



ACADEMY AWARD-WINNING SCREEN-WRITER STEVEN ZAILLIAN TO CHAIR AGAIN THE SOCIAL CINEMA FORUM AT ISCHIA GLOBAL FEST 2010. AND SAYS...
PASCAL'S ISLAND by STEVEN ZAILLIAN

Ischia, the biggest of the three islands in the Gulf of Naples, isn't big. You can circle its rocky, 34-kilometer perimeter by boat in less than an hour. And while you're doing that, may I suggest you pause, as everyone does, to leap into the Tyrrhenian Sea, where you'll encounter (1) volcanic thermal waters, and (2) the fish you'll be eating later that evening. Ischia differs from its more famous neighbor, Capri, in ways that are readily apparent. You can feel it's more laid back. You can see there are far fewer yachts anchored in its bays. You can walk down every one of its cobblestone streets and never pass a Prada, Ferragamo, or Dolce & Gabbana shop. Instead, it has terme – spas – rich with rejuvenating mineral salts from underground hot springs. Most of the bigger hotels have at least one pool filled with these healing waters. And then there are places like Giardini di Poseidon, a kind of elaborate therapeutic theme park set down along the beach of Citara, where every 'ride' - and there are 22 of them - is a plunge into a thermal pool of a different temperature. As for the fish you were swimming with, you can order up a plate of them in every restaurant in every town on the island. Or you can do what I recommend and make an afternoon of it, renting a small boat to take you and your friends to one of the many coastline ristoranti that can only be reached by boat. I say reached, but what I really mean is approached, because the best way to reach them is to park the boat a hundred or so meters offshore and swim in. One of these is the aptly-named Garden of Eden. Another, simpler establishment has a name I've forgotten, but I can tell you how to get there: Just say to the boat captain at the Albergo della Regina Isabella, in your fractured Italian, Please take me to your favorite fish restaurant, and he will. Both of these places are nestled in picturesque rocky coves. Both serve fresh fish, pasta, vegetables, fruit, and wine and limoncello made from grapes and lemons grown on the island. The tomatoes, too, are locally grown and taste like something you haven't tasted in years: tomatoes. But the restaurants and spas, good as they are, aren't secret. The Secret of Ischia is a little film festival which has quietly taken place on the island each July for the last seven years. Everyone knows the Venice Film Festival. And though it's only a few years old, you've probably also heard of the Rome Film Festival. But how many know about the Ischia Film & Music Global Fest? Nobody, I would wager, but those who have somehow ended up there. Unlike Cannes, you won't find many film producers hawking their wares at Ischia. Indeed, you won't find one, because you will also not find any film buyers there. You won't find studios world-premiering their latest \$100 million films there either, because there won't be legions of international press. What you will find is a program of Italian and American films -

many of which have already been released - showing daily at a theater in Ischia Porto for free. And, at night, you'll find one projected on a screen anchored in the water of Lacco Ameno against dramatic rocky cliffs, where earlier that day you swam and sunned and drank a glass of Ischia wine. But now, at night, you and the other invited guests are drinking Bellinis. You are wearing a linen jacket, or an evening dress, and you are sitting on a dock in a plastic chair, al fresco, watching, as we did, Fellini's 8 1/2 one night, and Dolph Lundgren's latest action film the next. It's juxtapositions like this that should give you a clue to the lack of pretension of the Ischia Festival, headed by film and people lover, Pascal Vicedomini. Pascal is an Italian national treasure, if you ask me. He's a champion of cinema and social causes, and he is tireless. He does everything from organizing the program, to moderating the seminars, to televising a live interview show, to presiding over the award ceremonies. He is, as producer Mark Canton is fond of describing him, a force of nature. There is a rare and wonderful spontaneity to the proceedings which becomes apparent to the unsuspecting very quickly. When I first arrived last winter to Ischia's sister festival on Capri - after 14 hours of flying from Los Angeles to Frankfurt to Rome, a 2-hour train to Naples, and an hour on a boat to the island - I sought out Pascal with the intention of introducing myself and retiring to bed. I found him at the already-in-progress opening night ceremonies and the first thing he said to me was, Steve, please can you make a presentation to composer Nicola Piovani. I said, When. He said, Now. I said, I can barely stand up, I can barely think straight, I'm wearing jeans and a t-shirt, I'm sorry but I can't. Pascal looked at me ruefully. My son, Charlie, who had also just traveled 17 hours, looked at me ruefully. Somehow he understood immediately what it took me a moment longer to realize: This was the spirit of the festival. Whatever comes up, the right answer is always yes. So I nodded, okay, went up on stage in my jeans, made the presentation, and stayed up for another six hours, enjoying a concert by Mr. Piovani and a dinner at midnight. This year, things in Ischia got off to an even more spontaneous and exhilarating start. Sting, at his wife Trudie Styler's urging, came to the festival. At the opening night ceremony, he got up, said, I'm not good at making speeches, so I'll sing a song. He sang a short tune a cappella, and, figuring he was done for the night, sat back down. I watched Pascal regard him ruefully. I regarded him ruefully. And while Sting may not have immediately realized what the looks meant any more than I had a year and a half before, he would soon enough. Before the night was done - along with jazz pianist Eric Lewis, Italian rock singer Zucchero, and opera legend Andrea Bocelli - Sting had given a rousing impromptu concert of Police songs - one of which he said he hadn't sung in 25 years - to ... a hundred or so people. That's Ischia. That's Pascal. And that's what we - Jean-Jacques Annaud, Jim Sheridan, Paul Haggis, Trudie Styler, Danny Glover, Marc Forster, Bille August, Terrence Howard, Angela Bassett, Dan McVicar, Nastassja Kinski, Fisher Stevens, Mark Canton, Gina Gershon, Harvey Weinstein and Pascal's other guests - now come to expect on his island. But how did we end up here? As far as we can recall, we all got a phone call or an email, though we can't precisely say why we got it. For whatever reason, we did, and we said to ourselves, we don't quite know what this is, but are idly curious. Or curiously idle. Either way, we all gave the right answer. Yes

<http://www.oneforthetable.com/ofth/stories/pascals-island-3.html>

ISCHIA GLOBAL FILM & MUSIC FEST INTERVIEW # 4:

STEVEN ZAILLIAN Posted by Timothy E. RAW

August 26, 2009 - At the top of the A-list of Hollywood screenwriters, Steven Zaillian is best known for his screenplay of the Steven Spielberg-directed Holocaust drama *Schindler's List*, based on the book by Thomas Keneally. His work on the film won numerous awards and citations including an Academy Award for Best Adapted Screenplay. He is also credited with providing the story for the big screen adaptation of *Mission: Impossible*, penning a re-write for *The Silence of the Lambs* sequel *Hannibal*, that boldly moved away from the source material and co-writing the screenplay for Martin Scorsese's *Gangs of New York*. More recently he adapted a New York magazine story by Mark Jacobson into the film *American Gangster* for director Ridley Scott, starring Denzel Washington and Russell Crowe. He has also directed from his own screenplays, helming the films *Searching for Bobby Fischer*, *A Civil Action* and *All the King's Men*, an adaptation of Robert Penn Warren's classic 1946 political novel, starring Sean Penn, Kate Winslet, Sir Anthony Hopkins and Jude Law. Zaillian fielding questions in the garden of The Regina Isabella Hotel.

TIMOTHY E. RAW: Are you anything of a soundtrack fan? Are scores something you might choose to listen to away from work?

STEVEN ZAILLIAN: Film scores, no. I don't really listen to film scores for pleasure. It's mostly rock n' roll music. A film score for me exists in connection with the film. I mean I might listen to it if I want to remember the film in some romantic way, but for me, composing for a film – and I think most composers would say this as well – it's very different than composing any other kind of music. It's a collaboration, very much like a writer and a director working together. A composer and a director have to work closely together as well, and the music that they would compose is generally a complete piece of music by itself but it's also working in conjunction with the scene in the film.

RAW: Is music something you go to in any way when you're writing?

SZ: Not for me, not for me. I sometimes listen to music to, y'know, put me in a certain sort of mood, but I'm never really thinking about the entire score — at least in the things I've done to this point — I'm never really thinking about the style of the score. I like to discover that with the composer, sit down with him, watch the film and discuss what the approach would be. One thing that I and most directors do, is that they'll use a temp score for their rough cut. Some composers I know, have trouble with this because sometimes the composer falls in love with the temp score and the temp score was written by somebody else. Sometimes a composer is actually asked to sort of work in the same vein as the temp score. Sometimes that happens with me and sometimes it doesn't, sometimes the composer will come up with something that works much better.

RAW: When you're writing are you ever considerate of the space in which the score needs to exist in the final film. Are you at all wary or conscious of that negative space?

SZ: I never write with the idea that the music is going to "save me". I never write and think "Okay, well this isn't such a good scene but I know that when the score is put in, it'll be a better scene. I never use it as a crutch. I sometimes write a scene that I know will have music, some kind of a montage or a sequence of scenes that will eventually have music connecting it but I don't specifically write with that piece of music in mind.

RAW: Of the films you've written but not directed, can you think of specific examples where the score has taken it completely off the page, in an unexpected direction from what you envisaged when you were writing?

SZ: I'd have to think back to each one individually. I know *American Gangster* is fresh in my memory 'cause I just did it last year... I think it was last year. I felt that (Marc Streitenfeld's) music was very expressive and very surprising and worked perfectly in conjunction with what I had done and what Ridley Scott had done.

RAW: Do you really have any greater degree of control or input over the score as a writer/director? You worked with James Horner on both *Searching for Bobby Fischer* and *All the*

King's Men. Between those films you wrote Schindler's List, so with the huge recognition from that and the fact that you have so much more experience now, does that give you added clout or leverage in the composer/director relationship?SZ: I don't think it's that much different. Both of those were done by James Horner and in working with him a second time, we'd developed this kind of a shorthand that we could use to discuss what we both felt would work best, because we had the history of Searching for Bobby Fischer. I could make references to a certain kind of music that was in that film that might be something like we should try in All the King's Men or use it as an example of what not to do in it. I think all composers, like all writers, want to approach a project as an individual thing. They certainly don't want to copy themselves if they can avoid it. They don't want to copy a temp score and they don't want to copy themselves in terms of something that they've done. What was very interesting about James Horner with Searching for Bobby Fischer, was that I made a conscious decision doing the temp score for that film, that I only used his music. I used music he had written for other films and I did it so that he wouldn't feel as if I was asking him to be influenced by another composer. I felt that his body of work at that time – he'd been scoring films for a long time already – was large enough that I could find the pieces of music that worked best as a musical example of what I was looking for, to convey that which would be harder to convey with words.

Chairing a press conference with director, Marc Forster.

RAW: With All the King's Men having such a stellar, high profile cast that the studio no doubt spent a lot of money investing in, I'm wondering if you get studio notes or even interference when it comes to that part of the process when you're scoring the film?SZ: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I mean, the studio always give me notes about everything. When I'm writing a script, I'll get a set of script notes, when I first screen a director's rough cut of the film I'll get notes and suggestions and yes, they do sometimes comment on the score. The comment is usually very specific like, "Can you try again with a certain scene?" I can't remember a time when the studio would say that they were questioning the entire approach, that's never happened.

RAW: One of my favorite scores is Mark Mancina's Twister. What a lot of people don't know is that you did a re-write on that film and I'm interested as to the specifics of your contribution.SZ: Zero! ...I was brought on to try to do what's called a production re-write, a couple of weeks before it was due to start shooting and I worked very hard for three weeks, one week into filming and two weeks before, but the director, (Jan De Bont) as it turned out was quite happy with the script that he had so he basically shot that. I thought I was being hired by the director, but I was really being hired by the studio. I don't think there's a word of what I wrote that's in that film.

RAW: Getting up to speed with what you're working on now, you've just been brought on to Moneyball, (a project with Brad Pitt in the lead) is that correct? The word online is that Steven Soderbergh "walked out" because the studio weren't happy with his draft. What's the state of play with that film?SZ: Right now, it's uncertain. Ultimately, I think that there will be another director but I don't think anyone knows at this point what's going to happen.

RAW: When are you set to direct next and when that happens will you be looking to work with James Horner out of comfort or will the material dictate that?SZ: I don't even know what that film is yet. It may be that the film will need very little music, it may be that the film wants an indigenous music to the story, it may be songs, I don't know. Since I don't even know what the project is yet, I can't begin to think about the music. But I love working with James and if it turns out that I feel it would have to be a big, lush orchestral score –which is what he does best I think, even though he does do kind of smaller things, that's what I appreciate from him most – it'll be dictated by the film.

<http://soundtrackgeek.com/2009/08/26/ischia-global-film-music-fest-interview-4-steven-zaillian/>