

Hey, just a brief (LOL JK) message from the guy who made this album - Toby "Radiation" Fox, if for some reason you haven't seen that name anywhere yet.

First. thank you so much for buying this!!! I haven't been composing music for very long but I greatly enjoy doing it, so I composed these tracks as a fun way to make some money for college. I also created this album primarily to challenge my own creative limits; I'm usually known for creating hard-rocking, fast-pumping tunes with very obvious video game overtones. With this album I tried to show that I can manufacture a soundscape beyond that... that sometimes I'm capable of variety! (probably not what you'd normally expect from me! SORRY BROS)

Unfortunately I wasn't able to finish the track for the fourteenth troll, Larry, whose track is comprised entirely of the sounds of horses neighing. It was a new genre Andrew and I invented together, and with it I would have consummated my quest to create every type of music known (and unknown) to man. The fact that I didn't finish that track is my only real regret. It keeps me in tears. But overall, aside from that one little fluke, I'm happy with the amount of stuff I was able to pull off, and the amount of improvement I made because I decided to defy the notions of my original style.

So how did this all start, anyway?

The scene: Late May 2010. I was talking to Andrew Hussie (as we are soul twins) when I asked him if I could do a solo album called "Alternia." Alternia's idea was thusly: The trolls have an entire game that none of us would probably ever see in any detail. Taking free reign over this unscripted world, I would go ahead and make a soundtrack to their game session as a parallel to that of the kids, mocking the tracks found in the early Homestuck albums - Harlequin would be recalled by a track called Crustacean, Showtime by Showdown, Aggrieve by Aggrave, Sburban Jungle would be Skaian Summoning, and the list went on. When fully-formed this album would form an alternate "troll version" of the original Homestuck albums, revealing the similarity in the alternate worlds through song - hence the name "Alternia."

Obviously Andrew was fine with this idea. (Unless in fact you are reading this in the alternate universe where the album was canceled and replaced with the other one we were planning. The one filled with horse neighs.) In fact, he only had one thing to say against my original concept.

I said: "We're not gonna see their game session."

He said: "Whoops don't be so sure!"

And then on 6/12, the troll game session arc started. WHOOSP AGAIN.

Luckily, I was there the exact moment the arc started, and I rushed to the forums to enter "Alternia" in the suggestion box. Hilariously enough, my name was chosen to be the planet's name (Alternia I mean. Although I'm sure Planet Radman McDoucheface was a close second in Andrew's mind). If I hadn't been able to post in the suggestion box when he was choosing the planet's name, and it was named something else, I probably just would have renamed the album "Hivebent." (Or "Radman McDoucheface's BIG HITS.")

By that point I had only completed 4 tracks - Showdown, Crustacean, Skaian Summoning, and "Theme," the latter of which I had to scrap because it was too nice-sounding for the trolls, to phrase it terribly. As Hivebent kept updating I realized that I really couldn't do whatever I wanted with the album because we were actually seeing the trolls' world. I decided that I would just scrap the parallelism and make a track for whatever struck my fancy. And boy was my fancy struck. My fancy resonated rapidly and coolly, generating sweet, sweet overtones to each of Andrew's inspiring updates until I had accidentally created a track for every single troll and then some. (Maybe if Larry had debuted in the comic I would have finished that track. Blame Andrew.)

Now that I think about it, I guess that by making music for points in Hivebent without any established tracks as themes for the trolls, I imitated the first couple of albums in their sort of brave, musical pioneer sort of feeling more than I might have if I had chosen to parallel them completely and more literally, track by track.

So that's that story.

Also I'd like to clarify that this album is supposed to be 12 tracks long, but I can't stop myself from making music when the opportunity arises. So now the album is 12 tracks long, plus a bunch of accidental bonus songs.

Now, as if I haven't gone on long enough, let me toss some rude thank-yous towards some particular people:

- Cindy for being chill with this whole thing and helping me set it up. Also for being an awesome fan.
- Andrew for unintentionally inspiring me to make music to go with almost every update he's ever made (and the ones he hasn't).
- Alex Rosetti (Albatross Soup) for being a cool dude and giving me pointers on some of these tracks.
- My brother James for listening to my stuff.
- Seth Peelle (Beatfox) for being unreasonably nice and supportive.
- My radio listeners for being chill, nice dudes and dudettes, especially the radiologists (Blueberry, Shaon, angela, and Linnet).
- AndrewNeo and Solatrus for helping that radio exist and encouraging it (skaianet, too).
- The FanGamer / Starmen.net / RadioPSI crowd for putting up with my lazy bullcrap
- You, by supporting my music with your cash and/or ears (JOIN MY FACEBOOK FAN PAGE).
- Larry, for being the best troll.

1. Crustacean (CG Sprite Theme)

Harlequin (partial) was the first track of Homestuck. Therefore it only makes sense to have something similar be the first track of Alternia. It's not the craziest or intensest thing, so I hope people aren't put off by its inclusion at the very beginning. I feel like it fits the start of the album well though - the variety in noise channels and the oddness of the melody and chords give it a bit of a laid-back "alien" feeling that I feel encapsulates Hivebent. In short, it's the scenesetter track (Sunsetter??? NOPE).

In any case, hopefully Mark J. Hadley won't sue me for CREATIVE LICENSE.

Oh yeah, Cindy (Betelgeuse) says this track reminds her of an undersea carnival, and that the ending is when all of the underwater elephants are climbing up on top of each other, about to topple down. And that's why it's the best part.

I think that's the best way to describe this song.

Just don't try any other way.

2. Showdown (CG Battle Theme)

John's battle theme is simple with a heroic theme. It's catchy and brilliantly written.

Karkat's battle theme is almost needlessly complicated with sometimes obnoxious rhythms.

There's some contrast here. In fact, when I was paralleling the original albums, Alex Rosetti (Albatross Soup) told me that it didn't work as a parallel because it was a little bit too... all-over-the-place. But in the end I feel like this works for Karkat. After all, he's a rude, indifferent guy, and wouldn't settle for any song that he couldn't firmly rage to.

Interestingly, the melody was created by just stringing notes together until they made an interesting rhythmic and melodic arrangement. Then I added harmony and a disturbing amount of manual vibrato. When I was making it I was worried that the melody would sound too forced or forgettable (especially given the way I created it), but in the end it turned out alright.

This is a good time to note that I use a VST to emulate the sounds of the Nintendo, not Famitracker (which gives real NES sounds). When I tried to change the pulse mid-note on my VST to get some Virt-esque instrumentation, it kept giving me this static clicking sound. BARF! So that's why the instruments stay the same throughout. I apologize if the homogeneity bothers you but I figured that the melody was badass enough that its unchanging pulse width is irrelevant.

One last note: At the time of writing this (July 17th) I'm still not credited for this in the comic. Are you reading this, Andrew? Did you forget something????????????

??

no wait let me count these out

????????

ok that's better. now I am the biggest jerk.

3. mIrAcLeS (TC's Theme)

Gamzee's getting high off of some pies.

This piece was heavily inspired by EarthBound, which has a really unique, trippy feeling in a lot of its music that I really wanted to emulate here. To maximize this trippiness I added a lot of notes panning from ear to ear, covered in gobs of vibrato. I also put tons of vibrato on the drums (!??!) to make them sound ludicrous and actively shifted the pitch of the chimes so it sounds like they're dropping through a wormhole. Then I reversed a glockenspiel and stole some singing from Chrono Trigger. Whew!

So now when people ask you "how does this piece even work, man," you know the answer. It's right up there.

MIRACLES.

PS - Andrew wanted to put a ton of honking on this track to the point that the actual music was undiscernable. He actually linked me to some free sound websites and told me to register. I guess in that way, this track is off-character for Gamzee. If he wants the honking he's going to have to do it himself and make it a bonus track; I think I'm more content with this track than any of the other ones and I don't think it needs to be ruined by anything except my own voice saying "MIRACLES..."

4. The Lemonsnout Turnabout (GC's Courtroom Scene)

Terezi (played by the harpsichord) finds Lemonsnout (played by the oboe) at the scene of the crime, red-handed. Or red-snouted, whichever. There is a panning shot to the courthouse which looms ominously, covering the horizon.

Later, in the courtroom, Lemonsnout weeps for his innocence as the infernal grandfather clock tick-tocks in the background. It's the kind of ticking that resonates with a man's heartbeat. It resonates.

Tick tick.

But will the jury listen to a man like that? SUSPENSE.

Lemonsnout's weeping proves to be fruitless. The trial begins and Terezi refutes his alibi, the evidence on his side falls through, and it looks as if Lemonsnout is deservedly doomed.

However, a glimmer of hope appears - but it appears only to be swiftly extinguished by Terezi's quick wit and sharp tongue (he really does taste like lemons).

Lemonsnout then goes mad, screaming of his innocence until he is forced to concede. ORDER IN THE COURT. ORDER, the judge yells. LAW. LAW!

Fortunately, the judge decides that fate will give Lemonsnout one last chance. Terezi flips the coin, walking slowly towards the now-shaking Lemonsnout. The verdict is observed:

JUSTICE IS BLIND, YOU FOOL!!!

(Lemonsnout screams as he is thrown out the window.)

THE END

5. Phaze and Blood (CG's Medium)

A dark sort of Atomyk Ebonpyre-y theme for Karkat's medium. The main melody is oddly catchy.

I had a lot of trouble making this piece because the synthesizer I use to emulate the instruments that sound like they come from a Sega Genesis can only have a couple instances of itself open at once before Fruity Loops basically buckles at the knees and runs out of processing power. I ultimately had to render each part individually and stitch them altogether in Audacity.

My inspiration for this track (and I think superior to it even as a theme for Karkat's medium, at least for the first few notes) is "Burn in the Dark" from Brandish 3. Fantastic track from an awesome-terrible video game with a wicked soundtrack.

BURRRRRRRRRRRRRRN BABY BURRRRRRRRRRRRRRN.

6. psych0ruins (AA Ruins Theme)

I originally wrote the chord progression (and arpeggios) to this song while I was still trying to go through with the original concept for Alternia. I was hoping I could make an alien-sounding song for Karkat's medium using only the hazy skies seen from his window as the inspiration. Unfortunately I only got a few measures done before I ran out of inspiration, and then we saw The Land of Pulse and Haze and I knew this piece was done for. Fortunately I was able to raise what I had written so far from the dead in the form of this track.

Somehow I synthesized that crying sound by accident, but I felt like it was entirely fitting as the mourning of the dead. So I stuck it everywhere.

This track reminds me of Illusion of Gaia and La-Mulana kind of. Two games with a lot of ruins and a bunch of ghosts, dead people, and mysteries. The part at the end in particular reminds me a lot of La Mulana, because that game is prone to very full synth solos with a lot of bending pitch affairs.

Today just found out AA was dead all along... this theme seems a lot more haunting now.

Fitting.

7. Walls Covered in Blood (AC's Theme)

Mario Paint. If you don't know what that is, you might not appreciate this song.

I really wanted to make a samba with those terrible, lo-fi instruments. So I did. And now I am perfectly content to meow as I please.

But some people might not like my choice to sacrifice sound quality for nostalgic novelty - that's why I made the DX version. (Just for little whiners like you.)

Hopefully this piece is successfully cute. As cute as the fabled fountain of cute? I don't think so. I can only hope. If it is, please tell me. I will be so proud."

8. dESPERADO ROCKET CHAIRS, (AT Desperado Rocket Chair Joust Theme)

I made this the day I saw AT in a wheelchair in the comic with DAT LANCE.

I don't want to say this is his strife theme because I actually think it would be different than this. But I'll save that for another day. Another album. Another universe.

The important part is that this piece is based around a very certain image I have in my head, and nothing else.

uM, wHAT,

wHAT wOULD THAT IMAGE,

bE,

desperado rocket chair joust duh. FLY FLY FIGHT THEM OFF TAVROS

(Actually, I could see the jousting donation page using this song... Andrew, how much money does it cost for me to request an [S] donation page...?)

9. Death of the Lusii (Lusus Death Theme)

Not much to say on this one. If you couldn't tell, it's kind of a remix of Crustacean.

AND IT'S KINDA SAD.

ALL THE LUSII ARE DYING.

THE SUN WON'T COME OUT TO PLAY.

MY SQUIDDLE DOLL HAS A STOMACHE-ACHE.

Et cetera.

10. Virgin Orb (GA's Theme)

I made this 7/8 piece a long time ago, but I feel like it fit well for GA, so I revamped it. It's kind of ghostly and alien in its presentation. But it's also kind of flighty and... caring? There's no way for me to pin this song down with words. Words are heavy. This song is pure flight. The two don't mix. Just listen.

The drums that come in halfway were basically inspired by the Coffee Scene from EarthBound. Really similar stuff there. That song also inspired Gamzee's tune. I guess I just really like it a lot.

What I really imagine is GA waking up in the dream world and flying around, observing the blue orb in the sky and admiring the environment around her. Then she goes and finds AT, wakes him up, and he's totally pumped and happy and flies around doing loop-de-loops. And he's really thankful and all, and kind of wimpy living out his fantasies with his friend watching him.

And then at the end of the piece they both go back to sleep, so they can wake up.

... and die.

(I imagine that GA would be on the other moon than Tavros actually, but... now that I think about it, wouldn't it be fitting if the two "teams" were split up according which moon they were on? So maybe it's not too far-fetched that I'm thinking this.)

11. The La2t Frontier (TA and the Trolls vs. Sgrub)

ALL right, team.

Let's go out there and DO this.

what-EVER IT TAKES.

I DON'T CARE IF YOU NEED TO TURN THE SOUND UP TO PLAY IT.

I DON'T CARE IF THAT MEANS USING YOUR CRAPPY MEGAMAN X GUITARS.

I DON'T CARE IF YOU USE OUT OF TUNE SYNTH BRASS.

I DON'T CARE IF YOU PUT GUILLE'S THEME AND SUNSETTER IN THERE.

AND I DON'T CARE IF WE LOSE.

BECAUSE

WE

WON'T.

12. Skaian Summoning (The Day the World Died)

but

is there anything i can do to change your mind?

13. The Thirteenth Hour (UU's Theme)

??????????????

BONUS TRACKS (WHICH I MADE AFTER THE OTHER SONGS, SO THEY DONT NECESSARILY FIT OR FLOW WITH THE REST OF THE ALBUM):

X1 - Spider's Claw (AG's Battle Theme, short version)

Rude girls sometimes have bitchy battle themes~

It's (painfully/venomously) short because my goal was to spend very little time on each bonus track, and just making a few measures was taking up a lot of time. Creating this was a lot of fun though!

I'd love to have had this as a normal track, but this track gives me the feeling that AG is only the kind of character that you play as while the world is ending, not during the regular game.

I'm also sure she has a different track if you fight her as a boss. Why don't you think about what that would sound like instead, little boy?

bluh bluh mwuh mwuh

X2 - Staring (CT's Unrevealed Theme)

I made this the day CT was first fully visible, before the update. He's a creep. So he stares. And it's creepy. And ominous. So here's your theme, complete with ambient chainsaws and coughing.

I'll be honest - you know all those free industrial soundfonts and creepy (but basically USELESS) presets that come with a bunch of free synths? I had way too many of those. So I decided to just make this.

Also this song is very similar (which I didn't realize until after I finished) to the second track to the Tamashii no Mon OST, which is one of the greatest OSTs to a hilarious and pretty damn cool gem for that crappy old system they call the PC98. (Brandish 3!!! Although I wasn't that keen on Lotus Land Story to be honest. That extra stage was abhorrent.)

Those chainsaws are from my favorite game, of course. But who didn't expect that?

This track is kind of hilarious in retrospect, after seeing what Equius has become. He really needs a nice manly abusive wifebeaterly wrestling theme with a lot of highfalutin' harpsichord sensibilities, you know what I mean? I do. Watch out.

X3 - Keepers (CC and CA Theme)

I knew nothing about these two when I made these. (And as of July 17th, I still don't.) I saw CC smiling in what seemed to be a non-malicious way (even though she was culling things) and I saw CA taking care of garbage on his island. So I made a sort of semi-melancholic happy-go-lucky island tune, because I figure they're sort of mean but genuinely care about the waterworld around them.

Plus I just wanted to make a song like this after hearing some nice movie soundtracks and thinking of Chrono Cross. So I did. I always feel like I'm ripping SOMETHING off when I make songs like these. Trust me when I say it's never conscious. I'm pretty sure you can find every measure individually in other songs somewhere. Oh well. I guess it's how I put them together that counts, right?

I asked Andrew and he said Caligula invented horse hugs. So there.


(I also told my mom that. She believed me.)

X4 - Theme (Alternia Theme)

Not the theme to Hivebent. I made this before we had seen the trolls and how brutal they are. So it's overwhelmingly bittersweet and heartfelt. Entirely inappropriate.

Sorry.

That's the end.



Raised from infancy by the mysterious but melodious Rhythm Monks, Toby set out at the age of 10 in pursuit of a single goal: to be the master of all the beats. After years of traveling, he has clearly achieved this goal. None dare challenge him to a battle of rap; humiliating defeat would be the only possible outcome. He is the champion. Today, always in search of a challenge, he has moved on to musically depicting cyborg tits.

He's pretty cool.

-minibiography written by Linnet, and is presumed to be 100% accurate

All the art you see here is a tag-team effort by Cindy and Andrew





