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NEWS [September 1984)

Performances/Recordings:

The Utah Symphony recorded its Rózsa album for Varese-Sarabande in July. The final program, after many adjustments, turned out to be the expanded *Spellbound Concerto*; the expanded Piano Concerto (or *New England Symphonette*) from LYDIA and TIME OUT OF MIND; and shorter selections from BECAUSE OF HIM and THE WORLD, THE FLESH, AND THE DEVIL. Elmer Bernstein conducted, and Miklós Rózsa was in attendance, as he was for two live concerts of the same music the week before. The LP version is scheduled for release by the end of the year, with a CD to follow in the spring. Also recorded by the orchestra (under associate conductor Charles Ketcham) was a collection of scores for Alfred Hitchcock films, including SUSPICION (Franz Waxman), NOTORIOUS (Roy Webb), STRANGERS ON A TRAIN (Dimitri Tiomkin), and FAMILY PLOT (John Williams).

Other summer performance activity included a number of outdoor film music concerts by the Detroit Symphony at Meadow Brook, one of which included music from SPELLBOUND, BEN-HUR, and (!) LAST EMBRACE. Kenneth Jean was the conductor for the last.

Books:

Miklós Rózsa's *Double Life* will appear in a paperback version in England. The author will be present for the London publication reception in October. Christopher Palmer, collaborator on *Double Life*, has also published *Dimitri Tiomkin: A Portrait*. The 144-page study has fifty illustrations (nine in color) and sells for \$12.50. Publisher: T.E. Books, 3 Stanley Crescent, London W11, England.

Ronald Bohn's comprehensive *1983 Motion Picture and Television Music Credits Annual* is now available for \$8 in the U.S. See page 24 for address

Several readers have pointed out the source of Arthur Haupt's information regarding the *Zarathustra* recording used in *2001* (PMS 41). It is John Culshaw's memoir *Putting the Record Straight* (New York: Viking, 1981), the relevant portion of which was reprinted in *High Fidelity* (February 1982). According to Culshaw, the publicity-shy Decca management of 1968 was extraordinarily wary of admitting that their 1959 recording had gone into a movie. The same was not true of Herbert Von Karajan, who threatened to sue the company when other labels started to reap spectacular profits from their *Zarathustra* recordings while his, the "authentic" screen version, languished in relative obscurity.

Finally, our readers may be amused to glance at a mediocre spy thriller by Frank Jameson called *Green Fire* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1984). A Hungarian spy is a major character; his emigre brother is one "Tamas Kovaks," a famous composer of film scores in Hollywood; and a key liaison is one "Cardinal Rosza" (sic).

Award:

The Society for the Preservation of Film Music (see PMS 41) presented Miklós Rózsa with its first Career Achievement Award on 17 April. The affair was broadcast over the KFAC (Los Angeles) radio program "Luncheon at the Music Center."

Credits Update:

Sometime back around 1977 we published a letter by Clifford McCarty
(continued on p. 22)

PITTSBURGH TALES: I
by John Fitzpatrick

The "shoures soote" of April showed unwelcome signs of lingering through May, and Pittsburgh is a long way from Kent, but the motives that brought some twenty MRS members to western Pennsylvania were not altogether unlike those of Chaucer's Canterbury pilgrims of 600 years ago: We wanted to pay proper respects to an object of devotion (Miklós Rózsa's Concerto for Viola and Orchestra, Op. 37) and we wanted to have some fun besides.

It had been a long wait. We first learned of the Concerto early in 1976 when we visited Rózsa in Hollywood. He had conceived the work and completed its first movement the previous summer at Santa Margherita. "But don't write about it," Rózsa added. There was a lot of composing ahead, and he wanted the freedom to follow his usual practice with concert works--to set the music aside, put it in a drawer, and wait to see whether it would survive the test of his own scrutiny some months later. A lot of music has failed that stern test over the years, and Rózsa's published oeuvre is in a sense only the tip of an iceberg. We will never see the rest because he does not want us to see it.

Composition of the remaining movements must have gone well in 1976 because Rózsa was speaking openly of the Concerto in Washington that October. He was even more upbeat at Bloomington the following spring, and in FMS 19 we were able to report that the score would be orchestrated that summer, although it would "probably not be performed before the fall of 1978." But by the time of the Toronto-Hamilton events of September 1977 (our "pilgrimages" were more frequent in those years!), clouds had begun to appear. Asked how his summer had gone, Rózsa replied, "Terrible." Billy Wilder had kept interrupting with special requests on FEDORA, and Rózsa had had to break off his previous Italian retreat for a trip to Munich--largely unnecessary as it turned out. (Why, then, did he still consent to compose for films? "To give you people something to write about in your magazine!") The FEDORA affair would have to play to its dismal conclusion, and two more films, plus several record albums, would have to be prepared before the finishing touches were put on the concerto. And so it was that a work conceived in the wake of Sinbad's Golden Voyage would only be published after the release of DEAD MEN DON'T WEAR PLAID.

Andre Previn quickly consented to conduct the premiere, but with Pinchas Zukerman (who had first been introduced to Rózsa by Gregor Piatigorsky in the early 1970s), there was a problem. To his already full schedule of appearances as a violin and viola soloist was now added the conductorship of the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. Hence the years from 1980 to 1984 presented a new and more frustrating series of tiresome delays.

None of this seemed to matter on May 4th as we settled into our seats at the former movie palace that had now been transformed into the sumptuous Heinz Hall. (Our Pittsburgh host, Alan Hinkelman, remembers seeing CLEOPATRA there.) Only an hour before, we had all experienced the special

charge that comes from meeting an old friend. In a basement gallery of the cavernous building, Rózsa had just been the guest at a "Meet the Composer" forum with Andre Previn and Pittsburgh Symphony composer-in-residence John Harbison. This was the first time we had seen Rózsa since he experienced a stroke in Italy in September of 1982. That event had left him with some impairment of speech and movement on the left side. But ongoing physical therapy in Los Angeles, in Switzerland, and now most successfully at the Glendale Adventist Hospital have had their effect. Rózsa walked into the Heinz Hall gallery slowly and with the aid of a stick, but he was very much his own man. And when it came time to speak to the appreciative preconcert audience of some 150 people, he left no doubt that in speech, wit, and spirit, Miklós Rózsa is every bit the man he used to be. In addition to fielding the general background questions, he even volunteered to the audience a hint of his future plans. Would there be any more film scores? "No. I think I have done enough." And what would he like to do next? "I would like to write a symphony." It was on that upbeat note that we broke to go upstairs.

And what of the music itself? Even after a leisurely, almost dreamy performance of the Beethoven *Pastoral*, we were all in a supercharged mood for the premiere. From the very first notes—brooding lower strings preparing for the early entry of the solo—the music set its own special mood on the house. The first movement, much the longest, could be characterized as mysterious—not so dark and brooding as the Cello Concerto and yet far less assertively lyrical than the great Allegro of the Violin Concerto. In short, it had a character of its own, fully exemplifying the style of a composer like Rózsa whose music is traditional and yet also new, though in ways that do not lend themselves to easy critical identification of novelty or "innovation." All of us had known roughly what to expect; none of us could have predicted the very particular tonal universe of the Viola Concerto.

The most strikingly "new" sounds were in the second movement, a distinctive stop-and-go Allegro giocoso whose mixture of blocks, whip, and other percussive effects with rapid-fire pizzicato and spiccato bowing made for some of the most inventive scoring Rózsa has yet given us. The slow movement and—surprise—the fourth movement were closer to the conventional Rózsa concerto mold. (Regarding the unusual form, Rózsa explained that as the opening movement had blossomed into something darker and weightier than originally imagined, he felt the need of a short allegro for contrast. Thus the traditional slow movement and rondo finale were pushed back to third and fourth position, respectively.)

It was a good audience and a warm reception for a performance that had put an alert, sonorous orchestra and a fine soloist to a thorough test. "To be a great success my viola piece needs a Paganini for technique and a Caruso for the singing tone. In Zukerman I have both." So Rózsa had told a *Pittsburgh Press* interviewer before the concert, and so he continued to express in the most memorable visual image of the weekend. As the applause continued, Previn gestured to acknowledge Rózsa, seated in a box at the left. Time after time Rózsa would rise and bow to the stage in a gesture of almost courtly rhetoric as if to deflect attention back to the performers. It was an elegant end to an evening of great music.

From this point on, the human element dominates our Pittsburgh story. Those desirous of learning more about the Concerto are directed to the score (published by Breitkopf and Härtel, to be made available in the U.S. by G. Schirmer); to the probable broadcast of the concert via

National Public Radio this winter; to a possible future recording (perhaps with Previn and the Royal Philharmonic); to the accompanying article by Jeffery Dane; and to whatever insights other commentators volunteer to PMS in the future.

Friday ended with one of those bureaucratic foul-ups that orchestra managements always seem to inflict on us. (Remember how the National Symphony misadvertised its own New York concert and actually dissuaded many local Rózsaophiles from attending the *Tripartita* premiere [PMS 18]?) Nothing quite so egregious happened this time. We had been directed to a reception "with the local composers" in the Green Room down in the labyrinthine basements of Heinz Hall. This we found soon enough, though it did seem odd that Rózsa was glimpsed being escorted to an elevator headed toward the upper galleries. Previn and Zukerman were soon seen hurrying in the same direction, which left us alone in the Green Room with a befuddled and not entirely pleased group of Pittsburgh composers who had been abandoned at their own reception. It turned out that the Board of Directors had preempted the evening's guest artists for a gala supper--and that no one else had been told, not even official Pittsburgh composer-in-residence John Harbison. So it was that the MRS met the local composers. There was Harbison, whose *Ulysses' Bow* received its premiere later in May. There was David Stock, whose *Inner Space* can be heard on a CRI disc (SD 440) together with Harbison's award-winning 1978 Piano Concerto. (The genial Stock joined the Rózsa Society on the spot: "I'm interested in all sorts of composers.") There was even our own MRS composer, Jack Gallagher, visiting from Wooster, Ohio.

Most fascinating of all to the movie fans among us, there was William Kraft, the famed percussionist who is presently composer-in-residence with the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Four of us had come out from New York together--Mary and I and Gary Swartz and Ray Van Orden--and much of our talk in the car had centered on the recent Ralph Bakshi feature *FIRE AND ICE*, a movie that had melted away from theaters in a week but that had contained an impressive symphonic score by none other than William Kraft. As Gary and Ray spoke enthusiastically with the composer, it became apparent that Kraft was mightily pleased and not a little surprised that anyone had seen the movie at all, let alone appreciated his music. He kept telling his colleagues how amazing the film music audience was: here he had just found two people excited and knowledgeable about a score for an unknown movie. It was at this point that Michael Yacura of Gary, Indiana, walked in and was introduced to Kraft. "Oh yes," said Michael with his special brand of enthusiasm, "I really loved your *FIRE AND ICE*!" Kraft was flabbergasted. In ways not anticipated by the Pittsburgh Symphony's Board of Directors, we had "met the composers" indeed. The pity was that Rózsa had to miss his own reception for a supper at which (we later learned) the chief topic of conversation was business conditions in China.

But we did meet "our" composer the next day. Rózsa received us Saturday afternoon in an alcove of the Hilton lobby, where we strained to hear his every word in one of those privileged gatherings that can only be appreciated by one who was there. Rózsa expressed his satisfaction with the performance--though he did wish, for the sake of record album possibilities, that it could be made to come in at under thirty minutes (its present timing is about 32.5 minutes). To the provocative question of what records he listened to for relaxation Rózsa surprised us by saying that he didn't. Music is his life's work. If he wants to escape from it, he reads (chiefly history); if he wants to explore an unfamiliar piece, he studies the score. The sound-world itself is a luxury, not a necessity to him. And as for

future plans, well, this time he was a bit more noncommittal than the night before, and he did not entirely rule out film work.

For the second night's performance, several hours later, the mood was more relaxed. A few of us had had to leave, but others--Gene Kohlenberg and Robert Ward--had just arrived. The authority of the performance and the warmth of the audience reception seemed assured. The reviews were in, notably that of Carl Apone in the *Pittsburgh Press*. He had found the Concerto a "superbly crafted, important new work," noting especially the "incredibly introspective and lyrical" quality of the opening Moderate assai and the "boundless energy and rhythmic vitality" of the Allegro giocoso. Robert Croan was considerably less enthusiastic in the *Post-Gazette*, dismissing the concerto and instead devoting most of his space to the matter of the orchestra's newly vacant music directorship. (Previn had just stunned Pittsburgh by accepting a post with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and only during the course of the weekend was he formally released from his Pittsburgh responsibilities for the coming season.)

As it happened, the audience was larger and more receptive this time, and the performance was marked by one of those moments that can always surprise the concertgoer. Skipping through the skittish second movement, Zukerman seemed to pause and turn some pages. The orchestra, too, came to a halt. There were whispered consultations and what seemed to be a very long pause (it cannot have lasted much more than thirty seconds) before the forces regrouped to continue with what struck some observers as greatly renewed concentration and audience empathy. What had happened? We later learned that Zukerman had turned two pages of his score at once. It is slightly uncommon for a concerto soloist to play from a score, but "actually it's better that way," said Rózsa. Only sometimes there is the unexpected!



Front: Robert Ward, John Fitzpatrick, Rea Culpepper, Kim Szczypinski, Mary Peatman. Rear: Alan Hinkelman, Gary Swartz, Michael Yacura, Ray Van Orden. Photo by Jeffrey Dane. Also present for all or part of the weekend: Rosemary Dodson, Jack and April Gallagher, Ruth, Jeff, Christy, and Thomas Hinkelman, Gene and Sarah Kohlenberg, Maggie Ward.

We made our farewells to the composer afterward. This time everyone found the Green Room. For most of us it would be back to ordinary life on Sunday. But not before Alan and Ruth Hinkelman, who had coordinated arrivals and meetings for the entire far-flung weekend, hosted a splendid get-together in their home at nearby Mt. Lebanon. It was well into the night when our Pittsburgh pilgrimage finally came to its proper end in the kind of event for which the Society was founded: the shared experience of great Rózsa music and the free discussion of that music afterward.

PITTSBURGH TALES: II
A FRIDAY MORNING REHEARSAL
by Jeffrey Dane

When musicians tune up before a rehearsal or a concert they invariably do so with elements of the music about to be heard. What gave a particular fascination and a special personal value to the pre-rehearsal warm-up on this occasion was that music by Miklós Rózsa was emanating from the musicians onstage. The composer's distinctive musical signature was unmistakably stamped even on these isolated bits and snippets of theme, some of the ingredients in the musical entree that we were to be served for the next three days.

No one who holds the music of Miklós Rózsa in high esteem could possibly have hoped for more than what was offered during these events in Pittsburgh, to wit: this Concerto for Viola and Orchestra was the composer's most recent large-scale orchestral work, with not one but three world premier performances being offered by an important soloist, with a major conductor at the helm of one of the finest orchestras in the country. Additionally, two very important bonuses were evident: an artistic one, in that we were to hear the absolute music of Miklós Rózsa (not his film music, which is more conventional); and perhaps the best personal bonus was that the composer was present in Pittsburgh for the performances.

I was the only member of The Miklós Rózsa Society to attend a rehearsal, and I was privileged on this occasion to have been taken there by the composer himself, along with his son, Nicholas, and Nicholas' wife, Sean, who were also in Pittsburgh for the events.

I can easily understand why Anton Schindler proudly printed on his visiting cards, 'L'Ami de Beethoven,' as though it were an imperial knighthood: it frankly meant a great deal to me to be introduced to our driver by Dr. Rózsa with, "This is my friend, Mr. Dane."

It was raining lightly and I said to the composer, "You scored KING OF KINGS! Isn't there anything you can do about this rain?" Although the sun did not immediately break through the clouds, by the time we had arrived at Heinz Hall a few minutes later it had in fact stopped raining!

Once inside the hall, Dr. Rózsa sat on an aisle seat with Nicholas beside him. As I took a place directly behind the composer he silently handed to me, over his right shoulder, the piano score of the new concerto. During a private, hour-long meeting with the composer the day before, I had spent a few tantalizing moments looking through the orchestral score (a photographic copy in Dr. Rózsa's own note-hand).

Although I have been present very often at performances of Dr. Rózsa's music (twice even conducted by him), this was the first time I had the experience of witnessing his orchestral music actually taking shape for performance. The occasion was for me, in a word, a revelation.

Today's rehearsal was the most important, indeed the most meaningful, musical event of the entire season for me. It is a unique experience to be sitting with the composer of the music that is being rehearsed before you.

"I never follow the score when I am a spectator at a concert performance per se. The score should always be consulted at rehearsal, and while the notes are for study and a tool for the conductor (who should, ideally, have the score in his head, not his head in the score), at an actual concert of one of my works it is of more value to let the music surround the listener and play freely upon the emotions. If, during that or subsequent hearings, the music makes an eloquent appeal, then the piece warrants further study." So wrote Gustav Mahler, and I share with him this sentiment.

When one wishes to learn about what a chef does, one makes a point of watching him in his kitchen rather than by just eating the food. My own personal preference has always been to attend as many rehearsals as possible. Today I had not only the fascinating experience of hearing Rózsa's orchestral music rehearsed but I was also afforded an inside view of Andre Previn's own method of preparing a work for performance.

An interesting sidelight of this was my opportunity to see how he deals on a personal basis with the musicians of his orchestra. He has a no-nonsense, businesslike approach on the podium but it is finely balanced by a keen wit: when something went awry at one point during the rehearsal of the first movement, Mr. Previn stopped the orchestra and facetiously addressed the errant section, "You know, you can get arrested for that. That's a Federal rap!"

It was evident that Dr. Rózsa's concerto had already made something of an impact on the musicians of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra at rehearsals that week. During the previous afternoon's session, which I attended and at which Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony* had been rehearsed, one of the violinists apparently dug into some notes with a verve that was clearly inappropriate for a phrase marked *Cantabile*. When Mr. Previn asked, at that time, "What were you expecting this to sound like?" the violinist replied, apparently in all seriousness, "The Rózsa concerto!" The composer enjoyed this little vignette when I told him about it later that same afternoon. (The composer told me that Andre Previn had actually asked him, some time ago, which piece Dr. Rózsa himself would prefer [!] to share the program with the concerto—Mahler's Fourth Symphony or the *Pastoral*. "Without question, the Beethoven!" was Dr. Rózsa's immediate response. The composer made a point of telling me that it was the only time he had ever been offered such a choice. The unheard-of consideration of Andre Previn in this regard may be unique in the annals of modern musical friendships!)

Although this concerto is certainly not a symphony with viola obbligato. Dr. Rózsa had apparently followed the example of the Brahms B-Flat Piano Concerto by casting his own piece in four movements rather than the usual three, and all but the last of which end literally on a quiet note—yet a further similarity, in this case, between Rózsa and Brahms, all of the four movements of whose F-Major (Third) Symphony also end quietly. "This can be a very dangerous thing to do," Dr. Rózsa commented at the pre-concert forum later that evening.

So thorough and professional are Previn and the Pittsburgh that each movement of the concerto was rehearsed this morning practically from beginning to end and with a minimum of pauses. At the conclusion of each movement,

the conductor turned around on the podium and asked, "Miklós, is there anything you want to modify?" On each such occasion Dr. Rózsa had at least one suggestion, most of which related to technical matters such as some aspect of the scoring; it was conspicuous that the composer directed his comments away from matters of interpretation per se, choosing instead to leave those decisions to the performers. Such behavior bears out a statement he made in his memoirs, that he writes music "for people, not for computers."

One of his suggestions, in particular, made me realize more than ever before that I was at this moment in the company of a master craftsman. At the end of one of the movements, the composer said to Previn, "At bar 45, would you have the second flute play that phrase an octave higher? It's not coming through." (At this point I glanced over Dr. Rózsa's shoulder: sure enough, he had penciled a small "x" at that point in the orchestral score.) The ensemble then repeated the passage in question—and lo and behold, that phrase was now heard with a pristine clarity. This is a detail of orchestration which not every composer would be aware of.

While Dr. Rózsa and I spoke after the rehearsal, it became clear to me that he was speaking with me as one musician to another. My own training in composition at the Juilliard School was, let us say, fairly thorough, and Dr. Rózsa knew that he did not have to talk to me in C-Major. Though I could never hope to approach his own rank as a musician, it was frankly very pleasant for me to be treated by him as another composer (a composer of entirely different stature and capabilities, to be sure, but another composer nonetheless). Here was an unknown fellow musician being treated by a composer of the first rank with a completely unsolicited consideration and thoughtfulness. It is something I will not forget.

I told the composer that my own introduction to his music, at age 16, was via his film scores (BEN-HUR, specifically), but that since I had the album even before I had seen the film, my initial acquaintance with his work was in its pure musical form, without any association with the visuals of the film. I "graduated" from his film music to his concert, chamber, piano, and other works, and although his film scores always were (and still are) very close to me, I have always held his absolute music in even higher regard. From the way Dr. Rózsa reacted to this remark it was clear that he very sincerely appreciated it, and he told me so in no uncertain terms. I was, in fact, simply being sincere in having said it to him. There is, after all, a difference—a fundamental difference, difficult to define but easy to recognize—between a film score by Miklós Rózsa, and his absolute music which he composed primarily because that music was in him to write.

The events of these four wonderful days constituted a very personal experience for me and this narrative is therefore written from a personal viewpoint. If I had not become acquainted with the music of Miklós Rózsa during my own formative years, my life would have taken a quite different turn and I would not be the same person I am today. My study of his music has contributed to my growth as a musician, and my friendship with the composer himself has contributed to my personal growth as a human being.

A statement he made in his memoirs bears repetition here, and has a specific application to the way I feel about his music: that it instills "pleasure in life and pride in life"—and, in my own case particularly, meaning in life.

I am still touched by the generosity Dr. Rózsa has shown me on so many occasions, and specifically the unsolicited considerations he extended to me during the four days in Pittsburgh: he did not have to invite me for

that wonderful hour-long chat on Thursday afternoon; he did not have to accept my invitation to dinner that evening (and then retrograde it by ultimately taking me); he did not have to offer me a lift to the rehearsal the next morning; and he did not have to hand me the piano score of the Viola Concerto when we arrived there.

He did not have to do any of these things, but apparently he chose to. I am indebted to him for these (and so many other) personal kindnesses. Indeed, we are all indebted to him for what he has given us.

"JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT IT WAS SAFE
TO GO BACK INTO THE RECORD STORES . . ."
by Frank DeWald

Those indefatigable folks at Varese-Sarabande, responsible for some of the best (and, yes, some of the worst) film music on records, have recently enlisted the Utah Symphony for a series of recordings that has already yielded spectacular results and promises greater rewards yet to come. Currently available are *The Star Wars Trilogy* (704.210) and *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (704.130), both conducted by Utah's now-departed Varujan Kojian. Recorded this past July and still awaiting release is an album of Rózsa excerpts conducted by Elmer Bernstein. This article will focus on the merits of *The Star Wars Trilogy*. The Korngold and Rózsa albums are self-recommending to PMS readers though they certainly deserve loving critical treatment in future issues.

The first thing to strike me about *The Star Wars Trilogy* was its life-like sound. This is one of the best, most brilliant-sounding digital stereodiscs I have heard. The sound is clear and close-up without being clinically dry. It is arguably not concert-hall realism but it sounds natural nonetheless. Details are amazingly well-defined without being unnaturally highlighted. Previous albums of this music were well-recorded but pale in comparison with this one. A-B comparisons with Gerhardt's STAR WARS disc (RCA ARL1-2698, analog) leave no doubt about the superiority of Varese-Sarabande's sound: what, for example, is clearly a bass drum on Varese-Sarabande (in "Here They Come") is on RCA just an amorphous noise.

Perhaps even more striking than the sound-quality was the musical quality of the performance itself. The Utah Symphony, which has not been heard much on discs lately, emerges here with a razor-sharp ensemble, tonal beauty, and soloistic bravura equal to the sound of the same orchestra under the baton of Maurice Abravanel, who brought the orchestra to fame with a significant series of recordings (mostly of unfamiliar repertoire) made by Vanguard in the 1950s and 1960s. Hearing the orchestra today is like meeting an old friend.

One would think that the STAR WARS music didn't need "interpreting"--that straightforward, carbon copies of the composer-conducted soundtracks (essentially what Gerhardt gave us) were all that was needed (or not needed, as you prefer). But Kojian and the Utah players find more rhythmic thrust and beautifully arched phrasing in this music than I have ever noticed before. My notes on the individual tracks include so many references to a "dance-like" spring in the rhythm that I wonder if anyone has seen the great potential that exists in this music for a ballet. Gerhardt may have

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HERRMANN, HITCHCOCK, AND THE
MUSIC OF THE IRRATIONAL by
Royal S. Brown

Ed. note: This is the conclusion of an extended essay that was begun in PI'S 39/40 and continued in PMS 41. The complete article originally appeared in *Cinema Journal* (Spring 1982). It is reprinted here by permission of the author.

The following additional observations, presented in no particular order, are to my mind among the more important of the many that can be made concerning the music in VERTIGO, NORTH BY NORTHWEST, and PSYCHO:

1. It has been remarked often enough that Herrmann's music for PSYCHO offers a rare example of a film score composed for strings alone. "As composer/musicologist Fred Steiner has noted, "such a device imposes strict limits on the available range of tone colors."²⁰ A quotation Steiner gives from a Herrmann interview shows that the composer obviously intended the restriction of tonal color as a musical equivalent of Hitchcock's exclusion of spectrum colors in favor of blacks, whites, and all the various greys in between: "I felt that I was able to complement the black and white photography of the film with a black and white sound."²¹ If, as Steiner points out, the use of black-and-white photography and of strings-only music can actually be considered as enhancing the expressive potential rather than limiting it, the music and photography also have the effect of giving the audience even fewer than the usual number of links with "normal" reality onto which to grasp, since PSYCHO offers neither the usual array of colors associated with everyday objects (and it must be remembered that, by this point in film history, more and more Hollywood films were being shot in color—PSYCHO was Hitchcock's last black-and-white film, and only the second one since I CONFESS in 1952) nor the usual diversity of instruments of the symphony orchestra in general and the film-score orchestra in particular.

2. Another way in which PSYCHO cuts its audience off from normal reality is by its total avoidance of "source" music. The absence of any music coming over a radio, phonograph, or what have you, has the function of heightening the effect of the film-music convention whereby the appearance of soundtrack (as opposed to source) music generally "means" that something out of the ordinary is happening or is about to happen. Since PSYCHO has no source music, the appearance of any music tends to heighten expectations. This sets PSYCHO apart from the much more open NORTH BY NORTHWEST, which not only makes spectacular use of large orchestral forces, it also contains a substantial amount of source music. Indeed, NORTH BY NORTHWEST'S first, post-title musical cue is cocktail-lounge music played on violin and piano in the Plaza Hotel. As it happens, this particular song, the McHugh/ Adamson "It's a Most Unusual Day," serves as an ironically light-hearted presage of things to come. More noteworthy, however, is the ambiguous way in which apparent source music slips into apparent soundtrack music at the very moment the love affair between Thornhill (Cary Grant) and Eve (Eva

Marie Saint) begins to get steamy. As soon as Thornhill enters the dining car on the 20th Century Limited, we hear an innocuous piece of background music by Andre Previn entitled "Fashion Show," which MGM undoubtedly dug up out of its own vaults (probably from the 1957, Previn-scored DESIGNING WOMAN), since it is the type of music Herrmann steadfastly refused to write. The audience's impression is undoubtedly that this is background music being piped into the dining car to create a relaxing ambience, and it is, in fact, allowed to run for three and a half minutes to its end as Eve and Thornhill talk. Coincidentally, however, the Previn music concludes shortly after Eve "unmasks" Thornhill and begins to openly suggest that they spend the night together. A five-second break occurs during the following dialogue:

Eve: And I don't particularly like the book I've started.

Thornhill: Ah.

Eve: You know what I mean?

Then, as Thornhill begins his next line ("Oh, let me think."), we hear for the first time the love theme, composed by Herrmann. (Typical of the film/music industry is the fact that the love theme is indicated on the cue sheet as "Song from North by Northwest" and is even assigned a different publisher from the rest of the score.) In fact, both the Previn and the Herrmann cues are soundtrack music that can be considered as source music, given the manner in which they are presented. But both the musical quality of the Previn cue and its use in the sequence to back up preliminary small talk cause us to perceive it as source music linked with the prosaic realities of train travel. The more lyrical nature and the chromatic modulations of Herrmann's love theme, and the association of it in the sequence with the warming up of Eve and Thornhill's liaison, cause us to associate it with the calmer irrationalities of sexual love and therefore to feel the cue as soundtrack music that will undoubtedly reappear in subsequent love scenes, which in fact it will.

But it is VERTIGO that has the farthest-reaching implications in the relationship established between source and soundtrack music. Unlike NORTH BY NORTHWEST and PSYCHO, VERTIGO opens with three segued musical cues: the Prelude, the Rooftop, and a work of "classical" music that Midge (Barbara Bel Geddes) has playing on her phonograph as she and Scottie (James Stewart) discuss the consequences of the rooftop incident, during which which a police officer has fallen to his death because of Scottie's vertigo. As can be seen, the final of these three cues is an obvious example of source music,²² identified in at least one article as the Mozart symphony heard further on in the film, and indicated in the script as Vivaldi. In fact, the source music is the second movement of an obscure Sinfonia in E-flat, Op. 9, no. 2, composed around 1775 by Johann Christian Bach, the youngest of Johann Sebastian's many sons. Although the change in setting from the rooftop sequence to Midge's apartment carries the audience out of nightmarish irrationality--and a totally athenatic musical accompaniment--into a world of order that includes the classical strains from J.C. Bach's Sinfonia, the C-minor key of that work's second movement provides at least one link with the preceding sequence. More important, however, is Scottie's rejection of that music; shortly after peevishly telling his ex-fiancee, "Midge, don't be so motherly. I'm not going to crack up," Scottie asks her to turn off the phonograph, which she does.

The gesture seems innocuous enough; yet it is symptomatic of Scottie's refusal to accept the normal world, or even one of the better examples of music it has to offer. Even this early in the film, Hitchcock and Herrmann

are able to take advantage of the soundtrack-music-versus-source-music opposition as one of the delineating factors in the ongoing give-and-take between the irrational and the rational. This delineation is stressed in an even more pointed and poignant fashion in the two sequences that open the second half of VERTIGO (following the apparent death of Madeleine and the inquest scene). The first of these two sequences begins with a shot of Scottie at Madeleine's grave; this is followed by a dramatic, overhead shot of Scottie lying in bed. Playing behind these two shots, a soft version of the love theme communicates Scottie's obsession for the dead Madeleine. It is indicative of the musical nature of Hitchcock's cinematic style that the nightmare sequence that follows is foreshadowed more strongly by the camerawork than by the music per se: the overhead shot of Scottie lying in bed suggests the nightmare to follow by creating a quasi-musical sense of anticipation, not only because of the bizarre point of view it gives us of an ordinary scene but also because the looking-down-from-above perspective has already become an integral part, and therefore a visual theme of sorts, of the two previous sequences leading to death (the police officer's and Madeleine's). The ensuing nightmare sequence, which is accompanied on the soundtrack by Herrmann's grotesque reworking of the habanera (Carlotta) theme, thus acts as a darker parallel of the film's initial (rooftop) "nightmare."

Similarly, the post-nightmare sequence, which takes place in a sanatorium room with Midge trying to bring Scottie back from the depths of complete depression, gives a more somber parallel of the initial Scottie-Midge sequence discussed above. Here, however, there is a short break between the nightmare and the classical music, which has changed from J.C. Bach to the second movement (which is in the key of F major) from Mozart's Symphony No 34 in C (1780). This piece is deliberately played on a phonograph, as of the first shot within the sanatorium room, by Midge in an effort to use it as therapy to bring Scottie back to rationality.²³ Unlike the first Scottie-Midge sequence, where the classical music remained a casual part of the overall ambience of everyday order (which Scottie nonetheless rejects), here it plays an active role, in a setting that suggests irrationality, in the attempts of the film's most normal character (Midge) to restore rationality. Scottie's rejection of her--he remains totally impassive and immobile throughout the sanatorium sequence--indicates an even deeper

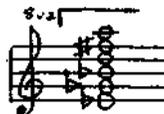
alienation because of the marked jump forward in musical quality from the J.C. Bach Sinfonia to the Mozart Symphony. Interestingly, the soundtrack music picks up again in the low strings with the final long shot of Midge (the only point in VERTIGO where the soundtrack score begins with her in frame, and only the second time in the film where it is heard with her at all) at the end of the sanatorium corridor, signaling the departure of this bastion of the everyday from the film, and then continues, after a brief interlude in strings and harp, with a wistful version of the love theme as Scottie seeks "Madeleine" in San Francisco. The whole way in which "present" source music is contrasted with off-screen soundtrack music in VERTIGO seems almost to be a comment on the function of film music in general: this "invisible" music that film audiences have always accepted as an integral part of the movies is almost always associated with the invisible, the bigger-than-life side of what transpires within the filmic narrative. And when we have a character such as VERTIGO'S Scottie Ferguson who is tragically attracted to what is not, then even Mozart and Johann Christian Bach are powerless to pull him out of the world, whether love or nightmare, that is reserved for the soundtrack score.

3. The love music in VERTIGO certainly stands as one of the outstanding components of this remarkable score, which I would consider as the greatest film score ever composed. Donald Spoto even makes a comparison between Herrmann's love music and the "Liebestod" from Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*.²⁴ Herrmann's outrageous statement that he would have cast Charles Boyer in the lead role and set the film in sultry New Orleans (see "Interview") shows the importance he attributed to VERTIGO'S love element. Yet, with his feeling for nuance that particularly characterizes his Hitchcock collaborations, Herrmann does not immediately pull out all the stops. The first time Scottie sees "Madeleine" in the film, the score introduces a secondary theme (Madeleine's theme) which, while suggesting the love theme, remains much more restrained in its mid-range instrumentation and more closely knit melodic line. A similar use of a subordinate musical theme can be noted in SPELLBOUNDED: the first time Gregory Peck sees Ingrid Bergman, it is not Miklós Rózsa's famous love theme from that picture that we hear on the soundtrack, but rather a much tamer, but none the less lyrical, theme. In VERTIGO, it is Madeleine's theme that is heard, along with the habanera, throughout Scottie's first encounters with her, including her jump into San Francisco Bay. It is only as the couple is driving to the Sequoia forest that the love theme appears for the first time. Once the latter fully blooms later on, however, Madeleine's theme is ingeniously incorporated into it as a second phase of the melody.

One of the most striking uses of Madeleine's theme, however, does not occur in VERTIGO but in NORTH BY NORTHWEST. Following the famous cornfield sequence (for which there is no music, save at the very end), Thornhill traces Eve to her hotel room. As she opens the door and sees Thornhill, the soundtrack music starts with NORTH BY NORTHWEST'S love theme. The motivic nature of this theme, however, allows Madeleine's theme, in the same, mid-range and low-string instrumentation and same key as when it is first heard in VERTIGO, to suddenly take over. If this seems like little more than a simple tieover from one film to the next, it should be remembered that VERTIGO contains a very similar scene. When, after the sanatorium sequence, Scottie sees Judy Barton (also Kim Novak, who has played the role of Madeleine in the film's first half), he follows her back to her hotel room. Although the latter sequence has no music, Judy and Eve find themselves in the identical situation of having to conceal their surprise upon seeing, at their hotel-room door, the man they had helped set up. Herrmann's revival of the Madeleine theme in NORTH BY NORTHWEST both stresses the parallel between the two scenes and the similarity between the two heroines. NORTH BY NORTHWEST'S love theme, on the other hand, never takes on the intensity of VERTIGO'S, since the Eve/Thornhill love never acquires the quality of the fatalistic obsession of the Scottie/Madeleine love.

4. Another carryover from VERTIGO to NORTH BY NORTHWEST is the highly dissonant, bitonal chord first heard in VERTIGO (along with frenetic harp glissandi) during the subjective shot as Scottie, hanging onto a gutter, looks down many stories to the street below. The chord later reappears in the two tower scenes and in the nightmare sequence:

EXAMPLE 13



(It should be noted that this chord is not only bitonal but also bimodal, since its component chords are a D-major triad superimposed over an E-flat-minor triad. Here again, Herrmann's harmonic language simultaneously suggests major and minor, although in a somewhat different way from what we have already seen.) In NORTH BY NORTHWEST, this identical chord is played, minus the harp glissandi but in an obviously parallel situation, as Thornhill hangs onto a Mount Rushmore ledge with one hand and onto Eve with the other. Furthermore, the brass unison that slowly rises in octave steps as Leonard (Martin Landau) steps on Thornhill's hand somewhat recalls the one-octave descents that repeat on different pitches in the brass over a chromatic ostinato during the first part of VERTIGO'S rooftop sequence. Also, as I have suggested elsewhere,²⁵ one wonders whether the Spanish flavor of NORTH BY NORTHWEST'S Overture and of certain reappearances of music from it was not at least unconsciously inspired by the Hispanic implications of the Carlotta Valdez element of VERTIGO'S narrative and the habanera Herrmann devised for it. It might also be noted that one of NORTH BY NORTHWEST'S prominent motives, a slow, moody succession of descending triplets first heard during the kidnapping sequence at the film's outset and generally associated with Van Damm, the chief villain (James Mason), and his deeds, makes a brief, earlier appearance in Herrmann's score for Nicholas Ray's 1951 ON DANGEROUS GROUND.

5. If, as I have already mentioned, the general tendency of Herrmann's motives and occasional themes is to move downward, both the VERTIGO and PSYCHO scores contain prominent passages of parallel upward and downward movement (which, paradoxically, can be elaborated only in the music's horizontal movement) as well as passages of mirrored, contrary motion. In terms of the affective impact on the listener, the effect would seem to be quite similar to that of the major/minor ambiguity that has already been observed. In VERTIGO'S opening motive (see Example 8), the down-up motion of the top line is opposed by the up-down motion of the bottom. In the ensuing rooftop sequence, the chromatic string ostinato that runs beneath the brass octaves keeps the triplet figuration (considerably sped up) and presents a mirrored, up-down motion. The relationship between this type of up-down tension and VERTIGO'S narrative and structures should be apparent. As an example of the former, the vertigo represents, as Robin Wood has noted, both a fear of falling and a desire to fall.²⁶ Structurally, as Wood also suggests, this conflict is inherent in the simultaneous zoom-in, track-out shot Hitchcock uses to communicate Scottie's vertigo subjectively. In PSYCHO, the whole film can ultimately be seen as a series of descents (from Marion's compromised position in her love affair—the opening hotel-room shot even shows her lying down with John Gavin's torso towering over her—and her stealing of the money to the sinking of her car in the quicksand) counterbalanced by attempts, figurative or otherwise, to rise again (Marion's termination of the sexual trysts, her repentance over the stolen money, the final resurfacing of the car from the swamp, not to mention the psychologist's bringing of everything into the "light" of psychoanalytic rationality). The ambiguity of meaning in the raising of the car is expressed both by the brief appearance of the mummified face and by the dramatic drop (a minor ninth) of the final note in the three-note motive (see below, Example 15) heard for the last time just before the score's final chord. That bitonal, final chord (see Example 12), then, transfers the ambiguity to the vertical simultaneity inherent in chordal structure.

If, in PSYCHO, the score and the filmic structure and narrative tend to go their separate ways in suggesting descent and ascent, there is one striking example where music and cinematic movement complement each other

in a manner that in certain ways sums up the entire Herrmann/Hitchcock music/movie relationship. In the sequence where Lila climbs the hill towards the imposingly gothic house where she hopes to find Mrs. Bates, Hitchcock, using cross-cutting, alternates objective shots of Lila with subjective shots (her point of view) of the house. At the same time, the camera continues to track in towards the house, which becomes larger and larger in the frame (ultimately being replaced by the front door) and back from Lila in the objective shots (which might be said to represent the house's point of view!), thus bringing closer and closer together the house and the person the audience is certain will be the next victim there. On the music track, Herrmann starts with a sustained F in the violins over another sustained F four octaves lower in the cellos and basses. Just above the bass note, the cellos (later the violas) play a four-note motive that rises a semitone at the end. Herrmann then proceeds to slowly bring down the violin line in half steps while, in contrary motion, the bass line and the four-note motive rise in half-steps:

EXAMPLE 14 etc.

The image shows a musical score for two staves. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 6/8 time signature. It contains three measures of music, each starting with a half note F# on the first line of the staff. The bottom staff is a bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 6/8 time signature. It contains three measures of music, each starting with a half note F on the second line of the staff. The notes in the bottom staff are connected by a line, indicating a continuous melodic line. The word 'etc.' is written to the right of the second staff.

This sequence repeats a total of twenty-four times during the fifty-two-second "Hill" cue until the violins and the first notes of the motive both reach a common F-sharp as Lila and the house also come together. The music then "resolves" on (what else) a D-A-sharp--F-sharp chord, that is, the Hitchcock chord minus the root. Once again, what Hitchcock accomplishes in the horizontal movement of the editing Herrmann suggests more vertically thanks to the simultaneity afforded by the textures of Example 14.

In a totally different vein, Herrmann uses a rising, chromatic sequence in a NORTH BY NORTHWEST cue to almost satirize this often abused staple of the film-music language. Thornhill and his mother (Jesse Royce Landis) find themselves in an elevator filled with people, including the two heavies who are out to get Thornhill. As the elevator descends, Herrmann almost impudently raises an octave leap, repeated four times in the violins, a half step upward some six times, creating a classic film music suspense sound that leaves the audience expecting the worst. Instead, the music abruptly cuts off on a chord as Thornhill's mother sarcastically asks the heavies, "You gentlemen aren't really trying to kill my son, are you?" Hitchcock's ironic comment on the entire chase-thriller genre is echoed by Bernard Herrmann's comment on the entire chase-thriller-music genre.

6. Finally, the three notes mentioned above as closing PSYCHO form an extremely important motive, which Herrmann has called the real PSYCHO theme, that not only plays an extremely important role in PSYCHO but that also has a strong importance in Herrmann's overall musical vision. First heard during the cue labeled "The Madhouse," during which Marion suggests to Norman that he should perhaps put his mother in a home, this slow-tempo motive is formed of a rising minor seventh and a falling minor ninth, the latter an especially dissonant interval to the Western ear

(a rising minor ninth that opens the last movement of Bruckner's 9th Symphony casts its somber shadow over the entire movement to follow):



ex 15

It has been noted by Graham Bruce²⁷ that these three notes represent a distortion of a much calmer motive associated with Marion Crane. Repeated a number of times in a descending, chromatic sequence during the initial hotel-room sequence, this motive likewise contains three notes in a rising-falling pattern; in this case, however, the interval is a very consonant fifth in both directions, thus forming a calm and static figure that begins and ends on the same note. As Bruce indicates, the opposition of these two three-note motives seems to support the line "We all go a little mad sometimes" and to delineate Norman's madness and Marion's sanity as two sides of the same coin, a characteristic Hitchcock theme. It is also interesting to note, however, that the "madness" motive has its roots far back in Herrmann's musical career. One form of it is associated with a generalized violence that follows one man's attempts to "subdue the beast": at the very end of Herrmann's cantata *Moby Dick* (1936-38), a solo clarinet plays an F, rises to a D-flat (a minor sixth rather than a minor seventh) and then gives way to a contrabassoon playing a C below the F (the minor ninth) as Ishmael speaks the line, "And I only am escaped alone to tell all this." In his 1950 opera, *Wuthering Heights*, Herrmann has the clarinets play a rising minor seventh from E-flat to D-flat but then drop a semitone to the C below D-flat, rather than the C below the E-flat, as the servant, Ellen, catches Heathcliff by the arm. She then leads him to a mirror and sings the following:

Do you mark those two lines between your eyes? And those thick brows, that instead of rising, arched, sink in the middle? And that couple of black fiends, so deeply buried, who never open their windows boldly, but lurk, glinting under them, like devil's spies?²⁸

Such might be a description of Norman Bates. Herrmann, at the end of his career, brought back the motive one final time to suggest how he saw the psychotic "hero" of Martin Scorsese's 1975 *TAXI DRIVER*, which was to be the composer's last film score (*TAXI DRIVER*, released after the composer's death, is dedicated to Herrmann's memory).

*

PSYCHO was to be the last great Herrmann/Hitchcock collaboration. For his next film, *THE BIRDS* (1963), Hitchcock, as Taylor points out, "did not want music in the ordinary sense of the term, but with Bernard Herrmann he worked out a complete pattern of evocative sound and 'silence' which was then realized in Germany by Remi Gassman and Oskar Sala, specialists in electronic music" (p. 276). In many ways, then, *THE BIRDS* continues the desolate atmosphere of *NORTH BY NORTHWEST*'S music-less cornfield sequence, in which Thornhill's life is threatened by an attack from a flying object (in this case a plane). What "music" there is on *THE BIRDS*'S soundtrack is entirely toneless and seems to be electronically modified bird calls. The one point in the film where "real," tonal music pops up is the "source

"source music" song sung by the school children just before they are attacked by the birds. The uniqueness of this one appearance of musical normalcy heightens, by contrast, the bleakness and brutality of the irrational atmosphere that hangs over the film. Whether or not Herrmann would have scored the film differently had he been given a chance is uncertain; he appears, however, to have approved of the results and, in an interview, points with some pride to *THE BIRDS* as an electronic score.²⁹

The 1964 *MARNIE*, although a continual delight to the Hitchcock buff in its continuation of many of the master of suspense's favorite themes and techniques, remains minor Hitchcock and minor Herrmann. Unlike any of the other Herrmann/Hitchcock collaborations, in fact, *MARNIE* is a theme score, with the striking melody, heard as of the title sequence, constantly reappearing, in various guises, throughout the movie. The theme itself, which is strongly foreshadowed in Herrmann's *SEVENTH VOYAGE OF SINBAD* score, is characterized, harmonically, by a major seventh chord that considerably opens up the sound from the Hitchcock chord. Also characteristic of the theme, however, is the use of the whole-step downward sequence that came to be something of a tic during the composer's last decade. Noteworthy is the almost literal reuse of the *MARNIE* theme's first period as the main theme for Francois Truffaut's Hitchcock tribute, *THE BRIDE WORE BLACK* (1967), the main character of which is also a woman on the wrong side of the law.

By the time Hitchcock reached, in 1966, *TORN CURTAIN*, his third film for Universal, film music was in the midst of its "pop tune" crisis, whereby studios began to see marketable songs as a profitable spin-off product from their movies. Universal obviously realized that such was not Herrmann's forte, and asked Hitchcock to find a different composer for *TORN CURTAIN*. According to Taylor, Hitchcock insisted on keeping his long-time composer, attempting, however, to reach a compromise with him in order to get a score that would not make Universal's corporate hair stand on end. One suspects that, had Herrmann come up with music resembling that of his *MARNIE* score, there would have been little problem, even though Universal obviously felt that even this music was not marketable. But Herrmann's attitude had always been, "If you don't like my music, get another composer." He apparently—and quite rightly—saw *TORN CURTAIN* as a film that justified neither the pop tune approach nor the type of John Addison-scored fluff it finally ended up with. And so, for the first time in his Hitchcock collaborations, the composer turned (perhaps somewhat spitefully) to an outrageous, but quite effective, orchestration, eliminating altogether the violins and violas in favor of the more "iron-curtain" sound of twelve flutes of various types. Herrmann also called for a beefed-up brass section that included sixteen horns, nine trombones, and two tubas! When it came time to record the score, Hitchcock, according to Taylor, sat through the first two cues and then stormed away, thus ending perhaps the most fruitful director/composer collaboration the cinema has yet seen.

Like the film itself, Herrmann's music, although occasionally exciting, reveals little of the expert tautness that marks the trilogy of *VERTIGO*, *NORTH BY NORTHWEST*, and *PSYCHO*, not to mention many portions of *THE MAN WHO KNEW TOO MUCH*; nor is there the lightness of touch that makes *THE TROUBLE WITH HARRY* a minor masterpiece. Following *TORN CURTAIN*, Herrmann was picked up by the same French director, Truffaut, who was one of many non-American film people to recognize the true artistic stature of Alfred Hitchcock well before the latter came to

be taken seriously in American circles. And at the very end of his career, Herrmann was "rediscovered," much to his delight, by a new generation of American directors, in particular Brian De Palma and Martin Scorsese. The composer's last efforts include several highs--especially the two Truffaut collaborations and De Palma's SISTERS (but not, in my opinion, the latter's OBSESSION)--and a few lows as well, including TWISTED NERVE and THE BATTLE OF NERETVA. As for the post-PSYCHO Hitchcock, perhaps only in the 1972 FRENZY did the director regain something of his lost form; and even here, one must regret the Ron Goodwin music that replaced an apparently far more interesting Henry Mancini score that suffered the same fate as Herrmann's TORN CURTAIN.

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It is obvious that one thing that inspired Bernard Herrmann to produce his Hitchcock masterpieces was the director's obvious sensitivity to music in general and to the film-score/film relationship in particular, a fact that Herrmann himself has admitted. Even Hitchcock films that do not contain notable scores reveal such nice touches as the song-writer's tune that is not completed until the resolution of REAR WINDOW'S mysteries. In the same way that the Hitchcock style carries his suspense thrillers well beyond the usual limitations of the genre, his use of music carried the film score past many of the established Hollywood conventions towards becoming, in many different respects, an integral part of his films. The rapport that the director came to establish with Bernard Herrmann showed that Hitchcock was not seeking the type of one-for-one relationship between music and filmic action that one finds in many movies. Instead of the more operative relationships one finds within older cinema, in which film and music tend to move much more in sync with each other, Hitchcock sought a music that expressed in its own aesthetic terms what the filmic style was expressing in its particular manner. The general lack of direct interference between film and music in the Herrmann/Hitchcock collaborations allows the full communication of the deepest strata each art has to offer.

In order to reach this point, Herrmann had to find a compromise between the "Mickey Mouse" techniques of one-for-one scoring and the standard musical forms, the elaboration of which would have clashed with Hitchcock's precise cinematic developments. Herrmann accomplished this in particular through a continuing reliance on the "short phrase," through his proven skill at manipulating instrumental color, and most especially through his creation of a particular harmonic language that in many ways offers the vertical image of Hitchcock's horizontally elaborated vision. What might be called the musical intertextuality--the various harmonic and motivic carryovers from one Herrmann/Hitchcock film to the next--offers one proof of the broader, more generalized emotional levels aimed at by Herrmann. Indeed, when I asked the composer whether, in VERTIGO, he would have composed a different score more suited to the particular voice and style of Vera Miles had that actress taken the role of Madeleine/Judy, as Hitchcock had intended, instead of Kim Novak, he gave a very revealing answer: "No, because the thing was the drive of the emotions" ("Interview," p. 67). But what Herrmann aimed at was not just emotion per se, as did so many earlier composers with their big themes, but rather the channeled kinds of emotions engendered by the oeuvre of a particular creative artist with whose work prolonged acquaintance allowed him to identify. The specifics of each individual film, however, allowed each score to take on its own character.

Ultimately, what makes the greatness of the Herrmann/Hitchcock scores is that the musical solutions Herrmann came up with for Hitchcock's particular brand of cinema seem in many ways to be the only ones possible. For a director primarily concerned with showing the eruptions of the irrational, potential and otherwise, within the context of a solidly established ethos, perhaps the only thing to do was to take the triadally oriented harmonic system familiar to listeners within that ethos and, while using it as an ever-present base, turn it against itself. In one of his supreme moments as a film composer, Herrmann musically brought to the surface, in his famous music to accompany the PSYCHO shower scene, the subliminal pulse of violence which, in 1960, still lay beneath the surface of American society. With his violins first building up a jarring chord in descending, major sevenths and then returning in screeching, upward glissandi, Herrmann reminds us of Thomas Mann's fictional Adrian Leverkühn using vocal glissandi in his *Apocalypse*. Describing the latter work, the narrator of *Dr. Faustus* reminds us that "ordering and normalizing the notes was the condition and first self-manifestation of what we understand by music. Stuck there, so to speak, a naturalistic atavism, a barbaric rudiment from pre-musical days, is the gliding voice, the glissando certainly, these images of terror offer a most tempting and at the same time most legitimate occasion for the employing of that savage device."³⁰

So perfect does Herrmann's solution seem that it has been widely imitated in post-PSYCHO films that express the actual upheaval of which Hitchcock's film was the presage. As Brian De Palma, who brings in snippets of the PSYCHO score in his 1976 film *CARRIE*, has put it, "we used a lot of the PSYCHO violins when we were screening the film before it had a score. We found it very effective, and we couldn't find anything better. Consequently, when we recorded the score, we recorded something very similar to that violin sound. It's a great sound, probably one of the best in cinema. So, thank you, Benny Herrmann."³¹

Notes

19. Another interesting experiment in the limiting of instrumental color can be noted in the David Snell music for Robert Montgomery's 1942 mystery thriller, *LADY IN THE LAKE*. Using a Christmas carol as point of departure, Snell scored *LADY IN THE LAKE* for a vocalizing, a cappella chorus, while Montgomery tried the unusual experiment of deploying an entirely subjective camera throughout the film.
20. Fred Steiner, "Herrmann's 'Black and White' Music for Hitchcock's PSYCHO," *Filmmusic Notebook*, 1, no. 1 (Fall 1974), 20-36 (Part I), and 1, no. 2 (Winter 1974-75), 26-46 (Part II). The quotation is from Part I, p. 31.
21. *Ibid.*, Part I, p. 32. The interview quoted is Leslie Zador, "Movie Music's Man of the Moment," *Coast FM and Fine Arts*, June 1971, p. 31.
22. The paradox here is that the J.C. Bach work was actually performed by the studio orchestra, conducted by Muir Mathieson, who takes it at a rather fast pace, and "laid in" on the soundtrack. It becomes source music only by association (with the phonograph) and not in fact.
23. Like the J.C. Bach work in the initial Scottie-Midge sequence, the Mozart here is performed at rather too fast a tempo, leading one to wonder whether or not there was a deliberate intention on someone's part--Hitchcock's, Herrmann's, or perhaps even conductor Muir Mathieson's --to throw the audience slightly off center in this manner.

24. Donald Spoto, *The Art of Alfred Hitchcock; Fifty Years of His Motion Pictures* (New York: Hopkinson and Blake, 1976), p. 299.
25. See my "North by Northwest by Hitchcock by Herrmann," *Fanfare*, 3, no. 6 (July/August 1980), pp. 12-15.
26. Robin Wood, *Hitchcock's Films* (London/New York: A.Zwemmer/A.S. Barnes, 1965), p. 74.
27. Graham Bruce, who teaches at the College of Advanced Education in Queensland, Australia, is preparing a doctoral dissertation for New York University on the film music of Bernard Herrmann. The idea mentioned here is contained in a rough draft of his chapter on PSYCHO.
28. From the libretto adapted from the Emily Bronte' novel by Lucille Fletcher, included in the recording by Unicorn Records, UNB 400, p. 21.
29. See Irwin Bazelon, *Knowing the Score: Notes on Film Music* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1975), p. 234.
30. Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus, The Life of the German Composer Adrian Leverkühn as Told by a Friend*, trans. H.T. Lowe-Porter (New York: Vintage, 1971), p. 374.
31. Royal S. Brown, "Considering De Palma," *American Film*, 2, no. 9 (July/August 1977), p. 58.

I wish to express my deep gratitude to Donald Spoto, Graham Bruce, Harry M. McCraw, Sara Kerber (of A.S.C.A.P.), Douglas Gallez and Jeffrey Marcus for their help in the preparation of this paper.

DEWALD (continued from page 10)

an edge in the slow, romantic pieces, but Kojian's performance hardly lacks for warmth.

Another decided plus for this album is the inclusion of nearly eight minutes of music from RETURN OF THE JEDI not previously recorded. "Fight with TIE Fighters" is an exciting bit of "filler" built from melodic and rhythmic fragments that are recognizably "Star Warsian." "Darth Vader's Death" plays with Vader's march theme in a mystical way reminiscent of Bernard Herrmann, with colorful orchestral touches such as the melody in string harmonics against a background of harp and celeste.

I have two small caveats about the disc. First, the amusical liner notes are a model of what film music liner notes should never be. Second, although there is a brief testimony from John Williams stressing his pleasure in the performances, and although it is stated elsewhere that a single album of music from all three scores is the realization of a "long-cherished dream" of the composer, nowhere is it directly stated that Williams had any say in the selection or sequencing of the excerpts. Although it makes a satisfying album, this particular cross-section of the three scores is too long for a concert suite. There may still be one or more composer-sanctioned suites to be heard!

Royal S. Brown (in *Fanfare*, vol. 7, no. 5) and I are so far apart in our assessments of this music and the recording that for a while I questioned my unbounded enthusiasm. But time and repeated listening have not changed my opinions, so I will reassert my belief that *The Star Wars Trilogy* is a technical and musical triumph. Now, would a new series of Classic Film Score recordings from the same producer (George Korngold!), conductor, orchestra, and label be too much to hope for?

NEWS (continued from page 2)

(now vice-president of the SPFM) in which he expressed his belief that Rózsa had written original music for *MINISTRY OF FEAR*, (1944). Now Mr. McCarty has confirmed that suspicion through research at the Paramount music library. According to McCarty, Ridge Walker, Paramount's present music librarian, found a "certificate" for Rózsa, which, he says, exists only when a composer first writes original music, and not when his music is re-used. McCarty found three cues (6:08) of original Rózsa music in this score, which is credited to Victor Young. He has also discovered two Rózsa cues (2:44) for the M-G-M British drama *EDWARD, MY SON* (1949), credited to John Woolridge. Finally, McCarty reports one instance of the reverse phenomenon: John Green added twelve cues (12:53) to *ALL THE BROTHERS WERE VALIANT* (1953). The additional music was orchestrated by Robert Franklyn and conducted by Green.

We asked Rózsa about these discoveries in Pittsburgh. He still cannot remember anything about the first two films, but he did confirm the *BROTHERS* story. After the film had been completed, it was decided that more music was needed. Rózsa was in Italy by this time and he agreed to let Green supply the extra music, which accompanies the Gilbert Islands sequences in the second half of the film.

Errata:

Apologies to Andre Everaert for a remark in PMS 38 that could be construed to mean that the Belgian Rózsa Society is inactive. What we meant to say was only that this first of all the Rózsa societies does not issue a regular international publication. In fact, they have been very active in Belgium, as anyone can find out by contacting M Everaert at Jan Delvinlaan 37, Gent 9000, Belgium.

Also, we regret the false announcement of the *Rózsa Gold* album in PMS 41. As far as we can determine, everything in Mike Snell's article appears to be accurate. It is simply that the composer, the producer, and the record company did not share the same high opinion of the Rhapsody performance tape. Southern Cross may eventually couple the Gold Sonata with a different performance of the Rhapsody.

Society:

Frank DeWald served as guest editor for the present issue and will do so again for PMS 44, to be published in October 1985. His address is 213 West Lake Drive, Haslett, MI 48840. Current plans call for the Society to publish two issues per year, in April and October, with Frank preparing the fall issue during the summer months. More frequent publication is possible, but would depend on the emergence of additional volunteer staff. (In the meantime, is there anyone who would like to help revise our masthead?)

Special thanks to Gene Kohlenberg of Penfield, New York, who has entered the entire MRS mailing list on his computer and produced the mailing labels used for the present issue. And also to another "silent partner," Thomas Moore of Birmingham, Michigan, who has been quietly assisting with membership inquiries and back issue service for several years.

And thanks, too, to all who have made special donations to support our "act of faith" membership roster last time and our ongoing tape service. Roster: Anonymous, Joan Baxter, Jeffrey Dane, Jim Doherty, Lee Hern, A. J. Lutsky, Kimberly Szczypinski, Ray Van Orden. Tape: Marc Allen, George

Anderson, Richard Anderson, John Archibald, P. Lambach, David Colon, Scott Bawes, Vince Dorval, William and Ann Finn, Dwight Hartsell, George Komar, Joel Kovacik, Denis Kramer, David Leong, Paul Levesque, G. Lewandowski, Richard Neukom, Herb Norenberg, Daniel Robbins, Christian Roy, Christopher Scharpf, J. Skinner, Leonardo Soriano, Paul Spencer, Richard Thompson, David Whisenant.

LETTERS:

A series of seminars was held last spring at the American Film Institute (Los Angeles) on the subject of film music. The speakers included David Raksin, Ernest Gold, Henry Mancini, Elmer Bernstein, Miklós Rózsa, and in the final week, three young composers: Bruce Broughton (TV films *THE BLUE AND THE GRAY*, *THE MASTER OF BALLANTRAE*), James Horner, and Basil Poledouris.

The Rózsa wit was much in evidence, and the audience responded with several ovations. Clips shown and discussed were: *SPELLBOUND* (razor sequence), *LUST FOR LIFE* (orchard paintings and bargaining for a house), *IVANHOE* (prelude, search for Richard, and reading of the King's letter), *QUO VADIS* (Vestal hymn and triumphal procession), *BEN-HUR* (procession to Calvary), and *THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES* (Bicycle scene and the stop at Urquhart Castle). There was rapt attention during the discussion of *LUST FOR LIFE* when Rózsa emoted producer Houseman as urging the composer to "portray the man, not the place."

Other interesting sidelights included little-seen films of Herbert Stothart at work at M-G-M and a Paramount short on the career of Victor Young. Elmer Bernstein revealed he knew nothing about the overture and epilogue included in the *TEN COMMANDMENTS* laser disc. Basil Poledouris revealed that his idol is none other than Miklós Rózsa. Despite director John Milius' patterning of *CONAN THE BARBARIAN* on Eisenstein's *ALEXANDER NEVSKY*, Poledouris' real inspiration in the composition of the score was *QUO VADIS*!

Lee Hern, Peekskill, New York

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[We received the following letter back in 1981, but the content seems apropos now in the wake of the great reader interest aroused by John B. Archibald's "Reunions with Old Friends" in PMS 39/40. Ed.]

I have heard much criticism in the past of film composers (from Max Steiner through Jerry Fielding) re-using themes they had previously written for other films or "borrowing" from other composers (such as Delerue's use of Vivaldi in *A LITTLE ROMANCE* or Morricone's use of Saint-Saens in *DAYS OF HEAVEN*). So I hope the next time you get a letter from someone complaining of a composer re-using previously written themes that you'll reprint the following to let them know this practice is not unique to film composers--and that the score should be judged on other considerations. It is abridged from an article by Franklin B. Zimmerman in *Musical Heritage Review*, 5:11 (1981): Turning to Handel's situation in the fall of 1741, when he first began work on *Samson*, we discover him impossibly overburdened with work. How else can we explain the fact that he began work on *Samson* the day after he had finished composing *Messiah* in just three weeks. Once again he was "writing like the devil." Between 22 August and 14 September he had disappeared from sight

to create *Messiah*, and then with scarcely a day's pause, began work on *Samson*, which he completed on 29 October.

Thus, within little more than ten weeks, Handel had created both his most popular and his most powerful oratorios.

One of the first noticeable things about *Samson* is the almost complete absence of self borrowing. Only once, in Micah's aria, "Then Long Eternity," did Handel refurbish an earlier composition, drawing upon that novel Italian aria, "Mi palpita cor," already extant in several versions, probably modeled after the original in *Aci, Galatea e Polifemo*. Borrowings from other composers are more plentiful, and we find Handel reworking musical ideas taken from Astorga, Legrenzi, Muffat, Porta, and Telemann, and even transplanting a whole movement from Carissimi's *Jepthe* for the dramatically important chorus in *Samson*, "Hear, Jacob's God." Yet none of these borrowings interfere with the inner coherence of *Samson* in the slightest way.

Ronald Bohn, Los Angeles, California

I was quite startled the other evening while watching an old Ida Lupino film from Universal called *WOMAN IN HIDING* (1949). It featured very nearly throughout a score by Miklós Rózsa, probably culled from library music of the "noir" period such as *BRUTE FORCE*.

Ray Van Orden, New York City

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