
The Guild

by glenn morley

A new professional association, The Guild of Canadian Film Composers / La Guilde de compositeurs de film canadien, has sprung up in response to the burgeoning Canadian film / television industry. Glenn Morley outlines its mandate.

With the coming of the recent boom in the feature film industry in Canada, many professionals have banded together to form associations in their respective fields where none had existed in the past. Likewise, unions and

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guilds which had been operating in the industry for some time found that the increased activity warranted re-examination of their roles, functions and effectiveness. To a certain extent, the film composers in Canada have been Johnny-come-latelies in the forming of a professional association. Now, with the recent establishment of The Guild of Canadian Film Composers/La Guilde de compositeurs de film canadien, that gap in the Canadian film industry has been filled.

The need for the guild is a basic one, as was soon

discovered at a series of ad hoc meetings held in April and May of this year between interested composers who have been working in the film industry. While the music industry in Canada does have a strong established network of organizations, such as the Musicians Union, the Composers, Authors, Publishers Association of Canada Limited (CAPAC), the Performing Rights Organization of Canada (PROCAN), the Canadian Independent Record Producers Association (CIRPA), the League of Canadian Composers, and of course, innumerable record labels and publishers, none of these organizations had addressed themselves to the particular problems of the film composer, although all of them were at least peripherally involved in the industry. After much discussion, it was decided that what Canadian film composers needed was an organization to "protect and promote the interests of Canadian composers in the film and television industry."

The most important concern for the composers is the assignment of copyright on the score for a film. Since the performing rights societies, which almost all composers in this industry belong to (CAPAC or PROCAN), are the administrators of these rights, these organizations were anxious to help in the formation of a guild, and to establish close working relationships. To that end, the Toronto offices of both organizations were made available for preliminary meetings, and their respective legal advisors gave counsel.

The main aims of the guild are as follows:

- 1) to establish an industry standard for contracts between film composers and producers, with particular attention paid to the delineation and assignment of the various rights involved in a film score;
- 2) to educate both composers and filmmakers as to the various aspects of film music;
- 3) to lobby on behalf of Canadian film composers with such government bodies as the Canadian Film Development Corp., the Canada Council, the various provincial arts councils, the National Film Board, and so forth.

What became apparent during these meetings was that many film producers thought that by hiring a composer to write the score for a film, they automatically became entitled to complete ownership of that score. This is not the case. There are many different rights connected with the creation of any piece of music, and each of these rights should be dealt with separately in a contract. Synchronization rights, mechanical and broadcast rights, and publishing rights each have a myriad of facets which, in the past, have often been overlooked by both the composers and the producers, usually to the detriment of one party or the other. For this reason the education of both composers and producers was considered to be of primary importance. To this end the guild proposes in the future to conduct seminars in various subjects pertaining to film music by leading experts in the field, and to form liaisons with similar organizations in other countries in order to discover how they deal with similar problems.

It was also necessary to promote the image of the Canadian film composer in general, to wit: yes, there really is such an animal as the Canadian film composer, and further, he is as talented and experienced as those found anywhere else. Composers are suffering from the same lack of credibility in Canada as many other professions within the industry. The showing of Canadian film composers at the trade forum at this year's Festival of Festivals in Toronto demonstrated the competence with which our home-grown composers can treat film, and with more presentations of this kind, it is hoped that producers can be persuaded that they don't necessarily have to look to the south to find a creator of the score for their project.

In order to build as comprehensive a representation of the industry as possible, the guild is encouraging any composer who is engaged in film or television work to become a member. Further information about the guild can be obtained by writing to: The Guild of Canadian Film Composers/La Guilde de compositeurs de film canadien, 133 Hazelton Ave., Toronto, Ont.

Professional Directory of Canadian Film Composers

The following list was prepared by the Guild of Canadian Film Composers.

Lucio Agostini

c/o Mr. Larry Goldhar
Characters Talent Agency
107 Queen St. East
Toronto, Ontario
(416) 863-1411

Credits: **Ragtime Summer; The Little Brown Burrow; Was Tom Thompson Murdered?; Front Page Challenge.**

Louis Applebaum

151 Bloor St. West
Toronto, Ontario
M5S 1T6
(416) 961-1660

Credits: Scores for several hundred films for the National Film Board and other producers in Canada, the United States and Britain. Recent Canadian productions include **Sarah, The Massays, and Homage To Chagall.**

Don Archbold

37 Galveston Avenue
Sherwood Park, Alberta
(403) 464-0621

Credits: Scores for over 80 films including one feature, **Parallels** and ten television series.

Michael Baker

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