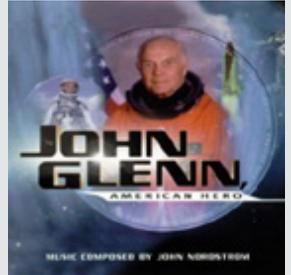




## Quality at the Front End

August 1999, John Nordstrom and Love Den Productions

1991, he formed his own production company, Love Den. Since that time, he has done a prodigious amount of scoring, including complete scores for several major TV mini-series, a feature film score, and episodes for television series and TV commercials. Along the way, his interest in music recording (he started out as a drummer, but now considers himself more of a guitarist) went into projects found on the Polygram and Lavender labels, as well as a complete CD on his own Love Den label. John Nordstrom's most major recent projects have included an original score for the PBS/Newsweek documentary entitled John Glenn: An American Hero and a PBS production Intimate Strangers: Unseen Life on Earth. Both entire projects were composed, recorded and mixed by Nordstrom at his home studio. Regarding the recordings themselves, John comments: "These were both really fun, really challenging projects because they had to sound big and spacious, yet were recorded right here at home. We recorded brass, strings and woodwinds, along with a military snare drum, right here at Love Den. And I couldn't be happier with the results."



One of the main microphones he used for the various instrumentalists was a trusty, old Neumann KM 84. Nordstrom comments: "This is one cool-sounding mic. I can't tell you how many times I've been using it and then the musician I'm recording says 'wow, what mic is that'. When I show them the little KM 84, they just nod in approval. Up until very recently, this was my only really great microphone." Another piece of gear that John has used religiously is a hand-made mic preamp designed by Beno May of Bernie Grundman Mastering. "In every project, this thing gets used on as many tracks as possible - not always easy for a two-channel unit. But when you need the cymbals to have a really sweet decay or the vocalist to have that airy, clear presence, you need the 'Beno' preamp" explains Nordstrom. The unit, he says, utilizes top-of-the-line Jensen transformers, a way-oversized power supply and a custom modified 990 op amp to achieve such stellar results. Just recently, Nordstrom decided to make two major upgrades to his studio. First, he bought a Mackie Digital 8-Bus mixing console, which he describes as "excellent sounding and totally flexible". And then for the front end of the system, he purchased something he's wanted for many years: a large diaphragm Neumann tube microphone. According to John: "Once I heard about the new M 147 Tube, I was really interested in it. With the old mics costing \$5,000 and up, a Neumann tube model for under \$2,000 was exciting." After using the mic a few times, John claims it is just the right sound for certain vocalists, as well as for drums: "This is one microphone with an incredibly present, focused sound. It cuts through the mix with no effort at all." As for the future? John Nordstrom isn't one to rest on his laurels. And while he can't discuss some of the projects he's immersed in at the moment, he has begun a working relationship with Hans Zimmer's production company, Media Ventures. He mentions "I've been composing new tracks for TV and feature film. It's great to have the opportunity to work on high-end projects, and I've been really happy with the results." Keep your ears open, and perhaps the next film or TV mini-series you see will feature the music of John Nordstrom.