



# FILM MUSIC



VIVA ZAPATA

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## VIVA ZAPATA

Lan Adomian

During most of the second decade of this century Mexico's history was marked by violent events. Revolutions, counter-revolutions, interventions, plots, counterplots, assassinations and revenge. The names that most frequently appear during this period are those of Diaz, Pancho Villa, Madero, Huerta and Emiliano Zapata. These personages represented almost every historical type of leader. There were among them villains and saints, realists and dreamers. There were opportunists and martyrs; some believing that the old order of tyrannical rule must stay; others fighting for the liberation of the Mexican peon from all bonds.

The real needs of the down-trodden mass of Mexican peasants cried out for leadership that would most readily bring about the fulfilment of this most ancient of all peasants' dreams:- possession of the soil which they tilled. One of the most outstanding and colorful leaders of these peasant movements was Emiliano Zapata - a native of Ayala. It was in this same Ayala that Zapata's bullet riddled body came to rest. It was here too that a legend started: "Zapata is not dead - when we, the peasants, will need him, he will come."

Many accounts have already been written about Zapata and undoubtedly many more will be written. Mr. Steinbeck's story of Zapata as filmed by Elia Kazan for Twentieth Century-Fox may cause a lot of controversy, or it may be accepted for what it is - one man's view of an exceedingly important era in the history of our neighbors below the Rio Grande. In this reviewer's mind no such controversy can be caused by the musical score of Alex North. A score that lends itself to adverse criticism gives the critic a marvelous opportunity to write a real or imagined post mortem; He can use such a review as a take off point for airing HIS ideas of what should have been done. But as already mentioned Alex North's score is a model of what film music should be. It understates when the exigencies of the story demands it. When the opportunity presents itself, the composer exhibits a fullblown musical talent that is able to cope with symphonic forms.

In a conversation with the composer it became clear that he had no intention of doing an "authentic" Mexican score. The possibility of using either authentic or composed "corridos" (a type of Mexican folk song) did occur to Alex North. However the conception of the film being what it is - a realistic treatment with poetic overtones - it was felt that the "authentic" approach would result in a phony quality. The composer did have one important advantage. He had spent the better part of two years in Mexico not as a tourist but as a resident in close contact with everyday life.

Thanks to the general style of VIVA ZAPATA! the composer did not feel compelled to overparticularize every individual emotion, but rather react objectively to the aspirations of the mass of Zapata's peasant followers. Still North's sensitivity to individual drama did not make this another "epic" score. The composer found many opportunities to let the music complete a dramatic situation. Unquestionably this is a score to be studied by those who'd like to see an ideal blending of the individual and epic or objective approaches. The examples that follow should leave no doubt as to the mature stature of Alex North as a composer, and in this instance a very sensitive and wise film composer.

The main title is of rather impressive length; it eventually brings you to the palace of Diaz where a group of peasants are waiting to be received by the dictator. The very opening of the main title is arresting in its use of xylophones and percussion, followed by the rest of the orchestra carrying a treatment of a tune which the composer overheard a woman humming in Zapata's native Ayala.

VIVA ZAPATA  
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VIVACE

XYLO.

TRPS.

HORNS

SSTGS. W.W.

TAMB.

S.D.

+PIATTI

① ② ③ ④

⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧

⑨ ⑩ ⑪ ⑫

The incident that eventually brings about the emergence of Zapata as a revolutionary leader occurs when mounted "rurales" drag a lassoed peasant along the dusty country road. Many another composer might have accompanied this brutal scene with some kind of "symphony music". Not so Alex North. He waits till the moment when Zapata's machete cuts the lasso that has almost strangled its victim, and at this point the music breaks in violently for a brief moment. As soon as the camera cuts to the dying peasant being comforted in the nearby cornfield a flute, very tenderly, intones a treatment of a Yaqui death chant.

DRAMATICALLY-WITH PASSION

TENDERLY-WITH TEARS

Zapata is captured by the reenforced rurales. He, like the old peasant whose lasso was cut by Zapata, is now walking the dusty road, his neck in a lasso. Here occurs one of the outstanding moments in the film. The camera picks up peasants in the plaza, in the fields, on the streets. Their faces are impassive, but their hands are making clicking sounds by knocking little stones against each other. This is a sort of primitive telegraph - apparently spreading the news of Zapata's capture. As the clicking rises in volume you hear a measured beat of bongos and tuned timbales. The orchestra has started a kind of Mexico Bolero. We hear next flutes, guitars, plucked strings. All this is without dialogue. The camera picks up figures of peasants seemingly emerging from nowhere, but all gravitating toward the bound Zapata and his captors. The music rises in volume expressing the unspoken demand of the peasants for the liberation of THEIR Zapata. The "rurales" thus surrounded are compelled to free Zapata who joins his people.

SLOWLY

Musical score for Timbales and Bongos. The top two staves are empty. The bottom staff is for Timbales and Bongos. The Timbales part has four measures with circled numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4. The Bongos part is labeled "(SEPARATE TRACK)" and has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes.

Musical score for Flutes, Guitar, and Bass. The top staff is for Flutes, starting with a piano (pp) dynamic. The middle staff is for Guitar (STRGS. CRED.). The bottom staff is for Bass, with circled numbers 5, 6, 7, and 8. The text "(DRUM PATTERN CONTINUES TO END)" is written below the guitar staff.

Musical score for measures 21-25. The score is written for strings and percussion. The top staff is a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The bottom staff is a grand staff (bass and tenor clefs). Measures 21 and 22 show the beginning of the section. Measure 23 is marked with a bracket and labeled "CELLI". Measure 24 is marked with a bracket and labeled "TAMP HARP". Measure 25 is marked with a bracket and labeled "CELLI". The bottom staff contains rhythmic notation for the percussion instruments.

Musical score for measures 26-31. The score is written for strings and woodwinds. The top staff is a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The bottom staff is a grand staff (bass and tenor clefs). Measures 26-31 show the continuation of the section. Measure 26 is marked with a bracket and labeled "VLAS.". Measure 27 is marked with a bracket and labeled "BS. CLAR.". Measure 28 is marked with a bracket and labeled "CLAR.". Measure 29 is marked with a bracket and labeled "CELLI". Measure 30 is marked with a bracket and labeled "CELLI". Measure 31 is marked with a bracket and labeled "CELLI". The bottom staff contains rhythmic notation for the percussion instruments.

Musical score for measures 32-37. The score is written for strings and tuba. The top staff is a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The bottom staff is a grand staff (bass and tenor clefs). Measures 32-37 show the continuation of the section. Measure 32 is marked with a bracket and labeled "VLAS.". Measure 33 is marked with a bracket and labeled "TUBA SOLO". Measure 34 is marked with a bracket and labeled "TUBA SOLO". Measure 35 is marked with a bracket and labeled "TUBA SOLO". Measure 36 is marked with a bracket and labeled "TUBA SOLO". Measure 37 is marked with a bracket and labeled "TUBA SOLO". The bottom staff contains rhythmic notation for the percussion instruments.

MARIMBA

⑨ ⑩ ⑪ ⑫

ENG. HN.  
BSN.

CLAR. ADD VLNS 1<sup>o</sup>

HNS. & TUBA  
pp

A:639

⑬ ⑭ ⑮ ⑯

CL. (VLNS)

⑰ ⑱ ⑳ (ADD BS. CL.)

ADD MARIMBA

ADD CLARS.

VINS. OUT

HORNS.

TRBS. & TUBA

Poco Cresc.

SBSN. B.C.L.

VINS. VIOLAS.

ADD MARIMBA

ADD MARIMBA

In a mountain hideout the now hunted Zapata is with his wife and closest collaborators. The preceding few years have seen much violence. The peasants almost achieved what they set out to do... get the land which they tilled for the landlords. There were joys and sorrows. The years were noted for the profusion of heroism and cowardice, nobility and treachery. A president had been assassinated. Zapata's enemies were determined to destroy him. But this was no simple matter. Zapata had too many friends. Treachery was the only way to render Zapata's movement harmless. As bait, he was offered an opportunity to meet with a military group that was ostensibly in favor of his ideas. On the night before Zapata was to go down into the valley to meet them, but his wife implored him not to go. She sensed that this was a trap. He rode away. Arriving at the appointed place, he enters a wide gate. In the sunbaked yard we see three women clad in black. Zapata is embraced by an officer and is about to talk with him. The officer jumps away and Zapata is shot full of lead by soldiers who are concealed on the roofs of the barracks. In the following example we hear the music accompanying the scene between Zapata and his wife (oboe d'amore, mandolins, guitar, marimba, bass marimba); the music grows ominous, the orchestra fuller: It cuts for a moment to the three women, and then to the gates ... a brief crescendo and the scene of Zapata's doom is set.

OBOE D'AMORE

LENTO (FREELY)

2 MANDOLINS

MARIMBA

GUITAR 1°

BASS MARIMBA

ADD GUITAR 2°

①

②

③

④

⑤

⑥

⑦

⑧

VLNS.

ADDNS. (SUST.)

9 10 11 12

This system contains two staves. The top staff is for Violins (VLNS.) and features a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes in the second measure. The bottom staff is for Additions (SUST.) and contains circled measure numbers 9, 10, 11, and 12, with various rhythmic patterns and rests.

CLS. MANDOLINS

GUITAR

STGS.

mf p

CELLI & W.W. 14

13 15 16

This system contains two staves. The top staff includes parts for Clarinets (CLS.), Mandolins, and Strings (STGS.). The bottom staff includes parts for Guitar and Cellos/Double Basses (CELLI & W.W.). Dynamic markings include *mf* and *p*. Circled measure numbers 13, 14, 15, and 16 are present.

STGS. (w.w.)

HORNS.

TRPTS.

ACCEL. POCCO

BASSI & W.W. 18

TRBS. 49

TIMP.

PIATTI

17 20

This system contains two staves. The top staff includes parts for Strings (STGS. w.w.), Horns (HORNS.), and Trumpets (TRPTS.). The bottom staff includes parts for Basses and Double Basses (BASSI & W.W.), Trumpets (TRBS.), Timpani (TIMP.), and Cymbals (PIATTI). The instruction "ACCEL. POCCO" is written across the bottom staff. Circled measure numbers 17 and 20 are present.

The assassins dump the body of Emiliano Zapata in the plaza of Ayala. Women and peasants come to venerate their dead hero. But the peasants say: "can you capture a river?" "Can you kill the wind?" ..... The legend has wings - it soars over the countryside - its message that Zapata isn't dead. The people believe that when needed Zapata will return.

**MAESTROSO**

The musical score is written in 2/4 time and consists of three systems of staves. The first system includes staves for Woodwinds (W.W.), Horns (HNS), Trumpets (TRBS), Basses (BASSI), and Percussion (P.P.S.). The second system continues the woodwind and string parts. The third system features a woodwind part and a percussion part with specific drum notation.

**System 1:** Includes staves for W.W., HNS, TRBS, BASSI, and P.P.S. (labeled with 1, 2, 3). Annotations include "MAESTROSO", "W.W.", "HNS", "TRBS", "BASSI", and "(TIMP.)".

**System 2:** Continues the woodwind and string parts, with measures numbered 4, 5, and 6.

**System 3:** Features woodwind and percussion parts, with measures numbered 7, 8, and 9. Annotations include "CON B.", "SW. DR.", "FLD. DR.", and "CON B. BASSA".

The music is singularly poignant. High strings and woodwinds, muted high trumpets, a tone cluster in the horns. The composer gives full and rich expression to the grief, pride and hope of the followers of Zapata. It is a very telling film score sensitively directed by Alfred Newman. Here indeed is fine music waiting to be presented in concert form.

VIVA ZAPATA.. 20th Century-Fox. Marlon Brando, Jean Peters. Director, Elia Kazan. Music, Alex North. Musical Director, Alfred Newman and Alex North. Music Copyright, by 20th Century-Fox.

*con B<sup>te</sup>*

10 11 12

*con B<sup>te</sup>*

13 14 15

TIMP. PIANO B.D.R. Sn. DR.

*con B<sup>te</sup>*

16 17 18 19

GUITAR MARIMBA