



FILM MUSIC NOTES

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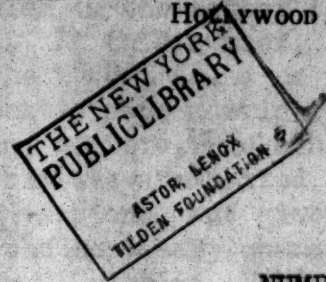
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FOREWORD

That Hollywood is showing a genuine desire to let us hear the music of our neighbors to the South is shown by such recent pictures as Republic's "Brazil," Disney's "The Three Caballeros," RKO's "Pan Americana" and Paramount's forthcoming "Masquerade in Mexico" - all billed with the genuine article in the way of original compositions by native composers, folk tunes and dances and native performances. Even such earlier efforts as "Flying Down to Rio," "Saludos Amigos" and the various shorts both in Technicolor and black-and-white, have all played their part in awakening our audiences to the beauty and worthwhileness of the music and musicians in these countries.

But that the Hollywood producers face a real problem in the matter is made clear in a recent issue of What's Happening in Hollywood. In this number, "Picturing Life in the Green Continent," Alice Evans Field of the MPPDA, tells us that as an emissary of the producers, Mr. Geoffrey Shurlock, recently made a trip to many South American capitals to talk with members of the press, writers, and others in order to get their points of view. The purpose of the trip was summarized in the following statement which, in its Portuguese and Spanish versions, was given to the press of the various capitals visited (with, of course, the necessary changes in the names of the respective countries - Argentina, Chile, Peru, Colombia, Venezuela, Costa Rica and Guatemala):

"There is a genuine desire, among Hollywood producers, to know and understand Brazil more thoroughly, and to acquaint the North American public with your country, your people, and your way of life, as far as it may be possible to portray them in a motion picture made outside your country. In this connection, it is important to note that the primary object is to entertain and inform our own audiences in the U.S.A. We would not presume to attempt to interpret Brazil to the Brazilians. That, we assume, is the responsibility of your own Brazilian-made pictures.

"But realizing that no Brazilian picture could have any great circulation in the U.S.A. until our audiences are better acquainted with your country and your language, the Hollywood producers are hopeful of supplying, in part, this lack of information on the part of our people, and thus initiating an era of greater understanding.

"To this end, I am hopeful that your writers and publicists will be able to advise as to how Brazilians would like Hollywood to portray, to our North American audiences, their country, their people, and their way of life. This, of course, is a difficult thing to attempt. But we trust that, with your help and advice, and your tolerance for mistakes that will inevitably be made in the beginning - but which we will eliminate in time - the Hollywood motion picture industry will be enabled to do its part for a better understanding between our great sister republics, and so contribute, if only in a small way, to the peace and prosperity of the post-war world."

The response was uniformly favorable. Those interviewed seemed genuinely appreciative of the fact that someone from Hollywood was interested enough to come all the way to call on them and ask their opinion on a matter in which they were all so deeply concerned.

All this interest is bound to include the music, both incidental and background, for these films. Composers, both South American and Mexican, are now and have been working in the studios along with the best of native talent and what they have done has added immeasurably to our knowledge and pleasure. It is an excellent sign for post-war construction and for Audio-Visual education as well. Let us encourage it in every way possible.

Music and Color Keynotes of Early 1945 Productions (from Hollywood Reporter)

The year 1945 is looming just over the production horizon as the year of the musical film, with three of the largest companies already committed to more tune-films than they have had in any other year. Warners has a round dozen in preparation, MGM announces music and color as its "keynote" for 1945 and now 20th-Fox comes along with the announcement Saturday that it will convert three straight story properties into musicals in addition to its already tune-heavy schedule.

Taking advantage of the increasing popularity of Technicolor musicals with theatre-going audiences, 20th-Fox is converting three of its best-selling novels into tuneful tinters.

First on the list to go into production will be "State Fair," from the novel by Phil Stong. William Perlberg plans to produce this film along the same lines which made "Oklahoma" a success both in New York and on the road. Film will carry much of the plot in the lyrics of the songs, with each of the principals warbling at least three numbers.

"Centennial Summer," from Albert E. Idell's novel of Philadelphia in 1876, also has been converted into a musical. Producer Otto Preminger is dickering with Jerome Kern to write the score for this bustle-era film.

"All-out Arlene," which William LeBaron originally planned to produce as a straight comedy, also has been altered into a musical. The story by H. I. Phillips concerns itself with the adventures of a stenographer who joins the WACs.

Along this same policy, Darryl F. Zanuck announced that 20th-Fox will remake "Two Arabian Knights" as a musical, with George Jessel handling the production reins.

Music and color will be the keynote of MGM's production activities for next year, with four of the five pictures so far scheduled to start in the first two months being musicals photographed in Technicolor.

"Yolanda and the Thief" is a musical fantasy laid in a mythical South American country, while "The Harvey Girls" is a period musical of 1890.

MGM, it was learned yesterday, has started preparations on a screen story based on the life of Robert Schumann, famous 19th century composer.

Marking the start of production on "Land of the Sky Blue Water," Lindsley Parsons, Monogram producer, leaves today for Phoenix, to superintend the filming of exterior and background scenes. The film, titled after Charles Wakefield Cadman's famous song, will feature this and other Cadman music, and will star Phil Regan.

* * *

Yehudi Menuhin, world-famous violinist, will play "Gypsy Airs" ("Zigeunerweisen") by Pablo de Sarasate as a musical feature of Paramount's "Duffy's Tavern," star-studded, entertainment-packed production.

The Romany composition is one of the most popular concert pieces for the violin and a favorite of music lovers.

The virtuoso, who has entertained American soldiers in England and on the fighting front in Europe, arrives in Hollywood January 16 and will immediately begin recording of the number.

His performance in "Duffy's Tavern" will mark Menuhin's first appearance before the motion picture cameras as a salaried performer. He made a benefit appearance in "Stage Door Canteen."

The film, in which the studio's top personalities are playing, is directed by Hal Walker, with Joseph Siström as producer and Danny Dare as associate.

* * *

Rights to the music of Puccini's opera, "La Boheme," have been secured by Gregor Rabinovitch, and will be employed as an integral part of his planned production, "Latin Quarter." The music was bought from Ricordi, Italian music publishing concern, and has been cleared by the Alien Property Custodian. "Latin Quarter" will be a modern version of the opera's story.

A new music department of importance to the motion picture industry, headed by Nat Finston, has been established by Selznick-Saphier to supply independent film producers with an all-inclusive music service. The division is a direct outgrowth of Finston's experience with MGM, where he was for nine years in charge of that company's musical activities, and the previous ten years which he spent as musical director for Paramount.

* * *

Werner Janssen has done the score for David Lowe's "Hold Autumn in Your Hand," from the George Sessions Perry novel, and has just completed conducting his own orchestra in the recordings. The Hall Johnson Choir sang a group of spirituals, also composed by Janssen. In unique treatment, certain sound effects, such as a scythe cutting stubble and a match struck on a stove, were made with musical instruments as part of the score.

* * *

A new milestone in film music - the strange effect of a sound track played in reverse - is heard in Lester Cowan's production of "Tomorrow, the World!" adapted from the Broadway hit. The idea is the creation of Louis Applebaum, 26-year-old Canadian composer, who scored the picture under the supervision of Ann Ronell. For the stirring chase scenes, certain passages are played backwards on the sound track, achieving an effect singularly difficult to describe, except that it creates an ethereal, weird and out-of-this-world mood in the listener. Conductor Leslie Fenton had a lot of fun making the recording.

* * *

Daniele Amfitheatrof, Russian conductor and composer, has been signed by Jack Skirball and Sam Wood to compose and direct the musical score for "Guest Wife," co-starring Claudette Colbert and Don Ameche.

* * *

Twenty-five of Cole Porter's best-known tunes will be featured in "Night and Day," the story of the famous composer's career. Cary Grant and Monty Woolley are only two principals set for musical which Michael Curtiz will direct for Warners.

* * *

Biggest boom in record and sheet music sales ever started by a motion picture is reported from locales where Columbia's Technicolor "A Song to Remember" is playing. In Hollywood, where the film based on Chopin's life is now in its third week at the Pantages Theatre, every music shop reports that it has been completely cleaned out of all Chopin records and sheet music.

* * *

Aaron Copland's "Our Town," which consists of three excerpts for piano from the score he wrote for the motion picture of that name, has just been published.

* * *

Leopold Stokowski has been appointed musical director for the Symphonies Under the Stars, by the Hollywood Bowl Association. His engagement will extend for three years, starting with the 1945 summer series but will be so arranged as to enable him to return each Autumn to New York in time to begin season preparations there. His work in the Bowl will include management of recordings, radio and motion-picture activities as well as directorship of a large portion of the season's concert programs.

A MUSICIAN'S FAN MAIL
Courtesy of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer

Dear Mr. Stothart: I have seen Thousands Cheer an even dozen times. The music was superb as a whole, and exoruciatingly good in some particular spots, such as the finale of "Daybreak," and in the tent scene, where Miss Grayson sang "Let There Be Music."

To come to the point, I want to know if it is possible to obtain recordings of such songs, exactly as they were played in the original picture. That is, a duplication of the sound track on an ordinary record disc, playable on a phonograph.

If such are available, they are very poorly advertised, and if they are not available, they should be. I have talked with many people on this subject, and the consensus of opinion indicates that such records would sell better than the proverbial hotcakes.

Answer: We regret that to our knowledge no commercial recordings as recorded in the picture have been made.

* * *

Dear Sirs: I have noted with much interest the background music in your recent production Random Harvest. Mr. Herbert Stothart has indeed done an excellent job. I wonder if it would be possible to obtain any of the music which was used in the picture. Even a rough sketch of one or two of the principal themes would be most appreciated. I shall be glad to defray any expenses which might be connected with such a service.

Answer: This music is original, unpublished, written especially for the production and is, as yet, not released for distribution.

* * *

Dear Sirs: I am just a high school student but I saw Dragon Seed and liked it so well I saw it twice.

In the picture Dragon Seed you played a certain song in the beginning and the end of the picture. I would like to know the title of the song so that I can buy the words and music to it.

Answer: The score of Dragon Seed is original, unpublished, including the Chinese National Anthem -- obtainable through any music store.

* * *

Gentlemen: The following inquiries have come to our office for attention:

"Could you tell me the name of the selection Kathryn Grayson was singing in the opening scene of Thousands Cheer, and also the composition played by Jose Iturbi when in the same picture he played over the telephone for Miss Grayson?"

"A few years ago Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer released the film Waterloo Bridge starring Vivien Leigh and Robert Taylor. The musical background contained three selections - two of which I recognized as 'Auld Lang Syne' and 'Let Me Call You Sweetheart'. The other tune (very haunting) sounded more or less in the classical vein. Will you please tell me the name of the other melody and its composer?"

Any information you can give will be greatly appreciated.

Answer: The music numbers you inquired about from Thousands Cheer were "Sempre Libera" from *La Traviata* and "Daybreak" by Grofe, published by Feist - and original, unpublished music by Herbert Stothart, a member of our staff.

* * *

Cher Monsieur le directeur de Madame Curie: Would you kindly tell us the name of the song that the cast of Madame Curie sang on New Year's Eve? My students in French are most anxious to learn this delightful song. Is it in a collection of

(A MUSICIAN'S FAN MAIL cont'd)

songs? If so, would you tell me the title of the collection and I shall start to hunt for it in New York. We can't tell you how much we enjoyed this wonderful film.

Answer: The song you asked about is "Le Carillon du Verre" - an old French song. You should be able to obtain this from Schirmer's New York, in one of their collections of Student Song Books.

* * *

Gentlemen: Re: Motion Picture Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo, starring Spencer Tracy and Van Johnson.

We would like very much to know the names of the orchestrations played in your production of the above named picture. Station Hospital, San Luis Obispo, Calif.

Answer: Listed below are the numbers from Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo:

Army Air Corps.....Crawford
Where Do We Go From Here.....Wenrich & Johnson
Chattanooga Choo Choo.....Warren
Deep in the Heart of Texas.....Hershey & Swander
Eyes of Texas.....Sinclair
My Wonderful One.....Whitman & Grofe
I Love You, Sweetheart of All My Dreams.....Fitch Et Al
There's A Long, Long Trail.....Elliot
San Francisco.....Kaper & Jurmann
Anchors Aweigh.....Zimmerman
Original Unpublished Compositions by Herbert Stothart

* * *

Gentlemen: I should like some information concerning a song played in the picture Maytime, starring Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy.

Near the end of the picture, there was a scene in which Miss MacDonald and Mr. Eddy sang excerpts from an opera which was composed for her, according to the story. I believe its title was "Zaritzza," or "Countess Zaritzza." The melody was hauntingly beautiful, and I have tried often to trace it. I believe that the theme was taken from one of the older and perhaps well-known compositions. But, I don't know what it is! I would very much appreciate your giving me this information if it is available.

Answer: The number you refer to in the above picture was adapted by Herbert Stothart from "La Tzarine," Tschaiowsky's Fifth Symphony. This symphony is available in album form in any music shop.

* * *

Dear Sirs: I recently saw The White Cliffs of Dover. I now am quite interested to find out the name of the music that was used in the background during most of the picture and Irene Dunne's and Alan Marshall's favorite waltz as the two leading characters.

If there is any way I can get the sheet music or record in my own city will you please tell me the name. If not perhaps you could send me the sheet music.

Answer: The music you inquired about from the production WHITE CLIFFS OF DOVER is original, unpublished music composed and/or arranged by Herbert Stothart.

* * *

Gentlemen: In the currently running picture Dragon Seed there is a scene in which a Chinese farmer is playing a wind instrument and I would like to know if this instrument is what is generally referred to as a recorder and if so what key is this particular one in. If this is not one of the instruments which I have mentioned would you be good enough to tell me its proper name?

Answer: The wind instrument you inquired about used in DRAGON SEED is a Chinese flute.

AFTERTHOUGHTS

By Sigmund Spaeth

"Hangover Square" successfully meets the old problem of building up the expectation of a musical masterpiece and then having to prove it on the screen. Erich Wolfgang Korngold had the same assignment in "The Constant Nymph," and also emerged unscathed. In this case the composer is Bernard Herrmann, who knows his way around an orchestra and a piano. Luckily he does not have to produce more than a few snatches of the actual concerto, but what we hear sounds impressive. There are "corny" touches in this horror film, and many improbabilities, but the musical score overcomes all handicaps.

* * *

"Molly and Me" brings together again Gracie Fields and Monty Woolley, with happy results, particularly as it permits England's darling of the music halls to sing a little, besides acting in her usual straightforward and appealing style. Cyril Mookridge is credited with the score, which is practical and unobtrusive.

* * *

For a light musical comedy with some serious background, "Tonight and Every Night" can be heartily recommended. Here is a picture which really justifies Technicolor and makes an artistic climax of every song and dance sequence. Rita Hayworth plays a part which, from every angle (or curve), fits her like a glove. When she sings "You Excite Me," she utters the last word in reverse statement. Marc Platt, once of "Oklahoma," does his spacious dances like a combination of Paul Draper, Paul Haakon and Jerome Robbins. The song writing team of Styne and Cahn has supplied an adequate collection of popular tunes.

* * *

In all the excitement over that unique documentary film, "The Fighting Lady," one is apt to overlook the helpful musical accompaniment of David Buttolph, directed by Alfred Newman. The subject matter encourages the use of conventional patriotic tunes, particularly when young America goes into battle against our enemies. But there is far more to the music than mere quotations of Yankee Doodle and company. Mr. Buttolph has lived up to the demands of a great picture, in the tradition of "The Memphis Belle," "Camouflage" and others in a distinguished list.

* * *

It is good news that Monogram Pictures are planning a film built around the music of Charles Wakefield Cadman, using the title of his best known song, "Land of the Sky Blue Water." The compositions of Cadman, long a California resident, should prove ideal screen material, and there is no questioning their popularity all over the country. Cadman's creative gifts have been expressed on the stage, in the concert hall, on records and via radio. By this time they should definitely be ripe for motion pictures.

* * *

Probably the best musician composing for film cartoons today is Scott Bradley of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. Even the silliest comic strip seems to inspire in him the creation of a well made and effective score. It is an education to study one of his manuscripts, for this man knows music and how to write it. One of his latest successes is "The Unwelcome Guest," in which a diminutive skunk exercises his sadistic talents on the huge but helpless brown bear. The original Bradley score is highly

AFTERTHOUGHTS cont'd)

sophisticated, combining the best features of music and imitative sound effects. There is humor also in Bradley's music to the slapstick film recitation, "The Shooting of Dan McGoo."

* * *

Jerome Kern's music and Deanna Durbin's voice should have made "Can't Help Singing" a better picture than it is. The idea of carrying the heroine all the way across the country in a vocal caravan sounds excellent, and might be expected to produce a cross section of American music at its best. Even with beautiful scenic effects, in Technicolor, the picture does not quite come off. Kern's music was subjected to a cruel test when presented "cold" to an audience of New York music teachers not long ago. But all the trappings of the screen still fail to bring it to life. Perhaps Mr. Kern has actually outgrown his musical comedy days.

* * *

A good musical job was to be expected of Werner Janssen in scoring "Guest in the House," which serves as a vehicle for the dramatic gifts of Anne Baxter and Ralph Bellamy, and the distinguished composer-conductor has not disappointed his admirers. Perhaps his greatest achievement in this film was to use so hackneyed a tune as the Liszt Liebestraum and adapt it to various moods of horror and suspense. It is often easier to create something original than to give a new significance to the familiar.

* * *

So the New York motion picture critics are worried about historical "inaccuracies" in the Chopin film "A Song to Remember." One could hardly expect them to resist this unique opportunity for the parade of musical scholarship. But their experience as showmen should have told them that it was far more important to present the great music of Chopin to a new public in a palatable and often exciting fashion, regardless of authenticity. Most musical biographies have been inexcusably dull. The huge audiences that filled the Radio City Music Hall for weeks in succession gave their own verdict on "A Song to Remember."

* * *

Highbrow intolerance has also had its fling at "Music for Millions," in which some great compositions are presented in a sometimes fragmentary fashion, particularly for the purposes of montage. Again the important point is that a vast new audience is being created for the music of Debussy, Chopin, Dvorak, Grieg, Handel, Brahms and Beethoven. If a short excerpt from a masterpiece will create enthusiastic interest at a first hearing, why spoil the effect as well as the story by trying to play the whole piece?

A FILM PROGRAM FOR MUSIC CLUBS AND CLASSES

By Sigmund Spaeth

(Co-Chairman of Motion Picture Music, National Federation of Music Clubs)

While a great number of film scores are worthy of careful study, and should be fully appreciated and analyzed by music lovers, there are always a few motion pictures in circulation that have music as their central theme, and these are naturally of particular interest to clubs and classes concentrating on that subject.

At the moment the two outstanding films promoting music for its own sake are Columbia's "A Song to Remember" and M-G-M's "Music for Millions." Below are outlines of these pictures, with a list of the musical compositions that they present in part or as a whole.

It is suggested that as much as possible of this music be played for clubs and classes, through available records, before the pictures are actually seen. In some cases the preliminary hearing of the music may immediately precede the seeing of the picture itself. If these pictures have not been scheduled in your community, ask for them at the local theaters and then cooperate in every way possible to build up an audience for them.

"A Song to Remember" has been criticized for its historical inaccuracies in connection with Chopin and George Sand. But the important thing is that this film creates an interest in Chopin's music and has an exciting story, beautifully played and photographed. Most musical biographies of the screen have failed because their makers thought more of authenticity than of audience appeal.

Similarly, there has been criticism of "Music for Millions" because so much of its music is presented in sample packages, rarely completing a composition and often merely suggesting its contents. The answer again is that the audience must be pleased, which might not be the case if the playing of an entire piece were allowed to slow up the action and interfere with the plot. If the film is a stimulator of enthusiasm for music, besides entertaining ticket buyers, it has more than justified itself. Here are the study outlines.

Music for Millions

The story concerns a symphony orchestra conducted by Iturbi and including a feminine double bass player, Barbara (June Allyson), whose little sister, Mike (Margaret O'Brien) comes to visit her in New York. Jimmy Durante and Hugh Herbert supply additional comedy. There is a plot involving Barbara's husband, reported missing overseas, and the arrival of their baby boy, celebrated climactically by the singing of Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus." But the music is the real hero of the film.

The progress of the action permits a partial or complete hearing of the following compositions, all of which can be made familiar to listeners through records: Grieg's "Piano Concerto" (first movement), played and conducted by Iturbi; Chopin's "B Minor Waltz" and a "Polonaise," in the same star's piano interpretations; Debussy's "Clair de Lune," in two versions, played by Iturbi on the piano and Larry Adler on the harmonica; the Finale of Dvorak's "New World Symphony"; Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus," from "The Messiah," with full chorus and orchestra. There is a montage introducing snatches of the Brahms' "Violin Concerto," Beethoven's "Fifth Symphony," a Liszt "Piano Concerto" and other music, and Jimmy Durante runs a jam session and sings his own comedy numbers, "Umbriago and Toscanini, Iturbi and Me." Thus the musical score offers unlimited opportunities for highbrows and jitterbugs to meet on the same plane and analyse each other's tastes. The film as a whole is a timely reminder of the democracy of music.

A Song to Remember

In this brilliant Technicolor picture the music is absolutely essential to the plot, and affords a most effective and popular introduction to the compositions of Frederic Chopin, convincingly played by Cornel Wilde (with Iturbi as the actual off-screen pianist).

While Frederic Chopin is still a small boy, the spark of a great genius is evident. The first music we hear him play, for his devoted teacher, Joseph Elsner, is about half of the "Waltz in D Flat," commonly known as the "Minute Waltz." As background music for the conversation between Elsner and Papa Chopin, we hear next the "Mazurka in B Flat."

The "Fantastie Impromptu" takes place at the Wodzinski mansion while the assembled guests are occupied with the food and refreshment. Count Wodzinski commands an encore, but we hear only the first few bars of the "Etude in A Flat," because Chopin refuses to play before "Czarist butchers."

In Pleyel's office, after Chopin and Elsner have fled to Paris, we hear about half the "Polonaise in A Flat" played by Franz Liszt, while Pleyel and Elsner argue about Chopin's first concert. Chopin joins Liszt at another piano, playing with him.

In the darkened salon of the Duchess of Orleans, while the guests believe Liszt to be playing, the strains of the "B Flat Scherzo" come to us. When the lights are raised, we see that it is really Chopin who has thus taken the music world by storm.

In their idyllic retreat at Nohant, an adoring Chopin plays the "Etude in E Major," the theme of the picture, for the woman he loves - Madame George Sand (Merle Oberon). Again, while she is at her writing desk, Chopin plays through the "Nocturne in E Flat" and sends it on to Pleyel for publication.

When Elsner comes to Nohant and tries to see the pupil who has cut himself off from the world, Madame Sand bars his way. In the background we next hear the famous "Berceuse," which Chopin plays while refusing to see his old teacher.

The second concert at the home of the Duchess of Orleans brings us the glorious strains of the "Waltz in C Sharp Minor," played through almost completely.

Chopin's Europe-wide tour for the benefit of his native Poland is represented musically by a montage consisting of sections of the "Etude in A Minor," the "Ballade in A Flat," the "Waltz in A Flat" (Opus 12), the "Waltz in A Flat" (Opus 34), the "Revolutionary Etude," the "Scherzo in B Flat Minor" and the "Polonaise in A Flat."

The magnificent "Nocturne in C Minor" forms a fitting backdrop for the Finale of the picture, as Franz Liszt pays tribute far more eloquent than words to his dying friend. The picture closes with this immortal music fading gently into the distance.

NOTE: A SONG TO REMEMBER can be made much more vivid and interesting by the liberal use of biographical material on Chopin. This will be available from your public library and there is also an excellent brief biography in Dr. Spaeth's own book "Stories Behind the World's Great Music."

REVIEWS OF CURRENT MOTION PICTURES FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF MUSIC INTEREST

A TREE GROWS IN BROOKLYN, 20th-Fox. (Soul's Awakening). Director: Elia Kazan.

Music by Alfred Newman. Orchestral Arrangements: Edw. Powell.

This is a picture which shows how the soul can rise above the darkness and drabness of circumstance, misunderstanding and even death itself. Its dominating note is poverty with the hardships and misery that characterize the lives of the very poor. To this is added a wife who, struggling against the discouragement of a ne'er-do-well, drinking husband to give her children the best in her power becomes hard in the effort. In the end, through the softening influence of the love the husband has evoked in all who came into daily contact with him and through the help of the daughter who has inherited her father's spiritual qualities, she again comes to happiness. Those who liked the novel will not be disappointed in the picture. It has been well adapted into a powerful and absorbing film. The direction of Elia Kazan is sympathetic and deft, etching in clear lines the character of each person in the excellently chosen cast, while Peggy Ann Garner, as the child Francie, gives a performance that is unequalled for sensitivity and beauty - truly amazing in an actress of her years. It is good to welcome James Dunn and Joan Blondell back to the screen...by all means, let us see more of them. Music in the picture is purely background in character and is used only occasionally. It consists mostly of popular street songs of the period, with the distant hurdy gurdy which was, and probably still is, so much a part of Brooklyn city life for additional atmosphere and a Christmas hymn or two, but all perfectly adapted to the needs of the picture. Adults.

BETRAYAL FROM THE EAST, RKO. (Familiar Pattern). Director: William Berke

Music by Roy Webb.

A picture which, though based on a design long well-known to war-time audiences, should be widely seen as it is both intelligently produced and directed with Drew Pearson's narration, at the opening, setting the documentary value of the happenings and Roy Webb's music providing well-balanced background accompaniment. His brassy fifths ascending and descending over harsh, clashing discords, in particular, release the proper sinister atmosphere for the main title to a film whose value lies as much in its warning for the future as in its showing us the mistakes of the past. Mature-Family.

BRING ON THE GIRLS, Paramount. (Technicolor and Music). Director: Sidney Lanfield.

Music score by Jimmy McHugh and Harold Adamson.

Gay and amusing musical, lavishly produced and directed with the Paramount touch. It has just enough story thread to link together the kaleidoscope of enchanting color provided by Edith Head's beautiful costumes and the exquisite new stage settings of Raoul Pene du Bois. These, by the way, elevate the picture from a run-of-the-mill musical into one of rare and unparalleled beauty, worth anyone's time and money to observe and study. Perfectly cast with not one false move in the way of direction, distinctive in conception and execution, here is a picture for everyone to enjoy. Music, with its expert hit tunes and under the direction of Robert Emmett Dolan is outstanding for this type of picture. Swing (under control) and Boogie-Woogie (with humor) contributing a sure appeal to youthful audiences who like to "Hoagy!" Dances are original and up-to-the-minute with Johnny Coy, the "Boy from Brooklyn," nothing less than sensational with his light, clean footwork, and Chloe unpredictably funny. It is all tiptop entertainment, good for many laughs. Family.

DELIGHTFULLY DANGEROUS, Rogers-UA. (Musical Fantasy). Director: Arthur Lubin.

Original Music and Arrangements by Morton Gould.

An engaging bit of fantasy in which expert dancing sequences with a genuine Continental flavor and original music, as well as clever adaptations and arrangements, play the most important parts. Unusual photographic angles of the orchestra, fine recording and the arresting personality of the young composer, Morton Gould, who conducts his orchestra and plays in the film as himself, besides being responsible for its music, make this picture of special interest to musicians. Also to be noted

(DELIGHTFULLY DANGEROUS cont'd)

is the presence of the Meremblum Junior Orchestra under the direction of Charles Previn adding materially to the school operetta scenes. The Strauss arrangements are used to excellent advantage throughout - in fact Mr. Gould's opus is distinguished by an overall coverage enhancing, in the best Hollywood tradition, everything from symphony, concert, dance and radio treatment to a strip tease show, all cleverly and delightfully done with the use of saxophone in the opening concert numbers and the lyrics of "Once Upon a Song," by Edward Heyman particularly to be remembered. The original title "High Among the Stars" was, however, dropped in favor of the film's present one which, for obvious reasons, seems a pity. Understanding direction, a good cast, with Jane Powell a most appealing ingenue and Constance Moore vaguely reminiscent of the earlier Marlene Dietrich, give life to the whole with Andre Charlot, of the famous Revue, also contributing an authentic note. For light entertainment with excellent musical values this picture should rank high. Mature-Family.

THE ENCHANTED COTTAGE, RKO. (Love Song). Director: John Cromwell.

Music by Roy Webb. Musical Director: C. Bakaleinikoff.

The superb performances of an outstanding cast, including a remarkable characterization by Mildred Natwick, give this revival of the highly dramatic Pinero play new life and meaning with the director, the make-up department and the composer of the music sharing equally in the laurels. Photography, too, is lovely but there is an ever-present hazard in the transposition of an English play to an American locale. Any student of American architecture knows that no such house was ever built on any New England shore in either the 18th or 19th century. However, since the spectator has stretched his imagination to visualize such a manor and such a cottage as existent over there, he cannot but be affected by the human values of the story, for rarely has such sensitivity been projected by one - reflected by the reactions of the characters concerned and so extending to the surroundings they loved. As regards the music, here again we have the solo piano dominating the main title and motivating the story. Instead of a concerto this time it is a tone poem, warm, rich and strong. It is good to again have strings giving body and substance to sentiment in the orchestral background. All in all, a tender human document with mystic overtones instantly perceptive in the enveloping score so admirably fitted to it by Roy Webb. Mature-Family.

GOD IS MY CO-PILOT, Warner Bros. (War over China). Director: Robert Florey.

Music by Franz Waxman. Musical Director: Leo F. Forbstein.

It is especially good at the present time to have the Flying Tigers and their great commander presented to us against a background of Himalaya and China, with photography on an almost epic scale. The Waxman score as an able added commentator and the kindly old darky with his underlying simple philosophy unify the picture and point the development of Col. Scott's faith. Danger, suspense, thrills and the indomitable fighting courage of our men are all stressed in this commendable production. The music, as a whole, is richly somber: the overall mood instead of detailed themes, and sound effects and silences are given equal importance. Family.

IT'S A PLEASURE, Int'l-RKO. (Skating and Sparkle). Director: William A. Seiter.

Musical Director: Arthur Lange.

The matchless artistry and grace of Sonja Henie has never been more beautifully displayed than in this lush Technicolor extravaganza. It has more of a story, too, than one might expect and though one does not like to see the male lead in one of this particular star's pictures cast as a drunken semi-reprobate, it is presumed that he eventually reforms, so ethical values are not too much disturbed by Mr. O'Shea's fine performance. The story, moreover, enriched by crisp dialogue is that of a jealous wife determined to seduce the husband of another woman and Marie McDonald as this scheming wife deserves special mention in an exceptionally well chosen cast. Photography and direction are excellent but the honors of the picture, of course, go to that exquisite snowflake of a skater, the inimitable Sonja Henie. No one who has not seen her in this last performance can even imagine the intricacies, delicacy and skill of her varied routines (which even include a dancing

(IT'S A PLEASURE cont'd)

number quite as lovely and graceful as her skating ones). Costumes are ravishing in their beauty of color and design. The theme song "Romance" by Walter Donaldson and Edgar Leslie is pleasantly haunting and Mr. Loper's choreography worthy of special praise, while the accompanying music score, gay and lively, adds greatly to the charm and exhilaration of the whole. Mature-Family.

IT'S IN THE BAG, Skirball-UA. (Press Agent's Dream). Director: Richard Wallace.
Music Score by Werner Heymann.

Hilarious nonsense but sterling entertainment, nevertheless, is this - shall we call it a review? No, rather a press agent's dream, produced with the expert showmanship we have learned to expect from Fred Allen. The plot is a take-off of a plot and characters a take-off on the actors' personalities as they have been built up on screen and radio. Especially refreshing in its original opening with Allen introducing a new type of main title, the audience scarcely realizes when the old-fashioned floating scenario gives way to narration and the performance moves thereafter with incredible timing from one laugh to another. When Jack Benny, Rudy Vallee, Victor Moore and Don Ameche join him, the result may be imagined. The quartet of singing waiters is a highlight not soon to be forgotten. Orchids, also to Mincerva Pious, a genuine comedienne, whose advent on the screen as the famous Mrs. Nussbaum is an event in itself. John Carradine and William Bendix each in his own vein are priceless. Music presents Werner Heymann from a different angle and fits the tempo to perfection, particularly in one madcap sequence with different keys being played simultaneously. Social and ethical values may not be of the highest in a picture of this kind, but so far as amusement value goes "It's In The Bag" is tops and moreover, to use a much abused term, it is all good clean fun to be seen and enjoyed by old and young alike. Family.

PAN-AMERICANA, RKO. (Travel Folder and Latin Rhythms). Director: John H. Auer.
Musical Director: C. Bakaleinikoff.

A disappointing picture in spite of the musical values of the specialty acts, for, with every studio facility from which to draw, the only pattern presented is the familiar one of luxury-travel, night clubs, expensive clothes and brittle, drinking, promiscuously kissing Americans. We do not build up good will by presenting ourselves in this guise and by limiting our knowledge of our neighbors to night club life. So good are some of the dance numbers (the snake sequence in Babulu is nothing short of sensational) that they would make an unusually interesting short, especially if done with the panorama background of Mexico City, Havana and Rio and the delightful music used in the picture. Sound cues, too, are excellent: the squawk of the engine whistle reflecting a state of mind and the "chimes of memory" being used to good effect. Mature-Family.

THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY, MGM. (Dark Odyssey). Director: Albert Lewin.
Musical Score by Herbert Stothart.

Primarily this picture is a profound psychological study of the influence of one man's mind over another. Lord Henry Wotton intrigued by the masterful portrait of Dorian Gray, establishes his altogether cynical and dissipated point of view at the outset. Dorian, by the purity, beauty and weakness of his face, is too tempting a target. Lord Henry proceeds to inoculate him with his own devastating theories of life, so develops a tragedy of suggestion and the power of the spoken mind. It is brilliantly acted in the unhurried tempo of the period, dramatically directed with many skilful and telling touches, (notably Sibyl's shadow preceding her as she returns from the door to return to Dorian, the sudden emergence of the Egyptian cat thrust suddenly into center stage, the swaying lamp and above all the silent pauses in action indicating in Dorian's face the passage of thought) and is outstanding from the standpoint of photography with its sharply etched contrast of luxury and squalor. The ornate settings of the 80s, faithfully reproduced also, serve greatly to enhance the somber drama of a story which has been exceedingly well adapted for the screen (perhaps for the very reason that director and adapter are one and the same person). Some of the more sinister aspects of the novel have been

(THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY cont'd)

glossed over or handled so delicately that one is scarcely aware of their existence and the picture loses nothing thereby, for thanks to this extraordinary treatment and direction of a most unpleasant subject, it is never offensive. The one "Hollywood" touch lies in the much publicized horror portrait, which in its exaggeration is so far removed from reality as to border on burlesque. How much more horrible and subtle had the natural face of a man, in Dorian's condition, a face still resembling his, but with all the marks of his shame, been shown, rather than this grotesque and almost childish nightmare. Lord Henry is played by George Sanders with keen insight and understanding and Hurd Hatfield's portrayal of the well-meaning but weak Dorian is an outstanding one. For the most part, the impassive face, the slightly bent shoulders, the extreme paucity of hand gesture, all contribute to a restraint which etches in unmistakable outline the inhibited character of the man. Angela Lansbury's characterization, in the nostalgic episode of Sibyl Vane, is remarkable, amply fulfilling the promise of her first memorable American film performance in "Gaslight." Music is excellent and dramatic at all times. Herbert Stothart remains true to Victorian conventions at the outset. He gives us genuine music hall atmosphere and following the present mode, features the piano throughout, the stormy Chopin prelude, with its cosmic problem, becoming a threnody. It has been suggested that when this was played in the den, had the player simply attempted to play it and wandered off into cheap music hall stuff, on the cheap piano, the mood of the scene might have been more dramatically observed but, however, one may feel about this, the score is an unusually fine one with the ominous feel of the schoolroom dominating after the story really begins. This whole picture is an exceptional one, though strictly for thoughtful and adult consumption. As such, it merits our gratitude to Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer for letting us have occasional fine films like this, in which the boxoffice can of necessity play but a minor part. Adults.

SALTY O'ROURKE, Paramount. (Racketeers and Racing). Director: Raoul Walsh.
Music Score by Robert Emmett Dolan.

A hackneyed subject is treated in this picture with considerable regularity and from an angle differing widely from the usual homespun or Southern mortgage variety. It is well photographed and directed and brings Alan Ladd back to us in the type of role the public has learned to expect from him. Acting honors of the film go to Stanley Clements and Don Zelaya and while the ethical values are spread very thin it is good entertainment of its type for the not too young. Music, adequate at all times, is supplied by the score of Robert Emmett Dolan. Mature-Family.

SEE MY LAWYER, Universal. (Variety and Slapstick). Directors: H. Christie & J. Cox
Musical Director: H. J. Saltor.

Cut in the usual Olsen and Johnson pattern this hodgepodge and slapstick farce will undoubtedly please their numerous fans. There is plenty of cheerful music and the proceedings are immeasurably enhanced by Paul Ivano's fine photography and the well paced direction of Howard Christie and Judson Cox. Aside, however, from its being clean and fairly amusing and the specialty acts of good caliber, the merits of the entertainment are wholly a matter for individual taste. Family.

STRANGE ILLUSION, PRC. (Shadow and Substance). Director: Edgar G. Ulmer.
Music by Leo Erdody.

An expert and interesting production seen from an original angle in which heredity and clairvoyance play their part. Dream texture is a fascinating field for the photographer and composer and the prelude of the picture is real phantasmagoria, better realized possibly in the photography than in the music which does, however, contain a definite warning. The main title has a cubistic form that is very intriguing. Music contributes materially, moreover, to the suspense of the whole and again a Concerto - this time the Schumann A Minor - is featured. Mature-Family.

TONIGHT AND EVERY NIGHT, Columbia. (The Show Must Go On). Director: Victor Saville.
Music by Jule Styne. Musical Director: M. W. Stoloff.

Here is a smartly paced musical, riotous with color, dance routines that are not only original but up-to-the-minute and a plot which has interest as well. Rita Hayworth and Janet Blair are well teamed and exceedingly good to look upon. The very fact that Rita is starred means super dancing and showmanship and in this case Marc Platt affords excellent support. Technique of the whole is definite and new - the ballets are stunning and the specialties have a definite life of their own - the newsreel number as distinct dimension with that mixture of photography and life that is being exploited today, each time with better results. In spite of its English director and the presence of one or two English people in the cast, the only English thing about the picture lies in the story which, by the way, is founded on fact. Had the supporting cast been wholly English its credibility would have been much enhanced. However, with the exception of one sequence, which is vulgar and in poor taste, the whole is good, lusty entertainment, with music which is exhilarating and rhythmic throughout. Mature-Family.

ON APPROVAL, British. ("In Grandmother's Day") Director: Clive Brook
Original Music: William Alwyn. Music Dir: Muir Mathieson.

Of interest chiefly to grown-ups who know something of post-Victorian England at the turn of the century this delightfully dated comedy of modes and manners will bring much pleasure. Others will neither understand nor care for it. However, the slow pacing, the low-keyed photography and the beautifully set action of a superlative cast make for what is practically perfection of its kind. Beatrice Lillie and Clive Brook, well-known over here, carry most of the honors, but his timid friend as played by Roland Culver and Googie Withers as the pickle heiress are equally good to remember. As regards music of the picture, the composer's problem was a difficult one since the film consists mainly of short scenes and sophisticated lines - therefore, the score became a series of incidental musical pieces rather than real background which usually is and always should be of a quality which reflects continuity. It was at its best in the dance sequences when the orchestra played music for the ball - this carried on regardless of changes of scene, interior and exterior. Also particularly effective were the bizarre and exotic measures composed for the dream episodes. All in all, however, Mr. Alwyn met his problem well considering, too, that he received little help from the direction (Clive Brook's - he directed as well as acted) which inserted a sort of gentle slapstick into what should have been smooth comedy. So, since the music became a sort of "house divided" it really did reflect the film. Adults.

HOTEL BERLIN, Warner Bros. (Dying City). Director: Peter Godfrey.
Music by Franz Waxman. Musical Director: Leo F. Forbstein.

The movie, while omitting many colorful and important details of Miss Baum's exciting book and interpolating others, does give at the outset authentic Nazi atmosphere and Nazi types - the hurly-burly seething of the hotel lobby with all its underlying intrigue and tragedy is well drawn and the actors do a more than creditable job in their various parts - Raymond Massey's characterization in particular being outstanding. Thanks to the manner of presentation and treatment and, also, to the able direction of Peter Godfrey, color and credence are achieved. Interest is kept at a high pitch and in spite of its similarity in theme to countless other "undofground" pictures, this one is timely, dramatic and absorbing. Mr. Waxman's score, too, is of signal interest, punctuated throughout with the heavy Nazi tread and rhythm. There is a new development for tramp of searching parties: explosive cut-offs. Orchestration, as always, is nicely somber and pregnant, with expert cueing in of bombs, detonations, tragic suspense and muffled effects. There is occasional relief in the playing of records and in the cafe music - and there are, too, long and effective silences. Mature-Family.

Composers for Films Seek Light - by Isabel Morse Jones, Music Editor, L.A. Times

Just a year ago the League of Composers presented a program of "Music and Film" in the Museum of Modern Art, New York. The audience was made up of composers. Disregarding the fact that this group of 300 was drawn from the more musically literate strata, a poll was taken and the results tabulated.

It was, naturally, the consensus of opinion that motion-picture audiences wish to hear new music rather than the familiar classics. Familiar popular music is generally out of the question any way, because it costs too much. Familiar classics, at least if they are old enough or not covered by an American copyright, are free. This question of original scores versus arrangements is not settled and perhaps never will be.

Two pictures of the year, which have used music as an integral part of a similar story, offer an interesting opportunity for public answer. The first is "Voice in the Wind," with an outstanding score by Michel Michelet. The other is "Hangover Square," recently released by 20th Century-Fox with the brilliant young composer-conductor Bernard Herrmann as music master.

In both, the story centers around a single composition. Michelet used "The River Moldau" by Smetana. Herrmann spent six weeks writing his "Hangover Square Concerto," the leitmotif of the film. Both are instrumentally rich. The Czech classic is so powerfully handled that it colors and molds the entire emotional mood of the film. It becomes the voice. The Herrmann "Concerto," name bestowed upon it by the studio, although it is by no means complete in form, has an utterly banal melody, without inspiration. But who would be expected to turn out an original piece of work in six weeks? Certainly not a composer-conductor who has been as busy in radio and films as Herrmann.

Music drawn from the standard repertoire has dominated Hollywood films. Gifted American composers have been occupied with documentary films and not entirely by their own choice. Few composers of serious music can collaborate to the extent that film and radio composers must. As writers of general background music and as coworkers with a dozen people as important as themselves, composers who have attained a distinctive style find the film medium difficult.

Alfred Newman, Max Steiner, Franz Waxman, Morton Gould, Jerome Kern, Herrmann, Nat Shilkret, Edward Ward, Miklos Rosza, Victor Young, Adolph Deutsch, David Raksin, Leo Forbstein, Arthur Lange and Michelet are collaborators. They get the best pictures to score. Erich Korngold, Aaron Copland, Hanns Eisler, Werner Janssen, George Antheil, Louis Gruenberg, William Grant Still, Richard Hageman, Ernst Toch, Alexander Tansman get a film to score on occasions. Their work is remembered by the few who really listen to film scores.

Most of the collaborators are also exceptional writers of mood music and some of it could be transferred to the single ear of the concert hall. Hollywood has developed these men by giving them enough scores for experimenting and learning. The producers expect composers like Prokofieff, Stravinsky, Schoenberg, Hindemith and the others from another music world to conform instantly in time and routine skills to the specialized demands films make.

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PATTERN FOR MYSTERY

By Roy Webb

The officials of FILM MUSIC NOTES have been kind enough to ask me to explain my approach for music in mystery pictures. I have been told that I have been fairly successful in this field and feel honored in the assignment of writing this paper.

In the first place, I was lucky to be composing for the artistic melodrama of producer Val Lewton, and felt that they deserved a deeper and more thoughtful treatment than the usual picture of this category. So the first thought was to enhance the local color of the film. Then to approach the dramatic situations in a more mental than physical manner. This, of course, is not a hard and fast rule as music and drama are such pliable subjects that one's intuition, which is very much tempered by experience, must largely be one's guide.

However, I believe a few concrete examples of that which I have just explained would be in order. In the film "I Walked With A Zombie" the main title music was a broad theme describing the ocean pounding on the beach of the island where the ensuing action took place. This was further enhanced, between the producer and myself, by having a visual background of real waves behind the title credits. (No actual sound, thank goodness!). Now, all of this is to show that at the very beginning the audience is prepared for an artistic endeavor and is ready to appreciate the fine points of the picture.

The film "Murder, My Sweet," a detective story of tremendous vitality, was preceded by music which described the light which is shining in the face of Dick Powell who is suffering a third degree trial at the start of the picture. This consists of one shimmering and very high note on vibraphone, novachord and tremolo strings which holds against a mysterious combination of melody and chords which finally fade out and leave that same high note alone by itself as the picture opens and reveals Mr. Powell under the light.

In general I would say that with the exception of a few bursts of intense music I have leaned toward the subtle treatment of mystery and melodrama, such as a man dreamily playing a guitar while a murder is being committed, or perhaps fog music when intense drama is being enacted on a very misty night. Again I must repeat that this is not a rule, and the action type of background might fit the situation much better. All of this greatly depends on the balance of the musical score, and what scenes the composer feels he must motivate to improve or embellish the film. Music for the main title of "I Walked With A Zombie" accompanies this issue.

NOTE: For biography of Roy Webb, see October, 1944 issue of FILM MUSIC NOTES.