

# A catch-up with global composer Trevor Jones

By  Martin Myers

1 Nov 2022

Dr Trevor Jones, a top global composer, will return to South Africa from the UK to open #Mex22.



Image supplied: Trevor Jones

Having recently received an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Cape Town in July, Jones will deliver invaluable insights into his rich catalogue of award-winning compositions while unpacking music for film, television, gaming and spoken word.

He has worked on numerous well-known and acclaimed films, including *Notting Hill*, *Excalibur*, *Runaway Train*, *The Dark Crystal*, *Labyrinth*, *Mississippi Burning*, *The Last of the Mohicans*, and *In the Name of the Father*, collaborating with filmmakers like John Boorman, Andrei Konchalovsky, Jim Henson, and Michael Mann.

He will deal with the business aspects that define the space and bring up media writing techniques, defining goals and ambitions, how to equip yourself as a writer and map out your journey, as well as aesthetics and philosophy (if we want to touch on those rarefied aspects).

I chatted to Jones on Zoom whilst he was working at Abbey Road on the 40th anniversary of *Dark Crystal*...

■ **Music Exchange: What does it mean to you to give back?**

Music Exchange offers the rare opportunity to find answers and ask questions about the Music Industry - local, national and international, and for a frank exchange of information pertaining to skillsets, industry business and practice, with fellow musicians, mentors and eminent Captains of Industry.

I look forward to it with great enthusiasm and excitement.

■ ***When are you happiest?***

Thinking about music while mucking out the stables of our rescue horses - nothing like horse sh\*t to make one realise that as fertilizer it's more valuable than one is.

■ ***What does music mean to you?***

Communicating emotion through organised sound.

■ ***What is the most enjoyable aspect of your work?***

Helping to make clear the narrative and bringing out the meaning of a scene by writing music with the appropriate emotional weight.

■ ***Are you famous?***

I hope not (laughs).

■ ***What do you think of when you are writing a score?***

Am I making the audience feel what the screenwriter and director intend - how can I surpass their expectations and achieve this in an original way?

■ ***What drives you... ego or humility?***

A bit of both

■ ***Your heroes?***

Leonardo da Vinci, Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Alan Turing, My uncle Norman.

■ **Which living person do you admire most and why?**

Sir Timothy Berners Lee the inventor of the World Wide Web.

The internet has changed communications forever and he has given it to the world freely, with no patent and no royalties due.

■ **What is your most treasured possession?**

My Steinway piano.

■ **It's your round, what are you drinking?**

As much as possible.

■ **What makes you stand out?**

My need to educate the next generation, my interest in the world, in people, in love and death.

■ **Nicknames?**

Dood by my grandchildren

■ **If you were not a composer what would you do?**

Stay in bed and take the fluff out of my belly button then make films, paint, and write.

■ **Pick five words to describe yourself?**

Obsessive, passionate, reclusive, dedicated, confused



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■ **Five favourite albums of all time?**

*The Dream of Gerontius* – Edward Elgar

*Kind of Blue* – Miles Davis

*Dark Side of the Moon* – Pink Floyd

*Bridge over Troubled Water* – Simon & Garfunkel

*Elgar: Cello Concerto* with Jacqueline du Pre & *Sea Pictures* with Janet Baker

■ **Greatest movies ever made?**

*Citizen Kane*, *The Third Man*, *Singin' in the Rain*, *North by NorthWest*, *Casablanca*, *Rear Window*, *The Battleship Potemkin*, *The Bridge on the River Kwai*, *Psycho*, *Nosferatu*, *The Spirit of the Beehive*, *Seven Samurai*, *Tokyo Story*, *Cinema Paradiso*, *Il Postino*

■ **What changed your life?**

A scholarship to the Royal Academy of music, and my mentors.

🎲 **Who do you love?**

Myself, my wife, children, grandchildren, dogs, horses and a cat called Tom.

🎲 **What is your favourite word?**

Hope

🎲 **Favorite fashion garment?**

The award-winning tie, designed by my son Caspar.

🎲 **Give us some real proper slang and what it means?**

CRUCIAL; Slang for very good

🎲 **Top of your bucket list?**

Spending as much time with my wife.

🎲 **Your greatest achievement?**

Nuturing four children.

🎲 **What do you complain about most often?**

Corrupt politicians

🎲 **What is your fear?**

Dying before I've written my next piece.



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🎲 **Happiness is?**

Eating a perfect mango in a cold bath on a hot day.

🎲 **If you are walking on stage for a keynote speech, what song would you use?**

Bill Clinton in his presidential campaign would walk on stage to the Main Theme of *The Last of the Mohicans*.

I would like to have *Vocalise* by Rachmaninov.

🎲 **The best life lesson you have been taught?**

People matter most.

🎲 **Where would you like to be right now?**

Here.

## 🎲 **Wishes and dreams?**

I wish that everyone could get a free education, either academic or trade.

And for my generation to leave a legacy for future generations of a plastic-free, unpolluted radio-active-free planet, protected by laws controlling carbon emissions and consequent climate change.

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Co-owner at Triple M Entertainment, founder Music Exchange, manager Sipho Hotstix Mabuse

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