Eclipse © 1989
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1. The Game

As the concise script at the beginning states, the goal is to assemble the Vega Solaris talisman (an impossible three-dimensional figure à la Escher). This needs to be done from the four crystals in which it is fragmented.

These four crystals (also impossible figures) are distributed in a world with several settings. These include a forest, caves and a temple, all of them distributed among dozens of screens. They must be taken to the initial screen in a limited time. The winner of the game will be the character (human or alien) whom will be able to arrive at the initial screen with four crystals in his pockets.

Two characters are searching for this talisman: a human and an alien, both being easily recognizable by their aspect. This is indeed one of the incentives of the game, since it is possible to play against another player or against the Spectrum. As can be seen in the following picture, the screen is split up into two panels. Each panel corresponds to a different character; the left panel is that of the human and the right one that of the alien. This figure shows the initial screen from which they depart.

At the bottom of this figure, you can find information about the content of the only four pockets of each character in which they can keep and carry the objects they find in their journey.

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Along the way, they will find not only these crystals but also weapons that they can use against the other character and against the bugs which appear more and more often. The opposite character as well as the bugs can inflict damage upon other. This is represented with colours in the stamina indicator of each character. These colours range from bright white (without damages) to black (without stamina). When black is reached, the character must recover. While this happens he remains unconscious for a while, which means that the other character can steal the objects he has gained with so much effort. Along the way, the following objects can be found:

- Crystals of the Vega Solaris talisman. Four different crystals make up the complete symbol.

- Weapons:

   Swords. Perhaps the most striking one because of the type of fight it implies.

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 Bows. You can throw arrows against the other character and to the bugs.

 Punches. You must not forget that, still without weapons, one can defend oneself in such a way.

- Shields. They provide immunity for a while, until they are used up. The character using them turns into yellow intermittently.

- Spells:

   Basic. A ball of light which is sent against the character that weakens its victim's stamina.

   Night Shot. It darkens the settings of the opponent.

   Teleporting. It allows a character to go to the other character's location immediately.

   Time Freezing. It freezes time except for the character who activates this mode. It also makes the bugs disappear.

- Food. It allows the characters to recover their lost stamina.

Obviously, the game must be completed within a limited time. This is represented by a skull inside an earth globe that slowly appears. When it appears totally, the game ends.

2. State Panel

The following picture shows the state panel, which contains three main sections: the left section shows information about the human character, the middle section shows the elapsed time, and the right section shows information about the alien.

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2.1. Character Information Section

Stamina

 The indicator of stamina can be found in the centre of an oval figure which changes from bright white (maximum stamina) to black (without stamina) throughout the sixteen colours available in the Spectrum. The character falls unconscious when the stamina is used up. While he is in such state, stamina is regained as time passes by. Another way to recover stamina is by eating.

Pockets

 The four pockets are shown on the right end of the information section of the human and on the left end in the case of the alien. Only one of the pockets is active: this is shown in blue background.

Icons

There are four icons (three arrows and a diamond) on the information section of each character. These allow you to use, pick up, drop and steal objects. Only one of the icons is active at a time (which is indicated in yellow fore colour). When pressing the Selector key (that can be user defined), it changes to the following icon (from left to right and top-down).

 Pocket Selection

If this icon (right arrow) is selected, a pocket can be selected by pressing the Fire key as many times as necessary (the pockets are selected in the same order as the icons: from left to right and top-down). If we are next to the unconscious opposite character, we will select his pocket (this is useful to steal from him).

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Action

When this icon is selected and Fire is pressed, the object in the selected pocket is used. This means that you can throw an arrow, eat, activate a spell, etc., depending on the pocket contents. If the pocket is empty, the character strikes with punches. The bugs can be knocked down by punches, but this means it will consume a lot of stamina; there is better to use spells or weapons.

Pick Up/Steal

When this icon is selected alongside an object lying on the ground and Fire is pressed, the character picks it up. If the pocket already contains an object, then they are interchanged.

This icon is also used to steal objects from the other character. To do so, one behaves as if trying to take an object from the ground, but alongside the other character. The latter must be unconscious for the former to be able to steal from him. In general, one must: 1) move away from the opposite character so that we are able to select the pocket where we want to keep the stolen object, 2) place alongside the opposite character and to select his pocket, and 3) pick up the object.

Drop

When this icon is selected and Fire is pressed, we drop the object on the ground next to the character (as long as there is room for the object).

2.2. Score Section

At the bottom of each panel, the corresponding score is shown. This increases as the bugs are knocked down or the opposite character's stamina is weakened by our weapons.

SCORE: 010280

2.3. Time Section

Between the information sections of the characters there is a space to show an image that is completed as time passes by. The game finishes when the image is completed or when the goal of the game is accomplished.

4. Characters

Characters can be controlled in different ways:

- Keyboard. Each player can define his own set of control keys, or to use the predefined ones that are shown later
- Joystick. A joystick connected to the ZX Interface 2, a Kempston interface or cursor type.
- Automatic. An Artificial Intellingence algorithm automatically controls one or both characters.

The actions that characters can perform are:

- Move in eight directions: up, down, left, right and diagonally. A joystick or the keyboard is used for moving the characters. When the keyboard is used, your need to press two keys simultaneously (for example, to go diagonally upright, the Right and Up keys should be pressed simultaneously).
- Pick up objects (crystals, weapons, spells and food). This action and the rest of them are described in the section "Status Panel".
- Steal objects from the other character.
- Fist fight against the other character and the bugs.
- Use weapons and spells.
- Eat.

5. Enemies

The main enemy is the opponent character, either human or alien, which is controlled by another player or the Spectrum itself. However, the bugs are another series of enemies who are mainly annoying, though they can also stun characters.

The best thing to do is to avoid them or to annihilate them with the different weapons thoughout. Although possible, but not a good idea, is to try to kill by fist fighting, not advisable, because they will inflict us too the high a damage.

One of the bugs, the dragonfly (the first bug to the left in the next picture) does not only weaken stamina, but also causes a disagreeable indirect effect: the character will move half speed. While this situation lasts, the character remains in magenta colour.

6. Loading

Loading and execution is the usual way: type LOAD "", insert the tape, and press PLAY in the cassette. This game features a special loading routine which draws the screen in consecutive lines, instead of the usual mode. Moreover, once the loading screen is totally drawn, a version of "Space Invaders" appears. You can play this game while the loading process lasts. The goal of this small game is to obtain the maximum number of points by "killing invaders". The score shows the number of killed invaders, and it turns into zero if one of the invaders is able to reach our position.

7. Predefined Control Keys

The next table shows the predefined control keys for both Vega Solaris and the Space Invaders version played during loading.

	Human	Alien		Space Invaders
Up	Q	U		
Down	A	J		
Left	W	O		Q
Right	E	P		P
Selector	X	M		
Fire	Z	Symbol Shift		Symbol Shift
Pause	H			
Quit	G (only from a pause)			

8. Main Menu

The main menu is shown when the loading process is finished. Their items are described below:

1 PLAYER 1: SPECTRUM

It defines the control type for player 1: the human character.

2 PLAYER 2: SPECTRUM

It defines the control type for player 2: the alien character. Whenever 1 or 2 is pressed, the type of control will vary following this sequence:

- SPECTRUM. The computer controls the character automatically.
- KEYBOARD 1. The keys defined for this set are used. They can be used by character 1 and character 2 (obviously, they should not be used simultaneously by both players).
- KEYBOARD 2. The keys defined for this set are used.
- INT2 PORT1. Port 1 of ZX Interface is used.
- INT2 PORT2. Port 2 of ZX Interface is used.
- KEMPSTON. A Kempston joystick is used.
- CURSOR. A cursor joystick is used.

3 DEFINE KEYS 1
4 DEFINE KEYS 2

When pressing 3 or 4, you can define the keys for the set 1 or 2, respectively. Remember that a given set can be used for any of the characters. Only when you define the key set 1, the pause and quit keys can be defined. When you use a joystick for character control, only the selector key is required to be defined.

0 START GAME

When pressing 0 in this menu, the game begins.