

(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.

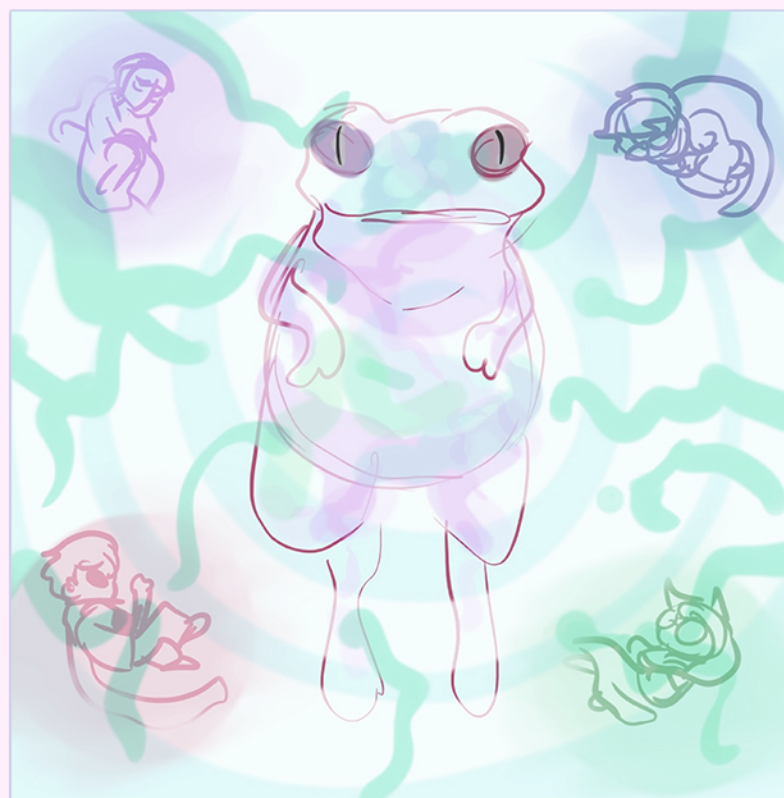
*(yes it was totally that easy.
no you can't stop me from pretending this.)*

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)



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

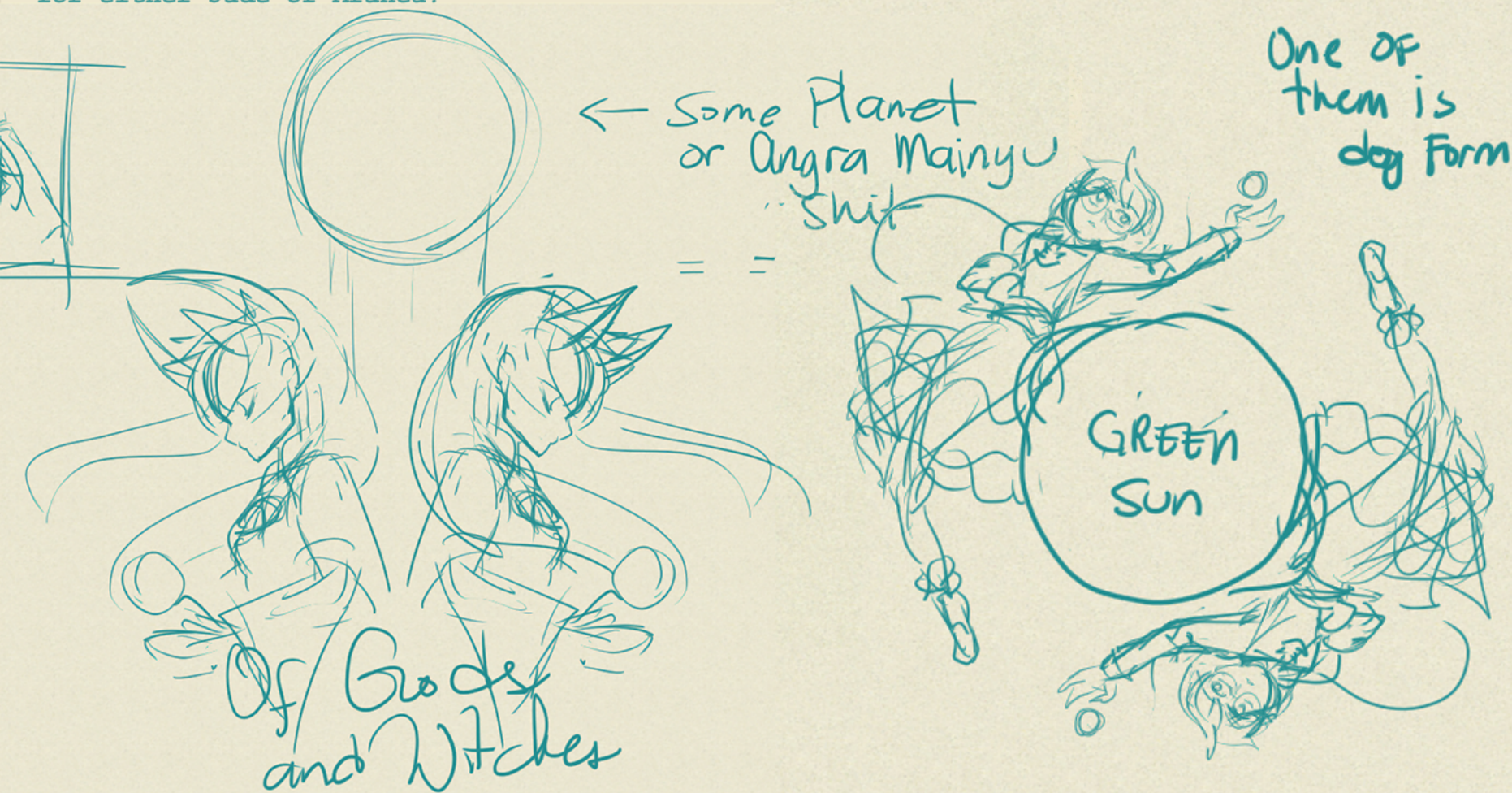
BY TENSEI
TRACK ART BY ARCHIEA

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

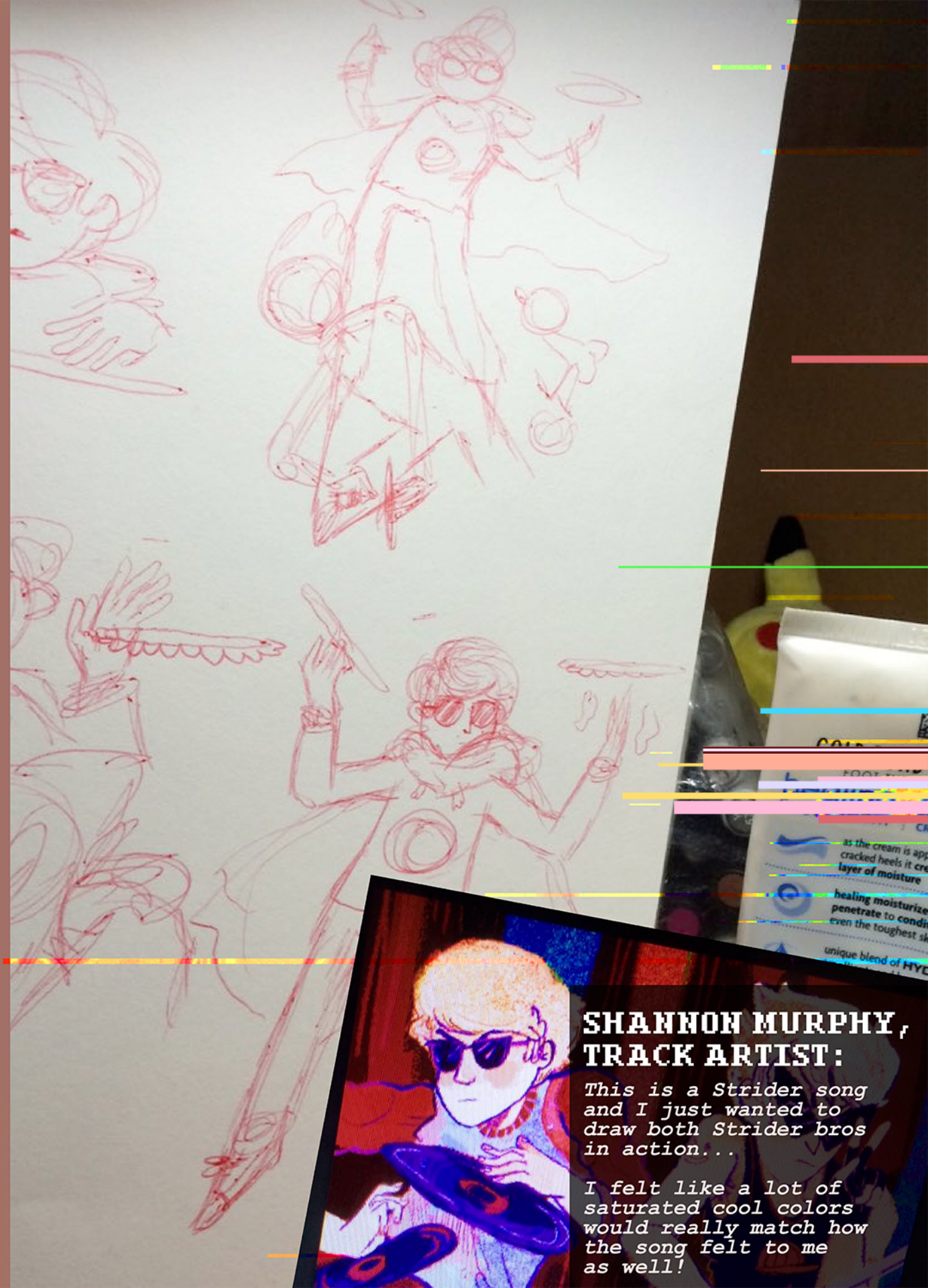
**ROBERT J! LAKE,
PROJECT MANAGER :**

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.

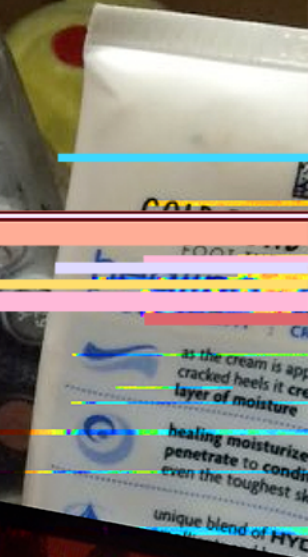
5:14



**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

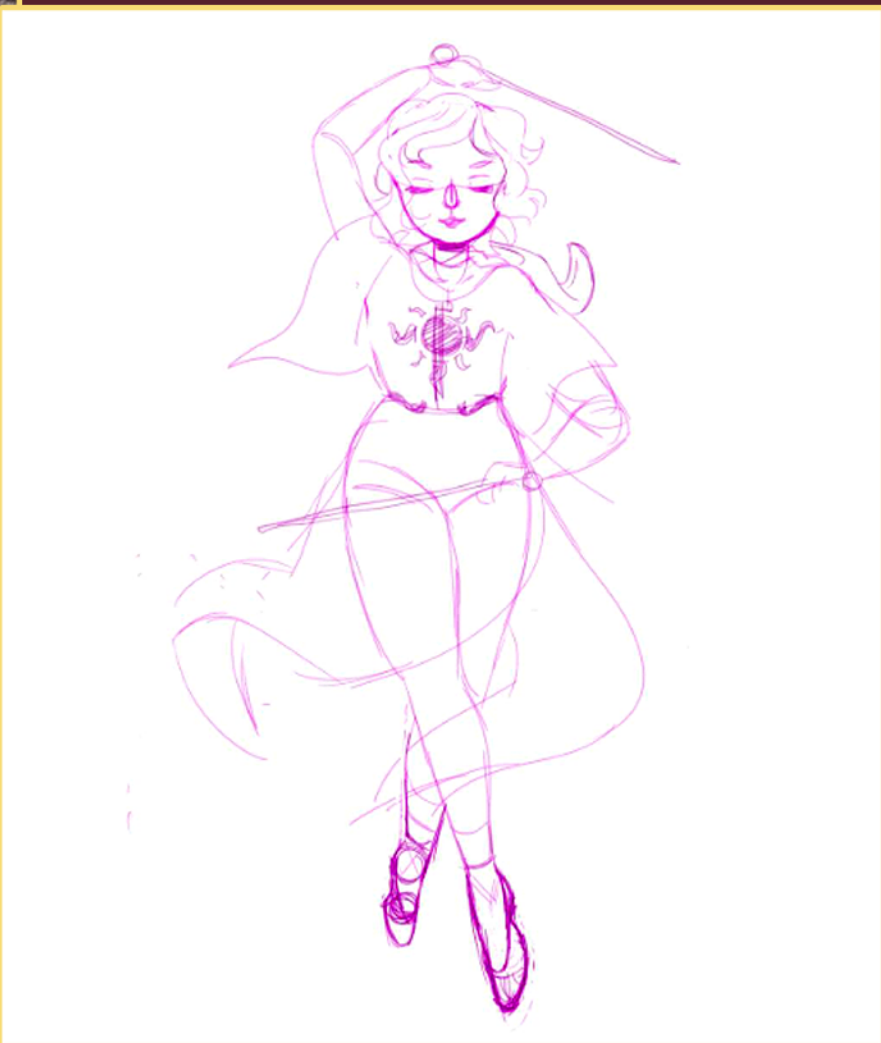
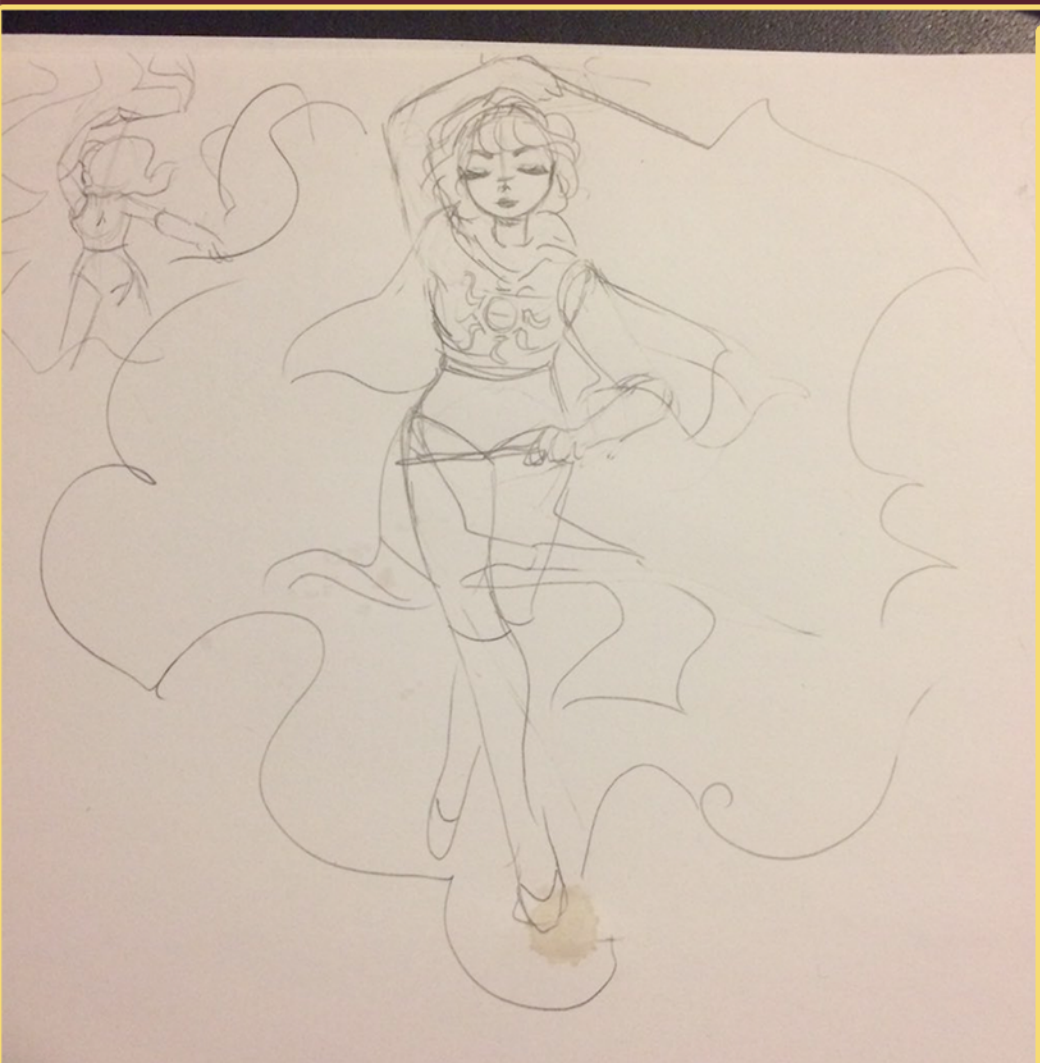
BY MARK HADLEY
TRACK ART BY RACHEL LUNDIN

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.

SBURB

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:**

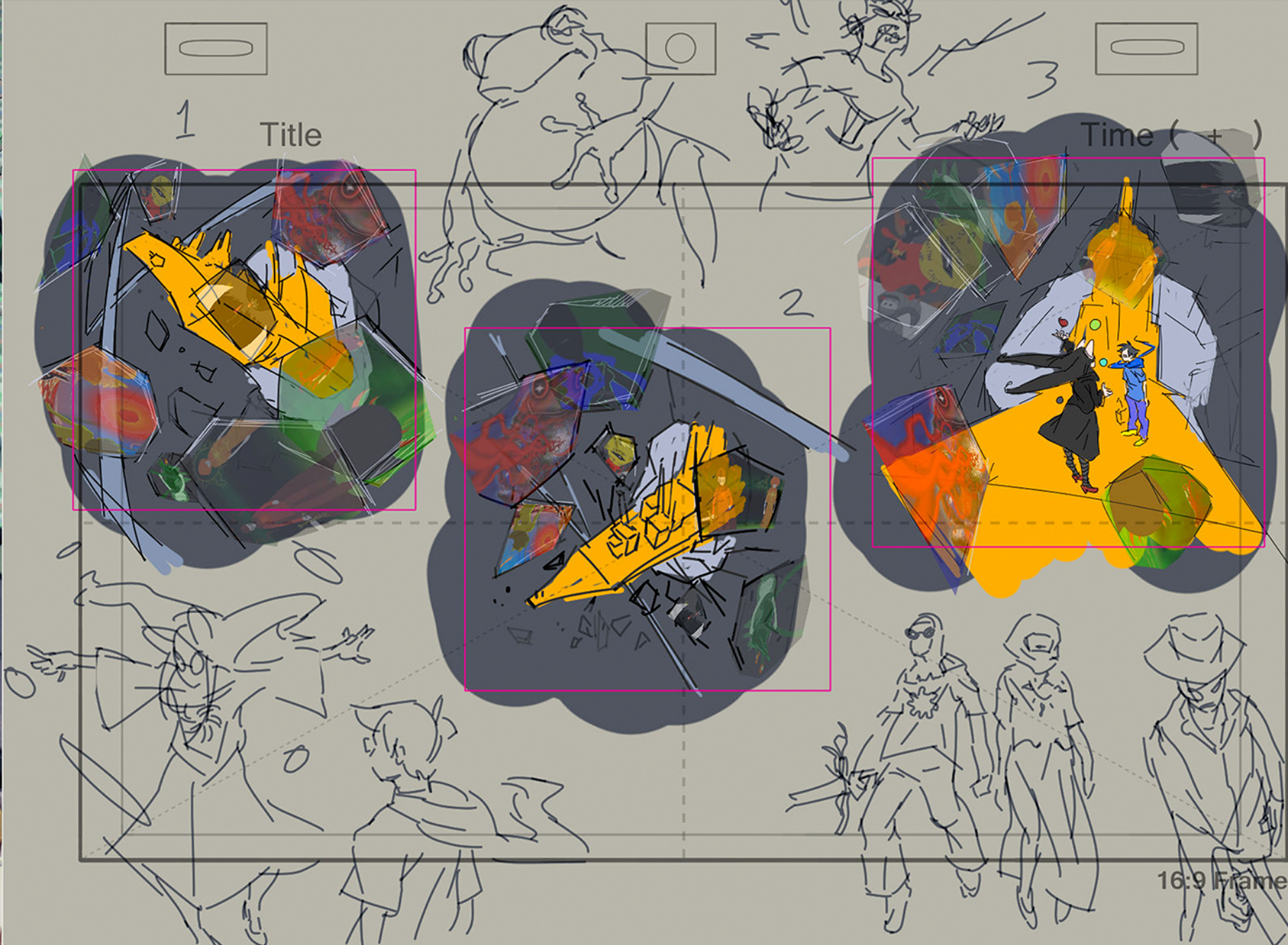
Cascade2 has a strange following online.

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:

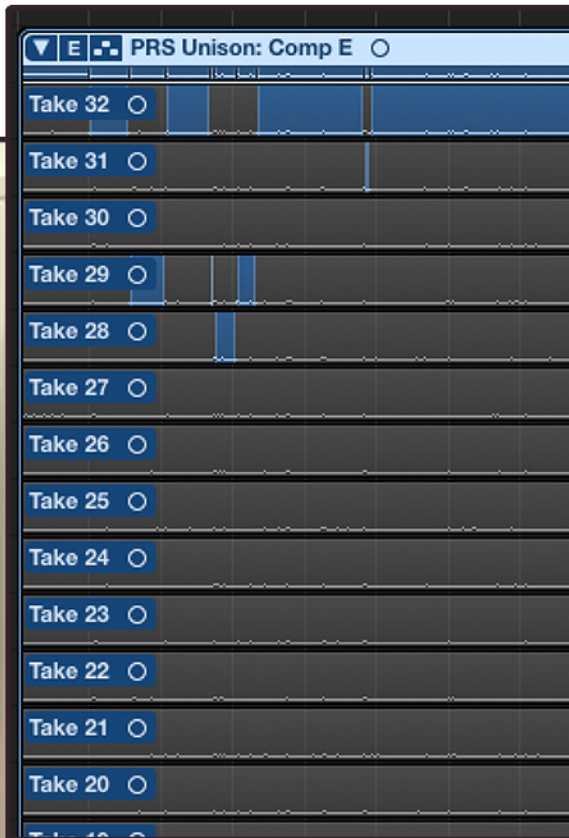
The idea for this started around the time Volume 9 came out.

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.



MOONSWEATER BY DAVID ELLIS WITH SAXOPHONE BY MALIK REFAAT

WAN
\$1,000



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!

