

CURRICULUM VITAE

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"I would have to say it was amongst the most satisfying of collaborations I have had. John's music is by turns beautiful, driven, dramatic, humourous, tender – and always in the service of the film. He watches the film apparently endlessly seeking new nuance, revising without complaint as requested and was prepared to attend and stay through out the mix which was a huge help to me.

In an unusual move we encouraged John to act as the key music editor, so as well as composing he was laying up against picture on pro tools – something he proved very adept at. The effect in the long run was a sound track that moved effortlessly throughout the film, giving the story greater coherence, emotion and pace.

A modest, good natured and hugely talented man – I would recommend him without hesitation and hope that I have the good fortune to work with him myself again in the near future."

Vincent Ward
Producer/ Director Rain of the Children

John Gibson has been writing music for drama of one kind or another since 1980. His skill as a collaborator has made his work a success in all genres across the modern musical landscape - feature film, theatre, television, and dance. He brings to each his skills as composer, lyricist, pianist, actor, performer, sound designer, music editor, repertoire and musical director, and teacher and a vast array of musical symphonies. He is able to invent new and unique sound worlds that perfectly complement each project, but that are above all organic and sound real (and no matter how far out, sound musical).

He is versed in all forms of contemporary music making but can bring out in sounds or melodies the emotional essence of a work. For this skill he has been sought out by many of NZ's finest artists and has established with many of them long standing collaborations. Vincent ward, Colin McColl, Douglas Wright, Shona McCullagh, Michael Hurst to name a few .

John began his career composing his first rock opera at the age of 16. At 21 he was appointed musical director at Fortune Theatre in Dunedin where he wrote original scores and songs, and as performer and song-writer appeared in many devised works touring throughout New Zealand.

Currently John's work for theatre numbers over 80 original scores, including over 150 original songs covering an enormous range of styles. Productions include many of the Shakespeare's, original scores for Brecht, and in collaboration with Michael Hurst, productions of the Greek classics, modern and devised work.

In 1983 John became resident Musical Director at Auckland's Theatre Corporate where he was selected by TVNZ to play the lead role and co-write the songs for a major drama series, "Heroes", for which he was a joint winner of a GOFTA for Best Music for Television.

Other television composing work followed and in these John developed the use of distinctive and unusual instrumentations, bringing a humour and freshness to a series of highly successful teenage dramas. In 1988 John was nominated for Best Music using an orchestral score featuring the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra for England's Channel 4.

Furthering a need to compose longer works, in the 1990s John wrote several scores for dance, collaborating with some of New Zealand's most successful choreographers. This led to an invitation to travel to Budapest to work with Hungarian dance theatre group, Artus. He has collaborated extensively with Shona McCullagh and Ann Dewey

John has been commissioned three times to compose for the New Zealand International Festival of the Arts: a dance theatre work, a large scale theatre work and a score for Wellington's Carillion.

John's versatility has resulted in a steady stream of documentaries and his ability to write strong and distinctive themes have been widely used in many t.v. series. Amongst them "Epitaph" and "Party Animals".

He was assistant musical director to Howard Shore for some of the early musical sequences in King Kong, and last year composed three scores for the Auckland Theatre Company. "The Duchess of Malfi", "Equus", and "Disgrace".

He has received various awards for his television work over the years and his work for Film includes such classics as "Red Scream" the first digital short made here and "Donuts for Breakfast". He has recently composed (with Jack Body) the score for Vincent Wards latest feature "Rain of the Children".

References in the media:

"Surely the most exciting aspect of this play is John Gibson's percussive musical score. The music holds a tight grip on the atmosphere of the play and results in a very real heightening of the drama.....If they had a hand in the selection of John Gibson as musical director, however, they did well. In a totally different genre, Gibson again excelled."

- The Listener

"On a simple set against a background of graffiti subtly and effectively lit, and accompanied by John Gibson music which is virtually another character (he aptly leads the curtain call)....."

- Linda Herrick, The Herald

“Many times too he demonstrated by parodistic reference his knowledge and understanding of a large number of musical styles, all of which he used not merely for purposes of clever display but because they could be appropriated within a specific context to have precise effect.”

- Peter Shaw, Metro Magazine

“The work mirrors the extraordinary music of John Gibson, which combines such diverse instruments as violin, cello tuba and banjo.”

- Jenny Stevenson, City Voice