

Smoke & Mirrors Graphics Game

In this game, you play Marie Antoinette, Queen Consort of Le Roi Louis Seize, and your mission is to rescue Louis Seize, who is entrapped by a laser beam (this game may not be entirely free of some slight historical anachronism!). During the mission you have to collect an Inventory of items and negotiate and manoeuvre obstacles and finally release the king, at all stages avoiding the deadly beam.

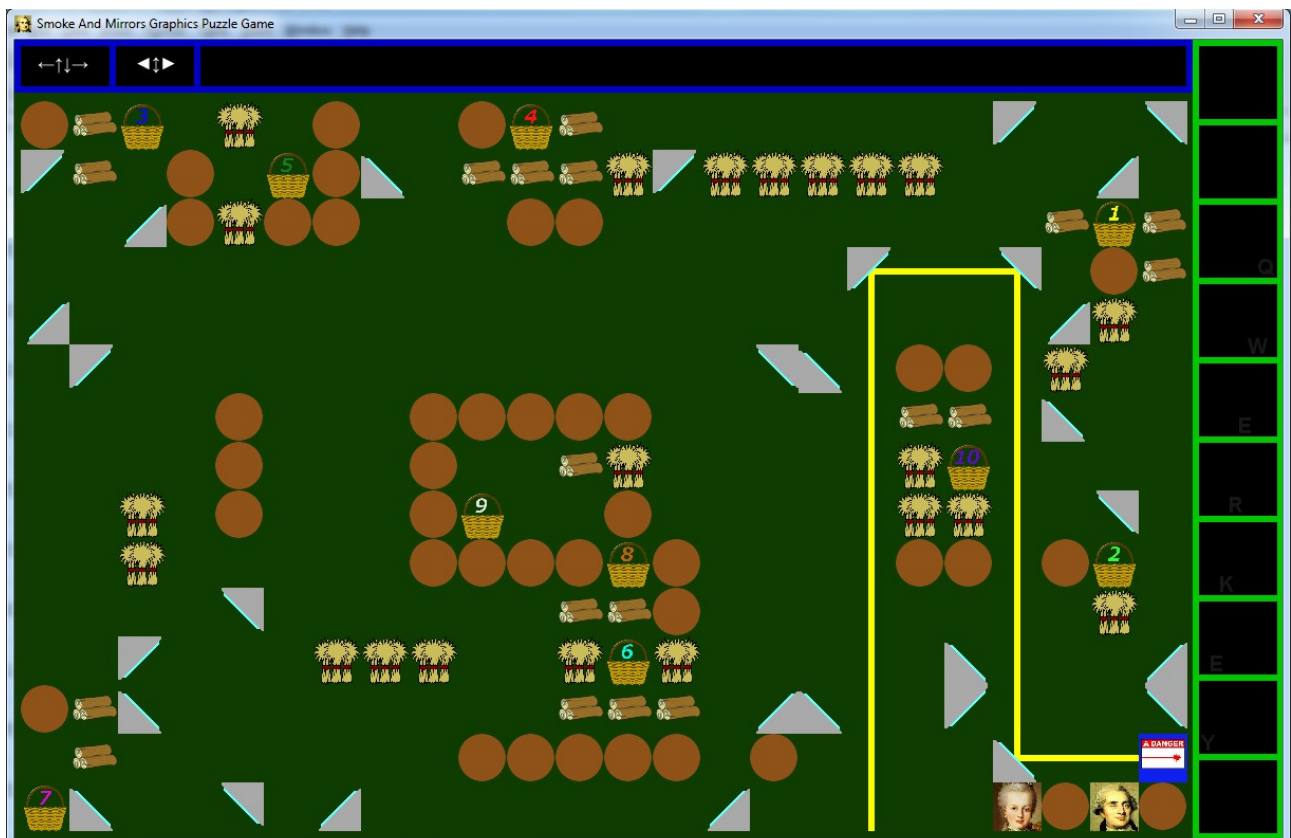
Installing the Program

Use the URL to download the zip file and extract the folder “SmokeAndMirrors_GL” and place that folder in your QB64 folder. Be careful that the extraction process does not create an extra folder layer. Open the file “SmokeAndMirrorsGL.bas” in the IDE, and make sure that you have the Run Option “Save EXE in / Output EXE to the source folder” checked. The program will work with GL 1.2.

https://www.dropbox.com/s/bwr4ehdjtrgjf6x/SmokeAndMirrors_GL.zip?dl=0

To play the game, your screen size must be greater than 1300x900 pixels. The mouse is not used in this program and all play interaction is via the keyboard. This program is an updated version of the SDL game to be found at the QB64.net URL (<http://www.qb64.net/forum/index.php?topic=12464.0>) if that site is available. Although the program has been completely rewritten, and now uses hardware accelerated imaging, the gameplay is almost exactly as the previous version (so there will be no novelty if you have already played that). In the SDL version of the game, it was Marie Antoinette who was trapped with Louis doing the movements. The GL version avoids such historical sexist bias!

The game window is shown in the diagram.



Smoke and Mirrors Screen

The Marie Antoinette character starts near the bottom right, separated from the king. She can move throughout the GamePlay Area unless barred by obstacles, and she can interact with objects in the GamePlay Area. A beam of yellow laser light entraps the king. Should Marie Antoinette move into the laser beam, she will meet an untimely death.

GamePlay Objects

Mirrors. These deflect the laser beam on their reflective face. At certain times, some mirrors can be moved or rotated.



Pillars. These flame-proof immovable objects have to be side-stepped.



Piles of Logs. These are too heavy to move, but will catch fire.



Haystacks. These can be moved and will catch fire.



Inventory Items. These items must be picked up in their order. Once the basket is picked up, the item in the basket will be transferred to the Inventory Area.



Laser and laser beam. While the laser is on, its powerful beam will set fire to flammable objects in its path. NB This is a powerful laser and the beam is harmful to human health.



At the top of the Smoke and Mirrors screen, there are dialogue boxes. If the symbol in the top left box is present, it indicates that Marie Antoinette is able to move – if that box is blank, she cannot move. The symbol in the next box indicates that Marie Antoinette is able to manipulate (push or rotate) any moveable object. The box to the right is a dialogue area where text can be displayed.



Movement Manipulation Dialogue

Inventory Area. As Inventory Items are collected, they are displayed in the Column to the right of the GamePlay Area.



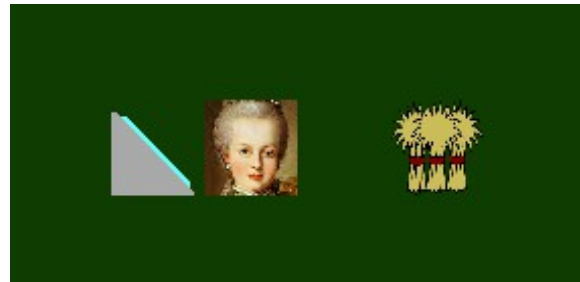
Inventory Items

Marie Antoinette is moved by pressing the arrow keys. In order to manipulate a moveable object, continue to press the arrow key in the direction of the object, as described below. When a fire is set, Marie Antoinette is able to move and can pick up Inventory Items but she is unable to manipulate objects. There are some events when she cannot move. The game strategy is to collect all Inventory Items while avoiding all hazardous situations. Inventory Item No. 10 is special in that it can only be picked up when it does not have any object touching it to the right and left and directly above and below. With a complete Inventory, Marie Antoinette may move into Louis's place (she may not cross the laser beam, of course) to complete the mission.

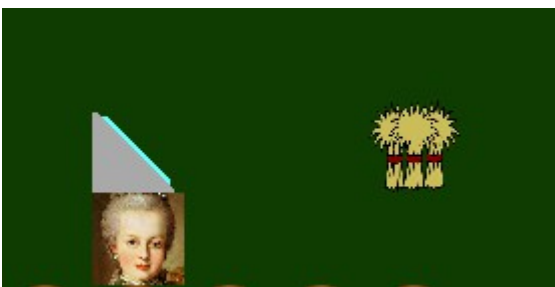
You will notice that the movement speed is restricted: above a certain rate Marie will not move any quicker no matter how quickly you press the arrow keys (or keep an arrow key depressed). This is because some of the actions are time-dependent. Initially, you may find the movement keys unresponsive, but it is a matter of getting used to the pace of the game.

It is suggested that when you play the game for the first time, you move Marie Antoinette three steps to the left, just to see what happens. Notice the effects occurring, the sounds and the text in the dialogue box. Thereafter, move more cautiously!

The mirror manipulations are given in the pictures below. With Marie Antoinette placed as in the first two pictures (next to the reflective surface of the mirror), if the arrow keys in the direction of the mirror are used, the mirror will rotate clockwise. With Marie Antoinette placed as in the next two pictures (at the back of the mirror), if the arrow keys in the direction of the mirror are used, the mirror and Marie Antoinette will move in that direction.

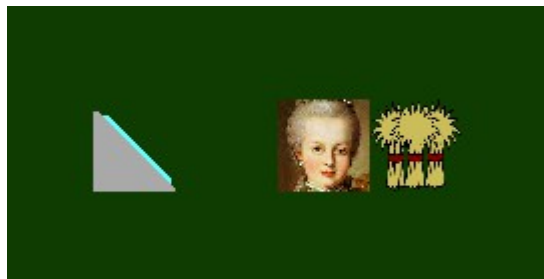


Rotate Mirrors Configurations



Push Mirror Configurations

In the picture below, when Marie Antoinette is moved in the direction of the haystack, both the haystack and Marie Antoinette move in that direction.



Push Haystack Configuration

To help understand how the object manipulations occur, you may view the following video. (The slight stuttering performance is a property of the video, not of actual Gameplay).

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/h4auehdpkaj5g/Smokin.wmv?dl=0>

When an Inventory item is picked up (by moving onto the basket), the game is saved automatically, and you can return to these positions.

As each Inventory Item from a list of 10 is collected, it is added and displayed. At the same time some words are displayed in the dialogue box. Keen-eyed players may recognise these words from a well-known rock song, and you will notice that each Inventory Item refers thematically to that song. Lines 8 to 13 of the code might give a hint as to the song referred to. In the author's version of the program, the appropriate sound snippet from that song is played along with each Inventory Item and its text, and this gives the program a fully-rounded thematic identity. However, because of Copyright issues, the released version does not use these sounds and the words appear only as text in the dialogue box.

At any point in the game, the Escape key can be pressed to Quit the game. You may then start again or Quit. (Pressing Esc twice at any time quits the program).

Function Keys

Function keys alter some game settings (these special keys will not operate when an event is happening.).

F2

Pressing F2 allows the player to load a saved game. This is useful if you get to a position from which you cannot advance. The saved games are displayed on the right-hand side. Use the up and down arrow keys to select the desired saved game, and then press Enter. Game 1 is the game when the first Inventory Item has been collected. Note that some saved positions will require you to move Marie Antoinette immediately in order to avoid being trapped. You can only load saved games up to the Inventory level which you have already reached. Your saved games do not necessarily offer future successful completion of the game.

F3

The game comes with 10 supplied saved games (one for each level). These saved games are guaranteed to lead to a successful mission (if then played with all correct movements). At any Inventory level, if you press F3 you will load the appropriate game. This method offers something of a 'cheat' and I recommend that you use only F2 to load your own games.

F4

By default, the laser beam instantly finds its path whenever its path changes. However, if you press F4 the laser beam slowly finds its path: this gives a demonstration of how the program operates, which may interest you. Press F4 to revert the laser beam to be instantaneous.

F5

The game comes with sound effects, so in order to enjoy the game to the fullest, ensure that your audio is turned on. Sounds are played for most interesting actions, including moving obstacles. However, as moving objects is a frequent activity, these sounds may become tiresome. If you find these sounds annoying, press F5 to turn off/on these sounds. All other sounds will always be played.

F1

As a reminder, F1 will show how the special keys operate.

F10

As you are not necessarily concentrating on the dialogue box when picking up Inventory Items in the game, it is easy to miss the Inventory words as they appear. Therefore you may, at some point, care to press F10 which shows all Inventory Items successively along with their related words. When all 10 Inventory Items and Dialogues have been displayed in this way, the program returns to the game.

Game Strategy

The fun of the game (as I suppose) is in manoeuvring the objects and discovering the effects, and the challenge of the game is to determine what actions are required to get to the next Inventory Level. I have a preferred solution to the puzzle, but there may be a number of others (my wife has found one different solution). Bear in mind that while the Gameplay time required to complete the task is about 10 minutes with everything correct, it will take considerably longer to figure out the requirements to achieve this. Necessary trial and error will lead to positions of entrapment or death! The moves are often not obvious – hint try all mirrors that can be reached (and some which don't look as if they can!): if they move they are likely to be required at that Inventory level.

Game Walk-through Video(s)

A walk-through video of my solution up to Inventory No. 1 is given at the end of this manual, if a little additional inspiration is required. Only view this video if you are really stuck. The whole idea of the game is for you to be creative in finding your own solutions.

Walk-through Video

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/xnrevx86lt7fnoi/AAD2-SKOo4Ppqx5u0Z6clO9ha?dl=0>