THE FILMMAKING PROCESS

Prepping for an acoustic recording session

WHAT IS NEEDED TO PREPARE YOUR SCORE PROPERLY

1. Staves for all instruments on session
2. Two or three stave "guide" of pre-recorded tracks.
3. SMPTE timecode timings of each "hit point" placed directly above the bar and beat where the hit occurs. This should only be above the first stave at the top of the page.
4. BE SURE TO PROOF ALL INSTRUMENT PARTS ON SCORE AND PARTS!!!!!
5. Bar numbers need to be large enough to be easily readable. Traditionally they are on a stave in the middle of the score or at the bottom of the score.
6. Time signature changes should be repeated three times. Once at the top, once in the middle and once on the bottom of the score. Traditionally these time signatures are at least 3 staves tall.
7. Name of production goes in the upper left hand corner.
8. Cue number and title/name are at the top of the page. (1m1-Main Title)
9. Composer name and PRO affliation and orchestrator's names go in the upper right hand corner.
   (John Williams/BMI
   Orchestrated by Herb Spencer)
10. SMPTE Start mark is placed above the first beat of the cue: :00:00:18:15
11. The last bar of the cue needs to have a double bar and with a streamer marking to denote where music ends:
    :00:02:22:02

What your score needs to have: look to the E.T. PDF scores in Project One for reference

What your score needs to contain-

Learning good habits now will help prepare you to work faster, be more accurate and more employable in the future. Take some time and review the list at the left to understand what a "professional" studio session ready score needs to contain.

Because there are always budget issues, sessions can be very demanding and tense.
Whenever the session has to stop to answer questions from the orchestra or make changes the intensity level always, always rises.
Making sure your music is playable, easy to read, and 100% accurate will earn you a call back.
Failing to properly prepare can result in losing a client

The greatest value of hiring a performer to record your music is the added nuance they bring to the performance. If you treat musicians with the respect they deserve their performances can elevate your music from ordinary to spectacular.

Examine your orchestration to insure playability

It is easy to forget when working primarily "in the box" that living, breathing people play the notes you write. As such there are physical limitations to consider. Writing uplayable music will not serve you well.

What is a slave reel?

To increase the number of tracks in the analog days required syncing multiple tape recorders together. It was impractical to have numerous machines running in sync when doing an overdub...thus the "slave reel" was born. A submix of instruments relevant to the overdub was created and bounced down to a stereo track. This could leave up to 22 tracks to overdub to if you were using a 24 track format. Prepare your stems with only the information needed for the overdub to occur. In Protools this would mean disabling all tracks except the "stems" needed for the overdub session.

"Slave reel" stems should go light on reverb and effects. It makes it harder to play to in the studio. Separate rhythmic elements, pads, solos and bass parts. This will give a degree of flexibility to help give the performer what they require to be able to play their best.