

## Music to his Fears: Daniel Schweiger, Part Two

Written by Mars

Monday, 07 February 2011 11:45

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Today we continue our talk with FANGORIA-writer-made-good Daniel Schweiger, music editor, liner notes scribe, actor (BUBBA HO-TEP, DIE-NER) and all-around nice guy. See part one of our exclusive conversation [here](#).

**FANGORIA:** Could you please walk us through the process of a typical job as a music coordinator.

**DANIEL SCHWEIGER:** I've really only done two films as a full-fledged supervisor with BUBBA HO-TEP and Jeff Burr's STRAIGHT INTO DARKNESS. I was able to help get Brian Tyler [BATTLE: LOS ANGELES] at the start of his impressive career and get one of my faves Michael Convertino [THE HIDDEN] to score the other. Having smothered Alan Howarth on ARCADE, I've learned to step back and let the composer do their thing. I just basically help with the spotting, then pop in to hear if it's all good. Score supervision is something I'd love to do more of. With temping, you either have the tone set for you by the temp the editor's laid in, or use your own devices. I just want to make the movie sound as good as possible, using the best-recorded score, especially since the preview process is so important now. And musical tastes have changed. As much as I'd love to temp a film with Jerry Goldsmith, that kind of style I love is considered too "old fashioned" now. But that being said, one of the coolest recent times I've had was when they asked me to temp the great remake of DON'T BE AFRAID OF THE DARK with all '70s scores. Finally, I was temping with Goldsmith's MEPHISTO WALTZ and Williams' THE FURY. That doesn't happen too often.



**FANG:** You mentioned working with Charles Band and being one of the few who got paid on

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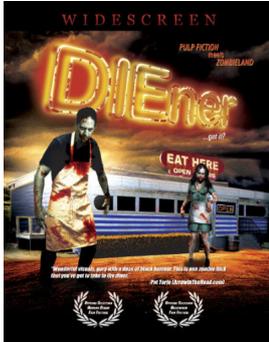
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time. His rep is pretty tarnished from that period.

**SCHWEIGER:** Again, I was one of the lucky ones in that I always got paid on time by Charlie, maybe because I was on staff. But he was always great to me and still has given me the most creative opportunities I've had in Hollywood. I honestly haven't watched anything that Full Moon has done since I left, though Stuart Gordon tells me GINGERDEAD MAN 2 was hilarious. It just seems a shame that the films are being done for so cheap now. The cool thing in my day was that Charlie's films were shot in 35mm, way better (even with their small budgets) than what you get from most D-TV genre flicks (at least technically speaking). I went to see SHRUNKEN HEADS on the big screen a while ago and was impressed by how well it played in projection. However, I think those days are behind Charlie. Yet he's always enthusiastic. I'd love to work with him again in some creative fashion.

**FANG:** Your characterization as the long-suffering editor at "Full Eclipse" in FREE ENTERPRISE is a favorite. How did you get involved in that film and was it the one that started your occasional forays in front of the lens?



**SCHWEIGER:** Well, FREE ENTERPRISE was essentially my life story at Full Moon, at least how [director] Robert Burnett saw it during his tenure there. I was always bitching and moaning about how I couldn't get laid, let alone get a date. And seeing a guy with his looks and mojo pissed me off further! I was thrilled when he somehow managed to film his own life story! And I was one of the new "real people" who got to play themselves—even though I had to audition for it. Who else could have played me? Perhaps my idol, a young Eddie Deezen! However, I'd actually gotten into SAG for a spec commercial I did before that. Now I'm financial core, meaning I work in both union, and non-union productions. I've been lucky enough to have been in a couple of flicks since then, including THE WEDDING VIDEO (coming out this year), BRYAN LOVES YOU (on Anchor Bay, where I got to do a scene with my old boss Lloyd Kaufman) and DIE-NER, a film I'm really proud of. I'll also be in another flick with Dan Roebuck that will hopefully be hitting this year, though we don't share any scenes in it. Dan is a truly great guy. I was a huge fan of his from RIVER'S EDGE before we even met at a screening for Savini's remake of NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD. While EDGE embodied my angst and how pissed off

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I was with women at the time (though not enough to murder anyone!), Dan was the absolute reversal of that role. Just the nicest guy ever, and a gigantic geek at that!

**FANG:** Do you feel any sort of disconnect with the modern wave of horror cinema?

**SCHWEIGER:** Well, in terms of horror scoring, I prefer stuff with melody as opposed to all of these crazy musical effects that stand for horror (and still can be pretty effective, as Mark Isham showed in his score for *THE CRAZIES*). As far as horror cinema, and cinema in general goes, I tend to like most of the stuff I see. And I don't see the stuff I'm not going to like—i.e. cute young blondes being tortured to death or being chased by a lame-o with a butcher knife. That's not my idea of horror, although psychos seemed to be far cooler during the slasher days. Everyone now looks like models—that whole idiotic wave of "MTV Horror." As a big fan of the genre, I can't stand stuff that gives horror a bad name. And as much as I dig gore (a major reason why I dug *Fango*), I think the best violence is left to the imagination—i.e. the guy getting nailed by the fishhook in *THE FOG*, still one of my fave horror films, an exemplar of a director letting the audience use their imagination. I'm also tired of the endless, crappy remakes (*CRAZIES* again being an exception). Stuff with rape. It just shows how fucked up the guy is who came up with this crap and is somehow getting to vent it on the screen. That's not horror. That's a non-lethal psycho who's somehow gotten Hollywood's ear.

**FANG:** As we reach the end of our chat, is there any interesting work you'd like to point out?

**SCHWEIGER:** Check out *DIE-NER* on Hulu and keep an eye out for me in *BLOODY BLOODY BIBLE CAMP* and *JOHN DIES AT THE END*, along with cool stuff that will blow horror fans' minds when it's finally unleashed on the world. I'm very proud of my wife Penka Kouneva's work on the clever *MIDNIGHT MOVIE*, as well as her video game music she abetted Steve Jablonsky with on *PRINCE OF PERSIA*. I got killed so many times to her "death stinger" music that I turned the soundtrack off! And I'm usually busy doing liners for Intrada, La La Land Records and now Quartet out of Spain. I'm also happy to have gotten an assistant music editing credit on *I AM NUMBER 4*. Just trying to stay happy and creative!

**FANG:** Last words to Fangorians?

**SCHWEIGER:** Horror and sci-fi rock! The good stuff that unleashed my imagination. And it

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seems now, more than ever, that dream is accessibly to be materialized via iphone, cheap cameras, et al. Movies have never been more makeable, so go for it and let Fango be your guide. It truly is to that generation what Famous Monsters of Filmland was to mine, and it was a huge deal for me to be able to write for it. Anything that jars fertile, demented young minds to good, creative action is fine with me.

{comments on}