FOR FILMMAKERS · PRODUCERS · ONE PAGE

The commissioning brief

What a score needs before the first note. Six things to bring to the first call, written to be forwarded to a producer — the same brief the essay works through, and the one NUHNA composes from.

A commissioned score goes wrong in the brief, not in the mix. The fee is settled before the first note and the scope is written down, so the more is known at the start, the fewer revisions the picture needs later. None of this is paperwork for its own sake: each item changes a decision a composer has to make anyway.

Two-week minimum	Two revision rounds	Exclusive on delivery	WAV 24-bit · 48 kHz+
Custom work, from written scope to delivery	Included in the fee; further rounds billed hourly	Copyright transfers to the production, in writing	Stems, alternates and cutdowns as scoped

01 · The cut and the temp

Send the locked or near-locked cut, and the temp track with timecode. Then two sentences: what the temp is doing that you want kept, and what it is doing that you do not. Most of the brief is already in that pair of sentences — it tells a composer which decisions the picture is already making.

02 · Where the audience looks

Attention is the deliverable; mood is a by-product. Name three to five moments where the sound has to point the eye, hold a silence, or carry an edit that the picture cannot carry alone. Timestamps are enough. A cue that knows where the cut is writes differently from one that only knows the genre.

03 · The delivery targets

Say where the work will be heard and in what form: cinema, streaming, broadcast, game build, installation, campaign placement. Then the technical list — stereo, binaural or Dolby Atmos; stems; middleware such as FMOD or Wwise; cutdown lengths for trailer and social; who implements them. Anything discovered after the mix costs a remix.

04 · Cultural material and credit

Flag anything that carries a tradition: an instrument, a chant, a ceremony, a language, a location with a community behind it. It changes how a palette is built, and it decides what has to be credited or cleared. Say it early, and name the makers, teachers and collaborators who should appear in the delivery notes.

05 · The deadline

Give the honest date, not the hopeful one. Custom work carries a two-week minimum, two revision rounds are included, and a rushed mix is the one thing a budget cannot fix. If picture lock is still moving, say that too — it is a scheduling fact, not a weakness.

06 · The rights you need

Settle the rights in the scope, not after the grade: exclusive transfer, term, territory, festival and broadcast use, and whether the work may ever appear in the public catalogue. A commission transfers the copyright in the master and the score to the production on delivery; the composer keeps the performance royalties and the credit **Music by NUHNA**.

What comes back

— A written scope and a fee, agreed before the first note and fixed against the picture.

— An original score composed for that production, not a re-cut of the catalogue.

— WAV 24-bit masters at 48 kHz or higher, with stems at the agreed tier.

— Alternates, instrumental versions and broadcast cutdowns as scoped.

— Tuning, tempo and key notes for the next vendor; credits and a cue sheet.

— Exclusive delivery: the work never enters the public catalogue and cannot be licensed to another production.

COMMISSION · BRIEF

Send the brief, start the score

Open the six points in your mail app with the headings ready, or begin with a thirty-minute call and a written scope. Live sets for retreats, ecstatic dance and life passages are booked separately.

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