

spotting notes

Guild of Canadian Film Composers

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The Guild of Canadian Film Composers is a national association of professional music composers and producers for film, television, and new media.

CHANGE IN CANADIAN MEDIA OWNERSHIP

by Paul Hoffert

Most composers' eyes glaze over when they read about media ownership. After all, does it really matter to a composer which corporation owns the CHUM, CTV or Global? Does it matter whether or not a Canadian media company such as Alliance Atlantis is sold to a domestic or foreign company?

Yes, it matters a lot to each and every composer. Fortunately, help is available to make sense of such changes! Here is a quick summary:

CTV + CHUM = Consolidation + Divesting

CTV recently purchased the CHUM Group for \$1.4 billion. General reaction from creators and producers has been negative. It was bad enough having only three major television networks to choose from (CTV, Global, CHUM), but now with only two, the number of customers has been reduced by a third.

Also, the GCFC is in the midst of contract negotiations with CTV under the Status of the Artist legislation. The outcome of these negotiations has become even more important since the CHUM stations sold to CTV will also be bound by our agreement.

To complicate matters, the CRTC insisted that before the sale of CHUM stations to CTV, CHUM must first sell its Citytv stations in Calgary, Edmonton, Toronto, Vancouver and Winnipeg to a different company because it already owns stations in those cities. The Citytv stations were subsequently sold to Rogers, which now becomes a national television network with its cross-country Citytv stations, in addition to its other media assets.

Alliance Atlantis Sold to Global

Not to be left out of the merger deals, Global paired up New York-based Goldman Sachs Capital to acquire Alliance Atlantis for \$2.2 billion, which added thirteen specialty channels, the CSI franchise, and Motion Picture Distribution to Global's network and specialty channels.

In this case, the concern is more media concentration for Global, plus a possible transfer of control outside Canada, which would likely mean fewer Canadian programs and less employment for Canadian creators.

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**Guild of Canadian
Film Composers**

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VIEW FROM THE PODIUM

by Chris Dedrick, President GCFC

With all that is happening in our industry, shifts as dramatic and difficult to assess as the long awaited reversal of the magnetic poles of the planet (well, maybe not quite that dramatic), it's only right that we should welcome change and challenge in the internal workings of our Guild. Your Board of Directors, along with our administrative staff, is motivated and renewed in its quest to keep composers ahead of the storm.

The Guild now sits in a very influential position doing things that will have profound effect on many Canadian composers.

As I look at the notes from "Spring Forward," our recent Board Seminar, the word that keeps coming to mind is ambitious. This is a very energetic group, and the work it cut out for itself is going to provide a good test of intention while creating some *accelerandi* in pulse rates across this great land.

Some of the action items are already done: updating the GCFC Vision Statement and Mission Statement, going on MySpace, choosing and hiring professional graphic artists to begin to create a new GCFC logo, and preparing an AGM that, we hope, offered more information and opportunity for feedback to all GCFC members. Other work has begun or has found its slot in the calendar, such as producing an up-to-date Governance manual, a Board manual to assist new Board members, building a program to mentor promising candidates for the Board and Executive, creating a PowerPoint presentation from new and existing visual and audio

materials that will give an impressive and educational overview of the Guild and its place in our industry, improving our outreach to that industry and offering special seminars to the schools that prepare people for key media careers.

With new member features on our website, communication and interaction amongst all of us should move to another level. We'll be conducting some

fact-finding surveys in the near future to collect information that will help us fulfill the responsibilities we have taken on to represent the community properly. As reported at the AGM, we are moving ahead with professional help to make three-year and long-range Business Plans in order to do our best to stay on top of all financial challenges and opportunities.

One quip that caught the attention of everyone at the Spring Forward seminar was the old, "Q: What is the biggest room in the world? A: The room for improvement." When I first attended meetings in the early '90s I saw this association simply as a forum for those composers who were willing to share information and experience with the intent of giving themselves a little more of a fighting chance to succeed in a difficult profession. I didn't expect, or particularly want, the GCFC to represent me to the industry. That is, until I realized the good work that the Guild

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6-PACK OF QUESTIONS WITH RICHARD BELLIS

by Scott Macmillan

Richard Bellis is an Emmy-award winning film composer and advocate for the film composing community. He serves on the Board of Directors for ASCAP, and is a past-president of the Society of Composers and Lyricists. As an educator, he has taught at the University of Southern California, UCLA, and leads the annual ASCAP Television and Film Scoring Workshop named in his honour. He recently released his new book, *The Emerging Film Composer*.



1 What was your main motivation for writing *The Emerging Film Composer*?

I wanted to provide a realistic view of the current conditions facing the aspiring film composer.

As educators, I believe we have the responsibility to help people make career decisions. I wanted to create an awareness of the responsibility that accompanies being an emerging film composer. The economic future of our

craft is very much in the hands of each individual who makes a deal to score a film. Also, I wanted to provide information about functioning in our business. The book is a bridge between academia and the real world. The response to the book from both veterans and neophytes has been wonderfully rewarding.

2 Which are your two favourite film scores that you have composed?

They would be Stephen King's *IT* and *One Special Night*. Both were well done films with decent production budgets and time frames. Each film used an acoustic orchestra and *IT* also had a significant amount of electronics. While the whole score is a bit dated now, the electronics were beautifully executed (by Ray Colcord) and were the absolute newest sounds available at that time.

3 What's the best thing that happened to you in this business?

The best thing was when I was hired as the music director/arranger for the show *Rock It!* The host was Canadian singer Gloria Kaye. For the last 27 years she has been Gloria Kaye-Bellis.

4 Who have been the most important influences in your career?

Compositionally, it would be Jerry Goldsmith and Henry Mancini. On the podium, Jack Feirman and my dad. Jack was conducting for Johnny Mathis when I was hired to conduct for Johnny on a world tour. My dad was a junior high music teacher and taught me the importance of the face, arms and hands in conducting. He made me aware that your arms don't make the music, the musicians do. Finally, the director Charles Wilkinson. He authored *The Working Director*, which I recommend to all my students. After all, we are not in the Music Business; we are in the Film and Multi-Media Business. The more we know about all aspects of film making the better.

5 Do you have any advice for composers working with orchestrators, music editors, recording engineers, lawyers and other musicians?

Yes. These people are all working for you to make your product successful. Make it easy for them to do their best work on your behalf. I've always felt that when I come to the recording session, rather than someone getting me a cup of coffee, I should be getting coffee for the engineer, the musicians etc. At that time, my job is essentially finished. They are just starting to work to make my music the best it can be. Service the people who service you.

6 Make up a question you'd like to answer. What should be the ultimate goals when delivering a score?

Service the filmmaker and the film in that order. Only one of those two can hire you for another film and/or fire you from the current one. You cannot have a 'successful' disagreement with a filmmaker. The target when you are on the scoring stage is 'No Mistakes and No Questions.' Questions eat up as much or more time than mistakes. Ensure your music is as easy to read and understand as possible. The harder the musicians have to 'work,' the less they can concentrate on performing your music.

LUNCH WITH LARRY

by Darren Fung

Larry Weinstein is one of Canada's most eminent documentations. A partner at Toronto's Rhombus Media, Weinstein has directed some of the world's most renowned music documentaries and performance specials, giving him a unique perspective on the role of music in film. His awards include an Oscar nomination and numerous Geminis and Emmys. In addition, he has been honoured with a number of retrospectives on his work, including Toronto's HotDocs Festival.

Tell us a little bit about your upbringing. What role did the arts, specifically music and film play in your life growing up?

Well, I wasn't totally immersed in the arts growing up. We went to art galleries and movies, but I wasn't exposed to a huge number of arts events. My parents are both from New York, and my father used to be a superintendent at the Metropolitan Opera, which fostered his love of the art form. I grew up in Toronto and the first three operas he took us to see were all *Aida*! We were occasionally exposed to concerts, and I remember seeing a Stravinsky concert at Ontario Place with the TSO in 1971, a few months after Stravinsky's death. The *Firebird Suite* had a huge impact on me.

Why film? For someone who seems so fascinated by music, many people would wonder why you didn't pursue a musical career instead!

I took piano lessons when I was nine, but I was terrible! I didn't last a year and I've regretted it ever since. The lessons didn't kill my love of music, but it killed my love of re-creating it.

I made a couple of films in high school, and loved the creativity and the collaboration. I also loved the effect that the films had on my schoolmates. From the beginning, I was fascinated by marrying image and music. My first documentary, which I shot, was actually about a slaughterhouse. I set it to a lot of music, but my favourite was the somewhat tongue-in-cheek use of Debussy's *Snowflakes are Dancing* as we see jugular veins being slit in slow motion. It was painfully beautiful music juxtaposed with painful images, and created this powerfully visceral effect.



There's almost always a great joy in creating films and collaborating with people, and that's why I love to work with the same people again and again — it's fun sharing the experience and it's an adventure. I was very lucky that I found like-minded partners who love music, and we inadvertently fell into making music films.

What do you feel is music's role in film? What are your thoughts on how music is used in film today? What can we learn from the past? What should we hope for in the future?

Music has a tremendous role in film. It can improve a film drastically, or it can kill it. I have a strong visceral response to film music. If I'm watching a DVD at home and hate the music, I have to turn it off. I walked out of *The Producers* in a theatre — but I don't think it was only the music.

I recently saw *Fractured*, a classy thriller and

I was immediately enthralled by the music and wanted to know who did the score — it was co-written by Mychael and Jeff Danna. I'm such a fan of Danna — *Little Miss Sunshine*, *The Ice Storm* and so many of the Egoyan films...wonderful music and not obvious.

The function of music today is not much different from the music of yesterday. It really boils down to a director's sensitivity to music, or his/her ability to hire the right composer. iPods now symbolize people's pride in the eccentricity of their music, encompassing all kinds of genres.

I think that films will reveal more and more different tastes in music.

What do you feel is the biggest challenge for Canadian film today, and Canadian culture?

The biggest challenge in my view is fundraising. Obviously, it's very difficult as a music documentary filmmaker. Our biggest national showcase of arts on television was CBC's *Opening Night*. It was a weekly show that featured the performing arts. At one point, they even screened films on Canadian composers. They've gotten rid of that show, and now there will likely be fewer than a handful of rather commercial 'cultural' specials on CBC per year. We are now second-guessing in order to conceptualize and deliver what the broadcasters think they want.

We are at a time when the venues are drying up for these things. The recording industry

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DO I TAKE THE GIG?

by Mike Freeman

Ah yes, the age old question that all creative people face at one time or another; "Do I take the gig?" In an attempt to garner some words of wisdom on the subject, we polled three veteran film composers: Richard Bellis, Donald Quan and Terry Frewer. Each weighed in on landing and keeping a gig, as well as building a career as a film composer.

Personal Relations

Donald Quan: Fostering long-term relationships with people that love working with you or love your music is absolutely crucial to make a living. In cases where the same people are repeatedly asking me back, I will tend to accept the job even if there are budget issues. Establishing a trusting ongoing relationship with a client or producer is one of the best moves you can make as a working composer.

Richard Bellis: Doing someone a favor by working too fast without a decent budget and then producing a mediocre score will not foster a good relationship. Nor will it create a good credit or demo.

Terry Frewer: I think it's necessary to ask about who will be influencing the music. This gives me an idea of how much rewriting I might have to do. These days, a composer may have to answer to the director, editor and any number of producers. Then, there are the studio or production company heads and last but not least, the broadcasters. All may want to weigh in on the music, and some are likely to be inexperienced with the composing process.

Budget

DQ: We are in a business and an endeavor of passion and emotion. It does us no good to view our compositional pursuits as theoretical or even money driven enterprises. In my experience, if you totally love the projects you are working on, you will automatically do your best work and improve your chances of continually landing gigs and getting paid well for your efforts.

RB: Give yourself a pre-determined number of projects of which you will make less than what you know you should. In my humble opinion, anyone writing original music for less than \$150 per hour better be getting something else of equal value in return.

Prospecting Work

DQ: There is no use going after a project that you are not truly interested in because you'll probably have a lousy time writing for it. For example, if you hate golf, there is no use submitting for the new 'Horizons of Putting' show.

TF: Creating for a committee can be very difficult, so I may have to insist on only dealing with one person- the director. Or in the case of television, a point person from the team of players. I would ask that music decisions not be made later by people who were not part of the original spotting session, and I would determine if the temp music fairly represents the direction both I and the others thought the music should take.

RB: Take all good work. But, how do you decide which projects represent good work? Which ones represent the film projects that will take you up the ladder fastest? I believe there are five possible reasons to take a job:

- 1) To make *good* money
- 2) To get a *good* credit
- 3) To foster a *good* relationship
- 4) To have a *wonderful* experience
- 5) To get a *good* recording of something you don't already have on your demo reel

If you have determined that you will only take three projects per year for little or no money, it will force you to be discriminating. 'Is this film good enough and is the director on his/her way up?' Remember, you are entitled to view the film before committing to score it no matter what you're being paid.

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General Advice

RB: Do not take work which is a buyout or for which you must sign away your writer's share of performance royalties. Front-end payments are at an all time low. If we lose the back end as well, our community will become one of blue-collar music workers and hobbyists.

TF: You also need to ask yourself, 'Can I succeed on this project? Can I create a good score with the budget, time and people involved? And can it be creatively fulfilling, fun and not too painful?' Well okay, many of us like the pain part!

DQ: A good rule of thumb is to chase after projects that sound like they are right up your alley. That way, even if you don't land the gig, at least you will have fun trying. Producers tend to be quite observant of true enthusiasm and can sense when a composer they are interviewing isn't really interested or knowledgeable about the subject matter. **sn**



Richard Bellis has scored over 36 films and has received an Emmy for "Outstanding Achievement in Music Composition" for the score of Stephen King's IT, an ABC Miniseries, and Emmy nominations for HBO's Doublecrossed and ABC's Double, Double, Toil & Trouble. In addition to his film-scoring career, Bellis is a past president of the Society of Composers & Lyricists; serves on the Board of Directors of ASCAP and conducts the ASCAP Television and Film Scoring Workshop.



Donald Quan's film music company, Q Music, has provided composing and music services to hundreds of television, film, radio and multi-media productions including Relic Hunter (Fireworks), Mutant X (Tribune Entertainment), and Tracker (Lions Gate) as well as the feature film Expecting and the new CBC pilot Getting Along Famously. Quan was nominated for Gemini Awards in 2002 and 2003 and was the 2004 recipient of SOCAN's International Television Series Award.



Terry Frewer recently received a Genie award for his film score Head In The Clouds and has scored numerous films and television series including: Lonesome Dove, The Chris Isaac Show, Beggars and Choosers and Mysterious Ways. He was also awarded a Gemini for his score to Over Canada. Terry has a B.Mus in Composition with graduate studies in Native American, Japanese and East Indian music and has studied jazz orchestration at the Banff School of Fine Arts.

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is a very scary place and the onus is much more on the independent composer or producer. It's an insecure time. But if you look at classical music, their record sales went up 27% last year compared to the whole recording industry, which lost another 5%. You would think a signal like that would show there is an appetite for culture, and by association, for cultural TV.

What do you see the role of the CBC being?

A public broadcaster must fulfill certain things that a private broadcaster will not. The CBC is our chance to keep our country together. Culture and cultural expression are such an important part of

our national identity. Most Canadians may not care, but I think that the CBC must provide showcases for culture. It's ironic that CTV is currently planning to program less reality TV than the CBC. Right now, the CBC is emulating private broadcasting – they are getting into programming for the lowest common denominator.

It seems ridiculous to be spending tax dollars on programming that can be marketed elsewhere. I wish Canadians would understand that the CBC should support things that can't be purchased anywhere else. For the first time in its history, the CBC will not have a weekly cultural showcase. The implications of this are terrifying.

If you had to sell a director on the value of music, how would you do it?

I would ask them to look at few scenes where the music plays an incredible and powerful role; first with the music, then without. Especially in a low budget situation, when every stage of the process seems like a creative compromise. When you conceive an idea on paper it's always perfect - but when the realities of production set in, you cut shooting days, have less time with actors, with editors and it's always a bit frustrating. Then in the post-production stage, the film can get better. Music is one of the true creative stages of making a film. It's an opportunity for the director and the producer to express something that is richer and far more intense. Music can recapture initial intentions before all the compromises had to be made. I can't imagine a more important stage.

You were recently selected by Hot Docs as an International Trailblazer at MIPDOC, giving you a unique position to comment on the Canada's position in film. Where do you think we stand? What do we do well? What can we do better?

In Canada we've always had a really strong documentary tradition, especially with the establishment of the [National] Film Board in the 1930's. We have some really great filmmakers in Canada. There is a lot out there, so in order for filmmakers to preserve their voice, they have to stick their necks out. The word 'documentary' is now being inflated

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Weinstein, continued

to mean all kinds of things, including the reality stuff and rather formulaic journalistic documentaries.

Certainly at Cannes, people from other countries in Africa and Europe saw Canada as an oasis with the funding structures that we have. It does look a little bit rosier from the outside than it actually is, but it can also be a stranglehold. When you're trying to raise money from outside the structure, you're almost penalized for it.

Playback Magazine says that you and your friends at Rhombus are going your separate ways after almost 30 years together. Any thoughts on that? Any future projects you'd like to talk about?

Sheena [Macdonald], the partner in charge of distribution has left, which is very sad for me, but the original partners from 1979 are all there under one roof at Rhombus, and we are planning to be for quite a while. Niv [Fichman] is continuing to produce his larger films, and Barbara [Willis Sweete] is doing some arts work, but also combining it with a number of medium-size features that she's developing. I'm doing documentaries, some dramatic stuff, another opera, and a surprisingly large number of music projects. We're proceeding – our structure is slightly different. *À la* Mark Twain, reports of our death have been greatly exaggerated!

I'm in preproduction for a new film, *Hana's Suitcase*. It's based on a bestselling Holocaust-themed book, and it's a hybrid documentary with some dramatic recreation and animation. It's going to be a 90-minute film, theatrically released in Canada and also for television. It's an incredibly moving story that needs to be seen on the big screen. For music, I'm imagining archival music from that era, as well as using works of Viktor Ulmann, Karl Amadeus Hartmann and Bohuslav Martinu, which all seem organically-linked to the story. **sn**

Media ownership, continued

BCE Privatization

This relates back to CTV since BCE (Bell Canada Enterprises) owns it. On July 2nd 2007, the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan and partners including Providence Equity Partners Inc. agreed to buy BCE for \$32.1 billion, placing Canada's most widely held stock in private hands for the first time in more than a century.

This development could have many impacts for composers and the entertainment industry in general. As a privately held company, BCE/CTV would not be subject to the public scrutiny and disclosure that publicly traded companies have. This could make it more difficult to gather information for lobbying and negotiations, including SOCAN Copyright Board tariff approvals.

Each of these developments on its own requires extensive research, analysis, legal advice, and re-calibration of the GCFC's strategies. Together, they have drastically altered the media playing field in Canada. With our media companies dealing with dollars in the billions, the power of an individual composer doing a deal becomes insignificant. Now more than ever, composers need to come together and pool our resources to most effectively deal with the huge industrial powers at play. **sn**

View, continued

leadership was initiating to help create a better SOCAN for media composers, and a more workable relationship with the AFM. Soon there were Copyright Board hearings in Ottawa, new communication opportunities with SPACQ, questions to pursue with CMRRA and SODRAC, challenges to the SOCAN blanket license with broadcasters, Status of the Artist legislation with potential GCFC certification. Who knew and understood all these things? How could the Guild rise to all of this without becoming impersonal and unwieldy?

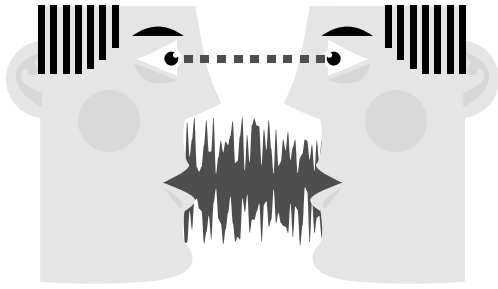
With all the expertise and high-level response that has been mustered by the GCFC to deal with all these issues, the key to preserving the

All these twists and turns in our development have given us a Guild that now sits in a very influential position doing things that will have profound effect on many Canadian composers.

original tone of the organization has been, and is, that we have never, to my knowledge, had a member of our Exec, our Board, or our Administration who would not respond personally, directly, and as quickly as possible to any email or phone call received from any of our members or members of the larger community. I hope there are other professional organizations that can make the same claim.

All these twists and turns in our development have given us a Guild that now sits in a very influential position doing things that will have profound effect on many Canadian composers, whether they are aware of it at the moment or not. These activities will raise the profile and recognition of the GCFC dramatically in the next couple of years, and the most obvious arena for this will, of course, be the negotiating initiative.

In just the last couple of weeks we have seen progress that we on the Negotiations Committee believe confirms some very important notions, the first being that our approach in taking a win-win, best partners in business perspective to the table is the way to achieve our goals. Secondly, we are indeed talking to the right people at the right company. Thirdly, that we can expect an acceleration of the whole process, having kept the flame alive through a year of intense corporate upheaval that has kept our counterparts very much occupied. Your team is committed to move with alacrity to make the most of the current momentum. Remember in the weeks and months ahead, our full Board, along with our legal counsel, will review results of the negotiations as they become available, and only with their approval will the agreements come before the full membership. Only with the ratification of the full membership can any agreement become binding. Therefore, continue to expect the process to appear quite under wraps, but the outcome to be absolutely and clearly visible. **sn**



↻ Counterpoint ↻

In this edition of Spotting Notes, we're pleased to premiere **Counterpoint**, a new section where two people anonymously debate (over email) on a somewhat contentious issue of importance to composers. The opinions in this article are strictly those of the authors, and do not reflect those of the Guild of Canadian Film Composers.

We are living in a world where the value of music in film and television is declining. Not only are our budgets getting smaller but films, especially in Canada, increasingly have to be made for less and less money. As a composer, I need to be able to provide a product that is both artistically gratifying, but as a small business owner, my operations need to be economically sustainable. Also, the AFM's rates and policies don't recognize that we live in a global economy and musicians are losing work, whether it is to synthesizers or orchestras overseas. There is no doubt that everybody deserves to get fairly compensated, but heavy handed union rules have made recording with a large number of live musicians inaccessible to most.

◆ The value of music in film and television is not declining, if you think outside the rectangle called a cheque. Yes, budgets are smaller in specific areas, especially television. People being put out of work by whatever inventions is an old story. How they adapt to the new paradigms is the creative and interesting part. I've recorded in several European and American cities for other music producers, but have always recorded film/TV scores for a Canadian show or co-production in Canada. Canadian musicians are not a problem. When I've gone to AFM meetings with concerned members to deal with international (Hollywood) gripes about our "Canadian Film Agreement," I see that to some degree, we have the same problem as many American cities have: an LA-based Recordings Musicians Association doing its best to stay in control of our industry. The AFM can be a pain, but it's not the problem.

I have quite a list of things that I do to make recording a project in Canada successful. If doing those things can't make it work, I wouldn't consider it a crime to go elsewhere. But I think it's in our best interests, artistically and financially, to keep as much live, Canadian playing in our scores as possible.

Should Canadian composers record overseas?

● As composers, we need to impress on the people who hold the purse strings the value that live musicians add to a film. Those people are producers and unfortunately, many of them can't think outside the rectangle called the cheque, creating a "bottom-line-at-all-costs" culture that we as composers continually like to complain about.

To their credit, most producers appreciate the value of live musicians once they experience the huge difference it will make to their film. The challenge is bringing producers to that point. According to the CFTPA, most English Canadian feature length films have a budget between \$3.4 and \$4.5 million. Using the 1% rule, music budgets will average around \$45,000, which doesn't leave a whole lot of money for orchestras. The Canadian Film Agreement is a great starting point, but it still leaves hiring AFM musicians out of reach for many productions.

You mention the need to adapt to new paradigms. If the AFM could help absorb some of that risk by providing more flexibility in tighter budget situations (it's not necessarily just about lower rates), more Canadian composers would hire more Canadian musicians. The reality is that the lure of the "Pragues" and "Moscow's" are not going away, and the AFM needs to address that.

◆ I think there is willingness to talk at the AFM that wasn't there in past years. There is no longer a large, thriving culture of busy studio players in Canada, and that is due to technology, the current production economy, music trends, and more. The low cost of Eastern European orchestras comes into play only when a critical number of players are being hired. One course of action is to crunch some numbers and make recommendations to the AFM that at least raises that critical number.

The other battle (and maybe there is some access through the CFTPA) is to do all we can to influence producers to fight the good fight when they raise the money for their projects, keeping music priorities in place. Those in the know do this, but many don't. Unfortunately, producers and composers and almost everyone in the credit roll suffer from the syndrome of the greedy stockholder and the profit-driven corporate slaves... er... Boards of Directors.

● I'm glad to hear that dialogue is no longer a dirty word! I think many composers would express the same amount of frustration that I have had dealing with the AFM, and that would account for much of their motivation in taking work overseas. However, the "critical mass" as you call it, is quite low as it stands right now.

Perhaps I'm longing for the "what-has-been" glamour days of the busy studio orchestras recording for every television show, and if we haven't already, we (myself included) as a community need to accept that those days are gone. What I'm scared of though, is the continuing trend of composers turning from artisans to music factories. It is because producers don't see the value that music brings to film, that we are getting less money, less time, and less respect for what we do.

◆ I agree, it's tough to give up the good old days, and we'll have to battle on several fronts if we are going to forge into the next years as "real" composers who write music that is performed rather than just sequenced. For some it's as satisfying, maybe more fun even, to do it electronically - take whatever money is there and keep going. No blame in that.

I feel good about the projects that can be successfully written and recorded here in Canada, not so much out of patriotism or politics, but more as a sense that an investment in our own industry has been made.

Now I have to excuse myself; I'm due at the farmers' market where there is an "eat local food" campaign gearing up. **sn**