

ÉDITIONS 64K
PRESENTS

REYNOLDS

PHILIPPE LESIRE



GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

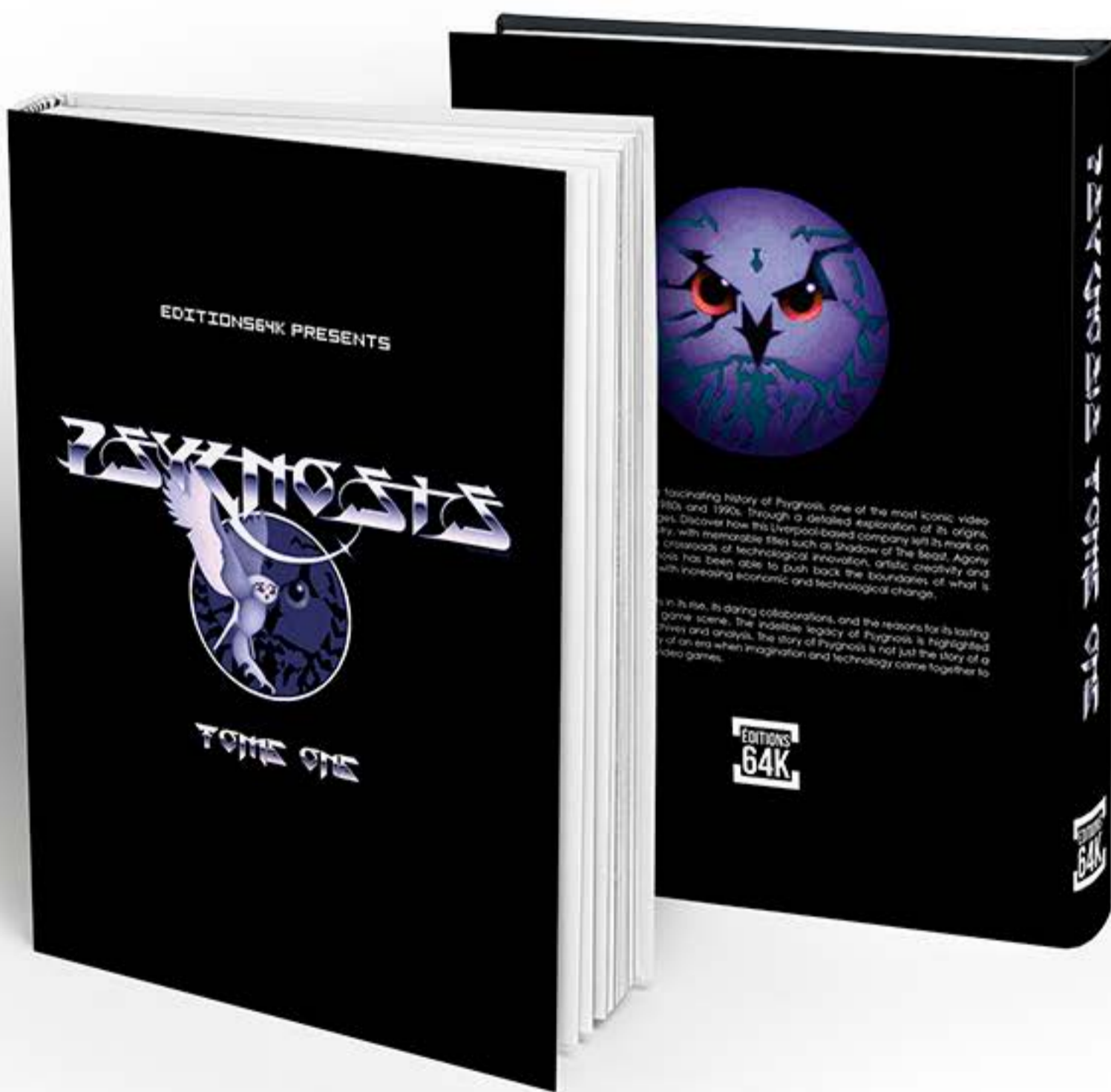
TOME ONE

Immerse yourself in the fascinating history of Psygnosis, one of the most iconic video game studios of the 1980s and 1990s. Through a detailed exploration of its origins, successes and challenges. Discover how this Liverpool-based company left its mark on the video games industry, with memorable titles such as Shadow of The Beast, Agony and Lemmings. At the crossroads of technological innovation, artistic creativity and gaming culture, Psygnosis has been able to push back the boundaries of what is possible, while coping with increasing economic and technological change.

Trace the key moments in its rise, its daring collaborations, and the reasons for its lasting impact on the video game scene. The indelible legacy of Psygnosis is highlighted through interviews, archives and analysis. The story of Psygnosis is not just the story of a company, but the story of an era when imagination and technology came together to redefine the world of video games.

Plongez au cœur de l'histoire fascinante de Psygnosis, l'un des studios de jeux vidéo les plus emblématiques des années 1980 et 1990. À travers une exploration détaillée de ses origines, de ses succès et de ses défis. Découvrez comment cette entreprise de Liverpool a marqué l'industrie du jeu vidéo, en particulier avec des titres mémorables comme Shadow of The Beast, Agony ou encore Lemmings. À la croisée des chemins entre innovation technologique, créativité artistique et culture du jeu, Psygnosis a su repousser les limites du possible, tout en faisant face à des évolutions économiques et technologiques grandissantes.

Retracez les moments clés de son ascension, ses collaborations audacieuses, et les raisons de son impact durable sur la scène du jeu vidéo. Une mise en lumière de l'héritage indélébile de Psygnosis à travers des interviews, des archives et des analyses. L'histoire de Psygnosis n'est pas seulement celle d'une entreprise, mais celle d'une époque où l'imagination et la technologie se sont entrelacées pour redéfinir le monde du jeu vidéo.



EDITIONS64K PRESENTS

PYGNOSIS

TOME ONE



A fascinating history of Pygnosis, one of the most iconic video games of the 1980s and 1990s, through a detailed exploration of its origins, development, and legacy. Discover how this Liverpool-based company left its mark on the industry, with memorable titles such as Shadow of the Beast, Agony, and others. Pygnosis has been able to push back the boundaries of what is possible in video games, with increasing economic and technological change.

In its era, its daring collaborations, and the reasons for its lasting success. The indelible legacy of Pygnosis is highlighted through interviews, analysis, and a look at the future of video games.

EDITIONS
64K

PYGNOSIS
TOME ONE

EDITIONS
64K

THE MEGAGAMES

1984 - Liverpool England

At the beginning of 1984, *Imagine Software* was working on two of the seven major planned concepts, and in particular a pair of high-level titles, referred to from here as *megagames* due to the groundbreaking ambition of these titles. *Psychapse* and *Bandersnatch* were conceived as *megagames*, i.e. games whose ambitions were greater than the technological limitations of the time. *Bandersnatch* was intended to accompany the next-generation ZX Spectrum computer, with more RAM (hence the extra 128 KB RAM card supplied with the game).

They may be smiling now, but they are about to encounter...



PSYCLAPSE COMMODORE 64
&
BANDERSNATCH. ZX SPECTRUM

How will these four master computer game writers be feeling in a few weeks time? They have been brought together to pool their awesome talents to create the two most sensational, mind boggling games ever imagined... *Psychapse* and *Bandersnatch*.

When such computer wizards as (from left to right) Ian Weatherburn, Mike Glover, John Gibson and Eugene Evans are locked away for weeks on end, anything can happen, will they maintain their sanity, or what's more to the point can you control your patience?

Coming soon from Imagine... Psychapse and Bandersnatch... the two most exhilarating experiences ever. Can you wait?

Imagine Software Limited, 5 Sir Thomas Street, Liverpool, Merseyside L1 6BW.
Dealer Enquiries Contact: Colin Stokes on 051-236 8100 (20 lines)

PSYCLAPSE COMMODORE 64
&
BANDERSNATCH ZX SPECTRUM

PROGRESS REPORT

It was only a few short weeks ago that (from left to right) Ian Weatherburn, John Gibson, Eugene Evans and Mike Glover were given their original brief... Produce the two most exhilarating computer games ever.

The tension is beginning to show, their once smiling faces are now drawn and haggard, their eyes are bloodshot, *PSYCLAPSE & BANDERSNATCH* are beginning to take their toll. The atmosphere is 'Imagine House' is electric, will they succeed? Can they maintain their sanity? Will they crack under the mental burden?

Remember, although they're adventure games, they're arcade games, they're completely original concepts in computer entertainment.

CAN YOU CONTROL YOUR PATIENCE?

CONSUMABLES TO DATE

Coffee consumed	1008 Cups
Soft drinks consumed	397 Cans
Cigarettes consumed	204
Ham	314
Cherry G. Tomatoes	35,376
Sauces	30,376

COMING SOON FROM IMAGINE, PSYCLAPSE & BANDERSNATCH

Imagine Software Limited, 5 Sir Thomas Street, Liverpool, Merseyside L1 6BW.
Dealer Enquiries Contact: Colin Stokes on 051-236 8100 (20 lines)

Imagine Software began placing advertisements in specialist magazines such as *Computer and Video Games*, *Crash* and *Sinclair User*. *Psychapse* was intended for the Commodore 64, *Bandersnatch* for the ZX Spectrum, the two most popular home computers. These games had to offer audiovisual quality and a total level of interaction, while being completely devoid of a parser (a text input system that was very widespread at the time) in order to offer a more attractive interface.

"In *Bandersnatch* you become one of the characters with a distinct and identifiable personality. What happens when you meet other characters depends on who they are and what you do, just like in real life. Characters then remember how they were treated by the player and act accordingly when they meet again. There is no life or score. It's about trying to get what you, the player, want. There are no status lines to spoil the realism. The whole screen is taken up by the action." *Bruce Everiss*

PSYCLAPSE & BANDERSNATCH COMMODORE 64
REINFORCEMENTS ARRIVE! ZX SPECTRUM



After eight weeks of total concentration by our four master programmers *Psychapse & Bandersnatch*, the two most original computer games ever conceived are entering the final phase of creation. Now the Imagine 'A Team' have been joined by (from left to right) Steve Carr, Ally Noble, Dawn Jones, Abdul Bashir and Fred Gray.

Steve, Ally and Dawn are three of the most accomplished graphic artists in the country and Abdul and Fred are two highly respected musicians.

The task is to enhance these magnificent games with dazzling animation, stunning effects and electrifying music.

Psychapse & Bandersnatch, a treat for your senses, coming soon from Imagine.

Imagine Software Limited, 5 Sir Thomas Street, Liverpool, Merseyside L1 6BW.
Dealer Enquiries Contact: Colin Stokes on 051-236 8100 (20 lines)

PSYGNOSIS, THE STORY OF A VISIONARY STUDIO

Psygnosis, a name that sounds like a legend in the history of video games, has left an indelible mark on the games industry. This British studio, founded in Liverpool in 1985, has been responsible for some of the most innovative and influential productions of its time. A look back at the contributions that have enabled Psygnosis to shape the future of video games with iconic titles, groundbreaking graphics and a creative approach that has redefined industry standards.

A story divided into 2 volumes chronologically retracing the entire journey of Psygnosis, from its origins in the 80s to its closure in 2012.

PSYGNOSIS L'HISTOIRE D'UN STUDIO VISIONNAIRE

Psygnosis, un nom qui résonne comme une légende dans l'histoire des jeux vidéo, a laissé une empreinte indélébile dans l'industrie du jeu. Ce studio britannique, fondé en 1985 à Liverpool, est à l'origine de certaines des productions les plus novatrices et influentes de son époque. Retour sur les contributions qui ont permis à Psygnosis de façonner l'avenir du jeu vidéo avec des titres emblématiques, des graphismes révolutionnaires et une approche créative qui a redéfini les standards de l'industrie.

Une histoire divisée en 2 tomes retraçant de façon chronologique le parcours complet de Psygnosis, depuis ses origines dans les années 80 jusqu'à sa fermeture en 2012.

THE BEGINNINGS

The creation of the studio in Liverpool by Imagine Software alumni, their vision to create graphically stunning games with Megagames.

PSYGNOSIS AND THE AMIGA - A LEGENDARY ALLIANCE

How Psygnosis exploited the capabilities of machines like the Amiga and the Atari ST to set itself apart. Psygnosis was born of one ambition: to revolutionise the video games industry. From the outset, the studio distinguished itself by its willingness to go beyond the conventions of the time. In 1986, their first game, Brataccas, marked a turning point. However, it was in 1989, with the release of Shadow of the Beast on the Amiga, that Psygnosis really caused a sensation. With its stunning graphics and memorable soundtrack, this title catapulted the studio into the international spotlight, attracting the attention of gamers and critics alike.

LES DÉBUTS

La création du studio à Liverpool par des anciens de Imagine Software, leur vision pour créer des jeux graphiquement époustouflants avec les Megagames.

PSYGNOSIS ET L'AMIGA - UNE ALLIANCE LÉGENDAIRE

Comment Psygnosis a exploité les capacités des machines comme l'Amiga et l'Atari ST pour se démarquer. Psygnosis est né d'une ambition, révolutionner l'industrie du jeu vidéo. Dès sa création, le studio s'est distingué par sa volonté d'aller au-delà des conventions de l'époque. En 1986, leur premier jeu, Brataccas, marquait déjà un tournant. Cependant, c'est en 1989, avec la sortie de Shadow of the Beast sur Amiga, que Psygnosis a véritablement fait sensation. Avec ses graphismes époustouflants et sa bande-son mémorable, ce titre a propulsé le studio sous les projecteurs internationaux, attirant l'attention des joueurs et des critiques.

The game was a real technical feat, using sprite multiplexing rather than Blitter. Shadow of the Beast uses up to 12 levels of parallax scrolling and a maximum of 128 colours on screen, all at 60 frames per second. In all, there are no fewer than 350 paintings and 132 monsters. A total of 2 MB of compressed graphics on 2 floppy disks.



Shadow of the Beast represents a 100% Amiga programming effort. It comes on two disks with custom loading routines giving 1040 KB per disk. Not only that, but all files are compressed by around 37%. The product makes full use of the Amiga's 1 Mbyte to reduce disk access.

"Choosing a dual-playfield mode certainly made for impressive parallax scrolling, but it also led to severe limitations. This meant, for example, that monsters were only allowed to move in a single plane, without being able to enjoy the depth of the scenery. These were the kind of concessions necessary to achieve the 60 frames per second animation speed I wanted to maintain at all costs, implying numerous design challenges and dictating the relative naivety of the gameplay. This also led to an impoverishment of enemy behaviours, such as swallowing their corpses on the ground when they couldn't be knocked off ledges. This mode also limited the number of colours that could be displayed for monster sprites to 8."

Martin Edmondson



AMNIOS

Psyclapse | Flying Chicken Software
Amiga

First release: 1991



MAX 1 SIM 1
PLAYER 1 PLAYER 1

Shoot 'em up | 2D | Top-down



The story

In command of a spaceship, your mission is to destroy all alien organic forms that have colonised different planets. The game features 10 levels divided into three types of environment: squamous, vegetal and epidermal. Amnios ships are equipped with various elements that they must take care of in order to carry out their mission.

Kidnappers - They guard the humanoids and try to prevent you from retrieving them. Once you've rescued a humanoid, its captor will come after you.

DNA strands - These can be deposited on the father ship to produce weapons. The color of the DNA strand corresponds to the type of weapon it can produce.

Humanoids - To enable the Sentients to launch a general attack on *Oncabloc*, you need to rescue the humanoids and take them to the mother ships.

Mother ships - These are the platforms where humanoids are placed and DNA is transformed into weapons. Each vessel can hold one humanoid and process one strand of DNA at a time. Hovering over a fathership will help you replace lost energy.



THE GOLDEN AGE

The golden age of Psygnosis games on the Amiga, or how Psygnosis was able to push back the limits of the Amiga with revolutionary graphics, animations and sounds with flagship games such as: Menace, Blood Money, and Barbarian. Psygnosis was also a forerunner in making the most of the Amiga's capabilities. Games such as The Killing Game Show (1990) and Agony (1992) offered visually impressive worlds that pushed back the technical limits of their time.

PSYGNOSIS ART: A VISUAL AND HISTORICAL EXPLORATION

Roger Dean and his covers, his influence on the visual identity of Psygnosis. The role of art in marketing, why Psygnosis game boxes were so unique and iconic.

L'ÂGE D'OR

L'âge d'or des jeux Psygnosis sur Amiga, ou comment Psygnosis a su repousser les limites de l'Amiga avec des graphismes, des animations et des sons révolutionnaires avec des jeux phares, tels que : Menace, Blood Money, et Barbarian. Psygnosis a également été un précurseur en exploitant au maximum les capacités de l'Amiga. Des jeux comme The Killing Game Show (1990) et Agony (1992) ont proposé des univers visuellement impressionnants, repoussant les limites techniques de leur époque.

L'ART SELON PSYGNOSIS : UNE EXPLORATION VISUELLE ET HISTORIQUE

Roger Dean et ses couvertures, son influence sur l'identité visuelle de Psygnosis. Le rôle de l'art dans le marketing, pourquoi les boîtes des jeux Psygnosis étaient si uniques et iconiques.

LEMMINGS: THE BIRTH OF A TIMELESS CLASSIC

One of Psygnosis' most famous games, and its impact on the industry. How DMA Design created the innovative concept of these little characters to save. The game became a global phenomenon, captivating millions of players and cementing Psygnosis' reputation as a creator of innovative games.

Numerous interviews tell the story of these revolutionary games.

The most legendary studios and incredible collaborations: Reflections Interactive, DMA Design, Traveller's Tales and many others...

LEMMINGS : LA NAISSANCE D'UN CLASSIQUE INTEMPOREL

L'un des jeux les plus célèbres de Psygnosis, et son impact sur l'industrie. Comment DMA Design a créé le concept innovant de ces petits personnages à sauver. Ce jeu, mêlant stratégie et casse-tête, est devenu un véritable phénomène mondial, captivant des millions de joueurs et consolidant la réputation de Psygnosis en tant que créateur de jeux innovants.

De nombreuses interviews alimentent l'histoire de ces jeux révolutionnaires.

Les studios les plus mythiques et des collaborations incroyables: Reflections Interactive, DMA Design, Traveller's Tales et bien d'autres...

Lemmings began life as a simple *Deluxe Paint* animation in August 1989, when *DMA Design* had just moved into its first office, which consisted of just two small rooms above a children's shop. The young company was then starting work on a new game called *Walker*, based on the *Walker* used in *Blood Money*.



"Scott Johnson, then employed at a McDonald's, was hired as a freelance artist to work on *Walker's* graphics. After building the *Walker's* head, he started drawing little 16x16 pixel men for the *Walker* to shoot at. But the 16x16 size was too big, the enemies were almost up to the *Walker's* head. It was just far too big and could be halved again. I'd seen tiny sprites 5 pixels high in games like *Oids* and I told Scott he could reduce his characters to 8x8 but he didn't agree. One lunchtime I started creating an image of little men being crushed by weights and shot by a laser gun - everyone loved it, Gary Timmons added a few more traps. We had fun creating these characters and making them die. The aim was to get 8x8 sprites, but they ended up being 8x10. We debated at length about which colours to use and found that green hair looked better than blue, and that's how the final Lemming came about." *Mike Dailly*



DMA Design's First Office

MICROCOSM

Psygnosis Limited | Psygnosis Limited
3DO | Amiga CD32 | FM Towns | PC (DOS) | Sega Mega CD

First release: 1993



MAX 1
PLAYER 1

SIM 1
PLAYER 1

Action | 3D | Behind view

The game

Time is running out for tycoon Tiron Korsby. A microscopic probe, "Grey M", has been injected into his bloodstream by rival company Axiom. A probe that, with every beat of her heart, travels to her brain to carry out its diabolical mission: total control of her mind.

Your mission: track down and destroy the intruder. Using the very latest micro-submersible technology, you'll navigate the strange and menacing world of veins, arteries and organs inside his body, before the final confrontation with "Grey M".

MICROCOSM

Over 500 megabytes of game data, graphics and sound. A cinematic presentation of photorealistic images and fully animated video sequences, produced using state-of-the-art *Silicon Graphics* workstations. Stimulating gameplay, fast and furious, authentic interaction with the rendered scenery, allowing you to steer your way through Korsby's body.

Microcosm was the first game to use Psygnosis's exclusive *Fractal Engine Technology*, which enables extremely smooth video transfer, even on single-speed CD-ROM drives.

Microcosm was initially developed on the *Fujitsu FM-Towns*, a Japanese Intel-based computer and console with custom chipsets. The game is the first in a trilogy that includes *Scavenger 4* (aka *Novastorm*) and *MegaMorph*. The latter is unknown to most Western gamers. *MegaMorph* was announced for the Amiga CD32 and FM-Towns, but after Commodore's demise in 1994, the Amiga CD32 version was shelved and the game was only released in Japan.



THE CD-ROM ADVENTURE

The first Psygnosis games to be released on CD stood out for their innovative graphics and their use of the CD-ROM medium for richer multimedia content, including high-quality cinematics and music. Psygnosis quickly made a name for itself with visually impressive titles and innovative concepts such as Novastorm.

THE SONY TAKEOVER

The acquisition of Psygnosis by Sony in 1993 marked an important turning point in the history of the studio and video games in general. Sony, which was preparing for the launch of its first games console, the PlayStation, saw in Psygnosis a key partner to help it design exclusive games and bring quality titles to its new machine. Sony's acquisition of Psygnosis was a key strategic element in the initial success of the PlayStation, enabling the console to benefit from exclusive, high-quality games right from launch.

L'AVENTURE DU CD-ROM

Les premiers jeux de Psygnosis sur CD se sont distingués par leur innovation graphique et leur utilisation du support CD-ROM pour des contenus multimédia plus riches, notamment des cinématiques et des musiques de qualité supérieure. Psygnosis, a su rapidement gagner en notoriété grâce à des titres visuellement impressionnants et des concepts novateurs tels que Novastorm.

LE RACHAT PAR SONY

Le rachat de Psygnosis par Sony en 1993, marqua un tournant important pour l'histoire du studio et du jeu vidéo en général. Sony, qui préparait le lancement de sa première console de jeux, la PlayStation, a vu en Psygnosis un partenaire clé pour l'aider à concevoir des jeux exclusifs et apporter des titres de qualité à sa nouvelle machine. L'acquisition de Psygnosis par Sony a été un élément stratégique essentiel dans le succès initial de la PlayStation, permettant à la console de bénéficier de jeux exclusifs de haute qualité dès son lancement.

We are delighted to present our new
international fundraising campaign

11 april - 11 may 2025
18H00 GMT

www.editions64k.fr/psygnosis



Nous sommes heureux de vous présenter notre
nouvelle campagne de financement internationale.

11 avril - 11 mai 2025
18H00 GMT

www.editions64k.fr/psygnosis

