

# GNOME news and programs

# GNOMOGRAM

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**GNOME and GTK as the basic programs for GNOME have in recent years been attracting more and more followers. There are now programs for almost every task and new ones are being added daily. Each month in the Gnomogram column we present the pearls among the GNOME tools and reporting on the latest GNOME rumours.**



## GNOME under Windows

Global Technologies Ltd. have now succeeded in getting the GNOME Desktop to run under Windows. This was done by using the software U/Win, which makes it possible to use the Unix-API under Windows, and an X Server for Windows. Thanks to U/Win, scarcely any changes had to be made to the GNOME source code (just 100 lines according to the developers). Although this project is very interesting there are still many features lacking, and the additional X-Server or U/Win are not exactly going to add to the performance and stability of the system. In the long term it would seem more promising to use the Windows ports of GDK/GTK.

## Dell and Eazel co-operate

Dell wants, with the launch of GNOME 1.4, to supply end-user PCs or laptops with pre-installed Linux and Eazel Services. Dell also wants to invest an as-yet-unnamed sum in Eazel. Dell, formerly highly Windows-oriented, is thus continuing a whole range of investments in Linux companies.

## Debian joins the GNOME Advisory Board

Debian has now joined the GNOME Advisory Board and will henceforth be represented there by Wichert

Akkerman, who took over the running of Debian in 1999. This means that almost all the big distributors, apart from SuSE, are now members of the Board, which appears to be restricted to the KDE League, although it does employ an important GNOME programmer in the form of Martin Baulig.

## Orbit port for the Linux kernel

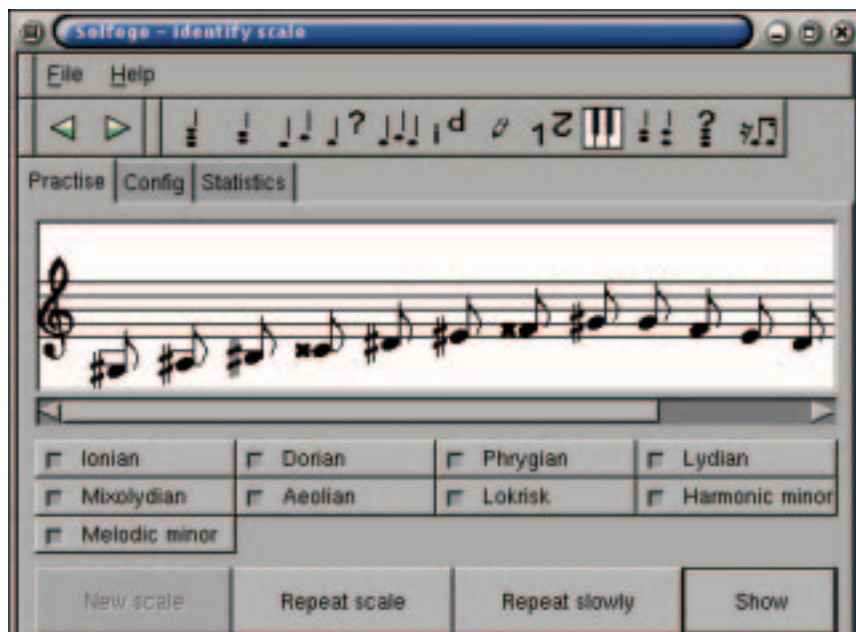
Under the name kOrbit an experimental kernel port from Orbit, the GNOME ORB, has been programmed. An ORB (object request broker) is a sort of middleman for CORBA objects, which (in principle regardless of the programming language) can be requested by a program. This makes possible a technology such as Bonobo, with which objects such as a PDF viewer can be loaded easily into programs. Since it not only does not matter in which programming language the program was written, but also where it is executed, it is possible with kOrbit to execute kernel modules via a network on other computers. Also, the modules are not executed, as they usually are, in the kernel space, but in the user space, thus like a normal program, which makes debugging experimental code easier. On the other hand kOrbit still represents an enormous security risk and does not



gtetrinet 0.4.1, solfege 0.7.26  
LinuxMagazine/gnomogram

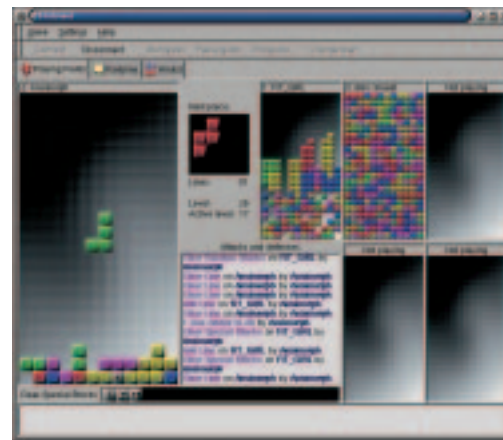
## RUBRIK

## SUBRUBRIK



[left]  
Figure 1: The game is practically won

[right]  
Figure 2: To recognise all types of tone by their sound takes a bit of practice



the game using the T key, but this is not recommended due to the ever-increasing speed.

## Solfege

All musicians have to get to grips with the basics of making music sooner or later. This includes the ability to recognise specific intervals and tones or rhythms. Solfege is a program for GNOME with which you can train your musical ear, with exercises ranging from triads up to twelve-tone scales.

The program is written in Python, which means you have to install the Pygnome or Pygtk bindings (and Python, of course) yourself. All the sounds are emitted via MIDI; but even without MIDI support on the sound card all the exercises can be played back via Timidity – Timidity converts MIDI data into the *wav* format and passes this on to the sound card. The MIDI settings can be found under *File/Settings/Sound Set-up*, where the MIDI device can also be changed if necessary. It is interesting that Solfege can be expanded by so-called 'lesson files' especially for school use. In these lesson files individual exercises can be defined, making use of the notation of Lilypond. Overall, Solfege is a very useful program for training one's own ear, even if the interface sometimes takes a little getting used to.

## URL Handler

Programs which rely on the GNOME URL Handler start Netscape for Internet sites by default even when another browser has been assigned to the Mime type *html*. This setting can, however, be altered in the Control Centre under *Handling documents/Opening URLs*, by changing the entry *default* to *mybrowser %s*, where *%s* stands for the URL. The pre-set for *default* is *gnome-moz-remote->newwin %s* – a script Netscape starts, if it is not yet active, and otherwise opens a new Netscape window with the specified URL..

A mail program can also be set by making an entry for the protocol *mailto* – but when doing so one must take care as not all mail programs can cope with the address given and there may be a 'mailto:' at the start of the recipient's address. ■

exactly make the kernel slimmer. For this reason, it is highly unlikely that this patch will find its way into the standard kernel. Nevertheless it is an impressive project with interesting possibilities – exactly what the merging of computers and network is all about.

## Gtetrinet

Another Tetris clone is not something worth writing about, but Gtetrinet can do more than a normal Tetris. With Gtetrinet a game with up to five other players is possible via a Tetrinet server where, depending on the server, somewhat different rules apply. Similarly to networked Gameboys, it is possible to play 'pure'. In this mode, if you complete two or more lines in one go, all your opponents have one to four lines added. The same rules apply in normal mode, but in addition there are also special blocks there, which can be used for attack or defence. Such blocks can for example empty one's own field or place blocks randomly spread in the playing field of the opponent. They can be applied by specifying the number of players or deleted with the D key.

A list of Tetrinet servers together with general information on the game can be found at the *tetrinet.org* site. But not all servers will co-operate with Gtetrinet; some will insist on special clients such as Tetrifast. On the server, you can chat with the other players in the Partyline window and select various games, where IRC commands (listed with the command */help*) are used. The first player in a game becomes the respective Moderator and can start and end the game. Players can also combine into teams. In this case, in the Winlist, instead of one's own name, that of the team is stated. For each game, depending on how long one remains alive, one can receive one to three points, so it may take some time for an entry in the Winlist to occur. It is also possible to talk to the other players during

## The author

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## URLs

[www.gtlinc.com/gnome-desktop.html](http://www.gtlinc.com/gnome-desktop.html)  
[www.research.att.com/sw/tools/luwin/](http://www.research.att.com/sw/tools/luwin/)  
[www.zdnet.com/zdnn/stories/news/0,4586,2659624,00.html](http://www.zdnet.com/zdnn/stories/news/0,4586,2659624,00.html)  
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[korbit.sourceforge.net](http://korbit.sourceforge.net)  
[gtetrinet.sourceforge.net](http://gtetrinet.sourceforge.net)  
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[www.goice.co.jp/member/mol/timidity/](http://www.goice.co.jp/member/mol/timidity/)  
[www.lilypond.org](http://www.lilypond.org)