

Hong Kong Film Composer/Professor Comes to AICM

AICM is delighted to welcome Dr Robert Ellis-Geiger as a Senior Visiting Fellow and we look forward to involving him in a range of national and international initiatives.



Dr Robert Ellis-Geiger is an Australian who left Australia in 1995 travelling the world as a performer, academic and film composer. Robert has recently scored for award winning Hong Kong directors - Johnnie To, *Election 2* (2006) and Patrick Tam, *After This Our Exile* (2006).

Robert is an active performer (vocal/piano, trumpet/flugelhorn) and a feature film composer of diverse styles (orchestral, pop, folk, jazz, world music) who combines acoustic instruments ranging from full orchestra to small eclectic ensembles that are often made up of culturally diverse instruments. He also frequently combines acoustic instruments with computer-generated instruments, synthesis and sound design. He likes to think there is a similarity in his approach to film scoring as to that of the late Gerry Goldsmith. Robert is currently working on a feature film directed and written by Richard Bowen who was the director of photography for Clint Eastwood's film, *Flags of Our Fathers* (2006). The score is being composed for string orchestra and solo Chinese instruments. He is also completing the music for two documentary films.

The Establishment of Orchestral Film Scoring in Hong Kong

On the 22nd of February 2007 Robert organised a professional training event where he conducted the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra performing the main title themes from two of his Hong Kong film scores at Shaw Studios. This was an historic event for Hong Kong cinema as it was the first time that a western orchestra in Hong Kong had been recorded performing a film score. Besides composing and orchestrating the music, Robert was the system designer for the audio recording and picture playback systems, event organiser and fundraiser. The event was sponsored by the Hong Kong government, international and local professional audio companies such as *Solid State Logic (SSL)* who sent a new AWS900+ analogue mixing console from England at no charge and

donated 100 high quality headphones (given to the orchestra). Further, Tom Lee Music sponsored the Aviom networked headphone monitoring system and Steinberg Asia (Singapore) provided software and hardware support. (see <http://sweb.cityu.edu.hk/scm/dssw/>). This was an extraordinary event for film music in Hong Kong.

In July 2008 Robert established orchestral film scoring services in Hong Kong for the first time by providing scoring services for the Austrian film *The Orange Paper* composed by Sascha Selke. He acted as score producer; orchestrator (acoustic and MIDI); composer of additional music; and conducted members of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra at Shaw Studios on the 6th and 7th of July 2008. Robert also mixed and mastered the final music score in stereo and surround that was later delivered to the dubbing theatre in Berlin. The film is due for release in late 2008. This was the first time, again, in the history of Hong Kong cinema that an overseas filmmaker had a score recorded by a 'real' orchestra in Hong Kong. Further information can be seen and examples heard at (<http://www.VisionSoncis.net>).

At the City University of Hong Kong, Robert is the programme leader for the AA in Media Technology and BA (Hons) in Creative Media at the School of Creative Media. There are close to four hundred students within the two programmes spread across a range of studios including Cinematic Arts, Animation and Critical Studies. Robert delivers courses in the areas of Audio Recording Arts, Sound Design for Cinema, and Surround Sound Production for Music. He has supervised BA (Hons) and MFA thesis projects ranging from music composition, sonic art works, and multi-media installations through to animation, film and video games. One of his current MPhil/PhD students Mr. Keith Leung, is a highly successful Cantonese Pop songwriter/producer. For a sample of his online teaching material see - <http://sweb.cityu.edu.hk/soundlib/>

'To have Robert as a Senior Visiting Fellow at AICM is both a delight and a privilege. As we grow our interest and presence in film and television music, Robert's advice and support will be invaluable' says AICM Principal, Dr Greg Whateley.