

# *The MIKLOS ROZSA Society*

## "PRO MUSICA SANA"

Honorary President: MIKLOS ROZSA

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### NEWS:

This issue is designed to get us back on schedule, so current reviews have been slighted in favor of some articles we have on hand that will hopefully prove to be of permanent and general interest. There is big news, though. A sound track disc of THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD definitely does exist (UAS 29576). Alan Warner informs us that while there will not be an American pressing, plans are being made to import the record into this country. The film has played in New York and in several other cities and will soon go into general release. A couple of reviews have mentioned the music, and we will quote them here for the record.

Alexander Stuart in the March Films and Filming: "One of the most attractive features... is the beautiful music score by Miklos Rozsa, reminiscent of the powerful and magnificent swashbuckling scores of Erich Wolfgang Korngold... Rozsa's music effectively complements the action throughout, at times introducing important themes of its own, but quite possibly its major role is as a mental key to open up memories of the old style Hollywood adventures."

An anonymous reviewer in Product Digest (10 April): "If spectacular special effects and a really smashing musical score were enough to make a first-rate fantasy adventure movie, then this new story of Sinbad the Sailor would rank among the giants of the genre... The second contributor is the brilliant Miklos Rozsa, who has composed a musical score to stir the emotions and set the imagination aflame. It has tremendous dramatic sweep and power, and it's worthy of a truly epic adventure film."

The record, which contains nearly an hour of music, has been released in England, but is rather slow getting to these shores. At least one mail-order import shop, however, has advertised the disc: August Rojas / 936 S. Detroit St. / Los Angeles, CA 90036 (\$6.75 plus 95c shipping).

Other records to look forward to include the next three RCA Classic Film Score releases, which George Korngold tells us will definitely be devoted to Waxman and Herrmann (October) and Rozsa (January). And Christopher Palmer tells us that Bernard Herrmann (whose conducting is discussed by Irving Kolodin in the May Stereo Review) has recorded a disc of music from Shakespearean films, featuring Walton's RICHARD III Prelude, Shostakovich's HAMLET, and three pieces from JULIUS CAESAR. Decca/London Phase-4 is planning a fall release to follow the same composer's fantasy disc this spring. There is also a pirate disc of radio broadcasts of A DOUBLE LIFE and NEW ENGLAND SYMPHONETTE (from TIME OUT OF MIND) on the Premiere label. While you are waiting for these records, don't forget Orion ORS 73127 and 14137, both of which are available for those who hunt. And remember that BEN-HUR (both vols.), KING OF KINGS, EL CID, and the M-G-M Great Movie Themes are all still available on British imports.

Unfortunately, open-reel tape fans receive some bad news. The open-reel mail service, Barclay-Crocker, informs us that Herrmann's two Phase-4 recordings of his film music are no longer available in that format, This would seem to dim the chances of an open-reel Dolby issue of the fantasy film disc. Oddly enough, Barclay-Crocker still lists the bizarre Wide-Screen Spectaculars (BEN-HUR, EL CID, and KING OF KINGS, slightly re-arranged) in their catalog as being available. (Fans of pre-recorded open-reel tapes can obtain this catalog and be added to Barclay-Crocker's mailing list by sending them a dollar at 11 Broadway, New York N.Y. 10004.)

Christopher Palmer, whose Impressionism in Music (Scribner's), dedicated to Miklos Rozsa, is finally reaching American bookstores, has now completed his biography of the composer, which will include many photographs and musical examples. Breitkopf and Hartel (London) will publish it this summer for about \$5 (U.S.), and the American distributor will be Alexander Broude Inc. American members can look forward to a discount price from the latter, courtesy of Dean Streit. Details will be forthcoming.

Mr. Streit, who has donated a number of scores to the Society's collection, also sent us a copy of the Feb.-March Symphony News, containing an interesting article on film music in the concert hall, specifically on the problems involved in preparing a concert in Buffalo last December.

Another book of great potential interest is James Limbacher's Film Music: From Violins to Video (Scarecrow Press). The cost (\$18.50) is formidable, but so is the length (over 800 pages). We haven't seen it yet but we understand that the massive listings of composers and films are comprehensive and useful.

Finally, we are happy to report that Dr. Rozsa will be conducting a program of his own works in Budapest on 23 August. It will be his first visit there in forty-three years.

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SCORING SINBAD by Miklos Rozsa:

THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD is not my first excursion into the fantastic land of the Thousand and One Nights, with Scheherazade's colorful tales, full of florid imagination. THE THIEF OF BAGDAD preceded this by thirty-three years. Oddly enough, in both pictures I had to surmount the same difficulties and, as a latter-day David, I had to defeat first the Philistine Goliaths, who were opposed to my music, which they found too highbrow.

Korda engaged me to compose the music for his THIEF OF BAGDAD in 1939, but soon afterwards when Ludwig Berger became its director, I was told that he wanted a well-known Viennese operetta composer, and I should only write the so-called symphonic sequences. Dr. Berger, however, underestimated the diplomatic skill of Alexander Korda, who always got what he wanted and could easily outwit directors, financiers, and politicians, and all the monsters of the Arabian Nights. Soon after the Viennese operetta ditties started to arrive in London (where the picture was being made), with clever diplomatic manipulations Korda caused Dr. Berger to admit that they did not belong in this oriental fantasy, and thus I remained the sole composer of the picture, which finally brought me to Hollywood.

History almost repeated itself thirty-three years later when Columbia's publishers wanted a hit tune in the picture and found my Sinbad theme uncommercial for this purpose. One day last spring, Mr. Schneer, the producer of SINBAD, arrived in Hollywood with a song, submitted to him by the publishers, who wanted me to use it for the titles. I could have turned him down point blank, but I preferred to use Korda's diplomacy and proposed him a deal. I promised to do two versions of the titles, one with my theme and one with the cheap commercial tune proposed by the publishers, providing that after hearing them both with the orchestra, he and his partner Harryhausen alone would decide which version would stay in the picture. We recorded both in Rome, first mine, then the other. After the second version the telephone rang on my conductor's desk. It was Mr. Schneer from the recording booth. "You were right; this junk won't be in the picture, I can assure you!" The good djinns of the Arabian Nights were again on my side! After the recording, the Italian Musicians' Union gave a party in my honor, presented me with the

entire recordings of Caruso, "Le piu bella voce d'Italia," and their president made a speech, saying that I brought music back to the screen, which they were missing for years. I was deeply touched," as Italians take their music very seriously.

Although both pictures were inspired by the same source, they were basically different. The first was a romantic tale, full of poetry, not lacking of course the fantastic elements, like the wicked magician, the Flying Horse, the murderous Silver Maid, the Flying Carpet, and the Djinnie who lived in a bottle. The new SINBAD lacks romance and poetry, but makes up for it in adventures and with the animated monsters, brought to life by the brilliant Ray Harryhausen. His fantastic creatures were more mythological than Arabian and consisted of a Homunculus, a Siren, an Oracle, a six-armed Goddess, a Centaur, and a Gryphon.

The first part of the picture takes place in Arabia, therefore the music has Arabic character, but then Sinbad navigates toward India, so the music changes to the style of the Indian ragas, but of course both highly stylized, because we are in the land of fantasy. All situations and personages have their distinctive identifying themes throughout the picture.

As I believe that the music should speak for its composer and not the composer for his music, there will be a Liberty-United Artists sound track album, which is already available in England. I hope that it will be released in America too.

THE RETURN OF A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE by Ken Sutak:  
(first of a three-part series)

The familiar rubric that "masterpiece" is the most overused phrase in the catalog of labels employed by critics, promoters, or enthusiasts of any art form applies readily to film music fans perhaps more so than to other groups. With the recent expansion of interest in and appreciation for good film scoring comes a tendency to draw lines more sharply. Strict musicologists turning to an artistic and intellectual confrontation with the very forms of film music often seem to find themselves without the necessary dramatic perception to understand what the film composer has attempted or without the language which allows communication to spring from insight. It is familiar ground for the musicologist to analyze, say, ALEXANDER NEVSKY as a cantata, but it becomes a foreign effort to view the film and analyze the same music, much disassembled, as a film score. The

strict musicologist is left to turn to the film music enthusiast for help, and while a few may help him, too many have little more to say than "It's great!" or "It just isn't very good, but the cantata is terrific!"

Film music enthusiasts who might have more to say remain a breed apart from, say, film fans or even serious music lovers; the former must understand a great deal which is apparent to the latter to offer intelligent film music judgments. And that such judgements cannot be offered on any other basis can be frustrating to the uninitiated. The tendency is then to look to instinct and emotion for explanation. If, for instance, Rozsa's music for SODOM AND GOMORRAH carries that peculiar theatrical complex of intelligence, energy, beauty, emotional majesty, sensual power, willing sensitivity, renaissance soul and sheer wallop of joy that causes the budding enthusiast to tuck the experience away within the maelstrom or character, there to be reprised in the enthusiast's leap from artistic experience into, say, the arms of a beautiful girl made more so by the cloak of Rozsa's music about her, well then, the enthusiast may indeed be hard pressed to refuse to label the antecedent artistic experience a masterpiece. But that the bond leads to joy does not mean that a masterpiece lies at either end. There are many beautiful girls to experience, and very few masterworks.

This bears but little on our joy. Good art, after all, magnifies, reflects, or shapes for reconsideration and reinitiation the experiences of life: we carry our artistic pleasures with us like sacks of joy, some of the prizes small, some large, but all worthy of memory and all ready to be pulled, shared, and used to make other experiences more meaningful, more comprehensible, more touching, more fun.

The best artists - writers, painters, composers, directors, etc.- have always understood so basic and implicit a bond between their work and their public, for artists are always among other artists' public. This insight is at its best joyous: when Orson Welles spoke of John Ford as a man who understood how the earth moved, he imparted to Ford the paramount joy offered in Hemingway's metaphor and thus spoke a poetic tribute in behalf of those who enjoy the simple riches in life, find the same riches nobly and repeatedly evoked in Ford's films, and return to the gutsy passion of cherishing what art has evoked. Yet at its worst, the insight is frightening: when Norman Mailer wept in Mexico for the suicide of Hemingway the nausea, the tears, the tremor of the legs, and the tenor of the silent

rage of the artist spoke for whole generations which saw and would see the guts of Hemingway's art ruptured by the artist himself. "a curse upon his followers" as Mailer would later call it; for if the artist could not finally confront life the way the artist himself had urged that life should be confronted, then who should dare?

So if the bond is magical and frightening to begin with, then its dichotomy is settled. Yet the dichotomy continues in further aspects of the artist's life. The best artists simply do not produce good art all of the time, and the cost of producing great art may be beyond reach. Picasso's Lovers and Guernica capture the very best and the very worst of humanity respectively, yet these polar masterpieces stand above an incredible array of so-so works, which in turn rise above a good deal of trash. Candles should be lit in memory of Ford after every screening of THE QUIET MAN and HOW GREEN WAS MY VALLEY and MY DARLING CLEMENTINE and THE GRAPES OF WRATH, but SEVEN WOMEN isn't worth the price of a match. Rozsa's scores for QUO VADIS? and BEN-HUR almost lead one to believe that their creator had private communications with God during their creation, but how account for so alien a venture as THE GREEN BERETS?

Yet if true artists understand that output will vary in quality, they also realize that the best of their art not only works wonders on an audience but also works different wonders, including the best of wonders, in different degrees. Hemingway just ain't the best 20th Century American writer because he could manipulate words better than his friends or followers; Mailer, for one, can write rings around Hemingway, or anybody. Yet, almost from the first, Hemingway knew where the truths which support the writing of rings were buried, and Mailer has had a hard time finding a similar shore. Hemingway (like Ford) saw and knew that life offered heroic opportunities to all men, that the best of joys come to those who confront life with courage. Yet his overriding gift to 20th Century thought (seen as much needed within and much rejected by 20th century experience) was the thesis that heroism is available ultimately only through love, that heroism is essentially the private creation of individuals strong enough to prize and to risk acts of loving above all other experiences and whatever the cost, and (whether the communion which gives birth to heroism and marks the best of joy be between man and woman and/or man and universe) that the acts of communion establish an irrevocable pact with life so strong that it withstands the exhaustion of utter physical defeat or the impact of death. Not for nothing was Hemingway called the greatest living romantic of his day;

that For Whom the Bell Tolls and A Farewell to Arms are masterpieces while the short stories and many of the novels are merely tributes to craft is indicative of both the power of a true artist to create something of supreme value and his concomitant inability to do it always, or even often, even when working with the best and the best of emotional, intellectual, and moral materials.

Film composers, perhaps above all artists, and even when gifted, are caught in a bind which threatens their practical ability to ever produce a masterpiece. Since film composers can only confront the materials which can give birth to a masterpiece when the film itself does so, and since most films do not and most that do do not do so very well, it is hardly surprising that even the most distinguished film composers have very few, if any, credits to their names which can justifiably be called masterworks.

To be sure, every film composer good enough to win acclaim, awards, and serious public interest in his work has contributed his share of film music classics. But classics are rarely also masterpieces. Classics are those relatively few works which aggregate a large enough body within an art form so as to give both distinction to the art form and foundation to its continuation. Masterpieces are the greatest works among classics, those very, very few works which say so much more of value about things which are of great value in collective human experience that the artistic reflections themselves enter human experience not simply as tributes to craft but also as vital commentary on human experience which allows human experience to grow in new or more comprehensible directions from a foundation which itself is expanding. Masterpieces are artistic experiences which enter what has been called the vast memory bank of mankind's collective experience.

In such a light, it is a small wonder that even an intensive examination of the best works of the best film composers yields but a small supply of masterpieces within the art form. Rozsa and Newman, I think, are due the lion's share of attention in this respect. Rozsa has given us - and has been lucky enough to be able to offer - stunning interpretations of epic subject material: the relationship of God and man and/or God in man and the effects of either or both upon civilized mankind (QUO VADIS?, BEN-HUR, KING OF KINGS); the thoroughly romantic notions of love as wedded to fantasy (THIEF OF BAGDAD) or courage (EL CID); the pre-JULES AND JIM examination of the impossibility of freedom (MADAME BOVARY). Newman, of course, has paid his romantic dues with WUTHERING HEIGHTS, essayed the human spirit in THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK, had much of joy to say about his

country (HOW THE WEST WAS WON) and much of anguish to speak about religious motifs (THE GREATEST STORY EVER TOLD).

Yet other "names" have not been as lucky. Prokofiev is often cited for ALEXANDER NEVSKY, usually by those who haven't seen the film. And while the NEVSKY music is amazing as music, it is considerably less successful as film music—i.e., it does not deal at all with the film's drastic needs to be energized and humanized, needs which must be met before epic terms can properly be drawn. On the other hand, Walton's HENRY V contains music which embraces all the needs of the film and which then proceeds to shape the meaning of a civilization's greatest pre-20th century military effort. Steiner, for all his contribution of film music classics, simply stretched himself too thin (and perhaps was just too popular) to acquire the vehicles or time which allow great works to emerge, and his one masterwork, GONE WITH THE WIND, almost won him an early grave. Similarly, Victor Young only took time out for one great work, perhaps because something like a film version of For Whom the Bell Tolls allowed no compromise, at least for a composer. Waxman was not handed anything like THE NUN'S STORY until late in his life. Herrmann never received another GHOST AND MRS. MUIR again. The most fruitful period of Friedhofer's career is virtually bounded by his complementary epic commentaries on America and Americans pro, post, and during World War II: THE BEST YEARS OF OUR LIVES and THE YOUNG LIONS. Tiomkin has had more opportunities than most but only became totally inspired and responsible once - when John Wayne gave him THE ALAMO. But Elmer Bernstein has had only one TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD, Georges Delerue only one JULES AND JIM. And Kaper, Raksin, Harline, not to mention Antheil, Copland, Thomson, and Wilder, have never really had the opportunity.

Add to the fact of rare opportunity the notion that it takes an enormous reserve of courage and stamina to give the materials of masterpiece their due. This is particularly true of 20th century composers who must deal with large sections of the public, including almost all film critics, ready to scorn the slightest, let alone the undaunted, musicalization of concepts like courage, love, personal honor, religious belief. Very simply, it took no small share of guts, existing beyond ability, to musicalize the humanly religious conflicts of THE NUN'S STORY, miraculous experience in BEN-HUR, and sacrificial commitment to all that is best loved in life and national character in THE ALAMO. The sad truth is that there are those who will laugh at such art no matter how well realized the artistic expression. But if courage means anything in art, if it has any

place at all in film composition, it means that the best composers refuse to consider such a public beyond the reach of art; true to their gifts and vision, the best composers must and do stand their artistic ground and write the music they feel must be written. Lesser composers give up. And to give up when the material calls for great commitment is to forge disgrace as well as disaster. Instance, neither Toshiro Mayuzumi's score for THE BIBLE nor Vyacheslav Ovchinnikov's score for WAR AND PEACE contains the worst music that has ever been heard in films. Not by a long shot. But because of the majestic subject matter of both films and the fact that it demands of their composers musical efforts which must amount to personal acts of courage embracing physical stamina, moral vision, musical ability, intellectual study, and the willingness to speak openly about subjects which matter enough to invite scorn born of the absence of empathy, and because to write trite music, or wrong music, or bluster-music, or screech-music for such films is not merely the action of an untalented musician but an act of irredeemable artistic cowardice which will haunt the artist and measure the man, both scores may lay claim to being the very worst scores ever written.

In film music as in any art form, then, the very best artists are always the bravest artists, and the brave cannot contain giving of themselves because they are wedded to a lifetime of seeking great challenge and incorporating challenge when found as artistic blood. And in film music as in every art form, somehow the brave are always, at some point, stung, dismissed, or mauled. For the true artists among film composers the pain may lie in the disappointment that the great challenge - the materials of masterpiece - are never offered. Or if offered, the prodigies of commitment and effort expended to meet the great challenge must ultimately be offered to a substantial public which doesn't notice, doesn't care, doesn't understand, doesn't agree. No film composer ever took such a bad, even humiliating, press as Newman did on GREATEST STORY, and no film composer was ever so sure that such denunciation was coming and so scarred by his inability to disassociate himself from the sins of others. Yet the work of art - the music which was Newman's and which represented his vision - bore no sign of horror, no hint of compromise, no retreat from the artist's deep wells of compassion, and no denial of the artist's loving, almost agonized reverence for the subject matter. If it is true that only Hemingway's brave are more than beautiful, it is perhaps because only the brave know triumph as ultimate fate and defeat as test. For

Newman it was, in a sense, the grandest of romantic exits - the victory in physical defeat which thematically engulfs the very best 20th century art in virtually every medium, call it For Whom the Bell Tolls on paper, THE GRAPES OF WRATH on film, or Guernica on canvas. It is also what some artists hope for, the exit which many artists implicitly expect.

What is almost never expected, however, is that the materials of masterpiece will confront the artist early, that the artist will throw every fibre of his untested artistic ability and every joint of his unformulated artistic vision into the fires of such a challenge, that the resulting work of art will be so strong, so massive a commentary that it immediately wins universal recognition and awe which do not dissipate with time but rather grow, spread, influence one generation, consume another.

It has happened only once in the history of film music. The film was A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE and it presented the first theatrical film score composed by Alex North.  
(To be continued...)

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BERNARD HERRMANN: A JOHN PLAYER LECTURE (11 June 1972):

(Ed. note: Both Miklos Rozsa and Bernard Herrmann spoke in 1972 at the National Film Theatre in London. Although we have published synopses of both events, we feel that the newly available complete transcripts are of sufficient interest to justify their serialization here. Our thanks to Soren Fischer, Doreen Dean, and Craig Reardon. This is the first of two parts.)

The program begins with a film clip of the main title from NORTH BY NORTHWEST.

Ted Gilling: Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Bernard Herrmann.  
(Applause.) I'd like to start, if I may, instead of a question, I'd like to read something that you said some time ago: "I feel that music on the screen can seek out and intensify the inner thoughts of the characters. It can propel narrative swiftly forward or slow it down. It often lifts mere dialogue into the realm of poetry. Finally, it is the communicating link between the screen and the audience, reaching out and enveloping all into one single experience." The first question is the question that many people ask: why do movies need music in the first place? After that credo, it's almost self-explanatory.

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B.H.: Well, I think - I don't want to make this discussion an historic one - but in spite of all new fashion and aesthetic theories, film is one medium that needs other arts, because it's a cooperative, mosaic enterprise, and the use of music has always been necessary even from silent days to the present

day. And people always ask me this question, "Why does a film need music?" Well, I'd like to say this - I've never met a producer who said to me, "I've just finished a film and I don't need you" They say, "You must come and see what you can do to help us!" Now, that alone is the crying need of the film, because music is a sort of cement, or veneer, that finalizes the art of making a film. We hope this evening to show some examples of this, but I think that Jean Cocteau said once that in films, one is never fully aware whether it's the music that's propelling the film, or the film propelling the music. And, I would like to say, that many times directors who receive great credit and applause for the marvelous scenes at the crucial time of recognition seem to forget the contribution that the composer has made to the film. I wish it were possible historically to see some films the way they were given to the composer, and if they were given to the world that way, whether they would be regarded with the same esteem. I feel that the aesthetic of film music is so misunderstood, or rather not understood at all. For example, in London there isn't one newspaper or magazine that regards film music with any seriousness or any discussion. Yet, in New York, until recently, Bosley Crowther of the New York Times always devoted space to film composers' remarks about the film and discussion of the music. The Herald-Tribune under Virgil Thomson would have at least a monthly review of the most important film scores. In this he was aided by the composer Paul Boles, who's since become a distinguished novelist. Today, there is no mention of film music made by film critics in England or New York. It's completely ignored. And because of that fact, and nobody seems to mention whether it was good, tasteless, sensitive, evocative, either way, they've regarded the film medium as a free-for-all to have the most, the greatest vulgarity that the human race has ever achieved, perpetrated on the screen, with the point of view that it's music that'll make money, and nobody'll notice it anyhow!

T.G.: When you approach a film, you've often said that the first step the composer must take is to get inside the drama. Can you give us some idea of the process of composing for films? Each one is obviously different, of course.

B.H.: Well, I must make it very clear that all remarks made by me only refer to my own attitude. I have colleagues who would dispute everything I say, who would say films is a way to make a buck—never mind what the film is about. They wouldn't

answer your first question—they're not interested in what the film's about. Film music can be decorative. It's a kind of wallpaper they put on. But when you're asking me to get inside a film, I'll give you an ideal situation. Let's start with KANE. I knew about KANE from the moment it was in the process of coming to life, and I read each page of script as it was

created, and I was frequently, if not daily, consulted about my feelings. When you deal with a very creative director, the composer is part of the whole process of the birth of a film. Hitchcock will many times...well, would call me and say, "Do you feel you'll need music for this scene? because if you do, I will shoot it differently, giving you more elbow room." Truffaut was the same way of course. Welles, Henry King, nearly most of the film directors I've had the good luck and good fortune to work with have regarded music as something that had to be created with the film. But I have worked for people who regard music as just a sort of you-take-it to Harrods's gift wrapping department. In this case there is no latitude given to you, and the picture's not elastic—it's set.

T.G.: This is the case of the music being the glove on the hand, rather than the skin.

B.H.: Well, it can be many things, but you see there are...the nature of music to a director who is sensitive to what it can do...it can take the place of dialogue, it can help the camera motion, it can also - which I think is the most impressive thing music can do - it can destroy the time element of a film. If music is done correctly - I'm not saying this is for every sequence - but if it's done with complete understanding, something of five seconds, if you ask the average viewer, he'll say, "Why, that went on for minutes! Oh, that was endless!" Or the other way around: "That was so short!" What do you mean short, it was at least four minutes. "Oh no, it wasn't!" You see, music, if it is created correctly, eliminates the time observation.

T.G.: I think we'll come to this later one when we talk about a film you did for Alfred Hitchcock. But for the moment, could we go into CITIZEN KANE?

B.H.: Well, I would like to start with KANE, because - I'm going to do something I don't like to do. We're going to reconstruct a moment in my own life where I first saw KANE. Now, the first thing I saw of KANE is the scene we're going to show you now, the opening of it, without any sound of any kind. And then after you see it, I will try to tell you some of my thoughts. Now remember, this is the way it was shown to me, not the way you know it.

Film clip: the opening of CITIZEN KANE, minus sound.

B.H.: Now, when I saw this, I was told certain things - that the rum would not have a main title, it would simply have the words CITIZEN KANE. It would start in silence. Incidentally, in parentheses, when the premiere of CITIZEN KANE took place, the audience was so bewildered by not having a main title and

music that people shouted out, "Sound! Sound! Sound!" I had to make up my mind at this point: what approach would I take for the creation of the music to this film? And I decided that I would use the old musical form of the leitmotif, in other words, a theme that is transformed incessantly. So, the very first bars I wrote are a series of few notes that dominate the entire film, no matter what's happening. In my mind it was a sort of variant on the ancient hymn, Dies Irae, and seemed to suggest to me what the subject of KANE was, which is "all is vanity". And then I was supplied with what is known as cue sheets, in which every frame of this film is given to me in seconds. Then there is another theme I had to come up with. This, film, as you all know, is about a search for "Rosebud". So I introduce Rosebud on, here I believe it is the vibraphone. As a matter of fact, musically the prelude tells you what the whole film is about. But now, in the course of the rest of the film, it will tell you visually. The opening of the film and the ending which we will show you are Siamese twins. The jigsaw puzzle is complete, musically, at the end of the film. Now let's play this with the music and watch what happens. I did not use, by the way, a conventional orchestra, although a very large one of woodwinds and brass.

Film clip: Once again the opening of CITIZEN KANE, now with sound.

B.H.: Now, this music has made this scene seem very short. Without the music it was quite long. Yet the times remain the same. This is the alchemy, not of my music, but of music used correctly in films. Music has this marvelous quality. But I had one problem in this, and that was Kane. Kane is the very first notes - it's associated with him all through the film - and yet Kane through this thing is not a human being, he's a symbol. We have to reserve everything for the fragment of Rosebud.

T.G.: In the breakfast montage, later in the film, you have a sequence which was extremely concentrated in terms of dramatic action, and which required incredible changes of mood.

B.H.: Well, this scene, which you all know is Kane's marriage and the break-up of the marriage, all occurs in a breakfast scene montage. Now, music has a remarkable effect if it's used in montages. You know, when you make a montage, you could make

it A-B-C, C-X-C, you can make it all kinds of ways. But if you put music into it, you freeze it. It becomes like, I might say, the insect in amber. The montage then has no other way than that way. Now, we'll play for you this breakfast scene, and it's done in a simple way. It's simply a kind of elementary waltz tune which describes their happiness, and

little variations in the montage are matched with little variations in the music. They're all little variations, 'till they no longer speak to each other.

Film clip: CITIZEN KANE, the breakfast montage.

T.G.: That's rather like a miniature ballet, isn't it?

B.H.: In a way. But you see, there are times in a film when the composer must be content with being very subservient to the screen. And that kind of wash - I call it a musical wash effect - is very important to the whole montage. Without the music, it's quite a different story. The ear may not hear everything, but yet it's working there all the time. Which of course brings me to the great thing: is a film score to be heard or not? Well, in the greater sense, not. It's...I've always felt, and it's only my opinion, that I don't like musical scores in films that bring attention to themselves. It's like a cameraman working away, showing what a bright boy he is. I mean, there are such people who make films that way, but I can't stand them. I mean, I like a film I don't want to know there's a camera there, don't want to know there's a composer; the whole thing together makes the film.

T.G.: Well, this point comes up recently in Pauline Kael's book, or rather her essay in The CITIZEN KANE Book, where she asserted that for the opera sequence you were going to use excerpts from Thais, but that the score was far too expensive. I think that may be inaccurate.

B.H.: Miss Kael wrote this book on CITIZEN KANE. At no time did she ever ask me anything, but yet she has the presumption to state that I didn't use Thais because it was too expensive. I would like to know how employing an orchestra of 85 men for days in and days out was saving money, but we couldn't afford Thais. We didn't use Thais for a simple reason: I did not know any opera which had an aria in it which would give the predicament of Susan in the film. We needed something that would have so much hysteria going on to match her turmoil as she's pushed onto the opera stage, that I simply composed a piece of music in the style of French opera of the period 1890, Chicago when McCormick and Ganowalska who were in many ways models for the scene held forth. So, I simply

composed a piece in that style in which I must say many critics have been fooled into thinking was by other composers. The reason for that we will show you. We will start in with the music lesson. My problem was that I saw before this opera,

as you will see, was this music lesson. At the end of this scene we went into the opera. I know no other piece in Thais or any such opera that I could use at the end of the singing. Now let's see the sequence.

Film clip: CITIZEN KANE, the farcical music lesson followed by the operatic fiasco.

T.G.: The soprano who sings in that is a lyric, rather than a dramatic, soprano.

B.H.: No, the girl who sings this opera was devised - well, I have to go technically. You see, she wasn't much of a singer, but she had to be somewhat of a singer. So I simply devised this aria in a very difficult, high key for a dramatic soprano. And we found a young girl who was perfectly willing to do it and was a very light lyric soprano, singing in a key at least a third too high for her, which gives the effect. If we'd gotten a bad singer the scene would not be possible - and if we got someone who could really sing it, then they would have carried it. Then the whole scene would not make sense. That it can be told that we were going to use Thais, I don't know where they got this. This is how books are written.

T.G.: Herman Mankiewicz's script says Thais, in fact.

B.H.: Well, Herman Mankiewicz. as far as I knew - and I was there, not Miss-nobody else - had something to do with the script, but he had nothing to do with the making of this film or my connection with it, or the shooting of it, and this film was created and brought into being by Orson Welles, and that is my final word on it, and if anybody doesn't believe it - if we ever reach a time where there will be an arts council to redo the past, let them give another director the script and let him make KANE, and see how close he comes.

T.G.: So, can we go to the closing sequence of KANE, which as you said before the score is really like a jigsaw. How does this put the final pieces in place?

B.H.: Well, you've heard the different motives. Now you'll hear how they were all done together, by the way, this music, of this scene, was done before photography and was used as an enormous playback, a playback being a piece of music that's done during the shooting. Gregg Toland followed the music end we worked together. The music was created first, and camera motion to find the characters followed the music, but I didn't

create it, we all did it together. It's sometimes done in films, very rarely, in which you create a piece of music first. It's generally done only in musicals, but it's unlimited if the director is willing to forget his ego.

Film clip: CITIZEN KANE, the closing scenes.

T.G.: Would anyone like to ask questions?

Q.: To what extent did your early experience in radio affect your method of composition when you came to this new medium of films?

B.H.: Well, I would say it wasn't part of it, it was all of it. When radio was a sovereign medium, you had to tell everything by music. I'd worked with Welles, Corwin; I was director for Columbia workshop; I worked with Archibald MacLeish, Irving Reis. All these people were pioneers in the art of using music in radio to an extent which had never been reached by any other country except America at that time in the early 30s. I did learn from radio that in radio we couldn't afford to beguile the audience with slush tones and a lot of rubbish. It was the function of music to project a story. The other part which was very important was it taught me... I used to have no more than three, four days to write a radio score of an hour. Because we're now coming to the whole big thing about films, and that is the technique of writing for films. Every composer must find his own way of working, of course, but the important thing he must remember is that the music itself must have a simplicity so that the first time through the ear and the mind grasp it. There's no point writing a film score that when you see it 3 times you'll understand it. Most films are not seen three times. We take great composers like Prokofiev, who's written some of the greatest film music. Now that he's gone, really of his works two of his film scores are perhaps his finest achievement. On the other hand, we have very precious, sophisticated composers who think it beneath them to even write a film score - but of course they're never asked.

(To be continued...)

#### LETTERS:

KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE wasn't highly interesting to my mind, and reminded me in various places of IVANHOE, JULIUS CAESAR, and EL CID. But I understand from Frank Squires, who was in Rozsa's class in film music at U.C.L.A., that M-G-M rushed the picture into

theatres in order to beat PRINCE VALIANT. Rozsa had only two weeks to score it and thus used discarded themes and hastily prepared orchestrations. Listening to the score seems to bear this out. Frank also quoted Rozsa as saying it was a "nothing" score. It certainly wasn't one of his most inspired scores, but it wasn't nothing either.

BOB WARD, Harrisburg, PA

Craig Reardon's article on SISTERS was excellent. I used it as an example of good filmusic critique in my Media Music class at the high school where I teach. John Fitzpatrick's ideas about soundtrack vs. concert score recordings were something I'd never really thought about before. Food for thought. Incidentally, he omitted one small item from the list: RCA LSC 2747, Boston Pops/Fiedler, contains a well-recorded albeit pedestrianly played version of the "Parade of the Charioteers". Also Bernstein's Backgrounds for Brando is available on a Contour import - 2870 337.

I appreciated the tip on the educational film, Hollywood's Musical Moods, but was shocked to learn that it rented for the prohibitively high price of \$65 per day (\$650 purchase!). The distributor wouldn't even let our high school librarian preview it.

Mary Peatman's essay on LOUISIANA STORY was first-rate - hope there will be more like it in future issues. Would have been interesting to hear her comments on the Hanson piece as well. I was glad to read John Fitzpatrick's supportive comments on the unjustly maligned Newman disc. However, I was quickly put off by the meaningless comparison between TGSET and Parsifal. It is strange that elsewhere in the same issue he took Tony Thomas to task for comparing the love theme from THE SEA HAWK to Wagner's Liebestod. To quote his own words: "that sort of thing does not help the cause". And as for Newman's "inferior" work, lover of Broadway musicals that I am, I resented (slightly) the implication that rearranging such works for the screen was the lowest of the low. Any film musical which I have seen conducted and arranged by Alfred Newman has been greatly enhanced by his superb work (not "hack" by any means) and, in fact, it was Newman's touch alone that saved CAMELOT from artistic disaster.

FRANK DEWALD, East Lansing, MI

Mr Fitzpatrick replies:

The Boston Pops still plays the "Parade" from time to time, and listeners in some areas can even tape a quadriphonic version.

On THE GREATEST STORY I am duly chastised with my own words. I still think an interesting comparison could be made, but Mr. DeWald quite rightly points out that I did not make it. But the problem of the Newman musicals could stand some more discussion. The issue

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is not whether Newman did a good job on these works; clearly he did. Nor is it whether or not you like Broadway musicals; I do not, but nothing could blind me to the magnificence of the first act finale from CAMELOT (largely original Newman, by the way), The problem is rather why a great talent would rather spend a large portion of his career adapting the works of

lesser men. What would we think of Wagner today if he had spent half of his career reorchestrating Meyerbeer? (In fact, he did reorchestrate some of Gluck's operas - a fact whose obscurity is probably due to the embarrassment it causes present-day Wagnerians.) The characterization of Newman as a "hack musician" is not mine; it is the composer's own. We must make of it what we will.

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I enjoy your newsletter very much but I did not agree with all of Mark Koldys's comments on the RCA Steiner LPs. I find all of Max Steiner's scores interesting, no matter how bad or low budget the film might have been. The CASABLANCA suite is deserving of the 8½ minutes it gets. The way Steiner used "As Time Goes By" to underscore the love scenes is just beautiful and very moving....Oddly enough, Mark thought Gerhardt's TREASURE OF SIERRA MADRE was the high point of side one. If performed right, yes, but Gerhardt's performance of this suite is not good at all, much too slow, with many changes in orchestration. By the way, why did Craig Reardon not mention SIERRA MADRE in his Warner Brothers review? It was probably the best suite on that side.

Steiner's music is very popular with most soundtrack collectors, but there seems to be a small group who down-grade his music in contrast with the very dynamic and forceful scores of Rozsa, Herrmann, Waxman, et. al. Luckily Gerhardt does not think this way and he has opened up to many a wonderful world of great Steiner music through his RCA series. One other comment: when will the MRSSS offer tapes of Rozsa's scores from music tracks? We can all make TV tapes and obtain tapes of old LPs. It is nice to read about Dr. Rozsa's great scores, but they were meant to be listened to.

PETER KENNEDY, Dedham, MA

Mr. Koldys replies:

A fervent amen to Mr. Kennedy's last comment, but the simple fact is that we do not have access to such tapes and neither does Dr. Rozsa. Not everyone, moreover, is able to obtain the older records, and not everyone has the time, inclination, or facilities to make TV tapes of the quality we are offering. The response to the MRSSS indicates that we are performing a valuable service for some. The "tapeography" that is planned for a future issue should contain a few pleasant surprises for everyone.

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As to the merits of Max Steiner, I do not contest the fact that Steiner's use, say, of "As Time Goes By" in the love scenes is very moving. My point is that on a record it is not, and one must accept the tact that film music that on its own cannot hold the interest is not very good music. Steiner could write good music, and the Gerhardt recording of THE

FOUNTAINHEAD proves this.

\*

Please, please, please don't let the new RCA disc be another recording of the SPELLBOUND Concerto or QUO VADIS? "Triumphal March". And I'm so sick of Steiner that I'm sure I'll be happy if I never hear another of Max's multitudinous scores again - enough is enough! GWTW can go to ... for all I care! (Of course, I did buy the record.)

FRANK DEWALD, East Lansing, MI

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MRSSS NEWS by Mark Koldys:

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank those who have written their compliments and suggestions to us. We are always interested in any constructive comments, pro or con, that can help the Miklos Rozsa Society Subscription Service perform its proper function. Herewith, our spring releases:

WM-11: THE RED DANUBE (tv tape)

WM-12: AN INTERVIEW WITH MIKLOS ROZSA

WM-11 presents a sonically worthwhile presentation of a score that contains in it some of the best (the deportation scene) and some of the worst (the finale) of Rozsa's film music. The film is infrequently telecast (possibly due to changing political viewpoints), and when it is the print is generally full of skips and fuzzy sound. This recording is not.

WM-12 may be of even more interest to many readers, as it offers an opportunity to hear first-hand Dr. Rozsa's responses to many questions that you may have wanted to ask. Taped a few years ago, interviewer Ken Doeckel quizzes the composer about a variety of topics, some surprising (his comments about the "Dragnet" theme may surprise you), all interesting.

We are deleting WS-2 (SPELLBOUND) from availability. As member Tom DeMary pointed out to us, Rod McKuen's "Stanyan" label has reissued this recording, and it is our policy to make available only recordings not offered by a legitimate commercial outlet. You can write to Stanyan at Box 2783, Hollywood California.

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ANSWERS TO FILMUSICQUIZ #4 Craig Reardon:

(Ed. note: to those who puzzled over Mr. Reardon's first excerpt unsuccessfully, we admit that somewhere in the

recopying and printing cycle, we accidentally made the first note in the second measure a G rather than an A, which is the note Mr. Reardon sent us and the note Mr. Steiner wrote. Apologies.)

#1: ADVENTURES OF MARK TWAIN (Max Steiner);

#2: LUST FOR LIFE (Miklos Rozsa);

#3: JANE EYRE (Bernard Herrmann),

ANSWERS TO FILMUSIQUIZ #5 by Athelney Jones:

The tie that binds the four musical examples together is the fact that each is a film about a famous detective; #1 and #4 Sherlock Holmes, #2 Philip Marlowe, and #3 Charlie Chan.

#1: SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE VOICE OF TERROR (Frank Skinner)(thereafter used as theme music for the remainder of the Rathbone/Bruce series);

#2: THE BIG SLEEP (Max Steiner);

#3: CHARLIE CHAN AT THE OPERA (Oscar Levant)(a spectacular opera composed for the film and titled Carnival, with Boris Karloff in the lead!);

#4: THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (Miklos Rozsa).

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