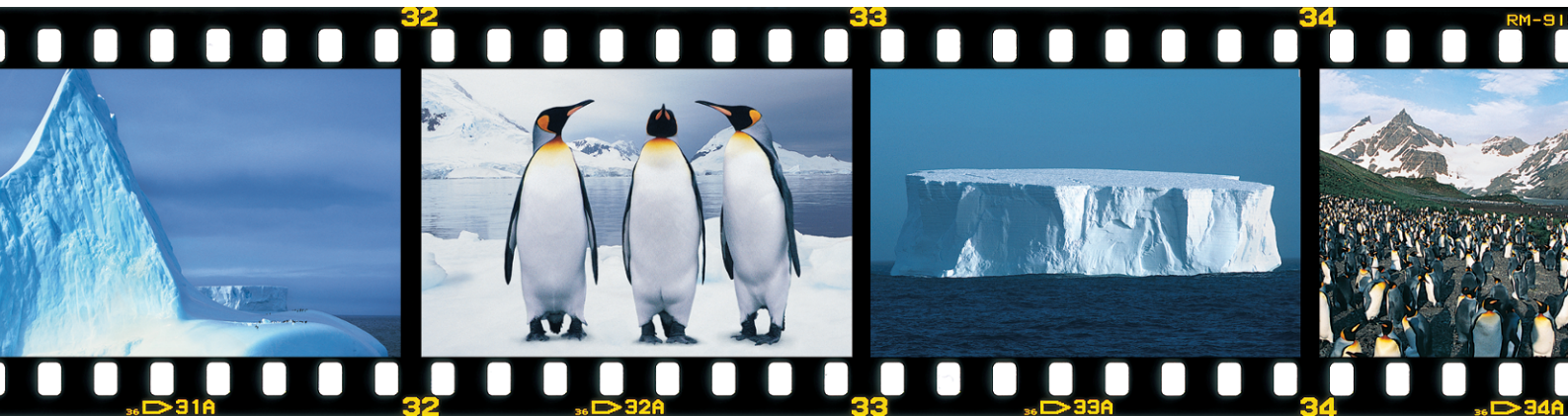


Gwenview

The Full Picture



Gwenview cannot replace a versatile tool like The Gimp. But if you simply need to organize your digital images or shoot off a slideshow, this image viewer is a good choice. Being capable of handling any image format supported by KDE, means that this application can handle whatever you need. **BY STEFANIE TEUFEL**

A picture paints a thousand words, or so the saying goes. And that might explain the masses of digital artwork that clutter up so many machines. The only problem is that there are thousands of formats, and your favorite graphics package may only understand one or two of them. Gwenview is a program that can load, display, and save any image format supported by KDE. Even graphic artists who regularly use the Gimp image processing package will find a friend in Gwenview: the QXCFI component (the GIMP XCF Image

File Reader plug-in for Qt 3) developed by Lignum Computing allows Gwenview to browse even GIMP (.xcf) files.

Packaged

The current version of the program is available on the project homepage at [1]. As the developers provide ready-made packages for most major distributions, installing the program should not prove too difficult. After completing the installation, you can type *gwenview* & to launch the program. The initial window should be similar to Figure 1.

If the four-panel view in the program window is too cluttered for your liking, you can use the *Window* menu to change the view. If you have not added comments to your image collection, you will not need the file info display. To disable it, select *Window / Hide file info* in the menu.

Free Windows

You can modify the look & feel of your image viewer using the *View* menu by opting to view the filenames of the directory contents in the top right panel

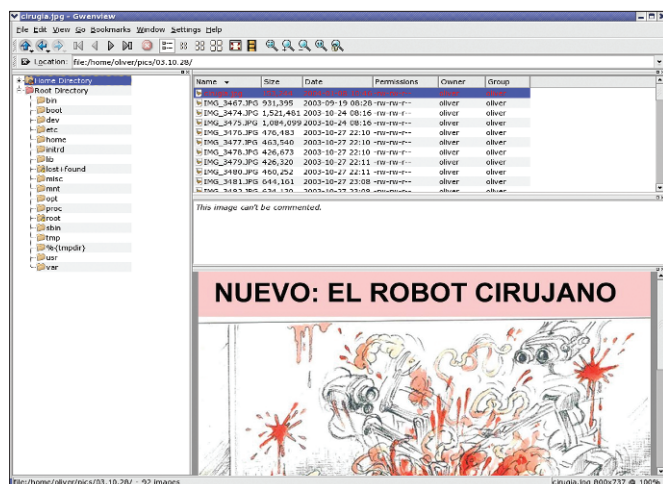


Figure 1: The initial Gwenview window has four panels.

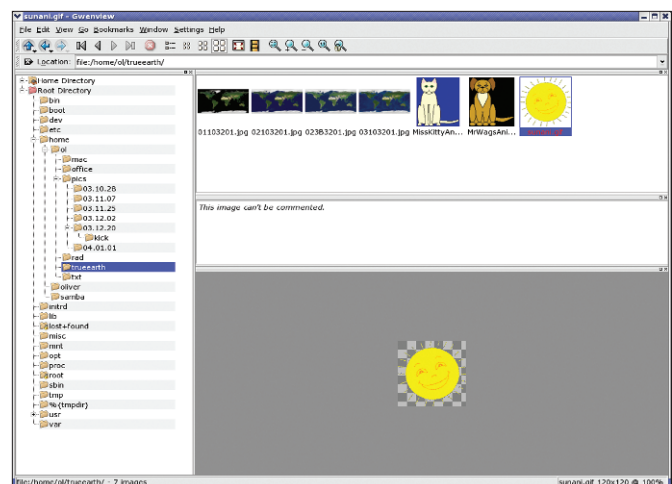


Figure 2: Large thumbnails are a good indicator of the file contents.

(Details), or you can use thumbnails in various sizes. Figure 2 shows the top right panel with *Large thumbnails*. Avoid the large thumbnails if your hardware is resource-challenged as this option does require a fair amount of computational performance.

The bottom right panel in Figure 2 shows another Gwenview feature: correct displaying of images that use an **Alpha Channel** to define transparency values. Gwenview uses a traditional checkerboard background, which is not part of the image, to display transparent areas of the image.

Like any other well-behaved KDE application, Gwenview provides typical file management facilities for copying, moving, deleting and renaming files. You can access these functions via the dropdown menu that appears when you right-click a file or via the *File* menu. Gwenview's developers have also implemented a **KIO Slave** that allows you to access Windows shares, tar archives, zip files, and similar file sources via KDE.

Besides standard file operations, the dropdown (see Figure 3) has a lot of other goodies. For example, you can select *Sort* to sort your images by name, date, or size.

More than a Viewer

As previously mentioned, Gwenview is not meant to replace your favorite image editor. But it does provide simple image manipulation features that allow you to rotate or flip images. You can either use the *Edit* menu or the dropdown to *Rotate left*, *Rotate right*; *Mirror* or *Flip*.

The *External Tools* option in the dropdown provides even more functionality. For example, you choose *GIMP* to tell Gwenview to open the image with The Gimp – of course, this assumes you have installed the program on your machine. If you particularly like an image or texture, you can select *External Tools / Use as wallpaper* to use the image as a background for your desktop. If you select *External Tools / Tile as wallpaper*,

Gwenview will apply the selected texture tiled onto your desktop as a background pattern.

The *Configure external tools* menu item (see Figure 4) allows you to add an external program of your choice. For example, if you prefer a different image processing program to The Gimp, click on the *Add*

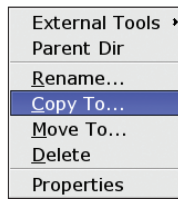


Figure 3: The dropdown menu provides a whole bunch of features.

button, type the name of the program in the *Name* box and select the application file for *Command*. The *File Associations* menu allows you to specify if this program should be used for all files or images, or only for a special file type. Finish up by clicking on *Apply* to display the new entry under *External Tools* in the dropdown.

Configuration Details

Besides configuring external programs, *Configure Gwenview* (see Figure 5) provides configuration options for other details. Should the first file in a folder be displayed automatically, or not? Should Gwenview display the name of the current file in red, or another color? Do you want full screen mode to display the path to the file? This is where to define your preferences. Last but not least, Gwenview has a zoom feature, a full-

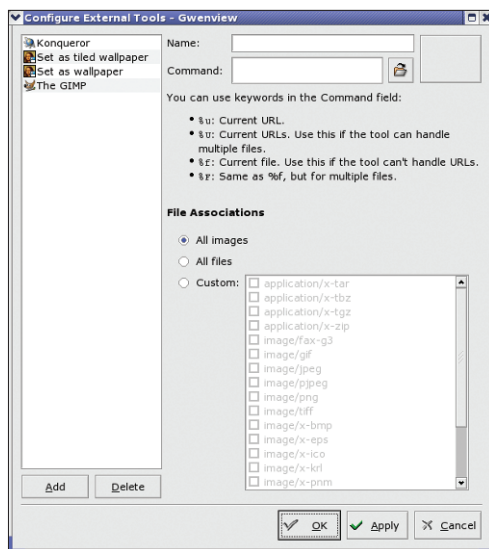


Figure 4: Add your own external programs.

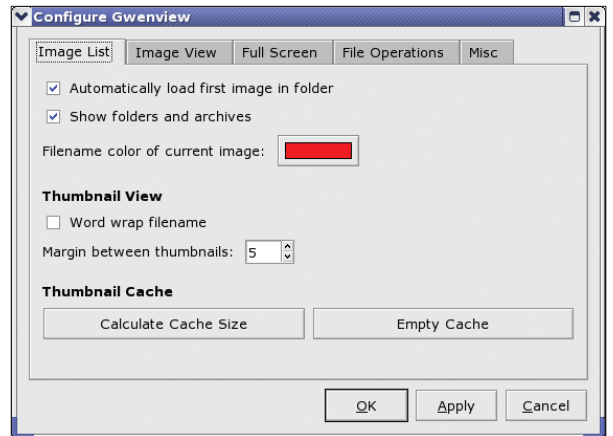


Figure 5: Modify Gwenview to suit your personal preferences.

screen mode, and a slideshow function. You can scale the image view by selecting *View / enlarge*, *View / reduce*. Alternatively, click on the various magnifying glass icons to scale images up or down.

To view the image at maximum size on a single screen, select *Fullscreen*. You can then reduce the image display to its normal size by clicking on the window icon with the red arrows. When you select *Slideshow...*, Gwenview will prompt you to specify the delay between each image before you start. You can also choose to display the images in a continuous loop (see Figure 6). Simply choose your preferred settings and then it's "Action!"

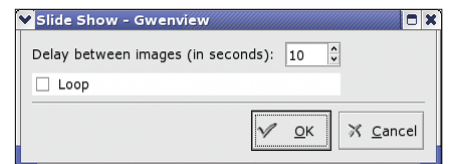


Figure 6: Selecting slideshow parameters.

INFO
[1] Gwenview: <http://gwenview.sourceforge.net/download>

GLOSSARY
Alpha Channel An additional channel besides the RGB (red/green/blue) channels normally used by image files. The Alpha Channel specifies the degree of transparency for each pixel of the image.
KIO Slaves allow KDE applications transparent access to such varied media as network drives, or compressed archives. The KDE KIO server automatically handles the details of the specific formats.