

WENDY BLACKSTONE : COMPOSER'S BIO

Wendy Blackstone has created over one hundred filmscores ranging stylistically from latin, to jazz, to orchestral, to rock and offbeat. For years she has experimented weaving originally designed sounds with acoustic ensembles to create fresh innovative music. Ms. Blackstone is considered one of the most accomplished 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.

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 that "Wendy's music took the show from a 3 to a 9." The show went on to win an Academy Award.

Among her other Academy Award nominated films:

The Dutch Master, A Stitch for Time, El Salvador: Another Vietnam, and Americas in Transition.. Emmy nominated films: *The Becky Bell Story, Dead Drunk, No Visible Bruises, and Eyes on the Prize II* among many others.

Some of her feature film accomplishments include *Love Walked In* starring Terence Stamp and Denis Leary for Sony Pictures; Nick Gomez's *New Jersey Drive* Executive Produced by Spike Lee for Universal Pictures; Glenn Close's *Journey*; Latin music for Betty Thomas' comedy *Only You*, starring Helen Hunt; *The Dutch Master*, Susan Seidelman's comedy starring Mira Sorvino; Charles Lane's *Hallelujah* starring James Earl Jones and Donna Dietch's *Angel of Desire*.

Of her many television projects, Wendy has already scored four primetime television series, numerous pilots and MOWs. She scored the pilot and the

1997/8 season of NBC's primetime show *Profiler*. She has written the theme and first season of CBS' *New York News* starring Mary Tyler Moore, Madeline Kahn and Joe Morton. *Maybe It's Me*, a comedy starring Fred Willard and Julia Sweeney on WB as well as the recent one hour drama, *For The People* starring Lea Thompson continue her list. Her many MOWs include *ATF*, starring Amy Brenneman for Sony and NBC; Ian Sander and Thomas Carter's *Someone She Knows* and *Chasing the Dragon* with Markie Post for Showtime, and *Uninvited* directed by Thomas Carter starring Sharon Lawrence and Beau Bridges for ABC. Her numerous collaborations with Tom Fontana are a highlight in her career.

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 to gain two Tony nominations.

A native of New York, Wendy took advantage of the rich diversity of her City. While studying orchestration and composition at Conservatory, she studied with NY's finest in Jazz performance and arranging. Her fluent Spanish is the result of her strong ties with the Latin music community and the bands she performed and arranged with for years. Her connection with the downtown music scene is a vital part of her artistic personae. She values her mentors, Elmer Bernstein and Dizzy Gillespie's nephew, Boo Frazier, who continue to inspire her with their experience and friendship.

Ms. Blackstone divides her time between New York City and Los Angeles. Her frequent sojourns in Italy have heightened her proficiency in the Italian language. She also speaks fluent Spanish and French and has an Irish/EU Passport.

PURPOSE:

The underlying thread throughout my projects is the desire to find the score within the film that most enhances it. I consider my studios on both coasts, laboratories where I hope to invent something new each project, as well as to create some small aesthetic revolution through what I create for the audience to hear.

For *Lodz Ghetto*, it was taking the sound of chopping onions from the ghetto's kitchen scene and manipulating the sound into an eerie goose-stepping effect to underline the horror of the Nazi soldiers invading the WWII ghetto. My recordings and reshaping of underground New York subways running and their shrieking gears helped to create an otherworldly background for 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* was not only fun, but made for a cool and unusual rhythm track. The list goes on...taxi honking become saxophones reshaped through constantly evolving techniques. Sounds, words, elements to be manipulated are often chosen because they are metaphors for characters or themes within the film. They serve to expand the sonic palette in a new and meaningful way.

Yet, I never forget the strength and simple directness of a beautiful melody. An effective melody is so often the most powerful and universal form of musical communication. I am constantly striving to integrate my love of melody with a drive to create the new and non-traditional, a desire to take the best of the old-world and combine it with what will become the best of the future.

What others have said about the Composer's works....

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.”

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...”