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A Musical Duo



By Peter Cronin

David Dachinger & "Radical" Rob Aster: A Musical Duo Finds The Sweet Spot

After the hits, with their shock-rocking rebel years behind them, a surprising number of musicians wind up on the golf course. But for David Dachinger and "Radical" Rob Aster, "the links" have provided both creative inspiration and an expansive palette upon which to paint their sweeping musical soundscapes.

Since 2006, this dynamic duo has been a mainstay at CBS Sports, their music providing the panoramic backdrop for golf's majors, from the PGA Championship to The Masters. Their score for Jim Nantz Remembers Augusta - Seve At The Masters was selected by CBS for submission to the 2009 Emmys, and their "Hasta La Vista Verde" was picked up as the theme for the Emmy-winning SwingVision. And yes, they do more than golf. The duo's "Thunder Meets Lightning" was featured in Superbowl XLIV, the most-watched broadcast (106.5 million viewers) in television history.

Not bad for a couple of former high school band mates from Long Island. After graduation, the two musicians followed their muses in separate directions, Dachinger to Boston's prestigious Berklee School and Aster to the University of Miami, where he studied under late bass master Jaco Pastorius alongside fellow students like David Letterman bassist Will Lee.

"I recognized that these guys were monster musicians and I could practice 'til the cows come home and I would never be able to do what they do just naturally," Aster says. "So I looked at record production and publishing. Somewhere along the way I fell into providing music for TV clients, and I really liked that side of the business."

Aster formed Radical Entertainment in 1995 as a platform to connect indie artists to TV and film. Dachinger, meanwhile, was busy making a name for himself in the studios, handling engineering duties for everyone from Usher to Celine Dion, to the Isley Brothers. It was in one of those studios that Dachinger picked up a magazine and stumbled upon an article about his old friend. They soon reunited.

The old high school chemistry returned immediately. With Aster on the front lines, building relationships and securing clients, and Dachinger ensconced in the studio, the pair was soon collaborating on thematic and background music for shows like Jeopardy, Wheel Of Fortune, America's Most Wanted and Dateline. But it wasn't long before their focus turned to CBS and to sports. From the NFL to College Football to NCAA Basketball to tennis at the U.S. Open, all the way to the PGA Tour, Aster and Dachinger (now under the company banner of Radical Rob's House of Tunes, or RRHOT) really hit their stride.

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"We had done music in other places, from record work to jingles," Dasinger says. "But we both have a passion for sports, and that's one of the reasons we enjoy working in this area."

That passion is reciprocated, with superfans like four-time National Sportscaster of The Year and CBS anchor Jim Nantz singing the duo's praises at every opportunity.

"No one has captured the spirit and vibe of CBS golf like Radical Rob, Dave Dachinger and their team," Nantz says. "Their music is the perfect accompaniment in our efforts to tell a story from some of the most beautiful landscapes in America."

The latest outgrowth of Aster and Dachinger's collaboration is Master Works, a CD collection of compositions culled from their extensive golf-themed catalog and recorded with a full orchestra.

With weekly deadlines and ever-changing creative scenarios to accommodate, Aster and Dachinger don't have much time for anything else lately. The pressure is always on, but for these guys it's par for the course.

"With golf or any sport, the opening of a show is really analogous to a movie trailer," Dachinger says. "So it's really like doing a new movie every week. You don't get bored, because it's never the same two weeks in a row."

"It's been an amazing year," adds Aster. "Over 250 million people have heard our music over the past 12 months. We've been working like dogs, but we know we're very fortunate. At the end of the day, we're just a couple of guys, trying to have some fun and make a living."

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