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LAST YEARS AND LEAVE-TAKINGS

by John Fitzpatrick

Miklós Rózsa died on 27 July at Good Samaritan Hospital in Los Angeles.

He was buried in a private ceremony at Forest Lawn Memorial Park on the 31 st.

Those are the sad words we knew we would have to report someday. They are no longer "news." But for all of us they demand a time of reflection and renewal. We begin our coverage with a brief account of Dr. Rózsa's last years. Next comes a report of the public memorial service held at the Hotel Bel-Air on 3 September. Some additional written tributes and letters follow. Finally, the section entitled "Quo Vadis, MRS" sets forth some ideas for the continuation and renewal of the Society.

Last Years

DR. Rózsa suffered a stroke at his summer home in Santa Margherita in 1982. He was a tough little man of 75 at the time, and he made a remarkable recovery. Partially paralyzed on one side, he learned to get around and even to drive his car with the aid of a special steering device. Impaired in speech, he was soon able to make himself understood to friends in several languages. Of course there was no question of composing for films any more. The sheer physical challenge was now beyond him. But film work was never the important thing to Miklós Rózsa. More than once he had paraphrased Mahler's famous remark: "I conduct in order to live; I live in order to compose." Substitute the film work for Mahler's conducting and you have a pretty good idea of Rózsa's attitude toward his craft. That does not mean that Rózsa was ever less than serious about his movie scores—no more than Mahler took his duties lightly as a conductor.

Denied the physical strength for major orchestral composition, Rózsa began the series of solo works that bear opus numbers from 39 to 45: the solo sonatas for flute (1983), violin (1986), clarinet (1986), guitar (1986), oboe (1987), ondes martenot (1987), and viola (1988). The last work was never completed. Rózsa's eyesight had begun to fail, and in 1985 his strength was sapped by another illness, the muscular condition known as myasthenia gravis. The skill and devotion of Christopher Palmer came to the rescue, as he edited the unfinished sonata into an "Introduction" (derived from the first movement) and "Allegro" (being the bulk of the second movement).

The rest was not silence. There were premieres to attend, most notably the Viola Concerto in Pittsburgh (1984) and Los Angeles (1988). The memoir *Double Life* was successfully published in 1982 and twice reissued (1984, 1989). And there was a steady flow of recordings as old LPs were brought forward into the compact disc era and film scores got recorded for the first time, thanks to the tireless efforts of Christopher Palmer—whose work Rózsa continued to edit carefully. There was a touching eightieth birthday celebration in 1987, the ASCAP Lifetime Achievement Award that same year, an honorary doctorate from USC in 1994, and those memorable trips to the Hollywood Bowl and to the old MGM (now Sony) recording studio in Culver City, where John Mauceri became the last in a long line of distinguished musicians to champion Rózsa's music during his lifetime.

After 1988 Rózsa was largely confined to his home—sharp and alert as ever but too frail to go out and too weak to write or speak effectively on the telephone. Friends like Tony Thomas were regular visitors. Erma Flowers, his private nurse, was a devoted presence for ten years. But for the rest of us, it was a time of gradual leave-taking. My own last personal letter from Rózsa is dated 1989. Eventually, I found it impossible to communicate even by phone. (Rózsa never liked the contraption. He was a prodigious letter writer, but even in better times telephone conversations could be a trial.) During the final years, Rózsa scarcely ventured out at all—except on Tuesdays to see his wife, who was hospitalized in Santa Monica.

Rózsa had more than an ordinary dislike of hospitals—especially the high-tech American variety—but he asked to be admitted in July. There were repeated strokes, progressive weakening, and then pneumonia. He died in his sleep during the early morning hours of 27 July. David Raksin was among the last to see him and reported trying to relieve Rózsa's evident stress at being unable to communicate with those he loved. "It's all right. You can rest now."

The Funeral

THE funeral was announced as private, but dozens of people appeared at Forest Lawn/Hollywood Hills on the 31st. (Alfred Newman and Max Steiner are buried nearby in Forest Lawn/Glendale.) A young minister had been recruited to speak, and many of those present were somehow consoled by his notable resemblance to the sorely missed Christopher Palmer, who unbelievably had died a few months earlier. There were readings from the Bible and from *Double Life*, including the story of the Lake Tahoe Bible episode that led to the composition of *To Everything There Is a Season*. John Mauceri, unbidden, had recruited some brass and percussion players from the Hollywood Bowl. They played meditative arrangements of some music from *King of Kings* (main theme and Lord's Prayer). For a time, the hillside scene suggested the Sermon on the Mount. Then at the end the musicians sent forth across the valley a proud and heroic note for those who had to go on without their beloved master. It was the Parade of the Charioteers in a simple band arrangement, and listeners said it sounded more authentic than ever in this outdoor setting.

Remembrances

THE Hotel Bel-Air sits at the foot of the Hollywood Hills, not far from the UCLA campus. Cloistered gardens nestle under the fragrant hillside in the same southern California fashion that typified Rózsa's own home. It was here that Juliet Rozsa had arranged for a more public remembrance on 3 September. About one hundred and forty invited friends and associates of the composer gathered at tables in a small ballroom that afternoon. Before us was a stage with piano and a couple of John Stevens's and James Pavelek's¹ pastel

¹ James Pavelek was present and has published his account in *Film Score Monthly* (No. 61, Sept. 1995) and the Australian *Journal of the Miklós Rózsa Appreciation Music Society* (BH 5, Nov. 1995). I am indebted to Mr. Pavelek for numerous details.

drawings on display. The rear wall was all glass, opening out onto the cascading foliage of the hillside. It was an exquisite setting.

Juliet introduced the family—her brother, Nicholas; her three dark-haired daughters; the composer's sister, Edith, and her husband Stephen Jankay of Redlands, California. The order of the afternoon was to be music, tea, and then reminiscences by those who had loved the maestro. The tea and cookies were in fond memory of the invariable routine of all who had visited the great house—it has since been sold to a grandson of J. Paul Getty—on Montcalm Avenue. Tony Thomas, a faithful visitor in recent years, lent his mellow voice as master of ceremonies. From the first, he spoke of Rózsa's good spirit and humor through all the hardships of his last years. In that same spirit, he bade us all enjoy the music.

The Music. Guitarist Gregg Nestor opened with his gentle arrangement of "Green Fire." Then the stage was given over to violinist Isabella Lippi and pianist John Novacek. Their recent Koch recording had been a special favorite of Rózsa's—this fourth (!) recording of the Op. 40 Sonata was a performance that he enjoyed often during his last months. That demanding work was not played at the memorial. Instead, the artists offered the Variations on a North Hungarian Peasant Song (Op. 4) and Duo Sonata for Violin and Piano (Op. 7). Their sound was rich and full, and the setting was exquisite. These were works from another age, written in Germany during the 1920s out of a memory that stretched back to the Austro-Hungarian empire. Familiar as this music is to most of us, there were doubtless friends and associates in the audience who were hearing it for the first time. Had Elmer Bernstein or Jerry Goldsmith ever heard this music before? There was no reason to believe that they had. All of us were bound together by the sounds, which seemed to link not only the diverse people in the audience but also the varied ages of Rózsa's career. For some reason this was the first time I noticed what has perhaps been obvious to other listeners all along—how the slow movement of the sonata ends with the very same pattern of open fourths that make up the "Anno Domini" motif in BEN-HUR, written some thirty years later.

Daniel Robbins took the stage next. He is a young pianist and composer who had been privileged to study with Rózsa in the 1960s and who is now taking on some of the reconstruction and orchestration work that had previously been done by Christopher Palmer. I had spent some time with Robbins the previous day, meeting in a coffee shop which turned out to be the very spot where he had set down the scoring of the "Battle of Torquilstone Castle" some months earlier! Amazingly, Robbins likes to do this sort of work at various locations around town, running out to his car (license: BEN-HUR2) when it becomes necessary to check a detail against the tape of the original soundtrack! It was encouraging somehow to be part of one very small corner of Los Angeles musical life—a life that shows every sign of going on. (Tony Thomas had pointed out earlier that no fewer than seven compact discs of Rózsa's music were in the works.)

Robbins played some of the earliest of the film music: "Alexandra's Song" from KNIGHT WITHOUT ARMOUR. This tune is none other than the (unused) melody intended for the mysterious Frau Sieber. Next came the theme and closing scene from LYDIA. The latter episode, more dramatic and poignant than the waltz or main theme, is a piece that Robbins had tran-

scribed for his second Intrada album and seemed to me the most affecting musical moment of the afternoon.

Leonard Pennario followed with his version of the "Valse Crepusculaire" from PROVIDENCE (more florid than the original) and then a six-minute arrangement of music from SPELLBOUND. This miniature "concerto" was easily the most spectacular music-making of the day. Dignified and quiet in a dark suit, Pennario may not concertize as much as he used to, but there was no doubt of his absolute command of the keyboard. As somebody said afterward, you felt as if you heard the whole orchestra, complete with theremin, in the torrent of sound that Pennario created. It was a memorable moment and was met with a standing ovation.

Tea was too brief. There were so many people with stories to tell. One wanted to hear all of them, but nobody had time. In the second hour, we would get to hear selected testimony.

The Remembrances. Tony Thomas introduced the Hungarian consul in Los Angeles, who gave a formal tribute to this long-displaced son of Hungary. The official seemed especially proud at Rózsa's being able to articulate in his native tongue a Christmas telephone greeting to a friend in Hungary: "God willing, I shall speak with you again next year." Alas, it was not to be.

David Raksin, who had been an especially faithful visitor in recent years, followed in the same formal vein. He chose to recount the classic Rozsa anecdotes—Marlene Dietrich, "Carnegie Hall," the girls who shouted "Pazzo" in the Roman Forum. This latest retelling of thrice-familiar tales made it clear that they now belong to all of us. Each story has a slightly different association for every listener. Raksin, for example, remembered first hearing the BEN-HUR incident in London, and he recalled the speakers as elderly women instead of young girls. A quirk of Raksin's memory or a variation in Rózsa's tale-spinning? The discrepancy somehow made the unspoken truth just a little more poignant: we shall never be able to quiz Rózsa on these episodes again.

James Sedares was the only one of the day's speakers who had never actually met Rózsa. There had been only a single telephone conversation, when the conductor received Rózsa's thanks and approval for the Symphony recording. Sedares seemed quiet and reserved. He spoke only briefly, to assert that Miklós Rózsa was "not only a great film composer but a great composer of music."

Privately Daniel Robbins also spoke of the Symphony recording as an example of Rózsa's typical drollery even in his last months. Robbins and Tony Thomas had been privileged to be present when the tape of the Sedares recording arrived. They sat with Rózsa as he listened for the very first time to the music of his youth. How would the maestro respond to the reappearance of this long-lost child? How would he evaluate its emergence into actual musical sound? The music ended, and both friends were quick to join with their enthusiasm and praise. This was a great work—the great Hungarian symphony. And what did the maestro himself think? "Have some more tea!"

Sam Sachs, formerly of the William Morris Agency, had been a friend of Rózsa's since the time of SPELLBOUND. He spoke with some pride of how he and Rózsa had held out for a share of the royalties that might accrue from a contemplated recording of that score. Producer David O. Selznick had wanted to reserve all rights to himself. According to Sachs, the agreement he and

Rózsa negotiated in 1945 has benefited film composers ever since. Sachs, obviously a very old friend, also recalled Rózsa's quandary over the double Oscar nomination of 1945 and how he eventually urged well-wishers to vote for whichever of the two films (SPELLBOUND or THE LOST WEEKEND) that they really admired more. "Gentle and firm" were the adjectives Sachs used to sum up Rózsa's character.

Also speaking for the business of film music was Herschel Burke Gilbert, known today as the president of the elite Laurel Records and as the composer of films and concert works in his own right. He, too, spoke of Rózsa's civic efforts as president of the Screen Composers Guild in the United States and then later (and less famously) as an influential member of Britain's Performing Right Society. Gilbert was proud of Rózsa's approval for the great String Quartets recording on Laurel. Weakened though the composer was by that time, "his hearing was plenty good."

Everybody knows that Jerry Goldsmith is the most famous musician ever to come out of MR's film music course at the University of Southern California. Goldsmith here spoke about other earlier encounters with Rózsa. How it was hearing the JUNGLE BOOK Suite, narrated by Sabu at a Los Angeles Philharmonic concert, that first inspired him to want to become a composer. How Rózsa was a frequent visitor at the home of Goldsmith's teacher, pianist Jakob Gimpel (who had played for LYDIA). He recalled being greeted in Rome by Rózsa in 1962: "Welcome to the most beautiful city in the world." In particular, he recalled a party given at the lavish home of a famous Italian film composer ("a charlatan really"), who had invited Rózsa to enhance the guest list but then endeavored to keep the master out in the garden lest he detract attention from the host himself. Today, Jerry Goldsmith said, he keeps Rózsa ever in his mind for his humility as well as his wisdom.

After MRS president John Fitzpatrick spoke of the ordinary music lovers in Dr. Rózsa's life (see p. 11), Elmer Bernstein took the stage for perhaps the most substantial remarks of the day. He recalled how Rózsa had accepted him as a colleague long before Bernstein established himself in the business. "He was a great man" This was spoken with a calm and certain emphasis. "He lent out his talents on a very selective basis, but his heart and his spirit were never for sale in a business that wants them all." Bernstein then recalled his pleasure at being able to conduct a number of albums of Rózsa's music in later years. "Your are my Nikisch," joked Rózsa in appreciative flattery. Among the working relationships that Bernstein (and others) shared with Rózsa was their association with the late Christopher Palmer. Bernstein spoke of how Rózsa first brought Palmer to his attention. "Is he ready to orchestrate?" asked Bernstein. Yes, but "watch out for all those bells and harps!" said the elder composer. Bernstein concluded by saying how much he still loves Rózsa's music. "I can't even imagine a life without Miki's music. He'll never be gone because I'm keeping him with me, always."

At Juliet's request, Tony Thomas read a letter from director Nicholas Meyer (see p. 9). Then Dr. Larry Livingston, dean of the School of Music at the University of Southern California, took the stage. He had met Rózsa only late in life—to express the school's thanks for Rózsa's donation of his precious collection of composer autograph letters. The collection is to be put on display at the school. Only a few colleagues survived from Rózsa's principal teaching years (1945-1955), but they told Livingston about Rózsa's concern to teach fundamental craft and technique—not any compositional model of

his own. Livingston testified strongly to the value of music from the heart, admitting that much of the academic world had gone off on hostile tangents during Rózsa's career. He saw people's enduring love of Rózsa's music as proof of the validity of traditional music making. Livingston's stirring words earned the strongest applause of the afternoon.

The final speaker, appropriately, was John Mauceri, who had done so much for the composer in later years. He recalled all the times he had brought Rozsa to the Hollywood Bowl and to the Sony Studios—and how these occasions always elicited the enthusiasm of the old man, as well as of the young musicians. On that first visit (for MADAME BOVARY), Rózsa's initial comment on the recorded take had been, "Bring the violas closer to the microphone." It was all part of an orchestra musicians' joke about wanting the ever-subversive viola section to be heard. From this Mauceri decided that Rózsa was an optimist. Hence Rózsa's comment when asked if he would like to come back sometime: "How about tomorrow?" Mauceri's most recent sessions had included a movement from the THIEF OF BADGAD Suite, recorded just a few days after the funeral. Everybody there was acutely aware of Rozsa's absence from the sessions. It was literally the first time these musicians had recorded any Rozsa without the man himself on the scene. It had been a painful moment for all. But the musicians had acquitted themselves well, and now Mauceri let them have their say. Everybody sat silent and moved as Rózsa himself offered the day's final word in a playback of the movement called "Eternal Love."

The Obituaries

PUBLISHED obituaries did not do the man justice. Could it have been otherwise? The *New York Times* carried only a brief note from the Associated Press on the 28th. A fuller story by Richard Severo followed on Saturday, headlined "Composer of Film Music," accompanied by an early 1950s studio portrait. It was long and respectful, but somehow gave the impression of a Hollywood composer who only occasionally dabbled in the concert world. The *Los Angeles Times* obituary by Myrna Oliver (7/28) was headlined "Classical and Hollywood Composer; Won Three Oscars." Ironically it was the LA paper that paid more attention to the concert career, quoting MR several times on the difficulty of the serious composer's life.

Shorter notices appeared in *Variety* (7/31), the *Hollywood Reporter* (8/29), and *People*. There was a mention in *Time*, but not in *Newsweek*. A notable paragraph in *Crisis* called Rózsa "one of our great 20th-century composers" (10/95). In England significant obituaries appeared in the London *Independent* (Laurence Staig, 7/31) and the *Times* (8/3). It was the musical press that paid more attention. Royal S. Brown's appreciation is in *Fanfare* 19:2 (Nov./Dec. '95):

Double Life . . . is one of the most captivating, eloquent, and honest books I have ever read. It was my good fortune to be able to talk to Rózsa Those conversations represented for me a wonderful and, in the case of the in-person interview, a sad link with a world, which with the passing of Miklós Rózsa has all but vanished from the present.

The *Gramophone* offered its respects in the November issue. The Spanish *Banda Sonora's* first issue (1/96) is a special tribute, with MR on its cover. *Films in Review* has a new twenty-page account of Rózsa's career by Bruce Eder in the March/April 1966 issue. (*FIRs* earlier "career article" by Ken Doeckel gave many of us our first extended look at Rózsa's life back in 1965; Doeckel was present at the Bel-Air remembrance.) John Stevens and the Australian Rózsa Society's tribute issue is BH5 (11/95). Schwann's *Opus* will feature tributes by John Mauceri, David Raksin, and Tony Thomas in its summer issue. There were special expressions of respect from the Hungarian Consulate General, Los Angeles City Council, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, to whom Rózsa had donated *The Denial of St. Peter* by Adam de Coster.

Later tributes included special mention in a number of record albums. Joel McNeely's "Hollywood '95" on Varese concludes with a valedictory look at a score of Hollywood 1940: the love music from LADY HAMILTON. And the very first clip in the Oscar telecast's annual necrology showed an excited, youthful Rózsa bounding up to the stage to accept his first (or second?) Academy Award. EMI's "Music from the Hollywood Bowl" is a five-disc archive of the old Capitol recordings. The collection is dedicated to Rózsa and includes a number of pieces conducted by him.

Finally, *Film Comment* featured Robert Horton's movie-oriented appreciation at the head of its Nov./Dec. issue. It is a quirky and opinionated piece but worth quoting:

The final jewel in the crown of the MGM years was *Ben-Hur*, of course. Rozsa's music for the epic seems expert but predictable, as befits that heavy-footed tight-belted official classic. But unforgettable, too: Everybody remembers what "ramming speed" sounds like in a slave ship, and the flourishes for the chariot race preparations are indelible. If we went back in a time machine to ancient Rome and heard their actual music, we'd probably complain that it didn't sound like Miklos Rozsa.

... It's hard not to conclude that Rozsa's achingly lovely concerto helped form this wonderful movie [*The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes*]. Rozsa gave Wilder the sound of loss, an air of Eastern European melancholy (did Holmes have a Hungarian in his family tree?), and the low humming of predestination. And genius, which Mr. Sherlock Holmes requires. That last is something that can't be faked. Billy Wilder knew that, with Miklos Rozsa, he wouldn't have to.

A GREAT PRIVILEGE

by Nicholas Meyer

The following letter was sent to Juliet Rozsa in August and read by Tony Thomas at the public Remembrance in September.

THIS is a hard letter to write. My memories of your father stretch back to a time far before I ever met him, or dreamed of meeting him—before, even, I had a very clear idea that he existed.

Let me explain. In 1958, when I was all of eight years old, an uncle of mine took me to see *KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE* at Radio City Music Hall. I can vividly recall the powerful impression the film made on me; not the least of the film's power (perhaps the most, as I look at it again!) was derived from the muscular musical score. I was too young to read or appreciate the significance of "credits," so your father's name and function escaped me.

But not his work. In years and films to come, I would succeed in linking the two and, as time passed, I began systematically to assemble your father on records. Indeed, by the time I first met him face to face in 1978—he was my first and only choice to score my directing debut, *TIME AFTER TIME*—I had assembled quite a Rózsa library on disc, a collection I lugged over to his house and asked him to autograph, album by album, before we got down to business.

What began with an extensive autograph session ripened into a working relationship and thence to a friendship of some duration and complexity, stretching over many years. What I discovered and responded to in Mikki was his civilized cosmopolitanism. His literacy and artistic sophistication appealed to my own range of interests and ideas. He was not merely a musical sophisticate, but the holder of a wide range of opinions regarding art, literature, culture, politics, and yes, even film, towards which he affected a kind of bemused condescension. He pretended not to be excited by the medium with which he collaborated so successfully, but I saw through his pretense without much difficulty and used to tease him about it. I knew he loved the movies, even as he pretended to be indifferent to them. I knew he was excited by the prospect of creating scores for them even as he wrinkled his nose over lesser examples of a genre. He would laugh when I punctured his pose and once startled me by describing a film score as a ballet written *after* the choreography was complete. No one who has not given the matter considerable thought would ever have come up with such a provocative way of viewing the work of writing music for films. I should add, incidentally, that this idea was not presented in any pejorative fashion but merely as a way of illustrating the challenge faced by the composer for films.

I took to visiting every Saturday afternoon and having tea at Montcalm Avenue. Sometimes members of my family came along, sometimes there were other quests, sometimes it was just the two of us. What was said was, I suspect, of no great consequence, but nevertheless proved mutually nourishing. Speaking of nourishment, Mikki would always try to get rid of some delicious cookies and I, cherishing my vanishing waistline, would try not to succumb to his hospitable blandishments.

He didn't suffer fools lightly, your father, so I was encouraged by the fact that I was invited to hang around on a more or less steady basis, week after week, month after month, year after year. When my family left for Europe in 1987, for what was to be an extended period abroad, we postponed our departure by one day in order to be present at Mikki's eightieth birthday festivities. Privately alarmed by the state of his health, I knew this was to be the last time I would see him.

How capricious the workings of fate! Impossible to imagine that Mikki would live another eight years or the unfair circumstances in which much of that time would pass, it was miraculous to realize that within that failing

body, your father's mind remained utterly alert, his memory intact, his spirit of inquiry largely undimmed. I cannot figure out if this was a blessing or a curse. It didn't seem very fair to me I must say, but your father made the best of his circumstances. Listening endlessly to books on tape, no bed or room was able to confine his curiosity.

Death punches a hole in the world—though some deaths punch bigger holes than others. It must be sad that your father's death created a veritable Grand Canyon. People are not interchangeable. The values he espoused, the talent he possessed, the charm he exerted—all these are not to be found in one place or person again.

I know this may be of scant comfort to you, but artists have one advantage over most people: their work grants them a kind of immortality denied the rest of us. When I listen to your father's music, I am again in the presence of a sophisticated lover—and creator—of beauty. I can rejoice once more as if seeing him and hearing him, which in a literal sense his music enables me to do. The infinite variety of his work—so well represented on records and CDs—allows me to re-experience his generous spirit, his wit, his craft, and his heart, in a pleasing multiplicity of facets.

Would that I could say the same of my own father. I am fortunate that as the author of several books and monographs, he left me some analogous record of his persona, but nothing to equal the sheer volume by which your father may always be remembered and known.

I count it a great privilege to have enjoyed his society and feel fortunate, as well, that a film I made had the benefit of music by him. I will miss our exchanges on Saturday afternoons, but I am comforted by the thought that if I wish to hear him speak—speak at length on a variety of subjects and in different moods—I have only to turn on my stereo or go to the movies.

My best to you and your family.

WORDS ON BEHALF OF THE COMMON FAN

by John Fitzpatrick

Spoken at the public memorial service on 3 September 1995.

Let me say a few words on behalf of the ordinary music lovers in Dr. Rózsa's life, the common "fans." You know the people I mean. They are mostly young—although some of us are not as young as we used to be. Many of us don't know too much about music—although that hasn't stopped us from writing long-winded articles and reviews. We are always asking for something—a tape, a photograph, an autograph, a bit of information, a new recording. And yet we are never quite satisfied when we get it. We always seem to be complaining that the instrumentation has been altered, the tempo ad-

justed, and a concert ending has been devised—in short, that the music doesn't sound exactly as it did fifty-five years ago.

And, yes, we are—many of us—prone to unfashionable displays of religiosity. Our deepest emotions have been stirred by the music in some biblical movies, and we often express ourselves in an evangelical language that is not currently in favor in the academic world of the East Coast, where I come from, and still less in the hard-nosed business world of Hollywood.

All in all, we fans can be a difficult and even disagreeable lot.

Miklós Rózsa was everything the fans were not: cultured, urbane, Olympian, perhaps sometimes aloof. But I am here to tell you that Dr. Rózsa cared about these ordinary people, that he reached out to them in his life as well as his music, and that he made a difference in our lives. Let me tell you a few stories to show you what I mean.

Let me tell you about the first time I met him. It was Philadelphia in 1968—perhaps the pinnacle of his career. His new Piano Concerto, written for Leonard Pennario, had achieved much success, and now he himself would conduct it for the first time, with the Philadelphia Orchestra, one of the finest in the world. I remember how we came down from New York to attend this great event. I was with Page Cook (now also sadly departed) and a fellow some of you may know named Myron Bronfeld (who, incredibly, died the same day as Dr. Rózsa). The music may have been over my head in those days—I mostly loved the film music—but I knew it was fiercely exciting. So we all cheered ourselves hoarse and clapped our hands raw, and then we headed for the greenroom. And there he was, the great man himself. Flushed, awash in perspiration. I remember his enormous smile stretching from ear to ear. (In those days all the photographs we knew were formal portraits of the "serious musician"; it was a revelation to see this other side of the man that is now more familiar to us from Nick's later pictures.) As I was ushered into the maestro's presence, I suddenly realized that I had nothing to say! All I could do was blurt out, "I think you're the greatest composer in the world!" And Dr. Rózsa said with that deep and hearty laugh, "Oh, ho, let's not exaggerate!" And that was all. I stood there like a fool for the next few minutes while the others did all the talking. But somehow Dr. Rózsa's occasional sidelong glances persuaded me that he cared.

Cut to four years later, New York City in 1972. I had gone to graduate school, I had become a little more articulate, and I had founded a Society and a journal in honor of Miklós Rózsa. It was something he had discouraged before, but for some reason he allowed us to go forward in the 1970s. Now he was passing through New York on his way to Europe and was looking forward to meeting me for what was really the first time. (I am sure he did not remember me from Philadelphia.) With more enthusiasm than prudence, I let word of the visit slip to several among the Society's growing roster of local members. Naturally, they begged to meet the maestro. What to do? When I mentioned my predicament to Dr. Rózsa, his response was unhesitating: "Bring all your friends." So I invited the rather odd sextet, and he took us all to lunch at the Russian Tea Room, which was and is a very expensive restaurant next door to Carnegie Hall. There he regaled us for hours with those stories he so loved to tell. (I don't need to recount them here. You all know what a great raconteur he was.) s

And so it went for the next decade and more—for as long as his health endured. Whenever there was a special event (the *Tripartita* in Washington,

the Viola Concerto in Pittsburgh, a modest concert in Ontario, a master class at a small college in Ohio, a film studies conference that we helped to organize at Indiana University), a group of us from the surrounding states—and sometimes from as far as London or Vancouver—would make our pilgrimage to see the great man. And he would always make some time for us—usually on the last day of the affair, after the formal banquets and public ceremonies. In a hotel lobby or somebody's modest apartment, he would lend his presence to a dozen or so of us and show by his attention that he really did care what we thought. His courtesy was endless. Occasionally somebody would get out of line and become too demanding or pretentious. I would sometimes apologize for such behavior in a letter. But Dr. Rózsa's response was always the same: "I enjoyed meeting *all* your friends."

I was in a unique position at these special times: I had the privilege of being a kind of intermediary between Dr. Rózsa and his fans. I saw how seriously he would respond to the probing intellectual questions and how courteously he would deflect the inevitable faux pas. (I remember a young man in Ohio who was introduced to him and offered that "you look so much older than in your photographs"!) Observing these young people, I would sometimes sense a hunger, a need, or a hurt in their lives. In all our lives, really, because music is the art that speaks most directly to our innermost selves. And I would think of the fans who couldn't be there because they were too far away or too shy or too poor or sick or afraid to travel.

I think now in particular of a man named David. David lives in Alabama. He has a crippling disease. I don't know what disease it is, and I don't know if David is young or old. I've never spoken to him, for he feels unable to communicate over the telephone and he always has an intermediary contact me. A couple of years ago, David expressed a desire to visit Dr. Rózsa at his home. That struck me as a bad idea: if David found it difficult to communicate with me, how could he possibly talk to an elderly man who was frail in body and impaired in speech? But David persisted. So I put him in touch with Juliet, and she set up a visit. Let me read you what David told me about that visit:

It was one of the most moving experiences of my life. Only now am I beginning to realize how fortunate I was to meet Mr. Rózsa. I love the *man*, and not just his music. I consider Miklós Rózsa one of the most courteous, unpretentious men I have ever met. He had a very kind demeanor the whole time I was with him—even when I was asking some rather personal questions! My heart has been satisfied that I shall see him in heaven, and I hope he's the head of heaven's music department! I told him I'd be very disappointed if he was not! He smiled about that!

Two or three times during our visit Mr. Rózsa gave both of us deep, moving glances with those eyes of his. It was almost as if he were looking down into our very souls. . . . I shall remember the light in his eyes as long as I live.

David is not unique. There are many of us like him in our need, our incompleteness, our hunger for something more. And Miklós Rózsa, in his music and in his life, helped to fill our needs, ease our pain, satisfy our hunger. We have all felt his piercing gaze. We are all in his debt.

If there is one image I would leave with you, let it be the famous one that opens Miklós Rózsa's greatest work (at least his greatest dramatic work). Think of the Sistine Chapel creation fresco that we see at the start of BEN-HUR. And think how the image is repeated at the well in Nazareth. (Not everybody notices this, but look closely the next time you see the film: Jesus' hand reaches out to Judah Ben-Hur's in an obvious visual echo of that very gesture.) Think of these images and of the majestic and tender music that accompanies them. I believe it is not presumptuous to say that Miklós Rózsa somehow participated in that great creative act of giving spirit and life and healing. I don't mean an easy healing or an obvious freedom. Ben-Hur goes on to years of slavery; Jesus goes on to Calvary; David is still crippled in body; and Miklós Rózsa suffered a long and debilitating illness before he finally found his rest. But in a very real way, in his music and in his life, Miklós Rózsa did comfort the sick and give freedom to prisoners. It remains for us who have been so blessed by his life to go forward and spread the good news.

A PERSONAL TRIBUTE

by Jeffrey Dane

IT was largely because of Miklós Rózsa that I chose to devote my life to music.

If I hadn't gotten to know his music during my formative years, my life would have taken a quite different turn, and I would not be the same person I am today.

I met him for the first time on Saturday, June 10, 1972, with John Fitzpatrick and some other of the earliest members of the Miklós Rózsa Society in attendance. The lump I felt in my throat when I first heard Dr. Rózsa's music thirteen years earlier returned on this June day as I shook his hand for the first time. I prize very highly a number of personalized photos of Dr. Rózsa and me, as well as the baton he used at his Hamilton, Ontario, performances in 1977. What I treasure even more are his autograph sketches and final manuscript draft of his Sonata per Flauto Solo, which he sent me, an unsolicited gift, shortly before the Pittsburgh premiere of his Viola Concerto in May 1984. But what I cherish *most* of all is that he called me his friend.

Here speaks a Romantic. I make no pretensions at having been "a close personal friend" of Miklós Rózsa, though I do wish I had been. My initial view of him was that of a young student who admired him tremendously. I met and spoke with him on eight occasions, all of which were special for me. Though I was introduced to his music with BEN-HUR, further investigation revealed it was the tip of a musical iceberg: ultimately more than forty works for the concert hall, fewer in number than his film scores but deeper in significance. Having spent time with this man is analogous to hearing a true masterwork: the rewards are many and great for those who seek them.

My study of his music contributed to my own growth as a musician. My friendship with him contributed to my growth as a human being, and the warmth of his music is a clear reflection of him as a man.

There are of course many people who knew him even in this casual way. It's very pleasing—it's even a source of *pride* for me to know I am one of them. Until late in life, he seemed to accomplish more every year than most of us do in our combined lifetimes. In my personal "weather," he represented important moments which had a profound effect on the climate of my life. While most of us are just transiting history, Miklós Rózsa is part of it—and that a keeper of the flame has now left us saddens me.

SYMPHONIC CINEMA

by A. C. Robbins

PROGRAMS of live film music with screened movie excerpts have been touring the country with increasing success lately. See *PMS* 51 for an account of one of the earliest such events. The restored ALEXANDER NEVSKY was perhaps the fountainhead of the modern movement. But October's program of "Emigre Composers in Hollywood" was surely the highwater mark of the trend. John Mauceri was making his New York Philharmonic debut. The event was a liberation from the summer "pops" concert world and brought indoors to take its rightful place as part of a regular subscription concert series in New York City's Avery Fisher Hall. Fifty-two years after the Theme, Variations, and Finale marked Leonard Bernstein's famous debut—and only three months after the composer himself had passed from the scene—this music would take center stage once again. Nicholas and Juliet Rozsa and Ernst Korngold were in attendance. An accompanying display case featured correspondence, photographs, the BEN-HUR Oscar, and other memorabilia. Coming so soon after July's sadness, it was a night to remember.

The large live/film concert repertory was here pared down to a few of its finest exemplars: THE ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD, MADAME BOVARY, and BEN-HUR. From each of the two composers there would be a concert piece as well: Korngold's post-Hollywood *Symphonic Serenade*, Op. 39, and Rózsa's pre-Hollywood Theme, Variations, and Finale, Op. 13, the very piece with which Leonard Bernstein had made his famous debut fifty-two years earlier with this same orchestra. (And also the piece which John Mauceri had taken to Rózsa's conservatory town of Leipzig only a few weeks earlier.) Mauceri has programmed the work often at the Hollywood Bowl. Once he even offered an unannounced encore of the finale at a film music concert—"just to give the audience a sense of what Rózsa's concert music sounded like." The Bowl orchestra was able to do this because the players now have the music in their permanent repertory.

The *Serenade* was notable for the gorgeous string tone of the Philharmonic players. Plainly the New York-born Mauceri had found a rapport with the famously variable home town orchestra. His interpretation, based on archival tapes of Korngold himself, was far more luxuriously distended and drawn out than the Werner Andreas Albert performance on cpo. At times I thought the music outlasted its inspiration. *Robin Hood* followed (Archery Contest and Coronation-Finale). It took a moment to find the right balance of

recorded dialogue and live music, but ultimately the brilliance of Korngold's writing combined with the glory of the unfaded Technicolor on the screen to make a wash of heroic sound that swept away all reservations.

I have never heard the Theme and Variations sound out as powerfully as under Mauceri. The work has been recorded and broadcast many times, and the performing tradition is fairly "narrow." Some great music admits a wide range of interpretations, but there are other pieces that almost seem to have all the guidelines built in. Rózsa's concert music in general, and this segmented piece in particular, seems to belong to the latter category. I have heard it under Walter, Bernstein, Rózsa, Ormandy, and now Mauceri. With the exception of Walter's lengthy *luftpausen* between variations, all performances move in the same general direction. The difference is in the rhythmic vigor and the quality of the playing. Suffice it to say that Mauceri matched the composer's own rhythmic inflection and that the NYPO on a good night far surpassed any orchestra Rózsa ever led in this piece. Sixty-two years after its premiere, Rózsa's Opus 13 may have had its greatest performance. (Actually Opus 13a—the work was revised in the 1930s [or in 1966?] and none of us has ever heard the original version. Here is a project for an archivist.)

From MADAME BOVARY we heard the entire ballroom scene, prefaced by just enough of the preceding episode to set up the dramatic situation. As in ROBIN HOOD, the recorded dialogue was problematical. Some lines were dropped altogether, and others failed to cut through the scoring. The loss of certain evocative sound effects (as when the a woman's fan sweeps the chandelier) was regrettable. But the waltz swept all before it in the evening's most challenging bit of audiovisual coordination. The musicians, of course, had to match the original tempo precisely in order to hit all the visual cues, most famously the breaking of the windows. This was no easy task, and only on the third night did Mauceri achieve perfect synchronization. It was a thrilling moment. Afterward he spoke of his almost having to "become" Miklós Rózsa on the podium. He could actually feel how the beats must have been established by an original conductor with much shorter arms than Mauceri's!

BEN-HUR was the conclusion: Charioteers' marches (both of them), Nativity, and the Burning Desert. The first scene was not entirely authentic, of course. A symphony orchestra replaced the original brass band, and there was some nimble maneuvering to make up for the brief cuts in the sound track version. The Nativity had visual problems (the stage lighting tended to wash out the dark colors). But the lyricism of the music made an effective middle section to this three-part suite. One missed the great eruption of the movie's fanfare and prelude, for here the Nativity is followed by the entire "Burning Desert" episode. The outline of the music necessarily followed the original, although one sometimes heard changes in the instrumentation, such as the added xylophone during the desert march. There is little dialogue in this scene, and Turner Entertainment had been able to supply unmixed dialogue tracks for a more effective aural synthesis than was possible with the older movies. The result was thrilling musical theater. The music sounded out in the original tempo but with a far richer sound than the M-G-M band could ever have given Rozsa in 1959. The first night, my eyes were riveted to the screen. Later I was able to enjoy the orchestral spectacle as well. Note how the violas quietly support the organ at key moments. A concert ending was provided in lieu of the film's Mediterranean segue. As the

lights came up, Mauceri let the players rise to a thrilling musical climax. It was music drama as exciting as anything I have heard at the nearby Metropolitan Opera. The audience loved it.

And even some of the musicians were moved. I spoke to an orchestra acquaintance afterward and wondered how the Philharmonic players felt about being relegated to a pit-like role—even to the point of accompanying the mooing of a cow! These words from a brass player seem to indicate that great film music does not lack respect at the Philharmonic:

I can guarantee that I enjoyed performing the concerts as much as you enjoyed hearing them. . . . I can still remember as a child the first time I viewed *Ben-Hur*. My father was stationed on a military base in Heidelberg, Germany. There I went with my brothers and friends to see the truly epic film. I was a beginning piano student at that time and was very aware of the sensational musical score. Thirty-three years later my perspective has changed considerably but the music remains just as powerful and moving as it was at my first viewing. My ten-year-old son was able to attend the Saturday night performance and after the concert demanded that we rent *Ben-Hur* from our local video store. It was wonderful to see the film capture his imagination the same way it did mine at his age.

QUO VADIS, MRS?

by John Fitzpatrick

THE Society has faltered in recent years. Now is the time to think about renewal.

The Miklós Rózsa Society was founded in 1971, reached its peak (in terms of membership and publishing activity) around 1978, and has been trailing off ever since. By "trailing off" I refer not to the quality of the journal—*PMS* 50 and 51 can stand with the best film music publications anywhere—but to the obvious decline of energy and vigor. There are many reasons for this: Dr. Rózsa's failing health, the rise of so many other film music publications, the loss of some valued collaborators, and my own editorial slowdown and "burnout." For many years, I wondered whether I could sustain the Society beyond the passing of its master.

Today I find that I must. Miklós Rózsa is—and always will be—a part of my life. It is a part that I have to share.

But a renewed MRS cannot ride on my shoulders alone. I have given the publication professional (if rather staid) form and a scholarly standard. There is much else that others can do better. To renew the Society, we must return to our roots. To quote from *PMS* 1, "It's your Society." That sentence has been repeated more often than it has been honored. It is time to harvest the measure of goodwill that I know (from your letters) exists within the organization.

Very well then, what can you do?

Let's begin by admitting that the MRS has always had a split personality. Yes, the phrase "double life" might even be apropos. I often describe *PMS* as falling somewhere between a scholarly journal and a "fanzine" (though I loathe the word). Some of our readers are highly sophisticated or at least willing to challenge themselves to increase their understanding of film and music. Others are just simple folks whose hearts have been touched. They want nothing more than to share their feelings and to keep abreast of current news. A scholar (though not, alas, a musician) and an encyclopedist, I have tended to favor the "high culture" side of the MRS duality. (I can't help it—words like "duality" really do come naturally to me!) Dr. Rózsa's own mandate encouraged this aspect of the Society. He knew that the Max Steiner Music Society would be an inevitable model, and he did not conceal his distaste for the some of the more mawkish manifestations of that admirable and trailblazing enterprise.

So we opted for the quasi-scholarly route. At times we did very well with it indeed. Frank DeWald's full score analyses would do any journal proud. But Frank can't carry every issue, and the cupboard had grown rather bare of late. *PMS* 52 had a tired feeling. The fact that I wrote almost the entire issue may have had something to do with that.

Very well then, we have to broaden our net. That means listening to our members as well as teaching them. Here's my current "shopping list." If you have entirely different ideas, please let us hear them.

Editorial. Twice we sought a new editor, without success. Failing that, a co-editor would be welcome. Does anybody want to specialize in a single area—book reviews? record reviews? current news?

Production. Can somebody take over the desktop publication process? *PMS* is currently composed in WordPerfect (we have access to Microsoft Word as well). WP gives pleasing results for text. But graphics are not its strength (nor my own), and WP is not a true desktop layout and design program. Somebody with knowledge and equipment could liven up the publication considerably. Adding more photos and artwork can be expensive, but creative use of scanning facilities could help to keep costs down. Above all, freeing me from production responsibilities should unleash a lot of pent-up editorial energy.

Art. Graphics and pictures make any publication more attractive. *PMS* has been almost puritanical on this point. The truth of the matter is that I think most pictures of movie stars and album covers are a waste of space and money. But what do the readers think?

Printing. Presently I take the pasted-up booklet to a local printer and let them print, collate, and bind—at New York prices. It is possible that somebody else could do this job more efficiently, especially if that person can also handle distribution.

Distribution. Stuffing, stamping, labeling, and mailing constitute a big chore. Even though the address labels are created directly from the database, there is still a good deal of hand work here. Certain people get renewal no-

tices, tape information sheets, etc. Enclosures and foreign mailings dictate varying postage. Ideally, I would like to see somebody take on this entire job. The completed issue could be shipped to any location. Absent a full-scale volunteer, my secondary appeal is to New York members. If you are interested in the occasional mailing party, please give me a call (673-2498). Many hands make short work. There is also room for somebody willing to stockpile back issues and help distribute them on occasion.

Administration. For some years the membership database and mailing labels were maintained by Gene Kohlenberg of Rochester. It was a valuable silent contribution. Recently I have taken these responsibilities back upon myself. Microsoft Access has enabled me to make some happy improvements. In all respects except for timeliness (there's never enough of that!), I think this part of the operation is in good shape. But you never know. Ideas and suggestions are always welcome!

Finances. Occasional donations have helped us in recent years, but our finances have not been seriously challenged. With a publication schedule as slow as ours, we simply haven't been spending much money. That may change if we increase or publishing schedule. So, yes, donations are still welcome. Conceivably, larger adjustments may have to be made down the road.

News. Reporting current events is an area where we have really fallen down. There are several reasons. Dr. Rózsa himself was really his own best press agent. He knew when some obscure provincial German orchestra would be doing one of his works and he always told us about the event-sometimes in time for us to give advance notice. Today there are more performances than ever before, but nobody seems to be keeping track. John Waxman is a valuable source on the film scores, but concert music activity seems to occur in a publicity void. We need to do a more aggressive job of news gathering. Help and advice are actively solicited. We could even afford to have a separate news editor.

Letters to the Editor. This popular feature has been neglected in recent years, but we shall try to change that. Keep 'em coming. Even unpublished letters are appreciated.

Thematic issues. It occurs to me that people would be more ready to contribute to an issue if they are explicitly invited. And the best way to get relevant comments is to let people know the topic in advance. OK, here goes. In addition to news and special features, each issue of *PMS* will focus on one pre-announced film score and one concert work. Everybody is welcome to contribute to these forums. If a full-scale score analysis is submitted, you can bet that it will run in the issue. But with or without such a feature we will still make room for personal encounters ("the first time I heard . . ."). The making of film, its critical and popular reception, the recordings reviews or "collector's" anecdotes), or just personal responses and appreciations. Each issue will be a kind of dossier on a given work. There will be room for a kind of "scrapbook" approach in which bits of everybody's knowledge and experience will be shared. The process will have the advantage of forcing us to explore some of the odd corners of the repertory. Does anybody have a few

words to say about THE LIGHT TOUCH or "A Madrigal of Spring"? Some day we'll find out! The planned topics—open to suggestion and revision—will be announced in advance. For starters:

PMS 54

Film: JULIUS CAESAR, celebrating, in particular, the landmark recording from Intrada.

Concert Piece: The Concerto for String Orchestra, Opus 17. (One of MR's greatest works, and one of his most frequently recorded, but rarely the subject of critical discussion.)

Consider this is a special for call for writing on the above subjects. But don't worry, PMS 54 will not neglect the current recordings and other news of 1996.

Record Reviews. PMS has not emphasized reviews of current albums. There are a number of interesting reasons for this. I shall detail them another time. But at this time of renewal, I would like to encourage reviewers to submit their work. "We have room for a few small ghosts."

"Great Moments." Here's another feature idea I've been toying with for years: Although few people have the ability, or the time, to analyze entire works, lots of us have something to say on a particular scene or movement. Why not encourage "close readings" of such moments? Write an appreciation of just one neglected scene from a film score. Perhaps something that has never reached a commercial recording. Or take a single movement or episode in a concert work. Using the CD's time readout, commentators lacking access, to score may still be able to really get into the music and take their readers farther than they ever thought possible.

Publicity and Advertising. I've never been much for beating the drums or soliciting advertising. The achievements of Luc van de Ven at *Soundtrack!* and Lukas Kendall at *Film Score Monthly* fill me with awe. There's a part of me that actually likes to keep the MRS small: "fit audience, though few," in Milton's words. (That puritanical streak again!) Should we explore broader channels? If so, somebody else must lead the way. Here, as in so many areas, I await your ideas for renewal.

EDITOR'S EASY CHAIR

THE title is courtesy of William Dean Howells, who used to edit *Harper's Monthly*. The idea is off-the-cuff commentary, freed from the shackles of high seriousness. "Some Fun and Adventure at Last," to borrow a Preston Jones review title from 1978. I don't mean to seem irreverent during this year of mourning, but I think MR might have appreciated those words. He wrote serious music, but he meant for people to enjoy it. Even "serious" editors get to join the party sometimes. (Why should Lukas Kendall have *all* the fun?)

What to say about the flood of recordings over this past year? The loudest fanfares had sounded for Koch's EL CID. Perhaps that's why it seems the biggest disappointment. Three-quarters of the selections here merely replicate the old MGM album—in an inferior performance! That's a harsh assessment, so let me qualify it right away. Sedares's performance is weighty and true to the music. His orchestra is richer-sounding than the Munich group of 1961. (And it's *much* better in "Coronation" than the Nuremberg players of ca. 1986!) The playing is fine, and the musicodramatic continuity has been well thought out. But think what's missing! The entire opening narrative, including Moorish themes we've never heard before and the introduction of Rodrigos's own theme . . . the arrival at Burgos . . . the assembly of the court . . . the prelude to the assassination . . . the siege of Calahorra . . . Ben Yusuf's night ride . . . the start of the banishment . . . the dawn rallying of the knights and first act finale. . . . You get the point. I'm glad that Koch is promoting this album so well, but do they really have to say "complete"? Will we have to wait another 35 years to hear the rest of the music (some of it completely unknown)? It's a great pity. When Sedares does give us new music (fight with Gormaz, the wedding night, the girl at the well), the results are splendid. And of course the performance here is not subject to invidious comparisons. So why not more of it?

In a word, the budget. Much of the old music survived, while the new material had to be expensively edited, orchestrated, and copied. Frank DeWald has spoken with some of the principals and will present a fuller report in *PMS* 54. By that time we may be more reconciled to the Koch album. The great musical tapestry may still be torn, but Koch lets us enjoy more of it than ever before. This is the CID we shall listen to. "I shall learn to love it."

Sedares is on firmer ground with the concert music. The *Sinfonia Concertante* marks the last disc premiere of a major Rózsa orchestral piece. If you've heard the 1966 Chicago premiere (a longer version), you will be disappointed that the New Zealanders lack the CSO's explosive energy. But most listeners will not know the Chicago broadcast. And even those who do will appreciate the beautiful clarity of the new version. For the first time the contrapuntal textures of this densely textured masterpiece are clearly laid out in modern sound. And in the brooding sonorities of the Viola Concerto, Sedares and Paul Silverthorne have no peers. I can't put my finger on the

reasons, but this version moves me as no other performance. Here is an album to treasure.

I've scarcely scratched the surface of the new material. Silva Screen's compilation is a knockout—really fresh-sounding interpretations for a change. It's sure to be controversial. And Intrada deserves some kind of award for its *four* Rózsa albums over the past year. Daniel Robbins's piano collections poke into some really odd corners of the repertory, with sometimes poetic insights. Bruce Broughton's *IVANHOE* is a sturdy retooling of the old war-horse. But *JULIUS CAESAR*, as reconstructed by Robbins and conducted by Broughton, is more than that. This recording uncovers a masterpiece that we never even knew was there. It turns the world upside down. More about all the new recordings in *PMS* 54. But especially about *JULIUS CAESAR*. It's the album of the year—and perhaps of the decade.

NEWS (May 1996)

Concerts

The Little Orchestra's (New York City) third Sound Tracks concert, in March, featured David Buechner in the *Spell-bound Concerto*. Although there was a genuine theremin on hand, its contribution was barely audible. (The instrument is difficult to balance in concert.) It was the whirlwind playing of the piano part that made the performance memorable. The Sound Tracks series has featured not only familiar repertory by Williams, Waxman, and Rózsa but also such rarities as Silvestre Revueltas's *NIGHT OF THE MAYAS* and Victor Herbert's *THE FALL OF A NATION*—both from lost movies.

At the Seville film music festival in October/November, Leo Brower conducted a tribute to Miklós Rózsa. Other notable concerts have included music from *BEN-HUR* (Rockford, Illinois, Symphony in March); music from *THE LOST WEEKEND* (Utah Symphony, Salt Lake City, in March); and the *Sinfonia Concertante* in Fargo, North Dakota on 28/29 September 1996 (Jamie Laredo and Sharon Robinson, solosits). For an account of the New York Philharmonic's October 1995 concerts see p. 15.

In preparation by Daniel Robbins (succeeding Christopher Palmer): new performing editions of choral-orchestral suites from *Quo VADIS*, *BEN-HUR*, and *KING OF KINGS*. Each suite is to run over twenty minutes. Choral episodes are to be featured, but significant orchestral passages will serve as connective tissue, Arrangements to hew to the original scores as closely as possible. No definite performance plans have been announced.

Journals

Add another name to the growing list of large-scale, illustrated, professional-looking film music publications. *Music for the Movies* is edited by John Williams (no, not that one!), and its distribution is handled by Silva Screen Productions, Ltd. Issue no. 8 features 98 triple-column pages, every one of them carrying illustrations or advertising as well as substantial text. There are articles on Thomas Newman, Hammer film music (including a close analysis of Benjamin Frankel's twelve-tone *CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF*); Laurie Johnson, John Barry; Michael J. Lewis; and many others, including a detailed account of the *JULIUS*

CAESAR recording sessions. There is even advertising from the Sinfonia of London in case you are looking for an orchestra to record your music! Heavy emphasis throughout on British music for film and television. Address: The Garden Flat, 2 Upper Belgrave Road, Clifton, Bristol, BS8 2XQ, England. Nominal frequency is quarterly. Rates are £10 in the UK, £14 in the US), but credit cards are accepted

John Stevens's Australian Rozsa Society has continued with unabated fervor, publishing its BH5 (memorial) issue in November. Address: Flat 11, 436 Macauley Street, Albury, NSW 2640, Australia.

National Public Radio produced a two-hour broadcast in January on *Ben-Hur: The Epic Film Scores of Miklós Rózsa*. Featured were interviews with David Raksin, Fred Steiner, Charlton Heston, and Leonard Maltin. During the same month there was also a BBC2 radio program on Rózsa and Bernard Herrmann, entitled *A Double Life, A Singular Skill*.

Miklós Rózsa's *Double Life*, is officially out of print, but you may be able to find a copy via the Internet. Contact Amazon.com Books.

Recordings

Koch's spring bounty from conductor James Sedares and the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra is fairly overwhelming: a lavishly reconstructed EL CID (3-7304-2 HI) and a pairing of the *Sinfonia Concertante* (Op. 29; disc premiere) and the Viola Concerto (Op. 34) (3-7340-2 HI). Soloists are Igor Gruppman (violin), Paul Silverthorne (viola), and Richard Boch (cello). (Incidentally, the Jan./Feb. *Fanfare* offers unconfirmed word of yet another EL CID, to be recorded in Berlin as part of a BMG film music series.

Koch's series (now billed as "The Complete Orchestral Music") continues with the Violin Concerto, Op. 24, which was recorded in New Zealand by Igor Gruppman in April. It will be coupled with the reissued Concerto for String Orchestra, Op. 17, and the Andante for

String Orchestra, Op. 22a (which is actually Christopher Palmer's orchestration of the second movement of the String Quartet, Op. 22. Both were performed the Berlin Symphony Orchestra under by Isaiah Jackson. Also recorded by Sedares in April was an album of film noir scores from the 1940s: DOUBLE INDEMNITY, THE LOST WEEKEND, THE KILLERS.

Intrada's Excalibur series was launched by two lavish productions: IVANHOE (MAF 7055D) and JULIUS CAESAR (MAF 7056D). Both scores were reconstructed by Daniel Robbins and performed by the Sinfonia of London under Bruce Broughton. The former is virtually complete except for the few fanfares; the latter is more than complete, giving us a first hearing of a great deal of music not heard in the film itself.

John Williams's forthcoming Boston Pops collection of music for the Olympic Games will include the Parade of the Charioteers.

Silva Screen 1056 ("The Epic Film Music of Miklós Rózsa") features Kenneth Alwyn and the City of Prague Philharmonic Orchestra in new recordings of repertory both familiar (MADAME BOVARY, Quo VADIS, BEN-HUR, KING OF KINGS, EL CID, SODOM AND GOMORRAH) and unfamiliar (BEAU BRUMMEL, ALL THE BROTHERS WERE VALIANT, THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD). The same label will issue a new recording of the Cello Concerto, Op. 32, together with Gerard Schurmann's *The Gardens of Exile*. The solosit is Peter Rejtow, performing with the Pecs Hungarian Symphony under Howard Williams. (This will be our first opportunity to hear Rózsa performed by a Hungarian orchestra.)

Intrada 7064D is Daniel Robbins's "Miklós Rózsa: Music for Piano, Vol. 2": Music from LYDIA; SO PROUDLY WE HAIL; THE WOMAN OF THE TOWN; THE RED HOUSE; DESERT FURY; THE BRIBE; EAST SIDE, WEST SIDE; THE SEVENTH SIN; BEAU BRUMMEL; as well as some of the light music from the Paris years.

EMI Angel 59932 reissues material from a legendary album of the early

1950s: THE RED HOUSE, the (orchestral) *Spellbound Concerto*, and the *Quo Vadis Suite*. The latter, in four movements, is perhaps MR's most elaborate symphonic presentation of a film score. "Ave Caesar" is the original recording—and the only complete version—of the elaborated triumphal march. "Romanza" is an extraordinary symphonic fantasy on the ygia and Petronius themes. "Arabesque" (inexplicably missing from this reissue) includes the "Assyrian Dance" and the "Sicilia Antiqua"). "Quo Vadis, Domine" develops the title theme and concludes with the Christian hymn. The new CD also reissues the BEN-HUR, KING OF KINGS, and EL CID tracks that Rozsa recorded in Munich in the late 1960s (formerly on Capitol and Angel LPs).

EMI's "Music from the Hollywood Bowl" is a five-disc compilation of past Bowl recordings from the Capitol/EMI archives. A number of MR's recordings

are included (CDZE 7243050 688600205).

A Flapper CD from Britain reissues two of the early SPELLBOUND albums (Selznick and ARA) as well as the original RCA *Jungle Book Suite*, narrated by Sabu. In the U.S. this album will appear on Pearl.

Bayer CD 100058 from Germany is a volin recital by Susanne Lautenbacher that includes the Opus 40 Sonata as well as music by Bartok and Kodaly.

Last, but certainly not least: BEN-HUR: "The Original Motion Picture Sound-track" (2 discs; Rhino R2 72197). It's real, it's virtually complete, it's spectacularly produced (with fifty-page booklet), it sounds terrific, and it's what people have been dreaming about for thirty-seven years. We expect to be talking about this one for a long time to come.

Charles Timberlake called and told me to turn on the Telemundo (Spanish language) cable channel. I did and they were running a dubbed version of EL CID. The interesting thing is that much of Rózsa's music had been thrown out and replaced by Rimsky Korsakov's *Scheherazade*

- Ronald Bohn, Bakersfield, Calif.

Focus in *PMS 54*: Concerto for String Orchestra and *JULIUS CAESAR*.

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