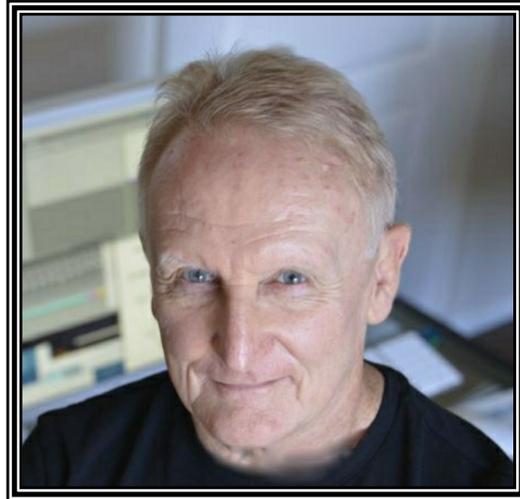




1525 AVIATION BOULEVARD
STE 1000 REDONDO BEACH
CALIFORNIA 90278-2805
PHONE 818-505-9600
SMCARTISTS.COM
A TALENT AGENCY

NEIL DOUGLAS ARGO

1947 – 2018



A film and Television composer, Neil Argo's dramatic and provocative scores have been heard around the world. From *Beverly Hills 90210*, *Melrose Place* and *Dynasty*, to the far reaches of South African National Geographic documentaries, he was attached to many noteworthy projects.

Studying both piano and percussion, upon graduation from high school, Neil elected to serve his country in the United States Air Force. But rather than flying planes, Neil's musical talents led him to be an integral part of the North American Air Defense NORAD Command Band. A joint military music organization, comprised of all branches of the military from throughout the world, the group afforded Neil to travel and perform internationally.

Completion of military duty led to a Bachelor Degree in Music Composition at North Texas State University at Denton, a school highly regarded for Jazz studies in performance and composition. It was here that Neil discovered his talent for writing music, and was encouraged to major in music composition.

Neil received his Master of Music, Music Theory and Composition at the University of Northern Colorado at Greeley, where he was later presented with the honor of Distinguished Alumnus. It was here that Neil further developed his Jazz and contemporary music repertoire, which expanded to include composing, orchestrating and conducting for various sized ensembles. He began writing for corporate and commercial clients while keeping an eye on



the long-term goal of writing for film and Television. Over his career, Neil was the recipient of 15 Telly Awards for his work in advertising.

During this period, Neil was a recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts Award, and became the first Composer-in-Residence for the State of Colorado. This led to his scoring of *Zebulon Pike and The Blue Mountain*, a highly acclaimed, feature length docudrama.

As Neil's music and reputation continued to expand, he was introduced to a former co-producer of the John Denver Specials for ABC, residing in Aspen—Marty Stouffer. Neil was asked to write the main theme for a new Television series to be called *Wild America*, which would subsequently become a major international series, and was developed into a motion picture. In addition to the theme, Neil scored over 100 of the episodes. The "Born to Run" episode of *Wild America*, won the Gold Award at the 27th Annual International Film and Television Festival of New York. After 12 seasons on PBS, the series was selected for syndication through Paramount Television, appearing on ABC and CBS.

The success of *Wild America* became the catalyst for Neil to move to Los Angeles and continue his pursuit of writing for film and Television. Upon arriving, Neil was introduced to Rocky Moriana, then Vice President of Music for Aaron Spelling's Spelling Entertainment. He was invited to attend scoring sessions for many of Spelling's popular Television productions, and was invited to write for several of the shows, including *The Colbys* and *Hotel*. Moving further into the scoring arena, Neil scored for Paramount Television's *MacGyver*.

After three years of orchestrating for other composers, composer John Davis, asked Neil if he would like to be a co-composer on the return of a classic series, *(The New) Mission: Impossible* for Paramount. The series aired on ABC from 1988 thru 1990. It was with this friendship that the two composers went on to collaborate on the very successful *Beverly Hills 90210*, *Hearts Are Wild*, *Melrose Place* and *Burke's Law*.

While writing for Television, Neil continued to pursue film scoring, which led to his composing the score for *The Cat Story*, produced by Film Buff Productions/MGM-UA Filmland, and directed by the noted Andy Tennant. He then went on to *The Laureate* (Robert Jacobson, dir.), winner of the Golden Eagle Award at the Houston International Film and Video Festival. The following year, Neil scored *Pictures from the Floating World*, a UCLA film project. Later, Palatine Cinema signed Neil to score *Un Incontro / An Encounter* (Silvanus Slaughter, dir.)

In 1993, Neil composed the score for the CBS Television Special *My Indian Summer*, and scored an episode of the National Geographic Explorer Series *Animal Minds*.



A highlight of Neil's scoring career was his attachment to the highly regarded, Emmy Award-winning *Survivors of the Skeleton Coast* (Des & Jen Bartlett, dirs./prods.) for National Geographic Television. The special led to his music being a part of the internationally syndicated series, *Skeleton Coast Safari*, a tremendously successful series. The soundtrack was released on the Cantiga Music label, Neil's own record company.

Further recognizing Neil's work, Kronos Records released the long-awaited soundtrack from the Television series *Wild America* in a limited edition CD. Neil's music played an integral role in the success of the series, which has been enjoyed by millions over the years, and has been performed by orchestras nationwide. Kronos Records has also released Neil's soundtrack from *P.J.* (Russell Emanuel, dir.) yet another highly acclaimed, award-winning film score.

Neil's scores involved full studio orchestras, as well as electronic synthesized music. While he preferred the magnificent sound of an acoustic ensemble, he also developed hybrid scores, using both acoustic and electronic elements.

In addition to his film and Television career, Neil was an Associate Professor at California State University at Northridge, for orchestration and film scoring, and has been a guest lecturer at numerous colleges and universities across America. He was also a member of the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, and a member of the Media Task Force at Biola University, La Mirada, California, where he also taught music technology, as applied to film and Television production, theory, in addition to private instruction.

And, while working with prospective composers, he also counseled with young filmmakers, introducing them to the finer elements of film scoring as related to their films.

Sadly, with a family history of heart disease, Neil Douglas Argo passed away on August 2, 2018, at the age of 71. Neil was my first client when I established the Agency, and he contributed greatly to my immersion in the world of Hollywood. In so doing, he became a very special friend. May he rest in eternal peace.—*Otto Vavrin II*