



FILM MUSIC



MOULIN ROUGE

FILM MUSIC

Official Publication of the National Film Music Council
26 East 83rd Street, New York City 28
Butterfield 8-3288

MARCH - APRIL 1953

VOLUME XII NUMBER IV

CONTENTS:

FILM MUSIC NEWS

MOULIN ROUGE

Lee J. Pockriss

SALOME (with score excerpts)

George W. Duning

CALL ME MADAM

Nathan Kroll

NOTES on THE BAD AND THE BEAUTIFUL

David Raksin

NEW FILM MUSIC FOR NEW FILMS

Mary Ellen Bute

MUSIC IN ART FILMS: Part I

William Hamilton

TELEVISION NOTES

Roger Bowman

Contributors:

Lee J. Pockriss, composer

George W. Duning, film composer

Nathan Kroll, composer-conductor, radio, films, TV.

David Raksin, film composer

Mary Ellen Bute, artist-musician

William Hamilton, writer-musician

Roger Bowman, TV Producer.

ADVISORY COUNCIL

GRACE WIDNEY MABEE
Founder-Chairman

MARIE L. HAMILTON
Editor, Film Music

VIRGINIA MOMAND
United Nations, N. Y.

LOUIS APPLEBAUM
Toronto, Canada

HOWARD HANSON
Eastman Music School

LAWRENCE MORTON
Beverly Hills, Calif.

MARY L. ALEXANDER
Libraries, Stamford, Conn.

WILLIAM HAMILTON
New York

LILLA BELLE PITTS
Columbia University, N. Y.

ROGER BOWMAN
New York

JOHN HUNTLEY
London, England

CONSTANCE PURDY
Hollywood

HELEN C. DILL
Univ. Calif. L. A.

EDITH M. KELLER
Ohio Dept. of Education

DELINDA ROGGENSACK
Cornell College, Iowa

KARL D. ERNST
Portland, Oregon

STANLIE McCONNELL
San Diego, Calif.

SIGMUND SPAETH
New York

ROSE MARIE GRENTZER
Oberlin College, O.

FREDERICK STERNFELD
Dartmouth College, N. H.

THE NATIONAL FILM COUNCIL OFFERS A COMPILATION OF SEVENTY REVIEWS BY MARIE HAMILTON OF 16MM FILMS WITH MUSICAL INTEREST THAT HAVE APPEARED IN FILM MUSIC. THE MIMEOGRAPHED COLLECTION COSTS TWENTY-FIVE CENTS. STAMPS ACCEPTED.

Published by the National Film Music Council, 26 East 83rd St., New York 28. President, William Hamilton; Vice President and Editor, Marie L. Hamilton; Secretary, Grace W. Mabec. Five issues yearly with occasional bulletins. Two dollars and fifty cents a year. Single copies fifty cents. Back files (28 copies) five dollars plus postage.

FILM MUSIC NEWS

THE NATIONAL FILM MUSIC COUNCIL has selected the following scores for their distinguished contribution to film music in 1952.

DRAMA SCORES	THE BAD AND THE BEAUTIFUL	David Raksin
	FACE TO FACE	Hugo Friedhofer
	HIGH NOON	Dimitri Tiomkin
	IVANHOE	Miklos Rozsa
	THE LUSTY MEN	Roy Webb
	MOULIN ROUGE	Georges Auric
	THE SNOWS OF KILIMANJARO	Bernard Herrmann
	THE THIEF	Herschel B. Gilbert
	VIVA ZAPATA	Alex North

MUSICALS	BECAUSE YOU'RE MINE. Musical direction, Johnny Green.
	HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN. Songs, Frank Loesser. Musical direction, Walter Scharf.
	SINGIN' IN THE RAIN. Songs, Arthur Freed, Nacio H. Brown. Musical direction, Lennie Hayton.
	WITH A SONG IN MY HEART. Musical direction, Alfred Newman.

SIR WILLIAM WALTON Sir William Walton will pay his first visit to the United States this summer. He has been invited by the Southern California Symphony Association to conduct a concert of his work at the Hollywood Bowl in August. His new symphonic march "Orb and Scepter", written for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, will be included in the performance. Sir William is well known to American audiences for his many film scores, notably his HENRY V and HAMLET.

JOHNNY GREEN Johnny Green, General Musical Director for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, has been made a life member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences for his work as chairman, producer and director of the recent Academy Award program. Life membership has been voted to only three members in the twenty-five years of the Academy's existence. Mr Green has been identified with the Awards programs since 1945.

STANDARD OIL BROADCASTS Although the Standard School Broadcast does not come under the heading of film music, we would like to draw attention to it. The Broadcast has been presented to western classroom audiences once a week for the past quarter century by the Standard Oil Company of California over the NBC network, and is designed as a course in music enjoyment. Each program this year was devoted to the music of a different country and its place in America. A teacher's manual is provided, giving background material for the various lessons. The Broadcast features an orchestra of thirty-five men, directed by Carmen Dragon, film score composer and conductor.

MOULIN ROUGE

Lee J. Pockriss

MOULIN ROUGE purports to be the 'story' of Toulouse-Lautrec. As the synopsis says, it is "the human drama of Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, a strange little man who was a giant in the world of art." It would seem to me that any picture dedicated to the 'human drama' of an important figure in the history of art would attempt to (1) capture the dominating spirit of his time and milieu -- (2) establish his artistic and social relationship to this milieu --and (3) to try and give as honest and rounded a portrayal as possible of the person considered, consistent of course with the demands of making a commercial motion picture.

This film unfortunately limits its responsibility to a stated subject of scope and integrity by --(1) watering down the dominating spirit of Lautrec's time to a presentation of superficial aspects of Parisian life in the 1880's, such as the ebullience of the patrons and performers in the nightclub from which the picture draws its title, and several isolated shots of stereotyped segments of both the higher and nether regions of society --- (2) showing the artist's professional surroundings to be little more than the inescapable group of picturesque but ever impecunious group of painters clustered at a cafe table sharing pleasantries and a mutual thirst, and the late 19th century Bohemia of the operetta and romantic novel, complete with garret, misunderstanding blue-nosed art-patronesses, and copious amounts of cognac -- and (3) limiting its appraisal of Lautrec as a person by focusing attention on his physical deformity, and its concomitant unhappiness. This facet of his personality is admittedly an important one, and must have undeniably colored his personal life to a great degree, but to dwell unceasingly on this one sensational aspect to the exclusion of everything else seems unfair.

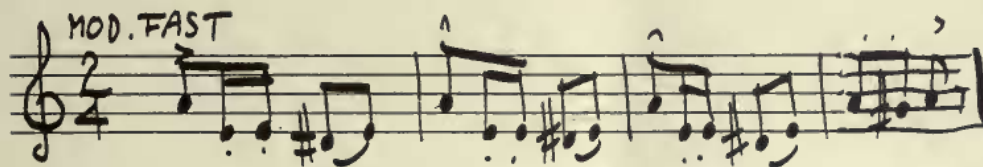
These qualifications would not be necessary if MOULIN ROUGE did not imply that it was the definitive film work on Toulouse-Lautrec, because considered purely on the grounds of film entertainment, MOULIN ROUGE is a colorful and unusual evening's entertainment.

The score for MOULIN ROUGE was written by Georges Auric, one of the Group de Six, who of recent years has devoted much time to the composing of film scores. The music here is excellent, refreshing in texture, imaginative in orchestration, and discriminating in choice of material, I think the question of texture is the most important factor in setting this music apart. It is generally very light and translucent with a predilection for using woods in a solo capacity and in such a characteristic way, that they are able to extricate themselves from the usual gluey background of strings and horns in which they are so often buried. The texture is very French and piquant, and the music itself has a 'point of view' and immediacy which is at once apparent and quite important in successfully fulfilling its commitments. The problems of mise en scene, presence, etc, will be mentioned as they occur in the film.

The title music is in the form of a small three-part overture beginning with an agitato - like theme in the strings and a hazy background of woods. This is followed by a charming and nostalgic little waltz lightly scored for flute, harp and strings. The material for this middle section is taken from one of the two songs which later occurs in the film, and later is used once again as background music. A short reprise of the opening

agitato ends the title music, and the film proper opens with a shot of the crowds entering the Moulin Rouge. There is no music for the establishing shot.

The following scene inside the Moulin Rouge contains one of the longest sections of music in the film, most of which is devoted to the dances which follow. At first it is orchestrated in a very realistic fashion; perhaps one trombone, one trumpet, one sax, several woods and a modest number of strings, resulting in a very believable sound consistent with what one might expect a twelve or fifteen piece band to sound like in an unsavory dancehall. The balance, however, is occasionally too low for a hall containing two thousand noisy people. As far as the music itself is concerned, it is almost rondo-like in form. A lively little theme in the flute keeps recurring, interspersed with different sections of polka material. The flute theme is very simple, but demanding and stayed with me.



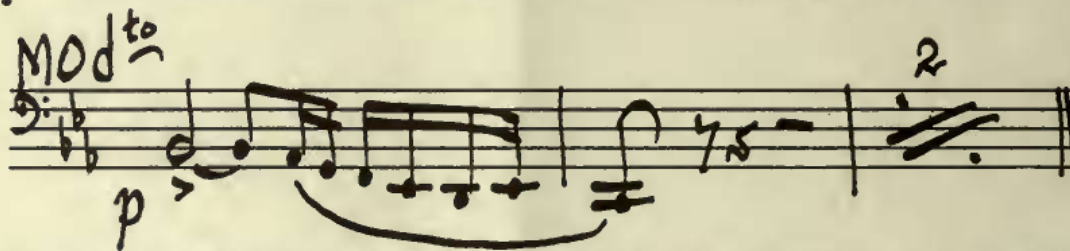
Next on the floor show is Miss Gabor (Zsa Zsa, that is) who as the character of Jane Avril sings the song from which the middle section of the title music was taken. The music of the song is warm and appealing, but the lyrics are completely out of keeping with the decor, the voice used is of the bad concert hall variety, and Miss Gabor's staging is unbelievably bad. And suddenly the orchestration becomes more complicated and sophisticated. It is, considered by itself, charming and tasteful, but quite inconsistent with the surroundings after the realistic use of ostensibly the same orchestra which played for the dances.

The can-can girls then enter to a burst of the traditional Offenbach music, played by an orchestra miraculously augmented for this purpose to symphonic proportions.



As everyone leaves the Moulin, Lautrec is left seated alone at his table, the lights grow dim, and the scrubwomen begin to clean up. It is here that the first music of dramatic intension occurs. A *mysterioso*, funereal in character, begins with the strings playing a tremelo figure and celeste figurations. Slowly it builds till Lautrec stands to reveal his stature, and then recedes again. As he walks through the deserted streets he is accompanied by a sad and somewhat modal theme used throughout the film to signify his loneliness and enforced isolation.

A flashback of his childhood follows with fragments of music in several scenes, always returning to his walk through the streets, and continuation of the initial music. After meeting Marie Chalet, they both continue to his apartment, and this section of the music ends with a run on the bassoon repeated several times which is quite atmospheric in context.



There are quite a few scenes which follow establishing Lautrec's unhappy relationship to Marie and his life of waiting for her to return to him. For this Auric uses music of basically non-thematic character relying again on solo woods in ostinato and dreary recurring figures.

One scene takes place in a very fashionable restaurant and the music is drawn from what one might expect to hear in such a place. It is a string ensemble playing rather contemporary sounding salon music, sweet in character. As the relationship between the two people becomes strained they begin to argue, and the refined sound of the string ensemble continuing in the background is a striking contrast to the bitter haranguing taking place between them. However, they leave as they argue, and the music accompanies them outside, and down the block, which was a little disconcerting.

The use of realistic music is occasionally inconsistent for a little later Lautrec in his search for Marie goes to the Paris stews. Here he finds her in a cheap bar of Hogarthian aspect, and the music is wonderfully realized through the use of a concertina and out-of-tune piano.

There are several important and wholly dramatic scenes which gain from an intelligent and sensitive use of music showing the composer's insight into the situation and his characters, but they all cannot be discussed. One is the suicide scene where the music ominously follows Lautrec's thoughts, as he turns on the gas and closes the window. It follows closely as he sees an unfinished canvas and realizes slowly that this is his reason for continuing to exist. He adds a few brush strokes to it, and then turns off the gas and opens the window to reveal the light and hope of the morning. This is a complicated psychological transition which takes place in a short amount of time, and is successful I feel through the ever present support of the music.

There is also a river scene on the Bateau Mouch with a simple use of harmonica and humming which is quite effective, and a montage of Lautrec's



paintings and sketches, which allows for a lively and successful little concertino for woods and chamber orchestra, and a circus scene where again a use of solo instruments and light orchestration is charming and well conceived.

Another song by Zsa Zsa (Gabor) again leaves much to be desired but I doubt whether Mr. Auric can be saddled with this responsibility. It is compensated for by another montage of Lautrec's works, these concerned with his subjects of lesser social repute. The music for this is very strange, modal, and almost oriental in character, and quite desolate in feeling.

Finally in Lautrec's death scene the spirits of his Moulin Rouge that was, dance in to wave goodbye to him. Here again is used the little flute theme I mentioned earlier, and other musical elements of the opening dance section.

MOULIN ROUGE .. Romulus: United Artists. Jose Ferrer, Suzanne Flon. Director, John Huston. Music score, Georges Auric. Technicolor.

SALOME

George W. Duning

The writing of the background score for the Columbia Picture, SALOME was one of those "once in a blue moon" opportunities for a film composer. The film story by Harry Kleiner presents Salome in a sympathetic light. The main ingredients of the story are the love of Claudius for Salome, the plotting of Queen Herodias against John the Baptist by King Herod. The film was directed by William Dieterle, a director who has a tremendous flair for this type of picture. A great deal of the score, over an hour in length, plays in the open without dialogue or sound effects to cover it.

All of the chief characters, Salome, Claudius, King Herod, Queen Herodian, John the Baptist, and Ezra, the King's religious counselor, are more or less of equal importance. The tried but true technique of the leit-motif was suggested.

Unlike QUO VADIS, whose fine score by Miklos Rozsa was stylistically correct and authentic, SALOME was filmed as a dramatic love story, and it was the opinion of Morris Stoloff (head of Columbia Music Department) and myself that the music should be written in a symphonic manner. I did considerable research in ancient Hebrew music and the music of the Greeks and Romans of that period. I found, in wading through several centuries of music both prior to and following the time of Christ, a remarkable similarity in melodic lines. I noted numerous examples of music settings for Psalms of David in which the same sequences of notes could be found in the Gregorian Chants which came several centuries later. As a matter of fact, when I set up the material for the "Baptist" theme, I instinctively did so in terms of the Gregorian Chants.

The only concessions that were made as to authentic sounds of instruments of the period were the occasional uses of an Irish harp, a viola d'amore, an oboe d'amore, cymbals, camel bells, and flute. My orchestrator, Arthur Morton and I felt that the occasional use of these colors was sufficient to indicate the geographical flavor of certain scenes. Otherwise, the entire score is written in the grand symphonic manner, using a modern orchestra consisting of full strings, woodwinds in twos, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, harp, and a battery of percussion.

The main theme, which is the Salome (Rita Hayworth) and love story theme, was divided into three sections; The first section (example A) has a somewhat modal character.

THEMATIC EXCERPTS FROM COLUMBIA PICTURES PRODUCTION

"SALOME"

Comp. by GEORGE W. DUNING A.S.C.A.P.

(Copyright Columbia Pict. Corp.)

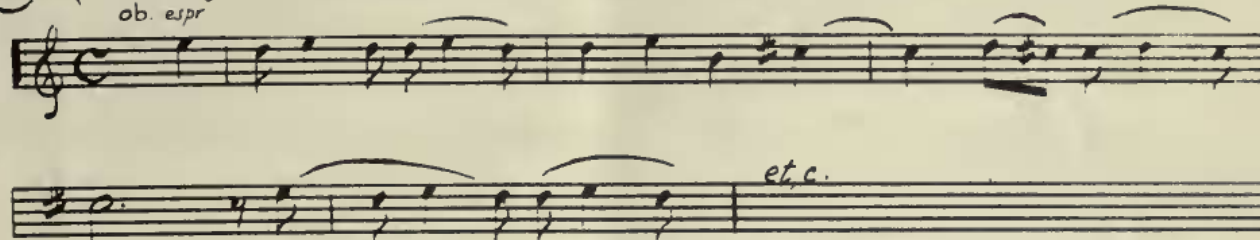
(A) (Main section) "SALOME" & "LOVE" Theme

Mod^{to}



The second section (example B) is of a rather light and expressive character.

(B) (secondary section:
ob. espr



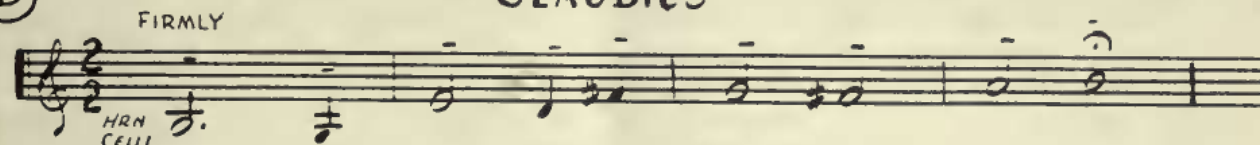
The third section (example C) was used for the more moody and dramatic scenes: for instance, the quarrel between Claudius and Salome and the scene where Queen Herodius asked her daughter to dance for the King and Salome storms out of the Queen's quarters.

(C) (third section)
DARK - MOODY



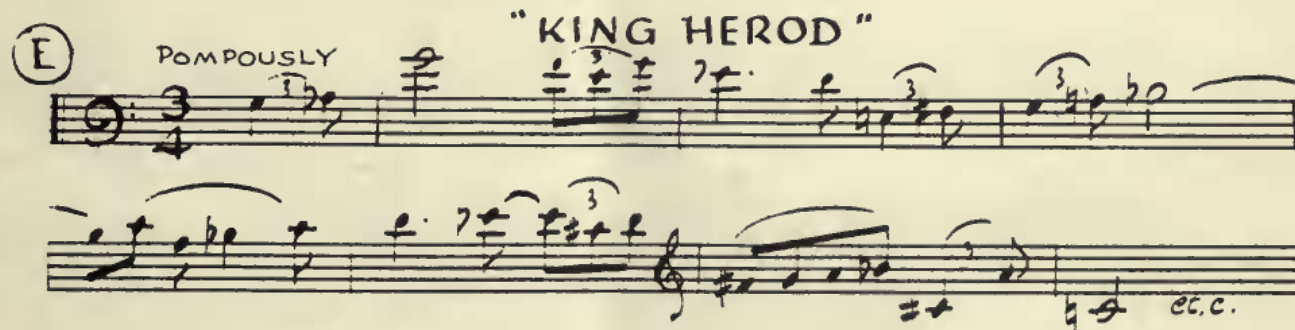
The Claudius (Stewart Granger) theme (example D) is usually heard in horns, or horns and celli. It was written so that it could be played as a counter line to the first section of the Salome theme (example K).

(D) "CLAUDIUS"



The main theme (example A) was also used in the light manner (example I). This treatment was used in an amusing scene between Salome and Claudius in which Salome is piqued because she has been supplied with sea water for her bath.

King Herod (Charles Laughton) called for a strong and somewhat pompous theme (example E). This theme usually was played by the low strings in the tutti passages, or as a bass clarinet solo in the quieter dialogue scenes.



The Queen Herodias (Judith Anderson) theme (example F) is of a fragmentary nature and is usually heard in the cold tones of a pair of muted horns or a clarinet played non-expressive.

(F) *And^{te}*
THIN - WORMY
ob. Cl.

"HERODIAS"

The musical score for 'HERODIAS' is written on a single staff in 3/2 time. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The melody is characterized by a slow, fragmented, and somewhat jagged line, typical of a woodwind instrument like a clarinet or muted horn. The notes are mostly quarter and eighth notes, with some rests and ties.

The character of Pontius Pilate and his Roman followers is set up in a martial piece of music in which I used a unison of horns set above a bass line consisting of a succession of parallel fourths and fifths (example G).

(G) *Mod^{to}*

"PILATE" & The ROMANS"

The musical score for 'PILATE' & The ROMANS' is written on two staves in 4/4 time. The top staff is for the trumpet and horn section, marked 'Trpt. Horn.' and 'Harshly'. The bottom staff is for the bass line, consisting of a succession of parallel fourths and fifths. The melody is martial and rhythmic, with many accents and dynamic markings.

As noted above, the character of John the Baptist (Alan Badel) was set forth in a melody adapted along the lines of the Gregorian Chants. This melody is usually heard in horns in unison played very softly with a cushion of strings above. In one wonderful scene, near the end of the picture, in which Salome and Claudius visit the Baptist who has been imprisoned in a dungeon in Herod's palace, I was able to use the Baptist theme to greater advantage. The scene is over six minutes in length, and most of it is covered by a long speech by Claudius in which he describes the miracles he has seen performed by Christ. Because of the low, soft quality of the dialogue, I had to be extremely careful in the treatment of the background music. I used two groups of strings, one with mutes, and played them against each other. Under one very low line, I even thinned out the orchestra to four violins. At the climax of the scene, where John the Baptist has been overcome with emotion over the realization that the Messiah has come, he gives his blessing to Salome and Claudius and tells them to "go in peace". This dialogue was extremely low and I got over it by resolving the climax achieved with the full string orchestra to a single note which holds over the dialogue line "go in peace".

(H) *Lento*
PURE - SIMPLY
Fls. Strad.

The BAPTIST "

The musical score for 'The BAPTIST' is written on two staves in 2/2 time. The top staff is for the flute and strings, marked 'Fls. Strad.'. The bottom staff is for the horns, marked 'Hrns.'. The melody is simple and pure, with a slow, steady pace. The notes are mostly quarter notes, with some rests and ties.

(I) *Gracefully* Fl.

"SALOME" (Light Treatment)

The musical score for 'SALOME' (Light Treatment) is written on a single staff in 6/8 time. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The melody is graceful and light, with a flowing line. The notes are mostly quarter and eighth notes, with some rests and ties.

The caravan scene in which Salome is being transported by the Roman soldiers back to Galilee is beautifully filmed. A great many of the scenes were actually shot in Israel. As a matter of fact, the scene on the river bank in which the Romans attack the Baptist and his followers, was shot on the bank of the river Jordan. Because of the length of the caravan scenes, I set up special material (example J) and alternated this material with treatments of the Salome music. When the caravan arrives at the castle of Herod, I was able to alternate this music with the Herod theme.

J (STEADILY) *The "CARAVAN"*

Handwritten musical score for 'The CARAVAN'. It features a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a tempo marking 'Tutti' and a dynamic marking '2'. The bass staff has a dynamic marking 'Horn'. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and accidentals. Below the staves, there are performance instructions: 'Plus. PERC. - TAMB. - PERSIAN CYMB. - CAMEL BELLS et.c.' and 'et.c.' at the end of the piece.

The picture ends with excerpts from the Sermon On The Mount. Again, I had the problem of a low dialogue level plus the fact that I wished to bring in the Roger Wagner Chorale and work to a climax for the end title. I used four horns in a modal melody which starts on a low "g" played very softly to an organ of high strings. The melody played by the horns gradually climaxes to a high "b" at which point I had all the violins repeat the horn melody in a higher register. The Chorale is singing a supporting structure; the entire scene resolving to "D" major.

K *SALOME (MAIN TITLE TREATMENT)*

Handwritten musical score for 'SALOME (MAIN TITLE TREATMENT)'. It features a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a tempo marking 'Warmly' and a dynamic marking 'stacc.'. The bass staff has a dynamic marking 'Horn'. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and accidentals. Below the staves, there are performance instructions: '(Salome)', '(Claudius)', 'esp.', 'w.w.', 'sul G', and 'et.c.' at the end of the piece.

"HEROD" THEME (MAIN TITLE TREATMENT)

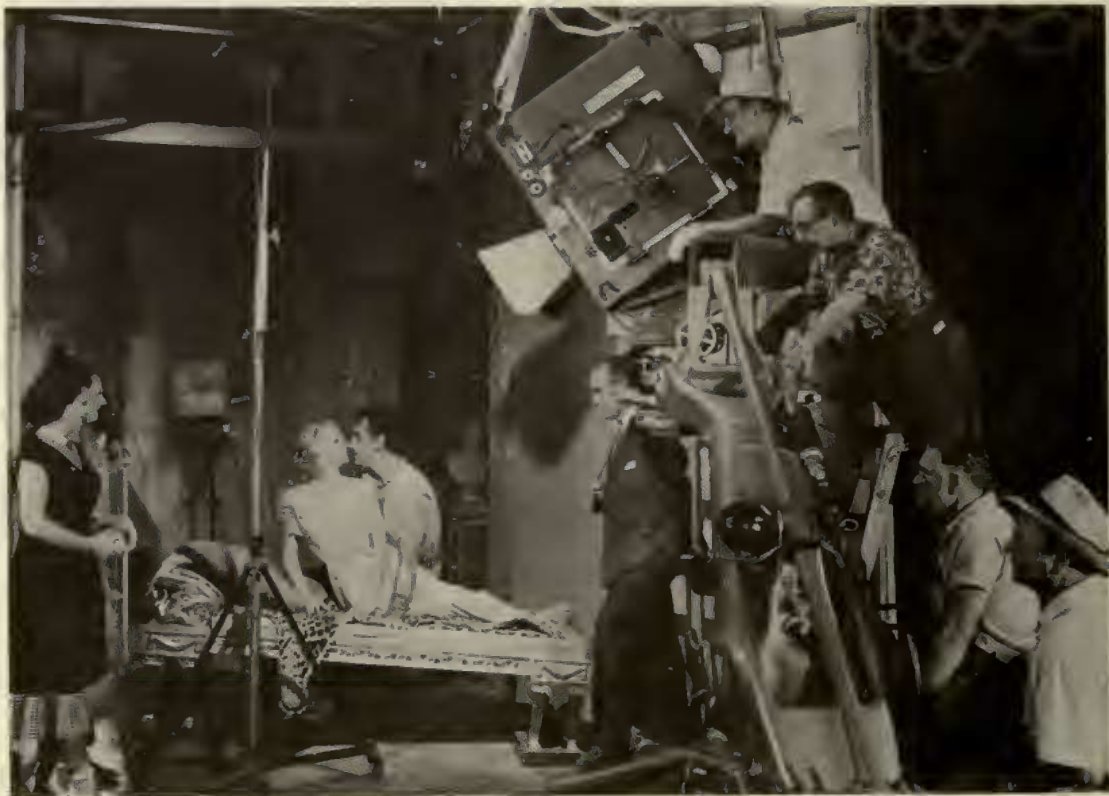
(L)

Handwritten musical score for "HEROD" THEME (MAIN TITLE TREATMENT). The score is written on two systems of staves. The first system has a treble clef and a bass clef. The second system has a treble clef and a bass clef. The music includes various notes, rests, and dynamic markings such as "f=f" and "f=mf". There are also some handwritten annotations like "Hrns." and "et.c."

The music for the "Dance of the Seven Veils" was written by my eminent colleague, Daniele Amfitheatrof.

A thirty minute album of some of the principle scenes in SALOME will be available on Decca records.

SALOME.. Columbia Pictures.. Producer, Buddy Adler. Director, William Dieterle. Musical Director, Morris Stoloff, Music Score, George Duning. Orchestrations, Arthur Morton. "Dance of the Seven Veils", Daniele Amfitheatrof.



CALL ME MADAM

Nathan Kroll

20th Century Fox may well take a bow for this excellent film version of Irving Berlin's CALL ME MADAM. It's a big lush musical in the best Hollywood tradition. It boasts a good workable plot, a bag full of good tunes by one of America's great tunesmiths, plus the incomparable Ethel Merman.

As in the Broadway success, the screen version is about one Sally Adams (Ethel Merman) who has gravitated from Oklahoma to Washington, D. C. where with her naturalness and her oil millions she has rapidly become the leading party giver, hostess to some of the biggest names in the news. Such unusual talents bring their own rewards, and as the story opens, Ethel is being sworn in as the ambassador of the United States to the Grand Duchy of Lichtenburg (mythical, of course). Not knowing beans about her new job, she takes with her as her press attache a young man of great erudition and charm (Donald O'Connor). Once in Lichtenburg we meet the usual servicable Grand Duke and Duchess, Prince and Princess (Vera-Ellen), and the handsome Secretary of State (George Sanders). Ambassadorial proceedings are studded with amusing imaginary telephone conversations between Ambassador Ethel and "Harry" that take in good-natured kidding of Margaret's adventures with music critics.

Musically, the film offers a flock of typical Berlin tunes, all expertly handled, though a bit on the brassy side. When Miss Merman is on she literally pops out of both the screen and the sound track. After thirteen tunes this can become a bit wearing. However, most audiences will enjoy Merman's singing "Hostess with the Mostes on the Ball", "Marrying for Love", and many others. "I Like Ike" is the only tune that was eliminated from the original Broadway version. Irving Berlin substitutes a song he wrote in 1913, called



"International Rag." This number introduces Ambassador Ethel to the assembled Lichtenburgers at a palace reception. The song is in the mold of "Alexander's Ragtime Band" and serves its purpose very well in this film. It gives La Merman a chance to really let go. She is accompanied by the old world orchestra led by Leon Belasco, the conductor of the palace musicians.

Donald O'Connor as the Ambassador's personal press attache and lovely Vera-Ellen as the Princess have had scenes built up for them that give both performers song and dance opportunities that are exceptionally pleasing to watch. This is especially true of the way in which "It's a Lovely Day Today" is used. Robert Alton contributes his usual competence to the dance routines. A show stopper is Vera-Ellen's dance "The Ocarina" as well as Donald O'Connor's solo, wherein he is given ample opportunity for diving, prat falls, dancing on a xylophone, etc.

George Sanders also deserves mention for the charm with which he plays the Secretary of State. More important, he reveals a melodious bass baritone voice which he uses very nicely, particularly while singing "Marrying for Love." Herbert Spencer and Earl Hagen are responsible for a smooth scoring job, and as always Alfred Newman can be relied upon for a perfect job of musical direction.

Call Me Madam .. 20th Century Fox. Ethel Merman, Donald O'Connor. Director, Walter Lang. Songs by Irving Berlin. Musical director, Alfred Newman. Technicolor.

DEPARTMENT OF AMPLIFICATION AND SO FORTH

After my review of David Raksin's music for THE BAD AND THE BEAUTIFUL appeared in the last issue of FILM MUSIC, Mr Raksin favored me with a note which disclosed some of the philosophy underlying the course and quality of his score. Although his remarks were not intended as anything more than a friendly personal communication - to show me that his "errors are not arrived at without considerable preparation" - he consented when I proposed passing some of them along.

First of all, my round declaration that his aim had been to build scenes rather than characters turned out to be a rash one, for, in a modest statement of purpose, he writes, "My object, hardly sublime, was neither to build characters nor scenes, but to write a whole score." This could be inferred to some extent on careful inspection of the excerpts quoted with the review, but I might well have made it plainer. Most of the score's apparently 'independent' ideas are to be found in the 'Georgia' theme (now called "Love is for the very young"). Such procedures belong to a formal conception which goes beyond the mere supplying of occasional textures and melodies appropriate to the action. Mr Raksin doesn't feel that the score will be perceived as a single, unified composition since there is relatively little of it in a longish picture. This seems likely enough, but I'm sure that, heard or not, it is the constructional element that gives the music its general aspect of rightness.

On character-building, the composer has this to say: "It was precisely the film's concentration on character that impelled me away from it.... I think the course upon which I decided (and in which Minelli and Houseman concurred) was correct.." "There is no theme for the central character. When we realized how our instinctive thinking was leading us away from this universal procedure, we decided that, if I was not to write 'Jonathan music', perhaps it would serve the picture best - even in certain crucial scenes - to be consistent and not pop up with heavy music delineating the baser side of Jonathan, like a Hungarian playwright introducing an important new character in the third act."

The composer agrees in part with my remark that the score comments, "but, if I may split a hair, it is subjective commentary. I could not see myself writing 'Well, how d'ye like this swine?' music for Jonathan, and only bitter music would have been right for him. Just as we know Jonathan chiefly through the people he has hurt, it is through them also that the music speaks of him and of Hollywood. And do not forget that Minelli, Houseman, Schnee and I are, for all to see, denizens of Hollywood, and all commenting madly, like a local-color man on a pool-telecast of an atomic blast. We are all frank to say that we too are movie people."

W. H.

NEW FILM MUSIC FOR NEW FILMS

Mary Ellen Bute

The usual service of music to films is the portrayal of character, to set the mood for the plot and to form a fabric for the knitting together and pointing up of documentary or literary ideas. It is often used as a running commentary developing in parallel or contrary motion with the intellectual mood of the film, and serves as a basic fabric out of which the sound effects and dialogue emerge. It sets the rhythm and pace for the audience's impression of the action.

For all this integral relationship with the current cinema, MUSIC plays an even more salient part in the ABSOLUTE film where it is actually inter-composed with the visual material. I have been dedicated to the advancement of ABSOLUTE film for some time and my interest in it is growing and branching out.

Many contemporary composers have been intrigued with the idea of one kinetic composition to be realized in the two materials (aural and visual) in such a way that they were inter-dependent and neither the musical composition or the picture would be complete alone. I have worked to such an end with the late and deeply lamented Joseph Schillinger and George Gershwin, and with the brilliant and forward looking composers, Henry Cowell and Edwin Gerschefski.

For some years, in order to explore the possibilities of the film medium, I have been working on the visual perception of classical and semi-classical music such as Saint Saëns' "Dance Macabre" for "Spook Sport", Liszt's "Hungarian Rhapsody #2" for "Color Rhapsodie" and Shostakovich's Polka from his "Age of Gold" ballet for "Polka Graph," which uses the graph pattern of the music as a springboard for the visual interpretation.

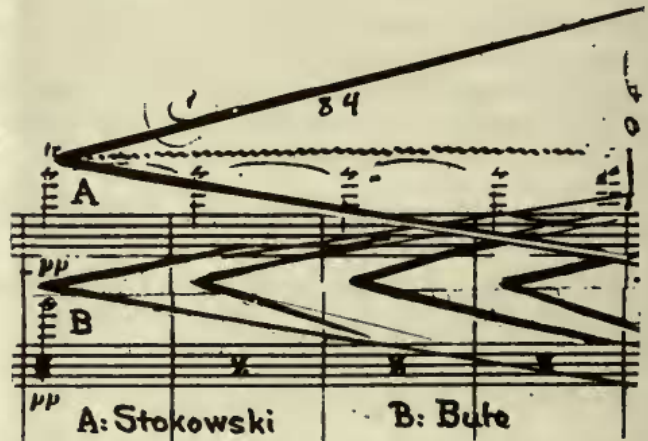
Violins I
Violins II
Violas
Cellos
Double Basses
Flutes
Clarinet
Bassoon
Saxophone
Trumpet
Trombone
Tuba
Euphonium

45 Allegretto. M. M. ♩ = 84.

Each small square equals vertically one semitone; horizontally one sixteenth.

I am doing two films with Leopold Stokowski, who has long been actively interested in this field. The first film which is completed is PASTORAL, a visual interpretation of Bach's "Sheep May Safely Graze". The second, EXUBERANCE, is a visualization of excerpts from "Carmen",

The acute reaction of an inspired musician to the visual development of my work is a source of great concern and excitement to me. For instance, in the following passage from Carmen I have a series of pictures which start in the background on each note and zoom out at the audience. The effect is cumulative and at the end of the phrase I feel that I have approximated the sound effect of Bizet's music. Mr. Stokowski feels that one visual element in a continuous zoom from distant field, would be more eloquent of the music. As it was his immediate and spontaneous reaction, I will try it that way and see how it fits in with my overall idea.



EXUBERANCE is like a painting which reveals itself in time continuity. In this way the painter can control the succession of visual impressions delivered to the on-looker and involve his audience aurally at the same time. The picture part of EXUBERANCE is more than a "visual interpretation" of the music. It has the elements of an interrelated composition.

My story is one of metamorphosis, which I am sure no creative worker who may read this will be in the least surprised to hear. As a painter desirous of expressing movement and controlled rhythms in time sequence, I turned to the then existent optical instruments and color organs and went to work with Leon Theremin, the inventor of electronic musical instruments, among which his Theremin Ether Wave instrument is the widest known.

There seemed to be no idea that was foreign to Leon Theremin. Among his many incredibly wonderful inventions and devices he had platforms surrounded by magnetic fields. One could dance on these and with the gestures of his arms and legs make his own music. Joseph Schillinger, who was most outstanding himself, said that Leon Theremin's mind was of such a high order that he made everyone else he (Schillinger) knew seem atavistic.

From the first half hour with Theremin I was installing tiny mirrors, about 1/8th inch in diameter, on minute oscillators in tiny tubes of oil to cut down the friction and make them amenable to control. We would reflect light through prisms on these mirrors to get a range of spectral colors, then move the point of colored light about on the screen. We felt that much form is latent in a point, that a travelling point inscribes a line; a point returning on itself a circle, a cube, an angle. From a vibrating point we got a spiral, the figure 8 "line of beauty" and so on.

Needless to say these visual "goings on" were accompanied by electrical tones and sounds of the most unusual order. The wave lengths of the colors were arithmetically related to the wave length of the sounds and I found the results exhilarating as did the little group in the workshop. But it wasn't enough for wide public demonstration. It was the kernel of something marvelous, but it needed money and concentrated effort to make it grow and flourish.

None of us had any money or the ability to interest venture capital in our ideas and Theremin had no bump of self-preservation. So he left the world poorer than it would have been had he been able to sustain himself in it longer.

As this phase of my work shut down, I turned to the film medium and found that with careful budgeting I could buy an adequate amount of 16mm film, use borrowed cameras and carry on with my experiments.

One day a girl, a friend from Houston, came to see me. Naturally I exposed her to some of my ideas and showed her my films. She said that she could't understand why I skimped and struggled. Why didn't I go to a bank and borrow money to make a proper movie? I put on my hat and went to a bank. With a little research I found I knew two boys with adequate jobs to act as co-makers. So I took a personal loan and made my first ABSOLUTE film, RHYTHM IN LIGHT, which was then booked by the Radio City Music Hall.

Ted Nemeth, ace cinematographer and film producer, photographed RHYTHM IN LIGHT. He not only filmed my first productions but taught me enough about motion picture photography so that I now expend only about $97\frac{1}{2}\%$ of my vital energy on the technical realization of my ideas and have a full $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ left over for creative work.

My next film, which is taking shape in my head and is charging my emotions, is entirely new visually and aurally. For it I have turned back to many of my early experiments which I am now technically equipped to develop.

A mathematical system serves as a basis for this picture. I take the relationship of two or more numbers, for instance 7:2, 3:4, 9:5:4, fraction them around their axis, raise to powers, permute, divide, multiply, subtract and invert until I have a complete composition of the desired length in numbers. Then I realize this composition in the materials I have selected to employ. I use this composition of numbers to determine the length, width and depth of the photographic field and everything in it. This numerical composition determines the length, speed, and duration of a zoom, a travel back with the camera, the curve and angle at which the camera approaches a subject. It determines the shape, size, color and luminosity of the subject; how, when and in what relationship to other elements of the composition it develops and moves. The melody, harmony, rhythm, dynamics, etc., of the sound are elaborated from the same numerical composition, thus setting up an exquisite relationship between the structural and rhythmic interferences of the combined materials.

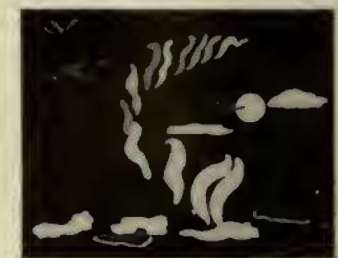
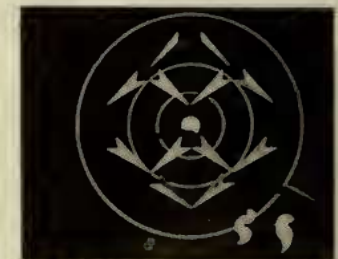
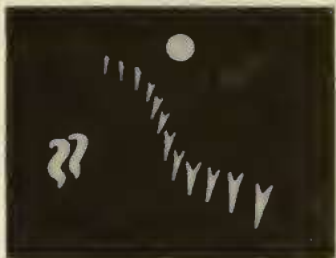
If at some time I compose a visual and aural combination that stands my hair on end I assure myself that it is my art impulses that are at fault. I am not necessarily to blame, but rather long generations of dull training of visual and aural perceptions have retarded my aesthetic tastes and emotional responses to a point where they are far behind the type of art I am capable of realizing.

But I and my indefatigable and far flung confreres feel there are indications that the day is close upon us when we will cast aside our atavistic art attitudes and impulses, leaving ourselves free and unencumbered to be exhilarated by the ever expanding revelations of this art which is expressive of our culture and refreshing entertainment for modern man.

MARY ELLEN BUTES
SPOOK SPORT
a graveyard gambol
 PRODUCED BY
 TED MEMETH STUDIOS
 ANIMATED BY
 NORMAN MCLAREN



Cast of Characters:
 Spook
 Ghost
 Bat
 Ball
 Sun
 Place a deserted graveyard
 Time midnight



The ten abstract films Miss Bute has completed to date are RHYTHM IN LIGHT, SYNCHROMY No. 2, PARABOLA, ESCAPE, TARANTELLA, COLOR RHAPSODIE and PASTORAL. In the past fourteen months POLKA GRAPH, which won the award at the International Film Festival in Venice in 1952, COLOR RHAPSODIE and SPOOK SPORT, each of which premiered at the Radio City Music Hall, have had a phenomenal number of theatrical bookings from coast to coast. PASTORAL, on which Miss Bute collaborated with Mr Stokowski, is scheduled for early release. These films are also available on 16mm.



MUSIC IN ART FILMS

William Hamilton

At the end of November, the 2nd International Art Film Festival ran its course in five sessions at the Hunter College Auditorium in New York. Representing as it did the collaboration of a large number of dedicated, responsible people, the whole affair was probably as comprehensive and authoritative a survey of a rather sprawling field as could be produced. It comprised forty-four items, most of which were films on Art - expositions of personalities and pre-created works. The remainder, a more experimental category not yet named satisfactorily, were attempts at creation directly in terms of motion picture. However worthy and promising these latter efforts were, I was a little surprised to find myself impressed oftener by the gains which have been made in the more conservative documentary practice. Many of these film-makers in their writing, shooting, and editing seem to have found the knack of banishing that tired travelogue quality, no mean feat when dealing with subject matter that just sits there.

Musically, these dozen or so hours of film provided a wide sampling of attitudes, methods and budget sizes. The ultimate in thrift is, of course, to have no music at all but to lard the commentary with fancy talk by way of compensation. This was done in JOAN MIRO MAKES A COLOR PRINT, and the result was not happy. Conditioning has done its work, and, for me at least, a movie entirely without music is probably bound to seem half-finished. Another picture of similar content, bluntly titled NEW WAY OF GRAVURE, typified the next lower stage in cost-cutting. Here the credits are accompanied by a few measures of one of the Brandenburg slow movements, apparently dubbed from an old phonograph record. When the commentary begins, the music fades in mid-phrase and is heard no more. As in the Miro film the speaker is William Hayter, who in this one also appears on the screen as print maker. He is a man blessed with a fine voice and forceful delivery, but his ringing announcement "Angels Wrestling!" - the name of the finished print - still calls for some formula of conclusion. Even a firm V-I on the piano would have helped.

Quotation from the standard literature was also applied to TOULOUSE-LAUTREC. The treatment was fairly systematic in that the excerpts used had some connection with the subject matter: Offenbach-type vivace for the dancing girls and the Debussy Quartet for the serious stuff. Yvette Guilbert singing "Le Fiacre" was all to the good, too. On the other hand, rough and random cutting gave the 'score' a patchy, disconnected character which deprives this motion picture of much of its motion.

Two abstract animations, AMERICAN MARCH and MOTION PAINTING NO. 1 by Oskar Fischinger present respectively "The Stars and Stripes Forever" and the fourth Brandenburg Concerto complete, accompanied by beguiling stripes and colors on the screen. For me, this sort of thing is fun only when the sound is in close sync with the picture, For this reason (and I guess, just this once) I was more beguiled by Sousa than by Bach.

The Festival's most distinguished musical offering was MISERERE, a study of Rouault's series of etchings. It's a completely professional job of picture making and the sound track brings us an uncut and thoroughly magnificent recording of an authentic masterpiece. Josquin des Prez' setting of the fourth Penitential Psalm, "Miserere mei, Deus", is as beautiful and historically

important as it is rarely heard, and to come upon it as a film background is a windfall indeed. Ideally I should have preferred to hear it without narration on top of it, (the commentator has a slight tendency to 'pong') but that would have been egg in my beer. The performance is by the Ensemble Vocale Marcel Couraud plus a trombone for the vagans, here a fifth voice which enters eight times to repeat the opening phrase on successively lower scale degrees.

A large trend observable in the scoring of films which deal with art of the past is the making up of music in the appropriate antique idioms. The most studied essay along this line was the score for THE GREAT PASSION, a film devoted to Dürer's treatment of the life of Christ. The idiom chosen is pretty clearly Eighteenth Century - of course long past Dürer. However, when thinking of Passion music, Bach comes much more readily to mind than Josquin, so the anachronism should probably be excused. The composer gives us a good capsule assortment of Bach-like forms and textures. There are fugatos, simulated recitatives (without voices) and chorale 'workings up'. The recorded sound of the instruments is unusually fine. In case anyone's interested, the three chorales used are "Christus der uns selig macht", the Passion Chorale, and "Meinen Jesum lass ich nicht."

The antiquity principle is applied more loosely and, I think, more successfully in two French pictures (with English commentary) LES GISANTS and ST. LOUIS, ANGEL OF PEACE. The former is a study of recumbent statuary on the tombs of French royalty and nobility. Music for voices and organ with a rather generalized 'liturgical' flavor accompanies it very impressively. ST. LOUIS takes up the story of Louis IX as told in picture and sculpture of the XIII and XIV centuries. Here, in sonorous brass and organ are the rough harmonies and bounding triple rhythms of the late organa. There is also a "Dies Irae" and (with men's voices) a "Veni, Sancte Spiritus."

The work of Veit Stoss, a fifteenth century wood sculptor is shown us in ALTAR MASTERPIECE. the score for this film and that for STEPHAN LOCHNER, a painter of the same period, are both of a less heroic cast than the two French items just mentioned. Both are obviously of the present day with antiqueness conscientiously worked in as flavoring matter. In both cases the result was quite attractive, although of the two, I found the LOCHNER music a little less interesting in content. At the same time, LOCHNER does provide several lovely seconds of light organ registration in the restored Baroque style.

Sir Arnold Bax' setting of JOURNEY INTO HISTORY (a very brief survey of English art in the eighteenth century) has its topicality completely absorbed into the personal style of the composer. Here it is not a matter of citing this figure or that turn of phrase as being redolent of the age of Hogarth and Johnson. Rather, we have a piece which renders the sentiment of the eighteenth century in the vocabulary of the twentieth. Such control - proprietorship, even - of ends and means is the mark of a very accomplished worker, and the geniality and elegance and verve of the whole production must be credited in large part to Sir Arnold.



Henri Storck, Director and Cyril Knowles, Photographer
at work on THE OPEN WINDOW

BUSTELLI is a charming display of porcelain figurines by another eighteenth century artist who worked in Germany. The music for it ranged rather freely in idiom -- from old dance forms to conventional present-day illustrative music such as the ornamental flute and harp stuff we've heard so often accompanying fountain shots, or a few bars on the black keys to identify something Chinese. Altogether the track has an appropriate gentleness of sound; there is properly sparing use of the brass, and the occasional small pleasant-ries serve well in the place of more imposing musical incidents.

The two pictures last mentioned mark a kind of boundary line between the Festival's pastiche, or mimic composition, and its composition-for-real, wherein the music represents the composer's direct, personal slant on the subject. Films falling in the latter group were, as might be expected, much more numerous, due, no doubt, to the mythical cachet associated with "originality". Again, the factor determining the style of many of these scores was economic. As a result, there were many attempts to bring forth multum in parvo by using solo instruments and small ensembles. That the attempts were not all completely satisfactory is less important, I think, than the fact that these byways in film music are being explored.

Two pictures, GOYA and A PAINTER'S WORLD: MILTON AVERY are accompanied in a vagrant improvisatory manner by solo guitar. In both cases the quality of the scene is reflected in the music with ease and suppleness, though there is no clear connection shown between the American Avery and the slightly flamenco accent of his sound-track. Neither guitarist is credited on the screen, but the Festival program advised me that GOYA is backed up by a man named Segovia.

Piano - entirely alone- supplies the music for PHILIP EVERGOOD. This score strikes me as quite a substantial piece in its own right-- one which I would be glad to hear again. Unfortunately it also seems to wag the dog. While it is adapted, at least superficially, to the ins and outs of the picture, the music lives its own life without really providing the desired background.

IMAGES D'ARGILE and a companion piece, IMAGES DE L'ANCIENNE EGYPTE are scored predominantly for woodwinds, and, as forecast by Rimsky-Korsakow, the effect "soon becomes wearisome." Occasional harp and pizzicato strings are not sufficient to relieve the deadly sameness of texture, and the writing itself is dry and austere. Consequently, our perusal of these beautiful objects from the Greek and Egyptian collections at the Louvre is made something of a chore.

A similar ensemble was used for DAPHNI, VIRGIN OF THE GOLDEN LAURELS, but with happier results. The instrumentation is nicely varied and the musical matter quietly appealing throughout.

A 'one-of-everything' wood-wind and string group plays a slightly avant-garde score behind MIRROR OF HOLLAND, a gimmick picture in which an assortment of Dutch landscape is seen as reflected in adjoining bodies of water. The music

employs fractions of the semitone in unessential positions, thereby lending strangeness without disrupting the tonal sense, and it follows beautifully the mood and shape of the film.

In totally different style, the same sort of forces play a fine, sassy background to MADELEINE, a cartoon in the manner of Ludwig Bemelmans and based on one of his whimsies. And a final more arty example-- ABSTRACT IN CONCRETE-- which is another reflection study, this time taken in midtown New York. The score for this one is pleasant, lively, unsurprising music in a cultivated jazz vein.

So much for now. The remainder of this summary, some general observations and a complete list of credits will appear in the next issue of FILM MUSIC.

TELEVISION NOTES

Roger Bowman

The situation in television today with regard to the use of live music, aside from variety shows, and the incidental organ or celeste obligatos on "who dunnits" is in a sad state. The expense involved in both the hiring of musicians - let alone composer-conductors - is pleaded by sponsors as reason enough in view of the generally soaring production costs for minimizing or eliminating them.

Sponsors admit sadly that a television drama without background music is like a stage setting without scenery - bare, empty, and lacking the third dimension required to round out the mood of the play.

In the light of the paucity of live, creative music, let us concern ourselves at this writing with the procedures used by one network for choosing music from recordings at a minimum or no-charge to sponsors from the extensive-growing library of the network. There are, at NBC in New York, approximately 10,000 selections in the special library of background music and up to 100,000 records in the NBC library of classical music.

In 1945, when this operation started, there was only a desk and a turntable and access only to the standard classical record library. Today, with the physical facilities equal to a staff of five people (four roomettes where directors and music programmers can listen to music) there is a library of specially recorded music on 16-inch vinylite discs, seven English libraries of special background music, composed originally for films and now used extensively in both television and radio in the United States and in England.

Catalogues provide clues to the general mood of each record. "Dramatic Atmosphere" had as subtitles: "Aftermath," "Deserted City", "Haunted House", "Snow Scene", "Motif for Murder", "Stop Press". Under "Fanfares" are titles: "Big Moment", "Majestic." "Light Atmosphere" has "All Strings and Fancy Free", "Exhilaration," "Shopping Center". Other titles include "Marches", "Melodic", "National", "Oriental", "Sea" and "Storm, Machines, War", etc.

According to Miss Margaret Snyder, director of the music section, "The individual compositions are broken down into several moods and can be used in whole or in part. But the library is so much larger and so much more varied than a written catalogue could indicate that the music programmer must rely on his memory. Besides, he should keep an open mind, since one piece may be applied in many different situations - one week tragedy, another mystery, still another comedy. You have to interpret the mood of the script and paint-in the background from knowledge tucked away in your mental file."

A full-hour TV drama, such as NBC's "Television Playhouse" or "Robert Montgomery Presents", takes a varying amount of time for music selection, depending on the individual director and the amount of music to be used. Ten to 16 hours is average for a single script. A period piece takes longer because the selector tries for authenticity, but also considers maintaining the mood of the play and keeping the music unobtrusive and in good taste. The script is received about a week in advance. The music programmer, assigned to a specific group of shows, reads the script, gets an idea of the type of music needed. Sometimes the director marks the places in the script where he wants music. The programmer selects music, sometimes pulling out ten times the amount of music needed. With the music programmer, the director decides on the final choices.

After the director approves the selections, the music programmer makes a synopsis of the visual or dialogue cues for the turntable engineer, and indicates the record numbers, starting positions (marked on records in red crayon), stacks the records in proper order and arranges to have them delivered to the studio in time for rehearsal.

The programmer of music has other duties. Music must be cleared for copyright, kinescope rights, tape-recording and other rights. As is to be expected, the music-programmer is always on the watch for new material and is sensitive to the need for replenishing old stock.

Said Miss Snyder, "We've just ordered our third dozen of King Palmer's 'The Film Opens'. This is the popular theme of WNBT's 'Eleventh Hour Theater,' and is played four or five times a day - - for station-break announcements besides being played on the program. What a windfall for the composer!"

"Generally, we can make better use of unfamiliar music for backgrounds. Many well-known classics are specifically identified with a composer or a drama. There are exceptions. We make wonderful use of Stravinsky's 'Rites of Spring' in an Indian battle scene on the Gabby Hayes show. And the works of Howard Hanson, Aaron Copland and Prokofiev are excellent standbys for various kinds of backgrounds."