

# „Stranger than Fiction“

The Making-Of of the  
Kahuna Mode Fiction Game  
and its afterlife ...

- Nika Bertram -

# look at topics

1. First incarnations, concept & cunning plan of the Kahuna Mode Fiction Game
2. „Behind the scenes“-tour through the game's creation stages & code
3. Game Demo (short)
4. Personal experiences & views on a possible future of digital storytelling

1.

incarnate KM = book

(First, there was ...)

The Book

„Der Kahuna Modus“,  
publ. 2001 at Eichborn  
&

[www.kahunamodus.de](http://www.kahunamodus.de)



1.

incarnate KM = MUD

```
Café Nuit
You enter a small, warm Café. There are several shelves with books and books, a bar, some tables and chairs and the nice smell of fresh brewed coffee. To your left, there is a door.
Contents:
Bücherregal, Buch, Blumenstrauß, Saxophon, Tierchen, Tasse Kaffee, soviseau, nika
Visible Exits:
out, left
help rabbit
help rabbit

just follow the white rabbit ...
```

```

;@NMMMMMMZ
No : .2EMM018
MMMMHEEMMMN2;7 oMMo
MM: o@MMu.o MM
UMMA ; 3GR :7 .M2
MMU:,:o:,: 8G7. M@
2MM7 :.7 8Z.Z MR
AMM27 .: o@u MMMMMMMZ
uMMMMU 7 ,ZMMR
7ZM M ENM.
MM ; MM
M ,M M
2MMMMU A M
bMMMMU. MMR
bMMMo bMM2 :MM@
ZMMZ MMMMMMMMMM8
EMR M
oMR RM
MM AMMMMMMM A ME
E72 MZ RM3 .M M M
ouMR @M @ M ; M,M
M3. , M M M MM
2M M@ M uM@ M
M@:@ . :ME M M UM
Rb8M;MEM EM bM.MZ M MMZ
M@; @MMMMMMMMb782MM M.M M
8MMMMMo .MM M MZ8R8
;UMMMMMMMMM8 M: uMM
,MRMMM
```

The  
kahunaMUD

telnet kahunamud.netack.de:4096

www.kahunamodus.de/mud.html

# 1.

# incarnate KM = txtadv

(only started, but never finished.. maybe someday..)

```
kahuna z5 - WinFrotz
File Edit View Colors Options Help
mysterious writing chamber                               Score: 8   Moves: 2

Ever wanted to enter the fictional realms of a novel
... and play or talk to its characters or meet them in the bar?
Well, here you can do it.

THE KAHUNA MODE
An Interactive Fiction - copyright (c) 2000 by Mika Bertram.
Release 1 / Serial number 000417 / Infora v6.15 Library 6/7 D

mysterious writing chamber
In front of you there's a mixing desk and a wall of monitoring screens. Each of them is numbered and showing a
different movie, some obscure independent stuff, you suppose. You get absolutely no idea how you got here or why
you're supposed to be here. And noone told you.

>look at monitor
Which do you mean, the monitor 1, the monitor 2 or the monitor 3?

>look at monitor 2
Now you've tuned into the boss' station. Interesting stuff here. Some story about a Merson becoming a Porn star.
Sure, you remember Orgazmo from last year's Fantasy Film Festival, but this seems to be the director's cut.

>
```

1.

incarnate KM = game

Kahuna Mode Fiction Game

[www.kahunamodus.de/swave.html](http://www.kahunamodus.de/swave.html)

(free download)

programmed  
by Jens Halm



1.

ask „concept & cunning plans?“

- Let go of the mouse. Completely.
- Create an accessible *and* expandable interface for writing & playing textadvs
- Incl gaming aspects: help & save, intro, rules & riddles & other nifty special FX



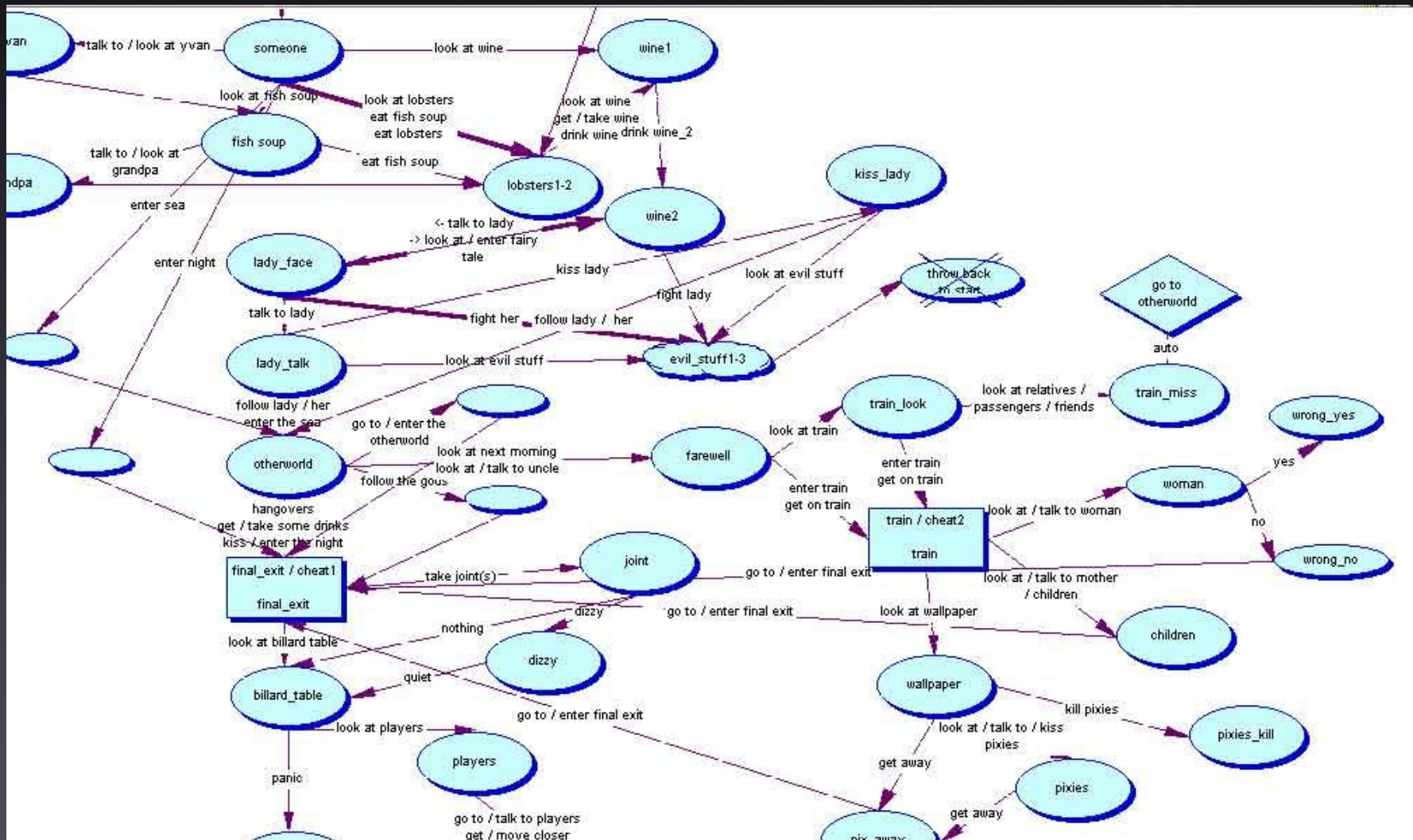
## 2. create game

- Plan game design, structure and genre
- Decide on authoring software & interface
- Choose multimedia content design
- Reduce and transform basic story elements (characters, actions, rooms/places) &
- Design new network / hypertext from them



# 2. create game

## Mind-boggling - er... - mapping

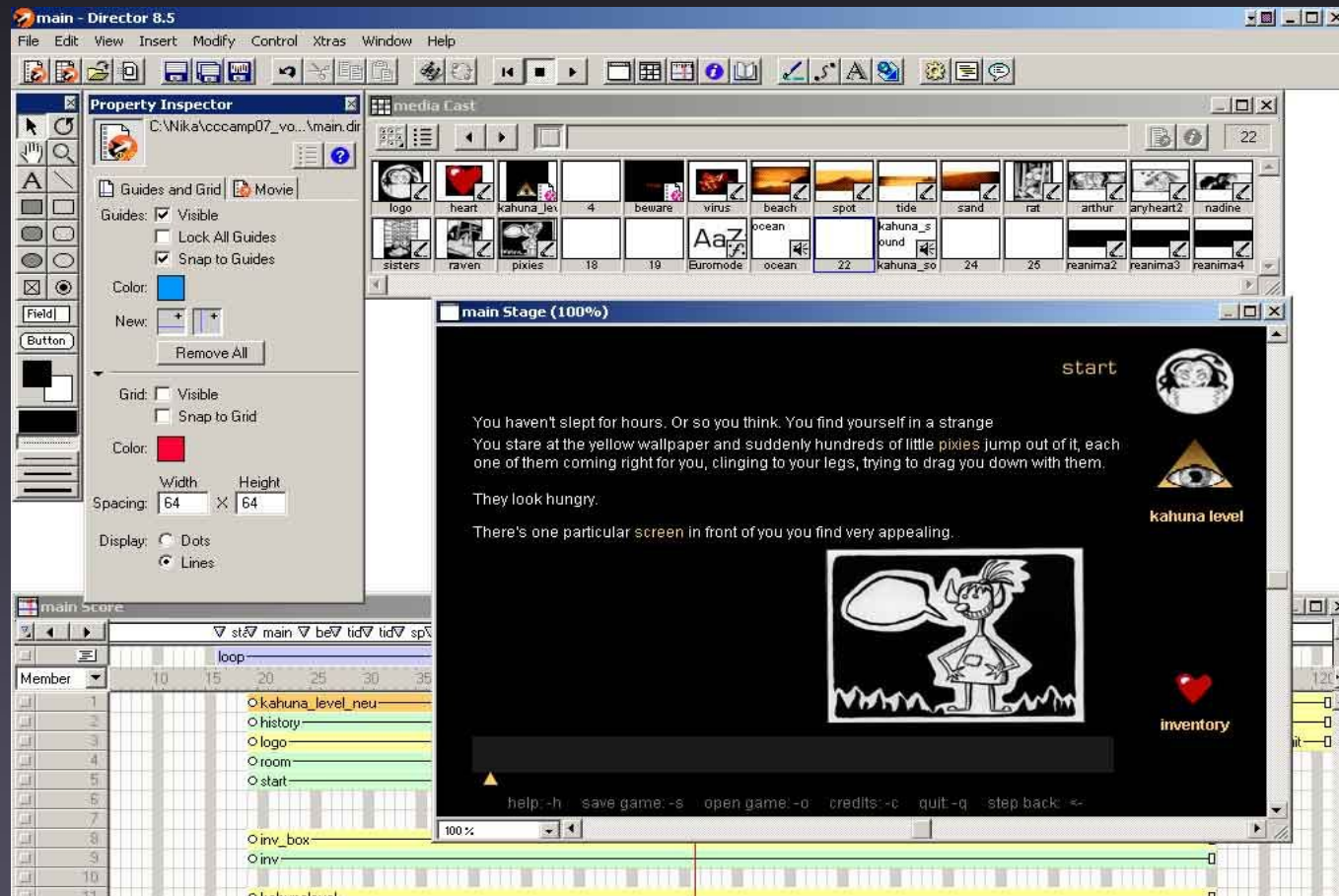


# 2. create game

Authoring Tool: Adobe MM Director

Stage, score, cast members (text, media, config), sprites

Scripting Language: Lingo --- Player: Shockwave



# 2. create game

## Text cast configuration (431 members)

The screenshot displays the 'text Cast' application window. The main window shows a text editor with the following content:

**You are ... in geekspace**

... yer average hacker's paradise. All you ever wanted: there's an Athlon even a G4 and a SGI Workstation, a Linux-cluster, 3-D-printer, CD-burner, internet-flatrate! Be careful, though. Arthur does not like people fumbling with any his stuff or witness his rather strange experiments.

You have to be a somewhat natural geek or able solve this riddle before

Exits: sea, prague, underground, final\_exit, beach - astral plane

You see some freshly made coffee, some cans of jolt\_coke, an apple and a userfriendly comic and The Lost Treasures of Infocom\_box.

The 'Property Inspector' panel on the right shows the following details:

- Name: geekspace\_look
- Size: 3.5 K
- Created: 02/01/01 03:17 PM
- Modified: 02/08/01 12:08 PM
- Modified By: Jens Halm

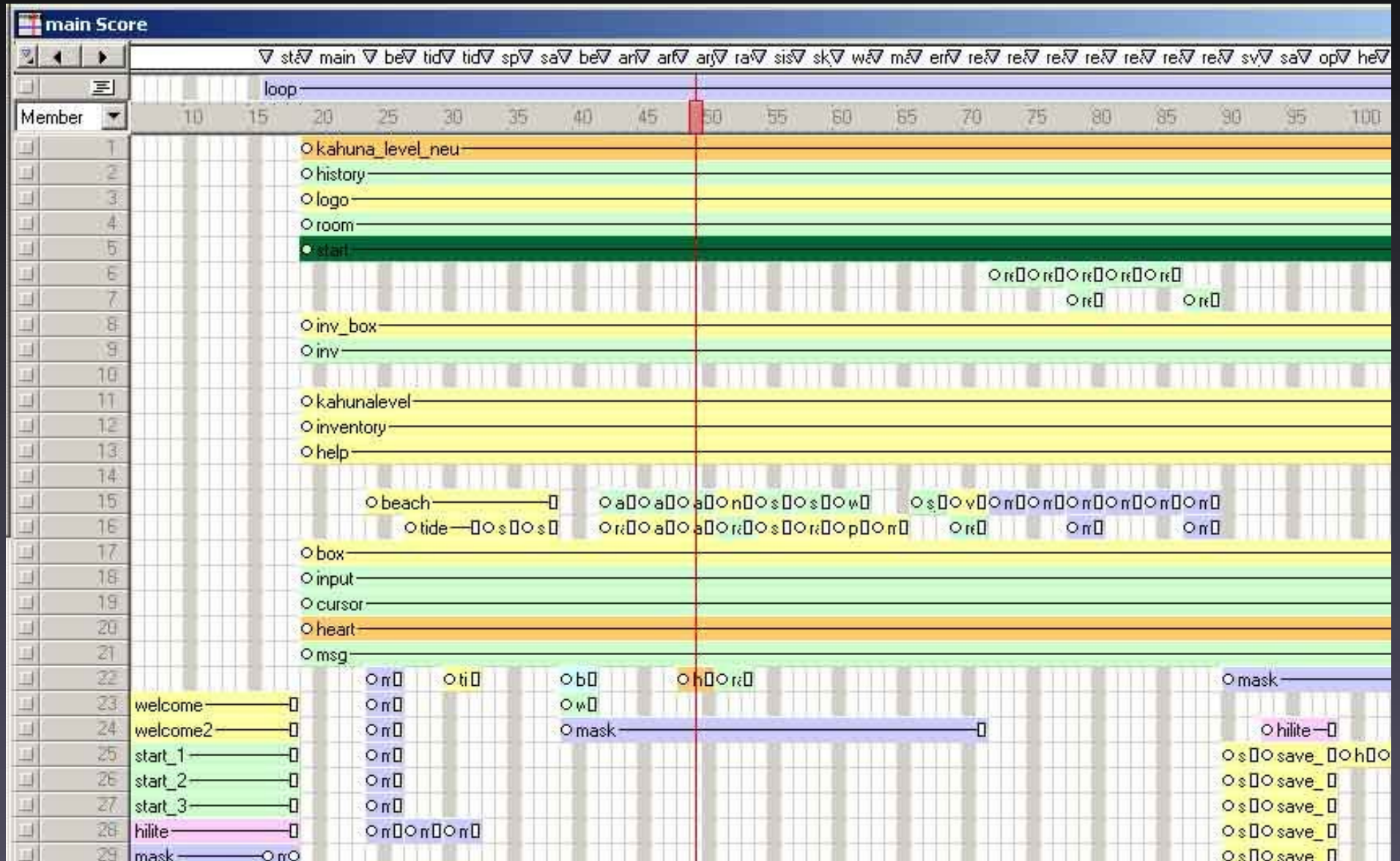
The 'Comments' field is highlighted with a red box and contains the following text:

```
geekspace#look#geekspace#-  
temp#-#sea#+#geekspacetosea  
temp#-#prague#+#geekspacetoprague  
temp#-#underground#+#geekspacetoun-  
derground
```

A red arrow points from the main text area towards the 'Comments' field.

# 2. create game

## Score View



# 3. play game demo

[/Users/Nika/Desktop/kahuna\\_shock.htm](#)

(offline link, only working during the presentation -  
fo the „real“ online version or download of the game  
go to [www.kahunamodus.de/swave.html](http://www.kahunamodus.de/swave.html))

# 4.

## get naked

- Publishing digital literature in Germany will not improve your status as a „serious literati“ - in fact, it could even lessen it
- Creating the game was fun
  - ... and i would always do it again
- Creating the game was (a)hell(lotofwork)
  - ... and i would never do it again

## 4. get naked

- Limits of our project
- Future of TextAdv Authoring Progs & Tools
  - For MM: Flash/Flex/AIR, Java FX (Sun)
  - For classical txtadv: Inform 7 or (almost) any prog lang, like Python, Ruby ....
  - Ren'Py (visual novel games, very pop in Japan)

## 4. get naked

- Personal views on ...
  - Programmers as code poets
  - Digital narratives vs. games
  - Hypertext vs. linear stories & books
  - Why isn't there more digital literature?



**read more . . . & THX!**

- [www.dichtung-digital.de](http://www.dichtung-digital.de)
- [www.gamestudies.org](http://www.gamestudies.org)
- [blog.cyberfiction.ch](http://blog.cyberfiction.ch)

Nika Bertram > [elek.troNika.org](http://elek.troNika.org)

Jens Halm > [www.spicefactory.org](http://www.spicefactory.org)