

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

Astrop blends music,
investment portfolios

BY PHIL W. HUDSON
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Doug Astrop sees music the way he sees his investment portfolios: as a puzzle where all pieces must be meticulously chosen to produce the best possible result.

Astrop, chief investment officer of Atlanta-based **Astrop Advisory Corp.**, is a certified financial planner practitioner and a certified investment management analyst by day, but an accomplished composer/pianist by night.

The son of the late William B. Astrop, co-founder and chairman of Atlanta Capital Management, purchased his first stock at just 22-years-old and always had a fascination with the stock market, from watching his dad and growing up around the business.

But also as the son of a musician, Doug, a native Atlantan, started tinkering with the piano at a young age.

"My mom is a pianist and a cellist so I think that filtered down in the genes," he said. "I started just banging around but gravitated toward the piano for some reason and then over the years started honing my skill, learning how to write songs and started composing."

During his freshman year of college at **Georgetown**, Astrop sold a cassette of original music at the student store, marking his first commercial music release.

However, it would be what happened after college that propelled him into the music industry.

Astrop moved to Los Angeles where he became an executive in the entertainment industry for companies such as **EMI-Capitol Music** and **Twentieth Century Fox**.

While at **Capitol Records**, Astrop licensed its songs for film, television and commercials then went into the film business with Twentieth Century Fox after earning his MBA from the **University of Southern California**.

During his schooling at USC, Astrop became friends with **Braxton Perkins**, vice president at **NBCUniversal**.

Perkins, who is from Nashville, said the two bonded over their connection to the South and interest in the entertainment industry.

"We shared a sense of humor and could crack each other up," Perkins said. "Sometimes in life you become friends with somebody in a new stage of your life, such as business school, then you form a breath of friendship and you remain connected."

Perkins said Astrop was always able to compose his own songs but also had a knack for rearranging other pieces of music.



When Doug Astrop isn't being a financial adviser, he's composing music.

JOANN VITELLI

"He's analytical, he's a thinker but he's also creative," Perkins said. "At the root of music there is a lot of math and at the root of finance there is a lot of math so seeing Doug where he is today makes sense."

Astrop said while he enjoyed working in the entertainment industry, he "always on these middle-management, bureaucratic jobs."

"You were in the business but you weren't creating and you were a little bit removed from the glamor," he said. "It got to the point where if I was going to be on the business side, I wanted to be in the investment business because there was move opportunity if I became involved in the family business."

So Astrop jumped from the entertainment industry into a new role as a financial adviser with **Merrill Lynch** in Los Angeles "literally across the street from Twentieth Century Fox." Following a nearly two year stint at Merrill Lynch, Astrop packed his bags and moved back home to join his father and brother

Bowen Astrop, now the chief operating officer, at Astrop Advisory.

At Astrop, he manages two equity portfolios that have beaten the S&P 500 handily.

"The Astrop Core 25 strategy is focused on beating the market during uptrends, while slightly mitigating the downside risk, and has beaten 98 percent of the large-cap blend mutual funds over the last five years," he said. "Our latest strategy, the Astrop Low Volatility Dividend 25 is primarily concerned with downside protection, while capturing most of the market's upside."

Astrop said even though music is not his primary vocation, it is an inseparable part of him that he must pursue.

"I've been composing music since as long as I can remember and have created a sizable catalog of original songs," he said. "There is no way I cannot make music."

Many of his songs have been featured in television programs such as

► EXECUTIVE PROFILE

DOUG ASTROP

Age: 43

Born: Atlanta

Lives in: Buckhead area of Atlanta

Current job: Chief Investment Officer, Astrop Advisory Corp., Owner/Composer, Lion Eagle Productions & Music Publishing

Previous job: Financial adviser, Merrill Lynch; Associate director, Twentieth Century Fox/Music Licensing, EMI-Capitol Music

Education: Bachelor's in business administration, Georgetown University (McDonough School of Business); MBA, University of Southern California (Marshall School of Business)

Family: Wife, Jennifer, and twin boys, Alexander and Maxwell, turning four in May, and dog, Bella

Hobbies: Spending time with family, composing music, watching movies, investing, reading

the "90210" reboot, CBS News, E! News and "The Colbert Report" and numerous reality shows, including several ID crime documentaries, "Say Yes to the Dress Atlanta" and "Hollywood Exes."

One of Astrop's oldest childhood friends and a fellow musician, **Ian Farlow**, owner of **Iroshai Multimedia Services LLC**, met Astrop at **The Lovett School**.

"I discovered pretty quickly that he played piano," Farlow said. "It [playing piano] was something I had been doing for a long time but I never had anyone to play with and it really tied us together. Plus, we drove the same car."

The two friends grew close and would often play the piano together in one of the school's many sound rooms or at its chapel and would even go to the Astrop family home to record songs together.

"In all of the years we technically only wrote one song that we completed together," Farlow said. "We just kind of bounced things off of each other and would put stuff out together. I've stopped, but he is still putting stuff out on **iTunes**."

Farlow noted even as hard as it is to get into the music and entertainment industry, it still surprises him that Astrop doesn't receive more recognition from the industry.

"He's written stuff or rewritten other people's stuff that is top notch," Farlow said. "But when you think about it, everything he does is top notch. ...His time will come."