

# Mp3 Jerry Berlongieri - Alter Echo Original Soundtrack



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"Skewed techno and oddball trance". - Gamespot 6 MP3 Songs ELECTRONIC: Trance, ELECTRONIC: Techno Details: Review, muen.net/muen.htm 2003 This reviewer has never been much of one for video games. Granted, he has gotten a mild addiction here and there ("The Sims", "Grand Theft Auto: Vice City"), but nothing too severe. Perhaps, being a complete audiophile, the part he abhorred more than anything were the frequently awful soundtracks. The typical melodies and chord changes of video games are horrifyingly bad; many game addicts this reviewer knows personally still turn the sound down in lieu of their cd player, despite recent improvement in this field. After hearing the work of Trent Reznor, Chris Vrenna, and a score of other contemporary electronic geniuses, video game soundtracks began to improve exponentially; long gone were the chirps and bleeps of yesterday's eight bit Nintendo. Today's home computer or Playstation 2 offer full-fledged game scores encoded as separate audio tracks, meaning the gamer is essentially listening to the soundtrack on cd while playing the game. While the sound quality has certainly improved, most game composers still produce boring (or outright terrible) works. Ann Arbor, Michigan's 'Jerry Berlongieri' is doing his best to break the notion that video games must have generic electronic music for their soundtracks. Berlongieri's work, especially for the "Alter Echo" soundtrack, is consistently interesting in addition to catchy. His choice of tones is always effective and this usage manages to transplant the listener to his world for the brief duration of every piece. "Development Overture", from the "Alter Echo" soundtrack, is the best example of Autopilot's ingenuity. Despite massive tempo and tonal changes, this piece never fails to hold the listener's attention through its downright hummable melodies. Berlongieri's work from "Descent: Mercenary" are more challenging pieces, both in terms of length and melody. The pieces are typically dissonant and anything but accessible, but the same depth that lies in the "Alter Echo" pieces is still very much present. These pieces

are somewhat reminiscent of "The Downward Spiral" era Nine Inch Nails, but never stick in one place long enough for the listener to deem them derivative; before long, the piece is always off on a tangent that has not yet been discovered. The intensity of "Failsafe" is the shining moment of these pieces, but the sheer industrial creepiness of "Thirteen Omega" is not far behind. Berlongieri typically shows off his atmospheric finesse in each piece, but "Contribution", from the "Descent 3" soundtrack, is the best example of it. Textural synths swirl gently around a thumping bass and quiet percussion section as various audio snippets float through and by the mix. "Bread and water", also from "Descent 3", also contains some great atmospheric moments. Filtered synths often poke out from the mix to keep the listener's attention, but its somewhat silly (in a good kind of way) melodies and skittering drums are more than enough to do this, anyway. In summation, Berlongieri is everything video game music has been lacking from the very beginning. He creates music that easily stands on its own, let alone suffice as background fodder. The biggest drawback of Autopilot is that his music is quite capable of distracting gamers from the game itself; all of his available material is far more interesting than a first-person shooter game any day of the week. If there were more soundtrack designers along the lines of Reznor, Vrenna, and now, Berlongieri, perhaps this reviewer could find an excuse to go out and buy a Playstation 2. Justin Waters

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