

John Frizzell

Composer

“Uhhh...that sucks more than anything in the world has ever sucked before, huh huh,” the voice uttered as the music faded away.

The voice was Butt-head’s, the music was John Frizzell’s. He had edited the insult onto his reel as a ploy to get a meeting with Mike Judge. It worked. Frizzell proposed that Beavis and Butt-head should be accompanied by a massive orchestral sound with belching brass, soaring strings and a glorious choir singing in latin. “That will be funny,” he told Judge. And thus, **Beavis and Butt-head do America** was Frizzell’s first feature film and first hit.

“I really want to f**k up Wagner,” Frizzell told Barry Hershey when he interviewed for the **The Empty Mirror**, a cinematic depiction of the putrid mind of Adolf Hitler. Frizzell wrote a score which features 20th century techniques labeled “degenerate” by the Nazi’s to brutally distort the music of Hitler’s perverse idol, Richard Wagner.

By chance, as life sometimes goes, this score made its way to the ears of **Jean-Pierre Jeunet**. Frizzell met with Jeunet and proposed scoring his film as an erotic fantasy. The film was **Alien Resurrection** and the music incorporated oddly romantic melodies juxtaposed by shrill industrial electronic chaos.

Frizzell thrives when a prevailing concept is used to drive the score and shape a film. Whether a time period, location or emotional idea, Frizzell believes this concept will spontaneously lead to the right instrumentation, technology and production techniques. These will naturally begin to define the music.

Chorus member of the Paris Opera Company at age 12. Rock bands as a teenager. Accomplished jazz guitarist after that. Educated at **The USC Thornton School of Music** and **Manhattan School of Music**. Master of the iconic **Synclavier** (the first digital music workstation). Synthesist and orchestrator for Academy Award Winning composer, **Ryuichi Sakamoto**. This set Frizzell’s focus on film music and gave him the skills to excel in complex situations.

For **Joel Silver**, Frizzell collaborated to accomplish the logistically and technically complex task of combining the sounds of rap artist **DMX** with orchestral scoring. To depict the American Civil War in **Ron Maxwell’s** epic **Gods and Generals**, Frizzell composed three hours of orchestral music and brought virtuoso violinist **Mark O’Connor** and the legendary **Paddy Maloney** together for the first time. For the cult classic **Office Space** laziness and apathy were represented with dreamy voices and hawaiian slide guitar. Recently, Frizzell depicted the life of a relentlessly optimistic yet impoverished mother of ten in **The Prize Winner of Defiance, Ohio**. “Devil May Care”. This was the phrase Frizzell and director **Jane Anderson** pin pointed as the concept for the score. From this thought came playful piano, plinking ukeleles, doo-wop singers and rock-a-billy guitars to set the tone for midwest life during the 1950’s.

“I have to record in Africa”, Frizzell told director **Michael Katleman** when asked to score **Primeval**, the story of a real-life crocodile which has killed an estimated 300 people in war-torn Burundi. After weeks of research, Frizzell headed for Cape Town where he recorded many traditional African players, including **Dizu** of Amampondo and legendary multi-instrumentalist **Madosini**. After precisely editing these recordings, and implementing the latest digital music technology, Frizzell has melded an orchestral score around these instruments, preserving authentic african tunings and rhythms while serving the action of the film.

Continuing his long standing relationship with **Joel Silver**, Frizzell is currently composing the score to **Stephen Hopkins’** thriller, **The Reaping**. The film stars **Hilary Swank** as a miracle de-bunker facing a series of Plagues in a small Louisiana town.

Throw out the old recipe. Try new ingredients. Change the order of the process. Aggressively utilize new technology. These ideas are defining the career of John Frizzell. By letting the concept set the course for his music, Frizzell has scored films across an enormous emotional range.