

## A Composer's Bet on Sound: How Buried Truths and Revelation Rising Aim to Redefine Streaming Storytelling

In a crowded streaming market, one project is betting that music—not just story—will define its success.



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By Cindy Stevens

As streaming platforms compete for attention in an increasingly saturated market, one area of quiet escalation has been the role—and cost—of music. Scores that once served as atmospheric support are now expected to carry narrative weight, deepen character, and extend a project’s life well beyond the screen.

Against that backdrop, *Buried Truths*, an upcoming dramatic series positioned for release this fall, is emerging as a case study in how music is being repositioned from a secondary element to a primary driver of storytelling.

At the center of the project is composer, arranger, and producer James A. Norkawich, alongside his cinematic rock ensemble, Revelation Rising.

### **The Story: A Marketable Blend of Suspense and Psychology**

*Buried Truths* follows a narrative arc that has become increasingly attractive to streaming audiences: a layered psychological drama rooted in secrets that refuse to stay hidden. The storyline traces the unraveling of past events—personal, moral, and criminal—that resurface in the present, forcing characters to confront not only what they did, but who they have become.

The structure lends itself to episodic tension, but its real strength lies in its emotional continuity. Each revelation builds on the last, creating a narrative that depends as much on mood and tone as it does on plot.

That dependency has made music central to the project’s design.

### **Music as Infrastructure, Not Ornament**

In traditional television production, music budgets were often constrained by necessity. Today, however, as platforms like Netflix and their competitors invest in high-production-value content, the calculus has shifted.

Industry observers note that projects like *Buried Truths* increasingly treat music as **infrastructure**—a foundational element that shapes pacing, tension, and audience engagement.

Estimates tied to the project suggest a multi-year commitment to music development, with budgets reaching into the multi-million-dollar range over the life of production. Compensation models for composers have evolved in parallel, often combining upfront fees with backend participation tied to streaming performance and licensing.

For Norkawich, this represents both an opportunity and a challenge.

### **A Composer with a Hybrid Approach**

James A. Norkawich’s background is not typical of a single-genre composer. Trained in jazz studies and film scoring, he approaches composition with an emphasis on structure and emotional architecture.

His process begins at the piano, where thematic ideas are developed in isolation before being expanded into full arrangements. From there, the music incorporates elements of orchestral scoring—strings, harmonic layering, dynamic shifts—alongside the energy and immediacy of rock instrumentation.

The result is a hybrid style that aligns with current industry demands: music that can function both within a narrative and as a standalone product.

## Revelation Rising: A Scoring Collective

Rather than relying solely on traditional scoring methods, Norkawich has built a collaborative unit in Revelation Rising. The group operates less like a touring band and more like a **modular production team**, capable of adapting to the needs of a given scene or project.

The ensemble includes:

- Lead and supporting vocalists capable of both intimate and large-scale performance
- A rhythm section designed to shift between subtle underscoring and high-impact sequences
- Guitar and keyboard elements that bridge cinematic and contemporary sound design

This flexibility allows the music to mirror narrative shifts in real time, a feature that has become increasingly valuable in serialized storytelling.

## From Early Work to Industry Entry Points

Like many composers operating outside traditional studio systems, Norkawich's trajectory began with independent releases. His debut album, *Yesterday (Songs From The Great American Songbook) Vol. 1*, demonstrated an ability to reinterpret established material with a cinematic sensibility.

A notable early placement came through *The Assassination of Gianni Versace: American Crime Story*, where his version of "The Man I Love" appeared in Season 2, Episode 9, underscoring a critical scene. The placement provided a proof of concept: music developed independently could translate effectively into narrative media.

## Distribution Beyond the Screen

One of the defining characteristics of modern scoring projects is their dual life. Music is no longer confined to the show itself; it is distributed simultaneously across streaming platforms, creating additional revenue streams and extending audience engagement.

For Revelation Rising, this means that material associated with *Buried Truths* is expected to be available across major digital platforms, positioning the project within both the entertainment and music markets.

## Looking Ahead: Expansion and Network Interest

As the project moves toward its anticipated fall release, discussions around future collaborations have begun to surface. Industry observers suggest that composers operating at this intersection of cinematic and commercial music are increasingly in demand—not only for streaming platforms but also for traditional broadcast networks and emerging media outlets.

Opportunities tied to cable networks, digital platforms, and international distribution channels are often part of the longer-term trajectory for projects of this nature. For Norkawich and Revelation Rising, *Buried Truths* may serve as a gateway into a broader range of scoring and production opportunities.

## A Broader Industry Shift

The significance of *Buried Truths* extends beyond a single series. It reflects a broader shift in how content is produced, financed, and consumed.

As competition intensifies, differentiation becomes critical. Music—once an overlooked component—has reemerged as a key factor in that differentiation. Projects that invest in sound as deliberately as they do in script and visuals are increasingly positioned to stand out.

Whether *Buried Truths* achieves that distinction will depend on execution. But its approach suggests a growing recognition within the industry: **in the streaming era, what audiences hear may matter as much as what they see.**

## Contact & Platforms

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