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# FILM AND TV MUSIC



THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

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VOLUME XVI NUMBER 2

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THE TEN COMMANDMENTS (with score excerpts)

Elmer Bernstein

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## THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Elmer Bernstein

The composition of the score for THE TEN COMMANDMENTS represents a year and a half of the most exacting work I have ever done. There were so many obstacles to overcome. The first was my own apprehension of scoring what amounts to the birth of civilized ethical concepts, of scoring conversation between man and God, of scoring the birth of freedom and the dignity of man as a free soul under God. I don't think that any true artist should feel equal to that task. I was certainly beset by many fears and doubts. Perhaps it would have been easier if I were being called upon to present a purely personal approach to these great matters. In the composition of motion picture music, however, the composer most often finds himself bypassing his most personal expressions in favor of media and language *most certainly* communicative.

Ex. 1

Musical score for "THE TEN COMMANDMENTS" by Elmer Bernstein, labeled "Ex. 1". The score is divided into three systems of four measures each, numbered 61 through 72. The first system is marked "MARTIAL" and includes "Col. Bz." and "Tutti" markings. The second system includes "Col. Bz." and "ALL STRS" markings. The third system includes "STRGS", "f CRESC", and "TRPMS" markings. The score features complex orchestration with various instruments and dynamics.

This is one of the primary concerns and responsibilities of the screen composer — the invention and adherence to musical language which communicates easily and spontaneously to the audience. In this case even this problem was not a simple one as I was working under the close supervision of the producer, Mr. Cecil B. DeMille.

It seems ridiculous to attempt to examine Mr. DeMille's great involvement with the scoring in one paragraph. First allow me a personal note to say that Cecil B. DeMille is one of the most extraordinary men it has been my pleasure to know. There is no detail of *any* aspect of picture making which escapes his very sharp scrutiny. From the costuming of the extra players to details of orchestration and sound recording Mr. DeMille was indeed the master of the fate of his picture. He has very definite concepts about music in his films and is indefatigable in his quest for what he believes to be correct for his films. His concepts are quite Wagnerian both dramatically and musically. He believes firmly in the use of the leit-motif and the interplays of these motifs in scenes which affect the destinies of more than one character. He is a great believer in line and most often would insist upon hearing the lines played on the piano in the belief that weakness of line could be masked by harmonic invention and other orchestral and compositional devices. A piano demonstration of composition played for him in a full, florid piano arrangement would invariably bring a request for a "one finger" demonstration of the line. He is a "spontaneous reactor," becoming warmly enthusiastic about things which please him and equally disturbed about things which irritate him. I found it quite possible to disagree as long as I was completely candid and honest; to attempt to gain an end in devious ways is an extremely dangerous procedure with Mr. DeMille, as he is much too astute a gentleman to be taken in by politicking. To sum up, let's say that Mr. DeMille knew what he wanted and had the energy and drive to keep at it until he got it out of you.

Now some general musical problems. In some cases we were faced with creating Egyptian source music. Since no system of musical notation is extant, we studied the instruments of the period and found a rich assortment of woodwind and percussion instruments. They seem to indicate a richness of color and a very limited

Ex. 2

⑤  
v.w. wtl.

dolce

BRGS. NOVA.

Ex. 3

vls. f.s. espr.

CEL. CHY

VLA6

① ② ③ ④

⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧

scale. Several compositions in this vein were created, some of which remain in the release print of the picture. A few were cut as it was felt that the sounds, while authentic, might be unpleasant to the modern ear. There are numerous fanfares for which I employed natural horns which impart a wild, barbaric quality to their sound. The only "tricky" effects employed were in the burning bush sequence in which the string choir was reinforced by a novachord, and in the sequence of the pestilence in which several electronic devices were used to help impart a feeling of terror. The orchestra at its greatest strength consisted of seventy-one musicians. The only unorthodox feature was the presence of eight horns. The music was recorded in a conventional single channel setup on full coat magnetic film and transferred to optical film upon the completion of dubbing.

As I indicated previously, this score was approached on the basis of creating themes for all the major characters and forces. I will attempt to demonstrate some of the usages in different situations. Ex. 1 is a forthright statement of the theme of Moses as it appears in the Main Title or Prelude. Moses emerges as complex figure in THE TEN COMMANDMENTS. Found in the basket on the Nile by the daughter of Pharaoh he is reared in the palace as a prince. He is temporal power, a warrior, a suitor of the throne princess, in all, a glamorous, human figure. Later he is fallen from favor, outcast from Egypt. He is a skeptic concerning his God until, transformed by his experience at the burning bush, he returns to Egypt as God's messenger to lead his people from bondage. The treatment of the theme in Ex. 1 relates to Moses as a prince of Egypt; its martial stride and "fleshy" orchestration tell of temporal power.

Ex. 2 is a treatment of the Moses theme for his discovery as an infant. Here both rhythmically and in its transparent woodwind setting it is imbued with the feeling of lullaby.

♩ = 56  $\frac{3}{4}$   
"EACH NIGHT BRUTIG..."

♩ = 106  $\frac{4}{4}$   
"IN THE MOCKING  
WHISPER..."

Ex. 4

Ex. 3 is yet another treatment of the same material. Here Moses, fallen from favor, is driven out into the desert "where men are purged and cleansed for God's great purpose". Here the arrogance is gone. In tempo, treatment and orchestration we have a wanderer in a desperate search for his God and the meaning of his life. This might be a good place to tackle the problems of thematic style. From Mr. DeMille's point of view the problem to tackle was story telling. From my point of view the problem at some point had to reduce itself to questions of through what musical idiom. Even if we could have resurrected the music of the ancients it is doubtful that the idiom would have been communicative to our ears. I was most anxious to avoid the time-worn augmented seconds that seem to represent the easy way to say Hebrew in music. I turned rather to more modern modes of more recent Hebrew music and so we find the Moses theme loosely based on the dorian mode, whose major sixth in midst of the minor feeling appears to be somewhat characteristic of a more vigorous side of Hebrew music. Do not assume anything clinical or scholarly in this approach, however, as our main goal was the immediate communication of story and emotion rather than a scholarly recreation of Hebrew music.

Ex. 4 is the theme of the seductive, languorous throne princess. Here we have a pure fabrication. This is not in any sense ethnic music, but its chromatic meanderings impart a suggestion of the exotic, the presence of incense.

Ex. 5

In the theme of the Hebrew people (Ex. 5) we have a marriage of the dorian feeling of the Moses theme with the suggestion of our old friend, the augmented second. This theme was primarily projected against a background of suffering and slavery and was abandoned in favor of fresh material in the scenes of the exodus.

Ex. 6

Rameses is the ruthless natural son of the Pharaoh who brings about Moses' downfall in the palace and goes on to become the tyrannical ruler of Egypt, finally brought to his knees by his indifference to the laws of man and God. Ex. 6 is his theme, faintly modal, always pompous and relentless.

:34/0  
DIALOGUE

Musical score for 'DIALOGUE' (0:34). The score is in 4/4 time and consists of four staves. The first staff contains a melodic line with triplets and slurs. The second staff contains a similar melodic line. The third staff contains a bass line with notes and rests. The fourth staff contains a bass line with notes and rests. The score includes markings for 'Vas. tr.', 'Cm. p.', 'Bsn. STAG.', and 'Col. 8va f.'. Measure numbers 9, 10, 11, and 12 are indicated.

:46  
CUT TO M.S. OF JOSHUA

Musical score for 'CUT TO M.S. OF JOSHUA' (0:46). The score is in 4/4 time and consists of four staves. The first staff contains a melodic line with triplets and slurs. The second staff contains a similar melodic line. The third staff contains a bass line with notes and rests. The fourth staff contains a bass line with notes and rests. The score includes markings for 'Cresc. Poco A Toco STAG.', 'p. cresc.', 'mf.', and 'Col. 8va'. Measure numbers 13, 14, and 15 are indicated.

Musical score for measures 16, 17, and 18. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of four staves. The first staff contains a melodic line with triplets and slurs. The second staff contains a similar melodic line. The third staff contains a bass line with notes and rests. The fourth staff contains a bass line with notes and rests. The score includes markings for 'ff.' and 'Col. 8va'. Measure numbers 16, 17, and 18 are indicated.

1:04  
JOSHUA

Musical score for 'JOSHUA' (1:04). The score is in 4/4 time and consists of four staves. The first staff contains a melodic line with triplets and slurs. The second staff contains a similar melodic line. The third staff contains a bass line with notes and rests. The fourth staff contains a bass line with notes and rests. The score includes markings for 'mf.', 'Hds.', and 'Col. 8va'. Measure numbers 19, 20, 21, and 22 are indicated.

Joshua, the fervent military organizer of the exodus, is represented primarily by a characteristic horn call. Ex. 7 shows a development of the call leading to a gentle theme that represents his love for the water girl, Lilia.

The musical score is divided into several systems. The first system contains measures 23 through 26, with a piano (*p.*) dynamic marking. The second system contains measures 27 through 30. The third system contains measures 31 and 32. The fourth system, labeled 'Ex. 8', contains measures 10, 11, and 12, with a *TUTTI* marking and a forte (*f*) dynamic. The fifth system contains measures 13 through 16, with a *FLG. CLS.* marking. The sixth system contains measures 17 through 20, with a *cresc.* marking and a *Soli* marking.

We now come to the most difficult problem of all. From the very outset all of us concerned with this project had been giving much thought to the projection of the concept of God, which is a vital factor in the unfolding of this picture.

The creative artist who tackles this problem may not find the solution difficult if he is primarily concerned with a subjective expression of his own feeling in relation to God. In a medium like motion pictures the artist cannot afford the luxury of subjectivity. In a medium which reaches more people in one month than a so-called "serious composer" reaches in an entire lifetime it is necessary that the screen composer have some recognition of the "language barrier" which exists between his own highly sophisticated (we hope) language and the more primitive musical language of his vast and varied audience. The screen composer must also have an *honest* desire to communicate with his audience. The snob is lost in this medium. His future is an obscure end with a small coterie. The composer who either by choice or necessity invents tortured musical devices to mask a weakness of line or lack of spontaneity of emotion is similarly doomed. Lest there be any misunderstanding let me restate that I am referring to the motion picture as it is constituted today. I am simply saying that when an artist works in a medium in which he has a captive audience, he then has the responsibility to communicate with it in a language it understands. It was an acute awareness of this problem which led me to procrastinate for some time in the creation of music for the scenes which concerned themselves with the presence of God. In music God could be many things; Gregorian chants, Palestrina, Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, or perhaps the Verdi of the Requiem, or perhaps I Believe. I am not building up to confessing that I took all these elements and fused them in some mechanical way. I mention the foregoing to try to give the reader an understanding of the thoughts that were conditioning my efforts as I approached the problem. The result appears below as Ex. 8. This is the most forthright statement of the theme as it appears in the prelude. After all this introduction I dare not make any comments of my own about this theme. It is, of course, too early to try to judge whether I have succeeded in what I set out to accomplish with this theme. That is something the millions of people who see this film will have to judge for themselves.

Musical score for Ex. 9, measures 21 and 22. The piano part consists of chords in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The vocal line has lyrics: "PIATTI" in measure 21 and "Soli" and "TUM" in measure 22.

Ex. 9

Musical score for Ex. 9, measures 1-4. Performance instructions include "NOVA-VIBR" and "VLS. (harmonics)". The score shows a piano accompaniment with numbered notes 1 through 4.

Musical score for Ex. 9, measures 5-8. Performance instructions include "NOVA-VIBR" and "VLS. (harmonics)". The score shows a piano accompaniment with numbered notes 5 through 8.

Musical score for Ex. 9, measures 9-12. Performance instructions include "NOVA-VIBR" and "VLS. (harmonics)". The score shows a piano accompaniment with numbered notes 9 through 12.

Musical score for Ex. 9, measures 13-16. The instruction "In Two" is written above the staff, and "w.w." is written below the piano part. The score shows a piano accompaniment with numbered notes 13 through 16.

Ex. 9 is a treatment of the theme which occurs as Moses returns from the burning bush and realizes for the first time that he is God's messenger and will liberate his people in bondage.

Musical score for Ex. 10, consisting of four staves. The top staff contains chords and melodic lines. The second staff has a long note with a slur and circled numbers 17, 18, 19, and 20. The third and fourth staves contain bass lines with notes and rests.

Ex. 10

Musical score for Ex. 10, featuring five staves. The top staff is marked 'STGdy. w.' and 'ff col Bbo.'. The second staff is marked 'ORGAN' and contains circled numbers 1, 2, and 3. The third staff is marked 'TPTS.'. The fourth staff is marked 'BR. W.W. STGdy. ORGAN'. The bottom staff is marked 'ff col Bbo.'.

Ex. 10 is a more wrathful God punishing the wicked after the debauch of the golden calf sequence.

Musical score for Ex. 10, featuring five staves. The top staff contains a complex melodic line. The second staff has circled numbers 4, 5, and 6. The third and fourth staves contain rhythmic patterns. The bottom staff contains a bass line.

Musical score for Ex. 10, featuring five staves. The top staff contains a complex melodic line. The second staff has circled numbers 7 and 8. The third and fourth staves contain rhythmic patterns. The bottom staff contains a bass line.

Musical score for measures 8-12. Measures 8 and 9 are marked with circled numbers 8 and 9. Measures 10, 11, and 12 are marked with circled numbers 10, 11, and 12. The score includes parts for Piano (p), Horns (HNS.), Trumpets (TPT.), Trombones (col. Bb.), and Piccolo (PICC.).

Musical score for measures 13-16. Measures 13 and 14 are marked with circled numbers 13 and 14. Measures 15 and 16 are marked with circled numbers 15 and 16. The score includes parts for Trumpets (TPTS.), Piano-Organ (PIANO-ORGAN), Trombones (col. Bb.), and Piccolo (PICC.).

Musical score for measures 17-18. Measures 17 and 18 are marked with circled numbers 17 and 18. The score includes parts for Piano-Organ (PIANO-ORGAN) and Trombones (col. Bb.). The key signature changes to E major in measure 17.

Ex. 11

Andante

Musical score for measures 1-4 of Ex. 11. Measures 1, 2, 3, and 4 are marked with circled numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4. The score includes parts for Woodwinds (W.W.), Basses (BASSES), and Piccolo (PICC. E♭ CL.).

System 1 of a musical score, featuring four staves. The top staff contains a melodic line with various ornaments and slurs. The second staff has circled measure numbers 5, 6, 7, and 8. The third and fourth staves provide harmonic accompaniment with chords and rhythmic patterns. A double bar line is present after measure 4.

System 2 of the musical score, continuing from the previous system. It features four staves with circled measure numbers 9, 10, 11, and 12. The tempo marking "Meno mosso" is written below the bottom staff. A double bar line is present after measure 8.

System 3 of the musical score, continuing from the previous system. It features four staves with circled measure numbers 13, 14, 15, and 16. The tempo marking "Meno mosso" is written below the bottom staff. A double bar line is present after measure 12.

System 4 of the musical score, continuing from the previous system. It features four staves. The bottom staff has a double bar line after measure 16, and the rest of the system is crossed out with a large 'X'.

The question of authenticity was one which returned to plague us periodically. It had been clearly established that the first function of the music would be to aid character delineation and thereby function in a somewhat "narrative fashion". However there were always the scenes with Egyptian musicians. Ex. 11 is one of the more successful solutions of this problem. The scale is a limited one, as were the ancient scales. The orchestration was designed to come as close to authenticity as possible. Since the sounds of the ancient instruments are known to us, if not the musical materials, it was possible to recreate a fine approximation of what an Egyptian orchestra might have sounded like, if not what they actually played. I can only guess that I made a pretty good stab at what the sound was like, because it caused some discomfort to the modern ear. Unfortunately little of the sound remains in the picture and that which is there is played at a rather low level, but if you are interested in this phase of things, listen to the music that is played as the royal dancers perform in the palace of Pharaoh.

Ex. 12

The exodus, Ex. 12, was a point of contention for a while. The question here was whether we should attempt a "Hebraic anthem" or not. In the long run the no's won, but not before I had tried several approaches of my own. The general consensus was that the first duty of the music was to give a feeling of elation. It was argued that any presentation of Hebrew music of that period would be of academic interest at best, and would be of no value at all if its elements were too foreign to communicate the excitement we were attempting to generate. This was once again a projection of the general problem. In conclusion I can only say that I have attempted to "flavor" what is essentially a familiar idiom with certain modal elements which at times impact a feeling of antiquity. The foremost concern of all was the greatest possible communication to the greatest number of people throughout the world. It is thought that this picture will probably reach more people than any other picture in the history of the art form. If, in sacrificing some of my more subjective expression, I have in some way made this picture a more exciting experience for some people I don't know, in some corner of the world I shall probably never see, I would consider this a sacrifice well made.

Handwritten musical score system 1, measures 9-12. The system includes a vocal line with lyrics, a piano accompaniment, and a percussion line. Annotations include "MIS. BR." above the piano line, "GLOCK. PA. HP" above the percussion line, and "MIS." below the piano line. Circled measure numbers 9, 10, 11, and 12 are present.

Handwritten musical score system 2, measures 13-16. The system includes a vocal line with lyrics, a piano accompaniment, and a percussion line. Annotations include "DRS." below the piano line. Circled measure numbers 13, 14, 15, and 16 are present.

Handwritten musical score system 3, measures 17-20. The system includes a vocal line with lyrics, a piano accompaniment, and a percussion line. Annotations include "Timp" below the piano line. Circled measure numbers 17, 18, 19, and 20 are present.

Handwritten musical score system 4, measures 21-23. The system includes a vocal line with lyrics, a piano accompaniment, and a percussion line. Annotations include "Col Bba" and "+HOB." below the piano line. Circled measure numbers 21, 22, and 23 are present.

I cannot conclude without acknowledging the aid of Mr. Henry Noerdlinger in research, Mr. Henry Wilcoxon, whose knowledge of Mr. DeMille's artistic thinking was an invaluable aid and a calming factor at some difficult moments, and finally Mr. Roy Fjastad, a veritable bulwark of strength at even the most trying moments, who reposed his absolute confidence in me and had faith in the outcome at all times. I don't think I could have got through the job at that particular stage of my career without Mr. Fjastad's steadfast loyalty and encouragement.

Mr. DeMille afforded me the great opportunity, but what can be added to the many words written about him? Suffice to say that I am very grateful for all that I learned under his tutelage. He is like all extraordinary men, unique, a great man of his chosen profession and his times.

**THE TEN COMMANDMENTS . . .**  
 Paramount. Charlton Heston, Anne Baxter. Produced and directed by Cecil B. DeMille. Music, Elmer Bernstein. Orchestrations, Lucien Cailliet, Van Cleave, Leo Shuken.

First system of musical notation. It consists of four staves. The top staff has a treble clef and contains a melodic line with various ornaments and dynamics. The second staff has a treble clef and contains a rhythmic accompaniment with the marking "TR." above it. The third and fourth staves have bass clefs and contain a bass line. Measure numbers 24, 25, 26, and 27 are circled below the second staff.

Second system of musical notation. It consists of four staves. The top staff has a treble clef and contains a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes in the third measure. The second staff has a treble clef and contains a rhythmic accompaniment with the marking "TR." above it. The third and fourth staves have bass clefs and contain a bass line. Measure numbers 28, 29, 30, and 31 are circled below the second staff. The word "TRAMP" is written in the third staff.

Third system of musical notation. It consists of four staves. The top staff has a treble clef and contains a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes in the third measure. The second staff has a treble clef and contains a rhythmic accompaniment with the marking "TRAMP" above it. The third and fourth staves have bass clefs and contain a bass line. Measure numbers 32, 33, 34, and 35 are circled below the second staff. The word "TRAMP" is written in the third staff.

Fourth system of musical notation. It consists of four staves. The top staff has a treble clef and contains a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes in the third measure. The second staff has a treble clef and contains a rhythmic accompaniment with the marking "TRAMP" above it. The third and fourth staves have bass clefs and contain a bass line. Measure numbers 36, 37, 38, and 39 are circled below the second staff. The dynamic marking "mf" is present in the third staff.

## CURRENT SCORES

### GIANT

Perhaps it would have been impossible to make *GIANT* any shorter. The State of Texas is big; the book by Edna Ferber about its loud, proud people in their vast domain stretches over several generations and several hundred pages. Perhaps influenced by the shibboleth of size now hypnotizing the film industry, George Stevens ignored the still, small voice of self-criticism and let the film run on and on (for three hours and eighteen minutes) through incidents and scenes and conversations that might have been crisped or cut.

When one grew tired of reading about Bick Benedict's over-weening pride and arrogance as head of the huge Reata Ranch, or his intolerance of his eastern wife's sense of the humanities, one could put the book down. But the film, alternating vastness and intimacy, is with us every minute of the time, following every thread of several sub-plots. Scenes that feature Jett Rick, the underdog grown rich through striking oil, are drawn out so that the teen-agers can feast on their idolized James Dean.

Dimitri Tiomkin has wisely practiced the only restraint in the undertaking. His musical score makes no attempt to underline, expose or even punctuate dozens of scenes, where music might be an interloper or tend to lend an importance they do not possess. The most striking feature of the score is the use of a single instrument, a wailing harmonica, to accompany some of the lonely, spreading scenes of Texas prairie, then building to full symphonic size (for example, when Bick surveys the hugeness of his holdings) as a dramatic scene builds or the locale changes. Tiomkin's use of "theme" music is apparent: the song "Giant" and the "Jett Rink Ballad" (a pseudo-cowboy tune) pervade throughout. The latter is the basis for many variations: soundings like a thin thread on the harmonica through the powerful surge of music to accompany Jett's oil strike, up big and brassy when Jett tells his news; turned into different rhythms, even jazz.

Tiomkin has secured some fine effects with sudden bursts of noise and music: the crash of oil pumps after the quiet, pregnant moment when Jett plays his toy slot machine, "always lucky"; the blare of a diesel engine whistle as the train sweeps across the screen to bring the soldiers home; the sting of the branding iron on the calf's flesh.

The composer has not hesitated to draw on familiar sources to point up appropriate situations: "Auld Lang Syne" for the Thanksgiving dinner in Leslie's Maryland home; "Dixie" on the lone harmonica at a party; all the Texas songs whenever needed.

### QUAINTANCE EATON



*GIANT* . . . Warner Brothers. Elizabeth Taylor, Rock Hudson, James Dean. Director, George Stevens. Music composed and conducted by Dimitri Tiomkin.

*Songs:* Dimitri Tiomkin, Paul Francis Webster: *Giant*, *There's Never Been Anyone Else But You*, Jett Rink's Ballad.

*Records:* *Giant*; Music from the Sound Track. (Capitol W 773) The three strong themes that reappear in these selections from Mr. Tiomkin's score are already popular in song form. The record has one of the most effective passages in the big score — "Road to Reata," where the "Giant" and "Love" themes are combined with the sound of the wind for the bride's coming to her new home — the lonely Victorian mansion in the middle of the endless prairie.

*Giant:* Rusty Draper, *Mercury*; Jimmy Wakely, George Cates, *Coral*; Jack Pleis, *Decca*; Jack Carroll, *RKO-Unique*. *There's Never Been Anyone Else But You:* David Carroll, *Mercury*; George Cates, *Coral*; David Rose, *M-G-M*; William Lewis, *RCA*; Bob Graybo, Joe Leahy, *Sparton*; Bob Graybo, *RKO-Unique*. *Giant, There's Never Been Anyone Else But You:* Ray Heindorf, *Columbia*; Art Mooney, *M-G-M*; Les Baxter, *Capitol*.

Sheet Music: M. Witmark & Sons.

### THE BRAVE ONE

Victor Young was especially fond of the music of the Latin countries. Four of his best scores were written for films in Spanish and Mexican settings — *FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS*, *A MEDAL FOR BENNIE*, *THE BULL-FIGHTER AND THE LADY*, and lastly *THE BRAVE ONE*, completed shortly before his sudden death. He had "real fun" doing the score for *THE BRAVE ONE*, he said. The story of the love of a Mexican lad for a champion bull was "born for music", and he had been given freedom to do as he chose by the film's producers, Frank and Maurice King.

In preparation, Mr. Young steeped himself in the music of Brahms, Rubenstein, Debussy and Rachmaninoff to get into the romantic mood he wanted for his underscoring. He applied his extensive knowledge of folk-tune forms in several passages, working them out in terms of the guitar. The three fanfares opening the bullfight sequence were used to tie in the simultaneous action in the ring and the child's frantic efforts to save his bull. In its big symphonic effects, its feeling for melody and local color, *THE BRAVE ONE* presents an excellent example of a Victor Young score. The whistled phrase that marks Leonardo's ownership of the splendid animal and that finally closes the film was the only expression of the producers' taste.

### MARY POWELL

*THE BRAVE ONE* . . . King Brothers; RKO Radio. Michel Ray, Rodolfo Hoyos. Director, Irving Rapper. Music, Victor Young.

*Record:* *The Brave One*; Music from the Sound Track. (Decca DL 8344) Victor Young conducts the Munich Symphony Orchestra in selections from his score. There

*The Barbecue at Reata.*

is considerable variety in the well-written numbers, from the bright playfulness of those dealing with the boy and his pet to the sombre melodies foreshadowing their possible separation and the bull's fate in the arena. The film's changing moods are especially well caught in "Leonardo's Quest", which Mr. Young had intended to lengthen into a symphonic tone poem.

## FRIENDLY PERSUASION

If the Quakers do not approve of music (as FRIENDLY PERSUASION would have you believe), they are not going to be very happy about this picture, although the rest of the world undoubtedly will welcome it warmly. Music accompanies the story all the way, in Dimitri Tiomkin's individual manner.

This Tiomkin style uses themes, much as Richard Wagner did. In the case of FRIENDLY PERSUASION, the chief theme is "Thee I Love", but there are almost a dozen others, requiring much more detailed study to recognize. Tiomkin has done his usual job of excellent craftsmanship, providing merry accompaniments for Gary Cooper, the preacher's husband, in his peccadillo (racing a Methodist's buggy) and many sentimental and tuneful moments for the lovely farm scenes and the romance of the younger generation. He has added to the drama of the poignant war sequences in which the son, played sensitively by Anthony Perkins, defends his countryside in spite of his religious scruples.

After Mother has betrayed her own preaching by thwacking a Rebel soldier for mistreating her pet goose, the sound of the forbidden organ is heard in this Quaker home at last. Music is really the victor.

## QUAINTANCE EATON

FRIENDLY PERSUASION . . . Allied Artists. Gary Cooper, Dorothy McGuire. Director, William Wyler. Music composed and conducted by Dimitri Tiomkin. Songs, Dimitri Tiomkin, Paul Francis Webster: Thee I Love, Marry Me, Marry Me, Mockingbird in a Willow Tree, Indiana Holiday, Coax Me a Little.

*Records:* Friendly Persuasion; *Albums* (Coral, Dot, Unique); *Thee I Love:* Pat Boone (Dot); Four Aces (Decca); Anthony Perkins (Epic); Lou Busch (Capitol); Michael Legrand (Columbia); George Cates (Coral); David Rose (M-G-M); Bob Graybo (Unique); *Indiana Holiday:* Lawrence Welk (Coral).

## TEAHOUSE OF THE AUGUST MOON

The film score for TEAHOUSE OF THE AUGUST MOON is based primarily upon Okinawan folk music and performed on the samisen, koto, hichiriki, shakuhachi and percussion instruments. Music is employed only when music is either being sung or performed on the screen, except for the opening credits (abstracted from the final Teahouse scene). The song and dance music utilized is oriental music void of Western compositional techniques. This music plays a purely functional role throughout; the entrance of Lotus Blossom to Tobiki accompanied by the male Okinawans singing a joyful folk song; Lotus Blossom's captivating



Glenn Ford, Marlon Brando, Machiko Kyo, Eddie Albert

serenade to Captain Fisby played on the samisen; the culminating Teahouse ritual performance by the "Ladies League for Democratic Action", turned Geishas under Lotus Blossom's tutelage. This song and dance production consists of a lovely folk song sung by a fourteen-year-old girl and a dance which features Lotus Blossom and the newly instructed Geishas. The score keeps in the true Kabuki tradition of rhythmic vitality and drive, semitonic penta-scale and the exciting counterpoint which arises from the different instruments anticipating each other. The film score differs from the original stage version by Dai-Koeng Lee as there was no necessity to bridge or introduce scenes in the film; the fade-in technique was employed to the fullest extent.

## SHELDON SOFFER

TEAHOUSE OF THE AUGUST MOON . . . Metro. Marlon Brando, Glenn Ford. Director, Daniel Mann. Musical supervision, Saul Chaplin. Okinawan songs composed or arranged by Kikuko Kanai.

(Mr. Soffer was Conductor of the National Company of "Teahouse of the August Moon.")

## BUNDLE OF JOY

Color, music and that wholesome young couple, Debbie Reynolds and Eddie Fisher, refurbish BACHELOR MOTHER, the comedy that Ginger Rogers and David Niven played somewhat differently years ago. Salesgirl Debbie is credited with being the mother of a baby she has found, and until things are straightened out, misunderstandings and tunes tumble over each other in carefree succession. The seven Myrow-Gordon songs, given lush Hugo Winterhalter arrangements and performance, are sung in the best Fisher style, two of them with Miss Reynolds. Choreographer Nick Castle's high spot is a riotous dance contest, accompanied by a Myrow rock'n roll number, "Tempo Fugit". This is definitely not a think film.

## MARY POWELL

BUNDLE OF JOY . . . RKO Radio. Eddie Fisher, Debbie Reynolds. Director, Norman Taurog. Songs, Josef Myrow, Mack Gordon: Bundle of Joy, All About Love, Some Day Soon, I Never Felt This Way Before, Worry About Tomorrow, Lullaby in Blue, You're Perfect in Every Department. Songs arranged and conducted by Hugo Winterhalter. Background score adapted and conducted by Walter Scharf. Musical numbers and dances staged by Nick Castle.

Records: *Worry About Tomorrow*, Bill Fontaine; *I Never Felt This Way Before*, Delores Parker; *Lullaby in Blue*, Edith Adams. (RKO Unique); *All About Love, Some Day Soon*, Eddie Fisher. (RCA Victor).

Sheet Music: Lamas Music Corp., New York.

## ON SUCH A NIGHT

It is almost twenty-five years since John Christie started the Glyndebourne Opera Festival with performance of "The Marriage of Figaro" on his Elizabethan estate on the Sussex Downs. The opera presentations given annually in this setting have become a cherished and internationally respected part of English musical life. ON SUCH A NIGHT is a handsome, lightly dramatised account of one of them. Groups of people in evening dress board a daytime train in Victoria Station, and a curious American tourist (oddly provincial, by the way) follows them to see what it's all about. Journey's end proves to be Glyndebourne, where titled opera-goer Marie Lohr gets the young man into "The Marriage of Figaro" by appealing to Mr. Christie himself. The film's excellent opera extracts are taken mostly from the second and the last acts of "Figaro", with Sesto Bruscantini as Figaro and Sena Jurinac as the



Sesto Bruscantino (Figaro), Frances Bible (Cherubino), Elena Rizzieri (Susanna).

Countess. Producer Carl Ebert appears in a short flashback, rehearsing Mme. Jurinac for the "Sul'aria" duet. Vittorio Gui conducts and the orchestra is the Royal Philharmonic. Apart from its musical interest, in its brief 35 minutes the film carries a nice and not over-serious feeling of the occasion — the beauty of the setting, the devotion of the Festival's followers.

MARIE HAMILTON

ON SUCH A NIGHT . . . Rank Screen Services Ltd.; British Information Services. David Knight, Marie Lohr. Director, Anthony Asquith. Music, Benjamin Frankel.

## "8 x 8"; AN INTERVIEW WITH HANS RICHTER

Gideon Bachmann

*Bachmann:* As your visual images are on the symbolic level, I would imagine you had a problem in adjusting your sound to correspond to the flow of pictures.

*Richter:* Yes, but then sound is always a special problem in film making. I still believe that this relatively new medium, film, has not been developed more than to the "first three or four letters of the alphabet." We have used film in many different ways, but the discoveries are just beginning. If that is 90% true for film in general, it is 150% true for film sound. Today we nearly always use sound as it was used during the silent period — first, to cover up coughing in the audience, or whispering or kissing or shuffling of feet and popcorn munching, and second, to get background music to underline some mood. I once heard a lecture given by a famous American composer in which he said that sound in Hollywood is used exclusively as background, and rightly so. I don't agree at all. There are exceptions, of course; in *HIGH NOON*, for instance, sound (the song) is used as an active and dramatic part.

What is the reason that sound is generally used so unimaginatively and passively? Music is an art form that has grown over thousands of years. It has developed its own laws, has grown into a language of its own, with its own principles and style according to its own aesthetic and cultural needs. How can one expect an art form in its own right and corresponding to the demand of an audience conditioned to its form, to fit like a glove over the new rebellious medium of the film? It does not.

Sound in film has its own problems and they are not musical problems specifically, but dramatic ones. Music in the proper sense of the word comes into it as far as the trained ear, the feeling for rhythm is concerned — but not as music per se — not as musical tradition or musical form.

Music can and should be used, but in a far more active way or, as the traditionalist would say, in an *un-musical* way.

I have made my new film "8 x 8" as an independent artist, and that gives me the freedom to experiment with sound as well as with the image. I think I have opened in "8 x 8" a number of new ways in the use of sound. In spite of what I have said so far, I start the film with a burst of music, romantic clavichord music. After the audience settles down and relaxes, the changes start — whole sequences with sound effects only, interrupted speech, etc. In principle I would like to say that sound in film is a problem whose solution still lies in the future. It is different from the usual problems presented to the musician or composer of today.

*Bachmann:* You mean it is not important whether the music we use in the film is good or bad by itself?

*Richter:* It had better be good, of course, but that is not the point, because what matters is that the sound (including the music) fulfills a dramatic function parallel to the image but not subjugated to it. Though I am a strong believer in the film as a visual language, I also believe that sound should play an active and creative part. This creative part can only be fulfilled if sound frees itself from the tradition of music, just as the image had to free itself (and still has to) from the tradition of the theatre and literature.

This is not a theoretical opinion. I have used sound in my new film exactly that way. I have cut up the conventional elements of the aural world — sound effects, music and speech — into small sections, and by re-editing them in a new sequence, playing them forwards and backwards or in any manner I found necessary, I have used them to construct the sound track for "8 x 8". I have composed with

sound as I do with pictures. Perhaps there is a relation here to a trend in modern music, represented by Edgar Varese, one of the most fascinating modern composers, who for more than thirty years has been musically articulating the cacaphony of our world, of our time, into rich "symphonies" never heard before.

*Bachmann:* You mean what is known as "music concrete"?

*Richter:* Not exactly. Music concrete in my opinion is only a variation of Varese. And Varese as well as music concrete are in a way the outgrowths of ideas of futurism. The original sound-organ which the Italian Russolo built in 1909 played nothing but street noises, fire engines, machines and other sound effects. It is a movement of our time, this incorporation of the world of sound that we hear in our cities into music. This sound we normally reject as disturbing noise. Nevertheless we are already accustomed and conditioned to it. Once fully integrated into the articulated world of musical art, it will be just as acceptable as Picasso or Kandinski. Though today it is still revolting to the "classical" listener, I feel it is enjoyable, exciting and . . . it is ours.

*Bachmann:* Could you give us examples of how you use sound in your film to illustrate your theories?

*Richter:* I have one sequence in which a man is playing chess with himself. He seems to be extremely nervous and disturbed with the problems on the board. And rightly so, because there is a wrong figure on the chess-board which frustrates him. I used stuttering as a theme for sound in this sequence, the desire to express something but the inability to do so. I had a trumpet stuttering, a melody that never comes through, people stuttering, machine sounds accelerated and retarded, a thwarted effort to count from one to ten, all building up to such a climax that the idea could not possibly be lost. When eventually a symbolic Muse comes to free the man from his frustration, everything falls into place; the trumpet blows its theme melodiously and all is right again. I used strains and words here, but they are neither music nor dialogue. Although they have no rational continuity, they still make sense by themselves as the expression of inhibition and as active dramatic participants in the film.

Another example is the sound in the Cocteau-enacted "Queening of the Pawn". Instead of using music or a poem by Cocteau, I took three sentences from a chess-book for beginners and had them spoken in French, English, Italian and German, backwards and forwards, the way the picture went and sometimes against it, fast and slow, in pieces and single words, and finally, as a kind of chorale, all four unisono. I treated it as a musical theme, a fugue, which I developed, sustaining the forwards and backwards steps of Cocteau's acting.

*Bachmann:* But there is, after all, real music in the film, too, music which is not disturbed to create a dramatic effect.

*Richter:* True. It includes Robert Abramson's lovely clavichord improvisations, Oscar Brand's singing of the late John Latouche's lyrics, and John Gruen's accelerated bullfight. Darius Milhaud wrote a musical theme for me and then I asked Douglas Townsend here to develop it as music, good music, in active cooperation with the film. I do not

mean to say that film should do without composers or music. Certainly not! But it should be understood that music in the traditional sense is only one among hundreds of forms of film-sound.

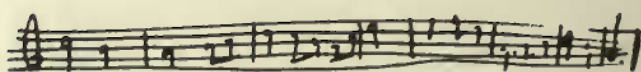
*Bachmann:* Mr. Townsend, we would be most interested in hearing how you used the Milhaud theme in "8 x 8".

*Townsend:* Mr. Milhaud suggested the use of his eight measure tune as the basis for a set of variations. I have therefore written three short variations (average time about thirty seconds) with an interlude and coda, while trying also to capture the mood of the images on the screen.

*Theme:* The theme is stated twice as Mr. Milhaud wrote it, with the addition of my harmonization.

*Var. 1:* The melody is first played on the cello, then on the recorder and trumpet. The piano serves as rhythm instrument to highlight the action of Mexican chessmen, made by means of stop motion.

*Var. 2:* On the screen 16th century Flemish chessmen are set on a chessboard which slowly revolves on a pedestal. Here I use the recorder, trumpet and cello, endeavoring to create the illusion of 16th century music through instrumental color and such contrapuntal devices as suspension and imitation.



*1st Var. for cello and trumpet*  
*Amicalement*  
*D. M.*

*Interlude:* The piano plays the theme through once; then a short transition leads to

*Var. 3:* Green and white Indian chessmen seem to dance a stately ballet to music from a music box.

*Coda:* The green king is knocked over by the white king. I have used only the first few notes of the original theme, and written a dramatic little coda which highlights the action on the screen and ends the variations.

*Bachmann:* Thank you, Hans Richter and Douglas Townsend. We'll look for "8 x 8's" simultaneous opening in New York, Paris and Hollywood in March. Good luck with it!

"8 x 8": *Variations on a Theme of Milhaud, Op. 3b; Dance Improvisation and Fugue, Op. 3a*, by Douglas Townsend. Published by C. F. Peters Corp. Both of these numbers will be broadcast during the American Music Festival over WNYC in February.

(Mr. Bachmann interviews film personalities weekly over New York station WFUV-FM, Friday, 7 P.M.)



Leith Stevens

Born Mt. Moriah, Missouri, September 13, 1909; began piano lessons at five; early ambition was to be concert pianist; won scholarship at Horner Institute, Kansas City, Mo.; piano debut at 14 playing Rubinstein Piano Concerto; conducting debut at 16 and was appointed musical director for Sylvia Tell Ballet Company; coached students of Mme. Schumann-Heink, 1927, and later toured with her; awarded Juilliard Foundation Fellowship, 1928; studied with Ernest Hutcheson, Rubin Goldmark, Albert Stoessel; joined CBS as vocal arranger, 1930; from 1933-1941 composed and conducted many radio shows, including "Columbia Workshop", "Saturday Night Swing Session", "Fred Allen Show", "Ford Summer Sunday Evening Hour", "Abbott and Costello", "Big Town"; in 1941 composed, arranged and conducted music for his first film, *Syncopation*; joined O.W.I. as radio director for Southwest Pacific area, 1942; after World War II returned to Hollywood to compose and conduct music for radio, including "Request Performance", "Rise Stevens Show", "The Doctor Fights", "The Saint", "Encore Theater", "Academy Award" series, "Richard Rogue"; under contract to Universal Pictures, 1948; since 1949 has free-lanced; entered television, 1950; composed and conducted music for "Burns and Allen", "Holiday", "Colgate Comedy Hour", "Climax", "Shower of Stars"; co-founder and first president of Composers and Lyricists Guild of America, 1954; helped pioneer use of jazz in film scores: *Eight Iron Men*, *The Glass Wall*, *The Wild One*, *Private Hell 36*, *Crashout*; at present composing the musical score for "Taj Mahal", a projected 90-minute NBC "spectacular" television production.

CREDITS

- 1942 *Syncopation* ..... William Dieterle-RKO
- 1947 *Night Song* ..... RKO Radio
- 1948 *Black Bart* ..... Universal-International  
(with Frank Skinner and others)
- 1948 *All My Sons* ..... Universal-International
- 1948 *Feudin', Fussin' and A-Fightin'*  
..... Universal-International
- 1948 *Larceny* ..... Universal-International
- 1949 *Not Wanted* ..... Filmmakers

LEITH STEVENS

Clifford McCarty

- 1949 *Never Fear* ..... Filmmakers
- 1949 *The Great Rupert* ..... George Pal
- 1950 *Destination Moon* ..... George Pal
- 1950 *The Sun Sets at Dawn* ..... Holiday Films
- 1951 *No Questions Asked* ..... Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer
- 1951 *When Worlds Collide* ..... George Pal-Paramount
- 1951 *Storm Over Tibet* ..... Ivan Tors-Columbia  
(adaptation of music by Arthur  
Honegger and additional composition)
- 1951 *Navajo* ..... Hall Bartlett
- 1952 *The Atomic City* ..... Paramount
- 1952 *Beware, My Lovely* ..... Filmmakers
- 1952 *Eight Iron Men* ..... Stanley Kramer-Columbia
- 1953 *The Hitch-Hiker* ..... Filmmakers
- 1953 *The Glass Wall* ..... Ivan Tors-Columbia
- 1953 *Scared Stiff* ..... Hal Wallis-Paramount
- 1953 *War of the Worlds* ..... George Pal-Paramount
- 1953 *The Bigamist* ..... Filmmakers
- 1953 *Crazylegs* ..... Hall Bartlett
- 1953 *The Wild One* ..... Stanley Kramer-Columbia
- 1954 *Private Hell 36* ..... Filmmakers
- 1954 *The Bob Mathias Story* ..... Allied Artists
- 1955 *Crashout* ..... Filmmakers
- 1955 *Mad at the world* ..... Filmmakers
- 1955 *The Treasure of Pancho Villa*  
..... Edmund Grainger-RKO
- 1956 *World Without End* ..... Allied Artists
- 1956 *The Scarlet Hour* ..... Paramount
- 1956 *Great Day in the Morning* .. Edmund Grainger-RKO
- 1956 *Julie* ..... Arwin-MGM
- 1957 *Lizzie* ..... Bryna-MGM

CONCERT ITEMS ADAPTED FROM FILM SCORES

- Syncopation*: American Rhapsody.
- Night Song*: Concerto in C Minor (for piano and orchestra).
- Destination Moon*: Destination Moon Suite.

DISCOGRAPHY

*Destination Moon*

"Earth" ("Prelude", "planning and building of the great rocket"); "In Outer Space"; "On the Surface of the Moon" ("The crater Harpalus", "Exploring the moon", "The dilemma", "Escape from the moon and finale"). Orchestra conducted by Leith Stevens (recorded from the sound track); Columbia CL 6151 (10" LP record).

*The Wild One*

Jazz Themes: "The Wild One", "Lonely Way", "Beetle", "Blues for Brando", "Hotshoe", "Windswept", "Scramble", "Chino". Leith Stevens' All Stars; Decca DL 5515 (10" LP record).

*Private Hell 36*

"Private Hell 36", "Havana Interlude", "Easy Mood", "Daddy Long Legs", "Joshua", "Lilli", "Dance of the Lilliputian", "Private Blues". Orchestra conducted by Leith Stevens; Coral CRL 56122 (10" LP record).

## MUSIC ON CAMERA THREE

Lewis Freedman and John McGiffert

Television has not yet begun to make a rich and imaginative use of music, either for its own sake or to enhance a mood. Direct presentation of good music (the NBC opera is an outstanding example) is still so rare as to point up the general lack; and the "background and bridge" music on non-musical programs is too often banal or pretentious.

Camera Three, as a program devoted to the experimental and educational presentation of the arts, is of course interested in presenting good music for its own sake. In addition, the low budget of the show means that it must survive on suggestion and selectivity. As a result, the atmospheric use of music is more than a useful tool; it can be a key factor in the effectiveness of many of the programs. Here are brief descriptions of some of the uses of music on Camera Three between March and November, 1956.

### 1. MUSIC FOR ITS OWN SAKE

a. Mozart: Guests, Nadia Reisenberg (pianist), Erich Leinsdorf (conductor), Kurt List (musicologist). Miss Reisenberg played one movement of a Mozart Sonata. The three guests then talked informally about Mozart, and what his music means to them. We discovered that listeners are particularly stimulated by hearing the performer's and conductor's opinions of music with which they are so intimately associated. The program concluded with a recorded selection from a Mozart Symphony, with the cameras taking close-ups of the faces of the guests as they listened. It was clear from the mail response that this device was both interesting and non-distracting to the audience.

b. The Art of Song: Singers, Phyllis Curtin (soprano), Yi-Kwei Sze (bass-baritone), Claudia McNeil (contralto). First program in a series aimed at breaking down some of the arbitrary distinctions between "classical" and "popular" music. Composers represented included Faure, Handel, Gershwin, Kern, Purcell, Schubert, and Villa-Lobos.

c. String and Jazz Quartets: The Camera Three String Quartet (organized by Daniel Saidenberg, cellist) and the Gerry Mulligan Jazz Quartet. Second in the series.

d. American Theatre Music: Guests, Arthur Schwartz (composer) and Erich Leinsdorf (conductor). Performers: Members of the cast of the new American opera, *Susannah*, by Carlisle Floyd. Last in the series. Mr. Schwartz and Mr. Leinsdorf, at two pianos, discussed and illustrated similarities between musical comedy and opera. Last half of program consisted of scenes from *Susannah*.

e. *Così fan Tutte*: Camera Three Opera Workshop (Phyllis Curtin, Jane Hobson, David Lloyd, Mack Morgan, and Kenneth Smith) in the first act of the Mozart opera.

f. The Course of Love: love songs of three continents by Marais and Miranda, international balladeers. This was more than a simple recital. In a stylized setting, and with careful changes in lighting to fit the changing moods, the half hour moved from the lighter phases of love to the more

tragic. In a switch from the usual relationship between music and literature, poems were used to establish atmosphere and to bridge the songs.

### 2. MUSIC FOR ATMOSPHERE

a. Dylan Thomas: Suite based on Welsh folk themes, especially composed for Camera Three, for harp and clarinet (live). Music was used under some of Thomas' prose, but only as settings (before and after) for the poems. One of the *misuses* of music is to play it (on organ or otherwise) under good poems.

b. What Price Nonsense: Selections from Edward Lear, Lewis Carroll, and James Thurber. Specially composed suite for clarinets and oboes (live).

c. Art in Motion: the mobiles of Alexander Calder. Music was of particular importance in presenting a subject that was likely to strike many of our viewers as disturbingly new, difficult, and abstract. We therefore used melodic and "un-modern" music while showing the mobiles, resisting the more obvious temptation to match "advanced" art with "advanced" music. Some Bartok was included, but only when examples of non-abstract motion were being shown on camera.

### 3. MUSIC FOR ITS OWN SAKE AND FOR ATMOSPHERE

This combined use of music has in a sense been most important of all to Camera Three. One of our major aims has been to put different arts into new combinations, so that a half hour may become more than the television presentative of an aspect of one art. If the program succeeds, it is a new artistic entity in its own right.

a. Elizabethan Miscellany: performers, Russell Oberlin (counter tenor), Betty Wilson (soprano), Paul Maynard (harpsichord), of the New York Pro Musica Antiqua. Songs from the "Elizabethan Songbook" framed the program and punctuated it throughout. They were important in themselves, as a part of the achievement and spirit of the Elizabethan age; but they were also vital in unifying the whole half hour, which was a dramatized compilation of prose, poems, and scenes from plays. It is vital in such a program, with its many different elements, to avoid chop-piness, and to prepare the audience emotionally for shifts of mood. For example: we incorporated songs into a tragic scene from "The Duchess of Malfi," and in this way restored some of the emotional force it inevitably lost from being taken out of the context of a full length play.

b. Goya: The Triumph of Darkness. In this program, dance and flamenco singing (with guitar) were blended with paintings and etchings, the aim being to capture the essential spirit of Goya as it became deeper and darker. The use of music here was as a means of symbolic expressiveness. The words of the singer (untranslated from the Spanish) had only an indirect connection with the Goya pictures. Creation of the proper emotional climate was the all-important factor.

c. Medieval Tapestry: Here, as in the Elizabethan Miscellany, music was both a part of the subject and an essential for atmosphere. For this impression of the Middle Ages in music, pictures, and dramatic scenes, we used records (both vocal and instrumental), mainly the Belgian Pro Musica Antiqua's recording of twelfth and thirteenth century music, and a Gregorian chant.

(Lewis Freedman is producer and John McGiffert is writer for CAMERA THREE.)

Goya



## CONFESSIONS OF A FILM COMPOSER

Victor Young

When fellow-musicians in more sedate branches of the music field ask why on earth I chose to become a film composer, I am stumped for a ready answer. Why, indeed, would any trained musician let himself in for a career that calls for the exactitude of an Einstein, the diplomacy of a Churchill, — and the patience of a martyr? Yet, after doing some 350 film scores, I can think of no other musical medium that offers as much challenge, excitement, — and demand for creativity in putting music to work. Every new film is unique in its dramatic values, and, scene for scene, asks for a fresh musical interpretation of the human comedy. The film composer must be equipped with an unflinching interest in the universe of man and a gargantuan knowledge of musical forms.

Film composition techniques have come a long way since the advent of the sound-track. In an early effort called *Frankie and Johnny*, I composed a song called *Give Me a Heart to Sing To*, for the late Helen Morgan. The other stars, Chester Morris and Lilyan Tashman, stood by waiting, (a young musician named Sigmund Spaeth sat at the piano), but the talented chanteuse just could not remember the simple lyrics, — and it was necessary to hold them up on a blackboard to get on with the scene. As is so often the case, the song itself died with the picture, but I'm going to dust it off and bring it back on records one of these days.

Film composers and alert music-lovers have for years chafed at the fact that hundreds of first-rate pieces of musical composition, apart from "pop" songs, have been buried in Hollywood vaults. Brooding over this some years ago, when I had completed the score of *For Whom The Bell Tolls*, I threw caution to the winds and simply gave the score to a music publisher and record company. Although this was contractually illegal, the producers were mollified when the market for such wares became manifest in heavy sales, — which helped to popularize the film itself. Although the studios are certainly more liberal today, it is still necessary for film composers to act as an organization to see to it that their music is kept from early burial. After all, film music is a rich and often exemplary library of contemporary American composition, and deserves a first rank in the concert hall.

After so many years in film composition I have evolved a work schedule or system that may seem unorthodox by Hollywood standards. Rather than read a script (which may be changed several times during shooting), or watch the daily "rushes" of a film in production (much of which may end up on the cutting-room floor), I prefer to wait until the film is finished and final, complete with spoken dialogue and sound effects. After a first viewing of the whole film, I will leave the screening-room for my own home — far from the Hollywood bustle — and as likely as not sit down to hear some recorded Brahms or Prokofieff, which has the effect of musical "brainwashing" and serves as an inspirational stimulus. Perhaps the next day the theme I will use pops into my mind. Then back to the screening-room for several more viewings, and copious notemaking as my theme develops in terms of the demands peculiar to each scene.

In this stage, a multiplicity of factors must be considered. If the sound effects are dominant in the scene (bells,

trains, people in action), the music must be subtle enough to enhance, but not interfere. Large images on the screen will often call for louder music. Registers must be watched carefully, as an actor's voice and music in the same register would tend to muddle together, so that for proper mixing, the opposite register to the voice should be used in the music. As soon as I have completed a full plan for my score, replete with exact information for instrumentalization, I turn it over to a gifted associate for orchestral arrangement. Unlike other colleagues, who may often use a different arranger for each new score, I have preferred to stick with the same one for over twenty-one years, because he is thoroughly familiar with the orchestral effects that go to make up my own style.

With the completed orchestral score in hand, the next step is the sound studio, where I conduct the orchestra, with one eye on a screen on which the film is being unfurled. Now the music must blend accurately to the action of foot by foot of film, timed and measured with the aid of a "click track" which marks off intervals of time much like a metronome. Sometimes the transition of mood in a film takes place in a mere second, — and the music must, of course, follow suit. Because this rigid synchronization is particularly true of cartoon scoring, the expression "Mickey-Mousing" has come to describe it, as well as its imitation in the accenting of comic or even dramatic effects.

When the painstaking job of grafting music to the sound-track has been accomplished, the composer offers up an earnest prayer that no director, producer or cutter will decide to slice out any part of a scene, because while this may be of benefit to the film's action, it can often mangle the musical continuity of the score.

The fascinating and exacting process described above is the champagne of the film composer's life, but not by a long shot his only preoccupation. Several years ago I was brought into David Selznick's office by a director who had just commissioned me to score the latter's latest opus. "This man can compose music?" cried the dismayed producer. "He looks more like a prizefighter to me!" As it happens, he wasn't wrong in his description. I have often been mistaken for a retired bantamweight, and have given up trying to look like a musician since my long-haired youth at the Warsaw Imperial Conservatory.

But the film composer should be capable of fast footwork and riding with the punch when he gets into the ring with his bosses, the directors and producers. Often highly gifted in the business of putting a film together, these good people are frequently endowed with the vaguest of musical backgrounds, and in an industry noted for its "yes-men," the composer must learn, subtly, to be a "no-man." Not knowing this, early in the game, I was asked by one of the mightiest to play out a score I had written, on his piano. He listened and then asked, "do you really believe that this is the best you can do for my film?" I thought it was, and told him so. "Go home and compose an alternate score," he commanded. After a two weeks of yeoman work on a new theme, new concept, I returned and again played it for him. "Do you like this score?" he asked. I replied honestly that I did indeed. "Well then, you couldn't have *really* liked the first one!" he boomed. Another well-meaning

film-maker said, at the end of a screening, "for this picture I want you to give me a score in the style of Hindemith." Knowing that he had probably heard his first Hindemith record recently, I nodded in solemn agreement and went home to compose a score which he marvelled at, — only it was in the "style" of Victor Young! A source of some disagreement is the producer's demand for music in a scene in which the composer feels it has no place, — or, contrarily, for no music where the composer feels it would be very effective. Often I have simply used my own judgement, — with which the producer as a rule enthusiastically concurs when he sees and hears the results.

By and large, Hollywood producers will come to intelligent terms with a composer's judgement, after considerable discussion. But it is always most productive to be given a completely free hand in one's work. I was delighted when the King Brothers recently turned over their fine film, *The Brave One*, to me, and simply said "It's your baby now." Set in Mexico, *The Brave One* gave me time and leeway to work in the Latin folk-idiom, which I'm particularly partial to. For the actual recording I was able to use the excellent 110-piece Munich Symphony Orchestra. The result is a



Michel Ray in *The Brave One*.

film composition I find deeply satisfying, and one that I hope will enhance the pleasure of audiences everywhere.

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## FILM AND TV MUSIC NEWS

The Composers and Lyricists Guild of America has elected its officers for the 1956-1957 term. Leith Stevens remains in office as president of the organization. The other officers are Walter Schumann, Winston Sharples and David Terry, vice-presidents; Jerry Livingston, secretary-treasurer, and Ben Ludlow, assistant secretary-treasurer. The Guild has presented its first honorary membership to George Jessel "in recognition of his generous gifts of his talent, wit and benevolence to all American art and artists." . . . The Motion Picture Association of Japan is sponsoring a Japanese Film Week in New York in late January, with evening screenings at the Museum of Modern Art. Shirley Yamaguchi will act as hostess to artists and executives prominent in the Japanese film world. John D. Rockefeller, III, and Masayuki Tani, the Ambassador from Japan, head the cooperating committee. . . . The Ed Sullivan Show on CBS will present scenes from five operas this season. Singers, conductors and an orchestra of sixty men from the Metropolitan Opera Company will appear in the fully staged excerpts. The first telecast, in November, was taken from the second act of Puccini's "La Tosca", with Maria Callas in the title role. . . . The Motion Picture Sound Editors have revised procedures for their Annual Awards nominations. Under the new system, each major studio will nominate its own best sound-edited film. The independents will choose their final nominee from five selections. . . . Richard Benda, authority in Schillinger System instruction, has written a series of twenty articles on "Lessons in Schillinger System Arranging" for the INTERNATIONAL MUSICIAN. The articles, which give practical applications of the System and time-saving techniques in orchestration, began in the October issue of the magazine. The back numbers are available. Write to the INTERNATIONAL MUSICIAN, 39 Division St., Newark, N. J. . . . Hugo Friedhofer has been elected to the Music Branch of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. . . . Through a grant awarded by the Rockefeller Foundation, the Third Art Film Festival in America will be held this spring under the co-sponsorship of the American Federation of Arts and the College Art Association. Films will be screened at the

Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Further information may be had from The Third Art Film Festival, 29 East 64th St. New York. Sidney Berkowitz is chairman. . . . Warner Brothers is making the full facilities of its studio available for the production of filmed programs on the ABC-TV network. The arrangement is the first of its kind between a major studio and a network. The deal permits Warner to produce films for any other television programs. . . . George Seaton, president of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, announces that nominations for the Academy's 29th Annual Awards will be made on February 18. The nominations will not be telecast. Jerry Lewis will head the Oscar ceremonies on March 27, which will be carried over the NBC TV and radio networks. NBC began televising the Academy presentations in 1953, and has acquired exclusive television rights to the ceremony until 1961. . . . Hartt College of Music and Hillyer College will federate to form the University of Hartford. Each college will maintain its academic identity under the governing board of the university. For the past eight years Hartt College has sponsored the Institute of Contemporary American Music, presenting new works by nearly a hundred musicians in one-composer concerts and numerous music festivals. . . . At the annual Sylvania awards, a special television award was given to Robert W. Sarnoff, President of the National Broadcasting Company, for his "outstanding contribution to music on television". The citation read in part: — "The committee of judges feels that — with one notable exception — there always has been a dearth of attention to the 'creative television techniques' possible in the world of music. That exception is the NBC Opera Theatre, and one man is primarily responsible for bringing it to us. . . . He launched the NBC Opera Theatre several years ago, and it has brilliantly fulfilled his three aims: to present opera in English, to follow plausible casting policies so that singers fit the parts they are portraying, and to have the words sung clearly so that everyone may understand them. Without compromising the quality of opera, this program has made it enjoyable to millions."