Converting JPEG Images to ASCII Art text (picture) in Microsoft Windows (2000 / XP / Vista / 7)

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A friend of mine, just mentioned about a program ASCIIPic - capable of converting graphic images in JPEG to plain text ASCII in *Microsoft Windows OSes*.
Yesterday I blogged about caca-utils (img2txt) - console tool to convert picture graphics to plain text ASCII , so knowing of the Windows freeware **ASCIIPic** existence catched my attention and I decided to give it a try to get idea what is situation with *Images to ASCII text convertion in Windows? :).*

1. Generating ASCII from JPEG images with ASCII Pic

As I don't have a *Microsoft Windows OS* at hand, I downloaded it and run it on my Debian notebook with **WINE** (Wine Is Not an Emulator) MS-Windows emulator.

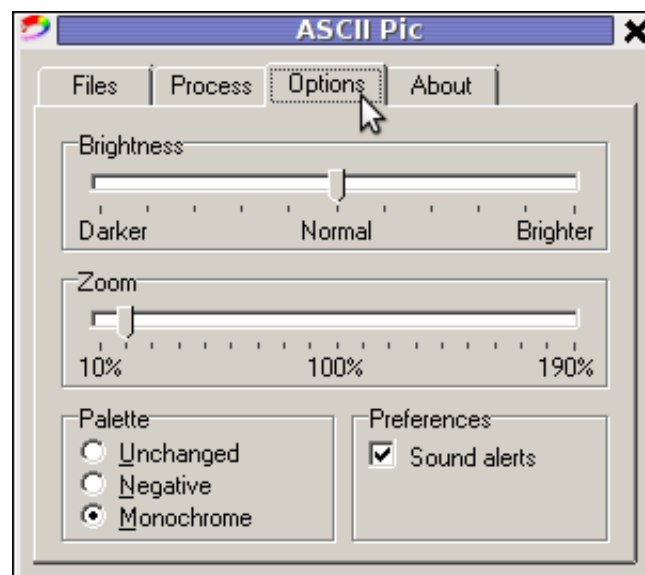For my surprise the program run succesfuly its GUI interface and worked pretty smooth even emulated on Linux.

As of time of writting, the latest version of the freeware program available is 2.0. You see in above screenshot the program is pretty intutive to use. You select an *Input file*, an *Output file* and you're ready to Process the image to TXT.
One small note to make here is the program couldn't recognize as Input files images in PNG or GIF formats, it seems the only image formats the program recognizes as input are JPEG and BMP.

The converted images to ASCII results are quite unsatisfactory, I tried converting few pictures originally in size *1024x768* but the produced ASCII was messy huge (the program didn't automatically set height / width dimensions to 60x80 and therefore, when I revied the produced pictures, they were very ugly and hardly readable. It could be the same image looks better if reviewed in MS-Windows Notepad but I seriously doubt that ...

I thought some improvement to the produced ASCII image might be possible from the app options so I played around with the *Zoom, Negation, Brightness and Monochrome options*, none of them had a drastic change on the output. Using any of the program options didn't make the output TXT "image" to look closer riginal JPEGs..

ASCII Pic official website contains a number of other tiny tools, like **WinKill** and **RemoteShut**, however most of the tools are already too obslete and useless just like *ASCII Pic*

If I have to compare *ASCIIPic* produced ASCII Images to *libcaca's Linux img2txt*, asciipic's ASCII images are a piece of crap.

2. jp2a command line tool image to ASCII generator

As of time of writting a good alternative program I found for Windows is **jp2a**
jp2a is a *free GPL-ed software* available for all major operating system architectures *Linux, BSD, Mac OS X, Windows*.
jp2a is a command line tool and lacks any GUI interface but if compared to **ASCII Pic** the output ASCII image is awesome.

jp2a Windows binary can be downloaded from here , also I've made a mirror of windows jp2a bin in case if it disappears here
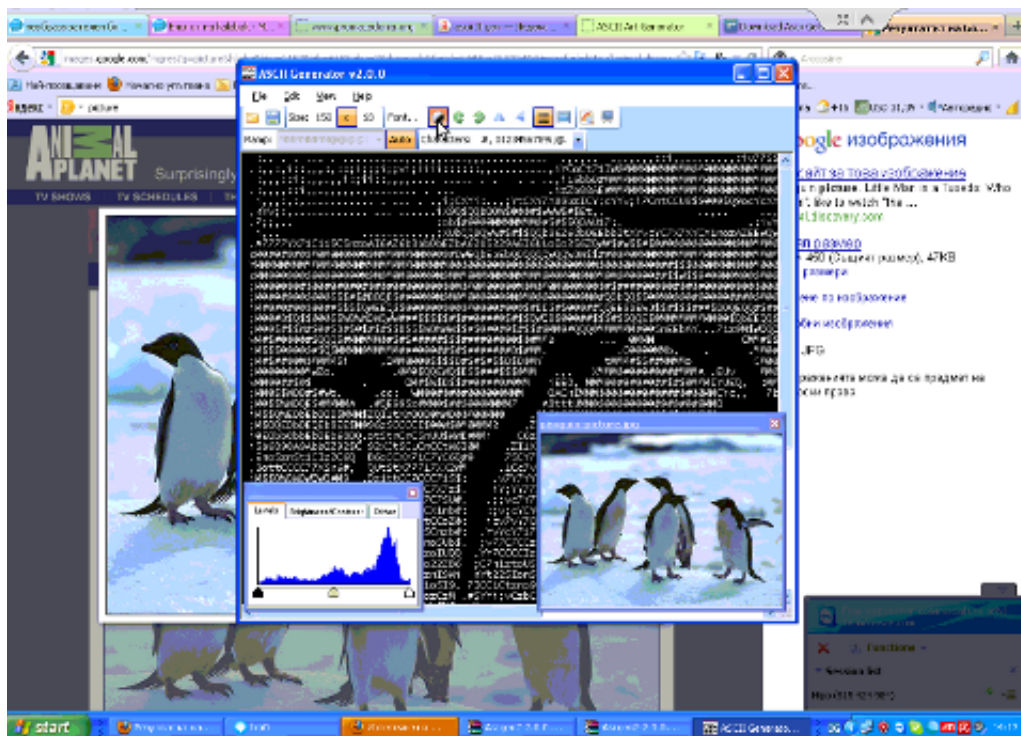
3. ASCII Generator 2 (asc2gen) - Windows GUI Images to ASCII generator

ASC 2 Gen is actually the best I can find program to convert images to ascii in Win as of time of writting.
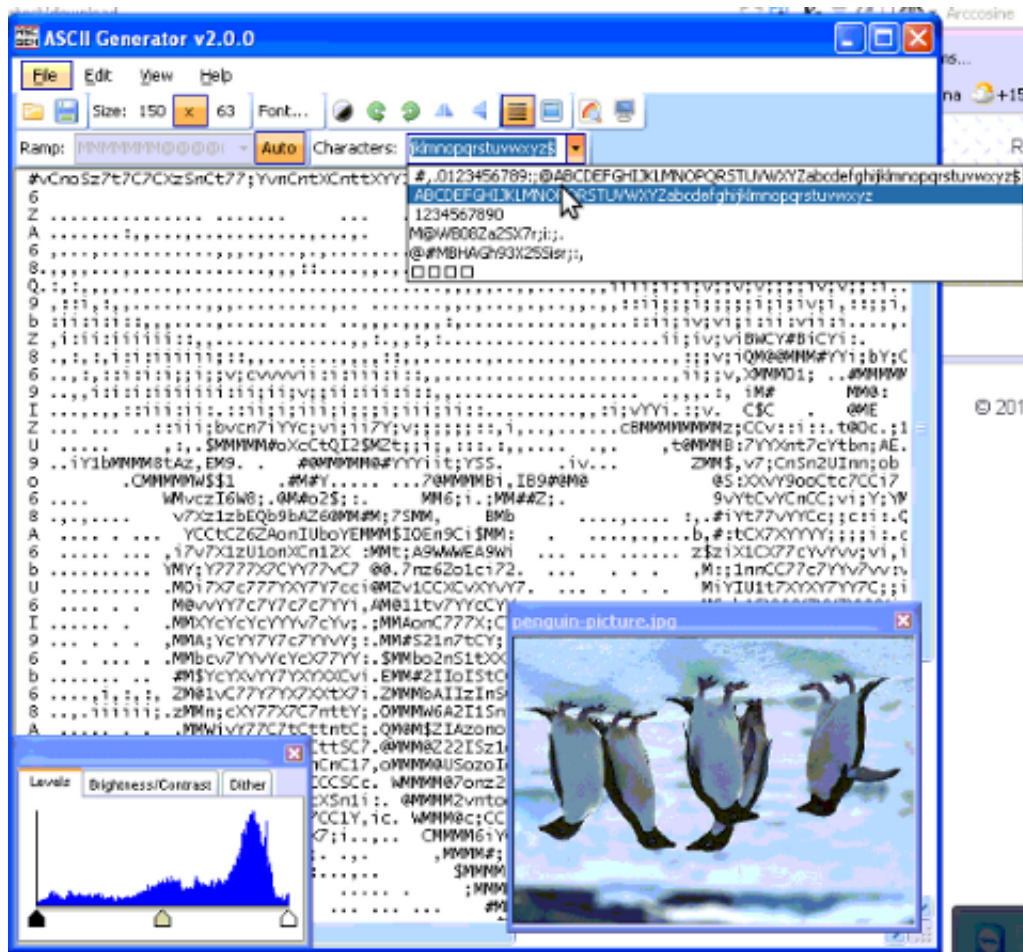Just like *img2txt* it generates pretty decent looking text images.

ASC2Gen failed to run *emulated on my Linux host* with *wine version* **1.0.1**, hence to test it I used a a Windows host via teamviewer.
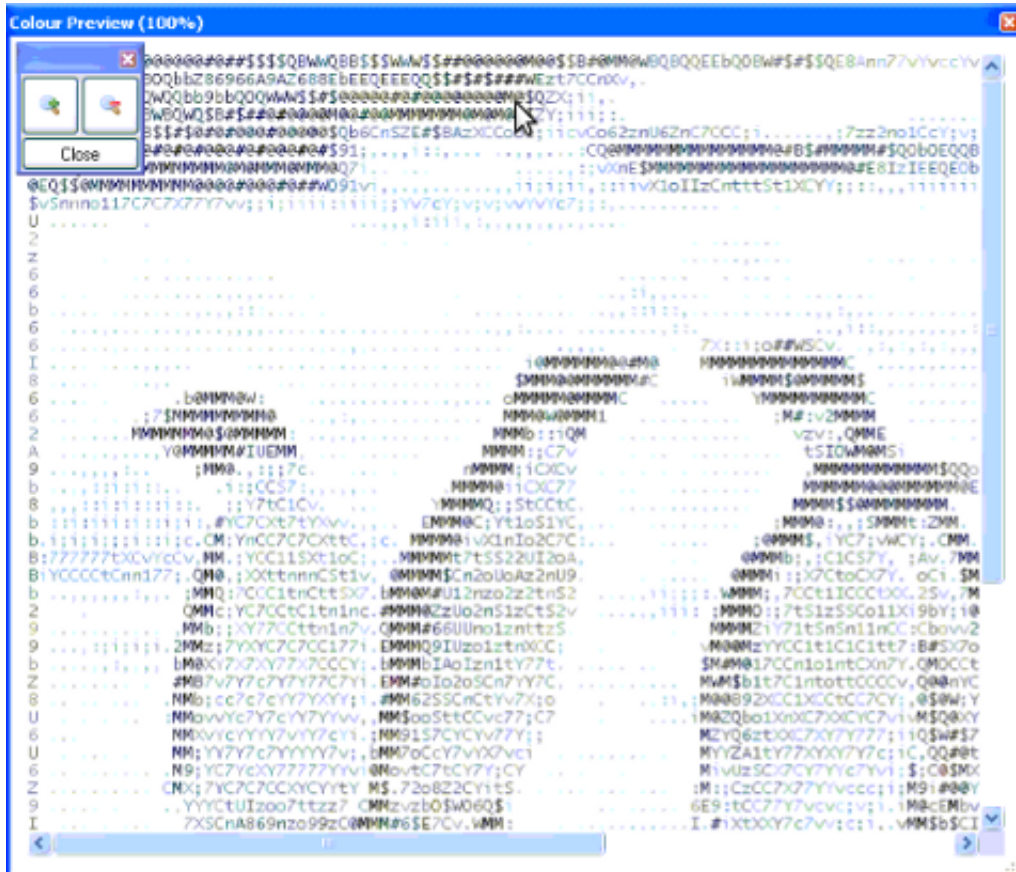
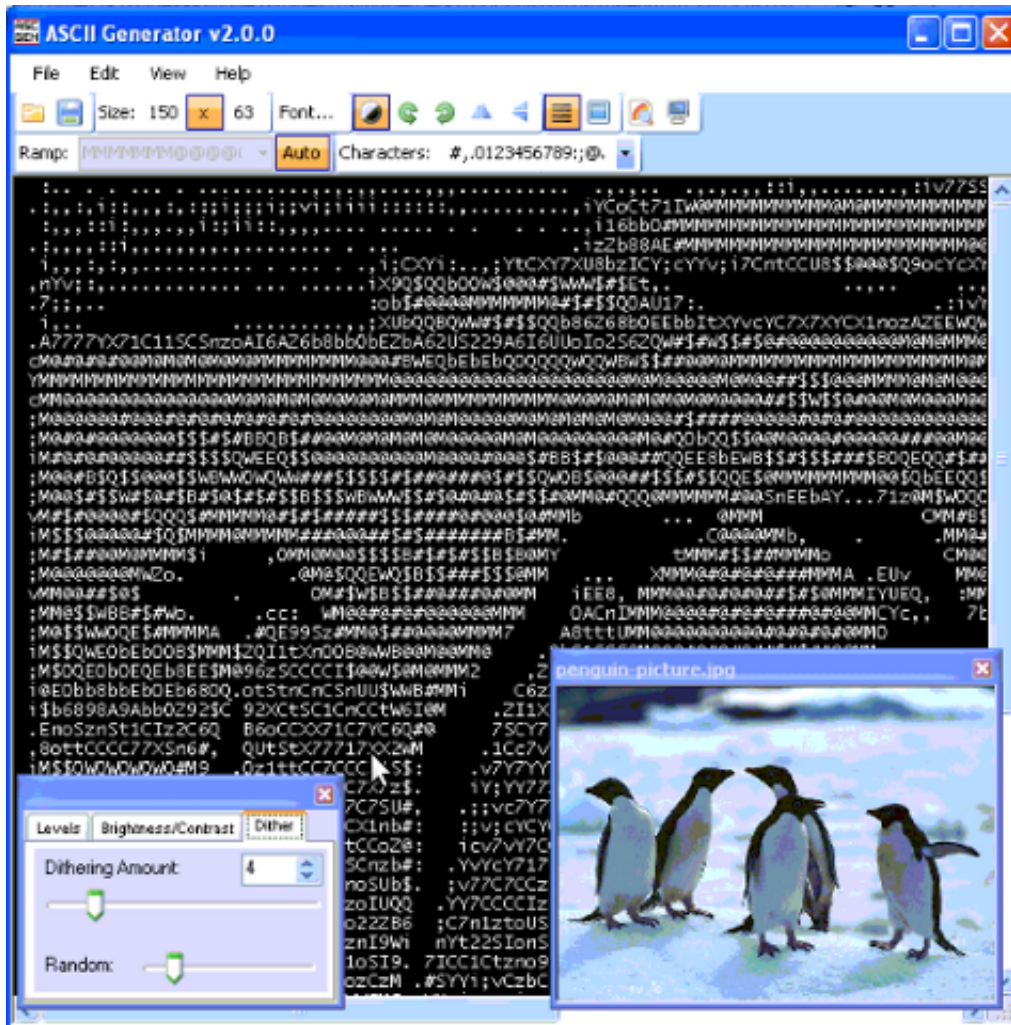Below are few screenshots illustrating most of the options **ASCII2GEN** provides:

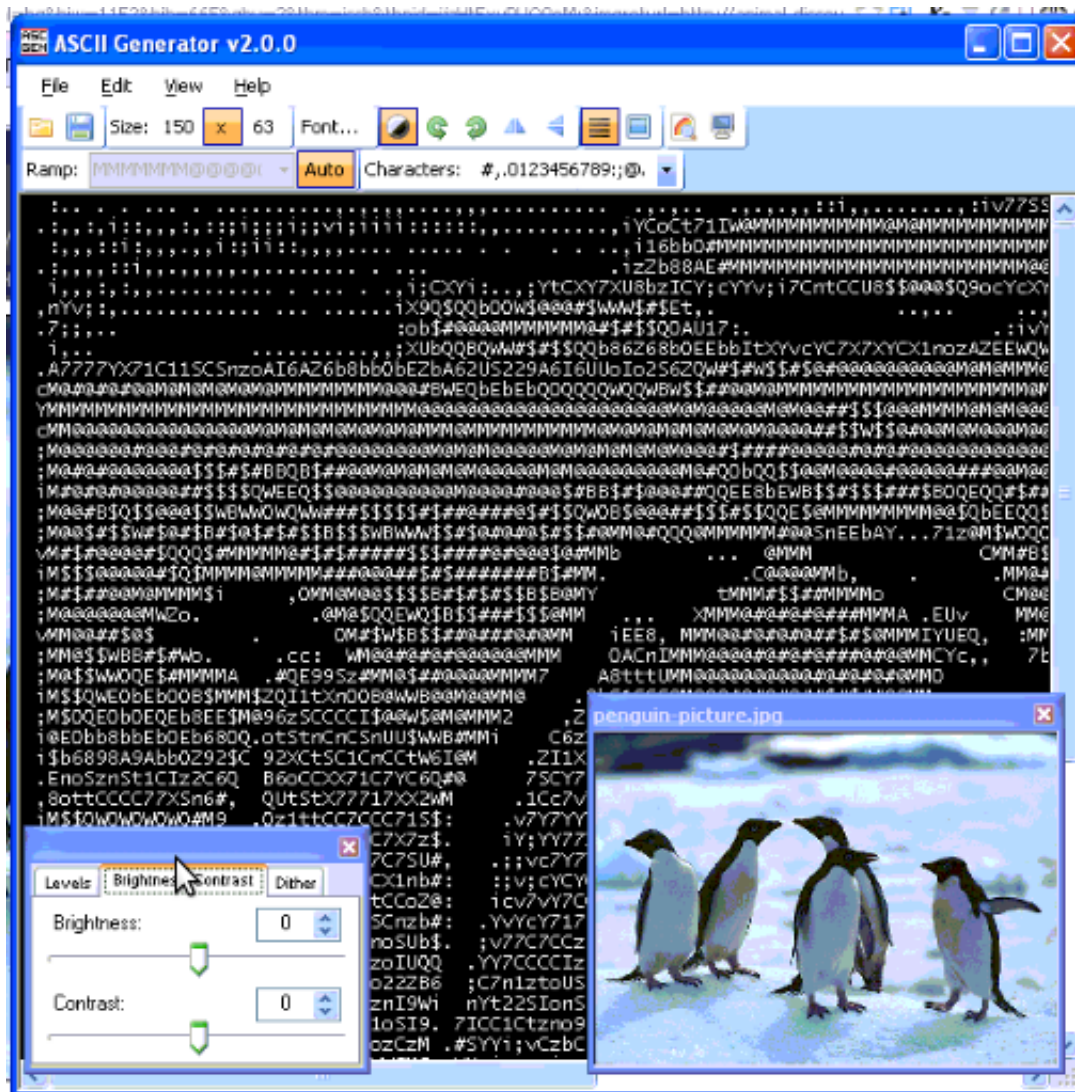**asc2gen penguins in inverted color set (black color text background)**
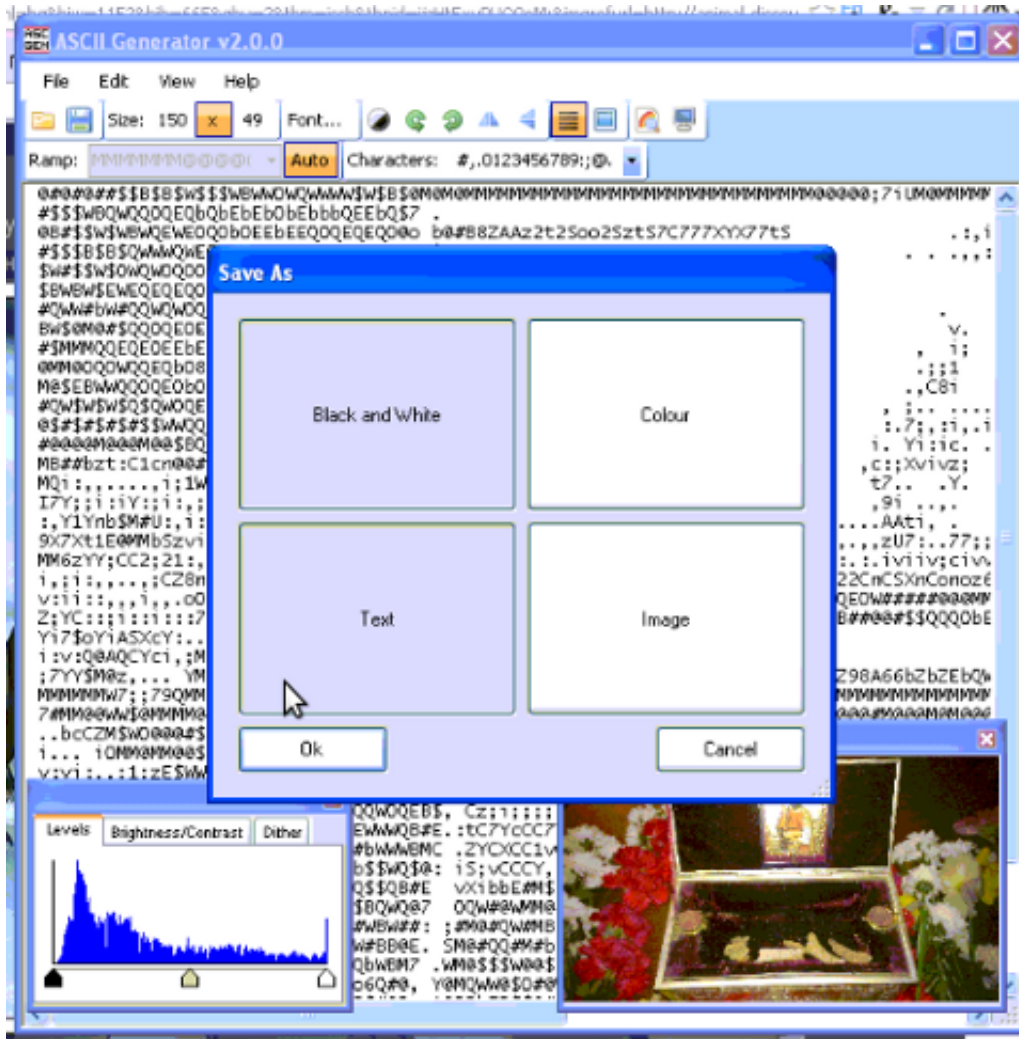

ASC2GEN flipped backhed generated image to ASCII

Picture to ASCII text converted with ASCII colors

ascii2gen dithering level option shot

asc2gen contrast / brigthness atune shot

asc2gen save as options shot

Something else nice is it supports a lot of image file formats as input including (BMP and GIF) images.
I've also made a mirror of asc2gen v. 2.0.0 here

While researching online, I found plenty of other *Image to ASCII geneartors*, however as I didn't tested
them I can't say if they are better ones.
Anyways I will be happy to hear if anyone knows other good ASCII generator alternative progs for
Winblows?