

Film Score Blogs by Bill Wrobel

Thursday, September 30, 2004 at 6:32 pm [Blog # 2]

The first Presidential debates in Florida are now occurring as I write. The television is to my left 3 yards away. So far it appears that both are standing their own ground, but Kerry is doing better than I thought he would. I disagree in his assessment that now that we're in Iraq that we should stay in and do better. Well, how about if we simply have a strategy to leave that sinking ship as soon as realistically possible? It's another Vietnam, a no-"win" situation. A 471 billion dollar military budget there is a bit too much!

I will henceforth try to avoid political comments except when the situation spontaneously moves me!

I spent my third day today at Warner Bros Archives during my vacation (for two weeks). I pulled the first of about five folders (many more available) they had on Tiomkin's *The High and the Mighty* (T.H.A.T.M). Unfortunately, the full score cues (fully orchestrated) were not available. Later in the afternoon, Ned phoned me there (I had left him a written message at 9:30 am at the Film & television Library on campus) and I asked him if the full score is there in the Dimitri Tiomkin Archives. I had already studied several full scores there, including *The War Wagon*, *Fall of the Roman Empire*, etc. He checked a file or computer screen record and determined that it looks like only the Conductor score and perhaps sketches were there. He would check it out first-hand when he pulls the material for me on my visit next Tuesday. He'll also pull from the Chuck Connors Collection any score materials—probably just *The Rifleman*. Also I wanted to see if there were any full scores in the Alfred Newman Collection, and he believes there are in the score for *The Greatest Story Ever Told* that I'll look at as well. I purchased the dvd recently.

I do not know where the full score is—probably somehow in the possession of the John Wayne Estate. I'll try to find out. So I laboriously worked on the Parts available to me at W/B Archives (and also the Conductor sheets). I "re-constructed" or reassembled the first six "notey" bars of the Main Title from the Parts. The cue # is 36114. The cue is 53 bars in length. The first four bars in the movie are the so-called "Introductory" (according to the cue sheets that I hand-copied) that last 11 seconds.

Instrumentation: 2 flutes, piccolo, 3 clarinets, bass clarinet, bassoon, contra bassoon, 6 horns, 4 trumpets, 4 trombones (two are bass Pos), novachord, 2 harps, 2 pianos, 2 timps, gong, soft cymbal, chimes (other percussion not researched), 20 violins, 6 viole, 6 celli, 3 CB. Also available is an arrangement version by Frank Comstock that starts differently in the first four bars. The Conductor score for it was there today, but many years ago at Doheny I worked on that version full orchestrations. I do not remember if it was the full score (I believe it was) or the Parts, but I hand-copied the first 12 bars, and then some other random bars.

Then I worked briefly on some of the Conductor cues. Starting with the very next cue that was “not recorded” or used (R1/2A-2/A or cue # 36115). I copied the first 8 bars. Then I worked on the next cue (Reel 2/part I) or #36116 that I’m not sure was used either. Then Reel 2/2 was indeed used (I listened to the tape in the Reading Room). But working with Conductor scores of only three staves is woefully inadequate. I am hoping there will be the chance of at least a few full score cues in the Tiomkin Collection when I research there on Tuesday.

Then I worked for two hours or more on the first bar and then Bars 10 thru 17 of cue # 36118 (Reel 3/1). Starting on Bar 10 is the delightful “Plane” theme that is heard several more times later in the cue. Besides the famous T.H.A.T.M theme, the “Plane” theme is the next most dominant or memorable theme or long motif in the movie. So I was happy to spend the time to reassemble the cue on my 30-stave paper (even that was not enough!). Unfortunately it was 4:30 and I wasn’t able to do the Trumpets lines except most of trumpet I!!

According to the music legal papers, the Coast Guard song “Semper Paratus” (by Francis Saltus Van Boskerck) was used after a \$1,000 fee was paid by W/B to the Sam Fox Publishing Co. I could not definitively determine who did the actual T.H.A.T.M “visual whistling” except that someone in the papers seemed to suggest that it was John Wayne’s own whistling. I rather doubt that, but it would be interesting if they (the dvd producers) could interview somebody from the original recording sessions and see what he says!

The Barber of Seville (music by Rossini) arrangements were used several times in the movie starting in reel 6. Also used were “Kaua I Ka Huahuai” (unknown composer) starting at the end of Reel 1 for 1:30 duration. After the “Father & Son” cue for 1:06 in Reel 2, “Aloha Oe” (written by Queen Liliuokalani) was used for a minute (arranged for the movie by Tiomkin). In Reel 3 we have “Take-Off” for 19 seconds, then the “Plane” music for 1:21, then “Vibration” for 45 seconds, and then T.H.A.T.M “vis. whist.” For 6 seconds. In Reel 4 we have “Polynesian” (cue sheets description for that cue) for 16 seconds, then “Slashes” for 35 seconds, then “Mother & Babe” for 34 seconds, and finally the “Plane” music again for 12 seconds. In Reel 5 we have the “Sally” cue for 1:29, and then the “May” cue for 38 seconds. Etc. In the final reel (Reel 18) we have “Variation” for 39 seconds, then T.H.A.T.M “bkg. vocal sounds” for 1:06, and then the exuberant “Giubilo” cue as the people safely disembark from the crippled plane and meet family members. This is played for 1:40 and then later for 2:54.

....[7:34 pm] The debate is over. I’m watching MSNBC on HARDBALL (Chris Mathews). Most of the commentators are saying that Kerry pretty much won the debate whereas Bush tended to fumble after the first half-hour. But the impression is also that Kerry still didn’t seem very clear about his plans—he would be seen as “fuzzy.” Well, we’ll see what happens in the next debate.

When I returned home about 5:20 pm, I found in the mail my ordered two books: Volumes 3 & 4 of “THE PERSONAL SESSIONS: A Seth Book.” This is formerly

deleted Seth Material from Jane Roberts (she passed away 20 years ago this month). Glancing thru it, I liked what Seth stated on page 9: "...Great talent requires great spontaneity, not great discipline. Spontaneity knows its own order, and will see that it flows in proper, free, orderly directions. Ruburt has been trying to dam his spontaneity to make it flows only through his work, and in doing so has hampered both his life and his work."

Tomorrow I'll be returning to UCLA to resume my work on the Rozsa score. Perhaps Susan will come along.
