Moondust is a Whole New World

Yes, you DO want to read the instructions to learn how to play.

Learning Moondust is like learning to swim or to ride a bicycle. Let your unconscious be the guide.

MOONDUST ™
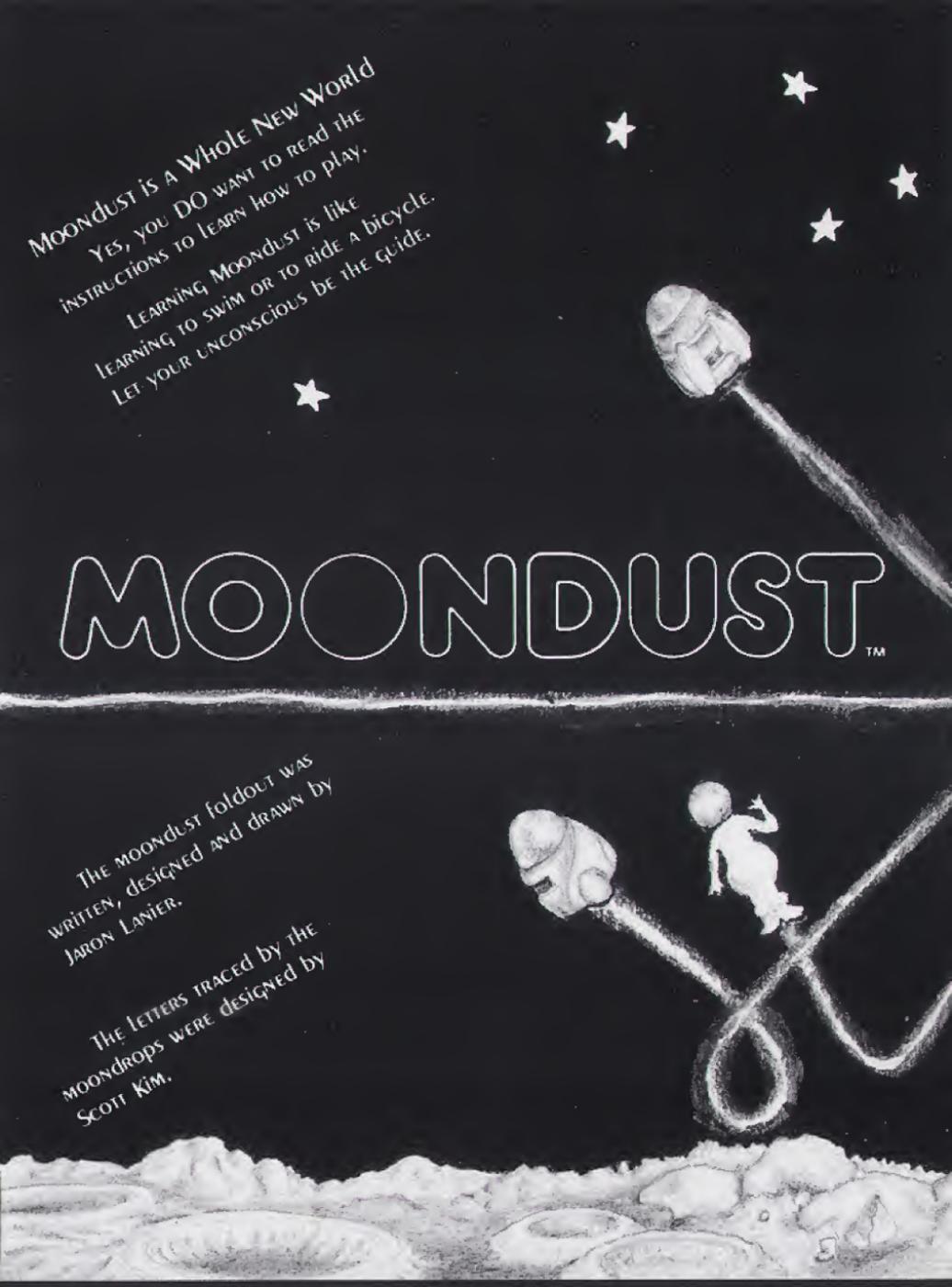
The Moondust foldout was written, designed and drawn by Jaron Lanier.

The letters traced by the moondrops were designed by Scott Kim.

To Start Playing Moondust

Turn off your Commodore 64 and slip the Moondust cartridge (with the label facing up) into the slot behind the "on" light. Make sure you've got a snug fit. When you turn on the computer there should be a flash of color and then a second or two of black before the game begins.

Turn off your computer whenever you are putting in or taking out a cartridge!

Choosing a Play Style

The title page, where the moondrop ships trace out the name "Moondust", will eventually change into a 'Choose Play Style' display. You can also get to the "Choose Play Style" display right away by pressing and releasing the joystick fire button.

To choose a play style, use the joystick to move the triangular pointer to the style you want and press the fire button. The moondrop ships and the spacewalker will burst out of the center of the screen. The game has started.

To Get the Most Out of Moondust

Turn up the color controls on your TV set. Experiment with different settings! If you have a stereo system, try playing the Moondust music through your stereo's speakers. It's well worth the extra effort.

Start With "Beginner"!

The "Beginner" level is very challenging. Don't expect to master it immediately, but when you have got "Beginner" licked, "Evasive", "Freestyle" and "Spinsanity" will be around to keep you busy.

To Get Out of a Game . . .

Press the "Restore" key. You'll be back at the title page.
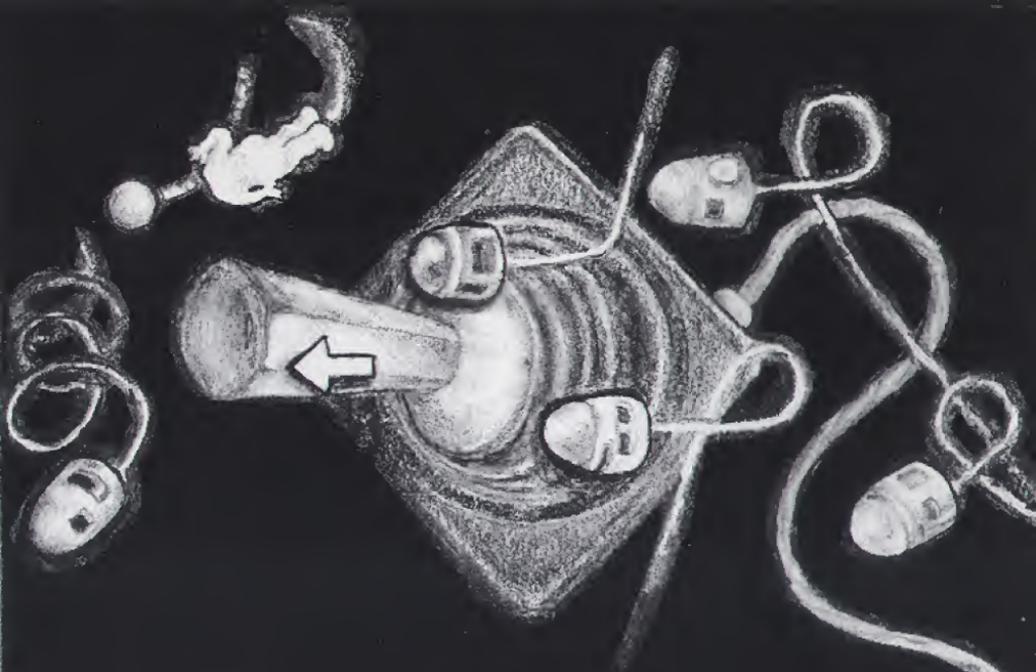
You Control Everybody
(Spacewalker and Ships) at Once!

If, for instance, you push the joystick to the left when you're playing "Beginner", everybody will go left.

The ships don't make sharp turns. They gradually curve around to point in a new direction.

When you move everybody in a new direction, the spacewalker's head will immediately go in the direction you want, and his body will gradually turn to catch his head.

Also: when a ship gets very close to the edge of the screen, it gets dizzy and goes in circles instead of obeying the joystick.

Pressing the fire button changes the way the ships and the spacewalker turn: clockwise instead of counter-clockwise, or vice-versa. (Ships doing dizzy spins at the edge of the screen during a button press aren't affected.)
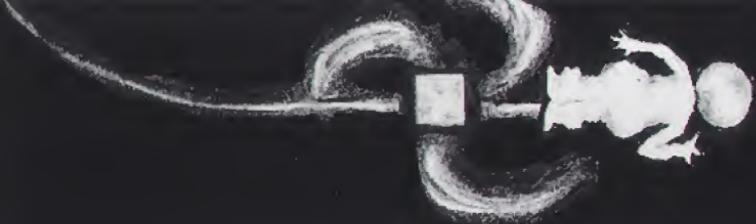
Drop a Seed with the Button

Once the game has started, follow the spacewalker with your eyes and try pressing the fire button once. One of two things happened . . .

A) The spacewalker left behind a blinking square: this is the seed. Also, the circular energy field appeared in the center of the screen. This happened because the spacewalker was far enough away from the center of the screen when you pushed the button.

B) Or you didn't leave a seed- square and the energy field didn't appear. All you left was a patch of sparkles. This means you pressed the button while the spacewalker was too near the center of the screen.

You DO want to drop a seed, but there is no time pressure to do so. You can play with the spacewalker and the ships as long as you like before you seed.
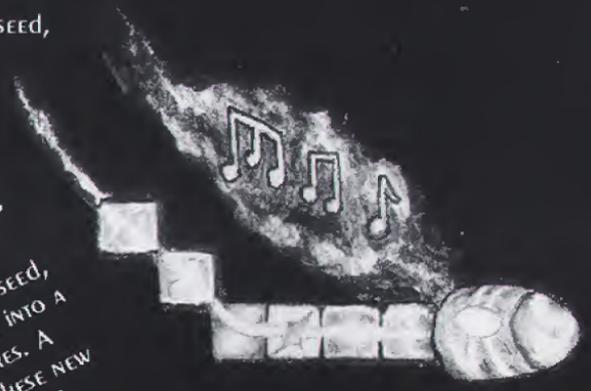
The Ships Smear the Seeds Out Into Streams

If a ship "runs over" the seed, it will "draw it out", drag it, into a stream of several seed-squares. A ship can run over any of these new seed- squares and draw out still more seed squares.

Note: The spacewalker can't smear seeds, except, to a limited degree, in "Spinsanity".

The Goal of the Game is . . .

Use the ships to smear the seed-squares into the exact center, the bullseye, of the energy field.

You Can Only Drag Out the Seed-Squares So Much . . .

If you reach the bullseye, the energy field will start to dance (it always dances differently!) as it swallows the seed-squares. If you use up your seed-squares without reaching the bullseye, the squares will retract.

Either way the number of points you earned on the most recent seed will be shown at the top of the screen, and the running total score will be shown at the bottom of the screen. The score will show for a while . . . if you hold the fire button down, you can "fast-forward" through the showing of the score.

Note: After a bullseye (or a knockout), everybody will re-burst from the center of the screen.

Scoring

The farther away from the center of the screen you drop a seed, the more points you can make with that seed.

When you drop a seed, the maximum possible points is shown at the bottom of the screen.

The closer to the bullseye you drag the seed-squares, the more points you earn. A bullseye earns the maximum points.

"Knocked Out"

Sometimes the spacewalker will get knocked on the head by one of the moondrop ships. When this happens, the spacewalker spins around and turns a different color.

If there are too many knocks on the head, the spacewalker gets "knocked out", and you don't get any points for the most recent seed.

When the spacewalker turns red, you know that there's only one more knock before a "Knockout".

Yellow = Two knocks left
Green = Three knocks left

The spacewalker starts out white at the beginning of each turn: head knocks from the previous turn don't count after you've started over with a new seed. Also: knocks don't start happening until you've seeded.

The spacewalker is more likely to get his head knocked when it's separated from his body.

How Many Seeds?

You get three seeds per game.

The game will tell you when you've reached the last seed.

Plus: You get a "Bonus Seed" every time you get a bullseye.

There's no limit to the number of "Bonus Seeds" you can earn.

After you've used up your three seeds and all of your bonus seeds, the "Game Over" display will come up.

"Evasive"

In the "Evasive" mode, the first seed-square doesn't sit tight and wait for a ship to draw it out. Instead the seed rushes for the edge of the screen! You have to catch it with a ship before it reaches the edge. If the seed reaches the edge of the screen without being caught, you'll get zero points for that seed.

The seed moves faster than the ships can, so you can't catch the seed unless you position some ships, in advance, to catch it.

"Freestyle"

The good news: you can't get knocked out when you play "Freestyle".

The challenging news: the ships no longer follow the joystick in a direct way. When the spacewalker turns a certain amount, the ships turn the same amount. The spacewalker alone follows the joystick directly.

"Spinsanity"

When you're not touching the joystick, the ships follow a certain spiral pattern. Try choosing "Spinsanity" from the "Choose Play Style" display, and then not touching the joystick at all: you will see an undisturbed, repeating, "Spinsanity" spiral pattern. (The spiral pattern changes only when the ships re-burst from the center of the screen.)

When you do move the joystick, the ships respond, as they do in "Freestyle", indirectly. You can get knocked out in "Spinsanity"—and you can survive only two head hits.

Hints: Learn to make use of the spiral pattern. Learn "Freestyle" before you try "Spinsanity".

For Purists . . .

You might have noticed that if you press the fire button during the title page and hold it down, the triangular pointer will appear by itself: the play style names only show up when you release the button. Well, if you press the Commodore logo key during the time that the triangular pointer is alone on the screen, and THEN you let up on the fire button, you can play in the "Relaxing" mode.

This means that there will be no writing (scores, max points, etc.) on the screen, and no head knocks in the "Beginner" level. The written things will come back when the game is over.

Note: You can freeze the action on the screen by pressing the Commodore logo key. Press it again and the screen comes back to life. When you freeze the action, the music keeps going . . .

The Moondust Music

You are ALWAYS in control of the harmony of the music, even during the title page. Moving the joystick up makes the music higher, moving it down makes the music lower. Moving the joystick sideways changes the kind of chord that's playing; for instance from minor to major. Moving to the left will make a bigger difference (fewer notes in common) to the chord than moving to the right. Moving diagonally will change both the key and the type of chord.

As you manipulate the spacewalker and the moondrop ships, you'll put the music through a lot of harmonic changes ... and then sometimes, when you get a bullseye, for instance, you might tend to leave the joystick alone for a while; that's when the music will settle on a single chord.

When you drop the first seed-square, there is only one note, repeating over and over. Each time you draw out a new seed-square, you add one note to a repeating pattern. The streams of seed-squares are an image of the musical pattern ...

The Moondust music is always different, a reflection of your own play style.