

Michael Quigley

Derek Elley must be complimented on the superb analysis in your June issue of Miklós Rózsa's new recording of his *Quo Vadis* film score. It was discouraging, however, to read the accompanying review of John Williams's *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* soundtrack, which did little other than to add to the growing body of deficient criticism surrounding every review of this album that I have so far seen.

Although I agree with Elley that Williams's score is indeed a 'landmark in film music', it was foully mutilated for its appearance on disc, and Elley's claim that 'the tracks are . . . arranged in proper order [with one exception]' is hardly correct.

The opening cut, *Main Title and Mountain Visions*, for example, begins with the chord cluster and massive thump which open the picture proper, and then leaps halfway through the film to where Richard Dreyfuss and Melinda Dillon first see Devil's Tower on television, and concludes with various sequences where the two race across the countryside in search of the mountain.

The second track, *Nocturnal Pursuit*, has an A-B-A construction, the A section of which is not even heard in the film, though it is alluded to after Dreyfuss's first encounter with a UFO.

I Can't Believe It's Real begins with the music when Dreyfuss and Dillon finally encounter Devil's Tower 'in the flesh', and then cuts to an Impressionistic passage near the film's end where the giant spaceship disgorges the pilots who vanished during World War Two. Since there was some gloomy music heard as the two came away from the mountain and proceeded along a road littered with supposedly gassed animals to their eventual capture, the editing here is most uncalled for.

Climbing Devil's Tower begins with a violent passage first heard near the film's beginning when police cars are chasing UFOs, then jumps to a section with staccato piano solo which, surprisingly, is heard during the climb. The sequence which rounds out this cut is a mystery to me. Much fine music heard during the climb is nowhere in evidence.

The remaining sequences on the album are mostly true to the film, though about thirty-five seconds has been edited out of the *Conversation* between the earthmen and the aliens, and there is an inexplicable break between the last two tracks which does not occur either in the film or on the albums by Mehta and Gerhardt containing suites from this score.

Speaking of Miklós Rózsa, Elley suggests that the composer's remake of his *King of Kings* score will soon materialise.

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