

(ten)



FOREWORD

ROBERT J! LAKE, PROJECT MANAGER:

This almost didn't happen.

As of release day, it's been exactly four full years since the last numbered Homestuck volume, with only one full album between then and now.

In fact, it's now actually been a longer time since the last numbered Homestuck volume than the time between Homestuck beginning and it coming out. That's crazy, right?

Can you believe there was a time when Homestuck albums were coming out every month?

Volume 10's been an open question since the moment Volume 9 got released. Every few months, the music team would talk about it, maybe float a song or two for it, then nothing. Which, you know. Process. Life happens. A lot of us went to college, maybe lost interest, moved on to making smash hit games, what have you. We splintered. Fans wondered if it'd ever happen. I've gotten messages about it basically ad infinitum over the past four years, and it's not helped by one-off mentions here and there teasing it endlessly.

People want to know what's up!

Well, finally, here it is. If Volume 9 is the culmination of over three years of musical evolution and growth for its musicians, Volume 10 is the reunion tour. For those of us returning, it's our chance to show how much better we got while we were gone (I think you'll agree that we've improved quite a bit).

As for the new faces, I think their work speaks for itself.

This isn't only the tightest, most consistent, most listenable numbered volume we've done, it's the one we've put the most love into.

I hope you enjoy what I've spent the past few months wrangling together with some of the most talented people I know.

I present the final Homestuck Volume.

Probably.

MARCY NABORS, CO-ORGANIZER, MASTERING ENGINEER:

Homestuck Volume 10, the big 1-0!

I can only begin to describe what a personally significant moment it is to be releasing this album. Homestuck has been huge for me; the enthusiastic community and the countless friends it's helped me to meet, the sprawling fantastical expanse that is the comic itself, and perhaps most notably, the outrageous wealth of great music.

Almost six years ago, the Homestuck discography served as the push I needed to realize that I could chase my dreams in the world of independent music, and today I'm proud to call many of these immeasurably talented musicians some of my closest friends.

Putting this album together has been an absolute pleasure, and I think it's a fitting conclusion to this seven-year-long tradition of incredible creativity.

Enjoy the tunes!



ALEXANDRA "LEXXY" DOUGLASS, COVER ARTIST:

Homestuck will always hold a warm, nostalgic place in my heart, so despite drafting up a handful of concepts—from the graphic and representational to the tongue-in-cheek referential—I ultimately ended up going with the one that expressed that affection the most.



CREATA

BY SETH "BEATFOX" PEELLE
TRACK ART BY PJ TUSH

SETH "BEATFOX" PEELLE, COMPOSER:

When I first auditioned for the Homestuck music team back in 2009, one of my two audition pieces was "Pumpkin Cravings", which ended up on the "Homestuck Vol. 5" album the following year (and was subsequently orchestrated by the illustrious Alexander Rosetti into "THIS Pumpkin" on THIS Album). The other piece was a short electronic-sounding demo entitled "Skaia Voyages" that I based on the "Sburban Jungle" and "Skies of Skaia" themes, inspired by the purposefully vague notion of the Kids' "ascension" recently introduced in the comic at that time. The demo never ended up going anywhere in that form, but its musical ideas stuck in my head, growing and evolving in my mindscape over the years into something much grander than what I had originally envisioned. It grew additional references to "Revelawesome" and the Kids' themes, grew a full orchestra, grew a massive choir and epic sci-fi noises of indeterminate nature...

And then - eventually - it became REAL.

It ASCENDED.

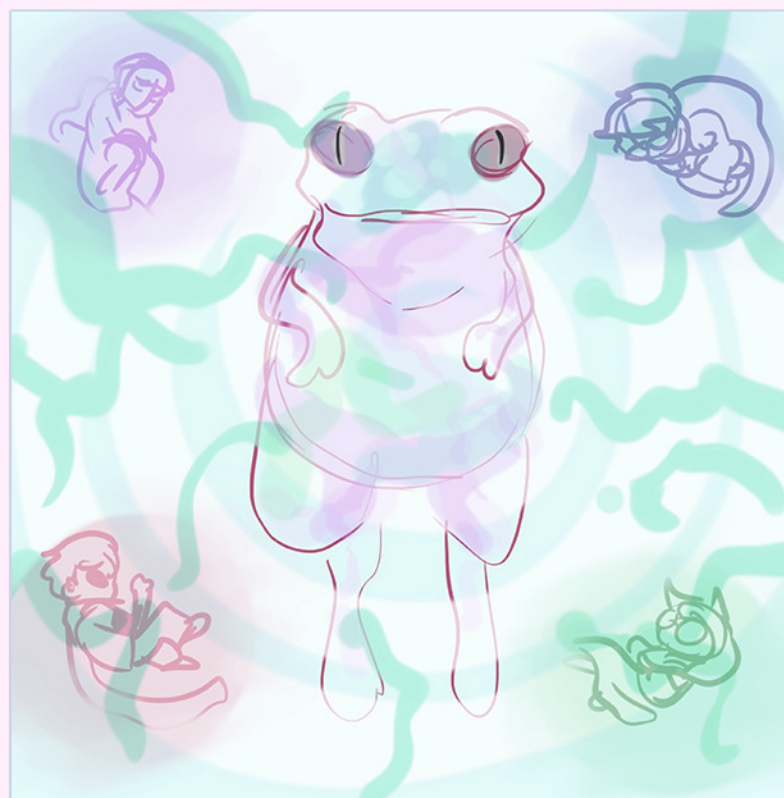
*(yes it was totally that easy.
no you can't stop me from pretending this.)*

PJ TUSH, TRACK ARTIST:

WOW 7 years of Homestuck. I only hopped on this hectic bandwagon in 2011, but it was definitely worth it. I NEVER would have expected to be able to contribute to and take part in Homestuck itself. This is like a dream come true. THAT BEING SAID: CREATA!

Creata was heard in short during the first part of Collide, so being able to listen to the full version of the song and then DRAW for it was pretty cathartic (i might have cried). When drawing for Creata, I wanted to capture the "essence of creation" and highlight the greater purpose of the Beta kids in the creation of their universe. The piece is long and explosive, much like one would expect the creation of an entire universe to be. I wanted to depict a climactic moment, something grandiose and defining that fits in with the end of Homestuck properly. What better event than the Genesis Frog finally blooming with the original quartet?

(i definitely did cry)



PJ

兎を箱に戻れ



TRAIN

BY GEORGE BUZINKAI
TRACK ART BY KATE HOLDEN

KATE HOLDEN (FELICITOUSARTISAN), TRACK ARTIST:

So I may have originally thought this track was about a literal train and been like "I can't really draw trains..." only to be told it was more like a training montage for John and agreeing that maybe I can actually draw John. I'd been watching a lot of Ruroni Kenshin with the girlfriend on Netflix and because this art was done by me as a last minute switcheroo I didn't have much time, so I did what I do best; I was a piece of weaboo trash and made this ridiculous fake shounen manga panel in manga studio.

The Japanese reads "Usagi o hako ni modore": "Put the bunny back in the box".

The next day I landed a job working at a Sake company. True story.

OF GODS AND WITCHES

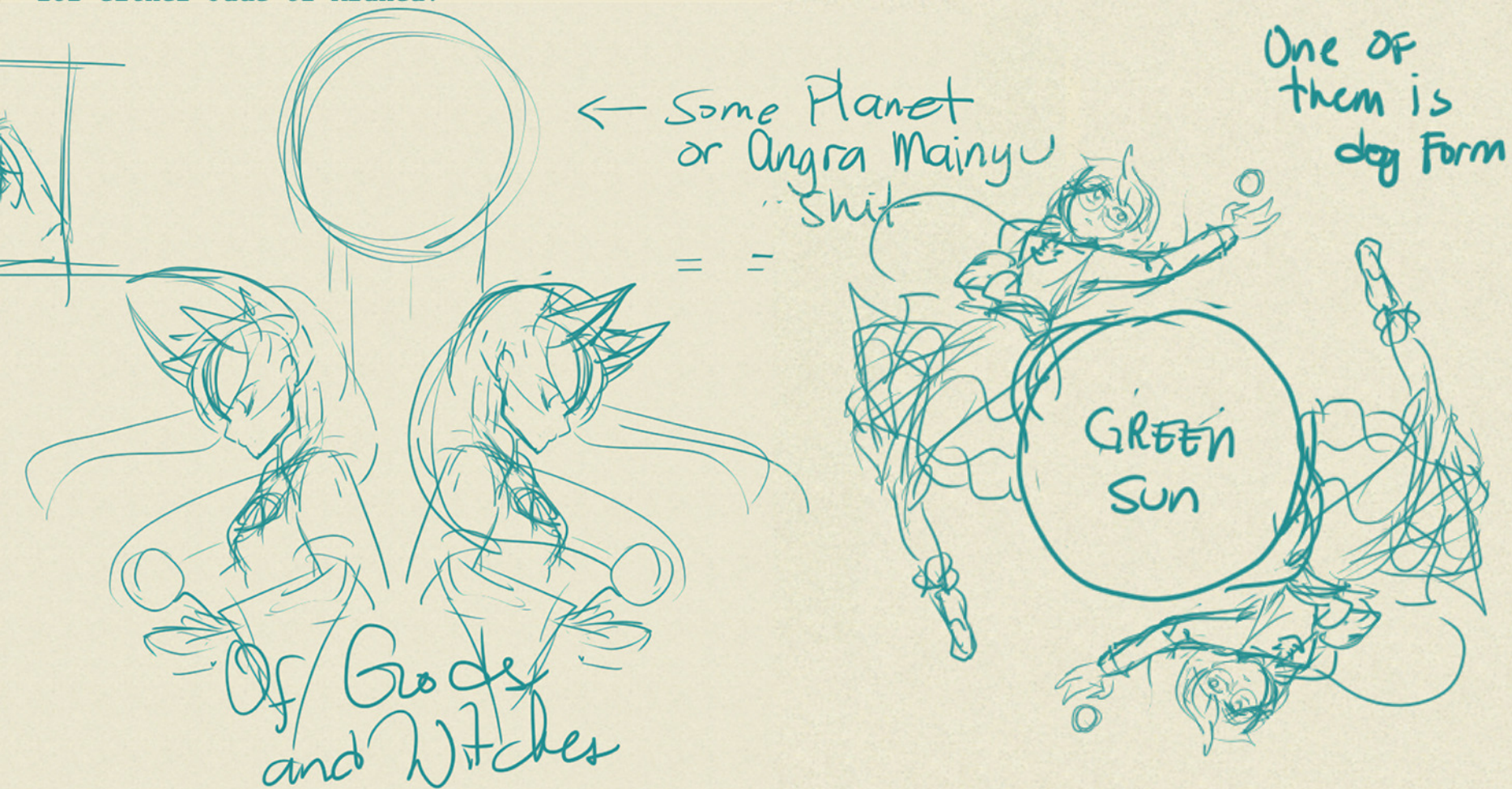
BY TENSEI
TRACK ART BY ARCHIEA

TENSEI, COMPOSER:

For the longest time I considered this a song for Jade, specifically her dog tier transformation. Then I realized, far too late, that Aranea doesn't have a lot of music given her relative importance in the comic!

More importantly, this song has some piratey/celtic jig vibes (partially based on the fight club theme from Assassin's Creed 3), which actually make it a decent fit for Aranea (given her Mindfang alter ego).

So by the limited powers of canonization invested in me, I hereby pronounce this song's alternative title as "Of Sylphs and Sekrets" and that it may be interpreted as a theme for either Jade or Aranea.





BY CLARK POWELL
AND ASTRO KID
TRACK ART BY SHANNON MURPHY

**CLARK POWELL,
COMPOSER :**

This was the best remix I ever worked on. There was another remix of this song that didn't make it onto the album, but you can use your imagination for that.

**RIKI TSUJI,
COMPOSER :**

actually clark is wrong and u dont have to use ur imagination here u go https://soundcloud.com/astro_kid/beatup_shutdown ... bye

**CLARK POWELL,
COMPOSER :**

step on me Riki

**RIKI TSUJI,
COMPOSER :**

i step on nobody

**CLARK POWELL,
COMPOSER :**

pls make an exception for me

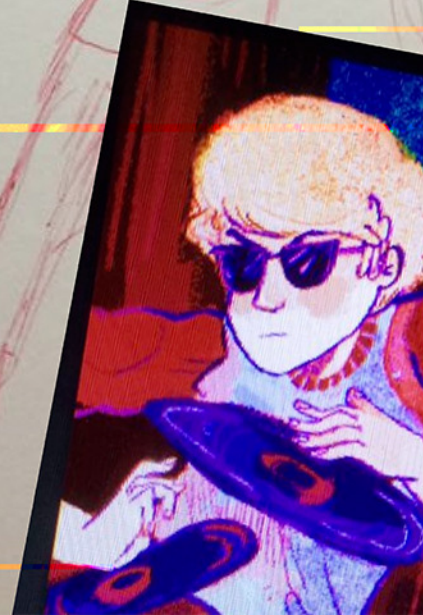
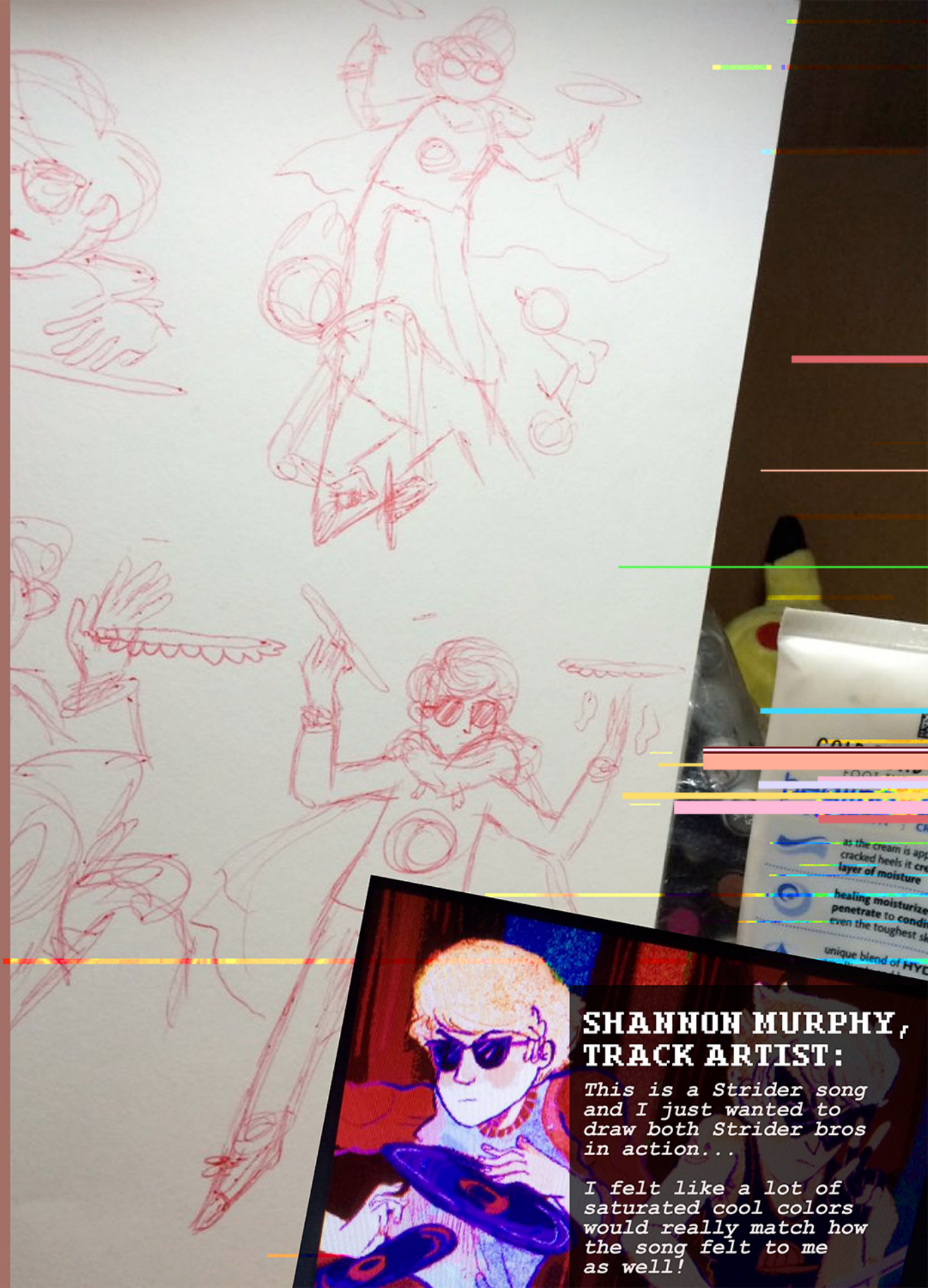
**ROBERT J! LAKE,
PROJECT MANAGER :**

is that your actual commentary i'll literally put this all in

**RIKI TSUJI,
COMPOSER :**

yes RJ literally put this in also Clark I love you but this, I cannot make an exception for. Please go step on yourself.

5:14



**SHANNON MURPHY,
TRACK ARTIST :**

This is a Strider song and I just wanted to draw both Strider bros in action...

I felt like a lot of saturated cool colors would really match how the song felt to me as well!

YOU KILLED MY FATHER (PREPARE TO DIE)

BY CATBOSS, WILLOW ASCENZO,
DJ 最テ一, VIASATELLITE, DAVID
"DIRTIEST" DYCUS, AND IAN WHITE
(FEAT. NOEL SADWIN ON VIOLIN)
TRACK ART BY MIKA B.

You Killed My Father (Prepare To Die) is, as you may have noticed, a collaborative effort from a bunch of fanmusicians, except I guess we're all Homestuck Official now. Homestuck's been a pretty big part of our lives, as you can see from these testimonials:

VIASATELLITE, BASSIST:

Homestuck had been one of the best experiences of my life, and being able to contribute music to it on several occasions fulfilled a few of my dreams.

It's been a massive pleasure to work with y'all.

WILLOW ASCENZO, ORCHESTRA, CHOIR: MIKA B., TRACK ARTIST:

The amount of musical fan activity that came out of Homestuck was really quite incredible, and something I've never seen in any fandom before. For all the highs and lows in the Homestuck fandom the way the fandom appreciated fanmusic was special.

DAVID DYCUS, COMPOSER, SYNTHS:

Homestuck gave me a sense of musical purpose I have not experienced before or since.

...Actually, that sounds stupid. Don't print any of that.

CATBOSS, DRUMS, MIXING:

Literally everyone I know is a Homestuck.

I am trapped in an unending hell.

Please kill me.

Being reeled in both by the song title and the clash between the two characters (and the music, of course), creating art for this was exciting.

I have always thought of John as one who keeps his dorky self kept close in all situations, so John facing off Bec with the most energy filled, accusing point served as my inspiration for this piece.





MALCOLM BROWN, COMPOSER:

Couldn't end without giving Terezi another chance to shine. "Sound Judgement" basically tells the story of Terezi's "CLOWN HUNTING" escapade where she goes hunting after Gamzee, battles him & gets spectacularly "ATOMIC DOUBLE JUGGALO BACKBREAKER"'d for her trouble. Goal here was mainly to create a "Terezi doing something badass" track: A little inspiration from things like "Battle without Honor or Humanity" from Kill Bill, sprinkled with little bits inspired by Terezi's theme, then a bit of weird guitar solo for Harlequin to represent Gamzee, and a whole load of staccato strings and rhythm guitar everywhere else.

Originally called "JUDG3M3NT D4Y" but we already have a track called "Judgement Day".

We've literally used all the names.

"Sound Judgement" works better though, although it should probably be "Smell Judgement"?

That sounds ridiculous though.

SERA B., TRACK ARTIST:

For this piece I wanted to go really comic book-y, so I leaned towards a Daredevil influence for Terezi (for obvious reasons). Initially, I had her in a more detailed setting in extreme light and shadow, with Gamzee's silhouette looming over her. Totally by accident I ended up deleting the background layers, leaving just the strip of red lava as the horizon-- which looked way cooler than what I had before and gave it the comic-book-cover vibe I was shooting for. S

uper fun piece to work on!

BY MALCOLM BROWN

TRACK ART BY
SERA B.

S. Bell

AGGRIEVOCAATION

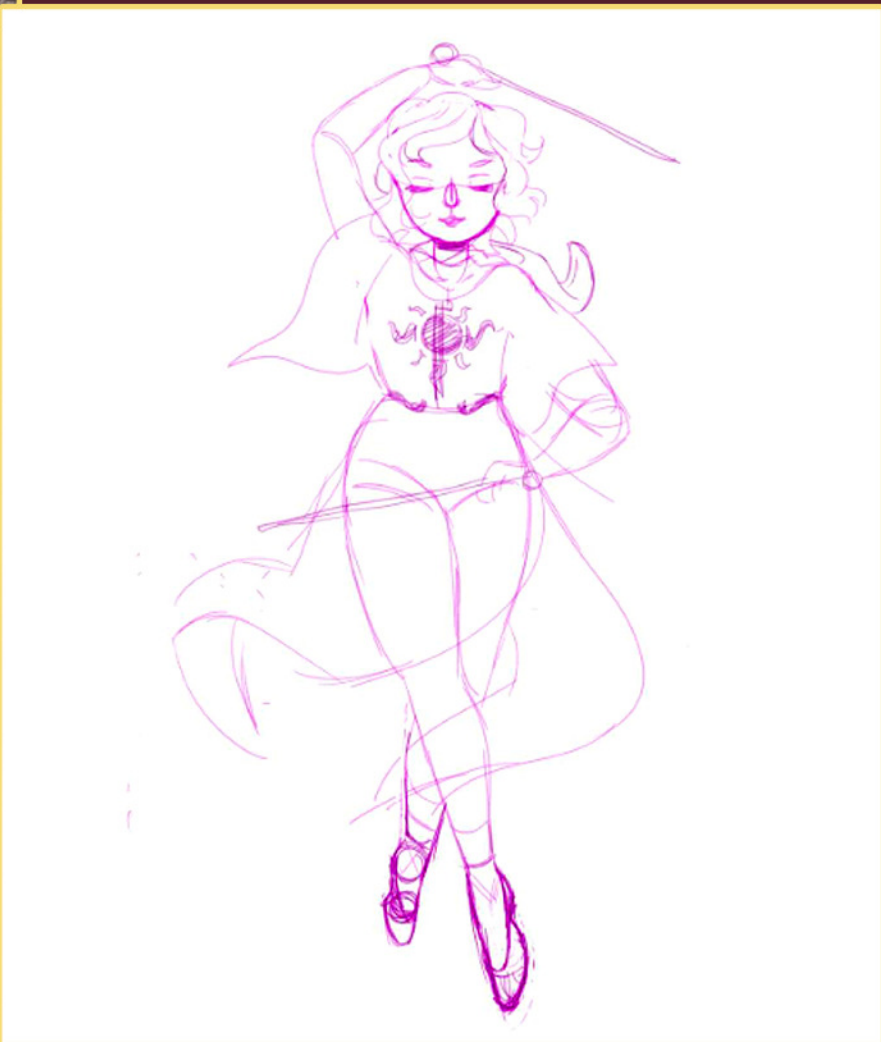
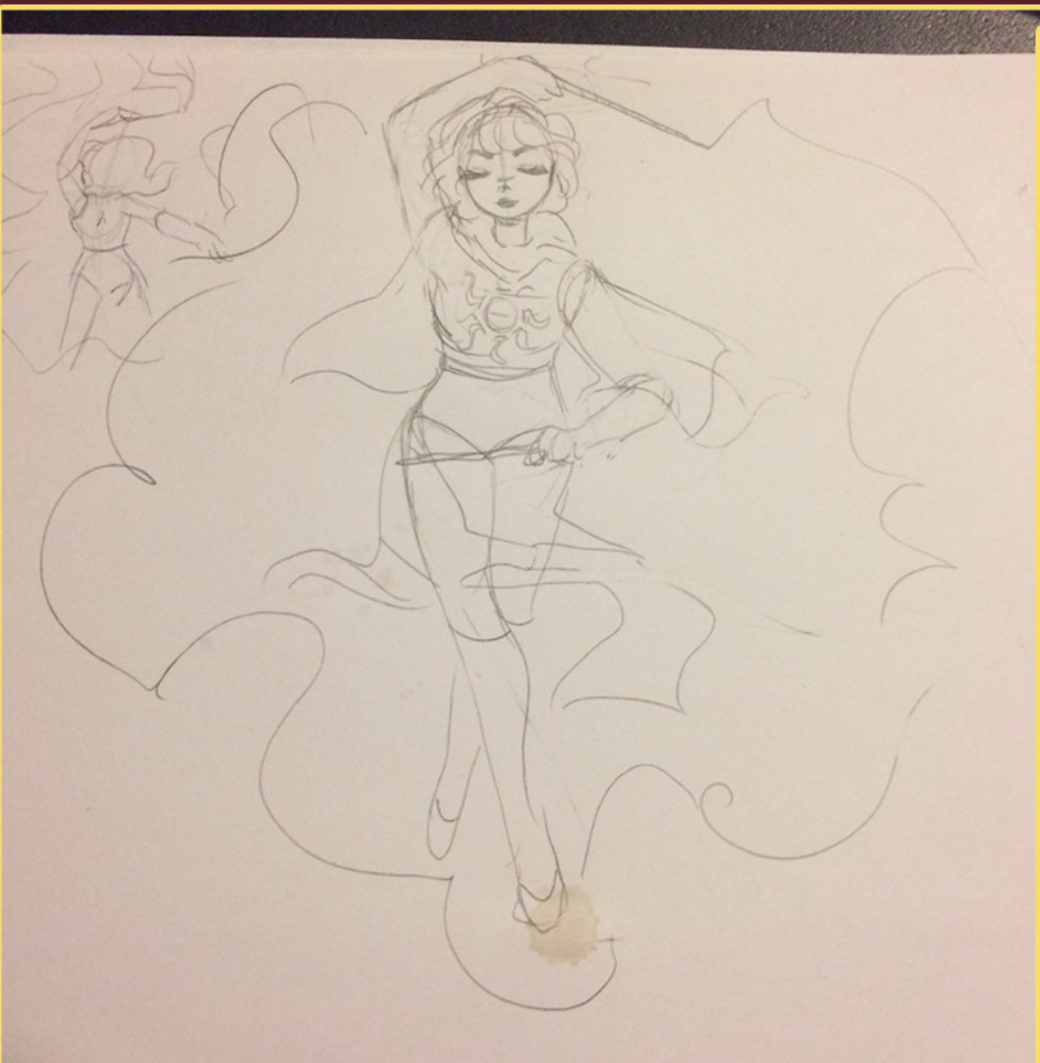
BY MARK HADLEY
TRACK ART BY RACHEL LUNDIN

MARK HADLEY, COMPOSER:

While "Harlequin" was the first piece of mine to appear in Homestuck, the first piece I actually wrote for it was "Aggrieve", and so I felt it was only fitting to make another mix of it for the final album. Plus it gave me an excuse to try writing it in a metal style! I'm not sure it could still be considered Rose's "official theme" anymore (not after the mountain of excellent music the team's written for her over the years), but I still like to think of it that way.

RACHEL LUNDIN, TRACK ARTIST:

Just, put, like, "It was cool to work on this," I don't know!



START



THE

BY KALIBRATION
TRACK ART BY SLOGBAIT

KALIBRATION, COMPOSER:

Well, it's really my last song for Homestuck, huh... I know I developed my thunderous-ridiculous-percussion style thanks to the comic, but it felt better to leave things on a groovier note.

So, it's "Stride", my little sequel-of-sorts to Upward Movement, featuring samples from Moonsetter and Showdown, and an updated version of that classic Dave Strider drum loop.

SLOGBAIT, TRACK ARTIST:

Fuck the rug.

SCARB

BY THOMAS FERKOL
TRACK ART BY SLOGBAIT

THOMAS FERKOL, COMPOSER :

Pretty sure this one first came about back in 2012.

Talked about metal with a certain "Skeletal Timothy" over Skype at some point, and he said something along the lines of, "Hey, you know what'd be a cool metal cover? Skaian Ride."

Naturally, I had to try it. And it turned out pretty awesome.

The guitar performances haven't changed since the first recording, but just about everything to do with the mix and virtual instruments have been tweaked.

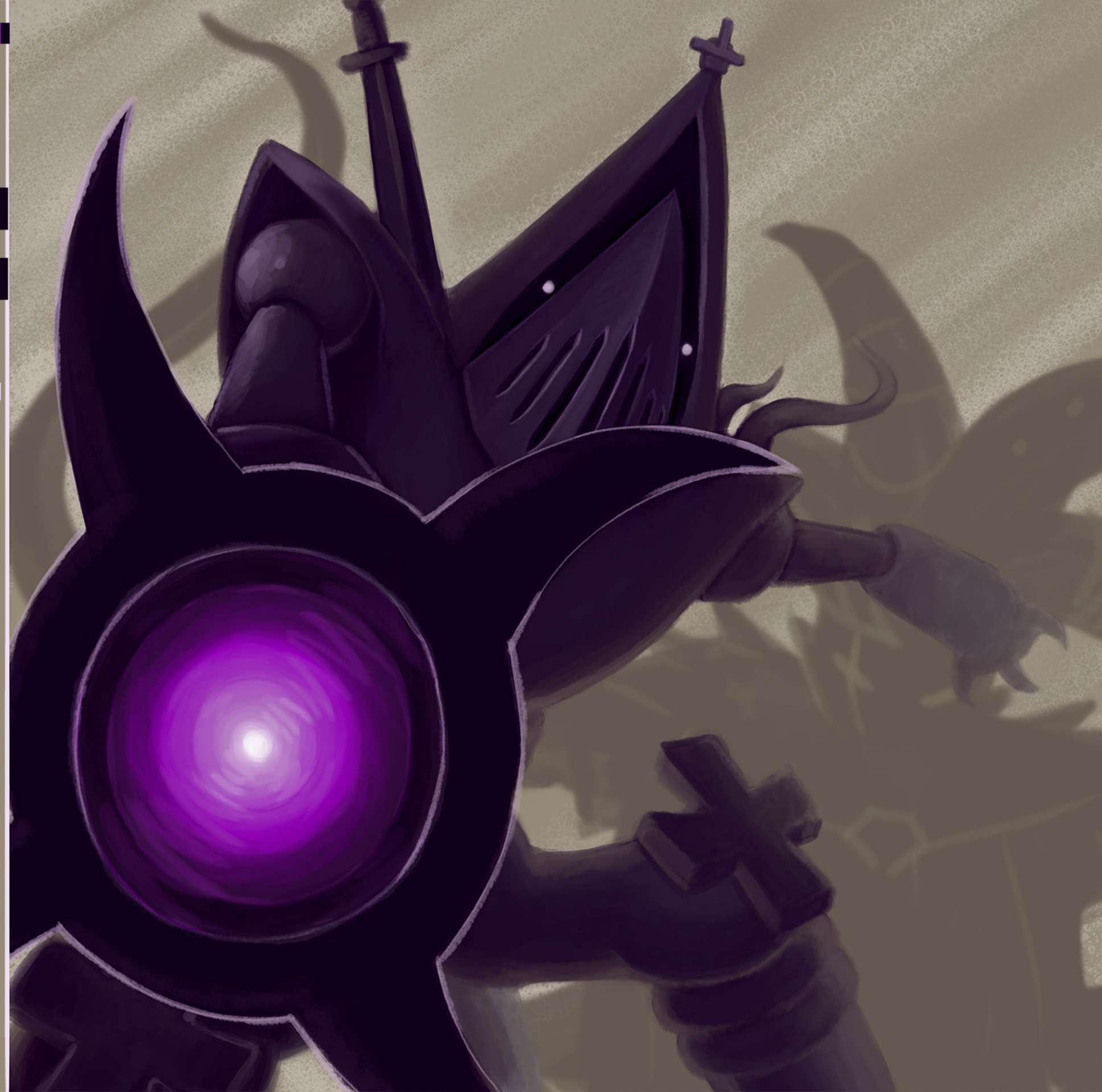
At the time, I was very influenced by Gojira, most noticeably in the rhythm guitars' super rhythmic chugging around.

And a fun fact: the double kick drum is augmented by a sample of the kick drums used in Septic Flesh's song "Anubis" to give it that perfect death metal punch.

SLOGBAIT, TRACK ARTIST :

Some of the more "mechanical" designs in Sburb were fricken cool.

Wish we saw more of them.



**ROBERT J! LAKE,
COMPOSER:**

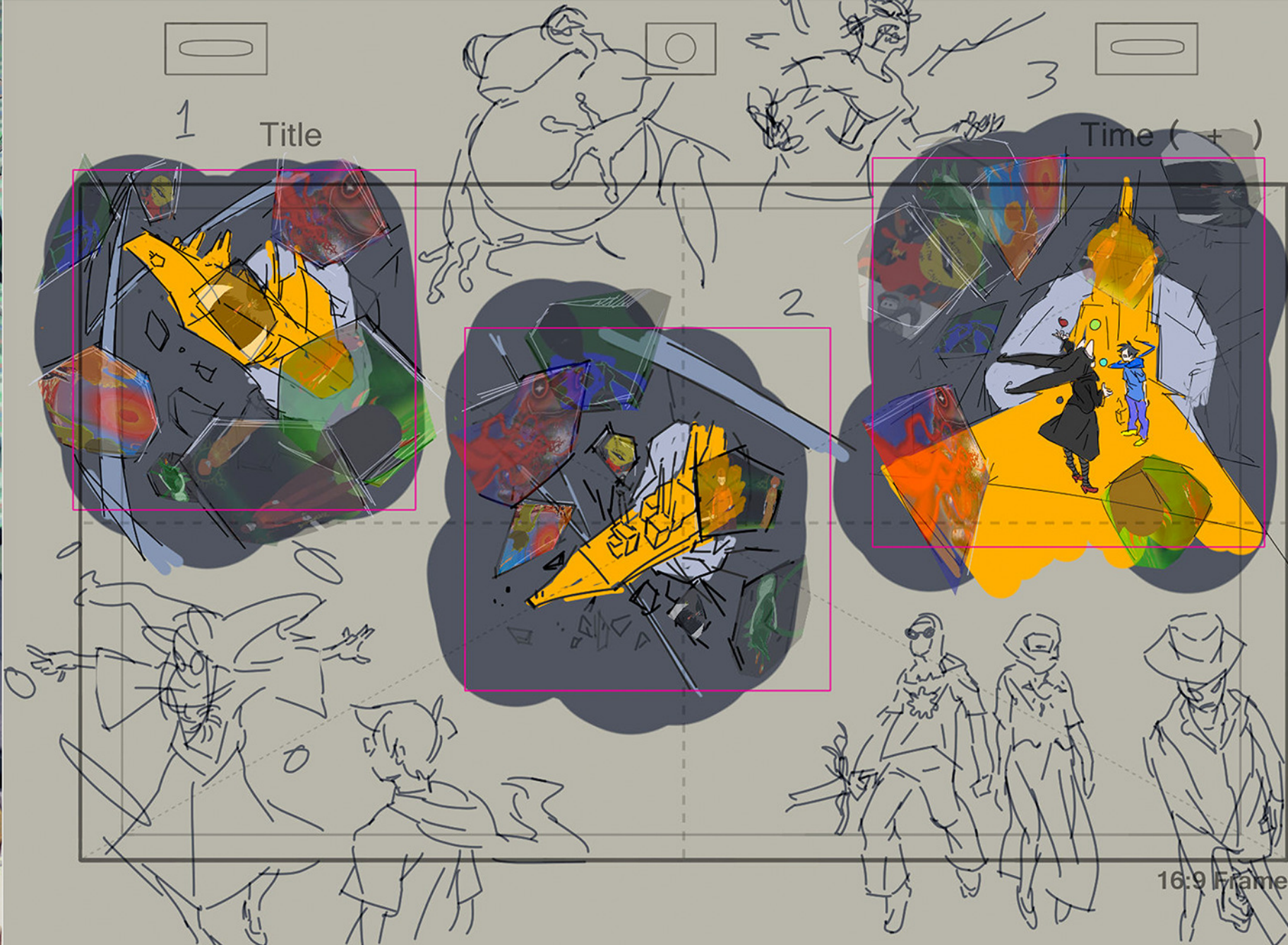
Cascade2 has a strange following online.

The post with the track itself (feel free to google around to find it) isn't that popular (though, relative to the rest of my blog, it's practically Michael Jackson) but the people who've heard it and like it are very vocal about it getting a release.

So, you know, here it is. Freefall hems pretty close to my original remix's overall arrangement, except it swaps out all the samples for newly recorded material (all me) and riffs way, way more loosely on the song quotes. This song is older than [S] Cascade is, and I think the difference between the original version from all those years ago and this is one of the most striking comparisons you can make to show how far I've come.

FREEFALL

BY ROBERT J! LAKE
TRACK ART BY NICO J. DOLLOSO



NICO J. DOLLOSO (NICODOLL), TRACK ARTIST:

I was approached by RJ to do a track art of my choosing for the album and decided to work closely with him for the track "Freefall." The track's subject was the EoA5 flash '[S] Cascade', which was from what I remember a clusterfuck on many levels in the Homestuck universe and for the MSPA website & Newground's hosting servers.

It sure was a ride I'll never forget.

I'm pretty content with the result despite having a short notice to finish it. I wanted to reflect on the clusterfuck of the flash's narrative in these glass shards falling from the area of impact; I love compositions where you can notice something new every time you look closely at it. It also fit well with the title of the track as well.

I also remember there being a lot of contrasting colours in the original flash, so I played with those in this image as well.

Very glad to able to have the opportunity to draw something for the album overall!

DAVID ELLIS, COMPOSER:

The idea for this started around the time Volume 9 came out.
Someone asked Toby what his favourite piece was and he said 'Moonsetter'.
As he liked what I did with TBOSRE for Blue Atom I set out to rework Moonsetter into smooth jazz, ended up with shuffle-funk.
Close enough.
Thomas Ferkol came up with the name.



Take	Start	End
Take 32		
Take 31		
Take 30		
Take 29		
Take 28		
Take 27		
Take 26		
Take 25		
Take 24		
Take 23		
Take 22		
Take 21		
Take 20		



MOONSWEATER BY DAVID ELLIS WITH SAXOPHONE BY MALIK REFAAT



TRACK ART BY DAVID LITT



CASTLE

BY GEORGE BUZINKAI
TRACK ART BY KIKO B.

KIKO B. (CHED), TRACK ARTIST:

This gentle but haunting refrain from George Buzinkai reminded me of those calm-but-ominous moments in my favorite adventure games, particularly a fantastic little game called Cave Story. Given the title of the track, a castle-exploration scene seemed to be a given.

I knew I wanted to draw the trolls, and liked the idea of depicting Terezi and Vriska during the post-retcon timeline. So I went with one of the castles we see in a Dream Bubble.

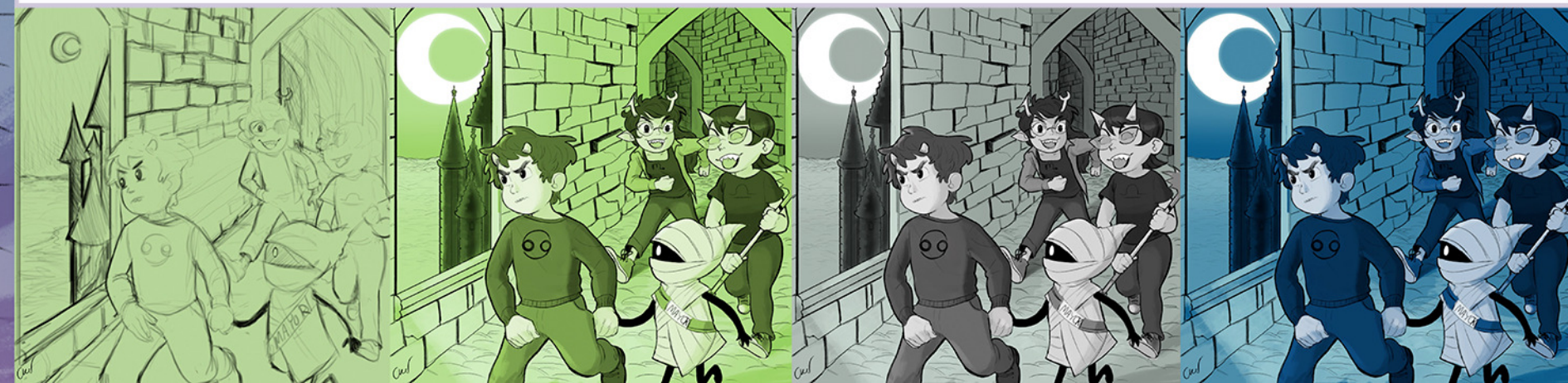
Although, compared to the vibe the song gives off, The Scourge Sisters seem a little too excited to be exploring this creepy old place. The piece needed something to give it a more ominous tone. A scrapped concept involved Karkat and the Mayor, so I put them in the forefront here to add a sense of urgency and foreboding - they're probably not in any actual danger, but Karkat's not gonna let his beloved Mayor get wrapped up in Terezi and Vriska's castle-plundering shenanigans. Visually, I was mainly inspired by the illustrations seen during the ending credits of Cave Story, and how effectively they used limited, almost monochromatic color palettes. I cycled through a lot of different colors for the piece before deciding on the blue/purple gradient here.

Still not sure which one I like best!

In hindsight, I could have easily set this piece in any of the castles on Prospit or Derse, but then I couldn't easily include the Mayor. And I really, REALLY wanted to draw the Mayor.

Besides, pursuing a more obscure concept forced me to get more creative with the scenario and composition.

So, ultimately, it's a win-win!



SKAIAN HAPPY FLIGHT

BY SETH "BEATFOX" PEELLE
TRACK ART BY ALYSSA DALANGIN

SETH "BEATFOX" PEELLE, COMPOSER:

The 1984 fantasy film "The NeverEnding Story" was one of my favorite childhood movies.

It was the first movie I ever remember watching at the theater, in fact!

And the film's fantastic soundtrack by Giorgio Moroder and Klaus Doldinger had a lasting impact on my own musical creativity. Doldinger's high-energy orchestral theme "Bastian's Happy Flight", in particular, is something special that has stuck with me throughout my life like few musical pieces have - an inspiring masterpiece embodying childlike wonderment in its purest form.

Andrew Hussie liked that movie, too, I guess.

So when Hussie came by my house riding a long magic dog through the sky and causing the absurd movie-referencing shenanigans called Homestuck, I somehow knew that the only proper response was to mash together the "Skaian Ride" and "Skies of Skaia" themes into a nostalgic homage to Mr. Doldinger's soundtrack.

(I am sure Mr. Doldinger - much like a certain ill-fated group of bullies - never could have seen THAT one coming.)

ALYSSA LEE DALANGIN, TRACK ARTIST:

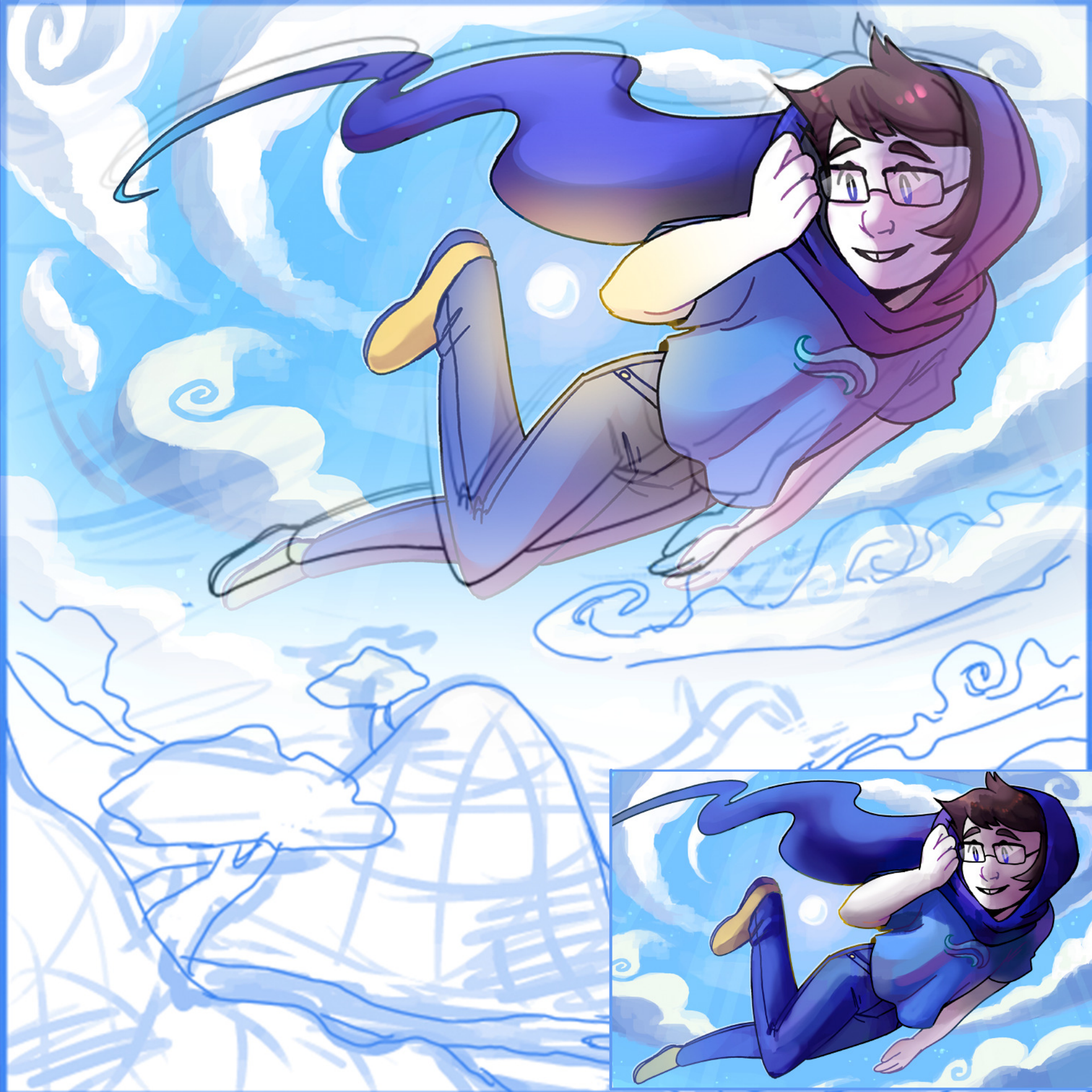
I wanted to illustrate Skaian Happy Flight when I heard it because the music was so whimsical and uplifting, I knew doing the imagery to match it would be fun. When I asked the musician what their vision was for a scenario or character, they said they didn't have anything in particular in mind (though they mentioned some influences from The Neverending Story, which Homestuck has also referenced).

There's a tiny Hussie riding a dragon in the background of my picture, based off a comic page I was shown, haha!)

Just based off the song title, I decided to draw John flying through some pretty Skaian scenery, so I set to work doing preliminary brainstorming. I mostly wanted to settle on cohesive shape language for the sky and the trees, since I already had an idea of the overall composition, and I really wanted the nature to be wispy. Unfortunately I didn't save too many WIP shots, but my sketch was pretty straightforward and most of the struggle came from deciding the colors for John...

One of the WIPs I've included here is showing a roughly shaded layer for John that I ended up scrapping for the simpler coloring that's in the final version.

There were aspects of the more detailed coloring I liked, but I didn't want John to stick out as awkwardly rendered against the otherwise mostly simplistic background style. I had a lot of fun creating this piece and I hope it does the cute song some justice!



VOIDLIGHT

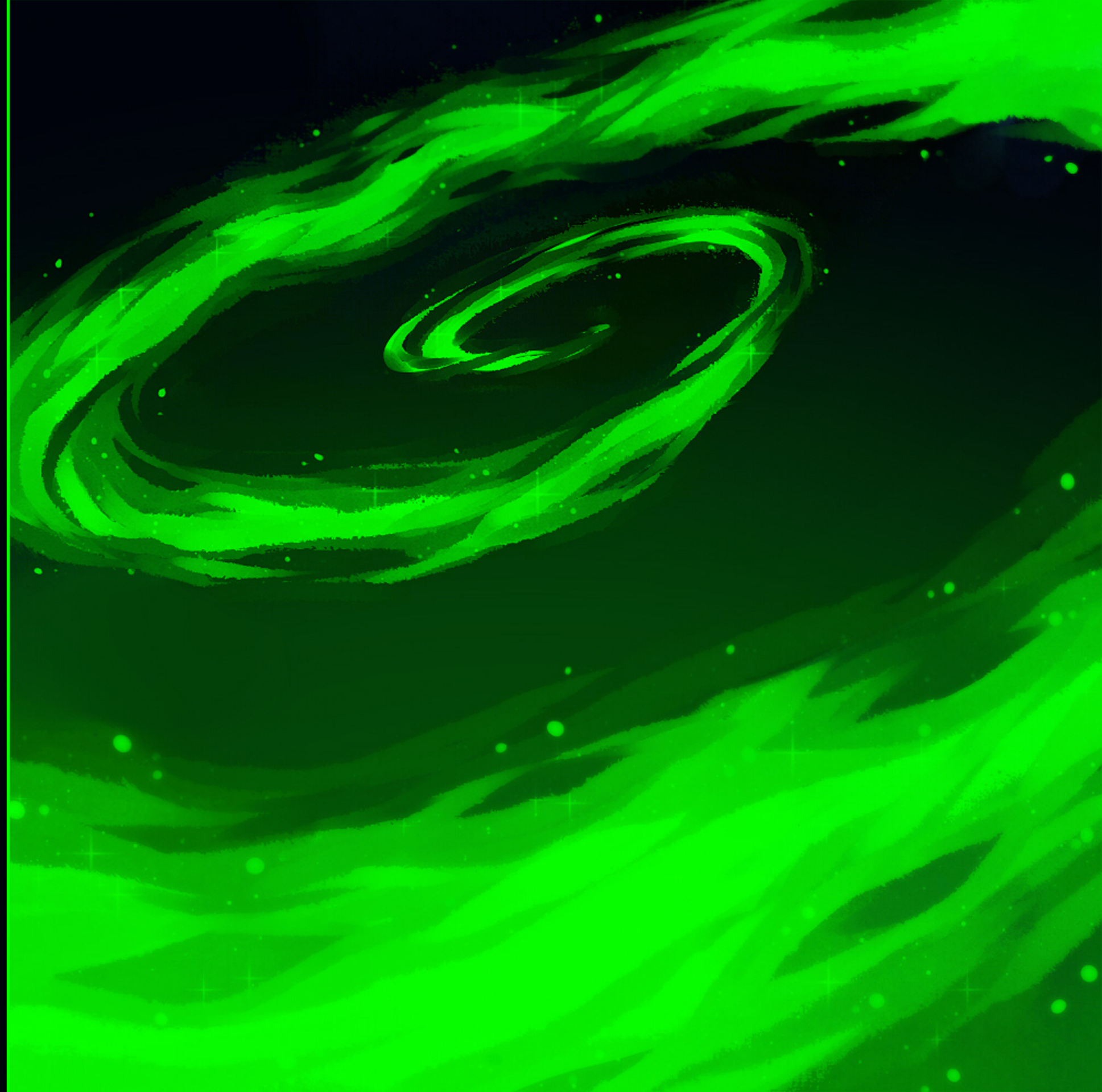
BY THOMAS FERKOL

TRACK ART BY ZILLENIOSE

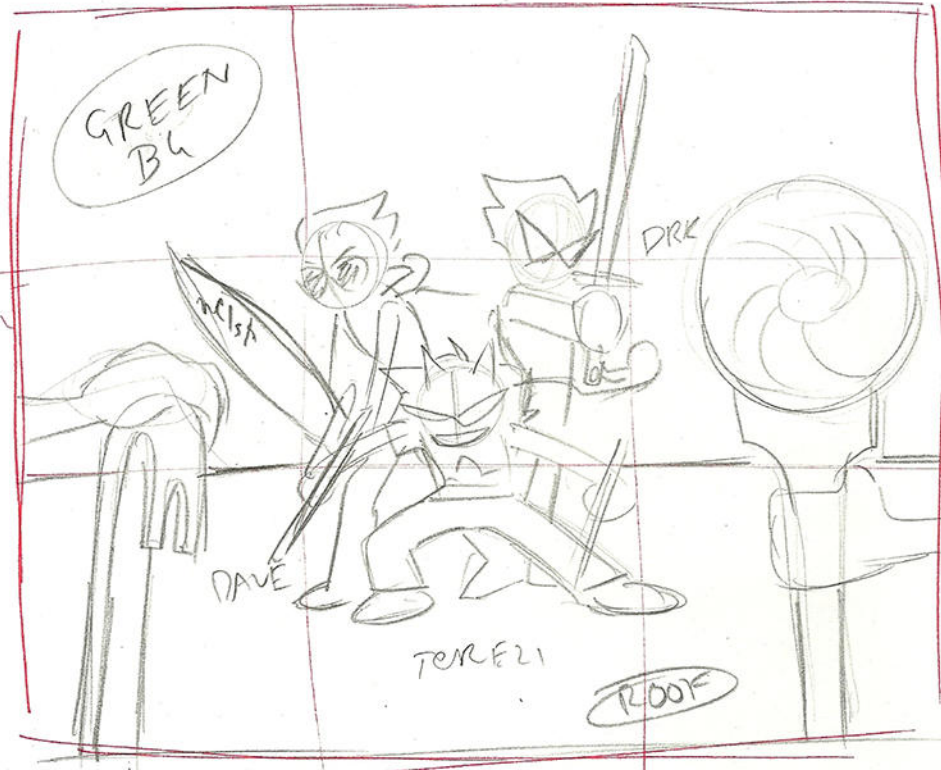
THOMAS FERKOL, COMPOSER:

Based on Calliope's haven in the Furthest Rings, this track has gone on a journey.

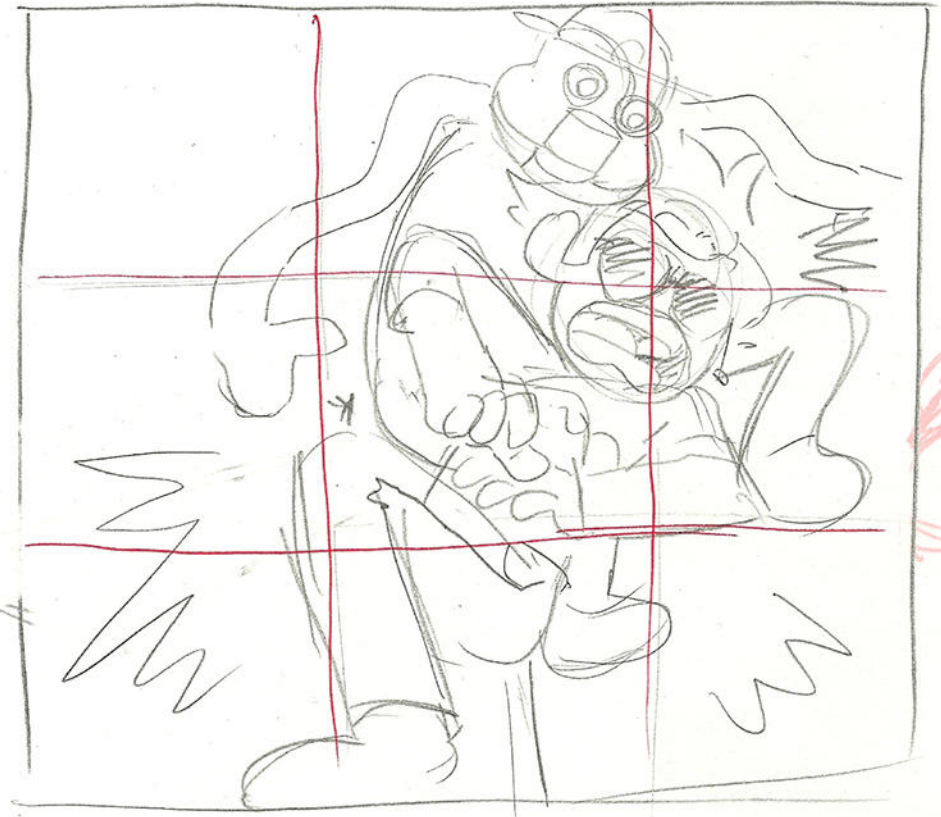
Though the piano and harp melodies have remained relatively unchanged through the years (yep, YEARS), the piece itself has had a number of facelifts and additions. With new drums, strings, electric pianos, a celesta, some synths, and a quiet, somewhat ominous epilogue, it was a doozy. I'm pretty sure the epilogue was inspired by a chord progression in a Sonata Arctica song. Something about the tone and instrumentation of the piece felt right at home with Sonata's synths. The piece is meant to convey both a relaxed and serene feeling on top of a somewhat melancholy and serious undertone. Calliope's void light spiral was a breather from the craziness happening elsewhere in the comic, but there was always the threat of English showing up.



BEATDOWN DX CONCEPT ART



OR
CALL BACK TO
ORIGINAL



BEATDOWN DX

BY CURT BLAKESLEE
TRACK ART BY MIRA W.

CURT BLAKESLEE, COMPOSER:

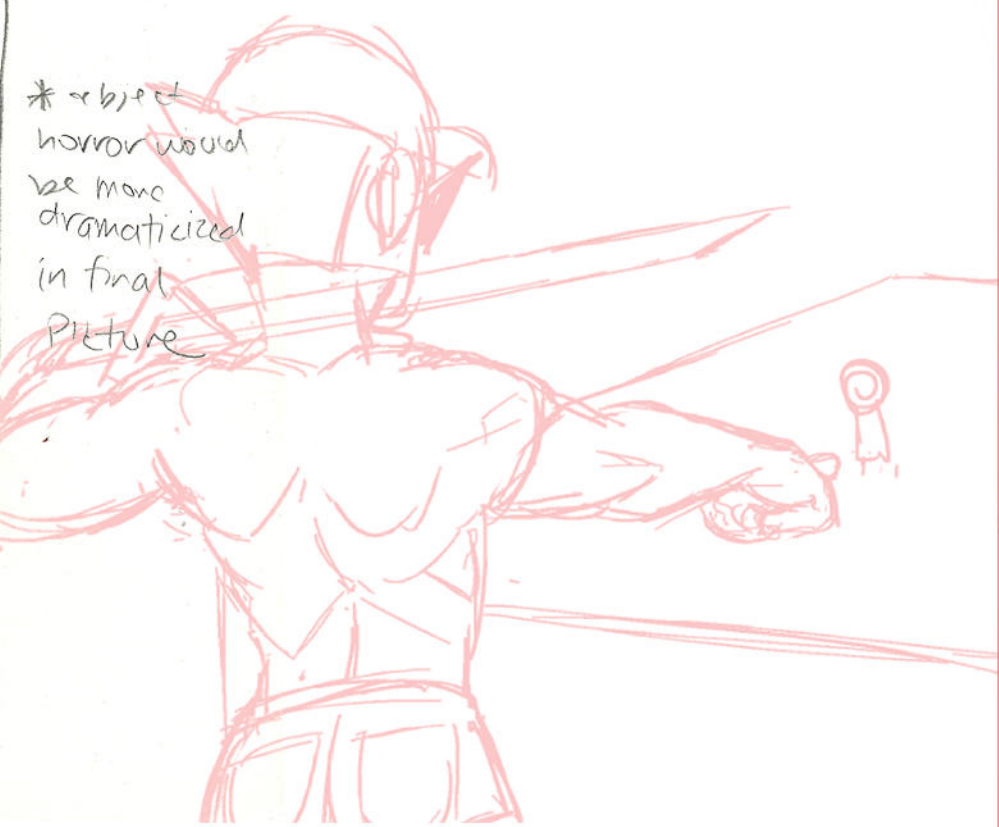
A simplified chiptune rendition of Beatdown. Dave's original strife track was purposefully overproduced, loud, and busy, so Beatdown DX is actually less 'deluxe' than the original.

Even so, the DX suffix is a bit of an homage to the tradition of releasing enhanced versions of old video games.

JACK
NOIR

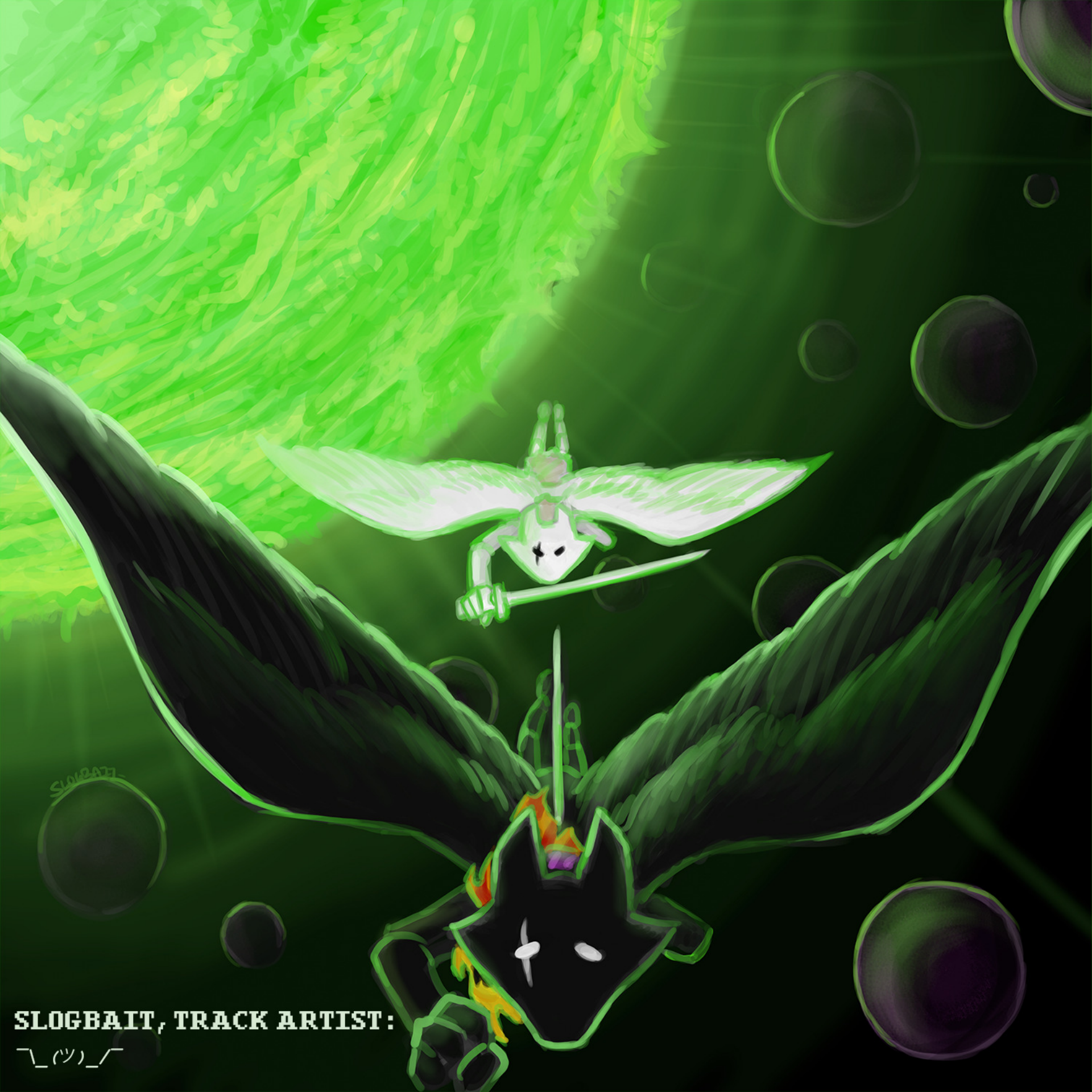
MIRA W., TRACK ARTIST:

Catch me on the roof in my mid 30's
pwning a 9th grader with a sword.



* object
horror would
be more
dramaticized
in final
picture





SOLAR VOYAGE

BY MARCY NABORS
ARRANGEMENT BY MICHAEL GUY BOWMAN,
MARCY NABORS, CLARK POWELL, AND ERIK SCHEELE
TRACK ART BY SLOGBAIT

MARCY NABORS, COMPOSER:

Way back in good ol' 2012 I was in a little one-off band with Erik Scheele, Clark Powell, Astro Kid, and the ever-charismatic Michael Guy Bowman.

At one point we played a small backyard show of Mobius Trip and Hadron Kaleido tunes, along with many other Homestuck songs you all know and love, to a lovely audience of dedicated fans.

In an effort to pack our show with even more Homestuck material, we put together this cool medley as a live bit, based on songs some of the band members had worked on.

Four years later, and with the addition of some radicool guitar by Tensei and rockin' drums by Jamie Paige Stanley, we're pleased to present it to you in this glorious and shiny new form!

Also Paul.

PAUL HENDERSON, VOCALS:

I recorded some vocals for Explare (as it was called at the time) like a year ago bc marcy was like "hey this might be on the next homestuck album?" and i really wanted to be on a homestuck album, so i show up for like twelve seconds. this is a dream come true

anyway bye

SLOGBAIT, TRACK ARTIST:

ツ(ツ)ツ



PJ TUSH, TRACK ARTIST:

Being so high energy, I wanted to make the piece as colorful as possible, but not unattractively saturated. Initially I planned on reflecting the characters in dream bubbles of their respective colors, but decided to depict them in full mugshot instead.

Each character is lightly engulfed in a colorful overlay in front of the chaotic, perpetually expanding infinity of gay space.

**BY ROBERT J! LAKE
AND LUKE BENJAMINS**
TRACK ART BY FENN, PJ TUSH, AND MIKA

FEEL

LUKE BENJAMINS, COMPOSER:

I actually wrote the melody for this track almost five years ago, for a project that never got off the ground. As far as I can remember, I didn't have any particular inspiration when I wrote it, musical or otherwise. It's the catchiest tune I've ever made, yet I couldn't tell you how it came to me exactly. This version is a completely unique take on this melody compared to the original context, giving it a very different feel. I wasn't able to do any of the audio production for this track, but I did guide RJ as to how I feel it should be put together. We ended up pushing the deadline too much with this one, and there are still a couple things I wish had been changed, but like with any creative work, you need to draw the line somewhere, lest you polish it endlessly.

In the end, I'm glad to finally share it with the world in some form, and I hope the world enjoys it.

FENN, TRACK ARTIST:

Feel is a very powerful song full of energy. We were inspired by the tension filled events occurring during the 3 year span of time between those stuck on the troll meteor, flying through space towards an unknowing and terrifying future.



MIKA B., TRACK ARTIST:

When rendering the final rendition of the track art piece, I hoped to give it a complete finish that would best accustom the pieces lovely concept art. I enjoyed working to convey the spectacular energy Jade is known to behold, particularly with her hair.

Overall, this piece was a great enjoyment to work on, and I was able to accompany two great artists in their work to create art to represent Feel, as well as the teens' spiraling adventure on the gay meteor.

CALLIWE



ROBERT J! LAKE, PRODUCER, ARRANGER:

This is really Luke's song. I started the project file but he made it his own. The crown noises are mine.



THE FEELING

FOR THE

BY ERIK SCHEELE
TRACK ART BY RICHARD GUNG

RICHARD GUNG, TRACK ARTIST:

A chill tune deserves a classy cover.

ERIK SCHEELE, COMPOSER:

Originally my thought for this piece was Spades Slick and Ms. Paint on a gondola, something semi-romantic and jazzy and very ship-worthy. Hence the accordion. But then, like any other time I started feeling vaguely like making something into a piece for shipping people, I actually made the piece and got a way better idea for what it would be for, aka post-game everyone-hanging-out reflection-relaxation. And hey, the accordion still worked.

I don't expect anyone else to be a Maria Schneider fan and also encounter this piece, but if they do, yes I pretty much took the first 4 bars of Evanescence and used it as the basis for the piece. A few other cues came from that piece as well.

STARFALL



REAL

BY SOLATRUS
TRACK ART BY CHRISTINA LILLARD

JEREMY IAMURRI (SOLATRUS), COMPOSER:

I got inspired by listening to a friend's liquid drum and bass tracks back in 2014 (shoutout to you, Justin!), and decided I really wanted to do something along those lines.

Anyway, life happened so this track collected dust until RJ and Marcy yelled at me to finish it.

Oh if you want to check out Justin's work, go here: www.facebook.com/FliteDnB/

CHRISTINA LILLARD (LUNE), TRACK ARTIST:

So I was minding my own business one day, and then all of a sudden Jeremy came and asked me if I wanted to do some art for Volume 10. Naturally, I obliged, and I asked him if he had anything specific in mind that he wanted me to draw for it, and he basically told me to draw whatever came to mind. So I listened to the WIP of the track he sent me a few times to get a feel for what I wanted to draw for it, and jotted down a couple of concept sketches for what I wanted to do!

The first character that came to mind was Rose for some reason, and the track gave me a bit of a Skaianet vibe, so at first I sketched up a little composition featuring the meteor terminal in the Skaianet lab.

I scrapped that idea because it would've been far too much detail for me to do in less than a week, so I thought I'd do something with Rose making her way towards Jaspers' mausoleum, with a view of meteors falling from the sky. After all, a title like Starfall called meteors to mind!

So I sketched up that idea and liked it enough to see it through to completion.

Fun fact: Jeremy was surprised that the final track art was so red, because he felt like the music would inspire more blues, but he liked it a lot in the end.

I always thought it'd be pretty cool to do something for an official album, and I guess that dream came true!

I'm pretty happy to have had this opportunity to draw something for this album.

ASCEND

BY TENSEI

TRACK ART BY MARIMO

TENSEI, COMPOSER:

First of all, I'm not an EDM producer.

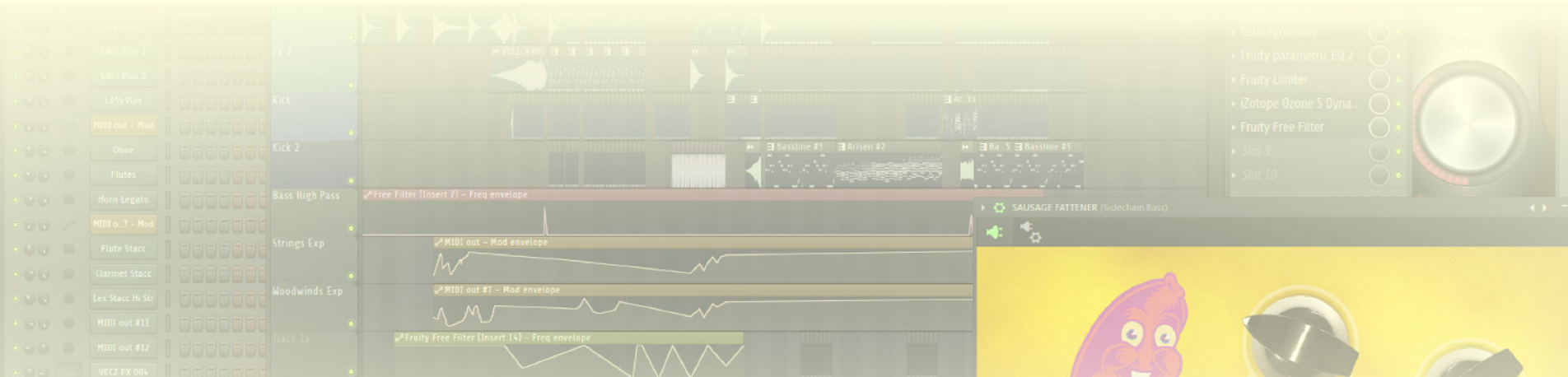
So I made this track called The King in Red. Here's the song:

PSYCH, that's the wrong song!

Sweet Fruity Loops - I use that.

Supa hot beats - I drop that.

John and Aradia - I ship that.





MALCOLM BROWN, COMPOSER:

This track's actually effectively a second go at a previous track I made called "Mother" which blended Black Rose/Green Sun & Aggrieve in a sort've more mystical tone.

It focuses on the more fantastical elements of Homestuck, like vampires & wizards & eldritch horrorterrors from the furthest depths, and I envisioned Rose & Kanaya milling around the Troll library during the timeskip, reading up on ancient lore and having a dance together.

There's a little bit of Enya influence sneaking in, particularly with all the humming choirs, and then halfway through we go into a bit of Yasunori Mitsuda inspired celtic dance and a little excerpt of Darling Kanaya before slowing down and ending on the Aggrieve melody again.

SERA B., TRACK ARTIST:

When Malcolm told me this was a Rose/Kanaya piece I got hung up on the idea of them having a little dance together in the meteor library. I figured it would be a sweet way to demonstrate the darker, more elegant aspects of the song and its liveliness at the same time.

I chose to have Kanaya as the lightsource to put a little more of a literal spin on the title-- Rose as Lilith and Kanaya as her starlight.

Just the two of them in their own little world, sharing a romantic moment!

LILITH IN STARLIGHT

BY MALCOLM BROWN
TRACK ART BY SERA B.

THANKS FOR PLAYING

BY MAX WRIGHT

TRACK ART BY SLOGBAIT

MAX WRIGHT, COMPOSER:

Thanks for Playing was originally conceived as a theme for Calliope, back before the Cherubim album had been released. At that time it had a runtime of only one minute, so when Volume 10 was being organised I ran with what I had and extended it into the piece featured. I felt that the initial theme has a air of purity, something that lent itself well to the birth of a new world - hence its allocation.

At least, that's how I'm justifying it. In reality this can be considered a Calliope piece at heart.

SLOGBAIT, TRACK ARTIST:

This is a really fantastic song that I'd been rooting for from the start, and when given the chance to do art for it I was intent on making sure it got the beautiful art it deserved.

We had very similar ideas for the visual direction, and I think I've done the concept justice.



RENEWED RETURN

MARCY NABORS, COMPOSER:

Four years! And what a wild four years it has been.

I started this one back in 2012 alongside "Solar Voyage", with lofty ambitions of live choir, strings, and woodwinds, a number of movements in different time signatures and tempos, and enough heart and soul to rival Homestuck itself. All this time later, I've emerged from my musical cocoon with a striking success of a piece, its delicate wings glistening in the moonlight as it rears its feathery antennae, taking in the world with newfound---

ahem.

Right.

I extend my endless thanks to the folks who were kind enough to lend their voices, instruments, and time to what has turned out to be the longest song in the entire Homestuck discography.

And to the listeners, I sincerely hope you enjoy it!

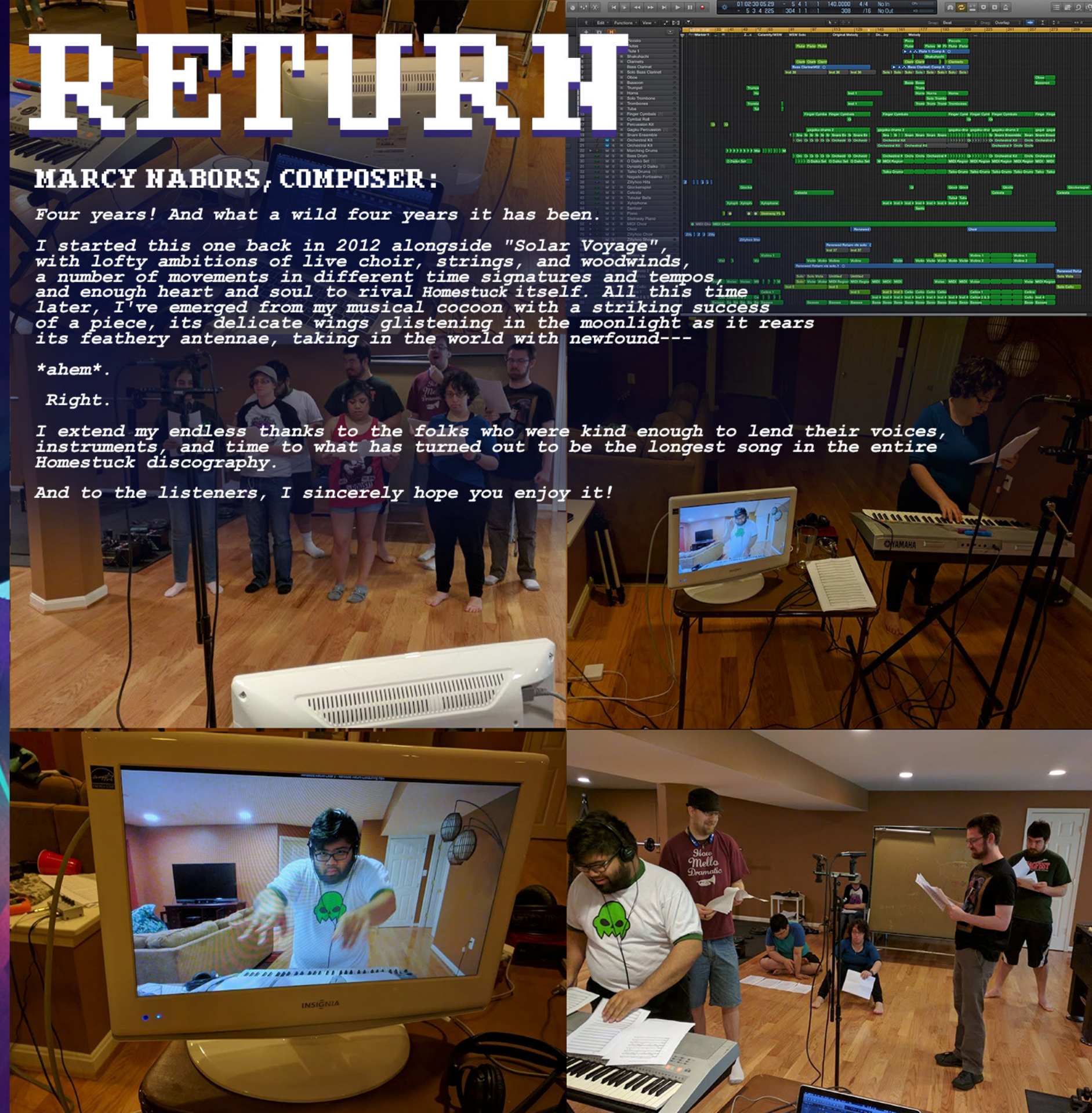
*SURGE EX DOLORIBUS, CUM SPE IN CORDE!
RESPIRA UT PROELIUM VINCATUR!
SURGE EX IRA, DA PACEM MUNDO NOVO!
RESPIRA UT TENEATIS FINEM FELICEM!*

*RENOVA!
REVENI!*

*(Rise out of sorrow, with hope in your heart!
Resurrect them that the battle be won!
Rise out of wrath, bring peace to a new world!
Resurrect them that you may grasp a happy ending!*

*Renew!
Return!)*

BY MARCY NABORS
TRACK ART BY ZILLENIOSE





ALEX ROSETTI, ARRANGER:

THIS Pumpkin is an arrangement of Seth "Beatfox" Peele's Pumpkin Cravings from Homestuck Volume 5.

If I recall correctly, Beatfox said he was imitating Danny Elfman's style in the original 8-bit piece. One of the many great things about it is all the "orchestrations" he does with such a limited palette, and how strong they come through.

So strong in fact, that I've wanted to make an orchestrated version for a long time.

Consider it fully "Elfmanized" now. The title is a reference to the "THIS FUCKING PUMPKIN" line from Problem Sleuth.

For obvious reasons I decided to drop one of those words when naming the arrangement.

WORTHIKIDS, TRACK ARTIST:

Alex's original request for this art was "so here's the thing..... could u draw the what pumpkin logo.... but with an exclamation point instead of a question mark maybe candy corn vampire-problem sleuth could be holding it?"

I remember drawing the altered logo all plain by itself and sending that to Alex, and he liked that fine,

but I was ultimately irked and redid it with candy corn PS a few days later.

THIS PUMPKIN
BY ALEX ROSETTI
TRACK ART BY WORTHIKIDS
BASED ON "PUMPKIN CRAVINGS" BY SETH "BEATFOX" PEELE

WORTHIKIDS



BY SETH "BEATFOX" PEELLE
TRACK ART BY KIKO B.

SETH "BEATFOX" PEELLE, COMPOSER:

Oh, hey. Is it the last track already? Man, where did the time go?

Wow. This piece has run through my head more times than any other that I've written for Homestuck. I hadn't been on the music team for very long before I felt motivated to create something in my head that could conceivably serve as a compelling closer to the comic, regardless of whether it ended up actually serving as such. Arguably the most thematically significant musical motifs in the comic - "Sburban Jungle", "Showtime", "Skies of Skaia", and of course, "Homestuck" - would all have their part to play. I first put it down into corporeal form in late 2010 as a full-length piano draft, but it wasn't until four years later that I began working on the final orchestrated version.

Efforts to complete it over the next couple years were sparse and sporadic at best and fraught with technical issues, but thankfully I managed to make the deadline for the album.

I wanted to make something that, although perhaps bittersweet, has a definitively happy ending.

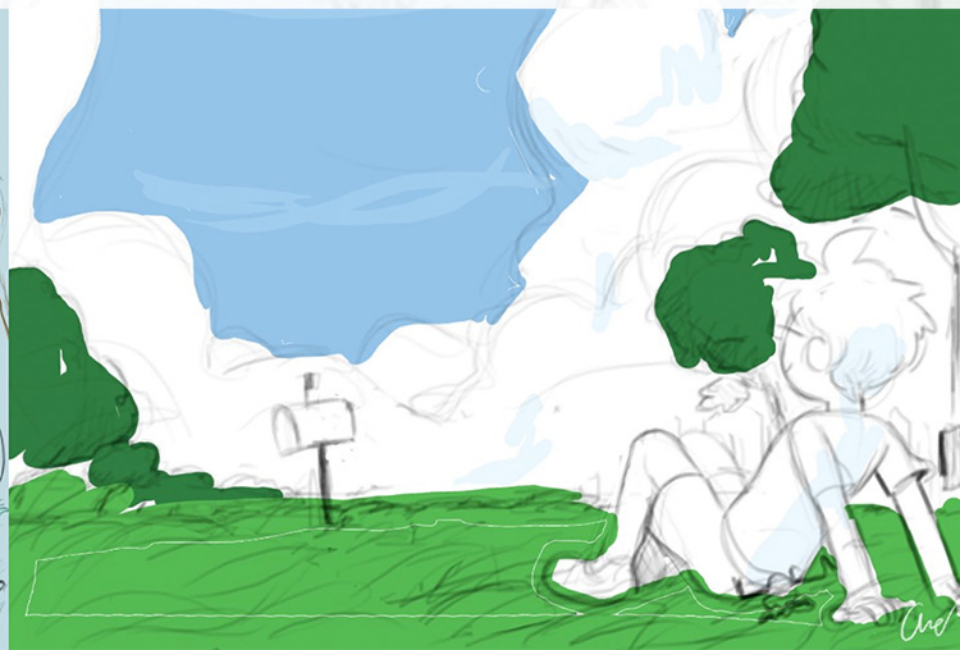
Despite all the super bad stuff that goes down through the course of the comic, Homestuck is ultimately a story with a message of optimism. Learning, growing, helping, loving.

Blossoming individually, but also working toward a shared goal that's so much bigger than the individual and so totally worth it in the end.

These are themes that play out through the entire comic, but also themes that are reflected in our reality.

I wanted this piece to be an expression of ideals that I, myself, believe in.

I'm hopeful that you believe in them, as well.



KIKO B., TRACK ARTIST:

Look how far we've come! Beatfox did such a spectacular job combining so many early Homestuck themes here. Listening to "Conclude" for the first time was a major nostalgia rush!

It's a fitting finale to a fantastic album. I went through tons of variations of the same image of John and his friends looking off into the new world they'd built, but I couldn't quite nail down the concept.

Nothing, no matter how vast in scope, or how many kids I crammed in there, properly conveyed the feeling of finality befitting the final track on the album, and the end of HS itself.

Realizing that my initial concept was leading me nowhere, I returned to Act 1 for inspiration.

My single favorite page in HS is page 82 - the soothing but foreboding sound of wind chimes ringing in the howling breeze might even be my favorite use of sound in the whole comic, period.

It was the first moment, when I began reading HS, that made me shiver with anticipation for what was to come. I wanted to evoke that moment here, only in a new light; one that brings John full-circle, acknowledges where he's been, and implies the possibilities of the future.

I intentionally set the scene to look a lot like his yard in Act 1, with the "THANKS FOR PLAYING" text hanging in the sky as the one distinguishing feature that sets this piece post-Act 7. Here, John isn't gazing forlornly at his neighborhood in anticipation of a long day, but relaxing somewhere warm and familiar after that long day has finally come to a close.

By the way, I haven't forgotten that his ACTUAL yard isn't exactly intact by the end of Act 1, but I figured it was worth it to take a little artistic license to deliver what this track needed.

It's not TOO much of a stretch to assume that John or any one of his God Tier pals could have rebuilt his home in the new universe, right?

Right.

It's my headcanon and I won't be shamed!

On a final and more personal note, Homestuck, and its music, hold a very special place in my heart.

I began reading in 2011, so there was a lot of the comic and a lot of music to catch up on. I saved up so I could buy and binge it all at once. My favorite themes fueled many lazy days drawing fanart, which I eagerly shared online. I can sincerely say that doing so changed my life in many ways, as is the case with so many little, seemingly inconsequential decisions. Sharing my enthusiasm for HS led me to meet many dear friends.

That's an experience that I think HS encapsulates incredibly well - the incalculable impact something as simple as sharing something with friends can have.

This piece is my thank-you to Homestuck for that experience.

Chel



THANKS TO:

SETH "BEATFOX" PEELLE
GEORGE BUZINKAI
TENSEI
CLARK POWELL
ASTRO KID
CATBOSS
WILLOW ASCENZO
DJ 最テ一
VIASATELLITE
DAVID "DIRTIEST" DYCUS
IAN WHITE
NOEL SADWIN
MALCOLM BROWN
TOBY FOX
MARK HADLEY
KALIBRATION
THOMAS FERKOL
ANDREW HUO
ROBERT J! LAKE
DAVID ELLIS
MALIK REFAAT
CURT BLAKESLEE
MARCY NABORS
MICHAEL GUY BOWMAN
ERIK SCHEELE
PAUL HENDERSON
JAMIE PAIGE STANLEY
SOLATRUS
JUSTIN HELLIER
MAX WRIGHT
KYLE G. JAMOLIN
CIARAN CAIN
ZEYNEP DILLI

KAT JAMOLIN
MICHAEL OHR
CORBIN PANGILINAN
ROBIN S
CHRIS ROPER
STEPHEN "JEEBES" WILEY
ALEX ROSETTI
PJ TUSH
KATE HOLDEN
ARCHEIA
SHANNON MURPHY
MIKA B.
SERA B.
RACHEL LUNDIN
SLOGBAIT
NICO J. DOLLOSO
DAVID LITT
KIKO B.
ALYSSA LEE DALANGIN
ZILLENIOSE
MIRA W.
FENN
RICHARD GUNG
CHRISTINA LILLARD
MARIMO
WORTHIKIDS
LEXXY
JAMES ROACH
ANDREW HUSSIE... AND YOU!

Without all of you, this wouldn't be possible.
Album managed by Robert J! Lake with help from
Marcy Nabors and James Roach.
Booklet designed and assembled by Robert J! Lake.