



FOUR SHADOWS

Music for The Esoterrorists

BY JAMES A SEMPLE

"Successful veil-out completion is essential to membrane preservation. In the wake of a wide-ranging investigational phase and messy, disturbing extirpation phase, the difficulty of a veil-out may seem daunting, even demoralizing. However, it is essential to remember this: hardly anyone really wants to know the truth."

-OV Operations Manual

This collection of four tracks has been written to help set the tone and feel of a game of Esoterrorists. As a modern game encompassing investigation, action, horror, suspense and conflict, I felt that a contemporary soundtrack was important to the mood. As such, the music here incorporates contemporary rhythms, electric guitars and sound design elements in addition to the expected orchestral and cinematic elements. Given that there were no pre-conceived notions of how The Esoterrorists should sound I've been pleased to put a really personal stamp on the soundtrack. The first track here is the main theme for the game but the others can be used either to introduce key scenes or to loop in the background.

The Esoterrorists Theme

"You are reality's last defenders, elite investigators combating the plots of The Esoterrorists, a loose affiliation of occult terrorists intent on tearing the fabric of the world and the letting the monsters in."

- The Esoterrorists

This music has been written to introduce a session of the game. It begins by hinting at the mystery and horror using sound design and a female vocal. The music then shifts into a faster rhythm culminating in the action theme of the game. The heavy drums and insistent violin ostinato are overlaid with distorted powerchords and squealing lead guitar lines representing the contemporary edge of the game. This track prototypes the sonic palette of the Esoterrorists mixing elements of rock, orchestra and dance music.

Little Girl Lost

*SLEEPING LYCA LAY
WHILE THE BEASTS OF PREY,
COME FROM CAVERNS DEEP,
VIEW'D THE GIRL ASLEEP.*

- William Blake, The Little Girl Lost

This track was designed to be played alongside the adventure *Albion's Ransom: Little Girl Lost*. My feeling behind the track was to create a mood evoking the urban and spiritual backdrop of this story. There's clearly a strong trance and trip-hop influence here reflecting the club scene of Manchester. Furthermore, the minor harmony and dark instrumentation hint at the underlying peril and mystery. Again a contemporary instrumentation integrates with orchestra, drum loops and voices.

Special Suppression Forces

"Recruited for their backgrounds in unconventional warfare, members of SSF teams primarily include active duty and reservist military officers, employees of contract security firms, and covert field operatives of various Western intelligence agencies. They sweep up nests of ODEs, engage in counter-terrorism, conduct counter-sortilege activities, and practice counter-intelligence against the enemy"

-The Esoterror Fact Book

Although much of the Ordo Veritatis work is based on investigation, there comes a time when action is needed and the Special Suppression Forces are called in. This track reflects the overtly military nature of this force and the dangers that they face. The music relies on a lot of very heavy percussion from Japanese taikos and similar instruments but also includes contemporary instrumentation. Eventually the piece closes with a restatement of the main action motif but with even heavier percussion than before.

The Membrane

"Central to Esoterrorist theory is the existence of the membrane, a barrier between the separate realms of objective and subjective reality."

-The Esoterror Factbook

The Esoterrorists use the media to help spread fear and weaken the membrane. The music here is suggestive of that influence and is a mixture of percussion, sound design and ambient ideas. Even the main theme is incorporated into this collage of sound although in a twisted manner, sometimes in reverse. Unlike the other tracks to date, The Membrane is specifically designed as background music, to be looped at low levels in the background in times of tension.

