FILM MUSIC

THE MIRACLE OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 1952 VOLUME XII NUMBER

FILM MUSIC

Offical Publication of the National Film Music Council
26 East 83rd Street, New York City
Butterfield 8-3288

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 1952 VOLUME XII NUMBER 1

CONTENTS:

PLEASE NOTE OUR CHANGE OF ADDRESS: 26 EAST 83RD ST., NEW YORK CITY, 28

Published by the National Film Music Council, 26 East 83rd St. New York City, President, William Hamilton, Vice President and Editor, Marie L. Hamilton. Executive Secretary, Grace W. Mabee. Five issues yearly with occasional special bulletins. Two dollars a year. Back issues (30 copies) Five dollars plus postage. Single copies 35 cents.

FILM MUSIC NEWS

FILM MUSIC, publication of the NATIONAL FILM MUSIC COUNCIL, has moved its headquarters from Old Greenwich, Conn. to 26 East 83rd Street, New York City. The change in address has delayed this issue of the magazine considerably, for which we apologize. We are hoping during the coming months to gather material on the film as a teaching supplement, and we will welcome reports from teachers, schools, libraries and community groups on their activities in audio-visual education. The Council's collected reviews of seventy 16mm films are available for twenty-five cents. Teachers tell us that they are using FILM MUSIC increasingly in the classroom and for lecture material. Files of the back numbers (30 issues) may be had for $5.00 plus postage.

AN ELECTRONIC DISCOVERY The Massachusetts Institute of Technology is developing an electronic discovery which makes possible the broadcasting of television shows to Europe. The Voice of America is studying its potential usefulness. Test broadcasts have hundred miles from Iowa to Virginia.

WNBC, WNBT and the MOVIES Stations WNBC and WNBT have planned a mutual promotion campaign with the Organization of the Motion Picture Industry of the city of New York. Fred J. Schwartz, head of the latter association, states that this agreement should prove that radio, television and the movies can benefit each other by working together. The plans include radio announcements of current pictures, programs on various aspects of the film industry, and the cooperation of the theatres in thirty theatre chains in the projects of the newly united groups.

SUMMER TOURS TO EUROPEAN FESTIVALS The Institute for Intercontinental Studies, under the personal direction of Dr. Eric Mann, organized- as every year- a tour to the most important of these festivals. Dr. Sigmund Spaeth accompanied the group as musical mentor. In Rome, the group attended two open-air opera performances in the Baths of Caracalla: Aida and Tosca, elaborated staged and with an outstanding cast - an unforgetable experience! During the famous Salzburg Festivals, a performance of Mozart's Figaro was considered by all tour members the finest opera performance they had ever seen. The impressive EVERYMAN, as well as a number of serenades and church -concerts were also on the program. The Lucerne Music Festival, placed in the incomparable setting of this fascinating Swiss town, offers concerts of such uniformly high artistic standards as are achieved by no other European festival. A Haydn serenade, played in the open air against the background of the famed Lions Monument, left a deep impression. A symphony concert at the "Kunsthaus" with Robert Casadesus as soloist and Herbert von Karajan as conductor, was considered the musical high spot of the whole tour. The military Tattoo at the Edinburgh Festivals thrilled all the ten thousand who attended, many of them drawn by the world's famous film showings.

E. M.

SALUTE TO ITALIAN FILMS Salute to Italian Films Week was observed in New York during the week of October 6th. Seven as yet unreleased Italian pictures were shown, one each day at morning and evening performances to invited audiences. Notable figures in the Italian motion picture world were present to add to the interest of the occasion. The films, a distinguished selection of current Italian production, will be released during the coming season.

THE MIRACLE OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA

Harold Brown

This is one of Steiner's best scores; in it he demonstrates that when given the opportunity, he has a large fund of musical knowledge upon which to draw, and can project various levels of dramatic intensity with a versatility comparable to opera composers of the past. Absent are the overdrawn sequences of lush sentimentality which have come to be associated with some film music - cloying music which tries to outdo the film rather than supplement it. Instead, Steiner keeps his music on a subdued level throughout much of the film, and, with a sure sense of dramatic movement, rises swiftly to a brief climax at the crucial point of a particular sequence. This is background music in its truest sense; coloring, highlighting, and intensifying what is on the screen, and not duplicating it.

It is the small flurries of excitement which are more interesting to the reviewer, for these are more difficult to Handle. Steiner has a way of getting behind the action on the screen with a well chosen burst of sound which calls no attention to itself, falls as quickly as it rises, yet effects an intensity where none otherwise would exist. The film itself is powerless to produce much excitement in a scene where children play with a ram, yet the music makes it a small event. Thus, if the larger outlines of drama are accomplished by writer and director, the smaller undulations are almost entirely the work of the composer.

Even in larger climaxes, much is left to the composer. These are mostly crowd scenes, and are not handled by the director with the realistic detail seen in some European films. The crowd is there, but only as a background; the only sound effect is a low murmur. It is left to the music to create any real excitement, and Steiner carries the day every time. It is interesting to note that only in these larger climaxes does he use the familiar Straussian idiom. When one listens to the music, it seems scarcely appropriate, yet when one forgets the music and looks at the screen, there is no doubt of its effectiveness. Whether it would have been even more effective had he, in keeping with the rest of the score, employed a diatonic style, is another question, which someday I should like to see answered.

For Steiner's use of diatonic material is excellent and refreshing. There are fine passages of modal harmony, some with melodies of Gregorian nature; elsewhere there are themes of basically diatonic nature which slide rapidly through various keys, or diatonic melodies harmonized with triads not conventionally considered in the key. I happen to be partial to this kind of consonant yet modern writing, and believe it is partly responsible for the great economy and clarity of the score. It gives, for instance, a certain dignity to the scenes of the angel's appearance, where almost any other idiom would have produced something maudlin.

Steiner has long been an exponent of the leitmotif idea; he gives it here a subtle twist. One is not aware of particular passages assigned to characters; one finds them instead assigned to particular recurring scenes - the girl in her bed, the children in the field, or the people in the town. We get the impression then of interlocking dramatic threads which are dropped and then resumed, and the varying emotional levels of music quicken or slow the pace. After taking time for dialogue, for instance, the drama again continues to unfold with the quickening movement of rolling harp chords as the girl lies asleep in her bed.

There is one notable exception in the handling of the crowd scenes. When the people come to demand the children's release from prison, the music ceases altogether. We hear only the rustle of the people, waiting in anxious, but belligerent, suspense. For this is not an ordinary crowd scene, but one of religious devotion. The mood is restless but static. And when the children are released and rejoin their families and friends, there is no burst of orchestral music. Instead, the people break into an ancient and austere hymn of praise as they march back to town. And there is no orchestral accompaniment.

This is not only dramatically correct, but of some significance. Steiner has presented throughout the film various bits of fine religious music which in this country has been stubbornly considered to be over the heads of the people. There are two Gregorian hymns, a Bach chorale, an anthem by Arcadeltian Chant, and a smaller fragment of an Ave Maria by Josquin des Pres. Such music is not esoteric. but has been shunned by producers who fear the unfamiliar. Yet it has long since been discovered that, in the right time and place, the most dissonant kind of modern music is easily assimilated. There is no reason why ancient church music is not equally palatable. Now that Steiner has taken the initial step, can we hope that more of this music will appear in future films? Incidentally, in giving us this music in its original setting - a capella - Steiner reveals not only his musical integrity but his perspicacity; it is the most effective setting.

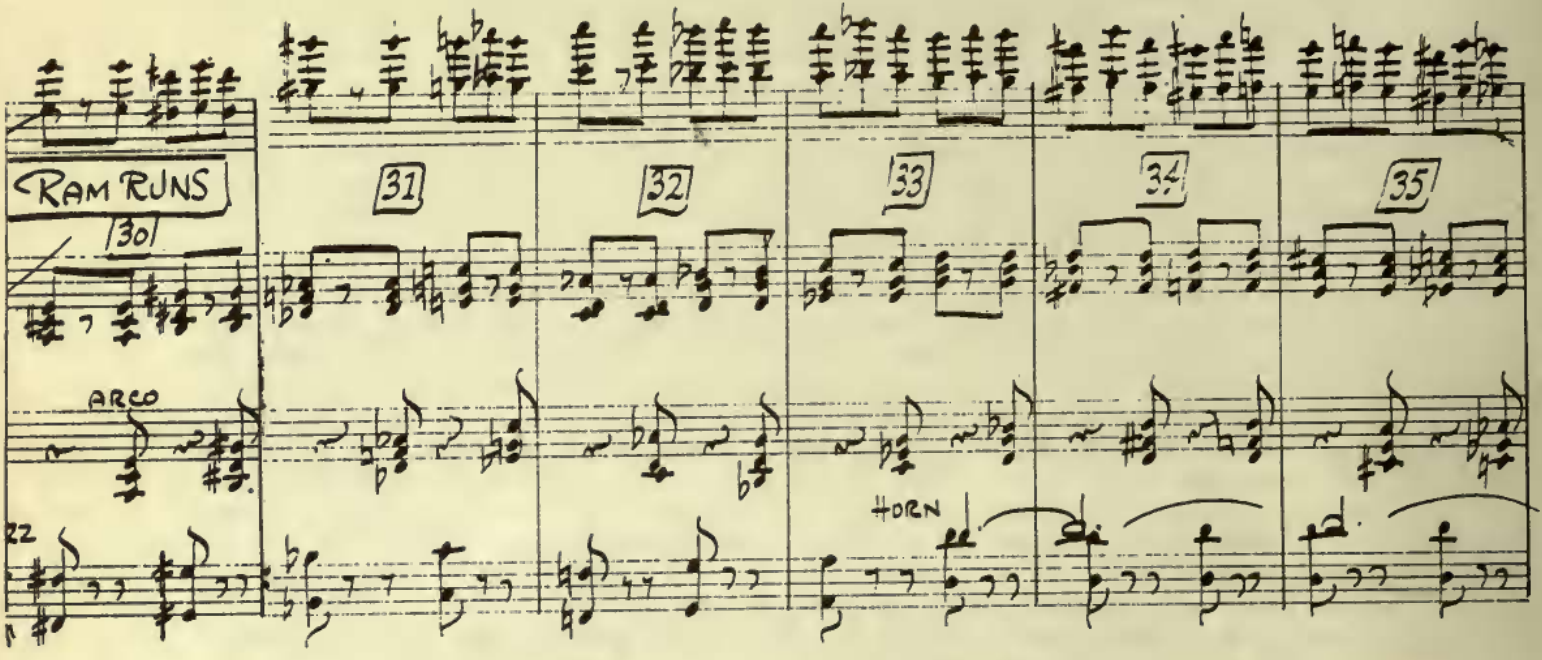
There are two particular places where I disagreed with Steiner's handling. Early in the picture, the first appearance of the angel is heralded by three claps of sudden thunder, coming unexpectedly out of a clear sky. Each is accompanied by a sustained forte chord in the low register, and with this, the music literally syeals the scene's thunder. The effect is ambiguity; is the crash we hear really thunder, or part of the music? And has the music dramatic significance, or is it merely adding to the noise? I have long felt that important sound effects should be left unaccompanied. Here, the first thunderclap alone is of quite enough significance to carry the scene. Any other sound simply dulls the effect. If the chord had been introduced at the second clap, we would have had two dramatic strokes of cumulative significance. As it is we have but one, containing conflicting elements, and merely repeating itself.

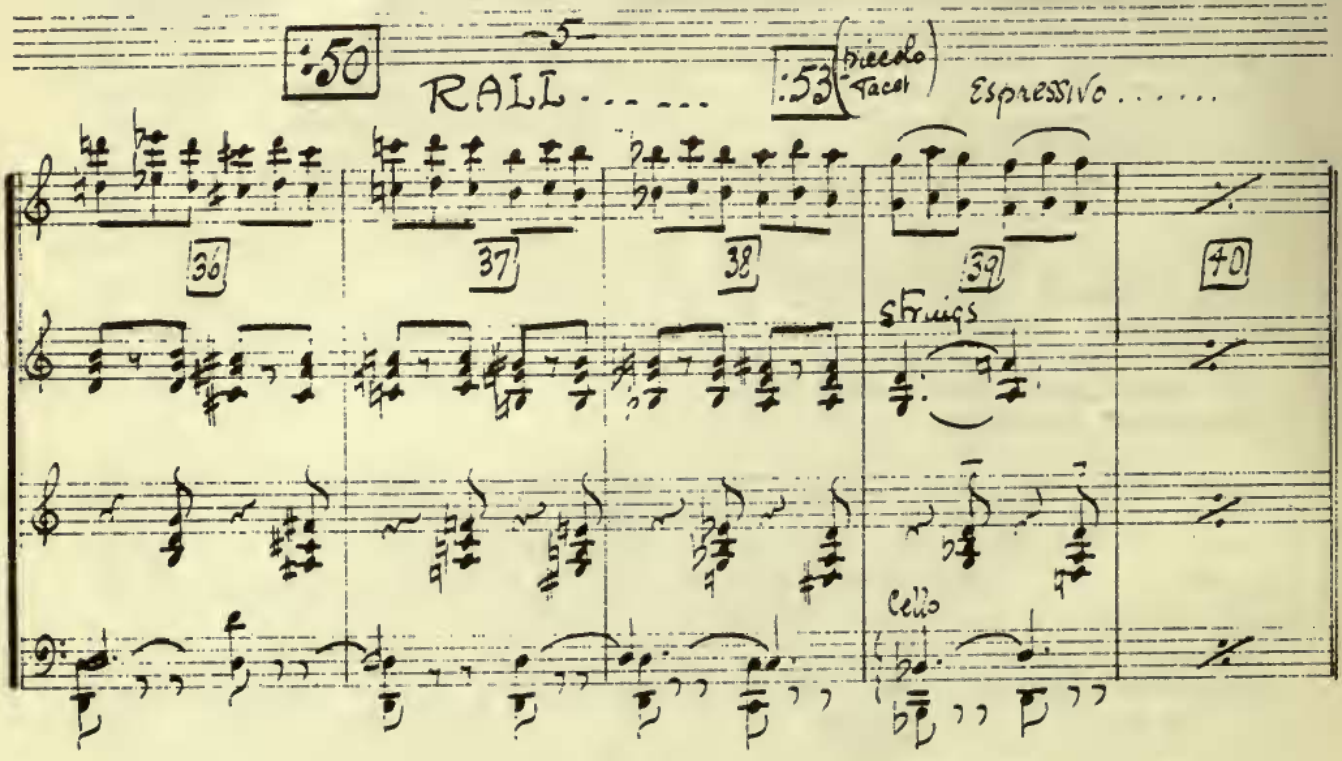
Later, when the police inspectors first appear, their silent march through the square is followed by music of definitely fearful character. A more subtle effect might have been produced by music of quiet foreboding. To be sure, subtlety is not one of the picture's strong points, and the music is certainly not out of keeping; still, a grey rather than black orchestra might have helped alleviate the melodramatic naivete of the character portrayal.

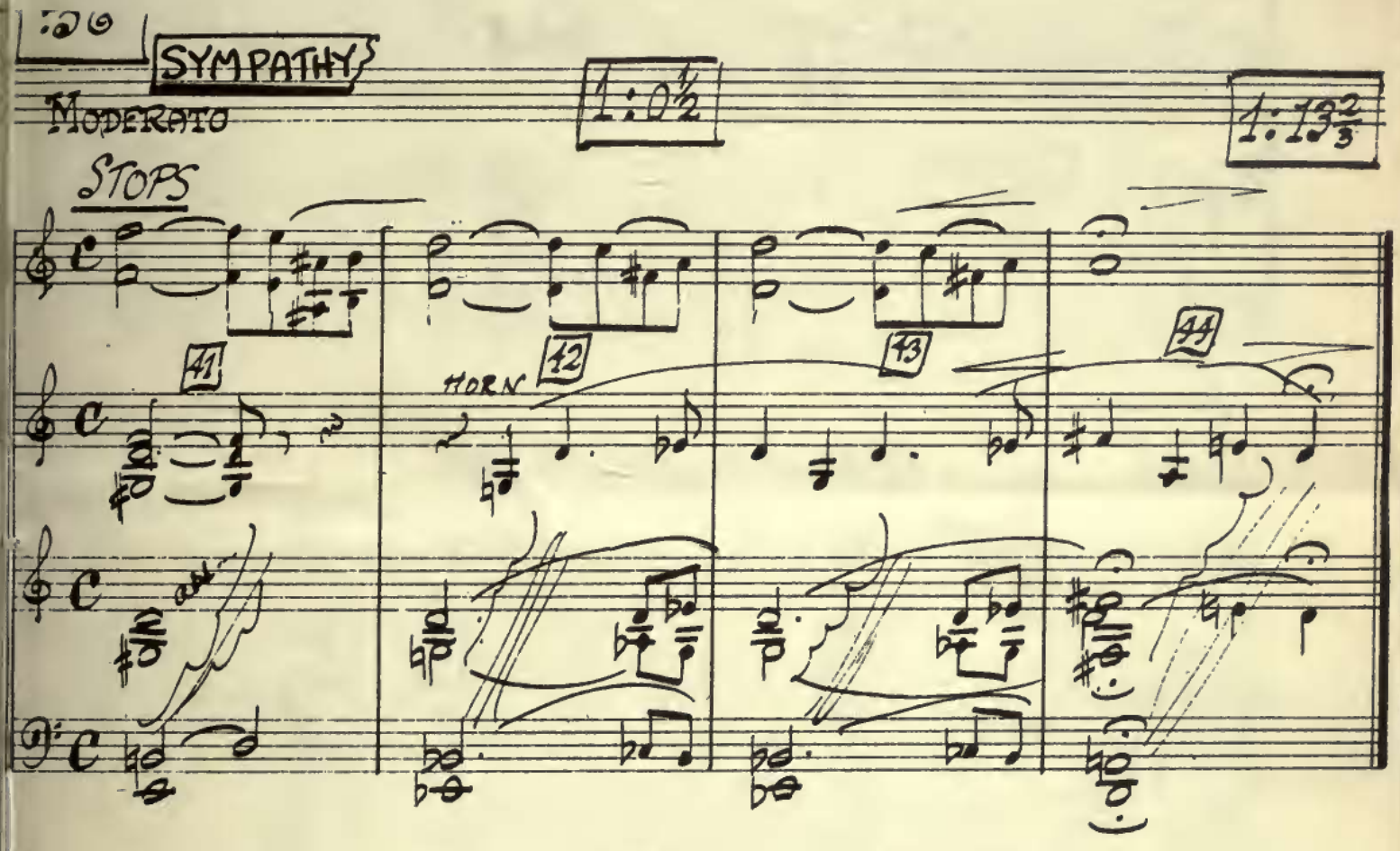
Finally, I wish that Gounod's "Ave Maria" had not been used as an important theme. It is expertly developed, and certainly associated in the minds of millions with religious feeling, which guarantees its effectiveness. Artistically, however, it is spurious religious music, certainly not on a level with the authentic sacred music in the film.

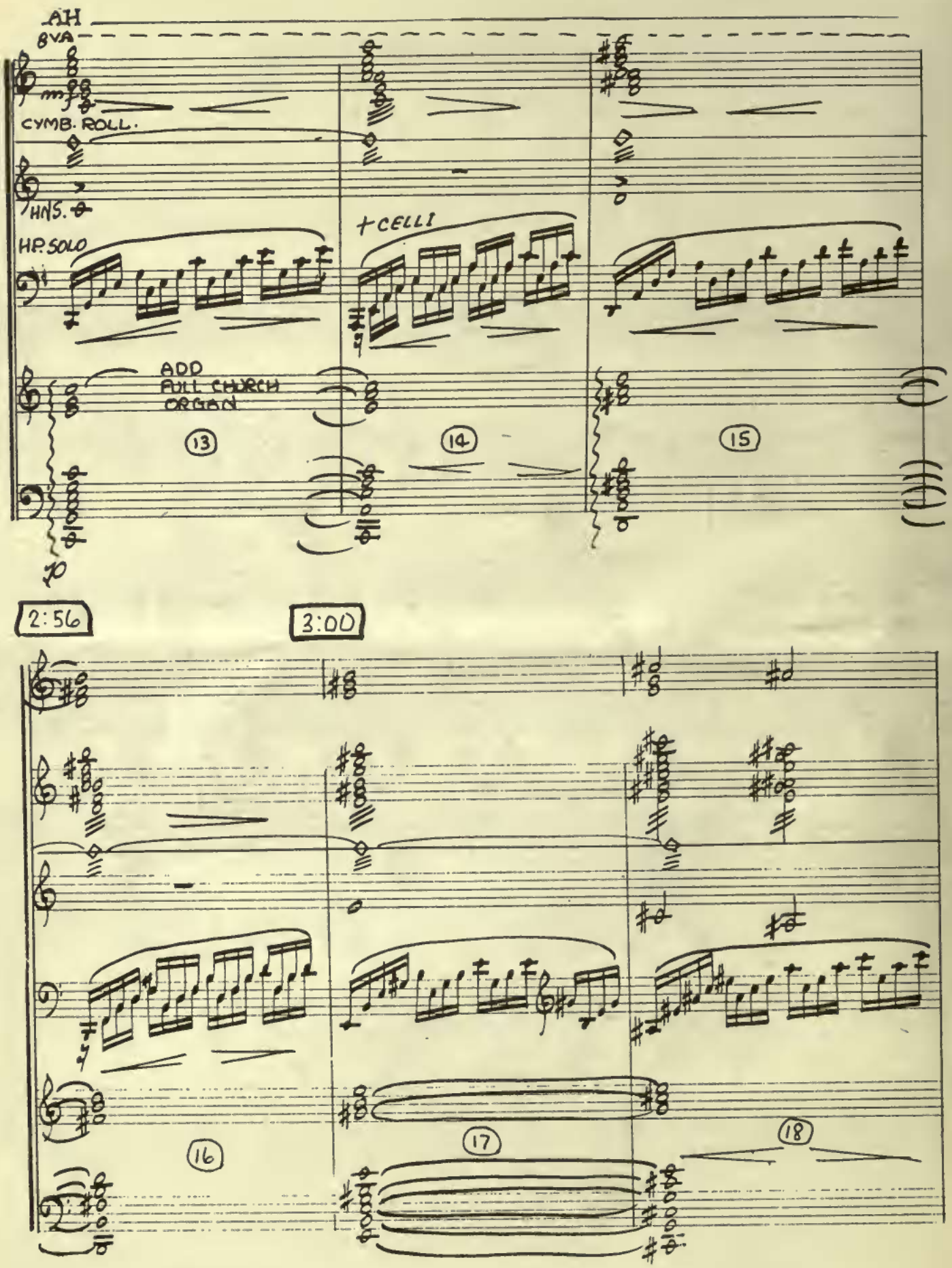
But these are minor points in a score which not only contains many passages of excellent music, but is in its entirety succinct and well integrated.

THE MIRACLE OF OUR LADY FATIMA.. Warner Brothers. Gilbert Roland, Angela Clark. Director, John Brahm. Music, Max Steiner. Orchestration, Murray Cutter. WarnerColor.

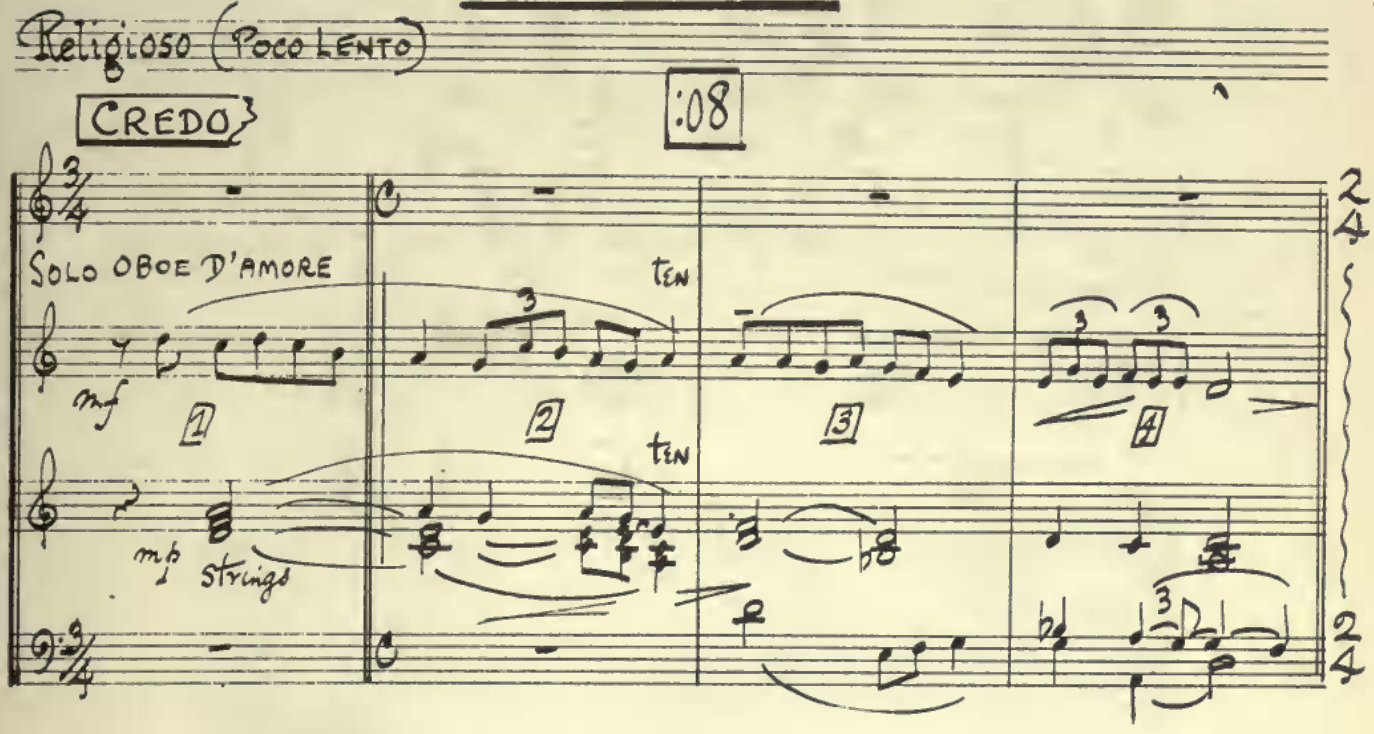

RAM RUNS
30
31
32
33
34
35
ARCO
HORN

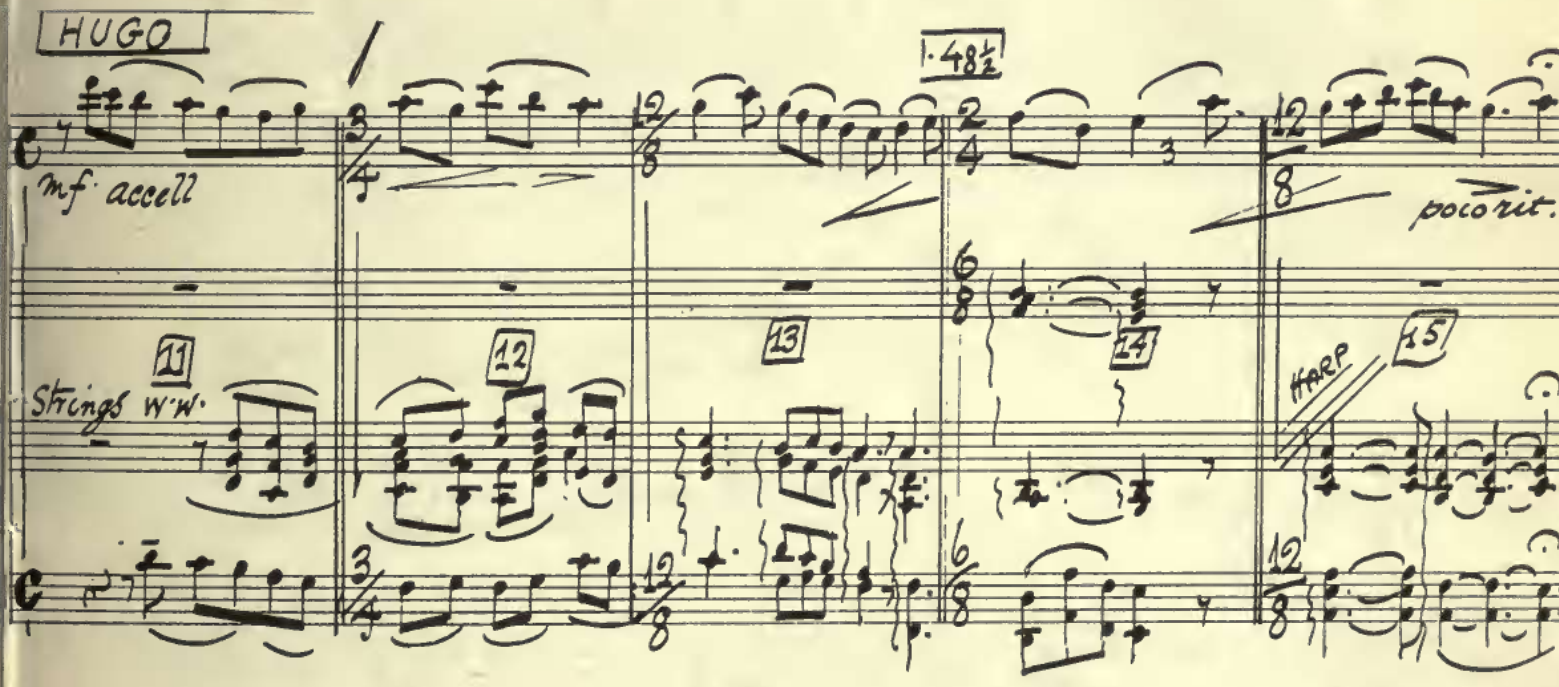

50
RALL.....
53
(piccolo tacet)
Espressivo.....
36
37
38
39
40
strings
cello

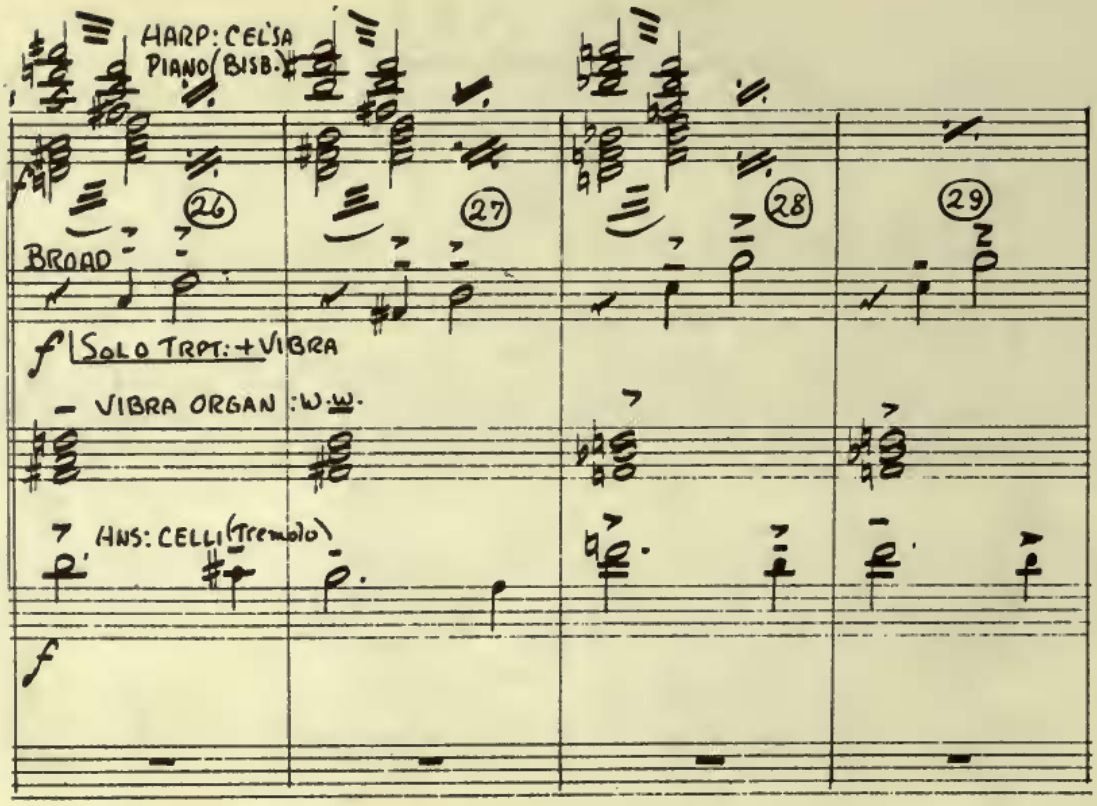

SYMPATHY
MODERATO
STOPS
1:0½
1:13⅔
41
42
43
44
HORN

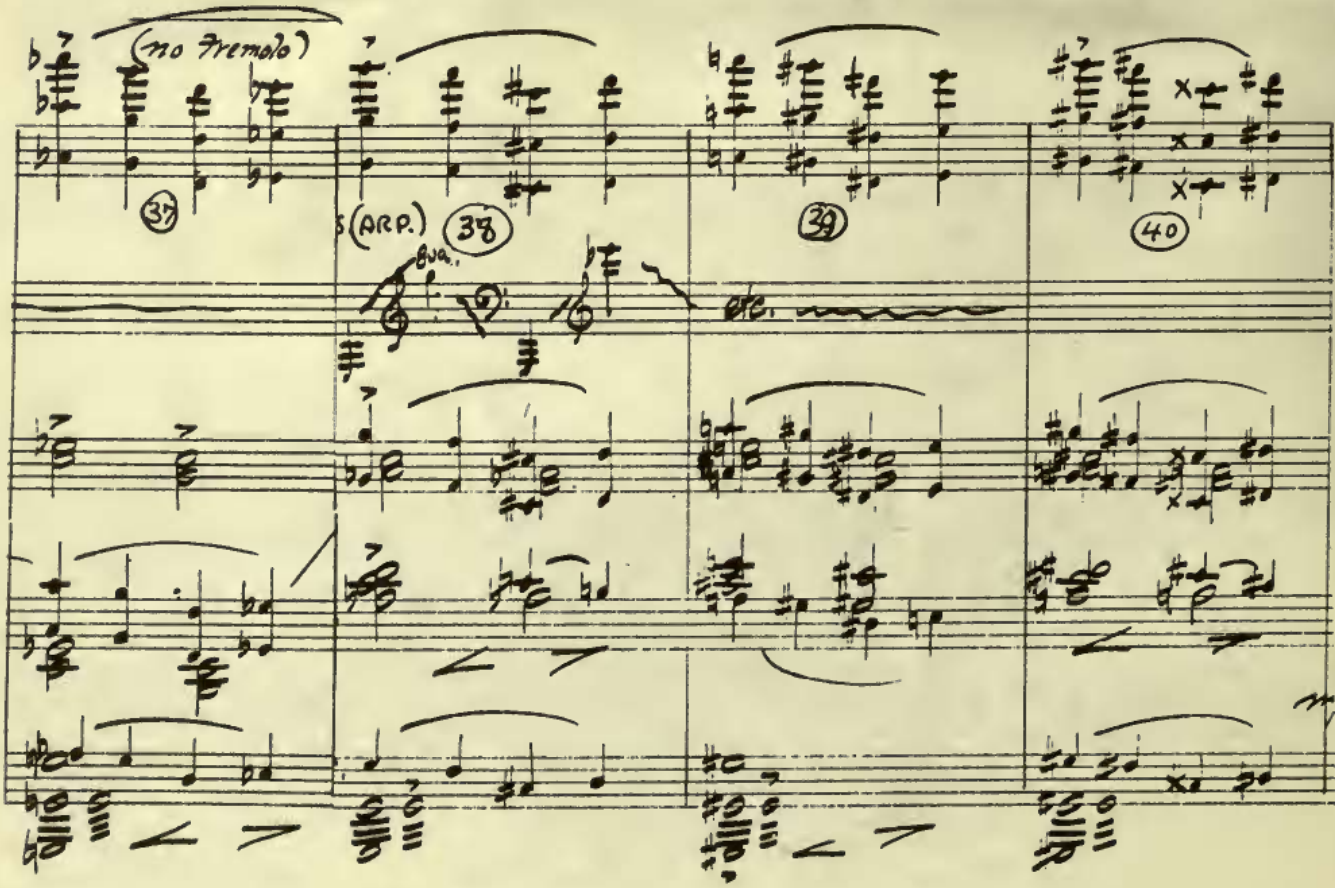

AH
8VA
mf
CYMB. ROLL.
HNS.
HP. SOLO
+CELLI
ADD
FULL CHURCH
ORGAN
13
14
15
2:56
3:00
16
17
18

REEL 5 # 1


Religioso (Poco Lento)
CREDO
:08
Solo Oboe d'amore
mf
ten
ten
mp
Strings


HUGO
1·48½
mf accell
poco rit.
Strings W.W.
HARP


HARP: CEL'SA
PIANO (BISB.)
26
27
28
29
BROAD
f SOLO TRPT: + VIBRA
VIBRA ORGAN
HNS: CELLI (Tremolo)
f


(no Tremolo)
37
(ARP.)
38
8va
39
40

THE QUIET MAN

Scott Wilkinson

John Ford has made a happy use of the Irish countryside as setting for the story of a young American prize-fighter's return to the little village where he was born and his turbulent wooing of a girl he finds there. With a fine cast that includes some of the Abbey Players and a full appreciation of the natural beauties of the locale, the film has all the picturesque humor and visual beauty for which Ireland is famous.

Victor Young's score for THE QUIET MAN is for the most part extremely well done. His handling of the orchestra and use of musical material gains the maximum of effect with the mimimum of means achieving a simplicity in the music and orchestra that fits the simplicity of the film. The Irish folk themes as well as the folk-like quality of Mr. Young's melodic line are treated with sensitiveity. There is a particularly good use of group singing injected from time to time. However, the whole musical atmosphere suddenly changes at the introduction of a romantic note- where Mary Kate is seen herding her sheep, for example, and in the scene where she realizes her love for Sean.

Here, Mr. Young takes on a lush,lush style that is the most commonly used writing for the situation and is quite inconsistent with his previous handling of the folkish type of story. Elsewhere, he employs a short fugatto, delightful in itself, but for this writer rather pointless. It starts and then dies out, seemingly without any particular reason. It is too interesting a theme to be dealt with in so short a period of time. Save for these details, which are minor, the over-all effect is very pleasing - as is the film.

SONGS: The Isle of Innisfree - Richard Farrelly
Galway Bay - by Dr. Arthur Colahan and Michael Donovan
published by Leeds Music Corp.
The Humor is on me now -Richard Hayward
published by Box and Cox
The Young May Moon - Thomas Moore
The Wild Colonial Boy - Traditional
Mush Mush - Traditional

THE QUIET MAN .. Republic . John Wayne,Maureen O'Hara, Barry Fitzgerald. Director, John Ford. Music, Victor Young. Technicolor.

Records available from Decca and RCA Victor.

THE MAGIC BOX

Quaintance Eaton

In a burst of honest sentiment and somewhat chauvinistic enthusiasm British Film Productions and J. Arthur Rank enlisted practically the entire top layer of Albion's cinema stardom to make THE MAGIC BOX, which tells the story of William Friese-Greene, inventor and photographer. Willy, as he is known to his intimates, was one of the fore-runners in motion pictures, having invented what is said to be the first movie camera - or at least the one whose principles persist to this day. Historical accuracy which would demand a greater share of the credit for Edison and a couple of Frenchmen, is passed over lightly in the film, by the use of a series of tombstone-like placques in honor of these and other inventors thrown under the title credits. This obeisance to history accomplished, the film proceeds to the ups and downs of Willy's life with two wives, alternate periods of affluence and bankruptcy, and eventual obscurity.

Filmed in Technicolor, with every resource of the British industry behind it and with Robert Donat's sure and sensitive acting, the picture will appeal for its human values if for nothing else. The other two starred performers are also very fine - Margaret Johnston as the second wife; Maria Schell as the first. And part of the enjoyment will be trying to pick out the famous names attached to minor characters- there are 67 bit parts to be identified. We'll give you a couple of hints- the policeman who witnesses Willy's first success is Sir L-w-n-c O-i-v-r, and St-n-l-y H-ll-w-y plays an officious broker's bailiff. Leo Genn, Glynis Johns, Cecil Parker, Michael Redgrave, Peter Ustinov, and Emlyn Williams are others to look for.

William Alwyn has given us another expert accompanying music score, so well tailored that its virtues hardly appear at first hearing. Listened to more closely, it is revealed as suave, agreeable, often derivative(its highly Tchaikovsky-ized texture makes it almost ballet-like in essence), and perfectly suited to the moments of the script that it embellishes. A detailed analysis is hardly necessary or desirable, but Alwyn has used a plaintive three-note phrase as a basis for appropriate development and variation. He is a past master at leading a musical motive into a natural sound, for example, the startling crash following immediately on the words of Willy's second bride-to-be, "I wanted security", which resolves into stunning fireworks at a carnival, and the hurried stringendo passage accompanying the expectant father's rush for a doctor, leading to the neighing of a horse drawing a carriage in London traffic.

One episode gives Alwyn a chance at some original music for its own sake. Willy and his first wife are members of the Bath Choral Society, which is preparing a gala program, to be conducted by Sir Arthur Sullivan(played by the experienced conductor, Muir Mathieson, who is responsible for the musical direction of the film). The title of the work they are rehearsing is never given, but it concerns an abandoned female. "Where has he gone, where has he gone?" the chorus asks over and over, as the buxom soloist(Olga Slobodskaya) valiantly bewails her lost lover in a high tessitura which almost but not quite baffles her. Willy is supposed to reply, in the only chorus solo, "I know not; I know not! Do not ask of me!" But Willy has been detained at a meeting with fellow camera enthusiasts, and forgets the concert. His wife bravely pipes up with the solo bit, to the astonishment of Sir Arthur, who not having rehearsed the group (unlikely , even in Bath in those days?), expects the solo to come from the baritone section. The entire sequence is delightful, both for Alwyn's clever music - exactly the type for ambitious provincial, amateur bodies - and for the human values.

THE MAGIC BOX.. J. Arthur Rank: Mayer-Kingsley. Robert Donat, Maria Schell. Director, John Boulting. Music, William Alwyn. Technicolor.

CARRIE

David Raksin

Some years ago, in the course of a lecture at the University of Southern California, I was trying to explain that empathy, or identification with the feelings of his characters, is an inner resource indispensable to a film composer. I suggested that talent for a career in film composing might be partially assessed through a "Hecuba Test". The reference was of course, to the soliloquy ("O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!") in Act II of "HAMLET", wherein the Prince, his own feelings in deep bondage, marvels at the passion with which the First Player invests the contrived emotionality of a playwright. Says Hamlet:

"What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
That he should weep for her?"

Many are the Hecubas, from LAURA to AMBER, who have been accompanied by noises of my contriving. I have abetted their scheming with clarinets and attenuated their yearnings with cellos - molto vibrato. After seventeen years of composing for films, I have learned that empathy is often better tempered with restraint. But there is one character who, more than any other, made restraint difficult. This is George Hurstwood, the tragic lover of Theodore Dreiser's SISTER CARRIE.

In discussing Hurstwood with William Wyler, director of the film (now called CARRIE) I noted that where Dreiser had pitied the man destroyed by his need for love, Wyler had suffused him with the sympathy a man of today might feel for a brother condemned by the rigid morality of an earlier day. It is our compassion toward Carrie and Hurstwood that determines the nature and course of the music in this film.

Thus, the musical material and its development are concerned with expressing the great longing of Hurstwood, as when he plods slowly upstairs, after his son's departure. Again, the music discovers the awakening of Carrie's feelings as Hurstwood leaves, after their scene in the Drouet flat. In the sequence of their first embrace, in the carriage, the music is part of the physical passion, and later reaches out after Carrie as she walks quickly away from Hurstwood.

The sound track of the scene in the park is a tour de force of re-recording for which laurels must go to Leon Becker, sound supervisor of the film, and the Paramount dubbing crew. That marvelous actor, Laurence Olivier, had pitched his voice in an almost guttural register to avoid sounding like the cultured Briton he is. Such delivery and expressive music ordinarily do not mix, to the great detriment of the music. But, thanks to the gifted Mr. Becker and his cohorts, the music was able to tell its part of this scene, including a moment of joy when Carrie confesses her love, and a touch of foreboding when Hurstwood cannot find the courage to tell her the truth about himself - that he is married.

Inept dubbing, which afflicts so many pictures, is often responsible for the sad line one sometimes hears from his colleagues in discussions of their film music: "Let me play you the records one day - then you'd really hear the score". But more often it is post-scoring cuts, and their effect upon the continuity and overall sense of the music, that give composers that Kafka look. Such cuts, which are inevitable, and sometimes even necessary, are made on grounds other than musical. And if there is a composer who can equal the dexterity with which a minor

executive mutilates the form-and-context relationship of music to story, I have never met him. Fortunately for CARRIE the hand that did the bidding of the master was that of an artist. In my absence, Mr. Steven Caillag, whose ability as a music cutter approaches genius, made the necessary elisions and extensions. It was he who saw to it that the music of Hurstwood's flight from his wife and employer to Carrie remained intact as to form and meaning.

It was my hope that the music of CARRIE would bear the same relationship to the story that existed between the story and music of some of the wonderful silent movies for which my father conducted the orchestra at the old Metropolitan in Philadelphia. What a warmth there was between the screen and score in those days, when "heart-songs", Kinothek music, and sometimes excerpts of masterpieces followed hard upon one another! The Saturday matinees when I sat in the orchestra pit and responded like a seismograph to the heavings of the Gish sisters had made a deep impression on my young mind, and somehow I now felt that in CARRIE Willie Wyler had made just such a fable as those I had loved. We agreed that the score should have this "chromo" flavor where feasible.

So the music of Hurstwood's flight does not endeavor to convey torment and urgency through dissonance. It is a kind of distraught aria accompanied by swift, syncopated afterbeats; and the color, which is not a trick of orchestration but a function of the dramatic line, remains the same for many, many bars.

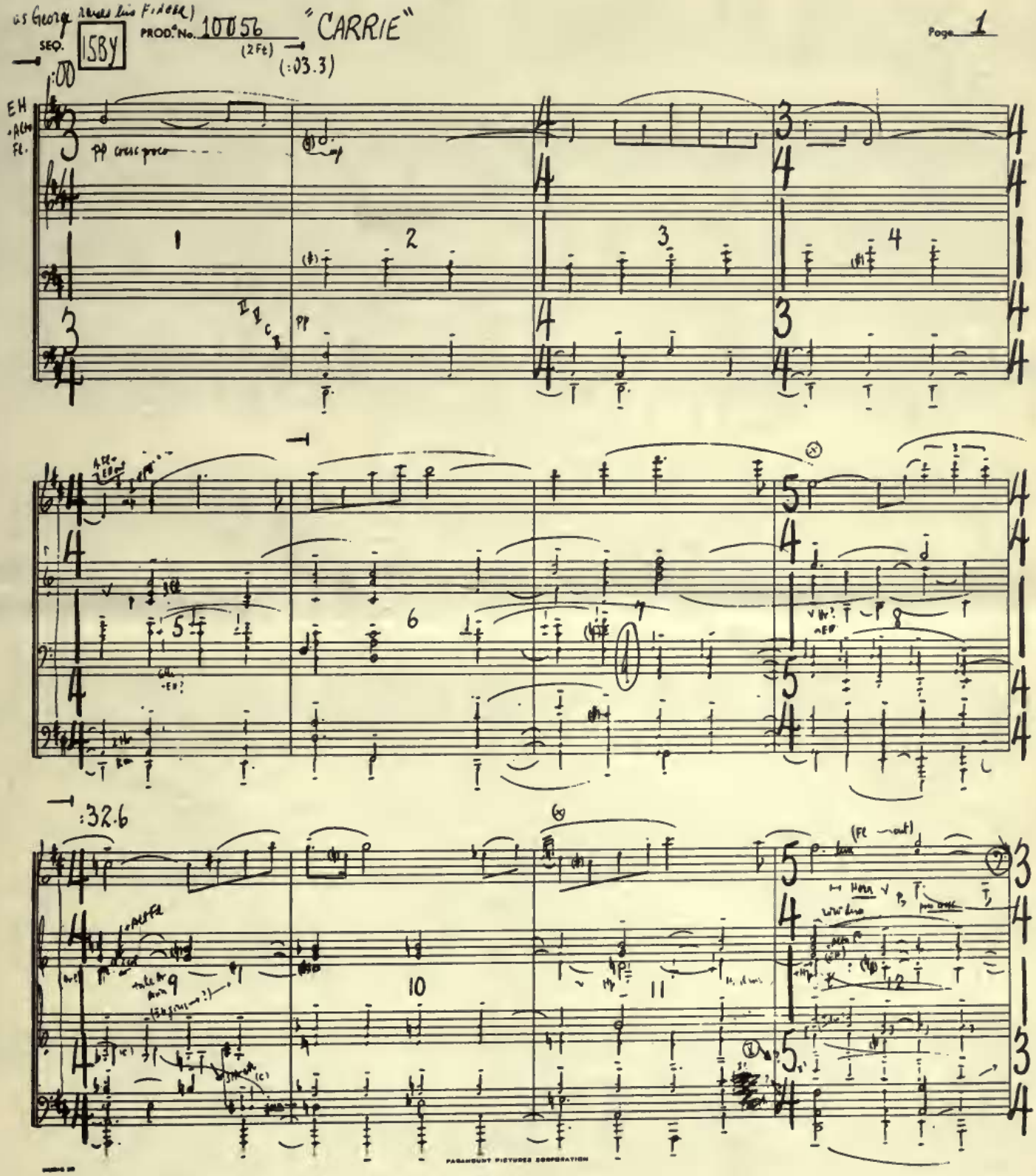
Program notes and sermons upon music are always faintly ridiculous. I console myself that I am, in part, eulogizing a departed friend, for cutting has in places reduced the music to the state of that Prism over whom Hecuba wept:

> "When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport
> In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs".

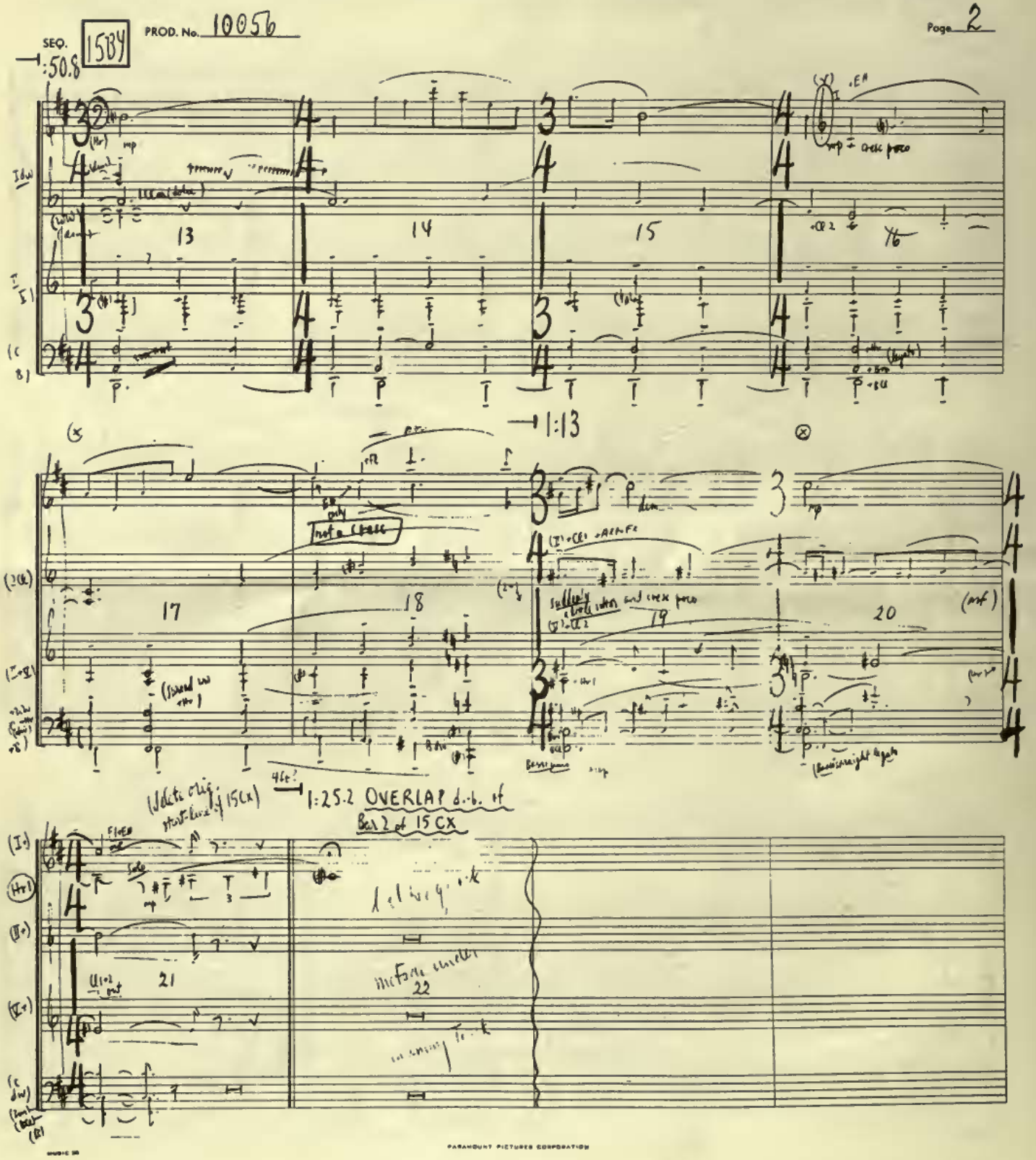
A year and a half ago I may have been one with Hacuba, shedding helpless tears over what Pyrrhus was doing to my poor Priam. Since then, my empathy has receded, through the First Player, through Hamlet, to comparative objectivity. And now, seeing the film, and hearing the score (which I finished in February of 1951), in a projection room in June, 1952, I was moved by it, I thought my father and his generation would also have liked it, and I was, after all, glad to have composed the music of CARRIE.

CARRIE.. Paramount. Laurence Olivier, Jennifer Jones. Producer-Director, William Wyler. Music, David Raksin.

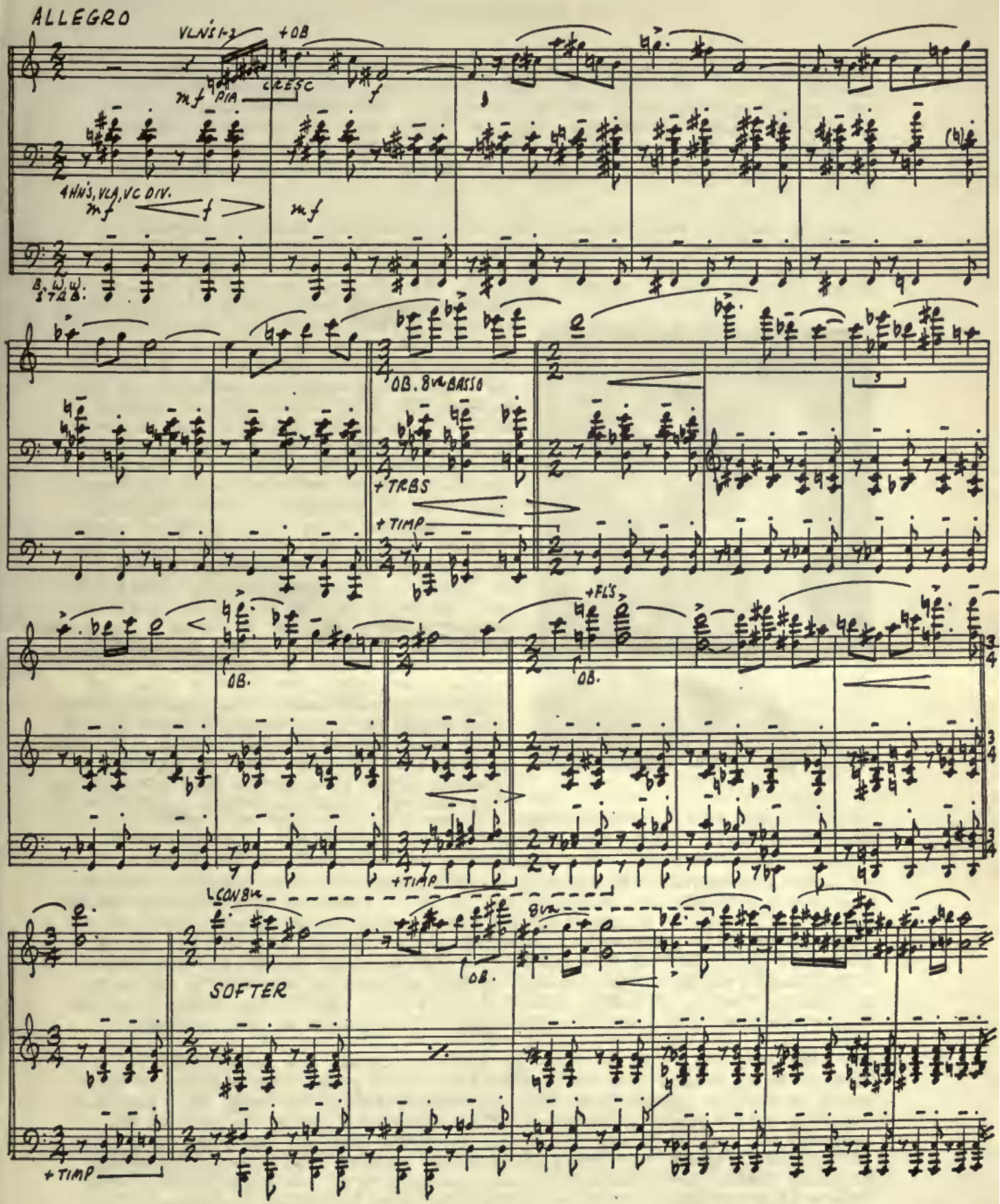
TWO VERSIONS OF THE PRINCIPAL THEME OF CARRIE



TWO VERSIONS OF THE PRINCIPAL THEME OF CARRIE



TWO VERSIONS OF THE PRINCIPAL THEME OF CARRIE



THE MERRY WIDOW

Alfred E. Simon

Once again THE MERRY WIDOW is back with us - this time in a dazzling and handsome M.G.M. color job. The idea of casting Lana Turner in the title role caused consternation here and there, but the powers-that-be got around that nicely, by changing the plot enough to make her an American widow instead of a Parisian one. Very few people could be upset by this change in tradition, for the story was hardly a masterpiece in the first place.

Although the 1952 version is considerably less silly than the original(on which the 1925 and 1934 versions were closely based), it is certainly not strong enough to make you miss the many wonderful melodies that have been either glossed over or omitted entirely. The effervescent quality of Lehar's memorable score lends itself so wonderfully to spectacular ballets and other production numbers that it seems really unfortunate that M.G.M. didn't take more advantage of it. But no one would be satisfied to sit through THE MERRY WIDOW and not hear at least its principal melodies, and they've seen fit to give us those. And to get us into a nostalgic Viennese mood, the picture starts right off with "Auld Lang Syne", sung first in English and then Chinese; as a gentleman on my right murmured sarcastically "That's one of Lehar's best." The first of the MERRY WIDOW songs in the film is "Vilia". This time,however, "Vilia" is not "the witch of the wood", but a sultry dancing gypsy girl, and the song is sung not by the widow, but by the dashing Count Danilo(reduced from his original rank of Prince), here most effectively acted and sung by Fernando Lamas. There has been some speculation as to whether the voice on the sound track is his own, or dubbed. My guess is that it's his own, since it matches his speaking voice in quality- this despite the fact that the synchronization is not always as successful as in other musicals. Lamas also does good work with "Maxim's", and "Girls,Girls,Girls", but undoubtedly his best number is the serenade "Night", known to MERRY WIDOW purists as the "Romance", as beautiful a melody as Lehar ever wrote. In duet with Miss Turner(or whoever sings for her) we hear the inevitable and ever-haunting waltz "I Love You So", sung and danced in the dimly-lighted quarters of our hero to a most seductive orchestral accompaniment! Later, the waltz is lushly and sweepingly played for a grand ballet of the type that Hollywood knows how to stage so well. Then there's a brilliant staging of the can-can number at Maxim's, and that's all we're granted in the way of set numbers. Paul Francis Webster has modernized the lyrics, incidentally, and they're a great improvement on the originals.

The long,long stretches of dialogue between numbers are fortunately not too hard to take, thanks to a delightful and almost continuous background score based on various themes from the Lehar music, including songs that have not received full-fledged production. This background score, as well as the over-all musical direction, is by Jay Blackton, who has had vast experience in conducting opera, operetta, and musical comedy. His fine achievements in those fields are reflected in this production of THE MERRY WIDOW - only it's a pity his light touch was hidden behind a bushel of dialogue.

THE MERRY WIDOW.. M. G. M. Lana Turner, Fernando Lamas. Director, Curtis Bernhardt. Music, Franz Lehar. Orchestrations, Maurice De Packh. Musical Advisor, Irving Aaronson. Technicolor.

HIGH NOON

William Hamilton

Here is one vote for HIGH NOON as the most sophisticated and brilliantly executed western to date. Based upon the leanest of plots, it is a melodrama of almost unrelieved suspense into which is worked a sobering message. The story can be told in a single, somewhat lumpy sentence thus: The retiring Marshal at Hadleyville, after learning of the imminent return to town on the noon train of vengeance-bound bad-man, Frank Miller, and after trying fruitlessly to recruit a posse, is obliged finally to receive Miller and company unassisted. In watching this, we are confronted by the uneasy matter of the individual's responsibility to support law and order, rather than count entirely on the efforts of a Strong-Man.

As might be expected, such an argumentative script, developed largely in terms of character and atmosphere must have a more than commonly high ratio of talk-to-action. And so it is with HIGH NOON. Nevertheless, good old-fashioned dramatic tension is so skilfully maintained that, far from seeming long-winded, the picture gives an impression of unusual brevity. Its running time is eighty-five minutes (just about average), and it recounts just about eighty-five minutes worth of story. The camera throughout has a predilection for clocks to help increase our anxiety at the dread approach of twelve. Also, the device of dissolving from one clock to another to follow the action about the town is an effective, if not completely original scene-shifter.

For all these virtues, it still seems to me that much of the film's success must be credited to Mr. Tiomkin's music score. For the most part, the music is derived from a not very idiomatic song (by Mr.T.) which is given in full at the beginning- - sung in fine, mournful, authentic style by Tex Ritter. Thus stated, the ballad functions as a theme, unifying the score which ranges freely back and forth between the general and the particular.

In the latter aspect, the sensitiveness and precision with which both speech and movement are accompanied recall the best in operatic practice. Witness the scene where the judge quotes to the marshal the mighty oath of revenge sworn by Miller years ago. Clearly, his words become a text set to the great, towering strokes of the orchestra. Again, in the shoot-it-out sequence near the end, the tactics of battle are practically spelled out in the notes. The tempo hastens and slackens to match the movements of the antagonists so that the eye and ear receive truly concerted stimuli. What might have been a fairly routine spats of gunplay is thereby enhanced sufficiently to top all that went before and provide a properly forceful climax.

As for mood music (the 'general'), the composer has tended to employ simpler and more literal allusions to the theme in a variety of arrangements --vocal and instrumental. Mr. Ritter is heard from time to time, repeating fragments of it with guitar and thumping, and there are passages featuring harmonica and accordian. Never have I heard either of these two instruments so attractively used in orchestral ensemble.

Still under the 'general' heading, there are a couple of subsidiary themes relating to the two chief female characters on the scene. The more distinctive of these is a modal, Hispanic melody associated with the queenly Helen Ramirez, and some of the score's most deft changes of pace occur between this and iterations of the ballad theme. The heroine music on the other hand, is not up to the mark, being just another version of that old andante favori, "The World's Most Beautiful Girl in Distress". However, I do not insist that the heroine, Amy, and her controversy with her bridegroom, the marshal should have been any more powerfully expressed in music. This would have been in full accord with the argument set forth by the ballad:

"Now do not leave me, oh, my darling ..." through..."till I shoot Frank Miller dead". However, since the story turns mostly on other matters, I can appreciate the wisdom of allowing Will's and Amy's problem to become part of the wallpaper, rather than risk an acute attack of misplaced emphasis.

I also liked the rousing reading of the Battle Hymn of the Republic in the church scene, though I wonder if such a church at such a time and place would be likely to have so fine a choir. And finally, I'm grateful for the harmonium behind Will's and Amy's wedding. Such functions in the movies too often subject us to the Hammond Organ.

HIGH NOON.. United Artists. Gary Cooper, Thomas Mitchell. Director, Fred Zinnemann. Music, Dimitri Tiomkin. Records available.

16mm FILMS

PEOPLE'S LAND.. Lovely shots of the English countryside - a 14th Century castle, old estates, hills and rivers, parts of the Lake District, which have been turned over to the National Trust to be kept as public parks forever. Vaughan Williams has made a charming score of English folk tunes. (British Information Services, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York. 10 min. Tech.)

THE TITAN.. A 16mm version of Curt Oertel's justly famous film, dealing with the work and period of Michelangelo in a dramatization of his masterpieces and the places in which his life was spent. Frederic March is narrator, and Robert Flaherty is credited with presentation. The score by Alois Melichar was reviewed in FILM MUSIC, January 1950. (Contemporary Films, Inc. 13 East 37th St. New York. 67 minutes; b and w.)

FOLK SONG FANTASY.. Emma Caslor sings three English folk songs - "The Riddle Song", "Who Killed Cock Robin" and "The Cooper of Fife". Puppets and their birds act out the stories of the presents which a country lad gives his lass, the trial of Cock Robin and the cooper's reformation of his vain wife. (Color 10 min.)

SING A LITTLE.. At a CBC microphone Allan Mills sings three ballads to the accompaniment of his guitar, "The Farmer's Cursed Wife", rejected even by the devil, "Barbara Allen" and her sad love, and "Jack the Sailor" are enacted by puppets in a nicely balanced film. (Both films from the Nat. Film Board of Canada, 1270 6th Ave, N.Y. 9 minutes.)

THE TITAN -- DAVID

MUSCLE BEACH.. Few short subjects are as much fun as MUSCLE BEACH. It displays dozens of beautiful bodies of various ages and sexes all tumbling strenuously and skilfully on a beach in California. Visually alone it would be a highly evocative and pleasing set of images. Backed up, as it is, by the wry, comfortable, improvisatory musing of Earl Robinson and his guitar, the thing is close to irrisistible. The figures hurtle through the air, and Mr. Robinson (lying flat on his back, I'm sure) strums, whistles, talks and sings. A real pleasure. W. H.
(Brandon Films Inc. 200 West 57th St, New York. 9 minutes, b and w.)

JAPANESE MUSIC TODAY

Tak Shindo

RASHOMON, the Japanese film which won recognition by the Hollywood Academy Award committee and the 1951 Venice Film Festival presents an example of a gradually growing attempt by Japanese musicians to adopt or adapt Western music to Japanese films. For a number of reasons, of which the American occupation may be considered an important one, Japanese musicians more and more have become conscious of western melodies, rhythm, instrumentation and scoring techniques. Rather easily detected is the presence of occidental influence in the score of RASHOMON. The music sequence where the woodcutter is pacing hurriedly through the forest is not an original but an altered passage, based on Maurice Ravel's "Bolero". Other themes in the background score are written with the flavor of western melodies, though they were original compositions by Japanese composers.

An outstanding example of borrowing a strictly American rhythm is the Japanese use of boogie-woogie, with Japanese lyrics and an occasional word or two in English. Though not used in RASHOMON, boogie-woogie is a current fad in the Japanese equivalent of "Tin-pan Alley". Typical numbers, both of which have been used in Japanese musicals, are "Tokyo Boogie" and "Samisen Boogie". The melodies are basically oriental, pentatonic in character, but the rhythm is borrowed directly from the American boogie-woogie,minus the profound feeling, which is distinctively original.

The instrumentation is usually occidental in modern films; however occasional strain of pentatonic melody by authentic oriental instruments are used to characterize a sequence. The most often used oriental instruments are the koto(harp), shakuhachi(bamboo flute) and the samisen(three string guitar). The kotos are constructed from the wood of the Paulowania tree and are built to approximately six feet in length and nine inches in width. This instrument has thirteen silk strings of even thickness strung lengthwise across a "quonset" shaped board. The pitch is adjusted by sliding the ivory tipped bridges along the strings. The strings are plucked by the right thumb, index and middle finger, each having a thimble-like pick. There are twelve standardized modal pentatonic scale of which the Hirachoshi and the Kumoichoshi are most often used. In recent years new scales have sprung up to correspond with the occidental scales. This has come about because of the increasing demand of combining the two fields of music.

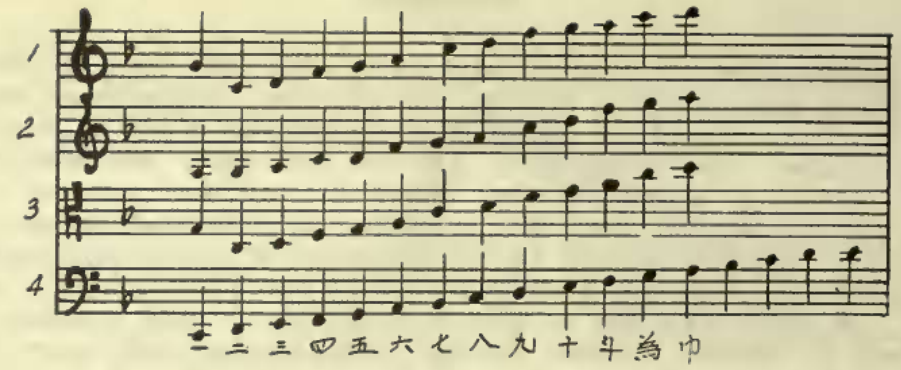
Koto and Shakuhachi

The traditional shakuhachi(bamboo flute) is a five hole solo instrument held like a clarinet. The hole on the bottom side is for the left thumb,two holes apiece for the index and ring fingers of each hand for the remaining four holes on the opposide side. The shakuhachi has a comfortable chromatic range of two octaves beginning D above middle C. The instrument has been altered to seven holes in order to make chromatic scale easily playable. The shakuhachi comes in various lengths but the twenty inch flute is now been considered as the standard size. This instrument has a distinctive sound of its own.

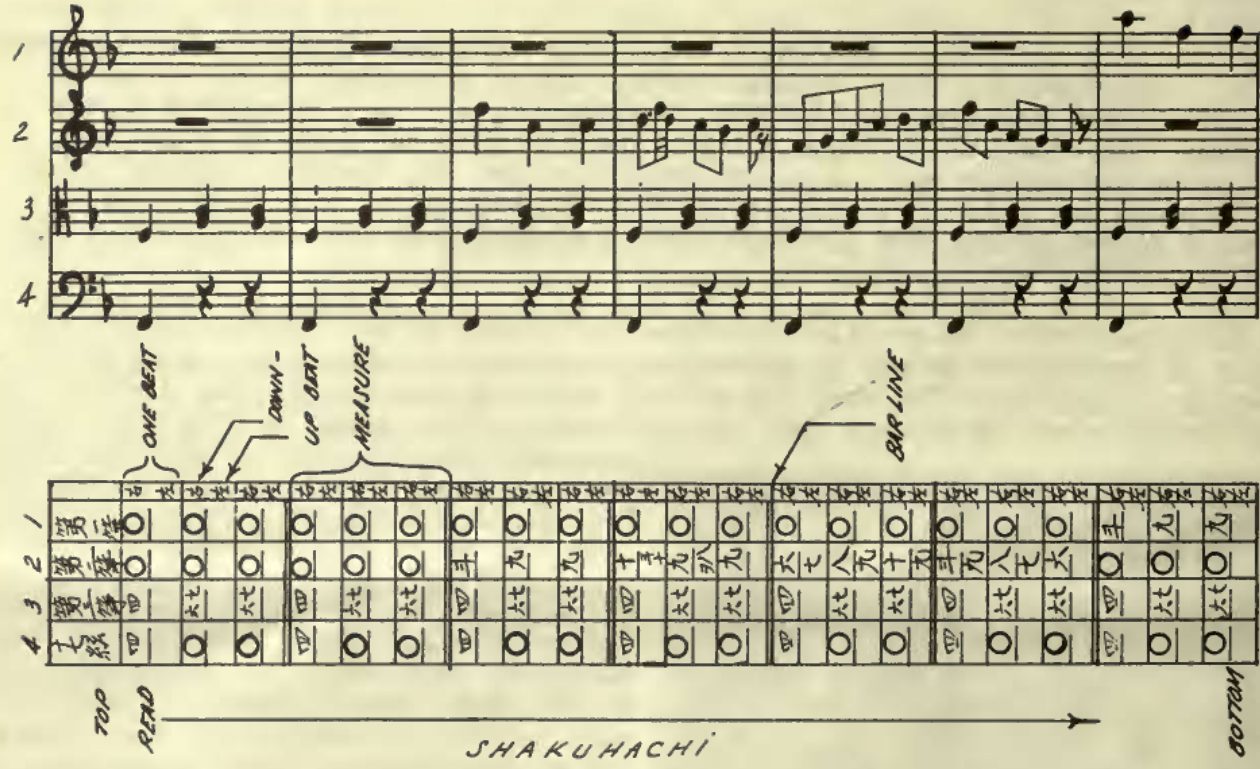
The samisen is a cat-skin covered box with three silk strings, and an ivory bridge. The Arabic numbers are found in samisen music, primarily due to the western culture in Japan at the time the notation was developed. Banjo and samisen sounds are somewhat similar.

Tak Shindo is a faculty member of the Southern California School of Music and Arts and a member of the American Operatic Laboratory,Inc. He serves as technical advisor in Hollywood on Oriental films.

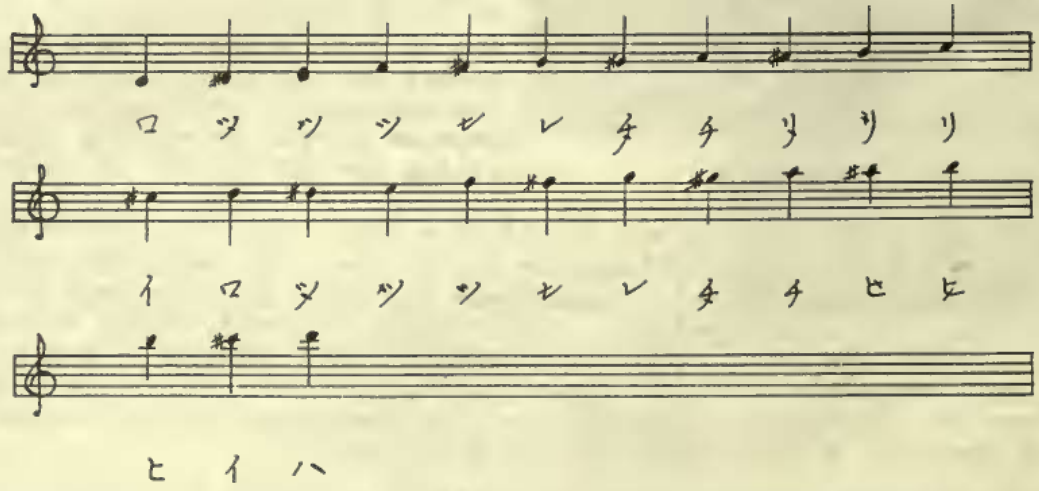
SCALE

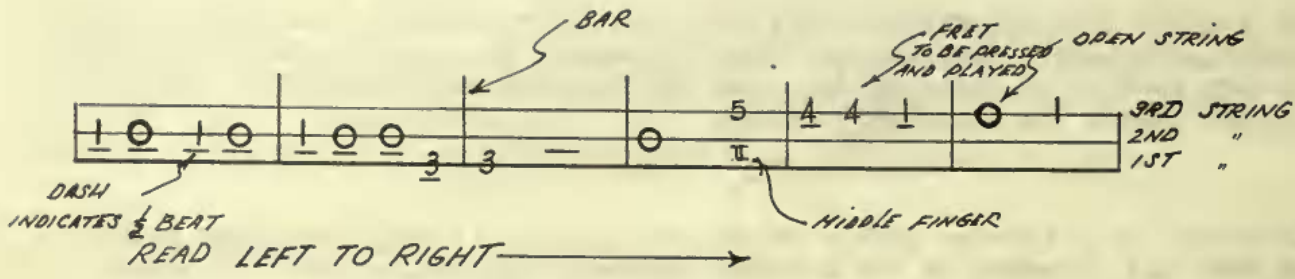


KOTO



SHAKUHACHI





Due to mechanical difficulties the article on PICTURA in the last issue appeared in an incomplete version. It is herewith reprinted in full.

P I C T U R A

Frank Lewin

Six films about six different painters are lumped together under the heading PICTURA. They form no discernible organic entity either in subject matter, narration or music; on the contrary, they offer a study in contrasts. In them, as in a laboratory, may be observed different attempts to cope with the problem posed by combining picture, voice and music. This problem is capable of a comparatively satisfactory solution in a film employing live sound: speech and music, as well as effects, can be readily integrated with the action on the screen. A film about art, however, is composed of three distinct elements: the paintings under scrutiny, the narration and the music, all of which must somehow be fused into a whole.

The subject matter of art films lends itself ideally to an imaginative use of these three elements. What seems of specific interest is the solution to the problem of combining voice and music -- what happens to music that is interesting in its own right when placed behind narration? Vice versa, how does "background" music sound when given more than usual prominence in widely spaced narration? What about musical style vis-a-vis the subject discussed in the film? Which musical medium is most effective: full orchestra, chamber ensembles, solo instruments? Must the score be continuous throughout the duration of the film -- what about silence, what about the introduction of realistic sound effects?

Not all these questions are answered throughout the six films. A good many of them, however, seem very pressing after looking at PICTURA.

I. THE LOST PARADISE - Hieronymus Bosch (1450-1516). Narrated by Vincent Price. Music by Roman Vlad.

A hurdy-gurdy-like section of music for full orchestra accompanies effectively a view of a large section of the canvass. When the camera moves in on details, the music grows delicate and illustrates the fantastic figures through eerie effects. As long as this music forms a background to the voice the overall impression is satisfactory, but when it comes to the fore after a while its lack of substance becomes somewhat pointless.

Technically all is not as it should be with this section of PICTURA. The track sounds blurred and distorted, and there are some rather poor cuts in the music. Furthermore, voice and music are not carefully coordinated. One of the banes of combining narration with music is the artificial, or dial induced, decrescendo of a chord or passage in full bloom. If this process is carried out without regard to fading at logical places in the music the effect can be crude in the extreme. As an example, when the angel drives Adam and Eve out of Eden, the full orchestra adequately underlines the scene. Unfortunately, however, it has just been faded down to let the narrator duplicate the point. The instances could be multiplied.

II. THE LEGEND OF ST. URSULA - Vittore Carpaccio (1460-1526). Narrated by Gregory Peck. Music by Roman Vlad.

The score employs, as far as could be judged by listening, as large an orchestra as the film on Hieronymus Bosch; it is cursed with an equally bad track, technically.

As the story unfolds, the music follows it well. In its quieter moments it possesses appeal and character in its own right; when it gets climactic, however, it does not quite bear out the promise of the less animated parts and takes advantage of some pretty routine sequences to whip up excitement. The description of Ursula and her suitor meeting and their immediate love is accompanied by a solo violin, alas. As in the Bosch picture, there seems to have been little, if any, attempt made to plan the placing of the narration entrances so as to come at logical places in the music. It may be that no attempt at all was made to correlate the two elements before they were mixed. It is discouraging enough to be forced to dispense with such correlation in those industrial and documentary films in which the voice must deliver a certain quota of information and the music tries to make up for the unnatural silence of the scenes shown. In a film dealing with art, however, such lack of sensitivity can hardly be placed under the heading of necessity.

III. Francisco Goya (1746-1828). Narration by Harry Marble. Andres Segovia plays music by Isaac Albeniz on the guitar.

I have been trying to analyze why this section of the six satisfied me most as a musical corollary to the picture. On the one hand the music consists of numbers by Albéniz which, naturally, have been composed independent of this or any other film. Then also here is one solo instrument which cannot hope to match the practically unlimited possibilities of orchestral combinations. Yet it seems to me the plus factors in this instance outweigh the advantages offered by a more traditional approach.

For one thing, the color of the guitar serves it equally well to stand alone or provide a background to the speaking voice. Another point worth considering is that as the music obviously could not be scored to the picture, the picture was cut to fit the music. Even though some of the cutting effects do not quite come off and others are effective on a rather naive level, somehow the music fits. On top of that, an attempt has obviously been made to correlate voice and music as to placing of narration. Also, the music has contour, proportion and a direction of its own and again this satisfies somehow. Maybe the main factor in all this is Andres Segovia. To the individual expression of the painter has been added the playing of an individual artist,

with all the advantages of flexibility (compared to the relatively impersonal quality of an orchestra) this implies. Finally, the intimacy engendered of necessity by the close scrutiny of the camera as it goes over the details of a painting seems to call for small effects in the music which suggest more than they illustrate. In the whole course of PICTURA nothing came close to moving me as much as the few plucked notes that underline Goya's portrayal of war's aftermath (the narration is considerately absent at this point).

To sum up, this section of PICTURA satisfied me musically, and I can't help feeling that some of this satisfaction must contribute to the overall effect of combining picture, voice and music.

IV. Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864-1901). Narrated by Lilli Palmer. Music by Guy Bernard.

Guy Bernard's score, for full orchestra, does not show to full advantage on the poor track for this film. The music must be quite colorful when heard undistorted and could most likely have taken some of the curse off a presentation of Toulouse-Lautrec in black-and-white. (All of PICTURA is in black-and-white, incidentally.) It is best not to speak here in detail about such technical points as variations in level of the commentary or the synchronization of picture with music, as they appear in this film.

The style of the music fluctuates throughout -- sometimes imitating or caricaturing the sentimentality of the period, at others furnishing music suggested visually by the scenes (can-cans. melodrama, circus): some sections where the music is not evocative employ a rather neutral modal style. Throughout there is little unity of style, or, if a kaleidoscopic effect was intended, no separation of illustrative from....well. background music. A comparison with another film dealing with art of approximately the same period, but totally different in character (THE CHARM OF LIFE) comes to mind, where the musical problem has been solved cleverly and effectively. It must also be remembered that given favorable circumstances all around, Guy Bernard's treatment of the music for a film can be very effective, as witness his excellent score for MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPTS.

At one point, a scratchy recording of Sarah Bernard's voice is thrust into the continuous flow of music and words -- a doubtful stratagem in a track that has no technical distinction of its own to provide a valid contrast.

V. Paul Gauguin (1848-1903). Narrated by Martin Gable. Music by Darius Milhaud.

It is futile, of course, to recur constantly to the lack of color in these films, but in the case of the section devoted to Gauguin this lack invaded the music as well. The bleakness and grayness of wood winds in constant imitations is apropos to the opening of the picture, describing Gaugin's early years. But when the scene changes to the South Seas, Milhaud surely could have shifted into high. Instead the same unvarying sham polyphony, in total disregard of the screen and frequently in active combat with the narration, just goes on and on. Contributing to this effect of monotony are the insistent, unflexing rhythms which are kept up for comparatively long stretches. Constant rhythms, unless used for special effects, can be quite wearying in film music.

The quality of the track in this section is good.

VI. Grant Wood (1892-1942). Narrated by Henry Fonda. Music by Lan Adomian, Musical Direction Jack Shaindlin.

This last section of PICTURA is the most satisfying all around, in many respects. In some scenes, such as for example the painting of the farmer's household around the dinner table, the music consists of a clean folk tune treatment that is bouncy and refreshing. Music and subject matter go well together -- the harmonic idiom follows the style that has become associated with stylized American folk music in recent years.

The strength and clarity of the paintings are not always reflected in the score. Some of the music. especially several of the trumpet and wood wind solos of which there are many, just doesn't say very much. This is especially noticeable when the music stands by itself as it does in the calendar sequence. In the Midnight Ride of Paul Revere I had the uncomfortable feeling at one point that picture cuts, Longfellow's poem being recited by the narrator, and the music each went their own way, without regard to the rhythm of one another.

The main title music, preceding the entire production, has also been written by Mr. Adomian. It is strong and interesting and creates expectations about PICTURA which, apart from the Goya and Grant Wood sections, are hardly realized.

PICTURA, ADVENTURE IN ART. Pictura Films Corp. Narrators: Vincent Price, Gregory Peck, Harry Marble, Lilli Palmer, Martin Gable, Henry Fonda. Music by Roman Vlad, Isaac Albéniz, Guy Bernard, Darius Milhaud, and Lan Adomian. Special musical arrangements: Jack Shaindlin.