

*"...with the advent of the Auricle, it's all become so easy for the composer... a marvelous piece of work..."*

Friday, August 21 [1992]. With spotting notes in hand. Alf [Clausen] prepares to write [for an episode of the *Simpson's*]. He uses several tools extensively: a piano, a Toshiba 3200sxc computer [dedicated to a software application entitled] **Auricle** [The Film Coin-poser's Time Processor] created by Richard and Ron Grant, and a ream of manuscript paper. Alf is an extremely busy man, so we asked as many questions as we could in a short period of time. Here's what we learned:

....

*Describe the process that takes place here in your studio.*

After the spotting sessions, I'll ask Chris [Chris Ledesma, the music editor] to send over the spotting notes. That gives me the beginning and end points of each cue and a brief description. I've created a cue template with the **Auricle** that I call a "Setup". My first step is to load up the setup file, enter the appropriate SMPTE start number for a cue, and then save the template with the actual cue number (i.e., 1M2). I'll repeat that process for every cue in the episode so that the computer contains a file for every cue to be scored. So when I'm ready to write a cue, I'll then load the appropriate file, and simply change the necessary parameters: click (tempo), time signatures, and so on to make the composition fit the timings. ...

*Looking at Chris's breakdown notes, there are instances where he's outlined as many as three hits within a single second. As you write music to coincide with these events, how specific do you get?*

I do get very specific. Obviously, I don't hit everything in the timing notes. But **Auricle** is an absolutely wonderful product because it enables me to be extremely specific when those cases come up. For example, when



the producers say, "We need three emotions in three seconds (I'm being slightly facetious!), from sad to happy to depressed," mathematically, you have to be able to nail those very precisely. That's what makes the 'depressed' so easy (laughs)....

*As you prepare each cue/or the eventual recording session, I understand that you program your own streamers and punches into the [Auricle].*

I build all the click tracks on **Auricle** and enter all the streamers and punches. That used to be a music editor's function, but with the advent of the **Auricle**, it's all become so easy for the composer. With so many of us composers being control freaks, we like to know exactly what we've got going in. **Auricle's** such a marvelous piece of work because you can punch or streamer a piece of a cue at home, get to the session, and all of a sudden decide you want to move the streamer or add streamers and punches, and it's simply a matter of a few keystrokes. Boom, it's there. There's no more physical doctoring of the film. So all of these things are done before we get to the date.