



FILM MUSIC NOTES

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FOREWORD:

Elsewhere in this issue will be found a full account of the Music Forum held in Los Angeles under the joint auspices of the Western Music Educators and the National Film Music Council, on June 10th, at the beautiful Carthay Circle Theater.

The unqualified success of this meeting and the enthusiasm it evoked makes one effectively realize the desire that exists to learn more about the correlation of music to pictures, and it is the hope of the National Film Music Council to make this Forum only the first of a series, perhaps opening in the fall with one contributed by Walt Disney on Latin American music. These will be held not only in Hollywood but in New York as well.

In line with our policy of becoming acquainted with what is being done in film scoring in other countries, as well as our own, FILM MUSIC NOTES plans a series of articles for next year dealing with this subject which we hope will prove of interest to our readers. Other features of importance are already under consideration.

With this issue FILM MUSIC NOTES finishes the third year of its existence. It has seen a most gratifying expansion of its subscription lists and we hope that as we go on growing we may, of course, do bigger and better things. Our thanks to our readers for their letters, suggestions and comments. We will be with you again in October and meanwhile may each day of the intervening months bring us nearer to that day of Victory we all so earnestly await.

- The Editors.

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NEWS ITEMS....COMMENTS

This is the last number of the present volume for, as most of our readers already know, we do not publish in the summer. We shall be checking up on the music for all major films just as usual, however, during the next three months and preparing articles for the October number which we hope will be of special interest. Meanwhile, send in your suggestions.

* * *

In checking over our subscription list we note that our readers are scattered all over the United States...thirty-nine states are represented but alas, nine are still in utter darkness so far as we are concerned. These are Washington, Maine, Rhode Island, New Mexico, Montana, Idaho, North and South Dakota and Alabama. May we not hope this error will be rectified in the near future so that we may present a united front to the world?

* * *

The large and interested audience of students and music lovers at the Music Forum on Film Music, June 10th, was very gratifying to the sponsors: The National Film Music Council, Grace Widney Mabee New York Chairman, Constance Purdy Hollywood Chairman; the Music Educators' Conference, Mrs. E. W. Dill; and to Alice Evans Field of the Motion Picture Producers & Distributors of America, and Ryllis Hemington of Fox West Coast, through whose cooperation the showing of the documentary film, THE MEMPHIS BELLE, was made at the Carthay Circle Theater.

The highlight of the occasion, of course, was the appearance of Corporal Gail Kubik of the Culver City Army Musical Unit, who composed the score. In a delightfully informal and spontaneous manner he gave a brief resume of his treatment of the score. After the presentation of the film, the first 700 feet were shown without sound effects or music and finally the complete music score was given without the picture or sound effects.

Vital evidence of the widespread interest in this field of music was shown by the enthusiastic young musicians who thronged about Corporal Kubik, at the conclusion of his talk, to ask pertinent questions about film scoring.

"The few civilians who see the films made by the First Motion Picture Unit, Army Air Forces, are privileged," wrote Isabel Morse Jones, in a recent article for the Los Angeles Times, for which she is music critic. "They are looking into the films of the future. The production of training, orientation and documentary films for the Air Forces and the training and equipping of combat units is a vital and important work in this war. The streamline technique, the direct methods used will be adopted in the studios. Music is composed especially for these pictures. Alexander Steinert, Gail Kubik and Dave Rose are in the army now and this is their post. Their music is written after the films are cut.

"Organized in July, 1942, at the Vitagraph Studios, Los Angeles, the unit was formed with men enlisted directly from commercial studios. After completing basic training at Fort Mac Arthur they were transferred to the unit headquarters to work on A.A.F. training films. The organization leased the Hal Roach Studios on October, 1942, and twelve days later shooting started. In November, 1942, the unit received orders to send combat camera units to every theater of operations. Since the date of its activation the unit has worked on more than 300 film projects and has completed nearly 100 training films. Most of them have music to point up dialogue and emphasize values.

"These three composers, well-known for their work in decidedly individual fields, work together and work separately at the post. Steinert is the romanticist, the smooth orchestrator with a leaning toward French subtlety. Kubik does the Disney type of animated training film and combat films that can be accented by his ultra-modernism, effective and streamlined as it is. Rose is the popular lyricist with a gift for arrangements and orchestration as well as singable melodies."

(NEWS ITEMS....COMMENTS cont'd)

The current New Yorker carries a very nice biographical sketch of Kurt Weill, familiar to our readers for his scoring of "Lady in the Dark," "Knickerbocker Holiday," etc. To New Yorkers he is equally well-known for his delightful work in "One Touch of Venus."

* * *

Alice Evans Field, who heads the Department of Studio and Public Service of the Hays Office, reports that some nice letters have come in anent her fine article on Film Scoring published in our May number. It may interest our readers to know that she is responsible also for the four-page pamphlet published weekly by the Hays Office, called "What's Happening in Hollywood," and which covers news of pictures in production from every conceivable angle which might be of interest to the layman. This little bulletin is a perfect gold mine of valuable information. How Mrs. Field ever manages to find the time to do the tremendous research involved, in addition to all her other work, will always be a mystery to us. But we take off our hats to her and are grateful for the helpful material of every description which emanates from her office.

* * *

Another Hollywood bulletin worthy of note that is published by the American Society of Music Arrangers, called "The Score." It contains much data of interest to all musicians and especially film musicians, and should enjoy a wide circulation among all of them.

* * *

No picture has been released this year which has roused as much spontaneous comment as VOICE IN THE WIND, scored and arranged by Michel Michelet (reviewed in the March issue). Russian born, connected with the University of Kieff, Mr. Michelet concertized extensively in Europe, lived for a time in Vienna where he played in a string quartet, then became interested in the cinema. For several years he then arranged and adapted music for the silent films in France. This was an experimental period of development and growth in a new medium. His creative ability found expression in over one hundred pictures. With the fall of France, he and his wife came to America. Three years in Hollywood have given him an insight into the American tempo and reactions. It is interesting to know that his first success in our country was obtained through writing for high school orchestras throughout the country. Mr. Michelet believes in the integrated score, not background music. For the most part dialogue should be unaccompanied and music can express what speech leaves unsaid - its real function. Sound effects gain by being written into the score for psychological reasons. Above all, the composer and engineer should work together in dubbing. An expression, a nuance in photography may call for changed values in dynamics. In this picture, the producer, director, writer and composer all worked together from the first and so have given it a value and distinction possible in no other way.

* * *

The following excerpts are from O. Lenard Quinto's thesis presented in 1942 to the University of Southern California - "A Survey of the Use of Music in the Entertainment Film." Mr. Quinto was, at one time, a member of the preview (Hollywood) committee. His thesis is highly interesting and informative and we hope it may be made available to the public. "The future of all film music lies in the hands of (1) the composers themselves through their musical integrity rather than monetary remuneration, and (2) the critics and public in organizing constructive opinions, thereby letting the studios know the score's worth to the films. In such a manner only will film scores come to be written in the style of the film, and at the same time make a contribution to the field of music. Documentary music has opened to film music composers a new set of horizons." Mr. Quinto also quotes with emphasis from Rathans: "The task of film music is to meet the problem of film music and not the problem of Hollywood."

(NEWS ITEMS....COMMENTS cont'd)

Two new madrigals by Miklos Rozsa, "Lullaby" and "The Madrigal of Spring" are to be introduced Thursday afternoon by the University Madrigal Chorus under Max Krone at U.S.C. Rozsa has been invited by Eugene Ormandy to conduct the Philadelphia Orchestra in the premier of his Concerto for strings in the early fall. Rozsa has also been signed to write the score for Benedict Bogeaus' picturization of DARK WATERS, a locale laid in New Orleans and the bayou country of Louisiana.

* * *

A class in music for theater, cinema and radio drama will be conducted by Walter A. Rubsamen, assistant professor of music, University of California, Los Angeles campus, during the six-week summer session opening June 26th. Information concerning courses may be obtained from Dr. J. Howard Williams, director of summer sessions, University of California, Los Angeles 24.

* * *

In an article entitled "Hollywood Turns to Gershwin" the New York Times recently published an interesting account of Ray Heindorf's work in preparing the score for RHAPSODY IN BLUE. We quote from it as follows: "Ray Heindorf, one of the busiest musicians in Hollywood and winner of two Academy Awards for his arranging and conducting of the scores for 'Yankee Doodle Dandy' and 'This is the Army,' has just completed the score for a forthcoming motion picture biography of George Gershwin. Though he didn't know Gershwin personally, in compiling the score for the film, Mr. Heindorf had the assistance of Paul Whiteman, who conducted the first performance of the RHAPSODY in Aeolian Hall in the early twenties, and Oscar Levant, who not only knew Gershwin but was, and is, a leading exponent of his music. Max Steiner contributed background music to the score.

"Mr. Heindorf reports that the picture will run about two hours and thirty-eight minutes, of which a full two hours will have music - an unusually high figure. More than an hour of the picture will be devoted to the playing of actual Gershwin works, and though Mr. Heindorf had to do some judicious cutting and arranging, the presentation of the music will be unusually authentic. He likes to relate one incident which showed how well equipped he was for the job of making a score out of Gershwin's music: One of the works he is using in the picture is the 'Cuban Overture.' Just two days before the scene had to be recorded he found that there wasn't a full orchestral score of the work to be had in all Hollywood. He wired to New York, but afraid that the score would not arrive in time, began making his own orchestration of the piece from a two-piano arrangement which the studio owned. When the Gershwin score finally arrived, he compared it to his version and found, to his delight, that, with the exception of a few minor details, the two were almost exactly alike.

"In preparing the score for the picture Mr. Heindorf's chief problem was selecting the works to be played from the huge legacy of songs and pieces Gershwin left behind, and then fitting them into the time limitations of the picture. Mr. Heindorf tried to hit all the high spots of Gershwin's musical output even though this meant cutting the 'Rhapsody in Blue' down from 12 minutes to 8, and 'An American in Paris' from 15 minutes to 6. The picture will end with a scene laid in a Hollywood version of the Lewisohn Stadium during one of the Gershwin Memorial Concerts that have become a regular fixture of the New York summer concert season.

"Mr. Heindorf says that Warner Bros. have made no attempt to glorify Gershwin or put him up on a pedestal. They have unearthed authentic incidents from the composer's life and included them in the film as faithfully as possible. One, which Mr. Heindorf especially liked, goes as follows: Gershwin met Ravel in Paris and said that he wanted to study with the great French composer. Ravel, however, refused to take him on as a pupil in composition. 'Right now,' Ravel explained, 'you are writing first-rate Gershwin. If you study with me, it won't be long before you'll be writing second-rate Ravel.'"

Music Advisory Committee of the Department of State
by Margery Morrison

Recently returned from Washington, D. C., Nathaniel Finston, Head of the Music Department of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, took an active part in the initial sessions of the Music Advisory Committee under the auspices of the Department of State, Public Information.

This committee is an integral division of Intra-America, the organization headed by Nelson Rockefeller. Its aim is the coordination of cultural activities in this country which concern Latin-America. Included among the well-known names are those of:

- Harold Spivak, Chief Musician of the Library of Congress
- Charles Seeger, Chief of the Music Division of the Pan-American Union
- Clifford Buttleman, Secretary of the Music Educators' Conference
- Howard Hansen, Head of Rochester Conservatory of Music (member National Film Music Council)
- Charles Tomlinson, Office of Public Information, N.Y. Univ.
- Nathaniel Finston, Head of Music Department, M-G-M
- Olin Downes, New York Times Music Editor
- Manuel Canyes, Pan-American Union, Juridical expert on copyright

The motion picture department in charge of Gerald Smith referred me to Mr. Finston as the man who is perhaps doing more for Mexican music than anyone else in Hollywood. Out of his busy day Mr. Finston found time to tell me about the Washington meeting, the participants, the agenda discussed. We recalled that golden period when he, as director of music and conductor of great orchestras at the Rialto, Rivoli and Capitol theaters in New York City, brought the best in music to vast audiences - when singers like Bonelli not only gave but found inspiration in popular appearances. Those rich, plastic experiences formed the immediate background of this rugged and intensely human musician when he came to guide the helm of this great studio.

"Our committee is formed," he said, "not only to clarify our ideas about Mexican and other Latin-American music but that our own may become as well-known to our neighbors as our swing and jive. Just as we have hill-billy songs, spirituals, Indian rhythms, cowboy ditties and sophisticated music so should Mexican local color be differentiated and recognized. It is as varied and characteristic." He agrees with Seeger "if a native form is used in a score only the best native performers should be employed to render it. It is by all means desirable not to attempt imitations of a native form. With the present trend in mind toward preparation of complete scores of original pictures, the problem of background study and authentic source material for composers becomes acute."

We have barely touched upon this subject but shall follow it up next season. Meanwhile, Mr. Finston leaves this query with us. "In times like these if the Russian government finds time to sponsor musical genius, why should we not do the same?"

AFTERTHOUGHTS

By Sigmund Spaeth

It is generally agreed by reviewers that THE MEMPHIS BELLE is the best motion picture yet produced by the current war. As usual, however, the paeans of praise have quite overlooked the importance of the musical background. It is the work of Gail Kubik, who also did the music for THE WORLD AT WAR, PARATROOPS and other successful documentary films. Mr. Kubik, after a trip overseas, is back again with the First Motion Picture Unit of the Army Air Forces at Culver City. His reputation as the ideal composer of music for war films is now permanently established.

* * *

The National Association for American Composers and Conductors gave a citation to Alfred Newman recently for having created the best motion picture score of the past year in THE SONG OF BERNADETTE. This award confirms the decision already made by Hollywood's Academy, and is a well-deserved tribute to the man who must be considered tops in his field, with a long and consistent record of musical achievement. Other awards went to Mayor LaGuardia and Newbold Morris, for their work in connection with New York's City Center of Music and Drama, to Samuel Barber for his symphonies and Richard Rodgers for "Oklahoma," to Leonard Bernstein for his conducting and composing, including the ballet, "Fancy Free," to Eleanor Steber and Leonard Warren of the Metropolitan Opera, Abram Chasins and Erno Balogh for various contributions to the cause of American music. Mr. Newman was in good company. Eventually the movie public itself may recognize the significance of a good film score.

* * *

Bronislau Kaper has done a fine piece of work in his music for GASLIGHT, pointing up the horror of the story but still keeping it from being too consistently gloomy. He had a chance to interpolate some classic bits, as when Ingrid Bergman takes her singing lesson and at a party which presents a trio and a concert pianist. The piano music, especially the Chopin selection, did not sound quite right in the M-G-M projection room, suggesting that such effects may be somewhat at the mercy of the operator controlling sound. Piano recording at best is still a delicate matter, with constant problems of pitch, volume and overtones. Mr. Kaper gets some of his own most original effects in the slightly discordant music which consistently suggests the evil designs of the villain (played by Charles Boyer).

* * *

THE ADVENTURES OF MARK TWAIN is definitely one of the best of the biographical films, and again music plays an important part in its success. Max Steiner lives up to his reputation with a fine score, making good use of the sing-song phrase of the Mississippi River pilots, "mark twain, safe water" (indicating two fathoms in the sounding). There are homely touches of authentic musical background with the true folk flavor of America, and altogether the music lends excellent support to the outstanding performances of Fredric March, Alexis Smith and others.

* * *

The United States Government could well give some attention to the propaganda cartoons made by Ragan Films of Philadelphia for the Canadian War Loan drives and other activities. These films are the most compact and effective message-carriers imaginable, sometimes making their point in as little as one minute of time. Ralph Strassberg has created the ideal music for these pictures, using a spare instrumentation which never overloads the sound track, keeping out of the way of the narrator's voice, but always fitting the action perfectly and arriving at some striking effects of synchronization. There is material here for both patriotic and commercial use, and the Ragan technique is sure to become widely popular in time.

Mexican Films in Hollywood
By Margery Morrison

What about Mexican films? Where can we see them? What about Mexican film music?

They are released through Aztec Distributing Films to the California Theater on Main Street. Once the rival of Grauman's Broadway, it is now patronized exclusively by Mexicans. Here you are shown a Mexican or Spanish feature and newsreel, an American short and cartoon, and occasionally there are included stage shows of dances and singers with a Mexican orchestra.

Many of the pictures are dated; there is no place where the current ones are released (except occasionally at Esquire) but there is subtle charm in the action and reactions: the background is novel and diverting, the native music lends impetus to the story. None of the pictures I saw had an original, complete score as we understand the term. We saw a beautiful Spanish version of the "Man with the Iron Mask," also an intriguing tale of a "Woman Without a Soul," both cosmopolitan, presented without inhibitions, skilfully directed with a Latin sense of values.

In fact, a new point of view, a series of new sensations is experienced. Best of all here is a painless method of absorbing a knowledge of Spanish - a must in these days.

The Los Angeles Times recently carried an interview with Esther Fernandez, a well-known star in Mexico, now starring in a Paramount film. She delivers this message from President Camacho. "Camacho wants prominent American stars to appear in Mexican pictures - he favors an exchange of talent. Mexico in collaboration with Hollywood should hold the American market. The Mexican government will welcome American producers to make pictures in Mexico City provided a percentage of the revenue is paid to the industry. The only danger that might threaten is the wish to exploit cheap promotions."

Recent Mexican Releases

AMOK (Zweig) music by Lara

MEXICO DE MIS RECUERDOS - music - Pardave'

In production - DAUGHTER OF THE REGIMENT and

LA CORTE DE FARAON, both starring Mapy Cortes

Mexico in recent Hollywood releases

TRADITIONS OF MEXICO - Columbia short picturing Mexican movie stars. Produced by Ralph Staub with the aid of the Mexican government

VIVA MEXICO (RKO) "This is America" Series

BATHING BEAUTY (M-G-M) Red Skelton musical, featuring Xavier Cugat and Carlos Ramirez

Fitzpatrick Travelogues (M-G-M) include five subjects devoted to Mexico: GLIMPSES OF MEXICO; MOTORING IN MEXICO; ON THE ROAD TO MONTEREY; MEXICAN POLICE ON PARADE and MODERN MEXICO CITY

NIGHT IN MEXICO CITY and MEXICAN SPORTLAND, Warner Bros. short subjects

Additional Notes

Lupe Velez is starring in NANA, released through Grovas Productions.

MARIA CANDALENA, was voted the best Mexican picture of the year; Dolores Del Rio, starred in that film, the best actress of the year.

FLESH AND FANTASY, Charles Boyer production, was voted the best foreign picture.

MEXICO DE MIS RECUERDOS, was voted the best Mexican picture for April, 1944.

The Mexican government is sponsoring a group of educational films on social problems.

We learn through Enrique Calderon of Aztec Films that Jose Mojica has entered a monastery. A protege' of Mary Garden, this famous Mexican tenor sang with the Chicago Opera and starred in the first Mexican musical made in Hollywood. The same was written by Desiair Vecsei.

Film Music and Public Taste
By Corporal Gail Kubik

One point which composers in and out of the industry are aware of - a point which is only beginning to be appreciated among musicians and the general public - is this: that music in films has done more than any other single thing in the past ten years to develop, influence, but also confuse, the general public's ideas about modern contemporary music. Ask any man on the street to name some contemporary composers and, if he can think of any, he will probably include the names of Max Steiner, Alfred Newman or Herbert Stothart. He names these men because he has seen their names dozens of times on the screen. When you say, "contemporary composer," he naturally assumes that Mr. Steiner or Mr. Newman, since they are writing music for the films of our day, must necessarily be called "contemporary," and their music, "modern." The net result is that since these men and their colleagues become identified in the minds of millions of people as significant contemporary composers, the aesthetic of their music is, therefore, thought to be the aesthetic of contemporary music.

To the discriminating musician this is a deplorable state of affairs. It can be argued whether this music, like any music, is good or bad; but it should not have to be argued that this music is contemporary. Most certainly, it is not. But is it to be wondered at that millions of people, when confronted with genuinely modern music, have difficulty in reconciling the real article with what they, through the medium of the motion picture, had come to think was fine contemporary music? Stravinsky and Hindemith, Harris and Piston, all have a harder time in the concert hall because their music, since it is known to be modern music, does not sound like the "modern music" of Steiner, Stothart or Newman. The bona fide creative composers lament not the fact that the Newmans or Steiners are writing the predominant number of scores, or that they are writing in a predominantly synthetic idiom, so much as the fact that music with a really contemporary aesthetic is placed in such unequal competition with the manufactured idiom of these men. Walter Piston's "Concerto for Orchestra" will not in twenty years be heard by as many people as heard in one week Max Steiner's music for "Gone With the Wind." Mr. Piston's share in the development of the public's taste in music is infinitesimal by comparison. The Tschai-kowski and Sibelius boys, every day of the week, in thousands of theaters, are helping the public to form a taste in music - a taste believed by this audience to be a taste for authentic modern music, but which, in reality, is a taste that makes very much more difficult the understanding and acceptance of the really contemporary music of our day.

I suppose one solution of this problem would lie in the creative contemporary composers being asked to write the scores for those films which had to do with contemporary subjects. A film on the war, for instance, in its score ought to have sounds that could only have been written today. There will still be a helluva lot of "true story" films that will require the romantic outpourings of Mr. Newman and Mr. Steiner. If the industry, through some miracle, could arrive at the point where the emotional style and dramatic content of a film was matched by a similar aesthetic and style in the music, then I think every one would be happy. This last point of view seems to me self-evident, but I would certainly like to know what the readers of FILM MUSIC NOTES think on the subject.

REVIEWS OF CURRENT MOTION PICTURES FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF MUSIC INTEREST

ADVENTURE IN MUSIC, Produced by Rudolph Polk. Vronsky and Babin, duo-pianists;
Iturbi in piano and harpsichord numbers; Feuermann, cellist;
Mildred Dilling, the harpist

A program of rare distinction, marvelously recorded. It will interest not only musicians and music lovers but the layman as well. Unusual photographic angles give us close-ups of invaluable, technical methods; overhead shots give us an intimate association with the mood of the artist. There is a unique shot of the quartet, blotting out all but hands, bows and instruments at a focal center. The artists have been well chosen, for their technical mastery is only a medium to interpret the "soul of the music." This term is seldom heard nowadays when everything seems to have technical rating of speed and tricks of showmanship. Especially with Iturbi and Feuermann are we aware of this psychic continuity, coupled with the ability to impart such an essence to an audience. It includes sheer joy in mastery. Real artistry gives us plus the difference between tossing a ball and juggling. F.

BATHING BEAUTY, M-G-M. (A Treat for Eye and Ear). Director: George Sidney
Musical Supervision and Direction: Johnnie Green

Exceptionally interesting production of its type in which music plays a stellar role, with close-ups of the musicians educational as well as entertaining. In the water scenes, Esther Williams is outstanding and these and the dance sequences are marvels of Technicolor, almost extra-dimensional in their sheer beauty. Red Skelton, much improved, adds his special brand of humor and the whole picture has just about "what it takes" to furnish excellent escape entertainment for the Service as well as the family! Family.

THE CANTERVILLE GHOST, M-G-M. (Oscar Wilde Re-written). Director: Jules Dassin
Music Score by George Bassman

Realistic settings, lovely shadowy photography in perfect keeping with the subject and an outstanding cast are featured in this modernized version of the Oscar Wilde story. Margaret O'Brien with her amazing ability is always a joy to watch, and if Charles Laughton seems wasted in the type of role he is called upon to play, Robert Young, on the other hand, fits into his perfectly. Music forms a solid foundation and background and is, furthermore, admirably woven into the mysterious and spooky scenes, adding greatly to the tenseness of the picture as a whole. Ectoplasms in photography and in music make interesting problems in this film. High frequencies of sound and higher ones of light produce the shimmering, extra-dimensional effects, with thunder and lightning heightening the sound and eerie impressions are well synchronized for nerve-tingling reactions. The Hunt music gives a virile, vital quality for the prelude and "Gertie from Bizerte" the necessary army touch! All in all, good entertainment for those who do not take their Oscar Wilde too seriously. Family.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY, Universal. (A Sad One for all Concerned). Dir: Robert Siodmak
Musical Score and Direction: H. J. Salter

Naturally a story by Somerset Maugham means one well told and this one depicting a love faithful through sorrow even unto death is a poignant and dramatic one in which Deanna Durbin stands completely on her merits as a dramatic actress for the first time. She acquits herself capably, too, but the camera in many cases is unkind, not to say cruel to the young star - and where, of where, is the lovely fresh voice which used to charm audiences all over the world? Gene Kelly, too, has far finer talents than he is allowed to display in this picture which is sad and depressing throughout - too much so, in fact, for these times when light, gay and colorful pictures filled with music and song are so needed to affect the grim realities we live in. These two young stars are each highly gifted in their particular fields and it seems a shame to waste them in sordid dramas. Photography and settings of the film are exceptional - so, too, is the music with the exception of Deanna's song - thanks to which an almost spiritual quality is built into the

(CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY cont'd)

picture, developing gradually from the Adeste Fideles and simple melodies of the beginning, through martial airs and the nostalgic "Always," all of which are purely incidental, to the concert shots, (the recording here was too loud, by the way) and up to the sequence showing the Midnight Mass in the Cathedral. This, beautifully, impressively and reverently done is a thrilling sight to see on the screen for the first time and the music here, including the lovely "Kyrie," is superb. The rest of the musical score gives strength and emotional feeling to the whole, as much by the silences as by sound, eventually growing into the magnificent climax afforded by the Tristan and Isolde excerpts at the close. Mature-Family.

THE EVE OF ST. MARK, 20th-Fox. (The American Way). Director: John M. Stahl
Music by Alfred Newman

A tender and poignant adaptation of Maxwell Anderson's poetic play has emerged from Hollywood. It is simple, wholly American in flavor and content, directed and acted with understanding and skill. Vincent Price as Francis Marion, proud of his descendence from Patrick Henry, does a grand job of a difficult assignment. In fact one feels that sincerity of purpose underlies the whole picture. Music serves purposely in a background capacity but is always fitting and well restrained, allowing long, grateful silences for the proper development of the story. Mature-Family.

THE HAIRY APE, UA. (Psychological Conflict). Director: Alfred Santell
Musical Dir: Eddie Paul. Original Compositions: M. Michelet

This is distinctly a man's picture and furnishes plenty of food for thought. It has, at the outset, strength and sincerity and is of absorbing interest until the anti-climactic ending, which lets us down and takes away from the film's power and value. All characterizations are, however, excellently done and both direction and photography are of the first order. The music used in the background to anticipate and set the moods is extremely effective - also, the musicians who appear are real musicians and the cello and violin and other music on the ship is well done and authentic. The score is casual background until the ship starts on her voyage to Lisbon. There it has an anticipatory note of misfortune for what would have been tragedy had the picture followed its course and here it is most beautiful, strong, compelling, with fine and sensitive orchestration. Adults.

HOME IN INDIANA, 20th-Fox. (Good Going!). Director: Henry Hathaway
Music: Hugo W. Friedhofer. Musical Dir: Emil Newman

A charming and refreshing human interest picture which the whole family can thoroughly enjoy. Beautifully done in Technicolor, the Autumn scenes wholesome and full of surprise. The Autumn coloring is exceptional and the level countryside, the swimming pond and the race track give as definite a locale and background as those of "My Friend Flicka" - both a real contribution to the American way of life. The tempo of the picture is especially interesting, being slow enough to allow the audience to see Charlotte Greenwood's thought before she expresses it in words - all of which is restful and a relief after the fast tempo of most of our pictures. It also accentuates the excitement, when it comes, of the high tension in the trotting races. From every point of view this is a good picture of a type badly needed for the adolescent trade for which, considering the numbers who fill the theaters, too few are produced. A rich, full orchestration for the first part of the picture includes a pastoral episode appropriately scored and the stirring arrangement of Camptown Races for the climactic race helps the excitement materially. Family.

"JOHNNY DOESN'T LIVE HERE ANYMORE," Monogram. (A Girl and Gremlin). Dir: Joe May
Music Score by Franke W. Harline

Light farce, based on whimsy, with some amusing angles and a surprise ending. It is fair enough entertainment of its type but ethically none too sound. The film is well scored, however, in Mr. Harline's usual expert style. Mature-Family.

THE MASK OF DIMITRIOS, Warner Bros. (Sinister Journey). Dir: Jean Negulesco
Music by Adolph Deutsch

Mystery and murderous intrigue set against an interesting foreign background, is unfolded by the gifted young director in original and engrossing fashion, aided by an exceptionally capable set of actors. Peter Lorre, as the writer of detective stories, is intrigued in spite of himself with a real life tragedy. He pursues the clues from one country to another as flashbacks involve us in an exciting series of happenings dealing with the criminal. Mr. Deutsch has given us, in the accompanying score, music which lends strength to the situations and supplies authentic and exotic atmosphere throughout. Mature-Family.

MR. SKEFFINGTON, WB. ("Vanity, Vanity--"). Director: Vincent Sherman

Music by Franz Waxman. Musical Director: Leo F. Forbstein

With an excellent cast and the fine production values we have come to expect in a Davis picture, this drama of characterizations is noteworthy, so far as acting and story are concerned, especially in the earlier reels. Later, it drags and furthermore, is marred by the grossly exaggerated make-up of the star which makes Fanny appear years older than her contemporaries, a condition which even the ravages of diphtheria could not possibly produce. This is a serious fault as it interferes with the smooth unrolling of the picture by focusing audience attention on something which should be incidental. The ending of the story is also open to question on ethical grounds. Claude Rains, however, is superb in the none-too-plausible role of the husband and the scene between him and his little girl in the restaurant is one never to be forgotten. Mr. Waxman's score provides a perfect background for the many tense emotional moments of the film. It is rich and sonorous at the outset with plenty of comedy in the sketching of Fanny's beaux, and in pointing the situations. There is a suggestion of the Rachmaninoff C Sharp Minor Prelude (the agitato) in depicting the brother, a subtle and beautiful Jewish strain in connection with Skeffington - in fact, a tendency for solo instruments in poignant situations. The most beautiful part of the score is in connection with the daughter: the lovely cello melody which ends on a sustained note, vanishing into the background, then picked up by high and piercing frequencies which give us Fanny's reactions and feeling of isolation which develops in the final part of the score. There is an interesting parallel in this treatment and that of "Address Unknown" - the transition from a single note to madness, and in the Skeffington score from a single note to self-realization. Adults.

THE STORY OF DR. WASSELL, Paramount. (Doctor's Saga). Director: Cecil B. DeMille
Music Score by Victor Young

One of the finest episodes to come out of this war is superbly told in thrilling Technicolor. It is beautifully acted and of course expertly and understandingly directed. No one can surpass Mr. DeMille in the handling of masses and some of the scenes of this kind in the picture are exceptional. Gary Cooper as Dr. Wassell rises to the greatest achievement in his career, presenting with complete naturalness and great power the many phases through which the character passes in the course of the film. Photography throughout is of great interest and beauty, especially that in the Javanese sequences with the lush vegetation, glimpses of temples, lily ponds and the bits of natural loveliness. The music of Victor Young is admirable in every respect. The picture could stand as it is without benefit of adornment in the way of music, although it does gain tremendously by the addition of a score which, combining well-known airs, patriotic and military music with original compositions of artistic ingenuity and fine descriptive quality, intensifies the significance of the scenes in which it is used, especially in dynamically rising to powerful crescendos and dropping away to almost a whisper of distant rumbling, brooding and gloomy forebodings. Also, the music relieves the devastating, stark reality of the picture, lending as it does glamour and atmosphere to give one soothing comfort where it is most needed! Mature-Family.

SUMMER STORM, Angelus-UA. (The Shooting Party). Director: Douglas Sirk

Original Score and Musical Direction by Karl Hajos

This sordid character study of an earlier day beautifully told and brought to the screen with the highest in production values: photography, settings, acting, and direction which is practically flawless, takes us back to the pre-revolutionary tempo and atmosphere of Russia. At the end we are left in the characteristic gloom and frustration usually induced in us by its nineteenth century writers. Nevertheless, for adult consumption, the picture has much to offer and the decadence of the aristocracy of the time is plainly and convincingly shown. The score, by a newcomer to Hollywood Karl Hajos, is unusually fine. It has a fundamental background of sonorous Russian rhythm: a signature in authentic Tchaikowsky manner although unquotable, many lovely folk melodies woven into its texture and the music heightens the action throughout. It takes us out of ourselves and transports us to another set of circumstances and a lost mode of life. Incidentally, it is a pleasure to hear Mina Koshetz sing again. No one is better qualified to do the songs of her country than this fine artist who is nowadays all too seldom heard. George Sanders, too, gave authenticity to his part of the singing, besides his brilliant performance as Fedor. Adults.

IMPORTANT BUSINESS, M-G-M "Miniature"

Amusing short with Robert Benchley rising to small town prominence because of a trip to Washington, the importance of which is amplified by himself, his family and the local grapevine. Sprightly music adds to the humor of the situations in which the gullibility of the American public is revealed. Family.

* * *

Separate issues of the Film Music Portfolio, consisting of the nine musical pages of the year together with the biographical notes about each composer, may be obtained from FILM MUSIC NOTES at a cost of \$1.00 for the set or .15¢ for separate sheets, if preferred.

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Biography of Gail Kubik

Corporal Gail Kubik was born in South Coffeyville, Oklahoma, in 1914. In 1930 he received a four-year scholarship at the Eastman School of the University of Rochester, receiving the degree of Bachelor of Music, "with distinction," in 1934, having studied Composition with Edward Royce and Bernard Rogers.

From 1934 to 1936 he taught Violin, Composition and Conducting at Monmouth College, Illinois, and during these two years took his M. M. degree from Leo Sowerby at the American Conservatory in Chicago. From 1936 to 1937 he taught at Dakota Wesleyan University in South Dakota. The year, 1937-38, was devoted to graduate study with Walter Piston and Nadia Boulanger at Harvard University. From 1938 to 1940 he taught Composition and Orchestration at Teachers college, Columbia University in New York.

During the years from 1940 to 1943 he was Musical Program Advisor and Staff Composer for the National Broadcasting Company, Lecturer on Music at the Rand School and Finch Junior College, and, immediately prior to induction into the Army, served as Director of Music for the Film Bureau of the Office of War Information in New York.

Professional honors include: MacDowell Colony Fellowships, 1937 and 1938; Sinfonia Composition Award, 1934; Chicago Symphony Golden Jubilee Award, 1941; Jascha Heifetz Award for "Best Violin Concerto by an American Composer," 1941; Society for the Publication of American Music Award, 1943; and the Guggenheim War Fellowship, 1944.

Film scores include: THE WORLD AT WAR, produced by Samuel Spewack (cited by the N.A.A.C.C. as the outstanding documentary score of 1942); PARATROOPS, EARTHQUAKERS, directed by Capt. Jerome Chodorov, and THE MEMPHIS BELLE, directed by Col. William Wyler - these last two pictures produced by the Army Air Forces First Motion Picture Unit in Culver City.

Corporal Kubik has just returned from England where he was sent by the Air Force to assist in the production of an Eighth Air Force film. While in England he was commissioned to do a "Sketch for Orchestra" on Stephen Foster's "Camptown Races" for the British Broadcasting Company. The BBC, on June 29th, also broadcast a program of Corporal Kubik's chamber music works. At present he is writing the music for a film about the South Pacific, being produced by Major Frank Lloyd.

Directed by Lt. Col. Wm. Wulfer
Narration by T/Sgt. LESTER KOENIG

THE MEMPHIS BELLS

Music by Cpl. Gail Kubik, A.A.F.

Moderately Fast
TRP.

BOMB LOADING

IMPORTANT THINGS

The Memphis Belle
Returns from
her 25th
Mission

B's cont. ...

Broadly

ELEGY

ALWAYS SMOOTHLY

B lower, cont. ...

etc.

The musical score is handwritten and consists of several systems of staves. The top system includes a melody line with the tempo marking 'Moderately Fast' and 'TRP.' (Trombone). Below it is a bass line with the instruction 'BOMB LOADING'. The second system features a melody line with the tempo marking 'Broadly' and a bass line with 'B's cont. ...'. The third system is marked 'ELEGY' and 'ALWAYS SMOOTHLY', with a bass line indicating 'B lower, cont. ...'. The lower half of the page contains piano accompaniment for the entire piece, with various dynamic markings such as 'f', 'p', 'mf', and 'ff'. The score concludes with a double bar line.