

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

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

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

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

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

THEMATIC EXCERPTS
FROM COLUMBIA PICTURES PRODUCTION

"SALOME"

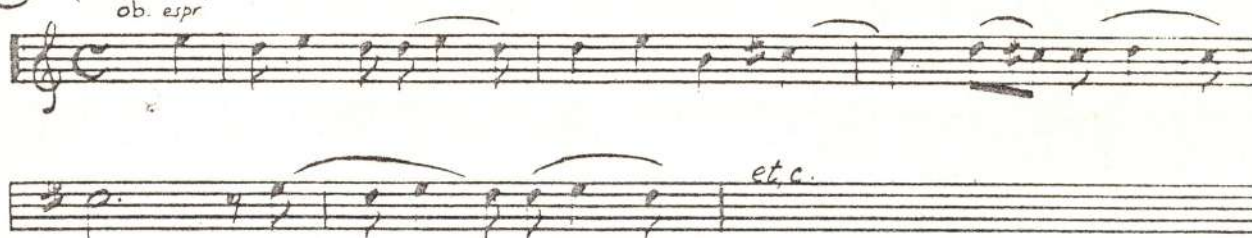
Comp. by GEORGE W. DUNING A.S.C.A.P.
(Copyright Columbia Pict. Corp.)

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

Mod^{to}

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

(B) (secondary section)
ob. espr



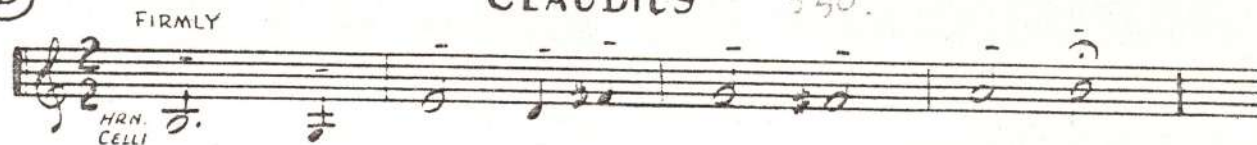
The third section (example C) was used for the more moody and dramatic scenes: for instance, the quarrel between Claudius and Salome and the scene where Queen Herodius asked her daughter to dance for the King and Salome storms out of the Queen's quarters.

(C) (third section)
DARK - MOODY



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

(D) "CLAUDIUS" 3/4



The main theme (example A) was also used in the light manner (example I). This treatment was used in an amusing scene between Salome and Claudius in which Salome is piqued because she has been supplied with sea water for her bath. 20

King Herod (Charles Laughton) called for a strong and somewhat pompous theme (example E). This theme usually was played by the low strings in the tutti passages, or as a bass clarinet solo in the quieter dialogue scenes. / 20

(E) "KING HEROD" POMPOUSLY



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

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

"HERODIAS"

Musical notation for 'HERODIAS' in 3/2 time, featuring a single melodic line on a staff with various ornaments and a final fermata.

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

(G) *Mod^{to}*

"PILATE" & The ROMANS"

Musical notation for 'PILATE' & The ROMANS' in 4/4 time, featuring a unison of horns above a bass line of parallel intervals. Includes markings like 'Harshly' and 'etc.'.

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

(H) *Lento*
PURE-SIMPLY
Fls.
strs.
Hrns.

The "BAPTIST"

Musical notation for 'The BAPTIST' in 2/2 time, featuring a simple melody in the horns and strings.

(I) *Gracefully* *f*

"SALOME" (Light Treatment)

Musical notation for 'SALOME' (Light Treatment) in 6/8 time, featuring a graceful melody in the horns.

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

J (STEADILY) *The "CARAVAN"*

Handwritten musical score for 'The CARAVAN'. It features a treble clef staff with a melody and a bass clef staff with accompaniment. The tempo is marked '(STEADILY)'. The score includes dynamic markings like 'Tymx' and 'Hrnc'. Below the staves, it lists instruments: 'Plus. PERC. - TAMB. - PERSIAN CYMB. - CAMEL BELLS etc.'. The piece ends with 'etc.'.

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

K (Salome) *SALOME (MAIN TITLE TREATMENT)*

Handwritten musical score for 'SALOME (MAIN TITLE TREATMENT)'. It features a treble clef staff with a melody and a bass clef staff with accompaniment. The tempo is marked 'Warmly'. The score includes dynamic markings like 'stacc.' and 'esp.'. Below the staves, it lists instruments: 'Hrnc.' and 'w.w.'. The piece ends with 'etc.'.

"HEROD" THEME (MAIN TITLE TREATMENT)

(L)

Handwritten musical score for "HEROD" THEME (MAIN TITLE TREATMENT). The score is written on two systems of staves. The first system features a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a bass clef staff with accompaniment. The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like "f" and "mf". There are also some handwritten annotations and a circled "L" at the beginning.

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

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

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

