

JERRY GOLDSMITH AT 70



The occasion of Jerry Goldsmith's seventieth birthday has been a wonderful time of both looking back and looking ahead. After the nearly fifty CDs we have done together since **THE FINAL CONFLICT** in 1986, there is much to look back on. So many great scores. So many great times. **LIONHEART, CHINATOWN, TOTAL RECALL, MEDICINE MAN, BASIC INSTINCT, RUDY, AIR FORCE ONE, L.A. CONFIDENTIAL, SMALL SOLDIERS** ... the list goes on.

Of course, I became aware of Jerry's music long before I got the chance to work with him. Well, as long ago as 1979 anyway, when I went to see **STAR TREK - THE MOTION PICTURE** and heard music more wonderful and inspiring than any I had ever known. How timely it is then to be writing about Jerry just after listening to the twentieth anniversary CD of this score. How quickly those twenty years went by! I'm sure Jerry is thinking the same thing.

Goldsmith's career is a rare one in a town that loves to be done with people as soon as possible. To endure some forty-plus years in a career in Hollywood is something that can be claimed by only the most legendary of actors, perhaps fewer than a handful of directors and maybe only one other composer. To have remained during those forty years at the absolute top, year after year, almost from the very start and to this very day is something that puts Goldsmith in a category all by himself.

Certainly speaking for myself, (and it's not too far a stretch to speak for others in this case), those who are lucky enough to work alongside Jerry are in a not uncommon state of awe. As can be witnessed in the credits to his CDs, there are a few people who have, over the years, accompanied Jerry from picture to picture (team Goldsmith, if you will); Arthur Morton, Alexander Courage, Ken Hall, Bruce Botnick, Sandy De Crescent, Jo Ann Kane, Richard Kraft and myself. A front row seat to Goldsmith's career is the best seat in town. The show is remarkable. His recording sessions have more of a family atmosphere than anyone's. Everybody knows

everybody else. We have all worked together for years. The musicians all certainly know and love him. The only new face most times is the director. I love watching the director's face after Jerry records a big cue. The smile that forms after Jerry has just taken a scene they shot and transformed it from a piece of film into a "motion picture" is just priceless. They run over and hug him ... sometimes they're crying ... everyone in the booth is applauding ... what a great thing to be a part of! The **RUDY** sessions were particularly emotional in this regard. I find it striking to see Jerry deliver scores on a regular basis that would, all by themselves, warrant legendary status for the composer if his career had begun and ended with that one score.

In addition to new film projects, I have been lucky enough to work with Jerry on a continuing series of new recordings of both his own film scores as well as scores by our mutual friend, the great Alex North. These recordings, and the trips we go on to undertake them, are among the most joyful and looked forward to events of my career. My first trip to Europe was with Jerry when we recorded Alex North's unused score from "**2001**." What a great way to see London for the first time ... going to Abbey Road Studios to record North's long lost "**2001**" music with Jerry conducting the National Philharmonic Orchestra! It just doesn't get any better than that! Alex's music is a passion for us. I remember the day I woke up in my London hotel room knowing that later that day we would be recording **A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE** - two years to the day from when we recorded "**2001**". The anticipation was overwhelming. Where "**2001**" was a revelation and developed its reputation as an-honest-to-goodness masterpiece after our recording, **STREETCAR** had been a favorite score of mine for as long as I could remember. It was also a fascinating couple of days seeing Jerry conduct a score as stylistically different from his own music as **STREETCAR** is. This was also the day when our long discussed "*Alex North series*" really started to take shape. "**2001**" may have come first but it's hard to have a series with only one CD. Even

two barely gets the job done.

Before recording more Alex North however, it was time to devote some attention to Jerry's own music. In February of 1997, shortly after he completed the score for **L.A. CONFIDENTIAL**, I introduced Jerry to my new favorite group of musicians, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra. We would record **PATTON, TORA! TORA! TORA!** and **THE SAND PEBBLES**. During our preparations for these recordings, Jerry kept impressing upon me that **PATTON** would be more difficult and take more time than I thought. Boy was he right! In fact, while Joel McNeely was scheduled for an afternoon session to begin **OUT OF AFRICA**, the German advance marched on. It was a long winter. Joel never got out of the control booth until ten minutes before the end of the session. Baseball analogies were abounding with Joel McNeely coming in as my closer as Goldsmith left the podium.

For **TORA! TORA! TORA!** I took on a new role for the better part of a session when I joined the RSNO under Jerry's direction alongside Lynda Cochrane on prepared piano. Periodically Lynda and I were joined by another girl banging on the inside of the piano with mallets. What a fascinating experience to hear Jerry's music from within the orchestra!

The following week we would regroup in London, this time in studio two at Abbey Road, for Alex North's **WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?** The emotion of the score definitely transferred itself to the mood of the day. Such a beautiful score!

Jerry had long been lobbying for **VIVA ZAPATA!**, and **THE AGONY AND THE ECSTASY** had forever been a favorite of mine. In September of 1997 we would induct them both into our series. Afterwards, and before returning to Los Angeles, we would also record "*Frontiers*", a collection of some of Jerry's best music for science fiction films. What a joy this album was. So many of my favorite pieces of Jerry's, lined up one after another. The excitement I felt each time we

finished one piece and moved on to the next was enormous. "The Enterprise" from **STAR TREK** (perhaps my single favorite cue from any film score), "The Monument" from **LOGAN'S RUN** (another cue on my short list of favorites), the theme from **CAPRICORN ONE** ... every piece we were recording was something I selected because I loved it. The RSN0 was making everything sound so good. I have to say that this CD ranks highly among my most cherished projects.

In just a couple of weeks I will be returning to Scotland with Jerry for a series of three concerts with the RSN0 to celebrate his 70th birthday. A few days later there is another concert with the

LSO in London. This will be another occasion where the parade of favorites will be breathtaking. With all of these glances backward, Jerry's sights are set firmly on the future. I've already started work on preparing the soundtrack for **THE 13TH WARRIOR** and Jerry is hard at work composing the score for Universal's **THE MUMMY**. There are already a couple of pictures lined up after that.

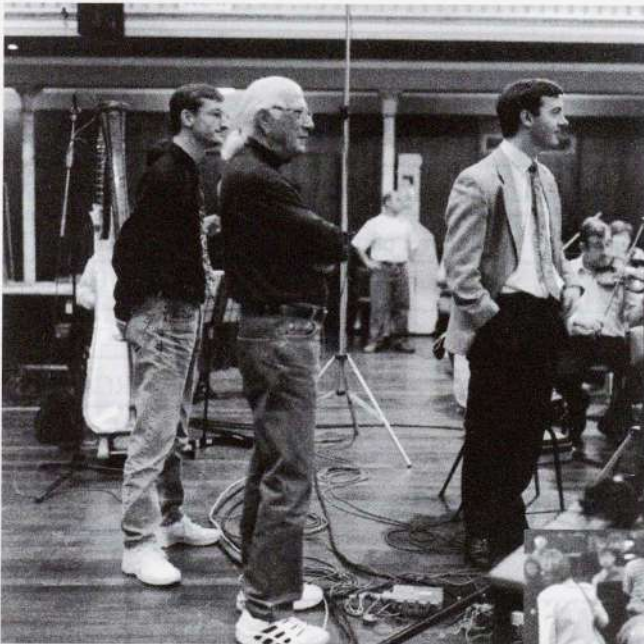
Jerry Goldsmith's role in film music today cannot be overstated. I've always said that the four or five most exciting days over the course of a year are the four or five first-day recording sessions as Jerry begins a new score. You never know what

you're going to get. It's always better that you could have imagined. He makes it all look so easy. His own enthusiasm is infectious. I assume this is how he manages to deal with a schedule that makes those half his age look at his career and continued output in near mythical terms. Every year there's four or five new movies, plus a trip or two to Scotland or London for album projects. Then there are the concerts he gives all over the world, not to mention his teaching! The really wonderful thing about Jerry's 70th birthday is that he will have a few parties, conduct a few concerts and then get right back to writing music. He is, after all, the hardest working man in show business!

Robert Townson and Jerry Goldsmith at the mixing console



Robert Townson, Jerry Goldsmith and Simon during a break at the AGONY AND THE ECSTASY sessions (1998)



Group shot at the FRONTIERS session (1997)



Robert Townson and Jerry Goldsmith reviewing a score (1998)

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