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Music montages cut closely to the beat

'America's Funniest Home Videos' 500th Episode

By TODD LONGWELL

Whether it's babies rejecting food to the bombastic orchestral sounds of Strauss' "Also Sprach Zarathustra" or ladies getting their party on to the tune of Gretchen Wilson's "Redneck Woman," there is one cardinal rule for putting together musical montages for "America's Funniest Home Videos."

"You have to cut in sync with the song," says producer Rich Connor, who estimates he's put together more than 500 montages since joining "AFV" in 2001. "If somebody's falling and they're missing the drum beat that's half a beat later, you're missing the boat."

Typically, each episode features two musical sequences, one set to a pop song and another to a classical piece. Most well-known classical works are in the public domain, so "AFV" is able license performances of the greatest hits of everyone from Beethoven to Tchaikovsky easily and cheaply, but pop tunes are more expensive and harder to come by. Songs from the catalogs of icons such as the Rolling Stones, the Beatles, Led Zeppelin and even Bon Jovi are usually out of reach financially or rights holders won't license them to the show. Many newer artists, however, like Lady Gaga and Katy Perry, let their songs be used regularly, but some can be surprisingly precious about their work.

"A couple of years ago, when the Jonas Bros. were really hot, they said, 'We'd like to know what the concept is and we'd also like to see a cut of it before we sign off,' " remembers Connor, "and I had to say 'no,' because I can't do it and then risk them saying no and setting the whole production back."



'AFV' host Tom Bergeron with studio audience members participating in one of games involving guessing what will happen in the clip that pepper the broadcast.



Di Bona directing an episode.

'America's Funniest Home Videos' 500th Episode

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