



FILM MUSIC NOTES

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Editor

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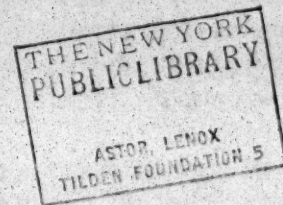
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FOREWORD

With this issue our fourth year of existence comes to a close. It is a year in which fateful pages of history have been turned and great events have taken place. We have tasted some of the fruits of victory and this has given us renewed strength to face the grim task which still lies ahead.

At this time, therefore, we feel especially privileged to share with our readers the following excerpt from a talk given recently by Mr. Clarence Gustlin, the eminent pianist-composer and commentator, before the Matinee Musical Club of Los Angeles. It expresses better than any words of ours possibly could the thought we should like to leave with you until we meet again in the fall.

"We stand appalled today by the picture which the world presents to our view; a picture of horror, cruelty, destruction and devastation. It portrays tragedy and sorrow, blood and tears. It is a veritable orgy of discordant human relations.

"Each of us searches his innermost soul for its meaning and the remedy for this unspeakable plague, called War. Those of us fortunate enough to know Music, with its array of discords and concords, know that no matter how complex and hideous the discord, it can be resolved simply and magically into harmony. We know there are scale steps charged with tonal magnetism which eternally attract those which cause the discord. Are there not likewise eternal principles of Law, Justice, Charity and Brotherhood, charged with irresistible magnetism in their appeal to the imagination and idealism of mankind, which will resolve ultimately discordant human relations and bring the long sought Peace on Earth, Goodwill toward Man.

"Difference of language has long been recognized as an obstacle in the path of human understanding. Music and Art are languages universal in their appeal. Therefore we should seek more clearly to understand the cultures of other races and peoples, permitting them to interpret for us their aspirations, ideals and characteristics. These are bound to furnish many common bonds of sympathy and understanding.

"Both as individuals and organizations, it is imperative that we exert our utmost effort and intelligence toward the solution of the social and political problems confronting us, resolutely determined to bring to all humanity a new day and a new earth filled with Unity, Peace and Harmony to crown all the sacrifices made in the names of Truth and Freedom in this and ages past."

Our first issue of Volume V will be issued in September instead of October as heretofore, a change which we trust will meet with the approval of our subscribers.

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NEWS ITEMS....COMMENTS

Mrs. Grace Widney Mabee has been invited to become a member of the Women's National Radio Committee, which meets monthly in New York at Steinway Hall. Only representatives of national organizations are given this honor. Mme. Yolanda-Meroinon is chairman and Rosalie Wolf, editor of Radio Review, executive secretary.

* * *

A showing was recently arranged in New York of the Toscanini film and one called Valley of the Tennessee, the music for which is written by Norman Lloyd of the Sarah Lawrence School. The John Finley Williamson Choir also was featured with Jan Pierce as soloist. This special showing was arranged for Mrs. Mabee and groups from Teachers College, Columbia University, including Miss Pitts, Dr. Samuel Burns and Gordon Bailey, through the courtesy of the National Board of Review

* * *

Says Robert Bagar in the New York World Telegram: "Music appreciation in this country has assumed the proportions of a highly organized business. It isn't that really, but the flourishing books on the subject, the lecture courses, the radio programs devoted to it might all be part of a great monopolistic scheme to educate the masses. For the good of America's aesthetic future, a lot of what goes on under the fair name of music appreciation could be dispensed with, though there is unquestionably much that helps.

"Quite unwittingly, however, a current motion picture is doing more for the cause, I think, than just about ninety percent of the mannered, flighty, helter-skelter propositions making the rounds. The motion picture I have in mind is Columbia's A Song to Remember, a fictionized biography of the life of Chopin.

"It doesn't matter that the story is highly exaggerated and given an ultra-romantic slant. Nor does it matter that certain incidents of only slight significance in Chopin's life are beautifully glamorized a la Hollywood or that some of the true facts are blithely omitted, a la the same. What does count is that all through this occasionally affecting picture the music of the composer is played.

"Hence we have the Hollywood formula for a scenario in which there is some drama and excitement - whether or not they are based on fact - and also a running commentary of piano music, Chopin's music, the waltzes, mazurkas, nocturnes, etudes and all the rest, whose importance is obviously superior to that of the ordinary movie score, because, in a way, they are the picture.

"The musically receptive listener, though he be untrained, can hardly avoid being indoctrinated. Neither can the nonreceptive one. The reasons? Well, there is a romantic love story, a love story, as it turns out, which is enacted by likeable, personable people - Merle Oberon, Cornel Wilde, Paul Muni and an actor who impersonates Franz Liszt (regrettably, I didn't get his name). The story is also about the trials and tribulations of a musician with a great gift who seems, at first, too weak to pursue an ideal.

"Sympathy for this screen Chopin inevitably calls forth sympathy for his music as it unfolds. And since that music is not difficult to grasp, since it doesn't really require a high-pressure course to appreciate it; and since it is very lovely, very moving music, what can said receptive or nonreceptive listener do but like it together with his liking the romantic tale itself?

"I believe that unintentional propaganda of this kind does more for music in the long run than all the formal presentations put together. At least, it starts things going. And there is no reason why entertainment and education cannot continue to prove mutually supporting forces, as they do in A Song to Remember and probably in many similar film efforts."

(NEWS ITEMS....COMMENTS continued)

Note for "Swing" Fans - Leave it to the hotcha boys of the big name bands to instill in the popular mind an appreciation of the best in music. So asserts Harry James, who is among the tops of those who have been doing just that thing - leading us by the ear, so to speak. A pleasant way to get an education, most of our bobbysockers will agree.

"The screen," Harry told me on the eve of his departure for New York, "is cultivating a popular taste which no producer can afford to ignore. Look at the success of A Song to Remember. It has inaugurated an entire cycle of film projects based on the careers of the greatest composers. Observe the growing popularity of Jose Iturbi with the swooners.

"Freddy Martin started all this with his popularization of Tchaikowski. It's a great movement and I want to be identified with it." Citizen News

* * *

When Leopold Stokowski saw Herb Yates' new sound recording stage at Republic he set up such a trumpeting of praise it was heard all around Hollywood.

"It's perfect. The acoustics are so good a small orchestra would sound like an immense one in here," the famous musician exclaimed. "I want to arrange to make all my records here. Would that be possible? There isn't anything like it in the country."

Other film studios and broadcasting heads began maneuvering to get a peek at the structure which is the last word. There isn't a square inch of wall or ceiling in the place. It's all rounded.

Behind the stage there is a skating rink which, of course, can be used for ice capades but which is also the particular delight and joy of Yates who is a whiz on skates. Darryl Zanuck has a steam room where he and Joseph Sonenck and other big shot 20th-Fox gents keep fit but give Herb a twirl or two around the rink and he is as fit as a fiddle. So when he is in town the rink is ready for use night or day.

In a short time Republic under Yates will observe its tenth anniversary and I may say if as much progress is made in the next ten years at the erstwhile little studio out in the valley the biggest majors will have to look alive for they'll be getting plenty of competition from that quarter.

Players, directors and writers, who used to have an inferiority complex about working at Republic hold up their heads with pride now as they walk along the broad streets between the huge big new sound stages. There is a feeling in the air of being part of something that is growing by leaps and bounds. Yates left off selling tobacco back in 1916 and became interested in films. He learned everything there is to know about the business the hard way so that when he was ready to organize Republic Pictures Corporation in 1935 he knew exactly where he was going and why.

- Citizen News

* * *

At a private showing of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, on May twenty-fifth, the first part of Russia's great motion picture, Ivan the Terrible, was presented. As the film came directly to us from San Francisco where it was shown for delegates of the Conference, English titles have not been added as yet and this was apparently detrimental so far as the majority of critics and spectators were concerned. To anyone, however, familiar with Russia or Russian history, the film is a superb achievement, epic in scope and grandeur and with a score unsurpassed for modernistic beauty and strength. Photography, sets and costumes are nothing short of magnificent, and if the picture is not entertainment in the ordinary sense, it is far more than that in spectacular appeal. When it is released here FILM MUSIC NOTES hopes to cover it in detail. Meanwhile, it is something for the thoughtful and particularly for those interested in the development and progress of cinematic art to await.

NEWS ITEMS....COMMENTS continued)

Formation of Music for the Wounded Inc., a national organization to provide continuous musical entertainment for the permanently disabled veterans in the government hospitals after the war, is announced by Samuel H. Stiefel, who will act as promotional director, with Leopold Stokowski as president.

James C. Petrillo, president of the AFM, will be actively interested, and members of the musicians union throughout the country will be called upon to donate their services to the shows given at the various hospitals.

Funds to carry on the work will be raised through a series of public concerts to be given periodically in principal cities. Stokowski and Stiefel will soon visit key cities, including New York, Chicago, Philadelphia and Detroit, to set up the concerts, which will be launched with a concert at the Hollywood Bowl the third week in September.

Music for the Wounded Inc., will be a non-profit organization, with the parent company incorporated in California. Subsidiary organizations will be formed throughout the country. The board of trustees, functioning in Hollywood, will comprise studio executives and stars. The cooperation of Army and Navy officials will be sought, as well as that of civic leaders.

* * *

Thirty-seven pictures are being put through the musical scoring stages in Hollywood, with hundreds of musicians, composers, copyists, and conductors being employed.

Now in various stages of preparation, pre-scoring and scoring is Warner's MILDRED PIERCE, being scored by Max Steiner; PRIDE OF THE MARINES, THREE STRANGERS, and THE TIME, THE PLACE, AND THE GIRL, being scored respectively by Franz Waxman, Adolph Deutsch and Ray Heindorf.

Universal has seven in work, including LADY ON A TRAIN, with Miklos Rosza scoring. Milton Rosen is pre-scoring UNCLE HARRY; Salter is scoring on FRONTIER GAL and under-scores on ONCE UPON A DREAM; CRIMSON CANARY and ALIBI IN ERMINE are being scored by Edgar "Cookie" Fairchild, who will also conduct all vocals for Ginny Simms in "Alibi". NIGHT IN PARADISE has Frank Skinner composing special music.

At 20th-Fox JUNIOR MISS has David Buttolph working on special compositions, Sonny Burke arranging, and Emil Newman conducting. Also in work is WITHIN THESE WALLS, which Newman is recording from Buttolph's compositions; CAPTAIN EDDIE, with Alfred Newman conducting from a musical score by Cyril Mockridge, and KITTEN ON THE KEYS for which Newman last week conducted a 106-piece orchestra which was augmented by Harry James and his Band.

Paramount has Victor Young starting recordings on YOU CAME ALONG from his own original compositions; Werner Heymann assigned to compositions for the musical score of HOLD THAT BLONDE; Robert Emmett Dolan scoring CROSS MY HEART, and Miklos Rosza doing pre-scoring for LOST WEEK-END.

At M-G-M, Charles Previn starts pre-recording on TWO SISTERS FROM BOSTON, with Bronislau Kaper preparing scores for HOLD HIGH THE TORCH and OUR VINES HAVE TENDER GRAPES.

Musical backgrounds for five pictures are in work at RKO. Constantin Bakaleinikoff is giving finishing touches to GEORGE WHITE'S SCANDALS and is scoring THE SPANISH MAIN and DING DONG WILLIAMS. Paul Sawtelle is assigned to the musical score of THE FALCON with Leigh Harline composing the background score for FIRST MAN IN TOKYO.

Republic has MAN FROM OKLAHOMA being scored by Morton Scott from orchestrations by Dale Butts, and MEXICANA being scored by Walter Scharf, who is also pre-scoring CONCERTO.

Mischa Bakaleinikoff is conducting for the recordings on OUTLAWS OF THE ROCKIES and on RUSTY at Columbia. Marlin Skiles is composing the background music.

WHITE PONGO, ENCHANTED FOREST, ARSON SQUAD, DANGEROUS INTRUDER and SONG OF OLD WYOMING are getting Saul Bernie's scoring attentions at PRC.

(NEWS ITEMS....COMMENTS continued)

Thornton Delehanty writing for the Herald-Tribune from Hollywood, June 3, comments:

"A form of existence highly envied and rarely achieved is that of the Broadwayite who can successfully split his time between New York and California without splitting his personality, his pocketbook or the quality of his work.

"Kurt Weill is such a person, a creative commuter who uses his whim for a timetable. He has been here now for weeks touching up the film version of One Touch of Venus, writing some additional music to his original score, and taking a swim every day in the ocean.

"He says that a swim in the ocean has the mental and moral stimulus of a brisk walk down Madison Avenue and that tossing about in a bed of kelp is as energizing as a brush with the milling crowds of Times Square.

"In an office at 20th Century-Fox the other day he talked about music and the picture business, the alertness of American audiences, the occasional snootiness of Broadway toward Hollywood, about bobbysockers, the influence of American jazz on European composers, and his own method of collaboration.

"He talked also about Where Do We Go From Here? - the Fred MacMurray musical which he did when he was here last year and which illustrates some of his cherished ideas about the relationship between music and pictures.

"This picture, he says, was frankly an experiment with an opera form, in that the music and lyrics are integrated with the story, advancing it rather than retarding it, as is the case with most musical films.

"We had to have the right story to start with,' he said, 'one that lent itself to comedy and action. What we got was a sort of humorous fantasy. It concerns a young man who, when he is turned down for the Army, consults a genie who gets mixed up in his time sense and translates the chap into Washington's Army. Our hero then decides he wants to be in the Navy and, presto, the genie puts him on the ship with Columbus on the voyage to America.

"With that kind of material,' he went on, 'we felt we could afford to have fun. Take the mutiny scene aboard Columbus' ship. The scene runs for something like fifteen minutes and the whole thing is sung. We had good singers, too, men like Carlos Ramirez and Fortunio Bononova, but we also had MacMurray, and thanks to the mechanical wonders of the microphone we were able to make his voice come out like an opera singer's.

"That's the great advantage of the movies over the stage. One of the difficulties in casting a stage musical is to find actors who can sing or singers who can act. It's very hard to get a combination of the two. But in pictures you can take actors who don't need to know anything more than how to carry a tune and the mike will do the rest. Like these aviators, our movie actors can sing by instrument.'

"Mr. Weill does not belong to the school which maintains that screen music must be accounted for and explained.

"It isn't necessary,' he said, 'for some one to walk over to a piano in order to show he is going to sing. The opera form is just a convention, and ninety-nine out of a hundred people in the theater wouldn't notice, and wouldn't care if they did, whether the music is introduced by story cues or not. That's what we tried to show in Where Do We Go From Here? Ira Gershwin and I simply put the whole thing into musical form - we let the action sing for itself. Of course, you have to be particular about the kind of story you choose. It's better if the opera is built around some familiar legend, like Rip Van Winkle or the Columbus voyage, so that the audience can keep ahead of it.

"Here in America is the best audience in the world to write music for. They are remarkably quick to catch what you are trying to put over. They laugh when the music is meant to be funny. I find I can switch them over from laughter to tenderness or any other kind of response in a few bars.'

"Weill said he was amazed at the enthusiasm of youngsters in America for instrumentalists. 'In Europe,' he said, 'young people liked music deeply but they listened to it in a kind of dumb rapture. The average youngster over there didn't have

(NEWS ITEMS....COMMENTS continued)

any appreciation for orchestration and they didn't know one instrument from another. They were fed on classical music and they accepted what was given them. But here the great instrumentalists like Benny Goodman and Harry James and Gene Krupa are gods. The young people can tell the minute they hear a recording what band is playing. The younger generation here may not know or care anything about so-called classical music but it would be an easy step for them if they wanted to take it.'

"He said that the records of Louis Armstrong and the early Gershwin music had influenced him when he was writing operas in Germany and that Stravinsky and other modern composers in Paris had also been influenced by American jazz.

"Weill is returning to New York shortly but he has no definite plans for a Broadway musical. He has to have a story idea that appeals to him before he can start work, and his method of arriving at the idea is to beat his brains out jointly with some playwright until the theme develops."

* * *

A comment from one of our readers, Mrs. W. D. Olds:

We went to see Without Love (ears always alert to bird songs) and said "Oh, oh! a Western meadow lark in Virginia?"

How about it?

Always aware of the music in films we are now even more conscious of it, thanks to you.

Dr. Olds, formerly of Redlands University, now active as a choral conductor in Los Angeles and state chairman of religious music of the National Federation of Music Clubs, is an authority on bird songs and Schirmer published a collection of his songs founded on bird calls.

(NEWS ITEMS....COMMENTS continued)

A lavish, top-budget Technicolor musical film based on the lives of Ludwig von Beethoven and Franz Schubert is now in preparation by Universal and scheduled for midsummer production.

* * *

Martha Scott, the lovely star of Our Town, The Howards of Virginia, One Foot in Heaven, In Old Oklahoma and other fine pictures, spoke to a group of New York women who preview motion pictures for a dozen or more significant organizations - religious, patriotic and educational. These women represent the three faiths and serve all social groups and colors. Miss Scott talked to Catholics, Protestants and Jews, Daughters of the American Revolution and officers of the Federation of Women's Clubs; members of parent-teacher associations and editors of religious journals; all of which are associated with the Hays organization. Indeed, that day she talked through these previewing groups to the women of America who have a common task in helping to give the nation good pictures and clean entertainment.

That occasion also honored a very successful woman, Jeanette Wallace Emrich, who after years on the foreign mission field is now the organizing and directing genius of these previewing groups of women. She has one son in the ministry and one in the army overseas. In addition to her duties as a staff member of the Hays organization, she teaches in Hunter College. She has a delightful sense of humor.

In honoring Mrs. Emrich, the fact was emphasized that the most important civic and social tasks in America call for a united America, all races, faiths and colors working together.

* * *

It will be gratifying for the readers of our bulletin to learn that at a recital of Operatic and Art Songs given recently by the pupils of Mme. Adelaide Gescheidt at her New York Studios, they sang beautifully with true musicianship and understanding. This intelligence, moreover, comes to us from sources quite unconnected with the studio so that it is doubly pleasant to record it here, especially as one of the soloists is one of our New York previewers and Mme. Gescheidt herself is head of our previewing committee there.

* * *

Your editor was privileged to be present this year at the Luncheon and Installation Ceremonies of the Matinee Musical Club, long an influence for musical development in the city of Los Angeles. Its president, Mrs. Louise Glaum Harris (whose name was a household word in the days of silent pictures) has recently been appointed chairman for motion pictures for California by the National Federation of Music Clubs. She will continue, however, to serve as president of Matinee Musical "for the duration." Her fine work for the past five years in that office, we may add, has been outstanding and her personal graciousness and charm have endeared her to every member.

As reported by Marie Huston Malosek, Press Chairman of the Club: "A capacity group of Matinee Musical Club members and friends attended the Installation Ceremony for new officers last week at the Ambassador. Mrs. Louise Glaum Harris, entering her fifth year as president was paid high tribute. The theme was World Harmony and the ceremony was Mrs. Harris' own idea. A huge music staff was set on the stage, and each officer placed a note on it to complete the first bars of the Beethoven Fifth Symphony, symbol of victory. 'Harmony must be born in the hearts of people before it can be worked out in international affairs. World Harmony is the dream of all our hearts, and faith is the substance dreams are made of,' Mrs. Harris said. The Fifth Symphony was played as a background accompaniment during the ceremony."

Notes on May Music Forum

The National Film Music Council held its last Forum for the current year on Saturday, May twenty-sixth, at the Four Star Theater in Los Angeles. Under the able chairmanship of Mrs. Helen C. Dill and thanks to the valued cooperation of Alice Evans Field, Motion Picture Producers & Distributors of America, and Ryllis Hemington, Fox West Coast Theaters, the meeting, largely attended by both music educators and council members, was unusually interesting.

Mr. Nat Finston, musical executive, and Mr. Jose' Rodriguez, the well-known critic and commentator now acting in a multiple capacity at the Disney Studios, were the speakers. The subject under discussion was, of course, motion picture music, with the accent this time on Latin America. Preceding Mr. Finston's talk, two beautiful Fitzpatrick Travelogues, one of Mexico, the other of El Salvador, were shown. Mr. Finston is responsible for the music of both, and very lovely it is, too. In speaking of South American music he told us that that the motion picture studios have made a notable contribution to these people and their music by bringing to Hollywood some of their finest musicians, including Ary Barroso, the composer, Raphael Mendez, the Mexican trumpeter, heard in the Pal short subjects, and many others. They all know their classics and their opera, their Bach and their Wagner, yet there is a naturalness in their music that is inherent and has not changed; a nostalgia, a smoothness and a languor that is reflected in their work. He regretted that time did not allow him to show us other Traveltalks in which the accompanying music is of the lively type, which they also do so well. He stressed the fact that in the last two years there has really been an attempt on our part to portray the music and musicians of our neighbors and, as is to be expected, we, in our turn, have been richly rewarded in so doing.

In opening his talk, Mr. Finston pointed out that while it was almost unthinkable now to see a picture and not hear it, in his pioneer days of 1917 things were very different. And with television right around the corner it will be as unthinkable for us to be without that in our homes as it would be now to have a motion picture without music and sound. When pictures are televised we will know by seeing them whether an orchestra is really there, playing, or whether the music is recorded. Television will be an actual musical playground for things to come and he promised us that a most important announcement would be forthcoming very shortly from the new group in which he himself is so deeply a part.

Mr. Rodriguez then spoke briefly on some aspects of Latin American music as applied to the cartoon. It has stiffer requirements than those necessary to the ordinary motion picture for the reason that this medium is a stylized, de-humanized presentation, as it were, with nothing condensed and no loose moments or vague episodes such as are allowable in the longer picture. The art of synchronization must be attained in a high degree by the cartoon composer and he usually brings a high degree of mechanical equipment to a craft of which he must have complete command, for he must be prepared to submit any and all kinds of music at a moment's notice. Conservatory training, therefore, is not of much use. Cartoon music must be changed from that of the classics or it will be like a wax flower under glass rather than a real one. Before the running of the Saludos Amigos film, which Mr. Rodriguez selected as best exemplifying his points, he said that as regards Latin American music a definition of terms is necessary. Broadly speaking, it consists of two streams - the upstream tonalities of the Italian opera school taken to Latin America from Spain and then made into the downstream translated and transfused by the South American Indians. The negro influence is vital in the United States, Cuba and the West Indies, but the more rhythmical, exciting and spicy percussion of the South American republics and Mexico are well illustrated in the film. He then introduced two musicians from the Disney Studios - both Brazilian - Aluisio Oliveiro, a delightful singer and radio star, a favorite with audiences all over South America

(NOTES ON MAY MUSIC FORUM continued)

and who was also the narrator in the films; and Jose' Oliveira, no relation, who besides being the voice of Joe Carioca (the now famous parrot character in the picture) plays a "mean" guitar and also illustrated the use of some of the fascinating South American instruments, including the Cabasa which is the beaded gourd with which we are familiar and which is played in two ways with the Pandero, our tambourine, to form the basic rhythms for the Samba. Their tambourine, the tambora, is a gypsy instrument imported from Spain. It is smaller than ours, square and played with a stick. Another interesting instrument like a large cylinder, hollow at one end, produces a violin-like sound when a wet handkerchief is pulled from inside. There was also a small guitar, more like a ukulele, which is a lovely solo instrument as well as a beautiful accompaniment for songs as was amply demonstrated when these two gentlemen captured the audience with their songs and playing. How fine it would be were Mr. Finston's television contribution now a reality so that we all could see as well as hear them, for to fully appreciate their vivacity and charm this is necessary.

Mr. Rodriguez explained that the Llama and Princesita themes developed in the Wagnerian manner are used throughout the picture. These are not native folk tunes contrary to the general impression, but original ones so saturated in local color as to appear so, and entirely the work of Charles Wolcott, and this music is much more effective in its own use than, say, the Hungarian rhapsodies of Liszt. He called our attention to the canons in the picture and incidentally it was fascinating to recognize this form as it appeared and the musicians and their instruments as we had just heard them. In closing, Mr. Rodriguez remarked that music, in spite of much wishful thinking and its being a universal language, has not, so far, proved a panacea as regards concord between nations but that if we can learn to laugh together and at each other, it will do more than listening to Bach fugues together can ever accomplish. In such pictures as Saludos Amigos there is the offer of a handshake and a smile. He also said in view of the many music educators in the audience that he sees no reason why schools and colleges all over our land should be equipped with football stadiums for student training, but not allowed even a modern turntable or any of the equipment so necessary to those interested in music. This only prolongs the apprenticeship of those young musicians who want to make music not only their avocation but their livelihood. So it is to be hoped that if only for practical reasons those in power will see the light before long!

All in all a most delightful and instructive morning for which our heartfelt thanks go to all who were responsible for making it so: the distinguished musicians who were our commentators, the Mssrs. Oliveira who demonstrated so ably the grace and charm of their South American melodies and dances and Mrs. Dill, Mrs. Field, and Miss Hemington for making the whole thing possible.

- Constance Purdy

FILM MUSIC NEWS FROM BRITAIN
Reported by John Huntley

Dear Miss Purdy:

I had hoped to send you regular film music material from England, but my R.A.F. duties constantly intervened, preventing me from assembling the necessary facts. You see, as the European war approached its conclusion, a great deal of work was thrown on us and the ferrying of prisoners back to England, plus a good deal of movement at sea prevented me from getting any film work done.

People who have seen your fascinating magazine have been very interested when I have shown it to them, and it has caused much enthusiasm amongst my musical friends.

So as the war in Europe retires to the history books and we turn our attention now to a speedy conclusion of the little yellow men and their odious regime, we in this country feel that we owe you in America a great debt of gratitude for the help you have given us in our darkest days and feel confident that together victory over Japan is assured, now that we have seen the superb fighting quality of your men.

"Greetings and good wishes to all FILM MUSIC NOTES readers from London, England. It's our first 'Peace-in-Europe' summer and everyone is looking pretty happy. London is crowded and the cinemas are full, and around Rainbow Corner (just off Piccadilly Circus) your fighting men, back from Europe, are relaxing after their great joint victory over the Nazis before returning to America. They, too, are visiting the London shows and finding plenty of entertainment for all, but at the moment, it is the music that we are especially interested in.

"The general release of the Noel Coward film 'Blithe Spirit,' a delightful Technicolor version of the play that has been running on the London stage for three years, offers a fascinating score by Richard Addinsell, famed for his 'Warsaw Concerto' and writer of over thirty scores for successful British films. Here is a bright and breezy score, thoroughly English in style, fitting perfectly an enjoyable film that will most certainly be screened in America before long. So successful is the music that a phonograph record has been issued of the Prelude and Waltz from the film, recorded by the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Muir Mathieson - exactly as in the film. Young Richard Addinsell is a man to look for in the credit titles; he is always reliable for a solid, polished and essentially English score, restrained and cleverly handled by his music director, Muir Mathieson.

"People are still talking about William Walton's score for the Laurence Olivier film 'Henry V,' still doing terrific business in London. Leading music magazines have special articles and even the ordinary film critics have all had words of praise for this outstanding example of movie music. It seems safe to say that it will become a concert suite as did the composer's 'Spitfire Prelude and Fugue' which he wrote for the film story of the creation of the first Spitfire by its designer, R. J. Mitchell (supremely played by Leslie Howard).

"Arthur Bliss has written the music for the one million-pound British production of George Bernard Shaw's play 'Caesar and Cleopatra,' which was directed at Denham Studios by Gabriel Pascal and stars Vivien Leigh and Claude Rains. A good deal of special music research was carried out before the film was begun to ensure authentic atmosphere for this most costly of all films made in this country. As is customary with all our major productions the London Symphony Orchestra recorded the score under Muir Mathieson's baton.

"Recently available in England is a set of gramophone records of Victor Young's score to the film 'For Whom the Bell Tolls.' We welcome this rare opportunity of hearing an American film score on records; only one other example of its kind exists in this country as far as I know by which we may hear American background film music scores out of their context, this being a single disc of Steiner's 'Symphonie Moderne' from the film 'Four Wives,' recorded by Werner Janssen's Orchestra.

"Great Britain has as yet no magazine solely devoted to film music but we now have a Film Music Committee formed under the London organization known as the Committee for the Promotion of New Music. Composers get together here to exchange ideas and film shows are arranged in which the music is studied and discussed.

"And for the moment, cheerio from London. More news to follow soon."

Choral Music in Motion Pictures
By Charles Henderson

Group singing, once rarely used in motion pictures, is becoming increasingly important in that field. Ten years ago there was comparatively little demand for singers and choral directors in the studios; one or two men controlled the field. Today nearly every studio has a vocal director under contract, and the best singers "segue" from call to call.

Musical pictures, of course, are responsible for a great deal of this upswing. The first musicals relied mostly on the orchestra for their song and dance accompaniments, except on big finales, or scenes where group singing was inevitable such as football rallies, church sequences, and birthday parties. Then, in 1933, Fred Waring brought to the radio his revolutionary ideas in the field of popular-song vocal arrangements. A year later the air waves were crowded with his imitators. Every vocal arranger tried to use more tricks than the next man. Soon afterward swing singing became rampant. And all of these devices for "spicing up" a song with voices found their way into pictures sooner or later. The so-called vocal background, a harmonized or unison counterpoint behind a solo voice, became especially useful as a means of maintaining interest, or improving the sound of the solo voice!

Imagination must be the watchword of today's motion picture vocal arranger. The range of periods and nationalities which he encounters are limitless. One day he dreams up a number which, though stylized for today's audience, is supposed to take place in an 1850 cabaret; the next day he must contrive a 1950 calypso session on a cannibal island. The backgrounds he writes must be interesting, but not too interesting or they'll detract from the soloist. The simplest assignment generally turns out to be a problem in the light of the varying interests of producer, director, dance director and soloist.

But forgetting musical pictures, and musical performances in dramatic pictures, there is a vast field in which voices are used (generally in conjunction with the orchestra), for effects. In *BAMBI*, for instance, I was called upon to suggest with voices delicate rain, wind, a terrific storm, winter bleakness, and impending danger. Reverberated voices, especially high sopranos in triads on a weird vowel, create that familiar unearthly sound that is used invariably for dream sequences, supernatural manifestations, and the like. In skating ballet sequences a vocal obligato can "catch" the rise and fall of the skaters, jumping an octave, maybe, for a quick lift. A softly recorded line from a song, sung in harmony a cappella can express an objective idea ("Nearer My God to Thee" over an insert of a funeral wreath), or a subjective idea ("You Were Never Lovelier," as a girl beautifies herself before a mirror).

The main obstacle in the path of the vocal director has been the difficulty of recording successfully both orchestra and chorus. Post-recording of the chorus on a separate channel with earphones has produced the best solution to date, although new problems in intonation and synchronization are bound to crop up. It is to be hoped that new technical developments will eliminate these bugaboos, and open up even great possibilities for the use of voices.

Cinematics
By Margery Morrison

"Students of today become film musicians tomorrow. Music departments of motion picture studios demand capable composers, arrangers, orchestrators, songwriters, choral directors, singers, pianists, orchestra players, outters, research musicians, librarians."

Taking this statement from the aims and purposes of the National Film Music Council as my text, I have written leading universities and educational institutions to see what courses are being offered in Cinematics at present and will quote them from time to time.

In the beginning of any new field, experimentation, trial and error, have been the order of the day. Cinematics is never static; there is constant search for new methods, new material. Many of the pioneers are now giving way to the second generation. New men are constantly appearing. The experience of the last ten years can now be formulated and general principles laid down for further development and study. There is a vast field of suggestion for future trends from musicians who have learned the ropes. The would-be film musician should familiarize himself with acoustics, pace, synchronization, scientific and technical research, the actual problems to be encountered.

There is a stimulating article on the state of music in our colleges and universities in a recent issue of the Music Publishers Journal by Dean Rowland Dunham of the University of Colorado, comparing the well-rounded activities of secondary schools with their high level of training to the more or less academic courses offered in the colleges. He speaks of the decline of the conservatory in favor of the university on account of the value of the degree, and the increasing status of the public school supervisor.

We feel that film music well repays study, analysis, original research; that it is to be reckoned with not only commercially but as a global medium of artistic and dramatic high potential.

Cinematics merits an honored place in the curriculum of the postwar university.

* * *

I am naturally very much interested in the film music which is improving in quality and importance with every year.

I think that such a man as Douglas Moore, who is professor of music at Columbia University, would be one of the best men to call on to give you information on this subject. Walter Damrosch.

* * *

In reply to your inquiry I have not heard of much that is being done in the college field in radio and moving picture music, however this year the Columbia Extension installed a course in Music for Radio given by Mr. Samuel Chotzinoff, music director of NBC, and a course in Modern Scoring and Arranging for Dance, Radio and Motion Picture, given by Mr. Henry Brant who is a composer in the field.

- Douglas Moore

* * *

Boston University is building up a microfilm library of music scores projected on the screen simultaneously with the playing of the records.

The Use of Films in Santa Barbara City Schools
by Josephine Murray
Director of Music, Santa Barbara City Schools

For several years the Santa Barbara City Schools have maintained a permanent film library, augmented from the different depositories in California and elsewhere. The film materials have been selected particularly to enrich the school curriculum, especially the unit of work experiences for pupils on grade levels from kindergarten through senior high school.

Teachers preview the films in the central library projection room and select those films best adapted to the special study, pupil interest, and maturity of the group. Many of the films have music settings, particularly the culture films from far countries. These films often have singing and dancing groups, and show the characteristic instruments of the particular country. We have in our permanent collection the set of Erpi films on the instruments of the orchestra. From time to time we bring special music films for use in our schools. For example, such films as Music and Youth, Youth Builds a Symphony Orchestra, etc.

The motion picture theaters in the community very often have a selected music film short or major film such as The Junior Symphony, Moonlight Sonata, a film on the ballet, etc., and since all children of all ages attend the movies, the teachers very often utilize this material as a point of departure for introducing for study the music topic shown in the film. For example, The Ballet, The Sonata, Program Music, etc.

I believe since the motion picture is so universal that we could utilize the commercial films much more than we do for stimulating interest in music form, design, mood, and the dramatic aspects of music in enriching and enhancing the story.

I think that a bulletin might be designed for the teacher and for classroom use showing ways and purposefully using music through the films to develop a keen sensitivity to the poignancy of music in enhancing and enriching the story, its use in setting the mood of the story, in anticipating events and in unifying the picture.

* * *

Fresno Conference

Report of the Committee on Audio-Visual Aids, Materials and Techniques
by Alberta Carlson, Vice-Chairman

Our investigation shows that music educators do not utilize the possibilities of the commercial picture extensively. In this respect we are overlooking a force which reaches out into the lives of our students outside of the school. We recommend a greater correlation and closer tie-up with the motion picture theater and the classroom. The publication, FILM MUSIC NOTES, is a valuable aid in this respect.

We recommend that a committee of successful teachers should work with one or more film manufacturers in creating new films which will aid in the technical approach to vocal and instrumental study. Films on diaphragmatic breathing, tonguing, correct encochure, bowing or string instruments and other details difficult to demonstrate correctly, should be successfully designed for classroom use. A film on the repair of instruments could be valuable to teachers and students who must meet this problem.

Music educators approve of the continued use and expansion of short films depicting symphonic and choral groups, bands, and solo performers. It is suggested however that nationally known groups, artists and conductors be used. Such films can be effective and impressive if worked out on the basis of education plus entertainment with the elimination of close-up of obviously bored, sour-faced musicians. Opinion concerning the effectiveness of depicting standard musical compositions pictorially is divided. Many feel that this can be overdone to the detriment of the music itself. Here again a good committee of music educators could possibly work with the film producers.

The consensus of opinion is that the sound film will play an increasingly important part in music education, that the wise music educator will use it judiciously, and that the results will justify the cost both to the producer and the consumer.

(CINEMATICS continued)

Film Music Appreciation in Junior and Senior High Schools of Greater Cleveland
by Mrs. William Roger Thomas
Youth Advisor, The Cleveland Cinema Club

One of the major projects of the Cleveland Cinema Club is the sponsorship of Junior Cinema Clubs in high schools, to encourage the study of motion pictures as an art.

When the schools opened last September, as the new chairman and advisor for these Junior Clubs, I sent an outline for programs and various phases of film work for study and discussion, with particular emphasis on music in the films. There was a very favorable response to these suggestions, and so much interest was aroused that the Cleveland Public Library had a special exhibit recently in cooperation with the Cinema Club and FILM MUSIC NOTES. The Motion Picture Editors of the Cleveland Newspapers were besieged with letters inquiring about the theme melodies, background music, composers and musical directors of the current pictures.

On January fifteenth a program was presented with ten Junior Clubs participating. From John Adams High School of Cleveland, Charles Vainer gave what was considered the outstanding talk of the program on "The Importance of Music in the Films." He spoke of the beautiful and inspiring picture, An American Romance and the fine musical score accompanying it. To quote: "The music was symbolic of our mechanized age, dynamic, complex, colorful, and yet a natural and primitive force, a part of the eternal rhythm of life. Music being the universal language, linked with motion pictures, the most popular modern art, you have unlimited possibilities for development of a great art in the future, an art for all the people everywhere."

** **

Here is a letter from the John Burroughs Junior High School, Los Angeles, California, by Carol Hultgren, Student Chairman of Motion Picture Music Committee -

Every week our class holds a motion picture evaluation discussion. We made an outline to go by, and in this outline is the question, "Does the music help to develop the plot?" At our last discussion the pictures reviewed were Keys of the Kingdom, The Picture of Dorian Gray, Music for Millions, A Tree Grows in Brooklyn and Hangover Square.

The girl evaluating Music for Millions said, "The important music was not in the background but in the limelight, and it was a welcome change from jazzy music to classical."

RHAPSODY IN BLUE

(The Story of George Gershwin)

A Musical Study Outline of the Warner Bros. Motion Picture for Clubs and Classes
By Sigmund Spaeth

The screen life of George Gershwin, RHAPSODY IN BLUE, unquestionably demands recognition as a most important addition to the musical biographies now available to the public through the popular medium of motion pictures. It is a typical Warner Bros. production, elaborately carried out, with a meticulous attention to detail, directed by Irving Rapper, with writing honors credited to Sonya Levien, Howard Koch and Elliot Paul. The part of George Gershwin is played by a brilliant young actor, Robert Alda, with splendid cooperation from such well-known stars as Joan Leslie, Alexis Smith and Charles Coburn, and a remarkable group of personalities in Gershwin's actual life, playing themselves on the screen, including Paul Whiteman, Oscar Levant, Al Jolson, George White, Hazel Scott and Anne Brown.

Since George Gershwin is now rightly considered not only America's greatest composer of popular music but perhaps also our most significant creator in the more serious forms, his compositions, as presented in this film, are worthy of careful study and analysis. They are given authentic and completely convincing interpretations by the performers most closely associated with them. The music itself is the heart and soul of the picture. Every admirer of Gershwin's genius will find satisfaction in these performances, and millions of converts should be added to the immense audience already devoted to this unique music.

George Gershwin wisely started his career by writing popular tunes, for which he had a particular gift that earned him first a living and eventually a fortune. But always his ideal was that of composition in the larger forms, for which he prepared himself through conscientious and painstaking study. He was the first composer to succeed in adapting the jazz idiom effectively to a serious musical expression, as he did not only in his epoch-making Rhapsody in Blue, but even more significantly in the orchestral tone poem, An American in Paris, the piano Concerto in F and the folk opera Porgy and Bess. Judged by those four achievements alone, the name of George Gershwin would automatically find and maintain its place among the immortals of music.

Fortunately all these and many other Gershwin compositions are available on excellent records, making their hearing and study a simple and practical matter for any individual or group sufficiently interested. While a certain familiarity with this music may be assumed, it will be found worthwhile to increase even such preliminary acquaintance before seeing and hearing the screen biography of the composer.

This suggested outline for study is concerned with the music rather than the plot of the picture, for the latter can well be left to the discovery of delighted theatergoers. It should be emphasized, however, that such a film would fail in its purpose if it did not hold the attention and command the enthusiasm of the average movie fan. Neither the producers nor the admirers of Rhapsody in Blue would wish to label it an "educational" picture, least of all to limit its appeal to a little group of serious music lovers. Such a film is justified only if it appeals to every type of listener, with a consequent practical support at the boxoffice.

Actually it should not be difficult to interest almost anyone in the music of George Gershwin, for its melodic appeal is enormous, with the added excitement of rhythmic individuality and consistently effective instrumentation. The average listener discovered these virtues more quickly than the scholarly critics, and an all-Gershwin program is still the surest drawing card in New York's Lewisohn Stadium or the Hollywood Bowl. His popular songs of course need no propaganda, for their supremacy in their field has long been established.

(RHAPSODY IN BLUE, continued)

Concerning the Major Works

Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue was commissioned by Paul Whiteman, and introduced by that conductor, with the composer at the piano, in Aeolian Hall, February 12, 1924. The title is justified by the frequent use of "blue" harmonies; emphasizing the interval of the minor seventh, as well as the typical grace notes which, on the piano, are also often called "blue." The Rhapsody begins with a low trill by the clarinet, from which it slides to the high note that introduces the first theme. This is a highly original melody, never clearly major or minor, with a sprinkling of chromatic intervals. A second theme follows immediately, again in a "neutral" mode, and these two melodies provide most of the early material, with Ferde Grofe's orchestration lending a great variety of color. The piano enters with a cadenza, built on the old-fashioned "blue ending." The complete Rhapsody (which is almost never heard without cuts) contains some subsidiary themes, too, and reaches its inevitable climax in the sustained melody in E Major, played by the full orchestra, with syncopated ornaments by the piano. This broad theme appears also in fast tempo, and at the end the two early themes are heard again in a new form, with the sustained "blue ending" for a finish.

The Piano Concerto in F came about a year after the Rhapsody, and was composed at the suggestion of Walter Damrosch, who conducted its first performance, with the New York Symphony Orchestra, at Carnegie Hall, the composer appearing as pianist. This work made a far deeper impression on discerning listeners than even its popular predecessor, and to many (including this writer) it represents the top flight of Gershwin's inspiration. The composer made his own orchestration. The Concerto begins with a rhythmic figure by the kettle drums, the piano entering later on a glissando to announce the first theme, which gets its individual effects from the harmonies as much as the melody. There is a second theme, broadly melodious, and in general the sonata form is followed throughout the first movement. The second movement is in slow time, with a muted trumpet introducing a melancholy tune, which is then turned into a more cheerful melody by the piano. Again there is a tuneful second theme, with a suggestion of blue harmonies, and the piano leads the orchestra right into the Finale, which is fast and furious. At the close the opening theme is heard once more, in broad orchestration, with contrapuntal effects.

An American in Paris, written in 1928, was inspired by an actual trip to that city, and this background is beautifully suggested by a montage sequence in the picture. There are two outstanding themes, the first representing Paris, with the actual sound of taxi horns, and the second, a slow "blues," describing the homesickness of the American.

The opera, Porgy and Bess, was produced by the Theater Guild in 1935, with DuBose Heyward supplying the libretto and Ira Gershwin the lyrics. Rouben Mamoulian was the director and Anne Brown created the role of Bess. She sings the lovely Summer-time in a briefly filmed scene from this dramatic masterpiece.

The picture also presents parts of the less known Cuban Overture and the almost forgotten one-act opera, 135th Street, for which B. G. DeSylva wrote the book. The popular tunes include such favorites as The Man I Love (sung by Hazel Scott), I Got Rhythm, Liza, Swanee (with Al Jolson as its original interpreter), Embraceable You, Delicious and Gershwin's final song, Love Walked In.

This feast of Gershwiniana should satisfy the most rabid of the composer's devotees, while to the comparatively uninitiated it may prove a revelation of American music in both the light and the serious manner. The motion picture, RHAPSODY IN BLUE, is sure to be widely discussed from the moment of its release to the public, with particular interest on the part of music clubs and the teachers and pupils in our schools and colleges. Every community should have a chance to see it.

Recent Films Containing Excerpts from Standard Works
FILM MUSIC NOTES Volume IV

OCTOBER

Arsenic and Old Lace: Bridal Chorus from Wagner's Lohengrin
The Climax: Minute Waltz, Chopin; Marche Militaire, Schubert
An American Romance: Lo, Here the Gentle Lark, Sir Henry R. Bishop
Wilson: American airs, patriotic, traditional and contemporary
Casanova Brown: Fire Music (Die Walküre) Wagner; Bridal Chorus, Lohengrin;
Lullaby, Brahms; Rock-a-bye-Baby, traditional
Henry Aldrich's Little Secret: Cry of the Walkyries, Wagner
Mr. Winkle Goes to War: Sweet Genevieve, traditional
Attack: Fetes Galantes, Debussy
Mademoiselle Fifi: La Marseillaise, Rouget de Lisle - National Anthem;
En Passant par la Lorraine, Aupres de ma Blonde, and other
traditional folk songs, both French and German. (The first
two are also used in Passage to Marseille and The Impostor
Since You Went Away: Home, Sweet Home, Payne-Bishop

NOVEMBER

None But the Lonely Heart: None But the Lonely Heart, Tchaikowski
Dark Waters: French traditional folk songs
Bluebeard: Pictures at an Exposition, Moussorgsky (also used in Mask of Dimitrios)
Meet Me in St. Louis: Popular songs of the period
Irish Eyes are Smiling: Irish folk melodies, traditional and modern
Frenchman's Creek: Clair de Lune, En Bateau, Debussy;
Sea Chanteys, traditional, French and Canadian

DECEMBER

Experiment Perilous: Waltz in C Sharp Minor, Chopin
Hollywood Canteen: The Bee, Schubert; Souvenir, Wienawski
Winged Victory: Silent Night, traditional, (also used in China Sky)
Enter Arsene Lupin: Aupres de ma Blonde, traditional French

JANUARY

Guest in the House: Liebestraum, Liszt
Music for Millions: New World Symphony, Dvorak; Clair de Lune, Debussy;
Hallelujah Chorus, Handel; A Minor Concerto, Grieg

FEBRUARY

A Song to Remember: A Flat Polonaise, Minute Waltz, E Flat Nocturne,
A Minor Mazurka, Fantaisie Impromptu, Chopin
The Fighting Lady: Yankee Doodle, Anchors Aweigh, Columbia the Gem of the Ocean
Gentle Annie: Columbia the Gem of the Ocean and other traditional American airs
The Unseen: Beautiful Dreamer, Foster
Roughly Speaking: American topical songs of the period

MARCH

Delightfully Dangerous: Strauss waltzes
The Picture of Dorian Gray: C Minor Prelude, Chopin
Strange Illusion: A Minor Concerto, Schumann

APRIL

The Corn is Green: All Through the Night, March of the Men of Harlech, and other
traditional Welsh airs
Son of Lassie: Ase's Death, A Minor Concerto, Grieg
The Brighton Strangler: Unfinished Symphony, Schubert
Salome, Where She Danced: Oh, Susanna, Foster
A Royal Scandal: Russian National Anthem, Tsarist
Without Love: Clair de Lune, Debussy
The Affairs of Susan: La Marseillaise, Rouget de Lisle

(RECENT FILMS CONTAINING EXCERPTS FROM STANDARD WORKS, continued)

APRIL, continued

Colonel Blimp: Mignon, Thomas; Zampa, Herrold, Orphee aux Enfers, Offenbach;
Fingals Cave Overture, Mendelssohn; Lohengrin, Wagner;
British Grenadiers, traditional

MAY

Thrill of a Romance: I Love Thee, Grieg; Pagliacci, Leoncavallo;
Die Walkure, Wagner; Mlle. Modiste, Herbert;
C Sharp Waltz, Chopin; Strauss Waltzes;
Vive la Campagne, traditional

Phantom of 42nd Street: Minuet, Boccherini

Valley of Decision: Irish traditional melodies

Twice Blessed: Spinning Song, Mendelssohn

Wonder Man: Dark Eyes, traditional Russian Gypsy air

JUNE

Rhapsody in Blue: Melody in F, Rubinstein; A Major Prelude, E Flat Nocturne,
Chopin; An American in Paris, Concerto, Rhapsody in Blue,
Summertime (Porgy and Bess), various Gershwin songs

These are selected at random from our reviews - probably our readers can discover many more.

Best Pictures of the Year from a Musical Point of View

The following pictures have been selected by the combined New York and Hollywood Previewing Committees as being those of greatest interest from a musical point of view, covering the period from October 1944, through June 1945:

RHAPSODY IN BLUE (George Gershwin, Ray Heindorf, Leo Forbstein) -

A SONG TO REMEMBER (Chopin, Miklos Rosza, M. W. Stoloff) -

THE GREAT MR. HANDEL (London Symphony Orchestra, Ernest Irving) -

For their eloquent and constructive treatment of musical biographies

MUSIC FOR MILLIONS (Georgie Stoll, Michel Michelet) - For its encouragement in general of better music in pictures and for Mr. Iturbi in particular

WILSON (Alfred Newman) -

MEET ME IN ST. LOUIS (Georgie Stoll) -

ROUGHLY SPEAKING (Max Steiner, Leo Forbstein, Hugo Friedhofer) -

INCENDIARY BLONDE (Robert Emmett Dolan) -

For their treatment of Americana: topical, period and college songs, military airs, etc.

OBJECTIVE, BURMA (Franz Waxman, Leo Forbstein, Leonid Raab) - For its treatment of natural sounds, growing into music

THE CORN IS GREEN (Max Steiner, Leo Forbstein) - For its treatment and use of Welsh national airs, making them an essential and necessary part of the picture

FRENCHMAN'S CREEK (Victor Young) - For its adaptation of modern music into a period setting and its telling use of sea chanteys

MRS. PARKINGTON (Bronislau Kaper) -

THE THIN MAN GOES HOME (David Snell) -

For their treatment of sound effects in relation to story

HANGOVER SQUARE (Bernard Herrmann) -

THE ENCHANTED COTTAGE (Roy Webb, C. Bakaleinikoff) -

For original piano inserts of concert caliber

CONFLICT (Frederick Hollander, Leo Forbstein) - For its expert treatment and synchronization of photography and music to create and build suspense

LAURA (David Raksin, Emil Newman) - For its balance and timing and treatment of "mood" music

THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY (Herbert Stothart) - For its "Nemesis" prelude, use of the piano throughout, and treatment of Chopin music

THOSE ENDEARING YOUNG CHARMS (Roy Webb) - For its beautifully interwoven use of a theme song

GUEST IN THE HOUSE (Werner Janssen) - For its masterly treatment of a record: exceptional background music and the Liszt Liebestraum

I'LL BE SEEING YOU (Daniele Amfithreatrof) - For the rich quality of its orchestration and telling use of spontaneous carol singing

TOMORROW THE WORLD (Ann Ronell) - For a score so poetically conceived as to give pleasure, and relieve the high pressure story without in any way detracting from it

(Best Pictures of the Year from a Musical Point of View, continued)

DARK WATERS (Miklos Rosza) - For its atmospheric handling and enhancing of dramatic effects as opposed to light folk and dance music thus creating an exceptional feeling of chiaroscuro

AN AMERICAN ROMANCE (Louis Gruenberg) -

COUNTER-ATTACK (Louis Gruenberg) -

For their remarkable epic quality - impersonal and universal treatment of mechanical rhythms

THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM (Alfred Newman) - For its fine use of Gregorian themes and ecclesiastical background - and the showing of character development through increasing thematic strength in the music

DELIGHTFULLY DANGEROUS (Morton Gould, Charles Previn) - For its overall coverage of everything from symphony to strip-tease and lovely incidental handling of Strauss Waltzes

THRILL OF A ROMANCE (Georgie Stoll, Michel Michelet) - For Melchior and the expert blending of various types of music with topnotch entertainment

CAN'T HELP SINGING (H. J. Salter, Jerome Kern) - For its tuneful melodies and being the nearest to light opera than any picture to date

THE CLIMAX (Edward Ward) - For a charming and stylized treatment of opera of a bygone day

THE SILVER FLEET (Allan Gray) - For choral singing of inspirational quality

WITHOUT LOVE (Bronislau Kaper) - For purely fantastic and extra-dimensional treatment of comedy

ALONG CAME JONES (Arthur Lange) - For a western score which is never banal nor blatant and has, besides, a marvelously synchronized crescendo of music, photography and drama at the very opening

Have our readers any suggestions? For instance, which picture had the best signature - i.e., showed in the very beginning its essence of things to come?

REVIEWS OF CURRENT MOTION PICTURES FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF MUSIC INTEREST

BLOOD ON THE SUN, Cagney-UA. (Plots and Counterplots). Director: Frank Lloyd
Music by Miklos Rosza

This suspenseful melodrama of Oriental intrigue versus Occidental courage opens on a sinister note with cherry blossom music containing overtones of doom. As the picture develops, entertainment value runs reasonably high, thanks largely to the particularly dynamic quality brought to it by James Cagney and a couple of "swell" - if we may be pardoned the expression - fights! However necessary it may be to make known to the general public the wiles and trickery of Japanese diplomacy and the long existence of its plan to dominate the world, it is difficult at times to accept, with the almost childish credulity apparently expected of us, the old stand-by plot of spies, missing papers and the fact that the Tanaka Memorial is contained in an envelope suited to an ordinary insurance policy...Acting is commendable throughout with Wallace Ford and Frank Puglia outstanding in supporting roles (the latter surprisingly enough in a propaganda picture of this kind is allowed to portray an honorable Japanese - we had almost forgotten there were such); and Sylvia Sidney's return to the screen showing her as more arresting in her maturity than in the heavy dramatics of her earlier days. Balanced and beautifully assured direction and interesting settings, seemingly authentic, add to the film's value while its eerie and intriguing mood is well defined by the musical score with its easily recognized Oriental intervals heightening, at all times, the intensity of the scenes in which it is used. Mature-Family. Running time - 1 hour and 50 minutes.

THRILL OF A ROMANCE, M-G-M. (Songs, Scenery and Love). Director: Richard Thorpe
Musical Director: Georgie Stoll
Incidental Music by Michel Michelet

The best in entertainment is set before us here in a warmly human little story played against stunning Technicolor backgrounds in which the Yosemite and the redwoods vie with the gayety and exuberance of the swimming pool and sophisticated surroundings of the fashionable hotel. Esther Williams shows herself a delightful actress as well as swimming champion; Lauritz Melchior a great screen personality as well as a great singer; Van Johnson's disarming simplicity is refreshing; and "Julid" and "lyonel" are real discoveries. The ubiquitous Chopin number, as played by Spring Byington, is amusing: the strains of Strauss' waltzes for the lovely swimming sequences are enchanting. Melchior sings the "Vesti la Giubba" from Pagliacci, Grieg's "I Love Thee," and "Vive la Compagnie" besides songs in a more popular vein - one about "Maybe" was particularly good. It is to be regretted that more attention was not given to the tone quality in recording the Liszt number as the microphone did not give good balance. There are all varieties of music in the picture, excluding symphony and, therefore, all tastes can be satisfied. Those who like it "sweet and hot" will be delighted with the dream number but to others the faces it shows us are inhuman. A native African tribesman would be preferable - he at least would have a savage nobility in his frenzy. M.F. Running time - 1 hour and 45 minutes

OUT OF THIS WORLD, Paramount. (Bracken - and Voice!). Director: Hal Walker
Musical Director: Victor Young

With music and specialty numbers as its backbone, this picture has super-showmanship, a clever cast and considerable entertainment value, but the performance lags in spots - especially the pneumonia treatment! - and would be improved by a little judicious pruning. Those who are amused by the raucous voice and exaggerated gyrations of Cass Daley will, however, doubtless wish her comedy left in. Showmanship is the cube root of all streamlined productions but what does it spell in the case of the five conductors? The music says nothing - it is a stunt - it pretends nothing else but to amuse and thrill a certain type of audience. Those of us who think of music in another dimension miss something that the present generation "wots not of." F. Running time - 1 hour and 35 minutes)

BILLY ROSE'S DIAMOND HORSESHOE, 20th-Fox. (Gay and Glittering). Dir: G. Seaton

Musical Directors: Alfred Newman and Charles Henderson

Lyrics and Music by Mack Gordon and Harry Warren

Here is a sparkling musical cocktail, very pleasing to the taste and with the dazzling Betty Grable its chief ingredient. The vivacity of her acting along with her beauty of form, feature and coloring carries the picture. A simple plot dealing with romance among theatrical folk holds the proceedings together, along with the well-known Gaxton brand of comedy. Lavishly mounted with first class specialty numbers, fast-paced direction and tuneful music, it is all excellent entertainment of its kind. With the exception of a good deal of drinking, which seems to be taken as a matter of course in films these days, ethical and social values are good. M.F. Running time - 1 hour and 46 minutes.

THAT'S THE SPIRIT, Universal. (Blithe and Buoyant). Director: Charles Lamont

Music Score by H. J. Salter

This is good family entertainment, unmarred by any casual or excessive drinking - in these days almost a record in pictures - and with gayety and fun predominant. The story, completely improbable, is based on the now familiar "out of this world" angle, first used to such good effect in Molnar's Liliom, but the cloud postures and centralized control now add television for the once-over of mundane matters, and deftly too! Staging, costuming, and dance routines are excellently carried out with the geometric black-and-white number so beautifully done as to be exceptional. Why is no credit given on the program to those taking part in anything so original and effective? Music, for the most part in the dance pattern, is well done with one of the best silences for building up ever to be felt in the theater scene, just before Johnny Coy, as Martin, turns on the phonograph. There is a nice use of records and the swinging of the "Evening Star" is clever, even though it will seem regrettable to real music lovers. Moreover, there are bits of choral expression which make musical highlights, particularly in the celestial sequences where phantom-like photography is combined with rich harmonies. It is most devoutly to be wished, however, that producers would pay more attention to such details of costuming as proper foundation garments for actresses wearing the clothes of the '90s. In reality, clothes then made women look piquant and attractive but they are not when worn over the present day figure. There were anachronisms, too, in the picture: chorus girls of that period did not wear brassieres, for instance, nor were babies as a rule born in hospitals. Nevertheless, it is all enjoyable, clean comedy, good for an hour of laughs and a tear or two. Family. Running time - 1 hour and 35 minutes.

PILLOW TO POST, Warner Bros. (Merry Farce). Director: Vincent Sherman

Music by Frederick Hollander

Fast-moving farce-comedy based on present wartime conditions, nicely mounted and well directed. Although at no time a worthy vehicle for the real talent of Ida Lupino, it is at first very amusing, smartly paced and delightfully acted. Toward the end, however, it sags badly and in spite of its being motivated there is too much drinking involved. It would be a pity to have our foreign neighbors' impressions of American drinking and puzzling conduct only strengthened by films of this type, however much we may enjoy them ourselves. Music starts off at a brisk tempo with more or less conventional orchestration largely in comedy mood with the inevitable bassoon. But the score is nicely mounted and points up the action skilfully throughout. Adults. Running time - 1 hour and 40 minutes.

TWICE BLESSED, M-G-M. (Timely and Entertaining). Director: Harry Beaumont

Musical Director: David Snell

A clever idea is here amusingly carried out to suit all types of audiences. The cast is a well selected one with the Wilde twins adding a refreshing note to the proceedings and Mr. Snell's music giving us an up-to-date and smoothly paced score. The Mendelssohn "Spinning Song" is well integrated to show Stephanie's stay-at-home tastes! The picture combines good entertainment with food for solid thought. M.F. Running time - 1 hour and 20 minutes.

THE SILVER FLEET, British-PRC. (Excellent and Absorbing). Dirs: Sewell & Wellesley
Music by Allan Gray

A profoundly moving pseudo-documentary picture is here developed for us, authenticated by the Navies of Britain and the Netherlands. How the impossible feat of delivering a submarine filled with Germans to England was accomplished by deep-seated faith, patriotism and the leadership of "Piet Hein" is dramatically, yet simply and sincerely shown us in a timely and well-written series of sequences against a noteworthy and unusual background of submarine construction, with imaginative photography. The British score by Allan Gray, is the best integrated and recorded one since "In Which We Serve" and the choral singing has inspirational quality and lift; the children also sing naturally and with conviction. Family.
Running time - 1 hour and 5 minutes.

CHINA'S LITTLE DEVILS, Monogram. (Heroic Children). Director: Monta Bell
Musical Director: Dimitri Tiomkin

A revealing and inspirational story of Chinese children who really seem to be living, not acting their terrible experiences in present day guerrilla warfare. Like their Russian comrades, they cannot be judged by our standards for they have experienced too much in their short years to be like ordinary carefree youngsters. The influence of the missionary (simply and convincingly portrayed by Harry Carey) on his charges gives the picture ethical value and the introduction of the Flying Tigers, "Little Butch's" godfathers, adds interest and excitement. The ideology of Dr. Temple is adroitly juxtaposed to that of Little Butch and moreover we are made to comprehend that this generation of war orphans will inevitably enter upon a new type of civilization with little of tradition to bind them to glib formulas. Direction is sympathetic and sincere, the action convincing and the music interesting, for a distinguished score underwrites the absorbing and heroic tale of these unbelievable youngsters, and there are some exceptional sound effects throughout. A good picture for the family to see so that our boys and girls may understand their blessings. F.
Running time - 1 hour and 16 minutes.

DIVORCE, Monogram. (A Preachment on its Evils!). Director: William Nigh
Musical Director: Edward Kay

The idea underlying this picture is of course a good one but unfortunately it takes more than good intentions to make a good movie and the story, as told here, is weak and unconvincing, the direction very obvious, and the good actors in the cast are lost in a maze of trivia. Kay Francis looks lovely, as always, and the music by Edward Kay is pleasantly styled to fit the mood of the various sequences. But when all is said and done the entertainment value of the film is mediocre and unlikely to appeal to any but a non-critical audience. Adults.
Running time - 1 hour and 11 minutes

BACK TO BATAAN, RKO. (Americans and Filipinos). Director: Edward Dmytryk
Music by Roy Webb. Musical Director: C. Bakaleinikoff

A timely film which is of great interest inasmuch as it depicts the terribly dangerous struggle and the unbelievable hardships to which our soldiers are subjected in their war against Nippon. It shows graphically the tactics which we have learned to use so successfully in such a short time, to overcome the difficulties of terrain, climate and conception of life in the Pacific war that we are now engaged in. Of necessity, it is also disturbing and harrowing but that is as it should be. Moreover, it stresses the merits of our "cousins" in the Pacific and makes us doubly glad to wish them well when they assume their magnificently earned independence. Music lends emphasis throughout and is psychologically fitted in at most opportune times with satisfying effects - especially noteworthy being the rhythm of the signal drums and their thudding beat used to denote impending disaster. The lack of it in other spots is equally dramatic, such as in the jungle when all we hear are animal or bird sounds, the rustling of leaves, etc. Never overdone, it is nevertheless important to the story. Mature-Family. Running time - 1 hour and 37 minutes.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE, 20th-Fox. (History Without Tears). Dir: Gregory Ratoff

Music by Emil Newman and Charles Henderson

A gay musical fantasy in bright Technicolor which romps its merry way into past history with only a slight regard for fact but in thoroughly pleasing fashion. The cast enters wholeheartedly into the spirit of the thing, the lyrics and music of Ira Gershwin and Kurt Weill are topnotch of their kind, and notably interesting are the settings, the costumes and wigs of the various periods - especially in the Hessian scenes - and the delightful choral singing. There is also some very clever juxtaposition of old and new as, for instance, the minuet changing to jitterbug; dialogue is apt and amusing and the moral values in vision of progress are good. Fortunio Bonanova turns in another of his fine performances and his singing with that of Carlos Ramirez is both ringing and colorful. Mr. Ryskind's handling of the story and the lustiness of the Ratoff direction give us eighty minutes of tingling fun with music excelling in moods - especially the brighter ones - under the expert direction of Messrs. Newman and Henderson, and the songs and singing, as noted above, really good. Family. Running time - 1 hour and 20 minutes.

RHAPSODY IN BLUE, Warner Bros. (Biography, Rich and Rewarding). Dir: Irving Rapper

Music by George Gershwin. Musical Director: Leo Forbstein

We have in this picture an outstanding American film biography in contrast to the European one in A Song to Remember - the latter distinguished for its romantic, imaginative quality, this one for its sincerity and warm human values. The melodies of George Gershwin, interwoven with the story of his all-too-short life, so full of creative achievement in a new field of music, including opera distinctively American, are here developed and handled with such a degree of mastery as to make it a production of the highest order. It is one remarkable for its presentation of American life and opportunity, and even the racial problem does not appear in that light - the negro scenes, the Jewish background, are given with such understanding that they are true valuations. Once or twice the Hollywood touch enters in, sacrificing actual fact for dramatic effect and the film could be shortened here and there to advantage, but even these things can be forgiven so thoroughly fine is the film as a whole. The recording arrangements and even the dubbing of the music are superb. Robert Alda and the whole cast turn in distinguished performances with the threads of direction at all times held together in the capable hands of Irving Rapper. A sequence showing the movie medium possibly at its best is the conception and development of "An American in Paris," in which the nostalgic scenes, the well-known and characteristic rhythms and sounds of the beloved city are synchronized and fused with the music. The montage of the concert tour - antedating the one in A Song to Remember - is also marvelously done. Elsewhere in this issue, Dr. Sigmund Spaeth analyzes the music of the picture in detail so suffice it to say that here is absorbing entertainment, rich in inspiration and truly American. A word of praise is due also to Ray Heindorf, Ray Turner and musical director Leo Forbstein for their part in a film which reflects credit on each and everyone concerned in its making. Family. Running time - 2 hours and 20 minutes.

NOB HILL, 20th-Fox. (Peggy Ann and the Barbary Coast). Director: Henry Hathaway

Musical Directors: Emil Newman and Charles Henderson

A lush, plush saga of old San Francisco days with an Irish colleen, a proud lady, a smooth imperturbable he-man and his pretty girl friend. Add a political angle: an unequalled showcase of the Barbary Coast and its hurly burly, gay, even rowdy songs and dances - this versus "Snob Hill" and we have the usual pattern of entertainment plus a tear for sentiment. The story, if very slight, is simple and sincere. Peggy Ann Garner does a good job in a kind of angel-in-the-house role, always managing to keep the sympathy of the audience. The picture is ethically sound in accepted movie fashion - the poor always triumphant over the inevitably evil rich. Background music is properly subordinate, old time songs are inserted pleasingly though not always in chronological order and if it is all fairly reminiscent of earlier pictures it is still acceptable entertainment. Family. Running time - 1 hour and 30 minutes.

ALONG CAME JONES, Int'l-RKO. (Glorified Western). Director: Stuart Heisler

Music Score by Arthur Lange

With Gary Cooper at the helm, Loretta Young as the girl, and Dan Duryea to complete the dramatic triangle we have an unbeatable combination ably abetted by the former New York columnist, Nunnally Johnson, whose expert understanding of human values gives a fine adaptation of an exceptional story: the type of western that sells America all over the world. With the main title topping anything to date in that line, it is not only an overtone to stirring events, it is a jacket cover for a best-seller! Photography is not only of great beauty and imaginative appeal but in the treatment of the passage of time, from darkness to dawn to sun-up as the mail coach dashes over dangerous and tortuous mountain roads, it is unsurpassed. This synchronized crescendo (music, photography, drama) culminates in catastrophe and the story begins. We do not get, in this film, the impression of broad open spaces and unlimited sun and sky which we have come to associate with westerns, but (once we are clear of the banalities of a frontier town) strange black-and-white effects of nightmarish quality, close-ups of rocky wastes, towering angles of dilapidated farm buildings, or the four walls of shacks which seem malignant, all of which add to the feeling of danger always imminent. The leisurely pacing of the picture wherever slow timing was possible is rarely seen in an American film and is particularly restful in a "thriller" accentuating as it does the majority of quick moving shots. Mr. Lange's score is exceedingly well handled throughout. Though always subordinate to the action, the music is never banal nor blatant. The easy jog of cowboy rhythms is the fundamental beat, but it changes to con fuoco on occasion. The lazy crooning of "Round and Round" with its many verses threads the tale. Melody's tunes rise spontaneously; he never registers "singing." Mature-Family.
Running time - 1 hour and 30 minutes.

INCENDIARY BLONDE, Paramount. (Betty Hutton Goes to Town). Dir: George Marshall

Musical Director: Robert Emmett Dolan

A graphic and entertaining film based on the colorful career of our Number 1 "Glamour Gal," is made to pass before us as through a fast-moving kaleidoscope, with Betty Hutton providing a vivid and exciting characterization of that vital Queen of the Night Clubs and ex-rodeo star, Texas Guinan. The story, whether doctored or not, is consistent with the character although the action may not always be considered so, as, for instance, the breaking into song with a volunteer chorus at the Rodeo, which introduced a "snappy" number but put a Gus Edwards touch to an otherwise sincere sequence. However, the brilliant if unobtrusive direction of George Marshall holds the picture well together. Technicolor adds a special quality to the Wild West and daredevil stunts and photography and sound recording, too, deserve special mention - the former bringing a true feeling of the period. Incidental background music is appropriate and good theater and the arrangement of the music score also merits commendation, the songs being rendered musically much as they were when current, not "Holly-glamour-wood-ized" as earlier pieces so frequently are. It is all characteristic Americana and outstanding of its type. Mature-Family.
Running time - 1 hour and 50 minutes.

CONFLICT, Warner Bros. ("Conscience doth make Cowards -"). Dir: Curtis Bernhardt

Music by Frederick Hollander. Musical Dir: Leo Forbstein

An exceptional picture of its kind, for it is a mature presentation of psychiatry in the discovery of the "perfect crime," with production values especially good in developing characterizations, motivations, suggestions and oppositions. A distinguished cast is given a real story and although to many Miss Hobart seemed much too nice a person at heart to merit sudden liquidation, she did very well in working up the shrewish wife angle. She and Miss Smith are perfect foils and prove their artistry, for the roles could be exchanged. The psychological phase of the case is excellently handled by writers and actors alike, and even Bogart is allowed to be a totally non-sympathetic character. Superb and imaginative at times, even symbolic, photography is synchronized with an exceptional score - one which is highly impressionistic, dealing also with subtleties, half-lights and mysterious shadows. In fact, Mr. Hollander's music is one of the best things in the film. Adults.
Running time - 1 hour and 30 minutes.

VICTOR YOUNG

If you have a young individualist in your family who likes to play music as he feels it, Victor Young believes you should permit him to so express himself. Over luncheon in the Paramount Commissary this past week he told us something of his own youthful experiments, his delight in breaking patterns, and his visions for the future of film music.

As a child of six he played "Yankee Doodle Dandy," holding the "fiddle" over his head. No one paid much attention to his musical exhibition at the time. His father was busy and his mother was ill. A little later, when his mother died, he and his sister were sent to Warsaw, Poland, to live with their grandparents. There he was entered in the Conservatory of Music, but conditions in their humble home were such that practicing was difficult to say the least. It was a four room apartment with thin walls through which came the sound of the neighbors' activities, and the noise of the adjoining tailor shop which provided a living for the family. To add to the young violinist's confusion, his sister practiced a different lesson on the piano in the same room and, still worse, he was required to polish the floor with his cushioned feet while he went through his scales. Despite all this, he organized a neighborhood orchestra and at fourteen conducted an aria from Mignon at the Conservatory. As he looks back upon those years he realizes that there he learned the valuable art of concentration and the ability to focus his mind upon more than one thing at a time.

Of late he has been scoring three pictures of widely differing content. For THE LOVE LETTERS, he wrote music reminiscent of "The Uninvited," making use of dissonances and weird, unearthly effects imposed upon the central theme of a great love. For MASQUERADE IN MEXICO, popular modern tunes are incorporated into a score which carries the mood of carnival and romance. For YOU CAME ALONG, the music problem was complicated because of a distinct change of pace midway in the picture. Opening on a note of tragedy, it tells of the joy which comes to a returned aviator when the girl he loves insists that they marry even though he has but a short time to live. The sound of planes overhead during a certain poignant scene might well have been introduced authentically by the sound department, but it was determined that background music would better interpret the mood desired. "I knew just the effect I wanted and how to get it," said Mr. Young, "because one day just before the Sunday Westinghouse radio program, I heard one of the men of the orchestra holding a long low note on the French horn as he was tuning up. It had all the sound of a finely tuned motor. I asked him to play it again, called in the trombones, and by careful blending we found we could simulate the far-off roar of plane motors at different levels in the sky, of one, or of many. You will hear it in the picture and you will see what I mean...it is like the actual thing, yet it adds something."

You enter a new realm of thinking when you talk with these men who compose film music. They are scientists, mathematicians, dreamers and experimentators. They are by no means satisfied with things as they are; foreseeing the day when opera, ballet, great symphonic music, and new, untried musical effects will be introduced.

"We are just at the beginning," declares Victor Young. "Someday, the composer will sit in with the writer and the producer; the blueprint of the production will be so planned that the pattern as a whole will include the background music. Perhaps the music will take the lead in certain scenes. For example, a man is walking on a bridge contemplating suicide. I may want to compose a tone poem to express his feelings but shall need more time than is given in a walk to the end of the bridge. All right, the man will walk back and forth several times until the mood is established through the music. Today, what happens? We write music to fit the action as filmed and the full atmospheric possibilities of such a scene are lost."

A. Males for Benny.

Lore Theme.

Pict Young

A handwritten musical score for a film theme. The score is written on ten staves, organized into five systems of two staves each. The top staff of each system is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The bottom staff of each system is in bass clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 2/4 time signature. The music consists of a melodic line in the treble clef and a more rhythmic, accompanimental line in the bass clef. The notation includes various note values, rests, and dynamic markings. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a fermata on the final note of the bass line.