

FILM SCORE BLOGS [Blog # 32]
Sunday, February 25, 2007 at 2 pm

Essentially this will be a Max Steiner blog! But later....

Tonight is Oscar Night (79th Academy Awards). It's obvious that it will be Helen Mirren's night for her excellent acting in *The Queen* (that my wife and I saw at opening week—and liked). Frankly, however, we saw very few of the movies nominated for Oscars this year. Usually we wait until the winners are announced and then rent the DVDs!

Now: For Best original Score nominees, we did see (and hear!) Alexandre Desplat's score for *The Queen*. I liked sections of it and I think it's deserving of a nomination, but this is not necessarily an enthusiastic endorsement! I had more anticipation for the music by Philip Glass for *Notes On A Scandal*. Reason: We rented *The Illusionist* two weeks ago, a very admirable movie set in 1900 Vienna. The music was also by Philip Glass, and we both liked the score. A writer/researcher who visited us a few Sundays ago heard some of it, and liked the music as well. He was surprised Glass was still doing movie scores. So, based on my enthusiastic appraisal of Philip's score for *The Illusionist* (I definitely recommend this movie, by the way!), I was hoping his score for *Notes on a Scandal* would be equally as effective. Alas, although it was nominated over his other score (it would've been far better if *The Illusionist* was nominated instead), the music was not as satisfying. Of course the movie itself is weird, uncomfortable to watch, full of unbelievable situations, drab locations, and so forth. Judy Dench deserves an Oscar nomination for the role (she won't win over Helen Mirren!) but the writers should've made her character a bit more appealing or sympathetic to the audience. For example, instead of threatening to expose the young teacher (played by Cate Blanchett, also nominated), the Dench character should've been seen as being torn about exposing her, but doing so out of emotional weakness (that she instantly regretted). At any rate, the score does not meld very well into this story. At times it's more of a distraction, seemingly out-of-place. His music for *The Illusionist* fit so much nicer and beautifully.

I did not want to see *Babel* so I have not yet (until it is rentable) heard Santaolalla's score in its entirety but what I did hear did not impress me. I would like to see *The Good German* (music by Thomas Newman) but I am in no hurry to see it (but what I heard of the music sounds promising enough). It's not like the old days when a Herrmann-scored movie just came out and I was just dying to see it right away in the big screen! The same applied to some Goldsmith scores, Williams, and even occasionally Horner. *Pan's Labyrinth* appears a bit too strange and violent to me and my wife, so here again we are in no hurry to see it and hear Javier Navarrete's score. We'll wait until Blockbuster has it available for rent. By the way, a movie now available to rent that my wife and I definitely do NOT recommend is *Hollywood Land* (the story about George Reeves of *The Adventures of Superman* fame). It is a really depressing, lousy, poorly directed movie. If you love the old series and thought highly of Reeves, then stay away from this awful movie. I can give many bad points about the movie but it's not worth my time and energy. Just stay away from it. Spend your rental money on *The Illusionist* instead. You may like the gorgeous score by minimalist Glass (not Herrmann-caliber, not as imaginative or potent or dramatic, but still satisfying and good to hear). The music was

conducted by Michael Riesman (not by Glass) of the Czech Film Orchestra. The music editor was Suzana Peric, assisted by Alice Wood and Jon Carbonara. The contractor was Zdena Pelikanova. Music preparation was by Pavel Ciboch (?? Not sure if I spelled that right). Music mixed by The Looking Glass Studios in NYC. Apparently Glass orchestrated his own music since I saw no reference to orchestrators. I'd love to see if I can get a copy of the score and do a future rundown analysis of it. It won't hurt to ask!

I haven't contributed much on *Talking Herrmann* lately except in the topic titled "Stevenoo, Where Are You?" that caught my immediate interest. This refers to a poster's curiosity if Steven Smith, the Herrmann biographer, ever posted there (he never has, which I found curious too). Nick Redman, the film music album producer, even made comments on that public forum topic, stating that he was close friends of Smith. So I logically asked, "Since you are friends with Mr. Smith, perhaps you can ask him why he has never posted on this *Talking Herrmann* forum (an understandable curiosity of many here)." Anyway, you can read all of the rather interesting replies! One nice bit of news from Redman was that he and Smith just finished working together on the upcoming Special Edition dvd of *Jane Eyre*, including an isolated score, and some recorded comments by Herrmann himself during the recording sessions (I presume). No mention of a music commentary was made, but that would be a plus. I'll check the Internet on this later....Not much added news. It'll be released April 24th (about \$15 range).

<http://herrmann.uib.no/talking/view.cgi?forum=thGeneral&topic=2616>

This morning I just finished my second of two newest rundowns meant for my next *Film Score Rundowns* update in early March (including this Blog # 32). I had already finished my rundown last week of John Williams' *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (CE3K). It was a bit of a challenge due to the part-atonal nature of the score (atonal music is usually not my musical cup of tea) but Williams did a superb job. I rate his *Superman* higher but CE3K nevertheless has many excellent moments, and wonderful "movements." I just wish the film itself was not so immature and uneven and painfully slow. The second rundown is Herrmann's *Endless Night*. It is not necessarily a "new" rundown since I wrote a first draft of it in May, 2005, meant for *L'Ecran Musical* (along with my analysis of *The Bride Wore Black*). As I mentioned in other blogs, these rundowns were specially written for this table-top sort of film music book but I have not heard from the Frenchman who approached me for contributions. I have written several e-mails but received no replies, no information gleaned from Google...nothing. I can only surmise the project is now dead. I'll hold off on *The Bride Wore Black* for now and see what happens, but I decided to expand my *Endless Night* paper by about eight pages and submit it for my new update in March. I almost decided to newly work on Goldsmith's *Twilight Zone* episode, "The Invaders." After all, it would be more fitting of the alien/close encounters motif if you consider CE3K, but I decided against it for now. It was easier to simply expand on *Endless Night*. I just don't want to see my long paper on *Bride Wore Black* to sit idle and unread for two years so far, stretching it another year or so! My main gripe with this individual in France who approached me is that he never bothers to periodically e-mail contributors to update on the situation. That's rather amateurish, unprofessional (especially since I had asked to be updated now & then). So

unless I hear good word within a few months, I'll pull the plug on my contribution (since I wisely did not sign my rights away) and simply put it online. Maybe I'll even offer it to the Bernard Herrmann Society (home of *Talking Herrmann*). We'll see.

I also posted in the "Tribute Film Classics" thread on *Talking Herrmann*:

"...Secondly, almost anything of Max Steiner would be appreciated (at least by me personally!). I can perhaps understand why one poster felt a bit displeased about SHE. I suspect that's because he is not familiar with the score (or perhaps even the composer), and that it's an old work not commonly seen or heard, and that BYU/FMA already came out with an impressive original tracks cd of SHE (including a terrific 34-page cd "booklet" full of illustrations and score examples!).

"What John and Bill offers for the Naxos version coming up will be the first modern stereo rendition. I do not know if they will include "more" music from the film score that is not already available on the BYU mono version, but just being able to finally hear the finely tuned details in the stereo-digital version will be quite welcomed. I do not know if it will be a "hit" or "big seller" for Naxos as I'm sure MYSTERIOUS ISLAND will be for Tribute, but I know I will buy a copy.

"Right now I am listening to the BYU cd as I write this post. Now: Bernhard Kaun composed a fair amount of the beginning reels of the score, so I wonder if John will include Kaun's contributions? I hope so. One of my favorite tracks is # 5 "Dugmore's Discovery/Avalanche." That music simply does not sound like Steiner--at least the beginning parts. The cue section starting at the :14 point is quite astounding music! That assuredly is Kaun's work. I hope John and Bill include that cue.

"I wonder if John found the "Main Title" of SHE as being vaguely familiar? Well, the four-note motif (first heard :11-:15) was later self-borrowed for Steiner's early Fifties score for THE LION & THE HORSE. He did a fair amount of self-borrowing for that delightful family B western for Warners. Frankly I personally would've preferred having that score rerecorded for cd instead of SHE. In many cases the music is simply more memorable, the themes highly distinctive and fun and energizing. It was one of the very first scores by Steiner I heard when I was a kid, and it made a big impression on me. Being a little kid, I was more into horses and cowboys back then instead of girls (SHE)! And I prefer Steiner over Korngold (although I prefer Herrmann slightly over Steiner!). So anything of Steiner would actually be appreciated, although I prefer Steiner's later works (late Forties up to his retirement). I am hoping Ray Faiola will soon come out with PARRISH. But if John wants to do a stereo rerecording of that luscious score, then be our guest!

"Speaking of self-borrowing: If you have the SHE cd, go to track # 13 "The Trail." Well, if you go to the 2:31 point, you will essentially hear the Main Title of Steiner's I WAS A COMMUNIST FOR THE FBI! I wonder if Max consciously realized this?

"The key of course is to attract sales for the new Tribute label in order to keep it afloat financially. MYSTERIOUS ISLAND is probably the absolute best choice for the premiere cd. I think most people are genuinely excited by its release. People will not, in comparison, be as "excited" or expectant of the SHE release for Naxos. While KENTUCKIAN was released already, more people will probably be interested in that release if only because there will be a lot more music (the complete score). Plus it's Herrmann (he has a bigger fan base than Steiner, realistically-speaking). KING

KONG did well because it was one of his most famous scores with an instantly recognizable title. GONE WITH THE WIND and perhaps CASABLANCA (and perhaps SEARCHERS) are the next ones most associated with Steiner. After that familiarity drops off for most people. Herrmann, on the other hand, is associated with famous Harryhausen films, famous Hitchcock scores, Truffaut, Welles, Scorsese, etc. Bill & John's plan to rerecord FAHRENHEIT 451 is also an excellent move (despite the previous legitimate and bootleg releases). I do not know what STEINER they are definitely thinking of doing for the Tribute label. Personally I think MIRACLE OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA is a good choice. It would truly be a world premiere recording. The same goes for THE HANGING TREE, but the former score is the better bet."

My writer/researcher guest two weeks ago listened to that clip from *She* and then I put on the Main title of *I Was A Communist for the FBI*. He seems to think that Max was probably quite aware of what he was doing when he self-borrowed from *She*, probably feeling that it was creative fun. He was a showman! Besides, who would notice it back then when *She* was probably not available to people? Television was just starting to gather dominance, and the practice of looking for self-borrowing was not necessarily a big thing, even for musicologists interested in film music back then. I don't know. Still, I wonder if Max was fully aware of this during the creative process.

Since we are discussing Max Steiner: If a definitive biography of Max Steiner is ever written, I hope it will include a decent analysis of his music/works. As critiqued by Littlefield's review of Smith's book, the sub-title was "The Life and *Music* of Bernard Herrmann," yet very little of the "Music" was ever really discussed. So if there's a subtitle of a future Steiner book (or Williams book, or Goldsmith, etc) that says "Life & Music" in it, then I hope the music focus is adequately focused on. Otherwise simply keep it "Life of" only and stick with the pure biography. Fortunately Max wrote an autobiographical draft called *Notes To You* but even that did not focus on the workings of his own music (very little of his creative-working process, inspirations, etc). Any taped interviews or comments by Max would be of interest, interviews with people who have known him, and so forth. Unfortunately, many people associated with Max (including all of his wives) are now passed away along with Max. It would be a different story for someone like Goldsmith, and especially Williams—if a definitive biography was ever written of them.

....[5:38 pm] Helen DeGeneres is now hosting the Oscars...I miss Billy Crystal! She's a good comedian, but he's more the showman/comedian—much more fitting for the Oscars. So far her jokes are not a real big hit. .. The one on Leonardo DiCaprio was funny, I thought: "I don't have a joke. I just thought the girls wanted to look at him for a moment." Now's she's "entertaining" with a tambourine in her hand and a bunch of religious singers. Oh, well...The song routine by Jet Black and others was hilarious...The sound effects "chorus" was interesting...Her sitting down with Scorsese was fun...the screenwriters montage/clips is pretty clever!...Ellen did an ok job, certainly better than Whopie Goldberg, in my opinion. But nobody can beat Bob Hope, Johnny Carson, and Billy Crystal.

-From my old research notes, it appears Max's orchestrator, Murray Cutter, resided in Montecito, WO 98322. I believe I found his address in the *Band of Angels* notes.

-In Max's *Flame & the Arrow* (I believe the original working title was *The Hawk & the Arrow*), the part that included "Rudi's Dancing Lesson" ("Smil-ing, smil-ing, always smil-ing...") was actually composed by David Buttolph. In bar 1 in 4/8 time, the top staff shows Line 1 F/A to same F/A quarter notes to (Bar 2) F/B 16ths to Line 2 C-D-B 16ths to C down to Line 1 G 8ths to (Bar 3) a repeat of Bar 1 to (Bar 4) F/B to D-D-B 16ths to Lines 1 & 2 E quarter notes. The bottom staff plays Line 2 E down to small octave G 8ths figure (crossbeam connected) to D down to G 8ths to (Bar 2) Line 1 E-D 8ths back to E quarter note to (Bar 3) a repeat of Bar 1 to (Bar 4) E-D 8ths to middle C down to G 8ths.

For Max's *Rome Adventure*, it appears a tentative early title was *Lovers*. The cue sheets for Reel 1 & 2 states that the first piece of music was "Opening Fanfare" (:12) and then "Rome Adventure" (1:31), followed by "The College" (:20), then "Tarantella" (3:14), "Roberto" (:50), "The Telegram" (:25), "Roberto" once again (:55), "Prudence" (:24), "Roman FanFare" (:10), "Rome Adventure" (:47), "Lovers Must Learn" (1:15), "Agitato" (:18), "Lyda" (:28), "Lyda" once again (:18), "The Bridge" (:15), "Prudence" (1:15), "Lovers Must Learn" (1:17), and then "The Kiss" (:35). That's a lot of music for the first two reels! The written cues show "Main Title" *Maestoso* in 2/4 time with the key signature of two sharps (42 bars). Then R1/3-2/1" (no title) is *Grazioso* in C time (51 bars). Etc.

In the Main Title, the fanfare goes on for eight bars (as given in the initial three-bar conductor sheet, and then it states "From Reel 3/part 2, 1 to 13 (9-21), 22-25 (22-25), one minor third lower." Then in the tempo-marking of Moderator in C time, the Rome Adventure theme starts after a mf gliss from small octave and Line 1 A quarter note glisses. We hear Lines 2 & 3 D half notes to C# down to A quarter notes to (next bar) Lines 1 & 2 F# half notes tied to 8ths to F# 8ths to "3" triplet value ascending 8ths F#-G-A, and so forth. The college music in 2/4 time (key sig of one sharp) is also included in the Main Title starting in Bar 31. After an 8th rest, violins play Line 2 D-C-Line 1 B legato 8ths to (Bar 32) A-G-A-B 8ths to (Bar 33) B-Line 2 C-Line 1 G 8ths to F# stand-alone 8th to (Bar 34) G 8th up to Line 2 D dotted quarter note. After an 8th rest in Bar 34, the celeste is prominent sounding the response 8ths of Lines 2 & 3 D down to B down to A. The tonality is initially G major (G/B/D). I could easily here this college music played in *Gone With the Wind* since it fits so well.

According to an Inter-Office Communication (Warner Bros. Pictures memo) dated January 24, 1962, the subject was "Cuts on *Rome Adventure*" from Delmer Daves. The studio wanted to cut the movie from 2 hours 12 minutes "to as near 2 hours as possible." Seven cuts were proposed. The first one was to "eliminate the scene of Roberto and Prudence on the deck on the morning of their arrival in Naples, and eliminate the PROGRESS SHOT through EUR....Next, "The Legion of Decency requested that we drop the line on the train where Lyda tells Don 'to kiss her and hurt her so that she will feel it all the way to Switzerland.'" This is simple to do—so that Lyda merely says, 'kiss me.' The boy does, and goes." Next, "After Don and Prudence spend the afternoon and evening together, during which time they have fallen in love, we will DISSOLVE OUT

on the scene where Prudence whispers to him, 'I love you,' and he goes to his room. This eliminates Don going to bed, becoming restless, and crossing to the girl's room in his pajamas. This was also a request of the Legion of Decency, and will not hurt the story at all, since we will DISSOLVE on the girl's confession of love." Other cuts include when after Don arrives at the book shop (going to the CIT ticket office, etc. Others include extra shots of the mountains, dancers, and so forth.

On a different note before I forget, the Waxman-scored *Silver Chalice* aired on a Christian channel last week. Too bad the movie is not yet available on dvd because I did indeed research the score at Warner Bros. Archives years ago, and I would need an audio reference source (like a cd or, better yet, dvd). There was a lot of interesting music in this lame (yet handsomely set) theater-like film, including music for scenes such as Nero's Banquet Hall, Christian House chase, Bazaar (Antioch), Simon's Terrace, Court of Petitioners, the Tower, Amphitheatre (Jerusalem), Deborah's House, and so forth. There was the Oasis Esdraelon, the Pavillion, Joseph's House, Wharf, Silversmith workshop, etc. I understand Newman apologized for his role in this film (thinking it would ruin his career before it started!).

.....It looks like Scorsese won for *The Departed*, and that movie won Best Picture. I guess we'll have to rent the movie! *Babel* won for Best Score. Oh, well. I believe I discussed the composer of that score in another blog. Newman or Glass should've won, or maybe even Desplat over Santaolalla.

Fort Dobbs is another Max Steiner movie, the original working title being *14 Bullets to Fort Dobbs* (why not "12" bullets, or even "13"?). Michael Heindorf did most of the orchestrations for some reason. I believe Cutter did a few, including Reel 7/2. Heindorf definitely did the "New Main Title" of 9 pages, 36 bars. This is a very obscure movie starring Clint Walker of *Cheyenne* fame but the music is quite good, in my opinion. It probably will never be released on dvd.

Susan Slade has very gorgeous music but it too is rather unknown to most people, even to Steiner fans. It reminds me a lot of his better known score (and movie), *Parrish*. *Summer Place* is really well-known but I personally prefer *Parrish* as an entertaining movie of that genre and its fantastic score. As for *Susan Slade*, the "Main Title" is *Maestoso* in C time, key signature of one sharp. Cue #39441, 7 pages, 36 bars. The sketch is formatted on six staves. Instrumentation: flute, alto sax, oboe, 2 clarinets, tenor sax, 2 bassoons, 3 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, vibe, harp, piano, guitar, 12 violins, 4 violas, 4 VC, 2 CB.

The instrumentation for Reel 1/2 is interesting. This cue is *Con moto* in _ time, key signature of one flat, 57 bars, 15 pages. To bestow a South American flavor, Steiner uses a clavel ("or gourds"), large Tom Tom, bongo, 2 guitars, and also a piano, harp, woodwinds, trumpets, horns, and strings. The Tom Tom sounds an x-headed quarter note (followed by a quarter rest) to two 8ths, repeated thru Bar 10 at least. After an 8th rest, the clavel sounds two x-headed quarter notes to 8th note (repeat next several bars). The bongo, after an 8th rest, sounds "3" triplet value x-x-x 16ths to x-x-x-x 8ths, repeated next several bars. Two guitars, after an initial 8th rest, play forte F/A/Line 2 C/F "3"

triplet value 16ths to four such 8ths. They then play this pattern in Bar 2 on Eb, then Db in Bar 3, then C in Bar 4. After an 8th rest in Bar 1, horns play *mf* small octave A/Line 1 F/F [written E/G/Line 2 C] “3” triplet value 16ths to four such 8ths to (Bar 2), after an 8th rest, G/Bb/Line 1 Eb notes in that same pattern to (Bar 3) F/Ab/Line 1 Db notes to (Bar 4) E/G/middle C notes. Repeat Bars 1-4 in Bars 5-8. Violins I are *saltando* playing forte on Line 1 F notes in that same pattern to (Bar 2) Eb to (Bar 3) Db to (Bar 4) middle C. Violins II play this on middle C to (Bar 2) small octave Bb to (Bar 3) Ab to (Bar 4) G notes. Violas play this on small octave A to (Bar 2) G to (Bar 3) F to (Bar 4) E. The piano and VC play rinforzando notes Great octave F dotted 8th up to small octave C 16th up to F down to C up to F down to C 8ths, and so forth. CB play small octave F 8th (followed by an 8th and quarter rest) to same F down to C 8ths in Bar 1.

Two On A Guillotine was the motion picture that director Robert Conrad thought that Max Steiner ruined with his music! He particularly disliked the “Rabbit” music. Guess who is remembered more for his contributions—Conrad or Steiner? The cue sheets for Reel 1 shows:

1. Magic Act. Visual Instr. 1:02
2. Sobre Las Olas Rosas (arr. Steiner) Visual Instr. 1:38
3. They're Either Too Young or Too old (Frank Loesser-Arthur Schwartz) bkg instr. 2:30
- 4 a) You Must Have Been a Beautiful Baby (Harry Warren-Johnny Mercer) :25
- 4b) The Blade (Steiner) 1:00
- 4 c) Title :02
5. Melinda 1:15
6. Melinda :05

Ellen's Theme in Reel 9 appears to be credited to Frank Parrish, music lasting 2:55. A lot of song music was used, especially in Reel 6. This includes 28 a) You Can't Stop Me From Dreaming (Cliff Friend-Dave Franklin) 1:06. Also 28 b) “It's A Great Feeling (Sammy Cahn) :20, and then A Rainy Night in Rio (Leo Rubin-Art Schwartz) :45. Etc. In reel 8, “What Is This Thing Called Love” vocal by Porter was used for nearly 2 minutes.

Although the opening credits of *Beast With Five Fingers* stated that the “Musical Arrangements” was by Hugo Friedhofer, in actual fact, Murray Cutter did the orchestrations. I studied the score at Warner Bros. Archives on October 14, 2003. I met a musicologist that week there named Neil Lerner. I discussed his paper within the book, Off The Planet, in my CE3K rundown. Not all of the full score cues were available to research of *Beast With Five Fingers* but what I saw were definitely orchestrated by Cutter. The “Main Title” is marked as cue # 29122, *Maestoso* tempo-marking, 62 bars, 16 pages. Instrumentation: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 4 trumpets, 4 trombones, tuba, timp, gong, snare drum, bass drum, cymbal, 2 harps, 2 pianos, Hammond Organ, guitars, 16 violins, 6 violas, 6 VC, 4 CB. The next full score cue available is R2/2, *Moderato (misterioso)* in _ time, cue # 29126, 78 bars, 20 pages. However, Reel _ (cue # 29123) is actually adapted from “Te Voglio Bene Assaje” (Neopolitan Folksong), *Moderato* in 6/8 time. Another tune used was La Vera Sorrentina (The Girl of Sorrento), a Neopolitan air.

Anyway, in R2/2, it opens with the flutes and bassoon I playing *mf* < Line 1 A dotted half note down to (Bar 2 in C time) E dotted half note decrescendo back up to A quarter note rinforzando legato down to (Bar 3) E dotted half note, and so forth. After a quarter rest in Bar 2, four violas play *mf* < > middle C# rinforzando quarter note legato to B half note, while VC here play Great octave A/small octave E quarter notes to G/D half notes. After a half and quarter rest in Bar 2, 12 violins play *pp espr* < Line 1 A quarter note down to (Bar 3) E dotted half note, and so forth. Nice moody cue initially.

The next available cue is Reel 3/2 (The Storm cue), cue # 29128, *Agitato* in C time, 67 bars, 17 pages. The flutes and piccolo play forte Line 3 C whole note legato to (Bar 2) Line 2 B whole note to (Bar 3) Bb whole note tied to next bar. The vibe is rolled forte similarly. The Hammond organ (top staff) plays Line 3 A#/B/Line 34 C whole notes tied to next bar and then (in Bar 3) Fx/G#/A# whole notes tied to next bar. The bottom staff H.O. plays in the tremolo stop Line 3 Ex/G/A# whole notes tied to next bar to (Bar 3) E#/F#/G whole notes tied to next bar. Violins are divided into three staves of four players each. Violins I are fingered trem between Line 3 A/Line 4 C to G#/B half notes (this figure played twice in this bar), repeated in Bar 2. Violins II play this on G#/B to Fx/A# half notes, and violins III between G/Bb and F#/A half notes. The harps are ascending gliss in Bar 11 small octave G#/B up to (Bar 12) Line 3 F/G# whole notes. In Bar 12, the piano is “gliss on white keys” on Contra-octave E whole note gliss line upward. By Bar 24, the marimba starts to sound descending quarter note tremolos Line 2 G-F#-F-E, and so forth.

In *Film Music Notes*, Vol II, No. 4 (January 1943), there is a one-page article titled “Max Steiner Comments on Music Scoring.” In part it states:

“Mr. Steiner believes that music won a major victory when he and men like him in his own and other studios convinced producers that the background score should not always be completely subordinate to the story.

“ ‘Not long ago,’ he says, ‘music had to fit each scene of a picture as that scene was photographed by the director. It was unheard of that a scene should be lengthened in order that a musical idea might be more effectively developed. Now, if I need ten feet more of film to complete a musical development, I usually get it. In a recent picture I lengthened one scene seventeen feet. I think that was my biggest fight—and music won! However, we have always to keep in mind the fact that we are making pictures, that a successful picture is a matter of close cooperation among all those contributing to it. That, of course, is true of grand opera composing and producing as well as composing for the film.’

“Unlike some other composers, Steiner refuses to look at ‘rushes’ of a film—the showings of a day’s camera work which are so important to directors in determining the progress of a picture. Until the whole film has been shot and edited, he does not see any part of it. Once it is turned over to him, he has it put through a mechanical device which exactly times every scene, every action, every bit of dialogue. From this, elaborate cue sheets are compiled. Meanwhile, Steiner, having studied his ‘libretto’ closely, evolves a general plan for music which will heighten its dramatic effect and sustain its moods.

“ ‘I create themes for the principal characters, among other things,’ he says. ‘At this point I do not consider the all-important matter of timing. When the cue sheets are ready, I have the picture run again, reel by reel, to refresh my memory. After that I begin

composing, according to the cue sheets, fitting my music to the many changes of scene and location that help to give the modern motion picture life and interest. That, of course, is the great problem of composing for the films—to give the score continuity, to keep the audience unconscious of any break, yet to make the music perform its function of sustaining each mood and scene. Of course, some scenes are more effective without music. I am the first to admit that, and when I feel that music can add nothing to a scene I refuse to try to find a way to make it do so.’

:Mr. Steiner believes that much of the music being written for background scores could, if it had the opportunity to do so, ‘stand alone’—in other words, that it has merit as ‘pure’ music. Eventually, he hopes that music publishers will recognize this, and make the best of it available for concert hall performance.

“ ‘Now,’ he says, sadly, ‘music created for a picture almost invariably dies with the picture, at least insofar as the music-supporting public. But I am optimistic. Much as we have been able to do we have only begun to realize the possibilities. I’m convinced that, in the not too distant future, opera and symphony will find their proper place in this great medium. Finer and finer music is being produced—to satisfy yourself to that, you have only to compare a modern movie-score with those of a few years ago. I am fairly convinced that the best of present-day movie music has lasting worth.’”

His statements about his working methods and design are extremely important. His statements show root beliefs about how he feels scoring a movie should be approached. His “mickey-mousing” approach (synchronization to action) is key to this approach. Whereas another valid major approach (“mood approach”) was largely accepted as the working method for composers like Bernard Herrmann especially. Steiner wanted to “hit” the action, so to speak, with incredible precision. For the mood approach, this is usually not necessary. Herrmann himself “mickey-moused” but relatively infrequently. Perhaps he did not want his music to sound “mechanical” as Steiner’s music was sometimes accused of because of his reliance on such mechanical timing devices, being overly dependent of precisely what happens to the changing scenes. Steiner speaks of the need of “continuity,” yet if a character suddenly turns or falls or makes some emotional expression, then the music has to reflect that (according to Steiner’s overall beliefs about approaching film scoring). So where is the continuity in such cases of the overall musical idea or thought-form? Because of his approach, his music has a certain exciting fluidity or changeableness, but I do not think it would necessarily sound unified or exhibit continuity if heard apart from the music and put on the concert stage. Herrmann’s mood music would be more successful in that. However, certainly not *all* of Steiner’s music is this changeable. This includes most Main Titles, cues that portray general mood and little or no reflections of minor changes within scenes, and so forth.

A book of 15 essays titled Music & Cinema discusses this somewhat, especially the essay on Stothart starting on page 187. I believe you can still read portions of this in the Google Books link below:

http://books.google.com/books?vid=ISBN0819564117&id=ZVrbW6ELKb0C&pg=RA1-PA116&lpg=RA1-PA116&ots=5Qs6L_57C6&dq=%22We+Make+The+Movies%22+Norton+Press&sig=wBXaD9WUx4A_3wzDjZ_hguy4LLI#PRA1-PA249,M1

The roots of Max's "mickey-mousing" approach to film scoring most likely (and logically) stems from his theatre/vaudeville years. He was not only involved with such conducting (and composing) in Vienna and other areas in the Continent, but he also worked extensively in London and then finally in New York (see my paper on the astrology of Max Steiner that also gives a detailed rundown of his *Notes To You* autobiography). It seems reasonable to surmise that Max many times had to "hit the mark," so to speak, with the music to reflect the sudden events and changes on the stage. So the cueing practice became an ingrained habit that carried over into the motion picture major chapter of his career. Bernard Herrmann, on the other hand, was intimately involved with unseen radio drama, so his overall "mood approach" would fit better under the circumstances, and he carried over that habitual practice (including self-borrowing—as I already documented-- that he was in the habit of doing on radio!) into his film music medium.

Another Steiner-ism, so to speak, is the habit of frequent musical quotation, especially in early and mid-career films. For example, in many of his war flicks, you'll hear plenty of "Deutschland Uber Alles" (Unknown) arranged by him; "Die Wacht Am Rhein" (Schneckenburger/ Wilhelm) arranged by Max ; "Marsellaise"; "Marines' Hymn" (Offenback); "Rule Britannia" (Unknown); "British Grenadiers" (Unknown), and so forth. For Americana and Western movies or scenes, Max would cite a lot of Stephen Foster, Emmett ("Dixie"), and so forth.

By the way, for those who may object to the term "mickey-mousing," remember that Steiner himself coined it! He wrote in a *Variety* issue that "I like to term my method—facetiously, of course—the "Mickey Mouse" type; that is, I permit myself to be dominated by the story and the characters, and synchronize the music to them. This theory is based on a sound psychology that underlies all my efforts; and that is that the ear must hear what the eye sees, or else it is disturbing."

Max Steiner wrote "Scoring The Film" as part of the 1937 book, *We Make The Movies*. In part, he states (starting on page 221):

"When a picture is finished and finally edited, it is turned over to me. Then I time it; not by stop watch, however, as many do, I have the film put through a special measuring machine and then a cue sheet created which gives me the exact time, to a split second, in which an action takes place, or a word is spoken...While these cue sheets are being made, I begin work on themes for the different characters and scenes, but without regard to the required timing. During this period I also digest what I have seen, and try to plan the music for this picture. There may be a scene that is played a shade too slowly which I might be able to quicken with a little animated music; or to a scene that is too fast, I may be able to give a little more feeling by using slower music. Or perhaps the music can clarify a character's emotion, such as intense suffering, which is not demanded or fully revealed by a silent close-up, as, for instance, the scene in *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, where Errol Flynn forges the order sending six hundred to their death.

"After my themes are set and my timing is completed, I begin to work. I run the picture reel by reel again, to refresh my memory. Then I put my stop watch on the piano, and try to compose the music that is necessary for the picture within the limits allowed by this timing. For instance: For fifteen seconds of soldiers marching, I may write martial music lasting fifteen seconds. Then the picture might cue to a scene at a railroad track,

which lasts for six seconds, when I would change my music accordingly or let it end at the cut. Once all my themes are set I am apt to discard them and compose others, because frequently, after I have worked on a picture for a little while, my feelings towards it changes.

“Having finally set my themes I begin the actual and tedious work of composing according to my cue sheets, endeavoring to help the mood and dramatic intent of the story as much as possible. The great difficulty lies in the many cuts (sections; different locations) which make up a modern motion picture. For example: The first two minutes on my imaginary cue sheet consist of the arrival of a train in some little town. I would use music that conforms with the pounding of the locomotive, a train whistle or the screeching of the brakes, and perhaps some gay music to cover the greetings of people getting on and off the train. After these two minutes, the picture cuts directly to the death of the father in a little attic in an outlying farmhouse, the scene lasting three minutes in all. I must, therefore, devise some method of modulating quickly and smoothly from the gay music in the station to the silence and tragedy in the death room. These two scenes would consume five minutes of the ten-minute reel, and at the point of the father’s death we might cut directly to a cabaret in New York where the daughter is singing, not knowing that her father is dead. Here is a transition which I would not modulate at all. Instead, it would be very effective to let a hot jazz band bang right in as soon as the cut, or short fade, to the cabaret was completed.

“There is nothing more effective in motion-picture music than sudden of mood cleverly handled, providing, of course, they are consistent with the story. During this cabaret scene, while the jazz orchestra is playing, if the daughter is notified of her father’s death, it would be absolutely wrong to change from the hot tune in progress to music appropriate to her mood. We must consider the jazz orchestra as actual music, not as underscoring; and in order to make this sequence realistic, we should contrive to make the music as happy and noisy as possible. For, in the first place, the orchestra leader does not know what has happened, and would, therefore, have no reason to change his music; and, second, no greater counterpoint has ever been found than gay music underlying a tragic scene, or vice versa. The latter, of course, applies only if the audience is aware of tragedy taking place unknown to the players.”

Now: I have the sneaking suspicion that Max may have changed his tune regarding his points in that last paragraph because I seem to remember movies after he had written this where he did indeed reflect the sudden mood of the character. For example, the gay cabaret music would be dramatically dialed down *subito* and in its place (or in the foreground) is the non-diegetic music score conveying great loss and sudden grief. I’ll have to check the many pictures that Max did and see if I can come up with such examples.

Film Music Notes, Vol III, No. 3 (December 1943) also quotes Steiner in the “News Notes, Comments, Etc) section. Quote:

“...Conservatively speaking, at least one half of all the movie-goers in the country are musical minded. I get between two and three hundred letters a week from fans. And immediately a picture is released the studio gets requests from all over the country asking

where recordings or the sheet music can be purchased. Yet neither the studios nor the exhibitors are doing much to take advantage of the fans' interests."

According to Max's Employee Starting Record document (available to research at Warner Bros. Archives, the date given is 4-12-37. However, this probably relates to the starting record of the particular assignment he was involved with for Warner Bros. because the "Starting Record" form was revised at different times, such as 9/54, 9/59, etc. Also, his employment for *The Charge of the Light Brigade* (he was loaned out from Selznick International Pictures) commenced August 17, 1936. He was guaranteed \$7, 500 for that picture. Max's number in several of them was the same (870626). The Department number is 450. His address then was 1012 Cove Way in Beverly Hills. In a 1960 "Change of Address Notice" dated January 19, 1960, Max was now living at 1091 Laurel Way in Beverly Hills. The Department is Music, and Occupation is Music. Date of Birth: May 10, 1888.
Place of Birth: Austria
Dates Becomes 65: 1953.
Years in Sate: 8
Married: Yes
Number of Dependents: 5
Nationality: American
Ever Employed Here Before: Yes
Then Max signed is named on the lower right.

-The original and long-lasting working title of "Trouble Along The Way" starring John Wayne and directed by Michael Curtiz was "Alma Mater." There is a two-page "Tentative Shooting Schedule (Balance of Picture)" document dated 10/16/52.

Oct. 16 – INT. Pool Hall Stage # 16
Oct 16 - INT. Belfry Room Stage # 4
Oct 16 - INT. Steve's Tenement Flat
Oct 17 – INT. Steve's Tenement Flat
Oct 18 - EXT. Arches, Pomona
Oct 18 - EXT. Chapel-St. Anthony

Sunday

Oct 20 - EXT. Practice Field-St. Anthony
Oct 21 - INT. Gym – Loyola
Oct 22 - INT. Gym – Loyola
Oct 23 - EXT. Practice Field
Oct 24 - INT. Recreation Room – St. Anthony
Oct 25 - INT. Show Room, Wholesale House

Sunday

Oct 27 - INT. Refectory – St. Anthony
Oct 28 - INT. Father Burke's Study
Oct 29 - " " " "
Oct 30 - " " " "

Oct 31 - “ “ “ “
Nov 1 - INT. Dept. of Welfare, New York

Sunday

Nov 3 - INT. Chapel – St. Anthony
Nov 4 - “ “ “
Nov 5 - EXT. Grandstand – Polo Grounds
Nov 6 - “ “ “ “
Nov 6 - EXT. St. Anthony Bench – Polo Grounds
Nov 6 - EXT. Holy Cross Bench – Polo Grounds
Nov 7 - INT. Locker Room – St. Anthony
Nov 7 - INT. Athletic Office – New York
Nov 8 - EXT. Baker Field – New York
Nov 8 - EXT. Field Tunnel – Stadium
Nov 8 - EXT. Bench, Football Stadium

Sunday

Nov 10 - INT. Belfry Room – Chapel
Nov 11 - “ “ “
Nov 11 -EXT. Eastside Street
Nov 12 - INT. Small Cocktail Bar
Nov 12 - INT. N.Y. Bus (Process)
Nov 12 - INT. Adm. Office – Polo Grounds
Nov 13 - “ “ “
Nov 13 - INT. Steve’s House – College Town
Nov 14 - INT. Anne’s Apartment & Terrace
Nov 15 - EXT. Terrace, Anne’s Apartment

Sunday

Nov 17 - INT. Anne’s Apartment
Nov 17 - INT. Pell’s Street Rest.
Nov 18 - INT. Courtroom – New York
Nov 19 - INT. “ “
Nov 20 - INT. “ “
Nov 21 – INT. Cardinal’s Limousine – Process
Nov 21 -INT. Cardinal’s Office – Refectory
Nov 21 - EXT. Store Window
Nov 22 - EXT. Curb, Yankee Stadium
Nov 22 - INT. 3rd Avenue Saloon
Nov 22 - EXT. Parking Lot
Nov 22 - EXT. Steve’s House – College Town

As for the cue sheets for *Trouble Along The way* (ala “Alma Mater”), dated March 2, 1953:

Reels 1 & 2

1 a) Warner Bros. Signature (Steiner) MPHC B.I. 0:06

- b) Saint Anthony's Alma Mater Hymn (Cahn-Steiner) MPHC B/V. 1:10
- 2 a) Doloroso (Steiner) MPHC B.I. 0:44
- b) St. Anthony's Alma Mater Hymn 1:43
- c) Notre Dame Victory March (M.J. Shea-J.F. Shea) Melrose B.I. 0:12
- 3 Auld Lang Syne (arr. Steiner) MPHC, V.V. 0:27
- 4 Saint Anthony's Alma Mater Hymn :45
- 5 I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles (Ken Brovin-Kellette) Remick B.I. :30
- 6 a) Saint Anthony's Alma Mater Hymn :11
- b) Steve (Steiner) MPHC B.I. :19
- 7 a) Alice (Steiner) MPHC B.I. :32
- b) Steve (Steiner) PPHC B.I. :55

Reels 3 & 4

- 8 a) Alice (Steiner) :18
- b) Steve (Steiner) :44
- c) Some Sunday Morning (Heindorf-Jerome) Witmark V.I. 1:06
- d) You're Getting To Be A Habit With Me (Warren-Dubin) :50
- 9. Holy God We Praise Thy Name (Ritter) arr. Max Steiner :48
- 10. a) Steve (Max Steiner) 1:07
- b) Discussion (Steiner) :45
- c) Saint Anthony's Alma Mater Hymn :12
- 11 a) Argument (Steiner) :13
- b) Adolescence :42
- c) Alice :25
- d) Temper :12
- e) Alice :15
- f) Retrospect :20
- 12. When The Roll Is Called Alma Mater (Sammy Fain-Irving Kahal) :16

ETC.

The Miracle of Our Lady of Fatima (titled on the music as "The Miracle of the Lady of Fatima") is one of Max's best scores and it was never released as a cd, and it's still not available on dvd (although it *was* released as a vhs tape). I suggested on *Talking Herrmann* that Morgan and Stromberg eventually rerecord this wonderful score because it would be an excellent world premiere recording, and I believe it would sell well (but not as much as the planned first Tribute release, Herrmann's *Mysterious Island*).

The cue sheets for *Fatima* are dated July 14, 1952:

Reels 1 & 2

- 1 a) Fatima (Max Steiner) MPHC Bkg. Instr. 0:25
- b) Jesu Der Du Meine Seele (Bach) arr, Steiner :45
- c) Revolt (Max Steiner) :56
- d) O Patria O Rei O Povo (Dom Pedro) Public Domain :07
- e) Revolt (Steiner) :09
- f) Credidi (Unknown) arr. Steiner :20
- g) Priests (Steiner) :19

- h) Religioso (Steiner) :25
 - i) Veni Jesu Amor Mi (Cherubini) arr. Steiner :35
 - 2a) Holy God We Praise Thy Name (Ritter) arr. Steiner 1:25
 - b) Hugo (Max Steiner) :05
 - 3a) Children (Max Steiner) :26
 - b) Hugo (Max Steiner) :55
 - c) Pastorale (Max Steiner) :28
 - d) Children (Max Steiner) :14
 - e) The Ram (Max Steiner) :11
 - f) Sympathy (Max Steiner) :21
 - 4a) Lightning (Max Steiner) :40
 - b) Cloud (Max Steiner) :20
 - c) Vision (Max Steiner) 1:03
 - d) Tis The Month Of Our Mother (Unknown) arr. Steiner :50
 - e) Vision (Max Steiner) :20
 - f) Tis The Moth of Our Mother :45
 - g) Hugo (Max Steiner) :15
- ETC.

The Bach music in the Main Title (cue # 34541-A) starts on Bar 10 of the cue, tempo-marked as *Religioso*. There is also a full chorus of women's voices, tenors, baritones and basses (so S.A.T.B.B. voices) all singing "Ah." The cued-in organ plays exactly as the top staff ("women") of the vocals.

Right now (8:18 pm Wednesday, Feb 28) in the background I'm listening to the 3-cd set Max Steiner: The RKO Years (1929-1936). If I have any special comments to make (such as noticing self-borrowing instances of note) then I'll them here...I am not especially fond of *Symphony of Six Million* but I would look at the music if I had the opportunity....In the *Bird of Paradise* score, track # 15 ("Safe Aboard the Boat") at 1:09 thru 1:25, the music is rather strikingly Herrmannesque...I am not particularly impressed with Max's *Sweepings* (1933)...Also I am not crazy about *Little Women*. I like *Little Minister* a bit better. Except for some exceptional RKO Years scores (*King Kong* especially), I much prefer Steiner's output in his later years, especially the late Forties to mid-Sixties.

-In an "Inter-Office Communication" memo dated June 25, 1957 to Hal Holman from R.J. Obringer, the subject is "Max Steiner—Band of Angels." As written:

"Reference is made to my memo to you dated May 22, 1957 with respect to Max Steiner's compensation in connection with BAND OF ANGELS.

"Steiner has completed his assignment and, therefore, the final installment of \$2000 is due. Also, Steiner wrote 22 minutes in excess of 60 minutes of music and is entitled to receive \$200 for each such additional minute, i.e., he is entitled to receive a further sum of \$4400. Will you, therefore, see that a total payment of \$6400, less customary deductions, is made to Steiner."

-Now: It appears that there was confusion regarding the title of *Fort Dobbs*. Remember how earlier I stated that it was tentatively titled *14 Bullets to Fort Dobb* on the

score itself. Well, in an October 3, 1957 memo from John Kotanan to R. J. Obring, the subject was "Fifteen Bullets From Fort Dobbs" ! Anyway, Max's guaranteed compensation was \$10,000 for that particular assignment.

-There are occasionally discrepancies in cue sheets. For instance, for the score to *The Adventures of Mark Twain*, there are cue sheets dated February 2, 1943, but also there are sheets (differently typed or different layout) dated May 31, 1943. In the first series of medley identifications:

- 1 a) Signature :12
- b) Mark Twain 1:09
- c) River 1:00
- d) Mark Twain :27
- e) River :19
- f) Mark Twain 1:43
- g) Pirates 1:12
- h) Steamboat :26
- i) Overturned Raft :21
- j) Pirates :36
- k) Mark Twain 1:08
- 2 a) Noboby Knows The Trouble I've Seen (Unknown) Pub Dom :12
- b) Mark Twain :30
- c) Agitato No. 1 :08
- ETC

In the May 31 version we find:

- 1 a) Signature :12
- b) Mark Twain 4:27
- c) River 1:19
- d) Pirates 1:48
- e) Steamboat :26
- f) Overturned Raft :21
- 2 a) Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen :12
- b) Mark Twain :30
- c) Agitato No. 1 :08

At any rate, it appears that edits were made in the film by the end of May 1943. And the film wasn't released until June of 1944, I believe! I totaled the second cue sheet items and it came up about 89 minutes. I can't find all of the complete pages for the February version, so I cannot at this moment tally up the total duration in order to note the difference between that and the May 31 version.

End blog session Wednesday, Feb 28 at 10:17 pm
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