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NEWS [April 1985]

Special Greetings:

Dr. Rózsa has asked us to convey his deepest appreciation to everyone who has written to him recently, notably on the occasion of his seventy-eighth birthday, and to express his regret that he is not able to keep up with the great volume of correspondence this year.

Performances/Recordings:

Alice and Eleonore Schoenfeld will play the Rózsa Sinfonia Concertante_ again this June in Los Angeles.

Still promised from Varese-Sarabande: Elmer Bernstein's Rózsa album (*Spellbound Concerto*, etc.) and the four Hitchcock scores. Also in their upcoming catalog is a new Waxman anthology performed by the Queensland (Australia) Symphony Orchestra under Richard Mills. Contents include music from *BOTANY BAY*, *THE PARADINE CASE*, *THE HORN BLOWS AT MID-NIGHT*, *TARAS BULBA*, and *THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN*.

The *Spellbound Concerto* album, when it appears in the Compact Disc format, will be the first all-digital Rózsa album recording. The analog-mastered Decca/London *BEN-HUR* and *QUO VADIS* will also be issued in CD form.

From Gordon Gray's new label. *Memoir*, comes *The Immortal Film Music of Miklós Rózsa* (MOIR 101), a reissue compilation of material from the earlier Polydor series that Gray produced in the 1970s. Contents are: *YOUNG BESS*, *LUST FOR LIFE*, *LADY HAMILTON*, *THE ASPHALT JUNGLE*, *THE THIEF OF BAGDAD*, *LYDIA*, *THE KILLERS*, *A TIME TO LOVE AND A TIME TO DIE*, and *THE LOST WEEKEND*. For other discographical news see *Soundtrack* and/or *The Cue Sheet*.

Publications:

Double Life, Miklós Rózsa's autobiography, is now published in paperback by The Baton Press, 44 Holden Park Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN4 0ER, England. Price is £5.95. For MRS members in the U.S. and Canada the Society is able to make this special offer: Send us (in New York) \$5.75 and we will arrange to have a copy of the book shipped to you direct from the publisher. This is a limited offer. We must have your payment by 25 June.

The Stichtung Cinemusica, Postbus 406 8200, AK Lelystad, Holland, announces the publication of a *Soundtrack Encyclopedia* with full information on more than 12,000 record albums, updated by computer and bound in loose-leaf format. The cost is expected to be about equal to the price of a single record.

The Dybbuk Sponsoring Committee (Honorary Chairman, Miklós Rózsa) announces the publication by Boosey and Hawkes of a piano-vocal score for *The Dybbuk*, the opera by the late David Tamkin, whom Rózsa has called one of the finest and least appreciated composers in Hollywood.

General:

Postal increases and other rising costs have forced us to revise our membership fees once again as follows: a two-year membership (which includes four issues of PMS) : U.S.: \$9. Elsewhere: \$10 or £8 (C.X.). We emphasize again that publication is now on a semiannual basis.

MIKLÓS RÓZSA—CASTAWAY IN LONDON

by Alan Hamer

1984 will go down as an important year for followers of Miklós Rózsa and his music. It will be remembered for the significant and successful Viola Concerto premiere; for the first hearing of a Fantasy on YOUNG BESS themes; an initial disc release of the JUNGLE BOOK Suite in its purely orchestral guise, coupled with a recent composer-conducted THIEF OF BAGDAD; a recording session in Utah to set down material for another Rózsa anthology plus the reappearance of *Double Life*, now published in paperback, which was able to be properly publicised in London, with the author present to provide radio, TV, press, and personal interviews over ten busy days in October.

Most unfortunately, the original hardback edition could not be similarly heralded two years ago as the composer suffered his stroke just at that time. Happily the effects of that experience have not been totally restricting by any means, and any physical slowing-up has been amply compensated for by a sharper mental alertness and increased wit that had this writer in stitches during his visit. Rózsa arrived from Los Angeles during the second week of October and sadly admitted it had been the first summer in very many that he had not been able to spend in Santa Margherita. It was not for a lack of wanting to go to Italy, but the rooms he has there are at the top of a formidable flight of steps that would have been just too much of an obstacle.

In attendance continually was a London-based publicity specialist, Belinda Harley, whose enthusiasm and untiring vitality were invaluable in ferrying Rózsa to and from the many studios, and it was through her efforts prior to his arrival that most of the interviews and programmes took place. Not least of these was a welcoming reception at the Hungarian Embassy, where a reasonably large number of guests turned up, mainly from the press and media. A surprise face was actress Moira Shearer, who warmly greeted the composer. Other old friends came along and everyone seemed to enjoy the occasion. Rózsa later admitted that he had visited the Embassy before—but back in the 'thirties when the people and circumstances were quite different.

There had been about a half dozen radio interviews arranged, including a phone-in programme introduced by Brian Hayes. One of the callers was MRS member Bill Turner, who asked for confirmation of a future complete EL CID on disc and was told that it is likely to become a reality for a German Radio Station.

Desert Island Discs has become an institution on UK radio, introduced by the debonair and very well-informed Roy Plomley. A "castaway" is invited to choose eight records essential to his sole survival on an imaginary desert island, assuming there is also the means to play them thrown in! The victim is also allowed one luxury item and one book, as well as the Bible and the complete works of Shakespeare. The programme is prerecorded and usually well edited prior to final transmission (early December in this case). Predictably, Rózsa chose no film music and none of his own concert music either, unlike Sir William Walton who once selected several of his own pieces.

Rózsa started by explaining to Plomley that he never listened to his own records as he always thought retrospectively that they could have been conducted better.

The eight discs that he did choose are listed below with the performers and any relevant comments:

Bach: *Chaconne* (B.W.V. 1004). Adolph Busch, vln.

I studied the violin first, and went on to write two concertos. I feel this chaconne is among the greatest music written for the instrument. When I was in Leipzig, I heard Busch play and was tremendously impressed.

Beethoven: *Ninth Symphony*. Furtwängler cond.; Berlin Philharmonic. I "sang" in this work in Leipzig twice under Furtwängler and once Bruno Walter. These were memories I shall never forget. I think this symphony is the greatest music ever composed--especially the first movement. The last is just incredible. It is one of the greatest achievements of any human mind.

Brahms: *First Symphony*. Bruno Walter cond.; New York Philharmonic.

Bruno Walter became a friend who played my music in Europe and finally in New York. I think he was one of the great conductors of our time, and I choose him to play this great work by a composer I am very fond of.

Debussy: *La Mer*. Toscanini cond.; Philadelphia Orchestra. I knew very little of Debussy before I went to Paris. There a new world opened up for me: French impressionism.

Ravel: *Daphnis and Chloe*. Monteux cond.; London Symphony. I first heard Monteux in Paris conducting *Daphnis*. It is a great, great work--a splendour of orchestration.

Britten: *War Requiem*. Britten cond.; London Symphony. I was in London when Anthony Asquith brought this score to show me. I didn't sleep all night. Finally I got the records too and I was enchanted.

Stravinsky: *The Rite of Spring*. Stravinsky cond.; Columbia Symphony. I heard this first in Paris. But later I was in London in 1963 at the Royal Albert Hall for the fiftieth anniversary since Monteux had first conducted it--and when there had been a near riot. Monteux was an old man and Stravinsky was in his box. It was a fantastic performance; a standing ovation followed. The composer was too ill to walk to the platform so Monteux walked all the way up to the box, and these two old men embraced each other. Everybody cried. I cried too: it was the most touching experience of my life.

Bartok: *Concerto for Orchestra*. Solti cond.; Chicago Symphony.

Bartok is very close to me; he was a great composer who had a tragic life during his last five years in America. I have chosen this performance by my close friend Sir Georg Solti, who has done much of my music, and I admire him enormously.

Rózsa was then asked if he could take just one of the records which one it would be and, without hesitation, he chose the Beethoven, saying, "For me this symphony is the beginning and the end of music." The luxury item Rózsa chose was a plentiful supply of manuscript paper and pens; the one book, a collection of Hungarian poems by Endre Ady, who had influenced the composer in his youth.

The one television recording arranged was for Scottish (Independent) TV, who had Carl Davis along to interview on the subject of film music. By all accounts the resulting programme should be highly successful and informative, but there are as yet no announced plans to transmit the finished product in Scotland or nationally. We must just wait patiently, videos at the ready.

Dr. Rózsa's wit has been mentioned previously, but on this trip he seemed full of gay jocularly, which was very refreshing. He was remembering his days at the studios and his colleagues with their funny little ways. Bronislau Kaper had a dry, acerbic humour which often kept the M-G-M music department well amused. As Rózsa recalled, it was the trend to have flashy foreign cars in Hollywood, and people asked Kaper why he retained his American model. "For me this is a flashy foreign car," he retorted. Another time Rózsa had been wearing a gaudy tie he had bought in Italy and everyone was admiring it. Franz Waxman particularly liked it and remarked sternly that Rózsa should have brought back some more for all his friends. Kaper was nearby and quickly retorted, "He did, Franz!" Rózsa had been somewhat coolly amused to hear about a recent book on Tiomkin as the pair never really hit it off. Another tale he told was when the Russian had been presented to Prince Philip back in the 'sixties. When asked quite innocently if he had written any concert music, Tiomkin looked horrified and shot back, "No!-- No money in it!" (Rózsa emphasised the heavy Russian accent to great effect.)

Perhaps one day Rózsa will be persuaded to fill another book with more amusing anecdotes about his double life, and perhaps explain his "Desert Island" choices in more detail. For the meantime, however, we have his autobiography --now in paperback--which recounts the story of a great career in music and films. We must be more than thankful for that.

* * *

Did you know?

Although Miklós Rózsa began to conduct his film scores when he moved to the United States (commencing with the second part of THE THIEF OF BAGDAD), he was at first not allowed to conduct at Paramount because that studio insisted on specialization. Composers composed, conductors conducted, etc. That is why DOUBLE INDEMNITY, THE LOST WEEKEND, and the other early Paramount scores were all recorded by Irvin Talbot. Only for the Hal Wallis productions did Rózsa get to record his own music.

* * *

THE REFERENCE SHELF
by John Fitzpatrick

Ronald L. Bohn:
Motion Picture & Television
Music Credits Annual, 1983

176 pp.; 15 photographs

U.S.:	Europe:
\$8 (individuals)	£.4 or 300 Belgian francs
\$10 (libraries)	

From: R.L. Bohn P.O. Box 3599, Hollywood, CA 90078	From: Luc Van de Ven, Astridlaan 171, 2800 Mechelen, Belgium
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Randall D. Larson:
Music Fantastique: A Survey of
Film Music in the Fantastic
Cinema

602 pp.; many photographs \$39.50
from Scarecrow Press, 52 Liberty
St., P.O. Box 656, Metuchen, NJ 08840

It would be hard to imagine two cinemusical publications more diverse than the present pair, but these books nevertheless do share one thing in common: they testify to the almost unlimited potential for the individual researcher in film music. Both of these projects are essentially one-man compilations; each represents a staggering amount of work.

Ronald Bohn has been tracking film music credits for some time. This latest manifestation of his research appears under the auspices of the Belgische Filmmuziek Society, that is, the folks who have published the excellent *Soundtrack* (formerly *SCN*) since 1975. Indeed, the booklet format here is the same as that of the old *SCN*, except, of course, that the present item is a good deal thicker.

The *Annual*--it has appeared in previous years as a "private" publication--is simply a compilation of published credits--producer, director, major stars, running time, and (in more detail) anything to do with the music. This includes not only the composer but also any arrangers, orchestrators, songwriters, or "source" composers who receive published credit. Prime-time television and many foreign films are covered, though there is no pretense of absolute completeness. Obviously a compilation like this is aimed at the historian, the archivist, and the librarian--at anyone, in short, who is concerned with the overall topography of the film music scene and not just with selected peaks. You don't need the *Annual*, for example, to tell you that John Williams scored *RETURN OF THE JEDI* in 1983; you might,

(continued on p. 18)

ANATOMY OF A FILM SCORE: The
Example of *E.T.*

by John Caps

Introduction. Steven Spielberg's film fantasy *E.T.: THE EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL* was released in May 1982 and by December of that year had outstripped all other films, before or since, in box-office receipts, general press approval, and immediate audience devotion. "Is there life after *E.T.*?" said one headline, and a whole wave of product merchandising began--posters, dolls, T-shirts, trading cards, glassware, sleepwear, and record albums of the music. Now, after two years, *E.T.* is hardly in evidence at all: he has, it seems, gone home. A fully promoted rerelease is scheduled for the summer of 1985, but I write here somewhat short of that date, intending to use the lull for a more reflective view of the film and its music score than was possible in the flush of its original success.

I have written on all this before, as a record reviewer, but believe it is important to take one more extended look for this reason: the music by John Williams for *E.T.* represents so much of what is best and worst about the whole genre of film music. That the film had an extraordinary effect on its audiences, child and adult alike, is a matter of movie history. That the music was at least 50 percent responsible for that effect was the message of my previous reviews on the subject. What remains is to examine the source of that effect, the actual workings of the music.

The Film and Its Use of Music. *E.T.* for all its high-tech production values and mechanical plot devices, represented a warming trend in the career of director Steven Spielberg, aimed in the direction of middle-class suburbia where he grew up (and where most kids buy movie tickets). Whether he was accurately exploiting or instinctively expressing the minds and hearts of the American public, the fact remains that he connected with them strongly with this film. It is not, as I wrote elsewhere, the kind of connection that a film like *THE WIZARD OF OZ* has enjoyed with several generations; it is rather a more immediate, less thoughtful connection, on a level with the sentimental wallop of Disney's *OLD YELLER*, for instance. And *E.T.*'s story was as achingly simple.

It began in a script by Melissa Matheson, the story of a small scouting party of extra-terrestrial creatures exploring an earthen forest when men come upon them. They panic; their ship takes off, leaving one of their kind behind. We follow the one human child, Elliott, who discovers *E.T.* and who takes him in. Clearly, considering its breakneck speed and surface polish, *E.T.* is a film adventure concocted for an audience that was raised with television. In fact the one group that rejected Spielberg and his film was the Hollywood community, which knows he will always be a TV director and not "one of them." Thus in keeping with television style (i.e., the small-screen aspect ratio, the efficiency of shots used, the continuous momentum of the storytelling), *E.T.* thrusts its music score out at us. And yet unlike television, the score is being used to carry much of the film on its own shoulders. Not quite half the story is told without dialogue, and music, with an almost operatic fervor, narrates the drama: swift and rhythmic brass for

the bicycle chase, a gentle celeste solo against muted strings as Elliott first shows E.T. around the simple treasures of his bedroom, a quirky little Petruschkan song for two oboes to accompany E.T.'s Halloween waddle around the neighborhood, or the thick Wagnerian chords and harmonies that make so poignant an encounter of the film's forest goodbyes.

Although the general purpose of film music is to follow and comment on the action or implications of a film story rather than actually to drive the film story as this score does, John Williams' music for E.T. is perfect for its context here—the whole film being a textbook example of what music can do for a film. To investigate the inner workings of that music, its derivations and precedents, or to criticize lapses in its construction (a certain compositional invalidity inherent in all "media music") is not to deny or in any way detract from how well it works in the theater. No amount of scholarly disdain can undo the fact that children are deeply stirred by this film or that adults confess to wanting to see and hear it again. Whether that favor will continue as future audiences, each further removed from Spielberg's specific world, view the adventures of E.T. does remain to be seen. If there is one element of the production likely to hold its own though, for immediate audience effect, it will be the music.

The Music. *E.T.* is in some ways a continuation of the fanciful friendly encounter with alien creatures in Spielberg's 1977 film, CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND. The music of John Williams for that adventure began in vague clusters of atonal sound from brass and choral forces, then gathered in momentum and a more regular meter as the story progressed to its climax. There, at the final scene with a mammoth starship descending and the appearance of the meek, benevolent extra-terrestrials inside, those searching, straining atonalities began, one by one, to resolve: twelve-tone into half-tone into whole tones into luxuriant neoimpressionisms—great washes of Debussian color, also reaching upward through key changes and leaps of harmony toward Wagner. In short, when the aliens were still unknown to us, perceived as a threat, their music was appropriately dark and unsettling, possibly evil; then as they stepped out and revealed themselves, the score relaxed., even soared with the intriguing possibility of interstellar friendship. Williams musically represented that dichotomy, where the unknown is both a threat and a lure, by using the interval of the tritone (which has such a sinister sound that medieval musicologists called it "the Devil in music" and banned its use), yet harmonizing it sympathetically.

None of those intellectual or musical complications exists in *E.T.*, however. We are to identify with the alien creature right away, and the music is tonal from the start, likewise stressing the recognizable, the universal. Williams wants us to feel connected to every emotion on screen and to share, at the indiscriminating gut level of a child, the adventures to come. The movie, for all its slickness, is masterful in the way it manipulates an audience, and music is even ahead of that game, not having to wait for script exposition but going intuitively right for the unspoken heart of things. Thus, the score is thematically structured as in opera, with musical motives being assigned directly to story themes: Loss, Danger, Friendship, Rebirth, etc.

The film opens in the hushed forest clearing with the first of these motives, which, early on, describes the open, starry night sky, but which becomes associated with the general feeling of being lost and far from home.

although the scoring is required to match certain visual cues on screen in order to coincide with the action. He accomplishes this by drawing on a number of wildly eclectic influences, at one point, when E.T. is cornered in the bush, even raising a crescendo to what sounds like Spanish bullfight trumpets announcing the supremacy of the matador. Among film composers, Williams is greatly admired for what he has done single-handedly to bring a symphonic respect back into the craft of movie music, but he has never been singled out by them as a particularly original composer. He can spread a rich orchestra out across a score paper with the best of them, but there is always the feeling of listening to a brilliant arranger rather than, or at least ahead of, a fully realized composer. His best scores (THE REIVERS, JANE EYRE) are basically wonderful reflections on a particular adopted style of music, so astute and sincere that they never wander beyond their single chosen idiom. CLOSE ENCOUNTERS is one of his best scores too: rampant with random style changes, somehow it all thrusts in one direction. For better or worse, Williams is an amalgamator.

At any rate, the interlopers leave the forest, E.T. is abandoned, and the music returns to the misterioso hush as in the beginning; the piccolo repeats the "lost" motif (Ex. 1), and the film's first music cue, some seven minutes long, ends. Spielberg then cuts to the house of his main human characters. Elliott notices signs of the creature in the yard but can't convince others. He and E.T. connect first through a mutual fondness for candy, the universal language. Elliott is aware of the difficulties of keeping an alien safe in a suspicious society and so hides him in his room. "I'm keeping him," he says, as though E.T. were a stray pup or a broken bird. In a scene that is at once tender and funny, the two of them trade simple hand gestures, mimicking one another with increasing delight in a wordless scene shaped only by the accompanying music, Williams' "friendship" theme, played liberamente on the harp (Ex. 4).

EX 4. "FRIENDSHIP MOTIF"



High strings harmonize the theme's development, then repeat a descending couplet whose sliding fall is the musical equivalent of a yawn as E.T. and Elliott, safe for the moment in suburbia, end their first meeting by falling asleep.

It is that same friendship theme (Ex. 4), this time played by the celeste with a sparse, arpeggiated harmony of violas and cellos, that underscores the scene next morning where Elliott shows his visitor around his room. The simple beauty of the song, marked "cantabile," provides continuity to the scene and an emotional base between the two characters on screen so that, even as the audience is smiling at the charming innocence of the bedroom tour, the quiet song continues, taken over by the clarinet against the tremolo of the strings. In other words, while the screen is quietly comic, the music is, in effect, playing against it, telling us, so that the characters don't have to, that this is where their friendship begins-- a classic example of how cinema can use music not merely to accompany a scene but to actually lead the storytelling, to voice the message of the film.

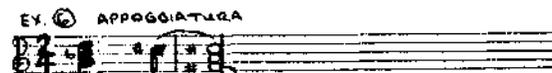
Elliott's brother and sister are eventually included in the secrecy-- their mother, though a warm and sympathetic if fairly hysterical character, is portrayed only from a distance, the usual adult distance this film espouses.

E.T. learns his first words and manages to indicate his desire to contact a rescue ship. "Phone home," he croaks, having put two earth words together in his first sentence and pointing outside. The "lost" motif makes a brief appearance as Elliott begins to realize that there are probably other aliens out there and that E.T. has a larger story to attend to than just this one household can contain.

It is as E.T. begins to put together a collection of household items into a message sender and the children see that he is intelligent beyond them (he is 800 years old, after all) and has his own life to lead, that the main E.T. theme makes its first entrance. It is usually associated with the magic E.T. can perform, making radar out of closet junk or levitating Elliott's bicycle over the treetops. With this last scene in mind, Williams has called it his "flying theme," although it swells whenever E.T.'s powers (the powers of love, Spielberg would say) are on the rise again. Like the opening piccolo, this flying theme (let us call it the "E.T. theme") is based on the interval of the fifth—the so-called "heroic fifth" that Wagner used over and over to make his tenors seem larger than life. For E.T., Williams uses the interval in its simplest form (Ex. 5).



This is actually a variation on the "lost" motif except that after the fifth, it proceeds by whole rather than half steps in a strong, tonic C-major. The "friendship" theme is a close cousin of both themes. All three begin with the two broad notes like a call, on the interval of the fifth (sharped in Ex. 4, somehow increasing its poignancy), then followed by a measure of similar double-time notes which lead back to the home note. The likeness of these three major phrases not only encourages cohesiveness in the score but also relates them all thematically, or philosophically if you will, within the story: the idea that closely linked to E.T.'s limitless wisdom is his bottomless capacity for love (Exx. 5 & 4) and that in great wisdom is great sorrow (Exx. 5 & 1). The one descending motif (Ex. 2) in particular exemplifies the idea of sorrow born of separation and the unfortunate wisdom to feel it most deeply. But even the heroic E.T. theme admits this yearning aspect with a well-placed appoggiatura at the end of its fourth phrase (Ex. 6).



All of these musical devices act viscerally on us, even on those in the audience who claim never to notice any background scoring in movies. The very act of a dominant seeking its tonic or of an appoggiatura leaning towards resolution re-enacts in an onomatopoeic way the message of this film: the search for Home: home planet, home chord, home key.

There is another very Wagnerian moment in the score, attached to E.T.'s "home" refrain. He has taken his homemade radar out to a field and Elliott, fearing it will fail, begs him to consider staying on earth for good. "You could be happy here," he says. "I could take care of you. I wouldn't let anybody hurt you. We could grow up together, E.T." But E.T. is still scanning the sky, saying

"home, home," with the "lost" piccolo playing behind him. Elliott sleeps while E.T. keeps watch and a much softer version of the usually heroic "E.T. theme" begins over a muted, repetitive figure from the violins, and it is somewhat like the "forest murmurs" in Wagner where Siegfried wanders in the woods wondering who his father is and where are his people.

Soon the needle stirs on E.T.'s indicator, radar having located a rescue ship or been located by one. There is a fragment of the "lost" motif and E.T.'s spoken word "home." Meanwhile the authorities are closing in, and Elliott, out all night in the damp with E.T., is rapidly developing pneumonia.

It is unclear in the script whether E.T. begins deteriorating, turning white and sickly, because he languishes for home and the scientists finally prevent him, or whether symbiotically he takes on Elliott's illness to spare him. In either case, the most moving conjunction of story and score, short of the extended farewell scene, is the moment when brother and sister decide they had better bring their mother in on the secret now that the creature seems so sick. They lead her up to the bathroom where E.T., now looking like a rotting squash, and Elliott are lying on the floor. The audience laughed loudly at the brother and sister's reactions on first meeting E.T., but there is no laugh now when the mother stands there, trying to take it in. Her reaction is the same but the music is in command now. "We're sick," Elliott says up to her, "I think we're dying," and Williams plays his quasi-religious chords again as E.T. reaches froglike arms out to her. She is frightened, though even the little sister reassures her, and she orders everyone downstairs. She pushes brother and sister out; then, in snatching Elliott up from the floor, raises a most pitiful cry from E.T. and a swooning crescendo of the "yearning" motif (Ex. 2) from the sound track. E.T. reaches out again into the bathroom space but falls back empty handed: a line of the "loss" motif repeats.

The long scenes in which doctors place Elliott and E.T. in adjacent isolation bubbles to monitor their conditions and to ask their official government questions are not scored. Rather, the soundtrack is filled with medical voices and computer beeps. It appears that E.T. is dying in taking over the sickness from Elliott, who in turn is getting better. Later, there is a tender version of the E.T. theme (Exx. 5 & 6) with a thoughtful drawing out of the appoggiatura as E.T. and Elliott try to communicate with one another from inside their plastic, sterile tents; finally the creature's vital signs cease, and he is placed in a kind of coffin. Fully recovered, Elliott is allowed to spend a few minutes alone with him accompanied by the original version of the "friendship theme" played on the celeste. He professes his devotion again and somehow E.T. begins to move, to warm back to life from the inside, heart life glowing again. It is the heroic E.T. theme, of course, that swells then as the neighborhood children smuggle E.T. out to the forest, on airborne bikes, to meet his rescue ship.

Williams' music for the bicycle chase, in which a few early teens outpedal a whole fleet of smug policemen, consists of a lot of quite complex double-time brass work, usually separated into grouped trumpets, trombones and horns, and an active tuba line, often playing a racing version of Ex. 3. Again, the film and orchestra are moving so swiftly here that the very grab-bag quality of the musical styles only adds to the frenzy of the scene. Williams here piles up references from all sorts of places in the service of his scherzo—including some specific

references from the Second Symphony of Howard Hanson that will merit a closer look (below) at that 1930 score as a possible source of musical ideas throughout *E.T.*

The climax of *E.T.* is naturally a full-blown version of the *E.T.* theme. Only the main characters seem to arrive at the forest clearing where the rescue ship stands waiting. The camera and the music linger over *E.T.*'s goodbyes with a kind of sentimentality that smacks of audience manipulation, yet it all has that Disney sweetness about it. The music as Elliott and *E.T.* part is marked simply "with warmth" in the score (Ex. 7).



This music, derived from the "yearning motif" (Ex. 2), is richly chorded and shaped by the internal ritards and sudden crescendos like so many of the neoromantic symphonies and indeed like so much of Wagner when his characters had to prove, time and again, that love was the only thing stronger than fate. The singing quality of the solo horn set against the rich strings giving the "friendship theme" full voice is the main reason audiences are drawn into these last scenes--the "loss" motif returns once more, harmonized now for the brass in a way that proclaims you can go home again.

It is that same solo horn, though, that brings back nagging thoughts about the Hanson score. At the very least, Hanson's so-called Romantic Symphony seems to have inspired the mood and approach of the Williams score to *E.T.*

* * *

Howard Hanson's Second Symphony, composed in 1930 and subtitled "Romantic" because, in his words, "My aim was to create a work romantic in temperament, simple and direct in expression," is in three movements, each of which contains a variant of one theme (Ex. 8)



The shape of this theme, its two broad call-notes, followed by a measure of double time notes, recalls the "friendship theme" (Ex. 4) from *E.T.* Certainly, in voicing these themes, the orchestras are similar: strings and winds treated as separate ensembles, closely harmonized, with the solo horn set off between them as a singing voice. A meditative moment in the Williams score during the farewell scene with a flowing, waterlike figure under a simple horn melody (just after the little sister's goodbye) recalls a similar moment in Hanson's first movement (Ex. 9)

Hanson's second movement begins with a melody that is related by intervals to his main theme in the same way that *E.T.*'s "friendship theme" is related to the film's main theme. What is more, this secondary Hanson melody itself (Ex. 10) is very like the secondary melody for *E.T.* (Ex. 4) except that the first measure descends rather than rising.

EX. 9A - WILLIAMS "FLOWING"

9B - HANSON "FLOWING"

9B - CONTINUED

EX. 10 HANSON - SECONDARY

The above examples, though, are just compositional gestures that, alone, might be coincidental between one work and another. Rather it is the overall language of both scores that we should be looking at. "Simple and direct in expression," Hanson had said. Also, "young in spirit." To achieve that, he seems to spend his symphony (25 minutes in duration) in two ways: either in direct singing of the two main melodies or in the construction of long orchestral builds and extensions which seem to serve as little more than connective wiring. What ties all these faulty lines together, of course, is the sincere and overriding emotion of the music. "Molto espressivo," Hanson's score describes many passages. A romantic notion infuses even those long, "busy" crescendos and carries us over, so that the final melody seems a fitting fulfillment and the whole piece feels legitimized.

These same qualities of apparently aimless rising-and-falling functional music and of "molto espressivo," simple-hearted melodic material which is sung outright but never developed are typical qualities of the Williams score as well. In the opening pursuit music, where so many idioms and sudden references pop up in the course of the chase, the whole orchestral style is reminiscent of the Hanson. Brass, strings, winds in thirds are all similar. Even the anachronistic "Spanish" moment

in E.T. may have a precedent near the end of the Hanson (letter "Q"), where the trumpet suddenly plays an accented series of rising notes over four measures that approach the feel of a tango. As in the Williams, there is no preparation for, or explanation of, such a snippet.

More blatant likenesses occur near the end of both scores. As E.T. sickens, dies, and is packed in ice, Williams directs his two main themes to be played in a very hesitant manner outside of strict tempo in order to sensitively convey the dwindling signs of life in the creature, and signs of hope in Elliott. Then, once E.T. is reborn and the bike brigade swings into action, a quick 3/4 tempo strikes up and a new chase begins. This transition, as well as the character of the music, closely parallels the transition between Hanson's second and third movements—the change between his "con tenerazza" secondary melody and an "allegro con brio" for all but brass.

Both "chase" figures are scored for high strings and winds played extremely rapidly. The Hanson then has unison horns enter on the fourth bar with an animated theme that has the feeling of an announcement. The quick 16th notes continue to repeat. In the Williams score, likewise, a declamatory theme is brought in for unison horns, similarly separate from the rest of the orchestra. He keeps the 16th-note chase figure, as Hanson had done, except that he breaks the rhythm, too, adding 32nd notes at intervals to give even more motion and excitement to the sequence. The Hanson 16th notes eventually give way to a joyous trade-off between winds and brass. The Williams 16ths develop into a soaring rendition of the E.T. theme which lifts all the bikers into the air and deposits them down at the site of the rescue ship, unnerved but unharmed.

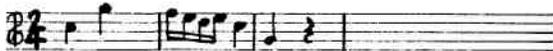
Although steeped in Wagnerian tonalities as we have already suggested, the final sequence in the forest appears to have at least three musical gestures that are identical to the finale of the Hanson symphony.

Each score moves toward its conclusion with one final, all-out, sumptuously orchestrated version of its main theme; each then builds to an enormous climax and then slams on a steep ritardando within a single measure, stopping in midair short of the resolution of the theme. There is in each a moment of suspended silence at the discretion of the conductor, then a slow, pianissimo resolve to the melody—for the Hanson, an inversion of the main theme (Ex. 8) played by a string quartet; for the Williams, the first eight notes of the E.T. theme played softly by piccolo with harp glissandos behind like the vague, mysterious orchestra that opened the film. Then both scores begin a slow crescendo of single-stepping, lifting notes which increase in animation and volume. In E.T. that coincides with the lift-off of the rescue ship (Ex. 11).

EX. (11A) - HANSON - CONCLUSION



(11B) - WMS. - "LIFT-OFF"



Its slow rise, then, in both scores, climaxes in a burst of brass fanfare over four bars, just before the conclusion. Director Spielberg actually modified the end of his film to include a rainbow that would match that brass fanfare of the score as the E.T. ship moves out of our view. An homage, he thought, to his long association with John Williams as the composer for most of his films--perhaps an homage, too, unbeknownst, back towards Howard Hanson, fifty years before.

For a score to draw on memories of a past work, in detail or in overall tone, is not altogether bad. Indeed, Hanson's symphony shows an awareness of Rachmaninoff and Liszt in its own language. Fine film music of the past has made open reference to existing concert works--has done so purposefully to relate certain aspects of the music to certain features of the film story: the primitive violence of *Le sacre du printemps* relating to the shark-infested story of JAWS or the twisted, abstract, yet somehow also earthy harmonies of Bartok relating to the subconscious origins of psychoanalysis in the film of FREUD. E.T. has done a similar thing, perhaps borrowing the sentimental heart from another work but then transplanting it successfully and beginning a life of its own.

Conclusion. Film, like ballet, is essentially an art of rhythm. The careful camera, the conscientious director, give each film a pace and visual meter of its own which the eye translates into vicarious physical and emotional sensations.

Seen without music, E.T. still races along but it is erratic. Music, at least a self-aware score like E.T., has the effect of smoothing out the storytelling syncopations, almost like a long phrasing arch over a group of notes on a page. It also has the effect of drawing the viewer into the story, validating his feelings toward it, rather than, as in an unscored Bergman film, leaving him alone to sort things out for himself. In a simplistic fantasy film like E.T. the music leads the audience along, actually creates of its own accord a warm, emotional response in them, whether or not Spielberg's story had truly earned it. This is music used as propaganda, emotional blackmail if you will, but so sincerely done and, across the whole tugging story, so carefully wedded to the action that much of the joy lies in simply watching it work.

As we have said, music is so integral to the movement of E.T., covers so much of the story, that it is possible to think of the film in retrospect as a musical or, let us say, as a "music drama." Not many films require that kind of guidance from a film score but every film music cue, even a 30-second string phrase in a love story or a scherzo in a western, ought to be as carefully associated to the action on screen or ought not to be used at all. In this way, E.T. is a classic example of everything that film scoring should do. It is both strong and subtle, exciting and humorous and touching. It also contains all the faults of the field--being derivative, episodic, occasionally arbitrary, fairly uninventive in its simple themes, and (the inherent vice of all film music) being externally (the screen) rather than internally (the composer) inaugurated. Some of these faults are quite simply part of the game; others are characteristic of Williams himself.

In any case, by whatever means and shortcuts he assembled this music for E.T., it remains a tremendously effective piece of movie scoring that, purely on its own conviction, delights and somewhere deeply stirs whole theaters full of children and their parents, and may continue to do so.

GROVES GROOVES ON BILLY'S BARD by
Frank DeWald

EMI/Angel has done well by the late Sir William Walton's trilogy of Shakespearean filmscores written for the Laurence Olivier productions (though they continue to ignore his 1936 AS YOU LIKE IT). In 1964 they issued a beautiful disc of excerpts, conducted by the composer and performed by the Philharmonic Orchestra, which had also recorded the original soundtrack. That album was reissued in 1973 on Seraphim, remastered with brighter, cleaner sonics and with new cover art and liner notes. Now, still another decade later, a new digital recording of the same music has appeared, with Sir Charles Groves conducting the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra.

Let us say at the outset that this well-recorded, well-played, slackly conducted album does not for one moment supplant the composer's own. Film music buffs will undoubtedly be interested in it, however, since it contains thirteen minutes of music from HAMLET not previously available. Gillian Widdicombe's liner notes explain how conductor Muir Mathieson was authorized to edit the HAMLET score for concert use, adapting it into two separate entities: the well-known "Funeral March" and "a substantial orchestral poem called 'Hamlet and Ophelia.'" Apart from some snippets which appeared on a deleted RCA album of dialogue excerpts from the soundtrack (LM-1924), this is the first recording of "Hamlet and Ophelia." Since this "new" excerpt will probably be the main reason for PMS readers to purchase the new recording (Angel DS 38088), this article will focus on the musical structure of Mathieson's "Poem for Orchestra" and try to relate the music to its use in the film.

"Hamlet and Ophelia" is in six broad sections, beginning immediately with

(1) Hamlet's theme—an insinuating, slow, contrapuntal piece for strings, with four recognizable fugal entrances. Mathieson chose to open with the second appearance of the theme—that which underscores Hamlet's speech beginning with "Oh that this too too solid flesh would melt" The abrupt appearance of woodwinds—like a sudden ray of sunshine in the gloom of Hamlet's thoughts—brings us directly to

(2) Ophelia's theme—most often scored as a plaintive oboe solo with undulating string accompaniment and more than a hint of tragedy and sadness. We first hear this theme when we first see Ophelia herself, sitting at her window reading a letter (from Hamlet?). A transitional passage in 6/8 meter (following, in the film, Hamlet's lines: "O cursed spite, that ever I was born to set it right") leads to

(3) Ophelia's description to Polonius (II,i) of Hamlet's visit to her chamber. The music evolves into a disturbing cantilena for unison strings that reaches a literal high point at the words "He raised a sigh so piteous and profound it did seem to shatter all his bulk." Interestingly, this scene is shown occurring on camera as Ophelia narrates it, and at the point of the sigh Laurence Olivier makes no actual sound, letting Walton's orchestra speak with greater eloquence (and perhaps more feeling) than ever the human voice could manage.

(4) The agitated fourth section is the lead-in to the famous soliloquy

"To be or not to be." It begins with a shot of Ophelia lying prostrate at the foot of some stairs, and as the camera pans quickly up a spiral staircase the music increases in excitement to reach a point of exhilaration and release as the camera bursts out of the castle and into the sky. The music and the camera both then descend to a shot of the sea and an even more turbulent passage representative of Hamlet's agitated state of mind. (This recorded version is somewhat longer than what is heard in the film.) As the tension subsides, we hear

(5) A section associated with Ophelia's madness--a musically distorted version of her own theme, first heard as she looks at her reflection in a stream, plucks a flower, screams (as though becoming aware of her father's death), and runs home to the castle

(6) The final section might well have been the music for Ophelia's death, but instead Mathieson closed with a reprise of Ophelia's theme as heard in an earlier form--lamenting, as it were, the young maiden's tragedy. The tone poem concludes on a rising string passage, which fades out exactly as it did on Ophelia's exit line: "God be with you."

The remaining selections on the album duplicate exactly the contents of the composer's recording: the "Prelude" and "Shakespearean Suite" from RICHARD III and the "Suite" from HENRY V.

A great deal can be deduced about Sir Charles Groves's performances by comparing his timings with the composer's: the same music which takes Walton 37 minutes takes Groves a more leisurely 43! We might noncommittally describe Groves's interpretation as "expansive," but a more acerbic critic might go for the jugular and decree these performances boring. For myself, I found them acceptable except in a few instances where the rhythmic impetus bogs down too much, as in "Charge and Battle" from HENRY V. I certainly prefer Walton's own performances, and the sound quality of his disc still holds its own. The sonics of the new disc are neither spectacularly good nor spectacularly bad, and the same might be said about the playing of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra. Surfaces are excellent (Direct Metal Mastering by Teldec), and this time each sequence has been individually banded, unlike the previous recording.

This disc, then, is recommended to all film music buffs for "Hamlet and Ophelia." But those who do not already own the composer's recording should buy that one immediately, in case Angel has plans to let it go out of print.

THE REFERENCE SHELF (continued from page 6)

however, learn from it that he also served as music director for a TV special entitled *Movie Blockbusters*.

Where the *Annual* really comes in handy for the ordinary reader is when you are trying to recall who wrote the music for some little-bally-hooded film that nevertheless made a strong musical impression. Like *THE FOURTH MAN*, for instance (Loek Dikker). Or *THE DEAD ZONE* (Michael Kamen). Or *BETRAYAL* (Dominic Muldowney). Then, thanks to helpful cross-indexing by title and composer, you can find out what else the promising Mr. Muldowney was up to in 1983 (a couple of obscure movies and also one of the BBC-TV Shakespeare productions). The *Annual* is full of fascinating surprises and revelations. Who would have guessed, for example, that the high-minded Roy Prendergast (author of *Film Music: A Neglected Art*) had a hand in *JAWS 3-D*?

I am sure that Mr. Bohn would be the first to admit that most of the music cited in the Annual comprises a veritable sea of mediocrity (or worse). But what he reminds us of at the same time in this useful compilation is that there are a variety of living musical traditions in full flower in the world of film music today. It remains for others to dig in and sift the gold from the dross.

That such sifting is no easy task is amply demonstrated by Randall Larson's *Musique Fantastique*. Larson is the incredibly enterprising editor/ publisher of *CinemaScore* (see PMS 37), and the characteristics of that valuable publication are again on display here: strong, wide-ranging journalistic coverage of several different periods and nationalities—undercut by derivative or inaccurate stabs at criticism and analysis.

Musique Fantastique starts from an interesting premise—that the genres of fantasy and science fiction provide a special opportunity for music to act (in the words of Christopher Palmer) "as a go-between, a telegraph wire which can bring us into direct contact with the remotest provinces of the imaginative mind." Of course the genre also affords composers the opportunity to experiment with new sounds, not necessarily of the conventionally pretty variety elsewhere so beloved of Hollywood bosses. For these reasons Larson feels that the genre merits separate discussion. And in fact his is the first book-length study ever to concentrate on a single aspect of the film music domain.

In sixteen chapters it surveys typical periods (Universal horror pictures of the 1930s, Hammer in the 1960s) and also individual composers (Miklós Rózsa, Bernard Herrmann, Jerry Goldsmith, and John Williams are each allotted full chapters). Larson is catholic in his approach to the music itself. Akira Kikukube (*GODZILLA*) and James Bernard (*HORROR OF DRACULA*) are treated as thoroughly as many familiar Hollywood composers. And he shows himself to have been an omniverous reader as well. Aside from his own wealth of interview material accumulated for *CinemaScore*, he quotes liberally (and credits generously) a great many other critics and commentators. One of my prime pleasures in reading this volume was the discovery of many useful leads to other studies, such as William Rosar on the first *DRACULA* and Bill Littman (writing in something called *Gore Creatures*) on *KING KONG* and *THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN*.

Unfortunately Larson is reluctant to move from the externals of composer biographies and film production anecdotes to the sort of musico-dramatic analysis that his subject demands. Thus an Irwin Bazelon quotation is advanced to attack *LOST HORIZON*, and then a Christopher Palmer remark is trotted out to defend the score. All very interesting, but what does Randall Larson have to say for himself? We never learn. When they do emerge, his own critical observations range from the merely mystifying to the truly unfortunate. In the former category: "The main theme [of *THE POWER*] is quite dramatic, its melodic style characteristic of Rózsa's work in this later period: a series of rapidly progressing notes ascend to abruptly halt for a beat, followed by one or more sustained notes. This motif was very effective in developing a sense of drama and cinematic motion, and can be heard in moments of subsequent films" In the latter: "A warm love sonnet is provided for the evolving relationship between Decker and Ilia [in *STAR TREK*]."

This really won't do. Mr. Larson is braver than most of us who try to write about film music. He takes enormous risks and he is going to have to live with the consequences. Even his filmography/discography (more than 200 pages' worth) goes out on a lot of limbs in attempting to define what does or does not constitute a "fantastic" film. If most biblical dramas are to be excluded, then why is *JESUS OF NAZARETH* retained? Why the medieval fiction of

THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME but not the quasi-supernatural legend of EL CID or the out and-out supernaturalism of LES VISITEURS DU SOIR? Or why not the "agnostic" miracle drama RESURRECTION? Is AIRPLANE! really a "fantastic" film? I cite these examples not to cast doubt on Mr. Larson's impressive research but merely to wonder if his efforts might have been more effectively employed in a more carefully conceived genre.

In sum, Larson's rashness is the polar opposite of Ronald Bohn's reticence. Both ventures are brave; each has value. But I keep hoping that there will emerge a healthy nonspecialist school of film music criticism written in a language to which the layman can make an honest contribution. As we honor Ronald Bohn's quiet foundation-building and Randall Larson's sallies into the unknown, we must regretfully conclude that such a school has not yet emerged.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

It's "dump on movie music" time again. This morning's *New York Times* (10 April 1985) contains not one but two of the traditional film music slurs so familiar from the dismal past. Donal Henahan, reviewing a St. Louis Symphony concert under the commendably eclectic Leonard Slatkin, must not have had much time to formulate his thoughts. Searching for a brief way to put down the evening's featured work, the Shostakovich Eleventh Symphony, Mr. Henahan simply alleged that in a weak performance the work "can sound like bad movie music." Mr. Slatkin, however, "succeeded in making it sound like superior movie music."

The Henahan remark might have been easy to dismiss had it not been followed by a similar barb from Bernard Holland. This latter critic was also out to damn a contemporary work (in this case the new Requiem by Andrew Lloyd Webber) and he likewise found the Loathsome Analogy to be the easiest (laziest?) way to make his point: "Usually when we listen to music, the composer is, in a sense, invited into our souls. It is an invitation, however, that this particular composer has refused; and in his stead he sends a delegation of representatives. Their faces are terribly familiar, and after a while we begin to realize that they are people dear to us-- Mahler and Orff, for example, Alfred Newman and Dmitri (*sic*) Tiomkin, Prokofiev and Puccini. Their message is soothing, because we have heard it already. And after all, no news is--well, you know." To his credit, however, Mr. Holland does not leave the matter at that. He attempts some Historical Analysis. But more of that below.

I had imagined that such remarks were a thing of the past. In my innocence I had even thought to share in some of the credit for their overdue interment. Surely there has been less of this critical Philistinism since the early 1970s, when publications like *Pro Musica Sana* demonstrated the seriousness of the audience for film music, writers like Christopher Palmer explained the sound basis for its appeal, and performers like Charles Gerhardt demonstrated its continuing viability for old and new audiences alike. Indeed, those who have come of age in the last fifteen years, nurtured by the film music publications and by the uncondescending treatment of the genre in general magazines like *Fanfare* and *High Fidelity*, would be grievously shocked at the sort of attitude that prevailed before then. That was a time when "all movie music sounds alike" and therefore no one bothered to pay any attention to the particulars.

Those were still the days when even a post-Bartókian symphonic concert work could merit dismissal ("On comes the Cinemascope," *Times* on the Rózsa Sinfonia Concertante) if its composer were found to belong to "the swimming pool set" (*Time Magazine* on the Rózsa Violin Concerto).

At least there has been some progress over the years. Today there seems to be a felt need to justify such hostile views. That is why Mr. Holland offers his history of musical expression in the twentieth century. It seems that the trouble all began "with a Swiss composer named Ernest Bloch," who developed a modern musical language intended to express his Jewish heritage--"a series of fourths evoking the call of the shofar and a free-flowing melody ripe with augmented seconds and flavored with ancient Jewish chanting." Then "Hollywood" (the lazy music critic's substitute for the biblical Philistines) took over this idiom in pictures like *QUO VADIS*, *DAVID AND BATHSHEBA*, and *THE ROBE*, with the result that "millions of viewers came to see sadness on the screen and simultaneously hear this music in their ears." All that Mr. Lloyd Webber is supposed to have done in his *Requiem* is polish up these battered Blochian devices and present them as "prefabricated" instant inspiration.

Unfortunately this sort of analysis reveals Mr. Holland to be something of a critical Philistine himself in the very precise sense of "one who is uninformed in a special area of knowledge." So taken up is he with his superficial comparison that he forgets that the differences between Bloch and Newman and Rózsa and Lloyd Webber are far more interesting than the similarities. How fascinating it would be, for example, to trace the (very plausible) Blochian influence that emerged in Alfred Newman's 1950's scores, to see how the spare, somber, mournful lines of *DAVID AND BATHSHEBA* were later illumined by the splashier colors of *THE ROBE*. Newman was an ethnic Jew, and it would be interesting to explore from a biographical perspective whether this new aspect of his style emerged solely from the subject matter of the films or whether it had its origin in some quasi-Schönbergian rediscovery of his roots. And how fascinating it would be if any such influence at all could be shown in *QUO VADIS*--a very doubtful proposition considering Rózsa's notoriously hermetic compositional integrity where contemporary influence is concerned. In fact I wonder what parts of *QUO VADIS* Mr. Holland had in mind when he made the comparison. Very little of the music in that film has much to do with musical Judaica, and the parts that do (chiefly the unaccompanied Christian hymns) own nothing to Bloch but stem instead from older Babylonian and Yemenite Jewish material. But surely Mr. Holland cannot have a clear recollection of these hymns. It is more likely that he thinks all three films had the same composer ("score writer" in his dismissive term). After all, don't all movie scores sound alike?

Contrast Holland's attitude with that of Walter Simmons, writing at some length on Samuel Barber's *Antony and Cleopatra* in *Fanfare* (Nov./Dec. 1984): "The musical language shifts on a fulcrum between a stern 'Roman' tone built on fourths and fifths in the manner of Rózsa, and a chromatic, languorous 'Egyptian' opulence reminiscent of Scriabin's ecstatic vein." Mr. Simmons is no Rózsaophile nor even a particular follower of film music. He is one of our finest music critics because he knows that clear-headed description is more illuminating than dismissive categorization. More important, he knows that great composers can be true to themselves and to inherited traditions at the same time. I believe that Rózsa and Newman, like Bloch before them, achieved a mode of expression that is contemporary, valid, and truly original because they were true to themselves. I am not so certain about Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Requiem*, but at least Mr. Holland's dismissal has had one good result. It has made me want to go out and hear the work for myself.

*

Why do the best directors always seem to be tone deaf? As might be guessed, my question is prompted by the dismal news that Maurice Jarre has won this third Oscar for scoring a David Lean film (A PASSAGE TO INDIA), the Academy once again having demonstrated its flair for selecting the very weakest of its five musical nominees. For the record, the others were a surprisingly creditable batch: Alex North's UNDER THE VOLCANO, an entirely characteristic work with a wonderful skeleton dance overture; John Williams' INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM, least and (one hopes) last of his Lucasberg epics but still a competent piece of work; Williams' THE RIVER, a more interesting score with notable solo parts; and Mike Oldfield's THE KILLING FIELDS, a totally eclectic "I'll try anything" melange of synthesizer patterns, orchestral traditionalism, and a banal John Lennon song for a finale.

Surprisingly, I think the last-named score is the one that worked best of all, at least on its own primitive terms. For something in a more sophisticated vein I would have turned to Loek Dikker's THE FOURTH MAN. But personal preferences aside, there can be little doubt that A PASSAGE TO INDIA is the weakest major orchestral film score in many a year—a work that brought dishonor to the movie it was supposed to be serving— even in the eyes of critics who admired the film. But everyone knows that the Academy's ways are inscrutable. What I cannot understand is how David Lean continues to be taken in.

Indisputably Lean's distinguished career has had some musical highlights. Arnold Bax's OLIVER TWIST is reckoned among the classics of British film music. 'Walter Goehr's GREAT EXPECTATIONS, less celebrated, is actually an even finer score, entering with rare enthusiasm into a Dickensian dialogue with that film's words and images. (Remember how the orchestra mockingly drowns out Mrs. Gargery's screams for Pip?) Malcolm Arnold and William Alwyn did some effective work on early Lean films, and if one must have a piano concerto rattling around in the background (a venerable forties tradition), then the device could hardly be better exploited than it was in BRIEF ENCOUNTER with the Rachmaninoff Second.

Problems started to arise, as is so often the case (compare Stanley Kubrick) , when Lean turned to larger canvases and (presumably) acquired more control over the musical side of his films. Malcolm Arnold, whose film music has always struck me as less successful than his symphonic oeuvre, did a decent low-key job on THE BRIDGE ON THE RIVER KWAI, but the sound track received a wholly unexpected notoriety (and an undeserved Oscar) on account of one of its lesser components, the old "Colonel Bogey March" of Kenneth J. Alford, which had been rearranged by Arnold for on-screen use.

Then, in what surely must rank as one of the least fortunate encounters in musical history, Lean met an obscure French composer named Maurice Jarre in 1962. (Actually Jarre seems to have been a Sam Spiegel discovery.) The initial result, LAWRENCE OF ARABIA, was by no means contemptible. It must have been a very difficult picture to score. All Lean's pictures are, for their scenery and spectacle and grand performances tend to obscure the fact that these are not conventional heroic dramas. Magnificent a figure as Lawrence is, he is nevertheless crushed by implacable forces beyond human control. The temptation to romanticize such a figure must have been great, and in his famous, slightly overlush "desert" theme, Jarre did not entirely resist the temptation. But the other thematic material compensated nicely, the music kept silent when it needed

to, and at times--most notably in the overture with its amazing triple-counterpoint climax--the score achieved a real distinction. If it did not quite deserve its Oscar (over Waxman's TARAS BULBA and Bernstein's TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD), it was nevertheless an auspicious debut for the Lean-Jarre collaboration.

Query: The film LAWRENCE credits "The London Philharmonic Orchestra, Conducted by Sir Adrian Boult." The record album, which professes to be (and sounds like) the "original soundtrack," says "Conducted by Maurice Jarre." Has anyone ever explained this discrepancy?

Since 1962 the Lean-Jarre collaboration has gone steadily downhill. Few big films can have been as inappropriately scored as DOCTOR ZHIVAGO. It is hard to argue with popularity, but here one must. The central "Lara" theme manages to fail on both musical and dramatic grounds. Hollywood composers rarely criticize their professional colleagues in public, but sheer professional exasperation has long made an exception for this celebrated theme. Thus Irwin Bazelon: "an exercise in melodic futility, marked by musical imperfections such as wrong notes and badly chosen harmonies and progressions." And Leonard Rosenman: "Its amateurishly twisted progressions aiming at modulation (and missing the mark), its actual wrong notes and unlettered harmonic choices simply make a bad tune." Even the orchestration is faulty. The band of balalaikas laid on for Russian flavor actually winds up sounding like mandolins and connoting a Neapolitan atmosphere instead! ZHIVAGO won Jarre his second Oscar.

I can remember little of Jarre's music for that magnificent *folie de grandeur* RYAN'S DAUGHTER except that listening to it was an excruciating experience. As I recall, it consisted largely of Gallic marches and tinkling ornamentation, none of which had anything to do with a tragic Irish love story. Which brings us to Lean's current film, his best since LAWRENCE, a tough, uncompromising look at several characters in the grip of a situation beyond their control. At least the music doesn't tinkle (Jarre's trademark since his French days). In fact, it starts out with some vaguely Indian sounds and some eerie wails from Jarre's beloved Ondes Martenot, another trademark device. Then, unaccountably, it launches into a sort of bloated 1920s dance number for symphony orchestra without any sort of rhythmic force or drama. I have never heard a score fall so flat so fast. One could easily imagine that a musicians' strike had intervened and necessitated the insertion of library cues. It's that bad. Sources close to the production say that Lean himself is partly to blame for the weakness of the score. As on LAWRENCE and ZHIVAGO, the scoring process was a hurried affair with little time for collaboration between composer and director (in this case a very busy writer-director-editor). Common-dably loyal to his colleagues over the years, Lean was nevertheless otherwise engaged while the music needed to be germinating. So when Jarre wrote an Indian-sounding prelude. Lean only heard--and rejected--it at the recording sessions, when of course it was too late to devise a valid alternative. That is why an \$11 million picture opens with a throwaway prelude. It's enough to make you cry--and realize that Lean's musical problems may be of his own making.

As for the rest of the score, it scarcely merits analysis. Aside from the incidental military marches, it's hardly there at all. The opening theme group tries to steal in at a couple of key moments, notably the cave and trial scenes, but never really gets anywhere. The film's rather limp epilogue is not helped by Jarre's pallidly Walton-esque music for the Himalayan scenery. Only in Lean's invented episode--Adela and the monkeys at the ruined temple--does the score have any real success. Here the pallid, distended entries of his melodies are rendered eerie by odd pauses and a disquieting bass line. Vulgar, loud chords announce the charge of the monkeys, and the scene is rounded off nicely by a now emphatic restatement of the ubiquitous opening theme.

As this scene demonstrates, Jarre is by no means a hopeless composer. His RESURRECTION of a few years back had merit, as did the television JESUS OF NAZARETH. And even Page Cook, normally contemptuous of Jarre, found much to praise in his POPE JOAN. But Jarre does have a rather limited melodic and harmonic imagination. He would do well to stay away from films as challenging and multifaceted as David Lean's. Unfortunately this latest Academy benediction makes it unlikely that he will do so. Few directors have ever provided so many musical challenges and opportunities as David Lean. The pity is that so few of these challenges have been adequately met.

Let us at least give M. Jarre the credit he deserves for the wittiest and most perceptive remark of the Oscar telecast: "It's a good thing that Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was not eligible in this category!"

New trivia question: What directors have had the most films to win Oscars in the original/dramatic music score category? Answers: David Lean (the above-mentioned four); William Wyler (THE BEST YEARS OF OUR LIVES, THE HEIRESS, BEN-HUR); John Ford (THE INFORMER and STAGECOACH); and Steven Spielberg (JAWS and E.T.).

More from the *New York Times* (John Rockwell on George Crumb's *Haunted Landscape*, 29 April 1985): "His music at times sounds like a veritable film soundtrack, with the percussion evoking all manner of 'haunted' happenings and the strings delineating a movie-music-like theme of slowly descending chords." Don't these guys ever let up?

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