

# Music in Films: A Critical Review of Literature, 1980-1996<sup>1</sup>

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Over a century has passed since December 28, 1895, when the Lumière Brothers first demonstrated their *cinématographe* to the public in Paris in an exhibition that was accompanied by a pianist.<sup>2</sup> As so many books and articles are at pains to remind us, film was never silent. It was merely mute.

Music was a vital part of the film exhibition, performance, and experience from the beginning. The piano in the corner movie house, the mighty Wurlitzer organ in the theater, the orchestra in the movie palace—these were as essential to a film presentation as the projector and the screen. Any number of theories for the presence and persistence of music in conjunction with film have been proposed. But whether through theatrical tradition, the practical

need to cover up the noise of the projector, the psychological necessity of providing “depth” for the “ghostly” two-dimensional images on the screen,<sup>3</sup> or some combination of such factors, music has been considered indispensable from the beginning. When movies began to talk in the late 1920s, it heralded a turning point in a technological revolution that led to the physical welding of sound (including music) to image, transforming the ephemeral into a semblance of permanence.

The purpose here is not to trace the history of music in film, but to survey the literature *about* music in film written between 1980 and 1996. Film music literature is a strange hybrid, much like its subject, existing in a limbo cut off from the main body of both its progenitors: neither film studies

nor musicology have paid much attention to film music in the past, and like a squalling brat, film music studies have continued to protest loudly the neglect. While it is true that film studies and musicology have been largely uninterested in film music—or, to be fair, ill-equipped theoretically to approach the synthetic form—the vociferous complaints of complete neglect are gradually being exposed as hyperbole.<sup>4</sup>

In 1979, musicologist Martin Marks published the milestone review article “Film Music: The Material, Literature, and Present State of Research,”<sup>5</sup> seriously addressing the special problems and nature of film music scholarship for the first time. Marks’s article is highly recommended for an overview and as a starter bibliography for the neophyte. The

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<sup>1</sup>I would like to express my thanks to Bill Rosar and Tom DeMary for doing some of the legwork in the United States that I was unable to do in the United Kingdom. Also my thanks to Elizabeth Endsley for compiling the bibliography and especially for chasing up Internet references.

I began compiling this article for different reasons altogether. The first was my doctoral exams in 1992. At the time, the idea of concentrating on film, dance, and theatre music instead of concert hall music was not only unusual but downright controversial (not, I hasten to add, in my own department, but in the field at large); ironically, those were the areas my first teaching job wanted, and the literature survey received another influx of material. In the tenor of this article, beyond its bibliographical content, I realized that I had first-hand experience to

impart about the transition of film music studies from a musicological backwater to one of its leading waves.

<sup>2</sup>*The Oxford Companion to Film*, 1976 ed., s.v. “Music.”

<sup>3</sup>This theory goes back at least as far as the work of film theorist Béla Balázs (*Der sichtbare Mensch, oder die Kultur des Films* [The visible person, or the culture of film], Vienna & Leipzig, 1924).

<sup>4</sup>See Caryl Flinn, *Strains of Utopia: Gender, Nostalgia, and Hollywood Film Music* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992: 3-4 as well as Marks, “Film Music” (see below). In their review of Flinn’s book and Kathryn Kalinak’s *Settling the Score: Music and the Classical Hollywood Film* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992) in the *Journal of the American Musicological Society* (67/2 [Summer 1994]: 364-85), James Buhler

and David Neumeyer take up the issue of “neglect” and point out that it has been used very effectively to structure arguments; but the time in which we can legitimately use such an argument has now surely past. Buhler and Neumeyer’s review article also contains a concise survey of film theory and the (lack of) film music theory. <sup>5</sup>*Notes* (1979): 282-325. An updated version was published in the *Journal of the University Film and Video Association* 34, no. 1 (Winter 1982): 3-40, thereby proving one of Marks’s points—that that much of the literature was published in “ephemeral or out-of-reach journals” (p. 290). Because the second version differs from the first primarily in additions to the bibliography, and because the first version is more easily accessible than the second, all page references will be to the version in *Notes*.

comprehensiveness is admirable, and daunting to those who follow.<sup>6</sup> The present article is meant to address the next couple of decades—decades that, as it happens, have seen a slow revolution in the kind and quantity of film music literature. As indicated in its title, Marks's article was divided into three sections. We shall return to the topic of the state of research at the end of this article, but first let us examine some of Marks's observations about the materials and the literature.

The materials are more or less a historical constant, although there was a shift from the cue sheets and compilation scores of the silent era to predominantly original scores with the coming of sound. We may study piano arrangements, concert adaptations (for instance, Sergei Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky Cantata*, Aaron Copland's *The Red Pony Suite*, or Miklós Rózsa's *Spellbound Concerto*), and soundtrack albums, although these usually contain significant alterations of the music heard in a film. The composer's score, the full score as prepared by the orchestrator, and the musicians' performing parts for recording sessions are more accurate—although not necessarily *completely* accurate, as changes are sometimes made in the recording sessions themselves—but access is severely limited by the owners of the music's copyright. The copyright holder is almost always the production company rather than the composer, since most com-

posers are hired by production companies to provide a service—that of producing a score. So what then do we study?

Marks astutely points out that the fundamental difference between film music and other “repertoires” is that film music is not really a repertoire. Even if we had access to all these written sources and audio recordings, in reality, film music exists only in conjunction with a film:

In other words, there not only is no repertoire of film music, there are also no “pieces of film music” at all—only pieces of film, with music photographically or electro-magnetically inscribed on a band alongside the image. The primary material of film music, both for the audience and the researcher, is not a recording or a score, but the film itself (p. 283).

Marks's pitch for studying the music in connection with the film may seem obvious, but it is truly astonishing how many studies of the music tend to ignore completely what is happening on the screen. This may be explained, if not condoned, by the methods which the researchers have been taught to use. Film studies are traditionally a visual domain; in the last decade or so, sound has made inroads into the field, but primarily in terms of the voice and, to a lesser extent, sound effects.<sup>7</sup> Music has been left out almost completely. Conversely, musicology was established in an

era when absolute music—music for its own sake, with no extra-musical program or function—was the ideal, with all music measured to that standard. It is therefore not surprising that music written for purposes of dramatic illustration would be considered almost beneath notice; additionally, methodologies for studying such music, *were* it to be noticed, are markedly underdeveloped.

One result of this schism is the predominant assumption that the reader has little or no knowledge of music. While the intent may be to accommodate those in film studies who might be intimidated by technical musical discussion, the result is immensely frustrating to those in music and perhaps continues to alienate and antagonize the musicological establishment, which understandably expects some serious engagement with the musical issues. On the other hand, it must be said that much of the literature that deals most directly with the music tends to ignore the visual side. Implicitly, or even explicitly, much of the music analysis pleads for film music's status as “real music.” This becomes most obvious in the frequently encountered distaste for—even hatred of—popular music. Since the 1960s, the pop-song-based score has grown increasingly important and may now be deemed the dominant type of score, at least in terms of sheer numbers. Understandably, some composers and fans of more “classical” scores see this trend as endangering the symphonic score, but very few of them will deign to concede that, when done well, as for instance in John Hughes's teen comedies *The Breakfast Club* (1985) and *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* (1986), a pop song score can be the most appropriate type of music for a film.

<sup>6</sup>In the collection *Film Music I* (ed. Clifford McCarty, New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1989), two articles address the same basic issues as Marks: Clifford McCarty's “Introduction: The Literature of Film Music” (pp. ix-xv), and H. Stephen Wright's “The Materials of Film Music: Their Nature and Accessibility” (pp. 3-15). Although they do include some new information,

they are too brief to be of comparable value. <sup>7</sup>For instance, in the special issue “Cinema/Sound” of *Yale French Studies* (No. 60, 1980), half of the articles on theory and *all* of the case studies are on the voice, outnumbering by twice the number of articles in the “Music” section.

Marks had no way of knowing (although the premonition lurks between the lines) that his article was written at a pivotal time in film music studies. Since the late 1970s, there has been both an explosion and an implosion in the literature—an explosion in the amount of material, and an implosion in the sense that detailed work on specific aspects of film music has become increasingly more prominent and has incorporated elements of psychology, sociology, philosophy, semiotics, and reception and perception studies.<sup>8</sup> Yet lack of focus remains a problem. A marked tendency to try to be all things to all people dilutes and attenuates the impact of much that has been written, and the scattered and marginal nature of the literature has led to a pattern that begins to wear upon the serious reader: every book seems to begin with some variant upon “of course, the movies were never silent” and then proceeds to a capsule history of film music from the beginning to the present (whatever present the author is in). I can think of no other area of music literature, at least, that seems compelled to recite its entire history so consistently.

Rather than building a body of literature, most of the books seem to start from scratch, resulting in a tremendous waste of energy and a diffusion of attention.

Any literature on film music is still, in Marks’s words, “far from easy to come by, and this is one reason for its own neglect. Books on film music pass speedily out of print, while articles lie scattered and buried in ephemeral or out-of-reach journals” (p. 290).<sup>9</sup> Despite its marginality (in some measure, perhaps because of it), the writing on film music covers a wide variety in content and approach. This discussion has been divided into the following sections:<sup>10</sup>

1. The Silent Film Era
2. General Reference Sources
3. Surveys
4. Biographies and Interviews
5. Film Music Society Newsletters, Magazines and the Internet
6. Historical Aspects
7. Theory, Aesthetics and Analysis
8. Pedagogy
9. Sociology and Cultural Studies

Categorization is based on the apparent intentions of the authors as well as their intended audiences,

although certainly there are cross-currents and overlap throughout.

## The Silent Film Era

Unlike any other period of film music, we do not know what the music for silent film really sounded like because it was not recorded but played live and in different configurations from theater to theater. Relatively few complete scores were written for silent films; the majority were pieced together from popular music, themes from “the classics,” and from libraries of specially composed pieces indexed by mood or action, as in Giuseppe Becce’s *Kinothek: Neue Filmmusik*<sup>11</sup> and Erno Rapee’s *Encyclopedia of Music for Pictures*.<sup>12</sup> Even the scores that were specially composed for films were probably hardly ever played as written once the film had left the central theaters for the hinterlands. A prescribed score infringed upon the job of the theater music director, which was to assemble and arrange the scores for film presentations, and in some cases the given score was used only as far it suited the music director and the local set of musicians.<sup>13</sup>

More than half the literature

<sup>8</sup>Although “perception” and “reception” may seem similar at first blush, the two methodologies are quite divergent. Perception studies tend to be scientific and psychological in nature; reception studies are cultural, embracing semiotics, aesthetics, and ideology.

<sup>9</sup>I can personally attest to the difficulty of gaining access to these materials, as this article was put together from a regional university in the United Kingdom. It was frustratingly difficult even to find references to recent books and articles (this necessitated a trip to the British Library in London), and even with the most persevering Interlibrary Loan staff, actually putting hands on such items was very much a hit-and-miss affair. As a result, there are a number of footnotes in which I state that I have been unable to see a particular article or book; citations are included for the benefit of those who may have access to

them, while categorization is based on title and extrapolation from other publications by the same author or comments by others.

<sup>10</sup>Articles in general volumes, like *Film Music I* (ed. Clifford McCarty, New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1989), and special issues of periodicals, such as *Indiana Theory Review* (11, no. 1-2, 1990) and *Chigiana* (42, no. 22, 1990), which I have been unable to see, have been discussed separately.

<sup>11</sup>“Kinothek” is a contraction of “Kinobibliothek” – “cinema library” (see below for more extensive information).

<sup>12</sup>New York: Belwin, 1925; reprinted in New York by Arno Press, 1970.

<sup>13</sup>Gillian Anderson has reconstructed types of musical presentations one could expect at theaters of various sizes with differing resources (“The Presentation of Silent Films, or Music as

Anaesthesia,” *Journal of Musicology* 5 (1987): 247-95). Her article is an offshoot of her work as a music librarian at the Library of Congress, where a major rescue operation has been underway to microfilm old, brittle cue sheets and scores in the collection of the Library of Congress and the Museum of Modern Art (New York) before they disintegrate. She ends with a rather eloquent plea for the excitement of live music with film, born of her experience of silent film screenings with music at the Museum of Modern Art. Anderson herself is now actively reconstructing and conducting such performances. Patrick Miller’s article “Music and the Silent Film” (*Perspectives of New Music* 21 (1992-93): 582-84) covers much the same ground, but in a very sketchy manner.

on music for the silent film era is directly or indirectly connected with reconstructions of silent film performance practice<sup>14</sup> or newly composed scores for silent films.<sup>15</sup> The latter phenomenon has increased dramatically in recent years, for instance in the former East Germany where silent films were broadcast on television with newly-composed scores beginning in 1977, or in Britain on Channel 4. Wolfgang Thiel, one of the composers working on such scores, writes of the challenges and rewards of such work.<sup>16</sup> Although he admits that the fragmentary films and variable projection rates can create headaches for the composer, he also argues that silent film composition opens possibilities to the composer that sound film does not, as the music is continuous and does not have to compete with sound effects and dialogue. He maintains that this revival of silent film is not a historicizing trend, but a popularizing one; he also links the phenomenon to a general trend toward past musical techniques, exemplified by John

Williams' neo-Romantic scores for films like *Star Wars*, which hearken back to the scores of Erich Wolfgang Korngold for such swashbucklers as *Captain Blood* (1935) and *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (1938).

When approaching the task of writing a score for a silent film, the well-informed composer (and Thiel is amazingly well-informed, as his masterly historical survey on the history of film music<sup>17</sup> proves) is torn between authenticity and attracting modern audiences, between the "inartistic" potpourri style of the silent period and the more integrated techniques developed for the sound film. In the end, Thiel reports that he opted for a combination that allowed a historical perspective on the original film; for instance, for Friedrich Murnau's *Nosferatu* (1922), he paraphrased Hans Erdmann's original themes in a modern-day style. This sort of reworking and recontextualization has become increasingly common in sound films as well, for instance Elmer Bernstein's reuse of Bernard

Herrmann's original score for *Cape Fear* (1962) in Martin Scorsese's 1991 remake; director Carlos Saura and choreographer Antonio Gades's fracturing of the familiar opera in their filming of Gades' flamenco ballet, *Carmen* (1983), with guitarist Paco de Lucia's improvisatory interpretation of Bizet's themes echoing the free reinterpretation of the plot; or François Truffaut's *L'Histoire d'Adèle H* (1975), in which Maurice Jaubert's scores for several films of the 1930s are woven into a new score rich in allusions to the earlier films.<sup>18</sup>

More historical aspects of silent film music performance are taken up by David Q. Bowers, Thomas J. Mathieson, and Rudy Behlmer. Bowers's *Nickelodeon Theatres and Their Music*<sup>19</sup> is really a history of nickelodeons and the instruments, with nothing about the music itself; it is, however, an entertaining book, full of reproductions of complete advertisements for musical instruments and wonderful photographs of theaters with long, informative captions.

<sup>14</sup>Dennis James, "Performing with Silent Film," in *Film Music I*, edited by Clifford McCarty (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1989): 61-79; Joachim Lucchesi, "Filmmusik Hanns Eislers in der Akademie der Künste" (The Film Music of Hanns Eisler in the Academy of Art), *Musik und Gesellschaft* 34 (1984): 602-603.

<sup>15</sup>Tan Christie, "Sounds and Silents," *Sight and Sound* 3, no. 3 (March 1993): 18-21; H. Ehrler, "Viele Töne verdoppeln die stummen Bilder: Alfred und Andrej Schnittkes Filmmusik zu Pudowkins *Das Ende von St. Petersburg*" (Many tones double the silent images: Alfred and Andrej Schnittke's music to Pudovkin's film, *The End of St. Petersburg*), *Neue Musikzeitung* 41 (December 1992-January 1993): 58; R. Wehmeier, "Endlose Klangflächen und Spannungslosigkeit: eine Stummfilmrekonstruktion im ZDF mit neuer Musikkomposition" (Endless sound planes and lack of tension: a silent film reconstruction in the ZDF with a new musical composition), *Neue Musikzeitung* 41 (December 1992-January 1993): 17.

<sup>16</sup>"Stummfilmmusik als künstlerische Aufgabe: Ein Arbeitsbericht" (Silent film music as an artistic start: a working report), *Musik und Gesellschaft* 33 (October 1983): 606-11. Lothar

Prox's "Musik und Stummfilm: Schnittkes Neukomposition für einen Russischen Revolutionsfilm von 1927" (Music and silent film: Schnittke's new score for a Russian Revolution film from 1927), *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 154 (January 1993): 53-55) ends with an interesting proposal for a perception/reception study, a comparison between a live performance in a big room and a television broadcast. Two other articles which I have not seen also deal with this phenomenon: Wolfgang Thiel, "Gibt es eine Renaissance der Stummfilmmusik?" (Is there a Renaissance in music for silent film?), (*Film und Fernsehen* 3 (1981): 22-26) and Lothar Prox, "Musik zu alten Filmen, Stummfilmvertonungen der Fernsehkanäle" (Music to old films: Silent film composition for television institutions), (*Musica* 34 (1980): 25-31).

<sup>17</sup>*Filmmusik in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Film Music, Past and Present) (Berlin: Henschelverlag Kunst und Gesellschaft, 1981), discussed below.

<sup>18</sup>Annette Insdorf examines this score in some detail in "Maurice Jaubert and François Truffaut: Musical Continuities from *L'Atalante* to *L'Histoire d'Adèle H*" (*Yale French Studies* 60 (Fall 1980): 204-18). She draws comparisons between Truffaut's literary and visual allusiveness (the

quoting of scenes from other films) and his collage score. Although Insdorf never quite makes the connection, Truffaut's borrowing appears much more "literary" than musical. Water imagery is very important in the film, and much of the music for *Adèle H* comes from *La Vie d'un fleuve* (the life of a river), a documentary about the Seine by Jean Lods, while in the scenes set on the island of Barbados, the music comes from *Ile de Pâques* (Easter Island). Although the study is not truly musical, it is a serviceable examination of a fascinating case of intertextuality. Intertextuality is not merely reference or quotation a new context (film, television show, advertisement, song, video, etc.), but the entire network of signification—all film, all television, etc. See Roland Barthes, "From Work to Text" in *Image-Music-Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (London: Fontana Press, 1977): 160-61. In practice, it often involves an alteration or inflection of the meaning of that which is referred to or quoted and, almost perforce, the reception of the original context. See John Fiske, *Television Culture* (London: Routledge, 1987), especially Chapter 7, "Intertextuality"

<sup>19</sup>New York: The Vestal Press, 1986.

This book is one of the few attempts to get at the real history of the first decade (1895-1905) of film, even if on a popular level. Mathieson's "*Silent Film Music and the Theatre Organ*"<sup>20</sup> moves into the second decade, focusing on technical aspects of the theater organ and the technique and conditions of playing for the theater organist. A first-hand account is given in Behlmer's interview with Gaylord Carter,<sup>21</sup> one of the most in-demand organists of the silent era, who provides some welcome illustrations of the sophisticated musical technique possible in that environment. For instance, instead of the horror stories one hears about the orchestra going off duty in the middle of a reel, with an abrupt shift to the organist, Carter describes a very smooth turnover, sealing the seams with an oboe solo matched by the oboe stop on the organ.

Those who actually wrote and compiled the music for theater musicians have been given increasing attention in recent years. Ennio Simeon has published two

articles on Giuseppe Becce,<sup>22</sup> certainly one of the most influential figures in silent film music as editor of the twelve volumes of *Kinothek: Neue Filmmusik*, an indexed anthology of music.<sup>23</sup> Becce was also one of the authors of the *Allgemeines Handbuch der Filmmusik* (General Handbook of Film Music),<sup>24</sup> along with Ludwig Brav and Hans Erdmann. Volume one of this "Handbook" was the first published survey of the theory, history, and techniques of film music, a trilogy of topics that pervades many subsequent books on film music, especially after Roger Manvell and John Huntley's *The Techniques of Film Music*;<sup>25</sup> volume two was the most sophisticated and thoroughly cross-referenced version of the *Kinothek* anthologies. Becce's primary collaborator, Hans Erdmann,<sup>26</sup> has undergone the sort of serious examination heretofore only associated with canonical Western art music composers such as Bach and Beethoven.<sup>27</sup> A composer who was an articulate and thoughtful theorist and also one who was

successful both in silent films and in sound films, Erdmann has been overshadowed by his more controversial contemporary, Hanns Eisler,<sup>28</sup> but is richly deserving of such a thorough examination. Ulrich Siebert has also discussed the political, economical, and socio-cultural aspects of film music in Germany in the 1920s, establishing a clear context for the appearance of the *Handbuch*.

The relatively rare complete scores composed<sup>29</sup> for silent films, such as Erdmann's score for *Nosferatu*, have found some scholarly attention, and the most extensive of these projects is Martin Marks's dissertation, *Film Music of the Silent Period, 1895-1924*,<sup>30</sup> in which he examines five scores in historical context and in relationship to the films for which they were composed. Marks's dissertation is one of the few non-survey studies to encompass the works of both specialist film composers and concert hall composers,<sup>31</sup> with five scores ranging over almost the entire silent period. They include two com-

<sup>20</sup>*Indiana Theory Review* 11, no. 2 (1990): 81-117. The article also includes a useful list of available videotapes of silent films.

<sup>21</sup>"'Tumult, Battle and Blaze': Looking Back on the 1920s—and Since—with Gaylord Carter, the Dean of Theater Organists," in *Film Music I*, ed. Clifford McCarty (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1989): 19-59.

<sup>22</sup>"A musica di Giuseppe Becce tra cinema muto e sonoro" (On the music of Giuseppe Becce between silent and sound films), *Music in Film Fest* (Vicenza, 1987): 79-90; "Art. Giuseppe Becce," *Cinegraph* (Hamburg: Lieferung 10, 1988), both unseen.

<sup>23</sup>Published by Schlesinger in Berlin from 1920 to 1927.

<sup>24</sup>Berlin: Schlesinger, 1927.

<sup>25</sup>Focal Press Library of Communication Techniques (London: Focal Press, 1957); second edition revised and enlarged by Richard Arnell and Peter Day (New York: Hastings House, 1975). Marks lists nine such books after Manvell & Huntley (p. 308), increased to eleven in the 1982 update.

<sup>26</sup>Ulrich Eberhard Siebert, *Filmmusik in Theorie und Praxis: eine Untersuchung der 20er und frühen 30er*

*Jahre anhand des Werkes von Hans Erdmann* (Film music in theory and practice: an investigation of the '20s and early '30s with examples from the works of Hans Erdmann) (Frankfurt am Main: P. Lang, 1990). Two other German dissertations inaccessible to me deal with the same period in an apparently more general manner: Ulrich Rügner, *Filmmusik in Deutschland zwischen 1924 und 1934* (Film Music in Germany between 1924 and 1934) (1983) and Dietrich Stern, *Musik und Film: Aneignung der Wirklichkeit. Filmkomposition zu Beginn der Tonfilmzeit* (Music and film: Appropriation of Reality. Film composition to the beginning of sound film) (1981).

<sup>27</sup>A canon is the body of works (films, pieces of music, etc.) that scholars have deemed worthy of serious study. For the dangers of canon-building, see the conclusion of this paper.

<sup>28</sup>This is perhaps attributable to Eisler's tenure as a composer in Hollywood and his association with Theodor Adorno.

<sup>29</sup>Many so-called "complete" or "original" scores were in fact compilations of much the same sort as a local music director would have put together; they may or may not have been more sophisticated.

<sup>30</sup>Harvard University, 1990; in book form from Oxford University Press as *Music and the Silent Film: Contexts and Case Studies, 1895-1924*.

<sup>31</sup>Most tend to concentrate either on the technique of film accompaniment (whether playing or composing/compiling) or on the specific film scores of a single concert hall composer. Michael Stegemann's "Der mord als schöne Kunst betrachtet: Camille Saint-Saëns und die Anfänge der Filmmusik" (Death Considered as Fine Art: Camille Saint-Saëns and the Beginnings of Film Music) (*Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* (October 1985): 8-14) is a model of a concise historical and analytical article, tracing the history and context of the film and analyzing the music and its use in the film. Rein A. Zondergeld's comparison of the silent film experiments of Pietro Mascagni (*Rapsodia Satanica*, 1915) and Richard Strauss (*Der Rosenkavalier*, 1925-26) is a rare example of an examination of more than one concert hall composer. "Ein sonderbar Ding: Pietro Mascagni und Richard Strauss as Filmkomponisten in Frankfurt" (An unusual thing: Pietro Mascagni and Richard Strauss as film composers in Frankfurt), *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 149 (June 1988): 41-42.

pilation scores, one for the 1895 Skaladonowsky Bioskop shows, Joseph Carl Breil's partially original score for D.W. Griffiths's 1915 *Birth of a Nation*, and Walter Cleveland Simon's 1912 film *An Arabian Tragedy*. Also examined are scores such as Camille Saint-Saëns's for the 1908 film *L'Assassinat du Duc de Guise* and Erik Satie's for the 1924 film *Entr'acte*.<sup>32</sup>

A very different sort of study is Traude Ebert-Obermeier's provocative examination of the critical reception of Edmund Meisel's controversial score for Sergei Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin*.<sup>33</sup> While no one has claimed the score is a masterpiece, it is frequently hailed as a landmark of film scoring because of its power to heighten the action of the film. In the 1920s, the film was recognized as a way of reaching, uniting, and inciting the masses, and Meisel's score was considered so effective that it was banned in some countries—not the film, just the score! Ebert-Obermeier's strongly (some might say stridently) Marxist approach is important in that it considers the social aspects of the interactions of film and music, an aspect often much neglected by other writers, but unwittingly points up a fundamental paradox. Capitalism is accused of imposing the will of an

economic elite by manipulating the masses; a few determine what the masses will like. Yet in its intentions to "educate" and even "incite" the masses, is the advocated social realism any different? As Ebert-Obermeier was writing from the historical perspective of 1982, one would have thought she would have addressed this issue, but she does not.

The silent film era is a separate and quite unique area of film music, although conventions that persist in film music today may be traced back to this era. Because of this apparently closed quality, the study of music for silent films has assumed a certain dominance in the academic study of film music, if not in volume, then in proportion: the majority of writing on film music in general is popular, not scholarly, whereas the opposite is true for silent film music. As Wolfgang Thiel has pointed out, silent film has become "classic," which sets it apart from the social and economic aspects that swirl around other film musics;<sup>34</sup> this makes it easier to approach, at least for musicology, which has until recently stayed resolutely clear of any such worldly concerns.

## General Reference Sources

Reliable reference sources on

film music are among the most needed and least accessible publications on film music. Many different kinds of lists exist, though most are published by small and/or specialized publishing houses and pass very quickly out of print. Most of the publications in this category are bibliographies of some sort. Some are bibliographies for specific composers<sup>35</sup> or a specific era,<sup>36</sup> but of the greatest importance to the scholar is Steven D. Wescott's *A Comprehensive Bibliography of Music for Film and Television*.<sup>37</sup>

Because film music literature is scattered throughout so many different kinds of journals, many of them obscure, locating citations entails tedious searches through numerous indices (a hit-and-miss proposition) and working outward from citations in other sources. Wescott provides an indispensable single citation index covering history, techniques and technology, theory, aesthetics, psychology and perception, sociology and culture, and such resources as bibliographies, filmographies, discographies, and reference materials. No book, however, can contain absolutely everything, and in 1993 Gillian Anderson published a supplement.<sup>38</sup> However, her additions are for the period 1930-1970. Wescott's book is now over a

<sup>32</sup>Marks's work on *Entr'acte* also appears in "The Well-Furnished Film: Satie's Score for *Entr'acte*," *Canadian University Music Review* 4 (1983): 245-77.

<sup>33</sup>"Kunst im Dienst der Revolution: Zur Musik von Edmund Meisel für den Film *Panzerkreuzer Potemkin*" (Art in the service of the Revolution: On Edmund Meisel's music for the film *Battleship Potemkin*), *Musik und Gesellschaft* 32 (November 1982): 648-53.

<sup>34</sup>"Zwischen Klang und Geräusch: Anmerkungen zur zeitgenössischen internationalen Filmmusik" (Between sound and noise: Remarks on contemporary international film music), *Musik und Gesellschaft* 36 (January 1986): 27-32.

<sup>35</sup>E.g., Cathe Giffuni, "A Bibliography of the Film Scores of Ralph Vaughan Williams," *Music &*

*Musicians International* 37, no. 2 (October 1988): 24-31; and S.M. Fry, "The film and television music of Henry Mancini: a selective annotated bibliography of the literature," *The Cue Sheet* 9, no. 2 (1992): 27-33.

<sup>36</sup>An example, presumably, is K. Vogelsang's *Filmmusik im Dritten Reich: die Dokumentation* (Film music in the Third Reich: Documentation) (Hamburg: Facta oblita, 1990) (unseen). Gillian B. Anderson's *Music for silent films 1894-1929: A Guide* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1988) catalogues materials in the Library of Congress, the Museum of Modern Art (New York), the New York Public Library, and collections at the University of Minnesota, the George Eastman House in Rochester, N.Y., and the

Fédération Internationale des Archives du Film in Brussels. This volume also contains an introductory essay by Anderson, "A Warming Flame – The Musical Presentation of Silent Films" (which is largely the same as her article "The Presentation of Silent Films, or Music as Anaesthesia," discussed above) and an interesting addendum on "Music Played During the Shooting of Silent Films," a practice that has hitherto received little attention.

<sup>37</sup>Detroit Studies in Music Bibliography, No. 54, Detroit: Information Coordinators, 1985.

<sup>38</sup>"Supplement to Steven D. Wescott's *A Comprehensive Bibliography of Music for Film and Television*," *Music Reference Service Quarterly* 2, no. 1-2 (1993): 105-44.

decade old, and in recent years a great deal of ground-breaking scholarly work has taken place. The plight of the researcher was vividly illustrated by Anderson's companion article to the supplement,<sup>39</sup> in which she recounted her attempts to trace the composers of several popular film tunes, to locate the scores, and to compile a list of related secondary literature. The resulting red herrings and dead ends would be humorous if the situation were not so dire. If it is so difficult to locate information on such prominent classics of film music as Leigh Harline's "When You Wish Upon a Star" from *Pinocchio*, Paul Simon's "Mrs. Robinson" from *The Graduate*, and John Williams's theme from *Star Wars*, how much more difficult must it be to locate something only moderately popular, or (horrors) truly obscure?

The soundtrack fan and collector audience is better served by several more recent publications, including Steve Harris's *Film, Television & Stage Music on Phonograph Records: A Discography*;<sup>40</sup> Donald J. Stubblebine's *Cinema Sheet Music: A Comprehensive Listing of Published Film Music from Squaw Man (1914) to Batman (1989)*;<sup>41</sup> and Mike Preston's *Tele-tunes: Television, Film & Show Music on Compact Disc, Cassette, LP & Video*,<sup>42</sup> a comprehen-

sive, cross-referenced list of music used in a variety of contexts, including advertisements (even deleted catalog items are included for reference). All these may be of use to researchers as well as fans, and Preston's book (despite its exceedingly unattractive format) is a positive boon for anyone who has gone around for days trying to remember what that piece of music is that keeps rattling around in the brain.

When it was published in 1974, James L. Limbacher's *Film Music: From Violins to Video* was a unique publication, a collection of articles tracing the history, techniques, and aesthetics of film music prefacing a series of lists: film titles and dates, films and their composers, composers and their films, and a discography of recorded scores.<sup>43</sup> While admirable in scope and intent, the book proved to be riddled with inaccuracies. Two subsequent publications updated the lists and corrected some of the errors,<sup>44</sup> but they remained essentially the most up-to-date cross-referenced lists of films and composers until Steven C. Smith's *Film Composers Guide*.<sup>45</sup> Smith, however, targets a quite specific audience—the production company that needs to hire a film composer. A secondary audience of fans was anticipated, with re-

searchers tagging along in third place.

This implicitly ranked target audience is certainly telling: first, production companies who provide money through jobs; then, fans who provide money by purchasing soundtracks and sheet music and movie tickets; and last, researchers who do not provide anything tangible at all. These three audiences, plus the composers and would-be composers themselves, are the major ones for all publications on film music, with the researcher almost always trailing in last place. In bibliographies, this situation is particularly acute. A new edition of Wescott's *Bibliography* is badly needed; a more prominent publisher, perhaps a university press, might go a long way in improving accessibility as well.

## Surveys

Film music is gradually making inroads into the field of musicology. A measure of the progress made may be taken from the difference in tone between the articles on film music in the two major general reference works on music in the English language, *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (1980)<sup>46</sup> and *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music* (1986).<sup>47</sup>

Christopher Palmer's article in the earlier reference begins:

The film has become a major 20th-century art form, as well as a powerful and ubiquitous means of mass communication, and its accompanying music is not simply a subcategory of incidental or dramatic music in general. The most characteristic devices and styles of film music may be clearly based on 19th-century developments, particularly in

<sup>39</sup>"Perfuming the Air with Music': The Need for Film Music Bibliography," *Music Reference Service Quarterly* 2, no. 1-2 (1993): 59-103.

<sup>40</sup>Jefferson, NC, & London: McFarland & Company, Inc., 1988.

<sup>41</sup>Jefferson, NC, & London: McFarland & Company, Inc., 1991.

<sup>42</sup>Morecambe: Mike Preston Music, 1993.

<sup>43</sup>Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press. Lists of this sort had appeared before, most prominently Clifford McCarty's *Film Composers in America: A Checklist of Their Work* (Los Angeles: Valentine, 1953), reprinted New York: Da Capo, 1972), but the combination with articles was unique and, to a certain extent, odd. For an indication of the extent of the book's unreliability, see Clifford

McCarty's review in *MLA Notes* 31, no. 1 (1974-75): 48-50.

<sup>44</sup>James Limbacher, *Keeping Score: Film Music from 1972 to 1979* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1981) and James Limbacher and H. Stephen Wright, *Keeping Score: Film and Television Music, 1980-1988: with additional coverage of 1921-1979* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1991).

<sup>45</sup>Beverly Hills, CA: Lone Eagle Publishing, c.1990. Second edition edited by Vincent Jacquet-Francillon, 1991.

<sup>46</sup>Ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 1980).

<sup>47</sup>Ed. H. Wiley Hitchcock and Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 1986).

opera and programme music, but the nature of the medium and the demands it makes on the composer have created special problems whose solutions are unique in both practical and aesthetic terms.

While everything Palmer says may be true, the tone is touchy and defensive, certainly unusual for an encyclopedia article. The article is divided into sections on history, technique, functional music, realistic music, musical and animated film, Europe, and the Far East. De facto, Hollywood is the model. Although Indian, Chinese, and Japanese films—often left out of even extensive surveys—are included, they appear in sections written by another author, John Gillett, who also provides the section on Europe. The section divisions reflect the influence of the tripartite Manvell and Huntley approach and the concomitant lack of focus. The concert hall bias is also quite marked; the article recapitulates an old saw about the social value of film scores: “The silent film thus acquainted millions of people with ‘classical’ music, even if in modified form, and created lucrative employment for many performing musicians.” More disturbing, Palmer states, “In Britain film music has always attracted ‘serious’ composers,” whereas Hollywood composers have been rather isolated from the rest of musical life, and sometimes regarded as disreputable. The stylistic anonymity of many Hollywood scores is due to a scarcity of very talented composers, with such exceptions as Copland, George Antheil and Virgil Thomson. But in Hollywood’s heyday the average yearly output of films with music was about 400, too many to rely on ‘serious’ composers working in the studios on a casual basis.

Palmer’s appeal to logistical necessity does not mitigate the condescending tone. It can only be damaging in a publication dedicated to “serious” music if the author is perceived as not taking the subject seriously.

By contrast, the contribution to *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music* by musicologist Martin Marks (Ph.D., Harvard) and musicologist/composer Fred Steiner (Ph.D., University of Southern California)—both with more rigorous scholarly training than Palmer (MA, Cambridge in music and journalism)—is much more appropriate to the task. The article starts off with a clear, matter-of-fact definition of film music:

Music, whether live or in some recorded form, presented in conjunction with the exhibition of motion-picture images; the forms in which it is recorded include optical and magnetic soundtracks on film and (increasingly) videotape.

The sections are likewise far more straightforward and parallel in construction: Introduction, The period of the silent film; The 1930s: the advent of sound; 1940-60; The 1960s and after; Musical, animated, and documentary films. In contrast (and perhaps response) to Palmer’s critique of American film composers, Marks and Steiner remind the reader:

In the following discussion of American film music two points should be borne in mind: its history is comprehensible only within the context of the history of the cinema itself, and there is, stylistically speaking, more than one sort of film music. Cinema, as a phenomenon of popular culture, is a sometimes uncomfortable mixture

of art and commerce, and its music is similarly dualistic, reflecting both the cultivated and the vernacular traditions of American music.

Marks and Steiner are also far more understanding about the use of popular music and compilation scores in films—although when listing the composers who contributed to William Friedkin’s *The Exorcist* (1973) they include concert hall composers Crumb, Henze, Penderecki, and Webern but ironically exclude pop musician Mike Oldfield, whose *Tubular Bells* is the piece of music most associated with the film. Overall, however, the depth-to-length ratio of this article, which in my opinion is far too brief for a type of music so pervasive and important, is astounding and laudable.

Undoubtedly the most thorough survey of film music yet written—and a truly amazing feat of information collection—is Wolfgang Thiel’s *Filmmusik in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Film Music, Past and Present).<sup>48</sup> The sheer amount of data marshaled in the 438 pages of this weighty little tome (unfortunately now out of print) is staggering, but it is very clearly organized. Neither is the work purely historical. The first chapter, entitled “Zur Wesenbestimmung der Filmmusik und der fernseh-dramatischen Musik” (Toward an essential determination of film and dramatic television music), examines different analytical approaches to film music: musicological (which Thiel asserts must be adapted to the distinctive characteristics of film music or will fail to tell us anything significant), techno-

<sup>48</sup>Berlin: Henschelverlag Kunst und Gesellschaft, 1981.



logical, stylistic, physiological, psychological, dramaturgical, and sociological (the conditions of production in a studio, for instance). The second chapter, "Entwurf einer internationalen Geschichte der Filmmusik" (Sketch of an international history of film music), contains the most thorough examination of film music history ever to appear in print, organized chronologically and by country. Although the information is briefly presented, the amount of it is breathtaking, so some omissions can be forgiven, even if one must certainly question the absence of Bernard Herrmann from the section on Hollywood in the 1940s.<sup>49</sup> One of the more interesting aspects of the historical survey is that significant writings on film music are included for each country and time period covered. The second half of the book organizes the information in another way as Thiel pursues film music as a genre study, both film music as a genre itself and the various genres of film and their impact on film music.

In short, Thiel touches on practically every element possible with regard to film music. His approach is Marxist, but only

lightly so. Those who do not necessarily want social theory with their historical data will not be put off by the tone, and the German prose style is clear and uncluttered. A benefit of the Marxist approach is that the cultural aspects of film are addressed, aspects that historically have been ignored by musicology and therefore by much musicologically-oriented work in film music. Also to his credit, Thiel is open-minded about style, embracing popular styles as well as the more classical-Romantic ones, and his obvious penchant for the music of Ennio Morricone is refreshingly enthusiastic in a scholarly work. While one can quibble with some aspects of the book—the music examples are usually very brief and inserted without much comment—the overall impact is stunning.

Thiel also published an article in 1986 which he called a "rhapsodic" survey of film music and trends in the 1970s and 1980s,<sup>50</sup> wisely warning that he did not have enough distance for proper historical perspective. Nonetheless, he makes several pertinent observations. He notes the upswing in the numbers of articles and books on film music, especially those of a scholarly nature;

the tendency of American publications to be completely concerned with American films, with an attendant nostalgia for a "golden age" of film music in the past; a predominance of silent film music in academia, as noted earlier; the expansion of stylistic possibilities, from avant-garde to popular styles; the increasing use of smaller ensembles; and the incorporation of pre-existing music.<sup>51</sup> One of his most intriguing observations is of a tendency toward stylized musical usage, such as in Carlos Saura's *Carmen* and Ettore Scola's *Le Bal* (both 1983), which he regards as a reaction to music video, akin to the widescreen epics that flourished in the 1950s in reaction to television.<sup>52</sup>

In addition to the general surveys, there are others that are more selective, examining the work of a few composers. Two such books are Christopher Palmer's *The Composer in Hollywood*<sup>53</sup> and William Darby and Jack Du Bois's *American Film Composers, Techniques, Trends, 1915-1990*.<sup>54</sup> As the titles suggest, both books focus on mainstream Hollywood production. Palmer's book is further restricted to composers of the 1930s through 1950s and lacks any real engagement with the

<sup>49</sup>Thiel is also one of the few writers to include musicals in his consideration, although his knowledge of Hollywood film musicals is a little tenuous as times – for instance, he considers directors Gene Kelly and Stanley Donen as students of Vincente Minnelli, whereas in fact, the three of them often collaborated, and in technical areas, Kelly and Donen were frequently more adventurous than Minnelli (compare *Cover Girl* (1944) or *Anchors Aweigh* (1945) with *Meet Me in St. Louis* (1944) or *It's Always Fair Weather* (1956) with *Gigi* (1958)).

<sup>50</sup>"Zwischen Klang und Geräusch: Anmerkungen zur zeitgenössischen internationalen Filmmusik (Between sound and noise: Remarks on contemporary international film music)," *Musik und Gesellschaft* 36 (January 1986): 27-32.

<sup>51</sup>A survey by Robbert van der Lek—"Filmmusik-

geschichte in systematischer Darstellung: Ein Entwurf" (A systematic representation of film music history: a sketch), translated from Dutch to German by Elicha Rensing, *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 44, no. 3 (1987): 216-39— attempts to draw a similar sketch of the entire history of film music, but the result is tedious, based on an overly detailed chart that does nothing to really enlighten the reader. I have been unable to see Hans-Christian Schmidt's *Filmmusik, Musik aktuell: Analysen, Beispiele, Kommentare* 4 (Basel: Bärenreiter Kassel, 1982).

<sup>52</sup>The growing influence of music video and such dramatic hybrids as *Flashdance* (1983) and the television series *Miami Vice* (1984-89) would soon bring this sort of experimentation to mainstream cinema. Such youth-oriented films as *Footloose* (1984) and *Top Gun* (1986) are

obvious examples, but highly stylized musical sequences may also be found in more adult fare. The period dramas *Bugsy* (1991) and *Quiz Show* (1994) both contain montage sequences which combine stylistic features of classic Hollywood nightclub-hopping sequences and the more modern music video. There are several recitatives and at least one aria for the lead terrorist in *Die Hard* (1988), as well as ballets for invasion and vault breaking (see Robynn J. Stilwell, "I just put a drone under him...": Collage and Subversion in the Score of *Die Hard*," *Music and Letters* 78, no. 4 [November 1997]: 551-80).

<sup>53</sup>New York & London: Marion Boyars, 1990.

<sup>54</sup>Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 1990. George Burt's *The Art of Film Music*, discussed under textbooks, might also count under this category.

music, which, together with the slightly purple prose, makes the book a little too precious for the reader with a musical background.<sup>55</sup> The very first words of the book are:

Film music is a notoriously difficult subject to discuss in depth, since (like all musical topics) such discussion presupposes some knowledge of the musical science which the average student of film or the man-in-the-street cannot be expected to possess. So I have restricted technical talk to an absolute minimum (p. 7).

This makes it clear that the audience is not expected to include musicians, which merely reinforces the division he bemoans a couple of pages later:

[Film music] often seems fated to attract uninformed and unsympathetic critical attention whenever it attracts any at all. The root cause is surely that film music is a hybrid and as such has never gained wholehearted acceptance as a legitimate form of musical creativity (p. 9).

Darby and Du Bois are likewise defensive in their study of the styles and careers of fourteen major Hollywood composers from Max Steiner to John Williams.

This book is largely descriptive and quite opinionated, coming down firmly on the side of classical Hollywood scoring. Like so many authors of books of this type, they start off with a chapter "From Silents to Sounds," though their chapter is superior to most and especially strong on early sound. The authors provide only some simplified musical examples "so as not to intimidate non-specialist readers"; these examples are better than nothing, I suppose, but they are almost useless for specialist readers. The crusty tone of the prose also wears a bit thin after a few chapters, and there are some sexist comments which must not pass unremarked, particularly in reference to Bette Davis films.<sup>56</sup> They claim "These acting tours-de-force support plots that are, to put it kindly, designed to flatter women patrons by placing Davis in situations where her character's concerns and drives are uppermost" (pp. 37-38). Of course, they are absolutely right, but Davis films are "women's films" in much the same way that most action and adventure films are "men's films," gratifying male desires for competition and conquest. Why shouldn't women have films that enact their fantasies, just as men do? Particularly shocking is that these statements come

in a book of such recent vintage. The sexism conspires with a dismissive attitude toward popular music—in particular the lack of acknowledgment that pop songs *might* contribute fundamentally to a film—to give the impression of a book out of touch with the times.

Other surveys are of a more specific repertoire of films. Randall D. Larson's *Musique Fantastique: A Survey of Film Music in the Fantastic Cinema*<sup>57</sup> is a fan-oriented survey of music for fantasy, science fiction, and horror films that is nonetheless a good source of information from such inaccessible sources as liner notes for rare albums (although these are not always properly cited). What is most strikingly missing from the book is, once again, music—Larson literally uses phrases like "Dit-dit-da" and "da-DAA" as musical examples! R. Serge Denisoff and William D. Romanowski's *Risky Business: Rock in Film*<sup>58</sup> is perhaps second only to Thiel's in its compilation of information; the book examines the uses of rock music in narrative films<sup>59</sup> by weaving together plot synopses, information about technological advances and their impact, media strategies, and business strategies.<sup>60</sup> A number of typographical errors, some confusion over names,<sup>61</sup> and other minor mistakes are distracting, but

<sup>55</sup>With the exception of Erich Wolfgang Korngold, all are composers for whom Palmer provides the entries in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. In addition, the sections on Tiomkin and Rózsa are largely the same as the material in Palmer's books on these composers and his liner notes for the RCA Classic Films recordings series, conducted by Charles Gerhardt, making much of the material redundant.

<sup>56</sup>The title character in *Jezebel* is considered "selfish" when she appears in her red dress at the cotillion, whereas most modern viewers would read this gesture as a bit of rebellion on the part of a spirited young woman stifled by societal constraints. While discussing *Duel in the*

*Sun*, the authors also make several remarks about the character of Pearl Chavez, for instance, "Pearl's growing admiration for Jesse who, as a gentleman, represents what might save her from her own passionate nature" (p. 242). Many might consider a woman's passionate nature her strength; however, patriarchal society is terribly suspicious of strong-willed women, especially those in control of their own sexuality, like Pearl Chavez or Carmen or Madonna.  
<sup>57</sup>Metuchen, NJ, & London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1985. For an extensive review of the significant problems with this volume, see William H. Rosar's review in *The Cue Sheet* 2, no. 3 (August 1985): 20-21, 27-28.  
<sup>58</sup>New Brunswick & London: Transaction Publishers, 1991.

<sup>59</sup>A small section on rock documentaries is included, but the authors state that "A vast majority of 'rockumentaries' are little more than filmed concerts, adding another sensory dimension to 'live' or concert recordings" (p. x).

<sup>60</sup>An exploration of "synergy"—the industry term for cross-promotional film-music deals—is drawn heavily from an article by Denisoff and George Plasketes, "Synergy in 1980s Film and Music: Formula for Success or Industry Mythology?" *Film History* 4, no. 3 (1990): 257-76. Denisoff and Plasketes note the relative failure of such ventures, despite the occasional *Saturday Night Fever* (1977) or *Flashdance* (1983).

<sup>61</sup>A particularly disappointing error is their misunderstanding of the name of Paul Shaffer's

the book is still very much worthwhile. The authors argue persuasively for popular music's inventive and creative use in film—an uphill battle in film music literature.

The most scholarly of these specialist surveys is by composer and musicologist Norbert Jürgen Schneider, whose subject is the new German cinema, 1960-85.<sup>62</sup> His sophisticated approach is partially enabled by its limited repertoire; yet, intriguingly, Schneider does not include other musicologists among his intended readership (he mentions composers, directors, editors, producers, and film fans). Schneider begins by defining film music not as a genre or style, but as a formal and functional category dependent upon and influenced by other media, by technology, and by audience reception. He is careful to insist that film and its music are socially and historically determined; therefore one must not try to compare Soviet film music with Hollywood film music, or a silent film score with that of a score for a 1980s action film, without seriously taking into consideration the socio-historical context, as that context will in large part determine the product. His material is drawn from conversations with composers, directors, editors,

writings on film music, reviews, and the author's own experiences as a composer and teacher of film music, and a good part of the book is dedicated to musical dramaturgy; it is lavishly furnished with examples, even if they are verbal rather than musical. Schneider manages to dig into film music as a site of complex interaction of the aural, the visual, and the cultural without overloading his prospective audience with theoretical jargon—no mean feat that.

### Biographies and Interviews

A major part of the literature on film music is directly concerned with composers, largely in the form of interviews and biographies, and relatively little of it is of a scholarly nature. Although effort obviously went into including film composers in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* and *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music*, one sometimes gets the feeling that the results are a bit scattershot. Jerry Goldsmith, easily one of the finest and most prolific film composers since the 1960s, is not represented in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, while David Raksin, one of the most important and articulate film composers from the studio system of the 1940s (his

jazz-inflected monothematic score to the 1944 *Laura* is an undisputed milestone) to the 1970s is omitted from both dictionaries—a truly unforgivable oversight. Some redundancies also appear since the same author is often responsible for the entry on a particular composer in both dictionaries, and the omnipresent Christopher Palmer is author or co-author of most of the articles on specialist composers,<sup>63</sup> leaving the two dictionaries with essentially only one point of view on film music.

Palmer's dominance in the *New Grove Dictionaries* is understandable in light of the fact that he was responsible for several of the earliest serious biographies of film music composers, those of Dimitri Tiomkin and Miklós Rózsa.<sup>64</sup> Palmer also edited Rózsa's *Double Life: The Autobiography of Miklós Rózsa*.<sup>65</sup> The tension between film music and concert hall music is especially strong in this book, as exemplified by the title. There are two forewords, one by Antal Doráti, the other by Eugene Ormandy; while both are, like Rózsa, Hungarians, it is hard to miss the fact that both are also famous conductors, not Hollywood celebrities.

Another film music composer with a life in the concert hall—though largely as a conductor rather than as a composer—is André Previn, who has recently been the subject of both a biography and an autobiography. Michael Freedland's biography deals actually very little with Previn's formative years in Hollywood as a pianist, and later as a composer, at MGM.<sup>66</sup> The book carries a tone of snobbery against film music throughout, although this seems to come more from Freedland than from Previn himself,<sup>67</sup> as Previn's autobiography of the same year (*No Minor Chords*:

character in *This is Spinal Tap* (1984). The character they call "Artie Funkie" is actually called "Artie Fufkin," a much funnier name.  
<sup>62</sup>*Handbuch Filmmusik: Musikdramaturgie im Neuen Deutschen Film* (The Handbook of Film Music: Musical Dramaturgy in the New German Cinema), Kommunikation Audiovisuell: Beiträge aus der Hochschule für Fernsehen und Film, Band 13 (München: Verlag Ölschläger, 1986).  
<sup>63</sup>One significant exception is the pair of articles on Erich Wolfgang Korngold, both by Brendan G. Carroll.  
<sup>64</sup>*Dimitri Tiomkin: A Portrait* (London: T.E. Books, 1984); and *Miklós Rózsa: A Sketch of His Life and Work* (London: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1975). Other books which follow more or less the same format are Edward Johnson's *Bernard*

*Herrmann: Hollywood's Music-Dramatist* (foreword by Miklós Rózsa, Bibliographic Series No. 6 (Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire: Triad Press, 1977)) and Brendan G. Carroll's *Erich Wolfgang Korngold 1897-1957: His Life and Works* (3rd impression, rev., ed. Konrad Hopkins and Ronald van Roekel, The Music Makers Series, vol. 1 (Paisley: Wilfion Books, 1987)). Both tend to emphasize the composers' non-film work (only one of the seven works commented upon by Carroll is a film, *The Adventures of Robin Hood*, and one of Korngold's earliest film scores at that).  
<sup>65</sup>New York: Hippocrene Books, 1982.  
<sup>66</sup>*André Previn* (London: Century, 1991).  
<sup>67</sup>For instance, Chapter 6 opens with the sentence, "André Previn was fast establishing

*My Days in Hollywood*) fairly brims with the youthful enthusiasm of the time and is one of the more enjoyable biographies.<sup>68</sup> Henry Mancini's *Did They Mention the Music?*<sup>69</sup> presents a look at one of film music's most successful and popular composers. Through extensive taped conversations with co-author Gene Lees, Mancini discusses his life from childhood to award-winning artist.

Two biographies of Erich Wolfgang Korngold were published to coincide with the centenary of his birth. Jessica Duchon is the author of *Erich Wolfgang Korngold*.<sup>70</sup> B.G. Carroll's book, *The Last Prodigy: A Biography of Erich Wolfgang Korngold*,<sup>71</sup> from the scholar most closely associated with Korngold in the literature, is likely the best biography of Korngold we are likely to see in a long time.

The most thorough, scholarly biography on a film music composer to date is Steven C. Smith's *A Heart at Fire's Center: The Life and Music of Bernard Herrmann*, an extraordinarily detailed account of

Herrmann's life and works.<sup>72</sup> The only thing missing which would make this the definitive work on Herrmann is a serious engagement with the music itself—there is not a single musical example in the entire book. A more balanced picture of a composer and his work is given to us by Frederick Steiner's ground-breaking dissertation on Alfred Newman.<sup>73</sup> Although lacking some of the biographical richness of Smith's book (there is a notable lack of information on Newman's education in composition), Steiner's dissertation thoroughly examines the content and context of Newman's music, drawing on not only Newman's life and philosophy of film music but the history and conditions of the Hollywood in which he composed. A number of scores are examined in detail, in particular *Wuthering Heights* (1939). Steiner, a composer in Hollywood himself (known primarily for his contributions to the original television series of *Star Trek*, about which more later), never quite comes to a comprehensive analysis of the

music/image relationship, but he gets closer than anyone except such literary-based analysts as Claudia Gorbman and Kathryn Kalinak. Alfred Newman's long-time associate Ken Darby is the author of a book concerning the trials and tribulations the composer encountered while scoring George Stevens's *The Greatest Story Ever Told*.<sup>74</sup> This readable work presents a rather scathing account of the problems Newman endured when the film's director interfered and ultimately butchered the composer's score for the film.

Film journalist Tony Thomas devoted much of his life to promoting the understanding and appreciation of film music. His book *Music for the Movies* recounts the history of Hollywood film scoring by examining the careers of major film composers. In *Film Score: The Art and Craft of Movie Music*, Thomas had composers explain the art of film scoring in their own words.<sup>75</sup>

Biographical sketches<sup>76</sup> and interviews<sup>77</sup> are now to be found scattered through all kinds of

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himself as one of the more notable Hollywood musicians, which is not far short of damning him with faint praise" (p. 74).

<sup>68</sup>London & New York: Doubleday, 1991.

<sup>69</sup>Chicago: Contemporary Books, 1989.

<sup>70</sup>London: Phaidon/Chronicle Books 1996.

<sup>71</sup>New York: Amadeus Press, 1997.

<sup>72</sup>Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991.

<sup>73</sup>*The Making of an American Film Composer: A Study of Alfred Newman's Music in the First Decade* (Ph.D. diss., University of Southern California, 1981).

<sup>74</sup>*Hollywood Holyland: The Filming and Scoring of The Greatest Story Ever Told* (New Jersey: Scarecrow Press, 1992).

<sup>75</sup>*Music for the Movies*, 2nd updated ed. (New York: Silman James Press, 1997) and *Film Score: The Art and Craft of Movie Music* (Burbank: Riverwood Press, 1991).

<sup>76</sup>Two articles on Miklós Rózsa have appeared in the periodical *Filmmusik*, one by Frank Heckel in 1982 (8, no. 12: 12-22) and the other by Hansjörg Wagner in 1984 (11 July): 8-21 (both unseen). Other examples include: Matthias Keller, "Opern ohne Gesang: Der Filmkomponist

Erich Wolfgang Korngold" (Opera without singing: The Film Composer, Erich Wolfgang Korngold), *Opera Yearbook* 1993: 34-37; Paul Luttkhuis, "Erich Korngold als Filmkomponist" (Erich Korngold as Film Composer), *Mens en Melodie* 46 (February): 82-87; and Frederic Silber, "Danny Elfman: Wunderkind of Film Music – A Profile," *Fanfare* 13, no. 2 (1989): 568-73. Robert L. Doerschuk's "Music in the Air: The Life and Legacy of Léon Theremin" (*Keyboard Magazine* 20, no. 2 (1 February): 48-68) is a lengthy and moving biography of Léon Theremin, the inventor of the electronic instrument which carries his name. The eerie, glissando sound of the theremin became synonymous with such unsettling topics as psychoanalysis (*Spellbound*, Rózsa, 1945), alcoholism (*The Lost Weekend*, Rózsa, 1945), and alien invasion (*The Day the Earth Stood Still*, Herrmann, 1951). For decades, Theremin had been assumed dead in a Siberian prison camp, but it has recently become known that the electronic engineer was dragooned by the KGB into creating espionage devices.

<sup>77</sup>Sheila Johnston, "Knowing when to Keep Quiet (Interview with Ryuichi Sakamoto)," *The Indepen-*

*dent* (9 October 1992): Education 17; T. Powis, "They Shoot; He Scores!" *Canadian Composer* 4, no. 1 (1993): 20-21; Steve Simels and G. Carpenter, "Elmer Bernstein: The Dean of American Movie Music," *Stereo Review* 58 (September 1993): 73-75; and Les Tomkins, "John Cacavas: The Changeable World of Film Scoring," *Crescendo International* 25 (January 1988): 20-23. Many interviews first published by Royal S. Brown in *Fanfare* may also be found in his book *Overtones and Undertones: Reading Film Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), discussed further below. A pair of very brief articles in *Canadian Composer* (Christopher Jones, "Focus on Film Music," and Johanne Barrette, "Keeping up with Quebec's Film Market" in *Canadian Composer* 4, no. 4 (1993): 10-12) are interesting not so much for the content or the composers interviewed (all rather obscure), but for the division between "Canadian" and Québécoise composers – though both articles are in English, the French-speaking composers are treated separately in a smaller article on the last page. Although there may be nothing more sinister than language difference operating here,

music periodicals, from the scholarly to the popular to the technical. Interviews are certainly a valuable source of information on composers' intentions and techniques—they are as close to a primary source as many researchers will get—but an interview is often enlightening more for what it reveals of the character of the interviewees than for what it reveals of their knowledge. An exceptional example is an interview with Bernard Herrmann by Leslie T. Zador and Gregory Rose;<sup>78</sup> the iconoclastic composer comes over as crotchety, irascible, bitter, and opinionated. Any number of sources will mention these traits of his character, but it only comes to life when you read his actual words.<sup>79</sup>

The film music periodicals *Soundtrack!*<sup>80</sup> and *Film Score Monthly*<sup>81</sup> regularly publish interviews with composers, along with articles, information about CD releases and reviews, and filmographies and discographies.<sup>82</sup> Interviews in German periodicals tend to be more in-depth. Wolfgang Thiel prefaces his interview with Hans-Friedrich Ihme, a com-

poser who works with the DEFA-Studio für Trickfilme (animated films) in Dresden, with a short rant against the unfair stigma attached to film composing.<sup>83</sup> This is not an inappropriate prelude to an interview with a man who wants to move into concert music and looks to his work in film music for new insights and experience to put into his concert music. Jelená Petruschanskaya weaves together interviews not only with Alfred Schnittke, but with some of the directors with whom the composer has worked.<sup>84</sup> The multi-voiced result is intriguing and enlightening, and should perhaps serve as a model of interview technique for an art form as collaborative as film.

### Film Music Society Newsletters, Magazines and the Internet

A number of film music societies have their own publications, like The Film Music Society's (formerly the Society for the Preservation of Film Music) *The Cue Sheet*, or *The Score*, published by the Society of Composers &

Lyricists from Los Angeles. Various newsletters are produced by fans or fan clubs of specific composers: *The [James] Horner Letter*,<sup>85</sup> *Legend—The Jerry Goldsmith Society*,<sup>86</sup> and *Pro Musica Sana* (the Miklós Rózsa Society).<sup>87</sup> Taken together with the soundtrack-centered magazines *Film Score Monthly*, *Soundtrack!*, the UK-based *Music from the Movies*,<sup>88</sup> *The New Zealand Film Music Bulletin*,<sup>89</sup> and the German-based *Scoretime!*,<sup>90</sup> these represent the most frequently issued type of publication on film music, although they are difficult to come by unless you contact the publishers directly. Many of them contain the same kinds of information—interviews with composers, soundtrack releases and reviews, names and addresses of retail outlets and mail order houses. They are also moderately to wildly irregular in publication dates. Their greatest scholarly value undoubtedly lies in the interviews with composers, although the reviews may be of interest now or in the future as indices of reception.

The phenomenally rapid growth of the Internet has made

the segregation is an intriguing small-scale manifestation of the large-scale political rift between the two language groups in Canada.

<sup>78</sup>"A Conversation with Bernard Herrmann," in *Film Music I*, ed. Clifford McCarty (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1989): 209-53.

<sup>79</sup>The most frequently interviewed composer recently has been Michael Kamen: Robert L. Doerschuk, "Michael Kamen," *Keyboard Magazine* 19 (September 1993): 56-65, 110; Irv Lichtman, "Words & Music: Kamen Keeps Track of Film Scores vs. Singles," *Billboard* 105 (6 March 1993): 18; Jason Needs, "Interview: Michael Kamen with a Vengeance," *Music from the Movies* (summer 1995): 7-9. and M. Meloy, "Michael Kamen: Chameleon Composer," *The Instrumentalist* 46 (April 1992): 44-47. Meloy's is the most rounded article, while Lichtman discusses Kamen's attitudes toward songs in film scores, and Doerschuk is concerned with the composition of one particular score, that for *The Last Action Hero*. Although Kamen has composed for such blockbuster action films as the *Die Hard* and

*Lethal Weapon* series and *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* (1991), the interviews reveal a man who is an avowed pacifist and dislikes violence.

<sup>80</sup>To subscribe, contact Luc Van de Ven. Kon. Astridlaan 171, 2800 Mechelen, Belgium.

<sup>81</sup>To subscribe, contact Lukas Kendall, *Film Score Monthly*, 8503 Washington Blvd., Culver City, CA 90232.

<sup>82</sup>One of the more intriguing places a film music composer has appeared was in the pages of the heavy metal rock magazine, *Creem* (I. Lababed, "John Barry: The Man with the Golden Baton," *Creem* 19 (October 1987): 30-31).

<sup>83</sup>"Gedanken und Gespräch über filmmusikalische Gestaltung," *Musik und Gesellschaft* 30 (October 1980): 584-89. Actors, he says, may move from stage to film with impunity – although he might find that that is not altogether true. Theatrical actors are often considered to be "slumming" if they make a movie, especially if it is a Hollywood movie and not an art house film.

<sup>84</sup>"Ein Gespräch mit Alfred Schnittke: Die Möglichkeiten des Dialogs zwischen Bild und Musik im Film" (A Conversation with Alfred Schnittke: The Possibilities of a Dialog between Image and Music in Film), *Kunst und Literatur* 36, no. 2 (1988): 272-80.

<sup>85</sup>For information, contact Mark G. So, 302 Scottholm Boulevard, Syracuse, NY 13224-1732.

<sup>86</sup>For information, contact Jonathan Axworthy, 102 Horndean Road, Emsworth, Hants PO10 7TL, England.

<sup>87</sup>For information, contact John Fitzpatrick, P.O. Box 666, Norwalk, CT 06852 in the United States, or Alan Hamer, 86 Bow Lane, Finchley, London, N12 0JP, England, in Europe.

<sup>88</sup>For information, contact *Music from the Movies*, The Garden Flat, 21 Upper Belgrave Road, Clifton, Bristol BS8 2XQ.

<sup>89</sup>For information, contact Colin A. Adamson, 35 Jenkin Street, Invercargill, New Zealand.

<sup>90</sup>For information, contact Jordan Jurtschak, Scheurenstr. 59, 40215, Duesseldorf, Germany.

information accessible globally in a rapid and efficient manner. A number of websites, discussion lists, and newsgroups are devoted to film music. The *SoundtrackNet* website offers information and reviews, as well as numerous links to other Internet sites that deal with film music, soundtrack recordings, individual film composers, and music societies for film music professionals. The *Film Score Monthly* website features daily news and also offers links to many World Wide Web film music sites. Interviews and reviews are featured on the British site *Film Music on the Web*. A Usenet newsgroup called *rec.music.movies* offers people interested in film music a place to post opinions and topics for discussion. The discussion group *Filmus-L* is maintained by H. Stephen Wright. After joining the list, subscribers post e-mail that is distributed to all list members. Stephen Deutsch runs a similar British discussion list called *Music and Moving Pictures*. The *Film Music Pro* e-mail discussion list was founded by Mark Northam specifically for professional composers. Information about this discussion list as well as *Film Music Magazine* are available at the *CinemaTrax* website. The Internet Movie Database (<http://www.imdb.com>) is also a quick

way of finding out details of who scored what film as well as some basic biographical data and further links.

## Historical Aspects

One of the more prominent trends of the past fifteen years has been toward focused studies of particular historical aspects of film music. While these studies tend to be short and scattered, they are, I believe, representative of a very positive trend, as they turn away from yet another surface skimming of the history of film music. The general shape of that history, repeated ad nauseam without critical inquiry, is in danger of being set in stone before we are truly sure of the facts. Scholars are now beginning to fill in the details.

A number of these historical articles deal with aspects of working on film music, many of them by authors who were themselves involved in the process. Easily the most entertaining is David Raksin's "Holding a Nineteenth Century Pedal at Twentieth Century Fox," which provides a sometimes hilarious first-person perspective on the operation of a music department under the studio system in the 1930s.<sup>91</sup> Of particular interest is the information on the "assembly-line"

process of scoring films under enormous time constraints. In an interview with Peggy Sherry, Raksin also relates his experiences of developing a film score from the songs written for the Kurt Weill/Ira Gershwin musical *Where Do We Go from Here?* (1945).<sup>92</sup> Although the interview does not go into the detail one might like, it is a rare example of a discussion of a very much neglected topic—the music in musicals that is *not* performed on screen (i.e., songs and dances).<sup>93</sup>

Then there are archival studies such as William Penn's research into "The Music for David O. Selznick's Production No. 103 [*Duel in the Sun*]"<sup>94</sup> and Richard H. Bush's exploration of the tracking practices common in scoring such serials as *Flash Gordon* and *Buck Rogers*.<sup>95</sup> "Tracking" is the process of scoring a film by using music available in music libraries, usually the studio's own library; since no new recording was required, this was a cost-saving (if the recording was already owned by the studio, free) and fast way of providing music for these low-budget, high-output films. Not surprisingly, the musicians' union put a stop to such practices—or at least demanded that a re-use fee be paid—in the early 1940s.<sup>96</sup>

Fred Steiner's survey, "What

<sup>91</sup>*Film Music 1*, ed. Clifford McCarty (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1989).

<sup>92</sup>"David Raksin remembers Weill, *Where Do We Go from Here?*, and 'developing' film music in the 1940s," *Kurt Weill Newsletter* 10, no. 2 (1992): 6-9. The interview is culled from a longer one that is part of the Oral History Collection at the Weill-Lenya Research Center.

<sup>93</sup>Another area of film music that receives only occasional attention is that of animated sound: Richard S. James, "Avant-Garde Sound-on-Film Techniques and Their Relationship to Electro-Acoustic Music," *Musical Quarterly* 72, no. 1 (1986): 74-89; David Keane, "The Birth of Electronic Music in Canada," an unexpectedly

poignant history of Canadian sound pioneers in *Studies in Music from the University of Western Ontario* 9 (1984): 55-78; and David Kershaw, "Music and Image on Film and Video: An Absolute Alternative," in *Companion to Contemporary Musical Thought*, ed. John Paynter, Tim Howell, Richard Orton, and Peter Seymour (London: Routledge, 1992), I: 466-99.

<sup>94</sup>*Perspectives on Music: Essays on Collections at the Humanities Research Center*, ed. Dave Oliphant and Thomas Zigal (Austin: Humanities Research Center, the University of Texas at Austin, 1985).

<sup>95</sup>"The Music of *Flash Gordon* and *Buck Rogers*," in *Film Music 1*, ed. Clifford McCarty (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1989).

<sup>96</sup>Tracking is also at issue in Fred Steiner's "Keeping Score of the Scores: Music for *Star Trek*," (*Library of Congress Quarterly* 40, no. 1: 4-15) and William H. Rosar's "Music of the Monsters: Universal Pictures' Horror Film Scores of the Thirties" (*Library of Congress Quarterly* 40, no. 3 (1983): 390-421). Steiner speaks from first-hand experience, as one of the composers who worked on *Star Trek*, whereas Rosar's article is more historical and aesthetic, dealing particularly with the tension between distrust of "unexplained" music in early sound films and the evocative power of music.

Were Musicians Saying About Movie Music During the First Decade of Sound? A Symposium of Selected Writings,"<sup>97</sup> examines English language sources during the transition from silents to sounds. Not surprisingly, Steiner finds that practically nothing appears in the scholarly literature, but such periodicals as *Modern Music*, *Sight and Sound*, *World Film News*, and *Melos* provide discussion of what Steiner identifies as the two main issues: music's role as a psychological and emotional element equal to other elements in film, and the need to develop a new form and style.

The experiences of concert hall composers with film are traced by psychomusicologist William H. Rosar,<sup>98</sup> and Christopher Palmer contributes two articles dealing with the relationship between Sergei Prokofiev and Sergei Eisenstein. The first of Palmer's articles engages in a little debunking of the usual tales of completely smooth relations between composer and director, as Eisenstein was not above moving bits of the score around without checking with Prokofiev. This article was occasioned by a reconstruction and showing of *Alexander Nevsky* in London in July 1989 with Vladimir Ashkenazy and the Royal Philharmonic playing live to the film.<sup>99</sup> In

the second article, Palmer takes a closer look at the production of *Ivan the Terrible*, both in its political and musical aspects.<sup>100</sup> This is certainly the strongest of all of Palmer's contributions to the literature, and a fine example of how, even in a brief article, musical and cultural aspects can be profitably combined.

### Theory, Aesthetics, and Analysis

As discussed earlier, the intermingling of theory, aesthetics, and analysis has been a feature of most of the serious examinations of film music since Erdmann, Becce, and Brav's *Allgemeines Handbuch* in 1927, although over the years the elements have gradually mutated from the practical (theory, history, techniques) to the analytical (theory, aesthetics, analysis). In many publications today, these three elements still underpin the structure, although with varying emphases and in a subtler, more interpenetrating fashion than in previous eras.

The most wide-ranging and thorough effort was (perhaps of necessity) the work of two people, musicologist-psychologist Helga de la Motte-Haber and art historian-music sociologist Hans Emons. Their intended audience

for *Filmmusik: Eine systematische Beschreibung* (Film Music: A Systematic Description)<sup>101</sup> is the film-lover, although the book would seem rather sophisticated for all but the most academic of film-lovers. Emons and de la Motte-Haber include particularly strong sections on musical structures in abstract films<sup>102</sup> and "Music and the Spectator." Their approach is theoretically informed, but essentially practical: They are among the few who dare to point out that trying to understand why music is in film develops into an endless regress of speculation, with one guess resting upon another. Therefore, they argue, it is best not to try to force film music theory into the Procrustean bed of psychology or linguistics but to meet it on its own ground and describe what the music does for the image, the action, and the viewer.<sup>103</sup>

Claudia Gorbman's *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music*, undoubtedly the most important and influential book yet written on film music, is more narrowly focused: Gorbman's central concern (announced by the title) is with music's often imperceptible contribution to the cinematic narrative.<sup>104</sup> In the first part, we find in one place a clear presentation of many of the theories about

<sup>97</sup>*Film Music 1*, ed. Clifford McCarty (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1989).

<sup>98</sup>"Stravinsky and MGM," in *Film Music 1*, ed. Clifford McCarty (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1989). Rosar investigates Stravinsky's dealings with MGM from sources other than Stravinsky's often highly selective writings. A similar tale is spun by M. Steinberg in "Celluloid Schoenberg: Cinematic Imagery from the Viennese Master" (*Symphony* 44, no. 1 (1993): 5-6), albeit in a much less scholarly way.

<sup>99</sup>"Prokofiev and Eisenstein," *Music and Musicians International* (November 1989): 6-10. As it was a sound film, the producers of the event were faced with the problem of dialogue; in the event,

the soundtrack was faded down and the subtitles shown below the screen, rather than on it. This would, of course, further distract the audience from the original unity of the film, and Palmer ponders the artistic permissibility about this type of presentation. Yet at the end of the very same paragraph, he speculates about a *Nevsky* in full Technicolor on the wide screen! (p. 10)

<sup>100</sup>"Prokofiev, Eisenstein and Ivan," *Musical Times* 132 (April 1991): 179-81.

<sup>101</sup>Munich: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1980.

<sup>102</sup>David Bordwell also deals with this phenomenon in "The Musical Analogy," *Yale French Studies* 60 (Fall 1980): 141-56.

<sup>103</sup>De la Motte-Haber has argued similarly in

"Wirkungen der Filmmusik auf den Zuschauer" (The Effect of Film Music on the Viewer/Spectator), *Musica* 34, no. 1 (1980): 12-17.

<sup>104</sup>Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1987. Parts of Gorbman's book had previously been published in various articles, including an earlier version of the first chapter in "Narrative Film Music" (*Yale French Studies* 60 (Fall 1980): 183-203); and "The Drama's Melos: Max Steiner and Mildred Pierce" (*The Velvet Light Trap* 19 (1982): 35-39). Richard Littlefield's review of this book in the *Indiana Theory Review* (11, no. 2 (1990): 65-73) is good in both senses: it is a favorable review and Littlefield's slight criticisms are well-considered.

film music, but in the end Gorbman does not commit to any one theory; while many may be frustrated by this apparent lack of scholarly rigor, I feel this is a wise decision. As de la Motte-Haber and Emons argue, by the late twentieth century, we have become so deeply ingrained in the culture of cinema that an objective theory of film music is patently impossible.<sup>105</sup> Theories based on psychology are often particularly precarious; one must accept the tenets of the psychological theory before even beginning to approach the music. Music surely exists in film for many reasons, and theories that try to pin down just one reason are of necessity doomed to failure.

The representation of music itself in the second part of *Unheard Melodies* is slightly disconcerting. The blurb on the jacket declares that the book “presuppos[es] very little musical expertise in its reader, [but] it will nevertheless also interest musicians.” This seems to imply that musical expertise is not important in understanding film music, and conversely that musicians are interested only in the notated score—an undercurrent throughout most of film music literature.

Musical examples in some chapters are in the body of the text, whereas others are relegated to notes at the back of the book, giving an uncertain signal as to how important the actual sound is. Although the stated intention is to bring film studies and musicology closer together, this mixed message risks driving a wedge between them by shortchanging both.

Explicit musical discussion is more to the fore in Kathryn Kalinak’s *Settling the Score: Music and the Classical Hollywood Film*.<sup>106</sup> Like Gorbman, Kalinak is implicitly fighting the film criticism bias against music, but she tries to bring music more actively to the center of the argument. The first chapter is an introduction to musical terms; while for a musician this chapter may seem dangerously simplistic, it is probably useful to those who are interested in music but have no training. Kalinak then proceeds to outline some history and theory of film music, and finally to analyze a number of films from the classical Hollywood period as well as more recent films that demonstrate the persistence of the classical Hollywood model. She uses a straightforward musical semiotics, unencumbered by unnecessary

theoretical constructs, in clear, convincing readings of films and their music. Musical examples range from single-line motivic transcriptions to reproductions of pages from original scores and, most intriguingly, graphics that demonstrate the interaction of musical gesture and on-screen action/dialogue. Kalinak only uses such an example once (p. 95), but this kind of figure, though not musically specific, if used properly can tell us more about the working of music in film than an extract from a full orchestral score.

The most recent of the general volumes, Royal S. Brown’s *Overtures and Undertones: Reading Film Music*,<sup>107</sup> is a supremely frustrating book, although it has many fine points to recommend it. In his historical chapter, Brown does not merely recapitulate what so many others have said but instead finds new paths and makes some subtle observations about reception and aesthetics; he does *not* concentrate on the classical Hollywood film, nor does he replace that canon with one of European art films. Brown is interested in all sorts of films and all sorts of musical procedures within films—in one chapter, he traces the use of Beethoven quartets in a number of films, and in the next he discusses *Head*, a film starring the television rock group The Monkees. His readings of films are generally intriguing, and Brown is even sensitive to nuances of gender and the presence of the author in an analysis.<sup>108</sup>

However, Brown—who explicitly does not presuppose any musical knowledge—makes statements that may sound perfectly plausible or even quite profound to someone with little or no musical knowledge but which are in fact either bone-numbingly obvi-

<sup>105</sup>Scott Lipscomb’s psychomusicological research would seem to bear this out. When he performed an experiment in which subjects were asked to rate the “fit” of film clips with musical extracts, the “right” music (the music actually composed for the scene) invariably rated highest. (“Perceptual judgment of the symbiosis between musical and visual components in film” Master’s thesis: University of California at Los Angeles, 1990.)

<sup>106</sup>Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992.

<sup>107</sup>Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994. Most sections of this book have been previously published as articles (which probably accounts for the rather disjointed feeling of much of the book).

<sup>108</sup>This is in sharp contrast to Darby and DuBois, whose prose is shot through with sexism (see above), or Graham Bruce (see below) who describes the opening shots of *Vertigo* as

“allow[ing] the spectator to experience the vertigo of the title by sucking him into a darkness as if into quicksand, a darkness associated with a drive toward the female” (p. 140). Bruce makes no comment on this explicitly male-constructed gaze, and no acknowledgement that the viewer (or the reader) might possibly *be* female. Yet when Brown notes that Claudia Gorbman had picked a film with a female hero (*Mildred Pierce*) to illustrate classical Hollywood practice while he had chosen a film with a male hero (*The Sea Hawk* – although obviously there are far more films with male heroes than female!), he says, “Although I feel that I picked *The Sea Hawk* because of the quality of both its music and the film/music interaction, the privileged viewpoint seems inescapable!” (p. 359, n. 11).



ous or simply wrong. This is most prominent in one of Brown's most influential arguments, his linking of the minor-major seventh chord with irrationality in Bernard Herrmann's scores for Hitchcock films. A great deal of weight is put on the need of this chord to resolve, which, after Debussy and jazz, is not as intense a need as Brown would lead the reader to believe; but more dangerously still, Brown links the minor-major seventh chord to an augmented chord that also appears in the score. On paper, this argument makes sense. However, the intervallic similarity will simply not be heard as Brown describes; it is virtually impossible to hear an augmented chord as a rootless minor-major seventh chord, especially over a gap between cues—it takes a great deal of establishing context for the ear to accept any triad (even an augmented one) as a rootless version of a *more* unstable harmonic construct, and if there is a gap of even a few seconds between cues with intervening sound effects, dialogue, or even intense onscreen action, the ear's slate will be wiped clean. Yet, if one is able to ignore the *music* in this book about film music, it is a refreshingly broad-minded and wide-ranging piece of work—it is up to individuals, perhaps, to decide how much musical inaccuracy they can swallow.

Among articles, Jean-Rémy Julien's "Éléments méthodologiques pour une typologie de la

musique de film" (Methodological elements for a typology of film music)<sup>109</sup> seems a peculiar product of 1980, with its recapitulation of long-established categories. The division between source music—"musiques justifiées ou légitimées par l'image" (music justified or legitimized by the image)—and underscore—"musique d'accompagnement" (musical accompaniment)—is nothing new, nor is the discussion of different types of source music—mechanical music (radio, record player, etc.), location music (music in a café, for instance), or musical performance (like that of a saloon piano-player in a Western). Julien divides underscore into five types: traveling music, music for psychological situations, music for events/catastrophes ("les accidents du scénario"), leisure music (which would seem likely to overlap with source music of various types), and a rather vague category called "les musiques du regard," which seems to represent something along the lines of character sketches of people or places. Despite an interesting digression on music for psychological states—those which are easily evoked by music (love, tension, tenderness) and those which are more difficult (hate, fury, happiness)—Julien's idiosyncratic typology is only slightly more sophisticated than those of Erno Rapee, whom Julien cites near the end of his text, and Julien's system, in practice, seems so flexible that overlaps between categories begin to invalidate

categories at all. Why would such an article be written as late as 1980? The answer becomes apparent in the last few paragraphs, as Julien refutes a dismissive statement by French film theorist Christian Metz, who reduces film music to "un système quelque peu puéril d'équivalences pléonastiques" (a system of somewhat puerile, pleonastic equivalences). Metz's statement was published in 1977 in *Le signifiant imaginaire* (The Imaginary Signifier),<sup>110</sup> one of his most influential works. Julien's article is clearly a response to Metz, but it is a shame that the article is neither particularly innovative nor at least a more thorough overview of film theory and aesthetics.

Some of the most intriguing theoretical/aesthetic scholarship does not deal with music itself but with its placement in a film. Lucy Fisher's "René Clair, *Le Million*, and the Coming of Sound" is particularly good, focused on one filmmaker's resistance to the new technology and the inventive usages of music resulting from his reluctance to give free rein to the voice.<sup>111</sup> In *Strains of Utopia: Gender, Nostalgia, and Hollywood Film Music*,<sup>112</sup> Caryl Flinn emphasizes the influence of Romantic ideology on the construction of what music is and its utopian functions, highlighting "the ways in which music has operated in the critical discourse surrounding Hollywood film" (p. 12). This sort of historical investigation of the cultural implications behind theory can be fascinating,<sup>113</sup> but particularly disappointing in Flinn's work is the very low level of actual musical comprehension. Throughout, she relies on the words of others (Leonard Meyer, Gustav Mahler, Roland Barthes—good words, but not her own) to make even simple

<sup>109</sup> *Revue de Musicologie* 106, no. 2 (1980): 179-202.

<sup>110</sup> Paris: U.G.E.

<sup>111</sup> *Cinema Journal* 21, no. 2 (1982): 34-50.

<sup>112</sup> Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992.

<sup>113</sup> "Male nostalgia and Hollywood film music: the terror of the feminine," published in the *Canadian University Music Review* [10, no. 2 (1990):

19-26], contains most of the actual analysis that Flinn undertakes in her final chapter, particularly that on the film noir classic *Detour*.

<sup>113</sup> See also Philip Rosen's "Adorno and Film Music: Theoretical Notes on *Composing for the Films*," *Yale French Studies* 60 (Fall 1980): 157-82.

points about music, and even her observations about musical placement sometimes seem naïve and historically uninformed.<sup>114</sup>

Flinn's musical examples are almost all source music, a tack also taken by Irene Kahn Atkins in *Source Music in Motion Pictures*.<sup>115</sup> Atkins limits her scope to diegetic, or source, music because "The fact that source music usually is justified makes its functions more readily discernible than those of other film music" (pp. 13-14). The very fact that Atkins turns away from background scoring because it has not been properly explained signals the limitations of her approach. This is amplified by another stated purpose of the book, which is to root out "musical material that could make a worthwhile addition to concert or recital repertoire" (p. 17). It is almost as if she wants to avoid trying to understand film music as *film* music, although in itself the book is a fine study of source music.

The aesthetic tension between film and the concert hall is addressed by Eddy Lawrence Manson<sup>116</sup> and, somewhat more obliquely, by Alfred W. Cochran, whose bias toward the aesthetics of absolute

music is especially evident in an article bent on proving the "quality" of film music.<sup>117</sup> Right at the beginning, Cochran comes out with a series of questions:

Does the subject merit attention? What can be gained from this research? Has it relevance to other scholarly inquiries in music? It is fitting that film music scholarship addresses these hurdles and surmounts them, for if it cannot overcome the challenges they pose, scholarly interest in cinema music should be directed elsewhere (p. 65).

He is apparently saying that unless film music qualifies as "art" it is unworthy of attention, or that study film music is only appropriate if it helps us understand music (presumably art music). Cochran is at pains to point out that his work has been on Aaron Copland, Gail Kubik, and Leith Stevens, "none of them traditional film composers. Had my research focused on composers less able, no doubt my conclusion about film scoring and film music might be different" (p. 66). Yet if they are atypical composers, what can he truly hope to tell us about film

music? Film music is one of the most frequently encountered types of music in the world—on that basis alone, it merits scholarly attention.

In *Music, Film & Art*, philosopher Haig Khatchadourian never connects music and film, but instead draws comparisons between the two.<sup>118</sup> However, many of his comparisons and assumptions seem quite simplistic. For instance, his definition of "cinematic"—a film in which the bulk of the film's meaning is conveyed in the visual—is based merely on the fact that films were "silent" first (pp. 133-34); by this definition, something as profoundly cinematic as *Fantasia* would not count. Khatchadourian seems intent on keeping the arts in their own prescribed boxes, and is correspondingly condescending about "mere entertainment."<sup>119</sup>

Samuel Chell and David Huckvale both mix aesthetics with analysis, but to very different effect. Chell uses Hugo Friedhofer's score for *The Best Years of Our Lives* as the focus of a discussion of music and emotion.<sup>120</sup> Unfortunately, like so many articles on film music, the author's engagement with the music seems

<sup>114</sup>This is especially obvious when she is dealing with musicals. For instance, she interprets Judy Garland's performance of "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" in *Meet Me in St. Louis* (1944) as "clear and uncomplicated" (p. 112), whereas the song is actually deeply ironic; and she calls the casting of Gene Kelly in the "non-dancing, sinister role of bad guy Robert" in the near-noir *Christmas Holiday* (1944) "bizarre" when, in fact, Kelly was often cast as an anti-hero in musicals and as charming weaklings in dramas (the mommy-fixated, presumably homosexual Robert—a 1940s Hollywood-brand Freudianism—is not too far removed from the vacillating, tear-prone lawyer Vito in *Pilot No. 5* (1942) or the smart-mouthed cabbie Victor who breaks under Nazi torture in *The Cross of Lorraine* (1943)). Flinn also seems to accept without criticism Eisenstein's infamous pictorial/notational correspondence from *Alexander Nevsky*. Even if

not a musician, surely she would have read the many criticisms of it.

<sup>115</sup>East Brunswick, NJ: Associated University Presses, Inc., 1983.

<sup>116</sup>"The Film Composer in Concert and the Concert Composer in Film," in *Film Music 1*, ed. Clifford McCarty (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1989).

<sup>117</sup>"The Spear of Cephalus: Observations on Film Music Analysis," *Indiana Theory Review* 11, no. 1-2 (1990): 65-80.

<sup>118</sup>New York: Gordon & Breach Science Publishers, Inc., 1985.

<sup>119</sup>Some of the articles on the aesthetics of film music are so brief that they tell us practically nothing: Richard Arnell, "Composing for Animated Films," *Royal College of Music Newsletter* 80, no. 1 (1984): 19-20; Laurence Green, "The Impact of Music on Film," *Contemporary Review* 260, no. 1515 (1992): 214-16; R.F. Sun, "The

Aesthetics of Film Music," *College Music Symposium* 19, no. 1 (1979): 216-20. The German volume *Musikpädagogische Forschung* (Band 3, (1982) contains articles by its editor, Klaus-Ernst Behne ("Musik-Kommunikation oder Geste?" (Music—Communication or Gesture?), pp. 125-43), Hans-Christian Schmidt ("ohne durch die ordnende Instanz des Intellekts zu gehen. Reflexe auf die vermutete Wirkung von Musik im Spielfilm" (... without going through the organizing authority of the intellect. Reflections on the assumed effect of music in film), pp. 164-79), and Helga de la Motte-Haber ("Musik als erlebte Gefühl—Ausdruck als Sinnkategorie von Musik" (Music as Experienced Feeling—Expression as a Sensory Category of Music), pp. 11-13), but I have been unable to see it.

<sup>120</sup>"Music and Emotion in the Classical Hollywood Film Score: The Case of *The Best Years of Our Lives*," *Film Criticism* 8, no. 2 (Winter 1984): 27-38.

tentative and unstable, and he frequently contradicts himself. The strongest part of Chell's article has nothing directly to do with what he says he is investigating but with the concept of music as structuring time. In his study of the music of the Hammer horror films, David Huckvale argues convincingly that "In attempting to discover the broad cultural implications of film music upon a society it is necessary to explore highly popular and often standardised film products" (p. 1).<sup>121</sup> Drawing on the theories of Theodor Adorno and the analytical techniques of Philip Tagg,<sup>122</sup> this concise, focused argument seems far more profitable than either airy theorizing with no real musical content, such as Chell's, or a merely musical analysis that never takes the visual element into account.

Unfortunately, this latter tendency flaws what must surely stand as the most rigorous musical analysis of film music, Alfred W. Cochran's doctoral dissertation, *Style, Structure, and Tonal Organization in the Early Film Scores of Aaron Copland*.<sup>123</sup> Cochran promises that his analysis is "geared to explore visual/musical relationships and provide explanation of the basic musical functions and interactions present in the scores" (p. x), yet his discussion of the relationship

between pictures and sounds amounts to one sentence when discussing *The City* (1939): "[The music's] rhythmic displacement complements the hesitancy and indecision which the 'Jay-walkers' display on-screen while crossing the street" (p. 71). At another point, Cochran describes the music for the fire engine as being pictorially conceived (p. 60), yet tells us nothing about the picture, or even what prompts him to say that the music is "pictorially conceived." While Cochran's musical analysis is thorough, one must question whether Schenkerian analysis, based on voice-leading, is really appropriate for the discontinuities of film music, broken up as it is into many small cues separated by silence.<sup>124</sup>

Claudia Widgery's dissertation *The Kinetic and Temporal Interaction of Music and Film: Three Documentaries of 1930's America*<sup>125</sup> is a perfect foil for Cochran's, and they even have the film *The City* (with its Aaron Copland score) in common. What Cochran promises, Widgery delivers: a detailed and sophisticated study of the relationship of visual image and music. Her purpose is "to examine some of the ways in which two shared parameters of music and film—temporality and motion, or kinesis—interact in combination."<sup>126</sup> In addition to *The City*,

Widgery examines *The River* (Virgil Thomson) and *Valley Town* (Marc Blitzstein), all documentaries, but documentaries with a socio-political point of view. After a very strong theoretical first section, which draws on a number of sources (particularly French and Russian) that no other author has mentioned, Widgery takes a different approach with each film. In *The River*, she is concerned with temporal perspective: how the perceived articulation of time in music, from an individual phrase to the length of an entire film score, influences perception of the film's temporal structure. In *The City*, the focus is musical gesture and empathic motion: how the tempo and type of rhythm of the music establish motion appropriate to the action and the physical identification thus aroused in the viewer. *Valley Town* provides a chance to examine the kinetic interplay of visual and auditory rhythm: how the rhythmic patterns of the music work with the film's visual rhythms (on-screen motion, camera motion, and cutting patterns).

This attention to the kinetic element of film is sorely needed, but is yet another area where the musical language is notably insufficient on its own.<sup>127</sup> Although Widgery is dealing with the politics of persuasion in these

<sup>121</sup>"*Twins of Evil: An Investigation into the Aesthetics of Film Music*," *Popular Music* 9, no. 1 (1990): 1-35.

<sup>122</sup>"Analysing Popular Music: Theory, Method and Practice," *Popular Music* 2 (1982): 37-67.

<sup>123</sup>Catholic University, Washington, DC, 1986. Cochran was able to examine the original manuscripts of the first two, and the copyright registration score and some sketches of *Our Town*.

<sup>124</sup>Cochran does address this point once, but at a different level, defending Copland from a movie critic who heard "Hearts and Flowers" music in a sequence in *Of Mice and Men* (the shooting of

Candy's dog): [The interruption in the music] allows the polarity of the outside voices and the harmony to assume greater importance. Thus the melody is created not only by the top line, but by the interaction of the other voices, and the chord flow. It is a subtle touch which avoids the overt sentimentality of a single, drawn-out melodic line (p. 160). However, he never really addresses the issue of interruptions between cues, and one wonders whether he would have brought up this instance had he not felt compelled to defend Copland against the critic.

<sup>125</sup>University of Maryland, College Park, 1990.

<sup>126</sup>From page 3. While Widgery's stated "ulti-

mate goal" is "facilitating a more resourceful use of music in future filmmaking," her work is more useful as a model of audio/visual analysis. Any intention of "improving" film music through scholarly investigation is probably doomed to failure, and the author runs the risk of looking foolish to those who accept and even admire what it is the author hopes to improve.

<sup>127</sup>This insufficiency of musical/kinetic language is not just evident in film music studies, but also dance. See Roger Shattuck, "The Devil's Dance: Stravinsky's Corporal Imagination," in *Confronting Stravinsky: Man, Modernist, and Musician*, ed. Jann Pasler (Berkeley: University of California

rhetorical documentaries from the 1930s, much of her approach could profitably be transferred to other sorts of films. After all, film is more than images, words, and music: movies *move*. Yet ideally movement should be introduced into a wider and deeper analysis of the film as a whole. Widgery flirts with an interpretive analysis throughout the dissertation, but never pursues the concept of signification with any consistency; in her conclusion we find an approach toward a consideration of reception:

Ultimately, the collaboration of greatest importance was not that of the filmmakers, writers, or composers per se; rather, it was that of the images, words and music themselves, for it is in the way they combine that the alchemy of provocative persuasion lies (p. 388).

Here, she obliquely questions the principles of authorship; while it may be that she is giving undue agency to the “images, words and music themselves”—of course they were created by filmmakers, writers, and composers—her

statement could also lead to consideration of participation by the receivers (viewers/hearers) of a film in creating meanings from the images, words, and music they are given.

A series of analytical books cluster around the work of Alfred Hitchcock, seemingly a remnant of the auteur theories that once dominated film studies.<sup>128</sup> Elisabeth Weis’s *The Silent Scream: Alfred Hitchcock’s Sound Track*<sup>129</sup> is not about film music in itself but about the entire soundworld of a film: sound effects, dialogue, and music, especially source music.<sup>130</sup> Although some of her readings are a bit naïve, especially musically, Weis takes more risks and actually says something deeper about the way film works than most have attempted, as when she observes the changing meanings of the song “Lisa” as it is “composed” in successive scenes by a character in *Rear Window*, or the centrality of music and the body in the film *Young and Innocent*, or sound (aural intrusion) as a metaphor for a penetration of the psyche in such single-set films as *Rear Window* and *Rope*.

Josef Kloppenburg’s study of *Spellbound* must certainly stand as the most thorough analysis of a single film and its music to date.<sup>131</sup> Kloppenburg approaches the film from a series of different angles (dramaturgical, psychological, filmic, gender-critical, and musical). He examines the motives for both their musical and psychological/semantic qualities, and does not shy away from interpretation: for instance, the modal quality of the music accompanying the opening apologia for psychoanalysis is read as archaizing, making a “sacred place” out of the sanitarium seen on screen. Because Kloppenburg’s approach is to take repeated passes at the film, each from a different angle, the result is not as integrated as it could be, but it is an admirably well-rounded and convincing piece of work.

Graham Bruce also concentrates on Hitchcock films, but through the work of composer Bernard Herrmann.<sup>132</sup> Despite the book’s strengths—an exploration of Herrmann’s dramatic style, and the introduction of timbre within the musical discussion—its weaknesses render it unsatisfactory.

Press, 1986); my “Stravinsky and Balanchine: A Musico-Choreographic Analysis of *Agon*” (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1994) also attempts to come to grips with the interactive analysis of movement and music.

<sup>128</sup>The concept of the auteur also seems to drive the film music theory of Sergio Miceli (*La Musica nel Film: Arte e artigianato Fiesole* (Firenze: Discanto, Distribuzione La Nuova Italia, 1981)). Although I have been unable to see this book, in his master’s thesis *Science Fiction Film Music after Star Wars* (1978) (Loyola University, 1990), Martin A.F. Voill draws heavily on Miceli. According to Voill, Miceli conceives film as a *Gesamtkunstwerk* created by an auteur, and underscore may be “acritico” (non-critical), in which the director’s interpretation is imposed through the music, or “critico” (critical) in which spectators are left to their own interpretation. The auteur approach also informs Ulrich Etscheit’s brief but cogent article on music in the films and novels of Pier Paolo Pasolini (“Ich habe die Oper

mein ganzes Leben gehaßt: Zur Rezeption von Musik im literarischen und filmischen Schaffen Pier Paolo Pasolinis” (I have hated opera my whole life; on the reception of music in the literary and film work of Pier Paolo Pasolini), *Musica* 42, no. 3 (1988): 246-54).

<sup>129</sup>Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1982.

<sup>130</sup>French sound theorist Michel Chion’s approach is similar to Weis’s but far more sophisticated and an exciting adjunct to film music literature. Even though he deals relatively little with music as *music*, Chion provides an intriguing analytical framework for considering the *sound* of music in film, in places akin to the work of Claudia Widgery, but more broad-ranging. An English edition and translation of his work by Claudia Gorbman may be found in the volume *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen*, with a foreword by Walter Murch (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).

<sup>131</sup>*Die dramaturgische Funktion der Musik in Filmen*

*Alfred Hitchcocks* (The dramaturgical function of music in the films of Alfred Hitchcock), München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1986.

<sup>132</sup>*Bernard Herrmann: Music and Narrative* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Research Press, 1985). The concept of composer as *auteur* also informs Robbert van der Lek’s monograph *Diegetic Music in Opera and Film: A Similarity between Two Genres of Drama Analysed in Works by Erich Wolfgang Korngold* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1991). This book, unfortunately, may not be worth the effort it takes to read it. The prose style is remarkably difficult, which cannot be completely excused by the fact that English is not the author’s first language, and a general lack of focus is exacerbated by van der Lek’s tendency to overtheorize, to obsessively organize, or lose himself in trivial detail. Yet several issues are brought up then dismissed as “falling outside the scope of this study”, including “what is a serenade?” – something surely relevant to the “Romeo and Juliet” opera scene in the film *Give Us This Night*.

Although he chides Christopher Palmer for impressionistic description rather than analysis, Bruce is only marginally better. As with his mentor, Royal S. Brown, Bruce's musical naïveté is presented with such authority that those who do *not* know music could easily be fooled into believing what he says. In a particularly egregious moment, Bruce states that in one cue from *Marnie* there are three successive chords "each in a different key" (p. 124). This is impossible. The chords may be distantly related, but they cannot be each in a different key—it is a sequence of chords that establishes a key; a single chord cannot exist in a key without the context of at least a melody.

Herrmann is better served in Hanjörg Pauli's much briefer analysis of the score to *Citizen Kane*.<sup>133</sup> Pauli traces the use of music in helping to temporally structure the complex, non-linear narrative style, and he also includes leitmotivic analysis with reference to derivations of the motives from the requiem sequence *Dies Irae*.

More thoroughgoing film/musical semiotic analysis may be

found in the work of Kathryn Kalinak and Steven D. Wescott. Kalinak's "The Fallen Woman and the Virtuous Wife: Musical Stereotypes in *The Informer*, *Gone with the Wind*, and *Laura*"<sup>134</sup> is an excellent short article on the characterization of women in the classical Hollywood film. Kalinak draws on both musical and visual symbols and is particularly telling in tracing the changes in the music for Scarlett O'Hara as the character changes: the further she moves from traditional, passive female role toward the strong head of the family and the business, the more the character is scored with sharp rhythms and chromatic harmonies—the musical symbols of the whore. Some of the same issues are taken up in Kalinak's "Max Steiner and the Classical Hollywood Film Score: An Analysis of *The Informer*" which appeared alongside Wescott's "Miklós Rózsa's *Ben-Hur*: The Musical-Dramatic Function of the Hollywood Leitmotiv" in the general volume *Film Music 1*.<sup>135</sup> Both these articles are concerned with the leitmotiv technique and how the music shapes our perception of the characters and the story; they

are solid examples of how film analysis and musical analysis can be combined to give us real insight into the working of a film on its audience. Yet, somewhat disturbingly, in his review of the *Film Music 1* volume,<sup>136</sup> Ronald Rodman says:

For the music theory discipline, another issue looms: Despite Kalinak's and Wescott's informative analyses, can one develop an analytical methodology that relies less on narrative and the tracking of leitmotifs and more on the overall musical processes? (p. 179)

One could agree with Rodman that the mere "tracking" of leitmotifs can be mechanical, but neither of these articles is concerned with merely tracking leitmotifs. And why would one want to rely *less* on narrative in analyzing a piece of music for a narrative film? It seems to me that would be of primary importance—nearly all the "information" that Rodman praises is inextricably linked with narrative. And, finally, do we have to assume an overall musical process in film music? Film music is by nature fragmentary. It comes and goes, entering and exiting, and perhaps with some closed narrative structures an organicist approach is desirable. But in more ambiguous cases, a less process-oriented technique might be preferable. In valuing such a score, should we not consider it more—not less—successful because it is more appropriate to its cinematic context?

## Pedagogy

There are two audiences for the teaching of film music: those

<sup>133</sup>"Bernard Herrmanns Musik zu *Citizen Kane*," *Dissonance* 26 (November 1990): 12-18. Other apparently analytical articles which I have been unable to see include: Alfred W. Cochran, "Leith Stevens and the Jazz Film Score: *The Wild One* and *Private Hell* 36," *Jazz Research Papers* 10 (1990): 24-31; S.M. Fry, "The Music for *The Pink Panther*: A Study in Lyrical Timelessness," *The Cue Sheet* 9, no. 2 (1992): 14-23; Hedemarie Strauch, "Der Einfluß von Musik auf die filmische Wahrnehmung am Beispiel von L. Buñuel's *Un Chien Andalou*" (The influence of music on perception of film, with the example of L. Buñuel's *Un Chien Andalou*), *Musikpädagogische Forschung*, ed. Karl-Ernst Behne, Band 1 (1980): 112-26; Dietrich Hahne, *Komposition und Film: Projekt nach Motiven aus Camus' "Der Abtrünnige" für Chor, Orchester und Spielfilm* (Composition and Film: Project after Motives from Camus's "The Rebel," for choir, orchestra and film), *Folkwang-Texte III: Beiträge zu Musik, Theater, Tanz*, ed.

Josef Fellsches, Band 5 (Essen: Die blaue Eule, 1992). Through the vagaries of Interlibrary Loan, one article that I have seen is Pekka Jalkanen's "Musical Character Spotting: the Leitmotiv in Finnish Film Music," *Finnish Music Quarterly* no. 3 (1993): 51-56, which contains a specialized history of Finnish film music (although Finnish film history seems to be pretty much the same as everyone else's), and a sketch of leitmotivic practices adapted and adopted not only by composers in traditional styles, but also by those composing electronic, jazz, and rock scores.

<sup>134</sup>*Film Reader* 5 (1982): 76-82.

<sup>135</sup>Ed. Clifford McCarty (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1989). Kalinak's article (much of which subsequently appears in her book *Settling the Score*) appears on pp. 123-142, Wescott's on pp. 183-207.

who create films and music, and those who study them. The publications that target the former are perhaps the oldest type of film music literature; those that target the latter are the newest.

Manuals and textbooks written for those in the film business tend to reflect the general schism in film music studies between the filmmaker, who is assumed to have no knowledge of music, and the composer, who is assumed to have rather more knowledge of film. A few books aim to draw the two sides together, and among these a model was Marlin Skiles's *Music Scoring for TV and Motion Pictures*,<sup>137</sup> the most recent book at the time of Martin Marks's literature review. Skiles, whose own career as a film and television composer spanned 40 years (1932-1972) and included teaching film music at San Diego State University in California, covers the basic technical requirements for the composer, plus tips on various kinds of writing and practical information such as copyright and unions. For the filmmaker, he provides very basic musical information.<sup>138</sup>

For nearly two decades, Skiles's manual was the only one aimed at both filmmakers and composers.<sup>139</sup> George Burt's *The*

*Art of Film Music*<sup>140</sup> is a quite different kind of book. It goes beyond the basics to actually talk about the relationship of the film and the music. Burt also has an ingenious solution to a perennial problem of film music literature, the disparity in the musical knowledge of the audience. Technical musical descriptions are put in italics and brackets so that those who don't understand music can skip over them without losing continuity; the musical examples themselves are very nicely produced and appropriately chosen.<sup>141</sup> Despite this, Burt seems to lose focus from time to time, and some peculiar lapses of logic flaw some of his arguments. For instance, while discussing director Sergei Eisenstein's theories of the contrapuntal relationship between image and music, Burt slides off on a tangent about musical contrapuntal forms that has nothing to do with his central argument. Yet, even with these drawbacks, this is easily the most sophisticated book to be aimed at an audience of filmmakers. Burt does not condescend.

*Music in Film & Video Productions*<sup>142</sup> by music editor Dan Carlin, Sr., and *Getting the Best Score for Your Film*<sup>143</sup> by David A. Bell both target the filmmaker. They deal with the history and function of

film music, choosing a composer and then communicating with the composer once chosen, the various stages of producing music and fitting it to a film, and the legal and business aspects. I have not seen Bell's book, but Carlin's is brief, clear, informative, and generally user-friendly. It is also one of the few which intimates that some of the people involved might actually be female, and a light sense of humor pervades the book. Throughout, Carlin advocates having fun with the process—which, admittedly, is probably easier for the producer and the director than the poor composer on a six-week deadline!

A small flurry of publications appeared around 1990 which were directed at the composer. German composer Norbert Jürgen Schneider's brief but insightful and remarkably comprehensive article, "Was macht eigentlich ein Filmkomponist?" (What does a film composer actually do?),<sup>144</sup> deals with the everyday stuff of the film composer and includes daily extracts from his diary tracing business meetings, recording sessions, and composition. Schneider also sketches out the basic knowledge required of the composer, musical, cinematic, and technological; he especially stresses the need to keep abreast of technological advances, stating that "the days of the note-writing film composer belong to the past" (p. 79). Certainly a good place to start for the composer trying to follow that advice is composer Jeffrey Rona's manual *Synchronization: From Reel to Reel—A Complete Guide for the Synchronization of Audio, Film & Video*,<sup>145</sup> concerning the technical matters of actually fitting music to film. The book is furnished with useful diagrams and charts and is easy to follow, even

<sup>136</sup>Indiana Theory Review 11, no. 1-2 (1990): 173-79

<sup>137</sup>Blue Ridge Summit, PA: Tab Books, 1976.

<sup>138</sup>Unfortunately, there are some slight but irritating historical inaccuracies: for instance, Skiles states that "The early use of [the harpsichord] by Bach, Haydn, and Mozart was for solo purposes," (p. 73) when in fact, even as late as Mozart, the primary purpose of the harpsichord was as a continuo instrument, supporting every sort of ensemble from the trio sonata to the orchestra.

<sup>139</sup>Andrea Grey's *Music for Film* (Sydney: Resources United, Australian Film Television and Radio School, 1985) is not very detailed or informative; neither is it particularly accessible.

<sup>140</sup>Boston: Northeastern University Press.

Much of Chapter 4 had previously appeared in the article "East of Eden: Climactic Scene," *Indiana Theory Review* 11, no. 1-2 (1990): 145-64.

<sup>141</sup>One niggle is that the rubrics indicating dialogue, action, camera action (all very valuable information) are all at the same level, undifferentiated, demanding a certain amount of sifting.

<sup>142</sup>Boston & London: Focal Press, 1991.

<sup>143</sup>Los Angeles: Silman-James Press, 1994.

<sup>144</sup>*Musica* 46, no. 2 (1992): 79-82.

<sup>145</sup>Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Publishing Corporation, 1990.

for the technologically uninformed; the breezy, practical tone is actually enjoyable—a real rarity in technical writing.

For a more comprehensive introduction to film composition, it is difficult to imagine a better book than Fred Karlin and Rayburn Wright's *On the Track: A Guide to Contemporary Film Scoring*.<sup>146</sup> This extraordinary textbook deals with traditional film-scoring methods, current practice with modern technology, and song scores. The authors interviewed numerous technical, creative, and executive personnel and selected about 150 films easily available on video as primary study materials. The book is not only incredibly comprehensive, but it is eminently readable and easily the most beautiful book of any kind produced on film music, with a large textbook format, a clean, elegant layout and typeface, and many music examples. But perhaps the most impressive thing about the book is its down-to-earth tone. The first paragraph of the introduction deals with the necessity of stress management, and during a discussion about dealing with the director and producer, the following sage advice is given: "One final serious word of caution: if an ex-

perience becomes so intense that you are either driven to drink or start smoking again—walk" (p. 17).<sup>147</sup>

Fred Karlin, the co-author of *On the Track*, is himself a seasoned film and television composer who teaches film music in the University of Southern California's Scoring for Motion Pictures and Television Program. He has also recently produced *Listening to Movies: The Film Lover's Guide to Film Music*<sup>148</sup> the first textbook aimed outside the film industry; it is a "music appreciation" text for a lay audience. This is perhaps not as successful a book as *On the Track*, but primarily because its focus is broader. As an overview of technical, historical, commercial, and musical aspects, it is certainly an admirable effort and part of a general upswing in the drive to teach film music to a wider audience.<sup>149</sup>

The pedagogy of film music is relatively recent phenomenon, but one gathering momentum that will probably only be aided by Karlin's *Listening to Movies*. A consistent feature of this particularly circumscribed area of the literature is the implicit plea for film music to be taken seriously. Articles began to appear in German periodicals in the early 1980s, generally aimed at

teaching adolescents.<sup>150</sup> American publications were about ten years behind and aimed at serious students of film. William Penn's "Music and Image: A Pedagogical Approach"<sup>151</sup> is one of three articles on the teaching of film music in the special film music issue of *Indiana Theory Review*. Penn suggests various techniques of exploring affect; this is a useful exercise, but he does not carry the discussion past labeling. A more rigorous musical approach is advocated by David Neumeier,<sup>152</sup> who feels that analysis of film music can improve our approaches to and understanding of concert and stage music as well:

Film places music in a new aesthetic environment that offers new opportunities to test theories of musical listening, hierarchical structure, or formal and tonal organization. It may also nudge music scholars into confronting more systematically and regularly some (admittedly complex) problems of intertextuality—which begin, of course, with the relationship of the film score to the other elements of the film—as well as the impact of social and ideological constraints on both compositional design and aesthetic judgments. If

<sup>146</sup>New York: Schirmer, 1989.

<sup>147</sup>The only odd note in the book is struck in the chapter on songs: although the book is aimed at composers, the emphasis here is on the lyrics, recapitulating the notion propagated by rock critics and those who oppose pop soundtracks that the only meaning in songs resides in the lyrics. Certainly, the presence of lyrics shifts the attention of most viewers from the background level of the instrumental underscore to the lyrics of the song (songs almost invariably take the foreground anyway), but melodies and harmony do contribute in an unmeasurable but immeasurable way to the meaning of a song. To take an example that surely everyone knows, the shape of the melody "Somewhere Over the Rainbow"

(lyrics by E.Y. Harburg, music by Harold Arlen, from the 1939 film *The Wizard of Oz*) is an arch, reflecting the rainbow, and the end of the phrase "once in a lullaby" has a rocking shape that one could easily imagine in a lullaby. This general shape is detailed by wide appoggiatura leaps on the words "somewhere," "way up," and "there's a," conveying a sense of yearning as well as the more literal height of "way up." Obviously one cannot teach someone to write a great song in quite the same way as one can teach how to construct a motive, a theme, or a transition, but to ignore the evocative power present in a well-shaped melody or harmonic structure is a regrettable drawback to an otherwise very thorough and sensitive book.

<sup>148</sup>New York: Schirmer, 1994.

<sup>149</sup>This effort to promote the teaching of film music has even reached the Education page of the British newspaper *The Guardian* (Kathryn Willgress, "Film scores" (1993): 16-17).

<sup>150</sup>Hans-Christian Schmidt, "Didaktik der Filmmusik" (The Didactic of Film Music), *Musik und Bildung* 3 (1980): 158-61; Stefan Gies, "Musik im Film: Manipulation oder dramatisches Mittel?" (Music in film: Manipulation or dramatic means?), *Musik und Bildung* 18 (September 1986): 762-70.

<sup>151</sup>*Indiana Theory Review* 11, no. 1-2 (1990): 47-63.

<sup>152</sup>"Film Music Analysis and Pedagogy," *Indiana Theory Review* 11, no 1-2 (1990): 1-27.

our mainly formalistic, procedure-oriented analytic methods have greatly improved our understanding of the absolute or concert music repertoire, they have also impoverished the possible contexts for musical analysis and therefore close critical discussion of music in general. Serious reinterpretation is required to make these [analytical] tools fit for use in an art where authorship is often in doubt,<sup>153</sup> where contexts constantly point outside the musical materials and their “internal” processes, and where music is rarely continuous and is only one element—usually a subservient one—among several. Still, one might reasonably suppose that recent phenomenological models for musical analysis, the revived expressivist-hermeneutic model, and a musical semiotics could all find the medium congenial (pp. 14, 16, 27).

Neumeyer does not seem to be advocating a true interdisciplinary analysis, but simply a more rigorous musical analysis with an eye toward film.

The third article comes from Kathryn Kalinak, who outlines a three-week module to be inserted into an introductory film studies course.<sup>154</sup> In relating her own experience as a film student, Kalinak

attacks the neglect of music in film studies: “Music is one of the most basic elements of the cinematic apparatus, but the vast majority of film students, undergraduate and graduate, will complete their degrees without ever formally studying it” (p. 30). Her course plan is clear, to-the-point, and covers both classical scoring techniques and alternative models for scoring, with an introduction that includes clips from *Bladerunner* and *Batman* as well as such classics as *Citizen Kane* and *Alexander Nevsky*. She also gives options for abridging and expanding the syllabus, gives a detailed rationale for her choices, and provides a series of study questions.<sup>155</sup>

In a single lesson plan, Eva Rieger constructs an entire mini-course in the use of music in classic Hollywood films around *Casablanca*.<sup>156</sup> In addition to covering the functions of the music and tracing the leitmotiv of “As Time Goes By,” she touches upon several cultural elements to bring into the discussion—the “utopian” function of this leitmotiv and its association with an irretrievable time and a place (Rick and Ilsa’s love idyll in Paris before the German occupation); the ideological stances of the “Marseillaise” and “Die Wacht am Rhein” for the scene in which the two songs are

set against each other in Rick’s bar; and the patriarchal virgin/whore juxtaposition of Ilsa and Yvonne.

## Sociology and Cultural Studies

In the last two decades, sociological and cultural/anthropological studies of film music have, if not exploded, then at least risen from practically nothing to a small but significant number. Somewhat perforce, by nature of the disciplines, sociological studies tend to concentrate on production and cultural studies on reception.

Robert R. Faulkner’s *Hollywood Studio Musicians: Their Work and Careers in the Recording Industry*<sup>157</sup> was the first serious sociological study in the field, and Faulkner followed this impressive work with another, a study of forty film composers in Hollywood during the 1970s.<sup>158</sup> In addition to conventional issues of career development and the social structure in the film industry, Faulkner moves to the subjective experience of working as a film music composer. The precarious plight of the film composer is compounded by sex discrimination, as is shown in Leslie N. Andersen’s study of female composers.<sup>159</sup>

<sup>153</sup>My one reservation about Neumeyer’s excellent argument for the serious study of film music and its implications for other kinds of musical research is this apparent concern with authorship. Is it truly necessary for an author to be identifiable to analyze the result? Or, on a different tack, does a multiplicity of authors somehow reduce the worth of a piece of music simply because it is not by one person (a remnant of the “great man” theory of music history)? Does perhaps unfair attribution actually devalue the music?

<sup>154</sup>“Music to My Ears: A Structural Approach to Teaching the Soundtrack,” *Indiana Theory Review* 11, no. 1-2 (1990): 29-45.

<sup>155</sup>Royal S. Brown’s *Overtones and Undertones: Reading Film Music* includes an appendix called “How to Hear a Movie”; it is a cross between an outline for the book (discussed above) and a syllabus for a film music course. The outline has an admirable breadth, but is possibly too detailed and idiosyncratic for practical use.

<sup>156</sup>“‘Spiel’ es, Sam!’ Filmmusikanalyse im Musikunterricht dargestellt am Spielfilm *Casablanca*” (“Play it, Sam!”: Film music analysis in a music lesson represented by the film *Casablanca*), *Musik und Bildung* 18 (September 1986): 771-78.

<sup>157</sup>Chicago: Aldine-Atherton, 1971. Preston J. Hubbard has also dealt with movie musicians,

but his is a more descriptive historical survey of the impact of the coming of sound on working musicians (“Synchronized Sound and Movie-House Musicians, 1926-29,” *American Music* 3, no. 4 (1985): 429-41).

<sup>158</sup>*Music on Demand: Composers and Careers in the Hollywood Film Industry* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1983).

<sup>159</sup>“Women Film and Television Composers in the United States,” in *The Musical Woman: An International Perspective*, vol. 3, 1986-1990, ed. Judith Lang Zaimont (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991). Even though it is certainly unintentional, and surely because Nan Schwartz is one of the most prominent composers in the article, it is



Studies of gender and feminist criticism frequently draw on the highly stylized genres of the musical and film noir. Edward Baron Turk investigates the power of the trained soprano and the threat to patriarchal containment that it represents, especially in a woman as attractive as Jeanette MacDonald;<sup>160</sup> while Turk continually threatens to over-theorize his subject in a welter of Freudianism that may not be palatable to many, his basic premise is convincingly argued.<sup>161</sup> Adrienne L. McLean, on the other hand, is concerned with the voice *and* body of the woman in film noir. She takes such feminist film scholars as Lucy Fischer, Laura Mulvey, and Kaja Silverman to task for “repudiating the creative female presence in classical Hollywood cinema that is not a designated directorial presence” (pp. 8-9).<sup>162</sup>

Other issues of minority, specifically ethnicity, have also been addressed. Gloria J. Gibson’s dissertation, *The Cultural Significance of Music to the Black Independent Filmmaker*,<sup>163</sup> is a very organized

investigation; although she discusses music only in general terms or in terms of lyrics, Gibson looks for uses of music in black cinema which might be unusual or even unique. Frequently, Gibson found, music was an integral part of the creative process as well as the end product. Several of the filmmakers to whom she spoke were structurally influenced by the music they listened to during writing and directing, from Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony to free jazz. Gibson also finds certain cinematic analogues to African-rooted musical processes such as antiphony, repetition, and the layering of sound and image.<sup>164</sup>

A very different kind of cultural analysis is undertaken by Jeremy Tambling in *Opera, Ideology & Film*,<sup>165</sup> a study of opera on film, particular in the context of British “culturalism”—the policy of fostering high art through government support. Overall, the book seems overwritten and the theory, drawn largely from Walter Benjamin and Frederic Jameson, a bit undigested; however, even if a bit

heavy going, the analyses are intriguing, especially as Tambling argues that opera might well *need* the “disruptive” influence of film if it is to have any relevance to today’s society. A good companion to Tambling’s book would be Gisela Schubert’s article on the Hollywood musical, specifically the so-called “biopic” (a fictionalized account of a composer’s life).<sup>166</sup> Schubert examines Hollywood’s approach to “great” music: the attempts at popularizing and democratizing “great” music, and the self-conscious alliance of composers such as George Gershwin and Jerome Kern with a European tradition of “great” music rather than seeking recognition on their own merits.

Studies that deal with popular music in films will almost always have a cultural element. This is positive in that, ideally, all studies of film music (or any kind of music, for that matter) should consider cultural context; it is negative, however, in that it perpetuates the myth that popular music has *only* cultural significance and no musi-

difficult not to notice that the only photograph of a composer is of the undeniably pretty, blonde Schwartz (p. 360), subtly reflecting the sort of patriarchal values that the female composers encounter in their careers. A delicate question arises – is it easier or harder for a pretty woman to make it in film composition?

<sup>160</sup>“Deriding the Voice of Jeanette MacDonald: Notes on Psychoanalysis and the American Film Musical,” *Camera Obscura: A Journal of Feminism and Film Theory* 25-26: 225-49.

<sup>161</sup>Reinforcing Turk’s argument, rock singers Pat Benatar and Ann Wilson (Heart), both beautiful women with very powerful soprano voices challenged patriarchal standards in much the same way during the 1970s. They were neither passive pop sirens like Olivia Newton-John and Stevie Nicks, nor blues shouters like Janis Joplin and Tina Turner, but wielded a distinctly feminine weapon in the trained soprano voice.

<sup>162</sup>“It’s only that I do what I love and love what I do”: Film Noir and the Musical Woman,” *Cinema Journal* 33, no. 1 (Fall 1993): 3-16. She proposes a theoretical positioning of the sometimes seemingly extraneous musical set pieces in film

noir as moments connecting the singer and the audience through the voice.

<sup>163</sup>Indiana University, 1987.

<sup>164</sup>Rosa Linda Fregoso’s *The Bronze Screen: Chicana and Chicano Film Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993) is an intriguingly oblique revelation of a similar phenomenon. Fregoso is not actually interested in music at all – ironically, as almost all the films she discusses are intimately bound up with music. *La Bamba* is a partly fictionalized biography of rock musician Richie Valens; *Born in East L.A.* is based on a Cheech Marin parody of Bruce Springsteen’s “Born in the U.S.A.,” blown up into a comedy of cultures in collision; *The Ballad of Gregorio Cortez* is based on a Texan *corrido* which also forms the basis for the synthesizer score; *Zoot Suit* is a musical; and *American Me*, a film which ranges over nearly fifty years, is temporally structured by the use of popular music. In an especially memorable moment from *American Me*, time, space, and experience are collapsed in one edit. A young gang leader struts onto a 1950s reform school playground to the strains of Bobby Day’s “Rockin’ Robin”; a handball game is in progress.

The camera follows the arc of the handball, and as it hits the wall, the music responds with the gunshot opening of Junior Walker’s “Shotgun,” placing the action at least ten years later. As the camera tracks the flight of the ball from the wall, we see the yard of Folsom Prison and the now-adult gang leader. The styles of the songs reflect more than just the passage of time; the youthful, relatively innocent cockiness of the boy is mirrored by the cheerful bounce of “Rockin’ Robin,” and his hardened maturity and confidence highlighted by the slower, more sexually aware “Shotgun.” The very fact that Fregoso does not seem to notice this intense musical structuring in the films she examines, and the manner in which she talks around the music without ever addressing it directly, are testament to a cinematic culture in which music functions much differently than in “mainstream” film.

<sup>165</sup>Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987.

<sup>166</sup>“Hollywoods ‘grosse’ Musik (Beobachtungen on Musical-Filmen)” (Hollywood’s ‘great’ Music (Observations on Film Musicals)), *Musiktheorie* 8, no. 1 (1993): 57-68.

cal value. While it is true that frequently films are filled with pop songs for commercial reasons, there are also examples where the pop song is more powerful than a conventional film underscore, and I would argue that these are more common than the bulk of film music literature would lead one to believe. Sometimes a popular song with extra-filmic associations is essential. In *Witness*, the barn scene between Harrison Ford and Kelly McGillis sparked by Sam Cooke's "(What a) Wonderful World" requires a song that will evoke a relatively innocent and uncomplicated cultural past (the early 1960s) as well as providing a clear generation identification and a light-heartedness for Ford's character that is otherwise missing.<sup>167</sup> Even "background" usages may draw on the audience's knowledge of a pop song; Phil Collins's "In the Air Tonight" adds tension and the thrill of danger to Rebecca de Mornay and Tom Cruise's liaison on a train in *Risky Business* (1983), not merely be-

cause of its intrinsic musical values but because the audience will most likely anticipate the thunderous drum fill.<sup>168</sup>

An article that, while not in itself exceptional, points the way to the sort of work which can be done on a song score is "Abstract for 'Let It Bleed,' the Music of *Goodfellas*" by R. Condren.<sup>169</sup> Abstract is a good term for this article, as it is very brief and remains at a surface level, but Condren does demonstrate how popular songs can evoke not only time and place but also emotional and psychological motivations. Douglas W. Reitingger's "Paint It Black: Rock Music and Vietnam War Film"<sup>170</sup> is more substantially written (though overall with less content), but articles like Reitingger's and Condren's do show that intelligent use of popular music is not only possible but that it has been done over and over again.<sup>171</sup>

Several authors have undertaken the daunting task of surveying a particular type of

music in film, paying attention to the cultural values attached to the music. Charles Berg's "Cinema Sings the Blues" was one of the first such articles; it examines the history of jazz in film as well as the parallels between jazz and film—both are four-letter words, he points out somewhat tongue-in-cheek, and both were outcast arts that are now recognized as legitimate.<sup>172</sup> Neil V. Rosenberg's fine article on bluegrass soundtracks has a nicely limited repertoire, which allows his thorough investigation,<sup>173</sup> but Alison Arnold tackles one of the most prevalent (in terms of sheer quantity) and eclectic forms of film music in the world in her article on the Indian film song.<sup>174</sup> Arnold's article, together with Peter Manuel's more historical account in the same volume of the journal *Popular Music*,<sup>175</sup> gives the only information on the subject easily accessible to Western scholars, and Arnold covers—if only very briefly – such topics as musical structure, vocal style, the

<sup>167</sup>A similar function is filled by the pop songs in *Truly, Madly, Deeply* (1991), which specifically place the central characters as middle-class, well-educated, liberal North Londoners in their late thirties. The lyrics of these songs (in some cases, even lyrics that are not actually heard in the film) also connect with a network of visual and verbal imagery throughout the film: Robynn Stilwell, "Symbol, Narrative and the Musics of *Truly, Madly Deeply*," *Screen* 38, no. 1 (Spring 1997): 60-75.

<sup>168</sup>In *Risky Business* (their book's title played on the film's), Denisoff and Romanowski maintain that Collins's passionate vocal for the title song from *Against All Odds* (1984) sells the relationship between Jeff Bridges and Rachel Ward in a way that the actors do not. This "fixing" of a weak element in a film has long been considered by movie producers and directors a function of the orchestral background score.

<sup>169</sup>*Popular Music and Society* 15, no. 3 (1991): 131-36.

<sup>170</sup>*Journal of American Culture* 15, no. 3 (Fall 1992): 53-59.

<sup>171</sup>Reitingger also proves that snobbery is not the sole province of those who prefer the classical

Hollywood symphonic score; there is a slightly nasty tinge of rock elitism throughout. In "The Rules and the Use of Specific Models in Musical Satire" [*Indiana Theory Review* 11, no. 1-2 (1990): 119-44], John Covach puts both film music and popular music studies at risk; he is in mortal danger of working something simple to death. For all his philosophical references to Schopenhauer, Covach basically tells us that parody is funny because we recognize elements in the parody. Covach's comparison of harmonic structures is not particularly fruitful, because in the style which he is studying, the harmonic language is so simple and stereotyped; the only truly salient point made is the harmonic pun on The Beatles' "Help!" created in The Rutles' "Ouch!" by starting a fifth too far away from the dominant (p. 137). Instrumentation and rhythm would be more appropriate points of study, but Covach makes only slight reference to these. He also interprets the interpolation of the Boccherini minuet in Spinal Tap's "Heavy Duty" as being "incongruous" between the dialect of classic music and the dialect of heavy metal"; but as Robert Walser has shown, these "dialects" are actually very close (see *Running*

*with the Devil: Power, Gender and Madness in Heavy Metal Music* (Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 1993)). What makes the Boccherini quotation humorous is not the classical borrowing, but the fact that it is something so simple and melodic. Many heavy metal guitarists borrow liberally from the passagework of such Baroque composers as Bach and Vivaldi to display their virtuosity, but Spinal Tap's Nigel Tufnel (Christopher Guest) is too dim to know from whom to borrow.

<sup>172</sup>*Cinema Journal* 17, no. 2 (1978): 1-12.

<sup>173</sup>"Image and Stereotype: Bluegrass Sound Tracks," *American Music* 1, no. 3 (1983): 1-22.

<sup>174</sup>"Popular Film Song in India: A Case of Mass-Market Musical Eclecticism," *Popular Music* 7, no. 2 (1988): 177-88.

<sup>175</sup>"Popular Music in India: 1901-86" (pp. 157-76) is almost exclusively about film music, which until quite recently dominated the production of popular music in India, as almost every Indian film had the requisite "six songs and three dances" (p. 163). Between 1931 and 1954, only two commercial Indian films had no songs (p. 160).

relationship of traditional musics and film song, conditions of production, and piracy.

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In 1979, Martin Marks ended his article with three tasks for the field of film music studies:

- (1) To find the materials (films, scores, literature, and so on);
- (2) To make the materials available for research (at the proper facilities, in catalogues and editions);
- (3) To devise methods of analyzing the materials so that scholars can come to an understanding of film music both
  - (a) in its own terms – that is, the function of music within the audiovisual whole, and
  - (b) in its social context – that is, the history of this music and its relationship to other kinds of music past and present. (p. 314)

The conditions underlying the first two tasks have not changed significantly. Primary written materials such as scores and parts are still largely inaccessible and are likely to remain so for some time due to issues of ownership and copyright. General references are still sorely needed, and many of those we do have are incomplete or inaccurate. Scholarly literature is still scattered, but it is becoming more abundant; with the increasing number of special issues on film music in music periodicals and the establishment of this journal dedicated to film music, the situation can only improve. Rapid technological developments have revolutionized access to information, as well as to

the films themselves. Marks’s proposed “web” archive, by which scattered collections could be united, is now quite feasible through on-line systems, and one could hope that an index of books and articles and perhaps a listing of major libraries that hold them would be included in such a project. And thanks to videotape, laser discs, and DVD, access to most films is easy.

Working from video, as most of us are obliged to do, may in fact be a boon to fulfilling part “a” of Marks’s third task, that of studying the music in the context of the audio-visual whole. If we are forced to transcribe, we have no choice but to be aware of how the music fits into the rest of the soundtrack of the film (unless your laser disc or DVD allows you to switch between various channels—music, effects, dialogue, etc.—which might in this context be described as “cheating”). We will also absorb the visual elements along with the sound. That is not to say that a directed visual interpretation of the film becomes superfluous, but that a connection between the music and what is happening on the screen becomes intimately linked in our thought processes—something which simply will not occur if we only study scores.

Controversial as it may be to suggest, I believe it is easier for musicians to grasp the principles of film than for film scholars to confront music, because of our culture’s visual prejudices (which writers on film music continually protest). Unfair or not, visual language is far more highly developed in our society than is the language of sound; therefore, it is easier to learn the visually-oriented theoretical language, especially later in life. Most musicians start learning

their profession as small children, whereas film studies are generally first encountered at the university level, usually in connection with some verbally-centered study—English, comparative literature, speech, drama, communications and media, or, only rarely, art history. As with any language, the earlier one starts, the more swiftly and profoundly one learns. Musicians will be more adaptive to learning film later on, as they already have at least some basis in the language, if only from watching movies. Music, so completely non-visual except in the highly arcane “secret code” that is musical notation, and so rarely verbally articulated in film, must seem an unfathomable mystery to a non-musician. However, it must also be said that some musicians may be “blinded” by their technical knowledge into assuming that they understand a piece of film music simply because they are able to parse its musical grammar. A truly integrated approach to the analysis of film music is still uncommon, although it is certainly a more prevalent aim among authors today than in 1979.

The sort of cultural analysis implied in part (b) of Marks’s third task is beginning to be addressed, but several recurrent strains in the literature may strangle such approaches. These include the seemingly inexorable formation of canons, the resistance of scholars (as well as composers and fans) to the use of music not specifically composed for film and to popular music, and a tendency toward theory rather than analysis and interpretation.

Canon formation is probably the most constrictive to a broader approach to film music, as it might bring film music into the narrow confines of traditional

musicology rather than allowing film music to help open up musicology to issues outside of absolute music. A canon of film music is forming whether we want one or not; David Neumeyer has argued that:

The formation of a film-music canon, by some device or another, seems inevitable, if for no other reason than that a composer's work becomes more fashionable (or falls out of fashion) and writers make choices about the films and scores they prefer to discuss – and other writers respond to those discussions. Finally, one can hope that the process may tell us something about the formation of other musical canons, including that of European concert/stage masterworks.<sup>177</sup>

This is an admirable hope, but, I suspect, a little utopian. If canon formation were merely the winnowing process that produced the scores that scholars wanted to discuss, it would be a harmless phenomenon; and if observing the process tells us something about the formation of canons, it would be merely a laboratory experiment. But in musicology, canon formation has a more insidious nature; it is a process of valuation by sometimes unstated criteria that often excludes items that may fall short by those criteria, even though they have other qualities that are of significance and worth. Canons are particularly hard on music that has the misfortune to

be widely popular; the tendency is to dismiss such music as appealing to some lowest common denominator and thus being, according to one of these unstated criteria, “inferior.”

Two parallel canons of film music are forming, one American and “classical,” one European and avant-garde. The majority of the writing on film music, especially the writing of real scholarly value, has been dedicated to either silent film music or scores of the 1930s and 1940s both from Hollywood and from Europe. Much of this is fine work and not to be faulted for its subject matter, but films since 1960 are almost completely ignored. Newer European films are generally much better served than Hollywood fare, and the one area of mainstream American production in recent years that has received the most attention is the use of popular music in film, even though many who work in the “canonical” areas of film music studies would not consider this to be proper territory.

Some do take exception to the categorical rejection of popular music as valid film music. In her brief afterword to *Unheard Melodies*, Claudia Gorbman draws threads of continuity between the use of popular music in modern films and classical Hollywood practice, including musicals—another vast area of film music that is more or less ignored in the literature. Frederic Silber's well-considered rant argues that popular music can add to the film's *content* as well as

its coffers, and asserts that it is not enough “to grudgingly accept a film score that embraces contemporary music simply because it works well within the film, as if such music were not worthy enough to be discussed critically.”<sup>178</sup>

Josef Kloppenburg likewise argues for the symbolic richness of music with extra-filmic associations, whether it be popular or “art” music, and his lengthier article contains economic arguments as well.<sup>179</sup> Kloppenburg particularly takes exception to the opinion that the use of popular music is mostly profit-seeking among the youth market, because such an idea is too general and music preference is not a condition of age; he also contends that the use of Mahler in *Death in Venice* is not “presumptuous misuse,” as de la Motte-Haber would have it, but a brilliant use of music with a built-in meaning for the audience. In an added twist, he points out that the film boosted sales of Mahler's music, and the album was marketed in connection with the film, the same as any pop soundtrack (p. 209). As this clearly shows, all music is a commodity; it is self-deluding to think otherwise. The very presence of any music at all in a film is a commercial consideration; it is considered a necessary convention of film making.

While opposition to scoring films with pre-existing music is understandable among film composers, as it threatens employment, and among film score fans, as it “robs” them of new music, scholarly opposition seems merely a remnant of outmoded views about music's autonomy on one side and the organicism of the art work on the other.<sup>180</sup> There can be as much or

<sup>176</sup> Alfred Cochran's dissertation, discussed above.

<sup>177</sup> “Film Music and Pedagogy,” 9–10.

<sup>178</sup> “The State of the Art: The Film Soundtrack as Contemporary Music; Contemporary Music as Film Score,” *Fanfare* 4, no. 1 (1980): 309–10.

<sup>179</sup> “Musikkulturelle Vielfalt – Eindeutigkeit des

Ausdrucks. Der “Unstil” der Filmmusik,” (Variety of music – clarity of expression. The “non-style” of film music), *Musikpädagogische Forschung*, Band 4: 207–17.

<sup>180</sup> Flinn connects these tendencies to Romanticism, Neumeyer and Buhler to modernism. Both are true as modernism sharpened

more creativity in choosing the appropriate music as in composing a new piece. Of course, one runs the risk that the intertextual connections are not made by everyone in the audience, but that should not discourage one from making the attempt. There are levels of recognition. The much-maligned *2001: A Space Odyssey* is a perfect example.<sup>181</sup> One does not have to recognize Richard Strauss's *Also sprach Zarathustra* to recognize the power of the opening fanfare. Yet, if one does know the piece, one can associate Nietzsche's verse prose with the film, the implied equation of "superman is to man" with the next stage of evolution depicted in the film. But there is an intermediate, musical level, as the fundamental exploration of man's intelligence in the film is outlined by the compositional exploration of the fundamental harmonic overtone series, a source of the music's power.<sup>182</sup>

The study of film music has been profoundly altered in the past fifteen to twenty years. On a basic level, there is much more of it and a greater proportion of that output is of a scholarly nature. The researchers examining film music now come from a broad spectrum of disciplines—film studies, languages, music psychology,

musicology, women's studies, cultural studies—and they bring to bear an impressive armory of analytical approaches—various forms of musical analysis, film theory, narrative theory, semiotics, reception and perception studies, audience-oriented criticism, gender criticism, and cultural studies; we might add the sort of kinetic analysis that Claudia Widgery introduced in her dissertation, an aspect of temporality and space in film that is far too neglected. They are beginning to look at newer films, and in the main, they are beginning to ask more sophisticated questions.

Historically, the scholarly literature on film music has tended toward the theoretical. Certainly there has been more detailed analysis of specific films in the past fifteen years, but the field still seems somewhat unbalanced. The diffuse nature of the literature has led to a constant repetition of history and theoretical approaches to the subject. Although each version is slightly varied, the tripartite theory/aesthetics/analysis format has grown a bit tired. It seems to me that we need to find fresh approaches, and perhaps the simple case study is a good place to start—to build theories from the ground up rather than from the

top down. Rather than postulating how *film* works, we might investigate how individual *films* work.

It would also seem that such a mixed medium as film should draw on interdisciplinary analysis. As we have noted, a number of theoretical approaches have been brought into the study of film music. All of these have something to offer and no one will ever be able to master them all, but, for instance, one does not have to digest all the various semiotic theories to draw out the manner in which meaning is created through sign-symbol systems. Bringing various aspects to bear on a single example might bring that single example into sharper focus—even if all we discover is contradictions. The friction between divergent possibilities is frequently a very powerful generator of meaning, as an ambiguous example allows for more possible interpretations and almost always proves more exciting than an obvious, indisputable one. Although one might well argue that many of these theoretical constructs have been developed in other fields, film is itself a hybrid and we may modify these theoretical constructs to our purposes.

Perhaps the greatest challenge to the study of film music is find-

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Romanticism's drive toward the individual "genius".

<sup>181</sup>Stanley Kubrick's 1968 science fiction film is a locus classicus of the debate of original score vs. pre-composed music. A score by Alex North was jettisoned by the director in favor of a "temp[orary] track" of music ranging from Richard Strauss to Johann Strauss to Györgi Ligeti. One finds numerous references to this score throughout the literature, and opinions are sharply divided between those who claim that pre-existing music can never fit the drama as well as a specifically composed score and those who claim that the cultural meanings ingrained in the vastly divergent styles of Strauss, Strauss, and Ligeti bring a depth to the film that new music from a single composer cannot approach.

Although North's score clearly reflects qualities of the temp track, it has a homogeneity (North's personal voice as a composer) which, one could argue, blunts the impact of the startling – and exhilarating – disjunctions of the film scored with the temp track.

<sup>182</sup>Popular songs may also function in a similar way. In Mike Newell's caustic theatrical comedy *An Awfully Big Adventure* (1995), the dashing mid-fortyish actor P.L. O'Hara asks the gauche sixteen-year-old assistant stage manager Stella Bradshaw to dance while a band plays the song "You Make Me Feel So Young" (Mack Gordon/Josef Myrow). On a sheerly musical level, the bouncy, cheery tune provides a kinetic counterpoint as the camera lingers on the physical beauty and grace of Stella and O'Hara, who are

notably more fluid than the other dancers; it is also an emotional counterpoint to the pain of the watching Doty, an older actress who has long been in love with O'Hara. Yet, if one recognizes the unsung lyrics of the song, other levels of meaning are revealed. One can make the obvious connection that O'Hara is attempting to recapture his youth (a recurring motif of this character) by seducing Stella; but O'Hara's suave sexual authority also clearly makes Stella feel "so young" and inexperienced, and the words are bitterly ironic for Doty, who obviously feels quite old compared to Stella. Still another layer of irony is added retrospectively, when O'Hara realizes at the end of the film that his lover, Stella, is his daughter, the product of a youthful indiscretion.

ing a balance between technical analysis and meaningful interpretation. “Analysis” without interpretation is a fairly sterile exercise; “interpretation” without proper analysis easily becomes an exercise in self-indulgence. Again, I think that a broad approach to a relatively narrow subject will tell us more than a narrow approach to a broad subject—we have had many of these. The next greatest challenge is then presenting that interpretation in a meaningful way. Music, sound effects, dialogue, and visual images must all be integrated in some fashion; the emergent CD-ROM and DVD technology offers such capabilities,

although unfortunately at this time hardware and software are expensive and relatively scarce. One can project, however, that in five years or even less, the standard method of presenting film music scholarship will be with QuickTime film clips, MIDI musical examples, and HyperText analysis.<sup>183</sup>

In his study of Satie’s playful score to the Dadaist/Surrealist film *Entr’acte*, Martin Marks gives us the sage advice not to take ourselves too seriously.<sup>184</sup> Flexibility may be the most important ingredient we add to our analysis. Every analyst, like everyone who experi-

ences a film, is different and will bring something different to the table. There will be many readings that are fairly straightforward, that most of us will accept, but there will be others that are more idiosyncratic; some may interpret the same film and the same score in radically different ways. Kathryn Kalinak and Royal S. Brown give quite divergent interpretations of the film *Laura* in their books, but each is convincing in the context of what the authors wish to say. There need not be only one point of view; disagreement breeds discussion, which is healthy. In this way, we may build a literature.

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<sup>183</sup>An early attempt at such an integrated presentation was Jon Newsom’s “David Raksin: A Composer in Hollywood” (*Quarterly Journal of the Library of Congress* 35 (1978): 142-72). Newsom’s article included extensive Manvell & Huntley-type examples with music and stills from the films and was accompanied by two 7” plastic discs with musical examples – unfortunately, if understandably, when I ordered the article through Interlibrary Loan, the discs were not included.

<sup>184</sup>“The Well-Furnished Film,” 268.

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