



FILM MUSIC NOTES



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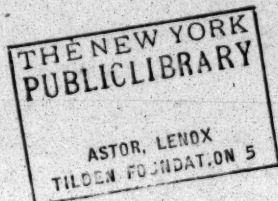
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FOREWORD:

Interest in the reproductions of Musical Themes from Current Motion Pictures, which was inaugurated in last month's issue, has been marked. With this number, at the request of some of our subscribers, we are inaugurating a further service in outlining brief biographical notes of the composer on the reverse side of the music sheet.

The Editors of FILM MUSIC NOTES are particularly gratified to record the lengthening list of subscribers among the city libraries and the more progressive schools and colleges all over the country. After this war, it is certain that more and more of our young people, trained as they are these days in visual and audio-education, will bring to the motion picture a life and intelligence far greater than any which has gone into its making heretofore. The scores of letters which the composers of picture music are receiving after the release of each of our better pictures is proof of this. That educators and librarians recognizing the value of the motion picture, not only as a source of entertainment but as an educational factor as well, are encouraging research into the music which goes into pictures is an excellent sign. It isn't so long ago that any discussion of pictures was discouraged at school. Time is indeed "marching on" and we with it!

CONTENTS:

NEWS ITEMS...COMMENTS...COMMENDATIONS

THE CINEMA WORKSHOP - U.S.C. by Margery Morrison

MUSIC IN THE MOVIES, by Dr. Sigmund Spaeth

NEW RUSSIAN FILM MUSIC BORN OF WAR, by Ivan Narodny

REVIEWS OF CURRENT FEATURE-LENGTH PICTURES

SAHARA THEMES, by Miklos Rozsa (FILM MUSIC NOTES PORTFOLIO, No. 2)

A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

NEWS ITEMS...COMMENTS...COMMENDATIONS

A showing of THE VOICE THAT THRILLED THE WORLD, a two-reel picture illustrating the development of sound on the screen, was recently arranged by THE NATIONAL FILM MUSIC COUNCIL (Mrs. Grace Widney Mabee, Founder and Chairman of the New York Committee). Members of the National Association of American Composers, Dr. Sigmund Spaeth, President, and others interested were invited to attend the performance, which took place at Warner Brothers Little Theater, in New York. Dr. Spaeth's comments on this most worthwhile picture will be found on another page of this issue.

The National Film Music Council is happy to announce that Miss Lila Belle Pitts has consented to serve on the Advisory Council. She will also serve as a member of the New York Preview Committee, where her wide knowledge of musical matters will make her presence doubly valuable. Miss Pitts is the President of the Music Educators Conference and Associate Professor at Teachers' College, Columbia University. Her interest in Film Music is genuine and of long standing.

There is no question but that Mr. Steiner rendered the composers of Motion Picture Music a service when he gave his much discussed concert at the Lewis Stadium last summer, and thereby refuted the claim generally put forth up to that time that to present such music without the film is inadvisable. The work of the pioneer is seldom appreciated at the time, but it is a fact that recently in Los Angeles Mr. Svedrovsky, who conducts the Standard Symphony hour on Sunday nights on one of the major networks for a large and discriminating radio audience, has included on each of his programs excerpts from Frank Skinner's score for Arabian Nights, the Ward concerto from Phantom of the Opera, Waxman's score for Rebecca and that of Korngold for Elizabeth and Essex, and it is to be hoped that more will follow the example.

Excerpts from our Mail

I was tempted to censure you for a certain paragraph in your appraisal of the Phantom of the Opera score, in which you say, "such as three bassoons (never used before)" but decided that I would let you off with a caution.

If FILM MUSIC NOTES promises to be more accurate in the future, it may deposit the enclosed check for one dollar and forget that I ever mentioned three bassoons.

With all good wishes for your continued and increasing success, I am,
Sincerely, Adolph Deutsch

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Will you please enter my subscription to FILM MUSIC NOTES? In addition I would appreciate any back numbers of the magazine you can provide.

At the super-movie-conscious Cleveland Public Library I noticed in a display case a copy of your magazine open to a page reproducing in manuscript form a section of Erich Wolfgang Korngold's score for The Constant Nymph. Immediately I investigated, looked over a few back copies, wrote down your address, and here I am.

Sincerely yours, Donald D. Warman, Jr.

* * * *

The sets of FILM MUSIC NOTES arrived several days ago. I am most appreciative of your efforts in getting them through OK. Will put one set in our Day Room so any men in our outfit interested can keep up on the trends in movie music.

For a year or so I was a member of the National Federation of Music Clubs, having a chorus in a small town in Wisconsin and our aim was to assist in raising the musical appreciation standards of the community. I wish to commend your efforts and the other organizations which have been so noticeably successful in improving the musical scores of the late films. Very sincerely yours, T/Sgt Daniel R. Ruggles,
Somewhere in the Southwest Pacific, Area-28, Oct. '43, Courtesy American Red Cross.

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If Director Alfred Hitchcock goes through with his original idea, LIFEBOAT will have no background music. "Where would symphonic music come from in a lifeboat adrift in the middle of the Atlantic?" asks Hitchcock. Someone in the music department heard about this and said, "Ask Hitchcock where did the camera come from?"

THE CINEMA WORKSHOP - U.S.C.

By Margery Morrison

"Compare the cinema with architecture, music, painting, sculpture and it is amazing what has been accomplished in less than fifty years by this youthful art! It not only has unlimited seeds for development, but a social value and appeal that cannot be measured!"

This is an enthusiast speaking - Harris Moore, Acting Head of Cinematics at the University of Southern California. While teaching at a South Carolina university, and in Poughkeepsie, New York, Mr. Moore became vitally interested in the field of Visual Education. That led him inevitably to the movies and their educational potentialities.

"How did you go about it?" I inquired

"By writing over seventy personal letters to magazines, studios, directors," he replied. "I wanted information about courses of study, methods of approach. Then I came to U.S.C. for graduate work and for the past two years have been connected with the Cinematic Department which has been in existence about ten years."

The Cinema Workshop is just what its name implies - a laboratory for the study of the cinema and allied subjects..photography, sound recording, music (film),radio, animation, production, scenario writing, make-up. The classrooms and projection rooms are picturesque - low building surrounding a patio in true Californian style. The accent is on the equipment which is modern and first class. Several pictures have been produced and sold to the studios.

"Have you connections with any of the major studios?"

"No! we are absolutely independent. At the head of each department are men who are first in their field. In charge of sound recording is a man whose name is often listed in the credits of our previews. The man who heads the radio is leader of the news department on one of our national chains. Boris Morros was first to be associated with us for Film Music. He gives an evening course illustrating various methods of synchronization - writing for mood, background, film orchestration, etc. He is, of course, known all over the country for his connection with theatrical productions and has been head of the music department at one of the major studios. Ernst Toch, widely known in Berlin as a pioneer in cinema music in the pre-Hitler days, later identified with British films, is now on the staff. He will be remembered as composer of the film score for 'Cat and Canary,' 'Ladies in Retirement' and lately, 'First Comes Courage'."

"How do the students select their courses - find their real aptitudes?"

"We offer a cultural course and a technical course. The cultural course begins with fundamentals dealing with general information, appreciation and evaluation. We teach by the laboratory method using actual films for illustration. We study, for instance, the Griffith films, methods, etc."

Here then is a brief glimpse of the Cinema Workshop. It is the first to be made an integral part of University training. At present there are about two hundred students and its graduates are scattered all over the world in essential positions

Musicians should realize the prime necessity of informing themselves about the engineering and mechanical problems, the general procedure of the cinema. The technical and the artistic must cooperate.

Stokowski, for example, made a great contribution to radio and film music when he spent a year studying these problems of recording and mixing sound..testing constantly with his orchestra. Balance, timing, projection and texture of tone all gained tremendously in value.

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Notes on a special interview with Dr. R. B. von KleinSmid, President of U.S.C., arrived too late to be included. They will be published next month.

MUSIC IN THE MOVIES

By Dr. Sigmund Spaeth, President of the National Association for American Composers and Conductors and a member of the National Advisory Council of the National Film Music Council. A talk given at the 20th Annual Conference of the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures, October 28th.

I think it is very necessary for us to pay serious attention to the music that goes with motion pictures. Strangely enough, music has been a bit of a stepchild in movies, and yet it has always been recognized as an absolute essential. Back in the old days of silent pictures there was at least a little tin-pan pianist in the small theater, generally improvising, trying to follow what was on the screen, and doing pretty well at it. In the days of silent pictures the artists, the actors and actresses usually insisted on having some music on the set while they were acting. They couldn't emote properly unless they had it. That was an admission of the importance of music to the picture. Then as soon as sound came it was immediately discovered no picture was really complete without some sort of musical background.

I would like to make these distinctions in the use of music for the screen. You have, in the first place, and most commonly, mere background music. That is what you hear most of the time. According to Hollywood producers and directors the chief function of background music is to keep out of the way of the action and any dialogue or other sound effects, because if the music obtrudes itself, imposes itself too much on your attention then you are going to find your interest in the story disturbed. This music must be so good that it always helps point up a situation, a dramatic climax, and sustain mood. But it must never make you aware of it as music.

Then there are films, feature films and also to a greater extent short pictures, in which the music is more than mere incidental, more than mere background. A film such as *The Constant Nymph*, which is being shown now, in which the plot is a musical working up to the climax of a rather elaborate composition, which Mr. Erich Korngold, one of the leading composers of the world today, wrote. There is a very interesting attempt there to show the development of an actual piece of music. We have right now *The Phantom of the Opera* in which the music of Tschaiowsky and Chopin is turned into so-called operas. It is actually instrumental passages built into operas.

Now, beyond that there is the type of movie that definitely treats a musical subject, that concentrates on a certain piece of music or the life of a musical composer, or it may be the showing of a band as you have it in the popular shorts. There are many varieties of that sort, of course, finding their climax in the actual synchronization of music and picture in the direct interpretation of an actual piece of music on the screen, which I think finds its climax in Walt Disney's *Fantasia*.

I insist always that if you are going to put music on the screen you must be sure of your audience appeal; you must be sure of entertainment as well as education. So that you have in these films, and particularly the short ones that deal specifically with a musical subject, two possible extremes, both of which I think are dangerous. You have the extreme of dullness on the one side, where you are trying to be educational and forgetting the absolute necessity of entertainment value, and you have on the other side the danger of mere superficiality. I think the happy medium may be in just such a picture as *Heavenly Music*, where you have a concession to the jitter-bugs. In a sugar-coated way your youngster, who is, of course, an important element in the motion picture gets the idea that Beethoven and the rest of the composers were pretty important people, and perhaps they wrote some music well worth listening to.

(more)

I believe there is a place for a picture which perhaps would do for music what the shorts have done for sports. To me those are ideal presentations, and why shouldn't we, just as well as having Pete Smith tell the audience how golf is played by Bobby Jones or tennis by Bill Tilden as it used to be, tell the audience how music is played by a great pianist or great violinist? We have had touches of it here and there. I think there is a whole field there for short pictures. Not to speak of the possibility of the stories behind our great songs, our national songs, the folk music which Russia and other countries have put on the screen, and which we have not yet really tackled. We have a tremendous treasure of folk music in this country that could be effective on the screen with the actual music. And finally, the actual presentation of a piece of music for which the screen is merely a visual accompaniment.

Some of the finest work done by American composers has been on the screen, and I have the greatest admiration, not only for those scores of background music made by the skilful experienced men of Hollywood, but the scores that are occasionally entrusted to a man who already has made a great reputation as a composer. We have a lot of our topnotch composers now called in to do these scores - we can, therefore, assume that the motion picture is an outlet for our best music, and that our best composers are going to express themselves more and more through that medium. In fact, the future of American music, to my mind, lies on the screen and on the radio far more than it does in the concert hall or the opera house.

Music is a universal language, is the common ground on which all of us can meet, because it is what they will understand everywhere, China, Italy, France, Russia, wherever it may be. They will get the universal elements of acting as they did in music which everyone understands.

* * * * *

Afterthoughts by Dr. Spaeth

Actually the most interesting music at present on the screen is to be found in that mad mixture of the serious and the absurd, Thousands Cheer. The high spot is probably Iturbi's boogie-woogie piano playing with Judy Garland, but he also does some more traditional things at the keyboard, plus excellent conducting of a glamorous band. Kathryn Grayson is the real star, a surprise package of brilliant singing and delightful acting. Her top notes and coloratura rival the most amazing tricks on the flying trapeze. Gene Kelly has a wonderful dance routine that gets him out of the "heel" type that Hollywood has thus far insisted upon. (From heel, to heel and toe, as it were!) Popular bands help to liven the proceedings, and there are several outstanding acts in the vaudeville show that a studio is supposed to produce at a moment's notice. Technicolor again takes a bow, and seems to have established itself as the natural background to good music.

The Voice that Thrilled the World, a concentrated history of talking pictures is a fascinating exhibit, which will appeal to the general public as well as to students of films. The voice of Thomas Edison reciting "Mary Had a Little Lamb," the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Henry Hadley, in a musical background to John Barrymore's Don Juan, the talking, singing and playing of Al Jolson as The Jazz Singer, these are only a few high spots in a consistently interesting and significant picture, indicating the tremendous strides that have been made in the recording of sound since Warner Bros. began their pioneer work in this field.

NEW RUSSIAN FILM MUSIC BORN OF WAR

By Ivan Narodny

This war is going to create a new film music in Russia of which the outside world has hardly any idea yet. Like phantoms of a different world, the men who are participating in this ghastly war have created a new psychology and new conceptions of life that will require a great change in music and the arts. The men who face death every hour and yet live forget that there is another life besides that of the firing line. They are no longer interested in music and films that they used to see and hear before. Dr. F. Pavlov, who has been concerned in army front entertainments for a long time, writes on the matter:

"The Russians love music so much that it has become a kind of magic moral stimulant to the soldiers on the army front. Films that have no music are not displayed on the army front or to a public absorbed by its war problems. We are creating a new film music, a music different from that which the outside world knows. Our film music in short telegraphic sentences speaks a language that emanates from the depths of agony and horror. It is strangely symbolic and melodic in a peculiar way. All the army front music is meant to breathe something religious, supernatural, titanic. Not the modernistic, artificial, but the simple spiritual idea appeals to army audiences. Fairies, ghosts, visions, men's souls, and things akin to them figure in the themes of nearly all trench-loved music.

"The music that the army men used to like before is out of question. The melodies that they liked before now sound banal. They hate the airs of musical comedies or popular concert songs and the instrumental music of the social world, as it sounds insipid and dead. They want the mystic, the humanitarian and the fantastic in the sound, which is only natural as sound in trenches is something that speaks of death or life. The tone of an instrument is a magic word. The new phrase of the army films is like a religious sermon, immense, spaceless, timeless. It speaks of the mysteries of life and the necessity of death. It carries one away from material pleasure or sorrow, from material narrowness and brutality. When a soldier hesitates or is afraid, he wants music that tells him that he must depend on the cosmic will and trust his destiny. We live now for the cosmic ideal. Music is the magic underground in a visible action. A new film shortly to be made is called 'The Dance of Death,' with music of the actual army front by various soldiers. Its characters emerge and vanish as if they were living phantoms of a spirit world. The tones of the instruments sound intense and filled with something exotic, vibrating with emotions. The rhythm is suggestive of a gigantic upheaval of nature, full of ghastliness and special charm. Nature and man, death and life breathe out of every chord, every note, as a mystic nightmare."

* * * * *

Though he is a citizen of this country and has lived here many years, Ivan Narodny has never lost interest in the music of his native Russia. As writer, journalist and critic he has worked unflinchingly to promote the interests of Russian music over here and to make our composers known over there. A lifelong friend of the great Russian composer and conductor, Reinhold Gliere, he is still hopeful of being able to persuade him to visit this country. It is Gliere, incidentally, who has furnished the musical setting for a play written by Mr. Narodny, and later to be made into a picture which should be of special interest to all Americans since it deals with a little known phase of the life of our own Admiral John Paul Jones, when he was at the court of Catherine the Great, the most glamorous of all Russian Monarchs!

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

Grace Widney Mabee, New York Chairman, Constance Purdy, Hollywood Chairman.

CORVETTE K-225, Univ. (Convoys Courageous). Dir: R. Rosson. Music: David Buttolph
Magnificent photography distinguishes this exciting action picture with its many
human touches. The general pattern of the film is the familiar one - return of sur-
vivors thirsting for revenge, characterizations of types, new ship assembling and
sailing the convoy, with the usual charting of the course and final instructions to
commanders, details of crew and the ship's routine, U-boat attacks, storms, final
revenge, and the heroes limping victoriously into port. A very fine musical accom-
paniment adds much to the interest of the film. It is rich and sonorous in tone and
is developed as it recurs, forging ahead and masculine in its voicing. Nice shading
marks the background music at the Canteen with the cello standing out for the roman-
tic moment. Good features also are the rough and ready music in the seamen's club,
just far enough away to drift across the talk, and the Bosun's piping. Atmosphere
is well suggested throughout. Mature-Family.

FALSE COLORS, U.A. (Cassidy Rides Again). Dir: George Archainbaud
Musical Director: Irvin Talbott

Good average western in which the music, well cued in with the action, follows these
definite patterns - dangerous riding, swift and deadly shooting, peaceful country,
loping measure and good company. The picture opens with a menace - two villains
galloping over desert badlands to spy on a caravan and shoot the man they want out
of the way. Uncompleted repeated sequences, fast movements and plenty of low fre-
quency woodwinds. Snarling strings and occasional brass make the accompanying music
graphic. The loping rhythm later suggests peace, security and good fellowship.
There is a lovely effect of fair weather, sunshine and the sound of a breeze in the
trees. The story sustains interest to the end, in true western style. Mature-Family.

GOVERNMENT GIRL, RKO-Radio. (Hectic Washington). Pro-Dir: Dudley Nichols

Music by Leigh Harline. Musical Director: C. Bakaleinikoff

Present day Washington, with its politics, propoganda, administration problems, over-
crowding and red tape, are all in the texture of this up-to-date photographic com-
edy, which, if overdone in spots, is nevertheless prime entertainment. Heading a
fine cast is Olivia de Havilland, and once more she proves herself, in the Senate
investigation scene to be one of our foremost dramatic actresses, making the story
believable by the sheer impact of her performance alone. Leigh Harline gives his
signature to a score which, under the musical direction of C. Bakaleinikoff, is
cleverly cued, orchestrated and evaluated throughout. A gay, adventurous theme
originates in the Union Station, continues to the hotel and blends with the strains
of the wedding music, and comedy rhythms point up the many amusing and pithy situa-
tions. It is refreshing to have a picture of this type without a night club scene,
but unfortunately one unnecessary drinking sequence has been introduced, which in
no way adds to the picture. Mature-Family.

GUADALCANAL DIARY, 20th-Fox. (Poignant Documentary). Dir: Lewis Seiler

Music by David Buttolph. Musical Director: Emil Newman

Beautiful photography, combined with realistic acting make this tragic picture of
the cruel hardship, overwhelming odds and actual suffering undergone by our Marines
in the Pacific, an outstanding document. It is not entertainment in the usual sense
of the word, but for those who can take it, it represents a major achievement in
production and value. As to the music - it is built up until the tension engendered
is almost unbearable, instilling authentic atmosphere wherever it is used, with fine
contrast in the shipboard music and the terrific background cued in from grim en-
counters as the story bites in. Patriotic airs are skilfully blended and orches-
trated at the right moment, especially in the stirring swing of the Marine Song as
they pass the Army troops which are to replace them. Mature-Family.

IN OLD OKLAHOMA, Rep. (Black Gold). Dir: Albert S. Rogell

Music by Walter Scharf

Colorful and exciting is this new version of an old story - that of the conquest of oil lands in the Oklahoma of the late '90s. It is well acted and elaborately produced, contains some unusual and original train sequences, and a good background of frontier music. The traveling rhythms are well done and those of the machinery and race with the elements tellingly coordinated. Interesting bit of modern music from the phonograph - the strains of a Strauss waltz. Family.

JOHNNY COME LATELY, Cagney-U.A. (The American Scene). Dir: William K. Howard

Musical Director: Leigh Harline

This is not an A picture in the sense that vast sums have been expended in its production or in having a roster of star names. It is, rather, a story of simple people who have the courage of their convictions and are willing to lose all for what they think is right. Direction is excellent, the story refreshing, and too much cannot be said for Cagney's characterization throughout. It is also a pleasure to welcome Grace George to the screen. She looked and played her part to perfection. An exceptionally fine musical score, the work of Leigh Harline, accompanies the picture - it is unobtrusive, yet always properly fitting. Mature-Family.

LOST ANGEL, MGM. (A Modern Fairytale). Dir: Roy Rowland

Music by Daniele Amfitheatrof. Musical Director: Nat Finston

An absolutely delightful story, told with right values and perception of the child's point of view. When Alpha leaves the Institute to discover magic for herself we find it with her. Maxfield Parrish, for example, gave us the same quality in picturing an orchard as it looks to a child. When she is swept up to the policeman's horse, when she looks into the Chinese shop, the dimension is changed unmistakably. Photography in the picture is lovely and plays an important part in creating just the right atmosphere. The opening shot, especially, is noteworthy - the perspective of the street angle opposite the Foundling Home, the night effects, etc. Music throughout is as charming as it is appropriate. That which spells magic resembles in character, perhaps in orchestral effect, the astrologer's in Coq d'Or - though it is no imitation. Little Margaret O'Brien as Alpha proves to be that rare jewel - a real child actress. She is natural and unspoiled, with almost a touch of genius. F.

MY KINGDOM FOR A COOK, Col. (Timely Nonsense). Dir: Richard Wallace

Musical Director: M. W. Stoloff

While there is nothing new about the plot and the picture could be cut to advantage, it furnishes amusing situations, is well tied together and has a good finish. There is dry humor in the story and the music incidental to it is appropriate and sprightly with the introduction setting the keynote in robust British rhythm and comedy orchestration. Musical jokes throughout the score give a good fillip, like the disguised "Rule Britannia" merging into "Yankée Doodle" as Morley arrives in the states. Spirited orchestration and the texture employed buoy up the whole. Family.

MYSTERY BROADCAST, Rep. (Radio and Murder). Dir: George Sherman

Musical Director: Morton Scott

An entertaining picture with plenty of thrills for the mystery-murder fans, but with some sequences unsolved, which should have been clarified to make the story complete. Direction is good, the action convincing and in the photography every possible angle is used to make the film more exciting. Some very sinister effects in muted high-frequency monotone occur in the score - slow chimes (also muted) - again for suspense, along with the heavy pacing of footsteps in broken rhythm add to the general creepiness. The recording of the wind in the pines is most effective. In fact, sound effects are tellingly employed throughout and in the studio scenes add a touch of welcome comedy, as well. Mature-Family.

THE NORTH STAR, Goldwyn. (War Comes to a Village). Dir: Lewis Milestone
Music by Aaron Copland. Lyrics by Ira Gershwin

With production, photography, casting and direction all of the finest caliber and the accompanying score by Mr. Copland a masterpiece of human values, one of the most genuinely moving war pictures to date has been made to live before our eyes. It has been handled with deep seriousness and real understanding, sensitively and beautifully, and the nobility and courage of a people defending with their lives the honor of their country could not be presented to the American people through any more forceful medium than this one, in which the coordinated rhythm of story, photography and music is exceptional. The photography, by James Wong Howe, is most dramatic and the Russian timing - that is to say, the passage of a day, has been marvelously captured by him with early morning, the gradual changing of the sky and shadows, and the same locality under all conditions as in life. Mr. Copland has given us a strength and fundamental sincerity, an originality of treatment, and climatic effects that make this score an event. As noted above, it is a masterpiece in terms of human values even through the harsh dissonances and shattering impact of the climax. The first half of the picture is a notable contribution to modern folk music, with Mr. Gershwin responsible for the lyrics. Done with a background of accordions, strings, woodwinds and the voices of villagers and children, old and young, the result is an impressive simplicity of style and expression. We have songs of work and play, dances and a walking song - all equally authentic sounding and delightful, and the skill shown in sounds and visual effects is amazing. Mature-Family.

OLD ACQUAINTANCE, W.B. (The Rivals). Dir: Vincent Sherman

Music by Franz Waxman. Musical Director: Leo Forbstein

Mature direction and a closely woven story with plenty of backbone, fine acting and beautiful photography combine with an exceptional music score to make this good cinema. Bette Davis and Miriam Hopkins are excellent foils and Esther Dale plays Harriet inimitably and to the life. The dialogue throughout is clever and sparkling; never forced and the photography is capably handled, with the final shot as the room with the old acquaintance sinks from view unusually interesting. The Waxman score, beginning inevitably with a strain of Auld Lang Syne, starts off on a definite emotional life of its own with climactic treatment, then ends on the same melody. This score is much more than a commentary or background music. It derives from the story and marks definite emotional crises - the first flicker of interest, a bit of sentimental development of heart interest, discord, dissonance and finally a breadth and sweep that denotes a poignant story. It is a step in the new musical pathway - envisages all, is in the modern idiom and beautifully orchestrated. Mature-Family.

RIDING HIGH, Para. (Glamour and Girls). Dir: George Marshall

Music by Victor Young

This is a rough-and-ready musical whose value lies chiefly in its treatment of technicolor backgrounds. The real feel of the west is there with its air and space, clouds and softened outlines. Action, speed, and all the colorful pageantry of Indians, cowboys, sheriff, rodeos and duderanch are combined with sophisticated floor shows. There is no score in the usual sense but many songs in the popular manner are strung together and sung on the slightest provocation; there is plenty of rhythm and the dances are well done...the Indian number on an almost overpowering scale. Dorothy Lamour is her beautiful self and Dick Powell nobly gives of his best. It all adds up to fair entertainment. Mature-Family.

SAHARA, Col. (Heroism in the Desert). Dir: Zoltan Korda

Musical Score by Miklos Rozsa. Musical Dir: M. W. Stoloff

Preeminently a man's picture, this is a stirring story of war, all the better for its not having the ordinary love interest. Direction is masterful, there are many frustrations as there would be in life, the happenings are never too obvious and all character delineations are graphic and tense in interest with especially fine work by Bogart and Naish and the Nazi airman, played by Kurt Krueger. The score is

(SAHARA cont'd)

admirably blended into the frame of the picture, not too loud, and just far enough away to suggest another dimension. The introduction is brief, definitely employing the Oriental traveling-rug theme. Muted trumpets at its close announce the background for Lulubelle (the American tank to whom the only words of affection that occur in the story are addressed) and become more insistent at the close of this sequence foretelling an ominous tale. A fleeting mirage effect uses muted chimes and woodwinds. A beautiful oasis theme, as refreshing as Massenet's is skilfully developed against the trickle of water. But this peace and momentary serenity are changed suddenly to tragedy when the Germans arrive and the battle is on. The score here shows great strength. There is no attempt at nationalism or of incidental illustration. The feel of the desert and of fate is accomplished as much by the music as by the outstanding photography. Mature-Family.

SHRINE OF VICTORY, 20th-Fox. (Greek Testament). Dir: Charles Hasse

In this simple and touching narrative of a Greek naval officer we have a clear picture of his country - its background, starting with the unusual shot of the Parthenon frieze. Magnificent photography giving the feel of the land; its characteristics and the enveloping sea. Musical background chiefly strings - I suppose the aulos. The outstanding example is the unaccompanied folk song sung as an aid to escape. This with the Greek national anthem and one of the dance numbers should make a record with wide appeal, and a commercial one at that. Mature-Family.

TOP MAN, Univ. (Songs and Jive). Dir: Charles Lamont

Musical Director: Charles Previn

This is the best of the Universal light musicals to date. The numbers are all entertaining, the orchestrations expert and up-to-date, with the Harmonica Group a welcome addition. It would be a good thing, however, if some way of augmenting a piano number could be originated. The present method sounds well but is poor theater. Susanna Foster's lovely voice and real charm are not used to the best advantage either, but O'Connor is a natural and very likeable in this picture, and whether one approves their antics or not it must be conceded that this is a clever and gifted group of young people. Richard Dix and Lillian Gish make good ballast and the airplane angle gives a patriotic and timely touch to the story. Family.

THE UNKNOWN GUEST, Mono. (Surprise Mystery). Dir: Kurt Newmann

Musical Director: Edward Kay

An ingenious production with a surprise ending, and whole situations carefully built up by suggestion. It provides fair entertainment and some clever character studies, and the score is an interesting one materially contributing to the suspense. Several recent scores have used low frequencies with wide intervals, and indistinct, muted chimes superimposed for weird situations - they prove very effective. Very nice, too, is the swish and swirl when Chuck casts his fly in the night fishing scene. M.F.

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A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

A meeting of film composers was held at the Beverly Hills Hotel on Tuesday, November 3, 1942. The present committee is a temporary one, and consists of the following composers: Anthony Collins, Adolph Deutsch, Leigh Harline, Arthur Lange, Edward Plumb, Max Steiner, Herbert Stothart, Roy Webb and Victor Young.

They have met many times during the past year, and have been in constant communication with ASCAP. Their findings will be made known at a meeting in the very near future.

Sixty-five composers were invited; forty-three attended and, of the remaining absentees, many telephoned their complete accord with any actions the group might take.

It was unanimously decided to send ASCAP a wire of protest against the adoption of any new writer classification system, until they had been consulted more fully.

It was also resolved that they take steps to form a Film Composers Guild, (name subject to change). The resolution was unanimously adopted.

More specifically the broad objectives are as follows:

- (1) To form a Guild, Society, Alliance or League of Composers. No affiliation with the American Federation of Musicians is contemplated in view of the fact that the work is purely creative and does not fall into any Labor Union category.
- (2) To formulate a Basic Agreement between the group, and the Motion Picture Producers, anticipating the widespread use of their music in Television, Slot Movie Machines, Juke Boxes, Radio, and the Concert Halls; Publication problems and general studio relationships.
- (3) To survey and analyze the U. S. Copyright Law with a view to devising amendments which will correct existing inequities. To endeavor to coordinate their amendments with those being drawn up by many other groups of individuals, corporations, and labor organizations and to present an integrated plan to the Congressional Committee on Copyrights.
- (4) To promote closer relationships between composers and the various arts and crafts that contribute to American films; to raise artistic standards.

THE DESERT THEME

Molto Moderato

Sahara

Niklos Rassa

Handwritten musical score for 'The Desert Theme'. It consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (B-flat, E-flat) and a common time signature. The lower staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature. The music features a series of chords and melodic lines. A dynamic marking of *f pesante* is written above the first few notes of the upper staff.

TAMBUL'S THEME

Moderato

Handwritten musical score for 'Tambul's Theme'. It consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F#, C#) and a common time signature. The lower staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature. The music features a series of chords and melodic lines. A dynamic marking of *p dolce* is written above the first few notes of the upper staff.

NAZI THEME

Moderato assai

Handwritten musical score for 'Nazi Theme'. It consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature. The lower staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature. The music features a series of chords and melodic lines. A dynamic marking of *f deciso* is written above the first few notes of the upper staff.

VICTORY THEME

frandioso

Handwritten musical score for 'Victory Theme'. It consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and a common time signature. The lower staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature. The music features a series of chords and melodic lines. A dynamic marking of *ff* is written above the first few notes of the upper staff. The word *etc.* is written at the end of the piece.

MIKLOS ROZSA

Internationally acclaimed composer and musical director for Alexander Korda Films, Inc., Miklos Rozsa was born in Budapest, Hungary in 1907, where he received his early musical education. When he was eighteen, he entered the Conservatory of Leipzig to complete his musical studies. Before ending his final examinations at the Leipzig school, the noted publishing house of Breitkopf & Hartel offered him a long term contract and published a considerable number of his chamber music works. These works were enthusiastically received and were performed by many of the leading chamber music ensembles in Europe.

In 1931, he turned to the orchestra for means of musical expression, writing a SERENADE FOR CHAMBER ORCHESTRA (Op. 10) which met with remarkable success. He then settled in Paris, where he wrote his THEME, VARIATIONS AND FINALE (Op. 13), a work which has been performed by nearly all of the leading orchestras of the world. This composition was first performed in America in 1937 by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and in 1943 by the New York Philharmonic, conducted by Bruno Walter.

The passing of four years found Rozsa in London where his Hungarian ballet was produced. It was here that he received the first offer to compose music for a motion picture - Knight Without Armor, starring Marlene Dietrich. Ever since his success he has been associated with motion pictures.

American film audiences will undoubtedly recall the following pictures for which Rozsa wrote musical scores - Thunder in the City; Divorce of Lady X; Four Feathers; U-Boat 29; On the Night of the Fire; Missing Ten Days; Thief of Bagdad; That Hamilton Woman; Lydia; Sundown; The Jungle Book; Jacare; Five Graves to Cairo; Sahara; The Hour Before Dawn; So Proudly we Hail.

In 1938, Rozsa was awarded Hungary's highest musical honor, the "Francis Joseph Prize," for composition.

A year later, his CAPRICCIO, PASTORALE e DANZA (Op. 14) was given its first performance at Baden Baden International Music Festival, and was unanimously acclaimed by the press as the Festival's greatest musical success.

Rozsa's orchestral works have been performed under the direction of Bruno Walter, Pierre Monteux, Albert Coates, Eugene Ormandy, Hans Lange, Charles Munch, Ernst von Dohnanyi, Karl Straube, Hans Weisbach and other American and European conductors

One of his most recent motion picture scores, composed for Kipling's The Jungle Book, has been recorded by the RCA-Victor Company into a colorful multi-record album. This is the first American film music ever to have received such recognition.

Rozsa just finished a CONCERTO FOR STRING ORCHESTRA (Op. 16), and a motef for mixed choir (Op. 17).

The National Association for American Composers and Conductors awarded the citation of merit to Rozsa for outstanding service to American music during the season 1942-43.

He is presently engaged on scores for Chopin (Columbia), and The Man of Halfmoon Street (Paramount).

It might interest our readers that the New York Philharmonic under Bruno Walter gave four performances this month in Carnegie Hall of his THEME, VARIATIONS AND FINALE.