

LG3D-Livecd 2.3

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[4]A new concept is amongst us and lg3d is its name. I test drove the livecd this evening and I've never experienced anything quite like it before. I think this is an extremely bold and ambitious project. I hope they continue to improve this desktop because it is truly a one-of-a-kind. In a time when most distros follow a very similar formula, Looking Glass is going its own way.

I first booted the livecd in its default configuration. It booted up in good time and automagically started its 3d desktop - after mounting all my partitions and detecting my nvidia video graphics card, I was a big nervous. But to my surprise, it loaded nvidia graphic drivers and no lock up occurred. The desktop was terribly unresponsive. The lag between my moving my mouse and the cursor moving made taking screenshots quite painful and almost an impossibility. The whole system was almost unusable. I got a few screenshots as I played around, but was becoming discouraged rather quickly.

However, the next boot I used "slax nohd copy2ram." I had just added another stick of 512mb ram into my machine in honor of Quake 4 and figured a gig of ram should be enough. It was. As it booted it paused to load the system into ram and warned it could take a while. It didn't take too long before it was on its way to starting the lg desktop. This time I could really play. I still found it a little buggy, but just a little. ...for a while. After a while the system began to slow down and things quit responding. But until it did, I had a good time moving windows off to the side, rotating them around and even panning through some panoramic wallpapers/backgrounds. It was quite fun.

On the technical end, lg3d-livecd is based on slax and uses java as the programming language. It comes with linux-2.6.12.2 and Xorg 6.8.2. It includes firefox, gaim and abiword. The lg3d-livecd panel/launcher also includes this cd cover demo, a help screen, and this globe with rotating satellite thing (that I never could figure out what it did - clicking

on it did nothing). It also comes with some other unique applications such as a 'googler' which is supposed to be a nice search tool, and blackgoat which appears to be an email client, and a cosmo planner/organizer which is a like a datebook. None of these latter applications really worked as I couldn't get them to take any keyboard input. However those previously listed seemed to function normally. There were a some other original applications as well. One of these appeared to be a browser of sorts with little previews of a webpage, but I couldn't really get the page into focus or get it to change pages. Another was this 'history of the world,' that seemed to map major changing points in history, such as the invention of the printing press, colorcoded and organized by century. It was kinda cool until it quit working.



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All distros have applications. But lg3d desktop offers many other features, some with purpose, some, I suspect, for the eyecandy factor. Animation and transparency seem to be a main focus in lg3d and is featured perhaps in excess. The cursor wiggles and jiggles when you move the mouse. There's an animated Java logo present when you're using a background that supports 3d rotation of the windows. The windows fly off the right side of screen when closed and twirl around as they minimize. All windows fade to semi-transparent when not in focus. You can see that in most of the [screenshots](#) [13].



[14]



[15]

The rotation of windows is a thrilling effect. If only one window is open, then it rotates on its axis. If more than one is open, they rotate around a center point. And how many times you "turn" those windows around is how many times they snap back in reverse when you let go.



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[18]

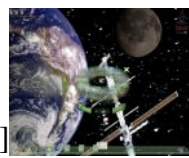
The background tool is unique as well. It displays the choices in a lazysusan-like manner that rotates either clockwise or counter-clockwise depending on the directional arrow you click. You can filter the offerings for panoramic, animated, layered, or all. And as you can see in the third screenshot, the appearance of the attempted transparency when unfocused. That one needs some more work.



[19]

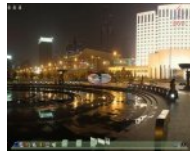


[20]



[21]

Another big feature of lg3d desktop is the panoramic backgrounds. Many of the backgrounds offered come with potential panoramic viewing. Activate one of these backgrounds and you can click the right or left side of the screen to see the full 360 degree view of a city, sky, land, or sea -scape. The following example is all from the same background.



[22]



[23]



[24]

One other application that warrants a mention is their image viewer. Quite buggy and very resource hungry, it rendered my system spent. I had to reboot after using it. That aside, it has some really cool features. The images in a directory are presented in this carousel like rotation. You can see in the screenshots to the left of the pic in focus. Click on a thumbnail and it comes around to the front of the pack and displays in the window. This system bogged down to a crawl when using this application and did not recover after closing it. However, if the developers ever work that out, this can be a great viewer.



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[27]

Their file manager is equally useless. It open directories in another window and links to them, however you can't really open any file in anything. I guess they are still working on that part too. However, it's a nice effect. It somehow don't quite blend-in with the rest of the desktop. It just don't mesh. Also shown in the screenshots is the clock that also doesn't seem to match the rest of the desktop very well.



[28]



[29]

LG3D is a truly different and unique desktop environment that can join the ranks of the strange and unusual with Symphony, perhaps starting a revolution all their own. I'm not sure all those bells and whistles would come in handy everyday, but some would nice. If you want to test out something quite distinctive, lg3d might fill that bill. Although not ready for prime time yet, this proof of concept is quite impressive and at only 235mb, it's certainly worth the download for a looksee. Other [screenshots](#) [13] in the gallery.

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- [3] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/taxonomy/term/102>
- [4] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/lg3d/desktop0>
- [5] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/lg3d/browser>

- [6] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/lg3d/help>
- [7] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/lg3d/gaim3>
- [8] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/lg3d/firefox>
- [9] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/lg3d/word>
- [10] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/lg3d/blackgoat>
- [11] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/lg3d/cosmosch2>
- [12] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/lg3d/googler>
- [13] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/lg3d>
- [14] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/lg3d/gaim>
- [15] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/lg3d/gaim1>
- [16] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/lg3d/rotate4>
- [17] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/lg3d/rotate5>
- [18] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/lg3d/rotate6>
- [19] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/lg3d/desktop>
- [20] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/lg3d/desktop2>
- [21] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/lg3d/desktop3>
- [22] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/lg3d/panaramic3>
- [23] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/lg3d/panaramic2>
- [24] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/lg3d/panaramic>
- [25] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/lg3d/image1>
- [26] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/lg3d/image2>
- [27] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/lg3d/image>
- [28] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/lg3d/fmclk>
- [29] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/lg3d/fmclk2>