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John Baxter, DMA
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SUMMARY

Composer, conductor, and scholar with a prolific career spanning award-winning feature film scores, international orchestral premieres, and collegiate-level instruction. Specialist in commercial music, music theory, and ensemble leadership, with a research focus on the intersection of music perception and contemporary harmonic analysis.

EDUCATION

University of Miami – Frost School of Music Miami, Florida

Doctor of Musical Arts – Composition, May 2022

Notable Teachers: Lansing McLoskey, Carlos Rivera, Gerard Schwarz, Juan Chattah

New York University – Steinhardt School, New York, New York

Master of Music – Film Scoring, Dec. 2018

Notable Teachers: Irwin Fisch, John Kaefer, Paul Chihara

Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut

Bachelor of Science – Psychology, May 2017

Notable Teachers: Konrad Kaczmarek, Kathryn Alexander

TEACHING EXPERIENCE/APPOINTMENTS HELD

American River College – Adjunct Faculty: Commercial Music/Theory

Develop and teach courses in music theory and commercial music (2025—)

Valencia College – Associate Faculty: Music Technology

Develop and teach courses in scoring video games, middleware, ProTools, and MIDI synthesis (2021-2023)

Frost School of Music – Teaching Assistant

Develop and teach courses in music theory, sight-singing, and musicianship (2021-2022)

Student Affairs Advisory Committee – Graduate Student Representative

Elected member of committee focused on student experiences and diversity initiatives (2021-2022)

Miami Dade College (Kendall Campus) – Music Instructor

Develop and teach courses in piano performance and theory (2019-2021)

Composition Online – Senior Instructor

Teach private courses in media scoring and concert composition using Logic Pro (2020—)

Udemy – Instructor

Develop and record an online full semester course on using Logic Pro and sample libraries to create motion picture soundtracks (2018—)

MUSIC TECHNOLOGY/PRODUCTION

Fluent in the Following Softwares/Coding Languages

Logic Pro X, Cubase, Sibelius, VEP, Pro Tools, Ableton, MAX/MSP, EastWest Library, Kontakt, Komplete, Soundminer, FMod, Wwise

Certifications Held

Project Management Professional, Lean Six Sigma Black Belt

Fluent in the Following Softwares

SharePoint, Power BI, Power Automate, Tableau, Power Pages, Adobe Creative Suite, Microsoft Office Suite

COMMERCIAL COMPOSITION (Complete List of Media Collaborations)

Awards:

Best Original Score: Vegas Movie Awards (November 2022)

Best Original Score: MindField Film Festival (July 2022)

Best Original Score: IndieEye Film Festival (July 2022)

Best Original Score: NJ Film Awards (July 2022)

Best Original Score: Vegas Movie Awards (January 2021)

Best Original Score: IndieX Festival (November 2020)

Best Original Score: Hollywood Blood Horror Festival (November 2020)

Wandering Heights

Composer for short animated film. Dir: Chris Sarfin (2026)

Mother Bird

Composer for feature drama. Dir: Bradley Stryker (2025)

More Than This

Composer/Arranger for short film (with Stephen Schwartz). Dir: Chris Sarfin (2025)

Axeman at Cutter's Creek: Absolution

Composer for feature horror. Dir: Joston Theney (2025)

Sci-Fi's Forgotten Visionaries

Composer for feature documentary. Dir: Pete Cohen (2024)

Mislead

Composer for short drama. Dir: Angel Reyes (2024)

Inhuman Tethers

Composer for short drama. Dir: George Anthony Richardson (2024)

Slay Ride

Composer for feature length horror. Dir: Olivia Dunkley (2024)

Dog People

Composer for short horror. Dir: Bradley Stryker (2024)

Moments of Youth

Composer for feature comedy. Dir: Gregory Pellerito (2023)

Searching for Yoo

Composer for feature drama/thriller. Dir: Marissa Lichwick (2023)

Defining Moments

Composer for short drama. Dir: Michael Trainor (2023)

Pick a Side

Composer for feature drama. Dir: Edward Green (2022)

Sheltering Season

Composer for feature thriller. Dir: Bradley Stryker (2022)

Voiceless

Composer for short drama. Dir: Di Xin (2022)

Oh What A Day!

Composer for short comedy. Dir: Derek Zuzunaga (2022)

Black Box

Provided additional music for fiction podcast starring Joel McHale, Chosen Jacobs, and Brec Bassinger. Dir: Brian Siegele (2021)

King Cake: The Joie de Vivre

Composer for feature documentary starring John Goodman, Elijah Wood, and Norman Reedus. Dir: Will Hess (2021)

Albion Rose

Sound Designer/Mixer for short drama. Dir: Tiffany Tenille (2021)

Natural Demise

Composer and music editor for feature horror/thriller film. Dir: Richard Ryan (2021)

F500 Man

Composer and music editor for feature drama film. Dir: Richard Ryan (2021)

Moms – The Musical

Orchestrator/Arranger for full-length musical. Dir: Jennifer Lake.

Wanton Want

Composer for feature drama. Dir: Joston Theney (2021)

How Does That Make You Feel?

Composer for comedic online series. Dir: Lara McCarthy (2020)

Overcast

Composer for short thriller. Dir: Lourdes Roche (2020)

UMA

Composer for Middle-Eastern documentary. Dir: Shoayb Khattab (2020)

Lost Son

Composer for short drama. Dir: Isaac Cruz (2020)

The Cloaked Realm

Composer for animated series. Dir: Pete and Marisa Cohen (2020)

The Migrant

Composer for short drama. Dir: Parbat Pc (2020)

Fat Kid with the Messenger Bag

Composer for short drama. Dir: Tristan Fortier (2019)

Gnarwhal Coffee

Composer for ad campaign (2019)

Sophie and the Serial Killers

Composer for feature-length musical. Dir: Michael Thordarson (2019)

Man Camp

Composer for feature-length comedy film. Dir: Nate Bakke (2019)

The Delivery

Composer for short drama film. Dir: Peixuan Wang (2019)

Rainbow Mothers

Composer for short documentary film. Dir: Elle Luan (2019)

Catnip Nation

Composer for feature-length documentary. Dir: Tina Traster (2018)

Happiness

Composer for short film. Dir: Houston Jones (2018)

Stay

Composer for 4-part dramatic web series. Dir: Dianna Ippolito (2018)

Take It

Composer for short action film. Dir: Mark Newton (2018)

Winfield Historical Times...And Other Oddities

Composer for post-modern art film. Dir: Julia Cowle (2018)

The House We Lived In

Composer for dramatic film. Dir: Kelly Sheridan (2018)

All In

Composer for action film. Dir: Jim DeFalco (2018)

The Trick

Composer for urban film. Dir: Oliver Coltress (2018)

She Fights

Composer for documentary. Dir: Cecelia Charendoff (2018)

The Delivery

Composer for movie musical. Dir: Chris Sarfin (2018)

He Takes and Returns

Composer for horror teaser trailer. Dir: Anthony DeRouen (2018)

Girls Pty Ltd

Composer for short children's film. Dir: Amelia Gilday (2018)

The Right Mind

Composer for short surreal comedy film. Dir: James Hall (2018)

The Right Spot

Composer for short surreal comedy film. Dir: James Hall (2017)

The Collector

Composer for feature length thriller film. Dir: Thodoris Vournas (2017)

LettersFall

Composer for video game. Dir: Jesse Lee (2017)

Something

Orchestrator/Composer for feature length thriller film. Dir: Stephen Portland (2017)

Roads, Trees, and Honeybees

Composer for feature length romantic comedy film. Dir: Stephanie McBain (2017)

Gabriel Morales

Composer for real estate commercial (2017)

Gautreaux

Composer for short romantic film. Dir: Houston Jones (2017)

Amelia's Story

Composer for romantic film. Dir: Katherine Roberts (2017)

Behind Her Eyes

Composer for psychological thriller film. Dir: Katherine Roberts (2017)

The Girl with a Thousand Eyes

Composer for commercial. Dir: Ji Strangeway (2017)

Velvet Green Music

Composer/Licenser (2017-)

Michael Anthony Fashion

Composer for marketing show (2017)

Reload

Composer for short film. Dir: Samuel Kolber (2017)

CONDUCTING/MUSIC DIRECTOR

Chamber Music Society of Sacramento

Conductor for ensembles (2026—)

American River College Orchestra

Guest conductor for orchestra (2024—)

River City Community Orchestra

Head conductor of orchestra (2024-2025)

Symphony d'Oro

Assistant Conductor for orchestra (2023—)

West Sacramento Community Orchestra

Assistant Conductor for orchestra (2023-2024)

Azimuth Orchestra

Selected as conductor of remote orchestra during pandemic. Programmed and conducted premiere performance (2020)

American Choral Director's Association

Selected as a conductor for a choral composition showcase (2020)

Colleges of Fenway – Music Director

Music Director/Conductor of *Guys and Dolls* for the Colleges of Fenway (2019)

Popular Theater Inc. – Music Director

Music Director/Conductor of new musical titled *Faux-bia*, debuting at Carnegie Hall (2018)

New York University Youth Music Festival

Conductor of string ensemble (2017)

Columbia Pops Summit

Acting Musical Director of Small Ensemble (2017)

Pitches and Tones Choir

Musical Director/Conductor (2014-2016)

COMPOSITION RECOGNITION AND AWARDS

The American Prize

Winner of The American Prize in composition for piece titled “Through it All” (2021)

Frost Symphony Orchestra Composition Competition

Winner of the FSO Composition Competition. “Rhapsodia” will be premiered in Spring of 2022 by the Frost Symphony Orchestra, led by Maestro Gerard Schwarz (2021)

Schnittke International Composition Competition

String orchestra piece titled *The Color of Rain* awarded semi-finalist status in composition competition (2021)

O/Modernt Composition Competition

String orchestra piece titled *The Color of Rain* awarded semi-finalist status in Sweden composition competition (2021)

Yale Symphony Orchestra

Chosen as composer for an orchestral reading (2017)

National Federation of Music Club

Winner of 1st and 2nd place in junior composition category (2013)

SELECTED PERFORMANCES/FESTIVAL ACTIVITY

International Composers' Festival

Orchestral piece "Water" selected for programming at international festival in Sussex, UK (2022)

Hot Air Music Festival

Composition *Missing Memories* accepted to the Hot Air Music Festival hosted by the San Francisco Conservatory of Music (2021)

Illinois State University Band

Wind Ensemble piece *DayBreak* to premiere with Illinois State University Wind Band (2020)

Sofia Symphonic Summit

Accepted to the Sofia Symphonic Summit in Sofia, Bulgaria. Premiere of 10-minute symphonic orchestral piece will be performed (2020)

Space City New Music Festival

Accepted to the Space City New Music Festival to premiere a new piece for solo flute (2020)

University of Tennessee Contemporary Music Festival

Composition *Missing Memories* chosen for the Call for Scores (2020)

Society of Composers Incorporated – University of Miami Chapter

Composition for Clarinet, Violin, Cello, and Piano performed at semi-annual concert (2019)

Foundation for Emerging Technologies and Arts Soundfest

Participant in festival. Premiered piece using live electronics and vocals (2019)

Henry Mancini Institute

Chosen as a participant in a workshop for experimental composition (2019)

RESEARCH ACTIVITY/PRESENTATIONS

College Music Society National Conference

Invited to present my research on "The Teardrop Chord" at national conference (2022)

Korea Electro-Acoustic Music Society Annual Convention

Presented MAX/MSP research project "Swimmer's Ear: Emulating Kinetic Sound Using Headphones and Sounds of Water" at KEAMSAC (2021)

American Musicological Society – Presentation

Article titled "The Teardrop Chord: Analyzing the Enigmatic Minor IV Chord in Pop and Film Music" accepted for a presentation at the AMS After Dark panel (2021)

Society of Music Theory Podcast

Research proposal accepted for inaugural episode of the new SMT Podcast. Presenting on research article titled, "The Teardrop Chord: Analyzing the Enigmatic Minor IV Chord in Pop and Film Music" (2021)

International Conference on Music Perception and Cognition

Presenter at the ISCMPC. Discussed research paper titled "Influences of Mood and Affect on Perception of Tonal Modalities." (2021)

“Future Histories of Music Theory: Problems and Possibilities” Workshop

Served as technical assistant and participant for workshop focused on future directions in music theory (2021)

Aspen Composers’ Conference

Presented original research at the 2020 Aspen Composers’ Conference (2020)

Music Theory Southeast Workshop

Member of workshop focusing on pop harmony and musicology (2020)

Yale Review of Undergraduate Research in Psychology – Editor in Chief

Reviewed article submissions and created final copy of annual research journal (2016-2017)

PUBLICATIONS

Baxter, J. (2021) “An Unfortunate Boon of Genius.” *Journal of Genius and Eminence*

URL: <http://creativityjournals.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/John-Baxter.pdf>

Baxter, J. (In Press) “‘That Sounds like Film Music’ What Stories are We Telling?” *The Proceedings of the 2020 Aspen Composers Conference*

Baxter, J. (2022)

“Swimmer’s Ear: Emulating Kinetic Sound Using Headphones and Sounds of Water.” *Journal of the Korea Electro-Acoustic Music Society*

URL: https://scholars.cityu.edu.hk/files/107876869/emille_19.pdf#page=8

The Convergence and Divergence of Music in Video Games and Film

Chapter titled *Breaking the Loop: Exploring the Translation of Music from Video Games to Films (and Back Again)* to be published in anthology through Routledge Publishing.

Baxter, J. (Monograph in Progress) *Beethoven’s Tutor: Examining the Metamorphosis of Composition Pedagogy*

Baxter, J. (2022) “The Teardrop Chord: Analyzing the Enigmatic Minor Predominant Chord in

Film and Pop Music” URL: https://smt-pod.org/episodes/supplements/season01/S01Ep03Supp_baxter.pdf

Baxter, J. (Under review) “Influences of Mood and Affect on Perception of Tonal Modalities.”

Psychomusicology: Music, Mind, and Brain

Baxter, J. (Under review) “Beethoven’s Deviance: Analyzing the Evolution of the Four-Measure Phrase in Beethoven’s Piano Sonatas” *The Beethoven Journal*

INVITED TALKS

Frost School of Music

Invited speaker for composition forum. Led discussion on synthestration, creating realistic mockups of live instruments using MIDI synthesis (09/20/2021)

University of Delaware

Guest speaker in the Composition Department. Invited to give a talk on composition and music technology in the industry and work in media collaboration (10/28/2020)

Frost School of Music

Invited speaker at composition forum. Discussed the business of media scoring and modern music technology (01/24/2020)

We Are Musicians

Invited speaker for podcast featuring musicians discussing topics such as composition, philosophy, and aesthetics (10/25/2020)

A.V.A. Live Radio Behind the Music

Invited speaker for radio show. Discussed latest album release “Daymares and Nightdreams” as well as other topics such as following popularity and trends in the music industry (12/12/2015)

GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Graduate Activity Fee Allocation Committee – University of Miami

Awarded maximum financial support for participation in the Schnittke International Composition Competition hosted in Lviv, Ukraine (2020)

Graduate Activity Fee Allocation committee – University of Miami

Awarded maximum financial support for participation in the Sofia, Bulgaria Symphonic Summit (2019)

ARRANGING

New York International Symphony Orchestra

Orchestrator for International Orchestra (2019)

California Mental Health Gala

String Quartet Arranger for two stage pieces during Gala (2018)

Universidade Luterana do Brasil

Arranger (2017—)

Pitches and Tones Choir – Yale University

Head arranger of choir (2015-2017)

Arranger (2013-2017) 30+ arrangements

Davenport Pops Orchestra

Arranger (2015-2017)

Oak Grove Centerstage Show Choir

Arranger (2013)