

Machinarium - A Tasty Gaming Treat

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[1]What would you do if you were thrown and locked out of town separated from your true love? You'd fight every obstacle to return and rescue her, of course. And that's your goal in Machinarium. As the hero, you must figure out how to out-smart the bad guys and to save your lovely girlfriend.

As the game opens you find yourself broken and discarded in the dump outside the city wall. Your first task is to reassemble yourself. Once that is accomplished, you can begin your quest to return to the city and your girlfriend. Your adventure unfolds as you solve puzzle-like problems in order to progress. For example, how do you trick the guard to lower the drawbridge? Or how might you enter a tunnel that remains sealed except for the few seconds when a train cart passes?



[2]

The back story is revealed through Josef's memories seen as thought bubbles as the story progresses. Some of the first memories recollect our hero and his love as children playing around in an oil bath laughing and splashing. Later, dirty deeds of the antagonists against our hero, how he came to be in the city dump, and how the girlfriend came to be captured are revealed. It's amazing how these small glimpses into Josef's mind, feelings, and motives start to build a three dimensional character and pull the player in from almost the start. You care about him and want to see him reunited with his girlfriend. The environment is as much a character as the robot. It's a mechanized world of greasy and rusting metal fallen into disrepair - dirty, dangerous, and desolate. It's like Dr. Seuss meets the Road Warrior. Yet ironically, there's something quite beautiful in the cold metallic smoggy maze.



[3]

The game doesn't waste much time before the puzzles become challenging. Fortunately, you're not all on your own. Each puzzle environment has a hint bulb that will give you one quick hint usually pointing to the one thing that will make the rest fall into place. But if that's not enough, there's a book of sketchboards containing almost the full sequence of steps. Although the book is locked by a side-scrolling Alien Invaders type of game you must complete before gaining access. This will prevent someone from seeking answers too soon and also avoids the scramble of trying to find a walkthrough full of spoilers. However, Josef provides help himself. If you try to send him somewhere or do something inadvisable, he'll shake his head and mumble, "uh huh." Sometimes he'll give you hints through his thought bubbles as well. It's just an utterly charming game.

[4]

The best thing about Machinarium is that it also runs on Linux. News of this game's existence almost missed the Linux community entirely. However, upon its official release on October 15, a Linux version was also released. Surprisingly, after remitting the small fee users are given access to versions for all three platforms as well as the background music in MP3 format. An [online demo is available](#) [5] to try before you buy, but a word of warning, once you begin you'll want to finish.



[6]

The Linux version is packaged as a compressed archive, or tarball. Some users will be able to simply click on this tarball and an archive manager will open. At that point click "Extract" to unpack the files. For others, open a terminal and change directories where you'd like the game installed. Unpacking it and running it from your home directory is perfectly acceptable and many times preferred, but if you'd like it available to other users, `su` to root and change directories to perhaps `/usr/local/games`. Just extracting the tarball is all that's required. You can start the game in a terminal or you might wish to make a link on your desktop. In summary, for example:

1. `cd ~`
2. `tar -zxvf ~/Downloads/Machinarium_full_en.tar.gz`
3. To play: `cd Machinarium/`
4. `./Machinarium`

To unpack the background soundtrack:

1. `unzip ~/Downloads/MachinariumSoundtrack.zip`

Machinarium is a Flash-based game and as such the gameplay might be a little different from other games you've played, but it's described as point and click. Cursor clues drive the game action. Tests here found it didn't play very well under the KDE 4 environment with only one gigabyte of RAM. However, under other window environments, it played well for the most part. Some areas of the game suffer a bit of lag, but those with more memory shouldn't experience any negative issues with performance. Some suggest disabling (or enabling) Hardware Acceleration in your Flash settings (right click anywhere on the game screen), but this didn't seem to effect performance here either way. However, disabling Fullscreen when encountering these "heavy" areas helped a bit¹. There is [an active user forum](#) [7] if you need assistance or just want to learn more.



[8]

Machinarium is an imaginative game with a beautifully rich environment and amazing details. You'll fall in love with the ineffable main character and become addicted to his alien world. It's well worth the small fee for the hours of enjoyment received in exchange. For us Linux users, it's an especially tasty treat.



[9]

1. Adding another gig of RAM cured the lagging/hesitation issue.

(Update: If it begins to lag again real bad after playing and quitting a few times, eating up all CPU, try `rm -rf ~/.macromedia` - after moving your saved game file located at `~/.macromedia/Flash_Player/#SharedObjects/<some random number>/#localWithNet/Machinarium/Machinarium.sol`)

Source URL: <http://www.tuxmachines.org/node/40704>

Links:

- [1] http://www.tuxmachines.org/images/machinarium_ss/machinarium4.jpg
- [2] http://www.tuxmachines.org/images/machinarium_ss/machinarium0.jpg
- [3] http://www.tuxmachines.org/images/machinarium_ss/machinarium1.jpg

[4] http://www.tuxmachines.org/images/machinarium_ss/hint.png

[5] <http://machinarium.net/demo/>

[6] http://www.tuxmachines.org/images/machinarium_ss/machinarium.jpg

[7] <http://machinarium.net/forum/index.php/board,3.0.html>

[8] http://www.tuxmachines.org/images/machinarium_ss/machinarium2.jpg

[9] http://www.tuxmachines.org/images/machinarium_ss/machinarium3.jpg