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FILM AND TV MUSIC

Love & Blue



LUST FOR LIFE

FALL 1956

VOLUME XVI NUMBER 1

FILM AND TV MUSIC

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FALL 1956

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Cover: Kirk Douglas as Vincent Van Gogh in *LUST FOR LIFE*.

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Harry Robin

Opinions expressed in signed articles are not necessarily those of the National Film Music Council.



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LUST FOR LIFE

Miklos Rozsa

Hollywood has not exactly achieved world fame for the historical accuracy of its film biographies, as the carefree manner in which it often juggles historical facts with sheer fantasy to suit its own dramatic purposes is its Achilles heel, where it can be — and usually is — attacked. LUST FOR LIFE, however, is a notable exception. It is most gratifying to see Hollywood come up with a film biography, which not only captures the dramatic highlights of a great painter's tragic life but also with painstaking research remains absolutely factual and correct on historical data and characterization of the *dramatis personae*. This was based on Irving Stone's now world-famous novel of the same name, written for the screen by the brilliant Norman Corwin, produced by a man of impeccable taste, John Houseman, and directed by an artist of his own merit — Vincente Minelli. The result of the collaboration is a moving drama of the tormented life of Vincent Van Gogh.

From the composer's point of view, the first problem was — as it always is with historical subjects — to find a suitable style. In concert music one always expresses oneself, but in dramatic music, and especially film music, where its most important function is to serve and help the drama, each subject, each period, needs its own style. In a present day film drama the composer can safely use his own contemporary idiom, as this will undoubtedly be the most appropriate, but for a period picture (even if its setting is only 75 years ago) a suitable style has to be found, which forms a homogeneous unity with the pictorial happenings of the photoplay. Berlioz writes somewhere that with each dramatic subject he attacked, he had to change the style of his musical expression. That in spite of this, his own personal idiom always came through goes without saying, as a strong and individual personality will always shine through, no matter how it is disguised.

The music that Vincent Van Gogh knew and liked was the high romanticism of the Wagner-Liszt-Berlioz school and its numerous satellites in France and Germany. His early impressionistic and pointillistic style, however, (under the

influence of Pissarro and the neo-impressionistic Seurat) corresponds musically with the impressionism of Debussy, although Van Gogh himself could not have known his music. There is a twenty-five year time-lag between pictorial and musical impressionism. The first important impressionistic orchestral work (inspired by the symbolistic poet Mallarmé) is Debussy's "L'Après-midi d'un Faune", which had its first performance in 1894 — four years after Van Gogh's death. However, the emotionalism of the musical *fin de siècle*, the daring harmonic and orchestral palette of Debussy corresponds — to my mind, at least — with the early style of Van Gogh, and gives a point of departure for further development as his own style started to develop, too.

There is an interesting similarity, which should be mentioned here, between the short, troubled, ecstatic lives and creative methods of Van Gogh and Hugo Wolf, who were contemporaries. Both were more or less self-taught artists, fighting unsuccessfully for recognition, existing in utmost poverty, highly strung, hyper-sensitive, irritable, querulous, eccentric, over-emotional; leading lives of extreme exaltation, when masterpieces came into being in the shortest period of time (as produced in a trance) or of utmost dejection, when long periods went by without producing anything. Both lost their reason, were confined in insane asylums, and both tried to commit suicide, in which only Van Gogh succeeded. The parallel stops here, however, as Van Gogh was a more progressive artist who broke entirely new ground, whereas Wolf, under the spell of his hero-worship of Wagner, did not develop a new harmonic or melodic language. The key word of Van Gogh's entire creation is subjective emotionalism or emotional subjectivity, and in the picture this had to be underlined and complemented musically.

Nothing was further from my mind than to imitate Debussy's style for this picture, but the timbre of this score is that of France at the beginning of this century. The main musical themes of the picture are the following:

The theme of yearning and seeking which characterizes musically Vincent's eternal search for the infinite and unreachable. It can be heard first under the credit titles.

(Ex. 1.)

Con moto

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The theme of achievement, developed from the second half of the first theme, tries to convey the beauty and contentment of creation.

(Ex. 2.)

Moderate

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Handwritten musical score for piano. The right hand features a complex, flowing melodic line with many accidentals and slurs. The left hand provides a rhythmic accompaniment with chords and moving lines. Dynamic markings include *f*, *molto esp.*, and *ff*. The piece concludes with "etc."

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The theme of brotherly love, which returns with every narration by Vincent's brother Theo as he reads Vincent's letters, is played with a solo cello. It expresses the serene, unselfish and unique relationship of the two brothers.

(Ex. 3.)

Handwritten musical score for piano. The right hand has a simple, serene melody with slurs. The left hand has a rhythmic accompaniment with chords. Dynamic markings include *p* and *pp*. The piece concludes with "etc."

Handwritten musical score for piano. The right hand has a more complex melodic line with slurs. The left hand has a rhythmic accompaniment with chords. Dynamic markings include *p* and *pp*. The piece concludes with "etc."

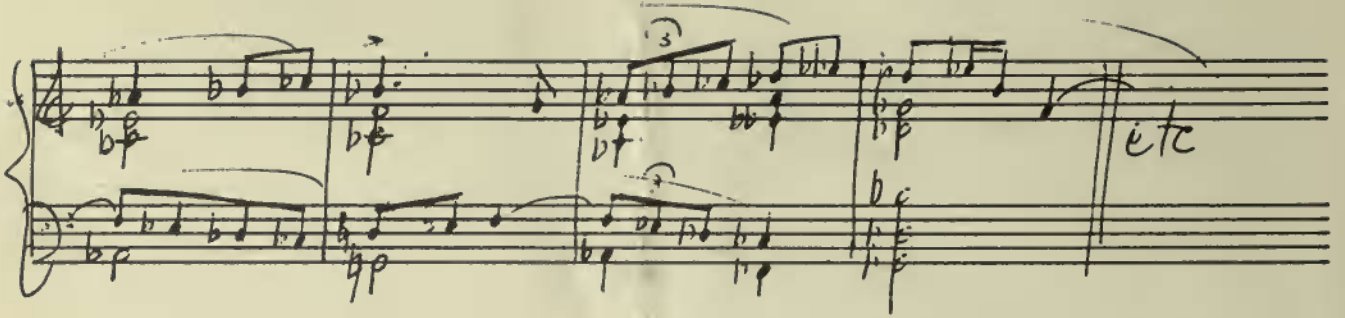
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The theme of Sien (Christine) the woman of the streets with whom Van Gogh lived for two years, is nostalgic and tender, as for a while she meant fulfillment and haven for him.

(Ex. 4.)

Handwritten musical score for piano. The right hand has a simple, nostalgic melody with slurs. The left hand has a rhythmic accompaniment with chords. Dynamic markings include *p* and *pp*. The piece concludes with "etc."

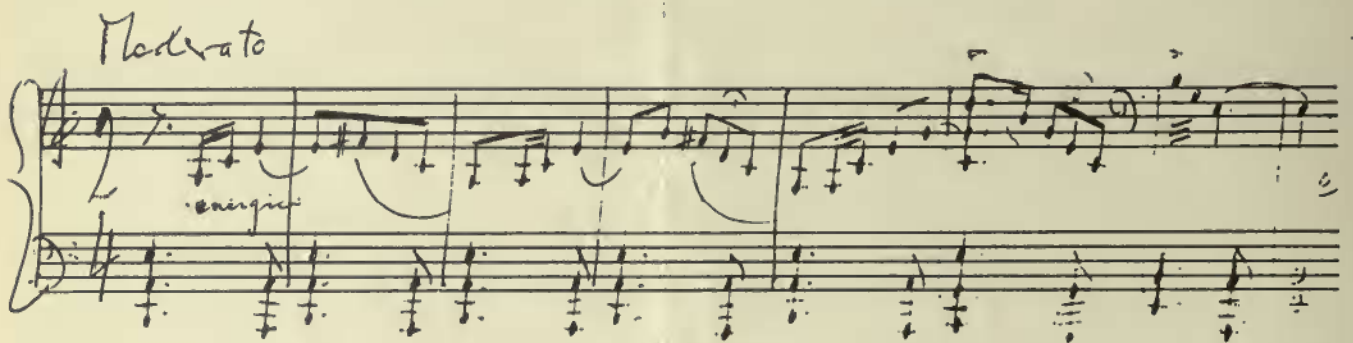
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Gauguin is characterized musically with a self-assertive and determined theme, as, in contrast to Vincent, he was selfish, ruthless and knew exactly what he wanted.

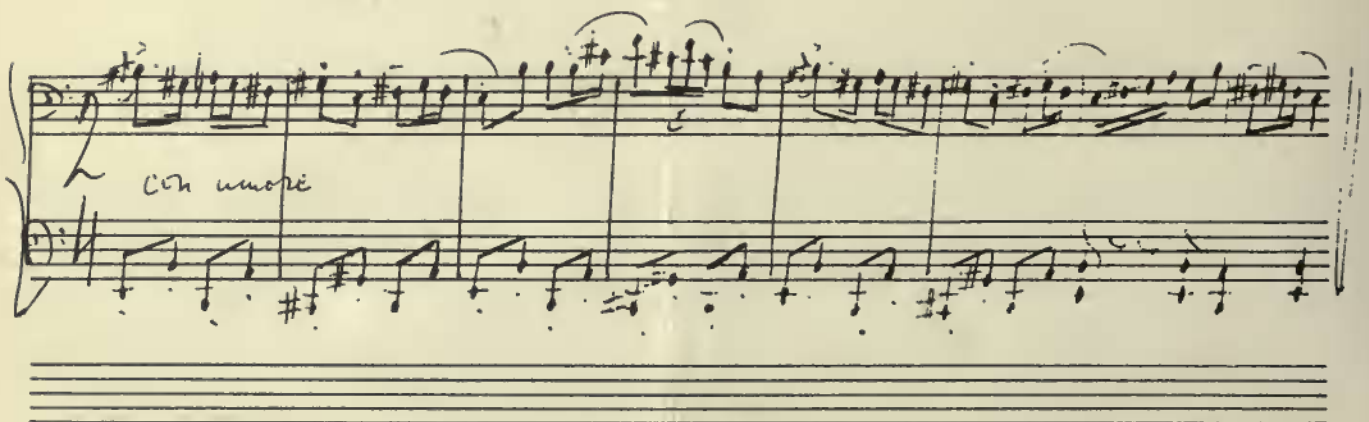
(Ex. 5.)



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Postman Roulin's friendly and jovial character is underlined with a bassoon solo.

(Ex. 6.)



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Kirk Douglas as Van Gogh with Niall MacGinnis
as Postman Roulin.

The madness theme, a distorted variation of the theme of yearning, first appears after a quarrel between Van Gogh and Gauguin. It gets fully developed later in scenes such as the ear-slashing incident and in the ensuing scenes of his confinement in the asylum of St. Remy and the sanatorium of Dr. Gachet at Anvers-sur-Oise, where Van Gogh ended his tormented life. The final scene brings back the theme of achievement in a more transfigured mood.

(Ex. 7.)

Alliepro moderato

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LUST FOR LIFE . . . M-G-M. Kirk Douglas, Anthony Quinn. Director, Vincente Minnelli. Music, Miklos Rozsa.

THE BACKGROUND MUSIC OF WAR AND PEACE

Nino Rota



Copyright 1956 Paramount Pictures Corp.

Natasha (Audrey Hepburn) and Andrey (Mel Ferrer) at the Court Ball.

In composing the background music for WAR AND PEACE I followed the two concepts of the story as they develop in Tolstoy's novel, constantly alternating, or overlapping and flowing together, thus giving a certain rhythm to the entire narrative and establishing its musical structure. These two concepts, already so clearly expressed in the title and of course reflected in the film, are illustrated on the one hand by the motives of the private lives, the relationship between the protagonists, their individual feelings and experiences; motives that somewhat broadly may be named "peace motives", or "personal motives." On the other hand, they are illustrated by the motives of public life, or history with its great feats of arms, of reality as objectively told in historic documents; these we may call the "war motives" or "environmental motives."

This distinction, clearly present in the book and in the film with the alternate succession or converging of the two themes, was the first and fundamental basis for the work of the musician.

THE "PERSONAL MOTIVES"

I composed first of all the music for the dances in the episode of the great Court Ball. A polonaise, a waltz and a Scotch dance stand out among the dances, but the waltz is doubtless the most important piece. In a general way the dances composed for the Court Ball have the flavor of early Romanticism; they are written in a style which may be defined as Schubertian with its delicacy and guilelessness (interspersed with Russian themes, however). The waltz which Natasha and Andrey dance together during the grande soirée carries the whole story of their love. It always appears again throughout the film as a hint or remembrance whenever their love becomes stronger or weaker or flares afresh, up to its tragic end. At a certain point — when Natasha gets ready to flee from Moscow with her family and has a last look at the gown she wore at the grande soirée — the waltz is taken up again and developed throughout the entire sequence.

In contrast with the theme of the waltz (which stands for European, Western spirit, the taste of an aristocracy inclined to conform with the musical fashion of the period) there is the theme of the tune sung during the sleigh ride. It's a simple little tune built on melodies which are typical of Russian folk music. There already exist many famous pieces of music, in which Russian folk songs were used more or less in their entirety. We need only think of the many compositions of the Petersburg "Group of Five", and especially of the first creative period of Moussorgsky. More recently, Stravinsky quite frequently used in his compositions motives and airs which the peasants and little people have been singing in Russia for centuries, of course with the elegant orchestration peculiar to him. What was difficult for me therefore was above all to find melodies which had not yet been used by composers of world-wide fame, such as Borodin or Rimski-Korsakov, and would not be recognized as "original" themes created by these composers.

One passage in the "sleigh ride song" takes over the beginning of a Russian folk song such as it is; the song reflects throughout the character of the Russian people in its colorful lively moods, which at times turn soft and sweet in melancholy abandonment or unexpected tenderness. It also enlivens the festive atmosphere in the Rostov home (especially in the sequence of Nikolay's return from Austerlitz), is developed in the hunting scene, and later accompanies the encounter of Petya with the French drummer and, right after that, his death. Towards the end of the film the waltz motive and the sleigh ride song merge in a melodic mixture which clearly symbolizes the fusion of the artistic with the popular spirit.

Another leitmotiv of the film — among the "personal motives" — is the melody which Natasha plays on the piano when Pierre comes back from the Rostov's after his quarrel with Helene. The piece bears all the marks of pre-romanticism (it may remind the listener of certain passages in Schumann at his most candid) and remains associated with the idea of Pierre in its variations and thematic recurrences. It is this motive which is picked up again in the final sequences of the film, when on the screen the promise of a new life together arises for Pierre and Natasha.

A traditional gypsy melody which the orchestra varies gaily, vividly underscores the whole sequence of the orgy at the Dolohov home. This motive is drenched with frivolity, excitement and insinuations. Much of its spirit is found again in the story of Anatole: for instance, during the reception at Anna Scherer's house, in the sequence in which Anatole tries his powers of seduction on Natasha, and again in the scenes at Dolohov's home shortly before the attempted rape of the young daughter of the Rostovs.

THE "ENVIRONMENTAL MOTIVES"

For the opening scene of the film, while the map of Napoleon's campaign in Russia appears on the screen, I composed a very rhythmic melody which is interrupted by and interspersed with the roll of the drums. All through the film this melody, enriched by fragments from the Marseillaise, accompanies the advance of Napoleon, as if to mark its frightfulness. As soon as the action begins, the parade of Alexander's troop departing for Austerlitz is given particular weight by a triumphal march that rises like a hymn; it is typically Russian in character, expansive, fluent, with an abundance of pathos which slowly recedes and ends on a note of solemnity. This is the real theme of Russian heroism,

of the abnegation and patience of a whole nation, and for this reason the march leads over to a counterpoint reinforced by the chorus which joins with a song of almost religious passion and austerity.

When the camera moves from the marching soldiers to the windows of the Rostov Palace, this march is followed by another heroic melody: the same march which later accompanies Andrey to the battle of Austerlitz and follows him (sung to the sounds of balalaikas and thus becoming a symbol of sadness and nostalgia) to the little village where he dies.

The "march of the parade" which opens the action of the film also closes it musically with its joyful crescendo. It submerges even the remembrance of the "Napoleonic rhythm" which had rung through the very first sequence; — with its note of victory it brings out the contrast between the two melodies.

The background music for the battles reaches the same emotional intensity. The battle of Austerlitz is dominated by passages from the Marseillaise among the merged motives of the "march of the parade" and the "Napoleonic rhythm." During the battle of Borodino a sudden rest in the music follows the scene in which the infantry troops of the two opponents march toward the enemy to the menacing rhythm of the drums. It is from this rest which intensifies the foreboding of the oncoming catastrophe that a motive arises, a cry of war with the rage to exterminate, the hatred and the irrational violence of men who are close to the blind fury of the beast. At times louder, at times lower, but always tempestuous, this motive accompanies the fight with its vehemence and ferocity, the charges of the dragoons and the frenzy of the artillery soldiers stationed at the guns; the anguish of the infantrymen on the attack and the turmoil of the deadly battle at its hottest. Later when the battle is over, the motive of the "heroic march" arises again in the scenes of the wounded and dying, now expanded, however, in a slow tempo and played in a sad mood of lament and pain.

The background music for the battle on the Berezina is a crescendo of the orchestra over an extremely expanded variation of the Marseillaise, the musical texture of which has wide lacerations, gashes through which come the sounds of the rhythmical mournful cadenzas of a funeral song. The theme of the famous anthem becomes more clearly recognizable when the flags of Napoleon's army are burned on the banks of the river: the last sign and the last voices of the collapse of the Grande Armée and the end of a gigantic ambition.

The background music for WAR AND PEACE was written mainly to create an atmosphere authentic in locale and period. This quality of authenticity had to lie in the character and spirit of the music, while orchestration and form were given the benefit of modern orchestration and musical eloquence. Purely historical background music would, in any case, never be able to have a grip on modern audiences, at least not on the average audience. Besides it would have been difficult to find in historical scores the type of music to fit all the situations in the film, in which, obviously, the makers of the film were concerned not so much with recreating the conditions of the period to the letter as with shaping them in line with the ideas we have of them now. Wherever possible the background music has also been "restored" in its form, however: as for instance in the songs and dances which have all the inflections and effects of the instruments typical of the stage music of the early nineteenth century.

WAR AND PEACE . . . Ponti-De Laurentiis; Paramount. Audrey Hepburn, Henry Fonda, Mel Ferrer. Director, King Vidor. Music, Nino Rota. Conducted by Franco Ferrara. *Record:* War and Peace. Music from the Sound Track. Columbia CL 930. Though these score highlights cover widely differing episodes in the film, they are all marked by Nino Rota's fluency of expression and the strong melodic line that reflects his ability as a songwriter. The album has a dozen excerpts from the score — themes as diverse as "The Battle of Austerlitz", "Natasha's Waltz", "Napoleon's Retreat", "The Orgy". A study of Mr. Rota's notes on the music will add considerably to listening interest.

Sheet Music: The Maid of Novgorod; Nino Rota. War and Peace; Nino Rota, Wilson Stone. Famous Music Corp., New York.

The Retreat from Moscow.



Copyright 1956 Paramount Pictures Corp.

THE BALLET OF ROMEO AND JULIET

Albert J. Elias

The film music for THE BALLET OF ROMEO AND JULIET is, of course, tailor-made for the action. Composed for movement — movement of every conceivable kind — it was, after all, written as a ballet. Whether it is the leaps, the pirouettes, the long, easy glides — or simply the pantomime that it has been scored for — Serge Prokofiev's music is ballet music of the first order. What is even more important, in the case of the Bolshoi Theatre's production for the screen, is that the ballet has not simply been filmed on a stage. Rather than being the exact reproduction of a staged ballet, it is a ballet film. Freed from the restrictions of the proscenium arch, the ballet, as a result, takes flight. It cuts loose wherever the movie director's imagination has wanted it to go, and with it goes every note, every measure of Prokofiev's music.

The music heard on the sound-track — rather than being the sound we hear from the orchestra in the pit — also is presented with new abandon. By turns elegant, witty, and tender, that music fills the theatre with appealing if not particularly memorable tuneful phrases. And it fills the theatre always with accents of rhythm.

It is becoming more and more obvious today that these accents are clearer when the screen is used as a medium for dance rather than for an over-size photograph of what dancers are doing on a stage, all to the accompaniment of a recording of an orchestra's work for limited action. ROMEO AND JULIET points this out, as does the unique flurry of other dance films this season, such as the intrepid Gene Kelly's INVITATION TO THE DANCE.

Yes, the rhythm of the dance is felt consistently and urgently throughout ROMEO AND JULIET. Having never

seen Prokofiev's ballet on the stage, it is hard to say to exactly what degree the film has created, rather than merely recreated, the looks — and the sound — of the work.

What one can say, is that the film gives us a chance to see how the music Prokofiev wrote fits the characters and action to a "T." In the case of the Bolshoi production, the narrator will leave off with his introduction, and then the character of Mercutio will enter in just the way we have been lead to expect. He is mischievous and energetic, and he is also Romeo's friend. The music, as a result, is taunting and twists here and there, and, accompanying as it does the hero's ally, offers some of the score's most beguiling passages. Street-fights that rumble across the scene are filled with the clashing of swords against swords, and with the darting about of quick-footed men in arms — and so the music tumbles vigorously into the auditorium. Then there is the music for Juliet, played by Galina Ulanova. Just as Juliet is the center of attention in almost any version of Shakespeare's play, she dominates the action and the music here. A close-up of Miss Ulanova lets one see a lovely blonde creature with the dress, the features, the ethereal air of one of the most serene characters in a work of art by one of the old masters like Rubens. And the music that goes hand in hand with her, is the simplest, purest, most lyrical kind. Like the music for the entire ballet film, it is thoroughly expressive.

THE BALLET OF ROMEO AND JULIET . . . S. Hurok; Tohan Pictures. Galina Ulanova, Yuri Zhdanov. Directors, Lev Arnshtam and Leonid Lavrosky. Music, Sergei Prokofiev. Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theatre; conductor, Gennadi Rozhdestvensky. Choreography, Leonid Lavrovsky. Dancers and Corps de Ballet of the Bolshoi Theatre. A Mosfilm production.

RICHARD III

Frank Lewin

The first showing in this country of Sir Laurence Olivier's production of *RICHARD III* attracted a great deal of attention, and with justification. It is an impressive spectacle in whatever form it is experienced: on television, on the theater screen in Vistavision and Technicolor, or listening to the sound track released by RCA Victor in a three-disk set. Sir William Walton wrote the score, as he had for Sir Laurence's previous Shakespearean productions of *HENRY V* and *HAMLET*.

The music contains many tuneful passages that remain in the memory. Throughout the film the score performs different functions. Some of it is implicit in the scenes, such as drums and trumpets followed by organ music during the coronation, and fanfares and field drums during the battle. At times the score serves to characterize personages in the film: Anne, represented by a plaintive oboe solo against a background of strings; Mistress Shaw by a pert ditty; Richmond by a broad and stately theme in woodwinds and brass. Finally, much of the music does what it is supposed to do in any adventure film: it stings and snarls and emphasizes and creates suspense or excitement.

The opening music sets an atmosphere of pomp and splendor which cannot be mistaken for anything but English. A broad tune in the tried and true Elgarian vein appears here for the first time; it is again heard near the end of the picture when we approach the camp of Richmond, the future Henry VII; it also ends the picture over the credits. The picture proper opens with a shot of the crown, portrayed musically by a high tremolo in the strings. The scene shows the coronation of King Edward IV. Brasses alternate in rhythm with the shouts of the nobles as they acclaim the new king. The last note of the brasses is picked up by the voice of the archbishop as he intones the benediction.

The sounds of gay music and the people shouting in the distance recede as Richard, the king's brother, is left alone in front of the throne. Richard turns to the camera and in his famous soliloquy "Now is the winter of our discontent . . ." he reveals his cold-blooded designs to gain the crown. Sir Laurence's voice is tremendously impressive here as all through the rest of the play. He handles it, in fact, like a versatile instrument at all times fascinating and expressive. The employment of music during this soliloquy seems curiously belittling to the power of the acting, both visually and vocally, to carry the scene. At the words: "Now are our brows bound with victorious wreaths . . ." the music enters discreetly in back of the voice, and when the lines refer to the "lascivious pleasing of a lute" we hear the sound of a lute. This surely seems to be an extreme case of gilding the lily.

The soliloquy rises to a shrieking climax — followed with great effectiveness by the soft chanting of monks approaching in the street. They form part of a funeral procession in which Anne follows the corpse of her husband recently slain by Richard. With Anne we are introduced to her little oboe tune as background. Throughout the film it faithfully appears as she appears, and does not alter its form materially however cruel the straits in which she finds herself. It remains sad and resigned even during the weirdly stirring scene in which Richard woos and wins her.

In many instances the music strongly emphasizes the grimness of the situation: Clarence being conducted to the Tower after a hypocritical expression of commiseration by Richard; a sting as Anne spits in Richard's face; shock music as the scene changes abruptly to the dark exterior of the Tower in which Clarence is imprisoned; a musical shriek as Richard turns to his young nephew when the boy play-



RICHARD III: John Gielgud, Mary Kerridge, Paul Huson, Cedric Hardwicke, Laurence Olivier.

fully refers to Richard's malformed shoulders. The treatment is far from subtle, but the music does what it is supposed to do: it shocks. A beautiful transition is effected, both pictorially and musically, as the scene of Clarence's violent death in a wine barrel shifts to the bed chamber of the ailing King Edward. Through a dissolve two lighted Gothic windows appear and the music changes to a soothing organ piece. The organ is presumably used purely for instrumental color; it is not employed, as it was during the coronation, as a sound emanating directly from the scene. On second thought this may appear to be somewhat of a confusion of styles, but on first hearing it certainly is effective.

The battle on Bosworth Field which concludes the picture invites, of course, comparison with the battle of Agincourt staged in HENRY V. Sir William Walton's task was thornier in RICHARD III for this battle is more dispersed in nature and less grimly fought. In contrast to the treatment in HENRY V where music supplied all the sound during the fighting, sound effects are used in conjunction with the score in RICHARD III. If this description of a battle seems less exciting than the other, that is most likely due to the nature of the engagement which was sporadic and finally ended in a general cessation of fighting when both parties united against Richard. The music graphically shows the slowing down of hostilities as the two armies stop combat and the soldiers embrace. Richard, on foot, is cornered. The only sound heard is his breathing — a chilling effect. He is set upon and mortally wounded, and the music takes up at this point. The musical treatment of this sequence rivals in obviousness that of many a less spectacular film: as

Richard throws himself from side to side in his death agony each movement is accompanied by a sharp stab in the orchestra. He raises himself for a final effort and then sinks down as a 'cello solo slithers down with him. We may smile at some of the effects employed in the old melodramas, but the technique is still very much alive, apparently.

The release of the sound track on records affords a welcome chance to hear the drama unfold at the listener's leisure. It brings home forcefully a virtuosity of Sir Laurence's acting and the tremendous range of characters encompassed by his supporting cast. The excitement of the drama comes through vividly.

RICHARD III . . . London Films. Laurence Olivier, John Gielgud, Ralph Richardson. Produced and directed by Laurence Olivier. Music, William Walton. Played by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Muir Mathieson.

Record: Richard III. Album from the Sound Track; RCA Victor (LM-6126). Sir William Walton follows the general pattern that has placed his scores for HAMLET and HENRY V high in the special field of film music. He has met the picture's contrasting demands in his unmistakable style, its imprint strong in the hauntingly sweet, poignant oboe melody that accompanies the Lady Anne, in the bright tune of the little princes' happier moments, in the ominous scoring for the film's terrors, in the big music for its pomp and for its closing battle. Sir William makes telling use of the organ in a score whose music, characteristically, becomes an inseparable part of the action.

WILLIAM WALTON

Clifford McCarty

William Turner Walton was born at Oldham, Lancashire, England on March 29th, 1902. Though he received his early education at Christ Church Cathedral Choir School and Christ Church College, Oxford, he is largely self-taught. He first gained prominence in 1923 with his String Quartet and *Façade*. The latter work was composed to poems by Edith Sitwell and illustrated Walton's early ability to synchronize music with words, the composer having collaborated closely with the poetess. Other works include the overture *Portsmouth Point* (1925), the *Sinfonia Concertante* (1927), and the Viola Concerto (1929). In 1931 Walton composed his largest work, the oratorio *Belshazzar's Feast*, which again demonstrated his expertness in the art of dramatic music. Subsequently he wrote a Symphony (1935), a Violin Concerto (1939), and the opera *Troilus and Cressida* (1954). He also has composed chamber music, songs, choral works, and music for the ballet, stage, and radio, but he produces slowly and is extremely self-critical. His music might be described as predominantly romantic, but he follows no school of musical thought and has been more concerned with evolving accepted forms than with discovering new modes of expression. Walton was knighted in 1951.



Sir William Walton

CREDITS

Release Date	Title	Production	Director
1935	<i>Escape Me Never</i>	British and Dominions	Paul Czinner
1936	<i>As You Like It</i>	Inter-Allied Pictures	Paul Czinner
1939	<i>Stolen Life</i>	Orion Productions	Paul Czinner
1941	<i>Major Barbara</i>	Gabriel Pascal	Gabriel Pascal
1942	<i>Next of Kin</i>	Ealing Studios	Thorold Dickinson
1942	<i>The Foreman Went to France</i>	Ealing Studios	Charles Frend
1942	<i>The First of the Few</i> (U.S. title: <i>Spitfire</i>)	British Aviation Pictures	Leslie Howard
1942	<i>Went the Day Well?</i>	Ealing Studios	Alberto Cavalcanti
1944	<i>Henry V</i>	Two Cities Films	Laurence Olivier
1948	<i>Hamlet</i>	Two Cities Films	Laurence Olivier
1955	<i>Richard III</i>	London Films	Laurence Olivier

DISCOGRAPHY

The First of the Few

Spitfire Prelude, Spitfire Fugue; The Halle Orchestra conducted by William Walton; HMV C3359 (12" 78 rpm record).

Henry V

London, 1600—Globe Theatre; First Chorus Speech; "Once more unto the breach"; "Now entertain conjecture of a time"; Night Before the Battle—"Upon the King"; St. Crispin's Day; The Battle of Agincourt; Burgundy's Speech; Last Chorus Speech; Madrigal; Agincourt Song. Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus conducted by William Walton, with Laurence Olivier in spoken excerpts; RCA Victor DM-1128 (four 12" 78 rpm records).

Death of Falstaff, "Touch her soft lips and part"; Philharmonia String Orchestra conducted by William Walton; HMV C3480 (12" 78 rpm record).

Hamlet

"O, that this too too solid flesh"; "To be or not to be"; "Speak the speech"; The Play Scene; Funeral March. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Muir Mathieson, with Laurence Olivier and others in spoken excerpts (recorded from the sound track); RCA Victor LCT-5 (10" LP record).

Richard III

The complete film; The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Muir Mathieson, with the complete cast (recorded from the sound track); RCA Victor LM-6126 (three 12" LP records).

CONCERT ITEMS ADAPTED FROM FILM SCORES

Escape Me Never: Ballet.

As You Like It: "Under the Greenwood Tree" (Song).

The First of the Few: Spitfire Prelude and Fugue.

Henry V: Concert Suite.

Two Pieces for Strings: "Passacaglia for the Death of Falstaff"; "Touch Her Soft Lips and Part".

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

"The Music of *Hamlet*" by William Walton, *Film Music*, March-April, 1949, p. 4.

Excerpts from the score for *Hamlet*, *Film Music*, November-December, 1949, p. 7.

"Notes on *Hamlet*" by Muir Mathieson, *Film Music*, January-February, 1954, p. 19.

"Music for Shakespearean Films" by William Walton, *Film Music*, Spring, 1956, p. 20.

(With this article Clifford McCarty starts a new series on film composers for our readers, as a continuing supplement to his invaluable reference book "Film Composers in America: A Checklist of Their Work".)

THE LIGHTER FILMS

Mary Powell



HIGH SOCIETY: Bing Crosby listens to Barrett Deems, Billy Kyle, Louis Armstrong, Edmond Hall, Trummy Young and Arvell Shaw.

It's been a good while since the escapist-minded have had such a choice of big, bright comedies, all more or less furnished with song and dance. Metro's **HIGH SOCIETY** heads the list, with a spectacular line-up of credits. Cole Porter has added his first new film score in ten years to a lush, plush Newport re-make of "The Philadelphia Story" that stars Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra, Grace Kelly and Celeste Holm. Louis Armstrong and his band, on hand for the Jazz Festival, do a couple of numbers, and open and close the film with the title song, a calypso account of what's

going on. With such over-all coverage, backed by Metro's superb music department, the score's ten songs get super-treatment.

HIGH SOCIETY . . . M-G-M. Bing Crosby, Grace Kelly. Director, Charles Walters. Music and lyrics, Cole Porter. Music supervised and adapted by Johnny Green and Saul Chaplin. Orchestrations, Conrad Salinger, Nelson Riddle, Skip Martin.

Record: High Society; Capitol W-750. Album from the sound track. The lively collection of the show's tunes includes the popular "Who Wants To Be a Millionaire?" (Frank Sinatra, Celeste Holm); "True Love" (Bing Crosby, Grace Kelly); "You're Sensational" (Frank Sinatra); "Now You Has Jazz" (Bing Crosby, Louis Armstrong). Johnny Green conducts the M-G-M Studio Orchestra.

THE BEST THINGS IN LIFE ARE FREE uses the seven year musical partnership of Buddy De Sylva, Lew Brown and Ray Henderson in the 20s as a framework for nearly two dozen of their songs. The infectious tunes practically tumble over each other as the partners (Gordon MacRae, Ernest Borgnine, Dan Dailey) compose, rehearse or fret over first nights. Plenty of bounce and humor and Jazz Age trappings goes along with this. "Black Bottom", with a gangster ballet, — the title song, and particularly "Birth of the Blues", which Sheree North dances with Jacques d'Amboise, stand out among the production numbers. Rod Alexander was the choreographer.

Dan Dailey, Gordon MacRae, Ernest Borgnine
in *The Best Things in Life Are Free*.



BEST THINGS IN LIFE ARE FREE . . . 20th Century Fox. Gordon MacRae, Dan Dailey, Ernest Borgnine. Director, Michael Curtiz. Music supervised and conducted by Lionel Newman. Vocal supervision, Charles Henderson. Orchestration, Herbert Spencer, Earle Hagen, Bernard Mayers. Musical settings, Jon De Cuir. *Black Bottom*, *Button Up Your Overcoat* and *Birth of the Blues* staged by Rod Alexander.

Record: *Best Things In Life Are Free*, Gordon MacRae. Capitol; Album.

THE OPPOSITE SEX is a revamped version of Clare Boothe's **THE WOMEN**, with music. This account of feline activities glitters with stars, luxurious sets and clothes, and several excellent production numbers that are fitted smoothly into the show business episodes. June Allyson, the lady among the females, is amazingly attractive in "Young Man With a Horn", done with Harry James, and the cleverly staged "Now, Baby, Now!" Jeff Richards, too, makes quite an impression with his supperclub-cowboy number, "Rock and Roll Tumbleweed". The title song sets up a fetching prologue and is used later in a comedy skit by Dick Shawn.

THE OPPOSITE SEX . . . M-G-M. June Allyson, Joan Collins. Director, David Miller. *New Songs* (5), Nicholas Brodsky, Sammy Cahn. Musical supervision, George Stoll. Dances and musical numbers staged by Robert Sidney. Orchestration, Albert Sendrey, Skip Martin. Vocal supervision, Robert Tucker. Musical coordinator, Irving Aaronson.

Records: *Rock and Roll Tumbleweed*. Art Mooney, Orchestra and Chorus. MGM-12320. *Now, Baby, Now!* The King's IV. MGM 12339. *The Opposite Sex, Now, Baby, Now!* Helen Dixon. Vik.

A third re-make — **YOU CAN'T RUN AWAY FROM IT** — puts a new aspect on **IT HAPPENED ONE NIGHT** by adding music and Technicolor, and substituting



June Allyson in *The Opposite Sex*.



June Allyson in *You Can't Run Away From It*.

June Allyson and Jack Lemmon for Claudette Colbert and Clark Gable. The engaging stars romp through this, bringing a bright breeziness to their songs together — "Temporarily" and "Thumbin' a Ride". They join the Four Aces in the title song, shout "Howdy, Howdy, Friends and Neighbors" with Stubby Kaye in a crowded bus, and Jack is assisted by the Mello-Men in a tipsy rendering of "Old Reporters Never Die". June does the film's only dance — a scarecrow frolic — while her own clothes dry after a dunking.

YOU CAN'T RUN AWAY FROM IT . . . Columbia. June Allyson, Jack Lemmon. Producer-director, Dick Powell. Songs, Gene de Paul, Johnny Mercer. Music supervised and conducted by Morris Stoloff. Music adaptation, George Duning. Orchestration, Arthur Morton. Vocal arrangements, Norman Luboff.

Records: *You Can't Run Away from It*. Music from the Sound Track. Decca; *You Can't Run Away from It*. The Four Aces. Decca; *You Can't Run Away from It*. Dean Jones. MGM. Sheet Music, Columbia Music Co.

BUS STOP is included in this group of films because its music is very much a part of its rollicking comedy. Ken Darby's gay little "Bus Stop Song" is sung by the Four Lads behind the main title, and it appears in catchy variations thereafter, as untamed cowboy Don Murray pursues Marilyn Monroe, chanteuse from the Ozarks. It is a favorite piece in the folksy repertory of Arthur O'Connell, who keeps up an easy singing and guitar-strumming accompaniment to the film's quieter moments. No mention of **BUS STOP**'s music should omit Miss Monroe's rendition of "That Old Black Magic", performed in Hildegard style for the cowboy patrons of the Blue Dragon Cafe in Phoenix, Arizona.

BUS STOP . . . 20th Century Fox. Marilyn Monroe, Don Murray. Director, Joshua Logan. Music, Alfred Newman, Cyril J. Mockridge. "Bus Stop Song", Ken Darby. Orchestration, Edward B. Powell. Vocal supervision, Ken Darby. Conductor, Alfred Newman.

Record: *Bus Stop Song*. Burl Ives. Decca.

THE ROMANCE OF TRANSPORTATION IN CANADA

Gerald Pratley

Under this somewhat forbidding title, the animation department of the National Film Board has produced a gay and lighthearted cartoon bringing to life the story of transport in Canada from canoe to airplane — to traffic jams. It runs eleven minutes and was made by Colin Low, Wolf Koenig, Robert Berrall and Tom Daly, and scored by Eldon Rathburn.

A whimsical and intimate approach is used and appropriate sound effects were written into the musical score. The visuals offer an element of humor in opposition to the commentary, which is given a dry, tongue-in-cheek delivery. As an example: while the commentator discourses on the hazards encountered by early explorers and fur traders, Jacques Cartier is shown flouncing through a primeval Canadian forest, an Indian guide yawns with boredom over one more rapid to shoot, and similar treatment is given to the days of the oxcart, the barge, the steam ship and the era of the internal combustion engine.

A train steams across endless golden prairie and the music assumes a syncopated cacophony of chugs, toots and modern rhythms. "Of all the problems confronting the first trans-Canada railway," states the commentator, "one was most perplexing — the Rockies." This under-statement is accompanied by a clangor of pick axes, dynamite and ringing steel, while, unconcerned about it all, a lazy cowboy lopes

across a dizzy trestle bridge, strumming a tune on his guitar.

This is one of the few cartoons made today in which visual wit is continuously employed and is related to the humor of the commentary. The drawings, design and colour are delightful, and the story is told so cleverly that the scenes flow into each other, and bridge the periods of time with fluid continuity. The more one sees "Romance of Transport" (as it is generally called) the funnier it seems to be. It is one of the Board's most artistic accomplishments, and it is a matter for regret that it has not been followed by other films employing the same technique.

Eldon Rathburn was the ideal composer to score this picture, and his lovely melodies and jolly sense of humour are an essential part of the film. Mr. Rathburn writes: "After much discussion as to the style and approach we would take with this picture, we decided that a score in the light jazz idiom would be most suitable, even though the story was an historical subject going back to pioneer days. The film finally emerged as a kind of triple counterpoint, made up of humorously stylized animation, sly commentary read in an over-earnest manner, and music in a modern style giving a sardonic feeling to the whole. The orchestra used for the film consisted of a trumpet (also doubling post horn), clarinet, tenor saxophone, trombone, piano, guitar, brass, vibraphone and drums."

Extract No. 1. This section was used over the title cards and the opening sequence showing a traffic jam, or rather, several kinds of traffic jams from intersection tie-ups to boats on canals, trains at crossings, building up to a long percussion solo (not shown in excerpt).

Very Fast.
Bop style

I

The image shows a handwritten musical score for a jazz piece titled "Very Fast. Bop style". The score is written on two systems of staves. The first system has three staves: Clarinet (clar), Tenor Saxophone (Tenor sax), and Piano (Piano). The second system has two staves: Trombone (Trombone) and Saxophone (Sax). The music is in 4/4 time and features complex, syncopated rhythms with many beamed eighth and sixteenth notes. There are various musical notations including slurs, accents, and dynamic markings. A box containing the Roman numeral "I" is positioned above the first staff. The score is written in ink on aged paper.

Handwritten musical score for Clarinet Solo and Bass. The Clarinet Solo part is written in the upper staff, starting with a dynamic marking of *f* and a tempo marking of *(mf)*. The Bass part is written in the lower staff, with the instruction *(Bass pizz & va lower)*. The music is in 4/4 time and features various chordal textures and melodic lines.

Handwritten musical score for Vibes and Clarinet. The Vibes part is written in the upper staff, and the Clarinet part is written in the lower staff. The music is in 4/4 time and includes dynamic markings such as *fz.* and *fz.*.

Extract No. 2. The post horn was used in this extract. It covers a traveler's ride in a stage coach over a bumpy road which ends with him being tossed out of the window of the coach into a pool of water.

Moderato Swing.

Handwritten musical score for Post Horn, Clarinet, and Trombone. The Post Horn part is written in the upper staff, starting with a dynamic marking of *f*. The Clarinet part is written in the lower staff, starting with a dynamic marking of *p*. The Trombone part is written in the lower staff, starting with a dynamic marking of *p*. The music is in 4/4 time and features various chordal textures and melodic lines.

Handwritten musical score for Tenor Sax and Post Horn. The Tenor Sax part is written in the upper staff, starting with a dynamic marking of *f*. The Post Horn part is written in the lower staff, starting with a dynamic marking of *f*. The music is in 4/4 time and features various chordal textures and melodic lines.

Handwritten musical score for Extract No. 3. The score is written on two systems of staves. The first system includes a Clarinet part with notes and slurs, and a Tenor Saxophone part. The second system includes a Piano part with notes, slurs, and dynamic markings like 'arco' and 'fz'. There are also markings for Tenor Trombone and Piano.

Extract No. 3. After a beautiful panning shot across mountains and canyons, a cowboy appears riding on his mule and at the same time strumming his guitar. This ballad-like song was used over this sequence.

Moderato (Ballad tempo)

Handwritten musical score for Moderato (Ballad tempo). The score is written on two systems of staves. The first system includes a Trombone solo, Guitar + rhythm, Clarinet, and Bass piano. The second system continues the musical notation for these instruments.

Handwritten musical score for piano, showing two staves with complex chordal textures and melodic lines. The notation includes various chords, arpeggios, and melodic fragments across four measures.

Handwritten musical score for piano, continuing the piece with similar complex textures. The notation includes various chords, arpeggios, and melodic fragments across four measures.

Extract No. 4. This is part of one of three boogie-woogie pieces accompanying train sequences. The bass ostinato seems particularly well suited to the rolling motion of wheels and the general feeling of distance being spanned by the railways.

Fast Boogie Woogie Tempo.

Handwritten musical score for clarinet and tenor saxophone. The notation includes a 4/4 time signature, a key signature of one flat, and a fast tempo. The score features a series of eighth-note patterns and accents.

clar.
4 tenor sax.

Piano + Rhythm

Handwritten musical score for trumpet and trombone plungers. The notation includes a 4/4 time signature, a key signature of one flat, and a fast tempo. The score features a series of eighth-note patterns and accents.

Tript-Trb.
(P) Plungers

Handwritten musical score for trumpet and trombone plungers, continuing the fast boogie-woogie tempo. The notation includes a 4/4 time signature, a key signature of one flat, and a fast tempo. The score features a series of eighth-note patterns and accents.

Tript-Trb.

16 MM FILMS

Science in the Orchestra (British Information Services, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York. b and w, 34 min. Sales rights, McGraw Hill, 330 West 42nd St., New York) Conductor Muir Mathieson introduces the science of sound to a child audience, using individual members of the London Symphony Orchestra and the Orchestra as a whole to illustrate his points. A physics teacher further clarifies matters with simple experiments and filmed diagrams. Three aspects of the subject are taken up. "Hearing the Orchestra" discusses vibration and sound transmission. "Exploring the Instruments" shows the process of sound production in the strings, brass and woodwinds and the parts played by each group in making up the orchestral range. "Looking at Sounds" illustrates the differences in tone qualities, with the help of the audiospectrometer. Though expressed in the most elementary terms, the film is never condescending. Its considerable amount of information is given with an engaging informality that will hold the young listener, and do much to increase his musical knowledge and pleasure. The music used is by Malcolm Arnold.

Carmen (Contemporary Films, Inc., 13 East 37th St., New York. b and w, 10 min.) Lotte Reiniger presents her animated silhouettes in her own delightfully funny version of "Carmen", in which the bull as well as Don Jose and the toreador succumb to the gypsy's charms. The most familiar melodies from Bizet's opera are used in the purely instrumental score.

Papageno (Contemporary Films, Inc., 13 East 37th St., New York. b and w, 12 min.) "The Magic Flute" inspires one of the most enchanting of the Lotte Reiniger silhouette films. Her re-telling of the Birdcatcher's romance is fanciful with joys, perils and a triumphant conclusion where his feathered friends re-unite him with his love, who rides back to him on an ostrich. Papageno's music — some of Mozart's happiest — is used throughout. Unfortunately, the fine baritone who sings it is not named in the scant credits.

Songs of the Auvergne (Rembrandt Film Library, 13 East 37th St., New York. b and w, 20 min.) A succession of charming episodes marks a day in a village in the Auvergne. Two small boys romp through the awakening of the French countryside, the gathering and bargaining at the market, the celebration of a wedding, the fin du jour. The lovely melodies of the province, an integral part of all this, are sung by Phyllis Curtin, known as an interpreter of these dance songs and "great songs". She is accompanied by the Boston Symphony Orchestra in "Lo Fiolare", "Malurous Quó Uno Fenno", "Lo Calhé", "Ound Onorèn Gorda?", "Obal Din Limouzi", "L'Antouèno", "Bailero".

Maskerage (Rembrandt Film Library, 13 East 37th St., New York. b and w, 10 min.) This Dutch film is a study of a collection of African masks in the Leyden Museum in Amsterdam. Lit by a single ray of light, shots of each mask are cunningly composed to intimate some special individual quality. The sound track is a fascinating example of musique concrète: the hum and crash of machines, the calls of animals and birds, a couple of patches of music, an unintelligible babble of humans and for one short moment, someone speaking Dutch; sounds distorted, speeded up, slowed down, run backwards. As an adjunct to the exciting mask footage, this is flawless. The composer, Pierre Schaeffer, is the chief practitioner of musique concrète.

Witch Doctor (Brandon Films, Inc., 200 West 57th St., New York. b and w, 10 min.) Jean Leon Destiné uses dance patterns and chanting based on Haitian voodoo rites in enacting the exorcising of an evil spirit. A dramatically darkened, stripped stage centers attention on Destiné's electric performance. Alphonse Cimber plays the excitingly effective drum accompaniment. Produced by Ritter-Young-Lerner in association with Victor Solow.

The following feature films with scores of musical interest are now available in 16 mm.

The Mikado (J. Arthur Rank) The Gilbert and Sullivan operetta stars Kenny Baker and Martyn Green with the D'Oyly Carte Chorus.

The Red Shoes (J. Arthur Rank) Leonide Massine and Moira Shearer dance in this memorable film of the ballet world. Its score by Brian Easdale, with ballet music by Chopin and Tchaikowsky, is played by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra under Sir Thomas Beecham. (FILM MUSIC; Vol. VIII, No. 4)

Both films are in color and may be had from United World Films Inc., 1445 Park Avenue, New York.

The Titan (Contemporary Films; 13 East 37th St., New York. b and w, 67 min.) The widely honored film on the life and work of Michelangelo was directed and photographed by Curt Ortel. Alois Melichar composed the score. (FILM MUSIC; Vol. IV, No. 3)

Hansel and Gretel (Ideal Pictures; 58 East South Water St., Chicago, Ill. Technicolor, 70 min.) Michael Meverberg's Kinemen version of the Humperdinck opera. (FILM MUSIC; Vol. XIV, No. 2.)

The Great Adventure (Louis de Rochemont Ass. Film Library; 13 East 37th St., New York. b and w, 75 min.) Lars-Erik Larsson wrote the score for Arne Sucksdorff's rarely beautiful picture of child-life on a Swedish farm. (FILM MUSIC; Vol. XV, No. 1.)

M. H.



David; from THE TITAN

THE MUSIC TRACK FOR "ODE ON A GRECIAN URN"

Harry Robin

In homage to Keats' ode, Lewis Jacobs' film underlines the poet's reaction to a relic of classic Greece. Like the poem, which serves as the scenario, the film is composed of five stanzas. Images of Greek statuary, bas-reliefs, architecture, landscapes and sea-scapes are designed into movement, while the poem is heard in a quiet reading by Hurd Hatfield to the accompaniment of a musical "score" by Henry Brant.

The "score" was actually improvised in the recording studio. No footage-log was made, and there was no attempt to achieve precise synchronization with visible movement. The relationship between what is seen and what is heard is, nevertheless, one of the most eloquent examples of the appropriate association of music to film.

According to Mr. Brant, who has composed a considerable number of feature and documentary film scores, "the actual writing down of music — composing, orchestrating, copying — involves numerous obstacles to the sustenance of a free, 'feeling' level. In doing the music for 'Ode on a Grecian Urn', I thought it would be possible to look at the film and react *directly*, by playing instruments which would suggest remote, pastoral antiquity. If this could be recorded, then there might be the possibility of preserving a fresh, spontaneous reaction. Associations between picture and music would then be arbitrary and fortuitous. This may sound like a description of old-time silent film piano accompaniments; but in those days the musical schemes were prearranged, with memorized 'mood' pieces used whenever music was needed.

"With the method we used to make the music-track (I cannot call it a 'score') for the 'Ode on a Grecian Urn', I was able to entertain choices based on impulse, rather than on the calculation of effect. We set up the instruments so that I could play any one of them, as the impulse to do so arose. They were all instruments of quite unconventional nature: a double-flageolet, a double-oboe from Persia, a baritone-recorder, zither, celesta, and a piano played directly on the strings. After a run-through of each stanza, I played my reactions to the stanza as it was projected again. In some cases, I recorded additional improvisations, which could then be mixed for the making of a final track. The superimposition of improvisations served at the final polishing of musical effects for the film."

The unusual combination of instruments, and the absence of specific "tonal" or "atonal" schemes in the improvisations, produce a music track that is fresh, strange and haunting, lending enchantment to the film's visuals in no small degree. The total effect is perhaps best described as giving the feeling of being permitted to sense a moment in antiquity.

This film is recommended to everyone interested in the development of sound and music in the art of film.

Ode on a Grecian Urn. Photographed and directed by Lewis Jacobs. (American Art and History Films, 41 West 47th St., New York. 16mm color; 9 min.)

CREDITS IN CURRENT RELEASES

AMBASSADOR'S DAUGHTER, THE . . . Norman Krasna; United Artists. Director, Norman Krasna. Music arranged and conducted by Jacques Metchen.

ATTACK! . . . Associates and Aldrich Co.; United Artists. Director, Robert Aldrich. Music, Frank de Vol.

AWAY ALL BOATS . . . Universal. Director, Joseph Pevney. Music, Frank Skinner.

BACK FROM ETERNITY . . . RKO. Produced and directed by John Farrow. Music, Franz Waxman.

BAD SEED, THE . . . Warner Brothers. Director, Mervyn Le Roy. Music, Alex North. Orchestrations, Maurice de Packh.

BANDIDO . . . R. L. Jacks; United Artists. Director, Richard Fleischer. Music, Max Steiner.

BEYOND A REASONABLE DOUBT . . . RKO. Director, Fritz Lang. Music composed and conducted by Herschel Burke Gilbert. Title song, H. B. Gilbert; lyrics, Alfred Perry. Sung by the Hi-Los.

BIGGER THAN LIFE . . . 20th Century Fox. Director, Nicholas Ray. Music, David Raksin.

BURNING HILLS, THE . . . Warner Brothers. Director, Stuart Heisler. Music, David Buttolph.

CRY IN THE NIGHT, A . . . Warner Brothers. Director, Frank Tuttle. Music, David Buttolph. Orchestrations, Maurice de Packh.

FASTEST GUN ALIVE, THE . . . M-G-M. Director, Russell Rouse. Music, André Previn.

JOHNNY CONCHO . . . Kent; United Artists. Director, Don McGuire. Music, Nelson Riddle.

LAST WAGON, THE . . . 20th Century Fox. Director, Delmar Daves. Music, Lionel Newman. Orchestrations, Bernard Meyers.

POWER AND THE PRIZE, THE . . . M-G-M. Director, Henry Koster. Music, Bronislaw Kaper.

RUN FOR THE SUN . . . Russ-Field; United Artists. Director, Roy Boulting. Music, Frederick Steiner. Songs: "Taco", "Triste Ranchero", F. Steiner, Nestor Amaral.

SECRETS OF THE REEF . . . Marine Studios; Continental Dist., Inc. Directors, Lloyd Ritter, Robert Young, Murray Lerner. Music, Clinton Elliott.

SILENT WORLD, THE . . . Columbia. Director, Jacques-Yves Costeau. Music, Yves Baudrier.

STORM CENTER . . . Columbia. Director, Daniel Taradash. Music, George Duning. Orchestrations, Arthur Morton.

THESE WILDER YEARS . . . M-G-M. Director, Roy Rowland. Music, Jeff Alexander.

VAGABOND KING, THE . . . Paramount. Director, Michael Curtiz. Songs, Rudolf Friml, Brian Hooker: "Some Day", "Only a Rose", "Huguette's Waltz", "Song of the Vagabonds". New songs, Rudolf Friml and Johnny Burke: "This Same Heart", "Bon Jour", "Vive la You", "Comparisons", "Watch Out for the Devil"; Victor Young, Johnny Burke: "Lord, I'm Glad that I Know Thee". Music scored by Victor Young. Orchestral arrangements, Leo Shuken, Gus Levene, Albert Sendrey. Vocal arrangements, Charles Henderson. Sheet music, Famous Music Corp., New York.

THE STATE OF MUSIC IN TELEVISION

Harry Robin



Leonard Bernstein uses a duet from "South Pacific" in describing "American Musical Comedy".

Copyright Roy Stevens

The production of any television program is subject to the taste and budget requirements of sponsors and advertising agencies. Even though the large television networks are involved in the origination of television programs, it is the sponsor and the agency account executive who perform the role of Esterhazy, or Razoumovsky, in this new chamber-art for the masses; *their* money must be spent for the production, and for the time on the very precious air. Ideally, the sponsor and agency man agree, the program which satisfies the widest possible range of tastes for the least possible cost, is the greatest program to hit the network. Now it is a truism that ideals change as soon as they are approximated; and so our sponsor and agency man ruefully agree, within a short time after the program has hit the network, that all is not ideal.

In their attempt to capture the unswerving attention of the television audience, sponsor, agency man and network executive commit many errors; but they also, though infrequently, are responsible for some quite wonderful entertainments, and a few demonstrations of the potentialities of television as an art medium, able to take its place as the young relative of theatre, radio and motion picture. The older media suffer from the venal motives of some of their practitioners; but, as in human society as a whole, there are also those whose motives are warm, constructive, and devoted to the elevation of their neighbors' spirits and tastes.

In television, music is used and abused in all the possible ways common in theatre, radio and motion picture. Many years ago it was discovered that music could serve as a remarkably efficient mnemonic device for words; thus, in radio, the advertising "jingle", which, in television, becomes "visualized". Performers sing and dance their praises to "milder cigarettes", "blandier soap", "drier beer", "harder metal"; it is no exaggeration to say that the music most frequently performed in television is the music of advertising jingles.

Recorded music of every description is pressed into service as background music for the soap operas, crime stories and westerns which constitute so large a portion of the "entertainment" fare that television offers. Unlike the situation in motion pictures, which almost invariably use newly composed scores, television suffers partially from a peculiar arrangement with the musicians' union, and from its own underestimation of the taste and interest of its audience. Sections of the scherzo of Shostakovitch's 5th symphony were used as the background music for an American (!) western just recently; last season, William

Schuman's "Judith" showed up a sagging "live TV" problem play . . . "shall our daughter marry him — or shall we kick him out the next time he sets foot in this house?" to the strains of the exoric evocation of the Biblical widow's dance . . . The list of such brazen misusages can be easily multiplied: simply turn on the set, shut your eyes, and listen.

Opera has had a somewhat healthier life in television; its very nature depending upon sight and sound, television was quick to investigate the possibilities of developing methods for opera presentation as early as 1946 and 1947. In addition to the occasional local, small scene and scale presentations, throughout the United States, a network has subsidized an opera company, the NBC-TV Opera, to develop and perform opera distinctly for television. The production group has made serious, often successful attempts to adapt older operas to the TV medium, and even more important, has commissioned living (!) composers to write operas for production. (An article on the work of the NBC-TV Opera will appear in the next issue of FILM AND TV MUSIC — Ed.)

The symphonic repertory has had, up to now, a rather sad history in television. Since symphonic music is rather more to be heard than seen, its performance on television is usually at the disadvantage of the relatively poor sound-reproduction provisions of most TV sets; and when seen, as is usual on TV, in medium shot or close-up, how interesting can a wind, string, or percussion player *look*? The telecasts of the N.B.C. Symphony astutely concentrated on the face of its conductor, Arturo Toscanini; but there are admittedly few such faces and personalities available to television.

It is in this general situation that one production group, OMNIBUS, stands out like the two-eyed in the kingdom of the one-eyed. Last season, OMNIBUS, a program subsidized by a continuing grant from the Ford Foundation, and therefore relatively independent of advertising and network pressures, produced a few programs on the subject of music itself. The producers were fortunate in having Leonard Bernstein, the conductor and composer, to serve as the lecturer-demonstrator in three programs: one on jazz, another on Beethoven's symphonies, and a third on orchestral conducting. Each was notable for its bright, often provocative use of the television medium. Mr. Bernstein's considerable talents as a musician and lecturer were always in evidence; and the pleasure and pride in the craftsmanship of music-making suffused the atmosphere of each telecast.

The OMNIBUS staff recognizes the potential and kinetic excitement of music-making as television program material. Music, as presented on these programs, had as much right to be of popular interest as baseball, soap operas, Westerns, and crime. Mr. Bernstein neither condescended to his audience, nor did he plead for their attention, for to the producers of OMNIBUS, and to Mr. Bernstein, music is a valid activity for human beings.

The OMNIBUS producers, aware of Mr. Bernstein's drawing power, began their 1956-57 series (on October 7th) with a full program devoted to a lecture-demonstration by Mr. Bernstein on the development of musical comedy in America. The program was informative, entertaining, and designed for television. No matter what he may think of Mr. Bernstein's opinions, the viewer's attention was held to picture and sound. The camera direction was based upon an awareness of the presence of a small, living-room audience attending to a smaller-than-lifesize image just a few feet away; the performers were seen by the cameras with respect for the human form, rather than with the intention to make them appear god-like; and the music was usually transmitted with an appreciation for musical dynamics and instrumental balance. However, on the occasions when the program required the performance of large groups, the production suffered from the limitations which beset all television: — the small screen reduces the size of individuals in large groups, to make them appear like animated, jerky dolls; the sound becomes incongruous with the visual dimension; and the audience feels *left out* of the experience.

Of course, televised lecture-demonstrations on musical subjects do not represent final achievements in the use of music in television. Perhaps, soon, OMNIBUS, or some other production group, can devote some of its resources to a production, or series of programs, using music as the subtle, powerful, and persuasive tool which radio and motion pictures have already found it to be.

FILM AND TV MUSIC NEWS

Two Academy Award winning motion picture directors are becoming active figures in television. Joseph L. Mankiewicz has sold half of his film production company, Figaro Inc., to the National Broadcasting Company as an initial step into the television field. The transaction enables the network to call on the services of Mr. Mankiewicz and his Figaro staff as advisors and consultants. Also at N.B.C. William Wyler makes his debut as a TV director with Somerset Maugham's "The Letter". Mr. Wyler directed the film adaptation of the story, with Bette Davis as star. Siobhan McKenna will have the leading role in the coming version . . . William Perlberg and a Hollywood studio have established a fellowship at the University of California for students whose film-making courses require short "thesis productions." A fund has been set up by Hollywood writers and producers for the raw film stock used in the work. One of these productions — TIME OUT OF WAR — won the 1954 Academy Award in its two reel category . . . Skitch Henderson has been signed by RCA Victor as a conductor, to put out a minimum of two albums annually . . . The Theatre Owners of America presented a Foreign Film Fair in the week preceding their annual convention in New York. Six films from six countries were screened at the Museum of Modern Art to acquaint theatre operators with the variety and quality in current international motion picture production . . . Under a new ruling by the Academy of Motion

Picture Arts and Sciences, foreign films may now be entered in their own class in the annual competition for an Oscar. Heretofore an award for the best foreign film was an honorary recognition voted by the Academy's Board of Directors. . . . David Raksin's "Serenade" from his main theme for the U.P.A. UNICORN IN THE GARDEN has been recorded by the Modern Jazz Quartet with Jimmy Giuffre. His "Paseo Del Gallo" is to be played on the South German Radio's Festival Week of Light Music . . . The Composers and Lyricists Guild of America has sent ballots to its members for the election of three Eastern and nine Western representatives, from workers for screen, radio, television or the stage. Leith Stevens is president of the organization . . . United Productions of America is planning 26 half hour shows for CBS-TV, made up of new cartoons and featurettes as well as U.P.A. product formerly released by Columbia Pictures. Lyn Murray, composer and conductor, has signed a term contract with U.P.A. as musical director . . . Miklos Rozsa will give a course in film scoring at the University of Southern California during the coming session . . . The Library of Congress has placed kinescope recordings covering the 1955-1956 series of N.B.C.'s Wide, Wide World in its reference department, "as an authentic history of contemporary life". The Library is beginning to add television examples to its world-renowned collection of books, scores, prints, sound recordings and films. All of the scores for Wide, Wide World have been written by composer-conductor David Broekman, and are available on record . . .

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