



FILM MUSIC NOTES

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FOREWORD:

"WHEN NATIONS CAN SING TOGETHER THEY WILL NOT WAR WITH ONE ANOTHER"

"AMERICAN UNITY THROUGH MUSIC," the theme of the recent Music Teachers National Convention held in Chicago. "MOBILIZE FOR ALL-OUT VICTORY," the theme of the NATIONAL FEDERATION OF MUSIC CLUBS, an organization of over one half million members. Mrs. Guy P. Gannett, National President says, "Music is almost as truly an angel of mercy in days of darkness as is the Red Cross. The one heals men's bodies; the other their souls. Every music club should be an oasis of musical and spiritual refreshment for people during these days; a center of friendliness and understanding. Organize more community singing under good leadership. Stress music that will increase patriotism and loyalty and upbuild faith. Music lightens the step and makes the heart glad. Let us lift our voices in a triumphant chorus expressive of courage and faith."

The National Chairman of Motion Picture Music and her chairmen wish to do their part in this extensive program. Every year music is becoming more important in establishing mood and pointing up dramatic action and the greatest musicians in the world are providing this music. For every good picture, whether of feature-length or short, good music must now be provided. While much of it is original, some of the fine old melodies of early days in our American history are being brought back to remind us of our great heritage. THE STAR SPANGLED BANNER has perhaps not been fully appreciated heretofore, but today every word of it is full of meaning.

Grace Widney Mabee, Editor Film Music Notes

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COMMENTS AND OPEN FORUM

"I feel that your 'Film Music Notes' is a bulletin which is filling a long-felt need. In public school and college music teaching, for years we have wished for such guidance to help us make the best use of the wealth of music available in and through motion pictures. Our budding composers and arrangers will certainly profit by these reviews. The audiences everywhere will find greater understanding and enjoyment of music in the films." Marguerite V. Hood, Music Department, University of Southern California.

"Film Music Notes furnishes a guide for cinema appreciation second to none. Books on the subject unfortunately do not guide the student or layman to an analysis of given photoplays but give general rules only. This new pamphlet is alive with practical suggestions as to WHAT to SEE and WHAT to HEAR in motion pictures of the month." Hans Rosenwald, Chicago Musical College and Critic, Chicago Sun.

"A fine service to schools, conservatories and private music teachers in guiding their students to see and hear the better movie productions." Barre Hill, University of Oklahoma.

The last two comments were made at the recent National Music Teachers Convention held in Minneapolis.

Question: A letter just received asks why the fine shorts we speak of are not listed on the billboards along with feature-length pictures? "We have been watching for 'Dance of the Weed' and 'The Night Before Christmas' that you mentioned in the last bulletin."

Answer: We regret that these shorts are not listed on the billboards. Now that many more shorts are being made on patriotic subjects, perhaps they will be exploited more fully. Urge your local theater manager to secure them from their exchange.

Question: From Phoenix, Arizona, comes an inquiry for lists of film music scores and records which may be purchased for its public library.

Answer: The November and December bulletins gave the few that we know are available and the place where they can be secured. Others will be named as we hear about them.

Question: Why are not more pictures made which are suitable for children; or for the entire family?

Answer: A list of such pictures is given in this issue at the request of several of our readers. While our mission is to stress the good music in films, nevertheless these all have good musical backgrounds or, are musical pictures.

Question: An inquiry from Illinois wants information regarding the orchestrators and arrangers of picture scores, as their names are never given credit on the screen.

Answer: This is such an important question that space has been allotted to an article on this subject in this issue.

LOOKING FORWARD:

Warners biggest musical year begins this month, starting with Yankee Doodle Dandy, biography of George M. Cohan. Nine musicals scheduled include five originals, two biographies, one musical comedy and one light opera. With such fine musicians as this studio has, this is something for which to look forward. Paramount will have eleven songs by Irving Berlin in Holiday Inn. Boris Morros, now a producer at 20th Century-Fox, is working on Tales of Manhattan; a twenty-two year old American composer, Sol Kaplan, will be thrilled on hearing his new composition, "Bacchanale," played in this production by the Philharmonic Orchestra. Jungle Book, music by Rozsa; Kings Row, music by Korngold; Born to Sing, based on the song, "Ballad for Americans"; I Married An Angel, with Eddy and MacDonald; Syncoption, a revue of American Music through past decades --- a few of the new productions.

REVIEWS OF CURRENT PICTURES FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF MUSIC INTEREST COMMENDED BY THE
MOTION PICTURE PREVIEW COMMITTEE OF HOLLYWOOD AND NEW YORK
Grace Vidney Mabee, Hollywood Chairman, Mme Adelaide Gescheidt, New York Chairman

BABES ON BROADWAY, MGM, Director: Busby Berkeley, Musical Director: Georgie Stoll

Here is a vivid and appealing story with acting of a high order, excellent photography, thoroughly professional playing, satisfactory music and flawless direction. The basic plot, while not original is handled with such freshness and charm that the audience is carried along from one well-paced sequence to another, through laughter and tears to the happy ending. The music is melodious and admirably suited to the text and not one objectionable feature is present to mar the fine values of the picture which is suited to young and old alike. Included are six new songs all headed for popularity and records are available: "How About You" by Ralph Freed and Burton Lane; "Franklin D. Roosevelt Jones" by Harold J. Rome; "Chin Up, Cheerio, Carry On" by Lane and Harburg; "Hoe Down" by Edens and Freed; "I've Got Rings on My Fingers, Bells on My Toes"; "Mary's A Grand Old Name"; "Blackout Over Broadway"; "Babes On Broadway"; and "I'm a Yankee Doodle Dandy" by George M. Cohan.

BALL OF FIRE, Goldwyn-RKO-Radio, Director: Howard Hawks, Musical Dir: Alfred Newman

This unique and highly entertaining story is that of a night club girl (Barbara Stanwyck) who establishes herself in the home of eight scholarly professors who are compiling a new encyclopedia and how she wins the affection of all of the gentlemen and the love of the youngest professor (Gary Cooper) whose task in the compilation is to supply it with the words of modern slang. Away from her former life, she finds real friendship and love. In spite of being highly improbable, the story has charm, sparkling humor and sincerity. Direction is unusually fine and every one of the supporting cast is good with each professor cast to perfection. The musical score by Alfred Newman is all that can be desired in this type of picture, with rum boogie a la Gene Krupa, a college male quartet from the days at the turn of the century, as well as effective original background music, which fits into the general scheme of the unexpected, ridiculous circumstances which characterize the picture from beginning to end. College students, as well as college professors, and the audience in general will revel in it. Far more desirable than the billboards' advertising would have you believe. Mature-Family

CORSICAN BROTHERS, U.A.-Edward Small, Director: Gregory Ratoff, Musical Score by Dimitri Tiomkin

The Dumas thriller brought to the screen with most of its original drama and fervor intact. The story itself is not without a generous share of hokum, but it is so well directed that one forgets this fact. One can even forgive Akim Tamiroff his Russian accent, so fine is his portrayal of Colonna. The music, unfortunately, is not outstanding even though it could have been so in view of the film's striking wealth of dramatic and atmospheric material. Mature-Family

KATHLEEN, MGM, Director: Harold S. Bucquet, Musical Score: Franz Waxman

Apart from being a vehicle for the return to the screen of the popular child actress Shirley Temple, this picture has especial value for the reason that it may help toward the understanding of lonely and misunderstood children. The story is good of its kind and the acting is, for the most part, excellent although exaggerated direction throughout does not always allow the children to be sufficiently natural for which reason the picture may not appeal to an adult audience. The dream sequences featuring Miss Temple are charming and well handled. The music, although there was very little of it, was always in the mood and an addition to the picture. The song, "Around the Corner," composed by Roger Edens and Lorenz Hart was used. The tinkling of the music box was especially attractive. Family

H.M. PULHAM, ESQ., MGM, Director: King Vidor, Musical Director: Lennie Hayton,
Musical Score by: Bronislau Kaper

A beautiful and intelligently made picture, in fact one of the best to come out of the studios recently, with a story told and acted with great subtlety, wisely cut and adapted from the book of the same name. The material is fresh and well put together, the acting is practically flawless and the photography unusually fine. Direction too, is exceptional with heart-warming touches throughout which add immeasurably to the mood of the story which is of the type, by the way, which should go far toward setting a high standard for succeeding stories of like nature. The picture is high in ethical value, with not a single objectionable feature; and if the casting of the Harvard types may not seem true to a Bostonian, he or she will doubtless overlook this in view of the general excellence of the picture. The musical score, by Bronislau Kaper, is on the same high level as the production. He has used popular music of the various periods to denote those periods - "Three o'Clock in the Morning" for post-war sequences; modern airs to depict today and the music of 1915 for that period. There are also thematic passages timed to represent the humdrum existence of Pulham after he has become a placid creature of habit in his older days. The silences are significantly treated. An especially telling effect is achieved in the ticking away of time. Let us have more pictures of this type. Adults

PLAYMATES, RKO-Radio, Director: David Butler, Music by: James Van Heusen and
Johnny Burke

A light but pleasantly enjoyable musical film with John Barrymore and Kay Kyser in amusing contrast, ably supported by a good cast. Some tuneful songs - "Lucky Stars and Stripes," a lively marching air done with considerable spirit; "Humpty Dumpty Heart"; and a gay finale entitled "Romeo Smith and Juliet Jones" - add much to the picture's entertainment, with the fine coordination between Kyser and his band keeping the whole on a consistent level throughout. The mannerisms of Barrymore were never more laugh provoking, yet his years of experience and expert showmanship are reflected in all that he does and his sense of timing is perfect. May Robson plays the role of gruff Grandma. This type of film, for all-around consumption is especially fitting for these times. Family

REMEMBER THE DAY, 20th Century-Fox, Director: Henry King, Music by: Alfred Newman

This fine story of community life in the school and home, with its delightful romance, appreciation of progress and development through right education, showing the mutual and lasting affection between teacher and pupil, is ably carried through by an exceptionally competent cast. The direction is intelligent and though the interpolation of war sequences may not appeal to some, this romantic drama is, on the whole, a meritorious and wholesome production. It restores one's faith in motion pictures as a medium for good. The music is consonant with delineation and story.
Family

THEY DIED WITH THEIR BOOTS ON, Warner Bros., Director: Raoul Walsh, Musical Director
Leo Forbstein, Musical Score by: Max Steiner

The story of General Custer is brought to the screen by an able cast, well directed. It is somewhat overdrawn, highly romanticized and the film is too long, but for audiences who like pseudo-historic pictures of the Western scene, it will doubtless be enjoyed, for it follows the pattern made familiar by the earlier "Dodge City," etc. The music score by Max Steiner is excellent. His music is always forceful and yet fits the situations perfectly. The orchestration was very interesting, as well as descriptive and scholarly use was made of the various military airs such as "Dixie," "Boots and Saddles" and the Scotch air adopted by the Seventh Regiment.
Family

SHANGHAI GESTURE, U.A.-Arnold Pressburger Productions, Director: Joseph Von Sternberg, Music by: Richard Hageman

"The Shanghai Gesture" first produced on the New York stage fifteen years ago has been brought to the screen with a number of changes, but the same dramatic action is retained. The direction is not all to be desired as the action is slow.

The musical score highlights the picture with the proper atmospheric music enhancing the psychological treatment of the story.

Mr. Hageman has again graciously given us his reaction to his handling of this weird story:

"Some years ago when I saw the play SHANGHAI GESTURE on Broadway, I thought immediately what a fine opera it would make, but somehow or another, I never got around to doing it. However, it always remained in the back of my mind, so it was with very great interest that I heard that Joseph Von Sternberg was going to make a film of it. When I was engaged to compose the musical score for the picture, I knew that I was going to tackle an unusual assignment; a difficult one, too, because while the locale, Shanghai, is Chinese, the characters are not except Madame Gin-Sling. (In the original production she was Madame God-Damn, but the Hays office changed that!) The other leading characters are English, Dutch, Russian, Arabian, etc., a mixture calling for diversified thematic material.

"The main title, which is almost three times as long as for most pictures, is more of an overture than just background music for the names of the cast. In this overture, I introduce most of my themes; that of Mother Gin-Sling, which is forboding and threatening; Omar's Arabian in form, and Poppie's which is half Oriental, half Occidental since she is half breed. The love theme is also heard in this introduction.

"There are naturally Chinese themes in the score, but not too 'chop suey' in color, and these furnish the only relief in an otherwise tragic, sinister, and melodramatic score."

THE VANISHING VIRGINIAN, MGM, Director: Frank Borzage, Music Director: Lennie Hayton
Musical Score by: David Snell

A beautiful story of real American family life adapted from the biography of "Cap'n Bob Yancey," written by Rebecca Yancey Williams. Frank Morgan, Spring Byington and Kathryn Grayson are ideally cast in the leads. The domestic and political career of a real Virginia blueblood brings a humorous and touching appeal to all who see this picture. It makes one long for good old days of real Americanism, such as we need today. Although there is not much music in the picture, it added greatly to the charm and to the establishment of the moods. The "Steal Away to Jesus" was beautifully and appropriately introduced and Miss Grayson's singing was a delight. She is indeed a real find as a singer. Family

WEEK END FOR THREE, RKO-Radio, Director: Irving Reis, Musical Director:
C. Bakaleinikoff

An entertaining, if somewhat noisy, marital comedy, light in texture and broadly played by an understanding cast. The very human situation of the young couple and their visitor who prolongs his stay beyond reasonable limits results in some amusing sequences, all of which are capably handled both by director and actors. Especially apt is the musical score with its spirited and well performed opening, admirably setting the stage for what is to follow and with interesting and well chosen sound effects used throughout. Mature-Family

"THE ORCHESTRATOR AND HIS IMPORTANCE TO THE PHOTOPLAY SCORE"

Article by Chauncey Haines, Jr.

The names of the orchestrators and arrangers deserve a place high on the list of technical credits, along with all the heads and sub-heads that constitute that long list of names we often impatiently endure at the start of every picture. This is the only medium of recognition possible to give that great army of workers who make up the rest of the staff, above and apart from the producer, director, stars and writers.

To cover or even attempt to cover briefly the work of any small group within this category would be like trying to write a book review on the "Brittanica." I'll merely touch on the relative importance of one unit - the musical arranger or orchestrator. The easiest way to assert his importance is to start at the top of the musical department, the august Musical Director, and see what happens after the finished picture is handed to him by the Producer.

The Musical Director decides who of the composers he has in his department, or of the free-lancers available, are best suited in ability, style and temperament to write the music - compose it, as it were. Much writing could be added here concerning the different composers and their different flairs and talents. After the composer has looked at the picture with the producer or director and has been presented with the idea or concept of said picture, the composer hies himself home or to any place where inspiration is supposed to run rampant. He writes the score as HE sees fit to write it. Now the orchestrator enters and takes over. It is up to him to see that the sometimes briefly indicated and jumbled manuscripts are arranged for the various instruments of the symphony orchestra of the studio so that when heard on the screen they have the musical continuity of one of the operas or symphonic poems. Quite a few of the composers are fine arrangers or orchestrators themselves, but, once given the assignment to write the music, they scarcely ever orchestrate themselves, rather turning it over to one of the talented geniuses with whom Hollywood seems singularly blessed. Truly, this is a golden age of orchestrators, a regular deluge of reincarnations of all of the great masters of the past. You could find a Wagner, a Humperdinck, a Tschaiakowsky, a Grieg, a Debussy, too numerous Ravels (all in style) right here in this southland.

Take for instance Warner Bros. How fortunate is the Music Director, Leo Forbstein, that he has such as Hugo Friedhofer, Bernard Kaoun, Ray Heindorff, Arthur Kay, Clifford Vaughn and Arthur Lange. And what a staff has exacting Alfred Newman at 20th Century-Fox - Eddy Powell, David Raksin, Leo Schukin, Leo Arnaud, David Buttolph. At MGM, shrewd Nat Finston has an excellent staff in Leon Raad, Leon Cutter, Joseph Nussbaum, Scott Bradley. At Universal, genial Charles Previn has a fine talent in Frank Skinner. At Paramount, Louis Lipstone has a great team in young Charles Bradshaw and tried-and-true Herman Hand, also Sigmund Krumgold. At Republic, clever Cy Feuer has literally surrounded himself with fine talent - Morry Glickman, Paul Sawtelle, Al Glazzer and lately, Dave Raksin and David Buttolph. Alexander Korda's ace director, Miklos Rozsa, has a genius in Al Sendrie; Walt Disney in Frank Churchill and Leigh Harline; Morris Stoloff at Columbia has an outstanding one in Franke Harling.

These are the real musical brains of their times. Never will there be enough said about them that would do justice to what they have contributed to the art of motion picture synchronization, not to mention your enjoyment. I hope I may have another opportunity to write on this, my favorite subject, and mention other important orchestrators whom I cannot recall at this time. I beg their humble pardon for any omission, for it is to these men that my greatest and most sincere admiration goes.

"MUSICAL ARRANGERS AND ORCHESTRATORS ARE THE UNSUNG HEROES OF EVERY MUSICAL PICTURE"

- From Daily Variety

Next month we shall have an article on outstanding composers.

THE AMERICAN SCENE - TODAY AND YESTERDAY

Some notable motion pictures produced in recent years, with additional ones now in production, which are part of "the American Scene" because they are historical, patriotic or depict the American way of life.
- All have good patriotic music and are good for the entire FAMILY

ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN (MGM)	NORTH WEST MOUNTED POLICE (Para.)
ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL (20th Fox)	NORTHWEST PASSAGE (MGM)
CAUGHT IN THE DRAFT (Para.)	OUR TOWN (Lesser-U.A.)
CHEERS FOR MISS BISHOP (Rowland-U.A.)	POWER AND THE LAND (U.S. Govt.)
DRUMS ALONG THE MOHAVK (20th Fox)	THE RAMPARTS WE WATCH (RKO-Time)
EDISON THE MAN (MGM)	THE REMARKABLE ANDREW (Para.)
FLIGHT COMMAND (MGM)	THE RIVER (U.S. Govt.)
THE GREAT VICTOR HERBERT (Para.)	SCATTERGOOD BAINES SERIES (RKO)
HARDY FAMILY SERIES (MGM)	SERGEANT YORK (W.B.)
HENRY ALDRICH SERIES (Para.)	STAND UP AND FIGHT (MGM)
HUDSON'S BAY (20th Fox)	THE STRAWBERRY BLONDE (W.B.)
KISS THE BOYS GOODBYE (Para.)	STRIKE UP THE BAND (MGM)
KNUTE ROCKNE - ALL AMERICAN (W.B.)	SWANEE RIVER (20th Fox)
LADDIE (RKO)	TEXAS (Col.)
LITTLE MEN (RKO)	THERE'S MAGIC IN MUSIC (Para.)
LITTLE OLD NEW YORK (20th Fox)	TIN PAN ALLEY (20th Fox)
MAN OF CONQUEST (Republic)	UNION PACIFIC (Para.)
MARYLAND (20th Fox)	VIRGINIA (Para.)
MEET JOHN DOE (Capra-W.B.)	WESTERN UNION (20th Fox)
MR. SMITH GOES TO WASHINGTON (Col.)	YOUNG MR. LINCOLN (20th Fox)
LAND OF LIBERTY (M.P.P.D.A.)	

SHORT SUBJECTS

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer

THE FLAG SPEAKS
SERVANT OF THE PEOPLE
ANGEL OF MERCY

THE PERFECT TRIBUTE
THE GREAT MEDDLER
WHILE AMERICA SLEEPS

ARMY CHAMPIONS

and

ALL THE MARCH OF TIME SERIES
WARNER BROS. HISTORICAL FEATURETTES
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