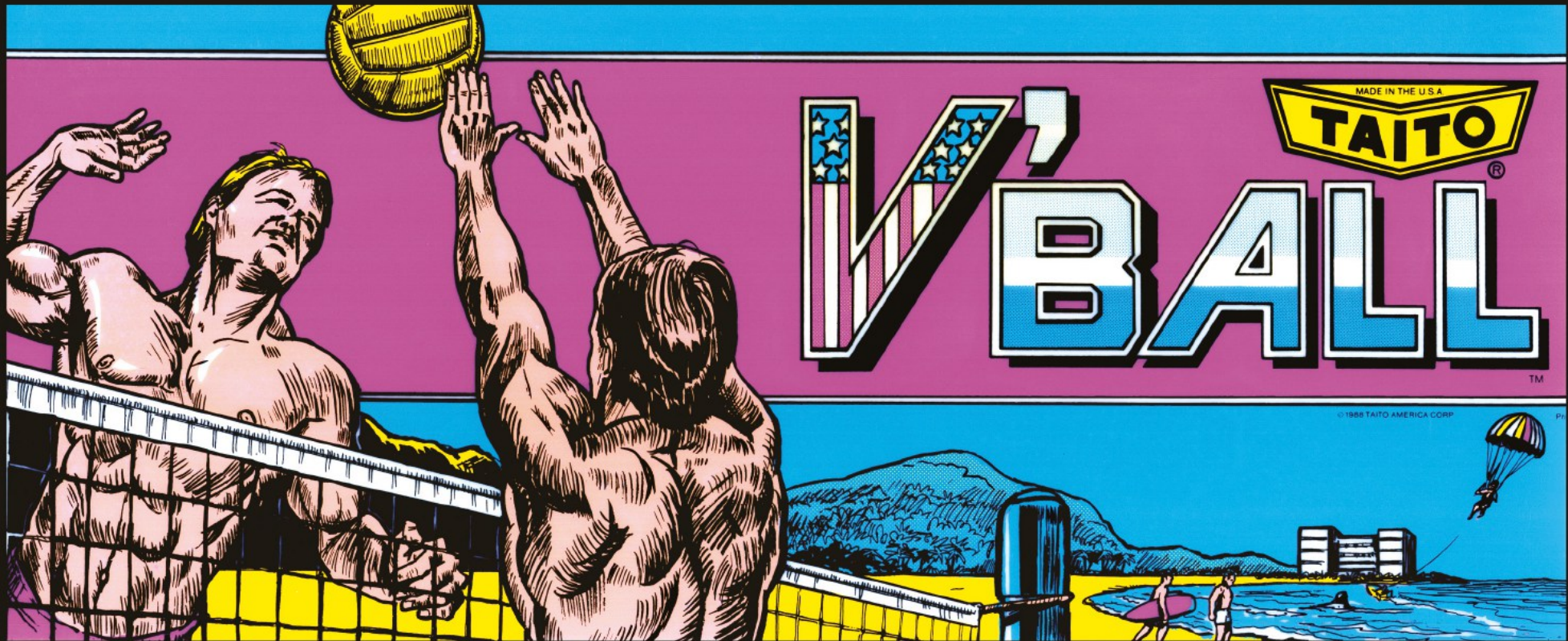


1987

Taito / Twin Cobra







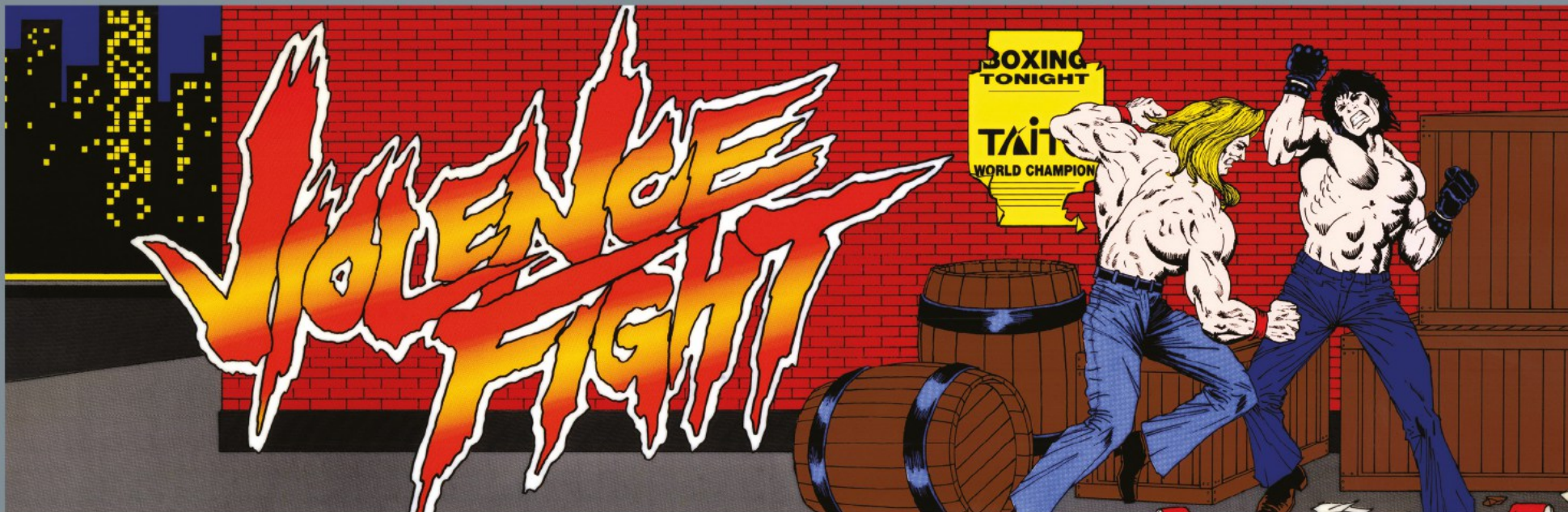


1988

Irem / Vigilante



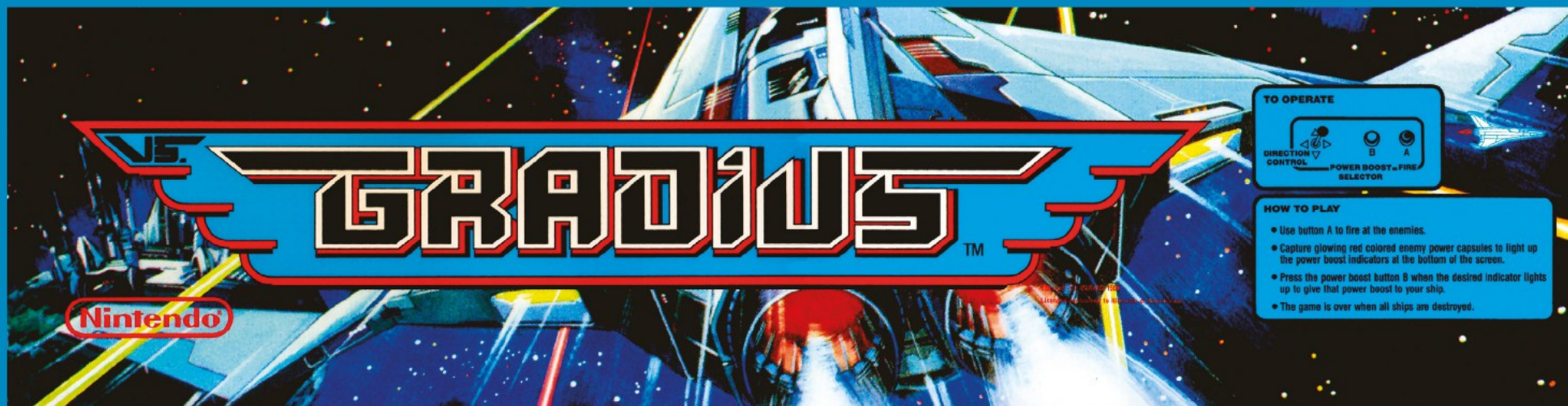






1986

Konami / vs. Gradius







1981

Atari / Warlords





© 1981

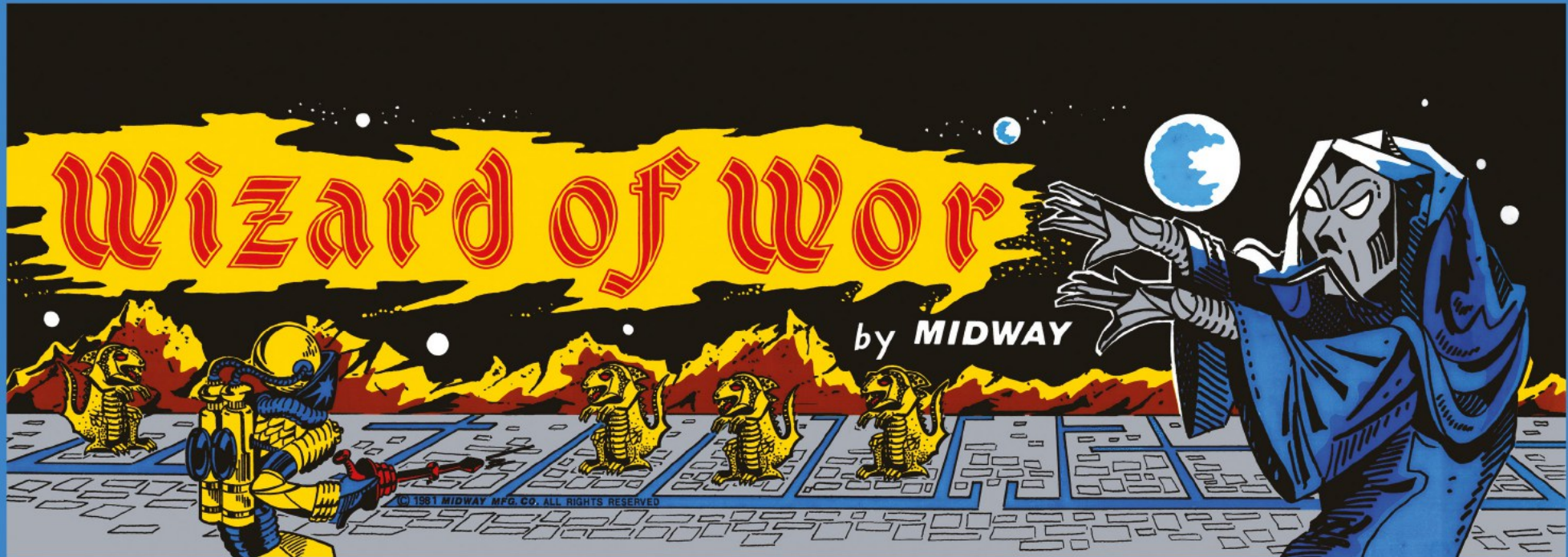




1989

Capcom / Willow







1986

SEGA / Wonder Boy









1982

SEGA / Zaxxon



# SIDE ART

The irony of arcade cabinet side panel art is that it was often hidden from view, as units would be arranged in rows with very little space between each game. Despite this, game makers would bless their cabinets with colourful and high-detailed side panel art to make them as visually appealing as possible, some of the best examples of which we've featured in this section of the book.

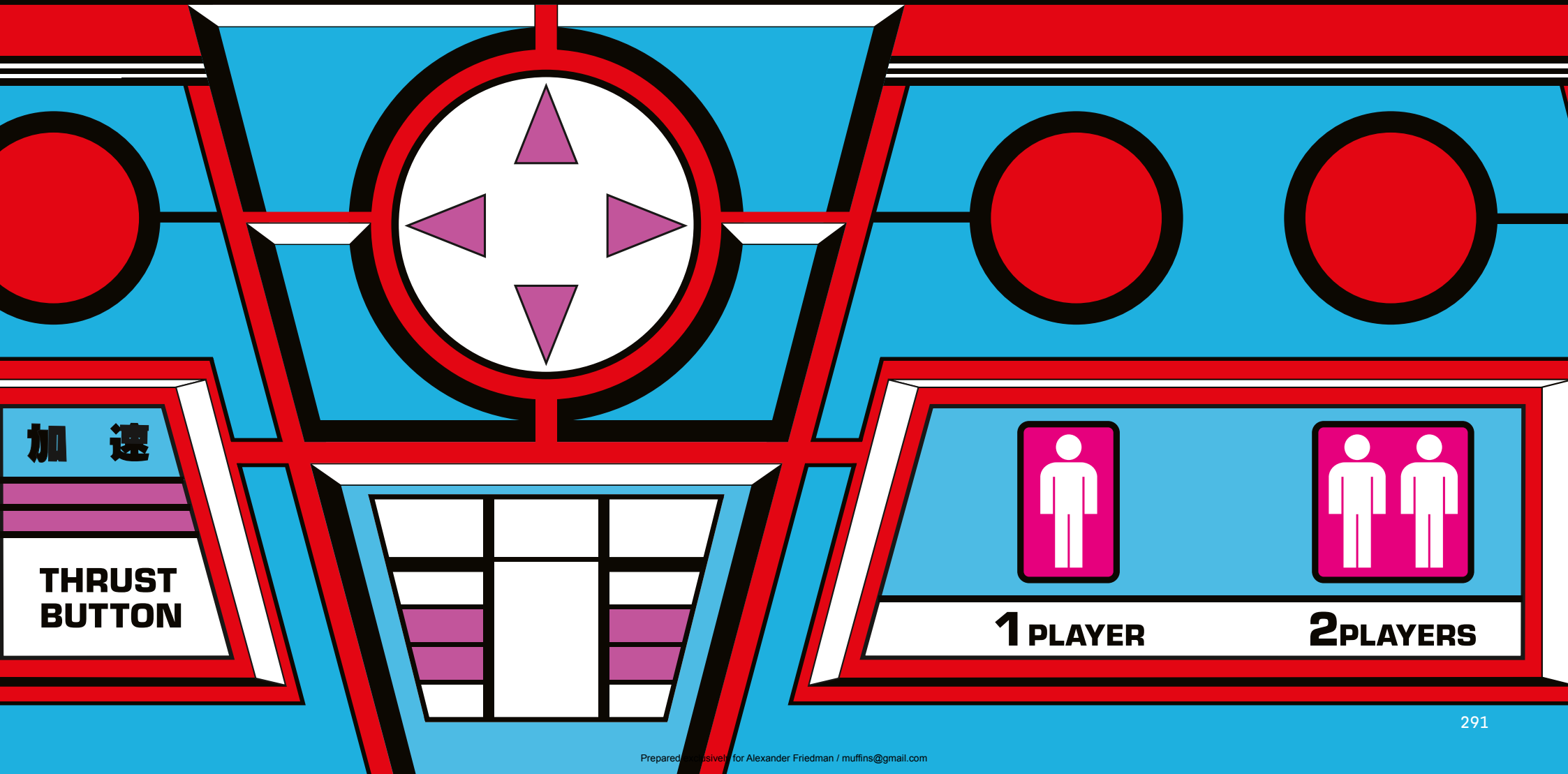
## INSTRUCTIONS

- INSERT COIN(S)
- SELECT ONE OR TWO PLAYER GAME
- CONTROL YOUR SPACESHIP BY USING CONTROL LEVER AND CLEAR DOTS (■) WITHOUT COLLIDING INTO ONCOMING CHASER MISSILES
- BY PUSHING THRUST BUTTON, YOUR SPACESHIP CAN BE SOME DISTANCE AHEAD OF CHASER MISSILES, BUT FUEL AND BONUS POINTS DECREASE
- GREEN ZONES WILL APPEAR ON THE COURSE FOR ACCELERATING CHASER MISSILES
- GAME STARTS WITH 3 SPACESHIPS
- ONE EXTRA SPACESHIP FOR 10,000 POINTS

## HI-SCORER'S NAME REGISTRATION

- BY MOVING THE CONTROL LEVER, MOVE THE UNDERLINE TO AN ALPHABET, AND PUSH THE THRUST BUTTON TO REGISTER THE ALPHABET ON THE UNDERLINE
- TO RUB OUT ANY WRONGLY REGISTERED ALPHABET, PUSH THE THRUST BUTTON WHEN THE WORD "RUB" IS ON THE UNDERLINE
- WHEN COMPLETED REGISTRATION, MOVE THE UNDERLINE TO THE WORD "END" AND PUSH THE THRUST BUTTON
- REGISTRATION SHOULD BE DONE WITHIN 90 SECONDS
- IN TOTAL, TEN ALPHABETS CAN BE REGISTERED





加 速

THRUST  
BUTTON



1 PLAYER



2 PLAYERS

Altered Beast / SEGA / 1988



V30 / Atari / 1986





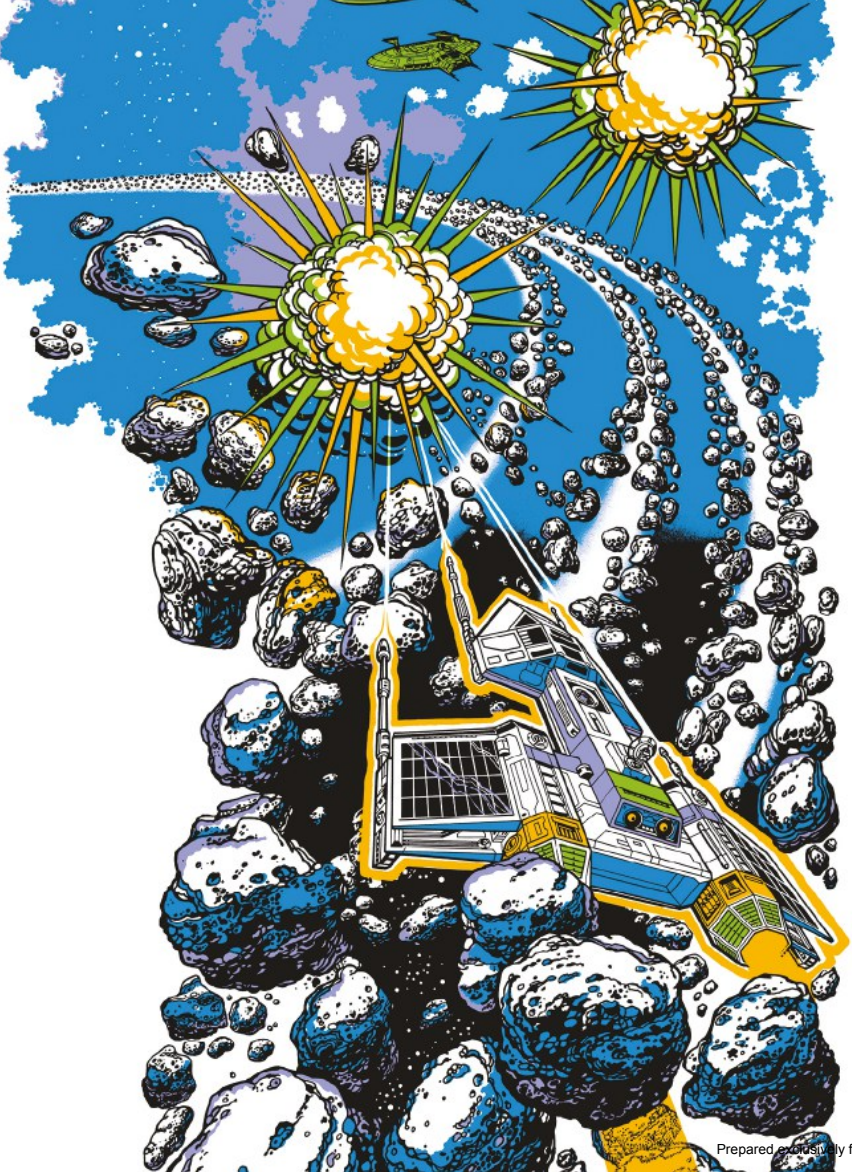


Baby Pac-Man / Bally Midway / 1982



© 1982 B

Asteroids Deluxe / Atari / 1980

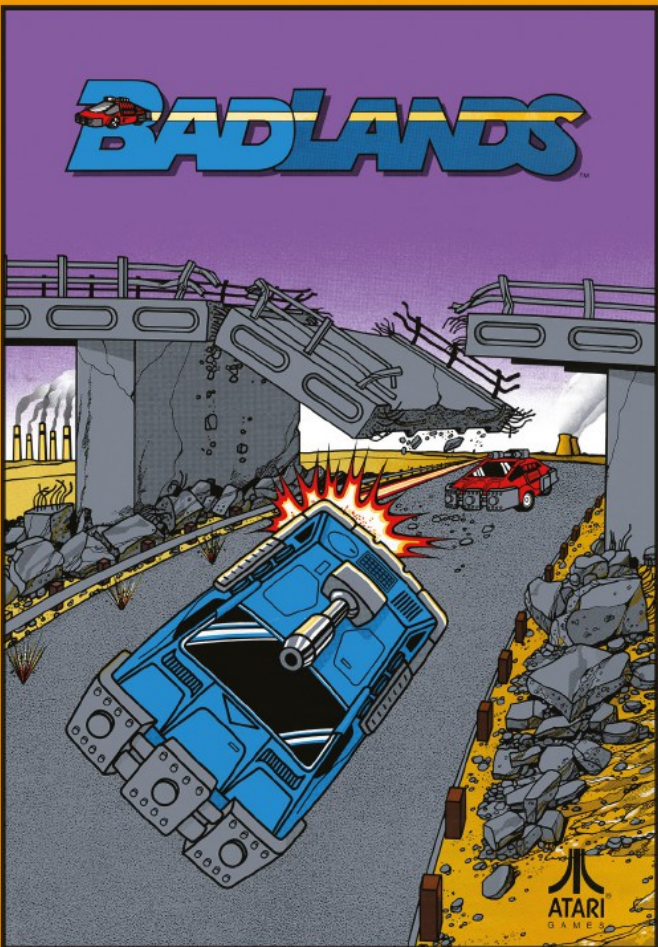




BurgerTime / Data East / 1982



295



Badlands / Atari / 1989



Captain America and The Avengers /  
Data East / 1991



Cabal / TAD Corporation / 1988

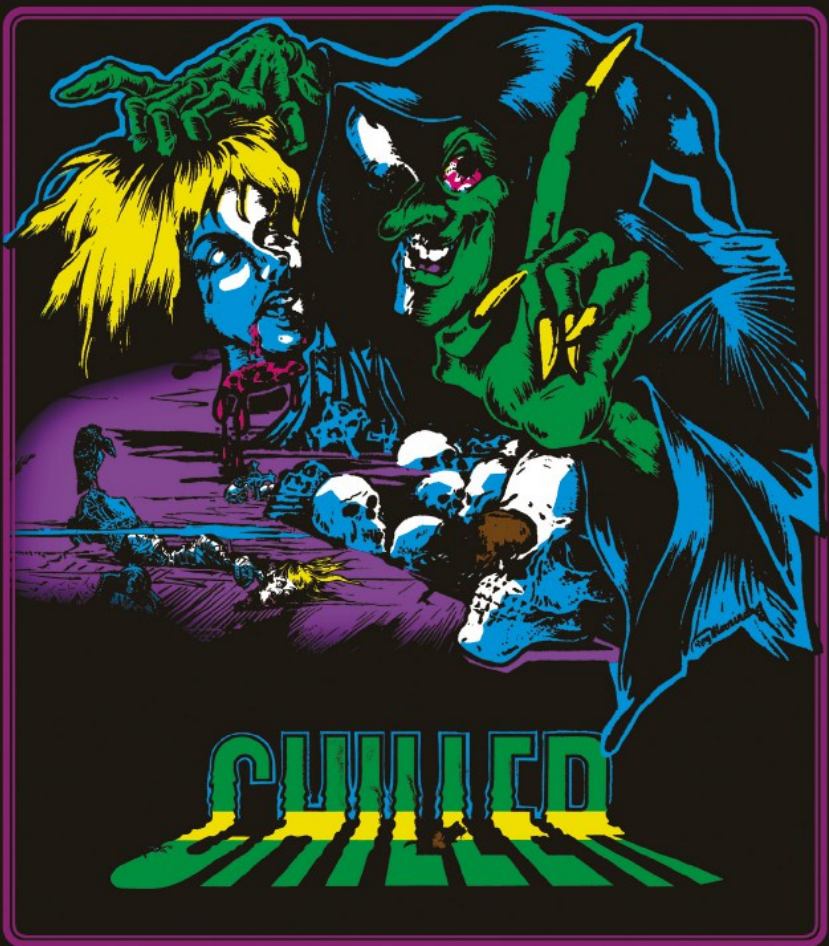




Cobra Command / Data East / 1984



297



Chiller / Exidy / 1986



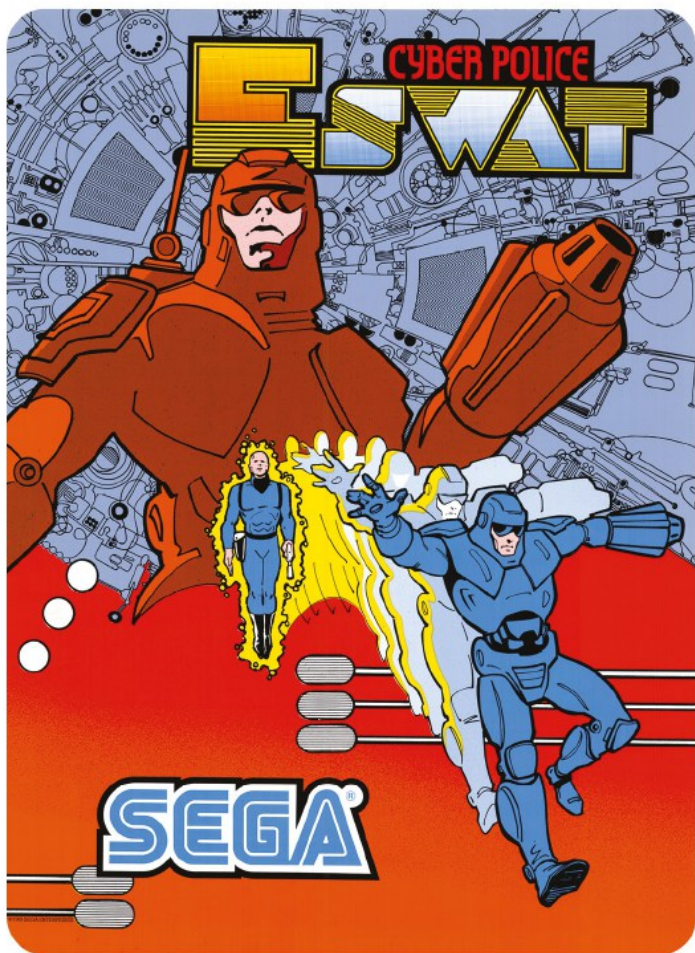
Crossbow / Exidy / 1983



Commando / Capcom / 1985







Dynamite Duke / Seibu Kaihatsu / 1989



Defender / Williams / 1981

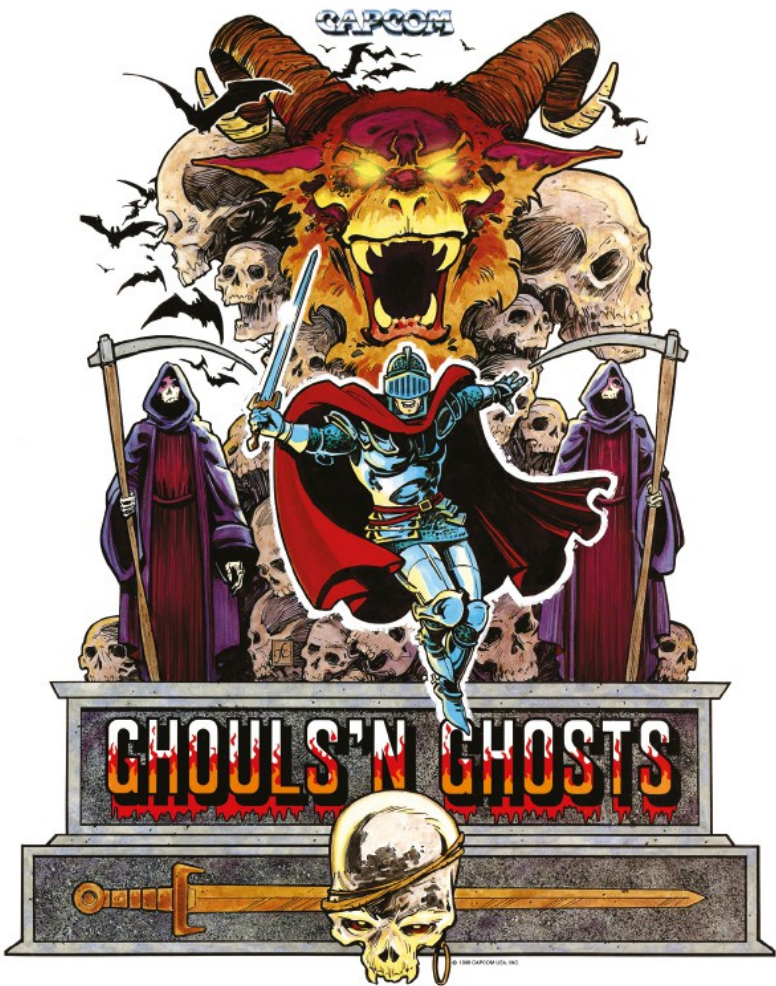




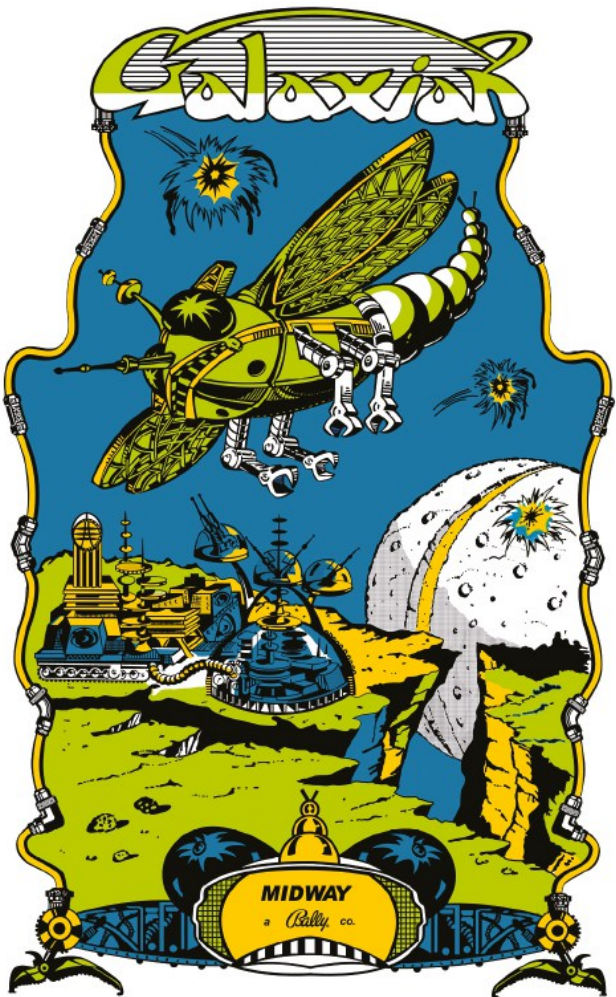




Ghouls 'n Ghosts / Capcom / 1988



Galaxian / Namco / 1979





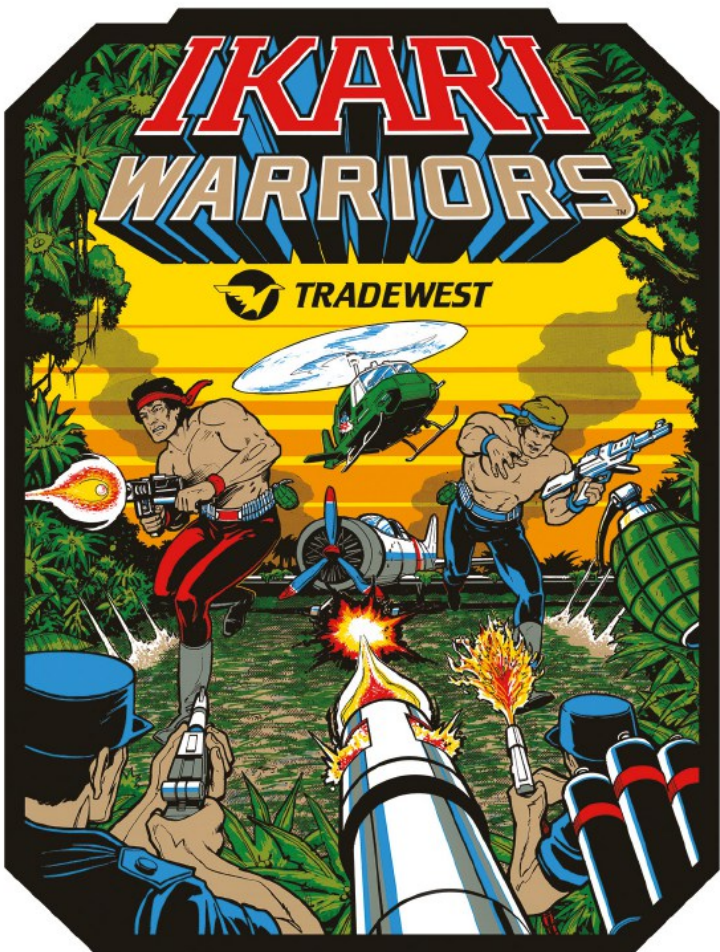
Ice Cold Beer / Taito / 1983



Ghosts 'n Goblins / Capcom / 1986



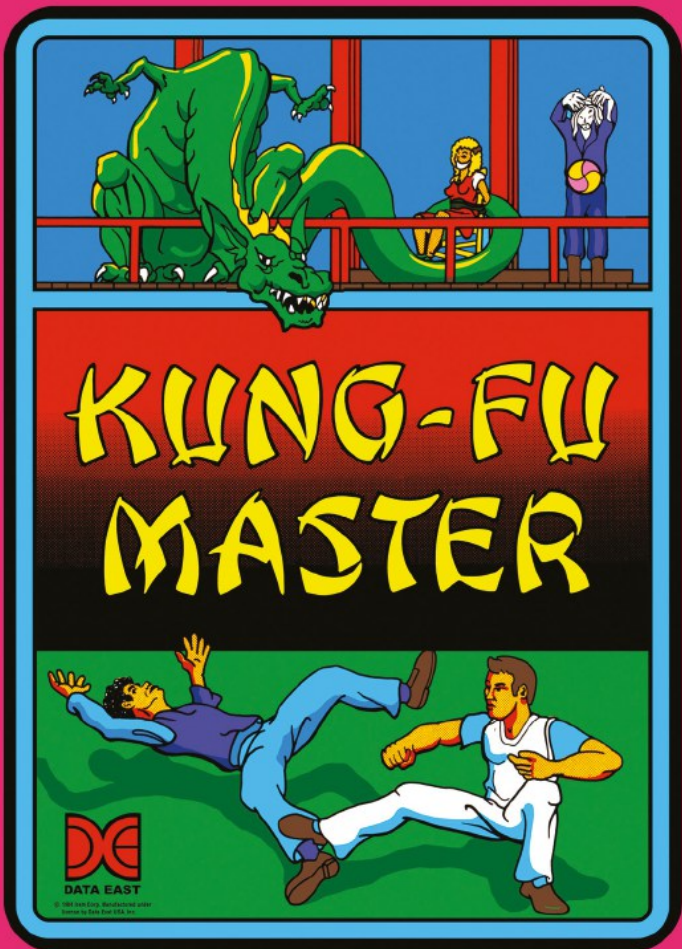
Karate Champ / Technōs Japan / 1984



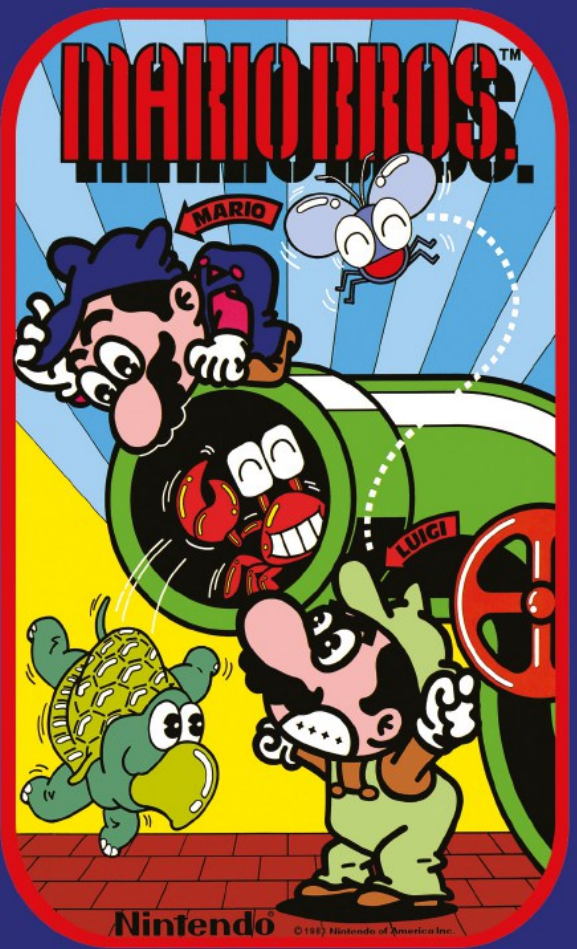
Ikari Warriors / SNK / 1986







Millipede / Atari / 1982



Mario Bros. / Nintendo / 1983





Missile Command / Atari / 1980



Metro-Cross / Namco / 1985



Mr. Doi's Castle / Universal / 1983



Mr. Doi / Universal / 1982





Operation Wolf / Taito / 1987



309



Ms. Pac-Man / Midway / 1982



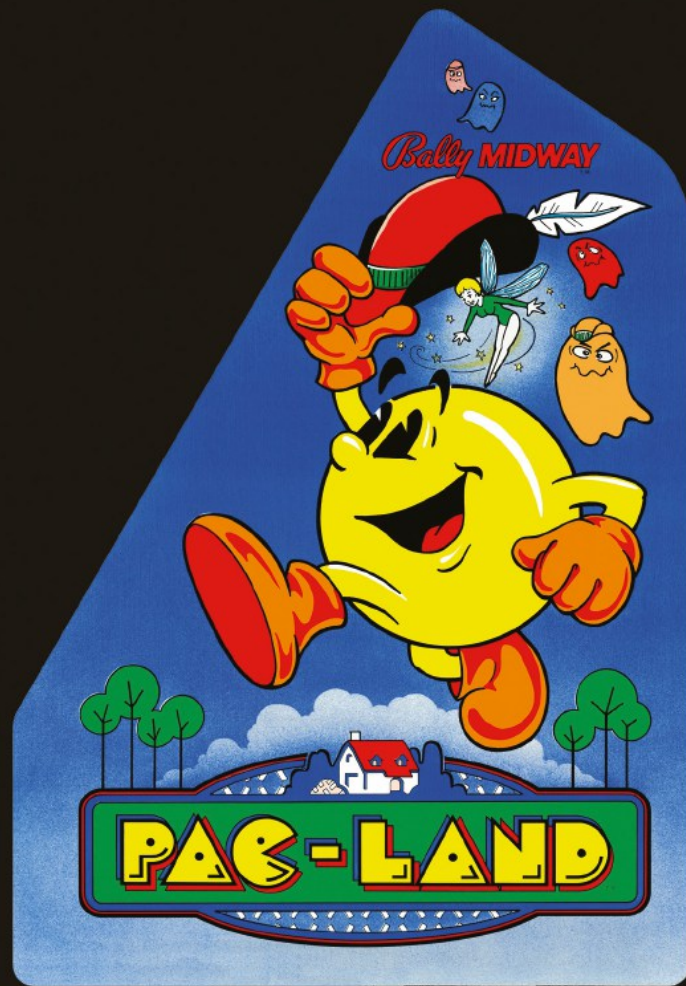
Out Run / SEGA / 1986



310



Pac-Land / Namco / 1984





Pole Position / Atari / 1982



311



Phoenix / Amstar Electronics / 1980



Q\*Bert / Gottlieb / 1982

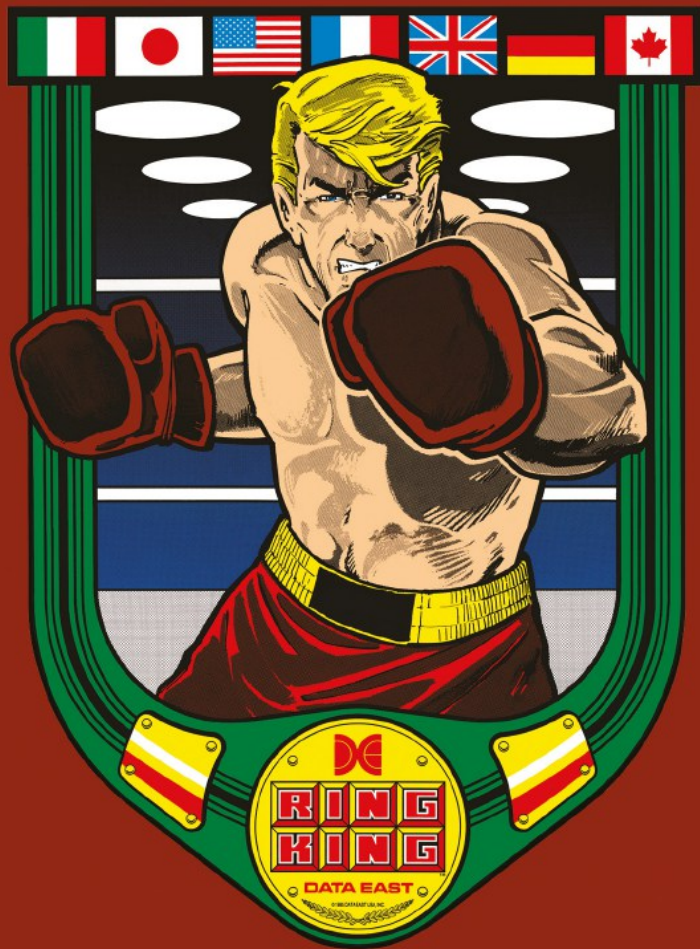


Popeye / Nintendo / 1982





Ring King / Data East / 1985

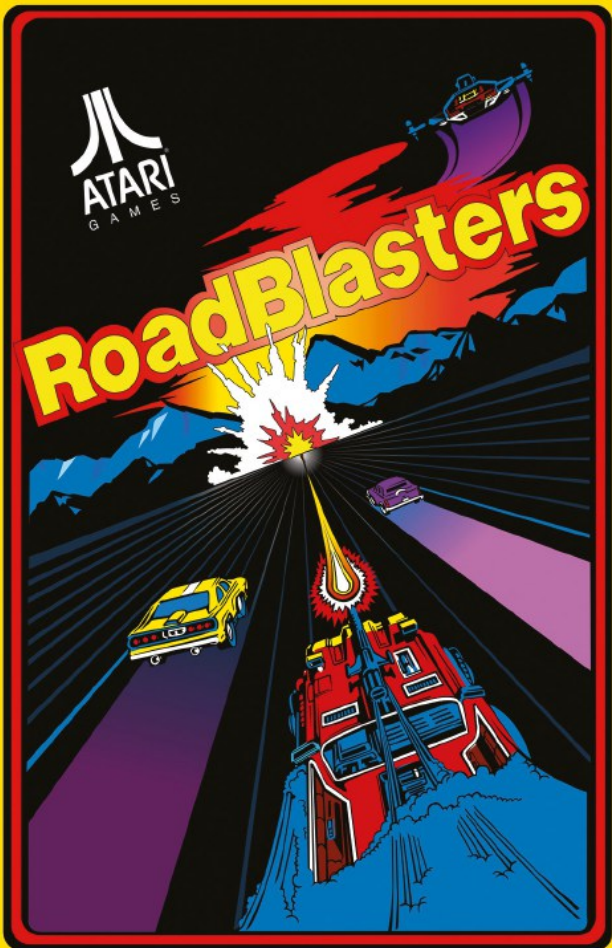


313

Rally-X / Midway / 1980



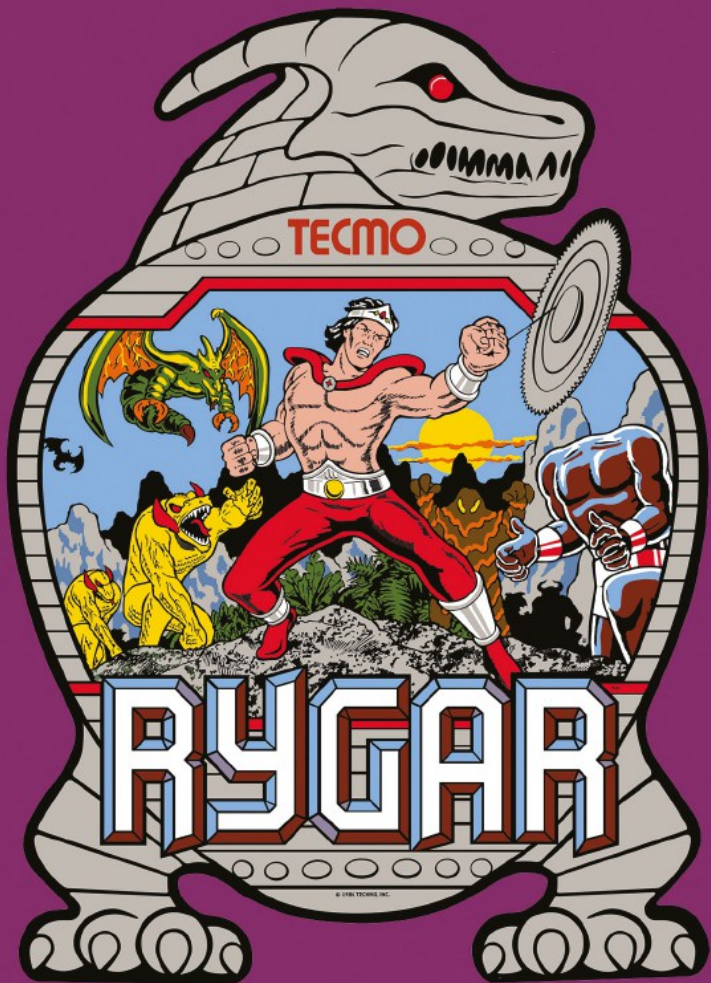
Rush'n Attack / Konami / 1985



Road Blasters / Atari / 1987









Side Arms / Capcom / 1986



Shinobi / SEGA / 1988

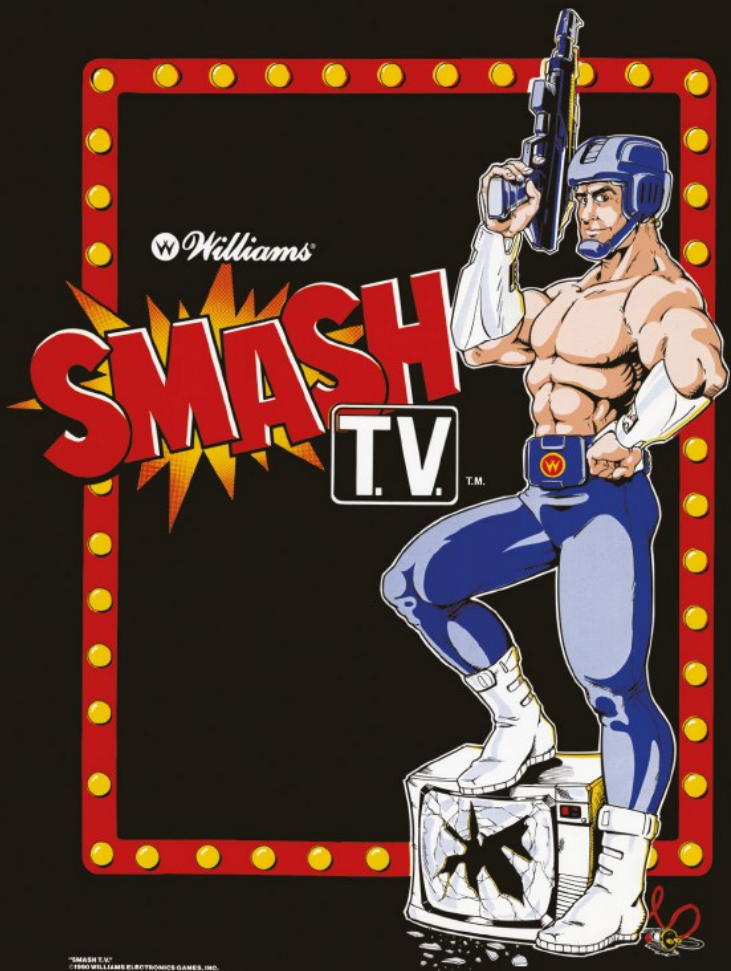




Space Invaders / Taito / 1978



317



"SMASH T.V."  
© 1990 WILLIAMS ELECTRONICS GAMES, INC.

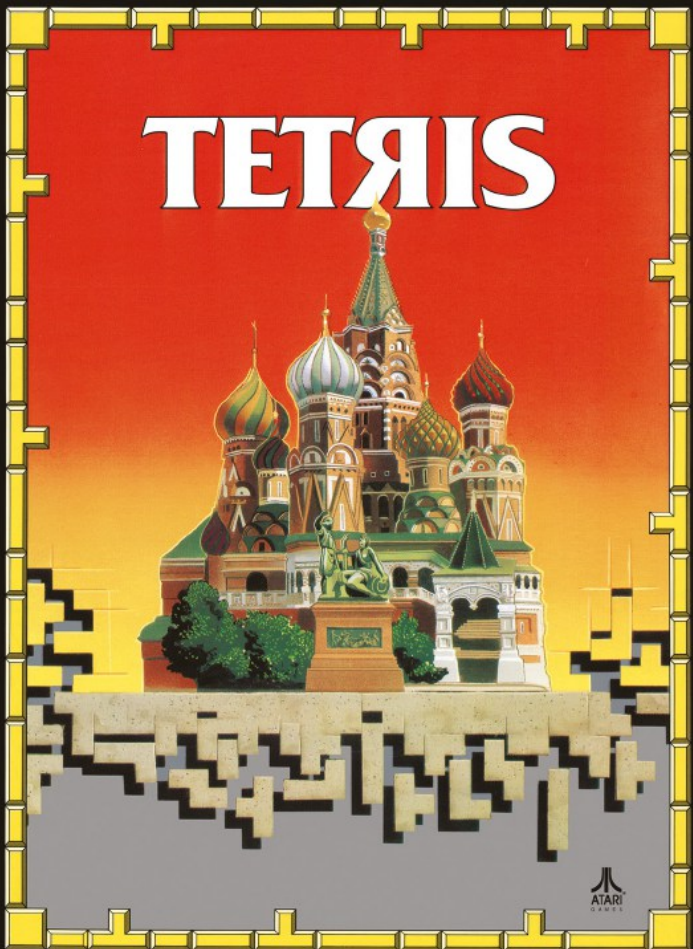
Smash T.V. / Williams / 1990







Tetris / Atari / 1988



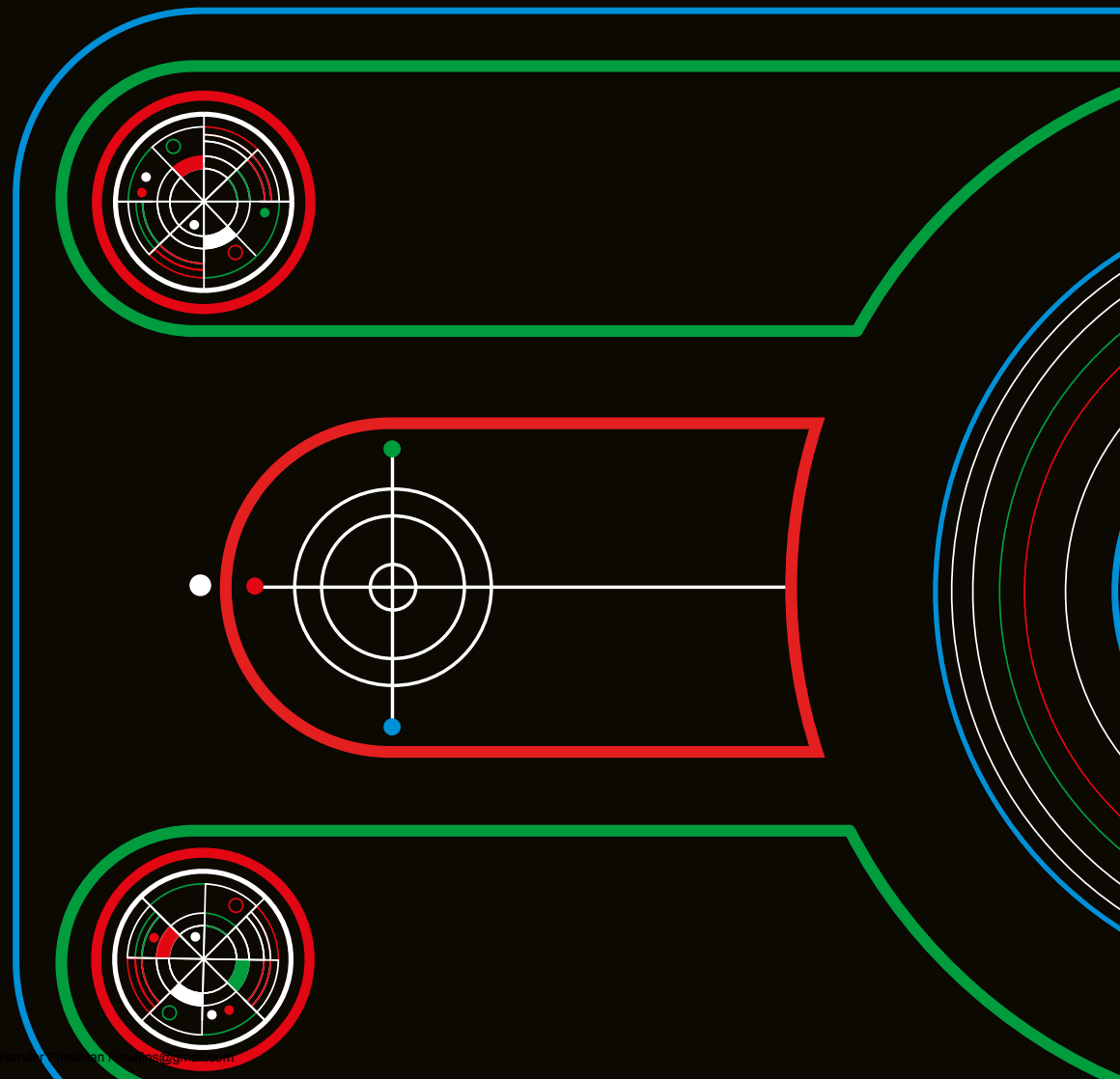
319

Street Smart / SNK / 1989



# REVIEWS

Merely showing you the arcade artwork that defined an entire generation of gaming isn't enough – we've also compiled a list of short-and-sweet reviews which talk a little about each game or discuss the unique characteristics of its cabinet artwork.







**START**

**GAME**

**INSTRUCTIONS**

- **SEE SCREEN FOR SCORING**
- **PRESS TRIGGER FOR INSTRUCTIONS**
- **INSERT COIN**
- **TO START: PRESS 1 OR 2 PLAYER BUTTON**
- **JOYSTICK MOVES TRON IN 1 OF 4 DIRECTIONS**

- **USE OF TRIGGER WILL**
  - A. FIRE TRON'S DISC OR**
  - B. INCREASE SPEED OF LIGHT CYCLE**
- **ROTATE KNOB TO AIM TRON'S DISC**

## #

### 720°

1986 / Atari

Designed to look like an iconic '80s portable boom box, the marquee for 720° is eye-catching, to say the least. The cabinet's speakers are housed in the marquee section, which is the reason for those two large circles. With its chrome styling, imitation cassette deck and bold, angular logo, the 720° marquee art grabs your attention despite the absence of any main image to hold your view. The game's title derives from the skateboarding trick where two complete circles are executed in mid-air.

### 1942

1984 / Capcom

The premise of Yoshiaki Okamoto's first game for Capcom is a little surprising for a title developed by a Japanese corporation: your mission is to fly across Japan to reach Tokyo and then destroy the entire Japanese air fleet! This seminal game spawned an entire genre of clones, ports, rip-offs and five sequels of its own. The cabinet artwork really is art in its own right, and the marquee is definitely one of the best of the classic arcade game era.

### 1943: The Battle of Midway

1987 / Capcom

Capcom's sequel to 1942 was a much more elaborate affair than the original, with a musical soundtrack, greatly improved graphics and faster, increasingly complex gameplay. The cabinet artwork is remarkably similar in style to the first game, making it very clear to arcade-goers that this game is the next evolution of the vertical scrolling shoot-em-up they'd been trying to beat since 1984.

## A

### Act-Fancer

1989 / Data East

Released in 1989, Act-Fancer: Cybernetick Hyper Weapon – to use its full title – is a side-scrolling 'run-and-gun' shooter which showcases a cybernetic protagonist who has the power to evolve into six different forms: Nuts, Cis, Chiffon, Ickx, Benebu, Ares and the ultimate form, Zakros. The bold marquee artwork shows our robotic hero alongside a snake-like enemy, with striking flame pattern underneath. The main image appears to be roughly based on the original Japanese flyer for the game.

### Airwolf

1987 / Kyugo

Based on the US TV show of the same name, Airwolf was the only game ever produced by Japanese developer Kyugo. The game itself is a reasonable attempt at a 2D horizontally scrolling helicopter shoot-em-up, but questions must be asked about the bizarre design of the marquee, which features what appears to be a wolf with wings, literally in 'sheep's clothing'. Didn't anyone think to give the graphic artist anything more than just the name of the game before asking them to design the marquee?

### Alien Syndrome

1987 / SEGA

This action-packed marquee is dominated by the Alien Syndrome logo, which is flanked by protagonists Ricky and Mary, locked in battle with a horde of xenomorph aggressors. A smash-hit for SEGA in 1987, the game borrows elements from the Alien movie franchise, as well as featuring nightmarish enemies straight out of a painting by H.R. Giger. Players must explore a series of eight-way scrolling stages rescuing hostages before making their way to the exit. Collectable weapons make the job of taking down alien foes easier, but the game's monstrous end-of-level guardians pose the sternest challenge. Alien Syndrome was ported to several home systems and was briefly revived in 2007 by external studio Totally Games.

### Altered Beast

1988 / SEGA

SEGA's international release of the Japanese market title Juuouki (Beast King's Chronicle) was reasonably successful, despite some woefully slow and disjointed gameplay. The main attraction of the game was definitely the ability for the human player to transform into 'The Beast' and become a much faster, stronger and powerful character. The artwork for the international cabinets was truly stunning and the marquee in particular stands out as one of the best pieces of art ever to grace an arcade game. The game's enduring fame is perhaps down to the subsequent Mega Drive port, which was a pack-in title in the early years of the console's life.

### Alien vs. Predator

1994 / Capcom

In something of a reverse from the norm, Capcom's Alien vs. Predator predates the movie of the same name by 10 years and was the first arcade game to combine the enemies from two separate movie franchises (albeit both licensed from 20th Century Fox). The gameplay was frantic and beautifully rendered, with a suitably vivid artwork package available with the popular conversion kit. As with most new releases from the early '90s onwards, the conversion kit was much more popular than the dedicated cabinet and fewer than one in ten Alien vs. Predator machines were dedicated originals.



**American Speedway**

1987 / Enerdyne Technologies

A rather basic top-down racing title from 1987, Enerdyne Technologies' American Speedway allows up to two players to compete on a single-screen circuit to see who is the fastest driver of them all. The artwork features the game's logo – complete with a texture that resembles the Star-Spangled Banner, naturally – but four open-wheel cars can be seen on the right of the image, jockeying for position on the asphalt.

**Area 51**

1995 / Atari

One of Atari's last coin-op hits, light gun shooter Area 51 uses pre-rendered graphics to good effect to create a memorable action title that fed off the spirit of the TV show X-Files – indeed, the 2002 reboot of the same name even employed the vocal talents of David “Mulder” Duchovny. The marquee for the coin-op original features the logo set against a rather garish orange background, with barbed wire hinting at the restricted nature of the famous US military base; a green-skinned alien stands menacingly to one side.

**Arkanoid**

Taito / 1986

Based on Atari's Breakout and credited with resurrecting the 'paddle and ball' genre for a new legion of '80s players, Taito's Arkanoid was a coin-op smash hit when it launched in 1986 and was followed by a sequel a year later, entitled Arkanoid - Revenge of Doh. Taito expanded on the core Breakout concept by adding power-ups and more complex levels, creating a series that would become globally successful in its own right. The arcade version's marquee art does a good job of communicating the central tile-smashing premise of the game, and keeps things relatively simple from a design perspective.

**Arkanoid: Revenge of Doh**  
Taito / 1987

This 1987 sequel kept the Breakout-inspired gameplay of its forerunner but introduced the concept of Warp Gates which made each playthrough different. Additional power-ups were added, and bricks with new powers – such as the ability to move or regenerate. Like the marquee for the 1986 original, the cabinet art used for Revenge of Doh is fairly basic, with the title being the main focal point. Two versions of the Vaus – your paddle-like ship – are shown at the bottom of the image, with a ghosting effect illustrating swift movement.

**Asteroids**

1979 / Atari

The Asteroids marquee is one of the earliest examples of spectacular artwork that really didn't reflect the contents of the game in any meaningful way. The gameplay itself was hugely compelling and Atari shipped more than 70,000 Asteroids machines across the world, putting over half a billion dollars in the pockets of arcade operators. Sadly, even Atari can't name the artist responsible for this seminal piece; in the late '70s and early '80s the company's cabinet art was usually designed by whichever freelance artist answered the phone first, and the details of who did what are sadly lost in the mists of time.

**Asteroids Deluxe**

1980 / Atari

The success of Asteroids in the arcades meant that Atari was keen to offer a sequel. The fact that experienced players could make a single credit last many hours was enough to have arcade operators demanding a similar game with more difficult gameplay. Atari responded with Asteroids Deluxe, released in March 1981 (contrary to the game's 1980 copyright notice). The upright cabinet was an unusual design, with a marquee that loomed towards the player, and the artwork was much more detailed and 'arty' than the original Asteroids game.

**Astro Invader**

1980 / Stern/Konami

This Space Invaders-style vertical shooter has its origins in Japan, under the title Kamikaze. Released by Konami in that region in 1979, it was later picked up for North American distribution by Stern Electronics in 1980, and was rechristened Astro Invader. Like Space Invaders, you control a ship which can only move horizontally along the bottom of the screen; alien ships are dropped down one of 13 different columns by a huge mothership. The marquee artwork shows the mothership, as well as two other ships which could be enemy craft or could represent those of the player. While the game does boast a two-player option, it is not simultaneous.

**Astyanax**

1989 / Jaleco

Known in Japan by the unintentionally hilarious name of The Lord of King, The Astyanax sees one or two players fighting their way through a fantasy landscape, their path blocked by all manner of weird and wonderful monsters – most of which are taken from Greek mythology. Around the same time, the game was ported to the Nintendo Entertainment System as a single-player affair under the title Astyanax. While the gameplay was similar, the visuals took a significant hit, as was often the case with arcade-to-NES conversions.

**Baby Pac-Man**

1982 / Bally Midway

Created without Namco's permission in 1982 by Bally Midway, Baby Pac-Man is a curious combination of video game and pinball, where play alternates between a 13-inch screen and a mini pinball table situated directly below. It was a unique premise that built on the core mechanics of Toru Iwatani's original, but its unauthorised development – along with Pac-Man Plus, Jr. Pac-Man, and Professor Pac-Man – would ultimately lead to a breakdown in the relationship between Bally Midway and Namco.

**Bad Dudes vs. Dragon Ninja**

1988 / Data East

This game (known to most as simply 'Bad Dudes') is something of a cult classic, thanks in no small part to the main mission of the game: rescuing the kidnapped 'President Ronnie'. Even an appearance by the not-very-popular fire-breathing Soviet circus strongman Karnov as an enemy boss didn't derail this side-scrolling platform fighter and it still stands as one of the late '80s most recognisable and well-loved arcade titles. The marquee depicts the titular 'Bad Dudes' Blade and Striker taking out a couple of enemies.

**Badlands**

1984 / Konami

Konami's only LaserDisc game, Badlands' premise of the brutal murder of the main character's wife and children probably did little to bolster its popularity in the arcades! The marquee is a cast of characters featured in the game, displayed in a 'most wanted' poster style.

**Badlands**

1989 / Atari

Not to be confused with the 1984 Konami LaserDisc shooter of the same name, Atari's post-apocalyptic racer Badlands is the unlikely sequel to Super Sprint and Championship Sprint, the company's two previous top-down efforts. Players can take out their rivals with lethal weaponry, and the whole game feels like a coin-op adaptation of the famous Mad Max series of movies; the marquee reinforces this connection, showing the player character racing across a scorched and barren landscape, outrunning his bloodthirsty opponents.

**Bagman**

1983 / Valadon Automation

Bagman's comic strip marquee by Larry Day served double duty by attracting potential players to take a closer look in order to read the panels, and also serving as a basic instruction sheet, explaining the basic concepts of the game. An alternative marquee was used in certain European markets, featuring a more traditional marquee with a Bagman logotype expanded to fill the entire panel.

**Bank Panic**

1984 / SEGA/Sanritsu

Developed by Japanese company Sanritsu Denki in 1984, Bank Panic was distributed by SEGA and proved to be a moderate hit for the company. As the town sheriff, you must protect the local bank from outlaws while taking additional care not to shoot innocent townsfolk who are simply entering the building to make a deposit. The game was later ported to the SEGA Master System home console.

**Battlezone**

1980 / Atari

Battlezone's marquee offers a (somewhat more detailed) player's-eye view from the same perspective present in the game itself. The original upright cabinet didn't include a marquee at all, but there was concern from the Atari marketing department that the use of a periscope to view the screen would mean that potential players wouldn't get to see the game in action. The marquee was added to the cabinet design, although (as is common with many Atari titles) the identity of the artist remains a mystery.

**Beast Busters**

1989 / SNK

Famous for being the last arcade title SNK created before it shifted its focus to its own NEOGEO hardware, Beast Busters is an arcade shooter which features some of the most downright bizarre enemy designs of the period. Hero characters Johnny Justice, Paul Patriot and Sammy Stately must fight off the undead hordes across a series of stages, collecting power-up items to aid their progress. Home ports followed at the time, and SNK would release a sequel ten years later on the Hyper NEOGEO 64 arcade format. In the same year, Dark Arms: Beast Busters launched on the handheld NEOGEO Pocket Color.



**Berzerk**  
1980 / Stern

The Berzerk marquee has all of the hallmarks of an Advertising Posters outsourced design job, common among the Chicago arcade and pinball manufacturers of the early '80s. The game itself was pretty much a one-man job, designed and programmed by Alan McNeil, and with no in-house artists at Stern, the task of designing the cabinet art was given to Advertising Posters, a hotbed of artistic talent for hire, first for the pinball business that grew up in Chicago and, later, the arcade game boom.

**Bionic Commando**  
1987 / Capcom

Initially positioned as sequel to Commando, this side-scrolling action title is unique in that it denies the player the ability to jump; instead, a special grappling arm must be used to access higher platforms and navigate a path through each level. While home computer ports of the game exist, the NES version is perhaps the most famous domestic edition, which is ironic as it differs greatly from the coin-op original. Capcom would resurrect the series in 2008 with Bionic Commando Rearmed, which served as an appetiser for a full-3D revival the following year.

**Black Tiger**  
1987 / Capcom

This fantasy platform shooter is known as Black Dragon in Japan and is considered the spiritual successor to Makaimura. Outside Japan, this makes Black Tiger the spiritual successor to Ghost(s) 'n Goblins. The international versions of the game carried one of two different marquee designs: the Romstar-licensed version being the most graphically interesting; the alternative just simple stylised text on plain black background.

**Black Widow**  
1982 / Atari

Released at a time when most games were focused on blasting aliens or racing cars, Black Widow was unique in that it placed the player in the role of the titular spider, with the aim being to defend your web from hostile insects. The marquee art doesn't show the spider, but instead opts to represent the player via a pair of hands, presumably 'controlling' the actions of the arachnid itself. Interestingly, Black Widow was also sold as a conversion kit for the underperforming Gravitar, and it is rumoured that many factory-built units were simply surplus Gravitar cabinets with Black Widow side art applied.

**Blaster**  
1983 / Williams

Released as a pseudo-sequel to Robotron: 2084 – the title screen begins "It is the year 2085. Robotrons have destroyed the human race" – Blaster was an excellent game, developed by the infamous Vid Kidz as their third and final release. Unfortunately, it launched in November 1983, just as the video game crash was in full effect. The marquee shown is from the rare upright wooden cabinet; the majority of surviving machines are the almost indestructible plastic Duramold version.

**Block Out**  
1989 / California Dreams

The creation of Polish developers Aleksander Ustaszewski and Mirosław Zabłocki, Block Out is best described as Tetris in 3D. In place of those iconic tetrominoes, players are instead faced with a pit into which polycubes are dropped; forming complete layers causes the blocks to vanish. The arcade game's marquee renders the title in 3D blocks, while around it a series of brightly-coloured polycubes fall from the sky.

**Blue Print**  
1982 / Bally Midway

Yet another attempt to capitalise on the popularity of maze games, Blue Print sees the hero J.J. – who, despite looking like a clown, happens to be an inventor, hence the title – fighting the evil Ollie Ogre in an effort to save his beloved girlfriend. To do this, he must find all the parts of a comical machine he has designed, painstakingly assemble it on the blueprint at the bottom of the playfield and then use it to shoot Ollie, who can be seen at the top of the screen chasing J.J.'s other half.

**Bomb Jack**  
1984 / Tehkan

Tehkan – later known as Tecmo – released Bomb Jack in arcades in 1984, and created one of the most recognisable franchises of the period. Jack's objective is to collect as many red bombs as possible while avoiding the unwanted attention of the many enemies which patrol the screen. Bomb Jack was a hit on home consoles like the Nintendo Entertainment System, and would sire an arcade sequel in the shape of Bomb Jack Twin. The marquee artwork is simplistic but eye-catching, showing our caped hero leaping to victory against an atmospheric city skyline.

**Bonanza Bros.**  
1990 / SEGA

Robo and Mobo – the siblings mentioned in the title – must enter a series of locations and steal valuable objects before making for the roof, and the safety of a waiting blimp. That's the premise of Bonanza Bros., one of SEGA's earliest System 24 releases and a unique split-screen proposition which encourages stealth as well as a quick trigger finger. The guards which patrol each building cannot be eliminated forever, but must be stunned by hitting them with your bullets or slamming them in doors. Home ports arrived later on the Mega Drive, Master System and PC Engine CD, as well as a series of computers.

**Bosconian**  
1981/ Midway

The marquee for Midway's US-licensed version of Bosconian is copyrighted 1981, but the game actually hit American arcades in February 1982. The design is unusual in that it includes 8-bit graphics taken directly from the game, along with solid colour elements and halftone gradients. The style of the marquee suggests that this was another design job outsourced to Advertising Posters in Chicago.

**Bowl-O-Rama**  
1991 / P&P Marketing

Produced by P&P Marketing in 1991, this 2D bowling simulation adopts a top-down perspective on the action, allowing players to better judge the travel of the ball as it races down the alley. The rather basic visuals were perhaps not enough to draw players in, so the colourful marquee – which showcases the game's logo alongside two pins – will have been instrumental in drumming up custom.

**Break Out**  
1976 / Atari

Arguably one of the most influential of Atari's arcade hits, 1976's Break Out took the paddle-and-ball gameplay seen in Pong and took it in a new direction; instead of playing against a rival, the aim was to use the ball to break all of the bricks at the top of the screen. Break Out inspired a flood of clones – Taito's Arkanoid being perhaps the most notable – but it is important for other reasons, too. While the concept was credited to Atari founder Nolan Bushnell and legendary designer Steve Bristow, the game was created by none other than Steve Wozniak, with a little assistance from Steve Jobs. Wozniak and Jobs would go on to found Apple in the same year that Break Out was released.

**Bubble Bobble**  
1986 / Taito

Cooperative gameplay was virtually unknown in arcade gaming back in 1986, but when Bubble Bobble came along with its cartoon dinosaur protagonists Bub and Bob in this 100-level epic platform game, it would set the standard for both platform gaming and cooperative play. Graphically simple, the variant of the marquee shown here (there are at least four other marquees) appears today on numerous t-shirts, bags and other items, indicating the level of affection that still exists for this truly excellent game.

**Buck Rogers**  
1982 / SEGA/Gremlin

In 1982, SEGA released a game in Japanese arcades called Zoom 909 which used its VCO Object arcade system, hardware predominantly focused on sprite scaling. While it had no connection with the famous comic character created by Philip Francis Nowlan, SEGA renamed the game Buck Rogers: Planet of Zoom for its release in North America, leveraging the increased brand awareness to bolster the title's chances. Buck Rogers in the 25th Century had hit TV at the end of the '70s and, while it ended its run in 1981, it still had considerable cachet with arcade-going kids.

**Bucky O'Hare**  
1992 / Konami

Based on the 1991 cartoon series Bucky O'Hare and the Toad Wars, this side-scrolling brawler sits alongside The Simpsons, Astérix and Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles as one of Konami's many attempts to exploit the popularity of media properties in order to draw in the coinage of arcade-goers. Bucky O'Hare mixes things up by giving each character a laser weapon which means players can alternate between melee combat and ranged attacks. The game's visuals are a close match to the TV show, which is a positive as the marquee artwork is relatively basic, showcasing the logo and little else.

**Bump 'n' Jump**  
1982 / Data East

Data East's 1982 top-down driving game was unique in that it challenged players with colliding with other cars and leaping over obstacles – the 'bump' and 'jump' of the title. Known as Burnin' Rubber in Japan and ported to the Famicom under the name Buggy Popper, Bump 'n' Jump benefits from an attractive marquee design which does an excellent job of conveying the energy and excitement of the core gameplay.



# C

## **BurgerTime** 1982 / Data East

One of Data East's most successful coin-op releases, BurgerTime places you in the role of chef Peter Pepper, who has to deal with the unwanted attention of the evil Mr. Hot Dog, Mr. Pickle, and Mr. Egg – all of whom can be dispatched by squishing them in between the various elements of the giant burgers you need to create to complete the level. True to his name, Peter can also stun them temporarily using pepper, but the onus is very much on quick movement and clever navigation of the platforms and ladders which make up each stage. The BurgerTime marquee showcases two characters: Peter himself and the advancing Mr. Hot Dog, the latter of whom has a rather sinister expression on his face. A number of versions of the BurgerTime game were made available, the variant included here being the international release from original developer Data East in Japan.

## **Buster Bros.** 1989 / Mitchell Corporation

Better known as Pang, this seminal single-screen cooperative action title sees you popping balloons with harpoons. Balloons divide each time they are popped, before vanishing altogether when popped a fourth time. The game's 50 stages span 17 world-famous locations, including Mt. Fuji, Angkor Wat, Ayers Rock, the Taj Mahal and Easter Island. Home ports and sequels have appeared all the way up to the present day, but we'll always have a soft spot for the game's initial Japanese title, 'Pomping World'.

## **Cabal** 1988 / TAD Corporation

"Dare the danger with Cabal" exclaims the marquee artwork for this seminal 1988 shooter; like Taito's Operation Wolf, the player's perspective on the action looks 'into' the screen, but the difference here is that your character is visible and can be moved in the foreground. The marquee is rich with detail, showing the two main characters (this is a simultaneous two-player affair) and a horde of enemy vehicles, including tanks, planes and choppers.

## **Captain America & the Avengers** 1991 / Data East

The Avengers characters have become very familiar to us in recent years but, back in 1991, they were nothing like as well known to most people unfamiliar with the world of comic books and graphic novels, particularly outside the US. The game is fairly true to the characters' comic book roots in graphic style and backstory, and the cabinet artwork could easily be the cover art from a graphic novel.

## **Centipede** 1981 / Atari

Unusually, the Centipede marquee was created after the very detailed side art and uses a number of elements from it, in a slightly stylised way. The Centipede text itself is relatively small in comparison with the other elements of the marquee and is not very readable from a distance. As Atari's second best-selling arcade game, this doesn't appear to have caused players any issues in identifying Centipede machines across dimly lit, crowded arcades.

## **Champion Wrestler** 1989 / Taito

Taito's stab at creating a decent arcade wrestling title showcases the talents of Matterhorn Deecker, Jimmy Carbon, Black Machine, The Samuray, Rocky Garner, Nitro Bankus, Bloody Cobra Joe and Miracle Rastan – the latter being based on the hero from the company's famous side-scrolling action series. Small sprites and a lack of visual impact are solid reasons for why this effort has been largely forgotten, while games like WWF WrestleFest, Saturday Night Slam Masters and Three Count Bout remain in the memory.

## **Chase H.Q.** 1988 / Taito

SEGA's Out Run triggered a flood of clones which focused on speed and bright visuals, but Taito took the formula and adopted a fresh approach which gave it yet another '80s coin-op hit. While speed remains the order of the day, the objective isn't to get to the finish line but to catch up with a fleeing criminal and smash into their car until they submit. Like SEGA's game, Chase H.Q. leveraged the fame of an existing car brand by making the player's sleek black pursuit vehicle closely resemble the (then) famous Porsche 928.

## **Chiller** 1986 / Exidy

American firm Exidy was no stranger to controversy – it faced criticism for creating the driving game Death Race in 1976 – and while the company produced many notable arcade titles in the '70s and '80s, it clearly realised that blood and gore could elevate coin-op releases above the competition. 1986's Chiller was a light gun shooter where the objective was to torture and kill seemingly innocent characters in the quickest time possible; sales were poor and many North American arcades refused to purchase the machine. The atmospheric marquee – which features a ghoulish character holding aloft a severed head – goes some way to explaining why.

**Choplifter**  
1985 / SEGA

Combat helicopter game Choplifter took an unusual route into the arcades, having been first written for the Apple II home computer by Dan Gorlin in 1982. Licensed by SEGA and released in 1985, the game sees the player controlling the helicopter in dual roles of hostage rescue and blasting enemies to pieces. The marquee for this game is one of the all-time greats and remains a popular choice for framing and wall-mounting.

**Circus Charlie**  
1984 / Konami

Konami's Circus Charlie is best described as a circus-themed multi-event game, reminiscent of their smash hit sports title Track & Field. The player guides Charlie through six different events featuring (unsurprisingly) circus-related skills and obstacles. The marquee reflects the first and fifth events Charlie must complete: riding a lion while jumping through flaming hoops and then riding a horse while avoiding numerous obstacles.

**Cloak & Dagger**  
1983 / Atari

This game was originally developed under the name 'Agent X' until the producers of the movie Cloak & Dagger approached Atari and asked if they had anything that could be used in scenes in the movie that called for a spy-themed arcade game. Atari agreed to change the name of their game to Cloak & Dagger and the marquee artwork reflects the crossover between the film and the game.

**Cobra Command**  
1984 / Data East

The early '80s saw several eye-catching LaserDisc titles hit arcades, and the limited scope of their gameplay was balanced out by the fact that they simply looked incredible when compared to the simplistic graphics seen in other games. Cobra Command was no exception and placed you in the cockpit of an attack chopper; directed by Yoshihisa Kishimoto of Renegade and Double Dragon fame, the title is perhaps best known for its Mega CD conversion, which arrived almost a decade later in 1992.

**Commando**  
1985 / Capcom

Known as Wolf of the Battlefield in its native Japan, Capcom's Commando is a seminal release in the 'run-and-gun' genre. The player advanced up the screen, taking out enemies with a machine gun and hand grenades. The marquee shows our hero – named Super Joe – using both of these weapons while surrounded by devastating explosions and flanked by the game's logo. In 1989, Capcom released MERCS, the sequel to this game.

**Conquest**  
1982 / Tago Electronics

This marquee is for a game that, at the time of writing, does not appear to actually exist. Tago Electronics licensed a Stern game called Journey (who originally licensed it themselves under the code name Type-110 from Konami in Japan) and renamed it Conquest. They issued an arcade advertising flyer at the 1982 AMOA show, offering conversion kits for older machines, called 'Turn-A-Profit' kits. The three games on offer were Anteater, Calipso and Conquest. Tago turned to Advertising Posters to develop the conversion artwork for the kits and Larry Day produced this fully finished marquee design for the Conquest game. What happened after that is, thus far, lost in the mists of arcade history.

**Crazy Climber**  
1981 / Taito

Crazy Climber was developed by Nihon Bussan, licensed to its own subsidiary Nichibutsu who sub-licensed it to Taito for the US market. The Taito version of the game is housed in a generic orange Taito cabinet. The marquee by Gordon Morrison is screen-printed on thicker-than-normal acrylic and uses a number of custom fluorescent inks in an attempt to compensate for the lack of backlighting in the Taito cabinets.

**Crossbow**  
1983 / Exidy

Exidy's Crossbow certainly made for an eye-catching sight in arcades during the early '80s; it boasted a full-scale crossbow mounted to the cabinet. The gameplay was also rather unique, with the player expected to protect a group of allies by shooting nearby threats from afar; digitised speech enlivened an already gripping experience. With its vampire bat and smoke-breathing dragon, the marquee is certainly an eye-catching affair.



**Cruis'n Exotica**

1999 / Midway

Following on from the original Cruis'n USA and Cruis'n World, Cruis'n Exotica places the action in rather outlandish locations, including the surface of Mars. Released at a time when interest in arcade machines was dwindling, Exotica was not a success and the subsequent Nintendo 64 and Game Boy Color ports received a lukewarm reaction from the gaming press at the time of release.

**Cruis'n USA**

1994 / Midway

Developed by Midway Games and directed by the legendary Eugene Jarvis, Cruis'n USA plays like SEGA's Out Run, but in 3D. Published by Nintendo, the game was supposed to be an arcade-based advertisement for the company's upcoming Ultra 64 hardware (eventually released as the Nintendo 64), but the system running the game was actually Midway's own V-unit board. When the game did eventually arrive on the N64, it failed to meet the launch window because Nintendo had issues with the quality of the conversion, as well as elements such as the ability to run over animals. Nonetheless, the marquee artwork is rather sophisticated, displaying one of the sports cars you get to drive racing through a desert landscape.

**Crush Roller**

1981 / Alpha Denshi

Released in the West by Williams under the title Make Trax, Crush Roller took the maze game concept popularised by Pac-Man and gave it a different spin; the objective is to use a paintbrush to cover the entire level while avoiding hostile fish which patrol the map. The 'Crush Roller' of the title refers to paint rollers which can be used to temporarily knock out the fish and buy you some additional time to lay down paint. In 1999, ADK would remake the game for SNK's NEOGEO Pocket Color handheld.

**Crystal Castles**

1983 / Atari

The Crystal Castles marquee features a host of artist Barbara Singh's in-game artwork, including the hero of the game, Bentley Bear himself. Crystal Castles' cabinet was almost completely covered in artwork and actually has a second, smaller marquee that functions as a speaker bezel. This may have contributed to Crystal Castles becoming one of the most successful releases of 1983.

**Cyber Police ESWAT**

1989 / SEGA

SEGA was inspired by many Hollywood movies during the '80s, and there are no prizes for guessing which '80s movie inspired ESWAT – a side-scrolling shooter which features police officers in huge, hulking robot suits. The marquee artwork does a good job of communicating the downright silliness of this title; our cyborg law enforcers are seen opening fire on a gorilla, which waits at the end of the Chinatown level. The Mega Drive port – which is totally different from the arcade version – is arguably the better game, despite its less impressive visuals.

**Dead Angle**

1988 / Seibu Kaihatsu

The sequel to 1986's well-received Empire City: 1931, Dead Angle places the player in the shoes of private investigator George Phoenix who stalks a series of cities in an effort to rescue his girlfriend from the powerful mobster Robert King. Unlike Operation Wolf, in Dead Angle the player's silhouette is shown on-screen, and it's even possible to duck to avoid incoming attacks. Seibu Kaihatsu would refine this approach in its next big title, Dynamite Duke. A Master System port of Dead Angle was released in the same year, which removed the two-player option and features fewer stages.

**Death Race**

1976 / Exidy

Pat 'Sleepy' Peak's artwork for the 1976 game Death Race was almost as controversial as the game itself, and, following a somewhat hysterical article in National Enquirer, Exidy's infamous offering was effectively banned in many towns across America. There are a number of different versions of the Death Race marquee; some are screen-printed onto acrylic or glass and there at least two known examples of machines converted from earlier Demolition Derby cabinets, with marquees hand-painted and signed by Peak himself.

**Defender**

1981 / Williams

The simplistic marquee design for Defender belies the huge complexity and difficulty of the game itself. Industry insiders predicted that the game would be a huge commercial disaster for Williams, after seeing the game at a 1981 trade show in Chicago. Playtesting in a number of arcades across Illinois suggested otherwise and the game went on to become one of the top-earning titles in arcade gaming history, outperforming even Pac-Man in 1981. Constantino 'Connie' Mitchell is credited as the artist.

<b>Dig Dug</b> 1982 / Atari <p>The cartoonish, angular graphical style of the Dig Dug marquee did nothing to detract from the popularity of the game when it launched in May 1982 to much acclaim. By the end of its production run, Atari had shipped over 22,000 Dig Dug machines. Former Atari programmer Owen Rubin owns a prototype Dig Dug machine complete with hand-drawn concept artwork.</p>	<b>Domino Man</b> 1983 / Bally Midway <p>The premise for Domino Man sounds like an unlikely one for an arcade game, but the gameplay of setting up and then toppling numerous dominos is actually surprisingly fun. All of the elements present in the game are reflected in the marquee, including the moustachioed protagonist, the neighbourhood bully, the killer bee and the fact that the whole game is played against the clock.</p>	<b>Donkey Kong</b> 1981 / Nintendo <p>The baby blue Donkey Kong machine is certainly one of the most recognisable arcade cabinets of all time. There are many photographs from the early '80s showing rows of identical machines lined up in arcades and Donkey Kong was Nintendo's breakthrough game that launched them in the Western arcade market. The identity of the artist remains a mystery, and a very brief, slightly cryptic email conversation with Shigeru Miyamoto leads us to believe that Nintendo's first staff artist may well have created the cabinet art himself.</p>	<b>Donkey Kong 3</b> 1983 / Nintendo <p>While it carries the world-famous Donkey Kong name, this third outing is a radical departure from previous titles. The player assumes the role of Stanley, who uses bug spray to repel Kong and various hostile insects who threaten his beloved flowers, found at the bottom of the screen. Despite being something of an outsider in the Donkey Kong series, this third entry remains enjoyable and comes complete with some captivating marquee artwork that truly showcases Shigeru Miyamoto's impeccable design work; Stanley is shown with his bug spray in readiness, while on the right side of the image an irate Kong beats his chest.</p>	<b>Donkey Kong Junior</b> 1982 / Nintendo <p>Unsurprisingly, the Donkey Kong Junior marquee features Mario (renamed from 'Jumpman' in the original Donkey Kong arcade release) along with Donkey Kong himself and his son, Donkey Kong Junior. What is somewhat surprising is that, in this game, Mario is the bad guy and Donkey Kong is now the victim, imprisoned by Mario and in need of rescue by Donkey Kong Junior.</p>	<b>Double Dragon</b> 1987 / Technōs Japan <p>This is the game that delivered a quantum leap in beat-'em-up gameplay, as the first side-scrolling, depth-aware fighting game offering cooperative play between two players. It is no exaggeration to say that without Double Dragon there would be no Final Fight, and a whole genre of fighting games owe their very existence to Yoshihisa Kishimoto and his team at Technōs. The Double Dragon marquee, featuring the two protagonists Billy and Jimmy Lee, holds such a place in gamers' hearts that it can be described in one word: legendary.</p>	<b>Double Dragon II: The Revenge</b> 1988 / Technōs Japan <p>Creating a sequel to what remains one of the most successful arcade games of all time can't have been easy, but Technōs Japan – under the stewardship of the self-proclaimed 'grandfather of beat 'em ups' Yoshihisa Kishimoto – certainly pulled it off with this 1988 release. Set after the events of the original game, Double Dragon 2 once again sees Billy and Jimmy Lee take to the streets following the brutal murder of their friend Marian at the hands of Willy, leader of the Black Warriors. The superbly atmospheric marquee artwork shows the Lee brothers each brandishing a weapon as members of the sinister Black Warriors gang close in for the kill.</p>	<b>Dr. Mario</b> 1990 / Nintendo <p>Designed by Takahiro Harada, Dr. Mario was an attempt by Nintendo to leverage the popularity of single-screen puzzle titles following the phenomenal success of Tetris, the Russian puzzler bundled with the company's million-selling Game Boy handheld. The player must remove viruses from the screen by using coloured pills. The arcade version is actually the NES edition and was intended for two-player use, hence the 'Vs.' prefix being included in the marquee artwork. The marquee also explains exactly how the pill-matching gameplay works, a hint at the surprising level of depth contained within.</p>
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# E

## Dynamite Duke

1989 / Seibu Kaihatsu

Seibu Kaihatsu – creator of the famous Raiden series of vertically scrolling shooters – produced this cult classic in 1989. Perhaps better known for its superb Mega Drive conversion handled by SEGA itself, Dynamite Duke mixes the gameplay of Taito's Operation Wolf with a third-person perspective; your character can be seen at all times, and it's possible to engage in melee combat with certain enemies. The side art shows Duke in two poses, one of which displays his fearsome bionic arm, which is capable of unleashing a yellow shockwave that damages all enemies.

## Dyno Bop

1990 / Grand Products

One of a unique subset of arcade machines that tasked the player with performing in-game challenges to win tickets which could then be spent on physical rewards within the same amusement centre, Dyno Bop's gameplay revolves around rolling plastic balls into the machine which, in turn, makes virtual balls appear on-screen in order to hit dinosaurs and smash their precious eggs. Success results in tickets being dispensed.

## Eagle

1980 / Centuri

Centuri's Eagle game is really just a modified version of the original Moon Cresta code, a fact made all the more obvious by the tri-stage ship included in the marquee. The game was originally intended to be an entirely new title, but the huge demand from arcade operators for new machines resulted in many 'tweaked' versions of existing games. There are some cabinets out there with side art featuring a different ship that was supposed to appear in the all-new Eagle game.

## Elevator Action

1983 / Taito

The Elevator Action cabinet was a standard Taito unit in fairly drab brown trim. The marquee featured contrasting bright yellow text and elevator door imagery, along with Pop art-style shading on the Agent 17 and enemy spy characters. Unfortunately, because of the proximity of the fluorescent tube to the marquee and non-UV stable ink used for the printing, almost all Elevator Action marquees were pale and faded within about six months of them appearing in the arcade.

## Empire Strikes Back

1985 / Atari

Surprisingly, Atari released this game after Return of the Jedi and then only as a conversion kit for the original Star Wars machines – there was never a dedicated Empire cabinet. 544 conversion kits were produced and Empire, which was based on the same game engine as the original Star Wars, saw a return to vector graphics after Jedi's forced perspective, Zaxxon-like gameplay. The game was something of a rarity in the arcades, as many operators with existing Star Wars machines – particularly cockpit cabs – were reluctant to do the conversion and lose the revenue from an increasingly profitable unit.

## Exerion

1983 / Jaleco

Developed by Jaleco and licensed for North American distribution by Taito, Exerion is a vertical shooter that uses parallax effects to give the impression of 3D depth. It's an impressive visual trick – and one which will no doubt have dazzled arcade-goers in the early '80s – but it masks some very simplistic and traditional gameplay. An MSX sequel called Exerion II: Zorni appeared in 1984, while a spiritual sequel called Exerizer (also known as Sky Fox in North America) arrived three years later.

# F

## Final Fight

1989 / Capcom

This is the game that took everything Technos achieved with Double Dragon and built on it to deliver the standard by which all other scrolling fighters would be judged. Originally planned as the sequel to Street Fighter – complete with the title Street Fighter '89 – Capcom decided that there was a lot more they could do with the Street Fighter franchise, and releasing a sequel with the word 'Final' in the title may not be the best plan. Final Fight's marquee is one of those which is as often found framed on game room walls as it is on a working arcade machine.

## Firefox

1984 / Atari

A LaserDisc title based on the 1982 Clint Eastwood movie of the same name, Firefox places you in the cockpit of the fictional Soviet MiG-31 fighter jet. To create the video sequences seen in the game, developers Mike Hally and Moe Shore had to sift through hours of footage from the film. The marquee proudly proclaims the title's status as a 'Laser Video' release, and shows the high-tech Firefox fighter blasting across the sky, presumably achieving the Mach 6 speeds discussed in the movie.

# G

<b>Food Fight</b> 1983 / General Computer Corporation <p>The Food Fight game itself was developed for Atari by General Computer Corporation as part of a legal settlement over an illegal 'speed-up kit' created for Missile Command in which General Computer Corporation added their copyright to the game. The inspiration for the game came from the infamous food fight scene in National Lampoon's Animal House movie. The marquee is an unremarkable piece featuring the game's Charlie Chuck character and chef taking a pie to the face.</p>	<b>Forgotten Worlds</b> 1988 / Capcom <p>The first game to use Capcom's new CP System arcade hardware, Forgotten Worlds boasts a unique control system which comprises of a traditional 8-way joystick and a dial known as a 'roll switch' which allows you to adjust the aim of your character while moving independently with the stick. In a nod to SEGA's Fantasy Zone, it is possible to spend cash at shops located at certain points in each level. Despite receiving a wide range of home ports on consoles and computers – the SEGA Mega Drive version is particularly good – nothing really comes close to playing Forgotten Worlds with the original control scheme.</p>	<b>Frogger</b> 1981 / Konami <p>The Frogger cabinet used by SEGA for this game was an end-of-line unit called a Convert-a-Cab, commonly used by smaller arcade operators who could literally 'convert the cab' to a different game whenever a title got too old. The cabinet artwork for Frogger attempted to compensate for the dull woodgrain box of the Convert-a-Cab by introducing a tyre tread theme that ran from the marquee, down the screen bezel and over the control panel. Between the artwork and the gameplay, something must have worked as Frogger became the first big hit for SEGA/Gremlin in the USA.</p>	<b>Front Line</b> 1982 / Taito <p>Only a solitary silhouetted figure carrying a rifle complete with fixed bayonet offers any real clue as to the game's content. This was one of Taito America's first releases, Taito having previously licensed their titles to other companies for US manufacture and distribution. Front Line's appearance in the arcades went largely unnoticed and the game provided little competition for the other titles, although it was awarded runner-up Coin-Op Game of the Year in 1983, behind Pole Position.</p>	<b>Galaga</b> 1981 / Namco <p>Yet another Advertising Posters creation, the Galaga marquee gives little away regarding what the player can expect after following the instruction to 'Insert Coin'. The marquee is more typography than art, in stark contrast to the hugely detailed side art panel that is widely considered to be one of the best pieces of arcade cabinet artwork to grace the side of a machine.</p>	<b>Galaxian</b> 1979 / Namco <p>This was the first game to use the now iconic 'Namco cab' so familiar to any fan of Pac-Man. The style of the cabinet meant that the available space for the marquee was fairly large in comparison to other machines. The original Galaxian marquee was hand-painted on glass, although the process quickly moved to screen-printing when the popularity of the game became apparent. Galaxian was the first arcade game to offer full-colour graphics and the marquee was suitably vivid for such a groundbreaking game.</p>	<b>Gaplus</b> 1984 / Namco <p>The sequel to the insanely popular Galaga, Gaplus was – along with its forerunner – one of only two games to run on Namco's Phozon arcade hardware. The big change here is that your ship – which must repel waves of aliens that descend from the top of the screen – is capable of moving vertically as well as horizontally. Gaplus wasn't as successful as Namco's other shooters and only received one home port, for the Commodore 64 in 1988.</p>	<b>Ghosts 'n Goblins</b> 1986 / Capcom <p>This Romstar-licensed version of the marquee contains the correct name given to the international release by Capcom: Ghost 'n Goblins. By the time Taito had released their licensed version the name had subtly changed to Ghosts 'n Goblins. This causes much confusion and discussion among arcade fans and collectors over which is the 'real' name of the game. In reality, the 'real' name of the game is 'Makaimura', which translates as 'Demon World Village'. The Romstar version of the marquee is more graphically interesting and less cartoonish than the Taito version and retains the singular Ghost in the title, just as Capcom intended.</p>
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### Ghouls 'n Ghosts 1988 / Capcom

Three years after Ghost(s) 'n Goblins (Makaimura in Japan) the game's characters returned in the sequel Ghouls 'n Ghosts (Daimakaimura). The graphics improved immensely and the level design was far more advanced and superbly rendered. The arcade artwork remains fairly similar in style, again with multiple versions depending on licensee and market. Out of the home ports, the one released on the ill-fated NEC SuperGrafx console is perhaps the most faithful, but SEGA's Mega Drive conversion is more famous.

### Golden Axe 1989 / SEGA

Arguably one of the most famous side-scrolling fighters of all time, Golden Axe took the core gameplay seen in the likes of Renegade and Double Dragon and set the action in a fantasy setting not entirely unlike that seen in the Conan movies. Indeed, the late '80s saw a flood of Hollywood movies based in the fantasy genre, such as Red Sonja, Willow and Beastmaster, and Golden Axe rode this wave perfectly. Sadly, its marquee art is one of the least inspiring things about the game; Ax Battler and Tyris Flare bare only a passing resemblance to their in-game counterparts, and the less said about the latter's shell-like brassiere, the better.

### Golden Axe: The Revenge of Death Adder 1992 / SEGA

An arcade exclusive that was sadly never ported to any home system, Revenge of Death Adder is an amazing sequel which manages to improve dramatically on its predecessor, adding in more detail, tighter gameplay and oodles of content. Thanks to the power of SEGA's System 32 arcade board, we're treated to smooth scaling, large sprites and maps which scroll both vertically and horizontally. The marquee is also a marked improvement over the one seen on the original game, featuring bold and detailed artwork sure to draw in potential players.

### GORF 1981 / Midway

The slab-sided GORF cabinet was an imposing sight when it appeared in arcades in 1981, and the marquee art for the 'Galactic Orbital Robot Force' was a stylised representation of the characters featured in the five missions of the game. The developer for Midway, Jay Fenton (now Jamie Faye) doesn't recall having any real involvement in the cabinet design and it's a reasonable assumption that the artwork for GORF, like most other Bally Midway titles of the period, was provided by Advertising Posters.

### Gravitar 1982 / Atari

Brad Chaboya's Gravitar cabinet artwork is some of the best ever to grace an arcade machine and is almost as action-packed as the groundbreaking coloured vector game itself. Gravitar has been described by Project Leader Mike Hally as 'Lunar Lander with guns' and that's a pretty accurate description.

### Gyryss 1983 / Konami

The Gyryss marquee is one of very few containing an optical illusion element, in this case, the illusion that the top and bottom of the frame surrounding the artwork bulges outwards. This is caused by the numerous coloured lines that extend out from the frame to a point at the centre of the image. These lines reflect the focus of the game, with the player's ship firing inwards from the outer edge of the screen.

### Hang-On 1985 / SEGA

SEGA's superbike-themed racer, with Yu Suzuki's revolutionary sprite-scaling graphics, was a huge leap in arcade racing game technology and changed the genre forever. The upright Hang-On machine featured a pair of realistic motorcycle handlebars attached to an otherwise fairly standard cabinet, but it was the ride-on version with its steering controlled by the player leaning left and right that everyone wanted to play.

### Heavy Barrel 1988 / Data East

Often mistakenly listed as part of SNK's Ikari series of games, Heavy Barrel was Data East's multi-directional, scrolling shoot-em-up forerunner to Midnight Resistance. The marquee was one of the first to make use of a new type of texture sheet to add shading, rather than the more traditional halftoning seen in most other arcade cabinet art.

**Hellfire**  
1989 / Toaplan

Code-named Captain Lancer while in development at Toaplan, horizontal shooter Hellfire was licensed to Taito and released on Taito's behalf by USA Games as a conversion kit, with a number of alternative artwork packs to enable arcade operators to convert multiple machines in the same location that would all look like different games. The marquee variant shown is a version using the logo from the in-game title screen.

**Hunchback**  
1983 / Century Electronics

Few video game heroes come as flawed and awkward as Quasimodo, the titular hunchback, but he's surprisingly spritely in this single-screen platformer. The goal is to make it to the opposite side of the screen to ring the church bell while avoiding threats such as fireballs and arrows. You'll also need to get your skates on, because if you don't make it to the bell fast enough, a knight climbs up the ramparts and kills Quasimodo. UK publisher Ocean Software released a series of home conversions in 1984, with the ZX Spectrum version proving to be especially successful commercially.

**I, Robot**  
1984 / Atari

A commercial bomb at the time of its release in 1984, I, Robot is now rightly recognised as one of the most influential arcade games of all time. It is believed to be the first game to utilise solid 3D polygon graphics, and while its odd gameplay and awkward controls take some getting used to, it remains eminently playable even by modern standards. The game's marquee reinforces the unique nature of its visuals, choosing to display the logo text as 3D blocks moving towards the player.

**Ice Cold Beer**  
1983 / Taito

Not strictly a video game but a mechanical one, Taito's Ice Cold Beer challenges players to tip a metal bar back and forth and manoeuvre a ball up the playfield into a specific lit hole while taking care to avoid losing the ball down an unlit hole. The 2017 indie title TumbleSeed takes inspiration from this 1983 release, which Taito would adapt for a family-friendly sequel in the form of Zeke's Peak in 1984, which removed the alcoholic imagery and replaced it with mountain-climbing. The main character in Zeke's Peak is taken from Zoo Keeper, which Taito released in 1982.

**Ikari Warriors**  
1986 / SNK

Before SNK became famous for its NEOGEO arcade system and its long line of one-on-one fighting games, Ikari Warriors was perhaps its most famous creation. Released in North America in 1986, it was the breakout hit for the Japanese firm, and rode on the back of Capcom's Commando, offering a similar style of run-and-gun gameplay. The marquee features the two leads, Colonel Ralf and Second Lieutenant Clark, both of whom would later appear in SNK's seminal King of Fighters franchise. The Tradewest logo is prominent on the banner as it was this company which handled North America distribution for the title.

**Inferno**  
1984 / Williams

Python Anghelo's marquee for Williams' Inferno is, as always with his work, a level above the vast majority of cabinet art of the time. The character artwork contains a level of detail and shading that demonstrates Anghelo's background as a storyboard and character illustrator for Disney. The figures in the marquee could easily have another life as characters in their own Saturday morning cartoon series. Unfortunately, the declining interest in new arcade titles in the mid-'80s meant that less than 50 Inferno machines were ever built and the chances of coming across one at your local arcade were extremely small.

**In the Hunt**  
1993 / Irem

Famous for the R-Type series, Irem plumbed new depths (no pun intended) with this underwater shmup set in a world where the polar ice caps have been melted by terrorists and the planet is covered in water. The task of taking down the sinister Dark Anarchy Society predictably falls to you and your specially equipped submarine, the Granvia. Subsequently ported to the PlayStation and Saturn, In The Hunt was unfairly ignored by many at a time when the gaming public was obsessed with newfangled 3D visuals; nonetheless, it's a solid shooter that is worth rediscovering.

**Jail Break**  
1986 / Konami

This rather crude-looking run-and-gun shooter sees you as a lone police officer tasked with containing the titular jailbreak. As you dash through the streets dispatching escaped convicts – which have managed to procure all manner of lethal weapons in the short time they've been loose – you'll need to rescue hostages and obtain your own enhanced ordinance. The sprites may be small and basic – even by 1986 standards – but Konami still managed to slip in some topless girls which appear when you shoot enemies in windows. Ahem.



# K

## Joust

1982 / Williams

The Joust marquee is the work of the late, great and appropriately flamboyantly named Python Vladimir Anghelo. It takes a certain kind of artist to accurately represent the inherent craziness of a game requiring the player, mounted on a flying ostrich and armed only with a jousting lance, to battle enemy knights riding buzzards which turn into eggs once they are defeated. Williams found exactly the right guy in Anghelo: the game is exactly as bizarre as the cabinet artwork would suggest.

## Jungle King

1982 / Taito

This was an interesting and controversial game for a number of reasons – it was the first side-scrolling 'jumping and attacking' game with a human-looking character, there was some negative industry press regarding the use of a sexy female character in the marquee, and Taito was sued by the estate of Edgar Rice Burroughs for use of a Tarzan-style character without permission. The machine went out of production very quickly (replaced with a cosmetically different Jungle Hunt) and very few examples of Jungle King remain.

## Kageki

1988 / Taito

The cabinet artwork for Taito's Kageki (Extreme) is as quirky as the game itself. The marquee features actual characters found in the game and the cartoon 'bobble head' style is exactly what players see when they 'insert coin'. A fun little beat 'em up, Kageki had the playability to have become a real cult classic, but Romstar simply didn't give it the wide release it needed to make that happen.

## Karate Champ

1984 / Technōs Japan

Karate Champ is very much the unsung hero of the fighting game genre and the developers at Technōs Japan likely had no idea that they were creating something that would spawn an entire generation of one-on-one fighters on every future gaming platform. The marquee forms part of a very well-executed cabinet art package, all themed on the same blue fist graphic.

## Karnov

1987 / Data East

This game was a somewhat old-school 2D scrolling platform fighter that was primarily a conversion kit offered to recycle older cabinets. The gameplay was already stale in 1987 and the adventures of fire-breathing Russian circus strongman Jinborov Karnovski weren't all that exciting in comparison to what was on offer from other arcade titles of the time. The artwork itself was well executed, particularly given the premise of the game.

## KLAX

1990 / Atari

When Atari lost the rights to Tetris it needed a replacement, and what it got was KLAX. The work of Dave Akers and Mark Stephen Pierce, this tile-dropping puzzler used a unique 3D perspective to show coloured tiles rolling down a conveyor belt, and was such a hit in arcades it was ported to pretty much every console and computer under the sun – in fact, it was the first game to be released on the NES, Mega Drive / Genesis and TurboGrafx-16, the three leading systems in North America in 1990. In contrast to the game's clean and colourful visuals, KLAX's marquee artwork is disappointingly messy; the tiles are crudely rendered and the pattern in the background looks out of place.

## Knights of the Round

1991 / Capcom

We're not sure what happened to the 'Table' part of the title, but this 1991 side-scrolling fighter is nevertheless an exciting retelling of the Arthurian legend. England is gripped by fear of the sinister Garibaldi, and it's up to Arthur, Lancelot and Perceval to end this tyranny and stake Arthur's rightful claim to the throne. While the combat mechanics are simplified when compared to Final Fight – which was released two years beforehand – Knights of the Round features a power-up system that sees your character's appearance change as you rack up the kills, and it's also possible to ride a horse.

## Kram

1982 / Taito

One of Taito's lesser-known arcade releases, 1982's Kram placed you in the shoes of a small, Q\*Bert-like character – the Kram of the title – who has to build walls to prevent enemies from killing him. Points are scored by collecting the many coins which are dotted around the arena, and you can also destroy the walls you have constructed, which is handy for those times that you accidentally wall yourself in. The marquee shows a rather menacing-looking Kram facing off against two floating skulls; the background is based on the actual in-game visuals.

**Krull**

1983 / Gottlieb

Not to be confused with the Atari 2600 title of the same name – both are based on Peter Yates' 1983 science fantasy film – Gottlieb's dual-stick arcade adaptation saw players taking on the mantle of the heroic Prince Colwyn in five different stages. Krull's marquee borrows the official logo of the film, showing the mystical five-pointed Glaive weapon, which is said to be the only item capable of defeating the evil Beast. As Gottlieb's first movie-themed game, Krull's profile inside the company was huge. The game graphics were the work of the great Jeff Lee, and the cabinet art was placed in the hands of Terry Doerzaph. Unfortunately, even Jeff and Terry's unquestionable talents couldn't overcome the declining market for arcade games post 1983 and, although the game was well received by players and the industry press, only 2,500 units made it to market.

**Kung-Fu Master**

1984 / Irem

The domestic Japanese version of the game (titled as 'Spartan X') was the very first side-scrolling beat-'em-up. Still hugely playable and deceptively hard, the game is well-loved by arcade aficionados and fighting game enthusiasts across the world. The marquee for the worldwide release licensed to Data East is a mixed bag, with some nicely executed stylised text and a less-than-perfect attempt at perspective with the character imagery.

**Last Duel**

1988 / Capcom

An otherwise standard vertically scrolling shoot 'em up, Last Duel offers the player something a little different in that the player's craft alternates between spaceship and car for each level. The marquee is a highly stylised affair, showing both of the player's vehicles side by side, using dither pattern textures to provide shading.

**LED Storm**

1988 / Capcom

Also known as Mad Gear – which coincidentally is the name of the crime syndicate featured in Capcom's side-scrolling fighter Final Fight – LED Storm combines racing with combat as the player drives along a twisting, hazard-filled track, bumping into rival cars and making insanely dangerous jumps. Fuel must be collected at various points, and reaching the next checkpoint is vital to your progress. Like so many of Capcom's coin-op hits in the '80s, LED Storm was ported to almost every domestic home computer of the period.

**Legendary Wings**

1986 / Capcom

The game's title sounds like it should be the perfect aircraft-themed game, but it's a bit of a surprise. The protagonists are actually a male character in blue trunks and a female character wearing a green bikini. It's a platform shooter, switching from vertical to horizontal scrolling across different levels. The marquee shown here is from the US Set 1 version, with two male characters.

**Life Force / Salamander**

1986 / Konami

Know as Salamander in Japan, Life Force is a spin-off from Konami's popular Gradius series, and was the first game in the lineage to alternate between vertically and horizontally scrolling stages. Gradius' revolutionary but rather convoluted power-up system was overhauled for this outing, which went on to receive its own sequel in the form of 1996's Salamander 2. The ship shown on the marquee is hard to identify; the lack of the two-pronged nose suggests it is the Lord British – player two's ship in this game – but it would appear the person responsible has employed a little artistic licence when it comes to the overall design.

**Lode Runner**

1984 / Brøderbund

Doug E. Smith's 1983 classic Lode Runner is unique in that it's one of the few games to have made the leap from home computers to the arcades, rather than the other way around. Lode Runner is one of the quintessential titles of the '80s and made its creator something of a legend among gamers; Smith would later work as the producer on the Western versions of titles like Secret of Mana and Chrono Trigger. He sadly passed away in 2014 at the age of 53.

**Looping**

1982 / Venture Line Inc.

The game was developed in Italy by Giorgio Ugozzoli and licensed to Venture Line Inc. for manufacture and distribution in the USA. The marquee pretty much describes the action in the game: loop your plane to avoid the hot air balloons.



# M

## Lunar Lander 1979 / Atari

With its vector-based visuals and punishingly realistic gameplay, Lunar Lander was quite a revelation when it launched in 1979 – ten years after man landed on the moon for the first time. In contrast to other arcade titles of its time, Howard Delman and Rich Moore's effort was more of a simulation, and required considerable skill on the part of the player; thrusters must be used to counteract gravity but these burn fuel, which is limited. The marquee features an image of the real-life lunar lander, set against a boiling sun which looks a little too close for comfort.

## Mad Planets 1983 / Gottlieb

The planets don't look particularly mad in Terry Doerzaph's Mad Planets marquee, although that may fool players into thinking that they're in for an easy time. In reality, the game is deceptively tough, and destroying the moon orbiting any fully grown planet will cause that planet to 'go mad' and head rapidly toward the player's ship.

## Magic Sword 1990 / Capcom

Capcom's Magic Sword – or Magic Sword: Heroic Fantasy, to give it its full title – was one of many fantasy-themed titles released by the Japanese company in the late '80s and early '90s, and followed in the sandalled footsteps of 1987's Black Tiger. The player assumes the role of the Conan-like 'Brave One', and must fight their way to the top of the wizard Drokmar's tower, enlisting the aid of several characters who fall into the typical fantasy roles, such as knight, wizard, archer and amazon warrior. The marquee artwork shows the hero with his sword extended; Capcom's logo is etched on the blade.

## Major Havoc 1983 / Atari

The factory custom Major Havoc marquee was an extremely thin item that struggled to represent the game in any meaningful way, although the cabinet itself was a thing of beauty. The version of the marquee shown is from the Tempest conversion kit and is a much more attractive item, showing Major Rex Havoc front and centre, with the vector elements of the game represented in all their glory.

## Marble Madness 1984 / Atari

Other than the Marble Madness name itself, the marquee offers no real clue as to the nature of the gameplay at all. Earlier versions of the concept artwork show three-dimensional mazes taken from Mark Cerny's actual level designs, but for some reason, these were ditched in favour of the fairly generic-looking design shown here. The game was Atari's first to make use of the new System 1 hardware platform and really deserved better than the cabinet art it ended up with.

## Metro-Cross 1985 / Namco

The term 'endless runner' is applied to a great many games these days, but Namco's little-known Metro-Cross is perhaps one of the earliest examples of this concept – even if it doesn't actually go on forever. The player character sprints automatically and the joystick is used to avoid obstacles and collect cans, some of which reward you with points while others speed up the game. The game's artwork showcases the 'Runner' character, as well as some angry-looking cans. It's not quite as bad as the cover of the home computer version, which features a skateboarder in spandex. Ahem.

## Mario Bros. 1983 / Nintendo

Nintendo's Mario Bros. game was not a massive hit in the arcades, and the overly simplistic cabinet artwork probably didn't help to attract players. The 'palette swap' used to create Luigi from the original Mario character in the game is reflected by the marquee and the game looks very much like a kid's title. It's also worth noting that the name Mario was not well-known among gamers in 1983, and all association with the earlier Donkey Kong was dropped in the design of the Mario Bros. marquee.

## Mat Mania 1985 / Technōs Japan

The internationally licensed version of Taito's Japanese game 'Exciting Hour – The Pro Wrestling Network', Mat Mania was a bright, exciting and fast-paced wrestling game with a lot going for it. The cabinet artwork was suitably vivid, with a number of characters that were as close to actual pro wrestling stars as Memetron could probably comfortably create without getting sued for infringing image rights.

**Mechanized Attack**  
1989 / SNK

Mechanized Attack was one of a massive number of first-person gun controller games that hit the arcades around 1989 and 1990. The premise of the gameplay was very simple: shoot everything. The marquee, in the house SNK style of the time, was a detailed and artistic piece, although the relevance of the seemingly randomly capitalised N in 'MechaNized' is a complete mystery.

**Mega Zone**  
1983 / Konami

This game is one of those titles that few have heard of and even fewer have played. The marquee is typically Japanese in style and has something of a Speed Racer feel to it. The game itself is a reasonably well-executed vertical shoot 'em up and is well worth an hour or two of playing time on MAME.

**Midnight Resistance**  
1989 / Data East

Heavy Barrel sequel Midnight Resistance features 8-way scrolling and 360-degree firing. The game was well-received by arcade gamers, who appreciated the option of cooperative gameplay, weapons upgrades and also the vast, complex levels. The marquee artwork depicts a number of in-game elements including the numerous ladders and flamethrower weapons.

**Mikie High School Graffiti**  
1984 / Konami

This deliciously oddball title is one of Konami's hidden gems of the '80s, and focuses on a high school student named Mikie, who, amongst other things, pushes other students off their seats with his rear end, avoids dancing girls and hurls basketballs at teachers, cooks and janitors to avoid being caught. It's wonderfully bizarre stuff, accompanied by licensed renditions of The Beatles' "A Hard Day's Night", and "Twist and Shout". This revised version – called Mikie High School Graffiti – was released later and toned down some of the game's more violent elements.

**Millipede**  
1982 / Atari

Originally named 'Centipede Deluxe', in the style of the Asteroids sequel 'Asteroids Deluxe', the game was quickly renamed after the 'deluxe' branding became a little tainted following the less-than-stellar performance of the Asteroids sequel in the arcades. The Millipede game itself was reasonably successful, but, as is so often the case, the artist(s) responsible for the cabinet artwork remain unknown and uncredited.

**Missile Command**  
1980 / Atari

Designed by the legendary Dave Theurer, Missile Command is one of Atari's most famous arcade hits. The player uses a trackball to control a crosshair which is responsible for deploying defensive countermeasures that wipe out incoming missiles – missiles which are targeted at the vulnerable cities located at the bottom of the screen. Released at a time when the Cold War was still very much a thing, Missile Command made quite an impression; it is still incredibly playable, even by modern standards.

**Moon Cresta**  
1980 / Nichibutsu

There were at least seven different licensed manufacturers of Moon Cresta in the years 1980 and 1981, with eleven known cabinet variants between them. This marquee comes from the 1980 Nichibutsu upright version and forms part of a seven-piece cabinet variant artwork set. The marquee is unusual in that it carries no manufacturer logo or copyright notice. After researching the background of this, it appears that a generic artwork package was planned for the North American market, with the option to add decals with the licensee details and copyright information; this marquee was part of that planned package.

**Moon Patrol**  
1982 / Williams

Larry Day's Moon Patrol marquee is where the line between what constitutes a piece of great arcade art and what can simply be considered great art in its own right becomes blurred. This marquee contains a level of detail far exceeding that offered by any other of the time, and its graphic novel aesthetic truly captures the imagination. In some ways, it overshadows the graphical capabilities of the game itself, but, fortunately, the designers and developers at Irem managed to coax the Z80 processor into delivering the first parallax scrolling game of all time.



**Moon War**  
1981 / Stern

As the title suggests, this shooter takes place over the surface of the Moon, and mixes together the gameplay seen in Asteroids and Defender. Dashing across the barren landscape, you must take down various enemies whilst taking time to refuel at special bases. It's not a tremendously interesting game, but it is blessed with an action-packed and eye-catching marquee by Gordon Morrison. Interestingly, in the same year, Stern also created a prototype Asteroids cabinet which used the same name.

**Mortal Kombat**  
1992 / Midway

Midway took what Capcom had done with Street Fighter II and delivered their own groundbreaking fighter with simplified controls and digitised graphics. Renowned arcade artist Doug Watson's martial arts prowess provided the inspiration for Ed Boon and John Tobias to go down the digitised route, although Doug didn't actually work on the cabinet artwork for Mortal Kombat.

**Motorace USA**  
1983 / Williams

Licensed by Williams from Irem, Motorace USA was also released under the name Traverse USA. The Motorace marquee is a classic Larry Day piece, similar in style to Moon Patrol, both artistically and in that it contains a level of graphical detail conspicuously absent in the game itself.

**Mr. Do!**  
1982 / Universal

One of the few games from the early '80s to be licensed from a US developer to the Japanese market (via Taito), Mr Do! was also the first game made available as a conversion kit to enable arcade operators to convert an ageing machine into a new game. The design of the marquee made it easy for operators to trim the oversized Translite print to fit almost any machine. The game itself was a great success, but one which Universal couldn't repeat with any of its subsequent releases.

**Mr. Do!'s Castle**  
1983 / Universal

The surprise success of Mr Do! was something Universal was keen to repeat, and the sequel, Mr Do!'s Castle, had a lot to live up to. It didn't, at least not in terms of commercial success, launching just as the arcade game market was on a downward trajectory. From an artwork perspective, the marquee is somewhat disjointed and confusing – much like the game itself, you could argue.

**Ms. Pac-Man**  
1982 / Midway

The sequel to Namco's groundbreaking Pac-Man, Ms. Pac-Man was the work of General Computer Corporation, which produced the Missile Command conversion kit clone Super Missile Attack. GCC was banned from creating other kits without first securing the permission of the original IP holder, and presented its next effort – a Pac-Man clone called Crazy Otto – to Midway, Namco's distributors in North America. It is one of several authorised Pac-Man sequels that Midway commissioned, a practice that would eventually lead to Namco severing ties with the company. The playful marquee artwork shows a sultry Ms. Pac-Man drawing a lusty gaze from the red ghost, Blinky.

**NARC**  
1988 / Williams Electronics

Designed by Eugene Jarvis – of Defender and Robotron fame – NARC was the game that relaunched the Williams Electronics arcade division and is famous for its tough stance on drugs, and copious amounts of gore and violence. Using a high-resolution screen and digitised sprites, NARC is notable for being the first coin-op to use the 32-bit Texas Instruments TMS34010 processor, which served as both a CPU and GPU. NARC's marquee artwork is relatively basic, but it contains the same anti-drug message the game itself is famous for.

**NBA Jam**  
1993 / Midway

Arguably one of the greatest sports games ever to grace the arcades, NBA Jam used real-life teams and players, but focused on fanciful play and unreal situations: players could spin through the air and the ball would actually catch fire at certain points, turning the net into smoke. Rather than playing with full teams, NBA Jam is a 2v2 affair which means the pace of the game rarely lets up. A massive coin-op success for Midway, it found further fame on just about every home console of the period.

#### **NewZealand Story, The** 1988 / Taito

Taito's series of cute platformers includes Bubble Bobble and Rainbow Islands, but NewZealand Story stands out as one of the most accomplished of its '80s efforts. As Tiki the Kiwi, you have to negotiate a series of stages to rescue his friends from the clutches of a leopard seal (referred to as Wally the Walrus in the home ports). Tiki can fire arrows at enemies and ride on special flying vehicles; the latter come in handy as many of the game's stages expand in all directions. The NewZealand Story possesses an aesthetic that is almost timeless, which can't be said for the game's marquee artwork, which looks rather rushed and amateurish.

#### **Ninja Baseball Bat Man** 1993 / Irem

This scrolling fighter is unique in that the premise was cooked up by Irem America's National Sales Manager, Drew Maniscalco, while the game was programmed by Irem's team in Japan (Maniscalco retains the rights to any products based on the concept which aren't video game-related). Four players can participate at once and the combat mechanics are deep and engaging; the game's appeal is strengthened further by the colourful, eye-catching visuals. Despite the obvious quality of the game, Ninja Baseball Bat Man was not a commercial success and was never ported to any home system.

#### **Ninja Gaiden** 1988 / Tecmo

Released under at least three different names in various markets worldwide, Ninja Gaiden was renamed as Shadow Warriors in Europe, due to the same censorship rules that gave the UK the Teenage Mutant 'Hero' Turtles. The game itself is a two-player team effort game with some nice features, including the ability to swing-kick players across the screen. The marquee depicts the ninja character swinging from a pole, delivering a swing-kick to his enemy.

#### **Nitro Ball** 1992 / Data East

While the title may invoke thoughts of sporting prowess, Nitro Ball is actually a vertically scrolling run-and-gun shooter in the same vein as Commando and Ikari Warriors (the Japanese name is 'Gun Ball'). What makes the whole thing so unique is that the setting is that of a televised game show during which the players have to score as many points as possible across a series of themed levels while the baying audience looks on. It's a very similar setup to the legendary Smash.T.V., and even has an announcer who constantly chips in with words of encouragement. Tragically, Nitro Ball was never ported to any home systems and remains one of Data East's most underrated arcade releases.

## O

#### **Omega Race** 1981 / Midway

Midway's Omega race is an Asteroids-like vector game with a subtly different mode of play in that the screen does not wrap, and the enemy ships move in a rectangular pattern around a central display panel. The cabinet was a very tall, upright unit with a large screen bezel that continued the marquee's artwork by Larry Day.

#### **Operation Wolf** 1987 / Taito

Arguably one of the most famous arcade shooting games of all time, Operation Wolf is famous for its large, realistic-looking Uzi machine gun – complete with recoil – and its detailed and varied enemy sprites. Operation Thunderbolt (1988), Operation Wolf 3 (1994) and Operation Tiger (1998) would follow, but it is the original game that has become the most famous of the series; it was ported to practically every home system of the period.

## P

#### **Pac-Land** 1984 / Namco

The launch of Pac-Man put creator Namco in an enviable position, but it also presented some headaches. Not wanting the character to be tied to a particular genre, it produced Pac-Land in 1984 – a platform-style adventure which was totally removed from the original game in terms of gameplay. Notable for its smoothly scrolling backgrounds and large characters, the focus is moving through each level and avoiding obstacles and enemies. A slew of home ports predictably followed, with the PC Engine version being perhaps the most faithful. Pac-Land's marquee features our circular hero with his Bavarian hat in place, while a pair of ghosts atop pogo sticks give chase.



**Pac-Man**  
1980 / Namco

The original Namco game was called Puck Man, based on the main character's hockey puck shape, but when Midway licensed the game for the US market they changed it to Pac-Man when someone pointed out the ease with which the P in Puck Man could be modified (by scratching the marquee with a quarter, perhaps?) to become an F. Sadly, the creator of the Pac-Man cabinet artwork is unknown, but their work adorned over 400,000 machines sold throughout the world between October 1980 and December 1982.

**Paperboy**  
1984 / Atari

The prototype cabinet for Atari's Paperboy was a revolutionary design featuring custom moulded plastics for the screen surround and control panel. Unfortunately, the need to keep production costs low following the big video game crash meant that the custom elements were vetoed by Atari's management. The game launched in a fairly standard wooden cabinet, with the only custom element being the handlebar control that used a modified Star Wars yoke. The move to a more traditional cabinet design provided more space for side art, while still retaining the original marquee design.

**Pengo**  
1982 / SEGA

The marquee features a cartoon penguin pushing around blocks of ice and the gameplay is based on a cartoon penguin pushing around blocks of ice – this all makes perfect sense. Pengo is an enjoyable maze puzzler similar in concept to Pac-Man, but here the walls of the maze can be pushed around in order to crush your enemies, the Sno-bees, in a manner that would make Pac-Man envious.

**Peter Pack Rat**  
1985 / Atari

Atari wasn't known for its cute and cuddly games back in the '80s, which makes Peter Pack Rat a rather unique proposition. The lead character looks like he stepped right out of a Disney movie (Debbie Hayes – who created the art and animation – had previously worked on animated movies such as Watership Down and Fire & Ice), while the backgrounds are full of detail and character, with some neat incidental animation. Peter's aim is to collect as many shiny things as possible and bring them back to his hideout; the game's marquee shows his main adversaries: Riff Rat, Clawd the cat, Scrapper the bulldog, Sticky the spider, Slugger the bat and Nite Owl.

**Phoenix**  
1980 / Amstar Electronics

The Phoenix machines manufactured by Centuri (the game was manufactured and distributed by a number of different companies) have glass screen-printed marquees. The design is basic orthographic lettering for the Phoenix name on a blue and black starfield with a couple of planets in the foreground, a complete contrast to the truly spectacular side art featuring a giant robotic bird. Interesting trivia: the game was developed by Amstar Electronics, which was located in (you guessed it) Phoenix, Arizona.

**Piranha**  
1981 / GL

Piranha used pirated code from Pac-Man as the basis for a game featuring coloured octopi replacing the ghost antagonists and a piranha in place of Pac-Man as the player-controlled protagonist. The marquee itself is pretty much a literal example of the game's premise and is typical of the artwork applied to quick and dirty hacks, variants and pirated games that flooded the market in the arcade boom of the very early '80s.

**Polaris**  
1980 / Taito

A unique spin on the Space Invaders concept, Polaris has you controlling a submarine rather than a spaceship, and your goal is to launch sea-to-air projectiles at a series of enemy planes whilst avoiding their depth charges. Boats are also added to the mix, as well as enemy subs which test your reflexes and timing. The evocative marquee artwork shows the player's sub bravely surfacing as an enemy plane swoops in for the kill.

**Pole Position**  
1982 / Atari

Atari did such a fantastic job with their marketing of Pole Position that many people don't realise that the game was originally a Japanese title, licensed from Namco. The Atari version contained modified advertising and descriptions, but the circuit remained the same as the original: Fuji Speedway in Japan, with Mount Fuji appearing in the background. The marquee itself features a colourful, stylised scene featuring open-wheel cars, along with seemingly random geometric shapes. Pole Position was one of the first games to draw in significant numbers of female gamers, keen to display their prowess behind the wheel.

**Pooyan**  
1982 / Stern

Originally a Konami Game, Pooyan (Little Pigs in Japanese) was licensed by Stern for the international market. The initial plan was to rename the game for the US market and the task of creating the artwork was given to Larry Day. The new name for the game was agreed and Larry began working on a marquee for 'PorkChops'. A number of iterations later, and it was decided that the artwork itself was great, but the PorkChop reference could offend a significant potential market. The name reverted back to the original Pooyan.

**Popeye**  
1982 / Nintendo

Largely thanks to the capabilities of the Zilog Z80 processor along with the coding skills of the Nintendo programmers, the cartoon style of the Popeye marquee really does reflect the graphical quality of the game itself. Unfortunately, the gameplay fell a little short of expectations and the industry press suggested at the time that Popeye may be the final nail in the coffin of the arcade platform game.

**Primal Rage**  
1994 / Atari

This attempt by Atari to muscle in on the one-on-one fighting craze triggered by Capcom's Street Fighter II, Primal Rage is best known for its unique stop-motion animated characters and its unusual setting – a primitive world called 'Urth' where giant monsters (including dinosaurs and giant apes) duke it out to see who is the strongest. Something of a cult classic, Primal Rage's marquee artwork is rather plain – it's just the logo and little else of note.

**Punch-Out!!**  
1983 / Nintendo

Punch-Out!! featured groundbreaking in-game graphics and audio (including speech synthesis) and was an absolute smash hit in the arcades. The game had a lifespan rarely enjoyed by any arcade title, with players still feeding coins into the machines well into the early '90s. Nintendo must have been extremely confident in the game's features, as they decided to give it one of the least-exciting marquees of the time.

**Punisher, The**  
1993 / Capcom

Another of the early '90s comic book tie-ins, The Punisher cabinet artwork features a pre-Thomas Jane Punisher and a pre-Samuel L. Jackson Nick Fury. Another popular conversion for existing Capcom Jamma cabinets, the marquee was delivered oversized to be trimmed to fit. Capcom did offer a dedicated cabinet with a very oversized marquee, but most arcade operators took the conversion kit path.

**Pyros**  
1987 / Taito

The Pyros game is typical of the late '80s Japanese platform adventure titles that had previously never made it to international release; highly stylised, cutesy characters in adventures narrated in text form by tertiary characters. The marquee artwork for Pyros is a lot less cute than the in-game graphics. This probably resulted in many players being surprised at the contrast between the action promised by the cabinet art and the reality of the game itself.



**Q\*Bert**  
1982 / Gottlieb

Terry Doerzaph's Q\*Bert marquee must be one of the most popular, recognisable and iconic pieces of early '80s arcade artwork in existence. While Terry was responsible for the cabinet artwork, it was Jeff Lee who developed the look of the Q\*Bert character for the game itself. The prototype Q\*Bert cab had a large version of the classic Q\*Bert 'swearing' speech bubble and no reference to the Q\*Bert name whatsoever. This was replaced with the more familiar version of the marquee in production, although a number of 'swearing' Q\*Bert machines have been discovered out there 'in the wild', including the mint condition, working prototype number one which was acquired from a former Gottlieb manager after spending 30 years stored in his basement. The marquee features Jeff Lee's original hand-drawn artwork.

**Qix**  
1981 / Taito

Alongside Space Invaders and Arkanoid, Qix is one of Taito's more famous '80s hits. The simple premise – you have to carve up as much of the playfield as possible while avoiding the titular Qix – is immediately engaging and inspired countless clones over the next decade. The marquee art shows a grid-like playing area being taken over by the game as the Qix itself – a series of lines which move around randomly and are deadly to the marker you control – punches through an unclaimed section of the playfield.



# R

## R-Type 1987 / Irem

Effortlessly one of the most influential shmups of all time, Irem's R-Type introduced the world to the idea of chargeable shots and invaluable sub-ships. Boasting an aesthetic which wouldn't look out of place in an Alien movie, the game's appeal is almost timeless, hence the fact it was recently remastered in the form of R-Type Dimensions EX. The game's marquee shows the R-9 Arrowhead space fighter up against Dobkeratops, the iconic (and slightly terrifying) first-level boss.

## R-Type II 1989 / Irem

The amazing success of the original R-Type ensured that a sequel would arrive sooner or later, and the second game improved on the first in every possible respect. The visuals were vastly enhanced and new weapons were added to the mix; it was more of the same, but that's exactly what fans wanted. Perhaps the most famous home conversion of R-Type II isn't a straight port at all; Super R-Type on the SNES uses the arcade version as its base but adds in a lot of new content.

## Radical Radial 1982 / Nichibutsu

Nichibutsu – the video game division of Nihon Bussan Co., Ltd – is perhaps most famous for Moon Cresta, Terra Cresta and Crazy Climber, but this oddball offering from 1982 is worth a look. You control a wheel which is capable of shooting at incoming enemies and jumping over obstacles. The levels change in theme as you play, and, at one point, a tune which sounds eerily reminiscent of the KISS hit "I Was Made for Lovin' You" plays over the action. Radical Radial's marquee artwork is superbly detailed, showing the main character's head-mounted weapon, and a selection of enemies.

## Raiden 1990 / Seibu Kaihatsu

Seibu Kaihatsu certainly wasn't a rookie studio when it launched Raiden in 1990, but it is this vertically scrolling shooter that the company is most closely associated with today. With its military stylings, powerful weapons and huge, screen-filling bosses, Raiden laid down the foundations for a franchise which continues to see instalments right up to the present day; Raiden V launched in 2016, with MOSS – a company populated by several former Seibu Kaihatsu employees – at the helm.

## Rainbow Islands: The Story of Bubble Bobble 2 1987 / Taito

Bubble Bobble was a massive success for Taito, and a sequel of some form was almost inevitable. However, rather than retain the same single-screen, bubble-blowing gameplay of the 1986 original, Rainbow Islands: The Story of Bubble Bobble 2 showcases an entirely different premise; the player – controlling either Bub or Bob (now safely returned to their human forms after being changed into dragons in the first game) – must use rainbows to create platforms and slay enemies whilst trying to advance up the horizontally scrolling playfield.

## Rally-X 1980 / Midway

The Rally-X marquee is one which may lead the player to believe that the game is somewhat more exciting than it actually is, with the crazy-looking racing car and a very determined driver at the wheel. The gameplay does include a fairly impressive radar system though, so the car's dual radar dishes at least reflect a feature offered by the game itself.

## Rampage 1986 / Bally Midway

This '80s arcade classic is so notable that it even spawned a movie in 2018 starring Dwayne Johnson which took over \$400 million at the global box office; proof that Hollywood may well be totally out of ideas now. Still, the original game remains a hoot even by modern standards, allowing up to three players to destroy a cityscape and munch on humans in the guise of either a gorilla (George), lizard (Lizzie) or werewolf (Ralph). The marquee shows these three characters locked in combat; George and Ralph are seen delivering punches to Lizzie's face.

## Rampart 1990 / Atari

A cunning mix of action and Tetris-style block deployment, John Salwitz's Rampart is one of those games that was massive at launch but nobody seems to talk about anymore. You take turns to build your fortress and then return fire against attacking ships – or other players. The shift between repairing your battered walls and striking out at your enemies gives the game a unique tension, and it's little wonder that it was ported to a wide range of home systems back in the day. The marquee artwork shows one of your defenders, gesticulating wildly in the direction of the enemy fleet.

<b>Rastan</b> 1987 / Taito <p>Taito game designer Nenko Nishimura has stated that the cabinet artwork for Rastan (and the game itself) was inspired by the Conan the Barbarian novels by Robert E. Howard. There is certainly a very 'Conan-esque' look to the character that appears in the marquee. Rastan makes another appearance in the Taito game Champion Wrestler as the character 'Miracle Rastan'.</p>	<b>Real Ghostbusters, The</b> 1987 / Data East <p>Based on the hit movie, The Real Ghostbusters (the modifier was added was added following a legal challenge by Filmation, which, in 1986, released its own animated show based on the 1975 live-action series The Ghost Busters) was an animated cartoon show that was accompanied by its own toy line and associated merchandise – including a video game. Developed by Data East, this licensed outing was actually based on a Japanese title called Labyrinth Hunter, as a result, no real attempt is made to characterise the four Ghostbusters, beyond them appearing on the cabinet. Home ports followed for personal computers, like the Atari ST and ZX Spectrum, which were commercially successful thanks to the branding.</p>	<b>Renegade</b> 1986 / Technōs Japan <p>The Westernised version of Technōs Japan's Nekketsu Kōha Kunio-kun, Renegade replaces the Japanese delinquents of the original with a bunch of street punks. You're assigned the role of a vigilante who has to fight his way through hordes of enemies to liberate his beloved girlfriend. Seen as the precursor to the even more successful Double Dragon, Renegade was designed by the same man, Yoshihisa Kishimoto, who is known as "the grandfather of the beat-'em-up genre", and its marquee features a leather jacket-wearing character – presumably the hero – standing valiantly in front of his girlfriend as a largely unseen knife-wielding attacker looks on.</p>	<b>Return of the Jedi</b> 1984 / Atari <p>Although Return of the Jedi was the third film in the original Star Wars trilogy, it was actually the second Star Wars arcade game to be released, appearing in arcades in September '84 – an entire year before The Empire Strikes Back made its arcade debut. Even though the game carried the name recognition of Lucasfilm's franchise, only 800 machines made it to market, a small number of them being the full-size cockpit cabinet which was almost entirely covered in artwork. The much more common upright version used the traditional illuminated marquee shown, featuring the Millennium Falcon and the Death Star.</p>	<b>Ring King</b> 1985 / Data East <p>The game itself is a fun little cartoon-style boxing-themed beat 'em up. The marquee, while reflecting the boxing theme, doesn't really fit with the cartoon look of the in-game graphics. Unusually, the UK version of the game retains the Japanese name and cabinet art pack and is known as 'King of Boxer'.</p>	<b>Road Blasters</b> 1987 / Atari <p>Code-named 'Future Vette' during development, Atari's Road Blasters was the final game delivered on the System 1 hardware. The marquee is an evocative piece for many games, but this is more due to a fond association with the game itself, rather than for its artistic merit. In truth, it is a fairly generic design and has the appearance of something delivered as an afterthought, rather than as an integrated part of the overall product design.</p>	<b>Robotron: 2084</b> 1982 / Williams <p>This is another deceptively simple marquee from Constantino 'Connie' Mitchell which perfectly reflects the deceptive simplicity of the game itself. What it doesn't do is offer any clue to the frenetic (and often short-lived) gameplay that follows when the player inserts a coin into the slot. It's interesting to note that the '2084' element of the design was so highly stylised that many people incorrectly interpreted it as the number '2004'.</p>	<b>Rod Land</b> 1990 / Jaleco <p>This 1990 Jaleco effort stars the fairies Tam and Rit, who, using their magical wands (the 'rods' of the title), must clear a series of single-screen levels of enemies. Clearly inspired by Taito's Bubble Bobble, hitting a foe doesn't kill them, but simply stuns them until the player grabs them a second time with their wand. There's no jump button, and Tam and Rit need to use ladders and tunnels to negotiate each stage; magical ladders can be summoned one at a time to aid progression.</p>
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**Rolling Thunder**

1986 / Atari

This seminal side-scrolling platform shooter – developed by Namco in Japan – has a gripping secret agent theme but was seen as something of a ‘filler’ game for Atari as their arcade business slid down the company’s list of viable future profit centres. SEGA’s Shinobi owes a massive debt to Rolling Thunder, a game which was sadly saddled with a rather unremarkable marquee.

**Rush’n Attack**

1985 / Konami

On the surface, you’d be forgiven for thinking that Rush’n Attack – known in some parts of the world as Green Beret – is a clone of Konami’s very similar-looking Contra; however, this 1985 effort doesn’t feature aliens, but instead pits the player – a special ops soldier – against a hostile nation. Initially armed with just a knife, you can procure other weapons on-site, including a rocket launcher and flamethrower. The game’s marquee shows the player character about to deploy the former on an unseen enemy while a massive explosion engulfs the logo.

**Rygar**

1986 / Tecmo

Tecmo’s 1986 action platformer is one of the most popular examples from this period, thanks to its tight gameplay and engaging design. Titled ‘Warrior of Argus’ in Japan, the game is famous for its lead character’s iconic ‘Diskarmor’ weapon; a bladed shield which can be thrown out on a chain to kill enemies. Interestingly, the ‘Rygar’ of the title actually refers to the main enemy, Ligar; In Japanese, the Roman syllables ‘Li’ and ‘Ry’ are the same. Rygar’s marquee art shows ‘The Legendary Warrior’ attacking a group of foes with the Diskarmor.

**Samurai Shodown II**

1994 / SNK

With Street Fighter II gripping the world of video games in the early ‘90s, SNK released a series of fighters with the intent of knocking Capcom’s title off its lofty perch. One of the most successful attempts was Samurai Shodown, which gave its cast of warriors a host of weapons to battle with. This second outing is considered by fans of the franchise to be one of the best; it refined the core gameplay and introduced much-loved characters, such as Neinhalt Sieger and Genjuro Kibagami. Unlike the first game, Samurai Shodown II was not ported to 16-bit consoles but would instead find a home on the Sony PlayStation – a pack which also included the first title – exclusively in Japan.

**SAR - Search and Rescue**

1989 / SNK

This 1989 offering is clearly inspired by both the movie Aliens and SEGA’s incredibly successful Alien Syndrome coin-op. One or two players are tasked with investigating the sudden disappearance of a spaceship, understood to have lost contact when it encountered an alien planet. The action takes place in tight corridors, with an emphasis of collecting powerful weapons in order to deal with the waves of xenomorph monsters. While the side art has an H.R. Giger-like alien, the marquee features, amongst other things, a skeleton and some rather silly-looking blob-monsters.

**Satan’s Hollow**

1982 / Bally Midway

Designed and programmed in its entirety by Bill Adams at Arcade Engineering, the artwork for the game could have been commissioned by Arcade Engineering or Bally Midway. The marquee appears to be very subtly initialled, but research so far has given no clue as to the identity of the artist. Very few Satan’s Hollow machines exist as many were cannibalised for their flight stick joystick, in order to repair broken Tron machines in need of a replacement.

**SCI - Special Criminal Investigation**

1989 / Taito

The sequel to Chase H.Q., Special Criminal Investigation sees police officers Gibson and Broady back on the road, this time driving a shiny new Nissan 300ZX Z32 T-Top Turbo. Unlike the original, it’s now possible to shoot at enemy cars. Home conversions predictably followed, but fans would have to wait until 1996 for Taito to release the most authentic port, and it was exclusive to the SEGA Saturn in Japan. The presence of Chase H.Q. on the disc made this an easy import for those who loved the arcade originals.

**Scramble**

1981 / Stern

The marquee for Scramble is, like almost all Stern marquees, oversized and sits on the machine at a downward facing angle. Unusually for a game developed in Japan, the marquees used by both Konami and Stern are identical, apart from the logo. The name of the Konami version of the game was originally planned to be ‘Sukaranburu’, which still appears in the game code, but the Stern artwork created by Doug Watson at Advertising Posters impressed Konami enough for it to change the Japanese market name to Scramble.

**Shadow Dancer**  
1989 / SEGA

The unofficial sequel to Shinobi, the game is set twenty years after the events in Shinobi and features Joe Musashi's son, Hayate, and his dog, Yamato. The game itself is a superbly rendered scrolling fighter, with massively detailed backgrounds and smooth, fast-paced animation. SEGA gave Shadow Dancer a worldwide release and the quality of the game, along with strong cabinet artwork, meant that it remained a fixture in many arcades long after its contemporaries were consigned to the storage warehouse. Strangely, the Mega Drive home version is a totally different game.

**Shinobi**  
1988 / SEGA

Hugely successful, SEGA's Shinobi is an extremely well-executed combination of scrolling platformer and beat 'em up, with additional elements of first-person combat. There are some cabinets in private hands with generic SEGA marquees that were originally test units placed into arcades with logging capabilities to record players' actions. The marquee shown here is the production version and is one that provokes strong reactions from those for whom Shinobi was part of their gaming history.

**Shooting Master**  
1984 / SEGA

Shooting Master's cabinet is cleverly designed to create the illusion of depth; the monitor is placed near the bottom of the unit, facing upwards towards a mirror which the player sees. The game involves shooting a series of bad guys as a hapless princess sprints from left to right. The princess's cries become incredibly annoying the more you play, which perhaps explains why this hasn't gone down as one of SEGA's arcade classics.

**Side Arms**  
1986 / Capcom

Borrowing the same two-directional shooting system seen in Capcom's earlier hit Section Z, Capcom's 1986 effort Hyper Dyne Side Arms (also known simply as Side Arms) places one two players in the cockpit of a robotic 'Mobilsuit' (no doubt 'inspired' by the famous Japanese anime series, Mobile Suit Gundam) as they take on the sinister forces of the Bozon. Cute 'super-deformed' versions of the Mobilsuit robots can be seen on the marquee.

**Silkworm**  
1988 / Tecmo

Released at a time when the arcades were positively heaving with 2D shooters, Tecmo's Silkworm stood out for one key reason – you could choose to pilot a helicopter or a jeep. This opened up interesting multiplayer possibilities, as two players could cooperate and play simultaneously as these two vehicles, one taking to the skies to deal with airborne threats while the other handled foes on the ground. The thematically similar SWIV was later released on home computers, and, while it's not an official sequel, it is considered to be Silkworm's spiritual successor.

**Simpsons, The**  
1991 / Konami

Various versions of this TV tie-in game were available in the arcades, including the dedicated four-player unit, a conversion kit for existing four-player Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles machines and the two-player conversion kit. The game itself was as close to controlling the animated actions of Bart, Lisa, Marge and Homer as it was possible to get back in 1991. The artwork package was comprehensive and available in various different sizes for the multiple conversion kits on offer. Unfortunately, there were variations in shade across the different pieces and the background colour varies from a baby blue to a turquoise colour, while the characters' skin ranges from pale yellow to almost orange. All of this makes any restoration of these machines something of a challenge.

**Sinistar**  
1982 / Williams

The marquee for Sinistar is often credited solely to Jack Haegar, the artist responsible for the in-game graphics, including the terrifying Sinistar himself. While it's true that the marquee contains the Sinistar character designed by Haegar and is actually signed by him, the lettering for the Sinistar name in the marquee was the work of Python Anghelo, who is generally only credited as the sound recordist. Nonetheless, this is a spectacular joint effort.

**Sky Shark**  
1987 / Toaplan

This 1987 vertically scrolling shooter was a conversion kit for Twin Cobra and the conversion could be done by swapping out the Twin Cobra ROM chips for the Sky Shark ROMs. Also known as Flying Shark, the game strapped you into the cockpit of a biplane, giving you a series of land, air, and naval threats to kill while collecting power-ups and driving your score as high as possible. The marquee is stunningly detailed, showing the titular plane as well as a besieged town, surrounded by tanks, ships and even a train which has been blown clean off its rails. The full-sized marquee was sized to fit the Twin Cobra cabaret cabinet and when used to convert an upright machine, the marquee had to be trimmed significantly.



**Smash T.V.**  
1990 / Williams

Conspicuously absent from the arcades since around 1984, Williams came back with a vengeance in 1990 with Smash T.V. With a control scheme and gameplay that many saw as the spiritual successor to the great Robotron: 2084 (dual joysticks and 'shoot everything!') the game was an immediate and resounding success. The coordinated cabinet artwork set made this machine instantly recognisable in the arcades back then, and Smash T.V. remains one of the most collectable machines today.

**Snacks 'n Jaxson**  
1984 / Bally Sente

Not a hugely popular machine back in 1984, the game has found a new audience in the 21st century among MAME gamers, most of whom weren't even alive when the game appeared in the arcades. Bill Maher's marquee is a very nicely executed piece which ties the text and graphic elements of the design together in a clever manner. Sadly, so few machines were produced that very few arcade-goers in '84 got to appreciate it at the time.

**Snow Bros.**  
1990 / Toaplan

Toaplan didn't just make shooters – it also dabbled in other genres, and released this Bubble Bobble-esque single-screen platformer in 1990. Snowmen Nick and Tom must cover their enemies in snow before rolling them off the edge of a platform; enemies hit by the rolling ball are also taken out. Like Taito's aforementioned classic, Snow Bros. really comes alive when two players are involved. The marquee is colourful and eye-catching, even if Nick and Tom bear only a passing resemblance to their in-game personas.

**Solar Fox**  
1981 / Bally Midway

A strange combination of space shooter and Pac-Man style game, Solar Fox was something of a 'filler game' for Bally Midway as every company fought for floor space in arcades. It is often said that for every groundbreaking game of the golden age of arcade gaming, there were at least ten 'me too' games that were developed simply to secure space in the arcade 'land grab'. Fortunately, something about Solar Fox captured players' imaginations. It probably didn't hurt that Doug Watson's marquee artwork for the game is one of the best ever created.

**Space Firebird**  
1980 / SEGA

The artwork for the Gremlin-licensed version of Space Firebird was created in Japan by Nintendo's Shigeru Miyamoto, as Gremlin really wanted the cabinet artwork to have a genuine manga feel to it. This was a very unusual move, as most licensed titles had their artwork completely reworked for the export market by the licensee. Nintendo and SEGA would become bitter enemies later on, but, back in 1980, the latter was happy to distribute the former's arcade titles in the states. Shigeru Miyamoto is now one of the most famous game designers of all time, with Super Mario, Zelda and Donkey Kong on his CV.

**Space Fury**  
1981 / SEGA/Gremlin

Developed by SEGA and published via Gremlin Industries, 1981's Space Fury was one of the first games to employ colour vector visuals and speech synthesis. The latter was used to excellent effect to taunt players between rounds; it also rang out during the game's attract sequence, tempting players to pop in some coins and test their skill. The game's unique visuals and sound would have been a real bonus, because the marquee artwork is disappointingly plain.

**Space Invaders**  
1978 / Taito

The most influential and recognisable arcade game of all time didn't really have a marquee at all: the screen bezel (or 'Display Plex' according to the manufacturer's parts catalogue) extended right to the top of the machine and formed a combined bezel and marquee. Unusually for the time, the Midway export version of the game retained the original Taito artwork, with the Midway logo replacing the Taito branding. The inclusion of the looming humanoid figures in the artwork led to rumours of a secret level where the player would be forced to fight the aliens face to face. In reality, the 55 aliens on each screen – plus the occasional UFO – were all the player was up against in Tomohiro Nishikado's masterpiece.

**Speed Racer**  
1995 / Namco

Based on the classic animated series of the same name – released in its native Japan as Mach GoGoGo – Namco's Speed Racer uses 2D sprites rather than 3D models and looks rather primitive as a result; let's not forget, this was released after Namco had given us the spectacular Ridge Racer. Just like in the TV show, you can use special weapons to deal with track-based dangers and take out rival drivers. It's also possible to leap over other cars and drive up the side of certain roadside elements.

**Spider-Man:  
The Video Game**  
1991 / SEGA

Released in 1991 for SEGA's powerful System 32 arcade board, Spider-Man: The Video Game takes inspiration from the likes of Final Fight and Golden Axe with its side-scrolling combat, but adds a four-player mode which allows players to step into the spandex outfits of either Spider-Man, Black Cat, Sub-Mariner or Hawkeye. SEGA mixes things up by including platforming sections, as well as mining Marvel's extensive library of villains; you'll encounter Kingpin, Venom, Doctor Octopus, Scorpion, Sandman, Green Goblin and Doctor Doom on your travels.

**Splatterhouse**  
1988 / Namco

With its gruesome visuals and violent gameplay, it's little wonder that Namco's Splatterhouse made such an impression back in 1988. The player character, Rick, allows himself to become possessed by a malevolent hockey mask in the hope that he can venture into the titular 'Splatterhouse' and save his girlfriend. What follows is arguably one of the most disturbing and gory experiences ever to grace an amusement arcade. The series would continue on the SEGA Mega Drive, and was resurrected in 2010 to commercial and critical disappointment.

**Spy Hunter**  
1983 / Bally Midway

The upright Spy Hunter featured custom controls cast from cabinet guru George Gomez's hand-carved originals, and extensive artwork covering the extended control panel. The marquee itself features the G-6155 CIA Prototype Interceptor and headshot of the game's unnamed protagonist. The G-6155 is an Easter egg itself: a reference to George Gomez's birthdate.

**Stargate**  
1981 / Williams

Williams' Stargate, now often referred to as 'Defender II' due to trademark issues, is a frenetic, complex scrolling space shooter with a host of features, special moves and tactical moves available to the player. The artwork is something of a mystery at this point, with some confusion caused by the fact that renowned artist Doug Watson was responsible for the TV-related Stargate pinball artwork. The marquee is often credited to Constantino Mitchell (as is the original Defender marquee) but the initials ISM appear on the left of the piece. At this point, the identity of ISM remains unknown.

**Star Wars**  
1983 / Atari

Mike Hally's Star Wars game was a massive hit in the summer of 1983, helped in no small part by the release of Return of the Jedi in cinemas that year. The game was based on a platform originally developed for a title called Warp Speed, which was repurposed after Atari agreed a development deal with Lucasfilm. The marquee features an X-Wing, two TIE Fighters and Darth Vader's ship; enough to make any Star Wars fan 'insert coin'.

**Street Fighter**  
1987 / Capcom

While the 1991 sequel is the one that made the franchise world-famous, Capcom's first Street Fighter outing – released in 1987 – is actually the game that introduced the world to Ryu, Ken and Sagat. The marquee art shows our two protagonists taking on disgraced boxer Mike (on the left, squaring up to Ryu) and claw-wielding ninja Geki (on the right, facing Ken). Ironically, while the two heroes have gone on to achieve global stardom, their opponents have never been featured in any of the many, many Street Fighter sequels released over the decades.

**Street Fighter II -  
The World Warrior**  
1991 / Capcom

Very few titles have enjoyed the universal acclaim of the world's gaming community, but Street Fighter II is nothing short of legendary. For many players, Street Fighter II was, is and will forever be the ultimate fighting game. So much of what gamers now consider standard practice in player vs. player games felt brand new in Capcom's 1991 release (even though the original Street Fighter laid down the foundations in 1987). The artwork for the cabinet was originally planned to be much more elaborate, but test units in selected arcades became so popular that, within hours, players were queueing for time on the machine. Arcade operators often had entire rows of machines placed side by side and an entire generation of avid Street Fighter II fans have never actually seen the cabinet side art.

**Street Fighter Alpha**  
1995 / Capcom

Capcom's 1995 'reboot' of the Street Fighter series is notable for many reasons, but most obvious of which is that it was the first 'all-new' entry in the franchise since the release of Street Fighter II in 1991. Set prior to the events of the second game, its cast is younger-looking and this youthfulness is complemented neatly by a more cartoon-like visual style. The marquee uses the key art created for the game by Daichan; Ken (complete with ponytail) and Ryu are shown back-to-back, rendered in Daichan's trademark painterly style.



### Street Fighter Alpha 2 1996 / Capcom

Following hot on the heels of the first Street Fighter Alpha, this sequel fixed many of the core issues with the original – namely a lack of characters and the use of palette-swapped backgrounds. As well as bringing back the cast of the first title, Alpha 2 features Dhalsim and Zangief (from Street Fighter II), Rolento (from Final Fight) and the plucky Sakura, an all-new female fighter who is utterly obsessed with Ryu and copies many of his moves. It is considered to be one of the best entries in the entire Street Fighter series and was successfully ported to the PlayStation and Saturn.

### Street Smart 1989 / SNK

Before it made its name as one of the most accomplished creators of one-on-one fighting games on the planet, SNK produced this rather undercooked brawler. Cooperative play is a nice touch and the large arena in which you fight means there's room for strategy, but this 1989 effort was largely forgotten once Street Fighter II arrived just under two years later – even by SNK itself, which embarked on a mission to challenge Capcom's dominance of the genre. Street Smart's marquee is a highlight, however; it shows the two playable characters – 'Mr. Karate' and 'Wrestler' engaged in brutal fisticuffs.

### Strider 1989 / Capcom

Designed and directed by Kouichi Yotsui, Strider is one of Capcom's seminal '80s coin-op hits. Placing the player in the role of a ninja from the future, it showcases stunning visuals, imaginative enemies and a surprisingly athletic hero; all of these elements combined perfectly to create one of the company's most memorable arcade hits. The game's marquee artwork shows a blond-haired Strider Hiryu (he has brown hair in the game itself) facing off against the hulking Mecha Pon, a mechanical gorilla seen at the opening of the second level.

### Super Dodge Ball 1987 / Technos Japan

Known in Japan as Nekketsu Kōkō Dodgeball Bu – it's part of the Kunio-kun series – Super Dodge Ball was retooled for its Western release and all of the references to the Kunio-kun characters were removed. The gameplay remains the same, however: the objective is to take out opposing players by hitting them with a ball. The title was ported to the NES and released in the West while a PC Engine edition – titled Nekketsu Kōkō Dodgeball Bu: Panc Bai Hen – was released in Japan with the Kunio-kun characters intact.

### Superman – The Video Game 1988 / Taito

This licensed title from the late '80s is unique in that it mixes side-scrolling combat with shooter elements. Superman can punch and kick his enemies, but it's also possible to fly in the air as well as walk on the ground – some levels take place entirely in the sky. You can also charge up a powerful blast by holding down the attack button, while certain sections play like a horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up, with Superman using his eyeball lasers to take down threats. The marquee makes the most of the DC Comics licence, showing Clark Kent's transformation into the titular hero, and the bold Superman logo.

### Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo 1996 / Capcom

Some may have accused Capcom of scraping the bottom of the barrel with this puzzle crossover but it has gone on to become one of the firm's most enduring titles, and has spawned numerous conversions and even a (short-lived) free-to-play smartphone remake. The objective is to match coloured gems and create combos which inflict damage on your rival. The appeal of the game is enhanced dramatically by the inclusion of little animations as each character unleashes special moves on their opponent.

### Super Qix 1987 / Taito

An update of the 1981 title Qix, Super Qix keeps the gameplay largely the same; you have to claim as much of the screen as possible while avoiding various enemies. Claiming territory reveals a piece of 2D artwork below; clones of Qix from this time period often featured scantily clad ladies as an incentive to play. The titular Qix was a stick-like enemy in the original game, but is replaced by a series of goblin-like monsters in this version; the marquee chooses to represent this enemy as a fire-breathing dragon, however.

### Tapper 1983 / Bally Midway

The early '80s were a hotbed of unique video game ideas – you only have to take one look at Tapper to realise this. Instead of being a fighter, space pilot or racing driver, you assume the more mundane task of tending a bar. You need to make sure each customer gets their drink on time and also collect empty glasses and tips. The game's marquee artwork reflects this role perfectly; it's an old-fashioned glass window not entirely unlikely one you'd find in your typical watering hole, complete with a foaming flagon of Budweiser – the company behind the famous drink sponsored this title. In 1984, Root Beer Tapper was released with the references to Budweiser – and alcohol in general – removed.

<b>Tempest</b> 1981 / Atari <p>The Tempest marquee is unusual in a number of ways: firstly, it's an Atari marquee that is more than a simple rendering of the game's name – it's a real work of art. There's also the unique inclusion of a speaker bezel on the left-hand side, and finally, it is signed by the artist. Sadly, research into the identity of the artist – including trawling through numerous old Atari documents from the time – hasn't offered any clues as to the creator of this excellent piece of arcade history.</p>	<b>Terminator 2: Judgment Day</b> 1991 / Midway <p>Developed in conjunction with the movie, rather than after it, Terminator 2 actually contains some enemies that were cut from the movie release due to budget constraints. The game also prompted jokes among gamers that they wouldn't play the 'sequel' game Terminator 2 until they'd completed the original Terminator (which didn't exist). From Jack Haeger's photographic cabinet artwork package to Ray Czajka's gun design, the whole thing stands up as one of the finest arcade game projects in history.</p>	<b>Terra Cresta</b> 1985 / Nichibutsu <p>The Terra Cresta marquee carries over the typographical style from its predecessor, Moon Cresta, although the game itself is a vastly different, graphically superior vertical-scrolling shoot 'em up. The ground-based cannon shown on the left of the marquee represents one of the most difficult elements of the game the player must face: the sheer number (some might say too many) of ground-based cannons and gun turrets.</p>	<b>Tetris</b> 1988 / Atari <p>Atari's version of Alexey Pajitnov's world-famous puzzler was released in arcades in 1988, the year before Nintendo packaged a version of the title with its Game Boy console. The play has to steer a selection of falling blocks to the bottom of the screen in the hope of creating complete horizontal lines, which are then removed from play. Arguably one of the most brilliant games ever made, Tetris has gone on to sell hundreds of millions of copies across all of the systems it has been released on. Atari chose to stylise the game's title as 'TETRIS', and this logo is included on the marquee and side art.</p>	<b>Thunder Blade</b> 1987 / SEGA <p>Inspired by the 1984 TV show Blue Thunder, which also features a helicopter, this SEGA effort is best experienced while sitting inside the deluxe hydraulic arcade cabinet version, which throws the player around in time with the on-screen action. Thunder Blade combines 3D sections with top-down gameplay to impressive effect; it's just a shame that none of the many home ports came close to capturing the same sense of action and enjoyment. Thankfully, a faithful conversion now exists on Nintendo's 3DS handheld, complete with a convincing autostereoscopic 3D effect.</p>	<b>Time Pilot</b> 1982 / Konami <p>A slightly rough-and-ready marquee with no side art to redeem it, Time Pilot had to rely entirely on the quality of the gameplay itself to draw players in and encourage them to drop their coins into the slot. Fortunately, Konami's Yoshiki Okamoto did something right with his game design and Time Pilot is widely considered a classic from the golden age of arcade gaming.</p>	<b>Toki</b> 1989 / TAD Corporation <p>It may not look like it, but Toki is a classic example of the 'run-and-gun' genre; instead of controlling a muscle-bound soldier, you assume the role of an ape – albeit one who was previously human before being cursed by the evil witch doctor Vookimedlo, who wishes to steal Toki's bride-to-be, Miho. Toki can spit projectiles at his foes and is able to collect power-ups – such as items which change his spit and an American Football helmet which protects him from aerial attacks – to make his quest easier. The colourful marquee artwork shows Toki transforming into an ape as the busty Miho is whisked away by a giant hand.</p>	<b>Tournament Cyberball 2072</b> 1989 / Atari <p>American football, but with robots – that's the high-concept pitch which made Atari's 1988 sports title such a hit with arcade players. Use of cybernetic team members aside, the rules are very similar to the real thing, with perhaps the biggest difference being that the ball explodes if you don't get it a certain distance down the field of play. This 1989 update added new 'Game Breakers' and 'Rookie' modes, as well as 100 additional plays.</p>
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# V

## Track & Field 1983 / Konami

This game spawned an entirely new genre of multi-event sports-based games and the action of hammering the two run buttons as quickly as possible is burned into the collective memories of anyone that grew up in the '70s and '80s. One of the reasons for the game's incredible success was the element of multiplayer competitive play. The artwork for the cabinet was relatively simple, with the title text playing very much on the patriotic stars-and-stripes theme.

## Trog 1990 / Bally Midway

Most notable for its 'Playmation' visuals – digitised claymation characters, basically – Trog is a maze-based title in which one of four dinos – Rex, Bloop, Spike, or Gwen – must collect a series of eggs before making their way to the exit. Of course, this isn't as easy as it sounds, but our heroic lizards must avoid the unwanted attention of the 'Troggs' (short for 'troglodyte') which patrol each maze. Comparisons with Pac-Man are obvious, but it's possible to punch enemies to clear a path, as well as use various power-up items to even the odds.

## TRON 1983 / Bally Midway

Based on the legendary Jeff Bridges-starring Disney movie of the same name, Tron consists of four separate sub-games – I/O Tower, MCP Cone, Light Cycles and Battle Tanks – and was intended to include a fifth which would focus on what is arguably one of the most famous sections of the film, where the characters throw discs at one another in a deadly game of frisbee. This fifth sub-game would eventually get its very own arcade release in the same year as Discs of Tron, but it was not as commercially successful.

## Twin Cobra 1987 / Romstar

Vertical-scrolling helicopter shooter Twin Cobra was licensed by Taito to Romstar for US distribution in 1988. The Romstar version supports two players simultaneously, which is why a cocktail version was never released in the US. The marquee for Twin Cobra formed part of a coordinated set of artwork, including the marquee, screen bezel and control panel overlay.

## V'Ball 1988 / Technōs

Also known as U.S. Championship V'Ball, this arcade sports title from Double Dragon studio Technōs sees the player take control of George and Michael (ahem) who try to make a living playing – you've guessed it – beach volleyball. The aim is to win a local tournament and scoop the handsome \$2,500,000 prize money. A range of special moves can be used to gain the advantage over your opponents, including diving and blocking. A home port was released on the NES under the title Super Spike V'Ball.

## Vigilante 1988 / Irem

Fighting games were most certainly the talk of the town back in the late '80s, and Irem joined the party with this likeable side-scrolling effort. As you might expect, the aim is to fight your way single-handedly through a group of hardened criminals known as the Skinheads to save your beloved Madonna from the clutches of the imaginatively named 'Giant Devil'. Bold, well-animated sprites make this one stand out from the crowd, although the rather basic mechanics mean it has aged less impressively than titles like Double Dragon and Final Fight.

## Violence Fight 1989 / Taito

The excellently named street fighting game Violence Fight featured big characters (one depicted in the marquee looking suspiciously like Rastan) and big moves. Make it through a few rounds and you'll find yourself fighting a tiger! The game was not widely released, and was mostly made available as a conversion kit.

## vs. Gradius 1986 / Nintendo

This version of Gradius, licensed to Nintendo for porting to the Vs. competitive play system, has some changes to the gameplay that allow the player a slightly easier start of the game. The marquee is essentially a large and beautifully-executed artistic piece with some player instructions and the Gradius logo overlaid on top of it.

# W

## **vs. The Goonies** 1986 / Nintendo

Another Nintendo-licensed title ported to the Vs. competitive play system, the marquee for vs. The Goonies is a painting of a scene from the movie with stylised text and some player instructions overlaid on top of it. The popularity of the Goonies movie probably didn't call for much more than name recognition to attract the attention of potential players in the arcades.

## **Warlords** 1981 / Atari

The bright and colourful artwork of the Warlords marquee (or 'attraction panel' in Atari's own terminology) is a stark contrast to the game itself, played on a black-and-white screen with a coloured overlay. The chances of coming across a Warlords upright machine were slim even back in 1980, as only 1,014 units were produced, according to Atari's records. Unfortunately, the records kept by Atari then didn't include any details of the artists responsible for the cabinet artwork.

## **Warp Warp** 1981 / Namco

Licensed by Namco in Japan, Warp Warp was one of a few games licensed to Rock-Ola as they jumped on the bandwagon of the Chicago-based arcade game business that boomed in the early '80s. The licence for the game in North America was originally reserved for Midway, but a change of plan meant that Rock-Ola was able to secure the rights, with the machines manufactured by Midway. The original Warp Warp marquee colours were a perfect match for those used in Bosconian, but were changed slightly when Rock-Ola licensed the title.

## **Willow** 1989 / Capcom

Ron Howard's fanciful attempt to outdo Tolkien may have gone down as a cult hit rather than a solid-gold cinematic classic, but we should be thankful that it gave Capcom the opportunity to create this brilliant 2D action platformer. Totally exclusive to the arcade, Willow places you in the role of Willow Ufgood (played by Warwick Davis in the movie) as he attempts to save the baby Elora Danan from the evil queen Bavmorda (Jean Marsh). Willow and Bavmorda both appear on the game's marquee, as does the kind-hearted mercenary Madmartigan, played by the (then) rising Hollywood star, Val Kilmer.

## **Wizard of War** 1981 / Midway

This is a game as famous for its synthesised speech as it is for its gameplay or cabinet artwork, with 71 different phrases uttered throughout the game. The marquee is another Advertising Posters creation from another unknown graphic artist, although an alternative version of the same marquee has appeared on a number of unsold machines discovered in a warehouse in Canada, signed by Lee Bellos.

## **Wonder Boy** 1986 / SEGA

This was a hugely popular side-scrolling platform game for SEGA back in 1986, containing many features that platform games still utilise today. The marquee artwork is essentially a menu of elements found in the game. The majority of the Wonder Boy machines found in arcades were conversions of older, less-profitable System 1 games and there was something about the quality of the printing SEGA used for the conversion marquee that makes it very susceptible to fading. Consequently, many Wonder Boy machines were retired early and there are now a lot more circuit boards out there than there are complete machines.

# Y

## **Yie Ar Kung Fu** 1985 / Konami

There is an entire generation of console gamers out there that are completely unaware that Yie Ar Kung Fu started out as an arcade game, the first to offer a host of different opponents for the player to fight against. Konami's classic one-on-one fighter requires such quick reflexes that the gameplay borders that of a twitch game. Yie Ar Kung Fu was hugely popular, with the bold, oversized marquee acting as a beacon to help players locate the machine across dark and crowded arcades.

# Z

## **Zaxxon** 1982 / SEGA

As the first isometric scrolling space shoot-'em-up, Zaxxon didn't really need much more than name recognition to secure its place as a money-spinner in any arcade. The bold Zaxxon logotype on the black background provided everything the game (and the arcade operator) needed. Unusually, Zaxxon was released in both Japanese and overseas markets with identical branding, apart from the addition of the Gremlin logo and copyright notice outside Japan.





# IMAGE CREDITS

Artcade would not be possible without the various artworks kindly given to us to use within this book. The following section gives credit to all images featured.

## ARCADE ARTWORKS

[www.arcadeartwork.org](http://www.arcadeartwork.org)

### Marquees

Act-Fancer  
Alien Syndrome  
Area 51  
Arkanoid  
Astro Invader  
Astyanax  
Bank Panic  
Block Out  
Blue Print  
Bomb Jack  
Bowl-O-Rama  
Break Out  
Buck Rogers  
Bump 'n' Jump  
Cabal  
Captain America and The Avengers  
Champion Wrestler  
Chiller  
Commando  
Cruis'n Exotica  
Cruis'n USA  
Domino Man  
Double Dragon  
Elevator Action  
Gaplus  
Golden Axe  
Gyruus  
Heavy Barrel  
Jungle King  
Karnov  
Kram  
Magic Sword  
Mikie High School Graffiti  
Ms. Pac-Man  
NBA Jam

Peter Pack Rat  
Polaris  
Primal Rage  
Radical Radial  
Rampage  
Rampart  
Rastan  
Real Ghostbusters, The  
Rush'n Attack  
Shinobi  
Sky Shark  
Snow Bros.  
Speed Racer  
Spider-Man: The Video Game  
Street Fighter Alpha  
Street Fighter Alpha 2  
Super Dodge Ball  
Superman – The Video Game  
TRON

### Side art

Altered Beast  
Arkanoid: Revenge of Doh  
Asteroids Deluxe  
BurgerTime  
Cabal  
Captain America and The Avengers  
Chiller  
Dynamite Duke  
Galaxian  
Ghouls 'n Ghosts  
Ghosts 'n Goblins  
Mario Bros.  
Metro-Cross  
Missile Command  
Mr. Do!  
Mr. Do!'s Castle  
Out Run  
Phoenix  
Pole Position

Popeye  
Q\*Bert  
Rally-X  
Rush'n Attack  
SAR - Search and Rescue  
Shinobi  
Side Arms  
Smash T.V.  
Spy Hunter  
Strider  
Street Smart  
Tetris

## ARCADE ART SHOP

[www.arcadeartshop.com](http://www.arcadeartshop.com)

### Marquees

Chase H.Q.  
Marvel vs. Capcom: Clash of Super Heroes  
NewZealand Story, The  
Rainbow Islands: The Story of Bubble Bobble 2  
Rod Land  
Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo  
Salamander  
SCI - Special Criminal Investigation

### Side art

Operation Wolf  
Ring King

## ARCADE MARQUEE

[www.arcademarquee.com](http://www.arcademarquee.com)

### Marquees

Beast Busters  
Bionic Commando  
Bonanza Bros.  
Buster Bros.  
Commando

Crush Roller  
Cyber Police ESWAT  
Dead Angle  
Dyno Bop  
Empire City 1931  
Exerion  
Forgotten Worlds  
Hunchback  
In the Hunt  
Jail Break  
Knights of the Round  
Last Duel  
LED Storm  
Life Force  
Lode Runner  
Moon Cresta  
Moon War  
Ninja Baseball Bat Man  
Nitro Ball  
R-Type  
R-Type II  
Raiden  
Samurai Shodown II  
Shooting Master  
Silkworm  
Splatterhouse  
Tapper  
Thunder Blade  
Tournament Cyberball 2072  
Trog  
V'Ball

## DAVID WHITE

[@postersdecine](https://www.instagram.com/postersdecine)

### Marquees

Toki



## ESCAPE POD

[www.escapepodonline.com](http://www.escapepodonline.com)

### Marquees

Astro Invader  
Black Widow  
Bucky O'Hare  
Cobra Command  
Double Dragon II: The Revenge  
Dr. Mario  
Firefox  
Golden Axe: The Revenge of Death Adder  
I, Robot  
Ikari Warriors  
Krull  
Lunar Lander  
NARC  
Pac-Land  
Pac-Man  
Qix  
Renegade  
Rygar  
Satan's Hollow  
Smash T.V.  
Space Fury  
Street Fighter  
Strider  
Super Qix  
Tapper  
Willow

### Side art

720°  
American Speedway  
Baby Pac-Man  
Cobra Command  
Commando  
Crossbow  
Crystal Castles  
Cyber Police ESWAT

Defender  
Dynamite Duke  
Final Fight  
Ice Cold Beer  
Ikari Warriors  
Karate Champ  
KLAX  
Kung Fu Master  
Mr. Do!'s Castle  
Ms. Pac-Man  
Pac-Land  
Road Blasters  
Space Invaders  
Tetris

## TIM NICHOLLS

### Marquees

1942  
1943: The Battle of Midway  
Airwolf  
Altered Beast  
Alien vs. Predator  
Asteroids  
Asteroids Deluxe  
Bad Dudes vs. Dragon Ninja  
Badlands  
Bagman  
Battlezone  
Berzerk  
Black Tiger  
Blaster  
Bosconian  
Bubble Bobble  
BurgerTime  
Centipede  
Choplifter  
Circus Charlie  
Cloak & Dagger  
Conquest

Crazy Climber  
Crystal Castles  
Death Race  
Defender  
Dig Dug  
Donkey Kong  
Donkey Kong Junior  
Dynamite Duke  
Eagle  
Empire Strikes Back  
Final Fight  
Food Fight  
Frogger  
Front Line  
Galaga  
Galaxian  
Ghosts 'n Goblins  
Ghouls 'n Ghosts  
GORF  
Gravitar  
Hang-On  
Hellfire  
Inferno  
Joust  
Kageki  
Karate Champ  
KLAX  
Kung-Fu Master  
Legendary Wings  
Looping  
Mad Planets  
Major Havoc  
Marble Madness  
Mario Bros.  
Mat Mania  
Mechanized Attack  
Mega Zone  
Midnight Resistance  
Millipede  
Moon Patrol

Mortal Kombat  
Motorace USA  
Mr. Do!  
Mr. Do!'s Castle  
Ninja Gaiden  
Omega Race  
Out Run  
Paperboy  
Pengo  
Phoenix  
Piranha  
Pole Position  
Pooyan  
Popeye  
Punch-Out!!  
Punisher, The  
Pyros  
Q\*Bert  
Rally-X  
Return of the Jedi  
Ring King  
Road Blasters  
Robotron: 2084  
Rolling Thunder  
Scramble  
Shadow Dancer  
Simpsons, The  
Sinistar  
Snacks 'n Jaxson  
Solar Fox  
Space Firebird  
Space Invaders  
Spy Hunter  
Stargate  
Star Wars  
Street Fighter II - The World Warrior  
Tempest  
Terminator 2: Judgment Day  
Terra Cresta  
Time Pilot

Track & Field  
Twin Cobra  
Vigilante  
Violence Fight  
vs. Gradius  
vs. The Goonies  
Warlords  
Warp Warp  
Wizard of Wor  
Wonder Boy  
Yie Ar Kung Fu  
Zaxxon

### Side art

Centipede  
Defender  
Donkey Kong  
Q\*Bert

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Accept no imitations ... we are the world's no. 1!



Artcade is a unique collection of classic arcade game cabinet artworks, some dating back 40 years to the dawn of video gaming. Once designed to attract players at a time when in-game visuals were crude and blocky, the cabinet art that accompanied titles like Space Invaders, Hang-On and Pac-Man is, unlike the games themselves, in very real danger of being lost to the ravages of time and forgotten, even by the companies which own these franchises.

Back in 2015, Bitmap Books teamed up with arcade enthusiast Tim Nicholls to publish the first edition of Artcade, a labour of love that was borne out of Nicholls' quest to restore his massive archive of original arcade game artwork comprised of titles from the last four decades. This extended edition, builds on the original concept by adding lots more artwork, from a series of professional collectors and restorers. There are also additional sections on side art, plus a new expanded interview with Larry Day and even a How-To Guide on restoring arcade artwork by Escape Pod.



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