

Song of the Weekend

By Lee Jackson

From the Lee Jackson Audio Community Discussion Group

(<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ljackaudiodiscgroup>)

Entry: 20211016 – Ant Farm Melee

This week's "Song of the Weekend" is Ant Farm Melee, from the Doomworld project, the Ultimate Doom MIDI Pack.

Ant Farm Melee gets its title partially from the hard rock group, Alien Ant Farm, known for their cover of Michael Jackson's "Smooth Criminal," which inspired the guitar and bass line in my work. It also gets its title from the Ultimate Doom level for which it was written, E4M3, "Sever the Wicked." That level reminded me of a bunch of ants having one giant melee fight in area after area.

The song has a special place in my history, as it helped me get through my time in the hospital earlier this year. I was hospitalized with a post-op infection in my left big toe that had started to run up my left leg. Just prior to that, I'd put Ant Farm Melee up on Bandcamp for sale for \$1.00, but sales were depressingly slow. I posted the facts of my illness, and asked that instead of sending me flowers, that people instead buy a copy of my song. The response was overwhelming - I made over \$100 in sales from the song, some from people paying well over the \$1.00 asking price. I want to thank everyone who bought a copy of the song right now. You kept my spirits up during a difficult time.

Ant Farm Melee is written in the key of E minor and moves at 144 beats per minute in 4/4 time. It is scored for the Microsoft GS Wavetable Synth, and uses the following patches: Drums (Standard), Organ 3, Strings, Overdrive and Distortion Guitars, Picked Bass, another Distortion Guitar (playing the rhythm guitar part), Crystal, and Vibraphone.

Musical Analysis:

Ant Farm Melee wastes no time and starts right off with a strong melody in the Organ, doubled by the Strings. Beneath this, the drums play a driving rock rhythm heavy on the downbeats, while the Bass and rhythm guitar play competing patterns that mesh into their own driving rock rhythm, supporting the drums. The melody repeats after 16 measures, at which point it is reinforced by the Overdrive and Distortion Guitars for another 16 measures. An 8-bar transition follows, with a drum solo in the last 2 measures of the transition.

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The Organ and Strings now play a 16-bar exposition on the melodic line, through measure 56. After this, the Crystal and Vibraphone speak for the first time, playing their own solo (doubled) line for an extended 17 bars, immediately followed by a one-bar Bass solo (true solo - no one else plays, not even the drums).

At measure 75, the dual solo between the Overdrive and Distortion Guitars begins, while the Drums kick back into gear. The guitars play through measure 90 and land on a note at measure 91 that is sustained for 8 more bars as it fades out. The Drums, Bass, and rhythm guitar then take over by themselves, playing the same rhythmic pattern they've been playing through the whole song through the end of the loop at measure 106.

I'm sorry this is such a short write-up this week, but there's not much to say about Ant Farm Melee. You have to hear it in order to understand it, and to do so, please allow me to give you a link to a YouTube video of the song. Thank you for reading, and thank you for voting for your "Song of the Weekend!"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Rd3uM7OwOw>