

MEDIAWEEK

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No 1 THIS ISSUE

TV NETWORK: Nine – 30.0% 5-city share
TV PROGRAM: *Australian Idol* (Sun 10) 2,068,000
6pm WIDAY NEWS: Nine over Seven by 226,000 (5 city)
SUB TV CHAMP: FOX8, 4.0% sub TV homes
SINGLE: "Out with My Baby" – Guy Sebastian (BMG)
ALBUM: "American Idiot" – Green Day (Warner)
MOVIE: *Alien vs Predator* (UJIP/Universal) \$3,042,854
DVD: *Star Wars Trilogy* (Fox)
VIDEO: *Spider-man* (Columbia TriStar)

Sources: OzTAM, ARIA, MIDIA, GIK Market Services

FINAL DAYS ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

Lack of access to leaders is biggest complaint of media in the press pack

The NSW state political reporter for *The Daily Telegraph*, **Simon Benson**, spent 10 days travelling with opposition leader **Mark Latham** earlier in the election campaign and then for the past 10 days he's been with prime minister **John Howard**.

"The control the leaders have exerted over the media this time around was quite unprecedented," Benson told *Mediaweek* this week from another hotel room after another day in and out of radio stations and meeting halls. "There has been very little access to the PM or the opposition leader. They have been running very similar campaigns logistically and how they handle the media."

Benson said part of the reason that it's harder to get to the leaders is that the press now rarely travel far with them. "Both leaders travel on new RAF 737 jets and they are quite small. In previous campaigns they have had 707s where you could fit all the press and the campaign staff. This campaign the media has been in a charter jet following them around."

Are most days early starts? "It can be very early. For the PM it can be 5am for his walk. He does that every day and the TV crews and the photographers have to be there every morning. Depending how late the journos have stayed up 'discussing' the day's events will depend on whether they are up for the

morning walk!"

Benson told us that the media really needs to go everywhere both leaders head to just in case something happens, even for talk radio visits. "Normally that's something a journo could listen to on the radio, but when you're on the campaign trail we all go to the studios with them."

As part of the media pack, Benson said it was a pretty good working environment and there was more camaraderie than competitive tension. "None of us has access, so we're all pretty much in the same boat. Occasionally there are things we pick up on that we go off and do on our own, but generally we are after the same thing and we often end up with the same theme of the day. There's often quite a bit of discussion amongst us about the day's most significant event if not much has happened at all."

"We all get on pretty well and there's none of the fierce competition that can go on in the gallery in Canberra."

Benson said the paper's chief political reporter, **Malcolm Farr**, relies on him for information on what's going on every day and what the best stories are. "I file all through the day on everything from policy items, colour pieces to anything controversial or silly that might happen."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8
INSIDE NEWSPAPERS PAGE 6

INSIDE

- 2 THE MEDIA WEEK
- 4 MEDIA PEOPLE
- 5 AD MEDIA
- 6 INSIDE NEWSPAPERS
- 9 INSIDE MAGAZINES
- 11 INSIDE RADIO
- 12 INSIDE TV
- 15 INSIDE SUBSCRIPTION TV
- 16 ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA

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Entertainment Movies SCREEN COMPOSERS STAGE AWARDS

The AGSC hands out awards next month – with a little help from APRA



PHILLIPS

With the Australian Guild of Screen Composers (AGSC) announcing the nominations for its annual Screen Music Awards this week, *EM* spoke to the org's President, ART PHILLIPS, about the role of the composer today.

What do the awards mean for the organization?

The AGSC, which I'm President of, is an organization which gives screen composers here in Australia a recognisable voice all across the board within our industry. Our continued aims and goals are to increase the awareness of our craft amongst the entire industry and to strengthen our creative value in screen productions. The number of members in the Guild is 110. We have about 200 others that are interested and continue to get our emails and are very supportive but haven't joined yet. Realistically there are probably only about 110 active screen composers. Out of that, about 50 or 60 are really out there doing stuff.

What is the history of the awards?

The AGSC has always had screen music awards. The Guild was recreated in 1988. In 1982 and 1983 three guys came up with the concept for a guild but it didn't work and didn't have enough support and only lasted a couple of years. In 1988, which is when I moved here from Los Angeles, the guild was reformed. It's a great voice for screen composers. We formulated our awards system in 1990 and that was the first year and we always had these always classy but boutique awards. We had them at places like Vacluse House – very intimate venues. They were always very small, but we always had about 12 or 13 categories, which went from corporate video advertising all the way up to feature films. That includes things like TV film, telemovie, children's TV etc.

At this stage there wasn't a major media story about the awards?

At the beginning there wasn't, but each year we got more and more people coming and it grew and grew. We sort of outgrew these venues we were using. The first year we had about 50 people coming. Around the stage of 1999 we were getting around 160 people, so we had to get bigger venues. Four years ago, APRA – who has been so good for the organization – had a concept with their awards, which included two or three awards in their pop awards. The awards that APRA used to offer to screen composition were feature film, TV theme and sometimes a third one for children's television. APRA's awards grew so much that they were really getting into what we were doing, and all along the line we would help APRA with submissions to the government about things. We would be invited to help judge their screen music awards and their professional development awards, which is another thing they do. We got very, very close and so the idea to join forces for a Screen Music Awards came about and three years ago we did. Now we have much more of a profile within the whole industry because of APRA's support, amalgamation and backing and the other good thing is we're able to put on a great presentation for the industry where we're able to use an orchestra. This year we have a 32-piece orchestra where we can perform some of the nominated pieces and winning pieces live in front of the audience. The live musicians are the Hollywood sound, after all.

How many categories are there this year?

13. The upper echelon is feature films, then there's TV advertising, telemovies, children's, documentary, short film score, all the way down to educational and corporate. It's all to do with music scores.

What does winning one of your org's awards really mean?

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A lot of times people say if you win an award you'll never work again [laughs]. It's the tall poppy syndrome [laughs]. It's a very prestigious thing. As the president of the Guild, these music scores are voted on by our peers. We have a great judging system where we now split between Sydney and Melbourne. We invite highly sought-after screen composers to be the judges and allocate certain judges to categories based on their expertise. Our peers judge these works. There's nothing better than winning one of our awards because it means your colleagues acknowledge your work. This year we had a record number of entries. Last year we had 210 and this year we had around 175 tapes we had to sort through.

As a screen composer then you could win awards through your guild, the AFIs and the IF Awards – is that right?

Of course, yes. Our organization supports music and music only. The AFIs don't have a specialist music category – they have a craft award, which could be awarded to anyone from a cinematographer to a sound designer to a composer depending on what the submissions are.

Is this a hard business to keep plugging away at?

It's tough business worldwide, especially in Australia. It's a small industry. Getting things happening as a producer, scriptwriter or director is not easy. One of the good things that could be happening here with the new CEO of the FFC, Brian Rosen, is he is now looking at the creative elements and the craft being part of the major component factor as part of who the FFC finance now. It's not just if you have a distribution deal and an outside backer and the FFC can match that. Now things are changing, which is great for this country.

Do screen composers necessarily need to look offshore for work?

There's not enough work here and we do need to look offshore. A lot of my work is offshore still through the States and the UK and a smaller percentage locally.

Has the internet made a big difference to the way you work?

Absolutely. The bulk of the work I have been doing is for US or UK companies. I demo the music for them and then send it overnight as a MP3 file and it gets approved. I can send my final soundtrack that way too if I want to. You can work anywhere in the world if you want to now.

You have had a very impressive background in the business.

I was a session guitarist in Los Angeles in the early 70s and worked on a lot of the Carpenters TV specials with Nelson Riddle, the arranger. I had a lot of experience in that area first, then slowly got into orchestration for projects. I got lucky in the early 80s and scored a TV show for NBC called *Santa Barbara*. That's when I realised there was so much more longevity to being a composer than a musician. I had a huge Australian connection. I first came here as musical director on tour with Demis Roussos in the early 80s and came out with Barry Manilow a few years later and then kept coming back for projects. I relocated and haven't looked back. I've worked on shows here like *Neighbours* and *The Flying Vet* for the ABC. At present I'm working on the theme for a documentary project from the States and have an Australian feature film as well next year. I just delivered a project for production music – where that music is used in a lot of different TV

TOP MOVIES OPENING THIS WEEK

(Opening October 14, 2004)

Collateral	UIP
Since Otter Left	Palace
The Notebook	Roadshow
Open Water	Icon
My Architect	Hopscotch
Intimate Stranger	UIP
The Football Factory	Becker
Evay	Columbia Tristar