SOFTWARE REVIEWS

sounds assigned to the different keys.

Once you have the hang of *Jam Session*, you may want to record a song. You select "Record" from a menu, and everything you play will be recorded. When you have finished recording a song, you have the option of saving it to disk or adding to it by recording again. When you are happy with a recording you can "make a record"—which means your friends can play your "records" on their own Macs without having the *Jam Session* program itself.

Whether you are 3 or 63, a professional musician or total amateur, you can enjoy *Jam Session*. It is designed so well that it sounds good (literally) even when you lean on the keyboard. It's truly unusual to find a program capable of providing so much entertainment for my family.
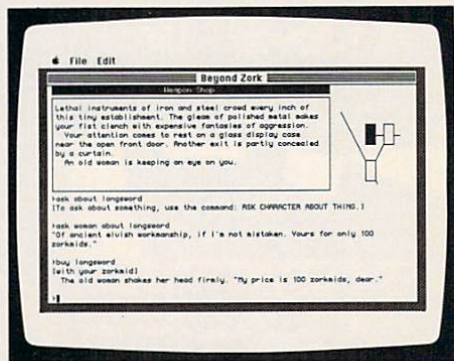—JOEY LATIMER

ENTERTAINMENT

Beyond Zork
HARDWARE REQUIREMENTS: 512K Amiga, 128K Apple, 512K Atari ST, C 128, 192K IBM PC, 512K Macintosh
PUBLISHER: Infocom
PRICE: $45–$50

In the beginning there was *Zork*, and it was good. And lo, *Zork II* rose up, and it was good as well. Never

one to rest on its laurels, Infocom gave us *Zork III*, and it was great. But now something wondrous this way comes. Something that transcends its predecessors, something that goes beyond . . . *Beyond Zork*.

Beyond Zork goes far beyond the ordinary text adventure. With the inclusion of role playing, humor, and many unique options, it forms a

package that is hard to beat.

At the outset, each player creates a character by distributing a set number of "points" among six characteristics: endurance, strength, dexterity, intelligence, compassion, and luck. (Optionally, a pregenerated character can be chosen.) The player's final goal is to save the Southlands of Quendor from the wave of misfortune and evil sweeping over it. There is only one thing that can save the day—the fabled Coconut of Quendor.

On your quest you will encounter rich, detailed, text descriptions and thought-provoking puzzles. However, you will also have to battle monsters, garner treasure, and gain experience as you would in a role-playing game. *Beyond Zork* never quite takes itself seriously, and many humorous interjections are interspersed regularly. The game is easier than the previous *Zork*s in the sense that the problems are generally simpler, but death is still a very real threat, especially considering some of the monsters the player has to confront (dust bunnies, discipline crabs, a cruel puppet, and of course, grues).

Many new commands are available. The most interesting is "Undo," which, if your computer's memory allows, causes the last command you entered to become undone; it's as if you never typed it. Another good feature is that the program automatically maps where you've been and displays it on the screen.

Perhaps it's my imagination, but it seemed that *Beyond Zork*'s vocabulary was smaller than that of other Infocom games. On a few occasions I had trouble communicating what I wanted to do, and sometimes had to give up on a particular course of action. But if that is the sacrifice that has to be made to incorporate the role-playing aspect, it's worth it.

Beyond Zork: let there be many more.
—DAVID LANGENDOEN

The Faery Tale Adventure
HARDWARE REQUIREMENTS: 512K Amiga, 512K Apple IIGS, C 64/128, 256K IBM PC, 512K Macintosh
PUBLISHER: Microlllusions
PRICE: $50

If you think fairy tales are just for kids, this game will change your

mind. Brave Julian and his brothers, the gentle Kevin and clever Phillip, are off to seek the wizard one by one in an effort to regain their village's protective talisman. Before you know it, they're being attacked by everything from common thieves to

wraiths and skeletons. Until you locate a sword and learn to fight, no one gets far. A character is rejuvenated each time he's killed until his luck runs out, but after that an even less-experienced younger brother must take up the sword—and that's assuming you were able to find a sword in the first place!

Learning to survive is just the beginning. You can't find the missing talisman unless the King is willing to help, but until you rescue his daughter, he won't know you exist. The princess is locked in an inaccessible tower. You could fly there, but the swan who could help you is on an island, and you can't swim. Get the idea? Fairy tales may be for kids, but *Faery Tale Adventure* has been known to force even hardened adult gamers to their knees—to beg for hints.

The Faery Tale Adventure has just about everything you can ask for in a game. It's attractive—the graphics are better than those you see on a lot of Saturday morning cartoons. Music turns the game into an animated film and warns you when evil creatures are approaching. It's fair—if your character dies, the successor can at least search the remains for any treasures you've collected so far. It's challenging—figuring out what to do with what you've found is almost as tricky as deciding what to do first and where to go next. Best of all, it's fun—and that's the bottom line when it comes to games.
—TAN A. SUMMERS