



SPARKLITE

ORIGINAL GAME SOUNDTRACK
BY DALE NORTH



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All music composed, mixed, and
mastered by Dale North

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I was immediately taken with Sparklite.

Taken and taken back. Seeing and playing it was like a sharp reminder of the things I dreamed of doing when I was a kid. The adventure games from those days had the best soundtracks, but not for any technical reason. They were the best at setting the stage, making you feel a certain way, and getting stuck in your head. That's immediately what I imagined when I first saw Sparklite.

It was an absolute joy to see these dreams realized in my work on the soundtrack for Sparklite. It felt and still feels like a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to set something like this to music and I'll always be grateful to the team at Red Blue Games. And I'm thankful that they were so accepting and open to my ideas and music. It felt like a privilege on top of a rare opportunity.

My hope is that I did this wonderful game justice. If you ever end up feeling anything like I did when I played the adventure games of my childhood I'll feel like I at least got part of the way toward that goal. Thanks so much for listening.

DALE NORTH



Interview with Dale North

HOW DID YOU COME TO WORK ON SPARKLITE?

I met the Red Blue Games team more than a year before I began work on it, and in that meeting I managed to get an early build of Sparklite to take home with me. But that's all that came of that meeting – me getting a copy of a really cool game.

But then they called me back a bit later. It was just for a small bit of music work for Sparklite but I was honored and delivered that. And I had high hopes that my work would lead to something more...but that was it.

Until a year later! They called me and asked if I would write the entire soundtrack. I felt like the luckiest guy in the world that day. I had always hoped it would work out to where I was writing the soundtrack but never once expected it to

happen. I can't convey how ridiculously excited I was that day.

HOW WAS THE GAMECUBE-LIKE AESTHETIC DECIDED UPON?

Early on, the Red Blue Games team made it clear that the games of that era were a clear inspiration for them. So it worked out that the game music of that era continues to set the pace and tone in my work. Combine all of that with my initial vision from when I first saw Sparklite and it seemed like this direction was a good one to go with.

CAN YOU REVEAL SOME TECHNICAL DETAILS BEHIND THE SOUND OF SPARKLITE?

GameCube game music was unique in that it seemed to bridge gaming eras. It rode this line of being both chip or hardware based as well as



Track Commentary

01 • GEAR UP FOR ADVENTURE

This song is a GameCube-ized version of the main theme and is essentially a re-performance of the very first piece of music I was hired to write for Red Blue Games. To take a piece that was written for full orchestra and reduce it to mere MIDI was a challenge!

02 • ABANDON SHIP

Tense calls of the main theme dot this suspense piece for one of the opening scenes of Sparklite.

03 • THE REFUGE

“The Refuge” is a sister piece to the original town song I wrote, “Returning to the Refuge.” That version was grittier and more forward. This version was written near the end of development to serve as a peaceful alternative. I tried to use the exact same instrumentation so that when the two are played side by side you could feel the relation.

04 • THE VINELANDS

The order for “The Vinelands” was something calm but also adventuresome, and something that could be heard for longer periods of time without becoming tiresome. I made a personal goal writing something that made me feel like I was playing any of the adventure games I loved back in the day.

05 • TITAN BATTLE

To write a boss theme within the same instrumentation and style guidelines I had defined with the previous pieces was something of a challenge. And writing a slower piece was even more of one! I created sort of a boss motif and peppered it with darkened calls to the main theme to get this sound.

06 • TITAN OVERCHARGED

I’ve always loved how the battle songs of Nintendo games felt urgent without being overly obvious about its methodology. One of the unsung heroes of

this sound was always some sort subtle underlying moving pattern. It was rarely percussive but sometimes atonal. It worked perfectly for taking the Titan battle into doubletime.

07 • RETURNING TO THE REFUGE

Festive, adventuresome, upbeat, but maybe a touch seedy and with some edge was the target for the this piece. I blatantly call upon the main theme here but I've shaped it to a different time and structure to kind of let the motion and accompaniment take the spotlight.

08 • THE GOLDENWOODS

"The Goldenwoods" is one of my favorite pieces in this soundtrack. Sharp ears will notice that I use a rhythmic motif established earlier on in other pieces as a very subtle callback to give a sense of place and journey. And there's also a few calls to the main theme in there too. My hopes is that less obvious pieces like this would tie the soundtrack together.

09 • THE ACID BOG

It's such a treat for us game music makers to write the swamp or cave theme. I definitely indulged for

Sparklite's version with warbly pads, flowing harp parts, and pitch-bent flutes.

10 • THE SHIFTING SANDS

In my original preparation work for this soundtrack I sampled a lot of hand percussion and created sound banks that I could use throughout the soundtrack. Not all of them stayed as we deemed them "too GameCube" but some of them got use in this funky desert theme.

11 • THE FOUNDERS' VAULTS

This piece went through a few iterations until it became this quiet, mystical version. I intentionally left a lot of space between the lines to leave some space for imagination. My goal was to leave a phantom impression of the main theme without actually audibly using it.

12 • A HERO'S FALL

You...you died? Well, as you float back to it, you're treated with a tinkling hint of the main theme in a peaceful, floaty loop.

13 • TITAN'S RIDGE

Titan's Ridge is supposed to set an insurmountable challenge, so that set the tone for this piece. As the game progresses I wanted to have a song that represented all that has come before, so I hope this does that. It calls on a lot of the themes you've heard before in a new way to give it a sort of 'you've come this far' feeling.

14 • THE TRUE POWER OF SPARKLITE

This song was just me letting absolutely loose on the idea that I was working on a GameCube adventure game from my past. I wanted it to clearly show that I grew up with these games and this sound. I had a lot of fun taking many of the motifs from the score and warping them to fit this epic battle.

15 • GREED OVERWHELMING

That slow, dark, menacing energy of a boss you've been working up to is what I was going for here. I hope it conveys determination in places as well.

16 • BALANCE RESTORED

To have the world back at peace after a long journey is one of the best feelings. It is one of the things that keeps me coming back to videogames. I only had about half a minute to convey this release so I tried to pack it all in here, but as subtly and softly as possible to serve as a contrast to the hard-hitting songs that lead up to this point.

17 • CREDITS

I get pretty emotional when the credits music starts for any game. Hopefully Sparklite's credits theme reflects the fun and adventurous spirit of the game as well as some of that bittersweetness of it being over. I also hope it shows how incredibly happy I was to work on such a wonderful game.

18 • HARMONY'S MAGNUM OPUS

Oh, what a treat. I'll let you play this game to find out what this is about. This song is actually a tiny bit of a spoiler so skip it if you'd like for now. Enjoy!





MAJULA FRONTIER
Traditional JRPG-style score



PERFECT SELECTION
Personal favorites including an unused track from Sparklite

Dale North Works



THE LONG RETURN
An emotional musical journey



WIZARD OF LEGEND
Fast-paced Sega Saturn-style beat 'em up score

All music composed, mixed, and mastered by

Dale North

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Special Thanks to the team at Red Blue Games!

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