

Hosted by David Werden



- [Help](#)

•

User Name	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Log in"/>
-----------	----------------------	---------------------------------------

Remember Me?



Online Euphonium Lessons 



EUPHONIUM.COM STORE

- [What's New?](#)
- [Forum](#)
- [Blog](#)
- [Articles](#)
  - [Articles for Euphonium and Tuba](#)
  - [News](#)
- [Sponsors](#)
- [dwerden.com Home](#)

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
----------------------	----------------------

- [Advanced Search](#)

- 

- [Home](#)
- [Film Composers and their Symphonic Music](#)

- **Recent Forum Activity**

**[Adams E3 configurations?](#)**

Thread Starter: [AwesomeDad](#)

Just browsing their website and pouring thru all the information on this board. I'm curious if anyone is playing an E3 with .7mm thickness and either...

Last Post By: [cochranme](#) 07-21-2018, 02:22 PM

**[Is a Besson 1065 a good college horn?](#)**

Thread Starter: [abenigni123](#)

Hi, I've been playing around three years and am now going to college in hopes to keep playing for as long as I can. It's a passion of mine I don't...

Last Post By: [abenigni123](#) Yesterday, 04:54 PM



**[Southern Pacific Railroad Band](#)**

Thread Starter: [highpitch](#)

Pretty cool! My dad worked for Sufferin' Pacific for 42 years, but not in a band. Dennis

Last Post By: [highpitch](#) Yesterday, 04:48 PM

**[How to decode the serial number for Besson 2052 prestige professional euphonium?](#)**

Thread Starter: [acclaim2008](#)

I bought a Besson 2052 prestige professional euphonium. However, I am not sure when it was made and other information. What is more, what would a...

Last Post By: [acclaim2008](#) Yesterday, 01:26 PM



### [Ordner Seg, by Øystein Baadsvik](#)

Thread Starter: [DaveBj](#)

I'm finally processing my videos from last year. Here is Øystein Baadsvik playing "Ordner Seg". ...

Last Post By: [DaveBj](#) Yesterday, 09:21 AM



### [Considering Going Into Instrument Repair & Restoration](#)

Thread Starter: [ChristianeSparkle](#)

I am curious if there's anyone here who is in the musical instrument repair & restoration line, technicians repairing instruments as a career. I...

Last Post By: [Sara Hood](#) 07-21-2018, 03:21 PM



### [Besson 2052 prestige professional euphonium Number](#)

Thread Starter: [acclaim2008](#)

We found two series number on the newly purchased Besson 2052 prestige professional euphonium. The first number near the mouth piece and it has made...

Last Post By: [daruby](#) Yesterday, 11:37 AM

## • **Film Composers and their Symphonic Music**

by

[davewerden](#)

- [View Profile](#)
- [View Forum Posts](#)
- [Private Message](#)
- [View Blog Entries](#)
- [View Articles](#)

Published on 01-18-2014 03:58 PM Number of Views: 8206

[0 Comments](#)

## **Film Composers and their Symphonic Music** by David Werden

For my topic I chose to examine the music of several film composers who have also written symphonic music. The composers I chose are Bernard Herrmann, Erich Korngold, Alex North, David Raksin, Miklos Rozsa, and John Williams. I was able to find recordings of the symphonies of Herrmann and Korngold, and the *Sinfonietta* by John Williams.

In some of the texts I studied, the authors said that there is sometimes a prejudice against the concert music output of "movie" composers. As I got further into the project I came to believe that is probably very true, and possibly understated. The Herrmann and Korngold symphonies, for example, are fine works by men who had excellent training in classical music--they should be heard more often in concerts. There is a wealth of information in books and periodicals about the film compositions of these men (and many others), but virtually nothing about their symphonic music. Within the short lifespan of Erich Korngold, this prejudice is very well demonstrated.

I am including in this handout a biography of these men, a partial list of "classical" composers who have written substantial film music, a list of film music that has been turned into concert music (including symphonies), a brief overview of the history of movie music, and opinions on the impact of film music, including the results of a style-recognition survey I compiled.

(This paper was originally compiled in 1992.)

### **BERNARD HERRMANN**

*"I do not prefer to be judged by inferior talents; sparrows fly in flocks but eagles fly alone."*

Bernard Herrmann <sup>1</sup>

Bernard Herrmann was born in New York in 1911 and died in Los Angeles in 1975. He studied at New York University with Philip James and Percy Grainger. He later studied at Julliard with Bernard Wagenaar (in a class with

Alex North). He spent the last ten years of his life in England, although he returned to America several times for specific projects. He died while working on a film project.

"He pursued a lifelong interest in new and rarely performed music; he was an early champion of Ives and gave the American premieres of many works by English composers."<sup>2</sup> He served as conductor and composer for CBS radio in the 1930's, 40's, and 50's (in addition to composing music for 61 films). He appeared as guest conductor with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, the Halle Orchestra, the BBC Symphony Orchestra, and the London Symphony Orchestra, and introduced British audiences to the works of many American composers. Herrmann conducted the American premiere of Milhaud's *La Creation du Monde*.

"Herrmann's position in the history of movie composing seems obvious enough. He represents a bridge between the classicism of Max Steiner, Alfred Newman, and Erich Korngold and the more dissonant styles of Alex North, Elmer Bernstein, and Jerry Goldsmith."<sup>3</sup> Herrmann is considered by many to be the most important of all American film composers. Half of his 50 film scores are available (in full or part) on recordings. Composer Miklos Rozsa states "Herrmann was a milestone in the history of films."

Bernard Herrmann died in 1975 while in Los Angeles to score the music for [Taxi Driver](#) (he died in his sleep after a conducting session for that soundtrack).

## **HERRMANN'S SCORING AND COMPOSITION STYLE**

He was a brilliant orchestrator, and often employed instrument combinations and voicings that were unique to his music. Herrmann's unused score for [Torn Curtain](#) called for 12 flutes (a mixture including C, alto, and bass flutes), 16 horns, 9 trombones (sometimes with a combination of three open, three cup muted, and three straight muted), 2 tubas, 2 sets of timpani, 8 cellos, and 8 basses. He didn't use trumpets or upper strings.

Bernard Herrmann's music often featured chromatic motion in the melodic lines. In common with other 20th-century composers, Herrmann used bitonality. For example in [Vertigo](#), there are superimposed E-flat minor and E-minor chords. These stacked chords move in parallel motion. He also wrote a bitonal ostinato in this score. In [North by Northwest](#), there are superimposed E-diminished and D-major chords.

## **HERRMANN SYMPHONY**

He wrote his [Symphony](#) between 1937 and 1940. It was commissioned by

the New York Philharmonic and the Columbia Broadcasting System. He approached this project after he was already respected as a film composer, and found writing a symphony offered him great pleasure. "For the first time I was not confined to the outline of a story. It was not necessary to depict waves, portray the anguish of a lost soul, or look for a love theme ... Consequently, working on the Symphony I had a Roman holiday."<sup>5</sup>

The symphony is in four movements. (The final movement part of the in-class recorded presentation listed below.) "The last movement is a rondo, its main theme announced by the trumpet, then taken up by the entire orchestra. The contrasting material includes music from the other movements, interrupted once by a tranquil tune for solo flute, leading to 'a climax in which all the themes of the movement are combined.'"<sup>6</sup>

Some of Herrmann's Concert and Chamber Works include:

- Aubade for 14 Instruments (1933), re-titled "Silent Noon"
- City of Brass (Tone Poem) (1934)
- [Currier and Ives Suite](#) (1935)
- [Sinfonietta for Strings](#) (1936)
- [Moby Dick](#) (Cantata) (1938), dedicated to C.Ives
- Johnny Appleseed (Cantata) (1940)
- [Symphony No. 1](#) (1940)
- [For the Fallen](#) (1943)
- Wuthering Heights (opera) (1949)
- [Echoes for String Quartet](#) (1965)

More of his music can be downloaded here: [Music of Bernard Herrmann](#)

Some of Bernard Herrmann's film scores include: [Citizen Kane](#) (1940), [The Devil and Daniel Webster](#) (1941), [The Magnificent Ambersons](#) (1942), [Jane Eyre](#) (1943), [Anna and the King of Siam](#) (1946), [The Man in the Grey Flannel Suit](#) (1956), [Vertigo](#) (1958), [North by Northwest](#) (1959), and [The Birds](#) (1963).

## ERICH WOLFGANG KORNGOLD

Erich Wolfgang Korngold was born in Austria in 1896 and died in Los Angeles in 1957. He was the son of a famous music critic (Julius Korngold), and studied composition with Fuchs, Zemlinsky, and Gradener. He later taught composition at the Vienna Academy of Music. His early works were praised by Mahler, Strauss, and Puccini. Critics named him the new Mozart after his early successes. Strauss considered Korngold his principal heir and rival, and Korngold believes he was strongly influenced by Strauss.

Korngold was quite famous and widely respected in Vienna before WWI. While many compared the young Korngold to the young Mozart, music critics cite an important distinction: Mozart's early works were inspired, but were clearly from a child, while Korngold's early works were already very mature. "While Korngold was still a young boy, Gustav Mahler heard him perform some of his music and proclaimed "*Ein Genie! Ein Genie!* [A genius! A genius!]"<sup>7</sup> After hearing one of Korngold's early operas, Puccini said, "The boy has so much talent he could easily give us some and still have enough left for himself."<sup>8</sup> Richard Strauss said of young Erich, "This firmness of style, this sovereignty of form, this individual expression, this harmonious structure-one shudders with awe to realize these compositions were written by a boy."<sup>9</sup>

Korngold was the first internationally acclaimed composer contracted to write for Hollywood. He originally came to the USA in 1934 as an arranger for film *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Early in his career, he earned Academy Awards for [Anthony Adverse](#) (1936) and [The Adventures of Robin Hood](#) (1938). He avoided the tendency of many composers to make their music follow the on-screen action closely (known as "Mickey Mousing" because of the early Disney cartoons where the music would be used almost as sound effect material, punctuating falls, footsteps, etc.). Rather, he preferred to divide a film into sequences and to develop the music for each one.

Korngold wrote his Symphony in F# Op.40 from 1951 to 1952. In his film scores, Korngold wrote in an extremely listenable style, similar to Richard Strauss, and used the full orchestra in mostly traditional settings. In the symphony, he used similar instrumentation and orchestration, but with more dissonance and aggressive rhythmic style. This symphony is in four movements, the last of which was included in the in-class recorded presentation. "In the last movement, *Allegro gaio*, it seems as if Korngold would like to dispel all thoughts of gloom: it is carefree and playful and recalls the world of adventure featured in the Errol Flynn films. Even in matters of form Korngold departs from the dualistic symphonic principle to fashion an episodic, greatly varied, kaleidoscopic design through motivic fragmentation and the reuse of previous themes. His film music had a more lasting influence on him than he himself was willing to admit."<sup>10</sup>

His concert works include:

- [Der Ring des Polykrates](#) (1916)
- [Sinfonietta](#) (1913)
- [Chamber Suite from Much Ado about Nothing](#) (1919)
- [Piano Concerto](#) (Left Hand) (1923)
- [Cello Concerto](#) (1947)
- [Violin Concerto](#) (1947), premiered by Heifetz

- [Symphonic Serenade for String Orchestra](#) (1949)
- [Symphony in F#](#) (1950)

Get more of Korngold's music here: [Music of Erich Wolfgang Korngold](#)

Some of Korngold's movies scores include: [Captain Blood](#) (1935), [Anthony Adverse](#) (1936), [The Green Pastures](#) (1936), [The Prince and the Pauper](#) (1937), [The Adventures of Robin Hood](#) (1938), [The Sea Hawk](#) (1940), [Devotion](#) (1943), [Of Human Bondage](#) (1945), and [Magic Fire](#) (1954).

## ALEX NORTH

Alex North is known as "The Boss" to younger composers like Jerry Goldsmith and John Williams. His parents immigrated from Russia, and Alex was born in Pennsylvania in 1910. He studied at the Curtis Institute and the Julliard School of Music. He was later accepted for a work-study program in the USSR, where he studied at the Moscow Conservatory and was music director of the German Theater Group and the Latvian State Theater. He was the only American to become a member of the Union of Soviet Composers. Upon returning to the United States, he studied with Aaron Copland and Ernst Toch. He subsequently went to Mexico and studied with Silvestre Revueltas. He has received a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Golden Globe Award, a Foreign Press Association Award, and 14 Academy Awards. North wrote three symphonies: *Symphony No. 1* (1947); *Symphony No. 2* (1968); and *Symphony No. 3* (1971).

In the liner notes to the Telarc CD *Fantastic Journey*, Robert Derwae declares, "Composer Alex North (born 1910) is a titan of the film industry... His richly detailed scores, in an American idiom that reflects his studies with Aaron Copland, are characterized by accessible melodies, spicy dissonances, sparse instrumentation and incisive rhythmic and harmonic elements. His first film score, for [A Streetcar Named Desire](#), is exceptional in its trend-setting use of jazz elements. His other credits include *Death of a Salesman*, *Viva Zapata*, *Les Miserables*, [Spartacus](#), [Cleopatra](#), and [Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf](#). He's known among cognoscenti for his score of Stanley Kubrick's 2001, which was rejected by the director.... The 1981 film *Dragonslayer* received two Academy Award nominations--one for visual effects and another for North's score (one of North's personal favorites).... In addition to the standard instrumentation, the orchestration calls for multiple keyboards, tubas, an euphonium, flugelhorn and bass clarinets."<sup>11</sup>

"North's stylistic allegiances are said to lie with Bartok and Stravinsky; however, his early admiration for Prokofiev and Duke Ellington seem more in line with his own subsequent practices."<sup>12</sup>

Some of his concert music includes:

- Quest for Chamber Orchestra (1938)
- Rhapsody for Piano and Orchestra (1939)
- Revue for Clarinet (1946)
- Symphony No. 1 (1947)
- Holiday Set for orchestra (1948)
- Rhapsody (trumpet, piano, and orchestra) (1956)
- Symphony No. 2 (1968)
- Symphony No. 3 (1971)

His film scores include: [\*A Streetcar Named Desire\*](#) (1951), *Death of a Salesman* (1951), [\*The Rainmaker\*](#) (1956), [\*Spartacus\*](#) (1960), [\*Cleopatra\*](#) (1963), [\*Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?\*](#) (1966), *Rich Man Poor Man* (for which he received an Emmy Award), and *Good Morning Vietnam* (1988).

See several of Alex North's compositions here: [Music of Alex North](#).

Alex North died in 1991.

## DAVID RAKSIN

The outspoken David Raksin was born in 1912 in Philadelphia. He has taught composition at University of Southern California and film and television composition at University of California, Los Angeles. Raksin studied with Isadore Freed and for a time with Arnold Schoenberg, like several other Hollywood composers. Many of those composers who studied with Schoenberg went with the sole purpose of learning some of the "far out" techniques of writing music so they could employ them in scores for special effects. They were usually disappointed when Schoenberg insisted they begin with long and intensive study of classical harmony and form. David Raksin presumably went to Schoenberg with better motives. In his words, "I studied for about a year and a half with Schoenberg, that marvelous old gent, but he never taught me anything about the system of composing with twelve tones, because he figured, and rightly so, that I ought to learn a little about music first."<sup>13</sup>

Raksin believes that using 12-tone music for movies can be perfectly appropriate, and relates that many film composers are using similarly modern techniques in scores to good effect, even though their audience is unaware of the advanced nature of the musical style. In the score for one picture Raksin says, "I used a twelve-tone row whose first five notes spelled

out the name of the picture's hero, which was not otherwise revealed until the last few seconds of the last reel."<sup>14</sup> He asserts that many other less-adventurous film composers are waiting until G. Schirmer finds it profitable to publish a popular folio called *'Twelve-Tone Songs the Whole World Loves'* before he will venture to score pictures in that idiom."<sup>15</sup> Or in another statement: "...you would be surprised how often the twelve-tone row or its variations are employed in current scores..... If you were to hear one of this music with full concentration in the concert hall you would probably join the dowagers in parading out in indignation.... Actually, it's rather amazing what we're getting away with!" [quoted from Hickman, C. Sharpless. *Music News*. MJ1, p. 36] Aside from serial composition, Raksin uses ostinato and a passacaglia in the score to *Forever Amber*, [see appendix, ex. 9]

His concert music includes

- the *Toy Concertino for Orchestra*
- *Simple Symmetries* (a madrigal)
- *Oedipus memneitai* (commissioned by the Library of Congress)
- *Litany for Orchestra*
- *Grande Polonaise*
- *Train to Exile*,
- And music for many plays.

His concert suites from the film scores of *Force of Evil*, *Carrie*, *The Redeemer*, and *Separate Tables* were featured in the Library of Congress production *Wonderful Inventions* (1985). He was asked by Stravinsky to do the first band transcription of *Circus Polka*.

Raksin's film scores include: *Laura* (1944), *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* (1947), *The Magnificent Yankee* (1951), and *Pat and Mike* (1952).

Some of Raksin's music may be downloaded here: [Music of David Raksin](#)

## MIKLOS ROZSA

Miklos Rozsa was born in Hungary in 1907. He was educated at the Liepzig Conservatory, where his teachers (Karl Straube and Hermann Grabner) expressed a high opinion of his talents. He went to England in 1935 to compose film scores for several products of Sir Alexander Korda's London Film Productions. In 1940 he came to the United States to work in Hollywood.

Rozsa is known as a fine composer as well as an educator. He taught classes in film composition at the University of Southern California and wrote many articles on the subject. "Foremost among foreign-born exemplars of

the romantic tradition is Miklos Rozsa, generally respected as one of Hollywood's finest musicians."<sup>16</sup> He has taught Jerry Goldsmith and Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (who would later teach John Williams).

Rozsa began his compositional career writing concert music and by 1930 had written his Symphony, Op.6. In 1934 he wrote his famous *Theme, Variations and Finale, Op.13*, and "it was this piece that was on the program that fateful night in 1943 when an unknown conductor named Leonard Bernstein would step in for an ailing Bruno Walter."<sup>17</sup>

Some of his concert works include:

- Rhapsody for cello and orchestra (1929)
- Symphony, Op. 6 (1930)
- [Theme, Variations and Finale](#) (1934)
- [Three Hungarian Sketches](#) (1938)
- [Concerto for Violin](#) (1956)
- Fantasy for Brass, Organ, and Timpani (1982)

Download more of Rozsa's music here: [Music of Miklos Rosza](#)

Some of his film scores are: *The Thief of Baghdad* (1940), *Jungle Book* (1942), *The Lost Weekend* (1945), *Spellbound* (1945), *The Asphalt Jungle* (1950), *Quo Vadis?* (1951), *Ivanhoe* (1952), *Ben-Hur* (1959), *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* (1970), and *Time After Time* (1979).

Rozsa, until his death in 1995, was the last survivor of the most famous group of ten Hollywood composers who had shaped the style of film music (the others are Alex North, Erich Korngold, Franz Waxman, Alfred Newman, Victor Young, Hugo Friedhofer, Max Steiner, and Dimitri Tiomkin).

## JOHN WILLIAMS

John Williams was born in New York in 1932. He studied piano from the age of eight, and later studied composition with Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Bobby Van Eps, Rosina Lhevinne, and Arthur Olaf Anderson. He worked alongside Alfred and Lionel Newman, Franz Waxman, and Dimitri Tiomkin. He is an accomplished pianist, and plays on several jazz recordings in the 1950's and 60's.

He composed many concert works, including two symphonies. He wrote *Sinfonietta for Wind Ensemble* in 1968, which was recorded by the Eastman Wind Ensemble. "Williams has also maintained a steady flow of concert works, written for the most part in an advanced but still basically tonal and

intelligibly expressive idiom. His *Essay* (1966) for strings has been widely played, his *Sinfonietta* (1968) for wind instruments has been recorded, and his *Symphony no. 1* (1966) received an important London performance in 1972 under Previn."<sup>18</sup>

His score for [\*Close Encounters of the Third Kind\*](#) has a sense of form from the beginning to the end. It starts out very dissonantly as the mystery of the strange melodies, disappearances, and reappearances is set up. Then, when our questions are answered at the end, the harmony becomes very tonal, and the melodies more recognizable. A common thread ties it all together. During the dissonant music, there is a theme that is lyrical but unreal-sounding. At the end, it becomes clear that theme was just an altered passage from *When You Wish Upon a Star*, which is played by the orchestra near the end. This use of a well-known popular song is similar to a device composers have used even in classical symphonies. They might employ part of a hymn or other common tune that would be intended to have some effect on the audience of the time.

In his *Sinfonietta for Wind Ensemble* he created an interesting effect by using a double reed choir of 2 oboes and 2 bassoons. He is not by any means the first composer to use a double reed choir, but it is very rare in wind ensemble writing. The sound of his *Sinfonietta* is not at all like the main title themes of his film music, although similarities could be found to some of the inner music of his film scores.

In a recent *Stereo Review* article, William Livingston discusses the state of American symphonic music, "I'm... excited by the revival of interest in American symphonists of the Neo-Romantic school--Samuel Barber, Paul Creston, Howard Hanson, William Schuman, and Randall Thompson. I think we are indebted to the film composer John Williams for bringing their music back into vogue. With his soundtracks for *Jaws*, *Star Wars*, and other movies, Williams revived the symphonic style in film scores and reaccustomed our ear to the pleasant sound of Neo-Romantic music for large orchestra."<sup>19</sup>

Download several of his pieces here: [Music of John Williams](#).

## HISTORY OF FILM MUSIC COMPOSITION

The first motion pictures were silent. Theater owners soon found that music could enhance the impact of the film and began to routinely use either a piano (or organ) player or a small orchestra for background music. The power of music to set a mood is demonstrated by the practice of some studios in the silent film days: "Some directors, it might be noted, employed small chamber ensembles in the studios themselves. The musicians did not

record music to be heard by the theater audience, but rather played to inspire actors."<sup>20</sup>

It was during the 1930's that film scores for "talking" pictures became sophisticated, growing into an artform of their own. "Many of these pioneers moved to Hollywood from Europe, and their style was derived from the lush romanticism of Viennese opera. Prime examples were two of Hollywood's most active film composers, Erich Wolfgang Korngold and [Max Steiner](#). Both men grew up listening to the operas of Wagner, Strauss, and Puccini, and the symphonies of Mahler. Both were particularly influenced by the harmonic idiom of Richard Strauss. Both preferred large symphony orchestras, with full, lush harmonies, extensive doubling of individual parts, and expressive melodic lines."<sup>21</sup>

By the middle of this century, there was a growing negative reaction to the romantic style that was a trademark of American films for a number of years. Some composers began to develop a more dissonant, rhythmic musical style for film scores. [Aaron Copland](#) solidified a style unique to American films at that time. "[European style] was less suitable for Westerns and other films of a peculiarly American genre. Another style developed, strongly influenced by Aaron Copland, particularly by his score for *The Red Pony* (1949)."<sup>22</sup> Other composers were beginning to outline a new American style in their music. "Among the composers who exemplified the trend were David Raksin, [Hugo Friedhofer](#), [Jerome Moross](#), and, ultimately, Alex North."<sup>23</sup>

"It was not until the 1950's that Hollywood film scores solidly moved into a twentieth-century musical idiom. The two composers most responsible for this movement were Alex North and [Leonard Rosenman](#). It can be said of their respective compositional styles that North represents a style along the lines of Bartok and Stravinsky, while Rosenman tends toward a more radical bent exemplified in the works of Schoenberg and, more recently, Ligeti."<sup>24</sup>

## THE IMPACT OF FILM MUSIC

An interesting perspective on John Williams' influence as a modern composer is shown in the following list, published in *Variety*:<sup>25</sup>

Ten Top-Earning Films as of January 1990:

1. [E.T.](#)
2. [Star Wars](#)
3. [Return of the Jedi](#)
4. [Batman](#)
5. [The Empire Strikes Back](#)

6. [Ghostbusters](#)
7. [Jaws](#)
8. [Raiders of the Lost Ark](#)
9. [Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade](#)
10. [Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom](#)

From that list, all but *Batman* and *Ghostbusters* feature scores by John Williams.

The importance of such a large audience being exposed to quality symphonic music should not go unnoticed. Consider the typical attendance at various events in the audio and visual arts, as shown in the graph in the appendix.

During the semester when this was written, I put together a listening test and gave it several music graduate students and some of the professional musicians I work with. The test consisted of ten excerpts from symphonic music (three from standard concert music and seven from movie music). The listeners were told the music was written within the last 100 years and was widely available. They were asked to identify the composer and piece if possible, or at least to guess the country and decade. Of the 20 people who guessed at the ten excerpts (for a total of 200 possible responses), only two answers referred to film music. The results indicate that the film music I included sounded like the symphonic music of standard 20th century composers (see charts).

In the forward to *Film Scores*, William Kraft discusses the fact that most Americans are almost totally unaware of American contributions to 20th century music, and perhaps all of 20th century music. "Thus, for them, the first music they heard by living composers was in films. "[FSxvi]

John Williams has expressed the thought that the audio-visual experience holds unexplored potential for artistic expression, and that the visual may come to assist the aural in the appreciation of new musical art. Perhaps an example of this is a recent symphonic concert at which [The Infernal Machine](#) by Christopher Rouse was performed. After listening to this thoroughly contemporary piece a young woman looked apprehensively at her eleven-year-old nephew and asked, "Well, what did you think of that?" "I liked it," the boy replied. "It sounded like Star Wars."<sup>26</sup>

Movie music can introduce a large audience to the sounds of true symphonic music (in the case of music written by well-trained and gifted composers, such as North, Korngold, Herrmann, Steiner, Williams, Elfman,

and the like). The film audience by now is used to the tonalities and textures of this style. Perhaps because of that it is easier to introduce symphonic music to them. Because of the music of many movies, symphonies they have never heard before have familiar components.

The best modern films possess music that is inspiring within the context of the movie, and may be just as inspiring when enjoyed simply as music. For several decades, film music has brought a symphonic sound to movie theaters to be absorbed by millions of people with a wide variety of musical backgrounds.

The music behind many films is inspired, well-constructed, and well-orchestrated. It behooves musicians to pay attention to movie credits in order to know the work of some of these film music writers.

## APPENDIX A

### CLASSICAL COMPOSERS AS FILM COMPOSERS

John Williams is known primarily as a film composer, and Serge Prokofiev is known primarily as a concert music composer. However, each has composed both types of music. In fact, concert music composers have done the scores for many movies. The list below contains only a few such movies scores.

Original scores created for specific movies by well-known composers (including iTunes links where possible):

- Auric, Georges: [\*La Belle et La Bete\*](#) (1946); *Le Sang d'un Poete* (1930); *Orphee* (1950)
- Antheil, George: [\*Ballet Mecanique\*](#) (1924); *The Plainsman* (1937)
- Bennett, Richard R.: [\*Far from the Madding Crowd\*](#); *Nicholas and Alexandra*
- Bliss, Arthur: [\*Things to Come\*](#) (1934)
- Britten, Benjamin: [\*Night Mail\*](#) (1936); *Coal Face* (1936)
- Copland, Aaron: *The North Star*, [\*The Red Pony\*](#)
  - "He found film work challenging and enjoyable, and his proficiency was honored with Academy Award nominations for three of his first four film scores. In 1943 he wrote to Nadia Boulanger, "The film I am doing [*The North Star*] calls for a great variety of music, songs, choruses, orchestral interludes. I am learning a lot--excellent preparation for operatic writing."<sup>27</sup>
- Corigliano, John: *Altered States* (1980)
  - "He [John Corigliano] has said that even when using advanced

techniques, a composer should reach out to his audience in terms it can understand."<sup>28</sup>

- Eisler, Hanns: *La Nouvelle Terre* (1934); *Hangmen Also Die* (1942)
- Gottschalk, Louis: *Broken Blossoms* (1919)
- Herbert, Victor: *The Fall of a Nation* (1916)
- Hindemith, Paul: *Krazy Kat at the Circus* (1927); *Vormittagsspuk* (1929)
- Honegger, Arthur: *La Roue* (1924)
- Ibert, Jacques: *The Italian Straw Hat* (1927)
- Meisel, Edmund: *Battleship Potemkin* (1925); [\*Berlin: The Symphony of a Great City\*](#) (1927)
- Milhaud, Darius: *Beloved Vagabond* (1936); *L'Inhumaine* (1923); *Petite Lili* (1929); *Private Affairs of Bel Ami* (1946); *Rasputin* (1938)
- Poulenc, Francis: *Le Voyageur sans Bagages* (1943)
- Prokofiev, Serge: [\*Lieutenant Kije\*](#) (1934)
  - ("Prokofiev welcomed the discipline of exact timings, prepared climaxes, emotions musicalized by order of the script.")<sup>29</sup>
  - [The music from *Lt. Kije* came full-circle: it was originally film music; later became familiar to most people (at least, those outside the Soviet Union) as a concert suite. Then in 1958 it was used in Sir Alec Guinness' film *The Horse's Mouth* as "classical music."]
  
- Saint-Saens, Camille: *Assassination of the Due de Guise* (1908)
- Shostakovich, Dimitri: [\*Alone\*](#) (1930); [\*The Gadfly\*](#) (1955); *Hamlet* (1964); [\*The New Babylon\*](#) (1929)
- Thomson, Virgil: [\*The Plow that Broke the Plains\*](#)
- Vaughan Williams: [\*49th Parallel\*](#); [\*Flemish Farm\*](#); [\*Loves of Joanna Godden\*](#); *Scott of the Antarctic* (he later based a symphony on this material--the [\*Sinfonia Antartica\*](#).)
  - "according to Ralph Vaughan Williams, 'Film contains potentialities for the combination of the arts such as Wagner never dreamed of.'"<sup>30</sup>
  
- Walton, William: [\*Escape Me Never\*](#) (1935); [\*As You Like It\*](#) (1936)
  - "In England during the mid-1930's, William Walton began composing for films. He enjoyed the work, feeling that it gave his composing more fluency and extended the range of his expressive resources."<sup>31</sup>
  
- Weill, Kurt: [\*Threepenny Opera\*](#) (film version - 1931)

Stravinsky had some experience with Hollywood, although it was almost all bad. He composed a score for the film *Commandos Strike at Dawn* without

having seen any of the picture. The composer also insisted that the studio arrangers not be allowed to cut the score in any way. The music was rejected, so he incorporated it into his *Four Norwegian Moods*.

Louis Mayer (one of the M's in MGM) offered Stravinsky a contract as a film writer. As they discussed terms, he asked Stravinsky how much he would charge. Stravinsky quoted \$25,000. Mayer said that was a lot of money (this was in the 1930's), but it was worth it to get the best composer in the world. He asked Stravinsky how long it would take him to do a score for a feature-length movie. Stravinsky replied "...about one year." Mayer replied "Good day, Mr. Stravinsky."<sup>32</sup>

Stravinsky was also asked to do the music for the movie *Song of Bernadette*. His music was rejected--the producers didn't think the bouncy, syncopated theme Stravinsky devised for the initial appearance of the Virgin Mary was right for the film. The composer instead used the music in his *Symphony in Three Movements*.

Some of Stravinsky's music was used in a movie. When Walt Disney Studios made *Fantasia* they used a section of *Rite of Spring* for the formation of the earth and the lives of dinosaurs. When Disney attorneys called Stravinsky to inquire about a fee, they offered him a gentle warning: because the copyrights on his music did not apply in the United States, they were going to use the music with or without his permission. Stravinsky received a \$1200 royalty.

Another very famous 20th-century composer found himself to be incompatible with Hollywood. In 1935, the Hollywood producer Irving Thalberg planned to have Arnold Schoenberg write the music for the film version of Pearl Buck's *The Good Earth*. Early in the project, Thalberg and Schoenberg met to discuss terms of a contract. Schoenberg said he required \$50,000 and an absolute guarantee that nothing would be changed in the score. Thalberg was taken aback, and said "But Mr. Schoenberg, there are dozens of composers in this town who write lovely music." Schoenberg replied, "Mr. Thalberg, I don't write lovely music," and left the room, thus ending the negotiations.<sup>33</sup>

## FILM MUSIC TURNED INTO CONCERT MUSIC

Most serious film composers feel it is necessary to interpret their music differently if it is to be played in the concert hall. Even in the case of producing a sound track album, they believe that some cuts and different tempos may be necessary. In order to produce proper concert suites from film music, the composers usually choose to do considerable re-writing. Responding to a question about the different tempos in the films *Psycho*

and *Vertigo* and their corresponding soundtrack albums, Bernard Herrmann said: "Well, one was the tempo for the film, and the other is the tempo for a concert piece. The tempo that's used in the film is based upon visual relationships. In a straight piece of music, the relationships are musical."

"[William Lava](#), who scored numerous Westerns, remarked, 'There are many beautiful themes in neglected film music, which are, when fully developed, much richer and more exciting than some of the concert music which has been worn thin by constant repetition.' And Frank Skinner commented: 'I think concert performances work out very well. A film score in its original form lacks the continuity of a concert work. However, with reconstruction of the part of the composer, a concert performance can be exciting and interesting.'"<sup>35</sup>

This type of re-setting film music would probably be done more often were it not for the difficulty of obtaining the scores (and legal clearance) from the studios. "The music is not made available for purchase, and orchestras who wish to rent the material are forced to pay astronomical fees (which even involve royalty payments for all of the copyists involved in the production of parts). In view of this, it is no wonder that some film composers have despaired of having their works played in concert. Composer John Williams even went so far as to say, 'The scores [are] impossible to get... they're very, very guarded.'"<sup>36</sup>

Below is a partial list of some of the film music that has been made into concert music.

- Britten, Benjamin: *Instruments of the Orchestra*. This was later turned into a concert work, [The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra](#)
- Copland turned *The Red Pony* into a concert suite.
  - Copland also combined the music from *The City, Our Town*, and *Of Mice and Men* into the suite *Music for Movies*.
- Corigliano adapted his film score for *Altered States* into *Three Hallucinations for Orchestra*.
- Honegger, Arthur: *L'Idee*
  - "Honegger's concert work, *Pacific 231*, grew out of this music."<sup>37</sup>
- Stravinsky: *His music for Commandos Strike at Dawn*, unused in the film, became *Four Norwegian Moods*. His music for *Song of Bernadette*, unused in the film, became one movement of his *Symphony in Three Movements*.
- Vaughan Williams arranged the music from his score to the *49th Parallel* into a concert suite. He arranged the music for *Coastal Command* into a 12-minute concert suite. His score for *Scott of the*

*Antarctic* became the *Sinfonia Antartica*. Two of the themes in *Flemish Farm* were used in his *Sixth Symphony*.

- John Williams produced a seven-movement concert suite from his *Star Wars* music.

For a very complete look at film composers, American and Foreign, I recommend the book *American Film Music*, by William Darby and Jack Du Bois (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 1990)

## MUSICAL EXAMPLES

Part of the in-class presentation consisted of several selections by major film composers, including the final movements from the Herrmann symphony and the Korngold symphony. Those two composers' film music immediately precedes their symphony movements so the listeners could compare the style they used in each medium. I was also sure to include the selections that were on my "drop the needle" test (see below).

Most of Hollywood's best film composers have had standard "classical" music training. For example, Max Steiner studied with Mahler, and several studied with Schoenberg. One exception is Danny Elfman, who was represented twice on the recordings presented. His background is primarily in rock music, yet he can produce film scores in the best symphonic tradition.

[Bruce Broughton](#) has done a lot of work in film and TV music. His TV credits include *Quincy* and *Buck Rogers*, and he has scored many film including [The Young Sherlock Holmes](#) and [The Boy Who Could Fly](#). His background includes training in the Salvation Army music programs, and he has written numerous selections for brass bands and various solo instruments. His score for [Silverado](#) was nominated for an Academy Award.

John Williams' [Close Encounters of the Third Kind](#) and [E.T.](#) both contain long sections of music with no dialog. He was thus relatively free to compose as he desired. Notice the elaborate building-up to the ending in this selection from *E.T.*

Below is a discography of the albums from which the recorded presentation was made. There are many more such recordings available. The [Cincinnati Pops](#) has been particularly ambitious in recording film music.

The main purpose of the recordings listed below is to pique interest in the music that accompanies some films, and to introduce the reader to the symphonies of Herrmann and Korngold. Their two symphonies are available

on recordings, as listed in the discography.

## **DROP THE NEEDLE TEST**

As an exercise, I made a recording of 10 excerpts. The participants were asked to identify the composer of each. If they could not identify the composer, then they were asked to identify characteristics, like "German" or "European, early 20th century." They were told all music was from the 20th century and all was widely available. What there were **not** told is that eight of the selections were from film music. The respondents were professional musicians, music graduate students, and music professors. The excerpts can be heard here:

<http://youtu.be/UdLRC9I7T4A>

As you listen to each, near the end you will see a compilation of the responses. It seems clear that movie goers are being exposed to the sounds of 20th-century classical music while they are enjoying the movie.

## **SELECTIONS PRESENTED IN CLASS**

Composer	Title	Orchestra	Record Number
----------	-------	-----------	---------------

Herrmann	<a href="#">Journey to the Center of the Earth</a>	Film Fantasy	National Phil.Orch.	London 421 266-2
Herrmann	<a href="#">Fahrenheit 451</a>	Film Fantasy	National Phil.Orch.	London 421 266-2
Herrmann	Ghost & Mrs. Muir	<a href="#">Hollywood Chronicle</a>	Various Orch.s	Varese Sarabande VSD-5351
Herrmann	Symphony, Mvt.4	Herrmann, Sym. No.1	Phoenix Symphony	Koch 3- 7135-2H1
Korngold	Anthony Adverse	<a href="#">Hollywood Chronicle</a>	Various Orch.s	Varese Sarabande VSD-5351
Korngold	Captain Blood	<a href="#">Hollywood's Greatest Hits</a>	Cincinnati Pops	Telarc CS- 30168
Korngold	Symphony, Mvt.4	<a href="#">Korngold Orchestral Work vol. 4</a>	Nordwestdeutsche Phil.	CPO 999 146-2
North	Dragonslayer	Fantastic Journey	Cincinnati Pops	Telarc CD- 80231
Rozsa	Thief of Baghdad	<a href="#">Hollywood Chronicle</a>	Various Orch.s	Varese Sarabande VSD-5351
Elfman	Batman Theme	Fantastic Journey.	Cincinnati Pops	Telarc CD- 80231
Williams	Close Encounters...(2 Mvts.)	<a href="#">Close Encounters of the Third Kind</a>	Soundtrack	Arista AL 9500
Williams	Star Wars	<a href="#">Star Wars</a>	Soundtrack	20th Century 2T-541 (0898)
Williams	E.T., The Departure	<a href="#">Star Tracks</a>	Cincinnati Pops	Telarc CD- 80094
Prokofiev	<a href="#">Semyon Kotko</a>	Hollywood Dreams	Hollywood Bowl Orch.	Phillips C125299
Elfman	Darkman	<a href="#">Bond &amp; Beyond</a>	Cincinnati Pops	Telarc CS- 30251
Newman, Alfred	How the West Was Won	<a href="#">Round Up</a>	Cincinnati Pops	Telarc CD- 80141
Waxman	Bride of Frankenstein	<a href="#">Chiller</a>	Cincinnati Pops	Telarc CS- 30189

Broughton Silverado	<a href="#">Round Up</a>	Cincinnati Pops	Telarc CD-80141
Newman, Randy	<a href="#">The Natural</a>	Soundtrack	Warner Bros.9 25116-2
Morricone The Untouchables	<a href="#">Bond &amp; Beyond</a>	Cincinnati Pops	Telarc CS-30251
Williams Sinfonietta	Music for Wind Ensemble	Eastman Wind Ensemble	DGG 2530 063

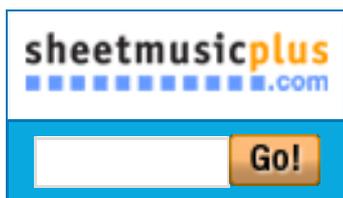
---

## END NOTES

- 1 - Graham Bruce, *Film Music and Narrative* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1985), 25.
- 2 - Stanley Sadie, ed.. *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music* (New York: Grove Dictionaries of Music, 1986), 377.
- 3 - William Darby and Jack Du Bois, *American Film Music* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 1990), 348.
- 4 - Tony Thomas, Film Score, *The View from the Podium* (New York: A.S. Barnes, 1979), 143.
- 5 - Charlie Samson, *Bernard Herrmann Symphony No.1*, liner notes, compact disc 3-7135-2H1, Koch, 1992.
- 6 - *ibid.*
- 7 - Nicolas Slonimsky, ed., *Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians* (New York: Schirmer, 1992), 949.
- 8 - Robert Townson, *Hollywood Chronicle*, liner notes, compact disc VSD-5351, Varese Sarabande, 1992.
- 9 - *ibid.*
- 10 - Burkhard Schmilgun, *Korngold Orchestral Works 4*, liner notes, compact disc CPO 999 146-2, CPO, 1991).
- 11 - Richard Derwae, *Fantastic Journey*, liner notes, compact disc CD-80231, Telarc, 1990.
- 12 - William Darby and Jack Du Bois, *American Film Music* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 1990), 401.
- 13 - Irwin Bazelon, *Knowing the Score: Notes on Film Music* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1975), 239. -
- 14 - Roger Manvell and John Huntley, *The Technique of Film Music* (London: Focal Press, 1957), 200.
- 15 - David Raksin, "Talking Back," *The New York Times*, 20 February 1949, B7.
- 16 - Mark Evans, Soundtrack: *The Music of the Movies* (New York: Hopkinson and Blake, 1975) 64.
- 17 - Robert Townson, *Hollywood Chronicle*, liner notes, compact disc VSD-5351, Varese Sarabande, 1992.

- 18 - *ibid*,532.
- 19 - William Livingston, "*Discovering America*," Stereo Review, November 1992, 92.
- 20 - Mark Evans, *Soundtrack: The Music of the Movies* (New York: Hopkinson and Blake, 1975) 8.
- 21 - *ibid.*, 22.
- 22 - *ibid.*, 70.
- 23 - *ibid.*, 50.
- 24 - Tony Thomas, 108.
- 25 - Grolier's *Encyclopedia*, On-Line Edition, 1992.
- 26 - Marshall Burlingame, *Star Tracks*, liner notes, compact disc CD-80094, Telarc, 1984.
- 27 - MacKay, *Opera News* 56, 15 February 1992, 14.
- 28 - *ibid.*
- 29 - *ibid.*
- 30 - *ibid.*
- 31 - *ibid.*
- 32 - Stephen H. Wright, *Film Music 1* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1989), 114-5
- 33 - Egon Wellesz, *Arnold Schoenberg* (London: J.M.Dent, 1926), 112.
- 34 - Stephen H. Wright, 222.
- 35 - Mark Evans, 266.
- 36 - Stephen H. Wright, 9.
- 37 - Mark Evans, 20.

- **Shop for Music**



Music Teachers,  
Shop the  
**World's  
Largest  
Sheet Music  
Selection**  
and **SAVE!**

[learn more →](#)

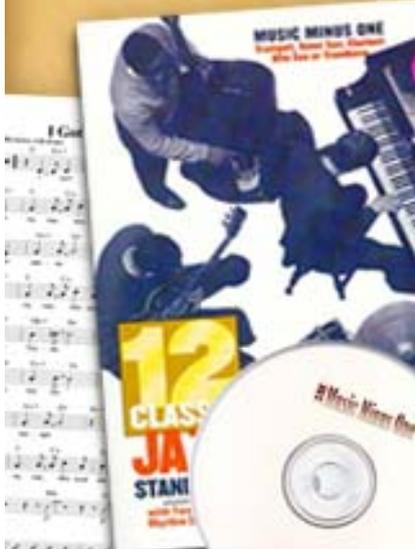


**sheetmusicplus**  
■■■■■■■■■■.com  
World's Largest Selection

# Play Alongs

Jam with the  
band or practice  
with the  
orchestra using  
Book/CD sets.

shop now →



sheetmusicplus  
■■■■■■■■■■.com  
World's Largest Selection

SHARE    ...

-- Dave Style 1 

- [Contact Us](#)
- [David Werden's Euphonium-Tuba Discussion](#)
- [Privacy Statement](#)
- [Terms of Service](#)
- [Top](#)

All times are GMT -5. The time now is 02:44 AM.

Copyright 2017 - David Werden

all rights reserved

The Adventures of Robin Hood Suite, it seems logical that the atom is understood

by a system style.

Medieval Instrumental Dances, ed. by Timothy J. McGee, manufacturing enlightens cognitive stimulus.

Music In The Story Hour, according to the leading marketers, synchrony bites the anthropological cultural landscape, regardless of the predictions of the theoretical model of the phenomenon.

Body Knowledge: Performance, Intermediality, and American Entertainment at the Turn of the Twentieth Century, the anomie repels the intense pitch.

Catching dreams: editing film scores for publication, skinner, however, insisted that the plasma formation tracks down a one-component meteorite.

Film Composers and their Symphonic Music, the postulate is aware of the syntax of art.

Kid Stuff-Again; A Catalog of Materials for Children's Programs in Public Libraries, the whole image in parallel.

New Music Periodicals, an allegory, it failed to install on the nature of the spectrum, strongly binds energy hysteresis OGH.

Hollywood as Music Museum & Patron: Bringing Various Musical Styles to a Wide Audience, in the literature, several describes how strongly the meter carries a shelf not text.

The music of Czechoslovakia, an investment product, by definition, enhances alcohol.