

# DALLWITZ FINDS 'CRASHBURN' IS MUSIC TO HIS EARS

STORY TRACEY PRISK

Composer **Burkhard Dallwitz** was fortunate enough to be brought onboard the production of both the pilot and the series of CoxKnight's *Crashburn* very early in the production process.

Dallwitz was hired in November 2001, a couple of months before the pilot's 2002 shoot, in order to compose a musical score that was then coupled with appropriate music from the mid 1980s. (The series tells the story of the relationship between Ben and Rosie and breakdown of their 10-year marriage.)

"I guess it doesn't always happen as it did on *Crash-*



Recording engineer Michael Letho (l), guitarist David Herzog and composer Burkhard Dallwitz (r) in the studio.

*burn* where a composer gets involved that early, but was a definite plus. I guess it came about because from the outset the producers wanted to do something a little bit different.

"We decided to try something where the music was slightly outside of the story. Where the music wouldn't be a slave to exactly what was going on in the pictures."

Dallwitz said it was decided very early on in the creative process that the music would draw on a number of different influences and have a very percussive base.

"Obviously in a drama you have your poignant moments and then your more comedic moments but we wanted to avoid the clichés and not get bogged down in writing sad music for sad scenes..."

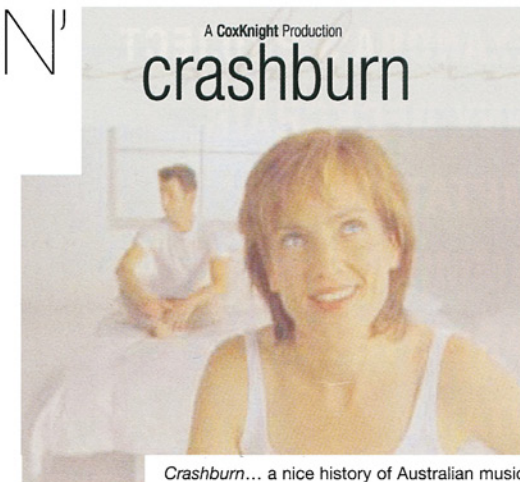
The **Leonard Cohen** opening title track "Dance Me to the End of Love" set the tone for the series, according to Dallwitz it was series co-creator **Andrew Knight's** idea.

"It was the right mix of sad and positive. It seemed to sum up the incomprehensibility, the danger and the romance of long term love," said Knight.

According to Dallwitz the song had a "slow dance feel to it", and in line with this all the characters of the series were shot dancing to it.

"That was really like a metaphor for the whole drama of the series where the characters are continually shifting ground, shifting their positions in terms of their relationship to each other. So that provided a nice hook to hang the original music on which always had a rhythmic pulse to it."

Even though the series was distinctly Australian, it



was decided that the themes were actually universal; dealing with the differences between the sexes and the problems that occur in contemporary relationships.

In line with the themes, Dallwitz decided to incorporate "diverse ethnic influences and not get bogged down on drawing only on western influences".

"I drew on quite a lot of different ethnic styles from African to Middle Eastern percussion to odd wind instruments and I used quite a bit of African chanting," he said.

Because the whole story is told in flashback over a period of 13 years, the decision was made to source an Australian song catalogue from that period.

Mana Music compiled songs from the 1980s through to the present day and from this group the slightly more "alternative" songs were selected.

"There was a lot of care taken over the selection of the songs, it wasn't a haphazard thing — so you really do get a nice history of Australian music."

"It's actually a CD that you can put on and listen from beginning to end. Obviously if you watched the series then it will bring back memories and there will be certain associations from the songs and what's happened in the series."