

WENDY BLACKSTONE: COMPOSER'S BIO

Wendy Blackstone has created original music for over 150 film and TV projects ranging stylistically from orchestral to offbeat, from latin to rock. A native New Yorker, Wendy has taken advantage of the rich diversity of her city. She embraced NY's varied music styles from contemporary classical to the downtown sound to the urban beats. Her connection with all of these music scenes are a vital part of her artistic persona. Determined to always create something fresh and new, she continues to combine experimentation with the great traditions of the past. From early on, she has experimented weaving originally designed sounds with acoustic ensembles to create fresh, innovative music. She values her mentor, the late Elmer Bernstein, who continues to inspire her.

When not working on her music, Ms. Blackstone seeks inspiration in the visual arts. She divides her time between NYC, LA and Italy, where she is currently building a music studio in a 12th century castle. Wendy speaks four languages including Italian, Spanish and French, and holds a US and an EU passport.

When Ms. Blackstone finished scoring *Dear Diary*, a half-hour comedy for Dreamworks starring Bebe Neuwirth, Executive Producers Steven Spielberg and Jeffrey Katzenberg became her new fans according to the show's producer, Barry Jossen. After seeing the show complete with her music, Spielberg said "Wendy's music took the show from a 3 to a 9." The show, written and directed by David Frankel, went on to win an **Academy Award**. A total of five films Wendy has scored have either been nominated or won **Academy Awards**.

Some of her feature film accomplishments include: *Love Walked In* starring Terence Stamp and Denis Leary, directed by this year's Oscar winning Juan Jose Campanella (The Secret In their Eyes) for Sony Pictures; Nick Gomez's *New Jersey Drive*, Executive Produced by Spike Lee for Universal Pictures; Latin music for Betty Thomas' comedy *Only You*, starring Helen Hunt; *The Dutch Master*, Susan Seidelman's comedy starring Mira Sorvino, Aida Turturro; and Charles Lane's *Hallelujah* starring Dennis Haysbert.

Ms. Blackstone has scored **four primetime television series**, numerous pilots and tele-films to date, including NBC's one hour drama *Profiler* (22 episodes), CBS's drama *New York News* (13 episodes) and *For The People* (13 episodes) including their pilots. *Maybe It's Me* (22 episodes), a WB comedy starring Fred Willard and Julia Sweeney by the creatives of SNL and *Frasier* is a favorite.

She also has scored the pilots for Tom Fontana's company including *Philly Heat* and *New Year*. Her numerous collaborations with Tom are a highlight in her career. Among her telefilms: *ATF*, directed by Dean Parisot; and several produced by Sander/Moses and Thomas Carter including *Someone She Knows*, *Chasing the Dragon* and *The Uninvited*.

Having begun her career scoring documentaries, the form is an imperative to who she is as an artist. Of the numerous she has scored, some recent titles include: *James Gandolfini's HBO Special*, *Alive Day Memories: Home from Iraq*, *HBO's The Alzheimer Project*, *Crude*, *Secrets of the Code*, *9/12*, and *Snoop Dogg's : California Youth Authority*.

Wendy diversified into theatre with Anna Deavere Smith's "*Twilight: Los Angeles 1992*", directed by George C. Wolfe (Angels In America), taking her music to Broadway's Cort Theatre and helping the

show gain two Tony nominations.

PURPOSE:

The underlying thread throughout my projects is to find the best score within the film. I always try to create a score that brings a new dimension to the film. Since for me, film composition an art form, I am always looking for the possibility to create a small audio revolution, something to excite and move the audience in a new exciting way. But it must always be what works best for the film.

For “Lodz Ghetto”, it was the sound of chopping onions from the ghetto’s kitchen scene which I manipulated into an eerie goose-stepping effect to underline the surreal horror of the Nazi soldiers invading the WWII ghetto. My recordings and reshaping of underground New York subways and their shrieking gears helped to create an otherworldly background for cues in my score about a psychotic young boy in “The Boy Who Cried Bitch”. The use of anvils as percussive instruments in the dental office scenes of “Dutch Master “ made it fun and quirky, creating a unique rhythm track. These are some of the techniques I enjoy though I always develop new ways to approach a score for each project to keep it unique and fresh. Sounds that I choose to manipulate are chosen because I see them as metaphors for a character or theme in the film, to maintain an integrity between the score and the film. This is one approach that I use to expand the sonic palette for the score in a new and meaningful way.

As important as new techniques to create is the more traditional role of the theme in a score. I never forget the power of a beautiful melody that gets to the essence of the film. An effective melody is often the most powerful, most direct and universal form of musical communication.

I am constantly striving to integrate my love of melody with a drive to create the new and the non-traditional. A desire to take the best of the old-world music traditions and combine them with what I hope will become the best of the future.

WHAT OTHERS HAVE SAID:

Ms. Blackstone is considered one of the most accomplished and creative film music composers working in New York and Los Angeles today, as featured in a cover article of the Film Score issue of “Ear” Magazine.

Sheila Benson, in her LA Times review of the film “Lodz Ghetto”, remarked,
”Setting off the impeccable work...is a phenomenal score so inventive and so detailed that it makes the film seem three dimensional.”

Steven Spielberg said of “Dear Diary”...
“Wendy’s music took the project from a three to a nine...”

The Hollywood Reporter on “New Jersey Drive”...
“Technically, “New Jersey Drive” is solid: Wendy Blackstone’s raging music captures the hard squalor of this urban environment...”

The Hollywood Reporter on “Love Walked In”...

“Special praise to composer Wendy Blackstone for the sumptuous score...”

Vincent Canby of the New York Times on “Twilight: Los Angeles 1992”...

“A dramatically moody musical score by Wendy Blackstone...”

Variety on “The Boy Who Cried Bitch”...

“A powerful suspenseful score by Wendy Blackstone...”

Terence Rafferty of The New Yorker on “Lodz Ghetto”...

“The excellent score is by Wendy Blackstone.”

Scott Williams of the Associated Press on “Lodz Ghetto”...

“Even its musical score, Wendy Blackstone is haunting and beautiful”.

Ian Sander of “Profiler”, “New York News”,...

“Wendy always brings heart and soul to her projects.”

The late talent Bruce Paltrow said of Wendy’s score for his pilot, “New Year”....

“This woman is a genius, the score is brilliant.”

Anna Deavere Smith and George C. Wolfe on the “Twilight” score...

“Thank you for your brilliant work...”

Betty Thomas on “Only You”...

“Incredibly wonderful, fun, Latin score...you’re the best!”

Timothy Ferris on “Life beyond Earth”...

“Tour de force...you’re a genius...”