



FILM MUSIC NOTES

Publication Committee

GRACE WIDNEY MABEE

CONSTANCE PURDY

NAOMI REYNOLDS

ALEXANDER STEINERT

6162 Hollywood Boulevard
HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX
TILDEN FOUNDATION

VOLUME I

APRIL, 1942

NUMBER VII

FOREWORD:

The past few years have brought a great improvement in the quality of motion pictures and their volume of business also has increased materially. The distributing plan to exhibitors is making this possible and FILM MUSIC NOTES and the MOTION PICTURE MUSIC COMMITTEE of the NATIONAL FEDERATION OF MUSIC CLUBS, appreciate this fact.

Because of these conditions, music has become much more important to every film. Music of the cinema is the newest intricate development of composition which demands the intelligence of the world's greatest musicians. That this is being recognized is shown by the largest educational institutions in the country and by the interest aroused in the material to be found in FILM MUSIC NOTES. Students in high schools, universities and conservatories are delving into the mysteries of this new idiom of music composition and they are preparing themselves to take their places in the studios of tomorrow. Stress is given to more comedy, scientific, historical, patriotic, humanitarian and spiritual themes, the latter the most timely of all.

(THOSE WISHING THE ENTIRE YEAR'S FILE OF FILM MUSIC NOTES - Oct. 1941 to June 1942 - MAY HAVE SAME BY SENDING ONE DOLLAR to 6162 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood, California.)

CONTENTS of this issue:

- Comments - Open Forum - News Items of Interest
- Reviews of recent pictures from viewpoint of music interest
- JUNGLE BOOK - Review and an appreciation by Vernon Leftwich, Secretary of the National Arranger's Association.
- An article by Dr. Miklos Rozsa on JUNGLE BOOK
- Article on TALES OF MANHATTAN by the composer of the music - Sol Kaplan
- List of pictures nominated as having the best music scoring of the year

"You are performing a very helpful service to music in the United States. Many of us know that superior talent is used in Hollywood and that some of the best composers write scores for the pictures, but I doubt that the friends of music in the country are well enough informed to keep up with the good things as they appear." With personal appreciation and good wishes. Henry Meyer, Dean of the School of Fine Arts, Southwestern University, Georgetown, Texas.

Question: Would you please tell us something of how the music department of a major studio functions?

Answer: "The main purpose of the music department is to coordinate and compose thematic material, background music and popular songs. Problems which fall into Mr. Lipstone's jurisdiction are those pertaining to the employment of the world's foremost talent; pre-recordings and recordings in connection with production; assignment of composers and lyric writers; legal matters in reference to music; creation of musical numbers to suit personalities of the singers; dubbing (synchronization) after a picture is completed visually; and changing musical trends in accordance with tastes of the motion picture world." Bernie Kamins, Publicity, Paramount Pictures

THE AURORATONE
developed within the laboratories of
CECIL STOKES

Among the most interesting, moving and revealing of discoveries of present day, is the AURORATONE....a development of Mr. Cecil Stokes, scientist, author and lecturer. Mr. Stokes appropriately designates the manifestations of the Auroratone as "Painting with Music" for it expresses musical compositions in a most amazing and illuminating manner in the forms of indescribable color-patterns of light.

It is not necessary to understand the principle of this amazing instrument in order to enjoy a recital of "music in color"; one needs only to have the capacity to appreciate beauty in any form, for the breath-taking flow of color in such exquisite forms as are produced by the vibrations of "Parsifal," "Evening Star" from Tannhauser, the "Lohengrin Prelude," "Clair de Lune," by Debussy, Schubert's immortal "Ave Maria" and especially the beautiful "Lord's Prayer" by Albert Hay Malotte, as sung by John Charles Thomas, do indeed leave one speechless and awed.

A most timely motion picture in full color has been started by Mr. Stokes, which will show the real purpose of the holy mysteries of the church....no longer as mere ceremonialism, but as magical images, depicting definite steps in the spiritual progress of man.

Mr. Stokes believes the time has now come when these secret truths should be shouted from the house-tops in a motion picture production which will play an important part in helping to lift "Whomsoever wills" from the slough of materialism now engulfing the world.

The doorway into new and other world adventures is to be opened to many who have never been inside a church of any kind. The multitudes will at least catch a glimpse of the significance of this message of Peace, Hope and Spiritual comfort, so badly needed in these anxious and troubled times.

REVIEWS OF CURRENT PICTURES FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF MUSIC INTEREST COMMENDED BY THE MOTION PICTURE PREVIEW COMMITTEE OF HOLLYWOOD AND NEW YORK.

Grace Widney Mabee, Hollywood Chairman, Mme Adelaide Gescheidt, New York Chairman

JUNGLE BOOK, Korda-United Artists. Director: Zoltan Korda. Music: Miklos Rozsa

A gorgeous and spectacular color production, with that wonder boy of India, Sabu, at his very best in the role of Mowgli, the child lost in babyhood and brought up by the wolves, who impart to him the law of the jungle. The beautiful material of the story is given a setting lavish in the extreme, with its running rivers, lianas spouting bright orchids, brilliant sunshine, murky mists and in the end the crimson blaze of forest fire - all this the background for an unsurpassed group of wild animals, tropical birds, butterflies and reptiles. The photography throughout is dramatic to intensity, and the cast as a whole well chosen.

With the music of Miklos Rozsa, now becoming a feature eagerly looked for in pictures, no slightest fault can be found. It is unusually fine, both in itself and for oriental atmosphere. Not only is it exciting, melodious and sensuous by turn but aids immeasurably in accentuating the varied moods and emotions demanded by this fantasy, including, as it does, a theme for each animal. An exceptional score. Mature-family

A word of appreciation from one of America's fine composers and arrangers:

"There has been a great deal of discussion recently, regarding the nature of music for pictures. Some feel that the music should be more in the nature of the orchestral colors with little regard for the composition of musical themes. Others still feel that the use of themes suitable to the leading characters and special episodes in the picture provide the best method of composing a picture score. One of the outstanding champions of this method is Dr. Miklos Rozsa. He has demonstrated this very effectively in his score for THE JUNGLE BOOK, shortly to be released.

"In this picture the characters are for the most part animals of the jungle and to each animal is allotted a characteristic theme. As in the elephant sequence, very effective use is made of the 'elephant' theme which is announced by the trombones and tubas and conveys convincingly the strength and ponderousness of these mammoths.

"A very dramatic theme used for Shere Khan, the Tiger -- the villain of the piece, menacing in character, it helps considerably in building up the dramatic effect of the Tiger sequences.

"Other themes are the chattering of the monkeys on the piccalos; a contra bassoon is used for Baloo, the Bear; a howling horn figures for the wolves, and a staccato saxophone for the laughing hyenas.

"While there may be some difference of opinion as to how much music contributes to the effect of a picture, its importance in this particular picture cannot be overestimated and Dr. Miklos Rozsa has risen to the importance of the assignment and provided a score, the beauty and effectiveness of which will linger long in the memory of those who see this outstanding picture."

Vernon Leftwich, Secretary
American Society of Music Arrangers

"SCORING THE JUNGLE BOOK" by Miklos Rozsa

"The score of Kipling's JUNGLE BOOK presented unique opportunities and problems.

It is a fantasy relating to animals and nature and offered great possibilities for musical expression and characterization. The greatest opportunity is that for musical delineation, effected by a cast of animals who do not speak, and therefore can only be portrayed in music.

Before starting on the actual composition, I studied authentic Indian music on records which I imported from India. I made a careful plan of the different ragas, scales and moods in which the music had to be composed. Naturally, it would have been monotonous for the western audience if I had kept the entire musical score in pure Hindu style (there being an hour and forty minutes of music in the picture.) I, therefore, used this music only for the actual Hindu scenes. Nevertheless, I tried to write characteristic and diatonic music for the whole picture.

Each of the principal characters, whether animal or human has an individual theme. Obviously, however, the manner in which these are woven together into the tapestry of the musical score depends not on any customary pattern of musical development but upon the action taking place at that time. The approach, therefore, is operatic rather than symphonic.

The main character is Mowgli, the foundling child, who in Kipling's tale is adopted by a she-wolf and brought up among the animals in the Indian Jungle. His musical theme is a gay care-free little tune.

Motives for the wolf father and mother are announced in muted horns, suggesting a wolf howl. Kaa, the python, is characterized by a unique theme of the contra bassoon, while in the case of the white cobra, high pitched harmonics, mixed with a whining musical saw, take over the musical picturization. Mowgli's friend Bagheera, the black panther, has a cattish violin theme, and a heavy and good-natured melody of the basses stands for Hathi the elephant.

The villain of the tale is Shere Khan, the tiger, musically interpreted by a menacing theme of the low trombones. The crocodile has a flutter tongue motif of the trumpets and a scherzo for piccolos and wood-winds portray the silly chatter of the Bandar Log, the monkey folk.

The other main themes are the themes of the Jungle which endeavor to depict the eternity and vastness of nature, also the majestic theme of the Lost City of the Maharajahs, the theme of the Hindu villagers, the Treasure Chamber, the Curse of the Treasure, the Silly Barber, and the March Theme of the Thieves in the Forest.

The soft and melodious theme of Mowgli's mother is also used as a song called Jungle's Lullaby.

At the present time, I am preparing an album of three records for the Victor Recording Company. With Sabu's narration as Mowgli, we will have the high points of the story told with music."

REVIEWS OF CURRENT PICTURES FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF MUSIC INTEREST COMMENDED BY THE MOTION PICTURE PREVIEW COMMITTEE OF HOLLYWOOD AND NEW YORK.

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KINGS ROW, Warner Bros. Dir: Sam Wood. Music by Erich Wolfgang Korngold.

Orchestral arrangements: Hugo Friedhofer. Music direction: Leo Forbstein (The December bulletin contained an advance article on "Kings Row" written by Naomi Reynolds after an interview with Dr. Korngold. The following is the combined report of the committee after previewing the picture): Henry Bellamann's fine novel brought to the screen is a powerful delineation of character and motives. Casting is brilliant and direction superb, but at times the screenplay seems overlong, giving the impression that much that is necessary to make the story plausible has been omitted. Nevertheless, the picture is an absorbing, even a gripping one and moreover one not to be easily forgotten. It is greatly aided by Dr. Korngold's fine and highly interesting musical score for which Mr. Bellamann, himself a musician, made a special trip to Hollywood to consult with the composer and which is of the usual lavish type we have learned to expect from him. The latter is generally adept at capturing moods - sometimes almost inspired - but whether he or his orchestrator is at fault his scores at times are much too heavy to limn some of the more subtle scenes. It is in the big dramatic sequences in this film that he is at his best. Adults.

MALE ANIMAL, Warner Bros. Dir: Elliott Nugent. Musical Director: Leo Forbstein
Music by: H. Roemheld

The theme of this story, lightly treated, is the serious one of the right to free speech, an invaluable one where the vaunted free speech of America is often a travesty. A secondary theme is the false emphasis on college athletics as opposed to educational training. This is done humorously and points out in a wholesome manner that present day failing. In spite of some faults and a drinking sequence which to some will surely be distasteful, it has a definite ethical value. Where music is used, it is used effectively, being spirited, but it lacks originality. It does seem too bad that with so serious a theme and serious domestic scenes which would lend themselves admirably to good music, the only music employed is in the college rah, rah boys sequences! Adults.

THE BASHFUL BACHELOR, RKO-Radio. Dir: Malcolm St. Clair. Music by Lud Gluskin
If all the pictures could give as much pleasure as a simple little picture of Lum and Abner in "Bashful Bachelor" scanty audiences would be a rarity. It is a pleasure to see a new face, with Constance Purdy playing the Widder Abernathy. She should go far in comedy roles. There are no objectionable words or action in this picture but all in all a good clean picture from beginning to end. Music was most appropriately used. Family.

THE ADVENTURES OF MARTIN EDEN, Col. Dir: Sidney Salkow. Music Dir: M. W. Stoloff
A fast-moving, rapid-fire story with an engrossing plot which holds one's interest throughout and whose stark realism is ameliorated by a genuine love interest adding to its general appeal. The leading parts are well played against a dramatic and beautifully photographed background. Music is well written and effective. It builds up in the appropriate places, in the court scene it is especially forceful, and helps create suspense throughout. Mature-family.

THE REMARKABLE MR. KIPPS, 20th-Fox. Dir: Carol Reed. Musical Dir: Louis Levy
From a story by H. G. Wells which he titles "the story of a simple man" this English drama to the average American audience will rate only as mediocre entertainment. In spite of its title, the hero does nothing remarkable; photography, with the exception of some outstanding montage shots and bits, is faulty and uninteresting; the story is drab. Cast is excellent throughout, even the minor parts being well done and the picture has a definite ethical value showing that wealth does not necessarily bring happiness. Music, of which there is regrettably little, is suitable to the romantic interludes in which is heard delicate, orchestral construction and is both melodic and atmospheric. Mature-family.

TALES OF MANHATTAN

"To understand the musical score for 'Tales of Manhattan' one must first know a little about this unusual film. It is made up in sequences which are related only by a connecting link -- which happens to be a tail-coat. Each sequence therefore is in a totally different mood ranging from sophisticated comedy to stark realism. I prefaced my musical remarks because this unique idea demands a unique score.

"My association with this film began when Mr. Morros asked me to write a Bacchanal which is the musical form for the sequence in which Charles Laughton appears. Mr. Morros was so impressed with this piece that the picture in this particular sequence was shot to the music. As a result I had the good fortune to write the complete musical score for this production. This was a vast undertaking for I wanted to be personified with each note of music to be played. I therefore composed music in almost every conceivable form, ranging from hot jazz and rhumba to symphonic works like the above mentioned Bacchanal, from passionate romance to the cacophony of modern New York, from a continental accordion waltz to a Gregorian chant.

"The scope and possibilities were vast indeed and needed much thought and inspiration. This, I was able to accomplish only because I worked with the picture and made myself as much a part of it as those who were on the sets. I had the cooperation, luckily enough, of my producer who was himself the head of a musical department for so many years. I experimented with ideas, with sounds, effects and instrumental combinations. Indeed this was a rare opportunity, for generally speaking, a composer in films is the last person to be connected with the picture and there is very little time to think clearly and create expertly. I have always contended that the musical score is of equal importance to a film as any of its component parts. If this score is as successful as we expect it to be this will prove a serious point."

- Sol Kaplan, composer of music score

"Sol Kaplan, graduate of Curtis Institute of Philadelphia, was recommended to me by a group of friends. Looking through his piano concerto and string quartette I felt a genuine fresh talent in his composition.

"I have also looked into his cinema debut on the original score he wrote for M-G-M short subject, 'Tell Tale Heart,' and in that I saw a real genius for cinema music. I disregarded completely his lack of experience because I believe there is no substitute for talent. The sixty-seven minutes of music written by Sol Kaplan for 'Tales of Manhattan,' in my estimation, puts him in the ranks of the foremost of cinema composers, on a par with Prokofieff and Shostakowitch."

Boris Morros
Producer of TALES OF MANHATTAN
Twentieth Century Fox

MUSICIANS IN HOLLYWOOD

by

Eleanore Rogers

One of the least recognized, but most praiseworthy angles of motion picture music in Hollywood, is that of the personnel of the studio orchestras.

How many of you movie goers have ever given a thought to the musicians who are playing the music you hear? How many of you know that a large proportion of the world's greatest instrumentalists are in Hollywood - lured here by the California sunshine, or frankly, because they can make a better living here than anywhere else? How many of you realize that these musicians banded together could make up the greatest symphony orchestra of all time? If my space permitted, I should like to give you the complete list of the outstanding names but here is just a sample:

Warwick Evans, English cellist, and founder of the famous London String Quartette. Evans was principal cellist with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, and for a time solo cellist with the Queens Hall Orchestra under Sir Henry Wood. Two other members of the Quartette are also playing in the studios. Thomas Petre, violin, and John Pennington, violin. Both of these musicians are distinguished soloists. It is with great pleasure that I can announce the reforming of the London String Quartette, under the patronage of Mrs. Coolidge, with a concert tour booked of 24 appearances.

The name of Toscha Seidel, world renowned violinist, speaks for itself.

Lauri Kennedy, cellist, now solo cellist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, with a reputation well established on two continents. Before coming to Hollywood, Kennedy was solo cellist with the famous B B C Orchestra of London. He is called "Toscanini's favorite cellist."

Bronislaw Gimpel, solo violinist of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Now called to the services of UNCLE SAM.

Emil Ferir, distinguished viola player with brilliant European reputation. Now first viola with Los Angeles Symphony.

Louis Kaufman, violin, formerly with the Musical Art Quartette.

Sylvan Noack, violinist, formerly with Boston Symphony and L. A. Symphony.

Alfred Brain, considered one of the world's greatest horn players. For many years he was first horn with the Queens Hall Orchestra and also the London Philharmonic. Later with the Cleveland Symphony.

Henri de Bussoher, famous the world over as the perfect oboe player. He is now first oboe of the Los Angeles Symphony.

Max Rabinowitsh, pianist. Was accompanist for Chaliapin for many years.

Vladimir Drucker, trumpet, has played with major symphonies in Europe; now first trumpet Los Angeles Symphony. Outstanding in his line.

Ary Van Leeuwen, first flute with Mengelberg in Amsterdam for many years.

Vladimir Bakaleinikoff, viola with the famous St. Petersburg Quartette. Also was assistant conductor Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra.

Harry Kaufmann, pianist. Teacher at the Curtis Institute of Music.

Ernest Huber, string bass. Played with Nikisch, Gewandhaus, Leipzig. Now first double bass Los Angeles Symphony.

There are a number of excellent women musicians playing in the studios, among them Nina Wulfe, violinist, a pupil of Carl Flesch, and at present the only woman player with the Los Angeles Symphony. Lysbeth Le Fevre, a pupil of Casals, concertized throughout Europe with great success, appearing with the Berlin Philharmonic, Orchestra of The Hague, and recently with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra.

American trained young musicians are coming to the fore and showing great talent. Outstanding is Virginia Majewski, viola, a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music. Two violinists who have attracted attention are Lilly Maher and Elizabeth Waldo, both of the Curtis School.