What was the first crime-type game you ever played? The one that’s really lodged in my head is Syndicate on the Amiga. At the time, its isometric cities and withering violence felt revolutionary: although the stages were small by modern standards, the sense of freedom was immense. You could steal cars, hypnotise civilians, blow stuff up, and generally cause mayhem wherever you went. Like a modern sandbox, Syndicate was one of those games where messing around was as much fun as knuckling down and completing the missions. I bring up Syndicate because there’s a decidedly amoral tone to this month’s edition of Wireframe: there’s an inside look at the creation of the early Grand Theft Auto games on page 28, and we provide a rundown of our favourite ever crime sandboxes on page 38.

Then there’s our cover game, Glitchpunk, which marries the top-down perspective and mechanics of GTA 2 to the cyberpunk theme of Syndicate. When I asked Glitchpunk developer Maciej Karbownik whether Syndicate was an influence, though, he revealed he was just six years old when he sampled it over a decade ago. It then dawned on me that Syndicate’s rapidly approaching its 30th birthday, and probably much older than Karbownik is. Time is indeed a cruel and unusual phenomenon. Enjoy the new issue!

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