



FILM MUSIC NOTES

JUN 1 '44F

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6162 Hollywood Boulevard
HOLLYWOOD 28, CALIFORNIA

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX
TILDEN FOUNDATION 5

VOLUME III

MAY, 1944

NUMBER VIII

FOREWORD:

A recent issue of "Time," quoting from a Mexico City newspaper in a scathing criticism of the concerts given there a short while ago by one of our leading conductors, reprints the following comment: "He seems to have taken great trouble to satisfy the tastes of a public which has acquired its musical appreciation through the cinema and canned music." This is an attitude which has been taken in this country also by some critics and people of high standing from an educational point of view, who apparently haven't taken the trouble, in recent years, either to go to pictures and hear the music provided for them, or listen to either radio or records.

In the old days the actual hearing of symphonies, operas or concerts was limited to the few who either lived in the cities or could afford to hear great artists when they went on tour. Now there is a vast listening audience all over the world for music and this is largely due to the apparently despised "cinema and canned music."

If one consults the roster of musicians writing for the screen there ensues a realization that it contains some pretty big names. Furthermore, there is scarcely an artist living today who is not glad to reach out to the great unseen audience which radio and films command. Too, more records are sold all over the world than ever before and our boys and girls are growing up with an appreciation of music traceable directly in most cases to the new mediums. So all the more power to the "cinema and canned music" - whether in Mexico, here, or in Timbuctoo!

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NEWS ITEMS....COMMENTS

First of a proposed series of MUSIC FORUMS will be held at the Carthay Circle Theater in Hollywood on June 10th. Sponsored by THE NATIONAL FILM MUSIC COUNCIL and the California Western MUSIC EDUCATORS' CONFERENCE and arranged by the Department of Studio and Public Service of the Motion Picture Producers & Distributors of America, Inc., this first program will present Corporal Gail Kubik in a discussion of his music scoring of THE MEMPHIS BELLE (reviewed in this issue). In addition to a showing of the picture, sequences of the music track will be run separately as illustrative of the composer's comments.

Winner of the 1944 Guggenheim award for music, Corporal Gail Kubik, returned ten days ago from England where he was called to assist in the music scoring of new Army Air Force films. Now back at his home base, The First Motion Picture Unit, AAF, Culver City, California, he is assigned to write the music for a picture of our Air Force in action in the Pacific, produced by Major Frank Lloyd.

Comments on the Forum will be included in our next issue. Tentative plans for continuation of the series in the fall include a Walt Disney Day, featuring Latin-American music.

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Pianist Shura Cherkassky has just returned to his Hollywood home after an extended eastern tour. He gave the only concert of the season in the Soviet Embassy, appeared as soloist with the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington, D. C., and gave recitals in New York, Baltimore and Miami. He did the actual playing of Chopin and Smetana works in the film, "Voice in the Wind," with Francis Lederer.

* * *

It is interesting to note the increasing trend in pictures toward biographical portraits of our great composers, both classic and popular. There have been European films on this order for some time, with Beethoven recreated in masterly fashion. We have seen Liszt, Schubert and even Paderewski himself on the screen and only recently a life of Verdi. Over here a few years ago, Don Ameche added Stephen Foster to his gallery of portrayals; Bing Crosby played Dan Emmett, of the early minstrel shows; and James Cagney gave us George M. Cohan. We have had Victor Herbert, Irving Berlin, Nora Bayes and Jack Norworth. Before long we are to see RHAPSODY IN BLUE which traces the career of George Gershwin and includes in its musical framework twenty-nine of the composer's best known works. In production is a similar biography of Ernest Ball, Irish ballad composer, which takes its title from one of his best loved songs, WHEN IRISH EYES ARE SMILING. In preparation are others: NIGHT AND DAY, featuring the life story and music of Cole Porter; SOMETIMES I'M HAPPY, dealing with the life experiences of Vincent Youmans; and more to come.

Fifteen years ago, or less, it was almost impossible to interest an American composer in pictures with a classical music background. But things are different now. THE LOVE OF MADAME SAND will feature Frederic Chopin and his immortal compositions. This is a long step forward and it is to be expected that the public will continue to want more and better music and will want to know more about the men who write it.

* * *

Recent showings in Los Angeles of re-issues of two European films dealing with Opera were well attended and distinctly worthwhile. Both tell absorbing stories and are rich in beloved operatic numbers. Signorina Cebotari, lovely Italian actress and singer, plays the title role in THE DREAM OF BUTTERFLY which includes almost the complete second and third acts of "Madame Butterfly." THE LIFE OF GIUSEPPI VERDI has, as its highlights, sequences from "Traviata," "Aida" and "Rigoletto," sung by distinguished Italian singers, with Maria Cebotari again prominent. Fosco Giachetti, cast as the composer, gives a sensitive performance.

(NEWS ITEMS....COMMENTS; cont'd)

To visit the music library of one of the major studios is a novel and worthwhile experience. While waiting for the music sheet from the Mark Twain score which is reproduced in this issue, Mr. Centrone, music librarian at Warner Bros., most graciously allowed us to inspect his domain and took pains to show us its treasures! The room is arranged like any large room in the stack section of a public library. There are the same card indexes, a few long tables - only the number of comfortable chairs usually provided for readers are missing for there are no readers here. And the shelves of the stacks, reaching nearly to the ceiling, instead of holding books hold scores - hundreds and hundreds of them; a living record of what has been accomplished by those pioneers of the sound track, Warner Bros. and to which some of the world's finest musicians have contributed their quota. Indeed, the present roster including Leo Forbstein who heads the department, bears such names as Max Steiner, Franz Waxman, Adolph Deutsch, Erich Wolfgang Korngold, Frederick Hollander, Ray Heindorf, Heinz Roemheld, Robert Emmett Dolan and many others.

From the library we went to the recording stage where Mr. Waxman was rehearsing his orchestra for the Jack Benny picture soon to be released, "The Horn Blows at Midnight." At one end of the room high over their heads so that everyone can see it when necessary is a screen fixed on the wall so that the conductor can check every scene with his recording. When the lights were lowered at intervals for this purpose, it was like the old days of silent pictures as the film is run without dialogue. But later earphones were brought us and plugged in to a portable switch by our chairs so that we could hear both voices and music. To watch Franz Waxman's sensitive conducting was a delight and further pleasure was added in this case by the presence at the piano of the lovely and distinguished widow of Richard Boleslavsky, herself a former concert pianist who has been with the orchestra for some years and who now lends her beauty and talents exclusively to this organization.

Mr. Steiner's own office in the music department is another point of high interest. The walls are covered with portraits and signed tributes of every description, even to the grand piano over which hangs a symbolic painting representing the impression made by Mr. Steiner's music on a young artist-admirer. Over all this Marie (Miss Keller), as she is affectionately known to the whole department, his efficient and devoted secretary and herself a musician, presides with understanding and tact. One always comes away from a visit to one of these studios with a feeling of increased respect for what is being accomplished within its walls.

* * *

In a recent visit to Mr. Bakaleinikoff, the genial and talented gentleman who presides over the musical destinies of the RKO Studios, he made the suggestion that a question and answer column be inaugurated in this bulletin. We thought this a fine idea and especially so as Mr. Bakaleinikoff himself agreed to answer any of the questions put, to the best of his ability and thought other studio musical directors might be willing to do the same. So we are more than happy to offer this opportunity to our readers to find out more about the musical workings and what goes on in the musical departments of the Hollywood film world. Music students should find this of particular value, and the editors of FILM MUSIC NOTES are most grateful to Mr. Bakaleinikoff, who, in spite of being one of the busiest musicians in Hollywood, has made it possible.

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Separate issues of the Film Music Portfolio, consisting of the nine musical pages of the year together with the biographical notes about each composer, may be obtained from FILM MUSIC NOTES at a cost of \$1.00 for the set or .15¢ for separate sheets, if preferred.

Visual Re-Creation of Music
By Margery Morrison

We used to consider music as the language of the emotions - now it can be mathematically conceived in the modern idiom!

The question of approach is however the interesting one.

Program Music in its original sense imitated elementary sounds. Daquin's "Cuckoo," the Beethoven Pastoral Symphony with its merrymaking and thunderstorm being favorite examples. Then moods evoked by emotion were apprehended until now our program notes tell us what it is all about, what to expect, how to feel! But the test of Absolute Music makes it independent of commentary and we are free to follow our own imagination.

In Film Music we have a different approach: music has been considered secondary to the picture without any definite life of its own. Given a fine scenario, clever synchronization, it may stand on its own two feet - depending on continuity, pace and tempo - and so have value as absolute music. So it finds place in concert and symphonic form.

Now Disney was one of the first to acquaint the huge movie public with the classics used as background to his comedy creations. They were adapted with marvelous psychological timing.

Reversing this process, Werner Janssen (who has just released three of a proposed series - "The Visual Re-Creation of Music" by Master Composers filmed in 16mm. Kodachrome) starts out with orchestrations of absolute music; creates pictures of fantasies that illustrate and popularize it.

Gaumont in Paris had another approach. A masterpiece was played by a great soloist - and as he projected the mood a stage presentation appeared - his vision!

Through his Kodachrome 16mm. films, Janssen vitalizes the classics for educational and for entertainment purposes - we are intrigued by the story the music subconsciously registers.

In fact, the only criticism of "Fantasia" is that the classics used became indelibly associated with a certain story. But it marked a definite phase and advance in general music appreciation.

An audience of young people who dote on jive and jitters and know only off-beat rhythm and look down their noses at any other medium may find an approach to another world of sound through these masterpieces, presented with a personal interpretation.

The Debussy idiom of the "Engulfed Cathedral," as presented by Janssen, subtly blends with the phantom values of the pictured legend. Rameau's "The Hen," perhaps uninteresting and unintelligible hitherto, suddenly finds a meaning through its amusing adaptation.

* * * *

Margery Morrison, who at one time gave lectures on Music Appreciation for Music Clubs and the New York Board of Education, was so impressed with the Gaumont presentation in Paris (mentioned above) that she planned an Artists' Vision series of shorts suitable for Vitaphone - then a novelty! From her prospectus over fifteen years ago, we quote: "Such pictures can well take the place of program notes for a popular program. A stage presentation of a subjective vision they feature great artists and artistic interpretation. They are of the same caliber and scope as the Great Composer series. We suggest a Vitaphone Overture series with small symphonic ensemble. For instance, Mendelssohn's 'Ruy Blas' with the story of the lackey called to play the part of king, projected on the screen."

Scoring Film Drama

In the deeper sense it may be that music has always been related to human emotions. Yet in the history of our Western music its close connection with dramatic art is relatively new. Plato, no doubt, would have frowned upon the enchanting Mickey Mouse music of Disney technique, for he taught that musicians degraded themselves when they tried to imitate the roar of lions or the whistling of the wind. Somewhere in the 13th century the songs of the troubadors began to find musical form, but not until the 17th century did opera originate and serious composers begin to write for the stage. With Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, music became dramatic, architectural. The first two composed what have been called "comedies of manners" for court life. Beethoven, a child of the turbulent French Revolution period, was the great tragedian, his music described as "more universal in emotional range than any art since Shakespeare." Romance came into our music with Mendelssohn and Schumann and Schubert. Then came Wagner, "dreaming new wonders in orchestral sound," but greatly mistrusted and criticized by many of his contemporaries who thought him subversive, an erotic dramatist.

Skipping lightly over the mountain peaks to the 20th century we find a new welding of music and drama in our modern art form - the motion picture. Here music has had, says Max Steiner "the most hectic career, not excepting sound, of all mediums which combine to make the motion picture." The real crisis came with the introduction of sound. There were, as we know, complete unbroken scores written for many of the important non-talking pictures, such as Ben Hur, The Covered Wagon and many others. And there was always the theater orchestra to fill in. But it was one thing to write music for pantomime and quite another to blend sound effects and dialogue and music into pictorial imagery. Today there are few uninterrupted scores. In some instances there is a continuity running throughout the entire footage of a dramatic picture but, often, it must give way to the spoken words and be so played down that it is felt rather than heard. Like an underground river it has its effect upon the surface structure but it does not intrude upon the landscape.

We get the same kind of scoring that was written for silent pictures only in the music which marks the opening, heard as we read the credit titles, and again at the end. Here, there is opportunity to define the mood of the story and to put the audience in a proper frame of mind for mystery, romance, tragedy or laughter. This is the "overture" which indicates the subject matter of the dramatic action.

The modern idea of using music to enrich drama is said to have originated with Gluck in 1757 when, rebelling against the opera form of the time, he said: "I wish to reduce music to its true function, which is to second poetry, in expressing the emotions and situations of a play without interrupting the action." But it was Wagner, a century later, who developed music drama as distinct from opera, making the drama the basis and the music its exponent by all the means which the developed orchestra had placed at the disposal of the composer. He did away with set numbers and attained continuity by the use of leading motives (the "leit motif") making the orchestra supply a continuous commentary to the dramatic events. The "leit motif" plays an important part in motion picture scoring today although some composers make far greater use of it than others. Some write themes for each leading character interwoven with the theme of the drama, some lean more toward what is called "mood music," seeking to convey the overall atmospheric content; and some delight in contrapuntal effects for dramatic contrast. Today it may be said that music scoring of a dramatic picture is recognized as a vital and necessary element in film production. There is, however, the notable exception of LIFEBOAT in which there is no background music except for the compelling "overture." "Where," Mr. Hitchcock asked, "might one imagine an orchestra to be when the entire action took place in a lifeboat on the open sea?" To which Werner Janssen countered: "Then where was the camera?" It brought to mind the old problem which so beset picture makers in the early days of sound. There was then the constant fear that audiences

(Scoring Film Drama, cont'd)

would not accept background music unless they could see the source of it. Today its value is universally accepted and proved. And only such an artist as Hitchcock ventures to discard its powerful emotion-building quality.

Now that so much fine music is being composed for pictures it is natural that experiments in recording film scores should be made. Victor Young's magnificent score for FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS has been recorded by Decca. So, too, has Alfred Newman's Academy Award score for THE SONG OF BERNADETTE. It is our understanding that Max Steiner's music for THE ADVENTURES OF MARK TWAIN will be recorded by them this summer. And how we shall love to play over and over again that pulsing music of the Mississippi River, with its clarion call "mark twain" - safe water! Plans have been made also to record parts of his score for SARATOGA TRUNK - at least the lovely romantic melody which is his motive for the role played by Ingrid Bergman. Throughout, his music for this picture sparkles with mischief and lighthearted gaiety, setting over against the feminine vivacity of "Clio Dulaine," the breezy, virile western feeling of "Col. Clint Maroon," as played by Gary Cooper. There is conflict and even tragedy in the drama but the music lifts it and carries it high. Possibly we shall hear in it some resemblance to his distinguished score for "Gone With the Wind," for the stories are not unlike, and yet this versatile composer is not inclined to repeat himself. Always a pioneer, Steiner breaks all rules. In fact he declares there are no rules and won't be as long as music continues to make such rapid strides. Just now he is at work on the score for the new Selznick picture, SINCE YOU WENT AWAY, a story of America today.

Who knows - perhaps historians may some day look back upon the 20th century as the beginning of a notable departure in music, something truly American, inspired by its union with the motion picture. Certainly the new medium is attracting the attention of the great American composers today. And from Europe there have come many distinguished musicians, happy and eager to contribute to this developing new art form in a free country. Well established are such men as Erich Wolfgang Korngold, Miklos Rozsa, and Constantin Bakaleinikoff. More of a newcomer is Daniele Amfitheatrof, famous Russian composer whose score for DAYS OF GLORY reflects the love of her people for Mother Russia, simple unaffected, woven of the folk songs of the land, it has great beauty and speaks of the loneliness of men, women and children fighting desperately far from home in defense of all they hold dear. That he could have composed the charming, nostalgic music for LASSIE COME HOME, and the whimsical overtones of LOST ANGEL speaks volumes for his versatility.

New to Hollywood, too, is Hans Eisler whose book on "Films and Music" will be published by Oxford Press this fall. His score for HANGMEN ALSO DIE was nominated for Academy Award and now he is at work on music for NONE BUT THE LONELY HEART, original music suggested by the Tchaikowsky composition of the same title. And there is Ernst Toch whose music for ADDRESS UNKNOWN is as dramatic and brilliant as the photography of Rudolph Mate - a subtle and purposeful "overstaging" which evokes added pity and terror as used against the restrained under-playing of Paul Lukas and the strong supporting cast.

The real problem in scoring lies in the swift interpretation of changing moods and scenes. Every scene must be timed to a second and the music written to a stop watch. Sometimes music is used as a kind of accent to punctuate rapid action, sometimes to clarify a character's reactions, sometimes it takes its place as part of the expression of the story. Today, there are differences of opinion concerning the advisability of presenting even the best of film scores disassociated from the pictures for which they were composed. However, the idea is challenging, and doubtless these recordings will do much to stimulate public interest in the use of music as a vital adjunct of the present day dramatic motion picture.

- By Alice Evans Field, Director
Dept. Studio and Public Service, MPPDA

REVIEWS OF CURRENT MOTION PICTURES FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF MUSIC INTEREST

ADDRESS UNKNOWN, Columbia. (A Study in Shadows). Dir: William Cameron Menzies
Music Score: Ernst Toch. Musical Dir: M. W. Stoloff

Essentially a study in the psychology of fear, this is not a pleasant picture. It presents the appalling demoralization of a strong, liberty-loving man weakening under the impact of Nazi pressure and finally being driven insane by his guilty conscience. It is beautifully acted in every particular, each character standing out like the sharp black lines of an etching. Had it been released shortly after the appearance of the original story which so horrified a public more or less unwilling to believe in the brutality of Nazi methods, the picture would have been of tremendous import. As it is, it will be remembered chiefly for the compelling characterization of Paul Lukas, and the amazingly beautiful and unusual photography with which Mr. Mate has invested it. In composition, in treatment of light and shade, and shadowy strange depths and eerie angles, it is a masterpiece! Take, for instance, the effect when Lukas, realizing that doom is approaching puts out the light and leaves the darkened room surrounded by deepening shadows; superb grouping in the church scene, authentic and spacious interiors - these are moving pictures with the caliber of engravings. A noteworthy score, on a recurring rhythmic theme, is the backbone of the picture. It is made up of short, ascending passages, and each time it appears the orchestration is strengthened and broadened until from simple, though rather disturbing statement with strings and woodwinds, it is brought to a sinister and terrible climax with the power of full orchestra - dissonances and insistent upper frequencies. Then, when Lukas is left alone and hopeless, a dirge emerges. This also is developed and a strange postlude brings the score to completion, punctuated by half-crazed thoughts. This could be condensed and brought into symphonic form as a commentary on Nazi psychology. Some discrepancies occur in the film but it stands out nevertheless as a worthwhile contribution to the Anti-Nazi propaganda of our day. Mature-Family.

THE ADVENTURES OF MARK TWAIN, WB. (American Portrait). Director: Irving Rapper
Music by Max Steiner. Musical Director: Leo F. Forbstein

A picture for old and young alike - rising almost to the level of an historical document invaluable for the annals of the time and in particular of America's beloved humorist who has now found "safe water." THE ADVENTURES OF MARK TWAIN is a picture of which the industry may well be proud, as America is proud of the man whose "portrait" it sets forth. From the very first shot of the paddle wheel of a steamer churning the waters of the great Mississippi, which gives the keynote to the dominating force of Mark Twain's life in his love of the mighty river, the audience is absorbed in this saga of American life. We follow him through his youth in the growing West; his recognition, followed by reverses; his subsequent struggles crowned by eventual honors, to his death (heralded as was his birth, seventy-five years earlier by the appearance of Halley's Comet in the skies), leaving the world bound to him forever in affection and laughter. So good is Fredric March that it seems almost as if the spirit of Mark Twain must have entered into the production. Photography is outstanding throughout: the glimpses of the interior of "The Queen of Dixie," the fog on the river. The calls of the boatmen, the sound effects on the steamboat itself, all contribute to bring to life a period which future generations will never know except through documents like this. As to music: the signature, indelibly Max Steiner's, gives us a majestic theme of our greatest river, (including the never-to-be-forgotten "mark twain" which gave Samuel Clemens his pen name) pulsating with life and the throb of the steamboat's engines. There is a suggestion of "Show Boat" - "it just keeps rollin'," punctuated with the calls of the river. This is the background for the first half of the picture. We are also given the rhythm of frontier days based on tunes like "O, Susanna," "Clementine," etc. The finale is an inspirational choral in Steiner's inimitable idiom - well befitting the tender fantasy as he returns to his source. In the picture are humor and laughter aplenty and very seldom does it seem too long though one or two scenes in the middle of the picture might be improved through a little judicious cutting. E

BETWEEN TWO WORLDS, WB. ("Outward Bound"). Director: Edward A. Blatt

Music by Erich Wolfgang Korngold

Directed with a profound knowledge of human character and with a cast of exceptionally capable artists, this motion picture achieves dramatic heights seldom reached. As a fantasy it succeeds in seeming to be reality - a very difficult, if not almost impossible, impression to create by this medium. It is especially timely just now for it will give to many a hope that young lives are not out off by war but go on with their work on another plane. The story of "Outward Bound," done up in a modern setting, still holds our intense, fascinated interest. Not for a moment does it lag in tempo, but surges onward and upward until at the close one is practically ready to scream aloud with Ann, so much have we been through and so powerful the emotional pull! Even the photography gives one an out-of-this-world feeling, so skilfully handled is the conception of motion! Mr. Korngold's music is at all times an integral part of the whole, rising and falling, now subdued, then crashing upon the consciousness and bearing it aloft to terrific emotional heights. At other times it is mystical and elusive and the eerie sense of infinity created by the boat scenes is in perfect harmony with the story. It excels, above all, in maintaining the mood of mysticism throughout. The signature, though prophetic of unusual happenings, is in the usual dimension: the scene in the waiting room becomes portentous with its wood-wind warning passage as preface and epilogue. The music is blotted out in the bombing and emerges with extra dimensional quality when we reach the liner. There is a curious suspension like the projection of a journey into space, with vague rhythm and floating overtones to create the illusion. Still unconscious of what has happened Henry seats himself at the piano, begins to improvise, and finds to his joy that his inhibitions have vanished. He plays a melody so poetic, so aspiring, so heartrending that the attention of his fellow passengers is aroused and in them we get the real self, the motivation of each one. The emotional reaction of this score, with its musical continuity and balance of treatment, is one highly communicable to the audience. Its unit of vibration is self-revealing and functions as all great music must. The score is all in all a profoundly moving one, punctuated by mental reactions, shocks and even grim humor when impartial justice is dealt at the end. Although the modified ending may arouse discussion the picture is still OUTWARD BOUND and should retain that name. It is a deeply thought-provoking adult picture and carries a distinct message for those who have the understanding to receive it.

COVER GIRL, Columbia. (Lavish and Worthwhile). Director: Charles Vidor

Music by Jerome Kern. Lyrics by Ira Gershwin

Musical Director: M. W. Stoloff

A delightful Technicolor musical, exceptionally cast, filled with sparkling dialogue which keeps the audience in good humor, and costumes both lavish and intriguing. There are three sensational dance routines with real verve and fiber and the madcap feeling of youth - all too rare in these days of speed for its own sake! First, the dance out of the restaurant into the street, around corners and up and down steps, gay and whimsical. Second, Dan's dance with his shadow, original in conception, modern in treatment - and the final dance of the trio when Rusty returns to her own niche. Such moods are seldom captured on the screen and are like an elixir whereby we regain something long lost and forgotten. Rita Hayworth gives an admirable characterization and her dancing is, of course, professional and distinguished. Her versatility is also shown in her rendition of the period songs of Tony Pastor's day. High pressure commercial methods in connection with the Cover Girls furnish an amusing parallel with "Lady in the Dark," but the Coudert story and the contest between Wheaton and Dan are vastly more human. Gene Kelly, dark and graceful, is the best possible foil for the lovely Rita, and turns in a performance that is sparkling and sure and beautifully timed throughout. In the score Columbia has given us an up-to-date score in modern vein, yet tuneful. Exceptional are the arrangements and orchestrations: well balanced and always worthwhile, whether background or revue material. Family.

DOUBLE INDEMNITY, Paramount. (Murder a la Mode). Director: Billy Wilder

Music Score by Miklos Rozsa

Though it shows that the "perfect crime" is still non-existent, this psychological portrayal of a crime is as perfect a picture of its type as has ever been brought to the screen, and Barbara Stanwyck, Fred MacMurray and Edward G. Robinson are more than just competent as its protagonists - they are superb. In fact, each member of the cast fits into it as perfectly as the bright facets in a diamond, with Fortunio Bonanova in particular revealing himself increasingly as an "artist of parts." Production angles are of high caliber with the photography of our own Hollywood streets and hills lending special interest to those of us who know them, and adding more than usual verisimilitude to the tense scenes unfolded against them. Narration value is getting a good deal of attention these days and the dictaphone idea with flashback as used here is original and adds greatly to the timing and suspense element of the early sequences, as one waits for speech! The music score is beautifully done - keyed throughout to the story. Muted at the beginning, the initial theme is insistent in rising inflections which subside into the neutral background. The development, using the same questioning motif gives a more definite answer, growing into sustained and dreadful reality. There are moments of pseudo-sentiment, and the sound setting is at all times effective. Adults.

GASLIGHT, MGM. (Psychological Thriller). Director: George Cukor

Music by Bronislau Kaper

Under the masterly direction of George Cukor this Victorian drama of murder emerges in a series of unforgettable scenes in which, although production values are paramount, Ingrid Bergman and Charles Boyer and the other members of a competent cast do their usual expert job of acting, and a newcomer, Angela Marlowe as Nancy, the maid, establishes herself definitely in the front ranks of her profession. Decor, costumes and photography of this sinister story are absolutely outstanding, taking us back to the late '80s and setting us down as firmly in the period as if we were actually a part of it. Another picture, with an American background, "The Age of Innocence," did this for us a few years ago but up to now nothing in the way of films has done it as well as this. Nor could anyone have supplied the proper musical atmosphere to accompany it better than Mr. Kaper has. The "Last Rose of Summer" in the signature, the faded air from "Lucia," introduce a closely knit score which synchronizes admirably in mood and suspense. Throughout we have a background of melodies associated with the singer and the period. From the old piano Anton evokes not only the Last Rose but "Fledermaus," while the "Pathetique" of Beethoven at the Soiree is the emotional climax which merges into Paula's hysterical and heartbreaking outburst. Vaguely disturbing is the undertone for the Prelude: Thornton Square, with its atmosphere of fog, gaslight and mystery. In the beautiful Italian scenes and thereafter there is no definite theme for Paula, save the "Lucia" - it is the photography which distinguishes her charm, her innocence and her loveliness. The music throughout is always kept well in check and is particularly interesting for the sound effects which always form a fascinating part of Mr. Kaper's scoring. Adults.

THE HITLER GANG, Paramount. (Rising Wave). Director: John Farrow

Music Score by David Buttolph

Noteworthy is this seemingly authentic and dispassionate account of the rise to power of Hitler and his Nazi regime, with a fine production tempo and unusually good musical background for the events depicted. The signature is nicely and conventionally orchestrated: portentous in character, it has fine balance of strings, snarling woodwinds in low frequencies and sinister brasses. It is left in a suspension as the story opens. Patriotic and traditional music is used throughout to good advantage, "Gott Erhalte unser Kaiser," for the huge assembly, the "Ride of the Valkyries" while Goebbels persuades Hitler to personally initiate the purge. A very moving delineation is that of Poldy Dur, the niece. Her immature playing of the "Shepherd Boy" being done with great simplicity and charm. Amusing, too, the bit of "Til Eulenspiegel" of Strauss to express Hitler's inner satisfaction. All characterizations are excellently drawn. Mature-Family.

LADY LET'S DANCE, Monogram. (Beauty, Grace and Rhythm). Director: Frank Woodruff
Musical Director: Edward Kay

Featuring Belita, sensational dancing and skating star, this picture furnishes top entertainment in that field. Wholesome, with beautiful photography and routines and Henry Busse and his Orchestra furnishing the dance music and a symphony orchestra's rich background accompaniment, Belita's daring and skilful technique is breathtaking! Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, however, does not belong in this type of presentation. F.

THE MEMPHIS BELLE, Paramount Release. (America in the Air).

Music written by Corporal Gail Kubik

This is more than a picture - it is an unforgettable experience in which every American may and should share. Technicolor at its most superb gives an added beauty and reality to a film, sober and inspiring, in which every moment is not acted but lived by those taking part. In the accompanying music we have one of the most original and modernistic scores to date. For the mechanical noises of the machine and of its epic flight merge into a strange pattern with a new counterpoint of high frequencies superimposed on slow-moving wide intervals. It has left behind the clanking work rhythm of "Metropolis" which has been the norm for so long; it has left behind the whirr of the revolving wheels used for a journey and given us a new idiom which should be listened to attentively and analyzed. It is not easy to take but this music adds tremendously to the value of the picture and is as strange as the new environment, yet so subtly is it conceived and so skilful is its execution that the average listener is hardly aware of its presence, which is just as it should be. To the Air Force First Motion Picture Unit and everyone connected in any way with the making of this film go our thanks. From now on, the words of the news commentators "planes failed to return" will have a deeper meaning than ever before. Family

SHOW BUSINESS, RKO. (Song and Dance Teams). Director: Edwin L. Marin

Musical Director: C. Bakaleinikoff

There are some people who will never be too old to enjoy and be rejuvenated by a musical comedy which offers good acting, good singing and good dancing. "Show Business" offers all three of these and they all add up to a good picture. Eddie Cantor and George Murphy are clever and excellent foils for each other and the simple plot is enough to tie the vicissitudes of the entertainers together. The music is at all times skilfully handled and entirely appropriate to the demands of musical comedy, with a succession of former hits, many associated with Cantor, all in authentic tempo and style. The opening number with George Murphy brings back all the sprightliness and dated mannerisms of the period. Cantor and Joan Davis furnish the comedy element and Constance Moore and Murphy the heart interest. The background music really develops from the birth of the child: here is a muted, dirge-like effect woven into similar photography of shadowy tones - it becomes from that point more of a continuity instead of excerpts, and the orchestration is arresting and moody. The theme number, "It Had to Be You," is developed in an original way, especially the composite of the night club and the beer hall! Family.

TWO SISTERS AND A SAILOR, MGM. (Music, Fun and Sentiment). Dir: Richard Thorpe

Music by Georgie Stoll

Though not startlingly original, this is thoroughly delightful entertainment for the whole family. It is well paced, directed and photographed and the musical background with its contrasting bands, gay songs and top-ranking specialty acts offers variety to suit every taste, from close-ups of their idol Harry James for the "hepcats" to the all-too-brief playing of the Iturbis for a different type of musician. "Young Man With a Horn," "Take it Easy," "My Mother Told Me," are some of the tunes to be remembered, along with the really fine singing of Carlos Ramirez. Two charming newcomers in the lead are natural and refreshing, while the timing of Jimmy Durante, the comedy of Gracie Allen, and the voice of Lena Horne all contribute their share in making this the best kind of "escape" picture. Family.

THIS IS THE LIFE, Universal. (Love, Laughter and Song). Director: Felix Feist

Musical Director: Charles Previn

Susanna Foster of the lovely voice and the irrepressible Donald O'Connor head a meritorious cast in a picture which is gay, clean and entertaining for many age levels. The story is fairly convincing, settings are modern and attractive and music sets the mood throughout most satisfactorily. There are many laughs for the adults in the attempted high handedness of these adolescents and Aunt Betsy does a superb role of "hands off" which most parents would have a hard time copying! Susanna Foster is a charming and beautiful girl, but her directors would be wise to simplify her vocal numbers to songs more in keeping with her age and lack of living experience. At her present rate of achievement, she will have little voice left at 25 or 30, as, in the opinions of many, it is being forced, and it would be nothing short of tragic to have this happen. Another suave easy Previn score, interpolated with many specialty numbers in jive tempo accompanies the picture. We all recognize Previn as a master of pace and modern orchestration and it is good to hear the nostalgic "With a Song in My Heart" in its delightful arrangement, and other songs of this caliber which Miss Foster, besides some sensational vocalizing, sings. Fine work is also done by the Major (Patric Knowles) and the charming Harriet (Louise Allbritton) who is the needed foil for Angela. Family.

WEIRD WOMAN, Universal. (Study in Suggestion). Director: Reginald LeBorg

Musical Director: Paul Sawtelle

This mystery melodrama, based on mental rather than physical stress resulting in murder, starts off at a slow pace to establish characters and foundation for the series of events to follow. Later it gains momentum and eventually the fast pace required to hold the attention of the mystery-minded. Lon Chaney, fulfilling the traditions of his father, gives an interesting performance, chiefly due to the mobility of his features. The photography, especially at the beginning, is extraordinary with its effects of wind, darkness and hidden movements. Music is really interesting and expertly synchronized. A study in veiled suggestion and motivation with uncanny effects, it follows the now familiar pattern of dissonance and terror: low frequencies, ominous pauses, and mysterious overtones that correspond to half lights. The tropical sequences with their insinuating rhythms are exotic and entertaining - the death chant ghostly and terrifying. Family.

THE YELLOW CANARY, RKO-British. (Excitement and Intrigue). Dir: Herbert Wilcox

Music by the London Symphony Orchestra

Thrilling and engrossing is this spy melodrama which really "jells." Usually in this type of picture we are completely lost in counterespionage but this time we follow through and find ourselves mightily absorbed and entertained by this clever and exciting tale. We are involved in mystery from the start and cannot make up our minds about the hardboiled and notorious young woman involved! Anna Neagle and Richard Greene do a convincing bit of acting in the major roles and the supporting cast is equally good. Production values are high and authentic Canadian atmosphere through the photography especially well established. Music by the London Symphony Orchestra gives a rich and harmonious foundation to the proceedings. The throbbing of the ship's engines, and an undercurrent of sound continuous through most of the picture add to the constant suspense. Mature-Family.

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Biography of Mr. Max Steiner

Mr. Steiner was born in Vienna and studied at the Imperial Academy of Music under Fuchs, Graedener, Mahler and Rose', and won the Gold Medal. He wrote and conducted his first operetta called, "The Beautiful Greek Girl," when he was fourteen, which was produced at the Orpheum Theatre in Vienna, and it ran one year. He also wrote much symphonic and popular music and had quite a lot published by Herzmsky (Doblinger) Vienna.

In 1904 he went to England and conducted at Daly's Theatre, the Adelphi Theatre, London; Hippedrome; and the London Opera House; Blackpool Winter Garden; London Pavilion, etc. He wrote some successful compositions published by Francis, Day and Hunter, in England. Also, in 1911, he conducted at the Alhambra Theatre, Place de Republique, Paris, for Alfred Butt.

In 1914 he came to America and conducted and orchestrated many musical comedies, reviews and comic operas.

In 1939 he came to Hollywood as General Musical Director for RKO Studios. In 1935 he went to Selznick International Pictures, Inc. and in 1936 he started at Warner Bros. where he has been ever since.

He won the Academy Award twice: in 1935 for "The Informer" and in 1943 for "Now, Voyager."

He was decorated by the French Government for his outstanding musical scores in pictures, having been presented with the Award of Officier de l'Academie Francaise; also, he was awarded the Bronze Medal by the King of Belgium at the Cinema Exhibition in Brussels, in August, 1936.

He has just finished the musical score for "My Reputation" for Warners, and has been loaned to Selznick International to write the musical score for SINCE YOU WENT AWAY, which is his 191st picture.

* * * *

In his chapter on "Scoring the Film," written for the book "We Make the Movies" compiled by Nancy Naumburg, Mr. Steiner wrote: "In composing a score there are certain facts which I have found important to consider. For instance, it pays to watch the particular pitch in which a person talks. A high voice often becomes 'muddy,' with high-pitched musical accompaniment, and the same is true of the low pitch. I rarely combine these except when I want to attain a special effect, such as matching voice and orchestra so that one is indistinguishable from the other.

"The speed of the dialogue is also of great importance to the modern motion picture composer. Fast music, over a slow dialogue scene, may help to speed up the action, but it may also ruin the mood, whereas slow music, over a slow scene, may either fit admirably or retard the action to an unprecedented extent. I rarely use fast music over fast dialogue. Instead I try to punctuate a fast-moving dramatic scene with music which seems to be slower, but which, in reality, approximates the same speed.

"Pronounced high solo instruments or very low ones, or sharp or strident effects (oboe, piccolo, muted trumpets, screaming violins, xylophone, bells, high clarinets, and muted horns fortissimo) are taboo with me, because we should be able to hear the entire combination of instruments behind the average dialogue. But I have found muted strings, harp, celeste and low woodwind effects to be successful. Of course, there are exceptions to this rule, and in many of my pictures I have broken it entirely.

"In fact, by now, the reader may well ask: What's the matter with Steiner? In one paragraph he gives advice and sets down a rigid rule, and in the next he reverses it. That is true...there are no rules, and there won't be as long as music continues to assume more and more importance in pictures, and the development of sound continues to make such rapid strides."

MODERATO
(a tempo)

MARK TWAIN

MAX STEINER

espress.

ten.

ten.

Rall.

tr.

ten.

STAS. W.W.

TRAM.

ten.

Rall.

ARP.