

## Teacher Spotlight on... *Art Phillips*

Gifted and accomplished musician, Two time Emmy award winner and all round nice guy, Art Phillips recently sat down to talk to me about his life, teaching and his passion for music. Here are just some of the things I learnt about this fascinating AICM teacher...



### How he got started in music

Art spent his early years hanging out in the kitchen with his musician father and grandfather listening and playing traditional Italian music together, with two guitars and a mandolin. At age 11, a lifelong friendship was sparked when he wrote a fan letter to his idol and musical inspiration Tony Mottola (the great American guitarist), who's advice encouraged Art to pursue his dreams. In the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, Art had made up his mind that working in music was going to be his future and set about finding a way to make it happen.

At a 'The Lettermen' concert with his sister, Art got his big chance. After the show he spoke with the musical director and swapped contact details, then on thanksgiving the year of his graduation, he got back in touch and set up a meeting in LA. A few months later, he got a call to fill in for the guitarist at a show in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania and within a month was touring with the band throughout Japan, Asia and the USA.

***'Putting heart and soul into your music is crucial. You can be technically perfect, but if you don't put your heart and soul into it, it won't be you!'***

### How he got to where he is today

Over the next 15 years Art studied with many famous masters in LA including Albert Harris, who was Nelson Riddle's arranging / orchestration partner and performed as one of LA's top session guitarists, working with the likes of Barry Manilow, Minnie Riperton, Demis Roussos and The Carpenters, to name a few.

Slowly, he began branching out as composer, working as an orchestrator, musical director and conductor, and found music composition to be his true passion.

Amongst his many achievements in the US, Art had a hit single that he co-wrote with recording artist Minnie Riperton, entitled 'Here We Go' (top 10 R&B single on the Billboard charts 1980) and later composed for the US television series 'Santa Barbara' (awarded Emmy's for best original music in 1986 and 1987), 'The Love Boat' and 'General Hospital'.

Moving to Sydney in 1987, Art's composing career skyrocketed again and over the years he has worked on countless Australian television shows including 'Neighbours', 'Missing Persons Unit', 'Outback House' and 'Catalyst'. He also writes original music for production music library companies, with over 55 CD titles, and has his production music used in television shows throughout the world including 'The Oprah Winfrey Show', 'Survivor', 60 Minutes, Cold Case Files, NYPD Blue, and 'America's Most Wanted' - just to name a few.

### How he got into teaching

Over the years Art taught guitar and composition to students in LA and in the early 90's he was given an opportunity to write a film and television course for Griffith University. The experience allows him to pass on his knowledge and real life industry experience and share his passion. *'The music industry is very different today, we now have so many new ways to express creativity. Technology has made music available to so many more people and to be*

part of their musical journey inspires me' commented Art.

His advice to students; **'Be focused but have diversity in your field. It's important to always think ahead and reinvent yourself regularly to be successful over many years in the music industry.'**



#### Latest Achievements

Art recently scored the music to the Australian 'Ironman documentaries' and has also released his new CD 'Chitarre Acustiche d'Italia'. The project is a tribute to his father, Arthur M Phillips, who was the root of his musical inspiration. The recording is inspired by his Italian musical upbringing and he is delighted to be able to honor his early heritage combining traditional compositions with a blend of 19th and 20th century songs.

For more information visit: <http://www.artphillips.com/italia.html>

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