

Michael J McEvoy - Biography

Michael is an American musician and composer currently based in London. He grew up in a musical family studying piano and viola, and is a self-taught guitarist and bass player. His piano studies began at age seven and viola aged 13. Michael's family moved to London in 1973 and Michael attended the Centre for Young Musicians playing viola in the London Schools Symphony Orchestra.

After gaining entry to Leeds College of Music in 1978 with viola as first study, Michael's interest in composition and improvisation led him back to London, where he worked as a keyboardist with saxophonist Dick Heckstall-Smith (previously of *Coliseum*). He then began an apprenticeship at the London recording studio, Matrix, where he met and collaborated with African conga drummer, Reebop Kwaku Bah (Jimmy Cliff, Traffic, Can). Michael established himself as a sought after session musician and arranger working with many pop artists.

His first break came while working with music producer Adam Kidron. Kidron introduced Michael to Ian Dury, who then hired Michael to co-write and arrange his album *Four Thousand Week's Holiday*. Michael worked as an arranger and musician on a number of projects with Kidron in the producer's chair including Scritti Politti's *Songs to Remember* and Nina Hagen's *In Ekstase*.

Throughout the 1980s Michael wrote songs and performed with several hit pop artists including No.1 teenybop idols, Curiosity Killed the Cat and Soul II Soul. He performed live and recorded in the studio with Sting, The Bee Gees, Mark Morrison and many others. He has also had a long association with Steve Winwood, touring with him in his legendary band, Traffic in 1994 (DVD release; *The Last Traffic Jam*), and was his Musical Director on the Junction 7 tour in 1997.

In the 1990s Michael wrote songs that were released on albums by Teena Marie (*Since Day One*), The James Taylor Quartet (*Sunshine of Your Smile*), Patrice Rushen (*Caravan*) and DJ Wookie. In 2001 Michael and Wookie had a # 2 single in the UK dance charts, *Back Up, Back Up*, which featured Michael playing lead guitar. His work as a producer has included many 'rare groove' club classics including *Try My Love* by Lalomie Washburn, co-production credit on JTQ album *Supernatural*, performing with soul-funk artist RAD, and London jazz-funk band Push.

Michael's first experience of writing film music was Beeban Kidron's *Vroom* starring Clive Owen and David Thewlis, followed by *The Bearskin - An Urban Fairytale* starring Tom Waits. His music also featured in a number of high profile documentaries including *J'accuse* (C4), *Equinox: Fly Navy* (C4), *Dog's World* (Discovery/Wall to Wall) and *Battle of the Hood and Bismarck* (C4/ITN).

Returning to the USA in 1998, Michael went on to compose music for a number of documentaries broadcast on A&E (Biography Channel documentaries on Kevin

Bacon and Jon Bon Jovi), History Channel (8 x Haunted History documentaries) and PBS. During this time he received three regional Emmy nominations and was awarded the Emmy in January 2004 for Best Instrumental Music for his work on the documentary, *Tennessee Yearbook*, which was narrated by Issac Hayes. While in the USA, he studied composition with Professor Michael Alec Rose, and conducting with Lyn Bingham at Blair School of Music (Vanderbilt University).

He returned to London in 2003 to study Composition for Screen at the Royal College of Music where he was the Performing Rights Society's Sir Arthur Bliss Memorial Scholar. In October 2005 he received his Masters in Music degree and was awarded the Joseph Horowitz Prize in Composition for Screen, the first time it had been awarded since 2001. Several prime-time documentaries followed: *French Beauty* for the BBC documentary series *Storyville* (BBC2) and *E=mc²* (PBS / US title, *Einstein's Big Idea*) a feature length dramatized documentary produced by Darlow/Smithson and WGBH Boston.

From 2005-08, Michael was a Professor of Composition at the Royal College of Music, London in the role Area Leader, Composition for Screen.

Michael has been increasingly in demand as a film composer, writing original music for Richard Linklater's *Me and Orson Welles* starring Zac Efron and Claire Danes, due for release early in 2009. He has also collaborated with the renowned DJ, Paul Oakenfold, as a co-composer and orchestrator on several feature film scores. In June 2007 they completed a score for the Japanese anime feature, *Vexille*, directed by Fumihiko Sori. Winner of Best Animated Feature at Philadelphia Film Festival 2008, and in 2008 they scored *Nothing Like the Holidays*, starring John Leguizamo and Alfred Molina, which was a surprise Christmas hit (No. 7 in the US box office charts) in December 2008.

Recent film credits include two Indie features, *Forget Me Not*, directed by Lance Roehrig and Alex Holt, and *Just Ines*, directed by Marcel Grant starring French actress Caroline Ducey.

During the first half of 2010 Michael composed the music for a 20 part children's series for Nickelodeon UK called *Summer In Transylvania*, which begins airing on Halloween night, 2010.

Michael's album, *Terra Cognita*, was released in June 2010 on German Jazz label C.A.R.E. Music Group GmbH.

Additional details about Michael's professional activities can be found on his website at: <http://www.michaeljmcevoy.com>

Hear tracks from Terra Cognita at: <http://www.myspace.com/michaeljmcevoy>

Email: mjm4info@mac.com