

Film & TV composer Rich Walters

"Be-cool" attitude benefits his career

"Just be cool."

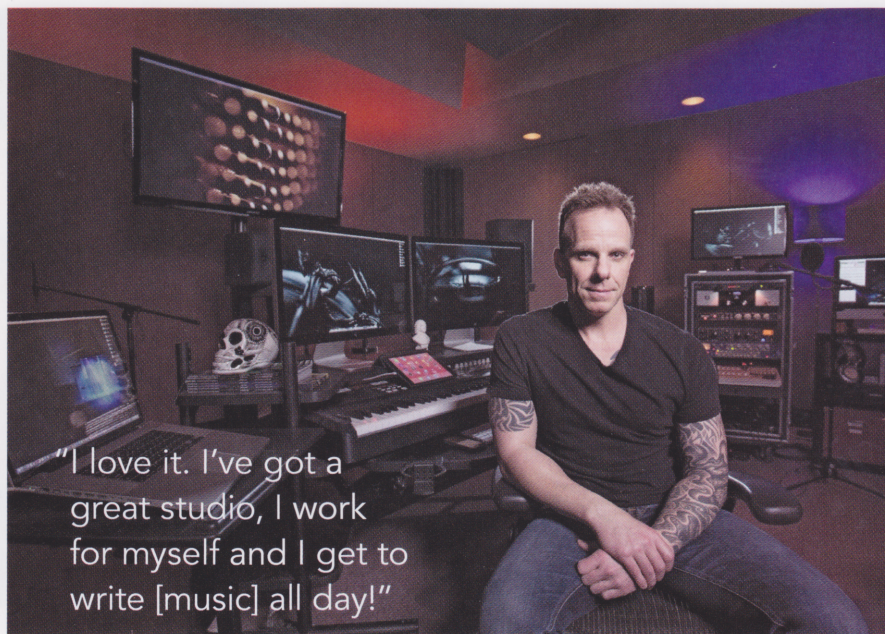
That's a phrase Rich Walters likes to repeat to himself. "When shit hits the fan, just be cool and take the punches, and you'll get through this," he says. "It's worked so far."

Indeed, for Walters, it's worked *very* well so far. A burgeoning star composer in the film and TV industry, his music is heard in films, on radio and on television, including internationally syndicated Canadian TV shows such as *Cold Squad*, *Falcon Beach* and *The L Word*. He's been nominated for two Emmy Awards and a Gemini, and he won a LEO in 2013 for his work on the TV mini-series *Ring of Fire*.

In the early winter of 2014, he was working on music for a new series called *Olympus* (Greek mythology meets *Game of Thrones*) that airs in March on the Syfy network in the U.S. He was also jetting off to Los Angeles, after having been personally invited by Grammy- and Oscar-winning composer Hans Zimmer (*The Lion King*, *Gladiator*, *The Dark Knight*, *12 Years a Slave*) to co-write music for a new film by Neill Blomkamp (*District 9*, *Elysium*) called *Chappie*, starring Hugh Jackman and Sigourney Weaver.

With that kind of Hollywood cred, it's no surprise that Walters, 46, divides his time mostly between L.A. and his home base in Vancouver, although he's also worked a lot in London (at Abbey Road and Air studios, no less) and in Prague.

But his entrée into the film world came



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about rather indirectly. After studying music theory and composition at what is now Capilano University in North Vancouver, Walters spent several years playing percussion in electronica and rock bands. Then, about 15 years ago, he landed an easy gig as a dialogue assistant at a large post-production facility in Vancouver. Once in the door, he was able to parlay his proficiency with Pro Tools into a new career.

"I started to sell myself as a music editor first, and I had a direct line to all these people I knew already," says Walters. "So this 'nothing job' ended up being a great jumping-off

point for getting my career going."

It's a lot of work – typically 12- to 14-hour days, seven days a week – but he's not complaining. "I love it," he says. "I've got a great studio, I work for myself and I get to write [music] all day!"

What's the secret?

"You've got to be willing to sacrifice a lot in your life if this is what you want to do," says Walters, "and you've got to be prepared to work harder than the next guy and just do whatever it takes," he says. "Take care of your clients and bust your ass."

And just be cool. – JIM KELLY

PHOTO: PETER HOLST



Turning The Page "It was when I was working at a post-production studio, and I kept seeing these composers roll in. That was my light bulb moment: I'm musically trained, I'm theoretically trained, I'm a multi-instrumentalist, I know the software. I thought, 'If these guys can do this, I can do this. This is what I want to do with my life.'"

FYI Publisher: N/A // Selected Credits: Composer (Film/TV): *Olympus* (2015), *Ring of Fire* (2012 TV mini-series), *The L Word* (Seasons 1 & 2), *Neverland* (2011 TV mini-series), *Falcon Beach* (Season 2) Music Editor (Film): *Chappie* (2014), *Elysium* (2013), *Capote* (2005), *Tin Man* (2007), *Riverworld* (2010) Music Editor (TV): *Continuum* (Season 1), *Missing* (Season 1), *Cold Squad* (Seasons 3 & 4), *The Outer Limits* (Season 5) // Website: richwaltersmusic.com // SOCAN member since 1997