NATIONAL FILM MUSIC COUNCIL

70 FIFTH AVENUE
New York 11, N. Y.
ALgonquin 4-8344

"To foster interest in music in the films; to encourage musicians who are developing this new art form; to awaken teachers and students to the educational, artistic and practical possibilities of this new medium of expression."

SPECIAL BULLETIN

A

SALUTE to WARNER BROTHERS

and the

TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF SOUND

Contents

THE NATIONAL FILM MUSIC COUNCIL

PRESENTS THIS CITATION TO

WARNER BROS.

for offering limitless possibilities to American composers
and for bringing original American music to
millions of theatregoers.
The addition of music to the art of the drama has
tremendously broadened the scope of the motion picture
and has created new opportunities for the
enjoyment of the best in musical achievement.
It was WARNER BROS. who through their introduction
of sound films made available to the
public at large the universal language of music.

Kate Mahoney Mabee

FOUNDER-CHAIRMAN

THE SOUND FILM

ITS PREMIERE AND ITS

TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY

On August 6th it is fitting that we should pay tribute to the medium that has played such an important part, during the last twenty years, in bringing musical entertainment, culture and education to the people of the world. Today we are amused when we attend a silent movie and see a singer perform without hearing his voice, or a statesman speak without hearing his message; yet the public and the producers were content with such film fare prior to August 6,1926.

At a time when the art of the silent pictures was at its height, the Warner Brothers believed in the new unproven art form of the sound film to the extent that they risked their fortunes and reputation to demonstrate its potentialities. They saw, as did Edison, the future of talking pictures as an educational medium, which would bring art and culture to the masses, a medium that could bring an interchange of friendship and enlightenment among all countries of the world.

Today the world salutes them.* Although there had been much scientific research and development prior to this date which contributed directly or indirectly to the success of sound pictures, as we know them today, Warner Brothers were the first to present them in such a way as to win acceptance by the theater-going public.

This is the way it happened. The late Sam Warner was keenly interested in inventions. In April, 1925, he wired his brother Harry: "Go to the Western Electric Company and see what I consider the greatest thing in the world." Harry complied but he wouldn't have if he had known that the "greatest thing" was again the controversial "talking picture".

Of this visit and its epoch-making results, he wrote: **

"I went and heard it and wired him back, "I think you are right'. Had he wired me to go up and hear a talking picture I would never have gone near it, because I had heard and seen talking pictures so much that I would not have walked across the street to look at one. But when I heard a twelve-piece orchestra on screen at the Bell Telephone Laboratories, I could not believe my own ears. I walked in back of the screen to see if they did not have an orchestra there synchronizing with the picture. They all laughed at me. The whole affair was in a ten by twelve room. There were a lot of bulbs working and things I know nothing about, but there was not any concealed orchestra.

"The thought occurred to me that if we quit the idea of a talking picture and brought about something the motion picture theater of the present day really needs - - music adapted to the picture - - we could ultimately develop it to a point at which people would ask us for talking pictures. If I myself would not have gone across the street to see or hear a talking picture, I surely could not expect the public to do it. But music! That is another story. An organ playing to a picture was the thing that I visualized. I stopped and thought a minute and said: 'Here's a theater that seats four or five thousand people, runs a motion picture, which is the most important part of its business, and neglects the most important part of the picture, which is music. The manager plays his music as an overture

and does not play it to the picture. Try this experiment some day. Take a motion picture, a silent one, and run it off. Then take the same picture and run it with an orchestra, and you will see the difference. That vision came to me."

"I said to my partners: 'Let's get the greatest artists and the best orchestra in the country. Let's have confidence in this and put all our muscle behind it. We'll know the result after we have opened the first show.'"

They did, and music sold the Sound Film. The New York Philharmonic Orchestra, under the expert direction of Henry Hadley, as well as outstanding opera and concert stars, were engaged. On August 6,1926, sixteen months after Sam Warner's first visit to the Bell Laboratories, the recording problems had been solved to the extent*** that they were able to present the following historic program at Warners' Theater in New York:

*See "Pioneering in Talking Pictures by Lee DeForest - Journal of the Society of Motion Pictures Engineers, January 1941.

**"Future Developments - Chap. 14 "The Story of Films" published by A.W. Shaw.

*** "The History of Sound Recording" - Levinson
Giving a Voice to Motion Pictures - A.P. Peck-Scientific American June 1927

Available through National Film Music Council

WARNER BROS. PICTURES, INC.
in association with
THE VITAPHONE CORPORATION

Present

VITAPHONE
and
JOHN BARRYMORE in "DON JUAN"

VITAPHONE PRELUDE

HON. WILL H. HAYS
President of Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America welcomes VITAPHONE.

THE NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA.
Henry Hadley conducting, Overture from "TANNHAUSER", Wagner.

MARION TALLEY
By arrangement with the Metropolitan Opera Company, Caro Nome from "RIGOLETTO", Verdi.

EFREM ZIMBALIST and HAROLD BAUER
Variations from "KREUTZER SONATA", Beethoven.

ROY SMECK
in "HIS PASTIMES"

ANNA CASE
"LA FIESTA", supported by the Carsinos and Metropolitan Opera chorus.
Accompanied by the Vitaphone Symphony Orchestra, Herman Heller, conducting.

MISCHA ELMAN
Joseph Bonime, accompanist, "HUMORESQUE", Dvorak.

GIOVANNI MARTINELLI
By arrangement with the Metropolitan Opera Company. Vesti la Giubba, from "I PAGLIACCI", Leoncavallo. Accompanied by the NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA.

Incidental music to the above numbers played by members of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, Herman Heller conducting.

JOHN BARRYMORE in "DON JUAN"

Screen story by Bess Meredyth
Directed by Alan Crosland

Musical score arranged by Major Edward Bowes, David Mendoza and Dr.William Axt.
Original composition by Dr. William Axt played on the Vitaphone by the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, Henry Hadley conducting.

The approval of the audience and the critics was unanimous. A doubtful public. skeptical of recorded speech, was convinced by the art that speaks directly to the heart. The following are a few excerpts from the press.

NEW YORK TIMES - August 6, 1926

VITAPHONE STIRS AS TALKING MOVIE

By
Mordaunt Hall

A marvelous device known as the Vitaphone, which synchronizes sound with modern pictures, stirred a distinguished audience in Warners' Theatre to unusual enthusiasm at its initial presentation last Thursday evening. The natural reproduction of voices, the tonal qualities of musical instruments, and the timing of the sound to the movements of the lips of singers and the actions of musicians was almost uncanny.

The future of this new contrivance is boundless, for inhabitants of small and remote places will have the opportunity of listening to and seeing grand opera as it is given in New York, and through the picturing of the vocalists and small groups of musicians, or instrumental choirs or orchestras, the Vitaphone will give its patrons an excellent idea of a singer's acting and an intelligent conception of the efforts of musicians and their instruments. Operatic favorites will be able to be seen and heard and the genius of singers and musicians who have passed will still live.

An Excellent Program

All the world loves a singer or a musician and this will assuredly elevate the films and in doing so it will improve the popular taste. The Warner Brothers are to be commended for the high-class entertainment they are giving with the Vitaphone. They sought world-renowned musicians and singers, instead of presenting subjects with low comedians.

NEW YORK TIMES - Sept. 17,1926

PRESENT AND FUTURE OF THE VITAPHONE

by
Olin Downes

The potentialities of this new process are endless and reach into many fields of dramatic musical and educational activities. Students of orchestration, as the new device becomes perfected and widely accessible, may not only hear but watch an orchestra, observe the effect of one or another choir of instruments as their

NEW YORK TIMES -Sept.17,1926

tone emerges from the ensemble, as such effects are now to be observed when Henry Hadley is seen and heard conducting the pictured orchestra at the Warner Theatre. Not only the tone but the technique of each instrumental soloist or group of players is visible. No doubt vocal teachers will in course of time leap upon available illustrations of their ideas as exemplified in such films as that of Mr. Martinelli employing his breath, his lips, his resonance chambers, as he sings with characteristic fervor the air from "Pagliacci".

VARIETY - August 7, 1926

CREATION OF A NEW ART

by
C. B. DuBois
President of Western Electric Co.

It is natural to see and hear at the same time. We may and we do artificially adapt our mental processes to either effect alone but the combination of the two is what the mind instinctively seeks.

The Vitaphone does this and thereby creates a new art. Anyone may prophesy as to just what direction its uses and effects will take as the years go on. No one can doubt the great possibilities it contains for preserving and disseminating knowledge, understanding and culture. On behalf of the Western Electric Company I take this opportunity to express our satisfaction that we have had a part in bringing this new art into being and our earnest hopes that it may fully develop its inherent possibilities for the benefit and pleasure of mankind.

Today we know that these predictions have been fulfilled. Through the screen the world's finest music has reached millions of people who would otherwise have never heard or seen it performed.* Films have also done more to popularize the classics* than any other medium. Innumerable famous artists have appeared on the screen and a great many more will be seen currently or have signed contracts to appear in forthcoming films.* The film score has established itself as the new twentieth century form of expression in the field of dramatic music. Gradually overcoming its childhood handicaps*,an art has evolved that is a distinct contribution to modern music.

*1. See "Music For All",John Huntley,Film Music Notes,Sept.1945.
*2. See "Musical Highlights of Past Year", Sigmund Spaeth,Film Music,May 1945,1946.
*3. See List of Current and Coming Entertainment Films available through the National Film Music Council.
*4. See "The Cinderella of the Cinema" -Miklos Rozsa. Music Educators Journal, January, 1946.

Music recorded on a film that aids its message through pictorial images, is undoubtedly one of the best ways of spreading racial and international understanding. It will be of invaluable aid to UNESCO in spreading world-wide goodwill, so vitally necessary if our civilization is to survive.

The current observance of the Twentieth Anniversary of Talking Pictures is world-wide in scope. A series of special programs, designed to highlight the scientific development and cultural contribution of the talking motion picture and to honor the scientists who pioneered in the field on an international scale have been given throughout the summer. Special ceremonies, in the United States and abroad, are commemorating the important pioneering experiments by science and industry, and portraying the contribution of the sound motion picture during the past two decades in the fields of entertainment, public service and education.

The anniversary program climaxed August 6, with local celebrations in key cities in the United States, Canada, England and South America and wherever in Europe American motion pictures are now being seen.

Warner Brothers are presenting as part of the celebration simultaneously in our major cities, their new technicolor musical Night and Day. Based upon the career of Cole Porter, it presents the suave beloved songs of our contemporary composer at their best. The thirty odd of his favorite hits appearing in the film are so beautifully arranged, executed and recorded that the picture is sure to please even the most discriminating. It is gratifying to have this film tribute to Mr Porter's art and courage made while he is still living and still creating.

Accompanying this feature is a short that teachers of music, science and drama are sure to want. Titled "Okay for Sound" it shows the experiments and inventions that culminated in the talking picture and the famous artists as they appeared on the first program. It informs us of the present day techniques of sound recording, including background music, and concludes with illustrations of sound as used in current films, among which is a scene from the coming Humoresque with masterly violin music by Isaac Stern.

Among other events planned by Warner Bros. and the companies co-sponsoring the anniversary are: special exhibits of early communications and photographic equipment; national and international science and industry conferences on future developments; educational forums on the applications of sound motion pictures to teaching arts and sciences, and on the use of sound film to promote international understanding.

It is indeed fitting, that the National Film Music Council should join this celebration by presenting to Warner Brothers its special citation and issuing this bulletin. Warner Bros. and all the other co-sponsors of the twentieth anniversary --

American Telephone and Telegraph Company
Bell Telephone Laboratories
Western Electric Company
Eastman Kodak Company
R.C.A. Victor Corporation
Thomas A. Edison, Inc., and the
Society of Motion Picture Engineers, -

should be proud indeed, of their part in making this miracle available to mankind. We congratulate them and wish them continued success.

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STANLIE McCONNELL

NATIONAL FILM MUSIC COUNCIL

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THE MUSICIANS OF THE WARNER BROS. STUDIOS

The NATIONAL FILM MUSIC COUNCIL is vitally interested in the talking films' twentieth anniversary celebration this year, showing the progress of motion picture sound from its beginning in the laboratories of Thomas A. Edison to the present. The advent of sound in films offered limitless possibilities for composers, not only to provide original scores but also to convey the works of the masters to a greater number of people than can be reached in our highly centralized concert halls.

Those who had seen the silent films that preceded the talking motion picture realized what a step forward the introduction of sound implied. With the presence of sound on the screen, the motion picture became firmly established as one of the greatest means of communication, through eye and ear, to the people of the world. This meant that the motion picture could now serve as an ambassador of good will, as a conveyor of great drama and music as well as personality .....a means of instruction along with fine entertainment.

The first complete synchronized musical score on film was "Don Juan" produced in 1926. John Barrymore was starred. The musical score was written by William Axt and the musical arrangement was by David Mendoza and the late Major Edward Bowes. Of unusual interest to those of us who are members of the NATIONAL ASSO. OF AMERICAN COMPOSERS AND CONDUCTORS, is the fact that the late Dr. Henry Hadley, Founder of this organization and one of America's great musicians, conducted the New York Philharmonic Orchestra in "Don Juan" and will be seen in Warner Bros. special anniversary two-reeler, "OKAY for SOUND."

Then came the first talking picture, "THE JAZZ SINGER" in 1927, starring Al Jolson. The screen became theatre!

Now pictures and music flow from the same celluloid. Changed techniques in composition and performance have created a new era in music. But the motion picture is a new art and music is the oldest. With the advent of sound pictures, producers realized this and they became ambitious to develop an idiom in music that would be technically and artistically, in harmony with the other arts of their creation.

Jack L. Warner, Vice President and Executive Producer of Warner Bros. Pictures, chose Leo Forbstein to head his music department.

My acquaintance with this genial gentleman, an excellent musician, along with most of the musicians in other Hollywood Studios, has given me an insight into the many difficulties they have had to encounter during the past twenty years. The greatest musicians in the world are to be found in these studios. While space will not permit my mentioning the fine men in all the studios, I wish to speak briefly of those who have provided some of the excellent scores released by Warner Bros.

Leo Forbstein, born in St. Louis, directed his own orchestra when 16 years old, while still a student. In 1925, he was called to conduct the orchestra in Grauman's Metropolitan Theatre in Hollywood and in 1928 took charge of all musical activities in the Warner Studios. Jack Warner spared no expense in securing the finest musicians to assist him....those who know the full range of music....from Symphonic and Opera to Swing and Jazz. Mr. Forbstein recognizes each of his musician's gifts and assigns to them the responsibilities they are able to assume.

It was Max Reinhardt who brought Eric Wolfgang Korngold to the United States to write the score for his production of "MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM" which Warner Bros. produced in 1935. Korngold had been a child prodigy and became one of Europe's greatest composers. His opera "Die Tote Stadt" (Dead City) was produced at the Metropolitan Opera House, with Mariz Jeritza singing the lead in 1921. Korngold found a warm reception in Hollywood and in 1934 signed a contract with Warners to score two pictures a year. Among his scores are "Midsummer Night's Dream," "Anthony Adverse," "Robin Hood," "Elizabeth and Essex," "Juarez," "King's Row," "Constant Nymph" and "Devotion."

Max Steiner, another who had written many compositions in the larger forms, and won awards of all kinds, came to America in 1914 and to Hollywood in 1929 as musical director for Radio Pictures....then to Selznick International where he won the Academy Award for his score for "Gone With the Wind." Then to Warners, where his versatile sense of tonal beauty has been applied to "Dark Victory," "Four Wives," "Sergeant York," "Now Voyager" (Academy Award), "Mark Twain," "The Corn is Green," "Saratoga Trunk" and many others he has scored.

Adolph Deutsch, born in London, came to this country when thirteen years old and was a gifted student in piano and composition. He was intrigued with the sounds of 'Alexanders Ragtime Band' and other forms of American popular music. To obtain money to study, after the first world war, he worked in the Ford Motor Co. while studying orchestration and composition. His symphonic compositions have been played by the Philadelphia and New York orchestras.

Among his best film scores are "The Fighting 69th", "The Maltese Falcon" and "The Mask of Dimitrios." His "March of the United Nations" used in "Action in the North Atlantic" is especially worthy. His most recent film is "Three Strangers."

Mr. Deutsch says, "The creative and artistic talents interplay with the sciences and skills to give the film its full dimensions. To be a competent collaborator, a musician must possess attributes far beyond musical talent, technical facility and discipline." He believes the composer should acquaint himself with the fundamentals of sound engineering and express his ideas microphonically as well as musically. The blending of actors lines and sound in their proportions and relationship is a skill demanding accuracy and imagination.

Franz Waxman began his work in motion pictures with the Fox Film Corporation in 1934. In 1935 he took over the music department at Universal Studios for one year....His score for "Rebecca" won him great honor. It has been arranged as a Suite which has been played by all the leading orchestras. In the fall of 1942 he signed a contract with Warners for whom he has scored "Objective Burma," "Hotel Berlin," "God Is My Co-Pilot," "Confidental Agent," "The Pride of the Marines" and "The Horn Blows at Midnight," the 'Trumpeter' theme from the latter being especially noteworthy. Mr. Waxman gave a fine compliment to the Warner Bros. Studios. He said, "They have an ideal situation. Great attention is given to music and its contribution to the film. In my 17 years' experience in the motion picture industry, I have had reasen to appreciate these conditions to the full and enjoy the progressive attitudes and encouragement to our work given by Jack Warner and Leo Forbstein, the music department head."

Ray Heindorf has been with Warners for many years. He has not only contributed musical scores but has been one of the studio's best arrangers. His arrangements for "Rhapsody in Blue," one of the two big musicals of the past year, were outstanding, as is his work in the anniversary picture, "Night and Day."

Frederick Hollander, made himself popular with his comedy scores, "The Man Who Came to Dinner" being one of his best, also "Christmas in Connecticut."

William Lava, is also one of Warner Bros. comedy and farce composers, especially for short subjects. His short, "I Won't Play," a miniature drama was presented to one of the Council's Film Music Forums in Hollywood.

Howard Jackson, a composer and conductor of French and Spanish extraction, born in St. Augustine, Fla., studied extensively in New York and has been a member of Warner Bros. music department for a number of years. He first came to our attention when winning the plaque from the National Federation of Music Clubs in 1941 for his score for the short, "The Dog in the Orchard." He also wrote the music for Warners' historical shorts on America. His recent score for "Club Havana" also received a citation from FILM MUSIC Notes. We wish we might mention many others working under the Warner Bros. banner, but our space is limited.

The National Film Music Council is an organization located at 70 Fifth Avenue, New York 11, and wishes to serve, not only the musicians but the music educators, club leaders and any organization desiring information on the music in films. Our monthly bulletin, FILM MUSIC NOTES will be issued hereafter from 70 Fifth Avenue, New York City. It contains valuable information on films, reviews of current releases, articles and excerpts from film scores by the film composers. Subscription, two dollars a year. The National Film Music Council provides additional material to all subscribers.

Sincerely,

Grace Widney Mabee, Chairman
National Film Music Council
70 Fifth Avenue, New York 11, N. Y.

SOUND: 1929-1946

Strange as it may seem today, the addition of sound to the screen was not regarded as an unmixed blessing when the release of The Jazz Singer made that addition inevitable. Many of the screen's most ardent admirers believed that the coming of sound meant the death of an art. They feared that the recording of dialogue would reduce the camera to a subsidiary position, and that, indeed, the film as a whole would become a mere mechanical means for recording stage performances, much as the gramophone records operatic selections.

Even while that misconception, for such it proved to be, was being widely entertained, it was being disproved in practice by enterprising film-makers who set out to restore the flexibility of the silent screen and to make the sound track not a supplement to the visuals but a complement, to add a new dimension to the motion picture.

As early as 1929, the first year in which talkies were made in any considerable number, King Vidor's memorable Hallelujah took the camera and microphone out of the sound stages and into the cotton fields of the South, where he caught the unstudied accents of the Negro people and the welling emotion of their great songs. Soon afterwards the Warner Brothers, who had introduced sound to a not altogether enthusiastic Hollywood, illustrated how it could be intelligently used in their series of gangster films of the early thirties.

However, we may regard gangster films morally or socially, there is no doubt that they were artistically remarkable, and much of their quality derived from their sound tracks. The roar of city streets, the terrifying row of the machine-gun, the racket these films made, set the spectator down right in the midst of the squalid slum life out of which the gangster grew.

Beyond atmosphere, more complex uses were found for sound by forward-looking directors. Sound could be used as counter-point to what the camera showed. Once this principle was established here and abroad, the "compound cinema" which an early critic had foreseen was made a possibility.

A more functional use of music is undoubtedly on the way. Aaron Copland's several film scores best illustrate the new approach to my way of thinking, and I believe that that approach will more and more find its growing point in the rapid development of the educational and documentary film. Because most documentaries are shot silent, the music and narration being synchronized afterward, it is necessary for the director and the composer to think more deeply about the relation of the score to what is shown visually. In such a film, visuals, sound, narration, and music are matched and played off against one another, very much as musical themes are orchestrated in a fugue.

It is a straw in the wind, I think, that many Hollywood film-makers to whom music had been merely a small incidental, found, when they came to make documentary films for the Army, that natural sound as well as music must play an integral and functional role in the total composition of the film, or play no role at all.

The lesson has been well-learned by all who worked on such films. It can best be stated in a musical figure: that sound must bear the relationship of counterpoint to visuals, rather than of harmony.

Richard Griffith
Executive Director,
National Board of Review

THE CONTRIBUTION OF SOUND FILM TO MUSIC EDUCATION

On this twentieth anniversary of the wedding of sound to film, it is appropriate to pause and take stock of the contribution of this event to music education.

Sound film has given us a new and important medium of musical expression. This new medium, unheard of a score of years ago, has brought a sharp increase in the number and extent of musical contacts for the average person. The music of films now ranks with the radio and phonograph as one of the most available and widely used sources of musical experience.

Sound film has brought the music of the artist, of the time-honored composer, of the contemporary writer, or of the modern arranger as close as the neighborhood theater. Production and distribution techniques have made this entertainment and experience available to the theatergoer at a small fraction of the cost of a formal concert. This is a truly powerful avenue for musical distribution. It is an important outlet for the writing of the contemporary composer, for the concert artist, for the ballad singer, or for the name-band. It is a means by which Chopin, Iturbi, Rachmaninoff, Gershwin, Melchior or Korngold become intimate in the musical thinking of the average person.

The size of the theatre-going audience is almost staggering. Consider the number of theaters in any locality, the number of shows daily, the frequency of changes of feature, and multiply this by average attendance figures and one appreciates the vastness of the audience. This vast audience for music did not exist twenty years ago. The exploration of the use of music in sound film is yet more recent. The rapid development of music on sound film and the emergence of the new audience for music belongs to the last decade.

Sound film has added dimension to our music. Listening to music is essentially an aural perceptual process. However, the layman and technician alike agree there is heightened emotional effect to be gained by the skillful blending of sight and sound. As a medium of musical expression the sound film is unique. The rapid advance of camera techniques, the dramatic skill of photographer and director alike, have produced an intimate and heightened effect for music on the screen.

Contrast the dramatic effect of a top-row balcony seat at a symphony concert with the closeup sequence of a Toscanini to realize the intimate and personal aspect of the screen experience. The directness of contact between screen personage and movie-goer is heightened by such factors as the darkened theater, the complete dominance of the huge screen, the ingenuity of the director, the dramatic photography and the superb acoustical qualities of some of our film which far outstrip the musical effect available from many seats in our concert auditoriums.

To the music educator it is of utmost importance that he take stock of the effects of the new medium for musical expression and consumption.

The music educator is concerned with the manipulation and development of the musical environment of the child. In a sense the musical environment of the child is ready-made. The teacher must recognize and accept the advent of the sound film and appraise its importance in the musical life of the child he guides.

Radio, phonograph, sound-film, community and school music are the basic sources that the teacher has to deal with. The teacher's task becomes one of admitting, encouraging, understanding, interpreting and extending these avenues of musical experience. Music educators, then, must of necessity acquaint themselves with sound film, appraise and interpret with their students the musical materials of featured and background types to be found in the current movie.

The threshold of instructional opportunity in sound film has scarcely been crossed. Educators have found few means of instruction as efficient or powerful as a well-conceived and directed teaching film, particularly in training for skills. The details of musical instruction deserve, and will in time, receive a series of sound-films that will aid materially in many of the teaching problems. In the area of instruction of orchestral and band instruments there is an almost unlimited need for training film. Music educators are faced at present with a limited library of teaching sound-films while producers are faced with a weak demand for musical film. Intelligent and collective planning is urgent between producer and music educator to decelop appropriate musical film and an adequate market.

Sound film, perhaps better than any other medium, can dramatize the principles underlying all artistic expression. It is important that we learn to recognize all the arts as a integral part of man's life. We need to see the common urges and drives from which artistic expression springs. We need to see the principles which underlie all the arts. A film such as Rhapsody in Blue can do much to give historical and cultural perspective to music if the portrayal is honest and effective. Perhaps by sound film the attitudes of acceptance, tolerance, and appreciation of man's attempts at expression will be built. Sound film has proved an important means in effecting a change in attitude. The Army found it a most competent means for indoctrination and orientation during the war. It is reasonable to turn to skillfully designed sound films to dramatize these underlying principles and concepts of the arts.

It is dramatically important that the teacher realize the role of appreciation and musical contact within the class-room. (We are rapidly moving toward the day when every class-room will be adequately equipped for sound film. We may continue with portable projectors but the fidelity of sound track and projector will be improved as our needs are made known to producers.)

It is this specific teaching situation that offers the most potent means for guided interpretation of musical experience. As suitable film becomes more available and as photographic and dramatic portrayals of musical (subjects improve, the emotional significance of class-room) musical experience will be heightened measurably. With this can come a direction of attitudes in channels more favorable to music and other artistic expression and to the all-round development of the youngster.

Thus far in the life of the sound film it has shown a rapid expansion dictated by economic considerations and guided to a limited extent by artistic principle. Many decry the philosophic implications or artistic standards of many motion pictures. Still others are unsympathetic with the use of music either in its featured form of in its role as background effect. It is not the purpose of the writer to argue this point. Music educators are in a position to wield influence on the direction of motion pictures and their musical content. By wielding a constant guiding influence on the tastes and desires of youth, music educators can influence general tastes and desires in film music on the part of the consumer. By concerted action music educators can guide, to a certain extent, the instructional sound film that will be made in the future.

Sound film is now entering its third decade. It has proved itself in every way as an important medium of musical expression and enjoyment. Its potentialities as a dominant means of musical life are enormous. In the final analysis the direction and degree of the development of these potentialities depends upon the extent of influence of musicians and teachers upon the tastes and demands of the theater-going public. Music education has a responsibility and a challenge. Is it ready to accept?

James F. Nickerson, Ass't Prof.
Department of Music Education
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Lawrence, Kansas

National Association for American Composers and Conductors
15 WEST 67th STREET, NEW YORK
HENRY HADLEY, Founder
LEON BARZIN, President

HENRY HADLEY AND THE FILMS

When I landed from Europe in late August, 1926, my husband, Dr. Henry Hadley, met me with the greeting that we must go at once up Broadway. He had a surprise for me!

I was travel weary and anxious for home but as there was an undercurrent of excitement in his greeting, I at once put aside thoughts of bathing and unpacking.

When we reached the Forties, he took my arm and pointed. There in blazing lights in front of the Rivoli Theatre were the words "Henry Hadley". For the first time in the wild and picturesque history of the Movies, a musician's name was featured and an American musician at that!

Our pride was deep and I think at that moment my husband realized the ever-increasingly important part that serious music was destined to play in film development.

We went into the theatre immediately and I saw Henry Hadley conducting the New York Philharmonic Orchestra in the Overture to "Tannhauser" - an overwhelming experience, as up to that time we were accustomed to hearing only pitifully small groups offering nothing more than a soporific background.

At one leap serious music had become an integral part of the films.

This "short" went all over the world. In fact, some time after its American showing I received a letter from the Princess Calitzin in Paris saying: "I became acquainted with your husband and the New York Philharmonic this afternoon. I dropped in at a cinema near the Madeline and to my surprise and delight, saw, by the caption that 'M. Henri Hadley' would conduct the overture to 'Tannhauser'.

In the meantime, Hermann Heller, of San Francisco, asked Dr. Hadley if he would be interested in writing a score for the screen version of "Manon Lescaut", to be produced by Warner Bros.

My husband saw at once what a great field this would offer composers and accepted with enthusiasm. Naturally the field was unexplored and Dr. Hadley felt keenly the responsibility that rested upon him as the first composer to write music to synchronize with the unfolding of the scenes and to make music an integral part of the finished picture.

It meant visit after visit to the Manhattan Theatre, to see whether this musical phrase must be enlarged or that cut down to fit with exactness and precision. It was an arduous task but he and Warner Bros. Studio were making technical history.

When finished, the score was as full as that of "Meistersinger", and my husband always considered that some of the most beautiful music he ever wrote was in it. What a pity that it should be buried in the archives of the Studio and can no longer be heard!

It was always a source of joy to us that this beautiful music was associated with the great performance of John Barrymore in "When a Man Loves", as this history-making film was called.

The public is always grateful for the gift of beautiful music, and Henry Hadley has received his meed of such gratitude. But perhaps as time goes on, we, as Americans, will learn that we owe him an even greater debt. He vigorously championed American music as guest conductor of the great orchestras of Europe, South America and the Orient, offered it on his own programs with pride and confidence. It was because of this that he was called "America's Musical Ambassador".

When America gave the screen voice, it was particularly fitting that Henry Hadley should be the first musician to utilize the new medium. Great music on the screen is no novelty today. Henry Hadley helped, by his vision and his understanding, to add the magic of melody to the magic of sound.

In the Music Division of the New York Public Library is a section dedicated for all time to the memory of Henry Hadley. This physical monument, visible and tangible. That other monument - a high patriotism which never excluded love of greatness in other peoples' achievements - is invisible. It is a strong tree rooted in the heart and spirit of a generous man.

It will grow and strew its sweet beneficience over ever-widening circles.

Mrs. Henry Hadley

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