



# RETROSPECS

## A PIXEL ART IMAGE PROCESSING APP FOR iOS

### A brief history of Retrospecs by John Parker

It's late 2013. The idea for Retrospecs had been kicking about in my mind for a few years – the concept being part preservation/part tribute to the sort of computer systems I lusted after whilst pouring over handed down copies of Byte magazine as a lad. However, I didn't get around to implementing anything concrete until early February '14 when I roughed out some vague proof of concept algorithms.

At the time I was re-skilling between jobs (the goal being to transition between web and native app development), so I abandoned the other bits I was experimenting with and started focusing full time on the app proper. After several weeks intensive graft, the first conversion engine (the "attribute" engine, created specifically with the Sinclair ZX Spectrum in mind) was limping along natively on my trusty iPhone 4.

Fast forwarding a bit, over the following three months I threw myself into expanding the available conversion engines, added a basic user interface and by Saturday the 7th of June 2014 I'd finally submitted the first build to the Apple App Store. Shortly after that, I was back in full time work so Retrospecs became a strictly weekend affair - adding new engines and emulations and building out the UI until it was roughly how I initially envisaged it.

Eight years and over fifty updates later, Retrospecs v3.0 was released on the 12<sup>th</sup> of July 2022. It represents the most polished version of the app to date and provides the ability to create a whole new range of effects via the new blending modes. As with all previous updates, it's free for existing users of the app.

### About the developer

Retrospecs was created by John Parker, a software developer whose fascination with computers began when his brother was given a Commodore VIC-20 for Christmas in 1982. In addition to working on Retrospecs, he pays the bills by working as a full stack web and mobile developer and as an added bonus, he's been dealing with the debilitating effects of ME/CFS for the last seven years.