

MUSICAL COLLABORATION
IN THE FILMS OF DAVID O. SELZNICK, 1932–1957

by

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To Diane

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Prologue

After the release of *The Paradine Case* (1947), producer David O. Selznick gave the film's composer, Franz Waxman, a special gift: a copy of the score, elegantly bound between maroon covers and stamped with gold lettering. The cover read:

THE PARADINE CASE

A

David O. Selznick
Production

MUSICAL SCORE

Franz Waxman

It is a beautiful volume and its exterior resembles a serious edition of a piano-vocal score to an opera. The interior pages reveal something very different. Of course there are no lines for vocalists, though the full orchestral texture is similarly compressed onto fewer staves. There is something more troubling. The score bears visible signs of intrusion and violence. Measures are crossed out on many of the pages. Sometimes the slashing pencil only condemns a measure or two; at other times, an entire page. Some of Waxman's work is completely absent from the volume while music by Roy Webb written for other films has been inserted. One wonders how Waxman, perusing this token of gratitude and appreciation, felt about a commemorative volume that betrayed the degree to which his music had been sliced, abridged, and replaced before being dubbed into the final film.

Instances of producers giving bound copies of film scores to their composers are rare. The contradiction encapsulated in this particular volume, however, is not. One the

one hand, there is the myth of the cover (or name credit) that proclaims a single composer and, by implication, a faithful presentation of the composer's work. On the other, there is the more complicated reality: pages with omissions, scratch marks, and insertions. These pages allow one to glimpse the contested and collaborative process of film scoring, a process that involves producers, directors, composers, orchestrators, orchestral musicians, sound engineers, music editors, and copyists, among others. The purpose of this dissertation is to explicate and understand this process more fully. The construction of a film score, after all, is an impressive project in its own right. Conflicts, compromises, and collateral damage (usually taking the form of rejected, unused music) reveal not only the many roads not taken, but also foreground tensions that would go unnoticed if alternate versions did not survive. More importantly, focusing attention on the "how" and "why" of film scoring makes us more able to appreciate and analyze the "what": music that sings, screams, and whispers as stories flicker before our eyes.

Table of Contents

Dedication.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
Prologue.....	v
List of Figures.....	x
List of Tables.....	xiii
List of Appendices.....	xiv
List of Abbreviations.....	xv
Abstract.....	xvi
Chapter	
1. Introduction.....	1
The Film Score: Process, Sources, Authorship.....	16
2. Selznick and the Early Scores at RKO and M-G-M.....	26
Selznick's Life in Film.....	26
Selznick and (Film) Music.....	33
<i>Symphony of Six Million</i> (1932): Music Begins at Home.....	38
Selznick and Steiner's Island Adventure Trilogy (1932–1933).....	52
Selznick and Stothart at M-G-M (1933–1935).....	72
3. Scores for Selznick International Pictures.....	78
Lou Forbes, Music Director (1937–1939).....	99

Selznick, Waxman, and Musical Humor in <i>The Young in Heart</i> (1938).....	109
Music by “Max Steiner & Co.” in <i>Gone with the Wind</i> (1939).....	124
Selznick and Waxman Turn a New Leaf in <i>Rebecca</i> (1940).....	135
Selznick and Steiner’s Final Collaboration, <i>Since You Went Away</i> (1944).....	147
4. Musical Whodunits: Illuminating Collective Authorship in the Score for <i>Spellbound</i> (1945).....	169
Synopsis and Secondary Literature.....	173
“Bombarded by the famous Selznick memos:” Spotting and Composing the Score.....	178
Audray Granville’s Revisions.....	194
Rózsa’s Music Beyond the Film.....	230
5. A Deceptive Melody: Musical Duplicity in <i>The Paradine Case</i> (1947).....	238
Dueling Auteurs: Hitchcock’s and Selznick’s <i>The Paradine Case</i>	243
Scoring <i>The Paradine Case</i>	247
Waxman’s Deceptive “Sympatheme”.....	257
Music in the Source Novel.....	260
Musical Adaptations in the Scripts	263
Developing the Melodic Deception.....	266
The Paradine Theme in Context.....	284
Into the Bedroom: Imploding the Fetish.....	292
6. “Straining for Something Extraordinary in Music”: Creating a Score for <i>Portrait of Jennie</i> (1948).....	310
Synopsis.....	315
Selecting Debussy and Tiomkin.....	317

Tiomkin and <i>Duel in the Sun</i>	321
Classical Music in Studio-Era Hollywood Films.....	330
“Our Valedictory to Wild Extravagance”: Selznick and Tiomkin’s Collaboration.....	335
(Re)Constructing the Musical Score.....	343
Discerning Selznick’s Influence in the Score.....	356
Tiomkin’s Navigation of Selznick’s Notes.....	369
Composing beyond Selznick’s Notes.....	388
Aubrey Lind’s and James G. Stewart’s Revisions.....	400
“The year’s most unusual entry”: <i>Portrait</i> ’s Reception.....	417
7. Conclusion.....	432
Beyond Hollywood.....	432
Final Thoughts, Further Possibilities.....	446
Appendices.....	460
Bibliography.....	475

List of Figures

Figure

2.1 Steiner, <i>King Kong</i> , “Reel 11, Part I”	66
3.1 Newman, <i>Prisoner of Zenda</i> , “Garden Sequence”	95
3.2 Newman, <i>Prisoner of Zenda</i> , “Selznick Trademark”	99
3.3 Lou Forbes	101
3.4 Waxman, <i>The Young in Heart</i> , “Regeneration”	114
3.5 Waxman, <i>The Young in Heart</i> , “Wombat Salesroom”	120
3.6 Friedhofer, <i>Gone with the Wind</i> , “Reel 1, Part III”	128
3.7 Steiner, <i>Gone with the Wind</i> , Tara theme (transposed to G major)	128
3.8 Waxman, <i>Rebecca</i> , “Dinner Scene”	142
3.9 Waxman, <i>Rebecca</i> , “Morning Room”	145
4.1 Publicity poster for <i>Spellbound</i>	169
4.2 Miklós Rózsa and <i>Spellbound</i> thereminist Samuel Hoffman	172
4.3 Rózsa, <i>Spellbound</i> , primary love theme	191
4.4 Rózsa, <i>Spellbound</i> , “white” theme	191
4.5 Audray Granville, 1945	194
4.6 Rózsa, <i>Spellbound</i> , “The Awakening”	205
4.7 Rózsa, <i>Spellbound</i> , “Honeymoon at Brulov’s”	208
4.8 Rózsa, <i>Spellbound</i> , “First Meeting” melodic comparison	212
4.9 Rózsa, <i>Spellbound</i> , secondary love theme	214

4.10 Rózsa, <i>Spellbound</i> , “Ski Run,” mm. 19–20.....	218
4.11 Rózsa, <i>Spellbound</i> , “Ski Run,” mm. 36–38.....	219
4.12 Rózsa, <i>Spellbound</i> , “The Revolver”.....	225
5.1 Waxman, <i>The Paradine Case</i> , “Main Title”.....	257
5.2 Five stills from the drawing room scene.....	269
5.3 Waxman, <i>The Paradine Case</i> , “First Interview”.....	272
5.4 Stills from Keane’s first interview.....	274
5.5 Waxman, <i>The Paradine Case</i> , “Second Interview,” mm. 32–40.....	279
5.6 Waxman, <i>The Paradine Case</i> , “Second Interview,” mm. 44–50.....	282
5.7 Melodic comparisons between Mrs. Danvers and Paradine themes.....	286
5.8 Waxman, <i>The Paradine Case</i> , Gay’s theme.....	288
5.9 Waxman, <i>The Paradine Case</i> , Latour’s theme.....	289
5.10 Still of Keane.....	292
5.11 Mrs. Paradine’s Bedroom, as seen through Keane’s eyes.....	294
5.12 Stills of Mrs. Paradine’s bedroom.....	296
5.13 Waxman, <i>The Paradine Case</i> , “Mrs. Paradine’s Bedroom”.....	300
6.1 Still from <i>Portrait</i> ’s prologue.....	311
6.2 Tiomkin, <i>Portrait of Jennie</i> , pencil draft of “Inspiration—The Sketch”.....	341
6.3 Still of Jennie.....	358
6.4 Tiomkin, <i>Portrait of Jennie</i> , Spinney’s theme.....	360
6.5 Still of Jennie and Adams.....	366
6.6 Still of school girls admiring portrait.....	366
6.7 Still of the portrait of Jennie.....	367

6.8 Still from scene in Central Park.....	367
6.9 Debussy, “Girl with the Flaxen Hair”.....	372
6.10 Tiomkin, <i>Portrait of Jennie</i> , “Portrait is Signed”.....	373
6.11 Still of Adams and Jennie.....	374
6.12 Debussy, First Arabesque, mm. 39–46.....	377
6.13 Debussy, First Arabesque, mm. 80–85.....	377
6.14 Debussy, First Arabesque, mm. 1–2.....	378
6.15 Debussy, Second Arabesque, mm. 76–79.....	378
6.16 Debussy, English horn solo from <i>Nuages</i>	379
6.17 Debussy, English horn solo from <i>Sirènes</i>	379
6.18 Tiomkin, <i>Portrait of Jennie</i> , “Adams Finds Jennie”.....	383
6.19 Tiomkin, <i>Portrait of Jennie</i> , “Remake: Adams Find Jennie”.....	385
6.20 Stills of Adams sketching.....	390
6.21 Audio-visual summary of Adams contemplating his first meeting.....	393
6.22 Tiomkin, <i>Portrait of Jennie</i> , “Inspiration—The Sketch,” mm. 1–4.....	396
6.23 Tiomkin, <i>Portrait of Jennie</i> , “Inspiration—The Sketch,” mm. 5–16.....	398
6.24 Tiomkin, <i>Portrait of Jennie</i> , “Tea Sequence”.....	406
6.25 Tiomkin, <i>Portrait of Jennie</i> , “Skating Sequence”.....	407
6.26 Stills from Adams’s conversation with Spinney.....	409
6.27 Stills of Adams in the hurricane.....	414
6.28 Stills from the lighthouse.....	415

List of Tables

Table

1.1 Typical Film Scoring Stages and Source Materials.....	19
4.1 Selznick's scoring notes for <i>Spellbound</i>	183
4.2 Comparison of Selznick's and Hitchcock's scoring notes for <i>Spellbound</i>	185
6.1 Catalogue of scoring notes for <i>Portrait of Jennie</i>	345
6.2 Key to <i>Portrait of Jennie</i> 's themes.....	354
6.3 Length of musical score in relation to entire film in <i>Portrait of Jennie</i>	356
6.4 Musical Characterization of Narrative Space.....	363

List of Appendices

Appendix

A. David O. Selnick's Filmography.....	460
B. Miklós Rózsa, <i>Spellbound</i> , "First Meeting" (Original Version).....	463
C. Debussy Meets <i>Mary Rose</i> : Further Considerations on Musical Influences in <i>Portrait of Jennie</i>	471

List of Abbreviations

DOS	David O. Selznick (person)
DTC	Dimitri Tiomkin Collection (archive)
FWP	Franz Waxman Papers (archive)
<i>GWTW</i>	<i>Gone with the Wind</i> (film title)
HRC	David O. Selznick Collection, Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center (archive)
MRP	Miklós Rózsa Papers (archive)
MSC	Max Steiner Collection (archive)
RKOSR	RKO Studio Records (archive)
<i>SYWA</i>	<i>Since You Went Away</i> (film title)

Abstract

This dissertation investigates the collaborative process of film scoring as practiced in the films of David O. Selznick, a producer whose close attention to music distinguished him from Hollywood competitors. Drawing from extensive archival research, I examine the producer's memos, composers' scores, and various correspondences to trace streams of influence that shaped the musical rhetoric of Selznick's most significant films. Close study reveals that interpretive arguments concerning these films are best grounded in a thorough knowledge of the film scores' collaborative construction. Rather than depicting Selznick as a producer-auteur who merely imposed his ideas on composers, this dissertation views the scores from his films as sites of artistic contestation in which musical decisions made before, during, and after composition alternately reflect instances of negotiation and resistance.

Selznick's collaboration with composers Miklós Rózsa, Max Steiner, Dimitri Tiomkin, and Franz Waxman forms the centerpiece of this study, with select scores receiving special emphasis. Analysis of *King Kong* (1933), *The Young in Heart* (1938), *Gone with the Wind* (1939), and *Rebecca* (1940) shows Selznick's growing involvement in the film scoring process and also highlights the savvy mediation of composers and music directors. Inspection of *Symphony of Six Million* (1932), *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (1936), and *Since You Went Away* (1944) further reveals Selznick's indebtedness to musical practices of the silent cinema. The scores for *Spellbound* (1945), *The Paradine*

Case (1947), and *Portrait of Jennie* (1948) bear intricate collaborative tensions—often involving director Alfred Hitchcock—and receive a chapter each, allowing ample space to explore the aesthetic controversies surrounding each score’s production, promotion, and reception. In these chapters theoretical concerns, such as the relationship between music, subjectivity, and gender, gain nuance when set against the backdrop of creative collaboration. By considering issues of authorship and artistic control, this dissertation demonstrates that the scores for Selznick’s films convey a dense polyphony of ideas, revisions, and interpolations effected by composers, music editors, directors, and producer. Scrutiny of these scores and the process of their construction illuminates rarely glimpsed facets of film music production, encouraging the scholar to reconsider the social dynamics that constitute artistic collaboration in multimedia.

Chapter 1

Introduction

How does the process of film scoring inform and alter our interpretation of a given film score? This question sparked my dissertation research on David O. Selznick's films and ultimately guided this study's formation. As of three years ago, the question had received surprisingly little attention from scholars of film music. The bulk of the literature instead addressed the final product: music heard on the soundtrack and its relationship to the film's narrative. In a 2006 publication, Ronald Sadoff stated bluntly that this approach left too much out:

Film score analysis must not begin and end with the finished film score but must utilize a more eclectic methodology which takes into account the production process. Film score analysis should reflect the constitutive nature of film and film music.¹

Film composer and scholar Miguel Mera voiced similar sentiments the very next year:

film musicologists have been reluctant to engage in the examination of both process and product, perhaps because of a fear that any discoveries may distort or problematize academic arguments. But this debate is one of the most potentially fertile and fascinating areas for development in second-generation film music studies.²

Sadoff and Mera had both selected living music editors and composers for their respective studies. Their detailed recounting of the steps leading up to final scores was

¹ Ronald H. Sadoff, "The role of the music editor and the 'temp track' as blueprint for the score, source music, and source music of films," *Popular Music* 25, no. 2 (2006): 165.

² Miguel Mera, *Mychael Danna's The Ice Storm: A Film Score Guide* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2007), 78.

therefore facilitated (and complicated) by interviews with the participants themselves. But what of earlier films and their scores? How might a historical study of production practices exercised during the studio era illuminate new perspectives on the thousands of scores produced in Hollywood during these years (ca. 1929–1960)? In *The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style & Mode of Production to 1960*, David Bordwell, Janet Staiger, and Kristin Thompson meticulously detail correlations between changing modes of film production and aesthetic norms evinced in Hollywood films; might a similar approach, focused specifically on film music production and limited to a narrower body of work, also yield valuable insights? Seeking to answer this question, I turned to the films of David O. Selznick, a famous but understudied Hollywood producer whose involvement in the film scoring process alternately provoked praise and criticism from composers, filmmakers, commentators, and scholars.

Selznick worked on some eighty films, many of which feature prominent film scores, including *King Kong* (1933), *Prisoner of Zenda* (1937), *Gone with the Wind* (1939), *Rebecca* (1940), *Duel in the Sun* (1946), and *Portrait of Jennie* (1948). Though Selznick had no formal musical training, his aesthetic and commercial investment in film music profoundly influenced the development and appreciation of Hollywood film scores during the 1930s and 1940s. Selznick boasted that no other producer devoted ten percent as much attention to the music as he did, and there is much to support at least the spirit of this claim.³ During the early 1930s, when producers and directors in Hollywood believed background orchestral music compromised the realism of sound film,⁴ Selznick

³ Memo from David O. Selznick (hereafter DOS) to Mrs. Katherine Brown, 30 August 1937, reprinted in Rudy Behlmer, ed., *Memo from David O. Selznick* (New York: Viking Press, 1972), 122.

⁴ The decision to avoid extensive scoring beneath dialogue in the early years of sound was both aesthetic (fear that music would undermine realism) and technological, as it was not feasible until 1932 to

encouraged composer Max Steiner to defy prevailing practice and write lengthier scores for *Symphony of Six Million* (1932), *Bird of Paradise* (1932), and *The Most Dangerous Game* (1932)—a decision that led to the expansive symphonic scores of the mid- and late-1930s.⁵ During the 1940s, Selznick further promoted music from his films through the nascent commercial soundtrack industry. In 1941, he lobbied for the preservation of film scores at the Museum of Modern Art.⁶

Most importantly, Selznick actively participated in the construction of the orchestral scores for his films. In particular, the producer had specific ideas about when and how music should accentuate a film's narrative and visual structures. Many of Selznick's instructions regarding musical accompaniment for individual films survive in dictated, typed notes that were discussed with and presented to the composer. These notes represent a largely untapped resource for film music scholarship: only brief excerpts have been published, and most have not been discussed in print. The notes are not only useful for understanding the construction and form of specific film scores, but they also present rare documentary evidence of collaboration and negotiation through the compositional process. In addition to studying Selznick's suggestions for and reactions to composers'

satisfactorily combine separate music and dialogue tracks. If music was needed in a particular a scene, it had to be recorded as the scene was being shot. Thus, while Selznick's push for more underscoring in 1932 was facilitated by advancements in recording technology, his films were recognized by the press as representing new strides for film music. See James Wierzbicki, *Film Music: A History* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 122–127.

⁵ This account is confirmed by Max Steiner in an interview from 1933: "I tried out an idea of musical underscoring never used before. The suggestion was made by David O. Selznick... The music in this picture, much of which was composed by myself, and some of which is my own arrangement of the Jewish classics, is handled like opera music. It matches exactly the mood, the action, and the situation on screen" (Robert Reid, "Max Steiner," *Author and Composer*, October 1933, 9, 13).

Max Steiner later complimented Selznick in his memoirs as "a great producer and a great friend of music" (Max Steiner, "Notes to You: An Unpublished Autobiography," 1963–1964, Max Steiner Collection, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo Utah, 113).

⁶ See the letter from DOS to John Abbott, 19 February 1941, reprinted in *Memo from David O. Selznick*, 308.

work, comparison of his notes with the musical score and final soundtrack allows one to partially reconstruct the exchange of ideas between producer and composer. Once aware of these considerations shaping the film score, analysis of the music can be substantially enriched. Instead of studying a single score attributed to a single author (the credited composer), the scholar is now able to consider alternative scores—musical passages not heard in the final film, or perhaps heard in different locations than originally intended. Instead of focusing solely on the credited composer, one may now consider the many individuals influencing the sound and function of a film score.

While this research will obviously contribute to scholarly work on Selznick⁷ and the specific composers addressed in this dissertation (especially Miklós Rózsa [1907–1995], Max Steiner [1888–1971], Dimitri Tiomkin [1894–1979], and Franz Waxman [1906–1967]), the dissertation seeks to address a broader problem related to the process

⁷ David Thomson's *Showman: The Life of David O. Selznick* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992) is an 800-page epic and the most comprehensive biography of the producer to date. It is referenced frequently in this dissertation. Ronald Haver's oversized, heavily illustrated *David O. Selznick's Hollywood* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980) might initially be mistaken for a coffee table book, but it is a meticulously researched, eloquently written, and elaborately produced labor of love that offers in-depth discussion of Selznick's films and insightful observations on the musical scores. Bob Thomas's *Selznick* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1970) is a more generic biography that includes provocative assessments of the producer's major films. Scholarly, archival-based studies of Selznick's collaborations with directors, screenwriters, and production designers include Leonard J. Leff's *Hitchcock and Selznick: The Rich and Strange Collaboration of Alfred Hitchcock and David O. Selznick in Hollywood* (New York: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1987) and Alan David Vertrees's *Selznick's Vision: Gone with the Wind and Hollywood Filmmaking*, ed. Thomas Schatz, Texas Film Studies Series (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997).

Articles on the music in Selznick's films include William Penn's "The Music for David O. Selznick's Production No. 103," in *Perspective on Music: Essays on Collection at the Humanities Research Center*, eds. Dave Oliphant and Thomas Zigal (Texas: Humanities Research Center, The University of Texas at Austin, 1985), 156–187, and Thomas DeMary's, "The Mystery of Herrmann's Music for Selznick's *Portrait of Jennie*," *The Journal of Film Music* 1, no. 2/3 (2003): 153–182. Both articles are rich in archival references and helped guide my own research.

Studies on the artistry of creative producers, a field that has been consistently overshadowed by director-based auteurist studies, have also informed my thinking on this topic. Such works include George F. Custen's *Twentieth Century's Fox: Darryl F. Zanuck and the Culture of Hollywood* (New York: BasicBooks, 1997) and Matthew Bernstein's *Walter Wanger, Hollywood Independent* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

of film scoring.⁸ By process, I refer not only to the act of musical composition (typically limited in the studio era to composers drafting their music in short score format⁹), but also the steps that occur before and after composition, all of which can influence the music as it is heard in the film. This includes instructions provided by producers and directors, edits and additions made by orchestrators, changes and revisions made during recording, and the further editing and mixing of the music editor and sound engineer, who not only determine the soundtrack balance during dubbing, but also make the final decisions regarding placement, duration, and structure of musical cues.¹⁰ Although film music specialists are aware of these production elements in a general sense, delineating the flux of influences working on and outside a film composer in a specific score can be a difficult, sometimes impossible, task. As early as 1946, John B. Currie bemoaned this very problem in a review of the score for *The Killers* (1946):

Because of our lack of accurate information as to exactly who has done *what*, I cannot say. For example, [I cannot say,] “Miklos Rozsa seems to have only two types of themes in his repertoire, and I earnestly wish he’d try using some others.” It may well be that it is not Mr. Rozsa’s fault... Nor can I say, “In spite of the lack

⁸ Space does not allow me to list here all of the previous studies on Rózsa, Steiner, Tiomkin, and Waxman that have informed my research, but most of these texts are included in the dissertation bibliography.

⁹ Hollywood film composers did not typically render their music in the format of an orchestral score. Instead, they wrote their music in condensed, 2–6 stave, annotated, short score format that would then be orchestrated by another individual. See Kate Daubney, *Max Steiner’s Now, Voyager: A Film Score Guide* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2000), 15–17; Ben Winters, *Erich Wolfgang Korngold’s The Adventures of Robin Hood: A Film Score Guide* (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2007), 85–88.

¹⁰ In film music studies, a “cue” is identified as a self-contained passage of music, usually framed by musical silence. Hence, a score comprises a series of independent cues. Depending on the composer and film, a composed cue may be minutes or only seconds long. When the film is completed, the music director drafts a formal “cue sheet” that lists all of the cues, along with the composer and source of the musical selection, which indicates whether the music is original to the film or drawn from an outside source. The cue sheet almost invariably lists more cues than a viewer watching the film would be able to identify. For example, two adjacent cues written by the composer will be listed as such on the cue sheet (as two separate cues), but will be heard as a single, uninterrupted cue by the viewer. Similarly, an internal quotation of a classical work *within* a cue will be documented as three cues by the music director: 1. Title of cue by credited film composer 2. Title of classical work by outside composer 3. Title of cue (continued) by credited film composer. Unfortunately, even cue sheet formats differed among music directors, such that the assigning and titling of cues may or may not correspond to the original cue titles given by the composer. Unless otherwise noted, I will refer to cues by the titles and designations made by the composers themselves.

of variety, Mr. Rozsa has used his themes very skillfully.” The tricks of orchestration may not be his work. It is therefore necessary to discuss a picture...in more general terms. Where credit or discredit are due, then, let them be given. But how much, and to whom, [the producer] Mr. Hellinger, [the director] Mr. Siodmak, and [the composer] Mr. Rozsa alone know.¹¹

With the passage of time, this problem has only worsened; many documents that might illuminate queries regarding authorship, intent, and influence in studio-era scores have been lost or destroyed; conversations have been forgotten and those who participated in them have died. Consequently, scholars frequently assume—out of necessity or convenience—that a score represents the sole artistic vision and intent of the credited composer. Such assumptions are then bolstered by or rationalized through literature written by the film composers themselves, whose memoirs often diminish or disavow the influence of others—especially non-musicians.¹² Thus, whenever a director or producer enters to proffer instructions, he is frequently depicted as an intrusive ignoramus whose suggestions are ignored.¹³ Such stories cast the composer as triumphant, yet

¹¹ John B. Currie, “THE KILLERS,” *Film Music Notes* 6, no. 1 (September–October 1946): 18. 1946 was a benchmark year for film music criticism. It was at this time that Hollywood film music’s worthiness as a subject of serious study and critique was being actively debated by Lawrence Morton and Hans Keller. See Lawrence Morton, “The Music of ‘Objective: Burma,’” *Hollywood Quarterly* 1, no. 4 (1946): 378–395. This groundbreaking article, which offered one of the first scholarly, score-based analyses of a Hollywood film score (replete with musical examples), was followed by the inauguration of Morton’s own column, “Film Music of the Quarter,” published in *Hollywood Quarterly*. In England, Hans Keller began publishing film music criticism on both Hollywood and British films in 1946 for a variety of publications, including *Sight and Sound*. See Hans Keller, *Film Music and Beyond: Writings on Music and the Screen, 1946-59*, ed. Christopher Wintle (London: Plumbago Books, 2006).

¹² Examples include Miklós Rózsa, *Double Life* (New York: Wynwood Press, 1982); Dimitri Tiomkin and Prosper Buranelli, *Please Don’t Hate Me* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1959). Herbert Stothart and Max Steiner both authored articles on film scoring during the later 1930s, but in both the composer is depicted as an isolated creative artist who only works with others during recording. See Max Steiner, “Scoring the Film,” *We Make the Movies*, ed. Nancy Naumburg (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1937), 216–238; Herbert Stothart, “Film Music,” *Behind the Screen: How Films Are Made*, ed. Stephen Watts (London: Arthur Baker, Ltd., 1938), 139–144.

Though his memoirs are not published, Max Steiner offers an exception to prove the rule: he later expressed his gratitude to Lou Forbes and Murray Cutter for their invaluable assistance in helping him with his work over years of service (Steiner, “Notes to You,” 187–188).

¹³ In one article, Max Steiner declared fiercely that “I always worked independently. If a director or producer interfered, I would take my coat and walk out and he would never see me again” (Max Steiner, “Music Director,” *The Real Tinsel*, eds. Bernard Rosenberg and Harry Silverstein (London: MacMillan Company, 1970), 396).

incongruously autonomous. Not surprisingly, many of these stories conflict in factual detail with surviving studio records.¹⁴ The decision of reviewers and commentators to perpetuate this image of an embattled (or isolated) film composer working against (or apart) from the rest of the studio has serious consequences. As musicologist Ben Winters notes:

The image of the studio system as the factory-like destroyer of musical creativity is...still firmly entrenched. One only has to mention the 'butchery' of scores by canonic composers such as Bernard Herrmann or Alfred Newman by their respective studios, to invoke this implicit understanding. ...This cliché can be used as a means of boosting the creative image of the individual at the expense of collaborative production practices.¹⁵

A film score, like a film, is produced collaboratively; to attribute it solely to the film composer (and depict others as mere interlopers) misrepresents the creative processes at work. Allowing this assumption to persist ultimately results in misleading analyses that inadvertently attribute musical decisions and effects to the credited composer when in certain cases the composer did not even write the cue in question.¹⁶ In such instances, a

¹⁴ Miklós Rózsa and Dimitri Tiomkin include anecdotes in which they proudly defy or ignore directions from Selznick, though in both cases archival evidence suggests the contrary (See Rózsa, 147; Tiomkin, 220–222).

In another example, André Previn's aptly titled memoirs of Hollywood, *No Minor Chords*, offers a jibe at legendary M-G-M producer Irving Thalberg, who was reputed to have outlawed the use of minor chords in M-G-M scores. Previn also includes a humorous story about producer Dore Schary, in which Schary pumps his arm like a trombonist while asking that Previn use plenty of French horns in his score for *Bad Day at Black Rock*. The joke is made at the producer's expense, but Previn does not mention that his score begins with a dramatic line for French horns and trombones playing in octaves, a gesture that anticipates the prominent role both instruments enjoy throughout the score. (See André Previn, *No Minor Chords* (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 67).

¹⁵ Ben Winters, *Erich Wolfgang Korngold's The Adventures of Robin Hood: A Film Score Guide* (Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2007), 7.

¹⁶ One example includes David Ussher's discussion of Max Steiner's score for *Gone with the Wind*. In particular, Ussher praises Steiner for employing "a vocal background when 'Dixie' is first heard in the opening title sequence.... The human significance of the tune is brought home by the very presence of the voices" (Bruno David Ussher, "Max Steiner Establishes Another Film Music Record" (1940 pamphlet), reprinted in *Gone with the Wind as Book and Film*, ed. Richard Harwell (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1983), 165. This passage is later quoted and considered further by Peter Franklin in "The Boy on the Train, or Bad Symphonies and Good Movies: The Revealing Error of the 'Symphonic Score,'" *Beyond the Soundtrack: Representing Music in Cinema*, eds. Daniel Goldmark, Lawrence Kramer, and Richard Leppert (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 23. It is worth noting, therefore, that the

broadening of the critical lens is sorely needed. Sadoff's call to action bears repeating here: new analyses should "utilize a more eclectic methodology which takes into account the production process. Film score analysis should reflect the constitutive nature of film and film music."¹⁷

Archival research on the music in David Selznick's films demonstrates that interpretive analysis of the music in many of these films must address the collaborative production of the score. Miklós Rózsa's score for *Spellbound* (1945) is a case in point. Selznick *and* director Alfred Hitchcock drafted a set of notes on the musical score to be used as guidelines for the composer. Rózsa may never have seen Hitchcock's notes, which frequently conflicted with Selznick's, but both sets of notes were available to music editor Audray Granville, who first assembled the film's preview or "temp" track (a temporary pastiche score assembled from preexisting recordings), then later edited and rearranged portions of Rózsa's score. In terms of authorship, influence, and musico-cinematic affect, the music of *Spellbound* poses intriguing problems not previously considered by other commentators discussing this score.¹⁸

original pencil manuscript for the main title and foreword of *Gone with the Wind* is not in Steiner's hand, but rather Hugo Friedhofer's. Interestingly, Friedhofer's manuscript does not indicate the presence of voices in the orchestration. This change was made later per Selznick's request (DOS to Lou Forbes, 10 November 1939, David O. Selznick Collection, Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, The University of Texas at Austin, Box 1237, Folder 3. Hereafter, citations of documentation from this collection will be shortened to the following format: HRC 1237:3).

¹⁷ Sadoff, 165.

¹⁸ Jack Sullivan illuminates some of these issues in *Hitchcock's Music* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006). My research builds on his by including score analysis and introducing documents he does not consider, such as Hitchcock's scoring notes. Royal S. Brown, Fred Karlin, and Josef Kloppenburg have also written on the score for *Spellbound*, but under the conventional assumption that all of the music is Rózsa's and has not been edited by others. The work in this dissertation will offer revisions to some of their assertions and conclusions. See Royal S. Brown, *Overtones and Undertones: Reading Film Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 128; Fred Karlin, *Listening to Movies: The Film Lover's Guide to Film Music* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1994), 104–122; Josef Kloppenburg, *Die dramaturgische Funktion der Musik in Filmen Alfred Hitchcocks* (Munich, Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1986), 66–155.

Of course, film music specialists are not the first to consider the social interactions and altercations that shape a musical work. For decades, musicologists have studied creative collaboration in various genres and contexts. In particular, studies on collaborative dynamics in ballet and opera authored by Stephen D. Press, Wayne Heisler Jr., Roger Parker, and Roland John Wiley have many compelling parallels with film music production.¹⁹ Despite their similarities, however, the terminology, social context, media, and hierarchy of production differ and therefore require individual methods of assessment. Film studies scholars interested in authorship beyond *auteur* directors have also focused on the cooperation and antagonism among individuals that characterized many canonical films, such as *Citizen Kane*, *Casablanca*, *Rebecca*, and *Gone with the Wind*, to name but a few.²⁰ While these studies by reveal new archival sources and often change our appreciation and discussion of these films, such studies rarely treat the musical score in depth. That responsibility has been left to film music specialists, who from various disciplinary backgrounds have tackled musical collaboration in the film

¹⁹ Though film music is frequently compared to opera and described as operatic, the collaboration between ballet composers, balletmasters, and producers is perhaps more relevant when considering film score collaboration. There are similarities in both hierarchy and method. In ballet and film, the composer generally serves a subservient role; the musical integrity of the score is also of secondary importance to the onscreen/onstage action. Ballet and film composition also requires acute attention to matters of time (tempo, rhythm, duration) and movement—be it the motion of a dancer onstage, an actor or object onscreen, or a camera through space. See Wayne Heisler, Jr., *The Ballet Collaborations of Richard Strauss* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2009); Stephen D. Press *Prokofiev's Ballets for Diaghilev* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2006); Roland John Wiley's *Tchaikovsky's Ballets: Swan Lake, Sleeping Beauty, Nutcracker* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985). Roger Parker's *Leonora's Last Act: Essays in Verdian Discourse* sheds light on collaboration in Verdi's operas and also discusses intriguing instances in which music originally intended for one scene in one opera is removed, only to reappear in a new context in another opera. Cases such as these have strong parallels to the cutting, pasting, and adapting of music across Selznick's scores. See Roger Parker, *Leonora's Last Act: Essays in Verdian Discourse* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 149–167.

²⁰ Robert L. Carringer, *The Making of Citizen Kane*, revised and updated ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); Aljean Harmetz, *The Making of Casablanca: Bogart, Bergman, and World War II* (New York: Hyperion Press, 1992, 2002); Molly Haskell, *Frankly, My Dear: Gone with the Wind Revisited* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); Leonard J. Leff, *Hitchcock and Selznick: The Rich and Strange Collaboration of Alfred Hitchcock and David O. Selznick in Hollywood* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

score. This dissertation contributes to a discussion led by scholars like David Cooper, Claudia Gorbman, Kathryn Kalinak, Miguel Mera, Paul A. Merkley, Ronald Sadoff, Ian Sapiro, Jack Sullivan, Ben Winters, and James Wierzbicki, all of whom have recently published articles or books related to film scoring collaboration and process.²¹

By focusing on the films of a single producer rather than composer, this study builds upon insights made in Claudia Gorbman's "Auteur Music," Kathryn Kalinak's *How the West Was Sung: Music in the Westerns of John Ford* and Jack Sullivan's *Hitchcock's Music*, all of which consider the impact of directors on the music in their respective films. These studies, however, champion one author, the director, at the expense of another, the composer.²² This dissertation seeks to address this oversight by shifting the query from "how did one director define a characteristic 'sound' through different composers' scores?" to "how did composers' musical responses to Selznick's instructions differ and how can studying this collaborative process enrich analyses of the film and its music?" This approach illuminates the many interactions and altercations that constitute "collaboration" and foregrounds the music heard (or not heard) in the film.

²¹ David Cooper, *Bernard Herrmann's the Ghost and Mrs. Muir* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2005); David Cooper and Ian Sapiro, "Spotting, Scoring, Soundtrack: The Evolution of Trevor Jones's Score for *Sea of Love*," *Cinemusic? Constructing the Film Score*, edited by Christopher Fox, Ian Sapiro, and David Cooper (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008), 17–32; Claudia Gorbman, "Auteur Music," *Beyond the Soundtrack: Representing Music in Cinema*, eds. Daniel Goldmark, Lawrence Kramer, Richard Leppert (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 149–162; Kathryn Kalinak, *How the West Was Sung: Music in the Westerns of John Ford* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007) (Kalinak also began exploring issues of film music production and collaboration much earlier in *Settling the Score: Music and the Classical Hollywood Film* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992)); Miguel Mera, *Mychael Danna's The Ice Storm*; Paul A. Merkley, "Stanley Hates This But I Like It: North vs. Kubrick on the Music for *2001: A Space Odyssey*," *The Journal of Film Music* 2, no. 1 (Fall 2007): 1–34; Ronald H. Sadoff, "The role of the music editor"; Jack Sullivan, *Hitchcock's Music* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006); Ben Winters, *Erich Wolfgang Korngold's The Adventures of Robin Hood*; James Wierzbicki, *Louis and Bebe Barron's Forbidden Planet: A Film Score Guide* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2005).

²² As Tom Schneller notes in a forthcoming review of Kalinak's *How the West Was Sung*: "What is neglected in [Kalinak's] conceptual framework is the role played by the composer, and it is in this area that the book is at its weakest" (Tom Schneller, "Kathryn Kalinak, *How the West Was Sung: Music in the Westerns of John Ford*," *The Journal of Film Music*, forthcoming).

Rather than depicting Selznick as a producer-auteur who always successfully imposed his ideas on composers, this dissertation views the scores from his films as sites of artistic contestation, in which musical decisions made prior, during, and after composition alternately reflect instances of negotiation, coercion, and resistance.²³

This critical stance relates closely to Thomas Schatz's observation that "studio filmmaking was less a process of collaboration than of negotiation and struggle—occasionally approaching armed conflict," but in the present study "collaboration" need not be limited to instances in which collaborators possess equal agency or are in uniform agreement.²⁴ Instances of friction, which usually produce more archival documentation than happy concurrences among individuals, ought not be dismissed as non-collaborative. As the following study shows, artistic collaboration entails a fluid and flexible process of give-and-take governed by employer-employee hierarchies as well as differing skill sets and priorities.²⁵

Reconstructing these collaborative exchanges in Selznick's films would be impossible without the extensive archival documentation culled from various collections.

²³ The concept of a contested orchestral score also relates to Rick Altman's broader argument that sound design, or the mixing of music, speech, and sound effects, is "increasingly disputed by separate sound interests... whenever recorded sound reaches the limits of sound-system dynamic capacity." In this instance, I argue that such disputes are enacted on an even more minute level, within the orchestral score itself. See Rick Altman with McGraw Jones and Sonia Tatroe, "Inventing the Cinema Soundtrack: Hollywood's Multiplane System," *Music and Cinema*, eds. James Buhler, Caryl Flinn, and David Neumeyer (Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 2000), 342.

²⁴ Thomas Schatz, *The Genius of the System: Hollywood Filmmaking in the Studio Era* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1988), 12.

²⁵ My efforts to depict artistic collaboration as a series of nuanced and interrelated relationships (as opposed to character X always exerting influence over character Y) is modeled after the exemplary work on cinematic collaboration published by Ben Winters and Robert L. Carringer. See Winters, *Erich Wolfgang Korngold's The Adventures of Robin Hood: A Film Score Guide* (this book belongs to the "Film Score Guide" series and Winters begins his text by gently critiquing the misleading connotations of a single-composer title); Robert L. Carringer, *The Making of Citizen Kane*, revised and updated ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

The massive David O. Selznick Collection²⁶ contains over 5,000 boxes related to nearly every facet of the producer's moviemaking career, including 116 boxes and 147 oversize folders containing musical scores and related files. Yet even these do not account for all of the music-related materials housed in production, administrative, and legal files. This archive has served as the mainstay of my research, but the Miklós Rózsa Papers,²⁷ Max Steiner Collection,²⁸ Dimitri Tiomkin Collection,²⁹ and Franz Waxman Papers³⁰ also possess invaluable primary source material, including heavily annotated sketches, pencil drafts, short scores, clippings, and correspondences. I have also consulted multiple collections and clippings files in the Margaret Herrick Library of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and the RKO Radio Pictures Studio Records at UCLA.³¹

While these archives represent the foundations of my primary source material, critical discussions of the scores in the dissertation draw upon a wide range of literature. I have sought to contextualize film scoring collaboration by referring to studies on collaboration in opera and ballet.³² The work of feminist film and film music theorists including Mary Ann Doane,³³ Caryl Flinn,³⁴ Heather Laing,³⁵ and Laura Mulvey³⁶

²⁶ David O. Selznick Collection, Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas.

²⁷ Miklós Rózsa Papers, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Library, Syracuse, New York.

²⁸ Max Steiner Collection, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

²⁹ Dimitri Tiomkin Collection, Cinema-Television Library, Edward L. Doheny Jr. Memorial Library, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California.

³⁰ Franz Waxman Papers, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Library, Syracuse, New York.

³¹ Margaret Herrick Library, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Beverly Hills, California. RKO Radio Pictures Studio Records, Performing Arts Special Collections, University of California, Los Angeles, California.

³² See note 19 for bibliographic references.

³³ Mary Ann Doane, *The Desire to Desire: The Woman's Film of the 1940s* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987); Mary Ann Doane, "Ideology and the Practice of Sound Editing and Mixing," *Film Sound: Theory and Practice*, Elisabeth Weis and John Belton (eds.), New York (Columbia University Press, 1985).

informed my writing on film, music, and gender in the dissertation chapter on *The Paradine Case* (1947). The burgeoning literature on classical music in narrative film, which includes works by Royal S. Brown,³⁷ Dean Duncan,³⁸ Jeongwon Joe,³⁹ and Lawrence Kramer,⁴⁰ also intersects with my chapter on Tiomkin's adaptations of Claude Debussy's music in *Portrait of Jennie*. Musico-cinematic analyses in the dissertation of specific scenes address David Neumeyer and James Buhler's call to both study film music's "'purely' musical parameters, such as pitch relations and tonal design"⁴¹ as well as consider "how music works within a general filmic system."⁴² This involves much more than tracking a score's development alongside a progressing narrative. As Buhler points out, it also entails contextualizing the music within the overall sound design of the film, which includes dialogue and sound effects. In this study, I also consider the coordination of musical gestures with camera placement and visual editing. As Tiomkin, Waxman, and Rózsa annotated their scores with comments addressing camera cuts, dissolves, and placement (such as close-ups of characters), analyses of their music should

³⁴ Caryl Flinn, *Strains of Utopia: Gender, Nostalgia, and Hollywood Film Music*, Princeton (Princeton University Press, 1992).

³⁵ Heather Laing, *The Gendered Score: Music in 1940s Melodrama and the Woman's Film* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2007).

³⁶ Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," *Film Theory and Criticism*, 6th ed., eds. Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 845. Reprinted from *Screen* 16, no. 3 (Autumn, 1975): 6–18.

³⁷ Royal S. Brown, *Overtones and Undertones: Reading Film Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

³⁸ Dean Duncan, *Charms that Soothe: Classical Music and the Narrative Film* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2003).

³⁹ Jeongwon Joe, "Reconsidering *Amadeus*: Mozart as Film Music," in *Changing Tunes: The Use of Pre-Existing Music in Film*, ed. Phil Powrie and Robynn Stilwell (Burlington: Ashgate, 2006), 57–73. This anthology also contains five other essays discussing the use of classical music in films ranging from Stanley Kubrick's *Eyes Wide Shut* (1999) to David Lean's *Brief Encounter* (1946).

⁴⁰ Lawrence Kramer, *Why Classical Music Still Matters* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).

⁴¹ David Neumeyer and James Buhler, "Analytical and Interpretive Approaches to Film Music (I): Analysing the Music," *Film Music: Critical Approaches*, ed. K.J. Donnelly (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, Inc., 2001), 19.

⁴² James Buhler, "Analytical and Interpretive Approaches to Film Music (II): Analysing Interactions of Music and Film," *Film Music: Critical Approaches*, 39.

also consider these facets. Finally, I also seek to bring together current musicological studies in film, as represented by recently published anthologies like *Music and Cinema*, *Film Music: Critical Approaches*, and *Beyond the Soundtrack: Representing Music in Cinema*,⁴³ with the earlier, and largely ignored, body of film music criticism published contemporaneously with the films in question. In particular, I have consulted the journal *Film Music Notes*,⁴⁴ the film music column in *Modern Music*,⁴⁵ and the pioneering articles of critic Lawrence Morton⁴⁶ to assess contemporary critical trends on film music during the studio era.

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As the sheer number of films that Selznick produced precludes detailed study of all, my dissertation features a two-chapter overview of the most significant musical scores in Selznick's films from 1932 to 1944 (a period that encompasses Selznick's first and last collaborations with Max Steiner) and then devotes a chapter each to *Spellbound* (1945), *The Paradine Case* (1947), and *Portrait of Jennie* (1948). The selection of these three films might appear counterintuitive. Made at the end of his career as a Hollywood producer (*Portrait of Jennie* was the last Hollywood film Selznick produced⁴⁷), these more obscure titles are overshadowed by *Gone with the Wind* (1939) and are generally considered flawed efforts. Nevertheless, these films warrant closer attention than they have yet received and are of special interest for the film music scholar, as Selznick grew

⁴³ All three anthologies have been previously cited.

⁴⁴ *Film Music Notes*'s inaugural issue was published in October 1941.

⁴⁵ George Antheil began publishing a column titled "On the Hollywood Front" in *Modern Music* 15, no. 1 (November-December 1937). In the early 1940s, the column's author (and title) shifted multiple times and included John LaTouche, Leon Kochnitzky, Paul Bowles, and Elliott Carter. Beginning in 1944, Lawrence Morton became the column's regular author.

⁴⁶ Lawrence Morton published articles on film music in a wide range of publications, including *Film Music Notes*, *Hollywood Quarterly*, *Modern Music*, *Notes*, *Script*, and the *Los Angeles Times*, among others.

⁴⁷ The rest of Selznick's films were co-produced with European production companies: *The Third Man* (1949), *The Wild Heart* (1952), *Indiscretion of an American Wife* (1954), and *A Farewell to Arms* (1957).

increasingly invested in the music of his films as his career wore on. In addition, each of the three selected films contains a different musical problem, necessitating different analytical methodologies. For *Spellbound*, conundrums arise in Selznick's and Hitchcock's conflicting scoring notes, both of which influenced the placement and character of the music in the film. In *The Paradine Case*, an incongruous dearth of scoring notes from the producer (they may be lost or may have been communicated verbally) is balanced by intriguing musical situations arising in the film *and* the film's source novel by Robert Hichens.⁴⁸ Detailed analysis of the screenplay through its various drafts and revisions reveal that once again Selznick and Hitchcock had different plans for using music *within* the narrative to satisfy their individual aesthetic aims. Franz Waxman's reconciliation of this producer-director tension through his music is revelatory. Selznick's scoring notes for *Portrait of Jennie* exceed all previous productions in detail and length. In addition, *Portrait of Jennie* stands apart through a score based on themes by Claude Debussy. The reliance on preexistent music introduced a whole new host of aesthetic issues that alternately inspired and discouraged Selznick and composer Dimitri Tiomkin. Through these three case studies, the collaborative scoring process can be reconstructed with great detail, thereby revealing the multiple individuals and competing aesthetics that characterize each score.

⁴⁸ Robert Hichens, *The Paradine Case* (New York: Doubleday, Doran, & Company, Inc., 1932).

The Film Score: Process, Sources, and Authorship

Before formally embarking on a study of music in Selznick's films, a basic question should be addressed: "what is a film score?"⁴⁹ The answer is not so simple, especially if one looks beyond a film's title and credited composer to consider ancillary issues of process, sources, and authorship. A brief survey of these issues as reviewed in secondary literature will help answer this central question more fully and clarify sources discussed in the dissertation.

⁴⁹ As the preceding pages have made clear, "score" or "film score" are terms common in the discourse of film music studies and will be used frequently in the following dissertation. The precise meaning of "score" is often not clearly determined, allowing for the possibility of confusion or ambiguity. A film's "score" is that film's aggregate musical content. Depending on context, commentators may use the word in reference to background music (usually orchestral) *not* heard by the characters within the narrative. Many commentators use "score" to refer to *all* the music in the film, including music within the story that is heard or performed by characters. In this study I follow the latter example. There are, of course, semantic problems that the word "score" invokes: a "score" connotes continuity and unity in both form and authorship. Film "scores"—as this present study emphasizes time and again—are not only made up of discontinuous passages music, but also comprise disparate musical sources that are composed, arranged, and edited by multiple authors. While the term is perhaps an imperfect one for the circumstances, it is also the uncontested standard in both popular and scholarly discourse. (Thousands of commercially released soundtracks—touted as the "original motion picture score"—attest to this.) So as to avoid confusion and unfamiliar jargon, I also use "score" in this text to reference generally a given film's musical accompaniment.

Related to the question of "score" is the issue of genre. In *Beautiful Monsters*, Michael Long inquires, "Does film music constitute a genre?" Long argues that this is "one of the thorniest questions" plaguing film music scholars (a somewhat contentious assertion), but suggests the question needs reframing: "I would argue that it is as much a genre, and as much bound to a system of genre parameters, as was Yiddish theater. This is to say not a genre but a tradition" (Michael Long, *Beautiful Monsters: Imagining the Classic in Musical Media* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 105). Long's point, however, depends on a relatively narrow definition of "genre" that would seem to preclude the generic challenges posed by intertextuality in many works, be they the finale of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, any symphony by Mahler, or many operas, musicals, and ballets of the twentieth century (see Robert Samuels, *Mahler's Sixth Symphony: A Study in Musical Semiotics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 91–94). Rather than resolve this issue here—a venture that would require much space and a significant departure from the present study—I would rather argue that film music's generic parameters are indeed wide and porous, but this characteristic is wholly in keeping with music's increasingly complex relationship to genre from the nineteenth century forward. As Raymond Knapp notes, "Defining a genre, even as opposed to a medium or style, is a notoriously difficult task, and usually involves a complex dance around those aspects that the definer is most interested in; not surprisingly, most attempts to define genres tell us more about the concerns of the definer than about the genre itself" (Raymond Knapp, *The American Musical and the Formation of National Identity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 15).

Process

The typical process of scoring a film is often alluded to in interviews and memoirs by composers and has been described in detail in multiple studies.⁵⁰ Fred Karlin and Rayburn Wright forward a chronological breakdown that has been used by scholars Ian Sapiro and David Cooper as a generic model. Their summary of this model, with my annotations in brackets, reads as follows:

1. Meeting filmmakers
2. Spotting⁵¹ [deciding where each music cue should begin and end]
3. Planning budgets and schedules
4. Conceptualizing [discussing the tone, style, and function of the score]
5. Timings and synchronization [determining to the fraction of the second the length of each cue and its relationship to onscreen action and dialogue]
6. Composing
7. Orchestrating
8. Recording
9. Dubbing⁵²

Karlin and Wright's outline is ideal for comparing and contrasting with specific case studies, which is precisely why Sapiro and Cooper reference it. In particular, the model does not touch on technology (digital or otherwise) and leaves the matter of agency open.

Karlin and Wright presume the composer will likely be present for all these steps, but

⁵⁰ Fred Karlin has written the most about the process of scoring American films, supplementing his step-by-step descriptions with prodigious anecdotes from composers. See especially Fred Karlin, *Listening to Movies: The Film Lover's Guide to Film Music* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1994), 3–65; Fred Karlin and Rayburn Wright, *On the Track: A Guide to Contemporary Film Scoring*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2004). Other books that depict the process of film scoring include Earle Hagen *Scoring for Films, Updated Edition* (Van Nuys: Alfred Publishing Co., 1976) and Frank Skinner, *Underscore* (New York: Criterion Music Corp., 1950). The *Film Score Guide* series published by Scarecrow Press, which now includes eight volumes, each on a specific film, recount the construction of the score for each film in question, though the depiction of this process is shaped by the sources available to each author. Gregory D. Booth's monograph, *Behind the Curtain: Making Music in Mumbai's Film Studios*, is one of the few studies to situate this process and its participants within a historical and cultural context (Booth, *Behind the Curtain: Making Music in Mumbai's Film Studios* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

⁵¹ "Spotting" refers to the practice of deciding where to include music within the film. During a spotting session the producer, director, and/or composer will decide which scenes will have music and will also determine the precise moment when the music will begin and end within each scene.

⁵² Ian Sapiro and David Cooper, "Spotting, Scoring, Soundtrack: The Evolution of Trevor Jones's Score for *Sea of Love*," in *CineMusic? Constructing the Film Score*, edited by David Cooper, Christopher Fox, and Ian Sapiro (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008), 31.

may not necessarily make the decisions. Though Karlin and Wright's text (published in 1990 and revised in 2004) is intended to guide aspiring contemporary film composers, their general outline is applicable to film scoring practices in the historical period addressed in this dissertation (1932–1957). This study of music in Selznick's films, however, does not focus on all elements equally and also includes steps not included in the above summary. Following the example of Sapiro and Cooper, I offer a revised model that reflects the process of film scoring recounted in the dissertation, with boldface indicating special emphasis:

1. Selection of the composer
2. **Spotting the film and drafting conceptual notes, with or without the composer's input**
3. Timings and synchronization
4. **Composing**
5. Orchestrating
6. Recording
7. Dubbing
8. **Rewriting (followed by additional orchestrating and recording)**
9. **Final dubbing, which may involve further editing of the cue in its recorded form**
10. Musical promotion: concert suites, broadcasts, sheet music, soundtracks

This list does not include “meeting the filmmakers” and “planning budgets” only because documentation for both is too inconsistent and spotty for sustained analysis.

(Occasionally budgetary concerns do exert direct influence on a score's content, as in *Portrait of Jennie*. In those contexts the budget will be considered.) New steps, including “selection of the composer” and “rewriting” have been added, as both shed light on the creation and rejection of music in Selznick's films. The final step, “musical promotion,” might initially appear removed from the process of film scoring, but is actually integrated in Selznick's later films, with composers and publicists expected to select, arrange, and disseminate music for performances and promotional products.

Sources

The process of film scoring as outlined above generates a daunting amount of source material, summarized here:

Table 1.1 Typical Film Scoring Stages and Source Materials

Process Stage	Source Materials
1. Selection of the composer	Correspondences (memos, letters, cables), legal contracts
2. Spotting and drafting notes	Documents labeled “music notes” carrying instructions and suggestions, memos
3. Timing and synchronization	Documents labeled “music cue timing sheets”
4. Composing	Sketches, pencil drafts
5. Orchestrating	Full scores, legal contracts indicating who orchestrated each cue
6. Recording	Piano-conductor parts, orchestra parts, recording logs indicating who recorded what and when, recordings from the sessions
7. Dubbing	Release print of the film, correspondences
8. Rewriting	Notes from the producer, pencil drafts, full orchestral scores, piano-conductor parts, orchestra parts, recordings
9. Final dubbing	Release print of the film, correspondences, music cue sheets
10. Musical promotion	Piano-conductor parts, full scores, recordings, sheet music, commercially released albums, correspondences

The “music cue timing sheets” used for Selznick’s films resemble shooting scripts, complete with dialogue and description of onscreen action.⁵³ Whereas shooting scripts are proscriptive, however, music cue timing sheets are descriptive, recording what actually happens in the footage along with split-second timings of when it happens. These sheets allowed composers and music editors to time their music to the film without

⁵³ Sometimes these documents are referred to by commentators as simply “cue sheets” and take different formats while fulfilling similar functions. See especially the reproductions of cue sheets Korngold used for *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (Winters, 83–85). I have elected to keep the more unwieldy term “music cue timing sheet” as this is the term used in documents from the Selznick Collection.

having to repeatedly reference the footage itself. Multiple copies of these sheets were made and distributed to editors and the composer. Each time a scene was reedited, a new music cue timing sheet had to be made. Consequently, multiple versions pertaining to the same scene may be found. Composers like Dimitri Tiomkin would sometimes annotate these documents with comments and brief sketches of musical notation.

“Pencil drafts” is a term I use to denote documents in the composer’s hand that are given to an orchestrator to be orchestrated. (The composers studied in this dissertation rendered these documents almost exclusively in pencil.) In the literature, these documents are frequently referred to as “sketches,” the term Kathryn Kalinak uses in her overview of film music materials.⁵⁴ Using “sketches,” however, creates semantic friction between the function and status of these documents. In *Grove Music Online*, Nicholas Marston explains that a sketch is

a composer's written record of compositional activity not itself intended to have the status of a finished, public work.... Even though a sketch might be sufficiently extensive and fully notated as to be performable, its origin as an essentially private notation distinguishes it from a composer's manuscript of a completed work, a document typically intended as the basis for subsequent copying and publication.⁵⁵

A brief look at the pencil drafts of most film composers reveals why some commentators refer to these documents as “sketches.” For one, the notation is consolidated on two to six staves per system and is therefore not finished. It must be arranged and notated in full score format before it can be performed by the ensemble for which it is intended. Sometimes the notation is very bare (in extreme cases only a melody line is notated). In such instances the orchestrator must fill out the texture for performance. In addition,

⁵⁴ Kathryn Kalinak, *Settling the Score: Music and the Classical Hollywood Film* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 17.

⁵⁵ Nicholas Marston, “Sketch,” *Grove Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>, accessed 25 July 2009.

composers like Max Steiner indulge in prolific marginalia ranging from serious instructions for orchestrators to puns and lewd jokes. It is not material intended for “subsequent copying and publication.” The problem with the designation “sketch,” however, is that the document represents the composer’s final version of a particular cue. When the composer hands the document to the orchestrator, it is not a glimpse of a work in progress—at least not from the composer’s perspective; this is the final, authoritative document from which the orchestrator will work, regardless of how incomplete the texture may be.

If one considers that these documents represent the composer’s final thoughts on the music of the cue (occasionally one can find emendations made in the composer’s hand on other documents from recording sessions), then the term “sketch” seems inappropriate, as the documents represent the closest thing to a composer’s holograph that one will find in a film music archive. In other words, these documents function as sketches in the process of scoring—they are an intermediary representation of the music heard in the film—but acquire the importance of a holograph when one is focused on ascertaining the composer’s musical intentions. The term “pencil draft” will be used in this dissertation to differentiate these documents from the composer’s “sketches” of themes and textures that are incomplete because they are not set within the context of a cue or larger piece of music.⁵⁶

Full scores are notated, usually in pencil but sometimes in pen, by the orchestrator. These are the orchestrator’s realization of the composer’s pencil draft and

⁵⁶ Ben Winters, also uncomfortable with using “sketch” to denote completed cues passed on to orchestrators, uses the term “short score” in his discussion of Korngold’s music for *The Adventures of Robin Hood*. I have shied away from this term, fearing that it might be too easily confused with the piano-conductor score, a similarly condensed orchestral score that arises later in the scoring process (Winters, 85–88).

were given to copyists for orchestra part extraction. For this reason, the full orchestral score is the document that most closely resembles the music heard in the film.

(Discrepancies arise when individual parts are changed during the recording session or entire passages are removed during editing.) Nonetheless, full orchestral scores are information-poor documents for other reasons. They usually bear none of the composer's annotations from the pencil draft (including visual and dialogue cues) and often were not used by the composers during recording. Erich Wolfgang Korngold, the exception that proves the rule, conducted from a full orchestral score, but most composers conducted from a piano-conductor part that more closely resembled the original pencil drafts.⁵⁷ Occasionally a composer's pencil draft would be orchestrated multiple times (for any variety of reasons) producing different orchestrations of the same pencil draft.

Piano-conductor scores (sometimes referred to simply as "conductor's parts") are somewhat like piano-vocal scores for operas. In both, the full orchestral score is compressed into fewer staves. In most cases, though, piano-conductor scores have no staves dedicated to vocal soloists or choruses. In place of vocal lines, the conventional two-stave format of piano music is expanded to three, four, or occasionally more staves, depending on the complexity of the texture. Usually the number of staves per system corresponds with the number of staves used in the pencil draft. Piano-conductor scores were made after the completion of the full orchestral score, but closely resemble pencil drafts, suggesting that the copyists had access to both documents. The point of the piano-conductor score was to create a document that would be familiar to the composer (hence the close resemblance to pencil drafts) yet include new textures and instrumental selections added by the orchestrator during the rendering of the full orchestral score.

⁵⁷ Winters, 92.

Most piano-conductor scores bear the composer's annotations pertaining to dialogue and visual cues, but do not reproduce instructions to orchestrators or similar marginalia.

Piano-conductor scores were written in ink by a copyist, duplicated, and distributed to the composer, music editor, and others monitoring the score. Sometimes individual copies bear the marks of their owner and include annotations indicating changes or excisions made during the recording or dubbing process.

Authorship

All of the documents listed and described above contribute to the construction of a film score. They also complicate the notion of *what* a film score is, and who its author or authors might be. Which, for example, is the film score: the composer's pencil draft, the full orchestral score, the piano-conductor score, the music heard in the film, or the music heard on a soundtrack or concert suite? Each "version" of the music contains different information and often the information that overlaps across materials is not in full agreement. Does one carry greater authority than another? In the most situations, it seems logical to consider the music *heard in the film* the final, definitive film score, but what of those instances when a more compelling musical argument emerges when music withheld from the soundtrack is considered? Scholars Ian Sapiro and David Cooper assert that such instances encourage "a reconsideration of film score composition...which does not necessarily take the 'final' soundtrack as the definitive version of the score."⁵⁸ And who exactly is the author of this film score appended to a film's soundtrack? Ostensibly the credited composer is the author of the music, though he or she has been assisted by orchestrators, copyists, orchestra, and engineers. But is a film score only recorded music? What about the score's spotting, which may have been determined independently of the

⁵⁸ Sapiro and Cooper, 17.

composer and often was the case in Selznick's films? What about those instances when the music is dubbed differently than the composer intended? What of those times when the composer's intended music is removed and music from another source is inserted, again, independently of the composer's wishes? Does the credited composer still retain authorship of such sequences even though he or she had no role in the music's selection or placement? These questions do not require hard and fast answers. Rather, it is the responsibility of the scholar to approach these options with flexibility, as the circumstances from film to film often differ in important ways.

For the purposes of this dissertation, however, the concept of "the film score" is neither limited to the final mix of music heard in the film nor the music *only* composed by the credited composer. By lifting these strictures, one has the opportunity to consider the composer's work (heard and unheard) more fully and the contributions of additional authors who might not contribute a note of music but might—through spotting, editing, selection, duplication, and rejection—exercise a profound influence over the content and placement of music in the film. This concept of collective authorship on a film score may undercut the image of the autonomous composer whose work is diminished and compromised when non-musicians intervene, but is more in keeping with the process outlined in the contracts composers signed to work for Selznick. These documents assign the composer responsibility, but do not offer the slightest promise of autonomy:

Your services hereunder generally, but not by way of limitation, shall consist of writing, composing, and revising musical compositions and musical works of all kinds for, and in connection with, the musical score of the Picture... of supervising the preparation, the recording and the re-recording of the musical score for the Picture...

Said [musical] services shall be rendered either alone or in collaboration with others, in such a manner as we may direct, under the instructions and control, in

accordance with the ideas of, and at the times and places required by our duly authorized representatives, and in a conscientious, artistic and efficient manner, to your best ability, with loyalty to our organization and with regard to a careful, efficient and economical operation of our business activities; it being understood that such activities involve a matter of art and taste to be exercised by us and that your services and the manner of rendition thereof are to be governed entirely by us.⁵⁹

In other words, film scores with Selznick were group projects enforced by hierarchical relationships. As stated in the contract, any creative decision made by the composer might be rejected, overruled, or adjusted by superiors. The composer was *not* in charge, but this subordination hardly rendered the composer powerless. Selznick might object and demand changes, but the composer had the advantage of musical expertise, which he could use to cajole, persuade, or even deceive. As the following pages will show, the circumstances of this working relationship produced a collaborative dynamic that was paradoxically fluid, tense, and very often fruitful.

⁵⁹ Franz Waxman's contract with Vanguard Films (Selznick's organization) for *The Paradine Case*, 17 November 1947, HRC 1016:14.

Chapter 2

Selznick and the Early Scores at RKO and M-G-M

Selznick's Life in Film

This study focuses on Selznick's films from 1932 to 1957, but understanding Selznick's profound fascination with the *making* of movies requires delving back further—to David's childhood.¹ Lewis J. Selznick, David's father, entered the movie business in 1913. A year later he helped form the World Film Corporation. At the Corporation's initial meeting on Long Island, a twelve-year old David accompanied his father. Two years later David, now an employee of Lewis J. Selznick Enterprises, had already begun sending his first memos.² When he died in 1965, the producer of *Gone with the Wind* would still be immersed in movies with plans to produce more. Put simply, Selznick lived a life in film, following in his father's footsteps before branching out on his own.

Lewis J.'s movie career had the trajectory of a roller coaster—startling ascents followed by equally thrilling plunges. The extreme ups and downs came with the territory: a new, turbulent industry with few rules and many aggressive players, clawing for dominance in a rapidly expanding market. Not prone to shyness, Lewis Selznick clawed with the best and made not a few enemies in the process. When the World Film

¹ The following synopsis of Selznick's biography draws heavily on the biographical work of others. Please see footnote 7 in Chapter One for a survey of these texts.

² David Thomson, *Showman: The Life of David O. Selznick* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), 19.

Corporation reaped \$329,000 in profits its first year (1914–1915), vice-president Lewis Selznick was confident he knew why:

They tell me I have succeeded in the film business. If I have, it is because of two things—liberality and quick action. I have been willing to share profits with others who could contribute to the making of these profits and I have moved fast—I have consummated deals while others were talking about them.³

Lewis Selznick enjoyed holding the reins and did not hesitate to take bold leaps of independence, such as when he deserted the World Film Corporation, absconding with their most popular actress, Clara Kimball Young. With this new prize asset, Lewis Selznick started the Clara Kimball Young Corporation installing himself as president. In the years that followed, problems mingled with triumphs: he was bought out by Adolph Zukor in 1917, then, after reestablishing independence, Lewis faced involuntary bankruptcy in 1923. Meanwhile David and his older brother Myron learned the business, traveling between coasts as the industry shifted from New York to California.⁴

For David’s father, the film industry offered a crazy, exhilarating opportunity to make a fortune and enjoy substantial fame: “Selznick Pictures Make Happy Hours” became an electric-light mantra in Manhattan, much to the chagrin of competitors.⁵ For him, movies quickly became means to a financial end. As David later recalled:

In the early days, I think my father cared as much as I do about pictures. With films like *War Brides*, with Nazimova...I think then he cared greatly. But everything became swamped with the details of building a huge company with branches all over the world. I don’t think then he had time for it. He was too concerned with empire building.⁶

³ Lewis J. Selznick, *The Moving Picture World*, 23 January 1915, reprinted in Thomson, 15.

⁴ Myron worked as a producer before David, but quickly left production to become one of Hollywood’s most powerful talent agents.

⁵ Thomson, 18.

⁶ Kevin Brownlow, *The Parade’s Gone By* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1968), 431.

David was never blind to money, but as someone who grew up surrounded by films he came to appreciate—perhaps as his father never did—that making movies was satisfying work unto itself. As long as he made good movies with ample promotion, the business would follow. Ensuring a movie’s success meant controlling the whole show: getting the best ingredients (story, cast, and behind-the-camera talent), then manage the film’s production as closely as possible. This philosophy did not emerge fully formed, but developed from experience as David watched the film industry become America’s most prominent and powerful mass media. When the business of film production eventually left the legal and geographic confines of New York City for Los Angeles, the Selznick family followed.

After his father quit working in films, Selznick went out on his own, ascending rapidly through the ranks at Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.⁷ As Thomas Schatz notes, “Selznick [was] a twenty-five-year-old dervish who, since joining M-G-M in late 1926, had climbed from script reader to head of the scenario department and then was promoted to supervisor status.”⁸ By late 1927, Selznick had moved to Paramount Studio, working as executive assistant to Managing Director of Production Ben Schulberg.⁹ (In the late 1930s, Ben’s son, screenwriter and novelist Budd Schulberg, worked for Selznick International Pictures.) A stint as executive producer at RKO (1932–1933) and a return engagement at M-G-M (1933–1935) rounded out Selznick’s experience at the major studios. By then he had worked closely on sixty-two films and less closely on many others. Like his father, Selznick wanted the freedom of his own production company and

⁷ David later married M-G-M boss Louis B. Mayer’s daughter, Irene.

⁸ Thomas Schatz, *The Genius of the System: Hollywood Filmmaking in the Studio Era* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1988), 48.

⁹ David later snagged Schulberg’s job, an event reenacted by Sammy in *What Makes Sammy Run?*, a novel by Schulberg’s son, Budd (Budd Shulberg, *What Makes Sammy Run?* (New York: Random House, 1941)).

fulfilled this dream in 1935, becoming an independent producer. Unlike his father, who in 1923 “decried the drive for bigger and more expensive pictures,” David wanted to use his company to make fewer, but more expensive films, that he could guide and mold through every step of production.¹⁰ In 1940, when Selznick was at the height of his career as an independent producer, the otherwise irreverent Oscar Levant would note with an air of respect:

There are few men in Hollywood so completely devoted to their pictures as Selznick. He represents the second generation of a Hollywood Royal Family and takes tremendous pride in his work. Nothing he produces costs less than two million dollars, for he feels that it would not otherwise be worthy of the Selznick traditions.¹¹

By this time Selznick had established his reputation as the leading producer of prestige pictures, productions that consumed large sums of money in the name of cinematic artistry or, to use Selznick’s word, “showmanship.”¹² As film scholar Tino Balio notes, prestige pictures were not limited to a particular genre: “Rather, the term designates production values and promotion treatment. A prestige picture is typically a big-budget special based on a presold property, often as not a ‘classic,’ and tailored for top stars.”¹³ The ultimate aim of such productions was to garner attention, acclaim, and awards that would reflect well on the studio. When the major studios released prestige

¹⁰ Thomson, 53.

¹¹ Oscar Levant, *A Smattering of Ignorance* (New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co., 1940), 129–130.

¹² Selznick’s use of “showman” and “showmanship” turns up in his memos and even in reviews of his films (Philip K. Scheuer, “Sentiment, Showmanship Unusual Blend in ‘Jennie,’” *Los Angeles Times*, 27 December 1948, 15). Biographer David Thomson titles his book “showman,” emphasizing that the term allows Selznick to be critically assessed as a creative individual without resorting to “art” and “artist,” designations that are all too frequently associated with highbrow culture and idealistic expectations that exclude popular and profitable Hollywood.

¹³ Tino Balio, *Grand Design: Hollywood as Modern Business Enterprise* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 179.

pictures, they did not always expect to turn a profit.¹⁴ Acclaim for the studio was its own reward and a string of cheaply made films could compensate for the extravagance of these special projects.

In this final respect, Selznick's output as an independent producer differed markedly. After Selznick began producing films independently from the major studios in 1935, he focused almost exclusively on prestige films. It was a risky venture; he operated without the safety net of cheap, budget-balancing films. This unusual circumstance placed incredible pressure on Selznick, who could not afford a poorly received effort: each of his productions had to be financially successful if only to balance the enormous expenditures. This strain, coupled with Selznick's innate determination and ambitions, expressed itself in many ways, including a veritably inhuman work schedule that kept Selznick perpetually connected to a film's ongoing progress. When exhaustion began to interfere with work in the late 1930s, Selznick turned to doctor-recommended Benzedrine. Regular consumption of the drug helped sustain the producer's round-the-clock activities until 1950.¹⁵ Those close to the producer, including his wife Irene, noticed that the drug seemed to amplify certain personality traits at the expense of others. As biographer David Thomson notes: "The drug kept away doubt and the prospect of depression, as well as fatigue. [Selznick] felt he could do anything and everything, and he never saw that the chemicals were putting armor plate on his difficulty in coming to decisions."¹⁶

¹⁴ With some prestige pictures, such as M-G-M's *The Wizard of Oz* (1939), the studios did not even expect to break even. See Aljean Harmetz, *The Making of The Wizard of Oz: Movie Magic and Studio Power in the Prime of MGM---and the Miracle of Production #1060* (New York: Hyperion, 1977), 19.

¹⁵ Thomson, 231.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 232.

Though Selznick was not the only one in Hollywood to use drugs to ward off sleep (composer Max Steiner was another practitioner), the producer distinguished himself from colleagues through an indefatigable outpouring of memos on every aspect of filmmaking, including music. This enormous body of dictation reveals an astonishing prolificacy and reflects Selznick's intense engagement with each production. As Selznick explained:

The difference between myself and other producers is I am interested in the thousands and thousands of details that go into the making of a film. It is the sum total of all these things that either makes a great picture or destroys it. The way I see it, my function is to be responsible for everything.¹⁷

Selznick's correspondences, which take the form of memoranda, letters, teletypes, telegrams, and informally drafted lists or notes, have enjoyed legendary notoriety.¹⁸ A very selective smattering of them has been published in a volume exceeding five hundred pages.¹⁹ Selznick worked on his memos primarily at night, dictating for at least several hours to a team of secretaries of three or more. As publicist Paul MacNamara noted, the memos did more than deliver instructions; they exerted psychological pressure:

With his barrage of memos, David made sure everyone connected with whatever part of the picture they were responsible for was being reminded of their responsibility. The memos were a sort of whip or cattle prod. The hell of it was, most of his ideas were worth thinking about.²⁰

¹⁷ DOS to Art Buchwald, 1957, quoted in *Memo from David O. Selznick*, ed. Rudy Behlmer (New York: The Viking Press, 1971), xiii.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ *Memo from David O. Selznick*, ed. Rudy Behlmer (New York: The Viking Press, 1971). A companion volume of memos from his contemporary, producer Darryl F. Zanuck, is noticeably thinner: *Memo from Darryl F. Zanuck: The Golden Years at Twentieth-Century Fox*, ed. Rudy Behlmer (New York: Grove Press, 1993).

²⁰ Paul MacNamara, *Those Were the Days, My Friend: My Life in Hollywood with David O. Selznick and Others*, ed. Anthony Slide (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1993), 6. Paul MacNamara's memoirs also include a particularly vivid anecdote about Selznick's notorious correspondences:

I was in the New York office when the famous "Ten Yarder" came in. It was about 5:00 in the afternoon. Neil Agnew and I were going over some advertising layouts when Mr. Agnew's secretary came in and announced that Western Union had just called to say that a long wire was coming in from the coast. A little while later a weather-beaten Western Union messenger came in with what looked like a roll of paper towels. It was the wire from Selznick (MacNamara, 31-32).

Employees occasionally bristled at these “prods,” but the surviving memos offer a rich glimpse of Selznick’s involvement, contribution, and collaboration with others. Taken together, Selznick’s memos also reveal an important dilemma with which the producer grappled when facing creative and logistical choices. It was a problem that stemmed directly from his unusual role as a producer of prestige pictures.

The so-called “art versus commodity” opposition is a forced dichotomy, as instances of pure art and pure commodity are most rare, but it was a very real concern for Selznick. On the one hand, he wanted his films more prestigious, more impressive, and better crafted than his competitors. According to this rationale, greater spending meant higher production values, which meant better quality films, which meant greater box office returns.²¹ On the other hand, Selznick’s keen eye for cinematic craft was inextricably linked to the base need of making money to finance future projects. Cinematic experimentation or idiosyncrasy might alienate audiences and could not be risked; capricious expenses were budgetary sins Selznick claimed he could not afford. He had no cheap films, after all, on which to rely for steady revenue. Not surprisingly, these competing concerns between the art and business of filmmaking prompted self-contradictory impulses. In many memos Selznick harangued employees for purportedly lavish spending. In other instances he poured money and resources into negligible details, all in the name of cinematic excellence and the Selznick tradition. As later chapters will

²¹ This approach worked superbly in the case of *Gone with the Wind*, but the film’s tremendous success put the producer in the awkward position of trying to match this level of accomplishment in future productions. As David Thomson perceptively notes: “Make a success and you are no longer simply in the art of making films but in the business of making successes” (David Thomson, *The Whole Equation: A History of Hollywood* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), 12).

reveal, this internal conflict frequently characterized Selznick's exchanges with music staff.

Selznick and (Film) Music

Selznick, who has employed music as successfully as any producer in films, told me never to be overcome by music and not to be afraid of it—to be tough in my decisions, determining for myself when music was needed and when it would be out of place, and to let no one dissuade me once an honest decision had been reached.

—Producer Dore Schary, *Case History of a Movie*²²

There is a great picture of Selznick sitting at an upright piano, hands on the keys, grinning widely.²³ According to his son, Daniel, Selznick could not play the piano.²⁴ With this knowledge, the smile conveys a different message, a good-natured jest: “I wonder what sound *this* chord is going to make!” (The few keys visible in the picture are not depressed—yet.) Though the producer had no formal musical training to speak of, he had a profound appreciation for music's powerful influence in film. And yet, as Daniel Selznick recalls, his father's interest in music did not extend far beyond the movie theater. He made sure that Daniel's budding interest in opera (at the age of five) was nourished through plenty of recordings but made little effort to attend concerts or collect records of his own. Producer Dore Schary's admission that “usually, the producer's only hobby is the picture business, if only because that's all he has time for” is likely applicable to Selznick, who took Schary on as a protégé in the mid-1940s.²⁵ It is probable that Selznick's exposure to music came predominantly through the picture business,

²² Dore Schary and Charles Palmer, *Case History of a Movie* (New York: Random House, 1950), 196.

²³ The picture is reprinted in William Penn, “The Music for David O. Selznick's Production No. 103,” *Perspectives on Music: Essays on Collections at the Humanities Research Center*, edited by Dave Oliphant and Thomas Zigal (Austin: The University of Texas at Austin Press, 1985), 156.

²⁴ Daniel Selznick, email message to the author, 29 August 2007.

²⁵ Dore Schary and Charles Palmer, *Case History of a Movie* (New York: Random House, 1950), 12.

including the many musical performances he heard accompanying silent films in the 1910s and 1920s. Selznick's interest in silent cinema music is partly revealed through a letter he sent to John Abbott at the Museum of Modern Art's Film Library:

You showed me some of the scores that were written for the early silent pictures, including cue sheets for some of the early short subjects, and I believe you also have [Joseph Carl Breil's] score of *The Birth of a Nation* [1915]. I think that without too much effort, you might accumulate scores of other important pictures up to the time that sound was introduced.²⁶

The impact of silent-era film on Selznick's musical choices is an important point in this dissertation and will become a recurring theme. Selznick's first four feature films were silent,²⁷ and many of his sound films would prompt commentators to note specifically silent-era qualities, often having to do with story type or visual style. The use of music in Selznick's films would also contribute to this effect, a point that will be discussed later.

Considering the substantial amount of music in Selznick's films and the countless other films he viewed over his life, one could fairly argue that the producer had extensive exposure to one *type* of theatrical music, which in turn helped him develop both strong musical convictions and a noticeably conservative taste. Oscar Levant, who worked with Selznick on two productions and befriended the producer, poked fun at Selznick's lack of experience and patience for anything outside the mainstream:

If I appeared at the studio with anything even faintly modern Selznick's invariable comment was, "It sounds Chinese."

On the other hand, if I produced something that was not obviously melodic, but well written for the orchestra, his reaction was, "You're not writing for the [Hollywood] Bowl. You're writing for fifty million people."

²⁶ DOS to John Abbott, 19 February 1941, reprinted in Rudy Behlmer, *Memo from David O. Selznick* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972), 307–308.

²⁷ Preceding the feature films are two silent nonfiction shorts: *Will He Conquer Dempsey* (1924) and *Rudolph Valentino and His 88 American Beauties* (1924). The four silent features are *Roulette* (1928), *Spoilers of the West* (1928), *Wyoming* (1928), and *Forgotten Faces* (1928). *Chinatown Nights* (1929) has scenes with synchronized sound while *The Four Feathers* (1929) was shot silently and given sound effects and a musical score in postproduction.

To him, the Bowl represented the pinnacle of everything that was erudite in music—a combination of the Paris Conservatoire, Carnegie Hall and the Mozarteum in Salzburg, occupying an empty space on a hillside. It was a place you went to assure yourself of a dull evening.²⁸

The recollection may be adjusted for dramatic effect, but behind the wit and vinegar is likely lurking some truth. Lack of broad musical expertise, however, did not mean Selznick was numb to music's potential to change, enliven, and illuminate film. On the contrary, he took personal responsibility for ensuring that music in his films functioned meaningfully and balanced well with the film's other elements. Even Levant recognized this, admitting that "despite [his lack of experience] he has a very creative part in supervising the music used in his pictures." In an unsent letter to Henry Weinstein of Twentieth-Century Fox, Selznick explained that the producer was ultimately responsible for judging a score's effectiveness within the context of a film:

Musicians notoriously hear only their music, which is as it should be; but...it is the *producer's* function, assuming there is a producer, to decide when the underscoring is damaging to the total effect, either because it is the wrong music, or because of any one of a dozen other reasons, including perhaps that it should not be in at all. You also have not yet learned, as believe me you will, not to judge music by what it sounds like separately, on the scoring stage or in the projection room. You are not releasing a score; you are releasing a *picture*.²⁹

Selznick also had specific ideas on how the process of scoring should be coordinated within the production of a film. When Walter Damrosch was briefly considered as a candidate for *Gone with the Wind*, Selznick sent the composer-conductor (and then music director for NBC) an overview of his views on film scoring. Fortunately for Damrosch, the verbose note was sent directly to studio employee Katharine Brown, who edited it down before sending it on. Below is an excerpt from Selznick's original letter:

²⁸ Levant, 128.

²⁹ DOS to Henry Weinstein, 14 November 1961, reprinted in *Memo*, 484.

Answering your questions, and so that you will know about these matters for the future, the usual method of scoring pictures is for the arranger and scorer not to come near the picture until the editing is completed. The producer then turns the picture over to the music people, usually with the injunction to do a great job cheaply in a couple of weeks. This, on the face of it, is silly, and I have tried to avoid working this way as well as to minimize the delays which are involved to get a picture released because of the time it takes to write, arrange, and record a score. Usually I have had the score in well ahead and I have tried to get these men to do the score from the script, having the weeks and months of production for the job—so that they are in a position to keep up with the changes as we edit the picture and to go with the least possible delay into the scoring, at the same time having had sufficient time during the shooting of the picture to do a good job, instead of being rushed into doing it in a week or so when the picture is finished. Incredibly, I have met resistance on this, particularly from Max Steiner, who found it difficult to do the work in this fashion, claiming that he had to have a finished picture. This was one of my long-standing arguments with Max, and his point in turn was based upon something else which was the root of our decision to get a divorce, which was my objection to what I term “Mickey Mouse” scoring: an interpretation of each line of dialogue and each movement musically, so that the score tells with music exactly what is being done by the actors on the screen. It has long been my contention that this is ridiculous and that the purpose of a score is to unobtrusively help the mood of each scene without the audience being even aware that they are listening to music—and if I am right in this contention, why can't the score be prepared from the script even though the cuts and rearrangements may be necessary after the picture is edited—for the basic selection of music and general arrangement would not be affected by these cuts. I could go into this with you at further length but it would develop into an essay on musical scoring, about which I feel very keenly. I don't think there is another producer in Hollywood that devotes ten per cent as much time to the score as I do—and it may interest you to know that I was the first producer to use dramatic scores. Max Steiner argued with me at the time, as he has since readily admitted, that musical scoring could not be used without the source of the music being explained to an audience.³⁰

Such investment in the music of his films meant that Selznick took special interest and pride in the success of composers who worked for him. When Selznick encouraged John Abbott to preserve more silent film music at the Museum of Modern Art, he also recommended collecting important sound film scores, including Max Steiner's scores for Selznick and non-Selznick productions, including *Symphony of Six Million* (1932), *Bird*

³⁰ DOS to Katharine Brown, 30 August 1937, HRC 1237:3.

of *Paradise* (1932), *The Informer* (1935), and *Gone with the Wind* (1939).³¹ As Daniel Selznick recalls, his father was always eager to talk about Miklós Rózsa's music for *Spellbound* (1945) and he even "became irritated with friends if they didn't appreciate Dimitri Tiomkin's stirring work in *Duel in the Sun* [1946]."³² Music played an important role in Selznick's films and the producer played an important role in the music. It was, perhaps, the music Selznick held most dear.

Up until 1935, when David O. Selznick became an independent producer, there is little extant documentation from Selznick about film scoring.³³ Anecdotes in memoirs and newspaper articles, however, repeatedly report on the producer's involvement in film music by 1932, a time when most films had minimal or no background scoring. There are also the films themselves, which display recurring musical traits and tendencies, suggesting the continuity of a creative personality—or personalities. One consequence of Selznick's attention to film music was his decision to work with a limited number of choice composers. Extracting Selznick's suggestions from the composer's music is virtually impossible without access to scoring notes, but study of these early films clearly lays the groundwork for the musical aesthetics Selznick would articulate in notes and correspondences later in the decade. While the degree to which Selznick influenced or was influenced by the music in these early films remains uncertain, these scores are

³¹ The producer also recommended Hugo Riesenfeld's score for *Tabu* (1930) and Leopold Stokowski's adaptations for *Fantasia* (1940). DOS to John Abbott, 19 February 1941, reprinted in Behlmer, *Memo*, 307–308.

³² Daniel Selznick, email message to the author, 29 August 2007.

³³ This is not to say that Selznick did write anything on music during this period, but rather that his personal papers as an independent producer have been preserved and organized in a single archive, whereas only occasional notes and memos from his earlier positions have been preserved. This problem is not limited to notes on music. Rudy Behlmer explains that "there are no extensive files for films produced by Selznick prior to 1936—just occasional, stray correspondence. Finding just one memo on some early and important films proved to be a major undertaking, which more often than not yielded little or nothing" (Behlmer, *Memo*, xviii).

crucial for understanding not just Selznick's relationship to film music but also the emergence and development of background scoring as a critical component of Hollywood film.

Symphony of Six Million (1932): Music Begins at Home

Father: I don't want my child to grow up and be ignorant that there was a man like Mozart! Beethoven! ...Rubinstein!

Elder Son: But he's a tailor.

Father: It's a different Rubinstein!

When David O. Selznick moved from Paramount to RKO in 1932, his new position as executive producer put him in charge of more films than he had ever supervised before or would again. The sheer quantity meant the producer had to pick and choose: some films received close attention, monitoring, and input while others received more perfunctory quality control. Consequently, biographers do not include the same number of titles from 1932 in their respective filmographies of the producer, evidently drawing different lines as to what qualifies as a *Selznick* picture. Ronald Haver documents thirteen films; Bob Thomas, twenty-one; David Thomson, twenty-four.³⁴ The American Film Institute Catalog records thirty.³⁵ The important point is that amidst this unprecedented level of hubbub Selznick had time to think about music and its potential to enhance those films in which he was more invested. The producer quickly came to

³⁴ Ronald Haver, *David O. Selznick's Hollywood* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980), 414–415; Bob Thomas, *Selznick* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1970), 309–319; David Thomson, *Showman: The Life of David O. Selznick* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), 751–753.

³⁵ *American Film Institute Catalog*, <http://afi.chadwyck.com>, referenced 29 July 2009.

appreciate that the use of music to raise a picture's entertainment value might also differentiate his films from others.³⁶

Selznick's first production as executive producer at RKO was *The Lost Squadron* (1932), a film about flight stuntmen that included opening title music by Max Steiner. Born in a family renowned for its legacy in Viennese musical theater,³⁷ Steiner had studied at the Vienna Conservatory under Gustav Mahler and Robert Fuchs before embarking on an itinerant career of composing, arranging, and conducting operettas all over Europe. World War I pushed Steiner from London to New York and he finally came to Hollywood (by now in his forties) in 1929 to work as music director for musicals. Some brief bits of original underscore for *Cimarron* (1930) were noticed by the press, but Steiner's duties in Hollywood mainly consisted of arranging and conducting, with only occasional composing.

That was about to change. For their second project together, *Symphony of Six Million*, Selznick wanted more from Steiner. The producer had an idea that *Symphony* ought to be symphonic, with Steiner's music playing underneath dialogue for many of the scenes.³⁸ Writing in his memoirs over four decades later, Steiner explained that Selznick requested him "to score one reel (i.e. about 1,000 feet or ten minutes) of music, to see whether it would interfere with the dialogue or help. It was decided that it did help and

³⁶ This idea has deep roots in the cinema, dating back to the rise of the nickelodeons after 1905. Rick Altman notes that exhibitors experienced a "crisis of the late aughts" when the rapid proliferation of nickelodeons (often clustered together in one part of town) created unprecedented levels of competition. Live, good music became a way for exhibitors to differentiate their nickelodeons from less proficient competitors (See Rick Altman, *Silent Film Sound*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 119–132).

³⁷ His father, Gabor Steiner, was a highly acclaimed theatrical producer; Max's grandfather, Maximilian Steiner, had served as the impresario for the Theater an der Wien, where he had introduced operettas by Franz von Suppé and Johann Strauss Jr.

³⁸ See "Picture to be Given Operatic Underscore," *Los Angeles Times*, 3 April 1932; Robert Reid, "Max Steiner," *Author and Composer*, October 1933, 9; DOS to John Abbott, 19 February 1941, reprinted in Behlmer, *Memo*, 307–308.

the top brass was delighted.”³⁹ Indeed, the addition of music to the scene proved so compelling that Steiner was requested to score additional scenes for the film. Selznick’s suggestion and Steiner’s score marked a watershed in the history of American film.

Symphony is not the first film to use nondiegetic music,⁴⁰ but it does represent an early effort of setting nondiegetic music beneath dialogue, a technique referred to as underscoring.⁴¹ Instead of constraining nondiegetic orchestral music to sequences (often montages) lacking dialogue, speech and music are intermingled throughout *Symphony*, a phenomenon that follows the example of melodrama but was described by contemporary journalists as operatic:

An “operatic underscoring” is the technical designation of the musical complement composed by Max Steiner for RKO Radio Pictures’ “Symphony of Six Million.” The underscoring goes through every foot of the film...*(sic)* [Steiner] credits the original idea for this treatment to David O. Selznick, executive vice-president in charge of RKO production.⁴²

The adjective “operatic” likely came from Steiner himself, who described his work for *Symphony* in an interview:

The music in this picture...is handled like opera music. It matches exactly the mood, the action, and situation of the scene on screen. If there is a fight, the music

³⁹ Max Steiner, “Notes to You: An Unpublished Autobiography,” 1963–1964, Max Steiner Collection, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah (hereafter abbreviated as “MSC”), Box 1, Folder 1, 115.

⁴⁰ The term “nondiegetic music” refers to background music presumably *not* heard by characters in the narrative. This contrasts with diegetic music, which has its source within the narrative—such as a band playing in a club—and is audible to characters in the story. The term “nondiegetic music” is synonymous to “background score” or “underscore.” The term “diegetic music” is synonymous with “source music.”

⁴¹ Mike Snell, “Symphony of Six Million,” *The Max Steiner Journal*, no. 4 (1979), 5. Snell credits the film as being the “first known instance of dramatic underscoring,” but earlier films had included instances of background scoring, though usually it was justified by some implied source, such as the unseen lobby orchestra in *Grand Hotel* (1932), a film that premiered two days before *Symphony*. Chapin Hall’s article “Hollywood Turns to Music in Films,” briefly surveys current films like *Grand Hotel*, *Delicious* (1932), and *The Wet Parade* (1932) which featured the “symphonic method” on their soundtracks. Hall gives *Symphony of Six Million* and the forthcoming *Bird of Paradise* their own section, noting that the scores in these films represent another level in which music “does background all the dramatic moments of the film” (Chapin Hall, “Hollywood Turns to Music in Films,” *New York Times*, 3 April 1932, X4).

⁴² “Picture to be Given Operatic Underscore,” *Los Angeles Times*, 3 April 1932, B18.

assumes that sort of theme; if the players are in a tender love scene, the music corresponds.⁴³

Despite its title and musical facets, *Symphony*'s central story has little to do with music. The title refers to the inhabitants of the film's setting—New York City—and is explained through a foreword following the opening titles:

A city—
Six million human hearts—
Each with a dream—
A hope—a goal—
Each soul a vagrant—
melody in the eternal
Symphony of life!

More specifically, the film follows Felix Klauber's dream of becoming a great doctor for his community, the Jewish ghetto in the Lower East Side. Plans go awry when his brother convinces him to leave the low-paying neighborhood clinic and work privately for wealthy uptown clients. Though his boosted salary allows his parents and siblings to enjoy comfortable living in upscale neighborhoods, Felix (Ricardo Cortez) gradually becomes estranged from his family, his childhood friend Jessica (played by Irene Dunne), and his community. Though Felix promises to continue serving the local clinic, his frequent absences ultimately result in tragedy. A boy dies at the clinic while awaiting surgery from the hailed "million-dollar hands" of Dr. Klauber. When Felix then loses his own father (Gregory Ratoff) in an unsuccessful operation, his disillusionment becomes unbearable. At the film's conclusion, Felix resolves to return to the clinic, where he saves Jessica through surgery and rededicates his life to serving the Jewish community of his youth.

⁴³ Robert Reid, "Max Steiner," *Author and Composer* (October 1933), 9, 13.

The film's similarities with *The Jazz Singer* (1927), another *bildungsroman* in which a Jewish boy, then man, must reconcile obligations to family and community with life in show business, are reinforced through Max Steiner's music.⁴⁴ As in Louis Silver's score for *The Jazz Singer*, Steiner's score also incorporates the solemn "Kol Nidre" for scenes preceding and following the father's death.⁴⁵ Steiner's score also includes other familiar Jewish melodies, including "Auf'n Pripetchok" (Mark Warshawsky), "Hatikva" (Naphtali Herz Imber), and "Eli, Eli" (Jacob K. Sandler) as well as several original themes that sustain the score's "Hebrew idiom"⁴⁶ through adherence to the harmonic minor scale. Felix's theme is the one recurring melody in the score in which there is no distinguishing ethnic tag. A *moderato* promenade consisting of a simple ascending sequence in the major mode, Felix's theme is often accompanied by regularly pulsing quarter-note chords that recall Elgar's *Pomp and Circumstance*, Op. 39, March No. 1.⁴⁷ The sense of perpetual forward motion, coupled with the upward trajectory of the melody, mirror Felix's upward mobility from poor child to Park Avenue doctor, while also musically distinguishing his theme from the rest of the score.

Throughout *Symphony*, music characterizes narrative space, contrasting the Jewish ghetto, Felix's true home, with the shallowness and vanity of Felix's uptown offices. The film begins with a street scene set in the ghetto. Steiner captures the action

⁴⁴ When the father in *Symphony* shows off his new car and its horn to his old neighbors, he playfully alludes to *The Jazz Singer* when he brags "You ain't heard nothing yet."

⁴⁵ Mervyn Cooke also notes this musical parallel between the two films. See Cooke, *A History of Film Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 87.

⁴⁶ "Picture to be Given Operatic Underscore."

⁴⁷ The resemblance to *Pomp and Circumstance* was intended. One piece of music bearing only Felix's theme (written in the hand of a copyist) carries the following instructions, presumably from Steiner: "This melodie (*sic*) is to be played according to Mood: A. moderato (dolce) B. dolorosa C. March a la Pomp and Circumstance for End of Picture, etc." *Symphony of Six Million* Orchestra Parts, RKO Studio Records, Performing Arts Special Collections, University of California, Los Angeles (hereafter abbreviated as RKOSR), Box M-812, Folder 50-23.

and bustle through an upbeat melody in the minor mode. Scored for woodwinds and strings with driving boom-chick accompaniment, the timbre and vigorous texture evoke the sounds of klezmer, or more specifically “freilach,” a term written in Steiner’s pencil draft that means “merry” or “cheerful” in Yiddish and often designates up-tempo klezmer selections.⁴⁸ The music emphasizes, even reveals, the location and cultural milieu. Once inside the Klauber home, the underscore ceases and the music shifts to the diegetic realm. The father presents his daughter with a book of classical piano pieces by Mozart, Beethoven, and Rubinstein, but then requests that she play “Auf’n Pripetchok” instead. She complies and her halting performance unfolds as father loses in chess to the young Felix, who studies from a medical book between turns, much to his father’s frustration: “How can Papa concentrate on chess when you are making so much noise with that book?” It is an endearing family scene with the unsung text of “Auf’n Pripetchok” offering gentle irony:

A fire burns on the hearth
and it is warm in the little house.
And the rabbi is teaching little children
the alphabet.⁴⁹

The song’s lyrics also forewarn Felix’s painful coming of age, a process that will entail learning the “alphabet” of medicine, while still losing his father on the operating table:

Remember, children,
remember, dear ones,
what you learn here.
Repeat and repeat yet again...
When, children, you will grow older
you will understand,
how many tears lie in these letters
and how much crying.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Max Steiner, “Reel 1,” *Symphony of Six Million*, MSC volume 8.

⁴⁹ Mark Warshawsky, “Auf’n Pripetchok.”

⁵⁰ Ibid.

Following this scene, the film jumps forward to Felix's young adulthood, and Steiner's underscore continues for scenes showing him at home, at the clinic, and at the Braille institute where Jessica works. When Felix moves to his uptown office, the music stops. The scenes in which Felix serves his flaky clients while fending off his father's requests for more time with the family unfold without musical comment. The "new" Felix is a noticeably less sympathetic character. Worst of all, his new job separates him from his original mission—to serve his community by working in the local clinic. Though he promised to make return visits to the ghetto, he has not had the time and sends money instead. The sustained musical silence through all of this expresses audible disapproval and estrangement, exemplifying Mark Slobin's concept of "*erasure*, an aspect of film music that is just as important as inclusion. Who gets soundspace and who gets silence carries major cultural meaning."⁵¹

The contrast between the musical ghetto and music-less uptown is especially vivid when the film cuts back and forth between the two locations, with the score turning on and off accordingly. Yet the division is eventually breached as the needs of the ghetto and Felix's family become too great to be ignored. A boy in the local clinic has been assured that Felix will operate on him, but Felix has not yet arrived. As the boy waits on the operating table, strains of "Eli, Eli" (a musical setting of Psalm 22, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?") are heard in Steiner's underscore. An abrupt cut to the uptown office interrupts the cue, making the shift from background score to musical silence sudden and noticeable. In the uptown office Felix and a healthy-looking client share laughs. As Felix prepares to leave for the clinic, the nondiegetic score is heard for

⁵¹ Mark Slobin, "The Steiner Superculture," *Global Soundtracks: Worlds of Film Music* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2008), 22.

the first time in the posh office. When the nurse asks why Felix is going, he replies that he thought he had an appointment there. “Eli, Eli” is heard again in the strings, but this musical imploring is not heard by the nurse, who assures Felix he has no appointment and should stay where he is. When the boy dies, Jessica goes to Felix’s office to confront him with his responsibilities to his community. As though carrying the nondiegetic score with her, her arrival in waiting room is accompanied by the melody “Hatikva.” Again, unsung words are important:

As long as deep within the heart
A Jewish soul stirs,
And forward, to the ends of the East
An eye looks out, towards Zion.
Our hope is not yet lost...⁵²

Felix’s Zion, so the musical argument goes, is the Lower East Side: the Jewish community in which he grew up and to which he must return. After Jessica challenges Felix to return to his original mission as a doctor for his community, the film shifts to a religious ceremony: Felix’s sister has had a son and the family has gathered for the Redemption of the First Born. The now elderly father once again requests that the daughter play “Auf’n Pripetchok,” a work that the daughter has performed in earlier scenes; the melody has also been heard in the underscore. As she plays the piano in the background, the father thanks God for blessing him with children that are similarly blessed and successful. The moving words and music fall especially hard on the guilt-wracked Felix, but then the father collapses in the midst of his speech. He is diagnosed with a brain tumor. Felix agrees to operate.

Just before the operation, Felix’s father encourages and assures his son, whose despondent face conveys doubt. During this sequence, Felix’s theme in the underscore

⁵² Naphtali Herz Imber, “Hatikvah,” 1878.

gives way to “Auf’n Pripetchok” and “Kol Nidre,” with the latter concluding the cue with dramatic finality, rendered broadly by strings and brass. When the last chord dies away, the operation commences. The operating sequence is a riveting set of tightly framed shots that show Felix over this father’s body, assistants’ faces, and hands nimbly exchanging tools. The scene is quiet: minimal speech, no music, barely any sound in the room itself. A breathless silence dominates, with tension growing into panic as the father’s life signs falter.

As Felix cries out over his dead father, the melody of the Kol Nidre is whispered in low strings. A slowly descending chromatic line, made pungent by the doubling of oboe and stopped horn,⁵³ leads into a cathartic cadential gesture. As the staff wheel father Klauber from the room, “Auf’n Pripotchok” plays slowly, with the melody on piano and accompanimental chords on organ.⁵⁴ The odd instrumental pairing specified in Steiner’s draft effectively invokes musical memory (the piano recalling the daughter’s performances) and the hereafter, with sustained organ chords sounding ghostly and funereal. The son is left alone in the room. “Auf’n Pripotchok” fades away, its final phrase played *doloroso* on bassoon. The power of Steiner and Kaun’s work here resides in its simplicity and restraint. Steiner knew that this was perhaps the most important portion of the score, and the transparency of the textures required that the details be perfect. “Talk to Bernhard [Kaun]” Steiner reminded himself in a note at the measure in which the piano-organ “Auf’n Pripotchok” began.⁵⁵

⁵³ This instrumentation was determined by orchestrator Bernhard Kaun, as Max Steiner’s draft does not specify instrumentation. See Max Steiner, “Reel 9,” *Symphony of Six Million*, MSC Volume 8.

⁵⁴ In his recent commentary on the score, Michael Long notes that the organ sound selected for this scene is significant: “not a grand organ, but the small sound associated with poor synagogues and domestic parlors” (Michael Long, *Beautiful Monsters: Imagining the Classic in Music Media* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 99).

⁵⁵ Ibid.

Interestingly, the written scores show that Steiner and Kaun had initially feared the music might be *too* plain and thin on the relatively unsubtle recording equipment. Steiner originally had the melody doubled in octaves on the piano and Kaun (perhaps at Steiner's request) added an undulating eighth-note accompaniment in the left hand of the piano. But in the film, the doubling and supplemental accompaniment are gone; even the organ part is further simplified through the removal of moving notes between sustained chords. The only shimmer of light is offered by the harp, which introduces intermittent chords on the melody's repeat.⁵⁶ Steiner later explained that this was the lone reel Selznick had asked for scoring, to see how the "experiment" of background music might go over.⁵⁷ Watching and listening to the scene now, one can understand why Steiner's work thrilled the studio staff. The music brings much to the scene; it is difficult to imagine the film without it.

Though *Symphony of Six Million* does not mark the very first instance of background music issuing forth without some narrative impetus, it is a groundbreaking effort that incorporated background music systemically in many scenes of the picture, not for just an isolated scene, transition, or montage. As has been argued previously, music is so central to *Symphony* that even the withholding of music functions as commentary, a situation that cannot arise in contemporaneous films where musical silence is the norm, not a meaningful exception. Steiner's relative unfamiliarity with the task of writing a lengthy film score shows in his pencil drafts, which begin with little more than the bare notes on two or three staves and progressively accumulate musical and visual detail. (A

⁵⁶ The harpist is Louise Klos; she and Steiner married in 1936.

⁵⁷ Tony Thomas, "Biographical History," Register of the Max Steiner Collection, <http://lib.byu.edu/EAD/XML/MSS1547.xml> (Accessed on 5 June 2009).

fact that strongly suggests Steiner largely composed the score in order with the film's plot.⁵⁸) As J.B. Kaufman notes:

The early sections are straightforward, with only occasional indications of visual cues. By the eighth reel he is writing notes to [Bernhard] Kaun, indicating the ideas for instrumentation and tone color. By the closing sections he has relaxed with loquacious marginalia, thus inaugurating a practice which will continue for the rest of Steiner's career.⁵⁹

While Steiner's annotations and instructions are not as extensive in these later reels as in subsequent scores, there are examples that anticipate what would become *modus operandi* for Steiner. For the cue labeled "Reel 10" (as with later scores, Steiner does not give descriptive titles to his musical selections, but rather just marks the location in the film) Steiner provides details addressing the close alignment of visual motion with musical gestures (what would become known as "mickey-mousing") and the frequent allusion to well-known orchestral works. "This is supposed to represent footsteps" Steiner notes for a passage in which quarter notes anticipate, then match, Felix's footsteps into the operating room where Jessica awaits him.⁶⁰ Then, for a descending scalar sequence in the strings that sustains suspense just before we see the successful conclusion of Jessica's surgery, Steiner writes "Bernard: I'd like this run to sound somewhat like the similar passage in 1812."⁶¹ On an earlier page, Steiner encourages Kaun to exercise extravagance with a recording orchestra that did not exceed thirty

⁵⁸ Steiner's recollection that Selznick requested him to score the scene in which the father dies *first* is a notable exception and raises some questions. Steiner's pencil sketch for the cue is more heavily annotated than the earlier cues in the film, so did he rewrite the cue or perhaps return to the pencil draft to add more detail?

⁵⁹ J.B. Kaufman, "Max Steiner: The RKO Years," *Max Steiner: The RKO Years, 1929–1936* (Brigham Young University FMA-MS110, 2002).

⁶⁰ Max Steiner, "Reel 10," *Symphony of Six Million*, MSC Volume 8, 7.

⁶¹ *Ibid*, 10. Referring to mm. 335–358 of Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture*.

members: “Bernard (*sic*): Please make this very dramatic! If you need 3 horns or 3 trombones etc put them in!”⁶²

If Steiner’s pencil drafts show the composer beginning with bare notation and slowly adding details and instructions over the duration of the score, this is the only detail betraying Steiner’s status as a “beginner” in a new field. In many other ways, the score is remarkably mature, with a large number of recurring melodies (original and borrowed) associated with not only characters but also narrative themes, including family, disillusionment, and hope. Though it is impossible to judge how much of the score’s musical characteristics reflect suggestions from producer Selznick, many characteristics of the score are in accord with Selznick’s musical preferences as realized in later productions. For one, there is the heavy reliance upon preexistent music. The reused melodies not only recall the borrowing and pastiche practices of silent-era musical accompaniment, but their absent texts also connect with audience members’ personal musical associations and memories.⁶³ Not surprisingly, multiple reviewers noted that *Symphony* reminded them of the silent film *Humoresque* (1920), another Jewish-themed *bildungsroman* about an aspiring violinist; the score by Hugo Riesenfeld similarly featured well-known Hebrew melodies.⁶⁴ The reviewer for the *Jewish Criterion* promised that “if the story [of *Symphony*] doesn’t draw tears, the beautiful strains of ‘Eli, Eli,’ ‘Kol

⁶² Ibid., p. 8. Studio records show that the recording of *Symphony*’s orchestral score took place in March 1932 over four days (March 4, 10, 18, 19). Each day the orchestra increased size, growing from 23 members to 27, then 29, then 30 (RKOSR Box P-16, Folder A585).

⁶³ In this particular facet, there is an intriguing parallel with the music in the Westerns of director John Ford. As Kathryn Kalinak demonstrates, Ford selected songs and song melodies to both control the musical content in his films *and* emphasize ideological tension: “Ford’s s musical choices function as a force field through which issues of race, ethnicity, gender, and national identity swirl” (Kathryn Kalinak, *How the West Was Sung: Music in the Westerns of John Ford* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 200). The same could be said of Steiner’s (and Selznick’s?) musical choices in *Symphony of Six Million*.

⁶⁴ See Rick Altman, *Silent Film Sound* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 387. As Altman explains, the prologue to the film given at the New York City Criterion Theatre even featured a live performance of “Eli, Eli.”

Nidre,’ ‘Hatikvah,’ and ‘Auf’n Pripitochok’ will do the trick.”⁶⁵ Though Steiner’s subsequent scores for Selznick at RKO would not feature preexistent melodies as *Symphony* had, Selznick and Herbert Stothart would resume the practice at M-G-M, with the producer continuing to favor the presence (and occasional dominance) of familiar works in most of his later films.

Another trait of *Symphony* that *would* carry directly in Steiner and Selznick’s following collaborations would be the use (or withholding) of music to signal important distinctions in narrative space and place. In *Symphony*, music signifies home and its associations with community, tradition, and roots. These traits are then contrasted with the music-less sphere of wealthy uptown, characterized by shallow relationships, weakened family ties, and trivial preoccupations with cocktails and lapdogs. In the films that directly follow *Symphony*—*Bird of Paradise* (1932), *The Most Dangerous Game* (1932), and *King Kong* (1932)—this concern with music and narrative space would continue, though instead of tying music to the home the association would be flipped. Music would now characterize the unexplored and exotic, with all the danger, allure, and possibility that such terms connote. In the meantime, *Symphony* would not be forgotten by either Selznick or Steiner, both of whom continued to recall and celebrate the film as a brave new step in the history of film and music. (Selznick later petitioned that the score be preserved in the film archives of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.⁶⁶) Indeed, even at the film’s release, reviewers recognized *Symphony* as a momentous occasion that looked simultaneously back to the music of the silent era and forward—to unexplored possibilities:

⁶⁵ “Symphony of Six Million,” *Jewish Criterion*, 15 April 1932.

⁶⁶ DOS to John Abbott, 19 February 1941, reprinted in Behlmer, *Memo*, 307–308.

“Symphony of Six Million” has that all too rare combination: a deeply human story, powerful drama, natural comedy, inspired direction and unusually perfect casting. And the Radio people who are responsible for underlaying it throughout with a splendid musical score have pointed the way which may be followed with profit by others. It was composed by Max Steiner, and as an example of thematic music is worthy of study. In the silent days we had music throughout the picture, sometimes a symphony orchestra, sometimes just an organ, or a violin and a piano. But there was music, and music does things to most people. With the coming of ‘talkies’ and their early imperfections, dialogue and the rasping of mechanical contrivances all but eliminated music. Lately, it has been brought in occasionally, possibly during a silent scene, or a big moment. Here in ‘Symphony of Six Million’ it is used in almost every foot, and for the very deliberate purpose of building and sustaining emotional values of both the dialogue the incidental background noises and the picture itself.⁶⁷

While *Symphony* has since receded into obscurity, it is an overlooked milestone in the history of Hollywood, worthy of further exploration. For this reason, Michael Long’s recent study of the film’s score offers especially valuable insight. Long persuasively argues that the incorporation of familiar Jewish melodies into *Symphony*’s non-continuous score reveals Steiner’s and Selznick’s indebtedness to both the musical repertoire and *practices* of Yiddish theater, an observation that has far reaching implications when one considers *Symphony*’s status as a crucial “node on the music-historical timeline that prefigures the next several decades of film-music practice.”⁶⁸ Indeed, *Symphony*’s score is also vital for understanding the role of music in Selznick’s

⁶⁷ Leo Meehan, “‘Symphony’ Rated As Classic,” *The Hollywood Herald*, 23 March 1932.

⁶⁸ Michael Long, *Beautiful Monsters: Imagining the Classic in Musical Media* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 88. See also Long, 73–108. Long’s discussion also acknowledges Hollywood’s profound and thoroughly complex relationship to Jewish identity and culture. This rich issue is salient to Selznick and Steiner, not to mention Bernard Herrmann, Franz Waxman, and other individuals discussed in this dissertation. As the documents studied in this dissertation do not directly engage with these issues, I do not discuss this relationship in depth here. Other authors, such as Long, Jack Gottlieb, and Mark Slobin have offered engaging research on the connections and tensions between Hollywood, music, and Jewish culture. See especially Jack Gottlieb, *Funny, It Doesn’t Sound Jewish: How Yiddish Songs and Synagogue Melodies Influenced Tin Pan Alley, Broadway, and Hollywood* (New York: SUNY Press, 2004) and Mark Slobin, “Some Intersections of Jews, Music, and Theater,” *From Hester Street to Hollywood: The Jewish American Stage and Screen*, ed. Sarah Blacher Cohen (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983), 29–43.

films and reveals that many of the musical characteristics that recur across Selznick's oeuvre are present in this initial production.

Selznick and Steiner's Island Adventure Trilogy (1932–1933)

Listen! Hear anything? ...That's not breakers—that's drums!

—Jack Driscoll in *King Kong*

Steiner's music for the approach of Carl Denham's ship to Skull Island in *King Kong* (1933) is one of the most famous and frequently referenced passages in all of Hollywood film music.⁶⁹ The scene begins in complete darkness, with a fade in on Denham's *Venture* gliding through heavy fog, the crew seeking to glimpse a rumored, mysterious island. Before the boat or mist is even visible, Steiner's score has already begun, timed to begin in the preceding darkness. It is the first instance any music has been heard since the end of the main titles over twenty minutes earlier. The hushed, sustained tension chords with eerily rippling harp signal uncertain danger, but more importantly mark the entry of the film into its own uncharted territory. There is now music where there had been none before. As crew members strain their eyes in the fog, first mate Jack Driscoll warns that vision is of little use: "Listen!" he cries to crew and audience. A gentle throb has joined the orchestral haze. It is drums, played by natives on the island, their restless beat soon augmented by trombones and rhythmic string figures. When Denham's crew, now disembarked, witnesses the ceremony firsthand, their

⁶⁹ Peter Franklin uses the scene as a point of departure for his article, "King Kong and Film on Music: Out of the Fog," *Film Music Critical Approaches*, ed. K.J. Donnelly (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2001), 88–102. Other mentions of the scene are included in Bruno David Ussher, "Max Steiner's Good Work," *Hollywood Spectator*, 20 November 1937; Roy Prendergast, *Film Music: A Neglected Art*, 2nd ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1992), 31–32; Kathryn Kalinak, *Settling the Score: Music and the Classical Hollywood Film* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 71.

astonishment is augmented by the raucous entrance of the entire RKO studio orchestra: squealing woodwinds and thumping brass accompanying the natives' chanting and dancing. It is a carefully engineered setup, with music and visuals alternately disclosing information to characters and audience such that suspense is sustained over more than five minutes. Diegetic and nondiegetic musical sources fade in and out of each other so smoothly that the very distinction between the two becomes moot. (Claudia Gorbman cannot resist gently submitting, "If a microphone and soundman were accompanying Denham, what would the mike pick up? Would it record the drumming, the chanting, and the RKO orchestra?"⁷⁰) The entire sequence reveals a high level of sophistication for a film released in 1933. Mervyn Cooke marvels, "this remarkable cue would not sound out of place in a modern film."⁷¹

Not all of Steiner's score is this subtle. Much of it is markedly unsubtle, and Cooke is quick to qualify his admiration by noting that the score "seems dated only in its slavishly graphic mickey-mousing."⁷² Even so, the music that invokes the fog and continues, virtually unchecked, until the film's conclusion has come to be known as the first Hollywood score of consequence that, as James Wierzbicki observes, became the "model for scoring practice that would sustain itself at least for the next two decades."⁷³ Indeed, many of the ingredients of Hollywood film music are here: a collection of recurring, associative themes, a veritable arsenal of mickey-mousing devices that mimic footsteps, swats, grunts, airplanes, and elevated trains, and, most importantly, a rich assortment of orchestral textures that add emotional depth to a story whose onscreen

⁷⁰ Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 75.

⁷¹ Mervyn Cooke, *A History of Film Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 89.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ James Wierzbicki, *Film Music: A History* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 130.

characters and situations might otherwise be described as one dimensional. But Steiner's music for *Kong* did not emerge from a vacuum. It had predecessors, important films with substantial, developed scores by Steiner. These efforts—*Symphony of Six Million*, *The Bird of Paradise* (1932), and *The Most Dangerous Game* (1932)—have begun to be acknowledged by scholars in historical accounts, but there is still little commentary on the scores themselves. *Symphony* and its musical importance have been addressed in this dissertation, but *Bird* and *Game* deserve attention, as their stories and scores are intimately related to *Kong*'s. Indeed one could even argue that these three films form a trilogy of sorts, unified by theme and personnel.

Watching *Bird*, *Game*, and *Kong* in succession reveals immediate parallels. All three films center on an exotic encounter: a group of white adventurers find an island populated by exotic others. In *Bird* it is a tribe of Pacific islanders; in *Game* it is a demented Russian assisted by threatening Eurasians; in *Kong* it is a tribe of African natives, supplemented by a giant ape and assorted dinosaurs. The arrival of the curious adventurers causes problems. Dire conflict, rounded out by some romantic scenes, inevitably ensues. By the time the white protagonists extricate themselves from the islands' clutches, tragedy and death have taken their toll, mostly on the natives. As the white adventurers sail away, the surviving cast members are left older, wiser, and glad to be alive.

The similarities in plots are heightened by other parallels, including shared casting (Joel McCrea stars in *Bird* and *Game*, Fay Wray and Robert Armstrong star in *Game* and *Kong*), shared footage (the same shark footage is used in *Bird* and *Game*, prompting Steiner to remark in his pencil draft to *Game* "We've got a shark in every picture, by

Jesus!”⁷⁴), shared sets (all three films are predominantly set on jungle islands), and shared personnel: Merian C. Cooper directed both *Game* and *Kong* while David O. Selznick and Max Steiner served on all three productions. Finally, all three films were deemed by critics to be throwbacks to the silent era, a conclusion—usually intended as a compliment—abetted by the musical accompaniment.

Bird was the first of the three movies to enter production. Much like the fogbound scene in *Kong*, Steiner’s music begins before we see a single frame of footage: trilling high strings provide a shimmering, pastoral backdrop. A fade-in discloses swaying palm trees along a shoreline as flute and oboe exchange arpeggiated, birdsong figures that Steiner later labels as “The Call of the Island” theme. With the music providing the bird and the footage promising paradise, the appearance of the film’s actual title after twenty-three seconds of music and soundless visuals is practically redundant. When the story commences after the main titles, the music neither pauses nor abates. Steiner’s music shifts to a cycling, pentatonic theme over rapid harp glissandi that accompanies the fleet motion of a sailing yacht as it rapidly approaches a reef. Crew members call out urgently: the pass is only eighteen feet wide, the ship is fifteen, the water is shallow. The boat rides through on a crest and the orchestra crescendos, peaking with a cymbal crash as water splashes over the camera lens. Listening to this scene with closed eyes reveals that there is not a drop of actual water to be heard on the soundtrack, only voices and Steiner’s evocative ocean music. The absence of realistic sound effects is hardly noticeable (unless one is consciously listening for it), yet the replacement of aural realism with sprays of orchestral color performs an important subliminal trick. Just as the boat rides the wave crest into a strange, beautiful land, so the gentle dissociation of visual and aural realism

⁷⁴ Max Steiner, “Reel 1, Part 2,” *Most Dangerous Game*, MSC Volume 82, 1.

eases the spectator over the barrier of disbelief, with music seducing the audience to believe, albeit temporarily, in a land where “native” Dolores Del Rio pursues amorous entanglements with sailor Joel McCrea. The effect anticipates the previously discussed fog music in *King Kong*, which Gorbman argues “initiates us into the fantasy world, the world where giant apes are conceivable.... It helps to hypnotize the spectator, bring down defenses that could be erected against this realm of monsters....”⁷⁵

With chestnuts of political incorrectness like “better keep your eye on him, Mac, he’s going native,” it is easy to dismiss *Bird* as exotic kitsch. Del Rio and McCrea fall in love and swim nude to the strumming of ukuleles, then Del Rio leaves to heroically sacrifice herself to a grumbling volcano—evidently opposed to interracial romance—that threatens to ruin her village. Even in 1932 *Bird* was considered dated entertainment, though that was part of its appeal. In an article titled “[Director] Vidor Uses Technic (*sic*) of Silent Days,” one reviewer raved:

Significant in “Bird of Paradise” are the beauty of photographic effects, the musical background that actually helps to tell the story, enhancing dramatic effects and building up climaxes just as symphony orchestras used to do with big silent films, and above all—the rapid action.... “Bird of Paradise” represents a silent picture success—and therefore a step forward.⁷⁶

The effect was intended. As Ronald Haver notes, much of Selznick’s enthusiasm for the project stemmed from his desire to fulfill creative ideas denied him while working on *White Shadows in the South Seas* (1928), a silent film production at M-G-M that Selznick had been discharged from while trying to exert too much control.⁷⁷ Another likely source of influence was *Tabu* (1930), a film shot silently by F. W. Murnau and Robert Flaherty

⁷⁵ Gorbman, 79.

⁷⁶ Robbin Coons, “Vidor Uses Technic (*sic*) of Silent Days,” undated clipping in Scrap Book 1, MSC Oversize Box 8.

⁷⁷ Ronald Haver, *David O. Selznick’s Hollywood* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980), 78.

in Tahiti but exhibited with an appended score on the soundtrack by Hugo Riesenfeld.⁷⁸ The music from this film so impressed Selznick that he later recommended the score's preservation at the Museum of Modern Art.⁷⁹ (*Bird of Paradise* also had a still earlier predecessor: the film was loosely based on Richard Walton Tully's 1911 play, a widely performed production that helped spark popular interest in Hawaiian music.⁸⁰) In any case, Selznick allowed Steiner's music to run rampant, filling nearly the entire soundtrack, as though *Bird* too were a silent work. Steiner recalled asking Selznick how much music he wanted for a film, with the producer responding, "For my money, you can start on the first frame and finish on the last."⁸¹ In *Bird* he nearly got his wish.

There is, however, one notable scene without music. It is night and the sailors are back on the yacht, all below decks with the exception of love-struck McCrea, who is outside. The orchestral score stops, giving space for a sailor to sarcastically croon a few lines of "Where the Blue of the Night," before he and his buddies marvel at McCrea's easy susceptibility to natives' charms. It is the film's one allowance for real world disenchantment and is fittingly confined to sailors stuffed inside their ship. When the camera cuts to the open night air and McCrea gazing wistfully about, the shimmering texture of the film's opening returns, marked in Steiner's pencil draft as "very träumerisch."⁸² And so the music and dream continue, with this brief respite serving as reminder that the exotic pleasures of *Bird* are neither felt nor enjoyed by those who fence themselves in. The music-less scene hardly even registers in Steiner's encompassing

⁷⁸ Riesenfeld's score also has "water music" with cymbal crashes synchronized with onscreen splashes.

⁷⁹ DOS to John Abbott, 19 February 1941, reprinted in Behlmer, *Memo*, 307–308.

⁸⁰ See Charles Hiroshi Garrett, *Struggling to Define a Nation: American Music and the Twentieth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 177–183.

⁸¹ Max Steiner, "Notes to You," 113–114.

⁸² Max Steiner, "Reel 2, Part 2," *Bird of Paradise*, MSC Volume 16, 1.

score. The composer writes off the minute of orchestral silence by jotting “G.P.” (grand pause) in the middle of an otherwise continuous cue.

For the rest of the film, Steiner generously unfurls theme after theme, with eleven melodies supplemented with shorter motivic fragments. Mark Slobin, the only scholar to comment at length on the score, assesses the variety of textures and idioms Steiner embraces, noting “Steiner mixed an orchestral score with depictions of indigeneous music-making, tossing in generalized colorful music that drew on the Hawaiian music craze...[thereby creating] quite the ethnomusicology of an imaginary community.”⁸³ Indeed, the sheer aural interest of Steiner’s music was considered noteworthy even when reviewers found the plot distasteful. Harry Burns of the *Hollywood Filmograph* ends his highly critical review of the film with a lone compliment: “In closing we wish to pay tribute to Max Steiner for his musical score, which really makes the picture.”⁸⁴ Steiner’s indigenous music for the islanders, though cliché by today’s standards, was also praised by the *Hollywood Herald* reviewer:

Mr. Steiner never once intruded with ‘Aloha.’ This is recommended to the Academy as cause for a special award for musical courage. That or the Producer’s Association should run him out of town for avoiding the obvious.⁸⁵

Ironically, it was producer Selznick who had specifically advised Steiner to write “original” Hawaiian music instead of employing familiar melodies.⁸⁶ To compensate fake indigenous music with a dash of authenticity, Steiner enlisted Hawaiian musicians, including Sol Hoopi’s Hawaiian Chorus, to perform on the soundtrack.⁸⁷ Sol Hoopi’s

⁸³ Slobin, 6.

⁸⁴ Harry Byrns, “Reviews and Previews,” *Hollywood Filmograph*, 30 July 1932.

⁸⁵ “New Pictures,” *Hollywood Herald*, 30 July 1932.

⁸⁶ Max Steiner, “Notes to You,” 115a [insert].

⁸⁷ “RKO Daily Musicians’ Report,” 15 January 1932, RKOSR Box P-16, Folder A587. Steiner claimed that his nonsense “Hawaiian” lyrics inadvertently contained authentic Hawaiian obscenities, which were noted by chorus members and removed (Max Steiner, “Notes to You,” 115a [insert]).

singers were later booked for a return engagement. When RKO's *A Bill of Divorcement* (another Selznick-Steiner production, but with little music) premiered later that year, a series of live acts preceding the feature were topped off with a performance by Max Steiner, the RKO Orchestra, and Sol Hoopii's chorus of music from *Bird*.⁸⁸ It is an early, noteworthy instance of symphonic film music being featured as concert music apart from the film. If the idea was not Selznick's, one can be sure he took notice. With *Symphony of Six Million*, Steiner's score had received respectable applause, but with *Bird*, he and Selznick scored much wider recognition and praise. Selznick appreciated this step forward and made sure the composer knew it. Steiner, who described *Bird* as his breakthrough score, recalled Selznick's compliments:

"This is the greatest music job I ever heard in my life. In my book you're a genius." Well, he really built me up and from that day on David Selznick and I always hit it off.⁸⁹

A full page ad for Steiner's music (perhaps Selznick's idea?) shows how Steiner was already beginning to enjoy a degree of star recognition. As the ad proclaimed, his music did not just accompany the show, it *was* the show:

MUSIC! ...Beautiful...primitive...filled with simple artistry...pulsing savagery...interpreting every emotion...adding to each great characterization...melodies of moonlight...tropical love and hate...an outstanding accomplishment by MAX STEINER. "*Bird of Paradise*"⁹⁰

After *Bird* came *The Most Dangerous Game*, an adaptation of Richard Connell's famous short story that improved on the original by adding a love interest (damsel in distress Fay Wray) and making the maniacal Zaroff (who hunts humans for sport) a pianist. For such a grim topic, *Game* is an endearingly goofy film, with suspense often

⁸⁸ Premiere Program for *A Bill of Divorcement*, 21 October 1932, Scrap Book 1, MSC Box OS 8.

⁸⁹ Max Steiner, "Notes to You," 115.

⁹⁰ Undated and unlabeled full-page ad, Scrap Book 1, MSC Box OS 8.

collapsing into self-parody. Even the music participates in the game of doubles. When Zaroff sits down at the piano, his performance of the film's motto theme (heard nondiegetically during the main titles and generally associated with the island's mystery and danger) vacillates between its standard, austere minor setting and an inappropriately breezy major version, better suited for a cocktail pianist than a murderer.

Initially Steiner was assigned to be the picture's music director, with W. Franke Harling composing the picture's score. Harling did in fact compose a complete score for *Game*, with music accompanying sequences that Steiner's score does not cover. Bill Whittaker, the only other commentator to acknowledge the existence of Harling's score, explains that director Merian C. Cooper felt Harling's score "was far too light, suggesting Broadway more than the remote jungle isle of Count Zaroff."⁹¹ So Harling's score was shelved—mostly. Consultation of Harling's pencil drafts and Oscar Potoker's orchestrations reveal that Steiner did not start from scratch when Cooper invited him to write a replacement score. The motto theme of Steiner's score is an adaptation of Harling's initial main title theme, both of which melodically circle the interval of a minor third, though Steiner elaborates the phrase for improved effect. Steiner also transforms Harling's theme for Zaroff, a series of dotted-rhythms that span a single tritone, into a series of sequentially interlocking tritones, a figure that exponentially increases Zaroff's capacity for evil—at least in musical terms.

Steiner's transformations are curious. They reveal familiarity with Harling's work and a reluctance to abandon it completely, but express a conscientious avoidance of simple borrowing. How aware was executive producer Selznick of these various musical

⁹¹ Bill Whittaker, "Lost Worlds and Forgotten Music: Max Steiner's Legendary RKO Scores," *The Son of Kong & The Most Dangerous Game* (Naxos 8.570183, 2000).

developments? Did he observe from a distance, or was he more closely involved, perhaps motivating some of the changes himself? Lacking documentation, there is no way to know for sure. Twelve years later though, Selznick would turn down an entire score for *Since You Went Away* and again hire Steiner to save the day.

With Harling's score rejected for being too light, Steiner and orchestrators Bernhard Kaun and Emil Gerstenberger erred on the hefty side, with textures so thick and busy for the film's extended chase sequence that the thirty-two member orchestra had trouble recording it. "There were a great many individual mistakes in the orchestra," wrote Murray Spivack in the recording log, "which were not due to lack of rehearsal. These should be considered unavoidable, inasmuch as the musicians were working from 10:00 A.M. to 6:00 A.M., and the music was extremely difficult."⁹² The musicians were not the only ones under strain. Steiner's pencil drafts exude anxiety and stress from having to assemble a replacement score in little time. For one of the action sequences, Steiner scrawled: "Bernard: Help this if you can! It's now 4 a.m. and I can't think anymore. Worked since 8 this morning."⁹³ In order to generate more music with less effort, Steiner also ordered that more passages be repeated, albeit with different orchestration. For one such passage near the end of the picture, fatigue forced bad puns: "cue the other instruments. Should be very forte. (maybe 80) HA! HA! (4 a.m.)."⁹⁴ Exhausted and already looking ahead to *Kong*, Steiner wrote on the final page of the score: "Grandioso a la Kaun... Bernard: Make this as nice as you can its 5:30 and I am dying! Dein Max."⁹⁵

⁹² Murray Spivack, "Recording Breakdown," 13 August 1932, RKOSR Box P-18, Folder A602.

⁹³ Max Steiner, "Reel 6, Part 6," *The Most Dangerous Game*, MSC Volume 82.

⁹⁴ Max Steiner, "Reel 7, Part 3," *The Most Dangerous Game*, MSC Volume 82.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

The repetitiveness of the score betrays Steiner's workmanlike approach. In place of *Bird*'s many lengthy melodies, Steiner only cycles through several succinct motives for *Game*. Nevertheless, there are many memorable passages, including the arresting main title opening, which dispenses with the expected orchestra tutti and instead offers only a haunting solo horn. (Leonard Bernstein would reprise this technique in his one Hollywood score, *On the Waterfront* (1954).) The horn call is not heard again until much later in the film, when a frustrated Zaroff hauls out his hunting horn to summon the dogs. As in *Bird*, Steiner's music plays a pivotal role in engaging the spectator with the film's fantasy. Though *Game* is not filled with music to the same degree as *Bird*, the spotting of the music once again emphasizes the divide between the "normal" world and the fantastic, nightmarish realm of Zaroff. The film's initial scenes aboard the boat and the subsequent shipwreck play without music, but as the boat disappears beneath the surface Steiner's score seeps onto the soundtrack, filling the void. The world of rationality is now at the bottom of the sea; the music brings with it a wholly different set of rules and expectations.

Once again, reviewers warmed to Steiner's music. A particularly impressed Edwin Schallert praised the score on multiple occasions:

The action is terrific and made more so by the musical accompaniment which despite a sort of roaring loudness at this particular theater, still adds tremendously to the interest and strength of the production....The film belongs to [Leslie Banks], to the creator of the musical score, Max Steiner, and to the director. The big point in the whole thing is that probably 50 per cent of this picture is done without any dialogue and the spoken word isn't missed.⁹⁶

In another article, Schallert noted that *Game*'s score furthered the silent-era musical ambience established with *Bird*:

⁹⁶ Edwin Schallert, "Man-Hunt Tale Real Thriller," *Los Angeles Times*, 17 August 1932.

A thing that should be noted, and more than just in passing, is the work that this musician, Max Steiner, is doing in bringing out atmospheric possibilities in pictures. He contributes measurably to “The Bird,” and even more to “The Most Dangerous Game,” which is soon to show.

In silent pictures music supplied much of the emotional sweep of a production when it was exhibited on the screen. In fact, I would be inclined to say that 50 per cent of this sweep was due to the influence of the theater orchestra, when there was an orchestra, and 25 per cent when the organ had to be depended on for accompaniment, provided both the orchestral leader and the organist were equal to the occasion.

For portions of “The Bird of Paradise,” and also for fully half of “The Most Dangerous Game,” music does its old share in providing the stimulus.⁹⁷

Like its predecessors *Bird* and *Game*, *King Kong* featured another strange island with thrilling, life-threatening adventure for the main explorers. *Kong*, however, went beyond the genre formulas of these earlier efforts. Unlike *Bird* and *Game* in which the film begins and ends just offshore of the island, *Kong*'s island adventure is framed by lengthy episodes in New York City. With Manhattan as basis of comparison, the terror of the island gains greater significance through what Thomson describes as “the eternal metaphor of savagery and culture that allows *King Kong* to surpass melodrama.”⁹⁸ “And I suppose there's no danger in New York?” challenges Carl Denham, *Kong*'s reckless explorer and filmmaker extraordinaire. “Listen, there are dozens of girls in this town tonight that are in more danger than they'll ever see with me,” he assures. “Yeah, but they *know* that kind of danger” answers Driscoll, a wiseacre grin cracking his face.

Steiner later recalled that Cooper invited him to score the film⁹⁹ and that the studio praised his work in *Kong*, “which made the artificially animated animals more lifelike, the battle and pursuit scenes more vivid.”¹⁰⁰ Steiner's accomplishment, though,

⁹⁷ Edwin Schallert, “Rivalry Seen in Film Plots,” *Los Angeles Times*, 8 September 1932.

⁹⁸ Thomson, 132.

⁹⁹ Max Steiner, “Notes to You,” 118.

¹⁰⁰ Max Steiner, “Scoring the Film,” *We Make the Movies*, ed. Nancy Naumberg (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1937), 230.

was much greater. In *Kong* Steiner made the ape more human, using music to underscore the film's ambivalent portrayal of Kong and, by implication, Carl Denham. This important function raised the score to a higher plane than merely making fights "more vivid," a feat Steiner had already accomplished with aplomb in *Bird* and *Game*.

For Kong himself, Steiner assigned a simple motive: three notes, descending by half-step, with the first and last pitch sustained (precise rhythmic durations vary). Depending on how these three notes are played and by whom, Kong's motive can sound demonic, angry, and unrelenting (as when the three notes are extended through ascending sequences) or merely plaintive and lamenting. Steiner uses it for both. To make matters more interesting, Steiner assigns a triple-time theme to Ann (Fay Wray), Kong's reluctant romantic interest, that often begins with a similar chromatic descent though three notes. Like Kong's theme, Ann's is heard in radically different renditions, ranging from the conventionally sweet and lyrical setting for when she and Driscoll discover they have feelings for each other: "Ann, uh, I—uh...uh, say, I guess I love you!" Here the theme is played as a gentle waltz, with intervals stretched from half-steps to more tonally friendly thirds and fourths (the rhythm and melodic contour remain the same). When Kong arrives to pluck Ann from the sacrificial bier, however, her theme repeats frenetically in its half-step form, alternating with Kong's thudding three-note motive. Interestingly, it is this version of the theme that is first heard in the film's main titles, prompting Peter Franklin to ask "Which is the 'original' version of it? Is the 'Ann' theme in reality a derivation of this motif, whose subjective associations [with "the audience's nervous anticipation"] and

effect are more significant than its specific character-linkage?”¹⁰¹ In the scene in which Kong carries Ann up the Empire State Building (cue shown below, figure 2.1), Steiner elides Kong and Ann’s chromatic themes, making the musical connection all the more explicit.

¹⁰¹ Franklin, 96. Franklin’s question stems from interpretive, not compositional, concerns, but Steiner’s pencil drafts show that he composed the main title cue *last*, not first (Max Steiner, *King Kong*, MSC Volume 91).

Figure 2.1 Steiner, *King Kong*, “Reel 11, Part I.” Kong’s motive is set in the lowest staff in measure 1 with a repetition of the motive beginning in measure 4. Ann’s theme—identified as “Stolen Love” in the draft—begins in measure 6 and is set in the second and third staves. This transcription of Steiner’s pencil draft includes visual cues, which are marked in underlined italics. Other marginalia, including instructions for the orchestrator, are in italics.

2 Aviators (close up)

1/2 tone shake

3

3

3

sfz

sfz

Kong on Tower

3

3

Cymbal

Keep "Aeroplane" going as well

sfz

violently repressed female object.”¹⁰² Steiner’s pencil drafts give further credence to Franklin’s argument. Kong’s theme is labeled “Kong” in the pencil drafts, but “Ann’s” theme is labeled “Stolen Love,” a brilliantly ambiguous title that levels accountability at Kong and the male crew members of the boat, all of whom are intent on control over the female object—even if it means stealing what they believe theirs. (Franklin adroitly lumps the sailors with Kong, their “‘natural’ representative.”¹⁰³) Thus, when Kong resolves to give up his life and love by setting Ann down gently atop the Empire State Building, it is he and not Ann who gets the final aria. Steiner writes a halting descending line in the violins, accompanied by a note reading, “This should sound about like the ‘Miserere’ from *Trovatore*.”¹⁰⁴ The passage from the opera he paraphrases is sung by Leonora,¹⁰⁵ but in the film it becomes Kong’s swan song as he attempts to stroke Ann’s hair, a final expression of longing and regret for his “Manrico” before taking the fatal plunge to the city streets below.¹⁰⁶

Though Steiner’s music for *Kong* hardly abandoned tropes of musical exoticism and fantasy celebrated in *Bird* and *Game*, Steiner’s score dove several levels deeper into

¹⁰² Franklin, 97.

¹⁰³ Franklin, 98.

¹⁰⁴ Max Steiner, “Reel 11 Part II,” *King Kong*, MSC Volume 91.

¹⁰⁵ Steiner paraphrases the end of Leonora’s exclamation from the Miserere Chorus in Act IV of Verdi’s *Il Trovatore*. The text is also applicable to Kong, who stands besieged not by the sound of prayers, but by the roar of airplanes:

“That sound, those prayers,
so solemn and dire,
fill the air
with baleful terror!
The distress
that fills me almost deprives
my lips of their breath,
my heart of its beating!”

¹⁰⁶ For the score’s final, tragic declamation of the “Kong” theme, Steiner points out the pathos by writing in his pencil draft, “GIVE! BERNARD! (Remember Kolnidre in *Symphony of Six Million*).” Steiner also musically reunites Kong with his “stolen love” by writing one last rendition of the “stolen love” theme following the final iteration of the “Kong” theme. For reasons unknown, this short passage was excised (Max Steiner, “Reel 12, Part II,” MSC Volume 91).

the film's psychological substructure, illuminating gendered anxieties that might otherwise go unremarked in this monster melodrama. Ironically, Steiner's music initially received little comment when the film first came out.¹⁰⁷ A quick perusal of the reviews explains the lack of notice. The oversized ape, dinosaurs, special effects, and powerful sound design by Murray Spivack dominated critics' attention. Even so, reviewers could not help but notice the spirit of silent cinema in *Kong*, with multiple reviews referencing *The Lost World* (1925):

As you can see, 'King Kong' is pretty much in the tradition of Conan Doyle's 'The Lost World,' as done in the silent films seven or eight years ago. There has, however, been nothing like it since, and with the cinema going in for parlor realism these days, the picture emerges as an interesting and effective stunt, produced with considerable imagination.¹⁰⁸

Music also aided with this "effective stunt," with Steiner's score once again coursing through extended scenes that had no dialogue and occasionally little realistic sound. As Steiner explained, "[*Kong*] was made for music. It was the kind of film that allowed you to do anything and everything, from weird chords and dissonances to pretty melodies."¹⁰⁹ Considering the film's many violent and frankly gruesome scenes, the weird chords and dissonances won, with Steiner remarking in his pencil drafts near the end of the picture, "Hurrah! The first pure triad!"¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ The reviewer for the *Hollywood Herald* is the exception:

"Steiner deserves a special paragraph for his musical score. Without it much of the sense of realism would have been lost. If ever a picture demonstrated what proper musical scoring can do, this one does. Steiner's work definitely helps to make 'King Kong' a big picture ("King Kong," *Hollywood Herald*, 18 February 1933).

Max Steiner archivist James D'Arc notes that Steiner's score for *Kong* was deemed "curiously appropriate" by Louella Parsons and criticized by Molly Merrick for becoming "a bit comic at times, as for instance, when we hear a full symphony orchestra in the heart of the dangerous Kong country." Not an auspicious beginning for what was to be eventually hailed as a most auspicious score. (See James D'Arc, "Curiously Appropriate," *King Kong: The Complete 1933 Film Score* (Marco Polo 8.223763,), 17.

¹⁰⁸ Richard Watts Jr., "King Kong," *Herald Tribune*, 3 March 1933.

¹⁰⁹ Max Steiner, quoted in Tony Thomas, *Music for the Movies*, 115.

¹¹⁰ Max Steiner, "Reel 10, Part II," MSC Volume 91.

After the excitement of *Kong*'s special effects had had time to abate, Steiner's music lingered, evidently heard more clearly in retrospect. Months after the film's release, one journalist remarked:

Going back over recent months, and keeping away from the straight musicals for the moment, the picture which seems to be a shining example for its musical score is 'King Kong' (Radio) orchestrated by Max Steiner. Memory and physical restrictions necessarily limit a summary on every picture which has come out of Hollywood in the past six or eight months, but it is logical to presume that no regular release has contained a more expert emotional buildup via music than 'Kong' did for the introduction of the giant gorilla. This was truly a fine piece of work, both as to scoring and staging, and undoubtedly was responsible to a definite degree for that picture's box office success, although many were seemingly unconscious of it.¹¹¹

Four years later music critic Bruno David Ussher also hailed the score as eminently memorable (a comment he repeated in 1940) and this, coupled with the publication of Steiner's brief comments on the score in *We Make the Movies*, helped to establish Steiner's music for *Kong* as the first Hollywood score of note.¹¹² The truth, of course, was more complicated. *Kong* represented a sophisticated summation of musico-cinematic ideas established and developed in Steiner and Selznick's earlier films.

And how closely was Selznick involved in the music of *Kong*? Lack of documentation again precludes satisfying answers, though *Kong* clearly benefited from the prior example of Selznick's earlier films and his present support. *Kong* is generally depicted as director-producer Merian C. Cooper's pet project, but Selznick ensured that Cooper had the resources to pursue this dream to its full potential. Selznick defended the project when skeptics at the studio objected to the film's spiraling expenses. It is safe to

¹¹¹ "Music on the Screen," *Variety*, 27 February 1934.

¹¹² Max Steiner, "Scoring the Film," *We Make the Movies*, ed. Nancy Naumberg (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1937), 230; Bruno David Ussher, "In the Realm of Music: Point and Counterpoint in the Medium of the Movies," *Los Angeles Daily News*, 17 July 1938; Bruno David Ussher, "Music in the Films," *Los Angeles Daily News*, 19 August 1940.

say that Cooper would never have gotten the elaborate, densely textured score from Steiner had Selznick not appreciated the value of music for an important film. What producer other than Selznick would have agreed to a \$30,603.48 score in 1933? To provide some context for this figure, the cast for *Kong* was only slightly more expensive (\$35,956) and the entire film cost \$672,155.¹¹³ A small indication of Selznick's value to *Kong* arises in an interesting letter written by Merian C. Cooper, who noticed Selznick's name missing from some advertising related to *Kong* at the Chinese Grauman Theater:

I wish that you would make every possible effort in your cooperation with Mr. Grauman to see that we give David Selznick full credit.

It must not be forgotten that Mr. Selznick was the Executive Producer of this picture, and only his full cooperation and backing at all made it possible to make "King Kong."¹¹⁴

A roughly contemporaneous article also gives some indication of Selznick's musical influence at RKO, though no mention of *Kong* is made. The article was ostensibly an interview with Max Steiner, but every word quoted from the composer was about Selznick:

David O. Selznick came to the conclusion that any music, whether classical or popular, that is known—even if not by name—to the general public, is distracting. He said to me one day:

"Steiner, when a tune has been heard before, the people in the audience search their memories. They say, 'where did we hear that before? Just what is that melody?'"

Selznick, who is extremely sensitive musically, also said he thought music should fit the precise action, mood, and even words in a screen play, and obviously should be especially composed.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Figures taken from a letter from E.L. Scanlon to Merian C. Cooper, 14 September 1938, Merian C. Cooper Collection, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, Box 9, Folder 15.

¹¹⁴ Merian C. Cooper to Eddie Eckels, 6 March 1933, HRC 1348:10.

¹¹⁵ "Classical Composers Banished from Hollywood," *Los Angeles Times*, 16 October 1932, B10.

There is something odd about this article. On the one hand, it indicates that Steiner was taking his musical directives primarily from Selznick—no other producer or director is mentioned. Selznick’s objectives also align with Steiner’s music on the island adventure films: no preexistent music as there had been in *Symphony*, but lots of mickey-mousing, in which music fits “the precise action.” But if this is how Selznick felt about music at the end of 1932, it is not how he would discuss film music in 1937, when in a letter to Katharine Brown he would enthusiastically encourage the use of preexistent music and decry excessive mickey-mousing.¹¹⁶ At some point then, Selznick changed his mind. Herbert Stothart, Selznick’s next music director, is the one who changed it.

Selznick and Stothart at M-G-M (1933–1935)

In 1933, Selznick moved from RKO to M-G-M, where he produced eleven films in two years. Like his films at RKO, some of these works feature extensive underscore while some, like *Dinner at Eight* (1933) and *Manhattan Melodrama* (1934), do not. At M-G-M, Selznick worked with a particularly influential collaborator: composer and studio music director Herbert Stothart (1885–1949). Stothart and Selznick’s relationship was a mutually enriching one. They enjoyed great rapport, which continued long after Selznick left M-G-M, and worked on films that are often singled out as benchmarks for both their careers. Stothart composed some of his most distinctive work for Selznick, including his scores for *David Copperfield* (1935), *Anna Karenina* (1935), and *A Tale of Two Cities* (1935). For Selznick, these pictures allowed him to craft his own style of prestige picture.

¹¹⁶ DOS to Katharine Brown, 30 August 1937, HRC 1237:3.

Selznick did not jump into this style of moviemaking at M-G-M. *Little Women* (1934), a project he left in production at RKO before switching studios, is a prestige effort, albeit on a more modest budget: a serious literary adaptation starring Katherine Hepburn, directed by George Cukor, with music by Max Steiner. M-G-M, however, was in an entirely different league, renowned for producing more and better prestige pictures than any other major studio. A large part of this reputation rested on the shoulders of Irving Thalberg, the man who Ethan Mordden credited for having “laid down the standards by which Hollywood measured prestige.”¹¹⁷ There had been a power dispute between Selznick and Thalberg in the late 1920s, prompting Selznick’s first departure from M-G-M, but the two men shared a passion for producing ambitious features that were artful, accessible, and promised a higher grade of popular entertainment. They were both showmen, seriously invested in the fine science of entertainment.¹¹⁸ Working at Thalberg’s studio again meant that Selznick had the talent resources and money to make high caliber films and establish his name in prestige pictures before becoming an independent.

Like Max Steiner, Herbert Stothart came from Broadway to Hollywood in the late 1920s to serve as a music director. He had been working at M-G-M since 1929, but his career as a film composer only began gathering momentum after he began composing for Selznick on *Nightflight* (1933) and *Viva Villa!* (1934). Selznick, for his part, valued Stothart’s contributions and made efforts to have the composer assigned to his pictures.

¹¹⁷ Ethan Mordden, *The Hollywood Studios: House Style in the Golden Age of the Movies* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1988), 102.

¹¹⁸ William Rosar brought to my attention that the history of showmanship as a carefully calibrated “science of entertainment” is long indeed. See W. Tatarkiewicz, “Theatric, The Science of Entertainment from the XIIth to the XVIIth Century,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 26, no. 2 (April–June, 1965): 263–272.

Of the scant archival material documenting their work together, two letters from Selznick express his excitement that Stothart will be working with him:

Dear Herb:

I've just heard that in accordance with my request I have you again on "Vanessa." I can't tell you how pleased I am and am looking forward to working with you again.¹¹⁹

For *A Tale of Two Cities*, Selznick exclaimed to Victor Barravale that he was "delighted with the assignment of Mr. Stothart."¹²⁰ Indeed, Stothart appears to have effected one especially important change in the producer's view of film music: namely, that the skillful incorporation of preexistent classical, popular, and folk music into a score had the potential to better connect with audiences than original music. This approach differs markedly from the methods evinced in Steiner's music for the island adventure films at RKO. For Stothart, however, the interweaving of strong music into film scores was not just a preference, it was an artistic responsibility. "The public today," wrote Stothart, "is benefiting by the greatest works of the greatest composers, woven into the drama of the screen and giving it new effectiveness, while the drama itself is creating a new sense of music appreciation."¹²¹ Stothart put this philosophy into practice, incorporating the music of Wagner into *Vanessa: Her Love Story* (1935), Tchaikovsky into *Anna Karenina*, *Romeo and Juliet* (1936), and *Song of Russia* (1944), the music of Mussorgsky, Stravinsky, Schumann, and Mendelssohn into the score for *The Wizard of Oz* (1939), and the music of Delius and Mendelssohn into the score for *The Yearling* (1946). Stothart believed the use of classical music in a film score served as a form of cultural uplift for

¹¹⁹ DOS to Herbert Stothart, 16 January 1935. The author thanks William Rosar for sharing a digital scan of the memo.

¹²⁰ DOS to Victor Barravale, 24 April 1935. A digital scan of the memo was shared by William Rosar.

¹²¹ Herbert Stothart, "Film Music," *Behind the Screen: How Are Films Are Made*, ed. Stephen Watts (London: Arthur Baker Ltd., 1938), 139.

the audiences, but he also felt that the music of the established “great” composers was not only a viable alternative to a so-called “original” score, it was in many instances preferable:

My own best successes are those in which Chopin, Tschaikowsky, and other composers can be recognized. The idea of a completely original score for a picture is a broad statement. I contend that the score which best expresses the mood of the picture is the important thing. The idea of an original score is something else again. None of us is a Mozart or a Tschaikowsky.¹²²

According to Steiner in 1932, in the melodramatically titled “Classical Composers Banished from Films,” this was exactly the sort of musical accompaniment Selznick did *not* want.¹²³ In 1937, however, the producer expressed an entirely different view, arguing that the incorporation of preexistent music in films was crucial and that he had “forced” Stothart to use the music of Tchaikovsky in *Anna Karenina*.¹²⁴ The notion that Stothart needed to be convinced seems unlikely in light of the above, but perhaps the reverse is true—that Stothart helped Selznick appreciate the value of preexistent music in film. It would not have been a hard sell—it had worked well in Steiner’s *Symphony of Six Million* and had been common practice in silent film scores.

Stothart’s scores demonstrated the effectiveness of this approach. In *Vanessa: Her Love Story*, Vanessa reluctantly marries a psychologically unstable man who suspects that she loves another. Before attending a performance of *Tristan und Isolde*, the jealous husband asks Vanessa to summarize the opera as he performs the *Liebestod*—“the most beautiful music in the world,” he explains—on piano. After the husband accuses Vanessa of not giving King Mark, the rightful husband of the opera, enough credit in her synopsis,

¹²² Stothart quoted in “Public’s Broader Views About Music Help to Improve Motion Picture Art,” *Minneapolis Tribune*, Oct. 22, 1937. From William Rosar’s “Bernard Herrmann: The Beethoven of Film Music?” *The Journal of Film Music* 1, no. 2/3 (Fall-Winter 2003).

¹²³ “Classical Composers Banished from Films,” *Los Angeles Times*, 16 October 1932, B10.

¹²⁴ DOS to Katharine Brown, 30 August 1937, HRC 1237:3.

strains of the *Liebestod* enter Stothart's underscore, signaling the sick husband's obsession for and suspicion of a wife he is convinced loathes him. The use of familiar music in this odd context, signaling here the self-reflexive delusions of a sick man, lodges in the spectator's memory, making this one of the more striking elements of Stothart's score. (Selznick would later request the *Liebestod* in *Garden of Allah* [1936] and encourage Dimitri Tiomkin to model this sound in the final scene of *Duel in the Sun* [1946].)

In *A Tale of Two Cities* (1935), Stothart begins paraphrasing material almost immediately, referencing the obligatory "La Marseillaise" and strains of "Adeste Fideles" in the main titles.¹²⁵ Leading up to the murder of the unsympathetic Marquis St. Evremonde, Stothart interweaves passages from Beethoven's *Egmont Overture*, a work frequently mined for dramatic application in the silent cinema. Stothart's use of it here also connects themes of Goethe's *Egmont*, a play about resistance to tyrannical authority, to the scene of a French peasant taking the Marquis's life in the name of liberty. Later, as prisoners are called to the guillotine, Stothart offsets the harsh calls of guards with a *sotto voce* rendering of the "Dies Irae" in the strings. Stothart's setting illuminates the chant melody's beautiful line, an aspect masked in more commonly heard grotesque realizations, like Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique* and Tchaikovsky's *Orchestral Suite No. 3*.

Stothart, whose creative incorporation of outside works is often misunderstood to be a crutch for the imagination, has been slighted by commentators. "His scoring was, with few exceptions, one of the least impressive aspects of MGM films," writes Selznick

¹²⁵ Selznick later had "Adeste Fideles" brought back to conclude Steiner's score for *Since You Went Away* (1944).

biographer Ronald Haver, “the music being a gooey pastiche of musical fragments and filler that meandered through the films, with none of the pace, vitality, and excitement of the scores that Warner Bros. and RKO films possessed.”¹²⁶ Stothart’s style was indeed different from the brassier scores composed at these studios, but Stothart’s preference for softer, impressionistic textures exemplified by Delius and Ravel was no detractor for Selznick, who took a great liking Stothart’s work and tried to engage the composer after Selznick left M-G-M.¹²⁷ Stothart’s scores changed the way Selznick thought about film music. Most importantly, Stothart’s ideas would continue to exert an influence in Selznick’s scoring notes long after the producer left M-G-M.

¹²⁶ Haver, 151.

¹²⁷ Selznick famously tried to engage Stothart to write the score for *Gone with the Wind* when Steiner claimed he would be unable to meet the agreed deadline. Selznick’s backup plan with Stothart created a small scandal, as Selznick related to John Whitney:

The Stothart situation was all worked out beautifully, and then over the weekend two things occurred: first, Stothart had a few drinks on Saturday night, apparently, and did a lot of loose talking about how he was going to have to fix up Max’s work.... The result was that within ten minutes it was back to Max, and he was in a rage.... Max, spurred on by the Stothart episode, really went to town, and the result is that by tomorrow we will have considerably more than half the picture scored.... I am sure that in any case we can credit all our attempts to get Stothart with leading Max to faster and greater efforts (DOS to John Hay Whitney, 13 November 1939, reprinted in *Memo*, 239).

Selznick later selected Stothart to write music for a live pageant held to benefit China Relief on 4 April 1943. The event played to 30,000 in the Hollywood Bowl with Madame Chiang Kai-shek as the honored guest. The producer and composer would have likely collaborated more, had Stothart’s commitments at M-G-M not been so consuming. Selznick listed Stothart among his top choices for *The Paradine Case* score, describing Stothart as an “outstanding man, who among other things is a joy to work with” (DOS to James G. Stewart, 7 April 1947, HRC 567:14.). This did not come to fruition, but in March of 1948, Selznick listed Stothart and Bernard Herrmann as tied for his top choice composer for *Portrait* (DOS to James G. Stewart, 22 March 1948, HRC 1151:9.). The previous month, Stothart had sent an endearing note to the producer, asking Selznick to consider him for the *Joan of Arc* score (a film that starred Ingrid Bergman, but was ultimately produced by Walter Wanger): “...and while you’ve had some good boys doing your musical jobs—I really think that I could do better.—A bit of “EGO” no doubt, but you always succeed in getting music in your pictures where it really means something—not merely just so many minutes of music, as is usually the case” (Herbert Stothart to DOS, 15 February 1948, HRC 1151:9).

Chapter 3

Scores for Selznick International Pictures

In the summer of 1935, Selznick's career entered a bold, new era: he became an independent producer. His company, Selznick International Pictures, would specialize in prestige pictures, similar to the fare he had produced at M-G-M. His first project, *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (1936), emphasized this continuity. Like *David Copperfield* (1935), one of his last films at M-G-M, *Fauntleroy* was another sentimental adaptation of a nineteenth-century novel depicting a boy's coming of age. Both films even starred the same child actor, Freddie Bartholomew. Selznick International Pictures, however, would have different music. Leaving Herbert Stothart at M-G-M, Selznick borrowed previous collaborator Max Steiner away from RKO to serve as chief music director and composer for the new company.

Constructing the score for *Fauntleroy* proved to be a happy project that progressed with few hitches. The producer drafted several sets of spotting notes in January of 1936.¹ These are Selznick's earliest surviving scoring notes. Each set of notes

¹ "LITTLE LORD FAUNTLEROY, Musical scoring to be made for.," 8 January 1936; David O. Selznick, "LITTLE LORD FAUNTLEROY, Music Notes, 23 January 1936; David O. Selznick, "LITTLE LORD FAUNTLEROY, Music Notes, 31 January 1936, HRC 463:6.

is two pages long and essentially conveys spotting directions for composer Max Steiner. They dictate which scenes are to have music and when the music should begin and end.²

While simple in concept, Selznick's scoring notes convey his ideas on how music should work within the drama. For *Faultleroy*, Selznick determined that music would enhance scenes of tear-jerking sentimentality and depictions of royal living, thereby setting these portions of the film apart. Thus, Selznick requested music for the tender scenes between Ceddie (Lord Faultleroy) and his mother, Dearest. Steiner responded accordingly by making Ceddie's and Dearest's themes the foundation for the score, gifting Ceddie with a lyrically arching melody, lightly energized by dotted rhythms. When heard performed first in the main titles, Steiner requested that the theme be given a

² Notes of this detail were not unique to Selznick. Hal Wallis, executive producer for Warner Bros., also drafted spotting notes for many of the studio's productions. Like Selznick's notes for *Little Lord Faultleroy*, they tend to be list-like in character with sparse detail. Wallis's notes for *Captain Blood* (1935), a production contemporaneous with *Faultleroy*, resemble Selznick's. An excerpt of Selznick's notes for *Faultleroy* reads:

Start music on Ceddie's and Havisham's arrival at Castle, and stop on Int[erior] Library as Ceddie starts to shake hands with Earl.

Perhaps music from announcement of dinner to time Earl and Ceddie are seated at table? After dinner in Library. Start music (Dearest theme) as Ceddie starts thinking of his mother: "He's the best friend I have except---." Continue through scene of Dearest putting candle in window (DOS, "Little Lord Faultleroy Music Notes," 23 January 1936, HRC 463:6).

Compare this with an excerpt from Wallis's notes for *Captain Blood*:

7. BRANDING SEQUENCE. Very, very soft music over this sequence to the dissolve.
15. Possibility of music where BLOOD finds PITT at the whipping post. This to be decided by [composer Erich] Korngold.
18. The orchestra carries until the slaves arrive on the exterior of the ship, at which time the music fades out and we pick up the singing—faintly—so that the music melts into singing (Hal Wallis, "Music Notes, CAPTAIN BLOOD," 11 November 1935, University of Southern California Warner Bros. Archives, Los Angeles, California, File #1788, 1).

Wallis's notes for *Captain Blood* also include a crucial aside: "Score the slave market [scene] as discussed." This statement serves as an important reminder that the scoring notes offer only an incomplete picture and never represent the full extent of the producer's communication with the composer. Nonetheless, Wallis's notes are valuable in that they provide at least one case for comparison with Selznick's notes. As will be seen, the detail of Selznick's instructions soon grew to exceed Wallis's.

“music box effect throughout.”³ The melody for Dearest is even sweeter in character, with gracefully drooping phrases swaying gently in a 9/8 meter. Steiner would modify Dearest’s theme for *Gone with the Wind*, using it for the similarly mild and motherly Melanie. For the film’s regal moments, Steiner composed quaint fanfares and even an elegant, andante march for the Earl’s well-mannered lawyer, who visits Ceddie’s Brooklyn apartment to invite the boy to England. Selznick thrilled at all of this music, later requesting the reuse of all three melodies in later pictures.

The producer made sure anything smacking of villainy did not receive music. When the grouchy Minna arrives, bogusly asserting her son’s right to Ceddie’s lordship, Selznick ordered the music out. Consecutive scenes concerning this false claimant constitute the longest stretch of the film lacking music. Much like the music-less scenes in *Symphony of Six Million*, which signal the protagonist’s estrangement from his own ideals, the withholding of music in *Faultleroy* emphasizes the intruders’ illegitimacy. Without music, their unsympathetic qualities are magnified. Earlier in the film, Selznick had initially requested music for a scuffle between Ceddie and a gang of jealous Brooklyn boys. Steiner wrote a hurry cue for the scene, but even this jot of ill-willed aggression clashed with the film’s musico-dramatic paradigm and was removed. It is the only substantial cut made in the entire *Faultleroy* score.⁴

As Selznick’s first film as an independent, *Faultleroy* set the tone of his new company and its concept of prestige in distinctly conservative tones—both in theme and cinematic style. *Little Lord Faultleroy* had already been made into a film—a silent one in 1921 starring Mary Pickford—and David Thomson argues that Selznick’s remake hardly

³ Max Steiner, “Main Title,” *Little Lord Faultleroy*, MSC Box 101.

⁴ Max Steiner, “Reel 1, Part III,” *Little Lord Faultleroy*, MSC Volume 101.

registered any difference in technique: “Apart from the addition of sound, [*Fauntleroy*] could have played beautifully in 1916.”⁵ The casting helps, as Dolores Costello, who plays Dearest, enjoyed her greatest popularity and stardom during the 1910s and 1920s. Musical touches in Selznick’s *Fauntleroy* also recall the silent era. When Ceddie must bid goodbye to friendly storeowner Hobbs, Selznick asked that Steiner use “Auld Lang Syne” for their farewells in two scenes. Steiner could have just as easily provided original music of a poignant nature, much as he had for Ceddie’s and Dearest’s themes, but Selznick’s preference for a recognizable, nostalgic melody answered to a particular logic born of silent cinema practices: that scenes of a certain generic category—“farewells” in this case—require preordained musical selections from the same.⁶ (The selection also echoed Stothart’s use of “Auld Lang Syne” in *David Copperfield* for another farewell scene involving actor Freddie Bartholomew.) That such practices perpetuated tired clichés was the very reason Selznick wanted them. The musico-cinematic “fit” was reassuringly familiar.

Steiner barely finished the score on schedule. In the penultimate cue of the film, he scrawled “S.O.S. Help! (It’s 1:15 and the orchestra is called for 2:00!).”⁷ Yet this typical push to the end appears to have been the only hitch in scoring. After completing his work, Steiner wrote a warm letter of thanks to Selznick:

Dear Boss
Many thanks for having given me the opportunity to score Little Lord Fauntleroy.
It felt just like old times and I hope and pray that you will forgive me for

⁵ David Thomson, *Showman: The Life of David O. Selznick* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), 203.

⁶ Nothing speaks to this practice more vividly than the various anthologies that organized original and preexistent compositions by their appropriateness to different cinematic contexts. Erno Rapee, for example, organized his 1925 *Encyclopedia of Music for Pictures* by “moods and situations,” including “Argentine” and “light agitato.” Giuseppe Becce and John Zamecnik published multi-volume anthologies that were widely used by theater pianists: *Kinobibliothek* (1919–1927) and *Sam Fox Moving Picture Music* (1913–1923), respectively. See James Wierzbicki, *Film Music: A History* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 52–57.

⁷ Max Steiner, “Reel 10,” *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, MSC Box 101, 13.

whatever mistakes I might have made considering the short time I had. I know you have a great picture and I wish you the grandest success you have ever had. Should the music help a little it will make me very happy.

Maxie⁸

Selznick, for his part, gave Steiner a signed program from the film, with the inscription:

To Maxie,
With appreciation beyond bounds for what he did and how he did it; and with
attrition
David Selznick⁹

One of Steiner's orchestrators, Earl Wilson, and his colleague Arthur Turelly also shared kudos with Steiner, inscribing on the cover of Steiner's collected pencil drafts:

"Gewidmet dern Meister! Seine Musik ist das Herz und die Seele der Filme."¹⁰ When *Fauntleroy* garnered accolades from critics¹¹ and performed well at the box office,

Selznick and Steiner had reason to celebrate. It was an auspicious beginning for Selznick International Pictures.

Selznick's next film was *The Garden of Allah* (1936). Like *Fauntleroy*, it had silent film predecessors: two of them.¹² Based on Robert Hichens's novel of the same name (Selznick would also film Hichens's *The Paradine Case* eleven years later), *Allah* featured a Sahara love story, an early use of Technicolor, and the dusky accents of stars Marlene Dietrich and Charles Boyer. Desert expanses and exotic locales gave ample room for Steiner's score. Anticipating Maurice Jarre's work in *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962), Steiner's orchestral score sweeps majestically through desert montages and a memorable storm sequence. *Allah* also features extensive passages for women's and

⁸ Max Steiner to DOS, 19 February 1936, MSC Box 4, Folder 13.

⁹ *Little Lord Fauntleroy* program, February 1936, MSC Box 4, Folder 13.

¹⁰ Steiner, *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, MSC Box 101

¹¹ Frank Nugent's review is especially complimentary, rating Selznick's cinematic adaptation higher than Frances Hodgson Burnett's source novel. Frank Nugent, "The Screen," *New York Times*, 3 April 1936.

¹² The *American Film Institute* catalog lists a 1916 and 1927 version (the latter directed by Rex Ingram), both based on Robert Hichens's source novel. A third film from 1909 is titled *Biskra, Garden of Allah*, but is likely not based on the same source text.

mixed choruses, serving doubly to convey religiosity (Domini (Dietrich) is raised in a convent while Boris (Boyer) flees a Trappist monastery) and the exotic allure of the desert. The line, “The Arabs have a saying ‘the desert is the garden of Allah,’” is accompanied by wordless female voices, a sound that becomes an aural motif for the desert itself. (Steiner’s association of choruses with exotic places and people looks back to *Bird of Paradise* (1932) and forward to Tiomkin’s wordlessly sung passages in *Lost Horizon* (1937).¹³)

Selznick’s spotting notes for *Allah* are short and do not address the entire film. There are, however, notes from the producer requesting changes in music Steiner had already scored and recorded. Some of the comments arrived as Steiner was still working. In one note from Barbara Keon, Selznick’s instructions mingle criticism on completed work with advice for the future:

Mr. Selznick made a few suggestions the last time he ran the picture:
A little better blending of the European music into the Oriental music under the insert of the note tying into the Bazaar sequence. The change as it is, Mr. Selznick feels, is a little too abrupt.

Mr. Selznick hopes, furthermore, that we won’t go overboard on Oriental [source] music, as there is a danger of the picture being monotonous anyway—and more romantic and European music may help.

For instance, the walk home from the dance hall, beautiful as it is, could have had even more romantic music under the first part of the scene—the romantic swell comes now at the end of the scene. However, do not do this over.¹⁴

In another note, Selznick made known his preference for a recognizable melody with an apropos title:

¹³ Tiomkin subsequently developed a penchant for using voices (often women’s choruses) in many of his scores, including *Shadow of a Doubt* (1943), *The Negro Soldier* (1944), *Portrait of Jennie* (1948), *The High and the Mighty* (1954), and *The Fall of the Roman Empire* (1964).

¹⁴ Barbara Keon to Max Steiner, 18 July 1936, HRC 407:4.

Mr. Selznick would like to recommend “In a Monastery Garden” for this [monastery] sequence—particularly the first part—using an orchestration with organ music which should definitely be part of a score instead of any attempt at realistic organ music.¹⁵

Selznick also requested an arrangement of Wagner’s “Liebestod” from *Tristan und Isolde* to play for the scene in which Boris (Boyer) confesses to his new wife Domini (Dietrich) that he is actually a monk.¹⁶ The confession answers many questions about his strange behavior, but also signals the end of their romantic relationship. Wagner’s star-crossed lovers may have been on Selznick’s mind, but the producer was also likely looking back to the incorporation of the “Liebestod” into *Vanessa* (1935), where recurring excerpts from the “Liebestod” signal the final deterioration of an already bizarre marriage—destroyed in part by a husband’s psychologically unstable behavior. Perhaps Steiner received the suggestions too late or convinced Selznick otherwise, but neither the “Liebestod” nor Albert Ketelbey’s “In a Monastery Garden” are in the score. Gounod’s “Ave Maria,” however, enjoys a prominent role; it is introduced at Boris and Domini’s wedding, then triggers a musical reminiscence when played at the end of Boris’s confession. While Selznick’s requests for changes in the score were brief, the comments portended greater things to come. In the future, Selznick would not be so concise or flexible in the matter of rewrites.

Steiner, for his part, enjoyed working on *Allah* and relished being chief music man for Hollywood’s hot new production company. The front page of an August *Box Office* issue features “Music Hath Charms” by Steiner, identified as “Musical Conductor of Selznick International Pictures.” Steiner outlines some of his ground rules for film scoring, but also makes a point of plugging Selznick’s films, past, present, and future.

¹⁵ “GARDEN OF ALLAH, Music Notes,” 7 September 1936, HRC 407:4.

¹⁶ “GARDEN OF ALLAH, Music Notes,” 9 October 1936, HRC 407:4.

Steiner mentions Selznick's history-making suggestion to score *Symphony of Six Million* and uses examples from *Fauntleroy* when describing mickey-mousing and the importance of writing music in a register different from the actor's voice. For *Allah*, Steiner admits to drawing upon life experience for the score:

I was stranded once in Cairo, when a theatrical group which I, at the age of fourteen, had joined as conductor, was disbanded. I might have been consoled then by the words of Virgil—"Forsan et haec olim meminisse juvabit"—for the schooling I got in Arab music at that time has served me in good stead in writing the musical accompaniment to the romance of Miss Dietrich and Mr. Boyer.¹⁷

As though to emphasize this linkage between music and the film's exoticism, the margins of the article are filled with sketches of desert palms, Dietrich's wind-swept face, and—somewhat incongruously—a person at a piano. An oversize treble clef, with Steiner's face superimposed over the bottom swirl, rounds out the iconography.

With the film's release, Steiner's music received high marks, helped in part by the use of "push-pull" sound recording techniques, which increased the decibel range of the soundtrack and enriched the sonic bouquet, producing "lots of bass [and] lots of highs. On the opening night [for *Allah*] at Grauman's Chinese, people were amazed at the sound that came out of this track."¹⁸ One reviewer praised the score not so much for its content as for its tasteful balance with the film's other elements:

In the first place the music is perfectly in character throughout, with local color not overdone. Secondly, it never becomes obtrusive. It makes no attempt to force itself upon the attention of the audience as a feature of the performance, but keeps its proper position as an aid in the portrayal and intensification of the mood. It is mostly restrained in dynamic scale, rising to a forte only when there is a pause in the dialogue, a silence to which music can contribute a definite meaning.¹⁹

¹⁷ Max Steiner, "Music Hath Charms," *Box Office*, 22 August 1936, 1.

¹⁸ Steiner, "Notes to You," 135.

¹⁹ "New Music Composed for 'Garden of Allah,'" *New York Sun*, 21 November 1936.

For Selznick, who asserted that “the purpose of a score is to unobtrusively help the mood of each scene without the audience being even aware that they are listening to music,” this praise of musical tact in *Allah* reflected as well on him as it did on Steiner.²⁰ The score received an Academy Award nomination, but Steiner was even more pleased with the special attention he received working for Selznick on high profile productions:

After the day’s work, Marlene Dietrich, who is such a wonderful cook, used to...cook dinner for David and me and herself. She made us goulash, wiener schnitzel and all her wonderful specialties. She’s a darling woman and I shall always love her, but not just for her skill with the skillet.²¹

Steiner could also thank Selznick for being extremely obliging in financial matters. Steiner had outlined a preliminary budget of \$27,722.50, a figure that oddly (accidentally?) omitted Steiner’s own fee of \$12,500. When all was said and done, the score cost almost double: \$54,817.41.²² It was the first of many Selznick scores that would grossly exceed their original budgets, in part a consequence of not having a stable, continuously functioning music department. Down the road, this lack of infrastructure would trouble the producer more, but for now extravagance in the name of music could be afforded and even privately admired. The success of Selznick International Pictures would continue unabated into 1937. For Steiner, though, the honeymoon was about to end.

A Star is Born was yet another remake—this time of an RKO sound feature produced by Selznick titled *What Price Hollywood* (1932). In both, a Hollywood hopeful falls in love with an actor at the peak of his career. As the starlet’s career takes off, the actor’s stalls and plummets. Professional embarrassment, public scorn, and personal

²⁰ DOS to Katharine Brown, 30 August 1937, HRC 1237:3.

²¹ Steiner, “Notes to You,” 135.

²² “GARDEN OF ALLAH, Music Expenditures,” n.d., HRC 3666:9.

failure end in suicide. The actress, now star, must learn to live on. Though based on the same storyline, *What Price* was not a film that received background scoring in 1932. Two montage sequences, opening and closing titles, and some diegetic performances comprise the film's entire score. In the intervening five years, however, Selznick had helped to radically change musical expectations for such films. Consequently, *A Star is Born* carried a much lengthier symphonic score to accompany its scenes of aspiration, humor, love, and tragedy. And this time around, Selznick's expectations for Steiner would be most particular.

No proscriptive spotting notes from Selznick have been found for *Star*. Instead, two sets of reactionary notes show that Selznick had a laundry list of grievances with Steiner's initial efforts. The first set of notes from 29 March 1937 are four pages long and include comments on the sound, visual editing, and music. While the notes were intended to isolate problems, not revel in praise, the critical mindset does not fully account for the producer's curt, dismissive remarks on the music. Before the story even begins, there were problems: "more tempo to music under main titles—should change, also, and punctuate insert cover Final Shooting Script."²³ (*Star* begins and concludes with shots of a shooting script, a self-conscious acknowledgement that this is a movie about movies.) For Steiner's next cue, "Interpretive music spoils flow of scene—too many changes, no emotional quality."²⁴ A later cue was pronounced, "dead," while the music for the central casting office scene was "too slow. Scene slow anyway—music should help." The score only went downhill from there: "Too loud, spoils scene," "Worthless," "?????," and on

²³ "A STAR IS BORN, Notes," 29 March 1937, HRC 513:7.

²⁴ Ibid.

multiple occasions, “N.G.”²⁵ These are knee-jerk responses, duly recorded during a preview of the film. There is little detail and hardly any suggestion of how things should be improved. Two days later, a much shorter document devoted entirely to music was sent to Steiner from production secretary Barbara Keon. “[The] following is a list of the music to be redone, as decided by Mr. Selznick last night.” The instructions are much more civil in tone, and show that the producer had taken time to think over his reactions and make concrete suggestions. For the early scene between Esther, the aspiring actress, and her grandmother, Selznick had initially complained that the music had “spoil[ed] flow of scene—too many changes.” In Keon’s letter to Steiner, the same critique is delivered more tactfully:

Try Fauntleroy music here. Mr. Selznick wants one piece of music, without changes, that will run all the way through this scene.

Suggested to use music from one of these Fauntleroy scenes: Scene where Dearest tells Ceddie she will not live with him at the Castle; scene between Dearest and the Earl, and between Ceddie and the Earl in Ceddie’s bedroom.²⁶

In other words, fix the cue by using music that worked in another Selznick-Steiner production. This would be the first of many occasions in which the producer opted for music from an earlier Selznick feature. From the producer’s point of view, there were many compelling reasons to recycle: the music was already written, it was owned by Selznick International Pictures, it helped set Selznick films apart through thematic repetition across films, and most importantly, Selznick remembered and liked it. There is even a detectable trace of the previously discussed impulse—born out of silent film musical techniques—to apply familiar tunes to recurring, generic situations. In *Fauntleroy*, the “Dearest” theme is used to convey the tender relationship enjoyed

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Barbara Keon to Max Steiner, 31 March 1937, HRC 513:7.

between mother and son. As outlined in the above comment, Selznick and Keon wanted to use this theme in *Star* to convey a similar filial attachment between Esther and her grandmother. Following this same line of reasoning, Selznick also requests that Esther's farewell with her grandmother be accompanied with the setting of "Auld Lang Syne" used in *Faultleroy* that accompanies Ceddie's farewell with Hobbes.²⁷

While Selznick raided *Faultleroy*'s score for several of the "problem" cues, some of Steiner's original music for *Star* was removed and not replaced, leaving the scene without background scoring. A notable instance is a Hollywood party for which Esther has been hired as a server. (She has not yet landed a film role.) Hoping to attract the attention of a director or producer, Esther makes the rounds with a plate of hors d'oeuvres, delivering impersonations of famous actresses. The scene is played for laughs, with directors and producers left wincing in Esther's wake, and Steiner's music mugs along. When Esther delivers sultry lines à la Mae West, Steiner writes a hot, swinging clarinet solo.²⁸ While Esther mimics Kathryn Hepburn's clipped speech pattern (an interesting choice; Hepburn was one of Selznick's "discoveries" at RKO), Steiner drops an insider joke, quoting the "Josephine" theme from his own score for *Little Women* (1934), in which Hepburn plays Jo March.²⁹ Selznick either did not get it, or did not find it funny. Steiner's cue, titled "Impersonations," went out, leaving Esther to deliver her gag lines by herself. Is the scene helped by withholding the score? In this case, no. There are too many lengthy pauses, as though the editor had intentionally left room for laughs and music—music that is no longer there. Esther's growing awkwardness with the cold crowd is a little too pronounced, leaving one to wonder if Steiner's music might have

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Max Steiner, "Reel III, Part 3," *A Star is Born*, HRC 65M.

²⁹ Ibid.

been just the antidote, if only Selznick had not been so grouchy and quick to dismiss it in his comments.

Steiner also had to rewrite many cues, including instances in which material from *Fauntleroy* was reused. Old themes still had to be arranged for their new context. The rewrites, however, also forced Steiner to generate new thematic material, some of which is quite effective. A new secondary theme for Esther's character identified as the "Janet Waltz" (actress Janet Gaynor played Esther) is especially memorable and enriches Esther's characterization. Her first theme is lyrical, but rhythmically square, with repeated eighth notes on a single pitch declaiming her stubborn resilience, but little else. "Janet Waltz" floats, its initial hemiola gliding over the bar lines, with descending melodic cells ascending sequentially before elegantly turning downward. Esther's first theme shows she has the will to succeed, but the "Janet Waltz" bestows upon her the ineffable "something" necessary to be that one-in-a-million star. (The "Janet Waltz" also shares rhythmic and melodic parallels with Steiner's "Stolen Love" theme from *King Kong*. Perhaps there is a subconscious correlation between *King Kong's* Ann and *Star's* Esther, women who want to be stars and suffer for pursuing this dream?) Though absent from his initial *Star* score, Steiner liked his newly minted waltz. He used it in various rewritten cues and featured it prominently in the film's opening titles, a cue that he had to write *three* times before pleasing Selznick. Selznick also appreciated the "Janet Waltz," calling for its reuse in later films featuring sympathetic, vulnerable heroines, such as "I" in *Rebecca* and mother Anne Hilton in *Since You Went Away*.

Selznick's call for rewrites may have improved certain aspects of the score, such as Steiner's depiction of the protagonist, but the extra anguish was more than Steiner had

bargained for. Sacrificing carefully positioned motivic correspondences because a particular cue had to be rewritten was frustrating.³⁰ With work bustling at Warner Bros., the other studio at which Steiner was now working, the composer decided to take temporary leave from Selznick International Pictures. The producer explained to a studio employee that the “divorce” had arisen because Steiner engaged in the “ridiculous” practice of “interpret[ing] each line of dialogue and each movement musically” and was loathe to compose from a script, insisting instead on having completed footage.³¹ Steiner could have added his own grievances to this list. Yet while producer and composer were frustrated, neither was about to abandon an otherwise fruitful working relationship. “We criticize and ride Max Steiner a great deal and no doubt will have to continue to do so in the future,” noted Selznick during *Star*’s postproduction, “so it might not be amiss to pat him on the back on the fast job he did of composing, arranging, and the actual scoring of ‘Star is Born.’”³² Steiner, meanwhile, had every intention of returning to Selznick for the project that had already generated substantial gossip and anticipation: *Gone with the Wind*.

Six more films would follow *Star*, however, before *Wind*’s release in December of 1939. On some of these films Steiner would provide compositional assistance, but he no longer served as the music director handling all music-related matters. For the next project, *The Prisoner of Zenda*, that responsibility would largely fall to Alfred Newman.

As with *Fauntleroy* and *Allah*, *The Prisoner of Zenda* had a substantial silent film

³⁰ In one instance, Steiner had reprised a passage of music heard early in the film under the Grandmother’s pep talk to Esther at the *end* of the film, when the Grandmother briefly returns to remind Esther of her promised commitment to her new career. The musical correlation is wrecked, however, because the initial appearance of this music is removed and replaced by excerpts from *Fauntleroy*. Compare Max Steiner, “Reel 12, Part III” *A Star is Born*, HRC 64M with Steiner, “Reel 1, Part II,” *A Star is Born*, HRC 63M.

³¹ DOS to Katharine Brown, 30 August 1937, HRC 1237:3.

³² DOS to Henry Ginsberg, 26 March 1937, HRC 227:2.

pedigree and had also thrived in various stage productions.³³ In addition to two celebrated silent versions (Adolph Zukor's first "Famous Players in Famous Plays" from 1913 and Rex Ingram's version from 1922), there was also a sequel, *Rupert of Hentzau*, released in 1923 by David's father's Selznick Pictures Corp. and produced by David's brother Myron.³⁴ Once again, David Selznick was drawing upon silent-era prestige, perpetuating the legacy of previously renowned films by linking them with his own prestige-focused production company. Initial notes on the music for *Zenda* are addressed to Steiner, but after Steiner's departure Selznick had to select a replacement. Selznick considered a number of individuals, including Kurt Weill (a curious candidate) and Erich Wolfgang Korngold. Korngold, who had impressed with his swashbuckling score for *Captain Blood* (1935) and won an Oscar for the costume drama *Anthony Adverse* (1936), would have been a natural choice for *Zenda*'s sword fights and pageantry. Newman got the job, however, in part because of recommendations from Selznick International's vice-president, Henry Ginsberg, and head secretary, Daniel O'Shea.³⁵

As with *Fauntleroy* and *Allah*, Selznick provided the composer with proscriptive spotting notes. The two sets of notes, drafted roughly a month apart, mostly agree with one another and with the finished film.³⁶ The most significant departure is the "drinking scene" in which the soon-to-be king of Ruritania imbibes excessively while hosting a

³³ As Ronald Haver notes, "the story of *The Prisoner of Zenda* had been a staple of stage and films ever since its publication in 1894. Its central location, the mythical kingdom of Ruritania, had come to symbolize all the escapist romantic fiction that had sprung up in its wake" (Haver, 208).

³⁴ The cast of *Rupert* included Adolphe Menjou, who later played roles in Selznick's pictures, including *A Star is Born*.

³⁵ Daniel O'Shea explained, "I have discussed the music for ZENDA with Henry [Ginsberg] on several occasions and I think his view of the situation is one hundred percent correct. In brief, he feels that for *Zenda* at least we should use Newman" (Daniel O'Shea to DOS, 20 April 1937, HRC 212:14).

³⁶ "Music Notes, THE PRISONER OF ZENDA," 11 June 1937; Barbara Keon to Alfred Newman, 8 July 1937, HRC 487:2. Keon's three-page document begins with the explanation: "Following are Mr. Selznick's suggestions for the scoring of 'Zenda', decided upon in a meeting with [director] Mr. [John] Cromwell after Tuesday night's preview."

distant relation, who coincidentally could be mistaken for an identical twin (both characters are played by Ronald Coleman). Selznick asked for “gay music of drinking song type” to play throughout the scene until the king and his advisor argue over alcohol, at which point the cue was to “blend into music of increasing tempo as argument starts.” Newman’s 174-measure cue follows these instructions faithfully, cycling through a series of trite, evenly phrased melodies (the first sounds like a variant of “London Bridge Is Falling Down”). Only at measure 161 does the mind-numbing regularity cease, entering into more dramatic underscore that features fragments of the Ruritania national anthem and angry fanfares in the horns and trombones, signaling the king’s affronted authority.

Newman’s entire cue is cut from the film. The scene plays without music until the very end, at which point the next cue begins, providing transition into the following scene. Much like Steiner’s removed cue in *Fauntleroy*, this substantial excision helps illuminate Selznick’s otherwise judicious spotting, which limits musical accompaniment to scenes of romance, violence, and royal display—a coronation, ball, and promenades. Filler music, especially of the lighter, “drinking song” variety, has no place elsewhere in the score. To have included it in this expository, dialogue-heavy scene stands at odds with the rest of the score and might have lessened the impact of Newman’s music in other sequences.

For the ball sequence, Selznick had an unusual request for Newman. When Rudolph (the king’s look-alike relative, currently masquerading as the king) and Princess Flavia leave the dancing and stroll outside to discuss their deepening relationship, Selznick instructed: “Start waltz again as Flavia and Rudolph walk out. Carry thru love scene to speech “I love you,” then start romantic music which stops on Zapt’s entrance

and interruption.”³⁷ In other words, Newman had to transition smoothly from diegetic waltz music to a nondiegetic presentation of the love theme, a melody generally set in 4/4. Newman solved the conundrum by inserting a neat transition, cued by Rudolph’s chivalric utterance: “There are times when a man might find it impossible to do even what his heart prompts him to do.” Following this line (m. 33 in “Garden Sequence,” see figure 3.1), violins play the love theme over the waltz accompaniment, with the theme’s rhythms transformed temporarily to fit the 3/4 meter. On the proscribed line “I love you,” the waltz tempo slows before shifting into 4/4, allowing a full rendition of the theme in its standard form.³⁸ It is an effective trick that leaves the ball, the dancers, and the waltz behind. The music temporarily shuts this world out, bringing the spectator deeper into the private sphere of the romantic couple. Though prompted by Selznick, Newman was clearly pleased with his elegant solution. He would repeat the device in other films involving romantic couples on the peripheries of dancing or chattering crowds, including *Wuthering Heights* (1939) and *Foreign Correspondent* (1940).

³⁷ “Music Notes, THE PRISONER OF ZENDA,” 11 June 1937, HRC 487:2, 2.

³⁸ Alfred Newman, “Garden Sequence,” *The Prisoner of Zenda*, HRC 29A:4.

Figure 3.1 Newman, *Prisoner of Zenda*, “Garden Sequence.” Reproduction of piano-conductor score, mm. 33–56.

The image displays a piano-conductor score for the "Garden Sequence" from the film *Prisoner of Zenda*, composed by Elmer Bernstein. The score is presented in three systems, covering measures 33 through 56. Each system consists of three staves: a top staff for the piano, a middle staff for woodwinds, and a bottom staff for the bassoon. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 3/4. The piano part features a melodic line with various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. The woodwind parts include a Clarinet (Clar.) and a Bassoon (Bssn.), both playing sustained notes and melodic fragments. The bassoon part includes a measure with a double bar line and a cross symbol (x) over a note, indicating a specific performance instruction. The score is written in a standard musical notation style with clefs, key signatures, and time signatures clearly indicated.

Figure 3.1 Newman, *Prisoner of Zenda*, “Garden Sequence” (continued).

The musical score is presented in three systems, each with three staves (treble, middle, and bass clefs). The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is common time (C).

System 1 (Measures 45-48):
The top staff contains a melodic line with a long slur. The middle staff is labeled "Clar." and features a rhythmic accompaniment. The bottom staff provides a bass line with rests.

System 2 (Measures 49-52):
The top staff continues the melodic line. The middle staff is labeled "Horn" and includes the lyrics "Oh is it true?". A "Rall." (Ritardando) marking is placed above the staff. The bottom staff continues the bass line.

System 3 (Measures 53-56):
The top staff begins with a "Kiss" marking. The middle staff features a triplet of eighth notes marked with a "3" and the tempo instruction "Faster". The bottom staff continues the bass line. The tempo instruction "Moderato" is placed at the beginning of the system.

As with *Allah*, many scenes in *The Prisoner of Zenda* left ample space for music, allowing Newman's score to march, dance, and storm through. Newman also incorporated preexistent classical works by J.S. Bach, Handel, Mozart, and Johann Strauss to appease Selznick, who claimed Newman "resisted the use of standard music that I thought could be used effectively and even help in achieving subconsciously a nostalgic mood."³⁹ A liberal use of the brass section further boosted the score's noticeability, especially in the many renditions of the royal fanfare—used in varying guises for the real king, the stand-in, and the rival prince—and the film's extended duel sequence. Newman's heroic score received an Oscar nomination, but Newman never worked for Selznick again. Selznick did not like sharing the composer with rival Samuel Goldwyn, who had prior claims on Newman's talent and time. "I think it vitally important that you make a nuisance out of yourself with Al Newman, explaining to him the great urgency of our getting the picture out in time," Selznick explained to Ginsberg.

I think also, that you should make a strong point of having Newman's exclusive and uninterrupted time on the picture—pointing out that [Goldwyn's staff] have been responsible for some of the delays because of [Goldwyn's] "STELLA DALLAS"....Newman said—facetiously to be sure, but nevertheless importantly—that after all he was working for Goldwyn first and for us second.⁴⁰

Though he only worked for Selznick once, Newman's *Zenda* music would enjoy unusual exposure. When M-G-M remade *Zenda* in 1952, the studio purchased the screenplay and score to Selznick's film. The M-G-M version is an uncanny replica, with most of the lines and camera angles copied, though with a different cast and in Technicolor. Newman's music (and by implication, Selznick's spotting) are transferred with similar fidelity, freshly recorded by the M-G-M orchestra and lightly adapted by Conrad

³⁹ DOS to Katharine Brown, 30 August 1937, HRC 1237:3.

⁴⁰ DOS to Henry Ginsberg, 29 July 1937, HRC 212:14.

Salinger. In addition to the twice-used score, Newman also composed a “Selznick Trademark” fanfare. The short piece played before the main titles under the studio’s insignia image: a shot of the sign “Selznick International Pictures” that pans down to reveal the studio building itself. The producer liked Newman’s five-measure opus and its succinct evocation of sonic depth and grandeur: accumulating layers of instruments playing the same Westminster Chimes-like incipit, but at different rhythmic ratios of eighth notes, quarter notes, and half notes (see figure 3.2). Newman’s Fox Fanfare (now commonly associated with the opening of *Star Wars* (1977)) had already been introducing that studio’s pictures since 1933; now his music would herald subsequent productions from Selznick International.

Figure 3.2 Newman, *Prisoner of Zenda*, “Selznick Trademark.”

The musical score is arranged in three systems. The first system consists of three staves: the top staff for Trumpets and Chimes, the middle staff for Violin (Vln.), Oboe, and Horns, and the bottom staff for Trombones and Bassoons. The second system continues the arrangement with similar instrumentation. The third system shows the final notes of the melody, marked with a fermata and a dynamic of *ff*. The score is written in a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 2/4 time signature.

Lou Forbes, Music Director (1937–1939)

After *Zenda*, Selznick created a new position in his company: music director. Lou Forbes got the job and proceeded to serve as the studio’s music director through the release of *Since You Went Away* (1944). His responsibilities varied slightly from film to film but included an assortment of tasks: securing permissions to use preexistent music, assembling “preview tracks” (also referred to as “temp tracks”⁴¹), supervising final

⁴¹ Ronald Sadoff offers a rich definition of these initial, temporary scores:

The ‘temp track’, a temporary mock-up of a film’s soundtrack, is assembled from pre-existing music prior to the real, commissioned score being composed. An integral element of the post-

scores, serving as a liaison between Selznick and the composer, monitoring recording sessions, and watching the budget. Forbes's presence altered the power dynamics, communication pathways, and delegation of musical responsibilities at Selznick International. At times the producer would express gratitude and admiration for Forbes's business and artistic savvy. At other times Selznick would rankle when he suspected Forbes of siding with composers and against him. Most of the time Forbes occupied the unenviable position of middleman, well aware that his survival depended on an ability to assuage, encourage, and occasionally manipulate employer and employees (see figure 3.3).

production process of American feature films, it survives only in its role for audience previews. Constructed by a music editor, in most cases, it is a blueprint of a film's soundtrack – a musical topography of score, songs, culture and codes in which a balance must obtain between the director's [and, in Selznick's case, producer's] vision, the music's function, underlying requirements of genre, and the spectator's perception (Ronald H. Sadoff, "The role of the music editor and the 'temp track' as blueprint for the score, source music, and scource music of films," *Popular Music* 25, no. 2 (2006): 165).

Although it is not clear when the practice of using preview scores began, Selznick was not the only practitioner by the late 1930s, although he appears to have relied upon it more heavily than other studio departments. As William Rosar states:

Gilbert Kurland, who was for a time both music and sound supervisor at Universal in the 1930s told me that they regularly previewed their films with temp tracks, and that sometimes the music worked so well, that they just kept it in the film. It would appear that they would then also hire a composer to write additional cues as well. There are a number of films like that, including Waxman's score for *The Invisible Ray* (1935), which tracks the "Storm Scene" from W. Franke Harling's score for *Destination Unknown* (1933), *except* that it was not track. Waxman actually interpolated one of his own themes into the cue and they rerecorded it new for the picture. Arthur Morton told me how he temp tracked *Hunchback of Notre Dame* (1939) with recordings of Shostakovich, Vaughan-Williams, and Hindemith, and it worked so well that it was a hard act for Newman to follow. Newman was angry and told him to never do that again! (E-mail communication from William Roar to the author, 22 July 2009.)

Figure 3.3 Lou Forbes. (Courtesy of the David O. Selznick Collection, Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, The University of Texas at Austin)



Forbes's hiring was intended to address a problem that perpetually plagued Selznick's independent production company: the lack of a full music department. All the major studios had these specialized music "factories," replete with composers, orchestrators, arrangers, copyists, an orchestra, a recording stage, recording engineers, and music editors. Studio producers and directors rested easy knowing a small army of musicians could be summoned to quickly write, arrange, perform, and record any music needed for their films. These music departments were elaborate operations intended to handle a high volume of films. The idea of Selznick supporting a bevy of musicians while only releasing several films a year was fiscally preposterous, but working without a music department was problematic—especially for Selznick. In most cases, the producer had to

borrow talent from the major studios. His closest tie was to Warner Bros., where Max Steiner worked under contract from 1936 on. Lou Forbes, Selznick's new music director, also had ties to Warner Bros. as his brother, Leo Forbstein, was the studio's music director. Consequently, many of the orchestral musicians performing the scores for Selznick's films came from the Warner Bros. house orchestra. A small number of composers, like Dimitri Tiomkin, freelanced, which meant Selznick could hire them without having to pay additional fees to a contract-holding studio. Inevitably, though, Selznick had to pay more for his music than the studios did for theirs. The elevated expenses of hiring musicians individually was exacerbated by Selznick's growing tendency to order rewrites, which necessitated extending contracts, rehiring orchestrators, and scheduling additional recording sessions. An expensive music bill became more expensive because Selznick was more committed to getting the desired musical effect than balancing the budget. It was a philosophy that did not just extend to music, as Selznick boasted:

Put me in the automobile business and I would be as well an organized executive as you ever saw, but success in the picture business lies in deciding when to be a showman and when to be a perfectly operating official. When these aims conflict I have long since learned that the only intelligent choice is to be a showman.⁴²

For the composers, the producer's commitment to getting the best music possible, no matter the cost, was a luxury they did not enjoy at the major studios and came as an extra perk for working with Selznick.

Yet even though Selznick was interested more in musical results than the budget, he became increasingly frustrated with the strictures of hiring from the studios and the steady buildup of unanticipated expenses. When Henry Ginsberg explained that Alfred

⁴² DOS to John Wharton, 23 May 1937, reprinted in Thomson, 246.

Newman had submitted an estimated budget of \$30,500 for *Zenda* (not including Newman's personal fee of \$7,500), Selznick responded: "I have noted the letter about *Prisoner of Zenda* scoring, and am duly impressed and depressed. I still think, however, we need a great score for this picture."⁴³ It was not the estimate that bothered the producer as much as the implied promise that the actual bill would be much higher. *Allah's* final music expenses had been twice the estimate. In lieu of a full music department, Forbes was hired to keep tabs on the scoring process and establish a semblance of organization that might save the producer some money. Overall, Forbes succeeded.

His first job did not require much. *Nothing Sacred* was a screwball comedy about a journalist and his story subject, a woman purportedly dying of radium poisoning who looks—and is—quite healthy. Selznick hired concert pianist, composer, and actor Oscar Levant to write the music. 1930s comedies, especially of the screwball variety, usually had little or no underscoring and *Nothing Sacred* follows this trend. It is Selznick's only independent production to have almost no background score. Levant composed an energetic main title and opening montage cue with some sweeping, bluesy melodies in the style of Levant's close and recently departed friend, George Gershwin.⁴⁴ That was about it. The few other music cues were arrangements of preexistent works performed by the Raymond Scott Orchestra or cues selected by Forbes from earlier Selznick films, like *Prisoner of Zenda*. Selznick left no extended notes for *Nothing Sacred*, but did request a gag that took aim at silent film clichés:

⁴³ DOS to Henry Ginsberg, 13 August 1937, HRC 212:14.

⁴⁴ George Gershwin died of a brain tumor on 11 July 1937.

For the music under Ernest reading [fake] suicide note, [Selznick] does not want any original composition but instead an extremely banal or greatly over used piece of music....The ideal selection is "Hearts and Flowers."⁴⁵

For a producer who frequently looked back to the silent era for musical inspiration, his choice of musical mockery here is both appropriate and slightly ironic. Otherwise an unremarkable score, *Nothing Sacred* at least gave Forbes an opportunity to familiarize himself with Selznick International before tackling more formidable projects.

For *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1938), *Made for Each Other* (1939), and *Intermezzo* (1939), Forbes assumed control of scoring matters, essentially taking the responsibilities normally shouldered by the composer. When Franz Waxman, the composer selected for *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, suddenly quit the production (likely called away by his home studio, M-G-M),⁴⁶ Forbes sat down with Selznick and Henry Ginsberg to select music tracks that could be cobbled into a final score. Their conference notes show that they mostly considered music from earlier Selznick films: *Little Women*⁴⁷ (1934), *Viva Villa!* (1934), *David Copperfield* (1935), *A Tale of Two Cities* (1935), *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, and *The Prisoner of Zenda*.⁴⁸ Notes taken by Forbes's secretary Cheri Leslie reveal that Selznick did "not feel it necessary to keep

⁴⁵ Hal Kern to Lou Forbes, 18 October 1937, HRC 3669:8.

⁴⁶ There is no indication that Waxman and Selznick parted on bad terms, otherwise they would not have gotten together again for *The Young in Heart* (1938). On the contrary, Selznick expressed high hopes for Waxman's *Tom Sawyer* score after the composer traveled to New York to perform his thematic sketches for the producer, who was staying in the city to attend *Tom Sawyer*'s initial previews (DOS to Henry Ginsberg, 9 November 1937, HRC 217:2). Interestingly, George Antheil hoped to get the *Tom Sawyer* assignment, wiring to Mrs. Jeri Knight that "this job will fit me almost perfectly[. As] *The Plainsman* score proved[. I] can write *Tom Sawyer* and *Gone with the Wind* scores with more real contribution to effect and drama of these pictures than any other composer here. I really have worked for this break many years and deserve it." Mrs. Jeri Knight forwarded the wire (and another one of similar tone from Antheil) to one of Selznick's secretaries who passed the recommendation on to the producer. Selznick does not appear to have been interested (George Antheil to Mrs. Jeri Knight, 10 May 1937, HRC 217:2).

⁴⁷ As mentioned previously, Selznick did not complete *Little Women* at RKO, but contributed to this project in its early stages.

⁴⁸ Cheri Leslie, "Notes on "Tom Sawyer" Music, Meeting Between David O. Selznick, Henry Ginsberg, and Lou Forbes," 6 December 1937, HRC 3670:2. Additional notes appended to this sheet show that music from *King Kong* (1933) was also considered.

repeating a particular theme for the whole picture,” a concession that made Forbes’s selection of tracks easier.⁴⁹ For scenes with more prominent music, Forbes hired Steiner, who had been too busy to score the entire film, to compose original cues. Though *Tom Sawyer* lacks the musical interest of a specially composed score, Forbes did remarkably well under the circumstances, mixing and matching old Steiner cues with new material. Most importantly, Selznick was pleased that *Tom Sawyer*’s final score—basically an enhanced preview score—could be fitted to satisfy his own musical expectations. “I couldn’t ask for a more charming score than [Steiner] did on ‘LITTLE WOMEN,’” Selznick wrote to Forbes, a point the music director remembered and duly applied, using *Little Women*’s main title music for the beginning of *Tom Sawyer*. Impressed with Forbes’s work, Selznick sent a brief memo to Henry Ginsberg, noting that he was “very pleased indeed by the conscientiousness and competence displayed by Lou Forbes through the work on ‘TOM SAWYER.’”⁵⁰ Here, it would seem, was a model of score production that could save considerable money.

Forbes’s patchwork score highlights an element of film score production that often figures crucially in analysis: a film score’s intertextual content. In a preview score consisting entirely of compiled preexisting music, the score’s intertextuality is squarely in the foreground. The score exemplifies—quite literally—Julia Kristeva’s notion that “any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations.”⁵¹ But even so-called “original” scores possess a spectrum of intertextual references, be it quotations of or allusions to classical

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ DOS to Henry Ginsberg, 14 January 1938, HRC 217:2.

⁵¹ Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, edited by Leon S. Roudiez, translated by Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine, and Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), 66. Quoted in David Cooper, *Bernard Herrmann’s The Ghost and Mrs. Muir: A Film Score Guide* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2005), 27.

and popular works, self-quotations by the composer of earlier concert or film works (as in Erich Korngold's score for *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (1938)⁵² or Herbert Stothart's background score for *The Wizard of Oz* (1939)⁵³), or inserted pieces from other films not selected by the credited composer.⁵⁴ From *Symphony of Six Million* onward, issues concerning intertextuality frequently crop up in the music of Selznick's films. Whether the composer, music director, or Selznick oversaw the incorporation of preexistent music in Selznick's films, Forbes's and Selznick's efforts on *Tom Sawyer*'s score reveal an early attempt to use intertextual relationships as a means of musically linking disparate Selznick productions.

For *Made for Each Other* (1939), Forbes pursued a similar strategy of drawing cues from earlier productions, including Waxman's "Regeneration" and "Death Watch" from *The Young in Heart* (1938), Steiner's original cue, "The Graveyard," from *Tom Sawyer*, and the arrangement of Gounod's "Ave Maria" used in *Garden of Allah*. Forbes then hired Oscar Levant, Hugo Friedhofer, and Nico Grigor to arrange and adapt these works while composing some new material. Scoring for *Intermezzo* was accomplished in a similar fashion. Selznick had been intrigued by a Swedish film in which a concert violinist leaves children and wife to pursue a musical love affair with a pianist. The producer resolved to remake the film for Hollywood and use the same actress who had played the alluring yet good-hearted pianist in the original: Ingrid Bergman. The original

⁵² Ben Winters, *Erich Wolfgang Korngold's The Adventures of Robin Hood: A Film Score Guide* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2007), 97–105.

⁵³ Nathan Platte, "Nostalgia, the Silent Cinema, and the Art of Quotation in Herbert Stothart's Score for *The Wizard of Oz* (1939)," *The Journal of Film Music*, forthcoming.

⁵⁴ In his discussion of intertextuality in film music, David Cooper distinguishes quotations from outside works and self-quotations with the respective terms "extraopus intertextuality" and "intraopus intertextuality." Cooper does not acknowledge, however, instances in which music from other films is included in a score without approval from the composer. See Cooper, *Bernard Herrmann's The Ghost and Mrs. Muir*, 27–28.

Swedish version had a number of musical performances in the narrative, but no background scoring. This would hardly do for a Selznick picture, so the producer had Forbes fill the soundtrack of the new version, following the example of *Made for Each Other* and *Tom Sawyer*:

I think that Steiner and Forbes should definitely be told that they will have one week from the time we turn the picture over to them to do the scoring.... Forbes has done a splendid job of demonstrating the effectiveness of what I asked him to do, which was the use of standard music. Even where he has used music from other pictures, the selections are 90% all right, and there is no reason on earth why the entire score of the picture [*Intermezzo*] cannot be done from orchestrations already in existence, both of classical and motion picture music, with an enormous saving in time and a considerable saving in money.⁵⁵

Once again Forbes hired a small team of composers to tackle the project. Max Steiner, Hugo Friedhofer, and Robert Russell Bennett quickly assembled a score based on Heinz Provest's "Intermezzo" theme from the Swedish picture, an assortment of classical selections by Beethoven, Grieg, and Tchaikovsky, among others, and two cues by Franz Waxman and Alfred Newman from *Dramatic School* (1938) and *Dodsworth* (1936), respectively.⁵⁶ Selznick especially admired the prominent featuring of classical melodies, woven into the nondiegetic score in a manner akin to Stothart's M-G-M scores. The subsequent positive response to *Intermezzo*'s music further reinforced Selznick's conviction—adopted from Stothart—that freshly arranged classical music offered many undervalued benefits:

The score on *Intermezzo* is receiving a great deal of comment and extraordinary favorable attention, for which I thank and congratulate you both.

The outstanding point that has been commented on by so many, and that certainly has served to make the score so beautiful, is its use of classical music to such a great extent instead of original music hastily written. This is a point on which I have been fighting for years with little success.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ DOS to Henry Ginsberg, 28 July 1939, HRC 175:13.

⁵⁶ "Intermezzo Cue Sheet," HRC 4516:15.

⁵⁷ DOS to Max Steiner and Lou Forbes, 9 October 1939, reprinted in *Memo*, 225–226.

Nine years later, Selznick would take this approach to an extreme, ordering an entire score from Dimitri Tiomkin based on compositions of Claude Debussy. For now though, Forbes had once again successfully coordinated a team to complete a score in a fraction of the time it would have taken an individual composer. With *Gone with the Wind* already waiting in the wings for its own musical accompaniment, Forbes's ability to push *Intermezzo* through quickly was vital.

Forbes's efficiency and effectiveness are admirable, but *Tom Sawyer*, *Made for Each Other*, and *Intermezzo* are not Selznick's finest films, nor do they have highly distinguished scores. (The possible exception is *Intermezzo*, which alternates diegetic performances with nondiegetic scoring to create an overwhelmingly musical film.) While these projects were not classified as low-budget "B" pictures, they did occupy a lower stratum within Selznick's output. Their less customized scores appropriately offer a lesser grade of musical tailoring and finesse. For more important films, like *Gone with the Wind* and *Rebecca*, Selznick would continue to rely on a single composer instead of the team approach. Nevertheless, the distinction between these two models—the single credited composer vs. Forbes's team—would blur during the construction of these scores, a development facilitated by Forbes's presence. Before embarking on these major productions, however, Selznick had an odd comedy that needed meticulously synchronized musical accompaniment. Produced after *Sawyer* but before *Made for Each Other*, this was not a film that could be covered by taking cues from other films. *The Young in Heart* (1938) needed special scoring of its own.

Selznick, Waxman, and Musical Humor in *The Young in Heart* (1938)

The Young in Heart is a charming, overlooked film in Selznick's oeuvre featuring a smart and similarly neglected score by Franz Waxman. At best, *The Young in Heart* has only received passing mention. Noting that the film lost \$517,000, David Thomson argues that *Heart* failed to measure up to Selznick's 1937 releases (*Nothing Sacred* and *Prisoner of Zenda*) and faltered because Selznick was already preoccupied with *Gone with the Wind*.⁵⁸ While it is true—and expected—that Selznick did not invest himself as heavily in the light comedy as he did in his forthcoming epic, *Heart* is a neatly crafted film and surpasses the better known *Nothing Sacred* in several respects, including musical accompaniment. Ronald Haver expresses admiration for *Heart*, calling it “one of Selznick International's best but least-known films,” though he too says little else about the project.⁵⁹ *Heart*'s greatest setback, it would seem, is its relatively modest story and production values. The film is not grandiose, bold, or challenging; it is simple, sentimental, even silly. Nevertheless, it stands apart by virtue of its unique brand of “gentle humor.”⁶⁰

The Young in Heart is musically distinctive on two accounts. First, *Heart* marked Waxman's first full collaboration with Selznick.⁶¹ Though Selznick had initially admitted a slight preference for his past collaborator, Max Steiner, the producer was drawn to Waxman, in part because “Waxman is inclined to do more economical jobs—with

⁵⁸ Thomson, 257.

⁵⁹ Haver, 223.

⁶⁰ A reviewer for *The New York Times* remarked, “But even better than charm, the story has heart, and irony, and gentle humor, a tightly written script, brilliant direction, and casting ranging from excellent to inspired” B.R.C., “The Screen in Review,” *New York Times*, 4 November 1938, 27.

⁶¹ Waxman's history with Selznick also included an earlier, aborted project. He was initially brought on to score *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, and even compiled a set of spotting notes, sketched a series of themes, and drafted several cues before leaving. When he scored *The Adventure of Huckleberry Finn* at MGM a year later, he recycled some of his material (Franz Waxman Papers, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Library (hereafter FWP), Oversize Folder 3).

smaller orchestras, etc.”⁶² Waxman had a rich and varied musical background. In the 1920s he studied at the Berlin Conservatory while supporting himself playing piano in nightclubs and jamming with the Weintraub Syncopators.⁶³ In the 1930s, Waxman began orchestrating (he arranged Friederich Hollaender’s music for *Der blaue Engel* (1930)), then composing, music for German films. Assault at the hands of Nazi thugs impelled Waxman to leave Berlin for Paris, then Hollywood, where he quickly distinguished himself with a thematically dense and strikingly textured score for *Bride of Frankenstein* (1935). In *Heart*, Waxman would have the opportunity to display a facet of musical talent that had thus far been underutilized in Hollywood: a remarkable acumen for funny music. *Heart*’s humor thrives and depends on Waxman’s background scoring, and Selznick’s decision to foreground the orchestral underscore creates the illusion that the movie has been built around the music.

The Carletons are an endearing family of fortune hunters, kind souls who nonetheless rely on sponging to support their lifestyle of leisure. At the start of the film, George-Anne (Janet Gaynor) and her brother Richard (Douglas Fairbanks Jr.) are shown wooing their respective prospects: George-Anne accepts a proposal from a hard-working Scotsman whom she believes to be wealthy while Richard feigns rapture with his rich but otherwise dull fiancée. Ignominious exposure of the family ruptures both matches and the family of four (with Roland Young and Billie Burke expertly cast as the oddball parents) are forced to return from the Riviera to London. On the train, the Carletons meet the lonely Miss Fortune (Minnie Dupree), an elderly wealthy woman who lacks family or friends. The Carletons obligingly fill the void, planning to snag the inheritance when the

⁶² DOS to Henry Ginsberg, 31 May 1938, HRC 647:17.

⁶³ Tony Thomas, *Music for the Movies*, 2nd edition, (Los Angeles: Silman-James Press, 1997), 95.

old woman dies. While awaiting the inevitable, the family tries to appear respectable and hardworking while living in Miss Fortune's house. The father and son even go so far as to acquire legitimate employment. Transformed by Miss Fortune's unwavering gratitude and trust, the family suffers a crisis of identity: their new lives of work and service ring dissonantly with their present aspiration to trick a kind woman into making them heirs. There are also romantic complications. George-Anne and the Scotsman (whom Waxman humorously pegs with the "The Campbells Are Coming") refuse to make up, but are also reluctant to sever ties completely. Richard, meanwhile, has taken a liking for his colleague (Paulette Goddard) at the engineering office, but has to prove his worth as a worker before she will take him seriously. In the end, of course, all ends well. Miss Fortune learns the truth about the Carletons but is not dissuaded in her devotion. The family, for their part, redeems themselves: Miss Fortune's capital has dwindled away and she will need the Carletons to support her. In the closing scene the family, their new fiancées, and Miss Fortune are crowded around a small table enjoying a meal in their new, modestly sized, cottage. Fortunes and fortune hunting have been relinquished, but the family has grown.

The New York Times critic praised the *The Young in Heart* as "one of the best sentimental comedies," a genre description that is helpful when discussing music's role in the film.⁶⁴ As Selznick's music notes for *Heart* indicate, Waxman's score was to accompany the film's most sentimental scenes as well as its most comedic ones.⁶⁵ Emphasizing sentiment was hardly an unusual request for a film composer, and in this respect the score is more ordinary, though still well crafted. Selznick wanted a familiar,

⁶⁴ B. R. C. "The Screen in Review," *New York Times*, 4 November 1938, 27.

⁶⁵ "The Young in Heart Music Notes," 20 June 1938, HRC 3670:11.

nostalgic melody as a recurring theme for the film's locus of sentimentality, Miss Fortune. The producer's initial idea was to use "The Old Refrain," a Fritz Kreisler piece (transcribed from Johann Brandl's "Du alter Stefansturm"), but copyright restrictions prohibited the work's incorporation into a background score.⁶⁶ Music director Lou Forbes suggested using "Long, Long Ago," for Miss Fortune's "lighter moods" and Tchaikovsky's "None But the Lonely Heart" or "something similar that Mr. Waxman could write" for Fortune's sadder scenes.⁶⁷ "Long, Long Ago" was already under consideration, as Selznick had submitted a list of scenes to Keon and Waxman, suggesting that all should feature either the "'Old Refrain' theme or its substitute in the 'Long, Long Ago' vein."⁶⁸ In the public domain, "Long, Long Ago" went into Waxman's score as did an additional secondary theme for Miss Fortune. Instead of pairing "Long, Long Ago" with Tchaikovsky, however, Waxman concocted a *dolce* theme for solo cello whose melodic trajectory vaguely recalls "Long, Long Ago." Indeed the two themes are melodic cousins of sorts, a continuity emphasized in an early scene in which the family first meets Miss Fortune. (Ironically, this cue was drafted and orchestrated by Heinz Roemheld, though based on Waxman's thematic material.⁶⁹) The two themes alternate as Miss Fortune recalls her past love interest—Mr. Dickey—and present loneliness. As Forbes had suggested to Selznick (and apparently shared with Waxman and Roemheld),

⁶⁶ In late September, Selznick asked Barbara Keon to "please make up for me a list of Miss Fortune's scenes in 'The Young in Heart', and check it with me as to which of these scenes I want underscored with 'The Old Refrain' theme." Two days later, music director Forbes explained to Selznick the impossibility of this particular musical selection: "Following is a copy of a wire received this morning: 'Original Old Refrain not public domain. Regret impossible secure quotation as all Kreisler compositions restricted for synchronized uses.' Harry Fox Music Publishers' Protective Assn." See DOS to Barbara Keon, 24 September 1938, HRC 647:17; Lou Forbes to DOS, 26 September 1938, HRC 647:17.

⁶⁷ Lou Forbes to DOS, 27 September 1938, HRC 647:17.

⁶⁸ Barbara Keon to Franz Waxman, 26 September 1938, HRC 3670:11.

⁶⁹ See FWP, Oversize Folder 113A. Heinz Roemheld also contributed to some of the film's humorous cues, drafting "Bridge Sequence 1 & 2" (which was reused in Waxman's score for *Rebecca*), "Kennel Sequence," and "Channel Sequence."

the secondary theme underscores those passages of dialogue in which Miss Fortune expresses regret and sadness for having no one with whom to share the pleasures and beauty of the world: “I’ve seen many lovely things on this little jaunt, but I’ve had to see them alone,” she explains wistfully. Waxman’s music for Miss Fortune’s sentimental scenes, with delicate strings, solo woodwind lines, and music-box-like textures recalls the impressionistic, translucent scoring favored by Hebert Stothart at M-G-M, the studio at which Franz Waxman had begun working in 1936. Stothart’s penchant for light, impressionistic orchestral coloring seems to have influenced Waxman in these warm-hearted scenes. The textural resemblance likely pleased Selznick, who relished working with Stothart.

Waxman’s themes for Miss Fortune are not the only lyrical episodes he composed for the film. In addition to a cheery love theme for Richard and Leslie, Waxman composed a series of melancholic passages for the scenes following Miss Fortune’s collapse in which the Carletons fear for her death and regret their initial eagerness to profit from it. One cue titled “Regeneration” follows the family’s declaration to take care of Miss Fortune—no matter what—and accompanies a teary catharsis in which George-Anne recognizes her family’s genuine love for Miss Fortune. Waxman’s melodic idea is simple and effective—a downward sob in the violins that is gently offset from the downbeat. The idea is elaborated twice before the entire melody—A A’ A’—is repeated a step higher, then another step higher, culminating in a *fortissimo* tutti, elevating George-Anne’s tearful monologue to a melodramatic climax. Though emotionally excessive by today’s standards, Waxman’s cue pleased everyone, such that Forbes

incorporated the cue into a similar scene in *Made for Each Other* (1939) and Waxman reworked it into his score for *Rebecca* (1940) (see figure 3.4).⁷⁰

Figure 3.4 Waxman, *The Young in Heart*, “Regeneration.”

The image displays a musical score for the piece "Regeneration" from the film *The Young in Heart*, composed by Franz Waxman. The score is presented in three systems, each consisting of three staves: a top staff (likely for a woodwind or string instrument), a middle staff (likely for a woodwind or string instrument), and a bottom staff (bass line). The music is written in 3/4 time and the key signature has two sharps (D major). The first system begins with a rest in the top staff, followed by a melodic line in the middle staff starting with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The second system continues the melodic development, featuring a *cresc.* (crescendo) marking and a *poco* (poco) marking. The third system concludes with a *ff* (fortissimo) dynamic marking. The score includes various musical notations such as rests, notes, beams, slurs, and dynamic markings.

⁷⁰ Franz Waxman, “Regeneration,” *The Young in Heart*, HRC 4019:1.

Figure 3.4 continued

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a piece in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first system, labeled with measure 10, consists of three staves: a vocal line with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp, a piano accompaniment with a treble clef, and a bass line with a bass clef. The piano part features a prominent melody with a slur over measures 10-12. The second system, labeled with measure 13, also consists of three staves. The vocal line continues with a treble clef. The piano accompaniment includes a triplet of eighth notes in measure 13 and a slur over measures 13-15. The bass line continues with a bass clef. The key signature remains one sharp throughout.

While Waxman’s sentimental music for the film is effective, real surprises arise in the film’s many comic scenes. The scoring notes indicate that the producer had already planned to use music for humorous effect in a number of scenes. This alone is a somewhat unusual idea, as Selznick’s only other comedy, *Nothing Sacred*, had barely had any background score at all. One wonders to what degree this change in style was inspired directly by Waxman.⁷¹ In any case, *Nothing Sacred* followed the norm of 1930s comedies, in which short, jaunty cues might begin or conclude scenes, but extended

⁷¹ Franz Waxman’s contract indicates that he officially began working on *The Young in Heart* on 13 June 1938, four days before signing his contract and a full week before the scoring notes were dictated (Franz Waxman contract, 17 June 1938, HRC 3670:12). It is possible that during this time Waxman and Selznick conferred to produce the three-page “music notes” document of 20 June 1938.

underscore was rare. Animated films, however, were different. In animated shorts, musical underscoring was inseparable from visual and verbal gags, an idea that intrigued Selznick. For the sequence in which Richard and his father absentmindedly search for work (and fail to notice the “men wanted” sign they are leaning against), Selznick requested a “Disney type score—to help comedy.”⁷² Selznick may have been thinking generally of Disney’s “Silly Symphonies,” animated shorts that relied on odd songs and novelty orchestral music for humor, but *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* seems to have been the particular model Selznick and Waxman had in mind. In that film, virtuosically frenetic music enhanced the humor of the dwarfs’ shenanigans—especially Dopey’s. Selznick had even considered featuring excerpts from *Snow White*’s “Heigh-Ho” in *Heart*.⁷³ Ironically, Waxman wrote no music for the job-search sequence, but the “Disney” approach is evident elsewhere. For the scene in which Richard takes his new engineering friend, Leslie, to the zoo, Selznick requested a “blending of romantic music with ‘penguin’.”⁷⁴ Oscar the penguin opens the scene and Waxman’s music turns him into a veritable cartoon character, aping his waddling gait, hops, and bumps with a bright and unblending ensemble of woodwinds, muted trumpet, and pizzicato strings. When Richard and Leslie engage in romantic banter, the music shifts deftly to their love theme, set in the upper register of the violins. When they begin to kiss the violins hold as the camera cuts abruptly to Oscar, who hops down four steps, his wind band punctuating each landing over the holding violins—1...2...3...4...—before the camera cuts back to Richard and Leslie finishing their embrace. In this odd sequence, music and visuals poke fun at Production Code prudery. Prolonged kisses were prohibited, and anything over

⁷² “The Young in Heart, Music Notes,” 20 June 1938, HRC 3670:11, 1.

⁷³ Lou Forbes to Mr. Butcher, 29 April 1938, HRC 3670:12.

⁷⁴ “The Young in Heart, Music Notes,” 20 June 1938, HRC 3670:11, 2.

three seconds was banned as vulgar. Here, Oscar's musically synched hops provide necessary diversion for four seconds as sustaining violins mark the ongoing forbidden activity occurring just off screen. After Richard and Leslie walk away, Oscar gets one last bow as his peculiar music nimbly concludes the cue.

Oscar's musical accompaniment recalls the hokey synchronization of music with Dopey's unpredictable lunges in *Snow White*, but Waxman's score also generates humor through broader forms of mockery. Arriving for his first day of employment at the "Flying Wombat" car dealership, the father bids goodbye to his son in gloomy tones: "I'm not much good at farewells," he says despondently, certain that he will never return from work again. Father and son play the scene straight, heightening the comedy. Selznick asked that Waxman's music follow suit: "give effect of [the father] going off to war. Perhaps use as counterpoint old bromidic number, not an original, such as Chopin's Funeral March."⁷⁵ Waxman made Chopin's piano piece the centerpiece of the cue, setting the melody for lone saxophone, backed by strings. Though the unusual choice of solo instrument and tongue-in-cheek repertoire selection undermine any pretensions to seriousness, the cue becomes still less subtle as the scene progresses. When the two men stop to gaze at a "Flying Wombat," an ultra-streamlined black sports car, a stinger chord aligns with a camera cut to the car, followed by a lone trombone declaiming the opening gallop of Richard Wagner's *Ride of the Valkyries*, tweaked with a flutter-tongue snarl.⁷⁶ (Later we learn that the Flying Wombat's car horn plays the same theme.) The Funeral March returns, but when the father leaves to enter the Wombat dealership, the automated

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ In addition to calling upon Chopin and Wagner for comic relief, Waxman also uses Verdi's anvil chorus from *Il Trovatore* when Richard awakes with a hangover, a condition that is depicted visually through a superimposed image of hammers striking an anvil. Here again, music delivers the scene's punch line.

doors—their abrupt motion causing the father to halt in surprise on the threshold and then back slowly away—swing open and closed to the accompaniment of an upward and downward flourish on the piano. Such gross mickey-mousing is almost too crass for cartoons; in a live action film it is especially absurd. Hastening back to his son, the father attempts to impart one final message: “Eh, tell your mother my boy”—he pauses, only to have a loud dominant-seventh chord pop his incomplete line with operatic flourish. He shrugs. “Tell your mother,” he repeats weakly and exits. Full orchestral accompaniment gives his dejected gait heroic weight as he shuffles into the dealership. Saxophones grotesquely squeal the Funeral March in his wake.

In a later cue, Waxman reprises the Chopin and Wagner comic routine while introducing a nice dash of original music. The father, who has long enjoyed the false title of *Colonel Carleton* (a holdover from his days as a bit player in the theatrical *Sweethearts of the Bengal Lancers*), has just been called aside by his employer. Carleton fears his false identity has again been discovered. The employer’s stern demeanor supports this hunch. Waxman’s music plays along, with paraphrases of Chopin’s Funeral March set over a sustained *piano* timpani roll. “Sometimes an executive’s position involves unpleasant duties,” the employer explains. “I quite understand sir,” replies father Carleton, anticipating an impending sack. “On the other hand,” the executive counters, as a solo clarinet plays a tonally confused rendition of the Valkyrie-Wombat call, “sometimes those duties are a distinct pleasure.” Carleton’s eyes light up. He is about to receive a promotion. The unanticipated victory is marked by a satisfying dominant-tonic resolution into a playful, chromatic march, performed initially on flute with muted brass emphases on downbeats. After the employer leaves, Carleton revels in his good fortune.

The oddball march for the phony colonel plays more fully, matching the colonel's stride across the room. Like Oscar the penguin, Carleton's wind band is bright and not entirely tonally stable, an effect that is enhanced through a wrong-note fanfare heralded pompously by muted trumpet (mm. 44–57, see figure 3.5). As the scene fades out, the cue concludes nobly—with the final cadential motion carried by a lone and honky bass clarinet. The music on its own sounds funny; paired with the colonel's pleased smile and formal gait, the musico-visual ensemble is a delight.

Figure 3.5 Waxman, *The Young in Heart*, “Wombat Salesroom.” In these final measures of the cue, the ridiculous trumpet fanfare is set on the second staff. (The half note in measure 58 of the fourth staff exceeds the 2/4 meter but is in the piano-conductor score.)

The image displays a musical score for the cue "Wombat Salesroom" from the film *The Young in Heart*, composed by Elmer Bernstein. The score is presented in two systems, each with four staves. The first system covers measures 49 through 53, and the second system covers measures 54 through 58. The music is written in 2/4 time. The first staff (top) features a complex melodic line with many accidentals and triplets. The second staff (trumpet) contains a fanfare with several triplet markings. The third and fourth staves provide harmonic support with chords and bass lines. A *rit.* (ritardando) marking is present above the first staff of the second system. The score concludes with a double bar line and a fermata over the final note in measure 58.

Other scenes accomplish similar effects, in part because the producer requested unusual music that would commandeer spectator attention. When Richard first enters the engineering office and balks at the imposing murals of men working and sweating in factories (effort being abhorrent to Richard), Selznick requested that the score be “bombastic [with] ultra-modernistic ‘industrial’ effect.” Waxman fashioned a gentler, Hollywood style of ultra-modernism that nonetheless featured flutter-tongued bitonal

chords in the brass, augmented by tremolo strings and pounding anvil. The cacophony ends suddenly, however, leaving only the shimmering sonority of a sustained vibraphone holding over. A brief piano flourish mimics Richard's uncomfortable shrug, and descending chromatic woodwinds match his steps across the room. The shift from ultra-modern to ultra mickey-mousing is accomplished in several seconds. Through it all, Waxman's music is humorous, unpredictable, and eminently noticeable. This spotlighting of background scoring, however, would not have been possible without Selznick's approval and encouragement.

Indeed, the producer had placed very high expectations on the music, hoping the score as a whole could accelerate the pace of the film: "On music throughout the whole picture do not keep tempo to the scene but play it a little faster," requested the producer.⁷⁷ "Even make slow music a little faster than what it should be [and] make music for fast tempo scenes even faster. [The] slow tempo of the picture...must be remedied by fast tempo music."⁷⁸ Waxman wisely took this suggestion with several grains of salt, relying more on bright flashes of orchestral color and active, chromatically inflected textures to create a sense of movement in places where rapid tempi would either be inappropriate or interfere with the precision required for mickey-mousing. One can understand, however, Selznick's wish that Waxman make pacing and time a priority. The success of the film's humor would rely on effectively timed musical accompaniment; for the composer to fall short in a comedy film that was—in the words of Lou Forbes—"heavily loaded with music" could be disastrous.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ "The Young in Heart, Music Notes," 22 September 1938, HRC 3670:11.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Lou Forbes to Ray Klune, 29 June 1938, HRC 3670:12.

Fortunately Waxman's score excelled. *The Young in Heart* would be Waxman's first Academy Award nomination and the *New York Times* reviewer singled out his contribution as especially noteworthy:

Individual or departmental excellencies stand out against the slightness of the story in almost epigrammatic relief...there is Franz Waxman, whose musical commentary in spots is vastly more eloquent and wittier than any merely verbal accompaniment could possibly be.⁸⁰

By the late 1930s, the novelty of background scoring had worn off since the early recognition of Steiner's RKO scores. Composers were now fortunate if they even received brief acknowledgement in general film reviews. This reviewer's articulation of the music's function within the narrative was unusual, making the praise all the more special. Other reviewers were similarly charmed and recalled specific passages of Waxman's score:

Then there is the musical score. No review of 'The Young in Heart' could do justice to the film without a bouquet tossed in the direction of Franz Waxman who did the music for the show. Don't make any mistakes about it being a musical film. There's not a song or dance number in it, but the music follows the cast around and defies them to get away from it. Best musical shots: the bass rhythms while "Oscar" waddles down the penguin ramp at the zoo; the interweaving of strains of "The Campbells Are Coming" whenever Carlson is on the screen or anyone is talking about him; the funereal music which follows the very sad Carletons, father and son, on the day Roland Young goes to take his medicine and apply for a job.⁸¹

One article focused specifically Waxman's efforts:

Music for motion pictures makes an audacious step forward in the score for "The Young in Heart," David O. Selznick's screen play now showing at Radio City Music Hall. From its customary role in screen productions as the mere creator of moods and a handy filler for gaps in dialogue, orchestral music here steps into the part of a sly and subtle comedian, contributing perhaps as much humor to the film as do the actors themselves.

⁸⁰ B.R.C., "The Screen in Review."

⁸¹ Mary Louise Walliser, "'Young in Heart' Dealing With Family of Lovable Wastrels Proves Charming Film," *San Antonio Tex News*, 22 December 1938.

Composed by Franz Waxman, already the author of much fine music for motion pictures, the score of “The Young in Heart” is a combination of original music and deftly treated familiar tunes on which, through the manner of their application, many of the play’s situations depend to a major degree for comedy. Much of this score is written in a satirical vein and, instead of creating sympathy for the characters, seems slyly to mock them.... And while the *leitmotiv* device, so long a favorite of film score composers, is on occasion resorted to in the Music Hall’s screen play, it is used in a fashion even more daring than that employed in the film productions of Ernst Lubitsch, Rene Clair and other great innovators in the realm of motion-picture music.⁸²

Reference to René Clair (and by implication, the music of Georges Auric) was indeed apropos; the musical humor of Waxman’s score recalls the colorful idiosyncrasy of Auric’s music in Clair’s *A Nous la Liberté* (1931). (Several years after *Liberté*, Waxman would also be in Paris, writing scores for Fritz Lang’s *Liliom* (1934) and Billy Wilder’s *Mauvaise Graine* (1934).)

Despite the “slightness of the story,” *The Young in Heart* proved a fruitful project for Waxman and Selznick that laid the groundwork for their later collaborations. In *Heart*, Selznick had placed a tall order and Waxman had met it eloquently, writing cues from Selznick’s instructions that ranged from the conventionally sweet and sentimental to bizarre and silly. As one of the least tampered-with Selznick scores (there are no cut cues, rewrites, or substitutions), *Heart*’s music is a happy anomaly set within a rather anomalous Selznick film.

⁸² “Incidental Music Gets a Speaking Part.” This uncredited article is included a Franz Waxman’s clippings folder, 1929–1939. From the context of the article, it is taken from a New York daily, ca. November 1938 (FWP Box 12).

Music by “Max Steiner & Co.” in *Gone with the Wind* (1939)

Max Steiner could count on steady work at his home studio of Warner Bros., but he also occasionally missed the glory days of composing for Selznick. Selznick’s films gave Steiner a much needed break from the humdrum material he often received while the choicest films went to Warner Bros.’ star composer, Erich Wolfgang Korngold. Feeling trapped by prison picture assignments and unhappy playing second fiddle to Korngold, Max Steiner all but begged Jack Warner for permission to work with producer David O. Selznick: “I am taking the liberty of writing and explaining to you what *Gone with the Wind* means to me....It is as necessary for me, my pride, my standing and my future activity to do *Gone with the Wind*, as it is necessary for an actor to get a *break* once in awhile.”⁸³ As Steiner explained, *Gone with the Wind* possessed “vast opportunity for music.” Somewhat ironically, the daunting time constraints and vastness of the film forced Steiner to rely heavily on assistants to complete the most prestigious project of his career. Even the pencil sketch for the film’s main title is not in Steiner’s hand, but rather Hugo Friedhofer’s. The signature on the sketch—“Max Steiner & Co.”—is therefore fitting.⁸⁴

Rudy Behlmer, who has conducted extensive research on the film and its score, acknowledges this assistance, but asserts Steiner’s primacy by noting that the others “composed a relatively small amount of material in the Steiner manner, which, for the most part, utilized Steiner’s thematic creations.”⁸⁵ When Myrl Schreibman interviewed

⁸³ Max Steiner to Jack Warner, 5 April 1939, Max Steiner Collection, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah (hereafter MSC), Box 4, Folder 14.

⁸⁴ Hugo Friedhofer, “Title and Foreword,” *Gone with the Wind*, MSC Volume 71ab.

⁸⁵ Rudy Behlmer, “The Score,” *Original Motion Picture Soundtrack to Gone with the Wind* (Rhino Records R2 72269, 1996), 29.

Steiner in 1967 on *Gone with the Wind*, the composer turned defensive on the topic of compositional help. “Nobody arranges anything from me,” replied Steiner, “They just orchestrate what I write down. They take it off and put it in score. It’s no great trick.”⁸⁶

The extensive extant archival materials related to *GWTW*’s score tell a rather different story, bringing to life the excitement, haste, conflict, and personal investment that characterized the film production as a whole and the score in particular. Steiner’s accomplishment becomes all the more vivid in light of the archival records, but the extensive contributions of Steiner’s colleagues are also striking. The following pages foreground their work, thereby revealing a special collaborative dynamic not present in other Selznick productions.

The scoring team was large. Max Steiner and Lou Forbes headed the operation and are the only two to receive onscreen credit. Steiner composed most of the music and conducted all of it. Lou Forbes served his standard role as music director. Hugo Friedhofer is not listed in the credits, but his contributions were substantial. In addition to composing over twenty-four minutes of the music heard in the film, he orchestrated twenty-four cues and supervised other orchestrators’ work. Adolph Deutsch, Heinz Roemheld, and Joseph Nussbaum also served as composers, arrangers, and orchestrators, contributing another sixteen minutes of music heard in the film. Along with these four, an additional team assisted only with orchestration: Reginald Bassett, George Bassman, Bernard Kaun, Arthur Kay, Leo Arnaud, Albert Hay Malotte, Maurice De Packh, Darol A. Rice, Cecil Copping, and Dudley B. Chambers, who handled vocal arranging.

When one considers that forty minutes of the roughly three hours of music heard in *GWTW* was arranged and composed by individuals other than Steiner, it becomes clear

⁸⁶ Myrl Schreibman, “Memories of Max: Part II,” *Film Score Monthly* 10, no. 2 (March-April 2005), 23.

that Friedhofer, Deutsch, Roemheld, and Nussbaum contributed more than trifling transitional passages. Forty minutes is enough to constitute a score unto itself. While these assistants were frequently working with Steiner's themes and mimicking Steiner's style—what Friedhofer called “forging a little Steiner”⁸⁷—a brief overview shows that the forgeries enjoyed considerable prominence.

Though Friedhofer's and Deutsch's cues are sometimes interpolated among Steiner's cues, much of their work is clumped together at the beginning of the film's respective halves. Thus, Friedhofer scored the main title and opening scene of the film, with Deutsch picking up the introductory riding music for Gerald O'Hara, Scarlett's father. For the film's second half, Friedhofer again led off, scoring scenes surrounding the altercation with the Yankee deserter. Steiner then contributed a single cue before Deutsch took over, writing a line of cues surrounding the death of Scarlett's father and the fortuitous blossoming of Scarlett's relationship with Fred “Old Whisker Face” Kennedy. Remarkably, the second half of the film is nearly half over (51 minutes) before cues written in Steiner's hand reenter the underscore. To a certain extent, these cue assignments reveal musical typecasting. Deutsch, for example, covered many of the riding sequences—the initial introduction of Gerald O'Hara hopping the fences, his death by the same, and later Bonnie's tragic death under similar circumstances. Heinz Roemheld was even more tightly cast for action sequences—he provided elaborate hurry music for the “Burning of Atlanta” and the attack of Scarlett in Shantytown; on the latter scene it appears that Deutsch may have also assisted. Nussbaum's role was more modest.

⁸⁷ Hugo Friedhofer, interviewed by Irene Atkins, April 1974, *Hugo Friedhofer: The Best Years of His Life*, edited by Linda Danly (Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 1999), 61.

He covered the band arrangements of period melodies heard as source music in the station sequences.⁸⁸

Within the context of the film itself, the amalgamation of cues arranged by multiple hands does not strike the listener as incongruous or patchy. Farming out the occasional cue to an assistant was common practice in Hollywood studios and Friedhofer's crew was largely successful in their efforts to "forge a little Steiner." Nevertheless, insights into their work arise when individual authorship is considered. Both Friedhofer and Deutsch, for example, seemed more comfortable fragmenting Steiner's thematic material than Steiner himself. Their slicing of the Tara theme into motivic snippets is especially interesting.⁸⁹ Deutsch, for example, integrates the distinctive octave leap of the Tara theme into his horse-riding music for multiple scenes. In Gerald O'Hara's death scene, Deutsch destabilizes the expected rhythmic emphasis just before O'Hara falls from the horse, such that music and image seem to momentarily jolt forward, forcing O'Hara from his saddle. This parsing of the Tara theme into malleable melodic cells better reflects Deutsch's, not Steiner's, compositional style of this period. While comparing Deutsch's score for *The Maltese Falcon* (1941) to Steiner's music for *Casablanca* (1942), Martin Marks notes that Deutsch's score is characterized

⁸⁸ This practice of scene "specialists" appears to have been somewhat common. David Raksin recalls similar work during his early career in Hollywood: "so on Friday afternoons I would usually go over to Warner's, where Leo would show me either a main title or a montage or a battle scene. That was all I ever did—or maybe a chase...in most cases I never even saw the rest of the picture" (Elmer Bernstein, "A Conversation with David Raksin (Part II)," *Elmer Bernstein's Film Music Notebook: A Complete Collection of the Quarterly Journal, 1974–1978* (Sherman Oaks: Film Music Society, 2004), 264).

⁸⁹ Somewhat ironically, scholars have devoted more attention to postulating the melodic source of Steiner's "Tara" theme than to considering the theme's transformation within *GWTW* itself. Jack Gottlieb notes strong melodic similarities between Steiner's "Tara" and the Yiddish-theater song "Mayn Goldele" by Louis Gilrod and Joseph M. Rumshinsky (Jack Gottlieb, *Funny, It Doesn't Sound Jewish: How Yiddish Songs and Synagogue Melodies Influenced Tin Pan Alley, Broadway, and Hollywood* (New York: SUNY Press, 2004), 46). Michael Long argues that Steiner's inspiration may have been Handel's "Ombra mai fù," from *Serse* (Michael Long, *Beautiful Monsters: Imagining the Classic in Musical Media* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 69–70).

by “melodic material [that] is utterly elusive. At the heart of the score lies a group of five or six thematic fragments, each lasting two or three measures at most. ...All are subjected to so many transformations that they seem to have no prime form.”⁹⁰

Hugo Friedhofer also transforms the Tara theme in the opening scene of the film, when the Tarleton Twins and Scarlett discuss the imminent war. The melody heard under this dialogue is striking for several reasons. First, it is only heard at the beginning of the conversation and never later in the film. Second, it begins with a downward octave plunge, followed by a balancing melodic ascent, an approximate inversion of the Tara theme. Thirdly, it incorporates and adapts the concluding melodic gesture of the Stephen Foster song, “Katie Belle” (see figures 3.6 and 3.7).

Figure 3.6 Friedhofer, *Gone with the Wind*, “Reel 1, Part III.”



Figure 3.7 Steiner, *Gone with the Wind*, Tara theme (transposed to G major).



By juxtaposing the inverted Tara passage with the “Katie Belle” fragment, Friedhofer underscores a dramatic opposition. The inverted Tara theme represents the Twins’

⁹⁰ Martin Marks, “Music, Drama, Warner Brothers: The Cases of *Casablanca* and *The Maltese Falcon*,” *Music and Cinema*, ed. James Buhler, Caryl Flinn, and David Neumeyer (Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 2000), 179.

enthusiasm for war—an event that will ultimately turn Tara upside down—while the “Katie Belle” fragment reflects Scarlett’s desire to talk about anything else. Interestingly, the “Katie Belle” fragment is altered slightly, such that it appears to recollect melodic and rhythmic attributes of the original Tara theme. When the twins promise to drop the war altogether, the inverted Tara theme finally disappears, transitioning to the opening of “Katie Belle” and marking Scarlett’s victory in this initial battle. Right from the film’s beginning then, Friedhofer subtly portends Tara’s demise at the hands of Yankees through an otherwise innocuous tune that turns the Tara theme on its head.

As the previous overview has shown, many of the action and suspense sequences were distributed to others. Consequently, the suspense sequences in which *Steiner* composed the music become all the more vital and help to explain Steiner’s investment in these specific cues. The sequence in which Scarlett ascends the stairs to assist with Melanie’s birth is a brief cue that shows Steiner coordinating a number of visual and musical concerns. The cue begins with the opening of Scarlett’s theme, synched carefully to her ascending footsteps such that her theme emphasizes the rhythm of her gait and upward motion. This quintessential Steiner maneuver is then enhanced through a dissonant patchwork of meandering chromatic lines, out of which emerge fragments of Melanie’s theme. Even though Selznick had suggested the scene did not require music,⁹¹ Steiner composed this short and complicated passage anyway, signing off with a flourish of indelicate punnery to Deutsch: “Adolf This might be too screwy! But after all the baby always comes—after screwing! So why not??? Great Balls of Fire change anything you want—even your underwear!! I don’t care!! My sex life has gone ‘with the wind.’”⁹²

⁹¹ “*Gone with the Wind* Music Notes, Corrected by DOS,” 7 November 1939, HRC 413:5.

⁹² Max Steiner, “Reel 9, Part A,” *Gone with the Wind*, MSC Volume 71ab.

Memories of this cue remained with Steiner, and years later he would recall how Selznick had attempted to tamper with the cue during a recording session.⁹³

The scene in which Scarlett learns that her mother has died offered Steiner another intensely dramatic situation with little dialogue. Steiner was less sure of himself here, and conveyed his reservations to Freidhofer: ““Hugo! Please watch this closely I’m writing so fast. It might smell a little!!” then “Sorry—Hugo! The voices are all over the place. There is no dialogue at (all) so [it] should sound good (schamltz and very much).” Then at the end of the cue “Hugo! I don’t know myself how I hear this—may be we’ll hold it or maybe we’ll cut on her scream.”⁹⁴ Evidently, Selznick also felt the cue smelled a little and opted instead for the preview track—a combination of two cues by Franz Waxman (“The Prayer” and “Charley’s Death” from *His Brother’s Wife* (1936)). Though Steiner’s version had a wrenching cello obbligato to accompany Scarlett’s grief, Waxman’s cues conveyed her terror through a slow, repetitive throb in the lower strings. It is an effect Waxman would reuse in *Rebecca* to similarly heighten suspense (discussed below). Crestfallen, Steiner wrote to Selznick,

While I do not question or criticize your liking that piece of preview track, I do strongly object to it on account of bad modulation, different type recording, different orchestra, and improper ending under the scream....Why have such glaring imperfections in what may prove to be the best picture to date, and why, to top it all, have a botched up job in one of the best scenes where there is not even any dialogue to cover it up? Please excuse my rotten typing, but I am extremely nervous and worried.⁹⁵

⁹³ See Myrl Schreiberman, “Memories of Max: An Archival Interview with Max Steiner,” *Film Score Monthly* 10, no. 1 (January-February 2005), 27. Selznick, for his part, would also remember this cue and request that it be used on the preview track for *Since You Went Away* during the hypnosis scene with the shell-shocked soldier (Barbara Keon to Hal Kern, 18 February 1944, HRC 600:7).

⁹⁴ Max Steiner, “Reel 11, Part I,” *Gone with the Wind*, MSC Volume 71ab.

⁹⁵ Max Steiner to DOS, 12 December 1939, HRC 1237:3.

Thus, even though Steiner had not been as inspired for this scene as the other, the thought of losing a key scene to the preview track was especially insulting when it meant removing Steiner's own work.

Though Steiner lost in this particular instance, going head to head with producer Selznick was one factor that helped to forge the special dynamic of "Max Steiner & Co." For one, Steiner and Company shared a common adversary about whom they could vent and joke. Friedhofer starts wisecracking in the margins of the main title, writing on the first page that one lyrical passage should sound "easy, flowing, a la Selznick."⁹⁶ For the cue in which Scarlett indulges in solitary drinking, Steiner writes a burbling passage marked "giocoso-stinkoso" and jots "if David doesn't like it, we'll use it in a W.B. picture!"⁹⁷ For the final measures of the film's first half, which feature full orchestra and organ, Steiner writes "And I don't know what Selznick likes—as usual—probably a guitar will play this."⁹⁸ Other light jests at the producer's expense turn up throughout the score, but in other contexts the tone is more serious. Lou Forbes came to the defense of the music team when Selznick complained that one cue did not meet his expectations. Forbes sent a terse reply with only quotations from previous Selznick memos:

⁹⁶ Hugo Friedhofer, "Main Title & Foreword," *Gone with the Wind*, MSC Volume 71ab.

⁹⁷ Max Steiner, "Reel 17, Part III," *Gone with the Wind*, MSC Volume 71ab.

⁹⁸ Max Steiner, "Reel 11, Part III," *Gone with the Wind*, MSC Volume 71ab.

To: Mr. Selznick
11/29/1939
From: Lou Forbes
Subject: Music GWTW

FROM DOS 11-28

“Once again Mr. Forbes and Mr. Steiner have let slide an opportunity we asked for, which was to really bring home “Marching Through Georgia” under the Sherman title. We hear a few bars of it distorted, and that’s all, and unless we are listening carefully for it, we would have no recognition of it.”

FROM DOS 11-18

“Under no circumstances use any patriotic American music with the possible exception of ‘Marching Through Georgia’ the strain of which—you might consider having it off key—could recur through the other effects and music.”⁹⁹

While Selznick was an easy target among the music staff, the producer’s involvement was also an asset. Alan Vertrees has already documented the efficacy of Selznick’s guiding hand in the formation of *GWTW*’s screenplay and production design; the same can be applied to his involvement with the film’s music.¹⁰⁰ His scoring notes reflect careful attention to music and its relationship to the characters and narrative. Explaining his rationale for switching between background scoring for Melanie and Ashley and source music for Scarlett with her beaux, Selznick wrote:

this few hundred feet is important in that it is the only glimpse we get of the rich and aristocratic side in the whole picture plus being the introduction of the Ashley-Melanie relationship and plus being our first opportunity to contrast Melanie and Scarlett musically and therefore, [make] the most lasting impression...¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ Lou Forbes to DOS, 29 November 1939, HRC 1237:3.

¹⁰⁰ Alan David Vertrees, *Selznick’s Vision: Gone with the Wind and Hollywood Filmmaking* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997).

¹⁰¹ “Gone with the Wind, List of Scenes for Possible Scoring,” 31 November 1939, HRC 413:5.

Selznick also prompted other important changes, such as the addition of voices to the tune of Dixie heard during the film's foreword (a memorable touch) and Steiner's revisions of the final sequence between Scarlett and Rhett.¹⁰²

Selznick's notes for *GWTW* marked a new, wholly unprecedented level of thought and personal investment from the producer. Scoring notes from previous pictures had yet to exceed four pages, though on occasion he drafted revised copies. Taking into account *GWTW*'s lengthy running time of four hours still does not account for the producer's verbosity on the score. Numerous memos from the producer related to music were collated into a thirteen-page document dated 6 November 1939.¹⁰³ The very next day Selznick dictated another twelve pages of instructions.¹⁰⁴ To these were added shorter installments over the ensuing weeks. The importance of the project simply drove Selznick to focus even more attention on music than he had before. Though time would not always afford Selznick the luxury of dictating such elaborate and detailed notes for all subsequent projects, the precedent and success of *GWTW*'s music set a new standard of involvement to which the producer would aspire on *Since You Went Away* (1944), *Duel in the Sun* (1946), *Portrait of Jennie* (1948), and *A Farewell to Arms* (1957).

Appreciating the stature of their assignment and knowing that the producer would be listening attentively, Steiner and company pulled together and worked extraordinarily hard. As Kate Daubney has observed, Steiner's score annotations can "give an indication of Steiner's attitude to his work" and in the case of *Gone with the Wind*, the project motivated him through and beyond bouts of exhaustion (regular doses of Benzedrine,

¹⁰² See DOS to Lou Forbes, 10 November 1939, HRC 1237:3 and "Notes on Music, For Maxie to Re-Write, in Order of Importance," 4 December 1939, HRC 413:5.

¹⁰³ "GWTW Music Notes, Compiled," 6 November 1939, HRC 413:5.

¹⁰⁴ "Gone with the Wind Music Notes Corrected by DOS," 7 November 1939, HRC 413:5.

which the producer was also consuming with increasing frequency, also helped).¹⁰⁵ Steiner's comments in the margins, which include irreverent jests, serious and not-so-serious scoring instructions, and even musico-dramatic musings, often addressed to specific orchestrators, stand out as especially prolific when compared with other Steiner efforts. Even Friedhofer indulged in chatty commentary for cues to be orchestrated by others.

The contrast is vivid when compared with Steiner's pencil drafts for *Since You Went Away*, his next and final film for David O. Selznick. Though Steiner's work was again bolstered by assistants, the sense of play, determination, and collaboration that arose during *Gone with the Wind* was conspicuously absent, perhaps because the new team lacked many of Steiner's longtime associates, including Hugo Friedhofer and orchestrator Bernhard Kaun. It is also clear that Steiner had lost patience with Selznick, who was repeatedly requesting rewrites. The details of this production are discussed further below.

Gone with the Wind was clearly a special project for Steiner as well as for his collaborators. Taken together—the marginalia, the various skirmishes with Selznick, the substantial contributions of Friedhofer, Deutsch, Roemheld, and Nussbaum, and the music itself—indicate that the score for *Gone with the Wind* is hardly the accomplishment of a single individual, but rather a remarkable feat effected by a team of individuals, whose intertwining relationships and antagonisms shaped one of the most famous Hollywood scores.

¹⁰⁵ Kate Daubney, *Max Steiner's Now, Voyager: A Film Score Guide* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2000), 16.

Waxman and Selznick Turn a New Leaf in *Rebecca* (1940)

*Mrs. Van Hopper: Most girls would give their eyes for a chance to see Monte.
Maxim de Winter: Wouldn't that rather defeat the purpose?*

For a film many producers would give their eyes to have made, *Rebecca* is all the more remarkable for having been Selznick's side project as he worked on *Gone with the Wind*. This helps to explain why, in contrast to the pages and pages of scoring notes generated for *GWTW*, there are relatively few scoring notes from Selznick on *Rebecca*. Yet even if Selznick's obsession with *GWTW* limited his attentions, he was anything but the distant producer. During preproduction and filming he was especially involved, monitoring the work of his newly contracted director, Alfred Hitchcock. When Hitchcock submitted an alarmingly misguided adaptation of Daphne du Maurier's book, Selznick stepped in to ensure that proper changes were made before the screenplay entered production.¹⁰⁶

Rebecca's import, however, extends beyond simply being a good film made alongside *GWTW*. *Rebecca* is markedly different from anything Selznick had made before. That difference is emphasized by music. Beginning with *Rebecca*, many of the characters in Selznick films would be psychologically troubled beings, ruled by repressed fears and irrational desires to which the audience is only afforded a limited explanation. Music in these films conveys to the audience the strange impulses that drive and haunt these characters, whether they be Maxim and his wife in *Rebecca*, the shell-shocked soldiers in *Since You Went Away* (1944) and *I'll Be Seeing You* (1944), "JB" in *Spellbound* (1945), Pearl in *Duel in the Sun* (1946), Anthony Keane in *The Paradine*

¹⁰⁶ Leonard Leff, *Hitchcock and Selznick: The Rich and Strange Collaboration of Alfred Hitchcock and David O. Selznick in Hollywood* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 45–46.

Case (1947), or Jennie and Eben Adams in *Portrait of Jennie* (1948). Compare this with Scarlett in *Gone with the Wind*, whose every thought and emotion can be read straight from her eyes. Steiner's music gives voice to her emotions, but it does not reveal anything hidden or submerged for the simple reason that nothing in Scarlett is. *Rebecca*, on the other hand, with its story of an alluring, dead wife whose memory dominates her widower husband and his second wife, is a wholly different world. Here music speaks when characters refuse or are unable. *Rebecca* also carried another mark of distinction—it was the Selznick film that would inspire Franz Waxman's and Lou Forbes's most impressive work.

As with his previous films, Selznick appears to have drafted some scoring notes, but they are presently lost.¹⁰⁷ There is no indication from the extant documentation that even Waxman¹⁰⁸ saw the producer's notes, which were drafted by late November. Instead Waxman brought his own notes to Selznick in early December, much as he had done on the aborted *Tom Sawyer* score.¹⁰⁹ Before submitting the notes to the producer, Waxman also showed them to director Hitchcock, who approved the composer's outline.¹¹⁰ Jack

¹⁰⁷ In a memo from late November, Selznick asks Barbara Keon to pass on his scoring notes to Hitchcock. These notes have not been found. Though Selznick later complains that one scene completely goes against the style he had outlined in his notes, there is no other indication in the sources that others saw these notes. Perhaps they disappeared with Hitchcock (DOS to Barbara Keon, 28 November 1939, HRC 172:3).

¹⁰⁸ Much like *The Young in Heart*, Selznick had initially planned to hire Steiner for *Rebecca*. Had Steiner been hired, however, he would have had to work on *GWTW* and *Rebecca* simultaneously. Quickly realizing the improbability of this scheme, Selznick turned to Waxman.

¹⁰⁹ Franz Waxman, "TOM SAWYER, Music Notes," 22 October 1937, HRC 3670:2.

¹¹⁰ Jack Sullivan asserts that these notes were made in close consultation with director Hitchcock and offer "one of the clearest revelations of how Hitchcock worked with a composer" (Jack Sullivan, *Hitchcock's Music* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 67). While it is possible Sullivan may be drawing upon material not available to the author, the director's relationship appears much vaguer. In a memo attached to the document itself, Waxman writes: "This is a rough outline on the musical scoring of REBECCA with a few ideas of mine. I saw Mr. Hitchcock on Saturday morning before he left for Palm Springs, and he agreed with my suggestions" (Franz Waxman to DOS, 2 December 1939, HRC 172:3). Waxman's language here does not suggest a lengthy or involved conference. In a memo from the day before, Esther Roberts reports to Mr. Klune:

Sullivan describes Waxman's notes as "voluminous," an enthusiastic adjective for a five-page document, but Waxman's words do offer a rare glimpse of how one of Selznick's composers envisioned the score *before* facing Selznick's outline and suggestions.¹¹¹ Many of the ideas Waxman initially presents are realized in the film itself, even in instances when Waxman's intended music is altered through the dubbing process. Waxman's music introducing the unnerving Mrs. Danvers was replaced by musical material drawn from elsewhere in the score,¹¹² but Waxman's idea that tension could be enhanced through music that "changes with Mrs. Danvers' appearance—stops with dropping of gloves—and with the picking up of the gloves the music slowly sneaks in reestablishing former mood," is preserved through Forbes's sensitive dubbing.¹¹³ The following scene between Mrs. Danvers and "I" (the nameless heroine of *Rebecca* doomed to live in the dead Rebecca's shadow) is also full of musical insertions not planned by

Mr. Waxman started running the picture at 11 o'clock this morning, broke for lunch, then continued to run until 5:30 this afternoon, when we were interrupted by Mr. Hitchcock. We ran the picture from the beginning thru the Confession Scene, and I sent a complete set of notes to Mr. Hitchcock. Tomorrow morning Mr. Waxman is meeting Mr. Hitchcock at Mr. H's home, and will come here directly afterward (about 10:30) to complete running the picture (Esther Roberts to Mr. Klune, 1 December 1938, HRC 3669:19).

While it is clear from this note that Hitchcock had the opportunity to study Waxman's notes, it is less clear that Hitchcock contributed anything to their formulation. Roberts's memo also indicates that the notes Hitchcock inspected only covered the beginning of the film to the Confession Scene. This perhaps explains why in the notes themselves Waxman writes "check with Mr. Selznick and Mr. Hitchcock" for a scene *following* the confession. On page two of the notes, Waxman enters a similar question, this time just addressed to Mr. Selznick. The question as to what Hitchcock may have contributed to the document—if anything—remains an open question.

One musical connection related to the director that is more indirect though better documented was his suggestion to reference Norman O'Neil's incidental music for *Mary Rose*, an idea Selznick pursued seriously for *Rebecca* and again considered for *Portrait of Jennie*. See Sullivan 66–67 and Appendix B of this dissertation.

¹¹¹ Sullivan, 63.

¹¹² The passage in question here actually combines mm. 116–119 and mm. 32–39 from a later cue, titled "Rebecca's Room."

¹¹³ Franz Waxman, "Music Notes REBECCA," 1 December 1939, HRC 172:3.

Waxman,¹¹⁴ but Forbes does follow the composer's instruction that "on Mrs. Danvers mentioning the 'first Mrs. de Winter' we hear the first haunting strains of the Rebecca theme." Obscuring such an important entrance would have seriously disrupted the score's thematic structure and Forbes thankfully sidesteps this pitfall.

In other instances the composer's wishes were not always followed. Waxman's description of the music for the confession scene in which Maxim admits he hated Rebecca is the most detailed passage from his notes. Waxman's three paragraphs, eagerly outlining ominous timpani rumbles and a "ghostly pianissimo" have been reprinted elsewhere.¹¹⁵ No one, however, points out that the last paragraph, when Waxman argues that "I am sure the following scene where 'I' restores Maxim's confidence...will be twice as effective without music, especially after the long and stirring dramatic sequence which has just ended," is at odds with the film. Rarely does a composer give such an impassioned plea for *no* music, but in this case Waxman's request was denied, presumably by Selznick. It is a change for the better: "I"'s encouragement of Maxim marked a crucial turning point in the drama—the first time in the whole film that "I" is given enough information to help her husband—and "I"'s self-actualization needed some form of musical release. Waxman responded by dropping in a bit of music he knew would please the producer: the melodramatically cathartic "Regeneration" from *The Young in Heart* (see figure 3.4).

Waxman's notes have been acknowledged by commentators, but five other sets of notes pertaining to the score have not. Two sets of notes precede the recording of

¹¹⁴ For this sequence, Forbes inserts excerpts from "George-Anne" from *The Young in Heart*, "He Goes to Court," from *Suicide Club*, and "Brink is Back," from *On Borrowed Time*. All are scores by Franz Waxman.

¹¹⁵ Sullivan, 67–68 and Christopher Husted, "The Scoring of Rebecca," *Franz Waxman's Rebecca* (Varèse Sarabande Film Classics, 302066 160 2, 2002), 9.

Waxman's music and include further instructions. The first set by Lou Forbes is only two pages long and covers the film from the beginning up to the Manderley Ball. Forbes's notes are modeled after Waxman's and even echo some of Waxman's phrases, but the outline is clearly intended for assembling the preview track and makes mention of possible cues for inclusion from *Gone with the Wind* and *Intermezzo*.¹¹⁶ A second set is dated 6 March 1940, four months after Waxman's original notes and one day before recording began. The notes are curiously subtitled "Music Notes Resume," suggesting perhaps that the notes are an elaboration of Selznick's "lost" notes from November 1939. If this is the case, old material is interpolated with new suggestions arising from a conference between Waxman and Selznick held on 9 February 1940 in which the composer played excerpts for the producer. The ten-page document includes many suggestions and reactions from Selznick that refer both to Waxman's proposed themes and Forbes's preview track.¹¹⁷ Examples include:

Mr. Selznick thinks that the preview music track over the prologue was excellent and hopes he will be just as crazy about Mr. Waxman's score.

In the following scenes of "Courtship" dissolves [between Maxim and "I"], score Mrs. Van Hopper, "I" Cinderella theme, and new light romantic light love theme for "I" and Maxim, letting audience be aware that you are deliberately repeating...individual themes.¹¹⁸

For the scene in which "I" enters Rebecca's bedroom and encounters the creepy Mrs. Danvers, Selznick evidently offered a rare compliment: "Music gorgeous as played by Mr. Waxman for Mr. Selznick."¹¹⁹ Hopefully Selznick conveyed the content of these notes verbally to Waxman at the conference. Receiving the lengthy document one day

¹¹⁶ Lou Forbes, 15 December 1939, HRC 3669:19.

¹¹⁷ Payroll documents indicate that Edward Kilenyi, Roy Hawthorne, and George Adams assisted Forbes's with the selection of music for the preview track ("Musicians," HRC 3669:13).

¹¹⁸ "REBECCA Music Notes Resume," 6 March 1940, HRC 3669:13, 1-2.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 7.

before recording would have placed quite a strain on the composer and his orchestrators, though such demands were not out of place in Hollywood. Strain or not, some of Selznick's requested changes helped more than even the producer envisioned.

For the film's opening scene following the Manderely prologue, when Maxim stands poised at the top of an ocean cliff and "I" sees him for the first time, Waxman planned to cut the music on the shot of Maxim staring over the cliff's edge, as Maxim apparently contemplates suicide. Forbes's outline essentially followed this, noting that the music would end when "I" calls out to Maxim. Selznick differed, requesting that "Final score should continue *throughout* entire scene, not stopping on "I"'s exclamation, as previously suggested."¹²⁰ Waxman whipped out another sheet of manuscript paper and added a thinly scored extension to his pencil draft that fulfilled Selznick's request while preserving the effect Waxman had created in his original effort, in which a loud tutti chord ends abruptly, rendering an orchestral gasp.¹²¹ Instead of breaking off into silence, though, Waxman now set a high, quietly sustained violin tremolo to which he added a lyrical clarinet solo playing a fragment of what later becomes Maxim and "I"'s theme. Following this, Waxman rounds out the scene with a lushly scored portion of the Manderley theme that unexpectedly reverses melodic direction, reaching upward hopefully instead of drooping downward, as it does during the preceding prologue. These additional bars of music bring much to this scene and the film as a whole. Without the music, the meeting is only a brief, awkward exchange, with "I" stuttering apologies and Maxim spitting reprimands. The music adds dimension to the exchange, with the tentative introduction of their love theme portending greater things to come (it also

¹²⁰ Ibid., 1.

¹²¹ Franz Waxman, "Opening Scene," *Rebecca*, FWP Oversize Box 91b.

balances the closing bars of the score, which feature a much fuller rendition of their theme) and the transformed Manderley theme anticipating the broader changes “I” will bring to Manderley and Max’s gloomy existence there.

The remaining three sets of notes were drafted during and after Waxman had recorded his score and are responses to screenings of the film that contained portions of Waxman’s score dubbed in along with remaining passages from Forbes’s preview track. Much of Waxman’s music was deemed exemplary, but Selznick had grown attached to Forbes’s preview track. This, in combination with time constraints, meant the producer did not ask for rewrites. He just ordered Forbes’s preview tracks to be dubbed back into the film. For the scene in which Maxim and “I” share an uncomfortable first dinner at Manderley, sitting at opposite ends of a very massive table, Waxman wrote a miniature of musical dysfunction. Two inner-voices diverge chromatically as a rhythmically erratic melody wends its way downward two and a half octaves from g-sharp³ to d¹, ending badly on a G dominant-seventh chord with an added G-sharp (see figure 3.8).¹²² A baffled Selznick wondered how anyone working for him could have failed to get the memo: “DOS very disappointed in music in dining room. It is all wrong and he can’t understand how Lou could let it go through when notes were so explicit as to what he wanted (‘Manderley Pomp Music’).”¹²³ Musical cleverness aside, the producer did not want music to interpret the scene’s emotional content, but rather reinforce the sumptuousness of the set. Forbes substituted an excerpt from *Fauntleroy*, duly labeling it “Pomp and Pageantry” in the cue sheet.

¹²² Franz Waxman, “Dinner Scene,” *Rebecca*, HRC 4037:1.

¹²³ “Rebecca, Dubbing and Scoring Notes,” 12 March 1940, HRC 3669:13.

Figure 3.8 Waxman, *Rebecca*, “Dinner Scene.”

The image displays a musical score for the "Dinner Scene" from the film *Rebecca*, composed by Max Steiner. The score is presented in two systems, each with three staves: a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (treble and bass clefs). The music is in common time (C) and features a key signature of one sharp (F#). The vocal line begins with a rest in the first measure, followed by a melodic phrase starting on a half note G#4. The piano accompaniment provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines in both hands. Dynamics include *pp* (pianissimo) in the vocal line and *pp* in the piano accompaniment. The score concludes with a double bar line at the end of the second system.

Another substitution involved music accompanying the scenes with Maxim’s estates manager Frank Crawley, a kind but pathetic figure who falls slightly in love with whomever Maxim marries. Waxman had subcontracted Crawley’s scenes to Hans Sommer, much as Steiner had farmed out cues to Friedhofer and Deutsch on *Gone with the Wind*. Sommer composed a genial and generic theme for Crawley that failed to satisfy Selznick. For the two major scenes in which Frank and “T” converse, Sommer’s music was replaced by excerpts from Steiner’s *A Star is Born*. Because one of Steiner’s passages did not contain an easily identifiable character theme, Forbes labeled the

passage “Frank and I” in the cue sheet, a misleading designation that has since led commentators to assume Steiner composed the theme specifically for *Rebecca*.¹²⁴ In another sequence, a cue by Waxman titled “Beatrice” (named for the secondary character dominating the scene), is replaced by Steiner’s “Janet Waltz” from *Star*, presumably because Selznick had a special fondness for the melody. He would have Steiner bring it back a third time in *Since You Went Away*. There is also a certain intertextual logic to this selection: in *Star* the theme characterizes a young woman aspiring to be a great actress. In this scene in *Rebecca* Beatrice and “I” discuss how “I” might better play her role as lady of Manderley. In addition to these substitutions from Steiner’s catalog of the themes, Forbes also inserted a number of Waxman’s works from earlier M-G-M scores, patching together compelling background music for “I” and Mrs. Danvers’s first scene, thereby enlivening a cue Selznick had initially faulted for being too static.¹²⁵

While one might criticize Selznick for this overly anxious alternating between original tracks and Forbes’s preview material, Waxman—perhaps taking inspiration from Forbes’s preview music—also indulged in borrowing from his previous scores, reusing multiple passages from *The Young in Heart* and one prominent passage from *On Borrowed Time* (1939) in *Rebecca*.¹²⁶ Importantly, Selznick’s requested substitutions did not diminish major cues or highly exposed passages. Waxman handled these moments in the spotlight quite well, such that intensely eerie cues like “Morning Room” and

¹²⁴ Tony Thomas, *Music for the Movies* (South Brunswick: A.S. Barnes and Company, 1973), 78; and Sullivan, 74.

¹²⁵ “Rebecca, Dubbing and Scoring Notes,” 12 March 1940, HRC 3669:13, 4.

¹²⁶ Waxman incorporates passages from *The Young in Heart* into “Second Tennis Montage,” “After the Ball,” and “Telephone Rings.” An excerpt from the cue “Pud Running Away” in *On Borrowed Time* is also woven into “Rebecca’s Room.”

“Rebecca’s Room” stand with minimal edits.¹²⁷ For “Morning Room,” a cue that plays when “I” enters a room saturated with Rebecca’s presence, Waxman incorporated an interesting effect that he later described in a speech on film music:

I set up a normal orchestra playing the accompanying music for the living characters on the screen—whereas for the dead Rebecca I set up an individual group of mechanical instruments—a ghost orchestra, so to speak. It consisted of three instruments—an electrical organ and two novachords. A novachord is a newly invented instrument which produces its sound by means of radio tubes.¹²⁸ It has a peculiar sound of unreality—of something that you cannot define.¹²⁹

The ghost orchestra, clearly identified in Waxman’s pencil drafts and the piano-conductor scores, returns in many cues, even in those distributed to assistants Sommer and Robert Russell Bennett, the latter playfully identifying the ensemble as “Rebecca’s Dibbuk orchestra.”¹³⁰ In “Morning Room,” the distant whistling of the novachord (a sound that simultaneously looks back to the cinema organ and ahead to the theremin in Rózsa’s *Spellbound* score) sends shivers down the spine, with Rebecca’s chromatic theme winding serpentine-like through shifting chains of nonfunctional seventh and ninth chords, pulsed softly by strings (see figure 3.9). The steady D-flat pedal, rearticulated on off beats, establishes a foundation for the sole purpose of emphasizing the other lines’ dissociation from it. Chords wheel slowly through tonal space much like the camera perspective, gliding disembodied about the room as “I,” visibly uncomfortable, attempts to gain her bearings. Without a word of dialogue, music and visuals create delectable tension, until the splitting ring of a telephone shatters the aura (m. 8), giving Waxman a chance to build it all over again—this time accompanying the unanticipated arrival of

¹²⁷ In each of these cues, several measures were cut to match the scene length after some footage had been excised. Fortunately the cuts are discreet.

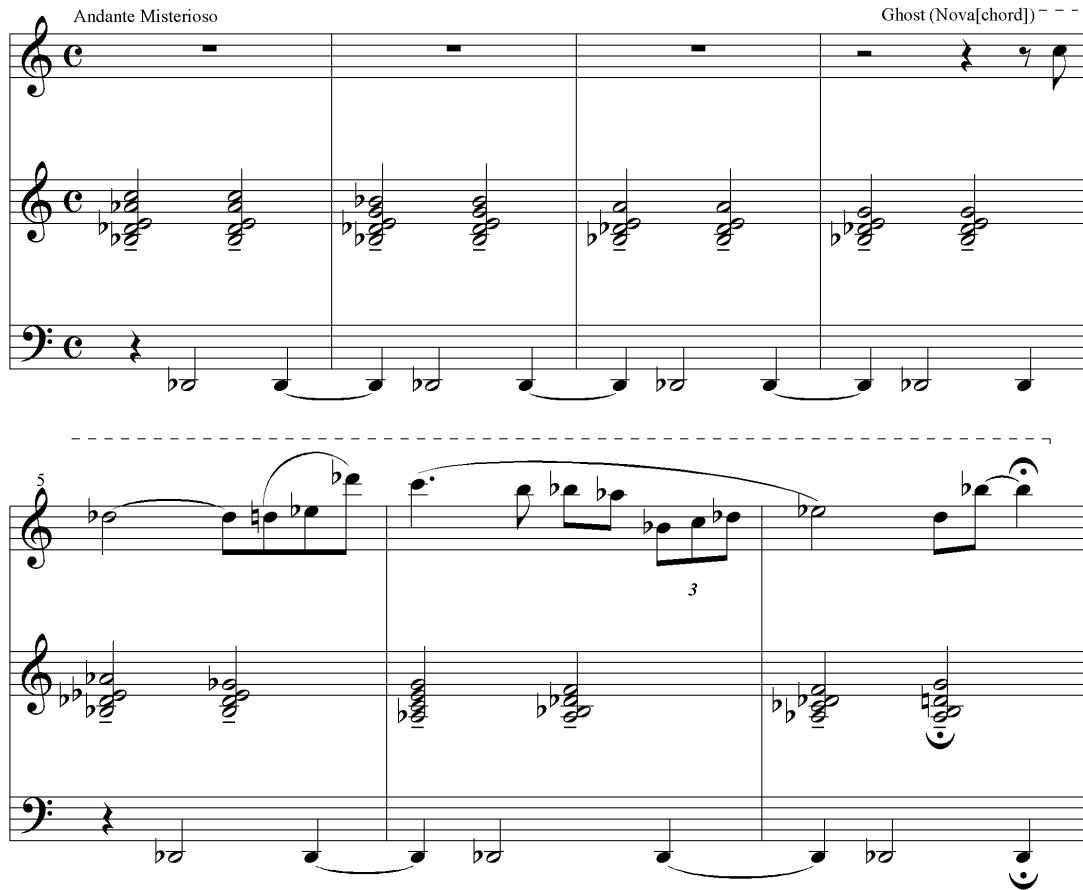
¹²⁸ The novachord was invented and patented by Laurens Hammond (inventor of the Hammond organ) and was manufactured between 1939 and 1942. The instrument had a six-octave range and could play chords as well as individual notes.

¹²⁹ Franz Waxman, “History of Motion Picture Music,” HRC 172:3, 5.

¹³⁰ Robert Russell Bennett, “The Boathouse,” *Rebecca*, FWP Oversize Box 91A.

Mrs. Danvers. The rest of Waxman’s cue is a similar masterpiece of paranoia and unease. He would return to this cue again when faced with a later psychological drama, Selznick’s *The Paradine Case*.

Figure 3.9 Waxman, *Rebecca*, “Morning Room.”



Selznick had no intention of tampering with these expertly wrought passages. Instead his calls for change addressed the corners of Waxman’s score, seeking out bits of slack that could be improved through smart substitutions from Forbes. This is hardly sabotage, just someone intent on having the best musical-visual effect at all times. Selznick explained his rationale for these sorts of decisions in an unsent letter written over twenty years later:

Of course [Bernard] Herrmann should be heard before any underscoring is taken out; but...musicians notoriously hear only their music, which is as it should be; ...it is the *producer's* function, assuming there is a producer, to decide when the underscoring is damaging to the total effect, either because it is the wrong music, or because of any one of a dozen other reasons, including perhaps that it should not be in at all. You also have not learned, as believe me you will, not to judge music by what it sounds like separately, on the scoring stage or in the projection room. You are not releasing a score; you are releasing a *picture*.¹³¹

Waxman, for his part, supported this outlook, remarking in a speech delivered after

Rebecca's release:

A motion picture score should be noticed just as much as you notice the other elements that make up a motion picture—like dialogue, camera movement, sets, costumes, etc. All these elements should form an harmonious effect to deepen the scenes and to intensify the characters and their conflicts.... One of the most talented men for balancing these various elements of a motion picture is David O. Selznick.... His interest and painstaking work for the most minute detail in the production of a motion picture is stimulating to the creative artist.¹³²

Even though Waxman's score is compromised in the film, *Rebecca* arguably benefits, with Forbes's sensitive work as music editor helping to both showcase Waxman's original work while also incorporating preexistent material as discreetly as possible.

When Hitchcock was loaned to producer Walter Wanger for a picture, Selznick recommended Forbes, noting that:

He has the unique combination of a very fine scoring talent as well as a business ability.... He was also enormously valuable on the "Gone with the Wind" score [and] Hitch knows something of how helpful he was to us in straightening out the scoring problems of "Rebecca."¹³³

Selznick would later hire Forbes back for *Since You Went Away*, but tensions and problems on this film's score—many unrelated to Forbes—would foul this final collaboration. Instead, *Rebecca* would stand as Forbes's most exposed and substantial contribution to Selznick International Pictures.

¹³¹ DOS to Henry Weinstein, 14 November 1961, not sent, reprinted in Behlmer, *Memo*, 484.

¹³² Waxman, "History of Motion Picture Music," 4.

¹³³ DOS to Walter Wanger, 27 March 1940, HRC 298:4.

Selznick and Steiner's Final Collaboration, *Since You Went Away* (1944)

During the postproduction of *Gone with the Wind*, Selznick had considered replacing Max Steiner when the composer claimed he was unable to finish the score by the deadline. For *Since You Went Away* the tables turned, with Selznick calling in Steiner to replace Alexandre Tansman. Unlike Steiner, Tansman was perfectly able to complete his score; Selznick just did not like the music. Steiner's replacement score, which would rely heavily on themes he had used in earlier Selznick pictures, would win *SYWA*'s only Academy Award, marking the first time Selznick's company¹³⁴ had received the award for best music. Though Steiner expressed ambivalence about the score, the Oscar represented a triumph for Selznick. It reaffirmed his hunch that *SYWA* benefited from a musical accompaniment drastically different from the one Tansman had offered. It also legitimated the producer's involvement and—when necessary—interference in the scoring process. There was also a less foreseeable consequence; *SYWA* would be the final collaboration between Steiner and Selznick.

Since You Went Away proved to be an intense, emotional drain on the producer for several reasons. For one, the film followed after Selznick's relatively long hiatus from production. *Rebecca* had been released in 1940; *Since You Went Away* opened in 1944. Before *Rebecca*, Selznick had produced at least one feature film every year from 1928 to 1940. (The sole exception is 1931, when he was shifting between studios; he produced over twenty pictures at RKO the following year.) The break was needed after the exhausting experiences of *Gone with the Wind* and *Rebecca*, but the time away hardly

¹³⁴ Between *Rebecca* and *Since You Went Away*, the producer reorganized his production company, changing the title from "Selznick International Pictures" to "Selznick Productions."

diminished audience expectations for the next Selznick feature. The producer's self-enforced standards were even higher. With *GWTW* and *Rebecca* he had become the only producer to win back-to-back Academy Awards for Best Picture. As Thomson insightfully notes, "make a success and you are no longer simply in the art of making films but in the business of making successes."¹³⁵ Selznick's next project could not be modest or typical.

Instead, *Since You Went Away* would transform the typical into the universal by depicting life on the American home front as an epic saga. The premise was simple. Father has left for war; mother (Claudette Colbert) and two daughters (Jennifer Jones and Shirley Temple) learn to live and serve America in his absence. They take on a boarder (Monty Woolley), the elder daughter works in a hospital and falls in love with a serviceman (Robert Walker), the mother takes a job in a factory, and the younger daughter collects rubbish for reuse. Meanwhile, the family attends dances, makes new friends, loses loved ones to war, defends American ideals in the face of skeptics, and suffers the perpetual angst of uncertainty—will the family ever be complete again? As one reviewer noted, *SYWA* "lingers briefly on plot, long and lovingly on incident and character."¹³⁶ Lovingly indeed—the episodic story spans three hours. At any other studio such indulgent length would have been checked and edited down by half, but this was a film by the producer of *Gone with the Wind*. *SYWA* even lightly echoed *GWTW*'s narrative by filming a story around a war. Instead of fighting and gore, one witnesses war's devastation away from the battlefield: in the hospitals, in the home, and primarily through women's perspectives. But whereas *GWTW* was a historical epic in which

¹³⁵ David Thomson, *The Whole Equation: A History of Hollywood* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), 12.

¹³⁶ Herb Sterne, "Since You Went Away," *Rob Wagner's Script* 30, no. 684 (29 July 1944), 14, reprinted in *Selected Film Criticism, 1941–1950*, ed. Anthony Slide (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1983), 211.

characters are swept along by momentous events beyond their control, the world of *SYWA* was—as contemporaneous circumstances demanded—more stable. The American home, the film’s foreword assures, is an “unconquerable” fortress, a gentle indication that much of what follows will be secure, familiar, and static. Yes, the family will adjust to financial hardship, service for the cause, and intermittent tragedy, but otherwise life will carry on. As opposed to *GWTW*, the pressures of war would not damage or fundamentally alter the American way.

The film’s message—that the American home was capable of weathering World War II—foregrounds another reason for the film’s draining effect on its producer. *SYWA* was Selznick’s personal contribution to the war effort. (In addition to producing the saga, he also wrote the screenplay, adapting Margaret Buell Wilder’s epistolary novel.) As biographers Thomson and Haver relate, Selznick wanted very much to be involved with the war effort, but was ill-equipped for the military (classified 4F on account of flatfeet, nearsightedness, and age) and not savvy in dealing with Washington officials.¹³⁷ When Washington failed to respond to Selznick’s ideas and offers of service, he turned to his most familiar outlet: Hollywood prestige features. Consequently, *SYWA* was not only Selznick’s attempt to match the previous achievements of *GWTW* and *Rebecca*, the film was also an exercise in fighting the good fight as best he knew how—through a sprawling film that celebrated American strength in the face of adversity. Any short cut or attempt to spare expense would be, in the eyes of the producer, unpatriotic. The composer selected for *SYWA* would have a lot to live up to.

¹³⁷ As Thomson relates, “David was an executive, an ideas man, a dictator, and it was on that basis that he started promoting himself in Washington....[He] never recognized a need for patience with bureaucracy. He assumed the war would be lucky to get him....To the authorities, it must have sounded as if David wanted a plum deal, his own theater of combat” (Thomson, 183). See also Haver, 333.

As with *GWTW*, Selznick spent a long time considering different composers for the *SYWA*. In May of 1943, the producer's initial preference was Herbert Stothart, the M-G-M music director with whom Selznick had worked regularly in the mid-1930s.¹³⁸ The two had just reunited on a special war-related event that took place in April 1943: Selznick had co-chaired a China Relief benefit held for an audience of 30,000 at the Hollywood Bowl with honored guest Madame Chiang (who stayed with the Selznicks) and a pageant titled "China: A Symphonic Narrative," music by Stothart.¹³⁹ Selznick hoped to continue working with Stothart on his present film project, but M-G-M's steady stream of features kept Stothart occupied. An impatient Selznick explained that he wanted Stothart on the job as soon as possible: "I am anxious to have the score written during production, from the script and from assembled sequences, so that we don't have that usual long period of delay after a picture is finished, writing the score, (with the alternative of a poor job that has to be rushed)..."¹⁴⁰ This was by now a familiar (and unrealistic) expectation of the producer and it would not work with a music director in charge of a major, bustling music department.

Selznick soon shifted his attention:

I'm inclined to think we might get a better result from [Bernard] Hermann...if only because he presumably would be available to us all through the picture, whereas Stothart would probably have to handle three or four pictures simultaneously. ... You will recall we had some dealings with him at one time to do the score of "Jane Eyre" before we sold the script.¹⁴¹

¹³⁸ DOS to Daniel O'Shea, 26 May 1943, HRC 600:7.

¹³⁹ See Thomson, *Showman*, 386–391.

¹⁴⁰ DOS to Daniel O'Shea, 26 May 1943, HRC 600:7.

¹⁴¹ DOS to Ray Klune, 6 August 1943, HRC 600:7.

Selznick continued to waffle between Stothart and Herrmann while also briefly considering Erich Korngold and Aaron Copland.¹⁴² A suggestion from Ray Klune to consider the lesser known Arthur Goodman was rejected soundly by the producer: “I don’t think on SINCE YOU WENT AWAY we should monkey around with any new people or take any chances.”¹⁴³

Selznick soon forgot his own advice. Arthur Goodman did not get the job, but Alexandre Tansman did. An émigré concert composer from Poland who moved to Paris in his twenties, the prolific Tansman became friends with Ravel, Stravinsky, members of *Les Six*, and even Charlie Chaplin. Chaplin would later prove instrumental in arranging Tansman’s escape from France to America in 1941.¹⁴⁴ At the time Selznick hired Tansman, the composer had only worked on one Hollywood film, *Flesh and Fantasy* (1943). In January 1944, Selznick asked for a list of available composers, along with their salient credits.¹⁴⁵ Tansman (misspelled as “Tunsmán”) was on the list Selznick received, along with a note indicating Tansman’s status as a freelance composer. Attracted to a composer unencumbered by studio obligations, Selznick hired Tansman to write the music and also engaged Charles Previn, a music director at Universal, to oversee Tansman’s work. Tansman prominence as a prolific concert composer was also a draw for Selznick, who welcomed—at least in theory—the involvement of prestigious concert composers on his productions. For the score of *GWTW*, the producer briefly pursued Walter Damrosch, who in return seriously considered the project. For *SYWA*, Selznick

¹⁴² See DOS to Taft, 21 December 1943 and DOS to Taft, 3 December 1943, HRC 199:5.

¹⁴³ DOS to Ray Klune, 30 August, 1943, HRC 600:7.

¹⁴⁴ Jill Timmons and Sylvain Frémaux, “Portrait of Alexandre Tansman,” *Polish Music Journal* 1, no. 1 (Summer 1998), http://www.usc.edu/dept/polish_music/PMJ/issue/1.1.98/tansman_part2.html, accessed July 19, 2009.

¹⁴⁵ DOS to Francey Taft, 11 January 1944, HRC 600:7.

had wanted to engage Deems Taylor, “an old friend of mine,” as a musical consultant whose name would lend prestige to the picture:

Candidly and confidentially, while I feel that Mr. Taylor would be of great help to whomever does the score, what we have in mind is the publicity value, which hopefully would include, incidentally, some plugs on his radio program but which I also feel we could publicize widely in other ways. I also feel it would give a certain little extra distinction to the picture.¹⁴⁶

Hiring Tansman, an established composer of symphonies, ballets, and operas, would similarly carry “a certain little extra distinction.” After Tansman had been hired, Selznick coached his publicist:

It must be borne in mind that Tansman’s position in the music world is so outstanding, and his reputation is such as a distinguished musician as to make the fact that he has written the score of great interest to music lovers. Among musicians and music lovers Tansman ranks head and shoulders over all the other men in Hollywood who are writing scores, most of whom have little or no position in the music world, however effective their work may be for motion pictures....I understand that...Tansman is the sixth most-often played composer...among all modern composers, including such men as Rachmaninoff, by symphony orchestras in this country.¹⁴⁷

Selznick was pleased that Tansman’s cultural cachet could be used for publicity, but the producer’s primary concern centered on Tansman’s ability to produce *film* music, not concert music. Aware of Tansman’s relative inexperience with Hollywood film—and Selznick’s films in particular—the producer made sure Tansman was duly indoctrinated. “I’m anxious for...Mr. and Mrs. Tansman (she is a very important collaborator with him) to see GONE WITH THE WIND tomorrow afternoon,” Selznick wrote in late February.¹⁴⁸ Selznick had more reason to be anxious when he received a letter from

¹⁴⁶ DOS to Harriett Flagg, 26 January 1944, HRC 600:7.

¹⁴⁷ DOS to Don King, 13 March 1944, HRC 199:15.

¹⁴⁸ DOS to Hal Kern, 25 February 1944, HRC 199:15.

Tansman in March. For a scene in which a Russian immigrant¹⁴⁹ extolls the great blessings of life in America to the film's central protagonist, the mother, Tansman had spent time researching American patriotic tunes to accompany the fervent monologue. He had found "The Liberty Song," with music by William Boyce:

I personally think it would be a good idea to use this theme for the underscoring of this scene, as it is supposed to be the first American patriotic song. The only thing—I don't know if and how far this song is familiar to the masses—it should be, as it is a historical song, but as it is quite old, I really am not sure about this.¹⁵⁰

Selznick's response to Tansman betrayed wariness:

As to the Liberty Song, it sounds excellent, but I am sure the public doesn't know it, and I think it depends on whether it has the feeling that we want for those who don't know it....If you have any doubt about it, I suggest that you and Mrs. Tansman come over and play it for me.¹⁵¹

Before sending this reply, however, Selznick had already sent off a memo expressing more serious misgivings to studio employee Johnston. "Would you please get together with Hal Kern immediately," wrote Selznick to Johnston,

and discuss with him my desire that the Tansman score of SYWA should not be done continuously but that the first session should be limited to whatever is the minimum required from a cost standpoint. Also it should, of course, be handled diplomatically and be kept between ourselves so as not to frighten or discourage Tansman. My purpose is to hear a couple reels of his music before he proceeds with the whole picture, so that if I am going to get any shocks or disappointments it will be limited to these few reels and I will know with the least possible delay whether or not I have to make a switch. I have the highest possible hopes for Tansman's work but I don't know enough about it not to want to be absolutely sure I am right about him before the whole picture is scored.¹⁵²

The handwriting was on the wall. Despite the composer's esteem in the world of music, Tansman was an unknown to the producer, and Selznick was having second thoughts

¹⁴⁹ The character part was played by the silent-era star Alla Nazimova, featured in Selznick's father's film, *War Brides* (1916). *Since You Went Away* was to be her final screen role.

¹⁵⁰ Alexandre Tansman to DOS, 11 March 1944, HRC 199:15. Tansman was unaware that William Boyce's melody had been originally composed for the 1759 song "Hearts of Oak," a British naval song; "The Liberty Song" was a later re-texting of the popular melody.

¹⁵¹ DOS to Alexandre Tansman, 15 March 1944, HRC 199:15.

¹⁵² DOS to Johnston, 13 March 1944, HRC 600:7.

about entrusting an enormous production to a composer relatively new to Hollywood.

Problems flared after an unsuccessful preview performance, which Tansman's agent, Abe

Meyer, attempted to patch over:

In fairness to all concerned, I think it is important that you have some facts regarding the music prepared for the preview.

Mr. Tansman's actual work on this consisted of only five or six minutes of music, principally arrangements of the song, "Together." This music was not timed to fit the actual scenes in the picture, but the work was done in accordance with the instructions received from your editing department. Tansman was simply requested to make several arrangements of "Together," given the approximate length of the whole scene and the general mood of the scene. Neither Tansman nor Charlie Previn were consulted for the application of these recordings to the scenes, and they had no idea s to how they were used.

I would also like to mention that the recording of the temporary track was made with a small orchestra at Mr. Selznick's explicit request and, naturally, these tracks could not sound as full as the other tracks which were made with much larger orchestras. It might be this comparison which caused Mr. Selznick's disappointment.

In view of these facts, it seems unfair to judge the work that Mr. Tansman has done for the final recording, especially since Mr. Selznick heard most of the themes, and I understand he was highly pleased with them...¹⁵³

In other words, Tansman had not received a fair trial. Reading between the lines, one can surmise that Tansman likely stumbled into a Selznick-specific pitfall. He had composed music *without* final footage, instead composing to a script or, if the agent is accurate, a document even less specific that only described "a general mood." For long, Selznick had wanted composition to take place before footage was complete in order to give composers more time and avoid the inevitable time crunch of post-production. Steiner and Newman had resisted, knowing how much a film could change between script and edited footage. Tansman did not, and suffered the consequences when Selznick viewed footage and music together in a work-in-progress state.

¹⁵³ Abe Meyer to Daniel O'Shea, 14 April 1944, HRC 600:7.

Tansman's three-stave sketches for individual cues are very bare. There are no instrumental indications (though such information may have been conveyed verbally to orchestrators), and no visual or dialogue cues. Timing markings are given at the end of the cue and occasionally within the cue, though these markings often follow regular subdivisions— :10, :15, :20—and do not seem to be aligned with music-visual synch points. Aside from reel numbers listed in the upper left-hand corner, there is no other indication that his music is film music or even orchestral music. Perhaps much of Tansman's score, like the trial score described above, had been composed without reference to finished footage, but it might also have stemmed from a broader aesthetic proclivity, a desire to convey a scene's general tone, but not match particular lines or shots to articulate important mid-scene developments. Tansman's sketches also reveal a penchant for quirky, "wrong-note" dissonances and idiosyncratic harmonies, such as chords built on stacked fourths.¹⁵⁴ While such techniques are employed for color and do not fundamentally undermine tonality, they may have unsettled a producer who associated such sonorities with humorous or spooky effects. Whether it was aesthetics or not proved moot. Selznick admitted that he liked Tansman's music, but did not like it as *film* music. Rejection came in late April, with Selznick sending a note in early May that began apologetically:

I ask you to accept my sincere regrets that I did not feel your excellent music for "Since You Went Away" was consistent with the dramatic and comedy effects I am after in the film. I have the highest regard for your obviously most extraordinary talent as a composer, but I feel that it was simply a case of

¹⁵⁴ Tansman's cue titled "Salvage Pile" is peppered with accented pairs of major seconds, set a fifth apart. (Steiner did not compose a replacement cue for this sequence, which shows the younger daughter organizing material in the pile before joining her elder sister to walk home. Consequently, the scene plays without music in the film.) For the cue titled "Shipyards," Tansman harmonizes a chorale melody (used in place of the originally proposed "Liberty Song") with collections of triads pitted against chords of stacked fourths.

miscasting; that the fault is my own; and that hopefully we may be associated in something else at a later date, something that is more up your alley, so to speak.¹⁵⁵

Then the tone changed, becoming more defensive.

I regret that so much of your time was taken, but I ask you to weigh against this the fact that we suffered considerable loss financially through not using the music in this picture, and—much more importantly—very valuable time. I am sure you cannot do other than agree that I went to every possible extreme and expense to try to convince myself that your music was what I was after, and to give it every opportunity—to an extent I have never heard of before—to have it presented properly. My judgment about it conceivably is quite wrong, but in the final analysis, right or wrong, I must follow my own judgment.

Warmest regards to Mrs. Tansman and yourself.¹⁵⁶

For a composer of Tansman's many accomplishments, the rejection came as a blow, confirming for the composer that Hollywood and its producers were no friends of the creative composer:

The film studio atmosphere was not terribly artistic. Generally, producers were rather uncultured people. There were a number of conventions used in film music. In a love scene, for example, they required divided strings in the high register. On the other hand, I chose to use French horns for such a scene—it was a big issue to have that accepted....Life in Hollywood was very artificial. It was not much fun for us.¹⁵⁷

Cultured or not, Selznick was not thinking about breaking conventions. He was working on a popular and patriotic film whose many constituent parts, including music, would ultimately reflect on *him*. For an independent producer who made a small number of highly expensive films, the need to succeed with the masses was even greater than for studio producers churning out many films each year. Selznick could not afford to experiment or gamble against his own instincts, regardless of how conservative or

¹⁵⁵ DOS to Alexandre Tansman, 5 May 1944, HRC 199:5.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Alexandre Tansman, "Diary of a 20th-Century Composer," compiled, translated, and introduced by Jill Timmons and Sylvain Frémaux, *Polish Music Journal* 1, no. 1 (Summer 1998), http://www.usc.edu/dept/polish_music/PMJ/issue/1.1.98/tansman_part2.html, accessed July 19, 2009.

unpredictable they may have appeared to outsiders. When Selznick anticipated trouble with Tansman's score, it was his responsibility—and his alone—to rectify the situation.

With little time left and a very long film in need of music, Selznick's acted reflexively. He hired Max Steiner. When Warner Bros. music director Leo Forbstein warned Selznick that borrowing Steiner on such short notice would not be cheap, the producer did not argue. "I suppose we are in a position that we will have to stand for it," Selznick wrote to studio manager O'Shea, "in any case I am certainly willing to spend it at this moment because I consider myself very lucky indeed to get him."¹⁵⁸ Selznick agreed to pay Warner Bros. an astronomical \$3300 a week for Steiner's services, and within days the producer was beginning to breathe easier.¹⁵⁹

I spent a couple of hours with Max Steiner this morning and before I left him we had come to an agreement on every single theme throughout the whole picture. He has done magnificent work in so short a time. I am wildly enthusiastic how the score is going to shape up. Thank heavens for Maxie.¹⁶⁰

Selznick was relieved, but now the pressure was on Steiner. For *Gone with the Wind*, Steiner had pleaded for the opportunity to work again with Selznick. For *Since You Went Away*, Steiner was drafted for the patriotic film: "This time Mr. Steiner did not ask to do the picture," explained Steiner's secretary Marie Teller, "but Mr. Selznick went direct to Mr. Jack Warner and borrowed him, as there is no work at the studio for him for several weeks."¹⁶¹ While it was flattering to be the composer called upon when disaster strikes, the reality of having to replace another's work (as Steiner had done for *The Most Dangerous Game*), do a better job, and accomplish it in less time, was not appealing.

¹⁵⁸ DOS to Daniel O'Shea, 29 April 1944, HRC 600:7.

¹⁵⁹ The contract for Steiner's loan-out to Selznick is dated 11 May 1944 and shows that Steiner had already begun working on the score on 8 May 1944. See HRC 600:7.

¹⁶⁰ DOS to Daniel O'Shea, 12 May 1944, HRC 600:7.

¹⁶¹ Marie Teller to Louise Steiner, 25 May 1944, MSC Box 1, Folder 10.

Steiner's personal troubles made the task even more difficult. His father was dying and had been hospitalized, Steiner himself was suffering from a back tumor that required surgery, and his marriage to Louise was breaking up. He would receive divorce papers in September.

Meanwhile Selznick, though grateful for Steiner's presence, had more instructions, requested changes, and constructive criticism. He just could not help himself. The producer had already generated a stack of notes for Tansman and he continued to add to the pile as Steiner worked. The meeting between composer and producer that had elicited Selznick's "Thank heavens for Maxie" exclamation also produced a short set of notes titled "Reminders for Max Steiner." The single page offers a review of their conference, with instructions for selected scenes of the film and a list of associative themes.¹⁶² The conference notes foreground three important characteristics of the score.

First, six of the nine themes are associated with pairs of characters.¹⁶³ Only Fidelity, the family's maid (played by Hattie McDaniel, the sole African American cast member), the boarder (Monty Woolley), and the family dog have individual themes. The remaining themes delineate and emphasize relationships among family and friends. It is an unusual approach that reinforces an important message: America's great resource is the stability and resilience of its social framework. The thematic structure of the score also reveals implicit exclusion and stratification. Though Fidelity is treated

¹⁶² "Since You Went Away" Music Notes, B[arbara] K[leon], 12 May 1944, HRC 509:4.

¹⁶³ The six themes associated with pairs are the "Anne-Tim [Mother-Absent Father]" theme, the "Tim-Girls" theme, the "Tony [friend of the family]-Anne" theme, "Jane [eldest daughter]-Tony" theme, and the "Jane-Bill [boyfriend]" theme. The notes also indicate that Steiner's original "Jane-Bill" theme was to be used instead as the "Jane-Tony" theme, with Steiner's theme from *They Died with Their Boots On* filling in for the "Jane-Bill" theme.

sympathetically (“you’re just like my own child,” she declares to the younger daughter in an early scene), her theme emphasizes racial difference. Unlike the boarder, who has a theme for himself *and* a theme pairing him with the younger daughter, Fidelia is not musically linked to anyone. In addition, her theme’s prominent blue notes and swung eighth notes set it apart from the rest of the diatonic, straight note themes.¹⁶⁴

Consequently Fidelia’s music simultaneously reinforces her relationship to the family (she at least *has* a theme) while denying her integration.

Secondly, the conference notes include directions for featuring familiar melodies, a penchant of Selznick’s that was familiar to Steiner. “Together” (Buddy De Sylva, Lew Brown, and Ray Henderson) was to play an important role in the film, evoking wife Anne Hilton’s memories of her absent husband through diegetic and nondiegetic settings.

“Together” was *their* song, and so the melody becomes a metaphorical representation of their relationship: separated by war, the husband and wife remain united by their favorite song. The popular hit of 1928 would work nostalgically on characters as well as audience, much like “As Time Goes By” (Herman Hupfeld) in *Casablanca*, another film on which Steiner worked.¹⁶⁵ Selznick also requested “Home, Sweet Home” (Henry Bishop and John Howard Payne) to play under the film’s foreword about America’s “unconquerable” homes and a later scene when Tony expounds on the American

¹⁶⁴ Selznick had requested that Fidelia’s theme be “mammie” music, a descriptor that was undoubtedly inspired by casting. In addition to Fidelia, Hattie McDaniel had played *the* Mammie in *Gone with the Wind*. Her nuanced performance simultaneously reinforced and transcended racial stereotypes and made history when she became the first African American to receive an Academy Award (Best Supporting Actress).

¹⁶⁵ As with “Together” in *SYWA*, the incorporation of “As Time Goes By” was an idea imposed by a producer. Steiner was reluctant to assist music sales for a song he had not written himself. At the end of his score for *Casablanca*, Steiner sarcastically wrote to orchestrator Hugo Friedhofer: “Dear Hugo: Thanks for everything! I am very pleased with you! Your Herman Hupfeld” (MSC Volume 24).

In a memo from Hy Daab to Joe Steele, the model of bringing back an old popular song as exemplified in *Casablanca* is specifically referenced, though at the time the song under consideration for *SYWA* was “Who.” See Hy Daab to Joe Steele, 14 October 1943, HRC 199:5.

homefront. Finally, Selznick requested the army song, “Caissons Go Rolling Along,” to be played by a band supplemented by strings for a train sequence. Though set nondiegetically in *SYWA*, the inclusion of “Caissons” was strongly reminiscent of the military pieces rendered diegetically at the train depot sequences in *Gone with the Wind*. In the finished film, these three initial works are supplemented by a substantial list of additional works, including (but not limited to) the “America the Beautiful,” “My Darling Clementine,” “How Firm a Foundation,” “The Dipsy Doodle,” and the “Emperor Waltz,” along with several Christmas carols. Just as Steiner’s use of Jewish melodies in *Symphony of Six Million* defined and characterized the cultural space of an ethnic American family, so the selections in *SYWA* musically celebrate white, mainstream America with due nods to patriotic, religious, folk, and popular musical genres. The exception, a performance of a Viennese waltz at an armed service dance, initially caused Selznick and Steiner some concern: they both wanted a familiar, “nostalgic” melody, but feared Strauss might appear sympathetic to the enemy. Reassurances from no less an authority than Rudy Vallee, who confirmed the popularity of Strauss’s waltzes among service men, helped assuage the producer and Strauss’s waltz stayed in, though the selection shifted from “The Blue Danube” to the geographically neutral “Emperor Waltz.”¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁶ Selznick initially requested any waltz that has “the real Viennese and Strauss nostalgic quality” for the waltz at the armed services dance. “The Blue Danube,” which had previously been used in *The Young in Heart* was a likely contender, but Steiner and Selznick feared that the title and composer might incur objections from moviegoers. Ann Harris of the research department consulted Rudy Vallee, who replied that he received frequent requests for both “The Blue Danube” and “Tales of Vienna Woods.” Selznick and Steiner considered going with the more “American” waltz, “The Southern Rose,” a title that likely refers to Strauss’s “Roses from the South.” “The Emperor Waltz,” however, was the melody finally selected for the picture (See DOS to Robert Dann, 15 February 1944, HRC 600:7; Ann Harris to DOS, 5 June 1944, HRC 199:5; DOS to Hal Kern, 5 June 1944, HRC 199:5).

The third characteristic revealed in the conference notes is the decision to draw heavily from earlier Steiner scores. The “Dearest” theme from *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (previously reused in *A Star is Born* and *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*) is used to represent the daughters’ attachment to their absent father. The “Janet Waltz” from *A Star is Born* reused briefly in *Rebecca* returns again as a theme for the mother and Tony, an officer and friend of the family. The chipper music Steiner had composed for a light-hearted scene in *A Star is Born* becomes a theme for the younger daughter and the boarder.¹⁶⁷

The reuse of the other themes was partly pragmatic, as Steiner had even less time than usual to assemble a long score. Drawing predominantly from Selznick films further helped as these earlier films were readily available. In his pencil drafts for the cues, Steiner could even direct orchestrators to relevant passages from the other films’ scores, rather than rewrite them for *SYWA*. For the sequence in which Brig (the younger daughter) and the boarder (a retired colonel) argue over the nuances of etiquette, Steiner writes “come sopra A Star is Born! Reel 9 Part 1 Original Key ([orchestrator Eugene] Zador has score).”¹⁶⁸ Selznick, however, also had motivation to draw from his earlier films. In theory, getting clearances on music from his own films would require little effort.¹⁶⁹ In addition, Selznick liked reusing music across his films. As has already been discussed, reused themes and passages turn up in *A Star is Born*, *Tom Sawyer*, *Made for Each Other*, *Gone with the Wind*, and *Rebecca*. An effective or memorable passage in

¹⁶⁷ The notes also indicate that the love theme for the elder daughter (Jane) and a young man (Bill) who ultimately dies in battle was to be drawn from the Steiner-Warner Bros. score *They Died with Their Boots On*, a title appropriate for the occasion. For this last selection, however, Steiner changed his mind. Perhaps the *They Died with Their Boots On* theme specified in Selznick’s notes refers to a rejected theme from *They Died* or else Steiner opted to compose an original theme for Jane and Bill.

¹⁶⁸ Max Steiner, “Reel 4 Part 4,” *Since You Went Away*, MSC Volume 141.

¹⁶⁹ A bit of hassle did arise for *SYWA*, as the selling of some of the company’s assets threw into question the ownership of music. See DOS to Daniel O’Shea, 16 May 1944, HRC 600:7.

one film (especially of a lyrical, hummable character) could be similarly effective and memorable in another. In addition, the crossing of musical themes from one Selznick film to another served to subliminally reinforce the Selznick “touch,” gently linking disparate films through familiar melodic strains.¹⁷⁰ *SYWA* takes this practice to a new level, thereby diminishing the “originality” of the effort while also giving passages from earlier films a new lease on life.

Steiner’s pencil drafts for *Gone with the Wind* are littered with instructions, observations, and jokes (many about Selznick), but this display of personal investment and good fun is largely absent in the drafts for *SWYA*. In its place are crossed out pages and rewritten cues. With *Gone with the Wind*, a combination of time pressure and Selznick’s preoccupation with other facets of the film meant that very little of the score was rewritten once it had been drafted. (A short passage following Rhett Butler’s “Frankly, my dear” is an exception.) One would think that similar conditions would apply for *SYWA*, as Steiner’s music was already the second score written for the picture. Unfortunately, this was not to be the case. After dispensing with one composer, Selznick wanted to make sure the new effort lived up to his expectations, even when those expectations changed. In this respect, Steiner’s work on *SYWA* would more closely resemble his efforts for *A Star is Born*, the film for which he had to write three main titles before finally satisfying the producer. One example in *SYWA* pertains to the cue played during the colonel’s birthday party and Tony’s surprise visit. In notes originally written for Alexandre Tansman, Selznick provides plenty of detail for the music of the scene:

¹⁷⁰ This use of music to brand a filmmaker’s output is quite unusual, though not entirely unique. Kathryn Kalinak remarks on the “striking recurrences of the same songs” in Ford’s films, which help to articulate Ford’s musical imprint in films “across numerous genres, produced by different studios in different eras and scored by different composers” (Kathryn Kalinak, *How the West Was Sung: Music in the Westerns of John Ford* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 12).

Start score with little “Mickey Mouse” note as Colonel takes three blows at cake....Start music treatment very lightly, then into Tim theme on toast. Into gay music again on Tony’s entrance. Include reminder of Bill [who was killed at Salerno] in hall with Tony-Jane [theme]. Gay treatment again, based on Tony theme when Anne calls “Who’s there”....carry through to Tony and Colonel meeting, then go into little bit of Bill-Colonel theme.
Then back to gay Tony music.

Should be change in tempo and whole treatment of music for interruption of Bill-Colonel theme, and for Bill-Jane theme in hall. Also, on reference to Salerno at table, stop music dead for punctuation, and no music until Colonel says: “Doesn’t anybody want any of this cake?” Pick up gay music again, and continue [to next scene].¹⁷¹

For a sequence of less than three minutes, Selznick’s outline has numerous twists and turns. Steiner appears to have worked from these notes, as his initial effort sprints through the requested themes. Though slightly later than proscribed, the cue begins as Jane answers the door and Tony enters. An upbeat setting of the Jane-Tony theme¹⁷² plays before shifting to the Jane-Bill theme as a “reminder of Bill” when Tony offers his condolences to Jane (mm. 9–13). The upbeat Jane-Tony theme returns (per Selznick’s request) when Anne calls “who is it?” from the dining room (mm. 14–25) and then shifts to the Colonel’s theme as Tony and the Colonel exchange greetings (mm. 26–32). For this portion, Selznick had requested that Tansman use the Bill-Colonel theme, but as Steiner had drafted no such theme, he makes up the difference by shifting from the colonel theme to the Jane-*Bill* theme when Tony once again offers condolences—this time to the colonel, Bill’s grandfather (mm. 33–38). Steiner also makes sure that both references to Bill’s death are duly marked by a “change in tempo and whole treatment,” which he effects through swift adjustments in meter, tempo, and orchestration. When

¹⁷¹ “SYWA Music Notes, compiled to date,” 17 March 1944, HRC 509:4.

¹⁷² Steiner’s theme for Jane and Tony melodically paraphrases the Larry Morey-Frank Churchill song “Someday My Prince Will Come” from *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937). At the beginning of the film, when Jane has a pronounced and undisguised crush for the older Tony, a dashing officer with a penchant for unexpected visits, the melodic allusion is humorously appropriate.

Tony asks “Where’s Fidelia,” Steiner brings in Fidelia’s theme (marked “blues”) for good measure, adding yet another melody to Selznick’s prescribed medley (mm. 39–44). A brief snatch of the colonel’s theme (mm. 45–47) serves as transition back into “gay Tony music” (mm. 48–58) which is once again interrupted by the Jane-Bill theme when Tony unwittingly brings up Salerno, the city in which Bill was killed (mm. 59–61). The colonel’s theme concludes the scene on a brighter note as he bravely turns the conversation back to the birthday celebration (mm. 62–67). The episodic handling of the themes does not represent Steiner’s best, but it is a facile realization of the producer’s notes, with only some extra thematic material added in appropriate places.

Steiner’s cue was close to Selznick’s original conception, but that did not mean the producer liked it. Without the slightest trace of irony, Selznick pronounced the cue to be overly choppy, with too many themes.

There are two or three times too many bits and pieces. It should be one continuous piece of music, less broken up as to themes, up to the time [Tony] goes into the dining room and greets the Colonel. Except for the serious treatment of [Bill’s death] for that piece of Jane at the door, it should be rather gay all the way through. The second serious piece is when he greets the Colonel—but without the Colonel theme. After the second serious piece, it should be again one continuous piece of music instead of what it is now. Do not want the intermediary piece and the Fidelia theme. After the serious moment with the Colonel, again get back to the gay piece, probably the Tony piece treated very gaily, because that’s what the scene is about—until we get to the piece about Salerno,—the[n] a recognizable rendition of the Jane-Bill theme—then back to the gay music on the Colonel, with some sort of punctuation after [Fidelia’s punch line] “I bought it”—but not that sustained note.¹⁷³

¹⁷³ DOS, “Music & Dubbing Notes, SYWA,” 19 June 1944, HRC 509:4. There is a strong similarity between Selznick’s comments here and those made by Sergei Diaghilev in 1920 to Sergei Prokofiev in response to an early version of Prokofiev’s ballet, *Chout*. The crucial difference, of course, is that Steiner’s music is written to accompany completed footage, whereas the composition of Prokofiev’s music precedes the choreographer’s work. Nevertheless, concerns regarding time, gesture, and broad alignment between music and visuals are strikingly similar. Recording Diaghilev’s comments in his diary, Prokofiev wrote:

In the present state the ballet was following the action too precisely and with too many details....it is more impressive when the music is presented in long symphonic sections which correspond to the whole scenes without being excessively detailed...[and thus allowing the choreography to]

The producer catches all of the melodic passages and pronounces judgment accordingly, an impressive feat considering he was hearing (not reading) the music while watching the film. To sum up, Selznick still wanted the music to shift along with the conversation's ups and downs as it moved between reflections on Bill's death and the gaiety of a birthday party and Tony's surprise visit. But Selznick did not desire the parade of themes he had originally requested, just a "serious piece" here and there. Steiner rolled up his sleeves and rewrote the cue, making all the requested changes. Consequently the cue becomes more cohesive. Instead of theme-hopping, one hears the Jane-Tony theme in ever new renditions, with melodic extensions, shifting orchestral textures, tempo changes, and key modulations carefully positioned to align with important lines of dialogue that had originally initiated section breaks. When Bill's death is mentioned, a shadow passes over the cue, but only once is Bill and Jane's theme invoked. Instead the Tony-Jane theme seems to hesitate, digressing into a somber, lamenting descent of half-notes (mm. 9–12), or else slowing respectfully (with a slight darkening of tone, "*sul G*," mm. 33–36), before pushing onward with resolved good cheer. In the end, the music carries the scene much better, improving the pacing and flow. Tony (played with disarming candor by Joseph Cotten) seems to breeze through the scene and his lines are helped by a cue that maintains forward motion. The changes Selznick ordered improved the scene, but one can sympathize with Steiner, who grew increasingly frustrated as careful attendance to Selznick's notes failed to avert time-consuming rewrites. On the back of one altered cue, Steiner jammed the pencil into the paper, scrawling in large letters: "Alteration #64!!!!"

become more independent and of a piece. If there is too much detail, as in my piece...[the] choreography becomes a slave to the music and it results in just a simple pantomime (Quoted in Stephen D. Press, *Prokofiev's Ballets for Diaghilev* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 41–42).

MUSIC BY DAVID O. SELZNICK.”¹⁷⁴ Though Steiner’s score for the film would win SYWA its only Academy Award, Steiner considered it a bitter irony that this intensely frustrating project won when his celebrated music for *Gone with the Wind* had not. Selznick was not unaware of Steiner’s frustration, and after the project was complete, sent him a special note of appreciation:

On the whole, I’m happy about and grateful for your characteristically outstanding labor on the score of “Since You Went Away”; and even if there are certain things about the score that are not to your satisfaction...I want you to know that I deeply appreciate how hard you worked, and what a Herculean task it was to get the score done, under the circumstances, in the limited time that you had.

I am particularly mindful of the personal problems that you had during the period, and also of the fact that you were not feeling too well physically. Please know that I am sincerely grateful. I do hope that somehow you’ll manage to get a little rest.¹⁷⁵

Steiner was not the only individual to have reservations about the score. Director John Cromwell, who had also directed *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, *The Prisoner of Zenda*, and *Made for Each Other*, submitted to Selznick a two-page letter citing egregious passages. Though Cromwell describes specific scenes, his complaints can be summarized in several observations: 1. The music is dubbed too loudly. 2. There is too much music. 3. The music anticipates dramatic turns within scenes, thereby stealing their thunder. “I have always felt that Max had the wrong conception of music’s function for a picture,” concluded Cromwell, “and he will continually try to dramatize the scene, either a bit preceding it or simultaneously. In an ordinary picture that’s bad enough, but certainly in one where we are making every effort to capture every-day reality it is to me a definite detriment.... I’m afraid that Max has seen himself in the light of ‘David Selznick presents

¹⁷⁴ Max Steiner, “Reel 12, Part 4, Alteration,” MSC Volume 141, back of single-sided page 1.

¹⁷⁵ DOS to Max Steiner, 21 June 1944, HRC 199:5.

Max Steiner in SINCE YOU WENT AWAY.’”¹⁷⁶ How aware was the director that he was slighting Selznick more than Steiner with these critiques?

Cromwell’s complaints are valuable in that they inadvertently emphasize Selznick’s musical preferences. *SYWA* was a picture about “every-day reality,” but it was not necessarily intended to be *realistic* reality. Instead it was a brighter, more universal, more ideal “reality.” And for that, it needed pervasive underscore to elevate its characters and their relationships to a higher plane of significance, just as music had done in other epic Selznick dramas. *SYWA*’s length and lack of a forward-driving narrative meant the film needed effective music even more than previous efforts. *Gone with the Wind* could arguably engage audiences without music. *With* music, it was all the better. But so many scenes in *SYWA*—including the one analyzed above—lack this immediacy, the desire to simply learn what happens next. Instead, audiences drift with characters through the everyday and incidental, thereby laying the burden on music to provide energy and motion when the story does not. Selznick once argued that “if the audience is even conscious of the score, it defeats its own purpose—except when used to disguise bad or inadequate scenes, precisely as an architect uses vines to cover bad design.”¹⁷⁷ Was Selznick, perhaps subconsciously, concerned that *SYWA* needed “vines”? Possibly for this reason, more than any other, Steiner’s music caught the attention of audiences and received the highest honor of the Academy. It is not his strongest score, but in terms of bolstering a film, it is certainly one of his most valuable. In this respect, the *SYWA* score is a strong conclusion to Steiner’s longtime collaboration with Selznick. Steiner’s score

¹⁷⁶ John Cromwell to DOS, 26 June 1944, HRC 509:4.

¹⁷⁷ DOS to Henry Weinstein, 14 November 1961, not sent, reprinted in Behlmer, *Memo*, 484.

brings much to *SYWA*, and Selznick's notes and persistent involvement bring much to Steiner's music.

Cromwell's letter to Selznick about the music in *SYWA* also conveys an important and easily overlooked point that has not yet arisen in this chapter: directors had little or no input on music in Selznick's films, even if they had such control working at other studios. Cromwell's dissent further illuminates Selznick's power over the score (Cromwell could only express disappointment, not make changes) and anticipates the friction that would arise between Selznick and a director in his next project. With seven acclaimed American films under his belt, Alfred Hitchcock was no longer the Hollywood rookie he had been for *Rebecca*. For *Spellbound* he would have his own scoring notes.

Chapter 4

Musical Whodunits: Illuminating Collective Authorship in the Score for *Spellbound* (1945)

Spellbound captured the zeitgeist of 1940s Hollywood by purportedly using psychoanalysis to resolve familiar narrative conflicts involving murder, intrigue, and redemptive love. “Will he kiss me or kill me?” asked psychoanalyst Ingrid Bergman on publicity posters as she embraced her patient, lover, and potential murderer Gregory Peck (see figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1 Publicity poster for *Spellbound*.



Such probing psychological queries proved fair warning to viewers who then—like now—were not always impressed by the film’s scientific enterprise. “As a thesis on psychoanalysis,” grumbled one reviewer, “*Spellbound* is no more trustworthy than a

brochure on the subject such as may be purchased at most cut-rate drug stores for the sum of twenty-five cents.”¹ There was something odd about a film that listed a psychiatric advisor in the credits—May E. Romm, Selznick’s personal psychoanalyst²—yet featured a just-in-time cure enacted on a ski slope, a brazen *deus ex machina* that made Dr. Romm and other specialists wince.³ Indeed, the Selznick studio had dealt with the topic of psychological trauma and therapy more meaningfully through depictions of shell-shocked veterans in two earlier films: *Since You Went Away* (1944) and *I’ll Be Seeing You* (1944). Yet in spite of *Spellbound*’s more obvious contrivances—and perhaps, to a degree, because of them—the film was successful at the box office and garnered six Academy Award nominations, including one for best director, best picture, and best music.⁴ What *Spellbound* lacked in scientific accuracy, it made up for in its skillful intermingling of thrills, romance, and a touch of humor. “Could you supply a man to see the picture with?” jotted Nina Spencer on her Pasadena preview card, “You need someone to grab

¹ Herb Sterne, *Rob Wagner’s Script* 31, no. 717 (17 November 1945), p. 14, reprinted in *Selected Film Criticism, 1941–1950*, ed. Anthony Slide (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1983), 223.

² Even May E. Romm’s billing got entangled in a conflict of veracity and showmanship. Less than a month before the film’s premiere, Selznick wrote to his secretary, Lydia Schiller: “If it isn’t too late, please immediately phone Dr. Romm and see if there is something we can put after her name besides M S M D. I think the MD is all right, but the MS is not impressive, and I would rather add something to the effect that she is a member of the American Society of Psychiatrists, or something of the sort.” Schiller responded the same day, “She is very emphatic about no other title appearing after her name as it would be against medical ethics.” Apparently a compromise was arranged; Dr. Romm is listed as “May E. Romm, M.D.” See DOS to Lydia Schiller, 1 October 1945, HRC 1117:1; Lydia Schiller to DOS, 1 October 1945, HRC 1117:1.

³ In a letter to a colleague, May Romm rationalized her involvement in the *Spellbound* project: “Naturally, the question arises, why should I have anything to do with a film... which many have interpreted as casting aspersions on psychiatry. Simply because had I not done so it would have been produced in a much more undesirable form than it is now.” Howard Faulkner and Virginia Pruitt, eds., *The Selected Correspondence of Karl A. Menninger, 1919–1945* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 407, quoted in Jonathan Freedman, “From *Spellbound* to *Vertigo*: Alfred Hitchcock and Therapeutic Culture in America,” *Hitchcock’s America*, Jonathan Freedman and Richard Millington, eds. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 84–85.

⁴ The other nominations included Best Actor in a Supporting Role (Michael Chekhov), Best Cinematography, Black-and-White (George Barnes), Best Effects, Special Effects (Jack Cosgrove).

onto. Screams were hard to subdue. I had a wonderful time.”⁵ Another reviewer noted that

If psychiatric material is to be used in movies perhaps we must accept its oversimplification as a necessary dramatic form and cease worrying about clinical accuracy.... *Spellbound* offers much to please and excite in its adventure, in the virtuosity of its passages of intensity.... Objections that the romantic elements slow the melodrama can be sustained but they do enrich the whole picture with a warmth and humanness somewhat rare in Hitchcock.⁶

In regards to the warmth and humanness, Hitchcock had considerable assistance from composer Miklós Rózsa, whose score emphasized, even hyperbolized, the “kiss” and “kill” sides of the film’s dramatic equation. Indeed, the score for *Spellbound* was predominantly known by its sprawling love theme and Rózsa’s use of the eerie-sounding theremin to convey and exoticize John Ballentine’s (or “JB’s”) psychological instability (see figure 4.2).⁷ Despite the motivic density of the score, these two central musical concepts stood out, inscribed into spectator’s memories through repetition within the film and beyond: through radio, records, and even a live performance at the Hollywood Bowl.

⁵ Nina Spencer, *Spellbound* Pasadena Preview Card, 27 September 1944, HRC 229:5.

⁶ Arthur Beach, *New Movies* 20, no. 8 (November 1945), 5–6, reprinted in *Selected Film Criticism, 1941–1950*, ed. Anthony Slide (Metuchen, N. J.: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1983), 224–225

⁷ Invented by Leon Theremin (Lev Sergeyevich Termen, [1896–1993]) and first demonstrated in 1920, the theremin is played by moving one’s hands around two antennae (see figure 4.2). Pitch is controlled by changing the distance between one’s right hand and the vertical antenna. Volume is controlled by changing the distance between one’s left hand and the lower, circular antenna. For more on Theremin’s life and the cultural history of the instrument, see *Theremin: Ether Music and Espionage* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000).

Figure 4.2 Miklós Rózsa and *Spellbound* thereminist Samuel Hoffman. (Courtesy of Miklós Rózsa Papers, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University)



Consequently, Miklós Rózsa's music for *Spellbound* has enjoyed a long and rich legacy, but the degree to which Rózsa's music was guided, revised, then promoted by others remains largely unacknowledged. Jack Sullivan's insights in *Hitchcock's Music* already challenge Rózsa's assertions of authorial autonomy and I argue further that the creative input of producer David O. Selznick, director Alfred Hitchcock, and music editor Audray Granville was as vital to the score's construction and reception as Rózsa's melodies. Through comparison of Hitchcock's and Selznick's scoring notes in relation to Rózsa's original cues and Granville's revisions, this study seeks to illumine the layers of musical discourse at work in a familiar and iconic work, while also challenging conventional notions of authorship and collaboration in the Hollywood film score.

Synopsis and Secondary Literature

Spellbound begins at Green Manors, a sanitarium for psychologically disturbed patients that is about to undergo a change in command. The aging Dr. Murchison (Leo Carroll) is retiring—albeit reluctantly—and the esteemed Dr. Edwardes will soon arrive to take his place. When Dr. Edwardes does arrive, everyone is surprised at how such an established name in the field could belong to such a young man (Gregory Peck). Dr. Constance Peterson (Ingrid Berman), the only female doctor on the staff, is especially taken by the young doctor. Her reaction surprises Dr. Fleurot and foils his own romantic designs: in an earlier scene he had flirted shamelessly with her, then warned her soberly that her lack of “human and emotional experience” was “bad for [her] as a doctor and fatal for [her] as a woman.” Constance's femininity might be saved by the arrival of the new Dr. Edwardes, but something is not quite right: Dr. Edwardes begins suffering short

stints of mental distress soon after he arrives. Following two irrational outbursts and Dr. Edwardes' collapse in the surgery room, Constance learns the truth, or at least part of it: Dr. Edwardes is not Dr. Edwardes, but rather an attractive amnesiac who only thought he was Dr. Edwardes.

Convinced he is Dr. Edwardes's murderer, "JB" (he has discovered his true initials) flees the sanitarium. Constance follows with the intention of curing his paranoia before he is apprehended by the police. Already operating outside the law, she must also work outside the social expectations of her gender. JB lavishes her with smiles and tender words regarding love, but turns ugly when the therapy gets tough: "If there's anything I hate," he snarls at Constance on the train, "it's a smug woman." Condemned at the beginning of the film for not loving enough, Constance is now discredited for loving at all. When her teacher and mentor, Dr. Brulov, resists helping JB, he tells Constance that her good intentions are the product of poor thinking: "We both know that the mind of a woman in love is operating on the lowest level of the intellect." After surviving a harrowing night in which JB wanders about with a razor and a murderous expression, Constance and Dr. Brulov interpret JB's dream (revealed to the spectator through sets designed by Salvador Dali). From the dream, they deduce the crime's location to be the ski slopes of Gabriel's Valley. A short trip there triggers multiple memories that had been disabling JB's mind. First, he accidentally killed his younger brother. Second, he was skiing with Dr. Edwardes when Edwardes went over the edge of a cliff and died.

All's well that ends well, but there is one more problem: the police have located a bullet in Dr. Edwardes back. JB is hauled off to prison while Constance investigates further. Her psychological insight pays off when she realizes that the likely murderer was

Dr. Murchison, the previous head doctor of Green Manors who was unenthused about retirement. When Constance confronts Dr. Murchison, he takes out a revolver and points it at her. Constance walks slowly out of the room; the spectator watches her down the barrel of the gun, a strange subjective shot that positions the audience in Dr. Murchison's body. The gun then turns to the camera—and fires. A disjunctively cheery epilogue with Constance and JB kissing at the train station ends the film.

The film's emphasis on psychoanalysis has attracted numerous commentators who generally dismiss the film's explicit Freudian program while finding more interesting psychoanalytic problems beneath the surface. Royal S. Brown, for example, argues that *Spellbound*

has long been recognized as a piece of Freudian cinema, and not a very convincing one at that.... But if one takes the point of view of...Constance Peterson, a much different perspective comes into view. For, in the course of her adventures as Freudian sleuth, Constance passes through all the stages outlined by Jung and his disciples for the so-called "process of individuation."⁸

Others have embraced the film's pointedly dated depictions of science and gender, analyzing these elements to make larger arguments about Hollywood and American culture in the 1940s. In response to the film's written foreword,⁹ Jonathan Freedman noted that the title card

serve[s] to remind use of the cultural situation *Spellbound* responds to and of the social gesture it performs. The addition of these introductory words reminds us that the film that follows was both the product of and a participant in a specific historical event: the full integration of psychoanalysis into American cultural life.¹⁰

⁸ Royal S. Brown, "Hitchcock's *Spellbound*: Jung Versus Freud," *Film/Psych Review* 4, no. 1 (Winter-Spring 1980), 35.

⁹ Written by Ben Hecht, the foreword was presented on a title card and read: "This movie deals with psychoanalysis, the method by which modern science treats the emotional problems of the sane. The psychoanalyst seeks only to induce the patient to talk about his hidden problems, to open the hidden doors of his mind. Once the complexes that have been disturbing the patient are uncovered and interpreted, the illness and confusion disappear...and the evils of unreason are driven from the human soul."

¹⁰ Freedman, 80.

From this critical angle, *Spellbound* is an especially interesting example as it offers a relatively uncommon instance in which the doctor is a woman and the patient is a man.

As Mary Ann Doane notes in her discussion of depictions of psychoanalysis in 1940s women's films:

[The 1940s cinema] uses psychoanalysis to validate socially constructed modes of sexual difference which are already in place—although potentially threatened by a wartime reorganization. Hence, it is not surprising that women far outnumber men as patients in these films (in a film like *Spellbound*, where precisely the opposite may appear to be the case...it can in fact be demonstrated that [Constance] is ultimately constituted as analysand—she suffers from a frigidity constantly associated with intellectual women in the cinema).¹¹

To complement the film's critical literature, Leonard Leff offers the most comprehensive study of the film's production history in *Hitchcock and Selznick*, though his remarks on the musical score are quite brief.¹² In many respects, this chapter follows and augments Leff's historical and archival approach by studying the flux of creative influences that shaped *Spellbound*'s musical score.

The score itself has received substantial attention. In addition to garnering an Academy Award,¹³ the score popularized the sound of the theremin in the Hollywood film, helping it to become “the standard musical instrument of cinematic psychosis.”¹⁴

(The frequent assertion that *Spellbound* is the first film to use theremin is inaccurate.

Dmitri Shostakovich used theremin in his film score nearly fifteen years earlier in *Odná*

¹¹ Mary Ann Doane, *The Desire to Desire: The Woman's Film of the 1940s* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 46. Dana Polan also notes that *Spellbound* shows how “female scientists are problematic in the ways they work to close off desire; the position for the woman is thus the converse of the man's, for whom the danger in science (as in *The Cat People*) is that of too much desire.” Polan, *Power and Paranoia: History, Narrative, and the American Cinema, 1940–1950* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 183.

¹² To read his comments on *Spellbound*'s score, see Leonard J. Leff, *Hitchcock and Selznick: The Rich and Strange Collaboration of Alfred Hitchcock and David O. Selznick in Hollywood* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 165–166.

¹³ Rózsa also won Academy Awards for his music in *A Double Life* (1948) and *Ben-Hur* (1959).

¹⁴ Donald Spoto, *The Dark Side of Genius: The Life of Alfred Hitchcock*, Centennial Edition (New York: Da Capo Press, 1999) 278.

(1931). Theremin historian Albert Glinsky asserts that Robert D. Dolan's score for *Lady in the Dark* (1944) introduced the theremin to Hollywood, which then "began to inch closer to the psychological foreground in motion picture soundtracks."¹⁵) In addition to the many film music histories and surveys that mark *Spellbound* as a historic score for both Rózsa and Hollywood,¹⁶ there are also several books on music in Hitchcock's films that devote attention to Rózsa's score, including Josef Kloppenburg's *Die dramaturgische Funktion der Musik in Filmen Alfred Hitchcocks*, Eva Rieger's *Alfred Hitchcock und die Musik: Eine Untersuchung zum Verhältnis von Film, Musik und Geschlecht* (*Alfred Hitchcock and Music: An Analysis of the Relationship of Film, Music, and Gender*), and Jack Sullivan's *Hitchcock's Music*.¹⁷ Kloppenburg offers the most detailed musical analysis of the score to date. *Spellbound* is the very centerpiece for his study. His musical analysis, which is based largely on aural examination of the soundtrack, gives detailed attention to Rózsa's subtle treatment of motivic material. Kloppenburg's rich interpretive analysis—as with Rieger's—is only informed by historical context provided in published sources, such as Miklós Rózsa's memoirs, an

¹⁵ Albert Glinsky, *Theremin: Ether Music and Espionage* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 2000), 253. In his monograph on the musical *Lady in the Dark*, Bruce D. McClung also asserts that the film's score features the theremin, though neither he nor Glinsky site the precise source of their information (Bruce D. McClung, *Lady in the Dark: Biography of a Musical* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 175).

Differentiating theremin from other otherworldly sound effects can sometimes be difficult, and I question whether theremin was actually used in this instance. The timbre heard in *Lady in the Dark* is different from the theremin heard in *Spellbound* or *The Spiral Staircase* (1946). The aural distinction has to do with the width and speed of the vibrato, which is wider and faster in the case of the theremin. The sound heard in *Lady* may only be a recording of a woman's voice enhanced through echo treatment. Access to studio records, however, would be necessary to confirm either assertion.

¹⁶ Roy M. Prendergast description of the score as "one of Rózsa's early significant contributions to film music," followed by a discussion of Rózsa's use of the theremin offers a typical example. Prendergast, *Film Music: A Neglected Art*, 2nd ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1992), 69–70.

¹⁷ Kloppenburg, *Die dramaturgische Funktion der Musik in Filmen Alfred Hitchcocks* (Munich, Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1986), 66–155; Rieger, *Alfred Hitchcock und die Musik: Eine Untersuchung zum Verhältnis von Film, Musik, und Geschlecht* (Bielefeld: Kleine Verlag, 1996), 102–108; Sullivan, *Hitchcock's Music* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 106–123.

engrossing account that is nonetheless occasionally unreliable. The problem that arises from these studies is that the score is assumed to wholly represent the creative intentions of Rózsa, while the visuals exclusively represent the creative vision of Hitchcock. The monopoly of authorship in either case is problematic, an issue that surfaces during even a cursory study of the archival material. Jack Sullivan's study places new emphasis on the score's rich archival sources and argues that appreciation of *Spellbound's* music must consider individuals like Selznick and Granville, who influenced and revised Rózsa's work. Sullivan's chapter, therefore, is an important precedent to this study, which picks up where Sullivan left off. The following pages introduce and discuss archival documents not mentioned by Sullivan or others and feature close analysis of the creative alchemy between Selznick, Hitchcock, Rózsa, and Granville—a complicated interaction that Sullivan's broad survey only glosses.

“Bombarded by the famous Selznick memos:” Spotting and Composing the Score

While Selznick and Hitchcock considered a handful of composers for *Spellbound*, the selection process was relatively simple in comparison to Selznick's protracted musings on composers for other productions. The earliest memo mentioning a composer for *Spellbound* is from early September, and shows that Hitchcock hoped to engage Franz Waxman, who had scored *Rebecca* as well as Hitchcock's *Suspicion* (RKO, 1941).¹⁸ While this is curiously the first and last consideration of Waxman for the production, the suggestion was inadvertently prophetic: excerpts from Waxman's score for *Suspicion* would be used in the *Spellbound's* temporary preview track and eventually transferred to

¹⁸ “Mr. Hitchcock has asked me to investigate a Mr. Waxman who he states is a good possibility to be in charge of music, scoring, orchestrations, etc. for “Dr. Edwardes,” R.L. Johnston to Ruth Rickman, 1 September 1944, HRC 601:11.

the release version of the film, thereby replacing some of Rózsa's originally composed music. After the Waxman suggestion, studio executive Daniel O'Shea suggested engaging the renowned and notorious Leopold Stokowski, but Selznick quickly rejected the idea despite the publicity opportunities it would afford. "On the last job [Stokowski] did," Selznick explained,

he drove everybody out of their minds, as to time and expense. I still can't see anyone to compare with [Bernard] Herrmann, and I don't understand the resistance to him. If there is anything against Herrmann that I don't know about, I wish everyone would stop keeping secrets from me. If there isn't anything against him, then I'd rather have no more argument about it, and would like to engage Herrmann.¹⁹

Selznick had tried to engage Herrmann for his previous production, *Since You Went Away* (1944), but Herrmann turned the project down.²⁰ Here again, a potential collaboration with Herrmann fell through, presumably because the composer was unavailable. Miklós Rózsa was next in line and accepted the job. As Jack Sullivan has noted, the selection of Miklos Rózsa proved to be an instance of happy and unusual agreement between producer and director.²¹ According to Rózsa, Hitchcock admired the composer's work in *Double Indemnity*, which had just been released in April.²² Selznick's reason for hiring Rózsa was different: the composer had come highly recommended from Lionel Barrymore, a friend who supplemented his busy acting career with forays into musical

¹⁹ DOS to R.L. Johnston, 2 September 1944, HRC 229:1.

²⁰ Herrmann later had a change of heart and offered his services for *Since You Went Away*, but by then arrangements had been made for Max Steiner to replace Alexandre Tansman on the production. See Harriett Flagg to Daniel O'Shea, 1 May 1944, HRC 600:7.

²¹ Sullivan, 107.

²² After hiring Rózsa, Selznick also saw *Double Indemnity* and sent a complimentary note to Rózsa: "Please accept my congratulations on your admirable score, which was such an important contribution to the quality of the film." DOS to Miklós Rózsa, 1 December 1944, Miklós Rózsa Papers, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Library (hereafter MRP), Box 36.

composition.²³ Interestingly, and perhaps not coincidentally, Miklós Rózsa would later conduct the world premiere of Barrymore's *Hallowe'en, A Fantasy for Orchestra and Voices* on a program that also featured the first concert performance of music from *Spellbound*.²⁴

Just as Bernard Herrmann had been brought from New York to Hollywood by director Orson Welles for *Citizen Kane* (1940), so Miklós Rózsa arrived under the auspices of producer Alexander Korda in 1940. Unlike Steiner, whose film career essentially began in Hollywood, Rózsa was already a veteran film composer who had composed for British films since the mid-1930s. He had also made a name for himself in the concert music world. Born in Budapest in 1907, Rózsa studied at the Leipzig Conservatory of Music in the 1920s. In the early 1930s he lived in Paris, composing chamber and orchestral music, including his celebrated *Theme, Variations, and Finale for Orchestra*, Op. 13 (1933, rev. 1943, 1966).²⁵ When concert music failed to pay the bills, Rózsa turned to his friend Arthur Honegger, who suggested film music. Rózsa's incredulous response revealed his distance from (and ignorance of) the medium:

I was unable to believe that Arthur Honegger, the composer of *King David*, *Judith* and other great symphonic frescos...could write music for films. I was thinking of the musicals I had seen in Germany and of films like *The Blue Angel*, so I asked him if he meant fox-trots and popular songs. He laughed.... "Nothing like that," he said, "I write serious music." I had no idea what he was talking about, so he recommended that I go to see *Les Misérables* the next day....²⁶

²³ "I don't know whether or not you have been told that, based in large part upon your enthusiasm and recommendation, I engaged Dr. Rozsa to do the score of our new picture, *Spellbound*." DOS to Lionel Barrymore, 20 November 1944, HRC 229:1.

²⁴ The concert took place at the Hollywood Bowl on 28 July 1945.

²⁵ In 1943 Leonard Bernstein stepped in for Bruno Walter and conducted the work with the New York Philharmonic. The resultant acclaim from this concert proved to be a milestone in the young Bernstein's career.

²⁶ Miklós Rózsa, *Double Life* (New York: Wynwood Press, 1982, 1989), 70.

Unable to break into the French cinema scene, Rózsa moved to London, where he began collaborating with Alexander Korda. Their partnership gave Rózsa the opportunity to learn the craft of film composition and also receive significant exposure in films like *Knight without Armour* (1937), *The Thief of Baghdad* (1939), and *The Jungle Book* (1942). After working for Korda in Hollywood, Rózsa moved to Paramount studios, where he composed the music for *Double Indemnity*, the film that brought him to the attention of Hitchcock. Throughout his film career, Rózsa would continue to compose concert music; he was determined not to be pigeonholed as only a film composer. The title of his published memoirs, *Double Life*, speaks to this versatility. The title is also indicative of Rózsa's conflicted view of film music. He took his film work seriously and had each of his film scores individually bound and stored in his private library, but Rózsa was frequently disdainful of Hollywood and, in particular, its cultural paucity.²⁷ He resented it when filmmakers did not defer to his musical expertise. For this reason among others, working with Selznick would prove to be a challenge.

Like Steiner and Waxman before him, Rózsa had to reckon with Selznick's involvement in the film's musical score. Rózsa recounted:

I was bombarded by the famous Selznick memos, which virtually told me how to compose and orchestrate the music scene by scene. One dealt with the scene where Bergman passes Peck's room after their first meeting and sees the light coming from under the door. "Be sure to sell Ingrid's love when she sees the light under the door (cymbals)." I never asked what he meant by "cymbals" (a cymbal clash is too intrusive a dynamic to be used in any but big, noisy, dramatic scenes) and thereafter completely disregard all his "musical" ideas.²⁸

Rózsa's comments need to be considered carefully. On the one hand, his quotation of Selznick's suggestion is nearly word-for-word accurate, suggesting that Rózsa had

²⁷ These bound scores are held in MRP.

²⁸ Rózsa, 147.

referenced his copy of the notes (still among his collected papers) when he recorded his memoirs onto audio cassettes over thirty years later.²⁹ Rózsa's purported defiance in response to the producer's perceived musical shortcomings, however, is misleading. As Sullivan has noted, Rózsa often "followed the spirit if not the letter of [Selznick's] ideas" and the following analysis puts to rest any notion that Rózsa chose to "completely disregard" his employer. Selznick had thrown out Alexandre Tansman's score for *Since You Went Away*, only to bring in Max Steiner for an eleventh-hour rewrite. Rózsa knew better than to pursue a course of action that might lead to similar circumstances. If Rózsa resented the producer's involvement, it was only because he did not appreciate the relative ease of his particular situation. While Rózsa felt "bombarded" by memos, the surviving papers show that Selznick's score suggestions were organized and succinct, two qualities absent in some earlier productions. Unlike the producer's notes to *Gone With the Wind* and *Since You Went Away*, which were dictated piecemeal over a period of months and only later compiled and assembled into narrative order by secretaries, Selznick's notes for *Spellbound* were dictated over five consecutive days (October 2–6, 1944³⁰) and followed the order of the film:³¹

²⁹ Selznick's original note reads: "Be sure to sell in this score her emotion when she sees the light under his door. (Cymbals, etc.)."

³⁰ Sullivan notes that these documents date from October 6–19, but this is likely a typographical error. See Sullivan, 109.

³¹ Like many of the producer's scoring notes, these are not signed, though the secretary reveals the authorial source through occasional third-person references, including the concluding note that reads "Mr. Selznick wants you to feel very free to suggest any ideas you may have..." The five sets of notes, all labeled "'SPELLBOUND,' Music Notes," are in HRC 1117:8.

Table 4.1 Selznick’s scoring notes for *Spellbound*

Date of Notes	Portion of Film Addressed
2 October 1944	Reels 1 & 2 (<i>Main Title through First Dining Room Sequence</i>)
3 October 1944	Reels 3 & 4 (<i>Fleurot and Constance’s Conversation through JB and Constance’s Conversation Following Surgery</i>)
4 October 1944	Reels 5 & 6 (<i>End of JB and Constance’s Conversation through Empire State Hotel Lobby</i>)
5 October 1944	Reels 7, 8, 9, & 10 (<i>Hotel Lobby through Night Sequence at Dr. Brulov’s</i>)
6 October 1944	Reels 11, 12, & 13 (<i>Brulov’s House the Next Morning through End Title</i>)

All together, the five sets of notes are less than seven pages in length and shift between bare spotting instructions (“score” or “no score”) and more detailed descriptions that request the presence of a particular theme or musical ambience:

Don’t have heavy music when Constance breaks away from him as he tries to kiss her the second time. Use ‘white theme’ when he looks at coverlet, pick up in tempo. Dramatize his fall then go into tender music as she kneels beside him, then a little build in music at end as she talks to him about making progress.³²

In addition to Selznick’s scoring notes, there is also a set drafted by director Alfred Hitchcock, dated 11 September 1944.³³ While Hitchcock’s notes receive brief acknowledgement from Donald Spoto³⁴ and a dismissive reference from Leonard Leff,³⁵ they have yet to be examined closely and have never been compared to Selznick’s notes.³⁶ Sullivan describes Selznick’s notes for *Spellbound* as “sketchy and curt” in contrast to Hitchcock’s practice of drafting “nuanced, detailed musical notes” for other

³² “SPELLBOUND” Music Notes, 5 October 1944, HRC 1117:8.

³³ Mr. [Alfred] Hitchcock, “House of Dr. Edwardes,” 11 September 1944, HRC 1117:8.

³⁴ See Donald Spoto, *The Dark Side of Genius: The Life of Alfred Hitchcock*, Centennial Ed. (New York: Da Capo Press, 1999), 277–278.

³⁵ Leonard Leff concludes that “Hitchcock had few original ideas about music. ‘Romantic music’ here, a ‘love theme’ there, he noted in some comments left for composer Miklós Rózsa” (Leff, 165).

³⁶ Jack Sullivan briefly describes Selznick’s notes, but erroneously concludes that Hitchcock “apparently did not make any for *Spellbound*” (Sullivan, 109).

productions.³⁷ For *Spellbound*, however, Hitchcock's five pages of notes are even terser than the producer's. Both sets of notes are organized into similar formats, suggesting they were typed by the same secretary. The visual similarity, however, is not matched by the content or the dates. Selznick's notes were written nearly a month after Hitchcock's, meaning the producer and director were not viewing the same version of the film. The print that Hitchcock reviewed on 11 September probably did not have any temporary music tracks, as on 2 September Selznick had still not hired anyone to assemble a temporary score.³⁸ By early October, though, Selznick was able to compliment the temporary music tracks he heard in his viewing of the film on 5 October.³⁹ If the music editor compiling the tracks used Hitchcock's notes for spotting the temporary score, then Selznick's notes are in part a reaction to the director's decisions.

Comparison of the producer's and director's notes affords a unique opportunity to assess Selznick's scoring preferences against those of a director who was similarly invested in shaping the final score. While director John Cromwell's list of grievances against Max Steiner's score for *Since You Went Away* reveals differences of opinion that could arise between Selznick and his directors over musical decisions, Cromwell's letter expresses a reaction to the finished product. In contrast, Selznick's and Hitchcock's notes offer two different musical outlines that were devised before Rózsa's final score was composed. The following table summarizes the producer's and director's spotting of the film, with significant differences noted in italics.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ DOS to Mr. Johnston, 2 September 1944, HRC 229:1.

³⁹ "'SPELLBOUND' Music Notes," 5 October 1944, HRC 1117:8.

Table 4.2 Comparison of Selznick’s and Hitchcock’s scoring notes for *Spellbound*. Quotations are taken directly from the scoring notes; italics indicate notable discrepancies between director and producer

Selznick (2–6 October 1944)	Hitchcock (11 September 1944)
Score main title <i>up to Harry entering and going towards the nurse.</i>	Score only the main title; <i>no music under the following title cards for the foreword.</i>
The music should <i>begin just before the dining room scene</i> with a “sympathetic Murchison theme as Murchison crosses [the room] and exits.” The music then continues into next scene, “blending into gay music,” and not stopping until “I take it the supply of linen at this institution is inexhaustible.” The music should resume again after the line, “Oh forgive me” and continue to end of the scene “with heavier and slower treatment of earlier light music—same theme.”	The <i>score should not resume until Edwards’s entrance to dining hall and stop on his line “I take it the supply of linen at this institution is inexhaustible.” There should be no more music for the scene.</i>
<i>No music for the scene between Fleurot and Constance.</i>	<i>Fleurot and Constance’s scene should be scored with a gay theme for Fleurot.</i>
<i>No score for the following scenes with JB, Garmes, and Constance.</i>	<i>The score should continue from the previous scene through the scenes with JB, Garmes, and Constance, then stop on the telephone call.</i>
Resume score on picnic sequence, starting at the end of previous scene as JB and Constance leave the office; the love theme should be featured prominently.	The score should continue through the picnic sequence.
<i>No music for the second dining room sequence.</i>	<i>Score dining room with light Fleurot music.</i>
The score should resume with the scene of Constance in bed and should sound “like Debussy.” <i>The music should continue through the entire fourth reel and accompany the surgery scene, the following conversation with Constance and JB in his bedroom</i> Continues into next reel, stopping for the scene with Norma Cramer, Dr. Edwardes secretary.	The music should continue through Constance’s bedroom, library, and love scene, <i>but then stop “on JB’s reaction to dark lines on robe.” No score for surgery.</i> The score should resume in the next scene with Constance and JB in the bedroom when Constance asks, “Who are you?” The score should continue through JB writing the note and putting the note under door, but then stop for the scene with Norma Cramer.
<i>The score should resume when Murchison picks up letter, continue through Constance reading letter.</i>	<i>There should be no music for reading of the letter.</i>
<i>There should be no music for the library sequence.</i>	<i>The score should resume for the library scene until Constance leaves room.</i>

There should be no music for the packing sequence, but use <i>“actual hot dance music from radio after voice ends.”</i>	There should be no scoring under the radio announcer, <i>but the score should resume as Constance starts to pack.</i>
<i>There should be no music for the lobby sequence.</i>	<i>The music should continue into the lobby scene until the line “I’m the house detective.”</i>
The score should resume for shot of Constance in the hotel corridor and “continue through [Constance’s line] ‘nothing at all,’ after kiss.” The score then resumes on the word “Burned”. The music should follow the pattern of the preview track. “Continue music through lobby. DOS liked preview track on suspense music...” The music should end at the lobby.	The score should resume with “‘hurry’ music on newspaper insert [of] Constance’s face. Continue ‘hurry’ music. F[ade]O[ut] on detective’s face.”
There should be no music for Penn Station or Grand Central Station.	There should be no music for Penn or Grand Central Station.
The score should resume in the train compartment, after Constance says “Think.” In particular, “use preview tracks as a cue for final music.”	The score should resume in the train compartment as JB starts trying to remember. The music should fade out on Constance’s, “Don’t biff too hard yet.”
There should be no music for the arrival at Brulov’s house.	There should be no music for the arrival at Brulov’s house.
<i>The score should resume in the bedroom of Brulov’s house on the mirror shot of Constance and continue through the scene. “Don’t have heavy music when Constance breaks away from him as he tries to kiss her the second time. Use “white” theme when he looks at coverlet, pick up in tempo. Dramatize his fall then go into tender music as she kneels beside him, then a little build in music at end as she kneels beside him, then a little build in music at end as she talks to him about making progress.”</i>	<i>The score should resume before the bedroom scene as JB and Constance are going up to bed and Brulov says, “happy dreams which we will analyze...” The score should stop on JB’s reaction to white coverlet.</i>
<i>The score should continue through the dawn sequence with JB in bathroom and Brulov in library. The score should stop on Constance’s line, “Alex—are you all right.”</i>	The score should resume for the dawn sequence, <i>but should stop during Brulov’s one-sided conversation with JB: “Stop, with musical climax on dissolve of milk filling screen.” The score should not resume until Constance goes down the stairs, “punctuating with music Brulov slumped in chair from her angle. Stop score as Brulov stirs and wakes.”</i>

<i>The score should begin as Constance walks to JB on the couch and end as she leaves the room.</i>	<i>There should be no music during the ensuing conversation.</i>
The score should play throughout the dream sequence.	The entire dream sequence should be scored.
<i>The score should stop and the end of the dream and resume during the dream interpretation on JB's line, "something is happening" and continue through the end of the scene.</i>	<i>The score should continue score after the dream sequence, then stop on JB's line, "something is happening." The score should resume on the line, "a murder on skis" and continue until JB jumps up and cries "Stop it!" [In the finished film, JB shouts "I can't stand this anymore, I've had enough of it!"]</i>
There should be no music for the police office.	There should be no music for the police office.
The composer may decide whether or not Constance's decision to go to Gabriel Valley should be scored.	<i>The score should resume for the scene in which Constance decides to go to Gabriel valley, "building into misterioso on Brulov shaking head from stairs and Constance's apprehension."</i>
<i>The score should continue for the police station scene if the above sequence is scored.</i>	<i>There should be no music for the police office.</i>
The score should resume (or continue) during the train compartment scene.	The train compartment scene should begin with "low misterioso music, soft and sinister against Constance's chatter. Drown out score at end with shriek of train whistle, just as lights go over JB's face."
<i>The entire ski run scene should be scored.</i>	<i>There should be no music at the beginning of the ski sequence, but should "burst out with score before boyhood illustration on line from JB: 'I remember I was only 7!'" The score should then continue, "building to ecstatic on 'That's the thing that has been troubling you all your life.'"</i>
There should be no score for Cooley in the car.	There should be no score for the scene with the stalled police car. [This scene was changed; the stalled car is not in the film.]
The score should resume for the fireplace scene, but <i>stop when the police enter. The score should resume after the policeman says, "Anything you say will be held against you."</i>	The score should resume for the fireplace scene. Stop the score dead on "I'm afraid a bullet was found in the body." Start score again on doors closing. (cut and replaced with shots of Constance?)
The score should continue on the four close-ups of Constance's face.	The score should resume on the shot of the doors closing. [This sequence was altered; the closing doors were removed.]

<p><i>There should be no music in the following scene at Green Manors.</i></p>	<p>There should be no music in the following scene at Green Manors <i>until “Constance begins to suspect Murchison—just before his voice on track.” The score should “continue as she gets notebook, walks upstairs, [but then] stop as she enters Murchison’s room.”</i></p>
<p>The score should resume when Murchison removes the gun from the drawer; the music should continue from here to the end of the picture.</p>	<p>The score should resume when Murchison removes the gun from the drawer; the music should continue from here to the end of the picture.</p>

Neither Hitchcock’s nor Selznick’s notes are loquacious, but even on matters as simple as whether or not a scene should have music, the director and producer sometimes differed. Hitchcock, for example, wanted the score to emphasize the film’s lighter comic scenes. The director asked that Constance’s conversation with her flirtatious and obnoxious colleague, Fleurot, be scored with a “gay theme for Fleurot” and requested that Fleurot’s theme be reprised in the dining hall sequence during which the other doctors tease Constance for picnicking with Dr. Edwardes (really JB). Interestingly, Fleurot is the only character to whom Hitchcock specifically designates a musical theme, a somewhat odd decision given the character’s marginal role in the story. (The only other theme Hitchcock requests is a love theme.⁴⁰) Hitchcock does ask for music to convey suspense and anxiety during some scenes, such as when he requests “hurry” music when Constance and JB make their getaway from the hotel, but often the director requested that music play against conventional expectations. Thus, in the train compartment, Hitchcock asked Rozsa to achieve a “low *mysterioso*...soft and sinister against Constance’s chatter.” In this case, the music was supposed to convey anxiety that Constance herself attempts to dispel through talking. Such tensions between music and dialogue were a

⁴⁰ “House of Dr. Edwardes, from Mr. Hitchcock,” 4.

favorite device of the director, who described such effects in an interview from the early 1930s:

Two people may be saying one thing and thinking something very different. Their looks match their words, not their thoughts. They may be talking politely and quietly, but there may be a storm coming. You cannot express the mood of that situation by word and photograph. But I think you could get at the underlying idea with the right background music.⁴¹

Most remarkable is Hitchcock's request that music be withheld during the sequences in which JB suffers an amnesiac attack. This effect is rendered conspicuous by Hitchcock's direction that music should lead up to the attack and then abruptly cut off during the attack itself, such that the spectator would be aware of the music's absence:

For the first dining hall scene: "Start score on Edwardes' entrance. Stop on his line, 'I take it the supply of linen at this institution is inexhaustible.'"

For the love scene and first kiss: "Continue score thorough kiss and opening of doors, but stopping on JB's reaction to dark lines on robe."

For the bedroom scene at Brulov's house: "Continue score, [with] love theme at beginning. Stop score on JB's reaction to white coverlet."⁴²

In addition to these scenes, Hitchcock also asked that the climactic ski run sequence scene play without music until just before JB's flashback, at which point the music should "burst" onto the soundtrack.⁴³ Excited about the absent music idea, Hitchcock spilled his ideas to Hedda Hopper, the Hollywood gossip columnist (as this represents one of Hitchcock's relatively few utterances on film music and is unacknowledged by others, I quote at length):

⁴¹ Stephen Watts and Alfred Hitchcock, "On Music in Films," *Cinema Quarterly* (Edinburgh) 2, no. 2 (Winter 1933–1934): 80–83. Reprinted in Sidney Gottlieb, ed., *Hitchcock on Hitchcock: Selected Writings and Interviews* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 244.

⁴² "House of Dr. Edwardes, from Mr. Hitchcock" 1–2, 4.

⁴³ On multiple occasions, Hitchcock expressed a preference for *no* nondiegetic music during important scenes that featured directorial visual virtuosity—the plane scene from *North by Northwest*, the shower scene from *Psycho*, and the protracted murder scene from *Torn Curtain*. In the case of *Psycho*, however, Hitchcock was persuaded to change his mind by Bernard Herrmann, who composed music so compelling that Hitchcock reversed his decision. In *Spellbound*, Hitchcock did not have the luxury of changing his mind; Selznick went ahead and altered the spotting to suit his own preferences.

Hitch's new picture is the much-talked-of "Spellbound,"...mystery, suspense, psychiatry, fantastic sets by Salvador Dali and music by the symphony composer and conductor, Miklos Rozsa.

Hitch has his own theory about music. He puts music in pictures so he can stop it.

He gets a celebrated composer to write music for him just so he can stop it. (Come to think of it, a lot of weary husbands who get dragged to concerts are going to cheer him for this.) But just why, sir, do you get all that expensive music just to stop it?

"You've seen people in danger?" asks Hitch. "People at some high point of tension? Let's do a scene: We're sitting in this room talking, when bang! Just like that, a burglar enters and points a gun at us.

"We freeze. We don't move or breathe. Certainly we don't talk.

"At any dramatic moment like that there comes a hush. When the danger is over, everybody starts jabbering. It's a release to talk. They talk louder, laugh louder.

"So...in a psychological mystery, there are appropriate intervals at which I want the music dramatically stopped—with a hush! Well, if we didn't have the music in the picture in the first place we couldn't stop it. Which is to say that we put the music there so we can stop it."⁴⁴

"Hitch" was in for a rude surprise. The dramatic musical halts to which this article and the director's notes refer had already been filled by Rózsa's music, per Selznick's order. The director's requests for musical silence at dramatic high points represent the most significant departure from the finished film. Ultimately these sequences were not only given musical underscore, but they also featured a recurrent theme performed by theremin, an electronic instrument whose presence on the soundtrack was just as conspicuous as the abrupt music-to-silence moments Hitchcock had endorsed.

The idea to score these sequences in such a fashion did not come wholly from Rózsa. The musical plan had already been outlined in Selznick's notes, where the producer requested that each of the "breakdown" sequences be accompanied by a "white" theme, a title that referred to JB's aversion to dark lines on white surfaces, but also related to a more abstract concept, what Jack Sullivan described as "an identification of

⁴⁴ Hedda Hopper, "'Hitch' Reveals Secret of Making His Pictures," *Los Angeles Times*, 11 March 1945, B1.

terror with whiteness that goes back in American culture to Edgar Allan Poe and Herman Melville.”⁴⁵ In an ancillary note printed on his spotting notes, Selznick asked Rózsa to

Use “white” theme wherever JB has breakdown—a mixture of romance and psychiatry with build and excitement in tempo. 1. seeing fork lines on tablecloth in dining room scene; 2. seeing lines on Constance’s robe; 3. surgery....and other spots in later reels.⁴⁶

In addition to honoring Selznick’s request by using a single recurrent theme for all of these episodes, Rózsa also provided the requested “mixture of romance and psychiatry” by rhythmically and melodically linking it to the film’s primary love theme. Both are characterized through a repeated rhythmic gesture that sandwiches two eighth notes between more sustained pitches. In addition, both begin with dramatically descending lines; the love theme descends a sixth in its first measure while the “white” theme descends a tritone, thereby outlining a distinctively unstable interval historically known as *diabolus in musica* (see figures 4.3 and 4.4).

Figure 4.3 Rózsa, *Spellbound*, primary love theme. “Main Title—New”, mm. 14–16.



Figure 4.4 Rózsa, *Spellbound*, “white” theme. “Main Title—New”, mm. 10–13.



Most commentators of the *Spellbound* score have noted this connection between the themes,⁴⁷ observing, as Royal S. Brown does, that “like Ballantine [JB], the music splits

⁴⁵ Sullivan, 112.

⁴⁶ “SPELLBOUND Music Notes,” 4 October 1944, HRC 1117:8.

⁴⁷ See Kloppenburg, 92–93; Rieger, 105; and Sullivan, 111.

into positive and negative identities from a single, structural source.”⁴⁸ While Sullivan argues that this musical characteristic imbedded in Rózsa’s music reflects “Hitchcock’s preoccupation with doubles,”⁴⁹ the notion of using musically related themes to link disparate concepts is emphasized at great lengths in an earlier Selznick production as well: namely, in Max Steiner’s score for *King Kong* (RKO, 1933). In that film, Kong’s ponderously descending chromatic motif has a lyrical counterpart associated with the actress Ann, Kong’s romantic interest. In addition, Steiner also uses a single triplet figure to signal danger and anxiety, whether it be the approach of King Kong or Jack’s awareness that he is falling love in with Ann.⁵⁰ In both cases, the music forges connections between seemingly disparate concepts, thereby linking King Kong with Ann and the fear of death with the fear of love. The score complicates conventional associations that Steiner’s stock musical gestures—such as loud, slow low brass for a threatening, gigantic gorilla—reinforce. While there is no explicit evidence that *King Kong* directly influenced *Spellbound*, the similar musico-dramatic concept is striking. Selznick’s vague idea of using music to intermingle romance and psychiatry, or more specifically, love with dementia and death, may well have been inspired by Steiner’s music from *Kong*.

Ultimately Selznick’s ideas about the “white” theme’s placement and meaning had a profound impact on the score that was largely antithetical to Hitchcock’s own

⁴⁸ Royal S. Brown, “Hitchcock’s *Spellbound*: Jung Versus Freud,” *Film/Psych Review* 4, no. 1 (Winter-Spring 1980), 41.

⁴⁹ Sullivan, 111. Sullivan’s point is apt and has a musical precedent in Frank Skinner’s score for *Saboteur* (Universal, 1942), which uses the same theme for the forces of evil as for the forces of good, altering only the mode from minor to major to reflect the difference.

⁵⁰ I am indebted for this insight, regarding the use of a single melodic motif under seemingly contrasting circumstances, to Joakim Tillman’s conference paper, “Courage or Fear, Daughter(s) or Motherly Feelings: Leitmotivic Association and Expression in Max Steiner’s Scores for *King Kong* and *Mildred Pierce*,” presented at the 2008 Music and the Moving Image conference at NYU.

conception. There were similarities, of course, as both director and producer wanted JB's breakdowns to be punctuated with some form of aural disruption. The means to achieve this end, however, were quite different. Whereas Hitchcock wanted to surprise and unsettle spectators with a musical absence that would focus viewers' attention on his own disjunctive and arresting visuals, Selznick wanted the nondiegetic score to rise to prominence, expressing JB's mental void through musical excess that would in some way connect back to his romantic interest in and anxiety of Dr. Peterson.

Whereas Selznick asked that all the breakdown sequences be scored, he did not want music under the emotionally neutral scenes that Hitchcock had spotted for music, including the conversational episodes at Green Manors and the hotel lobby sequence in which Dr. Peterson fends off a lecherous man and fools a house detective. In all of these instances Hitchcock hoped to compensate for a lack of suspense with a dash of music. Selznick's notes forwarded a different approach. By keeping these scenes music-free, they function more effectively as necessary respites in the dramatic arc of the story, contrasting with more emotionally intense sequences that feature musical underscore.

While Selznick's musical ideas were honored much more than the director's, significant portions of *Spellbound*, including the film's many dialogue scenes with only Constance and JB, show the producer and director to be in agreement. For those instances in which the two differed, it is important to emphasize that the drafting of Hitchcock's notes *preceded* the assembly of the temporary preview music track in mid-September whereas Selznick's notes were made *after*. Selznick had the advantage of hearing what Hitchcock had only imagined: a temporary realization of the director's musical outline that the producer could follow or adapt as he liked. In the meantime, Hitchcock had

ceased actively participating in the score's construction. Rózsa may never have even seen the director's scoring notes. Nevertheless, Hitchcock's ideas influenced Selznick's notes and his ideas continued to inform the decisions of the music editor, Audray Granville, who began work on the musical score just as Hitchcock was leaving (see figure 4.5).

Figure 4.5 Audray Granville, 1945. (Courtesy of the David O. Selznick Collection, Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, The University of Texas at Austin)



Audray Granville's Revisions

Audray Granville may not possess the name recognition of Hitchcock, Selznick, or Rózsa, but her influence on the score for *Spellbound* as the music editor was just as vital. Audray⁵¹ Granville had begun working in Hollywood as a freelancing musical

⁵¹ Granville spelled her first name as “Audray” in all studio correspondences, but her name is often printed as “Audrey” by others.

stenographer, which involved assisting musical directors in various tasks, including the dictation of melodies that composers improvised at the piano.⁵² After several years in that occupation, Granville joined the Selznick staff for *I'll Be Seeing You* (1944), a production on which she prepared and cut music tracks for dubbing into the film. *I'll Be Seeing You* was the one film produced by Selznick International that was produced by Selznick's protégé, Dore Schary, instead of Selznick himself. It is unclear, then, how aware Selznick was of Granville's work when he began to consider the music responsibilities for *Spellbound*. Initially, Selznick hoped to hire his past music director, Lou Forbes, for the assembly of stock music tracks for *Spellbound*'s temporary preview track:

...the score of DR. EDWARDES [i.e. *Spellbound*] should long since have been in the works; and we should decide upon someone without any further delay. Further, the scoring of the picture will be held up an inordinate length of time if whoever does the score also has to worry about the stock tracks for the preview jobs.

I still feel, as I am sure Hal [Kern] does, there is nobody anyplace in the world as good on stock jobs as Lou Forbes. I think we should engage him, but I'm perfectly open to suggestions for somebody else to do the stock job provided we can find anyone comparable with Forbes, and I'm mindful of the disastrous and enormously expensive experiment—without going into the time wasted by myself and everybody else, and the strain on the nerves—of the woman [, Francey Taft,] that we tried on SYWA.⁵³

Forbes was not hired. Perhaps he was unavailable, or Selznick changed his mind, or maybe Forbes was merely fed up with Selznick's suspicions and accusations from their previous project. Despite Selznick's praise in the above memo, the producer had criticized Forbes throughout the production of *Since You Went Away*. In any case, Audray Granville joined the post-production team to assemble preview tracks for *Spellbound*. In

⁵² Very little is known about Audray Granville's work apart from her employment with Selznick and the details included here are drawn from Lloyd Bacon, "Your Hollywood Job," *Today's Woman*, February 1946, 54–56, 61.

⁵³ DOS to Mr. Johnston, Willson, and Kern, 2 September 1944, HRC 229:1.

addition, she served—like Forbes had previously—as a liaison between the producer and composer. After Rózsa’s score was completed, Granville then determined the final placement, length, and content of Rózsa’s music on the film’s soundtrack. While Granville would not receive screen credit for her work, her extensive contributions were recognized in print elsewhere. In the press preview programs for the film, for example, Granville is listed on an indented line beneath “Dr. Rózsa” as the “associate.” This vague title gives little indication of her role in the film’s score, but was perhaps the only title that could adequately encompass the various and sundry tasks she accomplished.

Initial responses to Granville’s efforts arise in Selznick’s complimentary remarks regarding the temporary preview track. In addition to two instances in his scoring notes when he asked Rózsa to emulate the musical characteristics of the preview track,⁵⁴ there is another note that reveals the producer’s satisfaction with Granville’s preview music: “Tell Dr. Rozsa DOS likes the temporary music on the main title [and] on the ski runs both for tempo and mood and build, and hopes that the final music will be as good....”⁵⁵ This note, which can be read as a message of warning, presaged events to come. Both of Rózsa’s cues for these sequences underwent substantial changes. For the main title, Rózsa had to rewrite the cue when his first effort failed to meet the producer’s expectations. Rózsa later referred to this as a “silly incident:”

the secretary called me up and [said], “Mr. Selznick asked me to ask you how many violins did you use?” So I looked it up and said, ‘Eight firsts, six seconds. Fourteen.’ “We’ll call you back.” Ten minutes later, she called me. “Mr. Selznick looked it up. Franz Waxman used twenty-four violins in *Rebecca*. He wants you to remake the main title using twenty-four violins.” [So] I did. It was his money.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ “‘SPELLBOUND’ Music Notes,” 5 October 1944, HRC 1117:8.

⁵⁵ Barbara Keon to Hal Kern, 13 January 1945, HRC 1117:5.

⁵⁶ Rudy Behlmer, “A Conversation with Miklós Rózsa,” *The Cue Sheet* 22, no. 4 (October 2007), 37.

This may well be true,⁵⁷ but the record shows that Selznick and Granville were concerned with more than violins. Rózsa's original main title is dominated from start to finish by the film's primary love theme (Rózsa also composed a secondary love theme that enters the score later),⁵⁸ with only a brief melodic bridge in mm. 18–29 to provide some variety.⁵⁹ It was evidently too much too soon. Granville had a conference with Rózsa to discuss the matter. "Dr. Rozsa was in this morning," Granville reported to Selznick,

We ran the music and he knows exactly the changes to be made. He would like to bring the theremin in over the SPELLBOUND card [and] then go into a broad treatment of his theme from the cast card on, following the pattern of the "Rebecca" main title.⁶⁰

The new main title incorporated these changes and then some. The first four measures offer a full brass fanfare of falling fourths. It is Rózsa's rendition of the Selznick Trademark fanfare originally composed by Alfred Newman for *The Prisoner of Zenda* (1937) and featured at the beginning of subsequent Selznick productions. Rózsa's version is not heard in the film (Selznick was loathe to tamper with his studio's musical calling card), but the excised passage includes Rózsa's favored dotted-rhythms in place of Newman's more rhythmically staid original. The next five measures, which are in the film, clearly emulate the opening six measures of Waxman's main title for *Rebecca*. In both versions a rumble of timpani invokes restlessly ascending and descending tremolos

⁵⁷ Max Steiner tells a similar story in which Selznick visited a recording session for *Gone with the Wind* as they were recording the cue for Melanie's labor scene. Selznick demanded that Steiner use more cellos, even though this involved hiring additional musicians and rescheduling the recording. See Myrl A. Schreibman, "Memories of Max: An Archival Interview," *Film Score Monthly* 10, no. 1 (January-February 2005), 24–27.

⁵⁸ This and the other names for themes that are drawn from the conductor's score are probably not Rózsa's, as the anonymous labeler occasionally misidentified the themes. The names are penciled into the score and were likely used for cue sheet purposes to document the thematic content of each cue.

⁵⁹ This second theme is later used in the cue titled "The Awakening" (when Constance is unable to sleep and goes to the library to find Dr. Edwardes's book) and the theme is likewise identified as the "awakening" theme.

⁶⁰ Granville to DOS, 22 March 1945, HRC 3672:12.

in the strings with an austere and sustained French horn passage cutting through the accompanimental haze. After this prelude, which plays under the title “Selznick International Presents Ingrid Bergman and Gregory Peck,” a dissolve into the words “in Alfred Hitchcock’s *SPELLBOUND*,” is matched by a shift to a statement of the “white” theme, thereby introducing the pulsing theremin and disorienting harp runs. (In Waxman’s *Rebecca* main title, the horn passage prepares the entrance of the “Rebecca” theme, which occurs as the title “Rebecca” fades onto the screen.) As the names of the supporting cast members of *Spellbound* appear onscreen, the “white” theme gives way to the love theme with which Rózsa had originally intended to begin the main title. The immediate juxtaposition of the two themes in the main title foregrounds their melodic similarities and narrative correlations. The remainder of the main title cue presents two iterations of the primary love theme.

While the changes in Rózsa’s main title music do not introduce any radically unexpected musical procedures⁶¹—he was being asked, after all, to follow the example of another Selznick feature—the revisions are a distinct improvement over Rózsa’s perfunctory original. Rózsa may have wished to save the unique theremin sound for later in the film, thereby surprising audiences already immersed in the drama, but its introduction in the wake of the evocative horn-tremolo prelude establishes a musical and dramatic tension when the audience is most attuned to the music. The new main title also

⁶¹ Following Justin London’s scheme, the revised version of the *Spellbound* main title exemplifies the conventional thematic approach by featuring the “white” theme (associated with JB) first and the love theme (generally associated with Constance) second: “Main title cues were often cast in a two-part form. The opening “A” theme was associated with the title of the film. It may or may not refer to a specific character (that is, a male lead) or setting; it may simply signify the genre and tone of the picture. However, the “B” theme, typically with reduced orchestration, dynamics, and more lyrical in character, is often associated with the female lead.” Justin London, “Leitmotifs and Musical Reference in the Classical Film Score,” *Music and Cinema*, eds. James Buhler, Caryl Flinn, and David Neumeyer (Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 2000), 87–88.

juxtaposes the “white” theme with the primary love theme, thereby emphasizing their melodic and rhythmic similarities before the story even begins.⁶² Just as Selznick had coached Waxman five years earlier to compose a main title for *Rebecca* that would begin with “a little tremolo and some build and suspense” that could engender an air of “expectation,” so Selznick and Granville assisted Rózsa in developing a similar musical effect with different thematic material.⁶³

While Rózsa had the time and opportunity to rewrite his main title (the original version was recorded in February, months before the premiere), he was less fortunate for the ski run cue. “Ski Run” was recorded in early September, less than two months before the Halloween premiere. By then, tensions had developed between composer and producer. The cue failed to meet Selznick’s expectations, which had been set by Granville’s preview music tracks, and so Rózsa’s music was taken out and the preview music—drawn from Waxman’s score for *Suspicion*—went back in. The musical consequences of this musical swap will be discussed later.

In addition to assembling the preview music tracks, Granville also prepared the music cue timing sheets for Rózsa and included brief reminders about Selznick’s musical instructions and reel changeovers. (Switching from one reel to the next had to be negotiated musically by a pause or phrase break as a sustained pitch would skip in the soundtrack during playback.) Thus, inserted among the lists of precise timings, dialogue, and visual descriptions are additional notes designed to aid Rózsa’s work. The added notes are collegial in tone, but may have overwhelmed Rózsa and explained his feeling of being “bombarded” by memos:

⁶² Both Rieger and Kloppenburg note that this initial juxtaposition is crucial for establishing an aural link between the two themes. See Kloppenburg, 93 and Rieger, 105.

⁶³ “‘REBECCA,’ Music Notes Resume,” 6 March 1940, HRC 3669:13.

For the dining hall scene:

“I take it that the supply of linen at this institution is inexhaustible.” END OF
DIALOGUE AND CUT TO A GROUP SHOT OF THE AMAZED
DOCTORS... THIS IS TO BE PLAYED IN DEAD SILENCE

Cut to Constance...amazed by outburst (still tacet)

For the shot in which Constance sees light under JB’s door:

“She has almost reached the top of the stairs and END OF REEL

Note: Dr. Rozsa.. I believe that the change-over will occur later than this in the
final, however, the only thing I can do is time the entire sequence and break it up
where we will have to in the final.”

Then...

Note: Dr. Rozsa..you are to make sure that everyone in the audience knows that
this is Edwardes room..don’t forget the cymbals and tympani⁶⁴

These notes are not on all of the sheets, but only interspersed through sheets pertaining to cues heard in the first half of the picture. While Rózsa may have requested a respite from the commentary, Granville’s insertions anticipated and perhaps inspired a technique Selznick would implement several years later in *Portrait of Jennie*. For this production, every music cue timing sheet was edited to include notes and directions from the producer.

As Rózsa worked on the score, Granville monitored the composer’s progress and reported back to Selznick. In many cases her memos offer the only record of how and when the score was composed. Rózsa began in October after having been hired to score the film for only \$4,000. The stipulation that the score had to be completed by 28 November 1944, however, allowed that the composer would receive an additional \$111.11 for each day that he worked beyond this date. Rózsa did his best to honor the schedule; Selznick did not. The composer hurried to finish the project in November, with Granville noting back to Selznick that Rózsa had even rewritten and integrated the film’s

⁶⁴ Music Cue Timing Sheets for “First Meeting” and “The Awakening,” both undated, HRC 3673:2.

love theme during this period.⁶⁵ On November 13 Granville informed Robert Dann, one of the studio's financial officers, that Rózsa essentially had "all the music written up to the last reel with the exception of the 'Dream Sequence' and the 'Ski Run.'"⁶⁶ These two scenes, along with the main title, had been held up in editing. As with previous films, Selznick encouraged Rózsa to compose anyway and work from a script and rough footage. "I personally advised Dr. Rozsa today," Selznick assured his production staff,

that there was no need for him being delayed on his work on SPELLBOUND because of things remaining to be done on the dream sequence and the skiing sequence, respectively. He can write his music on the dream sequence from the sketches and script which he can obtain through Miss Keon and the Production Department. The skiing sequence only has a few things to be added to it and Hal Kern can tell him the approximate length and nature of this shot. Dr. Rozsa agreed that a few feet one way or the other in either or both of these sequences would not cause him any difficulties.⁶⁷

Rózsa agreed with his employer regarding the ski run sequence and appears to have composed the cue shortly thereafter,⁶⁸ but Rózsa knew better than to write the dream sequence cue from the script. Composing music with only dialogue and visual description was dangerous, as the finished visuals often looked very different from what the composer had imagined. (Max Steiner, for example, held this conviction and refused to even look at scripts beforehand, a practice that irritated Selznick.) There was also the problem of editing the footage, which often changed the timing of the scene and necessitated alterations in the music. Thus Rózsa waited out various delays as Selznick

⁶⁵ "Just to remind you that Mr. Selznick has not listened to Dr. Rozsa's love theme which he has rewritten. Dr. Rozsa is going ahead completing his scoring and using this theme." Granville to Lillian Browne, 1 November 1944, HRC 229:1. It is possible that Granville may have been referring to the secondary love theme used in the picture or perhaps meant that the secondary love theme *was* the primary theme before Rózsa composed the "new" and now familiar version.

⁶⁶ Audray Granville to Robert Dann, 13 November 1944, HRC 3672:12.

⁶⁷ DOS to Robert Dann, 17 November 1944, HRC 1117:5.

⁶⁸ A memo from Hal Kern to Selznick written in mid-December indicates that it was completed. See Hal Kern to DOS, 12 December 1944, HRC 229:1.

struggled with the editing of the dream sequence.⁶⁹ After leaving the *Spellbound* project to write music for Billy Wilder's *Lost Weekend*, Rózsa finally returned in September of 1945 to compose the dream sequence cue and complete recording of a score that had run almost a year over schedule.⁷⁰ With Selznick still fussing with editing in late August, Granville was forced to inform her employer that it had to be now or never:

Dr. Rozsa called yesterday to let me know that he is starting in on the score of a big picture two or three weeks from now and he wished to know the status of the "Spellbound" picture. This morning, Mr. [Eugene] Zador, our orchestrator, called to inform me that he would be out of town starting September 16. Our head copyist on the picture is also intending to leave town next month. Hal Kern and I discussed the feasibility of going ahead with the scoring of *Spellbound* in its present state, omitting the Dream Sequence, the Forward, and possibly the Main and End Titles. I feel confident that I can make cuts in the music track to match any picture cuts which you might make. If we follow this procedure, we are protecting ourselves against having to do a quick recording job and not being able to obtain the services of the musical staff now on the picture.⁷¹

By mid-September, Rózsa's work on *Spellbound* was complete, but the score still needed substantial attention, at least in Granville's and Selznick's eyes. "Together with what you told me last night, I am deeply concerned lest we shall have to do a lot of repair work on the score of SPELLBOUND," Selznick explained to Granville. "I think we should prepare for this even though, unfortunately, we may have to have our press previews and perhaps even the Astor opening with an unsatisfactory score." And so

⁶⁹ The dream sequence, which featured the creative input and set design of Salvador Dali, was originally twenty minutes in length and much more abstract in its visual content. It included, among other things, Ingrid Bergman transforming into a plaster statue, a process that was rendered visually by running the footage backwards. Selznick struggled to edit the sequence down while adding voice-over narration to explain various images. William Cameron Menzies was also brought in to finish certain parts of the dream sequence that Hitchcock had left unfinished. (See Spoto, *The Dark Side of Genius*, 277.)

⁷⁰ "Dr. Rozsa is coming in today [8 September 1945] to look at the Dream Sequence so that he can compose the music. Will let you know at the end of next week, how many days are involved as far as Dr. Rozsa is concerned in the completing of the score." Audray Granville to Robert Dann, 8 September 1945, HRC 3672:12.

⁷¹ Audray Granville to DOS, 21 August 1945, HRC 3672:12.

Granville set to work, editing, revising, and replacing various cues from within Rózsa's score.

While Jack Sullivan notes that Granville played a role in editing Rózsa's music for the release version of the film, he gives little indication of what Granville specifically accomplished. The following addresses this very issue. Granville did not re-compose Rózsa's music in the sense of rewriting melodies or inserting accompanimental lines, but she did edit specific cues through the act of cutting and pasting. Thus, while the musical content in most instances remained strictly Rózsa's, its relationship to narrative and visuals sometimes changed. Such passages offer valuable glimpses into the fluid process of suturing film and music. As Ronald Sadoff's notes: "The music editor, serving as a portal into a broader creative continuum [involving other collaborators], implicitly bridges film music and film. In proximity, we become cognizant of music perpetually undergoing contextualization within the filmic universe."⁷²

In most cases Granville's individual edits are discreet, even minute, in nature. One such example is Granville's excision of bars 51 and 55 from Rózsa's "The Cigarette Case" cue. Such limited edits were presumably made to fit the music to a scene whose length had changed slightly since Rózsa had recorded his music. Granville had, after all, assured Selznick that "I feel confident that I can make cuts in the music track to match any picture cuts which you might make." Measure-long cuts in the score hardly merit comment, but other revisions reveal more of Granville's creative hand in the construction of the score.

⁷² Ronald H. Sadoff, "The role of the music editor and the 'temp track' as blueprint for the score, source music, and source music of films," *Popular Music* 25, no. 2 (2006): 180.

One example occurs in the transition between two cues titled “The Awakening” and “Love Scene.” “The Awakening” begins with a shot of Constance stirring in her bed and precedes her evening visit to JB’s room. There is no dialogue throughout the entire cue, which lasts until Constance opens the door to JB’s sitting room. Consequently Rózsa’s music occupies the aural foreground, and the high dubbing level even obscures the occasional sound effect. (JB’s door buzzer, which Constance rings before entering his room, is virtually inaudible, a kind concession from the sound engineer that preserves the aura of Rózsa’s music.) Rózsa’s cue is mainly devoted to the film’s central love theme, with a secondary love theme making an appearance in mm. 34–55 for variety’s sake. Rózsa maintains interest in the melodic repetition through colorful orchestration that shifts perceptibly when Constance leaves one space and enters another. Thus, when Constance enters the library from the hallway, the orchestration drops from full strings, horns, and winds playing *fortissimo* (this is the moment in which Constance sees the light under JB’s door) to a solo oboe playing *pianissimo*, with significantly fewer instruments providing hushed chordal accompaniment as Constance pads to the bookshelf.

No doubt noticing this orchestrational transition, Granville carefully takes the reins as Constance rings JB’s door buzzer and prepares to enter another room. As Constance hesitates outside JB’s room to see if he will answer, the violins and lower strings echo each other in chromatic distortions of the love theme’s final swooping gesture, musically enacting Constance’s emotional apprehension (see figure 46., mm. 64–69). As Constance enters the room, Rózsa had composed another corresponding shift in orchestration, switching from violins to solo alto flute. The melodic material he had written, though, involved further reiterations of the love theme’s concluding gesture, with

each melodic swoop higher and more exaggerated than the previous. The final leap was crowned with a septuplet fall from a climactic g^2 (see figure 3.7, mm. 70–77).

Figure 4.6 Rózsa, *Spellbound*, “The Awakening.” The stills indicate Rózsa’s intended alignment of visuals with the musical cue.



64

2:48



The musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is in treble clef, the middle in bass clef, and the bottom in a lower bass clef. The music is in 4/4 time and a key signature of one flat. The score shows a melodic line in the treble clef, a bass line in the middle clef, and a low register accompaniment in the bottom clef. A time signature of 2:48 is indicated above the second measure of the top staff.



2:57 Interior sitting room

68

vibra[phone] *tranne*

alto fl. *tranne*

p

dolce espr.

68

pp sul ponticelli

72

3:10

7

72

76

rit.

3:18

76

It is an interesting passage to examine, but one can understand why it did not survive to the final print. There was simply too much repetition of a single phrase over a duration of 39 seconds. Even with Rózsa's melodic deformations, the music falls into a static holding pattern, anathema for a sequence in which there is no dialogue. Thus, Granville stepped in with a deft edit: she cut the last eleven measures of the cue and jumped directly to the beginning of "Love Scene," which began with a solo violin playing the love theme (this violin solo was originally to have coincided with the later shot of JB snoozing in his chair). The result is that the expressive affect of Rózsa's original cue is largely preserved—one still hears a plaintive solo instrument when Constance enters the room, just as when Constance had entered the library—but the melodic material is that of the love theme, which though heard frequently, is still preferable to the extended repetition of a single phrase. Granville then made up for the cut measures in "The Awakening" by repeating measures 12–17 of "Love Scene," a maneuver hidden beneath JB and Constance's dialogue that ensures the subsequent alignment of music and film as Rózsa intended. Granville's work here shows close and careful editing, changing as little as possible while improving the presentation of Rózsa's music in a highly exposed passage.

Another change that Granville effected in Rózsa's music suggests the indirect influence of Hitchcock's original scoring notes. The cue in question is "Honeymoon at Brulov's" and plays while JB and Constance discuss their growing affection for each other in Constance's old bedroom at Dr. Brulov's. Selznick requested that the music begin on the shot in which Constance looks into the mirror, fixes her hair, and says to JB, "Do you know, this room does look changed." Rózsa's original cue begins precisely on

this line of dialogue and features four measures of intertwining melodic lines in the oboe and violins that paraphrase both of the film’s two love themes, with the main love theme emerging in the violins at measure 5 to match Constance’s moment of emotional clarity (see figure 4.7).

Figure 4.7 Rózsa, *Spellbound*, “Honeymoon at Brulov’s.” Stills indicate Rózsa’s intended alignment of visuals and music. Dialogue cues—which differ slightly from the lines spoken in the film—are in the piano-conductor score.

Looking in the mirror and meeting JB’s gaze she says, “The fact that everything seems so wonderful in this room.” Here again, Granville makes noteworthy alterations. Firstly, the cue begins much earlier in the film and matches Hitchcock’s, not Selznick’s, request that music play from the beginning of the scene instead of entering in the middle, when JB and Constance’s conversation shifts from worrying about Brulov’s suspicions (or lack

thereof) to thoughts of love.⁷³ To fill the extra space, Granville drew from two different cues, taking three measures from a later cue entitled “Defeat,” which follows JB’s imprisonment and plays under a montage sequence in which Constance pleads to offscreen authorities for JB’s innocence and then speaks with Dr. Brulov on the grounds of Green Manors. The precise measures that Granville borrows from the cue (mm. 26–28), which feature a short, melancholic flute solo, are heard under an establishing shot of Green Manors that dissolves into a shot of Dr. Brulov chastising Constance: “My dear girl you cannot keep bumping your head against reality and saying it is not there.” Granville may have selected the measures for the “Honeymoon” sequence because the translucent, chamber-like scoring was appropriate, but she was also planting a musical clue. Constance and JB’s initial relief at having found refuge at Dr. Brulov’s will begin to unravel almost immediately until JB lands in jail and Dr. Brulov himself supports the opposition. The flute solo then leads to a more extended passage of the secondary love theme taken from the earlier cue, “The Awakening,” when Constance had entered the library at Green Manors to find Dr. Edwardes’s book (mm. 37, 39–51). Granville’s insertion of this love theme at the beginning of the “honeymoon” scene might seem counterintuitive under dialogue of this character:

JB: You were superb with the police.
Constance: Was I?
JB: Carried it off like a grade-A gun moll.

But Granville’s decision follows Hitchcock’s suggestion to use the love theme at the beginning of the scene (as opposed to Selznick who wanted the music withheld) and also supports the director’s penchant for using music to show (in the words of the director)

⁷³ Alfred Hitchcock, “House of Dr. Edwardes,” 11 September 1944, 4. Hitchcock’s full directions ask that the score begin on Dr. Brulov’s concluding line in the preceding scene “...happy dreams which we will analyze at breakfast.” Granville begins the score on the cut to the bedroom’s interior.

when “two people may be saying one thing and thinking something very different.”⁷⁴ After this second excerpt, Granville then segues into measure five of “Honeymoon at Brulov’s,” and follows Rózsa’s original plan for much of the cue, though some measures are cut to make up for the length of inserted material. Most significantly, Granville’s changes bring lyrical music into the sequence before the character of the conversation turns misty-eyed. By anticipating the tone of the conversation, the music seems to direct the characters on the screen, not merely follow them. Had the music entered when the conversation shifted from gun molls to romance—as Selznick had originally suggested—this effect would have been lost. Granville’s decision to follow the director’s outline over the producer’s does not necessarily mean she was undermining Selznick’s wishes. When she finished her work re-editing the score, she assured Selznick that “I have made all the musical changes you suggested and asked for in the score of SPELLBOUND. Hal [Kern] believes I have improved the music considerably.”⁷⁵ Nevertheless, even if Selznick had changed his mind on how the scene should work musically, it is interesting to note that the new form begins by closely following Hitchcock’s directions, which subsequently influenced Granville’s temporary track, and ultimately the final music heard in the picture. This rather complex negotiation of musical ideas presented, rejected, realized, then revised also takes place in one of the film’s most memorable musical sequences—the very first cue heard after the opening titles.

This particular cue is heard in the dining room scene in which JB enters as Dr. Edwardes and meets Constance for the first time. What Rózsa composed for this scene and what is heard in the film are very different. Rózsa’s cue, titled “First Meeting,”

⁷⁴ Stephen Watts and Alfred Hitchcock, “On Music in Films,” reprinted in Gottlieb, 244.

⁷⁵ Audrey Granville to DOS, 10 October 1945, HRC 229:1.

closely followed the spotting instructions in Selznick's notes, which requested that the cue begin at the end of the preceding scene, during which Dr. Murchison breaks in conversation with his associate, crosses the room in a long shot, and exits through a door:

[Have the score] pick up with sympathetic Murchison theme as Murchison crosses and exits. Continue score [in dining room], blending in gay music. Chord interrupts light music on CU [close-up] JB upset, before he breaks out. Stop score after "I take it the supply of linen in this institution is inexhaustible." Silent for few following cuts, then pick up again after "Oh forgive me." With heavier and slower treatment of earlier light music—same theme.⁷⁶

Rózsa's original cue (see Appendix B) begins with a three-measure introduction marked *moderato* and features an angular, dotted-rhythm theme associated with Dr. Murchison, a correlation that is reinforced through later repetitions in Rózsa's original score. The shift to the dining room sequence is matched by a change in tempo and texture: *moderato*, sustained notes give way to an *allegretto scherzando* passage that imitates the dining room chatter with light, staccato figures in the strings that are given a brush of darkness (a musical nod to the table conversation's submerged tensions) through modal mixture, with Rózsa tinting the predominantly G major passage with hints of G minor through recurring E-flats and B-flats.

The moment of JB's entrance, which Rózsa's labels in his original pencil draft at measure 12, is signaled with a tonal shift upward, from G major/minor to A major, and the introduction of a *dolce* theme that is not heard elsewhere in the score. While the theme is lyrical in nature, the tempo remains a brisk *allegretto*. Measure 16 coincides with a close-up reaction shot of Constance's face as she stares transfixed at JB. Here, Rózsa deftly shifts the tonal center back to G and introduces a variant, or response, to the *dolce* melody heard with JB's entrance. Here, the downward leap of a fifth in the original

⁷⁶ "SPELLBOUND," Music Notes, 2 October 1944, HRC 1117:8.

melody is stretched to a sixth—the exact distance traversed in the downward leap heard so prominently in the love theme, played so prominently in the main title. A closer look at the melody heard in measure 16 shows it to be a rhythmic and melodic replica of the love theme *except* that it lacks the crucial opening note, an absence that alters the metric emphasis and lightly disguises the true source (see figure 4.8).

Figure 4.8 Rózsa, *Spellbound*, “First Meeting” melodic comparison. (a) “First Meeting,” mm. 12–13 (b) “First Meeting,” mm. 16–17 (c) the opening of measure of the primary love theme, transposed to match corresponding pitches.

Figure 4.8 consists of three musical staves labeled (a), (b), and (c).
 (a) Labeled "Edwards [JB] enters" and "dolce". It shows a melodic line in G major (one sharp) on a treble clef staff. The notes are G4, A4, B4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C#4, B3, A3, G3. There are slurs over G4-A4-B4 and G4-F#4-E4-D4. A fermata is placed over the final G3.
 (b) Labeled "C. U. Constance". It shows a melodic line in G major on a treble clef staff. The notes are G4, A4, B4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C#4, B3, A3, G3. There are slurs over G4-A4-B4 and G4-F#4-E4-D4. A fermata is placed over the final G3.
 (c) Shows the opening of a measure of the primary love theme, transposed to match corresponding pitches. The notes are G4, A4, B4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C#4, B3, A3, G3. There are slurs over G4-A4-B4 and G4-F#4-E4-D4. A fermata is placed over the final G3.

Thus, at the moment of this “first meeting” between JB and Constance, Rózsa introduces a new *dolce* theme that immediately begins to transform itself into something else. That “something else”—the love theme—is not unveiled until later in the film.

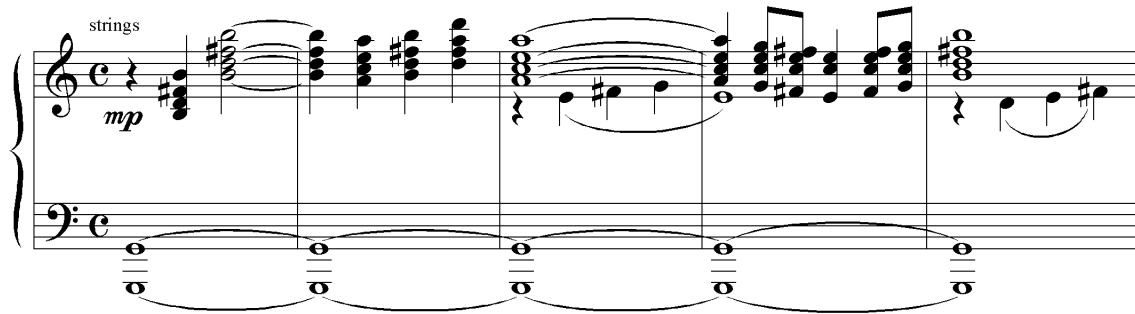
After JB and Constance cease staring at one another, Rózsa’s staccato chatter music resumes along with the idle conversation until Constance sketches the shape of a proposed swimming pool for the sanitarium on the tablecloth. The action triggers JB’s first breakdown and is matched in the music through the entrance of the theremin playing the “white” theme in measures 31–34. The music breaks off suddenly on JB’s line about the sanitarium’s linen (an abrupt silence that both Selznick and Hitchcock requested) and then the cue ends with softer echoes of the “white” theme broken up by a

meno mosso, legato rendition of the earlier chatter music, a gesture that honors Selznick's request for "heavier and slower treatment of earlier light music" to the last detail. (See Appendix B to see the entire cue in piano-conductor score format aligned with the appropriate visual cues.)

The analysis just offered summarizes the music and its relationship to the visual editing as Rózsa and Selznick originally intended. The film itself is quite different. For one, there is no music heard under Dr. Murchison's exit in the previous scene nor is there music underscoring the initial dining room conversation. Instead, the music begins several seconds into the shot of JB entering the dining room. Interestingly, this spotting decision goes against Selznick's notes and instead follows Hitchcock's direction to withhold music until JB's entrance. Granville may have preferred this suggestion and may have been more accustomed to it, especially if she had constructed the initial temporary track around Hitchcock's spotting notes. The music played, however, is not the briskly performed *dolce* theme described above. Instead it is the slower, secondary love theme that conveys yearning through a soaring octave leap, a gesture used in the "Tara" theme from *Gone with the Wind* (Max Steiner, 1939), "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" from *The Wizard of Oz* (Harlon Arlen, 1939), and the love theme from *Wuthering Heights* (Alfred Newman, 1939). In addition to the change in theme and style, the texture is markedly different: instead of a solo melody over a lightly burbling accompaniment, the passage is much more homophonic, with accompanimental chords moving in parallel motion with the melody. Unlike the original accompaniment, which conveyed forward motion through tempo and an active texture, this passage seems to

slow time dramatically as the melody unfolds leisurely over a sustained pedal, with only minimal figuration in the accompaniment (see figure 4.9).

Figure 4.9 Rózsa, *Spellbound*, secondary love theme. Measures 20–24 of “Love Scene.”



This clearly alters the musico-cinematic effect. Whereas Rózsa’s original cue reflected JB’s entrance and Constance’s reaction shot through the introduction and development of new thematic material, these changes occur within a musical cue that has already been moving nimbly along for thirty-one seconds. A spectator listening closely to the music would notice the new melody with JB’s entrance, but the musical gesture would largely go unnoticed by virtue of its subtlety; it merely marks the beginning of a new section within the middle of a musical cue. This new version is much more arresting, both musically *and* visually. Not only does the entrance of the music on JB’s first gaze at Constance signal a key moment in the drama, but the slower tempo, uncluttered texture, and dramatic opening melodic leap work together to focus spectator attention. The extended reaction shot of Constance gazing at JB is made to feel even longer by the nature of the musical accompaniment. For many viewers of *Spellbound*, this is a memorable moment, though not always for the best reasons. Students in classes often chuckle at the brazenly unsubtle conjunction of “love-at-first-sight” music and visuals. Even Fred Karlin, a committed enthusiast of the score, gently suggests that the “scene probably would not be spotted this way in a more contemporary film because the

immediate entrance of music would make [JB and Constance's] first meeting seem unreal and...corny.”⁷⁷ Karlin might be comforted to know that Selznick did not initially spot the scene in this fashion nor did Rózsa's original music for the scene include this melodic material.

Yet can this dramatic change be attributed solely to Granville's intrepidity? Here, the authorship of the musical decision is more difficult to trace as a close examination of the soundtrack shows that this revision does not seem to be an instance of cutting and pasting audio tracks (as were Granville's previously discussed edits) but actually features reused music *freshly recorded* for the new context. The scoring log supports this by indicating that Rózsa recorded “First Meeting (New Version)” on the last day of recording for the score, 14 September 1945. So who motivated this change—Selznick or Granville? And who selected the new material—Rózsa or Granville? We may never know, but the original instigator was likely Hitchcock, who had requested that music enter at this moment, a suggestion that Granville followed when constructing the preview track. The crowning irony is that the director hated the effect. When François Truffaut complimented the scene in an interview, Hitchcock sniffed: “Unfortunately, the violins begin to play just then. That was terrible!”⁷⁸

Hitchcock's disdain notwithstanding, there are certain facets of this musical revision that deserve praise. Whereas the “Honeymoon at Brulov's” cue benefits from being made less noticeable through a musical extension that matches the music's entrance with the beginning of the scene, “First Meeting” benefits from the reverse process. Here, the highly noticeable quality of the score's entrance mid-scene (and in a break of

⁷⁷ Karlin, 105.

⁷⁸ François Truffaut, *Hitchcock*, New York (Touchstone, 1967 [English Translation]), 119.

dialogue) is more likely to catch the attention of more spectators—not just the musically inclined. As the first background scoring since the main title, the bold entrance signals the prominent role music will play throughout the picture, a point that is reinforced through the entrance of the theremin moments later. In addition, the selection of the secondary love theme—drawn note-for-note from the “Love Scene” cue—is also strikingly appropriate in that it establishes a connection between musical and visual motifs, namely of shot-reverse-shot sequences featuring Constance and JB exchanging “spellbound” stares. Just as their initial meeting is visually depicted in this manner, so are the camera shots leading up to their first kiss, the very sequence that the secondary love theme accompanies in “Love Scene.” Thus, whether or not one finds the revision in “First Meeting” compelling, it effectively inscribes itself on the memory of the spectator by virtue of its exposed entrance, its obvious musico-dramatic function (reinforcing the love-at-first-sight visuals), and its integration into the film’s narrative and visual structures.⁷⁹

While Granville’s edits frequently changed the intended alignment of Rózsa’s music with narrative and visuals, the alterations made in the film’s final reels were more dramatic. Acting on Selznick’s orders, Granville completely replaced Rózsa’s cues for the most climactic sequences with music from other films that she had used in her preview score. For the ski run scene, Granville cut and paste together excerpts of four different cues: Roy Webb’s “Kit Murders Skaas, pt. 2” from *Fallen Sparrow* (1943), Daniele Amfitheatrof’s “German Prisoner, pt. 2” from *Days of Glory* (1944), Roy Webb’s “Street Scene” from *Stranger on the Third Floor* (1940), and Franz Waxman’s

⁷⁹ As a side note, Granville preserved the opening of Rózsa’s first version of “First Meeting” by using it in the entrance music track included in prints of the film. Thus, audiences did hear the music as they found their seats in the theater, though this was obviously not the intended context. DVDs of the film often label this audio track as the “overture,” though it was assembled entirely by Granville from recorded tracks, not composed specially by Rózsa.

“Two Fast” from Hitchcock’s *Suspicion* (1941). The last cue dominates the scene in both length and musical activity: an accumulation of ostinati heighten suspense as Constance and JB plummet towards a sheer cliff. As Sullivan has noted, Waxman’s music in this new context works well in part because it is drawn from a similar scene from another Hitchcock film with a “dizzying sequence involving dangerous speed and the heroine’s anxiety over whether the leading man will murder her.”⁸⁰

As mentioned previously, Selznick had already advised Rózsa to follow Granville’s preview score very closely for the ski sequence. In addition, he sent an earlier memo through production secretary Barbara Keon that Rózsa should use “distorted treatment of whatever theme you are using throughout the picture for each psychoanalytical reference to childhood causes, which should be used here very strongly as a counter score to the suspense of the scene.”⁸¹ Rózsa’s cue accomplishes both tasks. As Constance and JB begin to descend the slope, Rózsa furnishes three layers of ostinati, with the slowest line in the low strings and the most active line in the woodwinds and violins. (The density of the texture required the conductor’s part to be realized on five staves instead of the typical three used for the majority of the score.) Basses and cellos cycle nimbly through four descending quarter notes, each a whole step apart. Much like his use of the tritone interval in the “white” theme, Rózsa’s use of the whole-tone scale draws upon established extra-musical associations: whole-tone scales had often been used to represent threatening characters or connote supernatural or disorienting states, including dreams (see figure 4.10).⁸²

⁸⁰ Sullivan, 114.

⁸¹ Barbara Keon to Miklós Rózsa, 30 October 1944, HRC 1117:8.

⁸² An example of each includes Mikhail Glinka’s use of a descending whole-tone scale to represent the evil sorcerer Chernmor in *Ruslan and Ludmila* (1842) and Max Steiner’s use of an ascending and descending

Figure 4.10 Rózsa, *Spellbound*, “Ski Run,” mm. 19–20.

The image shows a musical score for measures 19 and 20 of the piece "Ski Run" from Rózsa's *Spellbound*. The score is written for five staves: two for woodwinds (w.w.), two for violins (vlns.), and one for brass. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The tempo is marked "Piu Allegro" and the dynamic is "mf". The woodwind parts feature a continuous, ascending chromatic line of eighth notes, with the second staff specifically labeled "SKI RUN STARTS". The violin parts play a similar chromatic line. The brass part consists of a series of chords, and the bass line is marked "pizz." (pizzicato) and features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The score is divided into two systems, with measure 19 on the left and measure 20 on the right. A rehearsal mark ":52" is placed above the first staff of measure 19.

Synchronized with a close-up shot of a grimacing JB, the “white” theme explodes in the trombones and theremin in measure 36; the whole-tone passage shifts accordingly so that the four quarter notes now outline a tritone. The frenetic texture continues, with the ostinati in the upper voices breaking apart into less rhythmically predictable chromatic patterns. The “white” theme repeats incessantly, ascending in tessitura and scoring (see figure 4.11).

whole-tone fragment to accompany Joel McCrea’s sleep in the strange and threatening castle of Count Zaroff in *The Most Dangerous Game* (1932).

Figure 4.11 Rózsa, *Spellbound*, “Ski Run,” mm. 36–38.



1:12
36 ww. C[lose] U[p] J.B.

ff
N[ova] C[hord], piano *sim.*

Harp

Trb., Therm[in]

vla. >

cello *8^{vb}*

The musical score for measures 36-38 of "Ski Run" from *Spellbound* is presented in a multi-staff format. The top staff is for woodwinds (ww.), featuring a melodic line with triplets and a dynamic marking of *ff*. The second staff is for strings (N[ova] C[hord], piano), showing a sustained chord with a *sim.* (sustained) marking. The third staff is for Harp, with a melodic line and a dynamic marking of *ff*. The fourth staff is for Trb., Therm[in] (Trumpet, Theremin), with a melodic line and a dynamic marking of *ff*. The fifth staff is for Vlna. (Violin), with a melodic line and a dynamic marking of *ff*. The sixth staff is for Cello, with a melodic line and a dynamic marking of *8^{vb}*. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings.

Figure 4.11 continued

The musical score for Figure 4.11 continued consists of five staves. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef, starting at measure 38. It features a melodic line with four groups of triplets, each marked with a '3' below it. The piano accompaniment is shown in two staves: the upper staff is in treble clef and contains a series of chords with trills, while the lower staff is in bass clef and contains a sustained note with a long hairpin and a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The score is enclosed in a large bracket on the left side.

In measure 69, as Constance and JB approach a sheer precipice, a new theme set in an unexpectedly bright C-sharp major enters, though its sunnier key is distorted with muted trumpet, grotesque woodwind trills, and dissonant accompaniment (including the outlined tritone in the lower strings). As requested by Selznick, this is the childhood theme that Rózsa had introduced in an earlier cue titled “The Decision,” heard when Constance suggests that JB might be struggling with a repressed childhood memory.⁸³ In that scene, the theme is set in flute and glockenspiel, with accompanying pizzicatos creating a music-box texture. On the ski-slope, the theme is played *fortissimo* by trilling winds before trombones interrupt with a chromatic variant that sounds strikingly similar to the “white” theme. The childhood theme returns to trumpet and woodwinds for a

⁸³ The theme is not heard elsewhere because childhood is never mentioned again, despite the inference in Selznick’s request that childhood would serve as a recurring narrative and musical theme throughout the picture.

second time, initiating JB's astonishingly gruesome flashback: JB as young boy slides down a railing, inadvertently knocking his brother onto the spikes of an iron fence. As the flashback progresses without diegetic sound (the boy opens his mouth and cries out, but is not heard on the soundtrack), trombones declaim their chromatic distortion of the childhood theme a final time as the brother falls to his death. Fortunately, the flashback arrives just in time for JB to prevent further catastrophe. Grabbing Constance, he pulls her to the ground before careening over the cliff edge. Disaster averted, JB exclaims: "I didn't kill my brother—it was an accident. It was an accident!" "That's what has haunted you all your life," Constance rejoins, "that was the memory you were afraid of!" Behind this timely revelation, the childhood theme—in its chromatic variation—is echoed softly by English horn (mm. 103–106⁸⁴).

In the final analysis, Rózsa's cue begins by following Selznick's instructions, but goes much further. Rózsa adopts Waxman's model of layered ostinati, yet builds a distinctive texture into which he integrates crucial thematic material, aligning the entrances of themes to emphasize specific shots. The childhood theme is also included, but enters before the spectator is given any clue that a flashback is about to ensue. By anticipating the flashback, the childhood theme acts as an extra-diegetic prompt, suggesting that the preceding musical turmoil—dominated tellingly by the "white" theme—is intended to encourage identification with JB's emotional state, as opposed to Constance's. Franz Waxman's cue, drawn note-for-note from *Suspicion*,⁸⁵ functions as a

⁸⁴ This brief English horn solo is *not* played in a recent re-recording of the cue performed by Allan Wilson and the Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra (Intrada, 2007).

⁸⁵ The Waxman cue from *Suspicion* heard in *Spellbound* is even the same recording, a rather unusual circumstance for the time. As Granville proudly explained to the studio manager: "Through the good offices of Philip Kahgan, the union man I have used as orchestra manager for both IBSY [*I'll Be Seeing You*] and SPELLBOUND, we have obtained unprecedented permission to use the RKO recorded tracks in the release print of SPELLBOUND without re-recording them for that purpose. This is a saving of some

more generic “hurry” cue with the music conveying a build-up of tension that relates more to Constance’s increasingly concerned expressions than JB’s ambiguous and static grimace. The intertextuality of the music reinforces this interpretation—in *Suspicion*, music and feminine anxiety are linked: the male protagonist’s expression during the harrowing car ride in *Suspicion* is blank and seemingly disconnected from the throbbing music while the female passenger’s distress increases with the music’s crescendo.

Rózsa’s music was also removed from another nail-biting sequence: when Constance confronts Dr. Murchison with a theory of Dr. Edwardes’ murder that posits Murchison as the murderer. In this case, music by Roy Webb for *Fallen Sparrow* (“Kit Murders Skaas, Pt. 2”) once again replaced Rózsa’s cue, though the music selected for this scene does not overlap with the excerpts from *Fallen Sparrow* Granville used in the ski scene. Whereas the ski scene juxtaposed the swift onscreen action of speeding skiers with relatively static shots of JB’s grimacing face, the pacing of this later sequence relies upon a slow undercurrent of suspense that grows over the course of Constance and Murchison’s conversation. In contrast to the fully scored ski sequence, in which Rózsa matched the tension of fleet action and JB’s frozen visage by counterpointing frenetic ostinati with a ponderously sustained version of the “white” theme, here music is withheld for much of the scene until Dr. Murchison calmly pulls the murder weapon from his desk drawer. (Both Hitchcock and Selznick agreed that this unforeseen turn of events required underscoring.) From this point until the end of the scene, music was intended to heighten suspense and uncertainty—will or will he not shoot Constance? Rózsa’s cue introduces new motivic material and reprises old. The cue begins with a slowly pulsing

\$1,500 which it would cost us in orchestrating, copying, stage space, crew, and film....” Audray Granville to Charles Glett, 12 October 1945, HRC 3672:12.

motive whose opening triplet figure coincidentally recalls Steiner's "danger" motive from *King Kong*. A recurrent theme heard previously in other suspenseful sequences follows,⁸⁶ only to give way to Dr. Murchison's theme, which enters as a muted trumpet solo ("The Revolver," m. 28) and dominates much of the remaining cue, growing in length and volume through melodic extension and orchestral doubling. Murchison's theme reaches a hysteric climax on the firing of the revolver. Given that the scene is Murchison's final performance, Rózsa's compositional decisions in this cue mark the tragic fruition of a musical seed planted early in the film's score. After introducing Dr. Murchison's theme at the beginning of the first cue heard after the opening credits ("First Meeting," mm. 1–3) and reprising it in later passages, including "The Dressing Gown" (mm. 18–19, 22–23, 44–45) and "Defeat" (mm. 54–67), Rózsa gives the Murchison theme unprecedented prominence in "The Revolver" cue, thereby aligning the theme's apex with a plot revelation that resolves all the preceding conflict and uncertainty. In this respect, Rózsa's use of the Murchison theme in his score for *Spellbound* resembles Bernard Herrmann's use of the "Rosebud" motive in *Citizen Kane* (1941). Here too, a musical key introduced early in the film anticipates the narrative's concluding revelation: an unspoken explication of "Rosebud," Kane's enigmatic deathbed utterance. Rózsa's planned thematic progression, however, is obscured in the film. As previously discussed, the introduction of Dr. Murchison's theme in "First Meeting" is cut, as are the theme's recurrences in "Defeat" and "The Revolver." Thus, the theme is only heard in the film during the surgery sequence (part of "The Dressing Gown" cue) and again—almost

⁸⁶ The theme is played by woodwinds in the quiet and mysterious opening of "The Razor—Part One," the nighttime scene in which JB awakens and walks eerily about with an open blade in his hand. The theme is played extensively in a very different context later in the film when it accompanies Constance's realization that Dr. Murchison is the murderer ("Constance's Discovery").

inaudibly—as JB rests on a chair, musing about his most recent dream.⁸⁷ The consequence of this cutting and pasting is that Murchison’s theme remains the score’s best kept secret, a lost, but valuable fragment whose meaning is only discernible after one considers the significant portions of Rózsa’s score not heard in the film.⁸⁸

While the obscuring of this motivic development in Rózsa’s score is lamentable, at least from a purely musical point of view, it is interesting to note that the selections Granville used in the scene are not only effective, but also alter our perception of the scene, much as her selections for the ski sequence had done. For one, the music she selected for Murchison’s monologue is much barer in texture. In place of Rózsa’s recurring motives and densely orchestrated passages, the excerpts by Webb and Amfithearof are little more than sustained chords laced with dissonance and novel sonorities, including tingling harp and an organ-like timbre likely produced by novachord. Heard by themselves, Granville’s excerpts are static and not especially

⁸⁷ Ironically, this latter occurrence was not even planned by Rózsa. Rather it is drawn from the excised Murchison theme in “Defeat” and was evidently inserted by Granville for the dream-telling sequence, as Rózsa only composed music for footage *revealing* the dream, not the surrounding footage of JB sitting in the chair discussing the dream. Granville specifically selected mm. 54–57 and mm. 62–67 from “Defeat.” The insertion is appropriate in that it follows on the heels of a dream sequence in which Murchison plays a role, though his masked face obscures his identity. As the dream fades out to reveal JB sitting in the chair, the Murchison theme is heard as JB expresses bafflement over a dream that makes little sense to him: “Does it make any sense to you what I dreamed?” he asks Constance. “Not yet,” she admits. The music tells us otherwise: Dr. Murchison is behind the intrigue. Although Granville’s inclusion of the Murchison theme here cleverly offers an answer to JB’s question, its meaning is largely lost as only she and Rózsa understood this melodic fragment to be Murchison’s theme. To spectators of the film, Murchison’s theme is not heard enough to even form an association between the theme and Murchison. The connection is only evident if one has studied passages of the score not heard in the film.

⁸⁸ In his detailed analysis of the score for *Spellbound*, Josef Kloppenburg duly notes the appearance of Dr. Murchison’s theme during the surgery scene (part of Rózsa’s cue titled “The Dressing Gown”), but is not aware of the theme’s intended referent, Dr. Murchison. (Kloppenburger’s analysis is based solely on the film; the author did not have access to Rózsa’s score or Selznick’s notes.) Thus, Kloppenburg notes that the “new” melodic figure introduced in the surgery sequence conveys “latent unrest [and] suspense that anticipates the following event,” JB’s sudden collapse in the surgery room. Kloppenburg also notes that the figure’s recurrence at the end of the scene creates a tidy a-b-a form for the surgery sequence. That Rózsa had intended the motive to emphasize Dr. Murchison’s wary expressions and reactions is not mentioned for the simple reason that the passage establishing the motive’s association with Dr. Murchison was removed from the film. See Kloppenburg, 123.

interesting, but they work well in conjunction with the scene. Whereas Rózsa’s music features Murchison’s theme, often aligned with either a shot of Murchison or an important line of dialogue from that character, Granville’s selections are devoid of discernable melody. Though lacking motivic signposts, the music nevertheless matches Constance’s emotional state more than Murchison’s. The selections are kept at a soft dynamic and the sparse, slowly changing textures reinforce Constance’s measured speech and steely emotional restraint—an excited glance or misplaced word might cause Murchison to pull the trigger. Rózsa’s music, in contrast, is clearly aligned with Murchison’s growing anger, with a *forte* declamation of his theme on the bitter words “What did you think I’d do when you told me all this? Congratulate you?” (See figure 4.12.)

Figure 4.12 Rózsa, *Spellbound*, “The Revolver.” The still indicates Rózsa’s intended alignment of visuals with the musical cue.



1:20
32 "What did you think?"



Thus, in this case, as in the ski scene, Granville selected music that encourages spectator identification with Constance, who in both scenes is at risk of becoming a second murder victim. Rózsa's music, on the other hand, places emphasis on the mentally unstable male character in each situation. By invoking their motives through loud, declamatory, and dissonant settings, Rózsa highlights the male characters' agency and destructive potential. While neither Rózsa nor Granville alters the scenes' outcome or suspenseful content, they do use music to emphasize one character's emotional responses over the other. By keeping the musical spotlight trained on Constance, Granville places the spectator more squarely in Constance's frame of mind—we feel her anxiety through the musical score, not JB's and Murchison's unpredictable menace.

Granville selected and edited the music cues for these scenes herself, but it was producer Selznick who ordered the removal of Rózsa's music for these two scenes. While Selznick's decision was said to have irritated Rózsa (an understandable reaction under the circumstances), it can be fairly argued that the temp track music in each case better serves the scenes in question, even if the replacements weaken the motivic structure of Rózsa's larger score.⁸⁹ In the ski scene, Granville's selecting of excerpts from disparate cues with contrasting textures (the ski run begins with sustained chords before erupting mid-scene into Waxman's ostinati-laden *Suspicion* cue) institutes structural breaks and unexpected musical shifts that inject the scene with excitement. Rózsa's music turns wild as soon as the ski run commences and remains so until the end of the flashback. Though energetic, it is also exhausting, stretching a single and extreme musical affect over an extended period of time. Similarly, Rózsa's music for the Constance-Murchison scene fulfills a long-term

⁸⁹ James G. Stewart, 252.

musical trajectory by featuring the Murchison theme in its ultimate and terrifying glory, but the thick texture, melodic activity, and volume are out of place in a scene that is otherwise breathless and hushed. In other words, Rózsa was thinking of his score as an unfolding, large-scale, musical work—a perfectly reasonable approach for a concert work, but not always appropriate in the context of film music. Granville's and Selznick's concerns, in contrast, were more local: how can music best support and enhance the tone and pacing of these climactic scenes? In this respect, Granville's selections succeeded over Rózsa's original work.

The inserted preview track music also had another, perhaps unintended, consequence. When the music for these sequences would begin and listeners realized—consciously or subconsciously—that the music did not resemble Rózsa's distinctive scoring style, it could generate a degree of unease. In musical terms, the film entered uncharted territory. One could not rely on Rózsa's now-familiar themes as a guide through such sequences. Thus, the substitution and its resulting disorientation—an effect that might annoy purists as egregious musical incongruity—served appropriately for such sequences.

Considering that the previous pages have recounted various instances in which Rózsa's music was removed, rewritten, or relocated, it is important to emphasize that despite Granville's edits—often made without Rózsa's input—the score remains largely cohesive. Josef Kloppenburg makes this point in thorough detail in his study of the score's rich motivic content in *Die dramaturgische Funktion der Musik in Filmen Alfred Hitchcocks*. Kloppenburg's selection of *Spellbound* as his central case study is puzzling given the premise of his book: an overview of music and dramatic function in *Hitchcock's* films. *Spellbound* and its accompanying score neither typify nor exemplify

Hitchcock's aesthetic style, for reasons that should now be clear.⁹⁰ Nevertheless, Kloppenburg selected Rózsa's score in part because the musical complexity befitted extended analysis.⁹¹ Though Kloppenburg was unaware of Selznick's extensive input and Granville's role as music editor, his study brings to light Rózsa's fluid treatment of motivic material, specifically the manner in which melodic fragments transform, develop into new motives, and refer back to one another. Had Rózsa's score been randomly diced and spliced, such an analytical approach could not have worked. Kloppenburg's detailed musico-cinematic analysis is therefore a tribute to the durability of Rózsa's work *and* Granville's artful editing, which largely reinforced, rather than weakened, the score's motivic structure. Kloppenburg gives special attention, for example, to the deployment of the secondary love theme: especially as it is introduced in the "First Meeting" cue, its reprisal in the nighttime "Love Scene," and its return again in the "Honeymoon at Brulov's." As has already been detailed, this particular theme was incorporated into "First Meeting" only after Rózsa's initial version was rejected. Likewise, the theme's presence in the "Honeymoon" cue was effected by Granville through a cutting and pasting of audio tracks. Though Kloppenburg was unaware of these later-stage edits, his analysis shows that the appearance of the theme in the "First Meeting" cue forges a specially nuanced association—that the theme's alignment with visuals emphasizing Constance's initial view of JB forges an association between the melody and *Constance's* first feelings of love.⁹² (Such a reading would not have worked with the original version

⁹⁰ See Kloppenburg, 66–155.

⁹¹ Kloppenburg was also attracted to the film's clearly defined narrative structure (see especially pp. 66–77), its treatment of suspenseful themes, and visual editing. Kloppenburg also notes that availability of the film (as with all the films discussed in this book) was obviously a necessary criterion for his selection (see pp. 11–12).

⁹² Kloppenburg, 114–117.

of the cue.) This association then influences one's perception of the theme's recurrences in later cues, all of which implicitly refer back to the initial occurrence. Thus, while Granville's edits all but removed Dr. Murchison's theme from the score, these later changes and insertions brought the secondary love theme to greater prominence, making it an integral part of the score's motivic structure. Interestingly, Kloppenburg's assertion that the secondary love theme reflects Constance's emotional response, and not merely Constance and JB's love for each other, indirectly relates to the temp track substitutions Granville made at the end of the film. Here also the music conveys Constance's perspective more clearly than does Rózsa's music, which aligned motivic content with the men. Broadly speaking, Granville's edits brought Constance's experiences more into the musical foreground, an effect that encourages spectator sympathy with Constance while simultaneously emphasizing her gendered otherness in a film (and, more broadly, a medical field) populated by variously unsympathetic men. To what degree, one wonders, did Granville's edits help to shape audience perceptions of Constance's role within its cinematic context? For Bosley Crowther of *The New York Times* the entire film rested on the shoulders of its capable female protagonist:

[Constance] is the single stimulation of dramatic logic and audience belief. For the fact is the story of "Spellbound" is a rather obvious and often-told tale. And it depends, despite its truly expert telling, upon the illusion of the lady in the leading role.⁹³

Indeed, it was this very illusion that Granville had actively participated in constructing and elevating—through and even beyond Rózsa's compelling musical score.

⁹³ Bosley Crowther, "The Screen in Review," *New York Times*, 2 November 1945, 22.

Rózsa's Music Beyond the Film

While the preceding discussion has sought to show how Rózsa, Granville, Hitchcock, and Selznick worked collectively (though rarely together) to produce an effective musical score, much of the music's success can be attributed to efforts directed at musical promotion beyond the film. Before *Spellbound*, both Rózsa and Selznick had already been involved in various music-promotion schemes. Selznick had already considered releasing a recording of orchestral music from *Gone with the Wind* (all prior soundtracks had featured songs from musicals, not background scoring), though the idea did not come to fruition.⁹⁴ After *GWTW*, background scoring from the following two productions was featured independently. For *Rebecca*, Waxman arranged a suite based on the Rebecca theme for NBC's *Standard Symphony Hour*. This new demand for orchestral film music led Selznick and his radio publicist Ted Wick to adopt a more proactive role with *Since You Went Away*, in which they commissioned a short suite from Steiner and then distributed recordings of it gratis to radio stations.⁹⁵ The ploy proved successful and was repeated for *Spellbound*.⁹⁶ Yet the music for *Spellbound* received more than just radio play. Rózsa had already conducted a performance of a *Spellbound* suite at the Hollywood Bowl during the preceding summer.

The performance was a coup for the studio and the film. The only film composition on the program, Rózsa's suite followed directly after intermission, "the best spot" in the program according to Granville.⁹⁷ Leopold Stokowski, music director for the

⁹⁴ Behlmer, 244–245.

⁹⁵ For more on this promotional innovation and Ted Wick's involvement, see Jeff Smith, *The Sounds of Commerce: Marketing Popular Film Music* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 58.

⁹⁶ The suite for radio broadcast was recorded on 14 September 1945 (Spellbound Scoring Log, HRC 3672:17) and distributed to one thousand radio stations prior to the film's release on Halloween (Sullivan, 121).

⁹⁷ Granville to DOS, 16 July 1945, HRC 3672:11.

Hollywood Bowl Symphony, had approved the program and invited Miklós Rózsa to conduct the entire concert, which included Nicolai's Overture to *"The Merry Wives of Windsor,"* the premiere of Lionel Barrymore's *"Halllowe'en,"* *A Fantasy for Orchestra and Voices,* and Enesco's Roumanian Rhapsody No. 1.⁹⁸ Granville, who had originally emphasized to Selznick the efficacy of promoting the film's score *before* the premiere, was pleased with the Bowl event.⁹⁹ "This is of greater advantage to us than having it performed on motion picture night," explained Granville to Selznick, "as it is being performed not just because it is a motion picture score but as an outstanding concert contribution."¹⁰⁰ Introducing the music from *Spellbound* as concert music—performed before even the film itself had premiered—was a novel stunt that Granville hoped would help win an Academy Award. Indeed, while the Bowl concert was but one performance, many of the individuals who would cast votes at the Academy Awards could potentially be in the audience. If nothing else, the press and advertising for the event marked *Spellbound* as a musically distinctive picture; moviegoers in the Los Angeles area would be more inclined to listen for the music when they attended the picture in the fall. As for the musicians themselves, Granville reported positive impressions: "I was back stage at the Bowl Saturday nite and members of the orchestra, which recorded the [radio] transcription, spoke of our music as the finest they had recorded this year."¹⁰¹

Granville's choice of "our music" (as opposed to "Rózsa's music") is telling: it indicates

⁹⁸ The program also featured the dancers Tony and Sally De Marco, who danced four dances before and after the intermission. Their selections were varied, ranging from Chopin to Gershwin, but the only film music selection in their assortment came from another Selznick picture, *Intermezzo* (1939, main theme by Heinz Provost, whose music was originally featured in the 1936 Swedish film of the same name). Perhaps the studio's publicity department exerted some influence even here. The De Marcos' dance routines are printed in a smaller font on the program, suggesting that their routines were not formally part of the symphonic program conducted by Rózsa. See *Hollywood Bowl Magazine* 24, no. 3 (July 1945), 51.

⁹⁹ See Sullivan, 117–118.

¹⁰⁰ Granville to DOS, 16 July 1945, HRC 3672:11.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

the collective ownership of a score on which both she and Selznick had exerted significant influence.

Musical promotion for *Spellbound* also extended into commercial records. As mentioned above, Selznick had already considered a soundtrack for *Gone with the Wind*, but it may have been Miklós Rózsa's own example—the release of a specially arranged suite by Rózsa drawn his score for *The Jungle Book* (1942)—that prompted Selznick to pursue this path with *Spellbound*.¹⁰² As a publicity and marketing venture, the recording, conducted by Miklós Rózsa and released by ARA Records, accomplished much, though the project suffered complications. For one, it had unanticipated competition. Rózsa's love theme had been set to lyrics by Mack David and the publishing rights of the song had been sold to Chappell Music.¹⁰³ Chappell evidently used these restricted rights as grounds to sell recording rights of the *score* to RCA Victor, which then released a special orchestral recording (not arranged by Rózsa) led by Al Goodman. The release made Selznick's radio publicist Ted Wick furious:

If we sold only the right to publish the popular song called 'SPELLBOUND' to Chappell, where in God's name does Chappell get off selling the rights to a recording company to release a recorded version of the score? No written version of the score existed in New York City and, therefore, Chappell had to pull some fancy skullduggery to get these notes on paper. I assume they had copiers copy the arrangement directly from our own radio transcription.¹⁰⁴

Another take-off of Rózsa's music was released by Ray Block on the Signature Recording label. Fortunately for the studio, arrangements were made so that a portion of

¹⁰² In his history of the soundtrack, Jon Burlingame cites Rózsa's *The Jungle Book* as the first instance of background scoring being sold as a soundtrack, though it should be noted that in this instance—as with its immediate successors including *Spellbound*—the orchestral music was re-recorded for commercial release, not taken directly from the film.

¹⁰³ For more on the trials of producing a popular song for *Spellbound*, see Sullivan, 117–120.

¹⁰⁴ Ted Wick to Robert Dann, 2 January 1946, HRC 3672:16. Though Wick suspects that the New York copyists were using the radio transcription as the source, the Goodman recording borrows more blatantly from the suite and *Spellbound Concerto* on the ARA release through its incorporation of extended solos for violin and piano.

the royalties from these recordings found their way back to studio coffers and Rózsa. By May of 1946, the RCA Victor recording alone had sold 72,480 copies.¹⁰⁵ Not only did the additional recordings increase the music's exposure, they also helped make up for the shortcomings of the ARA release, which featured more music (including a *Spellbound Concerto* with two piano soloists and Rózsa's original cue for the ski sequence) but played poorly. As the studio's endorsed soundtrack for the film, the bad sound quality became a source of embarrassment, causing Wick to fume once again. In a two page letter fired off to Mark Leff of ARA Records, Wick listed various grievances, including a marred radio promotional campaign (KMPC had planned to play the album on the air with Wick's commentary, but refused on account of the record's poor quality, thereby forcing Wick to rely on the studio's older radio transcription), and even stunted sales:

A potential customer phoned the studio yesterday to ask where the album could be purchased. He had tried to obtain it at "The Gateway to Music" and was told there that the quality of the pressings in the album was so atrocious that the shop had returned to ARA their entire shipment. I telephoned "The Gateway to Music" this morning and was told the same thing.¹⁰⁶

Yet even as the ARA release disappointed studio employees and customers, it still brought greater exposure to the film and its score. Most importantly, the *Spellbound* music campaign had somewhat inadvertently produced *three* separate albums featuring music from the film. In 1946, when commercial recordings of any orchestral film music were still extremely rare, this represented an unprecedented accomplishment.¹⁰⁷ (The soundtrack industry to which Selznick and Rózsa contributed has also perpetuated Rózsa's *Spellbound* score through re-releases and re-recordings, including a recent album

¹⁰⁵ Robert Dann to Mr. Beaman, 8 July 1946, HRC 229:1.

¹⁰⁶ Ted Wick to Mark Leff, 7 February 1946, HRC 3672:2, p. 2.

¹⁰⁷ Burlingame notes that between the first commercial album of background scoring (Rózsa's *The Jungle Book*) in 1942 and the release of the *Spellbound* albums in early 1946, there were only two other albums released: Victor Young's score for *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and Alfred Newman's score for *The Song of Bernadette*, both recorded in 1943.

that includes—for the first time—cues and passages from Rózsa’s score not used in the film.¹⁰⁸)

The effectiveness of these various promotional schemes can be partially gauged through fan mail sent to the studio. Many of the writers make reference to hearing the music apart from the film. Bonnie Quittner of San Marino, California, attended the Hollywood Bowl concert and heard the music on the radio before ever seeing the film: “When I finally saw the picture I was even more fascinated. It is truly a work of art.”¹⁰⁹ Similarly, Kevin of Los Angeles stumbled across Rózsa’s music while listening to the radio:

It was very early [in the morning] and I turned on the radio hoping to hear some nice music—yet knowing I would have to be satisfied with one of those all-night jive programs. Imagine my extreme pleasure when the music that came on was a beautiful classical melody—the most glorious music I have ever heard... Too soon, the music ended. Last night I saw the motion picture, “Spellbound.” The main theme of the musical score was the music I had heard that Sunday morning! I offer my sincerest admiration to your greatness. Please advise me the name of your music and where I may purchase a recording.¹¹⁰

Effusive in the extreme, Kevin’s letter was nonetheless a model endorsement for the promotional campaign engineered by Selznick, Granville, and Wick: hear the music on the radio, recognize it in the film, then buy the soundtrack. Kevin was not alone; other letter writers mentioned purchasing the album after watching the film or else asked questions about obtaining the music in various formats. B. E. Prescott of Seattle even requested a personal copy of the radio transcription disc.¹¹¹ He had correctly deduced that it was of superior sound quality to his purchased copy of the ARA recording. Rózsa’s

¹⁰⁸ Allan Wilson, Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra, *Miklós Rózsa: Spellbound, Complete Original Motion Picture Score* (MAF 7100), Intrada, 2007.

¹⁰⁹ Bonnie Quittner to Mr. Rozsa, 16 January 1946, HRC 3672:14.

¹¹⁰ Kevin to Monsieur Rozsa, HRC 3672:14.

¹¹¹ B. E. Prescott to the “Sirs” of the Selznick Studio, 27 March 1946, HRC 3672:14.

novel use of the theremin in the score also proved to be a selling point, with letter writers either praising the use of the electronic instrument or else asking about it. “In connection with the orchestration may I ask a question,” began Gene Cannody of Camp Lockett, California. “In the scene where the patient (Gregory Peck) arose in the middle of the night to shave, you used a block type series of harmonies above a pedal G. I think this G was some sort of electrical instrument, but what I cannot place. Would you be so kind as to tell me what this instrument was?”¹¹² Cannody’s accurate memory of musical details in this scene is noteworthy (another letter writer included a transcription of the theremin-dominated “white” theme¹¹³), and one wonders if such careful attention to the orchestral score resulted from prior exposure to the music before viewing the film. For example, the passage Cannody described in his letter constituted part of the *Spellbound* suite played on radio stations across the country.

In addition to attracting the attention of moviegoers and music lovers, the music in *Spellbound* received recognition from the Academy, with Rózsa winning an Oscar for Best Music in a Dramatic or Comedy Picture, a selection made from over twenty nominations. The score even won out over Rózsa’s music for *Lost Weekend*, a score that had similarly relied upon theremin to express mental distress—in this case, the desperate cravings of an alcoholic. While the aesthetic criteria for Academy Awards are fuzzy at best and not a reliable gauge for musical achievement, the prestige bestowed on the composer and studio for the award was considerable and marked an important victory of sorts—especially for Selznick and Granville. Both had chafed when Rózsa reused the theremin in *The Lost Weekend* for a similar effect, a decision that significantly

¹¹² Gene R. Cannody to Miklos Rozsa, 25 January 1946, HRC 3672:14.

¹¹³ Wooster Lambert Jr. to Miklos Rozsa, 27 January 1946, HRC 3672:14.

diminished the Selznick studio's thunder. When the two films premiered in New York only two weeks apart, the parallel was all the more obvious. Rózsa responded to Selznick's anger in righteous tones: Yes, he had used theremin in both scores, but he had also used "the piccolo, the trumpet, the triangle and the violin goodbye!"¹¹⁴ Rózsa was of course right that Selznick did not have "a monopoly on the instrument," but he also knew that the theremin was different from a piccolo or violin. Its dramatic impact rested in its novelty. Considering Rózsa's professed frustration at working with Selznick, were the producer's suspicions of musical sabotage all that far from the mark? In any case, the awarding of the Oscar to *Spellbound*—though Rózsa felt *The Lost Weekend* was more deserving—partially assuaged this disagreement and also implicitly endorsed Selznick's involvement in the scoring process (*Spellbound* marked the studio's second consecutive award for Best Music) along with Granville's judicious editing.¹¹⁵

Considering the intricate tensions concerning artistic control that characterize the score for *Spellbound*, it should not come as a surprise that Rózsa, Hitchcock, Selznick, and Granville were all discouraged with the end result, albeit for different reasons. Rózsa resented the notes from Selznick and the removal of some his most dramatic music. Hitchcock dismissed the score when he realized that his planned musical surprises—coyly revealed in Hedda Hopper's column—had been disregarded. Selznick was rankled by *The Lost Weekend* incident while Granville claimed to be disappointed with the score's repetitive qualities, even after having made adjustments through editing.¹¹⁶ In its

¹¹⁴ Rózsa, 148.

¹¹⁵ Rózsa, 149.

¹¹⁶ In a memo to Selznick, Granville wrote: "[Editor] Hal [Kern] believes I have improved the music considerably. I am not satisfied, however, but feel that I have done the best I can with the score we have. I don't believe there are over twenty bars of original music in the score, and the repetition is maddening. Under these circumstances, I found what melody was there and tried to use it to advantage." Granville to DOS, 10 October 1945, HRC 229:1.

final form, the soundtrack to *Spellbound* represented not a single or even shared vision, but rather an intricate conglomeration of ideas, revisions, and interpolations, a reality that partially explains the score's seemingly inconsistent relationship to the film's story and visuals. Personal disappointments aside, the music in *Spellbound* remains a compelling work because—not in spite of—the many hands that collectively shaped it. Indeed, the score's immediate success and lasting legacy are indebted to the individuals who not only influenced the music's incorporation into the film but also oversaw its dissemination into the public consciousness through radio, records, and concerts. Only by attending to this interplay of influences can one begin to appreciate that the music of *Spellbound* and its reception were defined through an opportune and expert confluence of skill, publicity, and showmanship.

Chapter 5

A Deceptive Melody: Musical Duplicity in *The Paradine Case* (1947)

The Paradine Case (1947) is a film of self-deception. The precise nature of this self-deception preoccupied the film's director Alfred Hitchcock, producer David O. Selznick, and composer Franz Waxman, though each had different ideas regarding its expression. Nevertheless, their efforts were united through music and by a particular melody: Waxman's Paradine theme. Much of this chapter will be devoted to explicating this relationship between music, narrative, visual framing, and deceit. As will be shown, the seeds were sown in Robert Hichens's source novel on which the film is based; other writers contributed important musical insights long before Hitchcock considered making the film. Even Waxman's musico-cinematic techniques developed out of his earlier scores, including *Possessed* (Warner Bros., 1947) and *Rebecca* (Selznick, 1940), the latter of which Waxman quotes in *The Paradine Case*. Though the relationship of these other works to the film have not been considered by prior commentators, they are crucial to understanding the musical manipulation at play in the film.

This chapter also addresses another deception of sorts, namely the misleading assertion made in auteur-oriented studies that *The Paradine Case* is a "badly mutilated

Hitchcock film.”¹ The contention that Hitchcock’s otherwise sure artistic vision was compromised in *The Paradine Case* by the meddling of others—namely the film’s over-involved producer—leaves too much unexplored and unquestioned. Just as Selznick’s improvements to *Rebecca* and *Spellbound* are often overlooked or under-acknowledged, so too has his work on *The Paradine Case* been cast in a negative light. While it may be fairly noted that Selznick’s tendency to second-guess his own decisions impaired progress on the production (including the score), this does not negate the benefit his creativity brought to the several Hitchcock pictures he produced, a point that Leonard Leff argues convincingly in his study of the Hitchcock-Selznick collaboration.² I do not seek to undermine or even diminish Hitchcock’s authorial presence in the film, but I will argue that some of the film’s most convincing effects, including the subtle weaving of Franz Waxman’s musical score into the narrative, were conceived or improved by individuals other than Hitchcock.³ As Thomas Leitch notes in his study of Hitchcock’s work with writers:

¹ Bill Krohn, *Hitchcock at Work* (London: Phaidon Press Limited, 2000), 105. Donald Spoto also portrays Hitchcock as the victim, describing *The Paradine Case* as “a lame-duck enterprise, a work assigned to a departing director by his increasingly neurotic and unselfconfident producer.... Hitchcock’s disgust with the content and method that were forced upon him conspired to produce an uneasy atmosphere from which Hitchcock could scarcely wait to extricate himself” (Spoto, *The Dark Side of Genius: The Life of Alfred Hitchcock*, Centennial Edition (New York: Da Capo Press, 1999), 294.). Patrick McGillan writes: “The last Selznick-Hitchcock production was stillborn, a lifeless picture critics rightly blamed on the producer” (McGillan, *Alfred Hitchcock: A Life in Darkness and Light* (New York: Regan Books, 2003), 396.). Robert A. Harris and Michael S. Lasky are similarly dismissive of Selznick’s role in the production: “The Paradine Case was Selznick’s project, not Hitchcock’s, and the result on the screen was obvious” (Harris and Lasky, *The Films of Alfred Hitchcock* (Secaucus, NJ: Citadel Press, 1976) 133.).

² Leonard Leff, *Hitchcock and Selznick: The Rich and Strange Collaboration of Alfred Hitchcock and David O. Selznick in Hollywood* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

³ Donald Spoto, for example, praises Hitchcock’s symbolic use of portraits throughout *The Paradine Case*, but both of the portraits discussed in this chapter—Col. Paradine’s and Mrs. Paradine’s—were introduced to the screenplay by James Bridie and Selznick respectively. Similarly, Andrew Sarris extols Hitchcock’s mise-en-scène for the bedroom sequence (discussed at length in this chapter), but the scene and its mise-en-scène were largely devised by Selznick.

See Donald Spoto, *The Art of Alfred Hitchcock: Fifty Years of His Motion Pictures* (New York: Doubleday, 1976), 175; Andrew Sarris, “You Ain’t Heard Nothin’ Yet”: *The American Talking Film—History and Memory, 1927–1949* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 260.

Both archival research and reinterpretation have repeatedly demonstrated that filmmaking is a radically collaborative enterprise, whatever its most gifted or vocal practitioners claim. The recent resistance to the imperial power once imputed to pantheon directors...should encourage more critical discussion of the nature of authorship in the cinema.⁴

Following Michael Anderegg's observation that behind-the-camera tensions between Hitchcock and Selznick exacerbated *The Paradine Case*'s peculiar and uncomfortable tone,⁵ I will argue here that this collaborative friction also had a positive impact on the film's score. In other words, Franz Waxman's music not only articulates an unbridgeable *narrative* gap between the film's protagonist and Mrs. Paradine, but also reconciles the differing *aesthetics* of director and producer. The music does more than serve as an external commentator on the narrative, as in *Spellbound*. In *The Paradine Case*, music functions as a recurring theme *within* the narrative; it is a conspicuous but verbally unacknowledged key that bears and discloses the central deception of the film.

By necessity, this chapter uses a very different methodology from the previous chapter on *Spellbound*, which examined the discrepancies between the notes of Selznick and Hitchcock to understand the musical decisions of Miklós Rózsa and music editor Audray Granville. For *The Paradine Case*, Selznick's music notes are discouragingly brief. The first mention is made in the shooting script and references the climactic trial scene of the film. When the protagonist, a lawyer, falters in his speech to the general assembly, the notes specify that "SOUND EFFECT TOGETHER WITH MUSIC starts to convey the growing disorder in [the protagonist's] mind...[then] the SOUND EFFECT

⁴ Thomas Leitch, "Hitchcock and His Writers: Authorship and Authority in Adaptation," *Authorship in Film Adaptation*, ed. Jack Boozer (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008), 77.

⁵ Michael Anderegg, "Hitchcock's *The Paradine Case* and Filmic Unpleasure," *Cinema Journal* 26, no. 4 (Summer, 1987): 50.

and MUSIC rise to a crescendo.”⁶ The only other note is in a music timing cue sheet and refers to a brief nighttime montage sequence: “Change the music on [the shot of the] Thames River—some kind of ‘city’ music. Or no music over the river shot. Let Waxman decide.”⁷ Both notes offer little insight into the score itself as the two sequences in question play without background scoring.⁸ The existence of two short notes regarding very specific locations strongly suggest that Selznick had drafted more thorough notes and that these excerpts belong to a substantially larger whole, but if this is the case, the whole has yet to be located. If Hitchcock left scoring instructions, they too are missing. The only substantial body of notes that address the score are the music cue timing sheets, which specify when a particular cue should begin and end, but do not include musical description (with the sole exception cited above). While these notes are considered in the following analysis, their lack of musical detail render them of limited value.⁹

Consequently, analysis of the musical score and the influence of the producer and director over Waxman’s musical decisions must be handled differently. Instead of looking to instructions that describe how music should function *outside* of the narrative (nondiegetically, as background scoring), this study will focus on the treatment of music

⁶ “THE PARADINE CASE, Final Shooting Script, Containing all old and new pages,” 10 December 1946, HRC 1074:1, 169A. While the author of this first note is not specified in the script (which was the product of many hands, including Selznick’s), the instruction that the music convey psychological “disorder” within a character’s mind is in keeping with Selznick’s music notes for *Spellbound* and anticipates similar instructions made in his music notes for *Portrait of Jennie*.

⁷ “Music Cue Timing Sheet, Trial Transition, M-91, First Timing,” 26 November 1947, HRC 1129:1.

⁸ Ironically, Waxman did in fact compose music to be heard under the chiming of Big Ben, but the measures were cut (Measures 1–3 of “Trial Transition are not heard on the soundtrack). It is unknown whether Selznick “let Waxman decide” or if the producer ordered the cut. See “Trial Transition,” HRC 4054:6.

⁹ As Selznick typically assumed the responsibility of musical spotting in his films, it is reasonable to assume that the music cue timing sheets were dictated by him. For *Spellbound*, however, both Hitchcock and Selznick drafted spotting notes (though Selznick’s were followed more faithfully by the composer than Hitchcock’s). In *The Paradine Case*, the presence of conflicting music cue timing sheets drafted on the same day allows for the possibility that both director and producer were dictating spotting instructions for Waxman—at least for select scenes.

as it developed *within* the narrative, an approach that ultimately reflects back upon the nondiegetic score, thereby illuminating its function. As will be shown, scenes in which music figures centrally were given special attention by both Hitchcock and Selznick. The subsequent analysis of Waxman's music will therefore stem from archival and critical studies of these very scenes.

While the following chapter will offer a musico-dramatic analysis of the entire score, emphasis will be given to the two complementary scenes that feature diegetic presentations of the Paradine theme: the opening scene of the film featuring Mrs. Paradine's piano performance in the drawing room and a later scene during which the protagonist examines Mrs. Paradine's bedroom. Previous commentators on Waxman's score, including Jack Sullivan and Eva Rieger,¹⁰ single out these scenes for their musically striking qualities; the following study illustrates how the interaction of music and visuals in these scenes is not only memorable, but also encapsulates and expresses the film's central theme of self-deception. Study of the two scenes' development in preproduction reveals further differences, deceptions, and most intriguingly—interdependencies. Hitchcock was heavily invested in the opening drawing room scene while the bedroom scene foregrounds the creative hand of Selznick. This authorial dichotomy even carries over into Waxman's music, which serves to connect and contrast these scenes' narrative and aesthetic tensions. Tracing the musical and visual construction of these scenes reveals both the contribution of individuals beyond Hitchcock and nuances our understanding of these scenes' significance within the film's dramatic arc.

¹⁰ See Jack Sullivan, *Hitchcock's Music* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 137–143; Eva Rieger, *Alfred Hitchcock und die Musik: Eine Untersuchung zum Verhältnis von Film, Musik, und Geschlecht* (Bielefeld: Kleine Verlag, 1996), 115–119.

Dueling Auteurs: Hitchcock's and Selznick's *The Paradine Case*

The Paradine Case follows the life of Anthony Keane (Gregory Peck), a successful and happily married London lawyer whose client is Mrs. Paradine (Alida Valli, billed as “Valli” for the film), a mysterious Italian woman charged with poisoning her blind husband, Colonel Paradine. Keane confides to his wife that his client is “strangely attractive” and quickly wanders astray. He neglects his wife, Gay (Ann Todd), and becomes increasingly infatuated with Mrs. Paradine, who admits she has seen “a great deal of life.” Entranced all the more, Keane makes a special and seemingly unnecessary trip to her summer house, where he spends significant time studying her bedroom. Adamant that his intentions are noble, Keane vows that “the rest of the world shall see her as I do—as a noble, self-sacrificing human being that any man would be proud of.” In lieu of hard evidence, Keane decides to pin the murder on Col. Paradine’s valet, André Latour (Louis Jourdan), but the man’s emphatic denials and eventual suicide lead Mrs. Paradine to confess her crime to Judge Horfield (Charles Laughton) and jury, admitting she committed the murder out of unrequited love for Latour. Glaring hatefully at her lawyer, she then blames Keane for driving Latour to suicide. Faced with professional and personal humiliation, Keane apologizes to all parties and exits the courtroom. In the final scene of the film, he and his wife reconcile, but the ambiguous music and framing leave the spectator uncertain as to whether their future together is salvageable.

As a Hitchcock film, *The Paradine Case* is strange in that it lacks the typical and crucial plot twist—that moment of revelation that radically alters the spectator’s understanding of the characters and the narrative: when one learns, for example, that

Maximilian actually hated Rebecca (*Rebecca*, 1940), that the retired psychoanalyst Dr. Murchison is actually a murderer (*Spellbound*, 1945), that Eve Kendall is actually an FBI agent (*North by Northwest*, 1959), that Norman Bates's mother is actually dead (*Psycho*, 1960), and so on. *The Paradine Case* does include Keane's revelatory moment when he realizes that his client murdered her husband. For the spectator, however, her admission of guilt merely affirms an intuitive suspicion that grows from Mrs. Paradine's calm acceptance of a murder charge in the first scene. For this reason, *The Paradine Case* is characterized by a sustained and uncomfortable tension which, in conjunction with its underwhelming resolution, may explain the film's relative obscurity in Hitchcock's oeuvre.

Despite the film's exceptional structure, Royal S. Brown has noted that the film anticipates the narrative trajectory of *Vertigo* (1958): "*The Paradine Case* is built around a very Orphic story concerning a man's obsession for a mysterious woman whose life is in his hands, his excessive curiosity concerning her past, and his ultimate loss of her due to this curiosity."¹¹ These two films are also similar in that both male protagonists attempt to construct—or rather misconstruct—a woman to fit a particular eroticized conception. In *Vertigo*, Scottie persuades Judy to change her hair, her clothes, and her makeup so as to better resemble the dead Madeleine. In *The Paradine Case*, this project is not expressed explicitly in the narrative. Instead, it is enacted metaphorically through the musical score.

While *The Paradine Case* may be viewed as introducing and anticipating themes that are developed more thoroughly in *Vertigo*, a film directed by Hitchcock more than

¹¹ Royal S. Brown, LP jacket notes to *Rozsa: The Jungle Book Suite (& Concertos by Waxman & Webb)*, ERM 6002, 1979.

ten years later, many of the films' themes share more in common with other contemporaneous films by Selznick. Similar to the narrative conflict in *Duel in the Sun* (1946) and *Portrait of Jennie* (1948, another film that has been compared with *Vertigo*¹²), the film's central tension draws upon a male character's questionable attraction to a female character whose background is either unknown or misunderstood by the male. In *Duel in the Sun*, a cowboy is attracted to a "half-breed girl" whom he assumes will be an easy and exotic conquest; they ultimately shoot each other, dying in one another's arms in a grandiosely conceived lust-death. In *Portrait of Jennie*, a painter is drawn to a young girl whom no one else sees but who, in a period of months, magically transforms into a woman; their romance ends when she is washed away in a hurricane.¹³

The closest film in theme and spirit, however, may well be the only other production on which Hitchcock, Selznick, and Waxman had worked as a team: *Rebecca*. As Leonard Leff notes, "Both *Rebecca* and *The Paradine Case* centered on an otherwise strong man dominated by a malevolent woman and ultimately redeemed by his selfless wife."¹⁴ While *Rebecca* differs crucially by making the selfless wife the protagonist rather than her husband, there is a definite link between the evil but dead Rebecca, whose musical theme haunts the soundtrack, and the murderess Mrs. Paradine, whose theme also recurs prominently in scenes in which she is not present. Jack Sullivan and Eva Rieger have also highlighted the musical similarities between the two scores. Sullivan

¹² See David Thomson, *Showman: The Life of David O. Selznick* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), 494–495.

¹³ Molly Haskell also identifies Selznick's foregrounding of dualistic characters in *Gone with the Wind* through the casting of Vivien Leigh, "the mesmerizing mixture of bawdy sexpot and exquisite doll.... Selznick [later] turned to Jennifer Jones... who came to embody both wide-eyed innocents (*Since You Went Away*) and palpitating sexpots. These erotically charged heroines were, in turn, attracted to good boy-bad boy opposites..." (Molly Haskell, *Frankly, My Dear: Gone with the Wind Revisited* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 84).

¹⁴ Leff, 227.

and Rieger note Waxman's use of a novachord in each score and the presence of musical "echoes and correspondences," especially in the parallel bedroom-exploration scenes (in both cases the bedroom's owner is absent); Rieger also illuminates similarities in Waxman's melodic characterization of female characters.¹⁵ This latter point is especially intriguing in light of Waxman's deceptive "sympatheme," and will be considered in greater depth later.

Selznick's interest in *The Paradine Case* dated back to 1933, when the novel was first published and recommended to the producer by Franclien Macconnell. Selznick had M-G-M, the studio at which he was then working, purchase the film rights to the book. The project was pushed around the story department, but never entered production. (Selznick had hoped to cast Greta Garbo, a prospect that did not enthuse the actress.) In 1946, the now independent producer purchased the rights from his old employer, M-G-M. In his study of the production, Leonard Leff notes that Hitchcock was excited about the material. Its British setting and topic appealed to the director, who had relished working on *Rebecca* and *Suspicion* for the same reasons. Hitchcock was also attracted to the extended trial scenes. In addition to featuring trials in films like *Murder!*, *Rebecca*, and later *I Confess*, the director admitting to having wanted to become a barrister: "What I wanted most of all was the opportunity to be a ham in court."¹⁶ Once production began, Hitchcock would also show his investment in the project through virtuosic film technique, which would include the simultaneous running of multiple cameras during the trial sequence, and ambitiously complicated tracking shots that necessitated

¹⁵ See Sullivan, 139–140 and Rieger, 119.

¹⁶ Leff, 227.

cinematographer Lee Garmes's invention of a "prototype of what would later be called the crab dolly."¹⁷

Hitchcock's enthusiasm for the project, however, dissipated as production bogged down with Selznick's compulsive reediting of the script (the producer even took the screenplay credit), which forced cast members to study the "final" version of their lines on the set.¹⁸ The director's frustration was worsened by Selznick's resistance to Hitchcock's elaborate camera work, which the producer criticized as "tortuous and unnatural."¹⁹ After completing principal photography and preparing a rough edit, Hitchcock presented Selznick with a three-hour film and largely left the project, returning later to film Selznick's requested retakes of certain scenes.²⁰ After his disappointment with Rózsa's score for *Spellbound*, which had followed Selznick's instructions much more closely than his own, Hitchcock left the logistics of hiring a composer for *The Paradine Case* to Selznick.

Scoring *The Paradine Case*

As had become common practice, Selznick considered a substantial list of possible composers for the production. Waxman appears to have been the first composer seriously considered. In early February, while principal photography was still taking place (it did not finish until 13 March 1947), technical engineer James Stewart reported back to Selznick that Waxman "would like to do the show providing he can obtain the

¹⁷ The crab dolly allowed the camera to move smoothly backwards, forwards, and sideways, thereby facilitating the complex camera movements Hitchcock desired. See Bill Krohn, *Hitchcock at Work* (London: Phaidon Press Limited, 2000), 105.

¹⁸ See Leff, 238–251.

¹⁹ Memo from DOS to Lydia Schiller, March 1947, quoted in Leff, 258.

²⁰ See Leff, 258–259.

necessary permission from Warner Brothers.”²¹ Meanwhile, Selznick was already pondering another recommendation he had received days earlier from Ted Wick, who handled the studio’s radio publicity: “If we could get a radio composer who is used to working against split second timing, and with a small budget, we could turn out some very creditable scores at a much lower cost than is customary for us to spend here.”²²

Wick especially recommended composers Leith Stevens (“excellent taste and works with great speed”), Bernard Katz (“extremely original composer with a great flare for very rich and extremely melodic music”), and Bernard Herrmann (“though somewhat of an individualist is one of the really top radio composers”).²³ Later in the month, Selznick forwarded his approval of Wick’s idea to James Stewart, noting also that “I think that whoever does the scores for the SUSPENSE program might do a fine job on THE PARADINE CASE.”²⁴ (Wick privately discouraged Stewart on this point, dismissing *Suspense*’s music director, Lud Gluskin, as “probably the greatest ‘no talent’ guy in the entire industry.”²⁵) In April, Selznick mused over his various options in a lengthy telegram to Stewart, which affords a detailed glimpse of Selznick’s insights and frustrations regarding scoring practices and politics in Hollywood.

I interviewed Leith Stevens today although it must be obvious that I can’t tell anything about the man’s abilities as a musician from talking with him.... I have no way of passing upon his abilities to do so important a score as *Paradine*. Accordingly, my feelings are as follows: 1. If we can’t get someone whom we know is good without any risk, such as [Max] Steiner (who I believe can be obtained if we put up with [Lou] Forbes and Forbes is not without his values²⁶) or [Herbert] Stothart from Metro (and they have so little production that I shouldn’t be surprised that we could get this outstanding man, who among other things is a

²¹ James Stewart to DOS, 7 February 1947, HRC 567:14.

²² Ted Wick to DOS, 3 February 1947, HRC 567:14.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ DOS to James Stewart and Ted Wick, 15 February 1947, HRC 567:14.

²⁵ Ted Wick to James Stewart, 20 February 1947, HRC 1151:9.

²⁶ Lou Forbes had worked for Selznick as the music director on all of his independently produced films through *Since You Went Away*.

joy to work with) or perhaps even Waxman. Then I don't see why we should gamble on a picture of this sort, which on the one hand has been made as pure commercial entertainment, and therefore doesn't indicate any arty experiments, and which on the other hand is an enormously expensive picture and needs the protection of someone who can be depended upon to do a very good job at a modest cost, and not to give us what we ran into with either our experiment on *Since You Went Away*²⁷ or with Tiomkin's wild and untenable extravagances and impracticabilities [on *Duel in the Sun*]. 2. If we can't get someone like Steiner or Stothart or Franz Waxman (who did so brilliantly for us on *Rebecca*) or some other top man from Metro or Warners (in view of the very few pictures being made by both those studios and their excessively overstaffed music departments, plus the obvious desire of them to cut down and economize on all fronts, including the loanout of people they would never consider lending before), what about Bernie Herman (*sic*) doing both *Paradine* and *Jennie*? With the delay in *Jennie* I should think there would be time. Indeed it might be wise to try to make a deal with him for these two pictures with options for one yearly since I think he is so gifted and despite his seeming madness far more practical and economical in his scoring (please correct me if monopoly on genius and on jobs among a handful of musicians). Failing one and two, then I am agreeable to trying Stevens but only on the basis I discussed with him and to which I found him agreeable, which is that he see the picture, write the key themes, play them for us, and present a general musical program for the picture, so that there is what amounts to an option on our part on him to go ahead. Suggest that his program also include a firm obligation as to the maximum cost, with either part of his compensation or bonus if completed to my satisfaction within this.... I hate to give bonuses to anybody for doing a job they are paid to do, but *the one department of picture making over which it seems impossible to exercise proper control is scoring* [emphasis added], and perhaps this is one way to do it, even though Stevens does seem far more sensible and rational than any composer I have so far dealt with. Maybe they breed them saner in America.²⁸

To summarize, Selznick wanted either a familiar and reliable composer who had worked for him before—Steiner, Stothart, or Waxman (but *not* Tiomkin)—or he wanted Bernard Herrmann. If Herrmann was unavailable, then he would consider Leith Stevens, who was promising but too unknown for such an expensive production.

Putting Steiner, Stothart, and Waxman temporarily on hold, Stewart began simultaneously courting the services of Herrmann and Stevens. In mid-April Stevens was

²⁷ For this picture, Selznick hired the concert and film composer Alexandre Tansman, who composed a score that was deemed inappropriate by Selznick and rejected. Selznick then hired his trusted and familiar colleague of the 1930s, Max Steiner, to write the score.

²⁸ DOS to James Stewart, 7 April 1947, HRC 567:14.

even allowed to study the script and film.²⁹ Herrmann was also shown a rough cut of the film. In an interview conducted with Stewart in the 1980s, the engineer claimed that Herrmann hated the film and thought it ill-suited to music, though he discreetly kept all of these observations away from Selznick.³⁰ This recollection, however, directly conflicts with Stewart's memo to Selznick: "I ran the picture with Bernie and he is extremely enthusiastic about it—called Hitchcock and praised it, etc. To my mind, he has a very clear understanding of the type of treatment the picture needs, and agrees with Hitchcock and myself as to where music should be used in the picture." As outlined in Stewart's memo, the problems had less to do with Herrmann's interest and more to do with his obligations, schedule, and personality: Firstly, his exclusive contract with Fox would have to be fixed. Secondly, he would need to compose the score entirely in New York City and would be on tour conducting in Europe from 20 October through 1 December. Lastly, there was the matter of his "musical independence," which Stewart tried to minimize: "...from talking to him about *Paradine*, I feel sure his ideas will appeal to you and that no difficulties will ensue in this regard." Any one of these issues could have presented a considerable hurdle, but the combination of all three made Herrmann's participation out of the question. Stewart's memo is also valuable in that it shows Hitchcock sharing his own ideas for the background score with Herrmann. Unfortunately, there is no record indicating what these ideas were.

With Herrmann out of the picture, Selznick preferred Waxman's experience to Stevens's lack thereof, but was still torn. In a lengthy and self-conflicted cable to Daniel O'Shea, general manager of the studio, Selznick expressed his desire to have Waxman,

²⁹ See Coral (?) to James Stewart, 18 April 1947, HRC 567:14.

³⁰ See Smith, 147–148.

the composer he had first considered for the job (“we need him...rather than taking any chances on newcomers”), but also complained about the additional expense that borrowing Waxman from Warner Bros. would entail: “The handling of the Warner contract musicians becomes more and more of a racket.” In addition, Selznick was already fuming over anticipated bonuses he would have to pay Waxman who “is already being very well paid and who should consider it worth money to him. Much less be demanding a bonus to do a picture of this importance especially bearing in mind what *Rebecca* did for him.”³¹ Two weeks later, Selznick had still not made a final decision and encouraged Stewart to pursue Daniele Amfitheatrof and Erich Korngold, “if there is too much difficulty about Waxman.”³²

Leith Stevens appeared to have been forgotten in favor of more established Hollywood composers, but then Selznick confounded expectations. James Stewart explained to Daniel O’Shea that “DOS has settled for Leith Stevens as composer on ‘The Paradine Case.’ He is now under contract at [Universal] and they are asking \$10,000 for 8 weeks, starting next Monday.” The word choice here—“settled for Leith Stevens”—is telling. With his requested bonus, Waxman would have cost the studio \$27,500. Selznick decided that a newcomer might be worth the risk if it meant saving \$17,500.

The plan backfired. Stevens composed and recorded nine cues before he was suddenly and mysteriously dismissed from the project, an incident that paralleled Tansman’s rejected score for *Since You Went Away*.³³ In a document dated 11 November, Selznick Releasing Organization settled with Universal by paying half of Stevens’s

³¹ DOS to Daniel O’Shea, 9 July 1947, HRC 567:14.

³² DOS to James Stewart, 24 July 1947, HRC 567:14.

³³ Although the music has not been located, music score sheets indicate that “The Keanes,” “Keane and [Sir Simon] Flaquer Disagree,” “Piano solo (Mrs. Paradine),” “Holloway Prison,” “The Keanes” [a different cue], “Gondola Sequence,” “Gay and the Horfields,” “Matron’s Room,” and “The Portrait” were recorded.

\$10,000 fee and returning the music and recordings to the composer. On 17 November, Franz Waxman signed onto the *Paradine* production and began recording on 2 December. That Stevens was hired at all is generally overlooked in accounts of the production, but the fact that he also composed music for the film has not yet been acknowledged. While this music remains missing, documentation related to Stevens's score sheds valuable light on Waxman's musical decisions for *The Paradine Case*. This relationship will be examined more closely in later analysis.

Selznick wanted *The Paradine Case* released in time for Academy Award consideration, which meant that Waxman had to work quickly. Drafting publicity notices on the musical score, Mervin Houser dramatized the composer's labors:

...AN AUGMENTED SYMPHONIC ORCHESTRA OF 100 PIECES IS RECORDING THE SCORE OF THE ACADEMY AWARD CONTENDING FILM AS SOON AS IT IS ORCHESTRATED. SPEED IS NECESSITATED BY THE FACT THAT SELZNICK IS RUSHING THE PARADINE CASE TO COMPLETEION SO THAT IT CAN BE RELEASED IN DECEMBER AND THUS QULIFY FOR ACADEMY CONSIDERATION...³⁴

Like most publicity ballyhoo, the facts are inaccurate (Recording the main title required seventy musicians; the rest of the score required fewer musicians.³⁵), but it is worth noting that Waxman's speed on *The Paradine Case* merited special attention in an industry in which rapid composition was the norm, not the exception:

FRANZ WAXMAN ESTABLISHED A RECORD TODAY FOR COMPOSING A COMPLETE MOTION PICTURE SCORE ALMOST ONE HOUR OF ORIGINAL MUSIC FOR DAVID O SELZNICKS THE PARADINE CASE IN FIFTEEN DAYS. THE MUSIC TOTALLING FIFTY FIVE MINUTES WAS RECORDED IN TWENTY SEVEN AND ONE HALF HOURS ACCORDING TO JAMES STEWART TECHNICAL SOUND SUPERVISOR FOR SELZNICK. WAXMAN WORKED ON THE SCORE DAY AND NIGHT SO

³⁴ Mervin Houser to Nick Mamula, 12 December 1947, HRC 567:14.

³⁵ The stage logs for *The Paradine Case* record the number of musicians used for each cue. See HRC 4313:3.

THAT IT WOULD BE COMPLETED IN TIME TO ENTER THE PARADINE CASE FOR THE 1947 ACADEMY AWARDS.³⁶

Here again, Houser's assertions need to be viewed with healthy skepticism (Waxman spent fifteen days composing before recording commenced, but this time period hardly represented a "record"); nevertheless, the repeated emphasis on the tight time schedule helps explain why Waxman's score was not subject to extensive rewrites or heavy editing, as in the case of the scores preceding and following it, including *Rebecca*, *Since You Went Away*, *Spellbound*, *Duel in the Sun*, *Portrait of Jennie*.³⁷

In addition to time constraints, Waxman was relatively untroubled by Selznick, who was heavily occupied during the fall and winter of 1947. While handling divorce proceedings with his wife Irene, Selznick was also working simultaneously on *The Paradine Case* and *Portrait of Jennie*. The intense personal pressures and professional demands reduced the amount of time he could devote to music.³⁸ During much of Waxman's work, Selznick was not even present at the studio. He spent late November through mid-December on the east coast attending the Philadelphia and New York premières of Tennessee Williams's *A Streetcar Named Desire*, a bold new play produced by his ex-wife, Irene. (Though their marriage had been deteriorating for years, David remained a devoted friend to Irene during and after their divorce.) Thus, while Waxman was recording in Hollywood, James Stewart had to cable Selznick in New York about progress on the score. On 4 December, he wrote:

³⁶ Mervin Houser to Nick Mamula, 17 December 1947, HRC 567:14. In the film itself, only forty-nine of these fifty-five minutes would be heard. The discrepancy in time is attributable to last-minute edits, including the excision of a scene set between Keane and Mrs. Horfield at an art gallery. Waxman's cue, titled "Art Gallery," was also cut.

³⁷ *I'll Be Seeing You*, which was released by Selznick but produced by Dore Schary in 1944, is not included among the Selznick-produced efforts.

³⁸ While the detailed nature of the two musical directions he left for Waxman suggest they belong to a larger body of notes, it is also possible that Selznick simply did not have time to draft notes that addressed the entire film.

In my opinion it is essential that you check all cutting and music no later than the 11th or 12th. We have completed twenty-five minutes of music to date. In general I feel it is quite good but there is a percentage which in my opinion should be changed. I feel it would be foolhardy to substitute my judgment for yours. Editing will be completed by late today and all of us will run the picture this evening after which I will wire you.³⁹

Following the screening, Stewart cabled Selznick a second time, again expressing some reservation about the music:

Hal [Kern, the editor,] and Lydia [Schiller, a secretary,] agree with me on that part of the music I feel must be redone. It amounts to only about two minutes. Have discussed it with Waxman and we will make these pickups Tuesday. This does not overcome all my personal objections to the music but I feel that to go further would be foolish and costly until we have your reaction.⁴⁰

Stewart's notes reveal not only the degree to which Selznick was removed from the scoring process, but also the extent to which Selznick's absence proved problematic. Fearful that any significant changes in the score might be criticized as "foolish and costly," Stewart opted to wait for Selznick's return. Stewart's extreme caution demonstrates Selznick's unchallenged authority over the music in his films, but also reflects apprehension stemming from a new arrangement in personnel. For previous productions, Selznick had worked with Lou Forbes and Audray Granville on matters of musical editing. James Stewart was a renowned sound engineer who had already won two Academy Awards at RKO before moving to Selznick's studio in 1945, but he had previously shared music editing responsibilities with Audray Granville.⁴¹ Granville and Stewart had a serious falling out—presumably during *Spellbound*—and Granville refused

³⁹ James Stewart to DOS, 4 December 1947, HRC 3375:3.

⁴⁰ James Stewart to DOS, 6 December 1947, HRC 3375:3.

⁴¹ He received Academy Awards for *This Land is Mine* (1943) and *The Bells of St. Mary's* (1945), both made at RKO.

to even speak to Stewart during the scoring of *Duel in the Sun* (1946).⁴² For *The Paradine Case*, James Stewart was on his own for the first time. For *Portrait of Jennie* he would continue in this position and assume a more active role, though his decisions would still be closely monitored by Selznick.

While Stewart hoped Selznick would appraise the score by 12 December, Selznick was in New York until 13 December.⁴³ Consequently, the score had been recorded nearly in its entirety by the time of Selznick's return. It was fortunate for both Selznick and Waxman that they had worked together on *The Young in Heart* and *Rebecca*, and were therefore familiar with each other's approaches and expectations. Following Selznick's arrival in Hollywood, only four cues⁴⁴ were re-recorded with newly composed endings on 19 December.

Waxman's music for *The Paradine Case* was composed and recorded under very different circumstances from the rest of Selznick's Hollywood films of the 1940s. Selznick's absence from the studio meant that most of Waxman's music went into the film largely as the composer originally intended. There was simply not time for Selznick and Waxman to indulge in extensive rewrites, as Selznick had demanded of Dimitri Tiomkin in his preceding production, *Duel in the Sun* (discussed in the following chapter). Similarly, there was not time to elaborately re-edit Waxman's original cues, as

⁴² "When...I sent Stewart to talk to [Granville] she refused to talk to him...she would take the job [for *Duel*] but under no circumstances would work with Stewart." Daniel O'Shea to DOS, marked "not sent," 3 September 1946, HRC 597:7.

⁴³ Thomson, 507.

⁴⁴ "First Interview" received a new ending as did a cues entitled "Frustrated Lover" and "Gondola Sequence," which accompanies a conversation between Keane and his wife, Gay, as they playfully discuss riding in a gondola in Venice. A new "Old Bailey" fanfare was rerecorded as were sections of the "Consulting Cell."

Audray Granville had done with Miklós Rózsa's music in *Spellbound*.⁴⁵ Compared to Rózsa and Tiomkin, however, Waxman had considerably less time to compose his score. This may explain why the score for *The Paradine Case* is relatively short in comparison to other Selznick productions and only accompanies 43% of the film's total duration, as compared to 55% in *Spellbound* and 75% in *Portrait of Jennie*.⁴⁶ But even if Waxman had had a somewhat freer hand than his colleagues while working on *The Paradine Case*, his score still had to accommodate and fit within the nuanced role Selznick and Hitchcock had devised for diegetic music in the narrative.

⁴⁵ Waxman did compose three cues that were completely cut from the film. The first, "Mrs. Paradine Arrested," was a short, seven-measure cue that would have been at the end of the drawing room scene, but was not used. The second cue, "Keane & Latour Part II," which was to accompany part of a conversation held between the two characters during Keane's visit to the Cumberland (where Hindley Hall is located) was deemed unsatisfactory and replaced by two cues from Roy Webb's scores for *Seventh Victim* and *Experiment Perilous* that were likely on the temporary preview soundtrack. The third cue, entitled "Art Gallery," was to have accompanied a conversation between Keane and Lady Horfield held at an art gallery before the start of the trial. The entire scene was cut. ("Art Gallery" is listed on the legal cue sheet even though no portion of it is heard in the film; evidently the scene was excised very late, perhaps after the film's initial premiere.) In a humorous acknowledgement of the scene's setting, Waxman quotes the "promenade" theme from Modest Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*.

⁴⁶ *The Paradine Case* score also proved to be relatively inexpensive—by the Selznick studio's standard: \$65,823.67. The budget report of April 1948 that includes this total does not include the \$7,500 bonus for Waxman that had irritated Selznick so. Either they forgot to include it or Selznick managed to cut it from the contract. See "Music Costs—'The Paradine Case'," 20 April 1948, HRC 1151:16.

Waxman's Deceptive "Sympatheme"

Figure 5.1 Waxman, *The Paradine Case* "Main Title." Measures 2–9. (*The Paradine Case* by Paul Dessau and Franz Waxman.⁴⁷ All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission of Southern Music Publishing Co., Inc.)

The image displays a musical score for measures 2 through 9 of the 'Main Title' from Franz Waxman's score for the film *The Paradine Case*. The score is written for piano and is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The word 'TUTTI' is written above the first measure, and a dynamic marking of 'f' (forte) is placed below the first measure. The score consists of two systems of staves. The first system shows measures 2, 3, 4, and 5. The second system shows measures 6, 7, 8, and 9. The melody is primarily in the treble clef, while the bass clef provides harmonic support with chords and single notes. The music is characterized by a single, recurring melodic theme.

Franz Waxman's score is dominated by a single theme (see figure 5.1). Featured in the main title music, the theme is heard again in a diegetic performance, played by Mrs. Paradine on the piano in the opening scene of the film. Minutes later, the theme enters the nondiegetic score, where it is heard some twenty more times over the duration of the film. One reviewer for *Film Music Notes* regarded these frequent recurrences as cliché: "this *sympatheme* (a coinage useful, however repellant, in consideration of current picture music practice) is reiterated in many guises so that we may share more completely in

⁴⁷ Paul Dessau served as a ghostwriter for the cue titled "Unhappy Keanes," which is based upon themes by Franz Waxman. At the request of the copyright holder, his name is included in all references to the score, though he did not contribute to this particular example.

Mrs. P's tribulations."⁴⁸ That a musical theme is inextricably linked to a character's inner being and faithfully reflects that character's thoughts and emotions was and is a Hollywood convention. Its applicability to Waxman's music for *The Paradine Case*, however, is problematic. The theme is frequently heard when Mrs. Paradine is absent. Rather than affirming the conventional association between musical motive and character, Mrs. Paradine's theme represents a calculated musico-dramatic deception. That is, Waxman mimics elements of the so-called "sympatheme" with the express purpose of deceiving the spectator. Rather than reflect Mrs. Paradine herself, the Paradine theme gradually comes to represent Keane's erroneously constructed image of her. In other words, the Paradine theme is appropriated by Keane to express not her feelings but, rather, his feelings for her. As Claudia Gorbman notes, music may be employed in film to "emphasize a particular character's subjectivity," but in *The Paradine Case* there is a crucial difference: The theme's association with Keane's subjectivity is deliberately delayed in order to mislead the spectator.⁴⁹

This use of a musical theme to represent a male's appropriation of a feminine object—that is, music as fetish—is not without parallels or precedents. Developing ideas introduced by Laura Mulvey in "Visual Pleasure and the Narrative Cinema,"⁵⁰ Royal S. Brown notes that "the erotic instinct is not focused just on the look alone: it is also focused on the act of hearing, and hearing music in particular."⁵¹ In particular, Brown discusses the use of David Raksin's "Laura" theme in *Laura* (1944), a film that shares

⁴⁸ William Hamilton, "Current Films," *Film Music Notes* 7, no. 3 (January-February, 1948).

⁴⁹ Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 83.

⁵⁰ Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," *Film Theory and Criticism*, 6th ed., eds. Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 845. Reprinted from *Screen* 16, no. 3 (Autumn, 1975): 6–18.

⁵¹ Royal S. Brown, *Overtones and Undertones: Reading Film Music*, Berkeley (University of California Press, 1994) 85.

strong musico-dramatic similarities with *The Paradine Case*. Another film music scholar, Caryl Flinn, similarly emphasizes that “music and femininity are linked and...made to perform for...male desire” in the score for the contemporaneous film noir feature, *Detour* (1945).⁵²

While music, femininity, and male desire are intertwined in *The Paradine Case*, as they are in *Laura* and *Detour*, Waxman’s orchestral score is only predominantly—not exclusively—tied to male subjectivity. There are important moments when the music, like the camera, reflects an alternative subjectivity that in turn destabilizes narrative structure. Released in the wake of World War II, the film’s depiction of long-standing patriarchal structures, such as the British legal system, under the sway of powerful, alluring women expresses in gendered terms doubts regarding the stability of post-war society.⁵³ In a similar manner, the orchestral score’s affiliation with the male protagonist’s subjectivity is occasionally undermined through musical gestures seemingly motivated by the woman Keane seeks to control and contain.

The most remarkable element of the Paradine theme, however, is the manner in which it directly enters the diegesis and in so doing subverts the music’s role as an omniscient, unifying force. As Flinn has noted, musical scores composed for classical Hollywood narratives were expected to “veil the lacks of the cinematic apparatus” and

⁵² Caryl Flinn, *Strains of Utopia: Gender, Nostalgia, and Hollywood Film Music*, Princeton (Princeton University Press, 1992) 132.

⁵³ The repeated exterior shots of the partially bombed Old Bailey (a consequence of World War II) drive this point home especially well: Just as the house of justice has been physically cracked by the destruction of World War II, so too has the larger patriarchal system been threatened by powerful women and disempowered men. Interestingly, this attack upon patriarchy enacted through Hitchcock’s film (and analyzed in detail by Michael Anderegg) is not nearly so present or threatening in Robert Hichens’s novel, published in 1933. As Michael Anderegg convincingly argues, the film “thoroughly undermines the patriarchal project that it seems, simultaneously, at great pains to construct.” (Michael Anderegg, “Hitchcock’s *The Paradine Case* and Filmic Unpleasure,” *Cinema Journal*, vol. 26, no. 4 (Summer, 1987) 49).

establish an aura of “wholeness,” so that there is “no separation of *I see* in the image and *I hear* on the track. Instead, there is the *I feel, I experience...*”⁵⁴ Waxman’s score only partially participates in this convention, and the distinctive moment when it shatters expectations forces the spectator to acknowledge the artifice of musical characterization and recognize what Mary Ann Doane terms the “ideological fissure” between musical themes and the meaning they signify.⁵⁵

Music in the Source Novel

Before examining Waxman’s score more closely, the connection between music, deception, and duplicity needs to be considered in relation to Robert Hichens’s source novel. As the film and its musical accompaniment offer an imaginative reworking of musical “themes” introduced in the novel and express them through specifically cinematic means, the following pages will briefly consider the role of music in Hichens’s book and its influence on the film.

The film version of *The Paradine Case* begins with Mrs. Paradine playing the piano. Immediately following her performance, she is arrested and charged with the murder of her husband. In contrast, there is no mention of a piano performance in Hichens’s source novel as Mrs. Paradine has already been arrested. Not until the book’s concluding trial does the reader learn that Mrs. Paradine played piano while her husband was dying from poison. Instead the subject of music is broached in Hichens’s novel during a dinner conversation between Judge Horfield, Keane, and a pianist named Arthur Lieberstein (a character not in the film adaptation). Reminiscing over the dead Col.

⁵⁴ Flinn, 44–46.

⁵⁵ Mary Ann Doane, “Ideology and the Practice of Sound Editing and Mixing,” *Film Sound: Theory and Practice*, Elisabeth Weis and John Belton (eds.), New York (Columbia University Press, 1985) 56.

Paradine, Lieberstein marvels at the Colonel's emotional attachment to music, admitting that music of the "sentimental" variety was so painfully nostalgic for Paradine that the man could hardly bear it. On one occasion, Lieberstein explained, his performance of an arrangement of "The Blue Danube" forced Paradine to hastily exit the room, shunning even the aid of his wife in an effort to hide his tears.⁵⁶

During the trial, the reader learns of Mrs. Paradine's pianistic skills as the Counsel for the Crown provides the jury with a preliminary account of the events from the night of Col. Paradine's death. After quarrelling with Mrs. Paradine and Latour, explains the barrister, the colonel dismissed them both and went to the lavatory. Shortly thereafter,

...servants in the house heard the piano being played in the downstairs drawing-room. Mrs. Paradine was there playing an arrangement of the well-known Viennese Waltz known by the name of 'The Blue Danube.' No one had heard her come downstairs, so no one could say when she came. She may of course have come down sooner or later. The servants seem to have assumed that she began to play directly she came into the drawing-room. If so she would have been upstairs for about a quarter of an hour. However, I am instructed that there is no evidence as to that. The evidence is that she was upstairs when Colonel Paradine went to the lavatory, and that some quarter of an hour later she was playing on the piano in the drawing-room. She continued playing for a considerable time, perhaps for half an hour or more. Then the sounds ceased."⁵⁷

Later, as the Counsel cross-examines Latour,⁵⁸ Mrs. Paradine's rendition of "The Blue Danube" receives renewed attention:

"After quite a lapse of time, was your attention drawn to anything?"

"Yes sir."

"What was it?"

"I heard the piano in the drawing-room going."

"About how long was this after you had gone downstairs?"

"I should say about twenty minutes, sir."

"Did you recognize the tune being played?"

⁵⁶ Robert Hichens, *The Paradine Case*, New York (Doubleday, Doran, & Company, Inc., 1932), 62–63.

⁵⁷ Hichens, 353–354.

⁵⁸ In Hichens's novel, Latour's name is actually William Marsh.

“Yes, sir. It was to do with what they call ‘The Blue Danube’ Waltz, but there was a lot of others things to it.”

“Ah! And for how long did this continue?”

“Quite a bit of time, sir.”

“Did anything strike you about this music?”

“Yes, sir.”

“What was it?”

“I didn’t see how Mrs. Paradine could play such music after what had happened.”

“What exactly do you mean by that?”

“After the terrible scene with the Colonel, sir.”

“You thought that very strange?”

“Yes, sir—that she should have got over it so soon.”

A sort of contemptuous bitterness came into his voice as he said that.⁵⁹

Keane later returns to the piano incident and argues for her innocence: “could anyone in their senses... be brought to believe that a woman waiting in agonizing suspense to know whether her attempt to murder her husband was going to be successful or not would pass away the time in playing waltz tunes on the piano?”⁶⁰ Mrs. Paradine reinforces Keane’s point, explaining that she played piano after the quarrel with her husband to soothe her nerves. But her explanation and Keane’s argument are disingenuous; Lieberstein’s story to Keane and Horfield about Col. Paradine’s breakdown revealed that Mrs. Paradine was aware of “The Blue Danube’s” devastating emotional impact on her husband. Judge Horfield, also privy to this detail from the conversation with Lieberstein, subverts Keane by reminding the jury on this “somewhat curious point” that “there are innumerable instances of criminals doing the most daring, and one would suppose nerve-racking, things to throw possible suspicion off the scent.”⁶¹

In Hichens’s novel, music serves the pragmatic purpose of determining Mrs. Paradine’s activities the night of the murder. Music also becomes a testing ground over

⁵⁹ Hichens, 384–385.

⁶⁰ Hichens, 436. Later, Mrs. Paradine explains on the witness stand that she played the piano that evening to soothe her nerves after the row between her, her husband, and Latour. (467)

⁶¹ Hichens, 510–511.

which to argue Mrs. Paradine's character and resolve. Could she be capable of performing piano if she herself had administered the poison?⁶² And if she could, why would she play something so light-hearted as "The Blue Danube"? In the film, music is never discussed during the trial and Col. Paradine's musical tastes are not mentioned. Nevertheless, the relationship between Mrs. Paradine and music, the use of music for deception and self-deception, and music's capacity to render male characters emotionally vulnerable are adopted and adapted in the film. Instead of discussions about music, however, these ideas are realized in specifically cinematic terms. They are transplanted to the musical score and visual editing, creating an ongoing subtext that relates specifically to Keane's misconstruction of Mrs. Paradine and Mrs. Paradine's collusion in this act of self-deception. Charting the development of Hichens's original musical ideas to this final mode of expression in the film, however, reveals an elaborate network of revisions and reinventions that began in the early 1930s.

Musical Adaptations in the Scripts

While studies of *The Paradine Case* in Leonard Leff's *Hitchcock and Selznick* and Dan Auiler's *Hitchcock's Notebooks* document the intense revising and reworking of *The Paradine Case* during pre-production and production of the film, the fact that *The Paradine Case* had been outlined and developed extensively at M-G-M during the previous decade is virtually unacknowledged in the secondary literature.⁶³ As has been

⁶² While the question of playing music *directly* after committing a crime never enters the discourse of the film *The Paradine Case*, the 1952 Otto Preminger film *Angel Face* (score by Dimitri Tiomkin) features this very phenomenon: a young woman who plays the piano immediately after attempting to kill her stepmother. (When she finally succeeds, she plays piano again.)

⁶³ Leonard Leff, *Hitchcock and Selznick: The Rich and Strange Collaboration of Alfred Hitchcock and David O. Selznick in Hollywood*, Berkeley (University of California Press, 1987), p. 224 ff. Dan Auiler, *Hitchcock's Notebooks*, New York (Harper, 2001).

previously mentioned, Selznick had M-G-M purchase the rights to the novel shortly after its publication. Over the next nine years, the studio's story department concocted some fifteen different treatments of the novel, ranging from brief story outlines to full-fledged screenplays. The second of these, an outline by Margaret Hawkins completed in December of 1933, begins quite differently from Hichens's book. Whereas the novel begins with an expository scene in which Keane and Judge Horfield converse at a London club, Hawkins returns to the night of Colonel Paradine's murder. After an argument between Col. Paradine, Mrs. Paradine, and the manservant, Mrs. Paradine sits down to play the piano:

...we show Mrs. Paradine in the drawing room playing a disturbing, haunting air on the piano. Her back is to the camera. In the middle of the selection she gets up from the piano and begins to pace restlessly up and down the room. We are shooting from behind her.

We DISSOLVE from her restless pacing about the room to her walk down a gray stone corridor, as she is led into a prison cell. We still have not seen her face.⁶⁴

Hawkins's ideas differ from the book not only in the inclusion of a live musical performance, but also in the change of repertoire. "The Blue Danube" has been replaced by a "disturbing, haunting air." Comparison between Hawkins's setting and the film shows that images Hawkins evoked made an impression upon Hitchcock. In Hitchcock's film, the music is mysterious in tone and the shot of Mrs. Paradine at the piano begins from the back, an effective visual setup that injects suspense merely by withholding her face.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Margaret Hawkins, "THE PARADINE CASE, An Outline," 2 December 1933, p. 1, HRC 1068:7.

⁶⁵ It is possible, though hardly certain, that Hawkins's opening may have been inspired by RKO's recent *The Most Dangerous Game* (1932), a film that Selznick had produced before moving to M-G-M in 1935. In this film, the hunter who kills humans for sport is also a pianist (a detail not included in Richard Connell's original short story). In one scene, he plays piano in the living room for his unsuspecting victims, offering them a genteel waltz that exudes a sense of latent mystery, a quality befitting the refined psychopath. This

M-G-M never made *The Paradine Case* even though the story department continued generating new treatments after Selznick's departure from the studio. In the mid-1940s, Selznick purchased the rights from M-G-M. Along with the rights, Selznick received the fifteen adaptations, which were read and assessed by Barbara Keon. Her notes, along with a chapter-by-chapter summary of the novel by Muriel Elwood, were at Hitchcock's disposal as he and his wife Alma Reville began working on their own treatment in 1946. While Elwood's summary did not include the opening piano scene (as it was not in the novel), Elwood did include most points of musical interest including the discussion with Lieberstein about "The Blue Danube" as well as another discussion between Mr. and Mrs. Keane on the same topic.⁶⁶ Notably, both of these passages in Elwood's summary are underlined in pencil, suggesting that Hitchcock and Reville were interested in these particular scenes. Although Keon's notes on Margaret Hawkins's adaptation do not explicitly reference the new piano scene, Keon does mention that Hawkins's version opened differently "with quarrel at Paradine home night of murder."⁶⁷ A pencil checkmark next to this passage reveals that this new angle also piqued Hitchcock's and Reville's curiosity. Although their first draft dropped the quarrel, the piano performance was moved forward to the position it would occupy in the final film, the very first scene following the opening credits:

In a well-furnished drawing room a woman is seated at a piano....She has an almost blank look which is startling, yet there is a strange brooding expression in her eyes. Her long slim hands move easily over the piano keys. She is dressed in a simple well-cut black dress. At a side table an elderly butler is pouring out a glass

context in which piano music appears to both veil *and* express the darker side of the pianist transfers directly into Hawkins's outline for *The Paradine Case*.

⁶⁶ "Chapter Breakdown: THE PARADINE CASE by Robert Hichens," from Muriel Elwood to Alfred Hitchcock, 12 February 1946, pp. 4–5, Margaret Herrick Library, Alfred Hitchcock Papers #554.

⁶⁷ Barbara Keon, "#1. Adaptation by Howard Estabrook," untitled, 3-page document that includes brief synopses of M-G-M treatments, HRC 3374:7.

of sherry from a decanter. CAMERA MOVES IN as he places it on a small salver and brings it over to the piano. The woman continues playing....She nods as he places the sherry on the piano beside her. As he turns to go she stops playing and takes a sip of sherry...CLOSEUP she puts the glass down on the piano and is about to start playing again, when the sound of voices comes from the hall. She listens for a moment, then resumes playing...⁶⁸

Oddly, this version makes no mention of the music's mysterious character or the fact that the shot would begin *behind* Mrs. Paradine. It is therefore apparent that Hitchcock and Reville had studied Hawkins's outline⁶⁹ and brought to it ideas of their own, namely that the performance would consist of two parts and that the music played *after* the sip of sherry would be shot in a closeup. These niggling details would have profound repercussions in the film itself.

Developing the Melodic Deception

As Michael Anderegg has noted, the film begins with a familiar visual device favored by Hitchcock: moving from an exterior, establishing shot to an interior through a dissolve.⁷⁰ In this case, the sequence begins with a slow pan of a London street. The camera pauses momentarily on an apartment door before dissolving to an interior: the entryway of the same apartment, in which a butler is bearing a glass of liquor on a tray. The camera follows the butler to the door of the drawing room, then cuts to the room itself. The camera continues to track from behind the butler as he carries the tray to a woman seated at a piano. At this point, the camera leaves the butler and approaches the

⁶⁸ Alfred Hitchcock and Alma Reville, "The Paradine Case, First Rough Draft (with Dialogue from the Novel)," 16 April 1946 (Re-run: June 12, 1946, Third-Run: August 12, 1946), p. 1, HRC 1134:5.

⁶⁹ That Margaret Hawkins's outline had served as a model is further reinforced in the "Third Draft Script *The Paradine Case* of 10 August 1946 with changes of 16 October 1946," which begins with a prologue (ultimately rejected) featuring an argument between Col. Paradine, Mrs. Paradine, and Latour, similar to the argument between Col. and Mrs. Paradine that begins Hawkins's outline. (HRC 4313:2)

⁷⁰ Anderegg, 55.

woman, whose back is to the camera. The camera rotates smoothly around the woman's head, gradually revealing her face. The camera pauses again, allowing the spectator to focus on her austere visage as she sips the liquor. The woman then looks upward and away from the camera, as though thinking. The camera pulls gently away, revealing the object of her gaze: a painting of a man—her husband.

Anderegg argues that this opening scene, characterized by mobile, deft camera work, “at once encourages identification with, creates sympathy for, and reveals the guilt of [Mrs.] Paradine.”⁷¹ His analysis, however, is based entirely upon the visuals. The scene functions differently when one considers the music. During the street shot, just before the dissolve into the entryway, several distant notes from a piano can be heard. Once the camera moves inside the apartment, the piano is louder but still off screen. The character of the music is lyrical and wistful; the familiar Mrs. Paradine theme—which had just been heard in a bombastic orchestral version during the opening credits—has acquired a gentler quality. The sustained pitches of the theme have been elongated and the aggressive chromatic countermelodies from the main title are replaced by simple, undulating arpeggios. This jarring juxtaposition of the quiet, emotionally restrained rendition performed by Mrs. Paradine and its overblown orchestral predecessor, which is later heard a second time when Keane examines a portrait of Mrs. Paradine in her bedroom, foreshadows the disjunction that will emerge between Mrs. Paradine “herself” and Keane’s misperception of her.⁷²

⁷¹ Anderegg, 55.

⁷² During the main titles, the Paradine theme is scored for full orchestra and features a prominent solo piano part. As the name of Valli (the actress who plays Mrs. Paradine) scrolls across the screen, an upward flourish in the piano signals the start of a new musical section. Here the theme is developed through a series of modulatory passages characterized by tutti orchestral textures and cascading chromatic lines in the horns and strings. The effect is strongly, if not intentionally, reminiscent of Richard Strauss’s “Of Joys and Passions” from *Also sprach Zarathustra*, Op. 30.

Once inside the room, Mrs. Paradine can be seen playing at the piano (see figure 5.2a–5.2b). She stops to take a sip from her glass (figure 5.2c); she sets the glass down; she looks upward at the painting; the music resumes. The closeness of Mrs. Paradine’s face (figure 5.2d), her upward gaze at the portrait instead of the printed music that she had just been reading, and the stillness of her body present an audio-visual ambiguity. It is possible that by this point the music has shifted from the diegetic to the nondiegetic realm, a subtle trick used in such earlier Hitchcock films as *Blackmail* (1929), *Foreign Correspondent* (1940), *Suspicion* (1941), and *Saboteur* (1942). If so, the music would be understood to represent her inner thoughts, to be her “sympatheme,” as Hollywood convention has it. Such an interpretation would also be reinforced by the visuals, which have progressed from an exterior establishing shot (literally outside a building) to an interior, subjectively motivated shot. That is, the camera pulls back to reveal the portrait in the drawing room for the sole purpose of disclosing the object of Mrs. Paradine’s personal gaze.⁷³ But as the camera draws away (figure 5.2e), one realizes that the audio-visual conventions have been manipulated: she is still playing, and the music stops

⁷³ The presence of the portrait in this scene is vital for the ambiguous music-visual effect achieved here. The portrait’s addition to the scene, however, was not Hitchcock’s idea (it is not mentioned in his and Reville’s first draft). Instead, it was inserted by the Scottish playwright James Bridie (Dr. Osborne Henry Mavor’s pseudonym), who was hired by Hitchcock to bolster the script’s quality. Bridie’s revised version had many flaws including new, superfluous scenes that were immediately cut from later drafts. Nonetheless, Bridie made several apt observations and noteworthy additions. In his preliminary notes, he remarked that Mrs. Paradine “is more something that happens to the characters than a character herself,” an important insight that would be born out in the Paradine theme’s association with Keane’s obsession for her. (James Bridie, “PARADINE CASE (NOTES ON DRAFT),” May 1946, p. 2, HRC 1134:6.)

Bridie tweaked the drawing room sequence. First, he added Col. Paradine’s portrait, the object which attracts Mrs. Paradine’s attention as she resumes playing the piano. Secondly, he specified that Mrs. Paradine was playing a piano piece by Schubert. (See James Bridie, “THE PARADINE CASE—Dialogue Treatment,” May 1946, p. 4, 1134:6.)

While it is a rather odd detail—he does not specify *which* Schubert piece—the note remained in all later versions of the screenplay and even made it onto the filmed set. The name of Franz Schubert (but not the piece’s title) can be made out on the sheet music shown in a photographic still of Mrs. Paradine standing beside the piano. (This photographic still, which does not correspond to an actual shot from the film but was taken for publicity purposes, is held in the folder of photographic stills for *The Paradine Case* at the Margaret Herrick Library.)

abruptly when the butler reenters to announce the arrival of the police, who have come to arrest Mrs. Paradine for killing her husband.

Figure 5.2 Five stills from the drawing room scene. The stills are drawn from a single shot, with the camera moving smoothly towards and away from Mrs. Paradine. There are no cuts.





(d)



(e)

Though the trick is very subtle, its intentionality is indirectly revealed through studio records that outline an alternative version of the scene. Leith Stevens, the first composer hired for the film, had composed a short nondiegetic cue to accompany the shot of Mrs. Paradine gazing at the portrait, but Stevens's cue was rejected and replaced with solo piano.⁷⁴ The decision to switch from an orchestra cue to solo piano was not necessarily Waxman's; a music cue timing sheet specified this change in plan after

⁷⁴ Leith Stevens's cue was titled "The Portrait." A cue sheet reveals that the cue would overlap "the last chord of Mrs. Paradine finishing playing the piano [the first time]" and would stop at "the sound of the door opening as the butler enters," the precise moment when Mrs. Paradine's second performance of the theme is interrupted in the film. See "THE PARADINE CASE, Music Timing Cue Sheet," 14 October 1947 (1st Timing), HRC 3674:6. A typewritten note in the scoring sheet reads "Piano to be added," followed by "last two bars" in pencil, suggesting that the piano was to be heard in the track only during the shot in which Mrs. Paradine's arms can be seen moving, which comprises the last few seconds before the sound of the door latch. Stevens's music has not been found, but the scoring sheet shows the cue was recorded with a 41-member orchestra on 3 November 1947. See Stage Log, "The Portrait," 3 November 1947, HRC 4313:3.

Stevens was dismissed and before Waxman was hired.⁷⁵ As a consequence, the spectator is allowed, if not overtly directed, to presume a level of intimacy with Mrs. Paradine for the sole purpose of undermining it. The spectator was not actually privy to the emotions of Mrs. Paradine through nondiegetic music—it only seemed so, for a moment. This subtle deception has profound resonance with the rest of the narrative. Keane’s professional and marital downfall will come about precisely because he presumes too much and believes that he understands Mrs. Paradine’s intentions. This opening scene foreshadows his oversight; by simply following audio-visual conventions, the spectator participates in a misconception that will now be enacted and developed to tragic consequence by the protagonist. Instead of establishing the guilt of Mrs. Paradine, this cinematic sleight of hand reveals the spectator’s desire to better understand the cool, expressionless Mrs. Paradine.⁷⁶

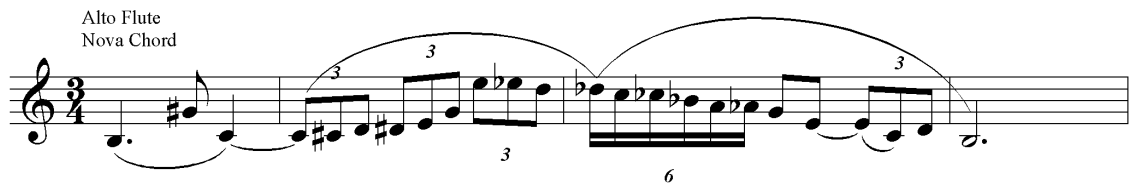
Until the bedroom scene, the Paradine theme is developed most extensively in the sequences in which Keane and Mrs. Paradine confer at Holloway prison. In these scenes, the theme’s association with Keane’s subjectivity is first established, then destabilized, allowing the nondiegetic musical score to reflect the shifting power dynamics between Keane and Mrs. Paradine that propel the narrative.

⁷⁵ A music timing cue sheet dated 12 November 1947 (following Stevens’s departure) calls for not a separate orchestral cue but merely a second performance by Mrs. Paradine. (See “THE PARADINE CASE, Music Timing Cue Sheet, M 12,” 12 November 1947, HRC 3674:6. This item was also mistakenly catalogued with music timing cue sheets for *Portrait of Jennie*; see note 39.) On 17 November, however, two music timing cue sheets were drafted and presumably presented to Waxman: one advised the use of orchestral music for this scene and the other prescribed that Mrs. Paradine would play the piano again. (See “THE PARADINE CASE, Music Timing Cue Sheet, M 12” and “THE PARADINE CASE, Music Timing Cue Sheet, M 12C,” 17 November 1947, HRC 1129:1.) The existence of two music timing cue sheets with conflicting instructions is very unusual; whether the two sheets had different authors (one by Hitchcock and the other by Selznick perhaps) or not, they show that the musical options and opportunities for this scene were considered carefully.

⁷⁶ Waxman also participated in the deception more directly: studio records indicate that he—not Mrs. Paradine, of course—recorded the piano solo for the soundtrack. See Stage Log, “Piano Solo (Mrs. Paradine),” 4 December 1947, HRC 4313:3.

The transference of the Paradine theme from a piano piece in the diegesis to a nondiegetic theme associated with Keane’s subjectivity occurs when Keane first visits Mrs. Paradine in prison. In the first counseling sequence, a long shot of Mrs. Paradine walking from her cell to the meeting room is accompanied by an alto flute and novachord playing the Paradine theme. The theme, however, is different from its presentation in the main titles and opening scene (see figure 5.3).

Figure 5.3 Waxman, *The Paradine Case*, “First Interview.” Measures 10–13.⁷⁷ (*The Paradine Case* by Paul Dessau and Franz Waxman.⁷⁸ All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission of Southern Music Publishing Co., Inc.)



In the first measure of the excerpt, the theme follows the expected rhythmic and melodic contour, leaping upward a major sixth before dropping a minor sixth. In the second measure, however, the line deviates from the model, skittering chromatically upwards in a series of triplets that peak on an e² (the expected high point of the phrase) and fall chromatically in a flourish of sextuplets. As one of the few instances when the Paradine theme is heard nondiegetically without Keane being present, this altered rendition of the theme perhaps offers a more ingenuous characterization of Mrs. Paradine. As it is not being “performed” by her or appropriated by someone else, the melodic character is more

⁷⁷ In the conductor’s score, the second note of m. 10 is written as an F-sharp, but is performed on the soundtrack as a G-sharp. The discrepancy may reflect a scribal error in the score, or the passage may have been altered during the recording session. Had an F-sharp been played on the soundtrack, it would have further destabilized passage by introducing a downward leap of a tritone between F-sharp and C.

⁷⁸ Paul Dessau served as a ghostwriter for the cue titled “Unhappy Keanes,” which is based upon themes by Franz Waxman. At the request of the copyright holder, his name is included in all references to the score, though he did not contribute to this particular example.

fluid, less predictable. The dark timbre of the alto flute and the shimmering tone of the novachord also give the line a unique aural color that contrasts with the more standard recurrences of the theme.

At the moment when Mrs. Paradine meets Keane, the flute disappears from the orchestral texture. Moments after meeting Mrs. Paradine, Keane blithely reassures her: “I know what you’ve been thinking.” Cued by this inanity, the Paradine theme quietly enters the orchestral score on bass clarinet, signaling the birth of Keane’s self-delusion. When Keane, anxious to express his sympathy for Mrs. Paradine’s situation, states that the late Colonel Paradine could not possibly have understood the supreme sacrifice she had made in marrying a blind man because “he’d never seen you,” a close up of Mrs. Paradine’s face (figure 5.4a) coincides with a slow, richly harmonized statement of the Paradine theme in the strings. Mrs. Paradine looks demurely downward before raising her eyes, motivating a reverse shot of Keane staring at her, “devouring her with his eyes” (Figure 5.4b).⁷⁹ The theme’s associative character is subtly shaded by this visual alignment. Previously, the Paradine theme could be understood to represent Mrs. Paradine herself, but at this moment the theme’s associative identity is unquestionably aligned with Keane’s subjective view of her. After Mrs. Paradine rises to leave, this association is emphasized even more strongly. A third iteration of the Paradine theme’s opening, performed by full strings in a chorale texture rich with seventh chords, begins as Keane watches Mrs. Paradine leave. The reverse shot of Mrs. Paradine that follows emphasizes Keane’s point of view by showing the back of her head in extreme close-up as she exits the room. The camera returns to Keane, watching Mrs. Paradine with utmost

⁷⁹ This phrase, used in Robert Hichens’s source novel to describe Keane’s initial fascination with Mrs. Paradine, is vividly conveyed through Gregory Peck’s performance of Keane and Hitchcock’s direction. See Robert Hichens, *The Paradine Case* (Garden City: Doubleday, Dorian & Company, Inc., 1933), 37.

interest (Figure 5.4c); violin and cello voice a sympathetic sigh through a downward glissando.⁸⁰ Similar to Laura Mulvey’s “male gaze,” which emerges here in increasingly explicit terms across the scene, the coordination of music and visual editing nuances the associative nature of the Paradine theme, tying it closely to Keane’s subjectivity. As Mulvey elaborates: “Hitchcock’s skilful use of identification processes and liberal use of subjective camera from the point of view of the male protagonist draw the spectators deeply into his position making them share his uneasy gaze.”⁸¹

Figure 5.4 Stills from Keane’s first interview.



(a)



(b)

⁸⁰ In the cue, there are actually two “sighs,” but the second is not heard in the film because the final measure of the cue is cut. See mm. 13–15 of “1st Interview (New Ending),” HRC 34A.

⁸¹ Though Mulvey is specifically referring to Hitchcock’s *Vertigo*, *Marnie*, and *Rear Window*, her observations are just as apt for *The Paradine Case*. Laura Mulvey, “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,” *Film Theory and Criticism*, 6th ed., eds. Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 845. Reprinted from *Screen* 16, no. 3 (Autumn, 1975): 6–18.



(c)

In this instance, however, the dramatic effect of the scene relies as heavily upon Waxman's scoring as it does on Hitchcock's visual direction. Selznick also lends a creative hand. Waxman's "1st Interview" cue was one of the few excerpts of the score that Selznick had rewritten after his return to Hollywood from New York. Waxman's original version is much thinner in texture through the end of the cue; the final iteration of the Paradine theme is uttered softly by a lone bass clarinet over tremolo cellos and basses. This muted gesture, made between lines of dialogue, was too subtle (it is a veritable echo of the second iteration of the Paradine theme made earlier on bass clarinet) and did not adequately fill the space left in the wake of dialogue. The second version warms the theme timbrally by setting it for full strings, but also adds a veneer of latent angst through a series of non-resolving seventh chords. In the context of the scene, the music is made more noticeable through the fuller texture, the harmonic bite, and another musical catch—an added caesura that draws further attention to the score just before the downward glissando in the violin and cello. The new setting allows the musical score to rise into the soundtrack's foreground, emphasizing for the spectator the crucial transference of the Paradine theme from Mrs. Paradine (as represented in the initial flute

solo) to Keane's view of Mrs. Paradine (as represented in the final, full-textured iteration).⁸²

While it should be acknowledged that the nondiegetic score is not a literal representation of Keane's thoughts as he never actually *hears* the Paradine theme in the diegesis, it does serve metaphorically to represent the shifting power dynamics between Keane and Mrs. Paradine. Significantly, this notion of diegetic themes transferring to the nondiegetic realm had already been used by Hitchcock in his first sound film, *Blackmail* (1929), while the notion of a nondiegetic theme mysteriously jumping from one person's head to another before leaking into the diegesis is expressed in Hitchcock's *Shadow of a Doubt* (1943), a film that Selznick admired.⁸³ As Jack Sullivan notes in *Hitchcock's Music*: "Throughout his career, Hitchcock blurred the boundary between the artificial score and music from real life; [in *The Paradine Case*] he obliterates it."⁸⁴

For Waxman, the bridging of diegetic and nondiegetic musical space with a single theme was also a readily familiar technique. *Possessed* (1947), a film that had occupied Waxman only months before beginning *The Paradine Case*, included diegetic performances and nondiegetic adaptations of Robert Schumann's *Carnaval*. A psychological thriller in which one woman's unrequited love for a piano-playing engineer ends in mental breakdown and murder, *Possessed* features an early scene in which the engineer (Van Heflin) plays a lyrical passage of *Carnaval* while conversing with the woman (Joan Crawford) who loves him. As Waxman later explained in an interview:

⁸² Eva Rieger brief yet insightful analysis of this same sequence also highlights its importance for introducing a split in the Paradine theme's association between Mrs. Paradine herself and Keane's love for her. See Rieger, 116.

⁸³ For a more elaborate discussion on this subject, see Royal S. Brown, *Overtones and Undertones: Reading Film Music*, Berkeley (University of California Press, 1994) 71.

⁸⁴ Jack Sullivan, *Hitchcock's Music*, New Haven (Yale University Press, 2006), 141.

Frequently, in the underscoring, I used [*Carnaval*] as an expression of Miss Crawford's attachment to Heflin. Now at the point in the film where she realizes that he really doesn't love her, which is the point at which her mind and emotions begin to crack up, Heflin plays the Schumann piece again. Heflin is apparently playing the piece correctly, what the audience hears this time is a distorted version...which suggested what Miss Crawford is hearing. That is, the distortion of the music corresponds to the distortion of normal emotions. What formerly had been a beautiful piano piece now sounds ugly to Miss Crawford because the man who is playing does not return her love. This illustrates what I mean by *getting inside* a character.⁸⁵

Although the narrative of *Possessed* has little in common with the narrative of *The Paradine Case*, Waxman's musical techniques in the former film clearly influenced his scoring of the second. In both films, Waxman incorporates piano music into the underscore to reflect the subjectivity of not the pianist but, rather, the character attracted to the pianist. Consequently, diegetic music is reconstructed in the nondiegetic score to reflect the developing obsession of the protagonist.

In contrast to the first scene with Keane and Mrs. Paradine at the prison, their second meeting is marked by a dramatic shift in conversational, visual, and musical authority. Before concluding their session, Keane inquires about Mrs. Paradine's life before her marriage to Colonel Paradine. After initially resisting Keane's questions, Mrs. Paradine relents: "When I was still at school in Naples, it began..." As opposed to the first meeting, when Keane assured Mrs. Paradine he already knew her thoughts, Mrs. Paradine's confession in this scene repeatedly undermines Keane's expectations:

MRS. PARADINE: I ran away with a man—Istanbul, Athens, Cairo...
KEANE: He was much older, of course, rich...he took advantage of your youth.
MRS. PARADINE: He was married, respected. I took advantage of him.

Keane's lack of control over this particular dialogue is reflected in the music, which reintroduces a second, melodically varied rendition of the Paradine theme on the solo

⁸⁵ Radio interview of Franz Waxman conducted by Lawrence Morton, transcript published as "Music from the Films': A CBC Broadcast," *Hollywood Quarterly* (5:2), Winter 1950, 135.

flute. As with the previous flute solo preceding Mrs. Paradine and Keane's first meeting, it begins "correctly," but then unexpectedly expands upward. A slight rhythmic augmentation upsets the expected trajectory of the melodic line, thereby undermining the listener's (and Keane's) expectations.

Growing increasingly upset at Keane's questions, Mrs. Paradine snaps at Keane when he inquires about additional lovers: "Of course there were others. We cannot hide these things. You said we cannot hide them, Mr. Keane. Let's drag them out; let them hang me for the past and be done with it." Her tirade is marked by a new, rising chromatic melody, a direct quotation from Waxman's earlier score for *Rebecca* (see figure 5.5).⁸⁶

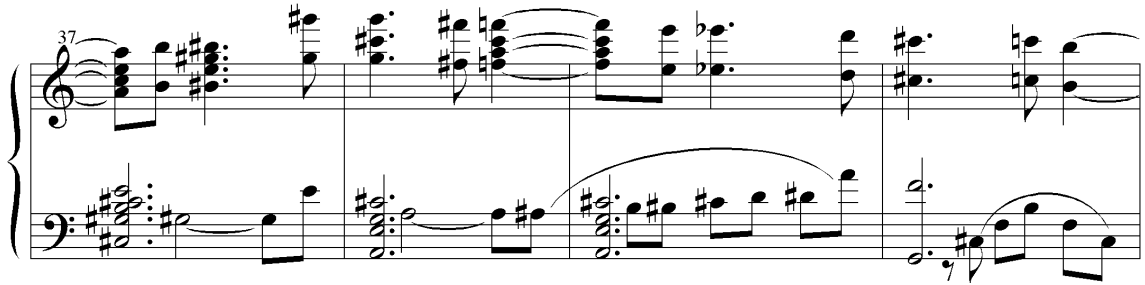
⁸⁶ This is not the only time Waxman makes allusions to themes from different film scores to make a dramatic statement. As Brown notes, "In certain cases, the reappearance of a musical motif from one film to the next can have intertextual implications that at the very least tell us what the composer thinks of a particular filmic situation. The first three notes of the moody, chromatic main theme Franz Waxman composed...for *The Paradine Case* reappear as a motif in the same composer's score for the 1952 *My Cousin Rachel*, whose female lead, like Mrs. Paradine, may have done in her husband" (Brown, *Overtures*, 43).

Figure 5.5 Waxman, *The Paradine Case*, “Second Interview,” mm. 32–40. (For mm. 36–40, the piano-conductor score shifts from three staves per system to two.) The stills are drawn from footage that runs during the first measure of this excerpt and juxtaposes Keane’s incredulity and disappointment against Mrs. Paradine’s bitter resentment. (*The Paradine Case* by Paul Dessau and Franz Waxman.⁸⁷ All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission of Southern Music Publishing Co., Inc.)



⁸⁷ Paul Dessau served as a ghostwriter for the cue titled “Unhappy Keanes,” which is based upon themes by Franz Waxman. At the request of the copyright holder, his name is included in all references to the score, though he did not contribute to this particular example.

Figure 5.5 continued



Considering Rebecca's reputation as a sharp-tongued woman with numerous lovers (and that everyone in *Rebecca* seems obsessed with the past), Waxman's thematic choice is clever. In addition, it once again complicates Mrs. Paradine's musical characterization: instead of varying the Paradine theme to reflect Mrs. Paradine's unpredictability, an entirely new theme enters the texture, as though Mrs. Paradine's sharp outburst, which contrasts sharply with her usual reserve, necessitates an altogether different accompaniment.

Initially astounded by Mrs. Paradine's intimate disclosures and subsequent rage, Keane nonetheless assures Mrs. Paradine that she can trust him to save her. She looks demurely downward (paralleling her gesture from the previous scene) and calmly replies: "I shall; I do." With this strange farewell, the strings play another richly harmonized rendition of the theme. While the music and Mrs. Paradine's posturing recall the end of the first jail counseling scene, the performance of the theme and the camera work elicit a very different response. Instead of Keane watching Mrs. Paradine leave, he leaves first, allowing her gaze to follow him from the room. His departure from her side and her gaze are captured in a single shot that tracks around Mrs. Paradine's face. The camera motion recalls the first scene of the film in which the camera similarly rotates around Mrs.

Paradine's head.⁸⁸ While this camera maneuver is admittedly scopophilic, it also emphasizes Mrs. Paradine's tremendous control over the narrative in strictly visual terms. In both of these shots, her motionless body and austere visage become an axis—a visual anchor—around which the camera and Keane are compelled to orbit.

The treatment of the Paradine theme as it accompanies this shot is also striking. Portamento slides in the strings, playfully inserted pauses in the melody, and rippling, upward arpeggios in the harp and piano (heard on the soundtrack, but not indicated in the conductor's part transcribed below) give the theme an unexpectedly and inappropriately whimsical quality (see figure 5.6).

⁸⁸ This camera motion is invoked once more in the courtroom scene to marvelous effect when Latour is brought to the witness stand. Here, the camera slowly swings around Mrs. Paradine's face, which is in the foreground, as Latour—in the background—walks to the witness stand. Though there is no music, the moment is aurally striking: With the cut to this shot, the ambient sound of the courtroom is immediately wiped from the soundtrack; the only sound that remains is the slow tread of Latour's shoes. Hitchcock describes this shot proudly in his published conversations with Francois Truffaut. (Francois Truffaut, *Hitchcock*, New York (Touchstone, 1967 [English Translation]) 129.

Figure 5.6 Waxman, *The Paradine Case*, “Second Interview,” mm. 44–50. Stills are aligned with appropriate measures as set in the film. (*The Paradine Case* by Paul Dessau and Franz Waxman.⁸⁹ All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission of Southern Music Publishing Co., Inc.)

The figure consists of two film stills at the top and a musical score below. The left still shows a man in a suit looking down at a woman with a serious expression. The right still shows a man in a suit standing in a doorway, looking towards a woman whose back is to the camera. Below the stills is a musical score for measures 44-50. The score is written for piano and features a complex harmonic structure with many accidentals. It includes a treble clef staff, a bass clef staff, and a separate bass clef staff at the bottom. The music is in 3/4 time and begins with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The score is divided into four measures, with the first measure starting at measure 44. The music is characterized by dense chordal textures and frequent chromatic alterations.

⁸⁹ Paul Dessau served as a ghostwriter for the cue titled “Unhappy Keanes,” which is based upon themes by Franz Waxman. At the request of the copyright holder, his name is included in all references to the score, though he did not contribute to this particular example.

Figure 5.6 continued



A musical score for piano and cello. The piano part is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and features a complex, multi-measure rest with many lines, indicating a long, sustained chord or texture. The cello part is written on a single staff with a bass clef and includes a section labeled "cello solo" with a melodic line. The score starts at measure 48.

The presence of the piano is also interesting; the instrument has not been heard prominently since Mrs. Paradine played it herself. These musical and visual elements eloquently complement the previous scene in which Keane's presence seemed to dominate the dialogue, music, and gaze. In this scene the power has shifted, and as the fanciful rendition of the Paradine theme signifies, Mrs. Paradine may be understood as a guileful participant in the power game unfolding in the musical score. This particular scene shows that Keane's dominance over the score is hardly complete. The appearance and setting of the Paradine theme here reflects Mrs. Paradine's ability to pander to a lawyer deaf to her words and admissions.

The Paradine Theme in Context

As the musical quotation from *Rebecca* discussed above reveals, thorough analysis of *The Paradine Case* score must consider the Paradine theme's relationship to other themes heard in the film and *beyond* the film to Waxman's music for *Rebecca*. The melodic contour of the Paradine theme is a good example; the alternation between slippery chromatic motion and dramatic leaps of a sixth and an octave strongly resemble the "Rebecca" theme, a similarity that is emphasized in its setting in the main titles. In both films, the theme is set in the low tessitura of the violins and is offset by rippling thirty-second and sixteenth note figuration in the woodwinds. As Eva Rieger notes, "Mrs. Paradine is assigned a theme strikingly similar to the one from *Rebecca*. As in *Rebecca* it is intoned in the main credits by opulent strings, so that the instrumentation achieves a sound of romantic longing."⁹⁰ While the similarities in the two main title cues are noticeable, there is an even stronger connection between the "Second Interview" cue from *The Paradine Case* and "Morning Room" from *Rebecca*, which accompanies the female protagonist's first visit to a room in which the dead Rebecca's belongings and presence prove overwhelming. As has already been mentioned, the "Second Interview" cue features a direct quotation of the Rebecca theme, but the similarities go deeper. Measures 19–43 of "Second Interview" are modeled, measure for measure, on mm. 1–24 of "Morning Room."

Waxman's alterations of the *Rebecca* cue for its new placement in *The Paradine Case* are subtle. The first iteration of the Rebecca theme by novachord in "Morning Room" (mm. 4–7) is replaced by the Paradine theme on solo flute (mm. 22–25). A two

⁹⁰ Rieger, 115. Jack Sullivan has also noted "echoes" of Waxman's *Rebecca* score during the second interview, which he relates to the "mysterious chords from *Rebecca*'s confession scene." See Sullivan, 139.

measure insertion in “Second Interview” (mm. 26–27) replaces an empty measure in “Morning” room, but after this adjustment the two align closely, with Waxman only adding a chromatic countermelody against the Rebecca theme (mm. 32–41) that prepares a setting of the Paradine theme in counterpoint with the Rebecca theme in measures 37–42 (see bottom stave of figure 5.5, above).⁹¹ Considering that the temporary preview score for *The Paradine Case* featured music from *Rebecca*, as specifically requested by Selznick, Waxman’s quotation of a cue from *Rebecca* in *The Paradine Case* may have had pragmatic motivation, thereby recalling his reuse of music from *The Young in Heart* in *Rebecca*.⁹² As noted in chapter two, Selznick encouraged the reuse of favored passages and themes across his films and even occasionally imposed such repetitions against the composer’s wish. While Waxman’s initial inspiration may have sprung from the preview score and a sense of what would most likely please the producer, his revisions of the *Rebecca* score for its new context in “Second Interview,” which include inserting the Paradine theme so that it is heard in counterpoint with the Rebecca theme, evince deft intertextual allusions that exceed mere cutting and pasting. Even the material that Waxman chose not to change illuminates new extra-musical associations. The prominent role of the Rebecca theme is the most obvious case, but Waxman’s decision to leave the melodic material from mm. 10–12 of “Morning Room” in mm. 29–31 of “Second Interview” is also telling. In *Rebecca*, this melodic material represents an intervallically compressed rendition of Mrs. Danvers’s theme, who enters the room when the melody is

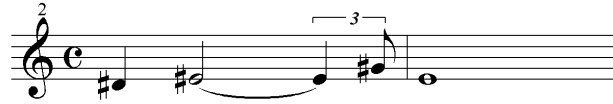
⁹¹ The final two measures of the “Morning Room” quotation—mm. 42–43—are not heard in *Rebecca*, though they are a part of the original cue. The measures were presumably cut for timing purposes and are ironically heard for the first time in *The Paradine Case*.

⁹² Selznick specifically requested that themes from *Rebecca* (but not *Spellbound*) be used in the compilation of the temp track by James Stewart. (Selznick to James Stewart, 28 February 1947, HRC 567:2.) In addition, untitled, unsigned, undated handwritten notes in HRC 3671:26 detail possible music options for *The Paradine Case*’s temp track and include frequent references to the score from *Rebecca*.

played. In the context of *The Paradine Case*, however, one is apt to hear the melody as a deformation of the Paradine theme; both follow a similar melodic and rhythmic contour (see figure 5.7a–c).

Figure 5.7 Melodic comparisons between Mrs. Danvers and Paradine themes.

(a) Waxman, Mrs. Danvers’s theme (from *Rebecca*, “Mrs. Danvers,” mm. 2–3)



(b) Waxman, melody from “Second Interview,” mm. 29–31 (exactly matches *Rebecca*, “Morning Room,” mm. 10–12)



(c) Waxman, Paradine theme from “Main Title,” mm. 2–4



Waxman thereby effects a bit of melodic punning that connects Mrs. Paradine with not just Rebecca but also Mrs. Danvers, a less obvious candidate who nonetheless resembles Mrs. Paradine in her dark clothing, ominous mysteriousness, and sexually transgressive impulses (Mrs. Danvers desires a married woman in a higher class; Mrs. Paradine desires a man who—in Mrs. Paradine’s words—“hates all women” and belongs to a lower class).⁹³

While the Paradine theme is the most prevalent recurring musical motif in the score, the presence of other associative motives—including a succinct, menacing gesture for the valet, Andre Latour, and an extended lyrical melody for Gay Keane—provide

⁹³ Waxman also reused another passage from the “At Dawn” cue from *Rebecca* (mm. 61–71) in two *Paradine Case* scenes: “First Interview” and “Third Interview” (mm. 18–24). As this passage is much more generic in its musical content, it is not discussed at length here. It is interesting to note, however, that the passage from “At Dawn” accompanies Maxim’s confession that he put Rebecca’s corpse into the sailboat. By reusing this music in the multiple interviews set between Mrs. Paradine and Keane, Waxman betrays Mrs. Paradine as a murderess who, like Maxim, has disposed of her spouse.

context for understanding the different ways in which an associative motive's presence and absence convey character subjectivity through music.⁹⁴ Notably, Keane does not have a melodic motive, reinforcing the notion that the orchestral score is predominantly aligned with his subjective view of others.⁹⁵ The fact that two of these main motifs are associated with women (his wife and his client) and that the third is associated with a man who is variously described as “queer,” “foreign,” and someone who “took no interest in women” further suggests that these themes represent Keane's perception of females and male “others” that evoke both desire and anxiety.⁹⁶

In accordance with Hollywood convention, Waxman's themes for Gay, Mrs. Paradine, and Latour rely upon musical stereotypes drawn from theatrical melodrama, opera, and cinema. As the faithful, compassionate, and beautiful wife of Keane, Gay receives a lyrical, diatonic melody in which a lack of rhythmic drive is established through the preponderance of long, sustained notes. In its full form, the theme follows a

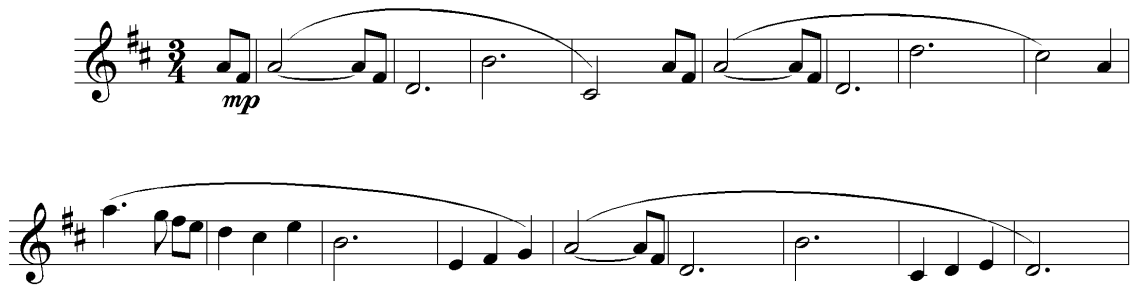
⁹⁴ In addition to these three motives, there is also a promenading theme for Hindley Hall and a plaintive, chromatic gesture for Mrs. Horfield. As both of these themes are treated marginally in the orchestral score, they are not discussed here.

⁹⁵ In lieu of an associative motive for Keane, Waxman occasionally uses the solo timbre of a cello to accompany scenes when Keane is often the sole focus of the visual frame. Such examples occur when Keane arrives home alone from Holloway prison (“Unhappy Keane's Part I), when he exits the courtroom after relinquishing the case (“Keane Leaves Court”), and, finally, when he mopes in Sir Simon's living room (“The Tag”).

⁹⁶ Latour's homosexuality, to which Keane responds with a mixture of loathing and jealousy, is only alluded to in the film (as it is in Hichens's novel). The author and screenwriter Ben Hecht, who assisted with dialogue in *The Paradine Case*, however, offered a detailed character analysis that places homosexuality at the crux of not only Latour's identity, but also Keane's: “Psychiatrically, Keane's ensuing obsession with Mrs. Paradine is a thing based on jealousy. It should be understood that [Latour's] more than Mrs. Paradine burns in his soul and blinds his wit. . . . All the psychotic underworld of Keane's soul is unloosed by his adventure [in the Cumberland where he first meets Latour]—his long latent homosexuality, his queer relation to crime that made him a champion of criminals. . . . When a lover is too jealous of a rival many things are involved—ego injury and the need for ego-rehabilitation—and also it may be of the man he is jealous as much as of the woman. The extra mania that makes him want to destroy—kill—may be inspired by the torment his unglimped selves excite in him, by his revulsion to the secrets of the bottom of his consciousness.” “Ben Hecht Rewrites,” 9 December 1946, Harry Ransom Center, David O. Selznick Collection (hereafter indicated as HRC) 1136:1, p. A

standard, four-bar phrase structure—AA'BA''—and it is predominantly performed by solo horn, flute, or violins (see figure 5.8).

Figure 5.8 Waxman, *The Paradine Case*, Gay's theme. Transcribed from Waxman, "Happy Keanes." (*The Paradine Case* by Paul Dessau and Franz Waxman.⁹⁷ All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission of Southern Music Publishing Co., Inc.)



In this context, the diatonicism and melodic and harmonic predictability may be understood to connote stability and fidelity. The use of lighter instrumental timbres reflects gentleness and vulnerability. In contrast, the Paradine theme is highly chromatic and melodically restless, with large leaps, longer phrases, and little cadential reinforcement. The theme is set in a variety of instrumental contexts, ranging from solo piano to full orchestra. While Gay's music is melodically light, consistent, and contained,⁹⁸ the Paradine theme bears melodic characteristics associated with late- and post-Romantic music; its heavy chromaticism and lengthy irregular phrases connote erotic excess and decadence. In this respect, the contrasting two themes model a common

⁹⁷ Paul Dessau served as a ghostwriter for the cue titled "Unhappy Keanes," which is based upon themes by Franz Waxman. At the request of the copyright holder, his name is included in all references to the score, though he did not contribute to this particular example.

⁹⁸ In one cue titled "Unhappy Keanes," Gay's theme undergoes some fragmentation, though nothing approaching the thematic transformations of the Paradine theme. Interestingly, "Unhappy Keanes" is the one original cue in *The Paradine Case* score not fully composed by Waxman. Instead, Paul Dessau sketched the cue and incorporated Waxman's themes. (Dessau is erroneously identified as an orchestrator for *The Paradine Case* in *Hitchcock's Music* (see Sullivan, 140), but he in fact assisted as a composer for this one cue.) One could speculate that Waxman might have treated the theme differently, had he had the time to compose the cue himself. Paul Dessau's pencil sketch, which is unsigned, is located in HRC 35A.

heard after Latour leaves the room, as Keane discusses the valet with another character. Over the course of the film, the theme continues to be played more often in Latour's absence, usually when Keane is speaking of him. Often Latour's on-screen presence is *not* accompanied by "his" theme as the melody does not reflect his character as much as it expresses Keane's jealousy towards him. Heather Laing notes that "a theme can... 'hold' one character in another's gaze, so that it reflects less on the represented character themselves than on the perhaps influential opinion of someone else."¹⁰¹ In *The Paradine Case*, the quality and placement of Latour's theme represents a similar hegemony: Keane's attempt to confine Latour to a specific stereotype.

In contrast, Gay's theme is almost always heard when she is onscreen. Importantly, these moments occur when she and her husband are alone, in conversation. The fact that her melody remains tightly tied to her physical presence allows her theme to be understood as the conventional "sympatheme," reflecting her own feelings rather than her husband's subjective view of her. Indeed, the scene in which her theme is heard in the minor mode after her husband returns home late at night better reflects her own anxieties toward her husband than his feelings toward her.

That Gay's theme is associated more closely with her own subjectivity than her husband's reflects a degree of limited empowerment. On the one hand, Gay's strength as a character is asserted through a melody that consistently reflects *her*, without the scrim of Keane's subjectivity. On the other hand, her "sympatheme," which forthrightly reveals her emotions without changing the melodic structure of her theme, reduces the

¹⁰¹ Heather Laing, *The Gendered Score: Music in 1940s Melodrama and the Woman's Film* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2007), 63–64.

complexity of her character, essentializing it to a single, predictable melody that changes very little over the course of the film.

Mrs. Paradine's theme occupies a middle space between Latour's theme and Gay's theme. Like Latour's, Mrs. Paradine's theme is invoked in her absence, but like Gay, she exercises greater control over her music. Indeed, Mrs. Paradine is a fluent musician, capable of "performing" (both literally and figuratively) her theme on piano.¹⁰² As has been shown, this musical empowerment functions very differently from Gay's control over her own theme. The melodic structure of Mrs. Paradine's theme—as opposed to Gay's—does change, introducing an unpredictable element to her musical characterization.¹⁰³ Although her theme is later subsumed by Keane's subjectivity, it is important to note that the crucial "deception" of her theme—that it somehow reflects her "real" self instead of a constructed exterior—is a collaborative project, realized through her guile and Keane's desire.

¹⁰² It is interesting to note that she is the only character in the film to demonstrate musical facility. When Judy, a secondary character wearing a black dress reminiscent of Mrs. Paradine's, sits down at a different piano, she is only able to play a few chords, not a complete piece of music. When Keane notices the piano in Mrs. Paradine's bedroom, he can only stare at it mutely. Gay Keane, however, never has an opportunity to display musical aptitude, or lack thereof. (Coincidentally, the actress's previous feature film role was as a concert pianist (*The Seventh Veil*, 1945)).

¹⁰³ Waxman reserves his most radical distortion of the Paradine theme until near the end of the film. In their last conference together, Mrs. Paradine reprimands Keane for attacking Latour on the stand and condemns Keane's behavior as unforgivable. Keane, stunned by Mrs. Paradine's unwillingness to support his efforts on her behalf, finally acknowledges to himself that the image of Mrs. Paradine he had championed was a false one of his own design. "Well I've exhausted myself," he utters in quiet shock, "destroying everything in an effort to save you...and I was an idiot enough to fall in love with you." The unraveling of his fantasy is captured through Waxman's setting of the theme in inversion, a relatively rare procedure in Hollywood film scores that perfectly suits the scene in which Keane's perception of Mrs. Paradine is finally and irrevocably turned upside down. See "The Consulting Cell," mm. 8–11 and mm. 22–23, HRC 4054:6.

Into the Bedroom: Imploding the Fetish

As the film proceeds, the Paradine theme's association with Keane's subjectivity is further reinforced through scenes outside the jail and in the Keane home, where the theme trails Keane like a guilty conscience, recurring under or after dialogue between him and his wife. In a quietly powerful scene, Gay expresses to Keane her desire to see him succeed in the case, if for no other reason than to prevent Mrs. Paradine from becoming Keane's martyred lover: "If she dies, you're lost to me forever—I know you'll go on thinking that you love her." Gay leaves the room and the camera tracks into a high angle, close up shot of Keane as he ponders her words (see figure 5.10). In the nondiegetic score, Gay's theme, which has been playing throughout the scene, is suddenly joined by another: Mrs. Paradine's melody on piano, conjured forth by Keane's thoughts.

Figure 5.10 Still of Keane. The Paradine theme's presence in the underscore for this shot discloses the subject of Keane's thoughts to the audience.



The theme is heard most prominently, however, during Keane's visit to Hindley Hall, the Paradine summer residence. Keane's motivations for this purported research trip—to learn more about the Paradines' family life—are hardly genuine. Keane's hope is to meet the valet Latour, whom Keane suspects of romantic involvement with Mrs. Paradine. It is at Hindley Hall that Keane's fantasies, expressed through the nondiegetic

score, reach an apex. In the midst of a tour, Keane is left alone in Mrs. Paradine's bedroom as the maid attends to business (figure 5.11a). The room is dominated by an imposing portrait of Mrs. Paradine mounted in the bed's headboard (figure 5.11b). As Keane begins to walk around, the Paradine theme is heard, played by piano with orchestral accompaniment, in the manner of a concerto. The piano part recalls Mrs. Paradine's earlier performance at the beginning of the film, an association that is reinforced through a series of tracking shots that steadily approach the portrait. At the start of the film, in the drawing room, Mrs. Paradine was physically present and her performance of the theme was simple, unadorned. Now in the bedroom, there is only a picture of Mrs. Paradine and the piano music is nondiegetic, elaborately ornamented and accompanied by an orchestra whose texture grows increasingly thick and chromatic as the scene progresses. Throughout this lavish treatment of the Paradine theme, tracking shots representing Keane's point of view focus upon Mrs. Paradine's portrait (figure 5.11c), her bathroom, her clothes, and finally the piano. As Anderegg has noted, "the whole scene is informed by a sense of violation, of intrusion, of fetishistic scopophilia."¹⁰⁴ The music further emphasizes this point when the steadily crescendoing passage climaxes with a crash of cymbals as the camera halts momentarily on Mrs. Paradine's negligee. Clothes have never received more impassioned musical accompaniment, and the opulent orchestral excess amply expresses the erotic nature of Keane's thoughts.

¹⁰⁴ Anderegg, 56.

Figure 5.11 Mrs. Paradine's Bedroom, as seen through Keane's eyes.



For moviegoers of the 1940s, this scene recalled Otto Preminger's 1944 film, *Laura*, in which the detective, Mark McPherson, searches the apartment of a woman he believes is dead. One newspaper reviewer of *The Paradine Case* even described the film as "a sort of 'Laura' in reverse that does not, unfortunately, attain a like distinction."¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁵ Edwin Schallert, "'Paradine Case' Fares Best in Elaborate Trial Scenes," *Los Angeles Times*, 30 December 1947, A3. The parallel has also been noted by present-day scholars. As Marc Straus writes, "Keane's meander through Mrs. Paradine/Rebecca/Laura's private rooms is now played out as a half-dream

As the detective in *Laura* sniffs perfume bottles, examines cloths, and gazes at the portrait on the wall, David Raksin's "Laura" theme is heard nondiegetically throughout, representing not Laura herself but, rather, the detective's growing obsession with her. As Royal S. Brown has observed, *Laura* (1944) is "perhaps *the* classic example of the fetishizing of a woman via music."¹⁰⁶ To further emphasize this point, Brown notes that when Laura actually arrives in the flesh and surprises the detective, the theme is cut off.¹⁰⁷ McPherson's dream of Laura is shattered by her actual presence.

The conclusion of the bedroom scene in *The Paradine Case* possesses its own twist. After the climactic negligee shot, the volume level decreases and the orchestral texture thins rapidly. Hitchcock then presents a final point-of-view shot of the Paradine portrait. This one is less powerful; instead of tracking toward the picture, the camera tracks around it (figure 5.12a). Its movement emphasizes the two-dimensional quality of the portrait. The picture appears increasingly distorted, revealing the constructed nature of Keane's fantasy.¹⁰⁸ In the next shot, Keane approaches the piano to examine the music on the ledger (figure 5.12b). As the piano in the underscore plays a final, unresolved dominant chord, a point-of-view shot reveals the sheet music itself (figure 5.12c).

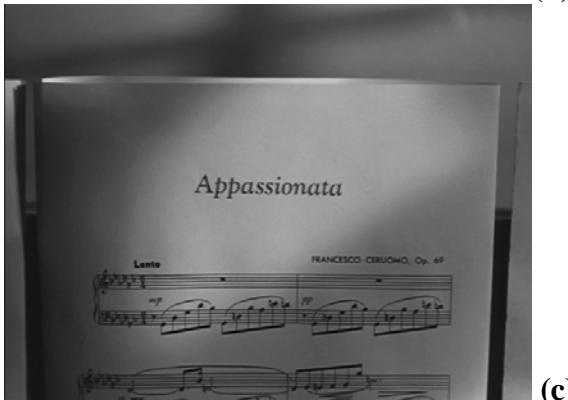
bordering on nightmare" (Straus, *Hitchcock Nonetheless: The Master's Touch in His Least Celebrated Films* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2007), 112.).

¹⁰⁶ Brown, *Overtones*, 86.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 89.

¹⁰⁸ This visual treatment of the portrait here resonates strongly with Dana Polan's provocative discussion portraits as sources of meaning in 1940s Hollywood films: "The painting becomes a fundamental pivot between two possibilities and becomes a figure for narrative itself, a constant conflict of plenitude and loss, of each turning into the other" (Dana Polan, *Power and Paranoia: History, Narrative, and the American Cinema, 1940–1950* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 222.).

Figure 5.12 Stills of Mrs. Paradine’s bedroom. These shots follow the climax of the orchestral cue.



The music reads: “Appassionata by Francesco Ceruomo, Op. 69.” Two lines of music are visible, just enough to confirm that it is the Paradine theme as Mrs. Paradine performed it at the opening of the film. The shot includes a clever bit of humor, with “Francesco Ceruomo” offering a playful Italianization of Franz Waxman’s name,¹⁰⁹ but it also reveals to the spectator that the Paradine theme is not, could not, be a musical

¹⁰⁹ In Italian, “cera” means “wax” and “uomo” means “man.”

representation or realization of Mrs. Paradine herself. The purported Paradine theme is actually “Appassionata,” a separate, published piece of music—the sixty-ninth opus of one Francesco Ceruomo. Mrs. Paradine may have played the piece and spectators might associate the theme with her, but it is not her musical double. By visually revealing the musical text and its “true” author within the diegesis, the film emphasizes Mrs. Paradine’s autonomy from the musical text. Just as the previous shot accentuates the two-dimensional (i.e., unrealistic) attributes of a painting of Mrs. Paradine, so this shot of the music illuminates the artifice of the musical object. Following the musical climax of the entire film, this revelation ironically draws the nondiegetic cue to a close. With typical Hitchcockian irony, the bizarre moment is punctuated by an off-screen laugh.¹¹⁰

Waxman’s organizes the bedroom cue around a series of increasingly unstable iterations of the Paradine theme to convey the expansion and implosion of Keane’s erotic fantasy through purely orchestral means.¹¹¹ The theme undergoes substantial change in its second iteration (figure 5.13, mm. 40a–44a), which follows a brief flute solo and begins as Keane looks into her bathroom. The key modulates from D-flat major to A-flat major, the theme’s opening leap of a major sixth is stretched to a minor seventh, and the

¹¹⁰ Just as this scene corresponds to a similar scene from *Laura*, so *The Paradine Case* may have served as a model for Max Ophul’s *Letter from an Unknown Woman* (1948), which contains a sequence in which an adolescent girl makes what Laing describes as an “illicit foray” into the apartment of Stefan, a pianist to whom she is attracted. As she walks about his apartment, “three versions of his piece [Liszt’s *Un Sospiro*] play successively on the nondiegetic track.” Like Keane, she is slowly drawn to the piano, but her exploration and its accompanying background scoring end abruptly when she knocks a stack of Stefan’s music on the floor. Much like Keane’s discovery of the sheet music on the piano, this seemingly innocuous accident conveys meaning central to the narrative. As Laing relates, “this paper is only a representation of what music really entails, paralleling Stefan’s diegetic and real working relationship to it, as opposed to Lisa’s more romantic (over-)involvement” (Laing, 86).

¹¹¹ Waxman devoted special attention to this pivotal cue and even drafted two versions. The second version, which features the pianist as a concerto-like soloist, is heard in the film. Harold Byrns was called upon to specially orchestrate the cue (Leonid Raab orchestrated the rest of *The Paradine Case* score), and the recording session featured an orchestra of sixty-nine players (a number that coincidentally matches the opus number of *Appassionata*). Only the main title music was recorded with a slightly larger orchestra of seventy members.

initial tonic chord is replaced by a dominant seventh. Waxman also subverts the theme's metric character in a shift from 3/4 to 4/4, which prolongs and emphasizes the third note of the theme, an unstable F-flat. Finally, the lyrical, regular quarter notes of the original theme are replaced by a rhythmically agitated passage that fragments the melodic arc with chromatic interjections. When Waxman states the theme a third time as the camera pans over Mrs. Paradine's clothes (figure 5.13, mm. 45a–51a), he increases the chromaticism and further distorts the original theme, driving the melody to an even higher tessitura. Two measures before the climax of this third iteration, the theme reenters, creating a brief passage of disorienting imitative counterpoint (mm. 47a–48a). As though depicting Keane's mind, the theme sounds divided against itself.

Figure 5.13 Waxman, *The Paradine Case*, “Mrs. Paradine’s Bedroom.” Measures 40a–51a. For reasons of space, the solo piano part is not shown. (*The Paradine Case* by Paul Dessau and Franz Waxman.¹¹² All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission of Southern Music Publishing Co., Inc.)

¹¹² Paul Dessau served as a ghostwriter for the cue titled “Unhappy Keanes,” which is based upon themes by Franz Waxman. At the request of the copyright holder, his name is included in all references to the score, though he did not contribute to this particular example.

Figure 5.13

The musical score is divided into three systems, each with three staves. The first system features Vlns. (Violins) in the top staff, Vc. con *diva* (Violoncello) in the middle staff, and Stgs. Trem. (Stage Trombones) and Hns. (Horns) in the bottom staff. The Vlns. part includes a *pp* dynamic and a *espr. poco a poco cresc.* instruction. The second system includes Vlns. (Violins) in the top staff, Fl., Ob. (Flute, Oboe) in the middle staff, and Stgs. Trem., W.W. (Stage Trombones, Woodwinds) in the bottom staff. The Fl., Ob. part is marked *f*. The third system includes Vlns. (Violins) in the top staff, Ob., Hns. (Oboe, Horns) in the middle staff, and Vle., Vc. (Viola, Violoncello) in the bottom staff. The Ob., Hns. part is marked *mf*. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings.

Figure 5.13 continued

The musical score is divided into three systems, each with multiple staves for different instruments and sections.

- System 1:**
 - Top staff: *Vc. con sva* (Violin, *con sordina*) with a dynamic marking of *ff* and a fermata over a five-measure phrase.
 - Middle staff: *Vle., Vc., Hn.* (Viola, Violin, Horn) with a dynamic marking of *ff* and a three-measure phrase.
 - Bottom staff: *W.W., Tbns.* (Woodwinds, Trombones) with a dynamic marking of *ff* and a three-measure phrase.
- System 2:**
 - Top staff: *Picc., Vlns., Vle., Vc.* (Piccolo, Violins, Viola, Violin) with a dynamic marking of *ff* and a seven-measure phrase.
 - Middle staff: *W.W., Tpt.* (Woodwinds, Trumpet) with a dynamic marking of *ff* and a seven-measure phrase.
 - Bottom staff: *Tbns.* (Trombones) with a dynamic marking of *ff* and a seven-measure phrase.
 - Below the bottom staff: *B. Cl., Bsn.* (Bass Clarinet, Bassoon) with a dynamic marking of *ff* and a seven-measure phrase.
- System 3:**
 - Top staff: *Mtd. Tpt.* (Muted Trumpet) with a dynamic marking of *pp* and a three-measure phrase.
 - Middle staff: *Vc.* (Violin) with a dynamic marking of *pp* and a three-measure phrase.
 - Bottom staff: *Cls., Tbns., Hp.* (Clarinets, Trombones, Harp) with a dynamic marking of *pp* and a three-measure phrase.

Throughout this thematic deformation the piano continues to play, but is eventually subsumed by the orchestra and effectively drowned out until after the

orchestral climax. If the sound of the piano playing the theme at the beginning of the bedroom scene represents what Robert Hichens described in his source novel as “her influence” filling the room, then the layering of new instrumental registers, the increased chromaticism, the obscuring of the piano’s timbre, and the distortion of the theme reflect Keane’s response to this lingering presence.¹¹³ Seduced by his own thoughts, Keane’s flight from reality is expressed through a musical passage in which the rhythmic, harmonic, melodic, and timbral qualities of the Paradine theme are distended to an unsustainable extreme. Ultimately, it is the sight of a lone piano and an unadorned piece of sheet music that draw Keane away from his hyper-romanticized, orchestral fantasy of a woman he has misconstrued throughout the film.

The bedroom scene invites comparison with the initial scene of Mrs. Paradine at the piano. In this first scene, Mrs. Paradine controls the music and its presentation through her performance of it. In other words, she “plays the part” in both the literal and figurative sense of the phrase. In this latter scene, she is absent and Keane’s erotic imagination provides the musical impetus for a lush orchestral rendition of the same theme. The appearance of the sheet music, however, brings the reverie to an end, leaving the spectator to ponder the significance of this disruption in which a musical object in the diegesis silences the nondiegetic score.

In both this scene and the opening scene of Mrs. Paradine at the piano, meaning is generated by slippage between diegetic and nondiegetic musical spaces. In Mrs. Paradine’s scene, careful camera work allows the spectator to believe, or at least consider, that the music has become nondiegetic, making Mrs. Paradine’s emotional character known to the spectator. Then the music is interrupted by the butler’s entrance,

¹¹³ Hichens, 237.

signaling its source within the diegesis. In the bedroom scene, the music is nondiegetic, but is similarly interrupted by a diegetic event: the discovery of the sheet music. These interactions between music and event across the boundaries of the diegesis subtly destabilize the spectator's relationship to characters and narrative, calling into question what we know and what we presume. Thus, while Keane's reaction to the sheet music is impossible to judge and is ultimately moot, its significance to the spectator is critical. It recalls the opening scene in which Hitchcock used music to suggest a false sense of knowledge about Mrs. Paradine. Set within the context of Keane's fetishistic excursion into the bedroom, this reference to the opening scene invokes a parallel between the spectator's "gaze" at Mrs. Paradine at the piano and Keane's gaze at Mrs. Paradine's portrait in the bedroom.¹¹⁴ Keane's scene appropriately ends with him next to the piano, staring at sheet music that bears the theme of his obsession and self-deception.

In contrast to the opening scene of the film, whose composite elements were introduced, developed, and honed by a variety of individuals including Robert Hichens, Margaret Hawkins, James Bridie (a writer hired by Hitchcock for further assistance), Alfred Hitchcock, Alma Reville, and Franz Waxman, the elaborate bedroom scene developed rapidly in the final stages of script development and came from Selznick. In

¹¹⁴ The thematic association between the opening scene of the film and the bedroom scene is reinforced by the music of the main title, which features ten measures of music copied directly from "Mrs. Paradine's Bedroom." Waxman's pencil sketches make this explicit. Instead of re-writing the music from the bedroom scene into the main title cue, he merely instructs the orchestrator to copy mm. 40–50 from "Mrs. Paradine's Bedroom" into mm. 18–28 of "Main Title." Close comparison reveals that the two passages are scored slightly differently, as "Main Title" was orchestrated by Leonid Raab and "Mrs. Paradine's Bedroom" was orchestrated by Harold Byrns. Scoring differences aside, the climactic music from the bedroom scene is heard under the main titles, followed shortly thereafter by the piano music from the opening drawing room scene. When the bedroom sequence itself occurs, its musical accompaniment recalls the main title music and, subsequently, the opening scene of the film. See Franz Waxman, "Main Title," pencil sketch, HRC 34A:3.

his original novel, Hichens briefly mentions Mrs. Paradine's bedroom, but does not indulge in detail:

In one [room Keane] lingered without knowing why until Mrs. Prite said: "This was where Mrs. Paradine slept, sir, and next door was her sitting-room."
"Indeed!" Keane said, now knowing why he had lingered. The room was, perhaps, full of her influence.¹¹⁵

Hitchcock and Reville's depiction of the scene in an initial draft of the script showed no intention to expand on Hichens's original conception. The maid explains to Keane that "this was where Mrs. Paradine slept, sire" and the spectator views the room in a long shot. "Oh," Keane replies, and the spectator watches as—in a single shot—he crosses the room to the window where he spies the valet. In this early version the portrait, piano, music, and implicit fetishization are conspicuously absent (to say nothing of Waxman's heavily orchestrated music).

James Bridie, an assistant hired by Hitchcock to work with the script, gave the scene additional weight in his adaptation by having Keane stand at the bedroom window and whisper a poem:

'The skies they were ashen and sober
The leaves they were crisped and sere
It was night in the lonesome October
Of my most immemorial year;
It was hard by the dim lake of Auber
In the misty mid-region of Weir—
It was down by the dark tarn of Auber,
In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.'¹¹⁶

The soliloquy did not survive. Bridie's unlikely suggestion that Keane recite the opening stanza of Edgar Allen Poe's "Ulalume" (1849) may have planted a seed, however, calling attention to a moment in the story ripe for development.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ Hichens, 237.

¹¹⁶ "James Bridie Script and Third Draft Script Comparison," 26 July 1946, p. 108–109, 1136:5.

With Bridie's monologue for Keane excised, Selznick expanded upon Hitchcock's and Reville's brief scene in an annotated script date October, 1946.¹¹⁸ In particular, the notes in the margin¹¹⁹ detail the appearance of the room and the presence of the portrait. Later, Selznick would evince further investment in the scene when instructing the studio manager that the only set from Keane's trip to Hindley Hall "on which there is any excuse at all for spending money is Ms. Paradine's room, to which I have added. The deal for the painting should be checked with me. Its costs should be somewhere between \$5000 and \$7500, and not more...."¹²⁰ In the final shooting script of 10 December 1946,¹²¹ the scene had blossomed to the form it would take in the film. The room, as the script read, "is an extremely feminine room, done in the Louis Quinze period. At one end is a little bay window with a boudoir piano of very delicate design. Some of her music lies open on the piano....Some of her negligees are lying across the bed...On the wall hangs a portrait of her—with a Mona Lisa smile and eyes that look directly at you...."¹²² The *mise-en-scène* is set, with minimal subtlety, for fetishistic encounters. Interestingly, the piano and sheet music are among the first details listed, and

¹¹⁷ Bridie's reference to "Ulalume" is actually appropriate in theme, if not in tone, to the scene. In the poem, the narrator undergoes a nocturnal journey with "Psyche, my soul." In response to Psyche's anxiety, the narrator "pacified Psyche and kissed her,/And tempted her out of her gloom--/And conquered her scruples and gloom..." The tryst, however, ends when the narrator realizes he—and his Psyche—have unwittingly returned to grave of his lost Ulalume. The poem's depiction of love overshadowed by tragedy, and in particular the narrator's erotic encounter with his own psychological desires relate to Keane's profound obsession. While Bridie's reference to "Ulalume" was cut (one wonders how many moviegoers would have identified the quotation as Poe's or even known the subject of the full poem), the notion that Mrs. Paradine's bedroom should serve as the site for Keane's indulgent fantasy did carry through to the final film.

¹¹⁸ "D.O.S. Annotated Third Draft Script, 10 August 1946 with changes of 16 October 1946," HRC 4313:2.

¹¹⁹ Although many of the annotations in the script are in Selznick's hand, the notes surrounding the bedroom scene are in shorthand, indicating that he dictated these ideas to a secretary.

¹²⁰ Selznick to Daniel O'Shea, 28 February 1947, HRC 567:2.

¹²¹ "Final Shooting Script—Copy Marked with Comments of [technical advisors] Bleck, Burt, Maude, and Reissar," 10 December 1946, HRC, 1136:2.

¹²² "Final Shooting Script—Copy Marked with Comments of [technical advisors] Bleck, Burt, Maude, and Reissar," 10 December 1946, HRC, 1136:2, p. 63.

their association with more conventionally fetishized objects imbues them with an erotic significance they might not otherwise have. The shooting script also details the content of individual shots, includes an insert of “open sheet music (Title to be supplied),”¹²³ revealing that the decision to specifically feature sheet music as one of the fetishized objects was made long before a composer was selected for the film.

As has been shown, the opening scene of the film and the bedroom scene interrelate with one another in the final version of the film, but the development of both scenes occurred independently. The drawing room sequence was initially construed by a screen writer at M-G-M over a decade before the film actually entered production. Adopted by Hitchcock and Reville, further adapted by Bridie, then tinkered with throughout pre- and post-production, the scene ultimately showcased Hitchcock’s directorial bravura, with balletic camera motion across an elegant and uncluttered mise-en-scene bolstered by deft editing and Waxman’s haunting piano music. Not surprisingly, the scene’s careful crafting captured the attention and praise of critics:

...Mr. Hitchcock has directed this material like a connoisseur of art looking for the first time at the Elgin Marbles. He circles around it, ventures near, draws back, pauses to study, comes close the better to appreciate a significant detail, retreats to let the full impact hit him, his interest—and his audience’s—ever mounting.... And so Miss Valli, as Mrs. Paradine (base murderess or noble, misunderstood woman?) is disclosed to view seated at the piano in her drawing room. First the back of her head, then, slowly, her profile, and after the flawlessness of it is good and clear, her lovely face slowly lifted from a glass of wine.¹²⁴

The bedroom scene is quite different in its construction and affect. As opposed to the lengthy gestation of the drawing room scene, the bedroom scene’s development occurred quickly and late in pre-production. In contrast to the austere images and

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 64. Preceding the shot of inserted music, Keane was also to have picked up a copy of *The Tatler* and examined a picture in it featuring Col. Paradine, Mrs. Paradine, and Latour, but this shot is not in the final version of the film.

¹²⁴ Cecilia Ager, “A High-Toned, Escapist Movie Comes to Town,” *P.M.*, 9 January 1948.

emotionally restrained diegetic music from the drawing room, the bedroom's appearance is excessively ornate and the background orchestral score densely orchestrated for large orchestra and piano soloist. In addition, the elaborate camera movement featured in the drawing room scene, an effect that Selznick dismissed as "tortuous and unnatural,"¹²⁵ is replaced in the bedroom scene by more conventional shot-reverse-shot patterns.¹²⁶ Given these distinctive binaries, which broadly reflect the differing cinematic aesthetics of Hitchcock and Selznick respectively, the bedroom scene represents Selznick's attempt to balance the film's opening, infusing it with broader narrative purpose. In other words, the two scenes are necessary complements to each other, differing radically in visual style yet linked by Waxman's music. In the two scenes, the Paradine theme not only undermines the spectator's perception of Mrs. Paradine and Keane but also mediates between the cinematic aesthetics of Hitchcock and Selznick. Consequently, the two scenes represent the visual, musical, and narrative poles that the film traverses, from the elusive, enigmatic Mrs. Paradine at the piano, to the woefully misguided Keane in her bedroom.

The scenes' importance is even greater when one recalls that both were devised specially for cinematic presentation. Although they reflect themes present in Hichens's novel, both scenes represent considerable expansions of brief passages. In their reliance upon visuals and music to convey what one critic described as the film's "unspoken placement of emphasis,"¹²⁷ both scenes renounce dialogue in favor of expressive techniques unique to film. The movement of the camera, the juxtaposition of

¹²⁵ Memo from DOS to Lydia Schiller, March 1947, quoted in Leff, 258. On occasion, Selznick even forced Hitchcock to forfeit a complicated camera setup for a more conventional, less stylized, approach. See Leff, 250.

¹²⁶ Shot-reverse-shot is a very common visual device in classical narrative cinema that involves alternating between a shot of a subject (in this case, Keane) and a shot revealing the object of the subject's gaze (in this case, Mrs. Paradine's clothes, negligee, portrait, and sheet music).

¹²⁷ Archer Winston, "The Paradine Case Tries a Beautiful Woman," *The New York Post*, 9 January 1948, 42.

discontinuous images, and the manipulation of diegetic and nondiegetic music dominate over speech and narrative progression.¹²⁸ Consequently, these remain the most memorable sequences of the film, effecting what one critic described as “the triumph of *The Paradine Case*” for Hitchcock, Selznick, and Waxman: “to demonstrate what masters of make-believe can do with grit, cleverness, and almost mischievous assurance in their knowledge of their craft.”¹²⁹

The Paradine Case was not only Selznick’s final film with Hitchcock, but it also marked his last collaboration with Franz Waxman. Their partnership had stretched over a decade and resulted in three compelling scores, all nominated for Academy Awards. Selznick and Waxman parted on very good terms, with the producer hopeful that they would work together again. In January of 1948, he warmly thanked Waxman for his efforts:

Please let me take this opportunity to thank you for your fine job on THE PARADINE CASE score, and for your superb cooperation in bringing the job off under such difficult circumstances of time limitations, and within budget.

I am looking forward to our being associated on other productions.¹³⁰

Waxman (or his agent) returned the gesture with a full-page, color notice in a trade journal. Selznick’s note was reprinted, accompanied by “Thank you, Mr. Selznick” in large bold letters, with Waxman’s signature at the bottom.¹³¹ Not to be outdone in any show, even one of gratitude, Selznick had Waxman’s score bound in an elegant maroon cover, stamped with gold lettering. James G. Stewart sent the gift to Waxman with a short

¹²⁸ In his commentary of the score, Jack Sullivan also praises the drawing room and bedroom scenes, noting that they possess “a hypnotic mixture of opera and cinema that draws us in: little dialogue occurs, just sound and image, pure cinema at its most rigorous” (Sullivan, 141).

¹²⁹ Ager, “A High-Toned, Escapist Movie Comes to Town.”

¹³⁰ DOS to Franz Waxman, 5 January 1948, Franz Waxman Papers, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Library, Syracuse, New York (hereafter FWP), Box 8.

¹³¹ Undated, unidentified magazine page in FWP Box 12, Clippings Folder 1948–1949.

note conveying “Selznick’s compliments.”¹³² In another note to Waxman, Selznick confided: “I am sure that the gods of music will forgive me for preferring Waxman to Bach on this one occasion—and who knows but that in the years to come they may wonder why there should ever have been any doubt in any event?”¹³³

¹³² James G. Stewart to Franz Waxman, 20 April 1948, FWP Oversize Folder 81.5A.

¹³³ DOS to Franz Waxman, 21 January 1948, FWP Box 8.

Chapter 6

“Straining for Something Extraordinary in Music”: Creating a Score for *Portrait of Jennie* (1948)

David O. Selznick’s wistful *Portrait of Jennie* (1948) seems spun from mist and fog. The first shot of the film following the Selznick logo is of circling, billowing clouds moving to the music of Debussy’s *Nuages* (*Clouds*). As an unseen narrator contemplates notions of time and timelessness, clouds swirl away to reveal a view of Manhattan as seen from the sky (see figure 6.1). A quote from Euripides, then Keats, complements the mystical aura. Even after the otherworldly story of star-crossed lovers commences, the tone persists as characters move about dimly lit locales, musing vaguely on the ability of love and art to defy the progression of time. The music of the film contributes to the haze and disorientation, in part because the score features the gauzily textured works of French composer Claude Debussy (1862–1918), whose meandering melodies and non-harmonic progressions withhold the grounding of regular phrases and cadences. Yet even these familiar Debussy pieces possess an uncanny quality, distorted by composer Dimitri Tiomkin (1894–1979) for the context of the film. Seeking to articulate this unusual ambience, one critic described *Portrait of Jennie* as “brave and tender, wrapped protectively in the wispy dress of fantasy.”¹

¹ Reviewing *Portrait of Jennie*, one critic wrote: “The late Percy Hammond, reviewing for the *N.Y. Herald Tribune*, used to employ the phrase ‘brave and tender play’ to describe a drama that showed sensitivity but

Figure 6.1 Still from *Portrait*'s prologue. This image aptly sets the stage for a Manhattan drama laced with unreality.



Portrait has elicited wide ranging responses from commentators, from enthusiasm to dismissal. Much of the criticism has been directed at the film's high-toned presentation, abetted significantly by the Debussy-based score. While some critics praised the music, their sterner colleagues noted that neither Euripides, Keats, nor Debussy belonged in a Hollywood film, and their presence in *Portrait* only confirmed Hollywood's supreme tastelessness in matters of Art.² Those assessing *Portrait* from within the trajectory of the producer's career, such as Selznick biographers David Thomson and Bob Thomas, have also viewed the film grimly, an example of how far the mighty can fall, when the peak is the Academy-Award-sweeping *Gone with the Wind* (1939).³

Portrait is not a film in which the whole exceeds the sum of its parts; if anything, the reverse is true. The film's shortcomings include narrative plausibility and awkward visual editing. There are, however, many compelling facets that previous assessments have overlooked or misunderstood. David Thomson hints at these hidden gems when he

failed to provide a valid dramatic experience in the theatre. *Portrait of Jennie* is brave and tender..." *Fortnight* 6, no. 1 (7 January 1949): 31 in *Selected Film Criticism, 1941–1950*, ed. Anthony Slide, (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1983), 192.

² Reception of the film is treated in depth later in the chapter.

³ See David Thomson, *Showman: The Life of David O. Selznick* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), 494–502. See also Bob Thomas, *Selznick* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1970), 244–248.

dismisses *Portrait* as a “travesty” yet notes the film is “sometimes uncannily piercing.”⁴ The score for *Portrait* is one such element that yields valuable insights under careful scrutiny. Despite its relative obscurity, *Portrait* features the most ambitious and complex musical project of Selznick’s career. The decision to use the music of Debussy, the hiring of Dimitri Tiomkin, Selznick’s extensive scoring notes, and the composition and editing of the score offer a revealing account of Selznick’s musical aesthetics and Tiomkin’s compositional prowess that may be largely reconstructed and appraised, thanks to an especially rich archive of surviving evidence. Perhaps because the film was so different from previous productions and its fantasy-based story so vulnerable to disdain, Selznick turned to the score with unprecedented vigor, hoping to improve—and perhaps redeem—a production that had been plagued with difficulties.⁵ (Selznick’s fantasy-based *King Kong* (1933), after all, had been effectively saved at the box office by virtue of Max Steiner’s innovative musical accompaniment.) Assembling the musical score brought its own problems, but through the process Selznick reasserted his convictions regarding music’s placement and purpose within a cinematic narrative. In *Portrait of Jennie*, Selznick’s musical journey came full circle as he returned to musico-cinematic principles drawn from the silent era and Max Steiner’s Selznick-produced scores of the early 1930s.

Portrait of Jennie exalts reminiscence, recollection, and the past itself. Keenly aware that the production system he had helped build was slipping away, Selznick was in

⁴ Thomson, 502, 498.

⁵ The filming of *Portrait* is not addressed here, but the film’s various hitches and obstacles during production are summarized by Thomson (see 498–502) and are covered in detail in John Matthew Miller, “David O. Selznick and His *Portrait of Jennie*” (Masters Thesis, University of Texas, 1987). Shooting on location in New York was particularly difficult and the camera work of Joseph August was not always deemed satisfactory by Selznick. As Thomson recounts, “those in which Jennie appeared and disappeared are still among the most stirring in all of Selznick’s work...but the closer photography of the stars was [in Selznick’s words] ‘wretched beyond words’” (Thomson, 498–499.). Problems were further aggravated by trouble off the set, such as the alcoholism of managing producer David Hempstead and threats of suicide from Jennifer Jones, the leading lady.

sympathy with a story that depicted the past rescuing a troubled present from itself: Jennie, a girl from the not-too-distant past, mysteriously appears and inspires an artist wracked by self-doubt to produce his greatest work. While this fanciful scenario had some rough parallels with Selznick's biography—"Jennie" is played by Jennifer Jones (b. 1919), an actress who entered Selznick's life in 1941, starred in several of his films, and in 1949 became his second wife—it is the protagonist's fixation on Jennie's past that expresses Selznick's own desire to resuscitate an earlier era of filmmaking. Perhaps for this reason the film is haunted by spirits of the silent cinema, of Selznick's youth. Silent film stars Lillian Gish and Ethel Barrymore were cast in prominent supporting roles while Joseph August, who began work as a cinematographer in 1913, worked behind the camera.⁶ Selznick himself aspired to create a "real D.W. Griffith effect" in the movie's climactic hurricane sequence.⁷ The film's green tinting, sepia toning, and the use of older camera lenses in select scenes also hearken back to the silent era and give the visuals an aged look, contributing further to the overall effect of yesteryear prestige. True, Gish and Barrymore had acted in Selznick's preceding films (Gish in *Duel in the Sun*; Barrymore in *The Paradine Case*) and comparisons with Griffith's *Birth of a Nation* had been

⁶ Lillian Gish is one of the most famous stars of the silent era. Though her career slowed significantly with the onset of sound, she occasionally appeared in films as late as 1967. In the 1940s, she appeared in only five films, two of which were Selznick's. Ethel Barrymore became a star in the silent era, but continued to appear in character roles in many sound features. Her last film appearance was in 1957. In *Portrait*, both women serve as mentoring figures for the protagonist; the memories they share with him guide his actions. Cinematographer Joseph August died during the production of *Portrait*; his first film was *Lure of the Violin* (1913). Though he continued working steadily into the sound era, his career began to taper off in 1937. Selznick essentially pulled him out of retirement for *Portrait*. His last film before *Portrait* had been *All That Money Can Buy* (1941). Actor Joseph Cotten, who played the film's protagonist, recalled that August was "our brilliant, incomparable cameraman, our master of ethereal light, as much our inspiration as anyone (even [director William] Dieterle vehemently conceded this)." See Joseph Cotten, *Vanity Will Get You Somewhere* (San Francisco: Mercury House, Incorporated, 1987), 82.

⁷ Memo from David O. Selznick to Ernest Scanlon, 17 May 1947, quoted in Thomson, 501. Hereafter, cited memos from Selznick will be documented as "DOS to...."

unavoidable during the production and release of *Gone with the Wind*, but *Portrait* brought all of these factors under the aegis of a single production.

Thus, it is not only the character of Jennie, but the film itself, that seems to emerge from a bygone era. In *Portrait*, the past remains ever present and music plays a vital role in this necessary melting of time. Throughout the film music *embodies* the past and its supernatural hold on the present, characterizing it as a life-giving force that binds characters—and their memories—together across time. Constructing a score around this mystical principle proved daunting for Selznick, Tiomkin, and the music editors Aubrey Lind and James G. Stewart,⁸ but it is not surprising that their efforts modeled the example of Eben Adams, *Portrait*'s down and out artist searching for true expression. Much like Adams's painting of Jennie, the final score for the film would strive to step forward by going back.

This chapter reveals the special role cast for music in *Portrait* by documenting and contextualizing the hiring of Tiomkin, the selection of Debussy's music, the drafting of Selznick's score notes, the composition of Tiomkin's Debussy-based score, and the final assembly of the score by Aubrey Lind and James G. Stewart. This account offers the most detailed survey of musical production at the Selznick studio and presents a fuller understanding of *Portrait*'s complex musical score by clarifying its authors and their creative influence. This chapter does not purport to be the complete story of *Portrait*'s score. Certain facets—such as the exchanges between Tiomkin and his orchestrators—must be glossed for a lack of source material. Nevertheless, the archival documents that

⁸ Aubrey Lind did not receive onscreen credit, but worked specifically as the music editor of the film; James G. Stewart receives onscreen credit as a “staff executive” and served as the film's technical engineer, which included supervising Tiomkin's recording sessions and the dubbing of the music onto the soundtrack.

survive show how the process in which a score is constructed can profoundly influence the manner in which the music is analyzed, understood, and appreciated.

Synopsis

Portrait of Jennie follows the life of Eben Adams (Joseph Cotten), a Depression-era artist whose frustrated creative life in New York City and empty pocketbook are established in a voice over monologue. Broke, Adams visits an art gallery hoping to sell his work. The no-nonsense owner Miss Spinney (Ethel Barrymore) buys one painting, but warns Adams that there is “not a drop of love” in his work. Trekking home through Central Park, Adams’s meets a mysterious young girl named Jennie Appleton (Jennifer Jones). Eben’s encounter with the girl is tinged with the supernatural. Mysteriously Jennie knows a great deal about Eben and her own circumstances are curious: she claims that her parents work as entertainers at Hammerstein’s theater, a building torn down years ago. As she sorts through Adams’s pictures, she pauses at his picture of Lands End Light. The lighthouse troubles her, stirring an uncomfortable memory she cannot identify. As the two walk together in the park, Jennie enters a trancelike state and renders a stark, dreary song, seemingly rich with un-childlike significance:

Where I come from
Nobody knows;
And where I’m going
Everything goes.
The wind blows,
The sea flows—
Nobody knows.
And where I am going
Nobody knows.⁹

⁹ The song is drawn from Robert Nathan’s source novel, though Nathan’s original lyric ends with “The wind blows,/The sea flows—/And nobody knows.” Jennie’s lyric in the film appends an additional “And

Before disappearing into the evening air, Jennie abruptly professes her desire that Adams wait for her to grow up. Bemused and intrigued by the child's wish, Adams mulls over her odd song and spends the night sketching her face from memory. The sketch is well received by the art gallery owners who agree that Adams has finally found the proper inspiration for his art. Exhilarated, Adams goes ice skating, where he meets Jennie a second time. Oddly, she has aged noticeably since their last meeting. After she explains that she is "hurrying" to catch up with him, Adams begins to realize that Jennie is more different than he initially realized: she is living outside the normal progression of time and history. He also learns that he is the only person who sees Jenny, an important detail that differs from Robert Nathan's source novel and draws into question whether Jennie exists at all or is just a figment of Adams's imagination.¹⁰ The rest of the film alternates between Adams's encounters with Jennie, during which he paints her portrait and falls in love, and episodes in which Adams tries to learn more about the girl, now woman, who appears older every time she reenters his life. This quest to learn about Jennie's past, which brings Adams in contact with theater employees and a quaint nun (Lilian Gish) who once taught Jennie, brings to light a startling revelation—Jennie is of the past; in fact, she is dead. She had been the daughter of theatrical entertainers at Hammerstein's and had gone to school at a convent, but was killed in a hurricane at Lands End Light on October 5, 192?. (The exact year is never specified in the film.) Spurred by this new information, Adams springs into action, hoping to rescue Jennie from the storm just as she had rescued him from self-doubt and failure. If he visits Lands End Light on October

where I am going/Nobody knows." See Robert Nathan, *Portrait of Jennie* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1939), 13.

¹⁰ Ibid.

5, Adams postulates, he will find Jennie and possibly save her. Adams's hunch serves him well and amidst a completely unforecasted hurricane, Adams reunites with Jennie at the abandoned light house. Although they pledge eternal love to each other, fate has the last word: Jennie is killed by a massive, Academy-Award-winning tidal wave effect.¹¹ When Adams regains consciousness in bed, he finds Jennie's scarf lying beside him, proof—of a sort—that Jennie had been with him. In the film's epilogue, the spectator learns that Adams's portrait of Jennie still resides in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where it is visited and adored by young girls who admire Adams's artistry and the muse who inspired him.

Selecting Debussy and Tiomkin

Throughout this strange drama, musical themes by Debussy arranged and orchestrated by Dimitri Tiomkin provide accompaniment and commentary. The presence of both composers' contributions is striking. Why fill the soundtrack with a French composer's music when he is never referenced in the narrative? And was not Tiomkin the very composer Selznick had sworn off after Tiomkin submitted a \$250,000 bill for his music in *Duel in the Sun*? There is no single answer to these questions, as both decisions were motivated by multiple factors. There is, however, an organizing principle, or guiding tension—namely that Selznick's desire to make *Portrait* boldly different from previous efforts was balanced by a conservative and self-preserving impulse to favor that which had worked before.

Selznick's decisions for *Portrait* were further guided by his knowledge that music would play a vital role in conveying the film's theme and ambience. In an undated memo

¹¹ *Portrait* received the 1949 Oscar for "Best Effects, Special Effects."

written roughly nine months before scoring began (ca. Nov. 1947), Selznick anticipated that *Portrait* would require the services of a musician willing to tackle “difficult music problems” as the film’s “quality is straining for something extraordinary in music.”¹² How Debussy and Tiomkin came to be collaborators on the *Portrait* score, however, is a complicated tale in which myriad proposals, decisions, and counter-decisions offer insight into Selznick’s working methods and overarching musical concerns. In particular, they show how Selznick drew ideas from scores for his 1930s RKO films, tapped into contemporary scoring trends, and then pushed for a score that surpassed its predecessors in terms of scope and technical complexity.

Selznick did not make his decisions quickly, though contemporary press accounts depicted as much. As one paper recounted, Selznick’s musical insights for *Portrait* sprung forth in a moment of spontaneous inspiration abetted by sickness:

Robert Nathan’s book came to Selznick while he was convalescing from a minor illness. A friend dropped in with an album of Debussy music, and Selznick found himself playing and replaying these recordings during the same period he was drifting through “Portrait of Jennie.” He decided this was the only music for the picture.¹³

Even if it is completely wrong, the tale is an effective piece of myth-building that explains both music and movie as the consequence of happy coincidence—a concoction of Nathan’s prose, Debussy’s music, and Selznick’s semi-delirium. The account, however, rings especially hollow on the words “the only music for the picture.” Selznick’s selection of composers and music for his films was typically indecisive and *Portrait* was

¹² DOS to Milton Kramer, David O. Selznick Collection, Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, The University of Texas at Austin, Box 1151, Folder 9. Hereafter, citations of documentation from this collection will be shortened to the following format: HRC 1151:9.

¹³ “Debussy’s Music Put on Screen,” *Los Angeles Times*, 19 December 1948, D3.

no exception.¹⁴ As Thomas DeMary's meticulously researched article, "The Mystery of Herrmann's Music for Selznick's *Portrait of Jennie*," shows, the first music considered for the film was not by Debussy at all, but by Bernard Herrmann (1911–1975).¹⁵ Even more oddly, the music by Herrmann was not orchestral underscoring; it was a song.

In Nathan's original novel, Jennie sings a mysterious song to Eben during their first meeting. "Jennie's Song" was transferred into the screenplay, but Nathan's lyrics needed music in time for principal photography. Beginning with *Since You Went Away* (1944), Selznick had repeatedly tried to engage Herrmann as a composer for one of his films and finally succeeded with *Portrait*. Herrmann had been brought to Hollywood in 1939 by Orson Welles to write the music for *Citizen Kane*. Herrmann's foray into film music won attention and accolades: the composer's first and second film scores were nominated for Academy Awards in 1942. (The second, *The Devil and Daniel Webster*, won.¹⁶) Herrmann's renown as an innovative and provocative film composer was established from the start, but his reputation as an obstinate curmudgeon would prove problematic on multiple productions.

Herrmann composed the requested song for *Portrait* while working on his score for *The Ghost and Mrs. Muir*, another love story with a supernatural premise.¹⁷

Composed in February of 1947, Herrmann's song for *Portrait* preceded any mention of

¹⁴ The list of composers considered by Selznick for *Jennie* includes, but is not limited to: Bernard Herrmann, Herbert Stothart, Max Steiner, Hugo Friedhofer, Richard Hageman, Roy Webb, Franz Waxman, Aaron Copland, Gian Carlo Menotti, Benjamin Britten, and Deems Taylor. Selznick also considered engaging Toscanini to conduct the score as "clearly, the job would not require very much of Toscanini's time." (DOS to Milton Kramer, undated, HRC 1151:9.)

¹⁵ Thomas DeMary, "The Mystery of Herrmann's Music for Selznick's *Portrait of Jennie*," *The Journal of Film Music* 1, no. 2/3 (2003), 153–182.

¹⁶ Also titled *All That Money Can Buy*.

¹⁷ During production, Selznick voiced concern over the fact that both *Portrait* and *The Ghost and Mrs. Muir* featured otherworldly love stories: "Because of the nature of THE GHOST AND MRS. MUIR, I should appreciate it if each of you would see this film at the Music Hall as quickly as possible and report back to me on comparisons and style with PORTRAIT OF JENNIE and also on what you think of the comparative qualities." (DOS to Mr. Hempstead and Lydia Schiller, 25 June 1947, HRC 1123:14.)

Debussy. Not until 29 July 1947 did a memo from Lydia Schiller to James Stewart, Selznick's sound engineer, recount an exchange in which New York writer Francis Brennan suggested to Selznick that he use Debussy's *Sirènes* and *La Mer* for *Portrait*, an idea that struck Selznick as "excellent."¹⁸ A memo from Selznick days earlier confirms this: "...the suggestion has been made, which I think is a superb one, that the score could basically be from Debussy, utilizing in particular the sea nocturnes for the themes."¹⁹ Selznick also mentioned that the score could include "Debussy and other classical music," suggesting that he was not envisioning underscore based entirely on Debussy's music.

As the production of *Portrait* continued over the next year, Selznick considered a variety of individuals for the film score (see note 14) without making any decisions on who should compose the score or whether the score would in fact include Debussy's music. As DeMary has documented, Selznick finally engaged Herrmann in July of 1948. Spotting notes for the first four reels, which made no reference to Debussy, were drafted and further annotated by Selznick on 21 July 1948. Herrmann scored three sequences, then abandoned the project. Having not yet signed a contract, he neither resigned nor was fired. Immediately Selznick began pursuing the services of Dimitri Tiomkin, though Tiomkin, composer of Selznick's *Duel in the Sun* (1946), had been conspicuously absent in earlier considerations for *Portrait*. Tiomkin signed a contract on 28 July 1948.²⁰

¹⁸ DeMary, 163.

¹⁹ DOS to James G. Stewart, 24 July 1947, HRC 567:14.

²⁰ The precise reason as to why Herrmann left is unknown. DeMary proposes that Herrmann abandoned the project as soon as he realized that composing a score for Selznick would involve acquiescing to the producer's various ideas and demands, a working situation that would have made the fiercely independent Herrmann bristle. Archival documents that will be discussed later also reveal that the composer and producer had very different ideas about which scenes should have musical underscoring. DeMary suggests that Herrmann's resistance to writing a Debussy-based score may have also forced his departure. While this may have been the case, the small amount of music Herrmann composed for the project is not based on

While Herrmann's replacement by Tiomkin brings to mind those rare, ignoble instances in which a composer's score for a film is rejected and replaced by another, such as Herrmann's score for *Torn Curtain* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1966) and Alex North's score for *2001: A Space Odyssey* (Stanley Kubrick, 1968), the practice was becoming common for Selznick. In 1932 he had overseen the replacement of W. Franke Harling's score for *The Most Dangerous Game* with a revised effort by Max Steiner. In 1944 he had rejected Alexandre Tansman's score for *Since You Went Away* and again hired Max Steiner, with whom he had worked extensively throughout the 1930s, to rescore the picture. For *The Paradine Case* (1947), Selznick hired the young Leith Stevens, who composed and recorded ten cues before Selznick replaced him with Waxman. In this context, one can see why Selznick, who had pursued but never worked with Herrmann, may have balked at any initial friction and opted for Tiomkin. Selznick's previous collaboration with Tiomkin, however, had not ended on the best of terms.

Tiomkin and *Duel in the Sun*

The problem had mainly been money. After assuring Selznick he could compose and record the score for around \$82,000, Tiomkin had produced a lengthy, heavily orchestrated score for eighty-piece orchestra (large by Hollywood standards) and chorus.²¹ The final bill was \$253,300.82.²² The gross miscalculation enraged Selznick, but the producer had been part of the problem. Tiomkin had been forced to rewrite much

themes of Debussy and the music notes with Selznick's annotations are devoid of any reference to the French composer. It is possible that Selznick may have dropped Debussy in favor of an original score from Herrmann *or* that he introduced the idea to Herrmann after the composer had already begun working, a situation that would almost certainly have prompted Herrmann's hasty departure.

²¹ William Penn, "The Music for David O. Selznick's Production No. 103," in *Perspectives on Music: Essays on Collections at the Humanities Research Center*, eds. Dave Oliphant and Thomas Zigal (Austin: Humanities Research Center, The University of Texas at Austin, 1985), 161.

²² *Ibid.*

of the score in order to satisfy Selznick and match new scene lengths resulting from the producer's compulsive re-editing. Nevertheless, Selznick refused to consider Tiomkin for his next picture, *The Paradine Case*. In a statement rife with unintentional irony, Selznick cited the composer's "wild and untenable extravagances and impracticabilities" as unforgivable.²³

Tiomkin may have been expensive, but on some level his "untenable extravagances" must have appealed to a producer who preached frugality while practicing something very different. Ever since *Gone with the Wind*, all of Selznick's films had tackled longer narratives with ambitious and epic settings. For *Duel*, Selznick aimed to create a film to rival *Gone with the Wind* in cinematic grandiosity and production values. Tiomkin²⁴ took to the opportunity enthusiastically, noting in excited (and broken) English:

I was led to believe by the grandeur and epic quality of the picture, that it requires great an unusual symphonic sound of music and variety of instrumental combinations.

...P.S. I have an idea of using human voices for the end of the picture and for the main title, for additional caller [*sic*] and as part of the orchestra. I believe that this sound will help bring a great climax to the picture and a big majesting [*sic*] opening.²⁵

²³ DOS to James G. Stewart, 7 April 1947, HRC 567:14.

²⁴ According to Miklós Rózsa's memoirs, Selznick held an "audition" between six composers, who were invited to score a specific scene from *Duel*. The one Selznick liked best would score the entire film. Rózsa was invited to participate, but was so insulted by the process that he refused: "even if Mr. Selznick had never heard a note of my music I would find his proposition an insult. Insofar as he had heard and apparently approved my *Spellbound* music, I regarded it as an outrage, and never wanted to hear his name again" (Rózsa, *A Double Life*, 148.). In an interview conducted with Rudy Behlmer on 1 June 1974 (prior to publication of his memoirs), Rózsa gives a slightly expanded telling of this tale, recalling that Selznick did not select the music of *any* of the composers who auditioned, but rather brought in Tiomkin on the recommendation of a publicist. The interview between Behlmer and Rózsa is included as a special feature on the Criterion DVD release of *Spellbound* (CC1577D). As of yet, no archival documentation has been found to support or refute Rózsa's anecdote.

²⁵ Dimitri Tiomkin, "Approximate Estimation on Music Budget for *Duel in the Sun*," undated, Dimitri Tiomkin Collection, Cinema-Television Library, Edward L. Doheny Jr. Memorial Library, University of Southern California, Box 17. Hereafter, citations of documentation from this collection will be shortened to the following format: DTC 17.

Trained at the St. Petersburg Conservatory as a concert pianist (Sergei Prokofiev was one of his classmates), Tiomkin had left Russia shortly after the 1917 Revolution to develop a serious performing career, following Waxman's path through Berlin and Paris.²⁶ A lucrative engagement performing on the American vaudeville circuit trained Tiomkin in the demands and compromises of popular, theatrical showmanship. The experience served him well when circumstances brought him to Hollywood,²⁷ where he began working as a film composer in 1931. He, better than many of his colleagues, came to appreciate that musical ability alone did not guarantee success in Hollywood. Snagging distinguished picture assignments also required savvy self-promotion, networking, and convincing "great composer" bravado. For a showman of Selznick's stature, Tiomkin's canny possession of these qualities was another reason to respect Tiomkin's work.

Duel is a lengthy, super-sized, Texan Western that centers around two brothers' conflicting love for Pearl, a "half-breed" girl played by Jennifer Jones. Pearl herself is a conflicted character, torn between lustful impulses inherited from her Mexican mother and a desire to master these sinful tendencies and become—as her longsuffering white father had always wanted—a real lady. Racist stereotypes aside, the film deals with cruder distinctions of lust and sex, subjects that are explicitly outlined in Selznick's music notes. The producer reminded the composer that the "Pearl Mexican-Indian Theme" should be "'Wild Cat' music—in the scenes where she is a throw back to her Indian mother," that Lewt (the bad brother) should have a theme with "terrific vitality

²⁶ Christopher Palmer, *Dimitri Tiomkin: A Portrait* (London: T.E. Books, 1984), 26–27.

²⁷ Choreographer and dancer Albertina Rasch, Tiomkin's wife, was engaged to produce ballet sequences for M-G-M. See Thomas, *Music for the Movies*, 81.

and sex” and that, in addition to these, there be—not just a love theme—but a “sex theme.”²⁸

Tiomkin accommodated Selznick’s involvement in the score. As with other films, Selznick used notes to guide the composer’s work. The notes for *Duel* were considerably more loquacious than his notes for *Spellbound*.²⁹ The sheer accumulation of commentary required a secretary to collate spotting notes with other music memos and compile them into an annotated master list for Tiomkin. The result was a detailed, multicolored, eleven-page document. Red ink delineated general music notes from the lengthier memos, which were typed in black. The date of each memo was listed in the margins and ranged from 20 August 1945 to 9 April 1946.³⁰ The document features much more than spotting notes and occasional suggestions for thematic material. For certain scenes, Selznick includes an entire list of themes to be used (or avoided) and explains his rationale in brief asides:

I don’t think there is an opportunity for a HELEN THEME, particularly since Pearl is so important a part of the first scene between Jesse and Helen, even though she’s offstage, and is definitely an important part of the second scene with Helen. Accordingly, I am inclined to think that the JESSE THEME should be used in both scenes.³¹

²⁸ “DUEL IN THE SUN,” DOS-Tiomkin Conf., 16 October 1945, copied 13 April 1946, DTC 17. In other notes, Selznick makes reference to a “desire theme” and “love theme.” Whether and how Selznick intended these themes, including the sex theme, to be differentiated is unknown. Tiomkin appears to have given the themes a primary melody, referred to as the “passion theme” in his own pencil annotations on music cue timing sheets. (“Desire” and “Sex” theme referenced together in “Compilation of Music Notes in Sequence Order, DUEL IN THE SUN,” 15 April 1946, p. 9, DTC 17. “Passion theme” written in “Music Timing Cue Sheet, DUEL IN THE SUN (3rd Movement), 8 May 1946, p. 1, DTC 17.)

A secondary melody, which Tiomkin labeled as “Desire” among his thematic sketches, is only heard in the film during the climactic duel sequence (See Dimitri Tiomkin, “Duel Transfiguration,” mm. 1–7, DTC 17.). Tiomkin introduced this “desire” theme in an early version of the “Smoke Rings” cue that would have been heard in counterpoint with the “sex theme” underneath Lewt’s forced kiss of Pearl. The cue was rewritten with the “desire” theme removed.

²⁹ “Compilation of Music Notes in Sequence Order, DUEL IN THE SUN,” 15 April 1946, DTC 17.

³⁰ A typo on p. 11 reads that one memo from Selznick was written on 6 November 1946. The typist probably meant 6 November 1945, as the document was typed in April 1946.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 10.

On this same page, Selznick also references a specific piece from the operatic repertoire when he insists that the climactic duel between Pearl and her lover Lewt requires the “most important piece of scoring in the picture—an equivalent of ‘Tristan.’”³² Although Tiomkin’s music does not sound especially Wagnerian, it does call upon substantial orchestral and vocal forces whose very noticeability—earnestly accompanying an isolated gunfight in the desolate Texan wilderness—gives the scene an emotional intensity and excess akin to opera. Sadly, Tiomkin’s “equivalent of ‘Tristan’” was aggressively edited, such that much of the music for the climactic cue—titled “Duel Transfiguration”—is not even heard in the film, presumably cut with the footage it would have accompanied.³³

Tiomkin acquiesced to most of Selznick’s musical demands for *Duel in the Sun*, auditioning themes for the producer and altering them when they proved unsatisfactory, following Selznick’s thematic outline conscientiously, and frequently rewriting entire cues. He removed an originally composed theme to insert Selznick’s proposed melody, Stephen Foster’s “Beautiful Dreamer,” for Lillian Gish’s character, a melodic selection that harkens back to musical repertoire for the silent cinema and recalls Gish’s early stardom.³⁴ One incident of rewriting made such an impression on Tiomkin that he retold it at length in his memoirs:

³² Ibid. The reference to Wagner’s *Tristan und Isolde* was originally made during a conference held between Selznick and Tiomkin on 16 October 1945. (Of all of Selznick’s music notes, this is the only one that specifically reveals its source to have been a conference meeting between producer and composer.) Although the notes are full of directives for Tiomkin made presumably by Selznick, it is possible that Tiomkin himself suggested “an equivalent of ‘Tristan’” for this major sequence. Whether he was reacting to Tiomkin’s music or merely the film’s narrative, one commentator described *Duel* as a “Wagnerian horse-opera, a *Liebestod* among the cactus” (Charles Higham quoted by Christopher Palmer, *Dimitri Tiomkin: A Portrait* (London: T.E. Books, 1984), 87).

³³ See “Duel Transfiguration—Reel 15, Part 2,” DTC 17.

³⁴ Tiomkin’s original version of the cue “Buggy Ride—Reel 3, Part 2” from *Duel in the Sun* does not include the melody “Beautiful Dreamer.” Tiomkin’s updated version of the cue, “Buggy Ride—Reel 3, Part 1,” obligingly features “Beautiful Dreamer” in measures 42–44. (The conductor’s parts to these cues and Selznick’s music notes are held in DTC 17.)

Music was a prime consideration [for *Duel*]. [Selznick] had a way of directing operations by means of office memoranda, copious and precise. Soon I got one giving an outline for the score I was to write, a sort of musical prescription. The memo listed the ingredients to be compounded, the themes, the kind of music required for various scenes.... These Mr. Selznick would want to hear before the film was scored. I wrote the music and rehearsed the orchestra, then played half a dozen themes for Selznick. The producer and his assistants sat in the last row of seats in a sound-recording studio. Things began well. [The first two themes] fared well, and so did all the others down to “orgiastic,” a swirl of soaring lyric intensity of which I was proud. When the orchestra finished, there was not a sound. The assistants waited for the boss to start clapping, but he never did. Instead he got up and walked out by himself...

Soon I was called to his office.

“Dimi, those other parts are splendid, but ‘orgiastic’ is not right.”

“What wrong is?”

“It sounds sentimental, like [the other theme,] ‘sentimental love,’ when it should be violent, uncontrolled, orgiastic.”

“Okay, I write other music.”

It was disconcerting. I had the orchestra ready to score the picture, but had to call everything off while I wrote another version of “orgiastic.” This time I gave it a stronger rhythmic effect; but when I had the orchestra play it for him, he simply dismissed his assistants and called me to speak to him alone.

“No, Dimi, it still is not right. It hasn’t the unbridled, throbbing urge.”

So I had to write it again, this time giving it plenty of throb, with violent palpitations in the orchestra. If this wasn’t it, I was going to shoot somebody.

It wasn’t. When the orchestra had played through the feverish measures, I saw Selznick leave the auditorium alone.

I was ready for murder. When the summons came, I went to his office. If he said once more that “orgiastic” wasn’t satisfactory, I might kill him.

“What is wrong now?” I restrained myself with difficulty.

“Dimi, that is not the way I make love.”

With that, my Russian inflections thickened in a shout of rage:

“But is the way I make love.”

He burst out laughing. That was the end of it. He agreed I should make musical love in my own way...and “orgiastic” went into the picture the way I’d written it the third time.³⁵

In his assessment of Tiomkin’s score, Christopher Palmer correctly intuits the producer’s involvement in this particular instance: “it is easy to sense Selznick’s hand at work in the interminable repetitions of Stephen Foster’s ‘Beautiful Dreamer’...” Indeed, the “Beautiful Dreamer” incident was but one of many concessions Tiomkin made to Selznick. See Christopher Palmer, *Dimitri Tiomkin: A Portrait* (London: T.E. Books, 1984), 85.

³⁵ Dimitri Tiomkin and Prosper Buranelli, *Please Don’t Hate Me* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1959), 220–222.

While Tiomkin's story has apocryphal elements,³⁶ its general lesson does not exaggerate what Selznick's notes and Tiomkin's many rewritten cues reveal—that Tiomkin's job for *Duel* was all the more taxing on account of Selznick's involvement. *Duel* clearly required extreme patience and flexibility from the composer.³⁷ Under such circumstances, Bernard Herrmann's fierce individualism would not have been appreciated. If Herrmann had resisted either Selznick's interventions or the mention of Debussy, Selznick might have returned to Tiomkin, knowing the composer would be accommodating and effective, if not necessarily cheap.

There were other reasons for hiring Tiomkin as well. He was an experienced arranger and adapter of preexistent pieces of music. For his first full film score, *Resurrection* (1931), Tiomkin had produced a pastiche score that he later described as “a

³⁶ As previously discussed, there is a “sex” theme but no mention of an “orgiastic” theme in the score or notes. It is also unlikely that Tiomkin would have had an entire orchestra audition themes for Selznick. Tiomkin may have conflated multiple incidents. A folder of Tiomkin's thematic sketches contains unused themes, including some love themes that Selznick (or Tiomkin) rejected. There is no indication that these were arranged for orchestra. Tiomkin may also have been recalling the cue titled “Rainy Day Rape & Surrender,” which was to have accompanied Lewt's rape of Pearl. There are two, not three, surviving versions, and they are of different lengths: the first version is twenty-nine measures; the second, thirteen. Both feature the “sex” theme and the differences in setting resemble Tiomkin's description of the changes he made in the so-called “orgiastic” theme. In the first version of the cue, hushed fragments of the sex theme play over tremolo chords. Over the duration of the cue, the dynamics gradually increase for a loud (*fff*) finish. The second version begins *fff* and *molto agitato appassionato*, with garish portamenti and flutter-tongued notes in the first trombone and saxophone. In the film itself, neither version is heard. Lewt's gruesome rape of Pearl unfolds without music.

³⁷ In certain respects, Tiomkin's collaboration with Selznick on *Duel* paralleled his earlier work on the music for Frank Capra's *Lost Horizon* (1937). In his study of this score's composition, William Rosar shows that Capra encouraged Tiomkin to begin scoring the film at a very early stage of the production process. (Capra even had Tiomkin on the shooting set!) Consequently, Tiomkin composed an extremely lengthy score for the initial, *five-hour* cut of the film. As Rosar explains: “at least half of this music was not orchestrated and never reached the scoring stage, since the film subsequently underwent drastic cutting and changes. As cuts were made, Tiomkin was furnished with new timing breakdowns so that he could cut and adjust his music to correspond with the new running times” (William Rosar, “*Lost Horizon: An Account of the Composition of the Score*,” *Elmer Bernstein's Film Music Notebook: A Complete Collection of the Quarterly Journal, 1974–1978* (Sherman Oaks, CA: The Film Music Society, 2004), 555–556).

concoction of some Russian tunes in minor keys.”³⁸ In the following years Tiomkin worked frequently for director Frank Capra, often accompanying scenes and montages with arrangements of well-known American melodies fashioned at the director’s request.³⁹ Tiomkin had also prepared pastiche scores based on patriotic and classical works for Capra’s *Why We Fight* documentaries for the War Department during World War II.⁴⁰ Selznick later praised these efforts, remarking to James Stewart that “whenever Tiomkin understands that there is no original music to be done and that it is a track job,⁴¹ he is absolutely brilliant...as witness his work for Capra in the Army when there was no money to spend.”⁴² Tiomkin had also adapted pieces by Johann Strauss Jr. for *The Great Waltz* (1938) and his score for *Shadow of a Doubt* (1943), a film directed by Hitchcock

³⁸ As the tone of the quotation indicates, Tiomkin was not particularly proud of the work and was even more disappointed by the manner in which it was dubbed into the film: “My score was massacred....” Tiomkin and Buranelli, 158.

³⁹ “[Frank Capra] was intensely American, as so many immigrants are....Among his motion pictures, the exotic *Lost Horizon* was an exception; nearly all the others were based on American themes...He showed me a big book called *What America Sings*. I found in it tunes by Mendelssohn, Gounod, and Haydn, and also New England fiddle tunes, Negro spirituals, and ballads of Revolutionary War days. I played them and studied their characteristics. I also found a gem, a collection made by Carl Sandburg, of lyrics and music from obscure places, almost forgotten songs of the Mississippi River, the cotton fields of the days of slavery, the woods of the lumberjacks, sailor chanties, barn dances. It was another stage of my musical education, and I could thank Frank Capra for it. It was a long way from the St. Petersburg Conservatory, and the trail had led through various styles until now I was writing music in the traditional American vein.” Tiomkin and Buranelli, 192.

⁴⁰ In his study of these scores, Warren Sherk notes that the World War II documentaries served as valuable preparation for Tiomkin’s arranging of Debussy’s music in *Portrait of Jennie*. See Warren Sherk, “Dimitri Tiomkin and the Army Orientation and Information Films (1942–1945),” *The Cue Sheet* 20, no. 4 (October 2005), 19.

⁴¹ By “track job,” Selznick implies that Tiomkin only acted as a music editor, selecting, cutting, and pasting existing tracks of music together for the score. While Tiomkin did perform this task for some propaganda films, including *Our Russian Front* (1942), the war films made under Capra’s leadership frequently featured new recordings of arrangements written and conducted by Tiomkin. See Sherk, 5–12.

⁴² DOS to James Stewart, 31 October 1946, HRC 597:7.

and admired by Selznick,⁴³ used Franz Lehar's *Merry Widow Waltz* as a motto theme which Tiomkin transformed, fragmented, and distorted to great effect.⁴⁴

For Tiomkin's part, the composer remained eager to work with Selznick. In October of 1947 he wrote to Selznick expressing his desire to write music for *Portrait*: "The story is familiar to me and I know that I could do a fast and swell job for you.... Needless to say that I would give all my heart to my work for you."⁴⁵ Although the note did not pique Selznick's interest at the time, Tiomkin's offer would appear more attractive when the need to fill Herrmann's position arose. That Tiomkin was not under contract to any studio provided additional incentive. Selznick described working with Warner Bros.'s music department as a "racket,"⁴⁶ and he resented composers who worked on non-Selznick films while on the Selznick studio payroll.⁴⁷ In other facets of film production, Selznick preferred individuals not tied to rival studios and Tiomkin's status as a freelancer certainly applied here.⁴⁸ In the end, familiarity with Tiomkin seems to have won the composer the job. As sound engineer James Stewart later recalled:

Suddenly [Selznick] says, "Jimmie, I can't understand why you don't consider Tiomkin?" I said, "Don't you remember how much trouble we had with him?" "Yes," he said, "Jimmie, but you see we know what kind of trouble we're going

⁴³ Leonard Leff, *Hitchcock and Selznick: The Rich and Strange Collaboration of Alfred Hitchcock and David O. Selznick in Hollywood* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987) 109.

⁴⁴ William Rosar suggests that Tiomkin's extensive experience with modern French music as a concert pianist may have also contributed to Selznick's decision to hire Tiomkin. See DeMary (quoting a personal communication with Rosar), 173.

⁴⁵ Tiomkin to DOS, 8 October 1947, HRC 569: 11.

⁴⁶ DOS to O'Shea, 9 July 1947, HRC 5667:14.

⁴⁷ "[Alfred] Newman said—facetiously to be sure, but nevertheless importantly—that after all he was working for Goldwyn first and for us second; and calling Newman in on additional things for the *Follies*, for instance, can very easily cost us a lot of money in a delay that will put [our *Prisoner of Zenda*] behind *Lost Horizon*." DOS to Henry Ginsberg 29 July 1937, HRC 212:14.

⁴⁸ In the case of *Gone with the Wind*, Alan Vertrees has noted that screenwriters Ben Hecht and Sidney Howard "were appealing to the producer for not being tied contractually to another studio...." Alan David Vertrees, *Selznick's Vision: Gone with the Wind and Hollywood Filmmaking* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997), 26.

to have with Tiomkin. We don't know what kind of trouble we're going to have with someone else." So we picked Tiomkin's kind of trouble.⁴⁹

Tiomkin was not Selznick's first choice, but under the circumstances the producer faced, the composer's willingness and availability made him well suited for the job.

Classical Music in Studio-Era Hollywood Films

While Dimitri Tiomkin's presence seems more logical when viewed in light of the composer's flexible (albeit expensive) scoring methods, the possibility that Selznick pushed for a Debussy-based score merely because Francis Brennan suggested it seems unlikely. Rather, Brennan's suggestion appealed to Selznick for a very specific reason. Selznick had previously advocated the use of preexistent music in film scores, a technique that stretched back to the silent era, but was increasingly receiving attention in 1940s films.

More than ten years before, Selznick had declared that he preferred film scores based on preexistent music:

I feel too that our pictures have been used as an exploitation ground for the second-rate talents of the composers who have been out here, and who have seen fit to substitute their own compositions for the practically untouched library of the world's music—which in my opinion is a gold mine for emotional effect that requires intelligent and educated selection and arrangement for our purposes by a man who has learned which music plays with most effect upon the emotions of the public. I am not certain that I would argue so much about the use of the world's classical and even non-classical music if I had as an alternate really fine original composition. But too much of what has been composed for my pictures, and everybody else's pictures, has been second-rate—and I say this even though I am grateful for what I regard as the excellent composition in some of my pictures, notably Stothart's work in *Viva Villa!* and Steiner's work in *The Garden of Allah*. ... On occasion, notably in the score of *Anna Karenina*, I was able to force standard music. In the case of *Karenina*, Tchaikovsky selections—and with good effect.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ James G. Stewart in an interview with Craig Reardon, 3 February 1977, reprinted in DeMary, 173–174.

After Selznick left M-G-M and began working with other composers, he continued to encourage his composers to use familiar, often nostalgic, melodies as themes for characters or places. His request that *Beautiful Dreamer* be used in the *Duel* score has already been mentioned in this chapter; he also suggested that Max Steiner use “Auld Lang Syne” for parting scenes in both *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (1936) and *A Star is Born* (1937), as well as the use of “Long, Long Ago” in Franz Waxman’s score for *The Young in Heart* (1938).⁵¹ Similarly, Selznick’s *Intermezzo* (1939) was a film about classical musicians that featured classical compositions in the diegetic and nondiegetic score, while Steiner’s score for *Gone with the Wind* featured period compositions extensively—again, at Selznick’s request.

While Selznick’s interest in preexistent music for film scores stretched back to at least the mid-1930s, interest in classical music and musicians became a more popular subject in Hollywood at large during the 1940s. Some films, such as *The Constant Nymph* (1943), *Between Two Worlds* (1944), *Hangover Square* (1945), and *Escape Me Never* (1947) featured fictional performers and composers playing original pieces composed specially for the film. Films such as *Deception* (1946), *Humoresque* (1946), and *Unfaithfully Yours* (1948), which depicted fictional virtuosi navigating turbulent careers and love affairs, mixed familiar showpieces with original concertos and fantasias

⁵⁰ DOS to Katherine Brown, 30 August 1937, reprinted in *Memo from David O. Selznick*, ed. Rudy Behlmer (New York: Viking Press, 1972), 122–123.

⁵¹ See David O. Selznick, “LITTLE LORD FAUNTLEROY Music Notes,” 23 January 1936, HRC 463:6; Memo from Barbara Keon to Max Steiner, “A STAR IS BORN Music Notes,” 31 March 1937, HRC 513:7; Memo from Barbara Keon to Franz Waxman, “The Young in Heart,” 26 September 1938, HRC 3670:11.

“Long, Long Ago” and “Auld Lang Syne,” are even listed in Erno Rapée, *Encyclopedia of Music for Pictures* (Originally New York: Belwin, Inc. 1925. Reprinted in New York: Arno Press & The New York Times, 1970), 87, 88, 330.

composed by film composers. (Selznick's *Intermezzo*, a remake of a 1936 Swedish film, represents an early example of this trend.) While these films gave classical music a prominent role in their respective narratives, the musical scores were not dominated by the works of a single classical composer. A cycle of composer biopics bearing blatantly imitative titles, however, strove for greater homogeneity by primarily relying upon works and arrangements of the featured composer. Despite the uneven quality of *Song to Remember* (1944, Chopin), *Song of Love* (1947, Robert and Clara Schumann), *Song of Scheherazade* (1947, Rimsky-Korsakov), and *Song of My Heart* (1948, Tchaikovsky), the use of classical music in these films received considerable attention and praise in the press and in the recently founded journal, *Film Music Notes* (First published in October 1941).⁵² While *Portrait* was not a biopic of a classical composer, it did follow the generic format of depicting an artist's struggle and triumph over adversity through his art. Indeed, an extended foreword for *Portrait* that was ultimately cut was designed to correlate Adams's artistic vision with that of the composer featured on the soundtrack: "For the

⁵² In the November 1946 issue, the journal initiated a column by Stanlie McConnell titled "Teaching Possibilities in Current Films," which described the educational potential of films featuring classical music or the lives of composers and musicians. In the same issue, Grace W. Mabee of the National Film Music Council stated: Many pictures being released now are of great value in creating an appreciation by the masses, for classical music...and the coming releases, *Humoresque* and *Magic Bow*, along with a number of others which will be brought to the attention of our readers and the consideration of schools, clubs and other organizations (Grace W. Mabee, "Message from the National Film Music Council," *Film Music Notes* 6, no. 2 (November 1946), 2). Writing in the serious-minded *Hollywood Quarterly*, Lawrence Morton devoted two columns of his "Film Music of the Quarter" to critically appraise *Song to Remember* and *Song of Love*, remarking in particular that Miklós Rózsa's arrangements of Chopin for the former film evinced "impeccably good taste" (Lawrence Morton, "Chopin's New Audience," *Hollywood Quarterly* 1, no. 1 (October 1945), 33).

Another related film, *Song of Russia* (1944) is not a composer biopic like the other "Song" films, but follows an American conductor's adventures in Russia as he falls in love with a Russian pianist and resists the oppression of the Nazis. A review of the music from *Film Music Notes* observes that Herbert Stothart's score is "woven mostly of Tchaikowsky themes," but also features other music by "modern Russian composers." See "Reviews of Current Feature-Length Pictures," *Film Music Notes* 3, no. 4 (January 1944), n.p.

Heather Laing also notes that contemporaneous British films featuring classical music were similarly valued for "developing the musical taste and knowledge of the cinema audience" (Heather Laing, *The Gendered Score: Music in 1940s Melodrama and the Woman's Film* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2007), 68, footnote 1).

music, it has seemed appropriate to use the themes of another genius who found in the atmosphere around him strange visions and inspiration—Claude Debussy; and it is this music that you are now hearing.”⁵³

The composer-based biopics may have provided some ideas for Selznick, but European filmmakers were also crafting single-classical-composer scores. In particular, Veit Harlan’s *Das Unsterbliche Herz* (1939) featured arrangements of the works of J.S. Bach and the score for David Lean’s *Brief Encounter* (1946) was made up entirely of excerpts from Rachmaninoff’s *Piano Concerto No. 2*.⁵⁴ William Rosar suggests that this film made a particularly strong impact on Selznick, who wrote “the British pictures are getting a great jump with music lovers as a consequence of using wonderful classical music for their scores.... The music is better...and the quality is better. ...I am not sure we shouldn’t make this [same] attempt even on PORTRAIT OF JENNIE.”⁵⁵ Indeed, *Brief Encounter* and *Portrait* would share an important musico-cinematic links: both films use music to provoke and express reminiscences on the part of protagonists.⁵⁶

Yet even with *Brief Encounter*, the composer biopics of the 1940s, and Selznick’s predilection for preexistent music in films, there is an even earlier influence—the so-called “silent” cinema. As was argued in chapter two, the musical practices of the silent

⁵³ “JENNIE/SPOKEN FOREWORD,” 30 September 1948, HRC 3377:7.

⁵⁴ To this list, one might also add Warner Bros.’ *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (1935), an anomalous American film produced mainly by Europeans brought to the studio specifically for the film. For this film, Erich Korngold was brought from Vienna to collaborate with director Max Reinhardt and arrange a score based on the music of Felix Mendelssohn.

⁵⁵ William Rosar’s personal communication with DeMary is quoted in DeMary, 163. The memo is from DOS to James G. Stewart, 24 July 1947, pp. 1–2, HRC 567:14.

⁵⁶ Both also use music to emphasize the subjectivity of each film’s protagonist. In *Brief Encounter*, this is accomplished early in the film. As one character babbles on to the heroine, whose mind is clearly elsewhere, the ceaseless dialogue begins to diminish unnaturally and a horn solo from the concerto enters the soundtrack, joined by a voice-over monologue from the heroine. The music and voice-over align the spectator with the character’s subjective point of view and blot out the surrounding environment. In *Portrait*, Selznick would encourage the use of similar techniques in which music either unlocks past memories or else sets the protagonist’s personal experiences apart from the “real” world.

cinema influenced Selznick's own musical aesthetics, including the use of repertoire associated with this era. In *Portrait*, the connection is even stronger. In his 1936 survey of the silent era, Kurt London notes: "There were cinema conductors who avoided compilations and accompanied good films with fragments out of the works of one single composer. This happened at times with music by Debussy and Tchaikowsky."⁵⁷ While London does not refer to any specific conductors, theaters, or films, he does specify that this practice was reserved specially for "good films" and that Debussy's music was standard for these musical arrangements. Considering that Selznick had followed his father, Lewis J., into the movie business during the silent era and that vestiges of these earlier days surfaced in multiple facets of the *Portrait* production, Selznick's championing of a musical approach that would hearken back to the prestige pictures of his younger days is fitting and would even be noted by the critics, as will be discussed later.

Various writers and individuals have often sought to credit the idea of a Debussy-based film score in *Portrait* to a single individual, but placing the score in context reveals a more complicated story.⁵⁸ The facts detailed above show that the score's concept developed over an extended period of time, involved the influence of multiple individuals and films, and also followed contemporaneous musical trends in and outside Hollywood. This does not, however, discount the fact that *Portrait of Jennie*'s Debussy-based score was in certain ways unusual. While it was not, as Selznick's publicists claimed, "the first

⁵⁷ Kurt London, *Film Music: A Summary of the Characteristic Features of Its History, Aesthetics, Technique; and Possible Developments*, trans. Eric S. Bensinger (London: Faber & Faber Ltd, 1936), 60.

⁵⁸ Selznick scholar Ron Haver writes, "Margaret McDonnell, the woman who had first suggested filming the story, wrote Selznick another note in late 1947 in which she suggested that he score the film with the music of Claude Debussy" (Ron Haver, *David O. Selznick's Hollywood* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980), 383). Unfortunately, Haver does not cite the location of this letter. As this letter it is not mentioned by DeMary in his detailed account of the *Portrait* score and I did not find the note while researching at the David O. Selznick Collection, I have not discussed it at length here.

motion picture ever to use Debussy's music for a musical score and also the first motion picture ever to be scored solely from the works of a standard composer of Debussy's stature,"⁵⁹ the use of Debussy's themes was a creative and controversial decision, not a compulsory and obvious choice, as in the composer biopics. The *Portrait* score, therefore, would exemplify Selznick's own musical preferences while also reflecting and developing practices introduced during the silent era that had only occasionally resurfaced during the sound era. The achievement of *Portrait*'s music would not be that it represented a "first" in motion pictures, but rather that it marked a peak in a particular musical approach.

"Our Valedictory to Wild Extravagance": Selznick and Tiomkin's Collaboration

Tiomkin began to receive film footage of *Jennie* on 30 July 1948. Immediately he and Selznick set to work determining the placement of Debussy's themes in relation to the visuals and dialogue. Notes for the remaining reels of the picture followed during the first week of August, with composing and orchestration proceeding through the rest of the month. During this time, Selznick considered alternative routes to recording the score which could reduce the bills. Selznick had not forgotten the astronomical figures Tiomkin generated while recording the score for *Duel in the Sun*. A cost analysis sheet shows three different possibilities were considered:

⁵⁹ Publicity document quoted in Sarah Reichardt, "Commodity vs. Artwork: Timelessness and Temporality in the Music for *Portrait of Jennie*," *Conference on the Hollywood Musical and Music in Hollywood*, Boulder, Colorado, 2001, 7–8. See Appendix C for background regarding previous uses and allusions of Debussy's music in Hollywood as they pertain to Selznick's own films.

1. Record the score in Hollywood with Tiomkin conducting: \$40,066
2. Record the score in Hollywood with someone else conducting (The assumption here is that a different conductor would work faster and more efficiently than Tiomkin.): \$35,290
3. Record the score in Mexico with Tiomkin conducting: \$26,666⁶⁰

Not surprisingly, the most attractive financial option was to record the score in Mexico, where instrumentalists, singers, a stage crew, and stage rental fee could be covered much more cheaply, thereby offsetting Tiomkin's slow recording pace. The logistics of such an arrangement, however, was less promising. The idea was eventually dropped. On 26 August, Tiomkin began a week of recording in Hollywood and recorded the first thirty-two minutes of the score. By this time, disturbing memories of *Duel in the Sun* had returned full force to the producer and he complained in blistering prose to James Stewart:

Apparently our valedictory to wild extravagance has not yet been sung, judging by what is going on with the scoring of PORTRAIT OF JENNIE. It is simply incredible to me that anyone in this business could fail to realize that such expense as that of the current scoring of PORTRAIT OF JENNIE, which would have been untenable in the boom days, is simply out of the question today.⁶¹

In the page of prose that follows, Selznick returned to some of the options that had been considered earlier in the month: perhaps the rest of the score should be recorded in Mexico or New York (on the assumption that New York players could better negotiate the difficult parts); perhaps identical cues of music should be played multiple times; perhaps Tiomkin should be replaced by a "conductor who makes sense" and who can record no less than ten minute of music a day, "not five or six which Mr. Stewart apparently...would regard as a good objective for an accelerated speed of recording by

⁶⁰ PORTRAIT OF JENNIE Analysis of cost to complete music, 11 August 1948, HRC 1151:9.

⁶¹ DOS to Argyle Nelson and James Stewart, 30 August 1948 (Dictated 28 August 1948), HRC 1151:9.

Tiomkin.”⁶² Convinced that another \$250,000 music bill was on the horizon, Selznick signed off with a wincing flourish: “What has been going on for the last few days in connection with this score will go down in the history of Hollywood as the last wild fling of people who really fiddled—and how!—while Hollywood burned.”⁶³

Selznick’s fuming motivated some action, though it was too late to save or change much. A memo was sent to Tiomkin from James Stewart outlining the new policies, including maximum orchestra fees, orchestration rates, and other matters of policy.⁶⁴ In a regular studio music department, such regulations and expectations would have been the norm, but Selznick’s operation lacked the necessary departmental infrastructure. Consequently limits and rules were imposed only after problems cropped up. For the remaining sessions, then, Tiomkin was allotted no more than eighteen hours of recording time with two orchestras (nine hours each): one with 54 instruments, another with 43.⁶⁵ In addition to these strictures, Stewart explained that “a schedule will be laid out before any recording starts, showing music to be made during each session. This schedule must be maintained or the recording sessions will be halted.” This threat to stop recording sessions was later exercised when some of Tiomkin’s cues were deemed to be over-orchestrated (a tendency for which Tiomkin often received criticism).

As with *Duel in the Sun*, however, the fault did not lie entirely on Tiomkin. At heart, Selznick was unwittingly criticizing his own extravagant impulses and inability to stick to a schedule. Just gaining the permissions for Debussy’s music in *Portrait* had cost

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid. Later in September, James Stewart sent Selznick a memo listing the size of “some representative symphony orchestras.” Selznick had requested that Stewart find this information, perhaps out of suspicion that Tiomkin was employing too many musicians for his recording sessions. See memo from James Stewart to DOS, 20 September 1948, HRC 1151.9.

⁶⁴ James Stewart to Dimitri Tiomkin, 18 September 1948, HRC 3377.7.

⁶⁵ During his first week of recording, Tiomkin had predominantly recorded with an orchestra of 54–59 musicians.

Selznick \$19,400, and while Selznick berated Tiomkin for recording too slowly, he failed to deliver timed footage to Tiomkin during the month of September. As James Stewart would later note in a letter to Robert Dann, from 1 September to 18 October “there was a considerable amount of time when [Tiomkin] did not have sufficient timing [sheets] to keep him busy; in fact the major portion of the timing was to him [only] by October 6.”⁶⁶

Thus, by the end of September, it was Tiomkin—not Selznick—who had reason to complain. Impatience, anxiety, and a touch of stage drama mingle in Tiomkin’s memo of 30 September to sound engineer James Stewart and Selznick:

You promised to give to me not later than Tuesday, October 5, 1948, Reels 9, 10, Main Title, and the rest of the picture so that I can proceed to compose, orchestrate, make arrangements for the choir, and prepare film for the final recording.

... You realize the enormous job I must accomplish, and to make successfully the great score, and to meet the date, I need to have all of the picture, as you promised, not later than Tuesday, October 5.

... Originally I was promised the whole picture at the beginning of August and I delayed all jobs in town to be free for you. Now it is the first of October and still I have not received the whole picture; however, I am not complaining but I would like to repeat that to meet all your dates and to finish the picture under the budget, which you know, yourself, is very meager... and I know Mr. Selznick is expecting a great job... I need all film in my hands for two weeks exclusively, in order to accomplish this tremendous task.⁶⁷

Tiomkin received the necessary footage on 6 October (one day late) and resumed intensive composition.

Tiomkin was assisted in his work by a team of orchestrators: George Parrish, David Tamkin, Manuel Emanuel, Harold Byrns, Paul Marquardt, Dubin, and Carter.⁶⁸

For *Duel*, Tiomkin had had an additional three orchestrators assisting him, but these

⁶⁶ James Stewart to Robert Dann, 27 December 1948, HRC 1151:9.

⁶⁷ Dimitri Tiomkin to James Stewart (CCed to DOS), 30 September 1948, HRC 3377.7.

⁶⁸ Carter only orchestrated a single cue: a jazz version of “Flaxen Hair” that was never used in the film.

numbers are still quite high when compared to *Spellbound* (one orchestrator) or *Paradine Case* (two orchestrators). For *Portrait*, a single orchestrator worked on each cue, and their creative responsibilities varied depending on the level of detail in Tiomkin's original sketch.⁶⁹ Without question, Tiomkin's attention to detail in each of his cues for *Portrait* varied more widely than any of the examined sketches by Waxman, Rózsa, or Steiner. Some of Tiomkin's sketches only include a bare melodic sketch, as in mm. 40–45 of the cue "First Meeting."⁷⁰ In this case, the orchestrator (David Tamkin) had to add supporting tremolo chords in the woodwinds and cellos to fill out the texture. Sometimes, even the sketches themselves include musical notation not in Tiomkin's hand, such as "Adams Visits the Art Gallery." The thematic foundation of the cue—an excerpt from Debussy's *Nuages* is in another hand,⁷¹ while an original countermelody labeled "City Theme" is notated by Tiomkin. (Selznick requested a "city theme" in his notes and Tiomkin inserted it into the *Nuages* texture; the countermelody was later cut during recording and is not heard in the film.) While such cases in which multiple hands jointly contribute to the musical notation on a single page are relatively rare and most probably reflect an orchestrator's realization of a verbal direction from Tiomkin, they reflect the close creative relationship Tiomkin had with his orchestrators and the degree to which he relied upon their assistance.⁷²

⁶⁹ The list detailing which orchestrator worked on each cue is outlined on an untitled, undated, three page document that merely is headed by the following: "Number [of cue] Title [of cue] Orchestrator, No. Pages," DTC 49.

⁷⁰ Dimitri Tiomkin, "M:14, First Meeting," pencil sketch, DTC 49.

⁷¹ As Parrish orchestrated the cue, he presumably contributed to the sketch.

⁷² William Rosar conducted multiple interviews with orchestrators who had worked Tiomkin to learn more about this largely overlooked collaborative process. While Rosar's unpublished study, "Dimitri Tiomkin and the Orchestrator: A Synergy of Creativity and Craft," only recounts—out of necessity—the point of view of the orchestrators and not Tiomkin himself, it is nonetheless revealing. Rosar notes, for example, that "a number of orchestrators attested to the very dense or complex texture of some of Tiomkin's music, and recalled that on occasion they found it necessary to take certain steps in order to render the music

Other cues, such as the one titled “Inspiration—The Sketch,” are very detailed.⁷³ Even a brief glance reveals that the sketch is chock full with information addressing the orchestration, performance style, and coordination of music and visuals. The sketch itself is made on Tiomkin’s personal staff paper and features four staves per system (the typical number used in *Portrait*, though Tiomkin did not always fill all the staves). Markings are made in black, red, and blue pencil. Almost all the musical notation is recorded in black pencil, as are many of the performing marks (including dynamics and directives like “delicatissimo,” m. 11), instrumentation instructions, and timing marks, which are written above the staves to ensure proper synchronization. There are also some visual cues, such as the word “dissolve” written across the bar line of mm. 3–4, which indicates a visual transition that matches a key change to G-flat major. In m. 9, “he is trying to sketch,” indicates a specific action that coincides with a musical event—the vertical expansion of the “Flaxen Hair” melody from the violin to the viola. There is also additional commentary that offers musical suggestions or models, such as “Boris Godunoff,” which is written above a passage of descending parallel triads that mimic Modest Mussorgsky’s instrumental voicing in a brief passage from the Coronation scene.⁷⁴ While the musical characteristics of this particular cue will be analyzed later, the appearance of the sketch

playable by an orchestra” (Rosar, 2). In addition, multiple orchestrators explained that Tiomkin conveyed many of his ideas regarding orchestration verbally while playing through the music at the piano. Also, he often encouraged the orchestrators to err on the side of dense rather than thin orchestration. Tiomkin would then whittle away and nuance the orchestration to his liking *during* the recording session. This was obviously an expensive practice and James G. Stewart attempted to minimize such experimentation on *Portrait*.

⁷³ Dimitri Tiomkin, “The Sketch,” DTC 49.

⁷⁴ Tiomkin’s reference to another work (not by Debussy) is actually quite rare. The passage from Modest Musorgsky’s *Boris Godunov* to which Tiomkin refers is rehearsal #6 (reprised at rehearsal # 19) of the second scene in the original 1874 version, reprinted in Paris by W. Bessel & Cie, 1954. Tiomkin admired this work and also referenced it in his sketch for “Duel Transfiguration,” m. 95, from *Duel in the Sun*. He also wrote a theme for Alfred Hitchcock’s *Dial “M” for Murder* (1954) modeled after another passage from Musorgsky’s Coronation scene (rehearsal #1, scene 2).

As Tiomkin hurried to finish the score, Selznick began to have doubts about Jennie's song, which Tiomkin had rewritten to loosely follow a theme from Debussy's *Sirènes*.⁷⁵ "I have been brooding," wrote Selznick to James G. Stewart,

about the changes we made, both in music and lyrics, of Jennie's little song.... I am afraid that we have destroyed something very, very valuable. ... There is no reason why we cannot use this piece by Herrmann for the song and even for the repetition on the "Dark Waters" theme, tied in with Debussy.... If there was a will on Tiomkin's part, a way could easily be found to let it be a kind of prelude to the siren's theme, using reprises of the Herrmann melody... and weaving it into other portions, including but not limited to the final reels.⁷⁶

If Selznick's memo anticipated resistance from Tiomkin, he had good reason to suspect difficulties. Tiomkin, swamped with work on the film and resistant to incorporating yet another composer's (and competitor's!) music into the score, ignored the instructions, even though he had contractually agreed to arrange Herrmann's song. Stewart then approached Anthony Collins, Herrmann's original orchestrator for *Portrait*, but decided "he was not the man to do it," going instead to Maurice de Packh, who was paid \$500 to arrange and conduct a recording of the short passages in mid-December, just under two weeks before the film's premiere on Christmas Eve.⁷⁷ Chagrined by the insertions, Tiomkin tried to convince Selznick that the Herrmann threatened the score's integrity: "It seems that Jenny (sic) song and repeaters did not click at preview.... This song is of a typical Hebrew oriental nature⁷⁸ which is definitely conflicting with the unique immortal

⁷⁵ The song paraphrases melodic fragments from measures 1–2, 15, and 26.

⁷⁶ DOS to James G. Stewart, 20 October 1948, HRC 3377:7.

⁷⁷ James G. Stewart to DOS, 11 December 1948, HRC 1151:9.

⁷⁸ The seemingly anti-Semitic reference here is baffling. Tiomkin may have been deliberately echoing the producer's own language, in an effort to lodge an effective complaint. During the scoring of *Duel in the Sun*, Selznick had explained to Tiomkin: "I would like to remind you that I thought the Pearl theme superb except for the first two or three bars, which seemed to me to be slightly Hebraic in nature" (DOS to Dimitri Tiomkin, 6 November 1945, quoted in Penn, 165.). The vagaries of this odd criticism, which music editor Audray Granville solved by assuring Selznick that "Hebraic, Irish, Russian, Spanish, and Indian music have similar construction," may have remained with Tiomkin (Audray Granville to DOS, 7 November 1945, HRC 3671:20).

style of Debussy.”⁷⁹ Nevertheless, the insertions of Herrmann’s song for Jennie remained.

In the meantime, Tiomkin had finished his work on the score, resuming recording on 29 October, nearly two months after the first recording sessions. On 1 November, the recording session was cancelled; Stewart blamed the halt on Tiomkin’s incorrigible extravagance: “despite warning, several of the cues... were much too heavily orchestrated [and] Sunday and Monday were spent in simplifying the orchestration and eliminating bars in order to make the material playable.”⁸⁰ Eager not to prompt another outburst from Selznick, Tiomkin recovered quickly and finished recording the score on 4 November. Though he visited Stewart and Aubrey Lind several times to observe the cutting of the music tracks, Tiomkin’s work for *Portrait* was essentially complete.⁸¹

(Re)Constructing the Musical Score

There are a number of different sets of scoring notes pertaining to *Portrait*, and a brief outline of their chronology and contents will show how an accumulation of ideas and suggestions, beginning with Bernard Herrmann and continuing through occasional meetings with Selznick and Tiomkin, produced a set of detailed spotting notes that both guided and limited Tiomkin’s compositional choices. Altogether, there are eight sets of notes pertaining to the film’s score. The first four, which comprise two copies authored by Bernard Herrmann and two versions by Selznick, overlap considerably and address only the first third of the film. The four later versions of music notes cover—with

⁷⁹ Tiomkin to DOS, 14 December 1948, HRC 569:11.

⁸⁰ James G. Stewart to Robert Dann, 27 December 1948, HRC 1151:9.

⁸¹ *Ibid.* Stewart makes no indication that Tiomkin served in an advisory capacity during the music editing, process. As Stewart reported in the same memo: “He has at all times...been free to listen to cutting of tracks and, on two or three occasions, has availed himself of this opportunity.”

relatively little overlap—the latter two thirds of the film. The notes span the dates 21 July 1948, which predates Herrmann’s departure, to 2 October 1948, which follows after Tiomkin had scored the majority of the picture and even spent a week recording. Consequently, Tiomkin did not have all of the notes in hand when he began scoring the film, but rather continued to receive notes from Selznick as he worked on the score in roughly chronological order.

As with other Selznick productions, the music notes are independent documents that—unlike memos regarding musical matters—are not signed or addressed to specific individuals. The authors and intended recipients, however, may be discerned from the context as well as other supporting documents. Notes dated 27 July and later were eventually copied with little or no alteration into music timing cue sheets.⁸² On the cue sheets, most of the notes were labeled “Mr. Selznick’s note.” The notes’ dates, length, authors, and contents are summarized in the following table (see table 6.1):

⁸² Music timing cue sheets look something like movie scripts in that they contain all the dialogue from the film as well as visual description of onscreen action. Their function, however, is quite different. Instead of prescriptive guides for the cast and director, they are *descriptive* accounts of the film as it appears and is heard onscreen. Every action and line of dialogue is meticulously timed and recorded in the margins, so as to aid the composer who may refer to them while working. Frank Skinner describes how such documents are made: “The music cutter will describe the action and dialogue to a stenographer, who in turn makes up the typewritten notes. The cutter starts to time at zero, and when important action or dialogue happens, he can stop the machine, get the reading on the footage counter, and tell at what split second it happens. When he has completed the timing sheets, it reads like a script, only the timing readings are indicated. It is possible at this stage to write the score without looking at the picture again” (Frank Skinner, *Underscore* (New York: Criterion Music Company, 1950), 2).

Table 6.1 Catalogue of scoring notes for *Portrait of Jennie*

Date	Length	Contents
21 July 1948	1 page	Spotting notes for first four reels; no musical description or mention of Debussy; pencil annotations by DOS; notes by Bernard Herrmann.
22 July 1948	1 page	Same content and page formatting as 21 July notes; DOS's pencil annotations have been typed into notes and labeled "DOS note 7/21."
27 July 1948 ⁸³	3 pages	Spotting notes for first three reels; spotting roughly correlates with music notes by Herrmann; musical description of cues but no mention of specific Debussy pieces; different page formatting from previous notes; by DOS. ⁸⁴
31 July 1948	3 pages	Spotting notes for first four reels; musical description very similar to 27 July notes, but references specific Debussy works; also contains " <u>KEY</u> to themes (Debussy selections)"; by DOS.
Undated, collated from suggestions made around 5 August 1948?	2 pages	First page contains spotting notes for reel 5, appears to predate notes from 5 August; Second page headed "General Notes... Rough notes for last part of picture"; contains spotting notes for reel 8 through to the end (reel 10) with Debussy selections and minimal musical description; page format same as notes from 27 July and 31 July; by DOS.
5 August 1948	5 pages	Spotting notes from end of reel 4 through reel 7; also contains additional details for earlier "Tea Sequence"; heavily detailed musical description of cues including Debussy selections; new page format; by DOS.
16 September 1948	3 pages	Response notes to music composed for reel 3 through reel 6; prescriptive notes including musical description and Debussy selections for reel 8; same page format as 5 August notes; by DOS.
2 October 1948	3 pages	Spotting notes for reels 9 and 10; musical description including Debussy selections; same page format as 5 August notes; by DOS.

⁸³ This particular set of notes is *only* available at the Dimitri Tiomkin Collection, DTC 49. The rest of the notes are held at the David O. Selznick Collection.

⁸⁴ These notes and all the following sets of notes are credited to DOS because in the music cue timing sheets in which these notes are duplicated, they are almost always labeled as "Mr. Selznick's note." It is highly likely, however, that Selznick was counseled on the selection of Debussy works for at least some of the notes by Dimitri Tiomkin.

The first set of notes is dated 21 July 1948 and was probably drafted by Bernard Herrmann before he left the production. The notes, which are reproduced in full in DeMary's article on Herrmann and *Portrait*, contain a spotting outline for the first four reels of the film and little else.⁸⁵ There is no description of musical qualities, and the only specific musical detail is printed at the top of the page: "Get clearance on WEDDING OF THE WINDS."⁸⁶ As DeMary hypothesizes, Herrmann planned to incorporate the piece into his score, perhaps for the skating sequence or another scene in Central Park.⁸⁷ While the notes are bare in form, they do provide a foundation upon which later drafts of music notes appear to have been based. In addition, the notes bear pencil annotations by Selznick, which raise some issues of musical affect and also reveal Selznick's desire for music to add motion and interest to scenes he feared were too static. When Herrmann suggested starting a musical cue just *after* the tea sequence, Selznick wrote in response: "Tea sequence desperately needs music." When Herrmann proposed to end the score on the policeman's dialogue and not score the following scenes, Selznick responded: "Afraid [the next scene] will be dead and that it will lose form of narration." Further down, Selznick reiterated, "I feel we must with music overcome present lack of dramatization of photo [of Jennie] and what follows in Clara sequence." Selznick not only wanted music to "fix" or cover the film's shortcomings (a common expectation among directors and producers), but he also simply wanted *more* music in the film than Herrmann did. For Selznick's tastes, Herrmann's proposed score was too sparse.

⁸⁵ "PORTRAIT OF JENNIE, Music," 21 July 1948, HRC 1151:9. Photo reproduction in DeMary, 169.

⁸⁶ Ibid. "Wedding of the Winds" is a concert waltz by John T. Hall published by Shapiro, Remick, and Co. in 1904.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 168. "Wedding of the Winds" was almost certainly intended for the hot chocolate sequence—Selznick's music notes from 27 July 1948 propose that the conversation over hot chocolate should "either continue with solid piece of happy youth theme, or realistic waltz band music" ("JENNIE"—MUSIC NOTES," 27 July 1948, DTC 49, 2).

The notes from 27 July 1948 resemble a more typical musical outline as constructed by Selznick. The notes cover roughly the same portion of the film, from the beginning through most of the fourth reel. The differences in the spotting and the level of musical detail are obvious from the outset. For the first scene in the park, Herrmann had suggested the following:

Start music on second narration after art gallery....
Continue to Jennie's line, "I'm Jennie." No music until she says, "I just know."
Then music continues and segues into song.

Make musical accompaniment for Jennie's song. DOS note 7/21—Only if distant and earthly [unearthly?] and can take out.

Start music again when Jennie finishes song and go to end of the sequence in the park. Take out Jennie humming...DOS note 7/21—ok if other music to fill in.⁸⁸

For the same sequence, Selznick proposed the following in the 27 July notes:

<p>NARRATION #2 LS Eben walking, park 2 City shots Eben finds parcel</p>	<p>SCORE: NARRATION PRELUDE—5 ft. in clear CITY THEME. <u>Summer music</u>—after fading out muted city sounds (Prelude to "Jennie youth springtime them,") a few bars in clear before "They seemed to come...meadow long ago." Incorporate girlish laughter musically. Fade in muted city sounds after "The park was deserted."</p>
<p>1st MEETING IN PARK</p>	<p>Blend summer music into: JENNIE YOUTH SPRINGTIME theme.</p> <p>DARKWATER THEME intro. Blend back to gay music, starting with "There should be a lighthouse.." (Not heavy, but ghostlike on "I don't know.")</p> <p>After rise from bench, trail into small thin prelude to Jennie's song, as though tune in her head.</p> <p>Underscore Jennie's song—very delicately, an occasional chord as punctuation, not an accompaniment. Weird quality. (Try 3 different ways.)</p> <p>Momentary stop in score after song. Then sneak into reprise, at first gay, then sad, nostalgic, trailing out unresolved musically, at end of 1st chorus (if not Debussy). JENNIE'S SONG will be used later as pattern when she disappears.⁸⁹</p>

⁸⁸ "PORTRAIT OF JENNIE, Music Notes," 22 July 1948, HRC 1151:9.

⁸⁹ "'JENNIE'—MUSIC NOTES," 27 July 1948, DTC 49.

In this brief comparison one can see how Herrmann's musical ideas differed from, yet influenced, Selznick's. Having spent a significant portion of his career scoring radio dramas for Orson Welles and the Mercury Theatre, Herrmann was accustomed to providing brief cues to ease scene transitions, then bring in music to underscore specific and limited passages: either a scene, or parts of a scene.⁹⁰ These tactics are evident in this brief excerpt, as Herrmann planned to score the beginning of the scene (to provide continuity through the voiceover narration and transition to the park), then stop when Jennie and Adams begin conversing. The music would then reenter under—and emphasize—Jennie's mysterious assertion, "I just know," and continue as a musical preparation for her song.⁹¹ More background scoring would follow the song until the end of the scene, thereby necessitating the removal of Jennie's humming, an effect that Herrmann deemed inadequate for the scene's conclusion. Herrmann's notes make no reference to the quality of the music; the only adjectives in this passage—"distant and earthly" are inserted by Selznick. This is not terribly surprising; musical description from Herrmann at this point could only limit his options. Less information would give him the freedom to experiment and score the scene as he saw fit, without having to fulfill certain promises or expectations.

As the producer and not the composer, Selznick wrote notes with a more prescriptive attitude. (By now the notes were for Tiomkin; Herrmann had left the production.) Within a short excerpt, Selznick specifies the use of five associative themes:

⁹⁰ For more on the influence of radio work on Herrmann's film scores, see Steven C. Smith, *A Heart at Fire's Center: The Life and Music of Bernard Herrmann* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 76–78; Robert L. Carringer, *The Making of Citizen Kane*, rev. ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 106–109.

⁹¹ Jennie actually says "I just know" twice in the scene—once just before looking at Adams's pictures and once after. While it is impossible to know which one Herrmann meant here, both are imbued with degrees of mysterious irrationality.

a “narration prelude,” a city theme, a “Jennie youth springtime” theme, a “darkwater” theme, and also the use of Jennie’s song as a theme for “when she disappears.” Selznick also provides succinct details describing the musical affect he wanted, such as “summer music” in a scene set in winter. In another passage, he asks that the music begin “gay, then sad, nostalgic, trailing out unresolved musically.” Most intriguingly, Selznick requests that a particular passage of the underscore sound “as though tune in [Jennie’s] head,” thereby using the orchestral score to underline one character’s subjectivity. Selznick also asks that music continue throughout the scene with only a “momentary stop” after the song. While all of these directions differ from Herrmann’s first draft of notes, the first composer’s ideas remain evident in parts. Selznick asks—per Herrmann’s suggestion—that Jennie’s song have underscore, though “very delicately, an occasional chord as punctuation.” He also follows Herrmann’s plan to replace Jennie’s humming with scoring at the end of the scene.

The rest of the notes continue in a similar fashion, dictating the recurrence of the same five associative themes while offering additional instructions, including more requests that the music express a character’s subjectivity: “score as if tune in [Adams’s] head” and “JENNIE’S SONG in Eben’s thoughts to bring in Jennie musically.”⁹² While Selznick preserved Herrmann’s idea that both scenes with diegetic musical performance—Jennie’s song in the park and Adams’s performance of Jennie’s song on concertina—be surrounded by nondiegetic scoring, Herrmann and Selznick diverged on the musical scoring for Moore’s café, an Irish pub where Adams shares lunch with his friend Gus and realizes the newspaper wrapped around Jennie’s scarf is dated 1910. Herrmann felt that this surprising revelation should be underscored with a brief cue that

⁹² Ibid., 2.

would end less than a minute later when the pub's proprietor joined the conversation, effectively dispelling the otherworldly aura. Selznick, however, felt the intimations of ghostly music should be withheld from the scenes with the no-nonsense Gus, whose main function was to offer brief respites of reality within a film tempered by dreams and fantasy. To reflect the contrast in tone, Selznick asked that no music be heard in the café until later in the scene, when Gus begins describing an Irish-themed mural that could be painted above the bar. For this sequence in which Gus unabashedly attempts to hook a mural commission for Adams, Selznick asked that the score play up the humor: "Mickey Mouse treatment of Irish scene...Military march? Lute and drums? [Irish song] 'Shan Van Vocht?'"⁹³ Ironically, this is the only specified piece of music in the 27 July notes. In the final score, Tiomkin incorporated the tune accordingly, with rousing snare drum rolls and military wind band instrumentation. In contrast, Debussy is only mentioned once in the 27 July notes and the passing reference to Debussy in relation to Jennie's song does not specify a particular piece. This correlation is doubly ironic, as Jennie's song would be one of the few parts of the score *not* based on a Debussy theme.

The next set of notes (dated 31 July) offer a third pass over the film's opening scenes, spanning from the main title through the scene in which Adams finds Jennie crying in the park. While much of the spotting and musical description is similar or identical to the content of the 27 July notes, Debussy's music is now omnipresent, with various selections inserted where appropriate. The following excerpt, for example, correlates to the above quoted excerpt from the earlier, 27 July notes:

⁹³ Ibid.

<p>NARRATION #2 LS Eben walking, park 2 City shots Eben finds parcel</p>	<p>CITY THEME and/or SNOW DANCING, Light trtment.</p> <p>Fade out muted city sounds. Few bars of segue (APRES MIDI) then <u>summer</u> music on “They seemed to come...meadow long ago.” incorporating girlish laughter musically. Fade in muted city sounds after “The park was deserted.”</p> <p>Blend into:</p>
<p>1st MEETING IN PARK</p>	<p>ARABESQUE young (Jennie theme) LA MER (dark water theme) Blend back to gay music, starting with “There should be a lighthouse..” (Not heavy, but ghostlike on “I don’t know.”)</p> <p>After rise from bench, trail into small thin prelude to Jennie’s song, as though tune in her head. LA MER, Part 6: Song.</p> <p>Underscore delicately, chords for punctuation</p> <p>APRES MIDI (Jennie’s disappearance.)⁹⁴</p>

As can be seen, the musical description is largely identical, but specific Debussy works have been aligned with Selznick’s thematic outline. Thus, *La Mer* is to be used for the “dark water theme,” while the “[First] Arabesque” serves as Jennie’s “young” theme (previously designated as the “Jennie Youth Springtime” theme.) The inclusion of Debussy’s works did motivate certain thematic adjustments—*Après-midi* accompanies *both* Jennie’s appearance and disappearance and replaces “Jennie’s Song” as the theme for her disappearances, as described in the July 27 notes. Such changes, however, are niggling. The main point is that Selznick had already predetermined a succession of themes to which Debussy’s works were later appended.

Tiomkin played a key role in this selection of Debussy works. As late as 30 July, Selznick had not made any decisions regarding Debussy selections, as music cue timing

⁹⁴ “JENNIE—MUSIC NOTES,” 31 July 1948, HRC 3674:5.

sheets from this date contain additional notes from Selznick, but no mention of Debussy.⁹⁵ Pencil annotations in Tiomkin's hand on one of the cue sheets, however, specify which Debussy selections should be used for the "First Meeting" sequence: The cue's opening—which roughly corresponds to "NARRATION #2" in the 31 July notes—should begin with "Clouds," then *Après-midi* instead of "Jennie's Theme," which Tiomkin crosses out.⁹⁶ It appears, therefore, that Tiomkin's annotations were made on 30 July and shared with Selznick, who subsequently entered them in his 31 July notes. A memo from the producer confirms this hypothesis. Writing at 6:00 in the morning on 31 July, Selznick noted that he and Tiomkin had spent the entire night selecting works for the film. The session had proven exhilarating for the producer, who exclaimed: "The music of the picture in my opinion has every chance of being the most distinguished and revolutionary score ever written."⁹⁷ Thus, while the selection of Debussy works and excerpts was motivated by Tiomkin, his ideas had to fit into a prescribed thematic scheme drafted by Selznick.⁹⁸

⁹⁵ "Music Timing Cue Sheet, FIRST MEETING, REVISED," 30 July 1948, HRC 3674:5, 4 and "Music Timing Cue Sheet, SKATING SEQUENCE, REVISED," 30 July 1948, HRC 3674:5. For the sequence at the skating rink, the following appears: "Mr. Selznick's notes: This should start realistically [i.e. diegetically] then go to appearance theme. Then go to gay theme. Go back to realistic music on pratt fall. Mickey Mouse Adams' pratt fall." Unlike most other notes printed on music timing cue sheets, these are not replicated in any of the other "music notes" authored by Selznick, suggesting that there may be additional sets of notes from Selznick that are misplaced or lost.

⁹⁶ Although *Nuages* is not specified under "NARRATION #2" in the 31 July notes, the use of *Nuages* for narration sequences is established earlier in the music notes. Its absence under "NARRATION #2" reflects editorial shorthand or accidental omission, as *Nuages* was used by Tiomkin for this narration sequence and all following ones.

⁹⁷ DOS to Paul MacNamara, 30 July 1948, HRC 944:4. Although the memo is dated 30 July, Selznick admits in the text of the memo that it is early morning and that he has stayed up all night. The memo was likely written early on 31 July.

⁹⁸ It should be noted, of course, that if Tiomkin had had complete freedom in the selection and placement of themes, his score would likely have resembled Selznick's outline in some respects. Commenting on Tchaikovsky's *Sleeping Beauty*, which was in part influenced by notes from balletmaster Petipa, Roland John Wiley notes: "Petipa very frequently offered guidance concerning the expressive qualities he desired in the music, but often one may fairly assume that his remarks were no more than Tchaikovsky would have imagined on his own: 'When a loud noise is heard [in the entranceway as Carabosse arrives], very animated

This paint-by-number approach exercised in the Debussy selections is especially evident in the the “KEY to themes (Debussy selections)” printed at the head of the 31 July notes. The key offers, in approximate terms, the associative significance of six excerpts from four different Debussy works: *Prélude à l’après-midi d’un faune*, *La Mer*, “The Girl with the Flaxen Hair,” and First Arabesque. The key is an unprecedented item among Selznick’s various music notes for films and appears somewhat redundant, as the positioning of themes within individual scenes is already outlined. The key, however, represented an informal contract. After having met with Tiomkin to determine which Debussy selections would be appropriate where, Selznick could now summarize and contain Tiomkin’s contributions within a key that would serve as a point of reference to which the producer could consult and direct Tiomkin, should differences or disagreement arise. While this key would soon become dated (Selznick was unable to get permission to use *La Mer*), it reflects Selznick’s desire to keep close tabs on the score’s thematic structure and, subsequently, its associative relationship with the characters and narrative (see table 6.2).

music” (Roland John Wiley, *Tchaikovsky’s Ballets: Swan Lake, Sleeping Beauty, Nutcracker* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 110).

Table 6.2 Key to *Portrait of Jennie*'s themes. This updated “key to themes” that includes the musical excerpts and selections featured in the film along with their extra-musical association. Whenever possible, thematic associations are quoted from Selznick’s music notes or Tiomkin’s sketches, with “DOS” or “Tiomkin” signifying the respective sources. All themes are drawn from works by Debussy, unless otherwise noted.⁹⁹

Work (by Debussy unless otherwise noted)	Association(s)
<i>Nuages</i>	“Riddle theme” (DOS)/ “Artist’s theme” (Tiomkin)/ “used for some narrations” (DOS)
<i>Sirènes</i>	“dark water theme, Lands End Light” (DOS)/Jennie’s death in the hurricane
<i>Prélude à l’après-midi d’un faune</i>	“Jennie’s comings and goings, prescience” (DOS)
First Arabesque (mm. 1–17)	“Young” theme for Jennie (DOS)
First Arabesque (mm. 39–46)	Love theme for Adams and Jennie
Second Arabesque	No single association; used for lighter scenes: light conversation, ice skating, cartoon music for the theater, and a dog’s romp through Central Park
“Girl with the Flaxen Hair”	“Eben [Adams] the artist re[garding] Jennie: sketches, portrait, etc.” (DOS)
Jennie’s Song (Herrmann)	Jennie’s mortality and dissociation from present-day reality
“Barrymore [Spinney] theme” (Tiomkin)	Spinney’s warm regard for Adams
Traditional Irish Melodies: “Shan Van Vocht,” “The Green Flag,” and “Jug of Punch”	Played at the Irish pub
Veni Sancti Spiritus	Sung at the convent by the student chorus
“Yonder, Yonder” (arr. Samuel Richard Gaines) ¹⁰⁰	Sung by Gus to Adams

⁹⁹ A significant number of other works by Debussy were considered for inclusion in the score, but were not used because of the high expense of permissions. These works include *La Mer*, “The Wind in the Plains,” the String Quartet, “The Snow is Dancing,” “Golliwog’s Cakewalk,” *Images: Iberia and Reflections in the Water*, “Clair de lune,” “La chevelure,” *Printemps*, and “The Sunken Cathedral.” See memo from Ed Taylor to James Stewart, 3 August 1948, HRC 1151:9; see also an untitled, undated list of accepted and rejected works by Debussy for *Portrait* among Tiomkin’s personal papers for the production, DTC 49. In addition to the themes based on excerpts from works by Debussy, Tiomkin also composed an original “city theme” at Selznick’s request. The theme is labeled in Tiomkin’s pencil sketches and is set in counterpoint to the opening material from *Nuages* heard at the beginning of “Adams Visits the Art Gallery” (mm. 1–4). The theme was cut during recording, however, and is not heard on the soundtrack.

¹⁰⁰ In the film, this song is sung by an Irish cab driver. Selznick had the song included because he was “insane” about it and believed it to be a Welsh folk song, which was not *too* geographically distant from the character’s homeland (DOS to Paul MacNamara, 13 April 1948, HRC 944:4.). Studio legal files (HRC

Taken together, Selznick's music notes for *Portrait* represent the producer's strongest effort to control as many musical details as possible throughout the film's entire duration.¹⁰¹ As previous chapters have repeatedly emphasized, Selznick did not hesitate to communicate his views and suggestions on musical scoring to his composers, but in his notes for *Portrait* Selznick leaves little to chance. In *Spellbound*, Selznick evinced a certain degree of latitude by requesting, for example, that Miklós Rózsa simply "continue to score" five consecutive scenes on Reel IV.¹⁰² Even in his considerably more detailed notes for *Duel in the Sun*, Selznick still left some scenes to the musical discretion of Tiomkin by merely requesting music, not specifying which themes to use or how they should sound. In *Portrait*, Selznick eschewed such flexibility. Rare instances of musical uncertainty, such as when Selznick wrote "???" for the scene in which Adams rents a boat for journeying to the Lands End lighthouse were later amended.¹⁰³ The boat-renting sequence, in particular, ultimately received fifteen lines of prescriptive musical notes, specifying that Tiomkin "score this scene as for two protagonists, the wave and Jennie, using 'SIRENS' for the wave, and 'APRES MIDI' for Jennie, both with echo effect treatment as in Mother Superior scene...."¹⁰⁴ Selznick's attention to such details even increased across the duration of the film's post-production, necessitating a change in the

944:5), however, reveal that the song was in fact an adaptation of a Russian folk melody arranged by Samuel Richard Gaines.

¹⁰¹ Selznick's decision to commission a score based on the themes of Debussy was itself a controlling act that limited Tiomkin's original contribution. Stanley Kubrick later pursued a similar path by shifting from original scores to compilation scores made up of his own selections. See Paul A. Merkley, "'Stanley Hates This But I Like It!': North vs. Kubrick on the Music for *2001: A Space Odyssey*," *The Journal of Film Music* 2, no. 1 (Fall 2007): 6.

¹⁰² "SPELLBOUND," Music Notes, 3 October 1944, HRC 1117:8.

¹⁰³ "General Notes," undated, HRC 3674:5.

¹⁰⁴ "JENNIE MUSIC NOTES and sound effects," 2 October 1948, DTC 49.

notes' page formatting (that begins with those of 5 August 1948) that could accommodate more musical commentary per page.

While the notes explicitly reveal Selznick's role in the assignment and positioning of associative themes throughout *Portrait's* score, the notes also imply the extent and limits of his creative input. As with earlier productions, there is little mention of orchestration, no comments on key area, no suggestions as to how transitions between themes might be handled, and, importantly, no instructions addressing *how* the music of Debussy might be adapted for the film. Tiomkin would obviously have to make decisions on these issues even if Selznick did not, and it is in these details that Tiomkin would inject his own creative insights regarding the music's role within the film. Before turning to Tiomkin's music, however, it is important to consider several overarching themes expressed in Selznick's notes that influence the dramatic function of *Portrait's* score.

Discerning Selznick's Influence in the Score

While Selznick did not write a note of music for *Portrait*, his notes about the music did much more than dictate a string of associative themes to be used at various points. Selznick's notes also shaped the larger structure of the score and its placement within the narrative. Firstly, Selznick's notes prescribed that the film would feature a substantial amount of music (see table 6.3)

Table 6.3 Length of musical score in relation to entire film in *Portrait of Jennie*

Total Length of Film	86 min., 5 sec.
Total Amount of Music	64 min., 35 sec.
Nondiegetic underscore	57 min., 30 sec.
Diegetic music	7 min., 5 sec.

Musical silence	21 min., 30 sec.
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A full 75% of the film has musical accompaniment, a significantly higher percentage than *Paradine Case* (43%) or *Spellbound* (55%). (In fact, the percentage for *Portrait* would have been even higher, but much of the music that Selznick requested and Tiomkin composed for the hurricane sequence was not included in the film.) While the amount of music exceeds other contemporaneous Selznick efforts, the preponderance of musical accompaniment does recall the lengthier musical scores of Selznick's 1930s films, particularly of the "adventure trio" made at RKO: *Bird of Paradise* (1932), *Most Dangerous Game* (1932), and *King Kong* (1933). The association between these disparate films is strengthened by virtue of music's placement. As may be recalled from chapter two, the RKO films withheld musical accompaniment for realistic scenes set in conventional locales (on a boat, in a city), then unleashed the nondiegetic score when the white, "normal," protagonists encountered an exotic place (always a remote island) inhabited by exotic subjects (be they native islanders, a psychopathic Russian hunter, or a giant gorilla). *Portrait* features neither island nor gorilla, but does use music to delineate between the "otherly" world in which Adams encounters Jennie—or powerful memories of Jennie—and the more "normal" world in which Jennie's presence is more distant. Often, this distinction is rendered blatantly through the use or withholding of music. The film's few unscored scenes, such as when Adams first visits the art gallery, when his friend Gus visits the apartment, or when Adams speaks with locals near Lands End Light, stand out by virtue of their musical silence and represent a "normal" world against which much of the narrative, with its Debussy-inspired dreaminess, contrasts.

In one sequence, a momentary cessation in the music signals an unsettling withholding of Jennie's presence. As Adams works to complete his portrait late at night, Jennie ruminates sleepily about one's ability to anticipate the future's troubles. As she drifts off to sleep, Tiomkin's cue slowly alternates and entwines melodic fragments from "Flaxen Hair" and *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*, with a wordless women's chorus serving as a pillow of accompaniment.¹⁰⁵ Selznick's notes then detail a musical pause synchronized with Jennie's sleep: "Keep [the score] going until shot of Jennie falling asleep. Trail score off, letting it go to sleep with her. No score under shot of Eben smiling, looks off at Jennie asleep, rushes to her. Start score again...." The result in the film is quite striking, for at the moment Jennie drifts off, the music wafts into silence and the spectator is presented with a freeze-frame of Jennie sleeping (see figure 6.3). The extraordinarily diffuse light and visual filter cause the image to look like a static painting rather than a sleeping individual.

Figure 6.3 Still of Jennie. As Jennie falls asleep, so too does the music.



¹⁰⁵ Tiomkin's underscoring of this sequence with *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* and "Flaxen Hair" departs, by necessity, from Selznick's notes which specify *Reflections in the Water*, a work for which the studio did not secure permission from the Debussy estate. His ethereal setting, however does follow Selznick's instruction to keep the music "weird [and] unearthly" ("JENNIE, Music notes," 5 August 1948, HRC 3674:5).

The alignment of the musical caesura and the freeze-frame jar the spectator, as though the narrative, or even the film itself, has broken down. When Adams realizes Jennie has fallen asleep, he rushes to her and shakes her; the music resumes as she awakens. The musical silence lasts only ten seconds, but it is a breathless pause, heightened by the fact that it is only one of two times that Jennie is shown onscreen without musical accompaniment. (The second occurrence, which takes place on the brink of Jennie's death during the hurricane *was* to have had musical accompaniment, but the music was replaced with thunderous storm effects.) Thus, the coordination of Jennie's sleep and the musical pause emphasizes the correlation between Jennie's presence in the narrative and music's presence on the soundtrack, and delivers an emotional punch precisely by breaking this established rule. Strange as Jennie's presence is in Adams's life, Jennie's presence *without* music is stranger still—it threatens the viability of the fantasy.

In addition to determining when music should and should not be heard, Selznick also specified when a scene should feature music *not* based on Debussy. Scenes between Adams and Gus, for example, either have no music, or have music unrelated to Debussy's themes. Instead, their scenes at the Irish pub are accompanied conventionally with traditional Irish music, and Gus later sings the traditional song, "Yonder, Yonder" to a despairing Adams, grieving Jennie's prolonged absence. While Gus's song serves as an expression of Adams's longing, its musical disconnect from the Debussy material emphasizes the great distance between Jennie and Adams, who is unwillingly trapped in the "normal," day-to-day world.

If the music associated with Gus contrasts with the dominant musical ambience of Debussy-Tiomkin, then the theme of Spinney, the gallery owner sympathetic to Adams's

serves to emphasize *her* relationship to Adams and his art, a distinction not bestowed upon other secondary characters. On the other hand, Spinney's theme is not based on Debussy, thereby setting her apart from the fantasy-enshrouded relationship that Adams and Jennie share. Spinney's theme, therefore, mediates between the unscored realistic world and the dreamscape that Adams inhabits when he is with or thinking of Jennie. The musical role of Spinney's theme is made all the more explicit in the music accompanying the tea scene analyzed below.

There is another character whose identity is complicated through music of a non-Debussy origin. Jennie's song, as previously mentioned, was composed by Bernard Herrmann before Tiomkin's hiring. After Tiomkin joined the project, he replaced Herrmann's original with a new melody paraphrasing passages from *Sirènes* (mm. 1–2, m. 15, m. 93). Per Selznick's request, Tiomkin even worked the new song melody into the orchestral underscore in several cues.¹¹⁰ As was previously mentioned, Selznick decided he liked Herrmann's version better (a hunch reinforced by the fact that those at earlier previews had praised it) and pulled Tiomkin's song. In addition, passages of Herrmann's song were arranged by Maurice Depackh and inserted into the score *over* Tiomkin's Debussy-based cues. In the finished film, Herrmann's song would be heard on four occasions:

1. In the park when Jennie first sings the song (complete).
2. In Adams's apartment when he plays the theme on his concertina (fragment).
3. In the concert hall, when the diegetic orchestral music is suddenly blotted out by a metadiegetic¹¹¹ rendition of the song in Adams's head (fragment).

¹¹⁰ Two brief fragments of Tiomkin's *Sirènes*-based "Jennie's Song" survive in the film's underscore, though their associative significance to the song, as opposed to the passages from *Sirènes* associated with Lands End Light, is practically void with the song itself replaced by Herrmann's version. See "Jennie's First Disappearance," measure 19, and "Last Meeting," measures 27–30.

¹¹¹ A term coined by Claudia Gorbman that refers to music on the soundtrack that a specific character is hearing in his or her mind. Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 22.

4. In the hurricane, when Adams enters the lighthouse and begins calling Jennie's name, then sees her boat (fragment, played four times). This last set of insertions does not replace Tiomkin's music, as this short scene at the lighthouse was originally to have played without musical accompaniment.¹¹²

The musico-dramatic consequence of these insertions is significant, as Herrmann's modally inflected melody differs stylistically from the rest of the musical material of the score, be it Debussy, Tiomkin, Irish, or the church music heard during the convent scenes.¹¹³ For one, the music that Jennie herself introduces and produces stands apart from the rest of the score, furthering the notion that Jennie, like her music, originates from elsewhere, a time or space separate from the film's "real world." While the film's nondiegetic score also expresses this otherworldly quality with ghostly *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* playing whenever Jennie appears and disappears, the presence of the song reveals an additional layer on the "real world"—"other world" continuum (see table 6.4).

¹¹² See "JENNIE—MUSIC NOTES and sound effects," 2 October 1948, 3, DTC 49.

¹¹³ To justify his decision to reinstate Herrmann's song, Selznick argued that "there is nothing about [Herrmann's song] that conflicts with the Debussy music in style or in spirit" (DOS to James Stewart, 20 October 1948, HRC 1151:9). Tiomkin in turn retorted that Herrmann's song "definitely conflict[ed] with the unique immortal style of Debussy" (Tiomkin to DOS, 14 December 1948, HRC 569:11). Both were right—to a degree. Herrmann's melody would not be mistaken for Debussy by anyone who knows the music of the French composer, yet to an untrained ear, Herrmann's meandering modal melody, which relies on melodic repetition instead of cadences to signal closure, would sound much more like Debussy than would, for example, "Shan Van Vocht." Thus, the song is more closely related to the Debussy-based themes than to the other musical material in the score, but at the same time is different *enough* from the Debussy-related material to betray its non-Debussy origins.

Table 6.4 Musical Characterization of Narrative Space

Narrative Space	Musical Content
So-called “real world,” with no supernatural intrusions	Traditional “Irish” music or musical silence ¹¹⁴
Characters and places that mediate worldly and otherworldly elements of narrative (i.e., Spinney and convent).	Original theme by Tiomkin and traditional Catholic music
Liminal space in which Jennie and Adams coexist, in thought or actuality, predominantly experienced through Adams’s subjectivity.	Themes based on Debussy
Jennie’s “other world,” remembered and expressed by her and only invoked by Adams at exceptionally poignant moments.	“Jennie’s Song” by Herrmann

Music is used to characterize multiple layers of experience that go beyond a mere reality-fantasy or normal-exotic binary. Rather than making strong distinctions, the musical accompaniment suggests blurred gradations of reality and fantasy through which Adams and Jennie slip back and forth as their relationship and circumstances change. Through his musical spotting and dictation of musical sources (Irish, Debussy, Catholic, original), Selznick directed these maneuvers across and between gradations, and in so doing, gave the film’s supernatural gloss an unusual degree of nuance.

¹¹⁴ Gus’s song is actually based on a Russian folk melody; see note 100.

While Selznick used different types of music to characterize the fluid shifting between Adams's "regular" life and Jennie's supernatural intrusions, he also manipulated the diegetic and nondiegetic musical boundary to give the film's supernatural ambience an especially unstable character, heightened to a large extent by the privileging of Adams's subjectivity through the voice-over narrations and musical underscore. In one montage, for example, Adams explains in a voice-over that "my memory was beginning to play tricks on me. I was seized by memories so urgent that they were more real to me than what was before me." After this statement, Adams is shown listening in a concert hall to an adapted and densely re-orchestrated passage of *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*. Adams's voice over continues over the music: "Everything reminded me of Jenny." His remark causes the bombastic orchestral sounds to fade mysteriously away, allowing an eerie rendition of Jennie's song performed on novachord and violin harmonics to emerge. Oddly, this new music, which seems to reflect a melody heard in Adams's head, matches with the emphatic gestures of the orchestra conductor. Later, when Adams visits the convent at which Jennie attended school, the musical scoring shifts between realistic Catholic hymns and organ music to works by Debussy rendered on church bells, a women's chorus, and an organ. With no narrative impulse to explain the tolling of "Girl with the Flaxen Hair" from the belfry, the division between diegetic, nondiegetic, and metadiegetic¹¹⁵ becomes increasingly vague.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ While there is no immediate justification for *Girl with the Flaxen Hair* to be heard on the bells at the convent, the mixing of Catholic music and Debussy in the convent scene makes more sense if one recalls Selznick's tendency to use Debussy-based music to suggest an otherworldly intrusion on Adams's subjective experience and the use of non-Debussy related music to suggest a more "normal" reality. The convent, however, is unusual because it is a location to which Adams is invited by Jennie. In their earlier exchanges, Jennie always appeared unexpectedly, but in the convent Adams seeks her out and to his surprise, finds her: "I was afraid you might not be here," he admits. The two walk around the convent and even observe a ceremony from the balcony, but their presence seems to go unnoticed by the many nuns and students. Such questions as "can the others see Jennie, or for that matter, Adams?," "is this a real place?,"

This dreamy world through which Adams and the spectator glide is not, of course, achieved through music alone. Rather, Selznick coordinates his musical decisions to work in tandem with other carefully deployed cinematic devices. There is, for example, the manner in which the story unfolds as though it were a flashback, narrated by Adams and therefore subject to the distortions of his memory. Jennie's presence—real, supernatural, or psychological—is conspicuously ambiguous and Adams's own perception of the real, unreal, past, and present is questioned by other characters. The visual presentation emphasizes this slippage between natural and supernatural through tinting procedures and visual filters. Although most of the film is shot in black and white, the storm sequence and climactic final reunion are tinted an unsettling green, the concluding sequence is shot in warm sepia-tone, and the final shot of the film, which features the finished portrait in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, is in color (see figures 6.5–6.7). In other scenes, special lenses and filters are used to make the visuals appear either older than they actually were or else appear textured, as though rendered on canvas (see figure 6.8).¹¹⁷ In addition to these effects, the film's screen size is not even constant, but rather expands to a proto-widescreen during the climactic hurricane sequence (an effect lost on the DVD release).

“is Jennie *more* real here than she was on the skating rink?” are deliberately avoided and the music, which alternates between Catholic and Debussy-based music played on organ, bells, and sung by women's chorus, suggests that this narrative space set at the convent comes closest to uniting their largely disparate realities. Later, Adams returns to the convent to learn of Jennie's fate, the pivotal revelation of the film.

¹¹⁶ Robynn Stilwell insightfully suggests that such musical passages of diegetic/nondiegetic ambiguity might be theorized as spanning a “fantastical gap,” an idea that works particularly well in the case of *Portrait*: “Like any liminal space, [it] is a space of power and transformation, of inversion and the uncanny” (Robynn J. Stilwell, “The Fantastical Gap between Diegetic and Nondiegetic,” *Beyond the Soundtrack: Representing Music in Cinema* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007) 186).

¹¹⁷ See Joseph Cotten, *Vanity Will Get You Somewhere* (San Francisco: Mercury House Inc., 1987), 79.

Figure 6.5 Still of Jennie and Adams. The entire hurricane sequence is tinted green.



Figure 6.6 Still of school girls admiring portrait. The scenes following the climactic hurricane, including this one, were sepia-toned.¹¹⁸



¹¹⁸ The distinction between film tinting (as in figure 6.5) and toning (figure 6.6) is outlined in the *Encyclopedia of Early Cinema*: “With tinting, the entire surface of the film—both on the image itself (including its lighter areas) and on its edges—is uniformly colored. Soon after the discovery of this method, a variation on the dye immersion process was devised by coloring only the sensitized portions of the frame—the dark areas of the image—through a chemical process called toning: a colored compound binds to the silver of without coloring the gelatin of the film (the lighter areas of the image retain white)” (Paolo Cherchi Usai, “color,” *Encyclopedia of Early Cinema*, ed. Richard Abel (London: Routledge, 2005), 140). See also Roderick T. Ryan, *A History of Motion Picture Color Technology* (London: The Focal Press, 1977), 16–25. Tinting and toning were practiced much more commonly during the silent era, though the technique continued to a limited degree into the sound era. Sound films other than *Portrait* that featured sepia tone were *The Good Earth* (1937), *The Wizard of Oz* (1939), and *Cabin in the Sky* (1943).

Figure 6.7 Still of the portrait of Jennie. The last shot of the film before the ending credits was the portrait hanging in the museum, filmed in color.



Figure 6.8 Still from scene in Central Park. The visual texture of this shot, with its canvas-like quality, was rendered through the use of visual filters, soft focus, and evocative lighting.¹¹⁹



With so much sensorial blurring in the film’s music and overall presentation, Selznick’s selection of Debussy, a composer heavily influenced by Symbolist playwrights and poets (including Stéphane Mallarmé, author of *Prélude à l’après-midi d’un faune*), seems all the more appropriate. While Selznick probably never considered *Portrait* a Symbolist work, the film is nonetheless influenced by the movement’s

¹¹⁹ As Ronald Haver notes, “Between [cinematographer Joseph August and director William Dieterle], they evolved a mixture of textured overlays, filtered effects, and impressionistic lighting that gave the finished film a poetic pictorialism subtly blending the grim reality of the depression era and the soft romanticism of the love story.” Ronald Haver, *David O. Selznick’s Hollywood* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980), 380.

ideological legacy. The film's narrative, for example, depicts multiple, albeit intermingled, realities—a material, “real” world coexisting with a fantastic world governed by dreams and imagination. More importantly, the mysticism of *Portrait* expands beyond its narrative, affecting the manner in which the story and its music are conveyed, expressed, and received.

Perhaps the most important insight that Selznick's notes disclose, however, is the producer's intention that music be specifically associated with characters' memory. On multiple occasions Selznick describes this correlation explicitly. The most obvious case is the example mentioned above, when Adams admits in a voice-over that “my memory was beginning to play tricks on me,” an explanation that segues into the manipulated musical effects in the concert hall. Later, when Adams learns of Jennie's death from the recollections of a nun, Selznick asked that the music feature “repeating phrases with [artificially added] reverberation and different orchestration, to illustrate Jennie in the past and Jennie in the present.”¹²⁰ In the same scene, Selznick asked Tiomkin to “bring in voices, as though permeating Eben's brain.... He knows now the pattern of Jennie's life—past and present merged into one.”¹²¹

This intermingling of past and present takes on a variant form when music is used to simultaneously recall and anticipate a particular event. One instance is Selznick's request that the “dark water” theme (based on an excerpt from *Sirènes*) be heard whenever Jennie examines Adams's picture of Lands End Light. In these recurring passages, the jarring entrance of the foreboding music (often accompanied by the entrance of a wordless women's chorus) expresses a mental strain that Jennie cannot fully

¹²⁰ “JENNIE, MUSIC NOTES,” 16 September 1948, 3, DTC 49.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

identify. The thematic material in these passages represents both a memory and a premonition of her death in the hurricane. Music does more than express memory, though; Selznick also asked that the placement of musical themes anticipate events or recollections, as though the music itself were instigating onscreen action. “‘Apres Midi’ doesn’t start early enough,” he complained in reference to Jennie’s mysterious entrance during the skating scene. “[We] should have [the] sense of something going on *before* Eben turns around [emphasis added].”¹²² Thus, in these and many other scenes, Selznick’s notes reveal a conscious effort to make music an active ingredient in the psychological drama of the film; music incites and sustains characters’ fixation on the past.

Tiomkin’s Navigation of Selznick’s Notes

With Selznick’s notes and the music timing cue sheets in hand, Tiomkin had a considerable number of instructions and guidelines to consider, balance, and negotiate. As Selznick was Tiomkin’s employer and their relationship was hardly a collaboration among equals, it is not surprising that Tiomkin followed Selznick’s instructions much of the time. Yet even the task of following orders can be as impressive—if not more so—than constructing a score according to one’s own whims.

At times Selznick’s instructions are simple, but require Tiomkin to achieve great precision in the timing of motivic material. For a scene in which the art gallery owner Miss Spinney and Adams discuss Jennie’s portrait while ridding in a horse-drawn carriage, Selznick instructed Tiomkin to use “Flaxen Hair with very little bit of Spinney theme toward end when she says ‘As you grow older—’.” Tiomkin follows this exactly,

¹²² Ibid., 1.

setting “Flaxen Hair” for solo violin above a chipper woodwind accompaniment that mimics the clopping horse feet. On the line of dialogue Selznick specified, Tiomkin shifts into Spinney’s theme, interweaving “a very little bit” and using only the initial 4/4-2/4 passage, thereby allowing Debussy’s “Flaxen Hair” to resume and conclude the sequence (Spinney’s theme is notated in figure 6.4). While this sequence certainly bears the guiding hand of its producer, who specifies the thematic content and even the musical properties of a non-Debussy theme, Tiomkin’s accomplishment is perhaps all the more impressive in his ability to adapt the musical materials for this context. By bringing “Flaxen Hair” back after the Spinney theme, Tiomkin even gives the musical sequence and scene a more satisfying sense of closure—an ABA’ structure as opposed to an AB.

For the scene in which Adams signs the portrait, Selznick gave directions that required innovative adaptation on Tiomkin’s part: “Continue FLAXEN HAIR through signing of the portrait. On signing of the portrait a little foreboding note as though they may not be together when people come to see portrait hanging in museum.”¹²³ Clearly Selznick had an effect in mind, but it was up to Tiomkin to transform this vaguely articulated idea into a compelling musical statement. Tiomkin attempted to realize Selznick’s conception through delicately rendered melodic elisions and harmonic adjustments. Measures 10–20 of Tiomkin’s “Portrait is Signed” correspond very closely to the initial twelve measures¹²⁴ of Debussy’s original “Girl with the Flaxen Hair.” The key, however, has been transposed from G-flat major to E major, a key that corresponds with the opening of Debussy’s First Arabesque—Jennie’s “youth” theme in *Portrait*. In measure 21 of “Portrait is Signed,” Tiomkin effects a clever elision; instead of following

¹²³ “JENNIE, Music notes,” 5 August 1948, 4, HRC 3674:5.

¹²⁴ The one measure discrepancy in length reflects the shortening of some sustained notes in Tiomkin’s cue to match timing.

measure 12 of Debussy's original with measure 13, he skips to measure 16, a measure that features a similar melodic figure but begins on a different starting tone. Rather than leaping in the middle of the melody to make up for the intervallic difference, Tiomkin holds to the same pitch, thereby smoothly modulating from E major to B major.

Tiomkin's adjustment does more than merely truncate the melody, it also effects a harmonic shift to the key of the dominant. Oddly, Tiomkin does not change the key signature to B major, but notates the passage in C-flat major, its enharmonic equivalent. This decision necessitates a mess of accidentals in the score, but Tiomkin's notational decision may have reflected a harmonic distinction Tiomkin frequently made in the score by setting Jennie's "youth" theme from the First Arabesque in brighter, sharp keys (thereby honoring the predominant E major of Debussy's original) while setting "Flaxen Hair," the theme associated with Adams's regard of Jennie, in flat keys (also honoring Debussy's original setting of the work in G-flat major). In this case, Tiomkin's decision to set the "Flaxen Hair" theme in E major and C-flat major (as opposed to B major) draws attention to this dichotomy and creates a certain tension in the theme's setting, and as a result correlates with the scene's odd tone, which is both exultant—Jennie and Adams are together and happy—and uncertain. With the portrait now finished, what will happen to Jennie? (See figure 6.9)

Figure 6.9 Debussy, “Girl with the Flaxen Hair.” Asterisks mark Tiomkin’s musical elision, which skips from measure 12 to measure 16 of Debussy’s original work, as shown in figure 6.10.

The image displays a musical score for Debussy's "Girl with the Flaxen Hair" in 3/4 time, featuring piano and dynamic markings. The score is divided into four systems of staves:

- System 1 (Measures 12-14):** The right hand plays a melodic line with a crescendo leading to a *p* dynamic. The left hand provides harmonic support. An asterisk (*) is placed above the first measure.
- System 2 (Measures 15-17):** The right hand continues the melodic line. The left hand has a *(très peu)* marking. An asterisk (*) is placed above the second measure.
- System 3 (Measures 18-20):** The tempo marking *Un peu animé* is present. The right hand features a *p* dynamic. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3'.
- System 4 (Measures 21-23):** The right hand continues with a *mf* dynamic. The left hand has a *p* dynamic.

Figure 6.10 Tiomkin, *Portrait of Jennie*, “Portrait is Signed.”¹²⁵ (*Portrait of Jennie* by Dimitri Tiomkin. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission of Southern Music Publishing Co.)

The musical score is presented in three systems. The first system (measures 20-21) consists of four staves: Vlns. (div), Ob, Nova[chord], Vibr, Celesta, Bells, and Hp II. The second system (measures 22-23) consists of three staves: Vlns. (div), Ob, and Bs. The third system (measures 24-25) consists of four staves: Vlns, Vla, Fl, Ob, Cue Tpt, Cl II, Chimes, Vibra, Bells, and Trb. Dynamics include *pp*, *ppp*, and *mf*.

¹²⁵ At the beginning of this excerpt, the piano-conductor score occupies four staves. For measures 22–25, Tiomkin only uses three staves, then expands out to four staves for measure 26, setting the chimes part in the top staff. For reasons of formatting and presentation, the chimes part in measure 26 has been set with the violin line, thereby preserving three staves for the entire system.

While the modulation to the dominant subtly unsettles the theme's harmonic mooring, the shift from flats to sharps would not have been perceivable to those hearing the music but not seeing the score. More noticeable would have been the measure of music heard exactly as Adams signs his name on the portrait. Here, Tiomkin uses the triumphant peak of Debussy's melodic line, heard in measure 22 of Debussy's original, but alters the chordal accompaniment. In the original, Debussy's accompaniment moves upward in a parallel triad motion that functions as a deceptive cadence: IV-V-vi. Tiomkin's setting of "Flaxen Hair" in a preceding scene ("Adams Shows Portrait," m. 19) preserves this harmonic motion, but in "Portrait Is Signed," he alters the deception by changing chords, moving through a series of non-functional major chords that begin on IV, but move in a very different direction: E[F-flat] major, D major, A-flat major. Thus, in place of Debussy's steadily ascending bass line, Tiomkin has the lower instruments descend—E (or F-flat), D, A-flat—thereby ending the progression with an unstable leap of a tritone. As this harmonic progression unfolds, Jennie's face becomes obscured through shadows and the obstruction of Adams's easel (see 6.9 through 6.11).

Figure 6.11 Still of Adams and Jennie. As Adams leans forward to sign his portrait, Jennie's face is obscured.



Heard in the context of the cue, Tiomkin's musical effect is subtle, though the difference would likely register subliminally for listeners who had just heard Debussy's original

chord progression in the preceding scene, during the cue “Adams Shows Portrait,” measure 19. Importantly, Tiomkin did not resort to jarring dissonances or shifts to the minor mode, which would have conveyed Selznick’s requested “foreboding note” in a crude fashion. Tiomkin’s adaptation of Debussy’s music in this instance shows a creative realization of Selznick’s conception that required considerable skill and discretion to effect. It not only follows Selznick’s instructions, it goes considerably beyond.

While Tiomkin’s task of realizing Selznick’s ideas represented a feat in itself, Tiomkin did much more than follow orders. His suggestions, adaptations, and revisions to Selznick’s musical outline enriched the musical cogency of the score and its relationship to the narrative. While not all of Tiomkin’s efforts are evident in the film itself, the following pages survey some of the delicate maneuvering Tiomkin employed while working under a very attentive and invested producer.

Tiomkin first suggestion was to include more Debussy works than Selznick’s handful of predetermined associative themes required.¹²⁶ Had Tiomkin’s request gone through, the film would have featured a more diverse selection and thus have avoided so much thematic repetition, which becomes more problematic towards the film’s end. Though Selznick supported Tiomkin’s wish, the motion failed to pass for budgetary reasons. For \$19,400 [\$169,400 in 2007], the Selznick studio was able to secure permission from the Debussy estate for only six pieces. That figure alone was much more than the studio had anticipated paying and they could not afford to negotiate for more of Debussy’s music. The “permitted” works were: First and Second Arabesque, “The Girl with the Flaxen Hair,” *Prélude à l’après-midi d’un faune*, two movements from

¹²⁶ In a memo from Ed Taylor to James G. Stewart, Taylor specifically notes that Tiomkin requested the following titles be negotiated for permissions: “The Snow is Dancing,” “Iberia,” “Reflection in Water,” “La Chevelure,” and “Clair de Lune” (Ed Taylor to James G. Stewart, 3 August 1948, HRC 1151:9).

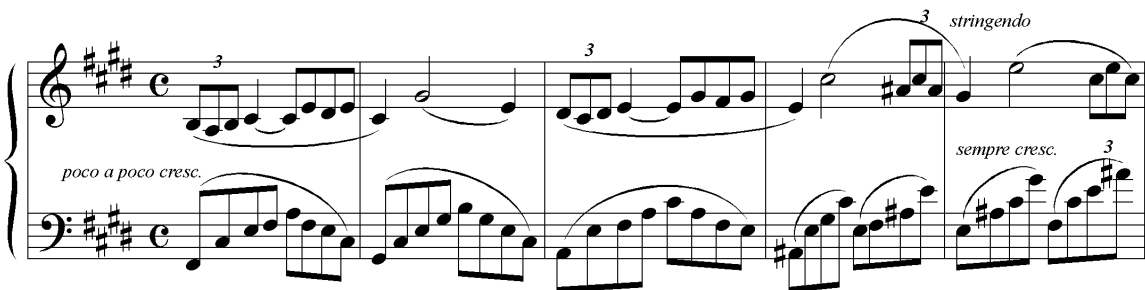
Nocturnes: Nuages and *Sirènes*. Interestingly, the collection divides neatly between three piano pieces and three orchestral works. In each group of three, there is one pair of related works: Arabesques Nos. 1 and 2 share motivic material as do *Nuages* and *Sirènes*.

In order to make the best out of a limited number of choices, Tiomkin isolated multiple passages from each of these works in an effort to expand the musical variety and generate more motivic material. One example is Tiomkin's adaptation of the First Arabesque. As Selznick's notes instructed, Tiomkin was to prepare two different treatments of the Arabesque—one that would represent Jennie as a child, and one that would serve as the love theme for Jennie and Adams. For the former, Tiomkin excerpted measures 1–17 and its thematic reprise beginning at measure 71, using these for the first meeting sequence between Adams and Jennie. For the love theme, Tiomkin selected measures 39–46 of the same work. Not only is this the most lyrical passage of First Arabesque, it also relates motivically to an interior passage from the excerpted section used for Jennie as a girl (mm. 80 ff.). As evident in the figures below, the two melodies share the same rhythm for two measures and also roughly correspond through paired melodic leaps in measures 41–42 and measures 84–85, respectively. Thus, by utilizing the musical structures embedded in Debussy's original work, Tiomkin is able to draw musical ties between individual, but related, associative melodies (see figures 6.12 and 6.13):

Figure 6.12 Debussy, First Arabesque, mm. 39–46. Used by Tiomkin as Adams and Jennie’s love theme.



Figure 6.13 Debussy, First Arabesque, mm. 80–85. Portion of a larger passage used by Tiomkin as Jennie’s “youth” theme.



Another insightful decision Tiomkin made addressed a scene in which Adams questions a theater employee about Jennie as a cartoon plays on the theater screen in the background. Originally Selznick and Tiomkin decided to use “Golliwog’s Cakewalk”¹²⁷ to serve as musical soundtrack to the cartoon, but when “Golliwog” failed to make the short list of permissible Debussy pieces, Selznick proposed a “Mickey Mouse treatment

¹²⁷ “Jennie—Music Notes,” 31 July 1948, 3, HRC 3674:5.

of Arabesque,” but did not specify which one.¹²⁸ Tiomkin selected the Second Arabesque, which he used on several occasions for scenes of a lighter character, such as when Adams takes a tumble while ice skating (“Skating Sequence”) and later when the art gallery owner’s dog breaks free in Central Park (“Adams Depressed”). For the theater scene, Tiomkin parodies the cue by adding comical woodblocks and percussion. Tiomkin cleverly selected measures 76–79, which are themselves a parody of the opening arpeggio figures from the First Arabesque, the theme associated with Jennie’s youth. As may be seen below, the gracefully connected arches of Debussy’s First Arabesque are inverted, playfully ornamented, and rendered in a staccato style in the Second Arabesque (see figures 6.14 and 6.15):

Figure 6.14 Debussy, First Arabesque, mm. 1–2.

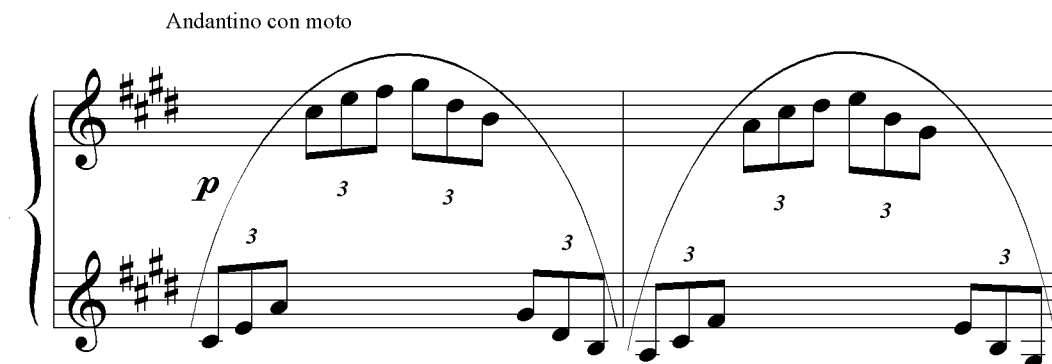
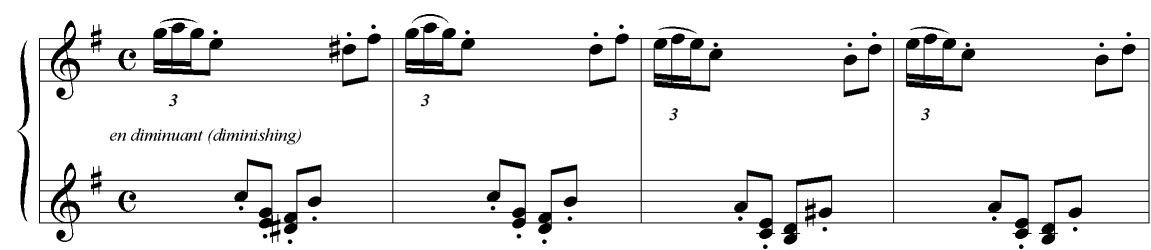


Figure 6.15 Debussy, Second Arabesque, mm. 76–79.



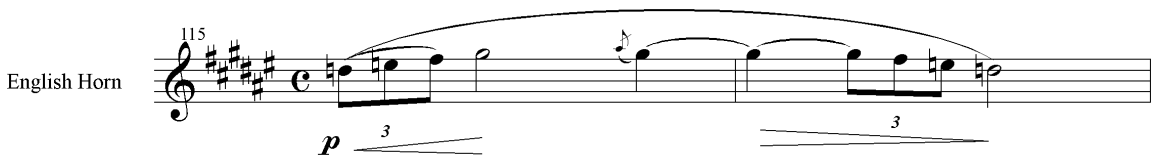
¹²⁸ “Jennie—Music Notes,” 16 September 1948, DTC Box 49.

Thus, in addition to parodying Debussy’s self-parody, Tiomkin once again draws from musical correlations already present in the original music. In a third instance, Tiomkin shifts from using the English horn solo heard throughout *Nuages* to its melodic cousin in *Sirènes* in the latter half of the film (see figures 6.16 and 6.17).

Figure 6.16 Debussy, English horn solo from *Nuages* (not transposed)



Figure 6.17 Debussy, English horn solo from *Sirènes* (not transposed)



Here Tiomkin uses Debussy’s own melodic variations to great effect and draws a compelling connection to the narrative. The passage from *Nuages* is identified as the “Riddle” theme in Selznick’s notes and as the “Artist” theme in Tiomkin’s pencil drafts, while *Sirènes* is associated with the hurricane and Lands End Light. Through the related English horn solos, Tiomkin shows that the “solution” to the artist’s riddle—where did Jennie come from and what is her fate—is inextricably linked to a terrible storm at Lands End Light. All of these instances show Tiomkin working to generate musical meaning beyond the mere progression of themes that Selznick prescribed.

While the above examples show Tiomkin’s ability to generate subtle musical connections in spite of the predetermined ordering of themes established by Selznick, evidence of Tiomkin’s outright resistance to Selznick’s suggestions is quite rare. For good reasons, the composer usually opted for more subtle deviations from Selznick’s

plan. There is, however, the exceptional instance of the theremin. Featured extensively in Miklós Rózsa's score for *Spellbound* (1945), the theremin had captured Selznick's imagination. Wanting to return to this instrument in a manner similar to his reprisal of themes and cues across multiple films, Selznick must have encouraged Tiomkin to use the theremin in the score for *Portrait*. Consequently, Tiomkin's pencil drafts and conductor's parts include passages for theremin, usually for sequences featuring *Après-midi* as Jennie makes a dramatic entrance or exit in Adams's daily life. Just as the theremin's sound in *Spellbound*, *The Lost Weekend* (1945), *The Red House* (1947), and *The Spiral Staircase* (1946) always expressed the intrusion of an irrational or psychotic impulse within the mind of a particular character, the presence of theremin in *Portrait of Jennie* would also suggest that Jennie's comings and goings were tied to some mental instability of Adams. On 10 August 1948, Hollywood's premiere thereminist Samuel Hoffman spent an afternoon recording portions of the *Portrait* score and was paid \$39.90 for his efforts.¹²⁹ Four days later Tiomkin put his foot down:

After careful analysis and thought I have come to the definite conclusion that I cannot use the theremin, because of the nature of my score which is based on DEBUSSY.

Having written so many sequences I feel certain that I can achieve the effect of an eerie and fantastic mood without the use of an instrument about which people have made so many remarks and done so much kidding.

I must naturally think of possible criticism of the critics. In the words of Sam Goldwyn... "Impossible".¹³⁰

Sent from Tiomkin to James G. Stewart, the sound engineer who corresponded directly with Selznick, the memo represents an unusual instance of the composer refusing to acquiesce. (Though it should be noted that Tiomkin appealed to Selznick *through*

¹²⁹ "Daily Musician's Report," 10 August 1948, HRC 1151:12.

¹³⁰ Memo from Dimitri Tiomkin to Mr. Jimmy Stewart, 14 August 1948, HRC 1151:9.

Stewart, rather than to Selznick directly—likely a deliberate tactical maneuver.) In this case, Tiomkin won; the theremin was replaced by novachord doubled with solo violin harmonics. The musical consequences proved vital. Had a theremin sounded forth each time Adams saw Jennie, audiences would have likely assumed that Adams was of unsound mind, like other theremin-associated characters from earlier psychological dramas.¹³¹ Using the novachord-violin timbre instead poses an aural ambiguity. It sounds similar to a theremin and enters the score and narrative in a soloistic manner typical of the electronic instrument in other films, but the sonority of an edgy violin vibrato suggests a different characterization. The result is that Jennie’s identity—real, ghost, or figment of Adams’s imagination—remains hazy by virtue of Tiomkin’s orchestrational decision. While she is clearly marked as an “other” through an exotic theremin-like timbre, it is not entirely clear where on the wide spectrum of “otherness” she fits or where, for that matter, Adams’s mental health stands. As a result, Tiomkin’s decision actually supports Selznick’s aims better than the producer may have realized. To Selznick, Jennie’s corporeal presence needed to be handled delicately, otherwise “her ethereal quality evaporates,”¹³² but the audience must not mistake her for merely a dream manufactured by Adams’s imagination:

...The charm of the book was that somehow it really happened. You can believe it or not. But the minute you get into something which couldn’t be...you no longer have fantasy...it becomes sheer imagination. Just when the audience should be deeply moved, waiting for him to take her into his arms, they are wondering, did he or didn’t he imagine it? If you try to rationalize it, it’s nothing.¹³³

¹³¹ Sarah Reichardt also draws this connection in her study of the *Portrait* score, though she asserts a theremin is playing on the soundtrack (a misidentification encouraged by the theremin cues in the pencil drafts and score). See Sarah Reichardt, “Commodity vs. Artwork: Timelessness and Temporality in the Music for *Portrait of Jennie*,” *Conference on the Hollywood Musical and Music in Hollywood*, Boulder, Colorado, 2001, 4–5.

¹³² DOS to David Hempstead, William Dieterle, and Peter Berneis, 20 January 1947, reprinted in Thomson, 497.

¹³³ “Criticism and Comments by DOS,” undated, 1, HRC 1123:11.

Tiomkin, of course, would not always be so successful in getting his way. Other times he would simply have to oblige when the producer did not like the initial results. When Tiomkin scored one of Jennie and Adams's reunion scenes with a translucent texture of harps, piano, celeste, vibraphone, and marimba, intended to evoke a "non-concerted rustle-shimmer"¹³⁴ effect, the producer turned it down. Selznick demanded "more schmaltz, more excitement"¹³⁵ and Tiomkin responded in fashion, setting the opening passage of *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* for full orchestral tutti, marked "Appassionato."¹³⁶ The effect is intentionally overdone, but Selznick must have relished it, as the opening passage from this rewritten cue is used a second time during the hurricane sequence. Not everyone was equally charmed; the music critic Lawrence Morton would later single out this passage: "Another fragment of the *Faun* has been whipped up into an amorous frenzy that would have made Tristan and Isolde blush or shamed Venus herself into becoming a Vestal."¹³⁷ (See figures 6.18 and 6.19.)

¹³⁴ Dimitri Tiomkin, "Adams Finds Jennie," m. 13, DTC 49.

¹³⁵ "JENNIE, MUSIC NOTES," 16 September 1948, p. 2, DTC 49.

¹³⁶ Dimitri Tiomkin, REMAKE Adam [*sic*] Finds Jennie, m. 6, DTC 49.

¹³⁷ Lawrence Morton, "Music: Mr. Selznick's Debussy," *Rob Wagner's Script*, March 1949: 36.

Figure 6.18 Tiomkin, *Portrait of Jennie*, “Adams Finds Jennie.” A reproduction of a page from the piano-conductor part. The annotation in the first measure is in Tiomkin’s hand and reads “Jenny” (sic), marking the moment when she appears on screen. (*Portrait of Jennie* by Dimitri Tiomkin. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission of Southern Music Publishing Co.)

2 Harps (glissandos and arps.)
Piano and Celeste (runs and arps.)
2 Vibras (contrary shimmer, etc.)
Marimbas
Novachord-high sustained misterioso

Non-concerted
Rustle-Shimmer Effect

13

p

Violins
p 3 Viole

3 Horns
3 Viole
pp

II Bsn.
Celli
D.B. Tacit

Add Fls-Oboe I

Clars.
(Hns., Vle.)

Cross Shake

Add I Bsn.

15

(Fls. out)
Add Ob. II

(Vlins.
Vle.)

(Clars.)

Vle.
(Hns.)

Cross Shake

Add Fls.

Figure 6.18 continued

17

Vlns.
Vls.

Fls.-Ob.

Add Ob.-Cls.

Ob.
I Cl.

I Hn.
+
III Hn.

II Hn.

Add Bsns.

I Hn.
+
Oboe

Mtd. Tpts.

Celli-B. Cl.-Bsns.

Celli-B. Cl.
+ II-III Hns.

Detailed description: This musical score page, labeled 'Figure 6.18 continued', begins at measure 17. The top staff features a complex rhythmic pattern with sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The second staff, for Violins and Violas, contains a triplet of eighth notes followed by a dotted quarter note. The Flute and Oboe parts have a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes. The third staff, for Oboe and Clarinet I, shows a sustained chord. The Horn I part has a single note with an accent. The Horn II and III parts have sustained chords. The Bassoon part has a triplet of eighth notes. The Muted Trumpets part has a sustained chord. The bottom staff, for Cello, Bass, and Clarinet, shows a sustained chord with an accent. The instrumentation changes between measures 17 and 18, with the addition of Bassoons and the removal of the Oboe and Clarinet I parts.

Figure 6.19 Tiomkin, *Portrait of Jennie*, “Remake: Adams Find Jennie.” While the thematic material from *Prélude à l’après-midi d’un faune* is the same, the dynamics, texture, and arrangement is radically different. (*Portrait of Jennie* by Dimitri Tiomkin. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission of Southern Music Publishing Co.)

Stretto

The musical score is arranged in two systems. The first system contains staves for Vln. I, Vln. II, Cls., Vla., Celli, Nova[chord], Hns., Tym., Bs. pizz, B. Cl., Add W[oodwin]d, Add Bsn., B. Cl., and Marimba. The second system continues the Vln. I, Vln. II, Cls., and Tym. parts. The score features various musical notations including triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings such as *pp* and *ppp*. Performance instructions include "Add W[oodwin]d" and "'G' gliss".

Figure 6.19 continued

Appassionato

Wd., Str.

Tutti 6

Bells

Mar.

Tpts., Trbs.

Hns.
fz
v

Hp. I

(Mar. simile tremolo)

The musical score is written in a key with three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a 3/4 time signature. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system includes staves for Bells, Maracas (Mar.), Tpts. and Trbs., Hns., and Hp. I. The Bells part features a melodic line with a slur and a fermata, and a triplet of eighth notes. The Maracas part has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The Tpts. and Trbs. part has a melodic line with a slur and a fermata. The Hns. part has a single note with a fermata and a dynamic marking of *fz*. The Hp. I part has a melodic line with a slur and a fermata, and a triplet of eighth notes. The second system includes staves for Bells, Maracas (Mar. simile tremolo), Tpts. and Trbs., and Hp. I. The Bells part has a melodic line with a slur and a fermata, and a triplet of eighth notes. The Mar. simile tremolo part has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The Tpts. and Trbs. part has a melodic line with a slur and a fermata. The Hp. I part has a melodic line with a slur and a fermata, and a triplet of eighth notes.

Figure 6.19 continued

The musical score consists of two systems of staves. The first system includes a top staff with a treble clef and a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). It features a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes, a *fff* dynamic marking, and another triplet. Below this are two staves: the first is labeled "Trbs." and the second is labeled "(Hp. II arpo simile)". The second system includes a top staff with a treble clef and a key signature of three sharps, featuring a triplet of eighth notes. Below this are three staves: the first is labeled "Col 8va" and the second and third are labeled with "6" and "7" respectively, indicating sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The score is written in a complex, multi-staff format typical of a film score.

In other instances, Tiomkin would attempt to pacify Selznick by composing multiple endings of a cue, as he did for “The Sketch,” “Skating Sequence,” and “Adams Shows the Portrait.” Sometimes the alternative endings merely offered thinned out orchestration of the same material; other times, as in “Adams Shows the Portrait,” Tiomkin would actually set different motivic material than Selznick had requested, as though carefully

suggesting an alternative.¹³⁸ Overall, this approach seems to have been effective. Unlike *Duel*, in which Tiomkin had written and rewritten individual cues two and three times on a frequent basis, both he and Selznick seemed to agree that this expensive trial-and-error method was ineffective. As a result, Tiomkin had much less rewriting to do, but he, the sound engineer James G. Stewart, and music editor Aubrey Lind had additional work when it came to recording and dubbing the music to scenes that had changed length during editing.

Composing beyond Selznick's Notes

One of the most important facets of Tiomkin's score that extends beyond the purview of Selznick's notes is its reinforcement of what will be termed a "reverse-Pygmalion" trajectory. While there are discernible traces of the Pygmalion myth running through three of Selznick's post-war Hollywood efforts—*Duel in the Sun*, *The Paradine Case*, and *Portrait of Jennie*—*Portrait* stands out by inverting the conventional narrative. In Ovid's telling of the tale, Pygmalion sculpts a statue, falls in love with it, and only then—by the grace of the gods—does the statue become real. In *Portrait*, Adams falls in love with a woman who is seemingly real (to Adams) and he paints her portrait. Shortly after the portrait is completed, she dies, leaving the painting to live on in her place. While this turn of events is both tragic and disturbing, the depiction of this process in the film is bittersweet and uplifting. As stated before, the film does not end with Jennie's death but,

¹³⁸ The first ending features the Jennie "youth" theme (from the opening of the First Arabesque), which is *not* what Selznick requested. As a safety, the alternative ending features the theme Selznick specified in his notes from 5 August 1948: the love theme, also from the First Arabesque, mm. 39–46. Selznick's notes from 16 September 1948 express a preference for this second ending, but in the film the *first* ending is used. Perhaps Tiomkin was able to convince Selznick or the sound engineer and music editor.

rather, with a scene in which a trio of school girls, shot in sepia tone, admire the vibrancy of Jennie's color portrait and the artistry of the man who produced it.

Tiomkin's score emphasizes the process by which Jennie's "essence" fuels Adams's artistic imagination. As the film progresses, the passage from the First Arabesque associated with Jennie's youthfulness (mm.1–17) is used less and less. To a degree, this progression is determined by Selznick's notes, which dictate the placement and recurrence of individual themes, but these notes do not account for the length and duration of the motivic material. This gradual diminishment of the First Arabesque theme in both occurrence and length may represent Jennie's aging from a girl to a woman, but it is interesting to note that as the musical signifier for Jennie's youth evaporates from the score it is replaced by two new themes. One is the previously mentioned love theme (First Arabesque, mm. 39–46, shown in figure 6.12), which is played to death—quite literally—in the final reels of the film. The other is based on "The Girl with the Flaxen Hair," a piece tagged in the "Key to themes" as "Eben [Adams] the Artist regarding Jennie: sketch, portrait, etc." While the love theme is treated as a fixed entity in length and content, the theme associated with Jennie's youthfulness and the "Flaxen Hair" theme associated with Adams's artistic interpretation of Jennie diminish and grow inversely. That is, as the lengthy passage from the First Arabesque is shortened, and heard less and less as the film progresses, the music of "Flaxen Hair" expands in melodic length and orchestral depth. It first emerges as a melodic fragment in the solo violin just before "Jennie's Song" (mm. 94–95 of "First Meeting,") and then gradually emerges in fuller, more richly scored renditions as Adams's portrait progresses.

While this progression is observable over the course of the film, the direct relationship between the First Arabesque theme and the “Flaxen Hair” theme is present only in a passage from Tiomkin’s score that was to have accompanied Adams’s first sketch of Jennie. The passage was discarded when the scene was drastically abbreviated during editing. The following analysis will first consider the scene as it appears in the film. Then the scene’s original content will be reconstructed from archival materials to show how Tiomkin’s full musical cue would have worked, had the longer scene been kept intact.

In the film, Adams’s first sketch of Jennie is conveyed in a fifteen-second montage of four shots, each linked by a dissolve (Figure 6.20).

Figure 6.20 Stills of Adams sketching. The following shot (b) shows Adams’s progress and changes the camera angle slightly. The third (c) shows the picture with still more detail. The final shot (d) shows a sunrise over the Manhattan skyline.





(b)



(c)






(d)

The first is a medium shot of Adams beginning the sketch, followed by two close-ups of the sketch itself. By excluding Adams's face from these latter two shots and raising the camera angle slightly, the camera's perspective of the progressing sketch aligns the spectator more closely with Adams's point of view, as though the spectator is viewing the emerging image through Adams's eyes. The final shot of the New York City skyline at

dawn concludes this sequence, signaling that Adams has worked on the sketch through the night and into the next day.

The montage is preceded by a short scene in which Adams arrives at his bohemian garret and walks about the room, gently unwrapping the scarf Jennie left in the park. During this sequence, a brief rendition of the First Arabesque “youth” theme is performed in the orchestral underscore. Just as the music cue ends, Adams picks up a concertina and begins to play the melody of Jennie’s Song. (As mentioned previously, Jennie’s Song is by Bernard Herrmann; it is not related to Debussy’s or Tiomkin’s music.) The shift from nondiegetic to diegetic musical accompaniment also coincides with the beginning of Adams’s voiceover, in which he contemplates Jennie’s strange wish that he “wait” for her. This layering of diegetic music and interior monologue leads directly into the montage. The concertina melody stops just as the montage and nondiegetic orchestral score begin. The voiceover overlaps slightly with the montage, providing aural continuity that smoothes the transition from diegetic concertina music to nondiegetic orchestral music. Tiomkin’s orchestral cue features Debussy’s “Flaxen Hair” and marks the first substantial excerpt of the work heard in the film. Thus, if the melodic material for the apartment scene and following montage are considered as one continuous sequence, they form the following progression (see figure 6.21):

Figure 6.21 Audio-visual summary of Adams contemplating his first meeting.

 <p>Adams examines Jennie's scarf</p>	 <p>Adams plays Jennie's song</p>	 <p>Adams sketches Jennie</p>
<p><i>Adams's voiceover</i></p>		
<p>First Arabesque (Jennie's youth)¹³⁹ <i>nondiegetic orchestra</i></p>	<p>Jennie's Song <i>diegetic concertina</i></p>	<p>Flaxen Hair (Adams's thoughts of Jennie)¹⁴⁰ <i>nondiegetic orchestra</i></p>

In this context, “Jennie’s Song” and its accompanying voiceover serves as a musical bridge linking two distinct pieces by Debussy that are related through their extra-musical associations. According to the “Key to themes,” “Arabesque No. 1” represents Jennie’s youth while “Flaxen Hair” represents Adams’s thoughts of Jennie. This associative distinction, however, largely dissolves in the context of the scene. Jennie’s “youth” theme usually plays when Jennie is present onscreen. In this scene, Jennie is physically absent, but her scarf serves metonymically to represent the fixation of Adams’s thoughts. From this perspective, all of the music in this scene represents Adams’s emotional state, but the shifting between thematic materials and musical sources expresses an unfolding psychological process. The scarf sparks Adams’s reminiscence of Jennie, which is reflected in the “youth” theme in the underscore. Next, Adams himself joins (or interrupts) the musical commentary by performing Jennie’s song on concertina, an act of musical appropriation that is reinforced through his voiceover, which effectively draws the

¹³⁹ The title of the orchestral cue is “Adams Reminisces.”

¹⁴⁰ The title of the orchestral cue is “Inspiration—[The Sketch].”

spectator into Adams's subjectivity. This mixing of diegetic performance and interior monologue almost suggests that the spectator is experiencing the concertina performance through Adams's ears. This sensory subjectivity then carries into the visual: the spectator views the progress of the sketch from Adams's point of view as "Flaxen Hair" plays in the orchestral underscore, signaling the successful channeling of Jennie, the youthful girl, to Jennie, an artistic idea in Adams's head that reaches its fullest expression through expressive lines sketched on paper and in the score.

While the visuals and music in this scene from the film combine to convey a rather nuanced idea, Tiomkin's cue featured a more expansive and compelling enactment of Adams's creative transformation. A music timing cue sheet shows that the sketching scene was initially edited to feature longer shots of the sketching process interspersed with shots of the darkening and lightening city skyline.¹⁴¹ (In the film, there is only one skyline shot at the end). The cue sheet also bore instructions for Tiomkin to overlap—not juxtapose—the orchestral cue with the concertina music, thereby creating an audio dissolve from diegetic to nondiegetic music, a musico-cinematic technique that often denotes "the transition from the real to the ideal realm."¹⁴²

Consequently, the beginning of Tiomkin's cue for the sketching sequence—alternately titled as "The Sketch" and "Inspiration"—set "Jennie's Song" and the theme for Jennie's youth (First Arabesque) in counterpoint for the first three measures (see

¹⁴¹ "Portrait of Jennie—Music Timing Cue Sheet, Inspiration," 8 August 1948, HRC: 3674:6. An earlier timing cue sheet from 30 July 1948 outlined a slightly shorter cue that would not overlap with the concertina playing. The decision to blend the two cues represents a later creative contribution, perhaps suggested by Tiomkin himself. While Selznick's personal notes do not mention the overlapping of concertina and orchestral music, his early draft from 27 July 1930 asks that the performance on concertina be *preceded* by "JENNIE'S SONG [in the nondiegetic score], score as if tune in his head..." (DTC 49).

¹⁴² This quote regarding audio dissolves is drawn from James Buhler, "Analytical and Interpretive Approaches (II)," *Film Music: Critical Approaches*, ed. K.J. Donnelly (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, Inc., 2001), 41, who in turn references Rick Altman, *The American Film Musical* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 67.

figure 6.22). While the inclusion of this special thematic and nondiegetic/diegetic interaction would have made the spectator's gradual alignment with Adams's subjectivity more artful and compelling, the reasons for its excision are easily explained. The melody of "Jennie's Song" in Tiomkin's cue differs from Bernard Herrmann's composition. During the scoring of the film, Selznick seriously considered replacing Herrmann's song with a new Debussy-based arrangement. Tiomkin obliged by setting the same lyrics to a melody based loosely on passages from *Sirènes*. Although Selznick ultimately returned to Herrmann's version and restored it to the film, Tiomkin had already woven passages of the new version into various parts of the underscore. Although most of the passages were not so exposed as to draw attention to themselves, this opening passage from "Inspiration" would have posed a more significant problem. Thus, it was cut from the film.

Figure 6.22 Tiomkin, *Portrait of Jennie*, “Inspiration—The Sketch,” mm. 1–4. First page of the piano-conductor’s part, which features the First Arabesque in the second staff in counterpoint with Tiomkin’s version of “Jennie’s Song” the third staff. (*Portrait of Jennie* by Dimitri Tiomkin. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission of Southern Music Publishing Co.)

Tranquillo

Vlns. (mutes) *ppp* +novachord ponticello

marimba *p* (chimes)

Fl. II

E.H. and Concertino

celli pizz *ppp*

marimba (chimes)

Vibra (motor on)

Flute Clr.

Bells

+Bssn dolce

Hns-muted, stgs

celli-harps

Bs.

The passage that follows introduces new thematic material in counterpoint to the Arabesque. As the First Arabesque continues in measures 4–8, it is joined in measure 5 by the opening, descending arpeggio gesture from “Flaxen Hair,” played *dolce* by solo

violin. In measure 6, the gesture is repeated; this time the timbre is given a slight shimmer through the addition of a second violin. In measure 9, the First Arabesque ceases, but the opening descending figure from “Flaxen Hair” is reiterated a third time by the entire first violin section and echoed by the violas. This carefully controlled development of “Flaxen Hair” through the horizontal extension and vertical expansion into other instruments creates the effect of Debussy’s piece gradually emerging from the orchestral texture. Tiomkin’s dovetailing of the First Arabesque with “Flaxen Hair” expresses the transference of musical energies, with the theme of Jennie’s youth channeling directly into “Flaxen Hair,” the musical emblem of Adams’s Jennie. In his heavily annotated pencil draft for the cue, Tiomkin even writes “theme coming to life” in blue pencil in measure 10 (see figure 6.2)—a point where the violins and violas exchange fragments of the emerging “Flaxen Hair” melody.¹⁴³ In measures 11–19 of Tiomkin’s cue, “Flaxen Hair” issues forth without further fragmentation.¹⁴⁴ This more fully orchestrated passage corresponds directly with measures 11–19 of Debussy’s original piano prelude (see figure 6.23).¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ Dimitri Tiomkin, “The Sketch, Reel 2 Part 4,” DTC 49.

¹⁴⁴ Tiomkin actually composed two different endings for the cue, such that there are two versions of mm. 12–19. The changes, however, are limited to instrumentation. There is no change in harmonic or melodic content. The brief passage heard in the film is drawn from the final five measures of the second version.

¹⁴⁵ Debussy’s original piano prelude is set entirely in 3/4, whereas Tiomkin’s cue shifts between 3/4, 2/4, and 4/4 in order to match the continuity editing and visuals. Interestingly, these changes in meter are compensated through small changes in rhythmic duration, so that the melodic content of each bar remains nearly identical to Debussy’s music even as the length of each measure varies.

Figure 6.23 Tiomkin, *Portrait of Jennie*, “Inspiration—The Sketch,” mm. 5–16. (*Portrait of Jennie* by Dimitri Tiomkin. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission of Southern Music Publishing Co.)

The musical score is divided into two systems of staves. The first system (measures 5-16) includes the following parts and markings:

- Staff 1:** solo violin *dolce* *p*
- Staff 2:** (2 violins) *p*
- Staff 3:** Fl II' Vlns. *pp* (triplets)
- Staff 4:** (Vla--Clrs)
- Staff 5:** Vibra
- Staff 6:** Bsn, Celli + Harp
- Staff 7:** Vla (arco)
- Staff 8:** Cello pizz *Piano*
- Staff 9:** (chimes)

The second system (measures 7-16) includes the following parts and markings:

- Staff 10:** 1. Vln.
- Staff 11:** Flute+Clar, Marimba+ Harp, (+Novachord) *dolce* *pp* *subito*
- Staff 12:** Fl. Vlns. *pp* (triplets), +E.H., +Cello (arco)
- Staff 13:** Hr, Pia *sostenuto*
- Staff 14:** Hn.
- Staff 15:** Cello *pp*
- Staff 16:** celi *pp*
- Staff 17:** Bs.
- Staff 18:** 1 Vla (solo)

Figure 6.23 continued

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system covers measures 10 to 12, and the second system covers measures 13 to 15. The score is written for a large orchestra with multiple staves.

System 1 (Measures 10-12):

- Staff 1 (Melody):** Starts at measure 10 with a treble clef and a key signature of three flats. It features a melodic line with eighth notes and rests. Dynamics include *p* and *mf*. A dashed line labeled "Chiasmo" spans across the system.
- Staff 2 (Woodwinds):** Labeled "(+Flute) *dolciss*".
- Staff 3 (Woodwinds):** Labeled "Clrs., Stgs." and "(chime)".
- Staff 4 (Woodwinds):** Labeled "Ob., Clar., Hn., Celli, Hp.".
- Staff 5 (Woodwinds):** Labeled "E.Hn. Vlas. (mutes)".
- Staff 6 (Woodwinds):** Labeled "(Clrs., Stgs.)".
- Staff 7 (Cello/Double Bass):** Labeled "Cello (solo)".
- Staff 8 (Percussion):** Labeled "Timp.".
- Staff 9 (Percussion):** Labeled "W.Ws.+Bells+Hp.+Nova[chord]".

System 2 (Measures 13-15):

- Staff 1 (Melody):** Starts at measure 13 with a treble clef and a key signature of three flats. It features a melodic line with eighth notes and rests. Dynamics include *ppp* and *pp*.
- Staff 2 (Woodwinds):** Labeled "solo vln. *mp*" and "(+oboe)".
- Staff 3 (Woodwinds):** Labeled "(chime)".
- Staff 4 (Woodwinds):** Labeled "Vlns." and "W.W., Tpts., Hn.".
- Staff 5 (Woodwinds):** Labeled "Trbs.".
- Staff 6 (Cello/Double Bass):** Labeled "Vla-Celli".
- Staff 7 (Percussion):** Labeled "Vibra. (on)" and "Nova.".
- Staff 8 (Percussion):** Labeled "W.W.".

At the bottom of the first system, the word "piano" is written above a dashed line with the number "8" and a superscript "va".

Through the intertwining of Jennie’s song and the First Arabesque as well as the gradual emergence of “Flaxen Hair,” Tiomkin’s “Inspiration” distills larger thematic gestures spanning across the film into a short, forty-seven-second musical utterance that followed Selznick’s suggestion to score the sequence with “Flaxen Hair” but went

considerably beyond.¹⁴⁶ With only Selznick's notes and the finished picture, which only includes the final five measures of Tiomkin's cue, one would assume that Tiomkin merely followed orders. The sketches, however, prove otherwise. The scene was more than a transitional montage for the composer. It was an opportunity for music to infuse a simple gesture—the sketching a girl's face—with deeper significance; namely, marking the transition of Jennie, an unpredictable and seemingly autonomous spirit, into a fixed image (or fixed piece of music) with which Adams, the Pygmalion figure, will fall in love. While the truncation of the scene was hardly a deliberate attempt to exclude Tiomkin's innovative contribution—there are other contributions that do remain in the finished film—this rediscovered music provides insight into Tiomkin's compositional approach as well as his understanding of the film apart from Selznick.

Aubrey Lind's and James G. Stewart's Revisions

Reading Selznick's notes alongside Tiomkin's manuscripts and conductor's parts reveals much of the tug and pull of ideas exchanged between producer and composer as they jointly sought to construct an effective musical score. There are, however, two others who played crucial roles in the construction of the score—the sound engineer James G. Stewart and music editor Aubrey Lind.¹⁴⁷ While James G. Stewart was

¹⁴⁶ "Jennie—Music Notes," 31 July 1948, HRC 3674:5, 2.

¹⁴⁷ In one interview, James Stewart openly disclosed that he did not possess the musical skills necessary to perform the "exacting" duties of a music editor or cutter, who often had to meticulously excise individual bars of music from recordings without creating jarring skips in the soundtrack. (See "Development of Sound Technique," an American Film Institute/Louis B. Mayer Foundation Oral History, James G. Stewart interviewed by Irene Kahn Atkins, 11 April–20 June 1976 (Glen Rock: Microfilming Corporation of America, 1977), 105–106. Nevertheless, he had extensive experience recording scores, interacting with composers, and dubbing music. In the interview, he even describes mixing the music at higher or lower levels than the composer intended to achieve certain effects.

In contrast to Stewart, whose position as chief technical supervisor brought him in frequent contact with Selznick and Tiomkin, Aubrey Lind's work for Selznick left no paper trail, aside from several

essentially reprising the same role he had served in *The Paradine Case* production, he would take a much more active and creative role in dubbing Tiomkin's music to the film's soundtrack.

In addition to handling the dubbing of the music, which involved managing the volume of the music and its balance with dialogue and sound effects, Stewart and Lind also had the unenviable task of fitting recorded music to a film that already had changed in length and timing since Tiomkin had begun composing. Whereas in most non-Selznick productions the composer did not begin composing or recording his or her music until after visual editing had been completed, Selznick continued to trim footage from many of the scenes during and *after* Tiomkin composed his score. Consequently, there was often too much music for the scene's length and the visuals and music no longer aligned properly. As music editor, Lind's job consisted of reconciling the differences by making judicious cuts in the music. The sketching scene discussed above was one case in which a shortened scene meant that much of Tiomkin's music was left on the cutting room floor. In another case, an entire cue, "Parapet Sequence," was deemed unsuitable and was cut and replaced by a music track that is heard again later in the film ("Adams Visits Convent"). Often, however, the edits were more discreet. "Adam[s] Visits the Art Gallery," for example, is shortened in the film simply by excising the first four measures and the last measure. Similarly, the scene in which Adams discusses Jennie's family with a Rialto Theater employee was abbreviated, forcing Lind to cut the first twelve measures

payroll checks. While it is known that Lind worked with Stewart when dubbing Alfred Newman's score for *Gunga Din* (1939), little else has been found. In the following analysis, it is assumed that he managed the precise cutting and pasting of musical passages under Stewart's guidance and supervision.

of Tiomkin's seventy-two measure cue.¹⁴⁸ Not all of the cuts, of course, were made by the music editor. Blue pencil strike marks in Tiomkin's conducting parts show measures the composer chose to excise during the recording sessions due to timing issues. One example occurs in "Adams Sells the Sketch," in which Tiomkin abbreviates a passage based on the First Arabesque by crossing out m. 30–31 and m. 33 to fit the timing of the cue to the scene. As opposed to Lind's cuts, which often excise an entire thematic statement (and consequently alter the thematic content of a given cue), Tiomkin's tend to be more surgical, removing interior measures and resorting to paraphrasing instead of outright omission when possible.¹⁴⁹ In either case, most of the cuts preserve the phrasing and cadential structure of Tiomkin's original by not beginning or cutting off music mid-phrase. All told, nearly every cue in the film has been shortened in length by Lind, Stewart, Tiomkin, or all three to fit the new scene lengths.¹⁵⁰

While it is tempting to view Stewart's, Lind's, and Tiomkin's efforts as necessary, but undesirable musical butchery, certain edits actually improve the musical cogency of the cues. A very simple case is the excising of the first three measures of an eleven-measure cue titled "Adams Reminisces." The original cue begins with the opening string tremolo passage from *Nuages* before transitioning into the passage from the First Arabesque designated in Selznick's notes as Jennie's "youth theme." By cutting the *Nuages* passage, Lind begins the cue with a solo violin holding a d^3 , which leads smoothly into the Arabesque theme, featuring the rippling arpeggios from harp and

¹⁴⁸ The title of the cue is "Mickey Mouse" because a Mickey Mouse cartoon is playing in the theater as Adams speaks with the employee.

¹⁴⁹ See also Tiomkin's carefully selected cuts in "Skating Sequence (Revised)": mm. 21, 28–29, 33, 37, 88 (shortened from 4/4 to 2/4). Tiomkin also composed an alternate ending that was two measures shorter than the original.

¹⁵⁰ The only cues to be heard without cut measures are "Hot Chocolate," "The Scarf," "Loneliness" [*sic*], and "Adams Visits the Convent."

celeste with solo violin gliding a light descant line. The cue ends, exactly as it began (from measure 4), with the sustained d^3 of the solo violin. When Adams begins playing the concertina a moment later, its reedy timbre follows smoothly after the held, upper register note on the violin dies away. The short cue consequently acquires a level of symmetry that it did not previously have in the original version beginning with *Nuages*. In the film, the lone d^3 of the solo violin emerges from silence and then closes the cue quietly, with the intervening measures of music blossoming from and returning to this single pitch.

A more complicated case is that of the conversation Adams and Spinney have over tea after Adams has sold his first sketch of Jennie (“Tea Sequence”). Following Selznick’s instructions, Tiomkin features an extended twenty-measure passage based on *Nuages* (following two measures of introductory material).¹⁵¹ Selznick’s only other instruction was to incorporate Spinney’s theme next, which Tiomkin does for ten measures (measures 22–31).¹⁵² Having obliged his employer, Tiomkin then branched out, setting “Flaxen Hair” and the First Arabesque in counterpoint to underscore Spinney’s prescient words of encouragement: “I think the sketch shows you what you can do. All you need is a little inspiration.” The gesture clearly reprises music from the excised section of “The Sketch,” when the “Flaxen Hair” theme (Eben’s thoughts of Jennie) is born out of the First Arabesque-Jennie “youth” theme. With this preceding passage cut from the score, the effectiveness of this later reprise is all but completely lost. Now the audience does not hear the two themes in counterpoint until this later scene with Spinney, and the gesture is easily missed under the dialogue. The last five measures of the cue

¹⁵¹ “JENNIE”—MUSIC NOTES, 31 July 1948, HRC 3674:5.

¹⁵² “JENNIE”—MUSIC NOTES, 5 August 1948, HRC 3674:5.

(measures 37–41) feature material from the Second Arabesque, which accompanies Adams’s mention of a “twirl on the ice” and anticipates the music of the following skating sequence, which uses the brisk Second Arabesque throughout.

This succession of themes summarizes the cue as Tiomkin originally wrote it. Stewart and Lind, however, had to adjust the opening material significantly and assume more creative roles. Feeling that the extended *Nuages* passage was too morose (Tiomkin’s opening tempo is “Adagio” and is to be played “sadly” at measure 4), Selznick had asked that the Second Arabesque start earlier in the cue, “at the beginning of the scene [when Adams says] ‘I haven’t been skating since I was a kid.’”¹⁵³ To accommodate this request, Lind began the cue with the passage from the Second Arabesque set by Tiomkin at the *end* of the cue (measures 37–41). Following this five measure introduction, Lind then returned to measures 23–30, which feature Spinney’s theme. Following this, Lind circled back to the *Nuages* passage at measure 10 and followed the cue through to the end, thereby repeating the Spinney and Second Arabesque passages. These simple changes alter the thematic structure of the cue:

Original Succession of Themes:

Nuages—Spinney theme—First Arabesque/Flaxen Hair—Second Arabesque

Lind’s Revised Succession of Themes:

Second Arabesque—Spinney Theme—*Nuages*—Spinney Theme—First Arabesque/Flaxen Hair—Second Arabesque

Much like his editing of the “Adams Reminisces” cue, which began and concluded with a d^3 in the solo violin, Lind’s editing gives the cue a rough sense of symmetry that it

¹⁵³ “JENNIE, MUSIC NOTES,” 16 September 1948, p. 1, DTC 49.

previously lacked, with the Second Arabesque beginning and ending the cue, while Spinney's theme frames the single *Nuages* passage. While this approximation of an arch form may be musically appealing for its purely formal properties, it also plays a significant role in articulating the scene's relationship to the larger narrative.

As previously mentioned, the Second Arabesque dominates the ice skating sequence. To prepare for this scene, Tiomkin cleverly elided the two juxtaposed musical cues: He ended "Tea Sequence" with a five-measure adaptation of the Second Arabesque's first four measures, then continued the Arabesque in "Skating Sequence" from the point he left off, heightening the cadential arrival in Debussy's original by inserting a brief pause between the two cues (see figures 6.24 and 6.25).¹⁵⁴

¹⁵⁴ Tiomkin's careful setting of the Second Arabesque across two distinct cues is almost thwarted by more Stewart-imposed cuts. The first four measures of "Skating Sequence" are cut from the film. Fortunately, these measures are essentially repeated in mm. 5–8, so the effect of continuity is not sacrificed.

Figure 6.24 Tiomkin, *Portrait of Jennie*, “Tea Sequence.” The cue’s conclusion features interrupted material from Debussy’s *Second Arabesque*. (*Portrait of Jennie* by Dimitri Tiomkin. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission of Southern Music Publishing Co.)

The musical score consists of two systems, each with four staves. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 3/4. Measure numbers 36, 37, and 38 are indicated at the beginning of their respective staves.

System 1 (Measures 36-37):

- Staff 1 (Woodxylophone):** Measure 36 features a *Glissando* leading to a note in measure 37. Measure 37 continues with a melodic line.
- Staff 2 (Piano Flutes):** Measure 36 has a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 37 has a long note.
- Staff 3 (Strings, Vibraphone, Brass):** Measure 36 has a long note. Measure 37 has a triplet of eighth notes.
- Staff 4 (Strings, Harp):** Measure 36 has a long note. Measure 37 has a triplet of eighth notes.

System 2 (Measures 37-38):

- Staff 1 (Woodxylophone):** Measure 37 continues with a melodic line. Measure 38 has a triplet of eighth notes.
- Staff 2 (Piano Flutes):** Measure 37 has a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 38 has a triplet of eighth notes.
- Staff 3 (Strings, Vibraphone, Violins 1/2 Tremolo):** Measure 37 has a long note. Measure 38 has a triplet of eighth notes.
- Staff 4 (Brass, Woodxylophone, Strings):** Measure 37 has a long note. Measure 38 has a triplet of eighth notes.

Figure 6.24 continued

Figure 6.24 continued shows a musical score for measures 40-43. The score is in 3/4 time and the key signature has three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The first staff (Violins) starts at measure 40 with a melodic line. The second staff (Violas) features a triplet pattern of eighth notes. The third staff (E. Hn. Hps.) has a sustained chord. The fourth staff (Bass) is mostly silent. The fifth staff (Clars., Bsns.) has a melodic line starting at measure 41. The sixth staff (Stgs., W.W., Hns.) is marked *pp* and contains a sustained chord. The seventh staff (Harp) has a melodic line starting at measure 41. The eighth staff (D.Bs. Pizz.) is marked *p* and has a rhythmic pattern.

Figure 6.25 Tiomkin, *Portrait of Jennie*, “Skating Sequence.” Beginning of the cue features a continuation of the Second Arabesque. (*Portrait of Jennie* by Dimitri Tiomkin. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission of Southern Music Publishing Co.)

Figure 6.25 shows the beginning of the cue for the “Skating Sequence.” The score is in 3/4 time and the key signature has three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The first staff (Vlns.) features a triplet pattern of eighth notes, marked *mp*. The second staff (Fls., Celeste) has a sustained chord. The third staff (Pizz. Strgs. (add Bells)) has a rhythmic pattern. The fourth staff ((add Hps.)) has a sustained chord. The fifth staff (Clars., Bsns.) has a melodic line. The sixth staff ((add Vle.-Celli pizz attacks)) has a rhythmic pattern. The seventh staff (Harp) has a melodic line. The eighth staff ((D.Bs. Pizz.)) is marked *p* and has a rhythmic pattern.

While this decision represents effective musical adaptation on Tiomkin’s part, Lind’s decision to *begin* “Tea Sequence” with the opening measures of the Second Arabesque also has important consequences. In the simplest sense, it relates directly to Adams’s

actions and dialogue. The chipper music conveys Adams's excitement after having sold his sketch of Jennie better than Tiomkin's original Adagio passage and relates to the onscreen action: Adams looking out the window watching skaters. Turning away, he remarks: "You know I haven't been ice skating since I was a kid in Maine." The Second Arabesque then reaches a musical pause (as it would in Debussy's original), but instead of continuing with its triplet-freckled melody as would be expected Spinney's lyrical theme enters, taking the underscore in a different direction. This interruption of the Debussy, made especially noticeable by its halt over a dominant pedal, generates a subliminal musical tension that is not resolved until the end of the cue, when the Second Arabesque passage returns and then continues into the next cue, "Skating Sequence." Over Spinney's theme, Adams reminisces about his childhood, but Spinney's theme in the underscore conveys Spinney's growing fondness for Adams and her attentiveness, emphasized first through lighting (she remains lit as Adams walks into shadow), then through a brief, eye-level medium close-up (Adams is shot at a low-angle, placing the spectator, like Spinney, in a sitting position) (see figures 6.26).¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁵ Had Tiomkin's cue been heard on the soundtrack as it was originally composed, Adams's reminiscences of childhood would have been accompanied by *Nuages*, music that would also relate to the onscreen dialogue but would have a very different effect, essentially highlighting Adams's dialogue and downplaying Spinney's role as listener. Thus, Tiomkin's original cue better follows the dialogue while Stewart's version emphasizes the visual framing, which tends to align the spectator's physical position with Spinney.

Figure 6.26 Stills from Adams's conversation with Spinney. Adams recalls his childhood while skaters move in circles outside the window (a). Adams muses in the shadows while Spinney listens from a well-lit corner (b). Spinney listens closely, her eyes looking up at Adams (c). Like Spinney, the spectator is similarly situated below Adams, as conveyed through this low-angle shot (d).



(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)

Following Spinney's theme, Lind jumps back further in Tiomkin's cue to measure 10, a passage based on measures 16–24 of Debussy's *Nuages*. (At this point, the music and visuals align as Tiomkin originally intended.) The passage from *Nuages* here is telling. Tiomkin generally uses the first eight measures of Debussy's *Nuages*, a passage he labels as the "Artist's Theme."¹⁵⁶ Here, however, the artist's self-doubts are reflected in the use of a different selection from *Nuages* reflects Adams's wandering from his true center. Following *Nuages*, Spinney's theme returns as she reassures Adams that his doubts are natural for any artist and not to be feared. The First Arabesque-"Flaxen Hair" passage that follows musically represents Spinney's solution for Adams: Jennie's spirit will motivate and inspire his work. The return of the Second Arabesque at the end of the cue marks a lift in Adams's spirits as he once again considers skating. This second entrance of the Second Arabesque offers a second attempt to "fix" the thwarted opening of the Second Arabesque heard at the beginning of the scene. In this case, the Arabesque continues successfully into "Skating Sequence" as the location shifts to the ice rink where Adams meets Jennie a second time.

Obviously, the fact that the thematic material heard on the soundtrack relates to the onscreen dialogue and visuals is perfectly conventional and hardly worthy of note.

¹⁵⁶ See "First Meeting," m.12, p. 2.

The point of interest here is that the cue is both subtle and effective because the music has been filtered through multiple minds. Selznick's instructions provided some compositional impetus to which Tiomkin added significantly more. Lind then pruned the material by omitting some passages and repeating others. Positioning the Second Arabesque at the end *and* beginning of the tea scene, Lind bracketed the scene with music emphasizing its special relationship to the following skating scene: the solution to the artistic insecurities Adams expresses over tea is Jennie, who will soon be skating on the very ice rink he views from the window. Similarly, the person who helps Adams arrive at this realization is Spinney, whose music surrounds Debussy's *Nuages*, effectively embracing the music that represents Adams's fears of mediocrity. Lind's changes to Tiomkin's music not only brighten the pacing of the scene, they also highlight relationships and tensions between characters within the scene and emphasize narrative connections beyond the scene.

As the technical engineer in charge of special effects, the climactic hurricane sequence was the most important part of the film for James Stewart. His decisions would profoundly impact four of Tiomkin's most technically complicated cues, though his influence would not be entirely positive. Selznick was also deeply invested in the hurricane, as it was here that he hoped to impress, shock, and amaze audiences with eye-popping, ear-shattering showmanship. While it would seem that a hurricane would provide ample drama by itself, Selznick wanted lots of music throughout much of the sequence. For a single shot of the hurricane's core, Selznick requested: "'CLOUDS'. Strange, ugly, grating. Sucking noise with one instrument—musical imitation of sound effect. Very shrill, almost maddening and deafening, growing in volume [like] weird

monster, like the end of the world.”¹⁵⁷ Later, as Adams and Jennie struggle in the onslaught of water, Selznick asks that “score...struggle up rocks. Storm music, no voices. ‘SIRENS’ counterpointed with ‘ARABESQUE’ if they will merge. Before dissolve, wipe out ‘ARABESQUE’ with ‘SIRENS’.”¹⁵⁸ In essence, Selznick wanted a musical equivalent of the visual special effects—the more literal the correlation, the better. Tiomkin got into the spirit of Selznick’s description and duly produced densely wrought sketches, each thick with chromatic swirls, dissonant clusters, and shards of Debussy’s themes. He even managed to fulfill Selznick’s wish and set *Sirènes* and the First Arabesque love theme in counterpoint at the appointed spot in the film.¹⁵⁹

All of this attention to the music, however, would prove largely moot; Selznick and Stewart were also planning for a full assortment of hurricane sound effects. Balancing the elaborately conceived storm effects with the equally elaborate orchestral storm was a challenge, and in dubbing Stewart gave priority to his water, wind, and thunder. When the studio submitted a report of its visual and aural special effects for Oscar consideration, the report concluded soberly: “Some music was used during the storm, but it was found more effective to use only the sound effects during the major portion.”¹⁶⁰ Indeed, of Tiomkin’s four cues devoted to the storm sequences, only brief excerpts of each are heard. Three measures from a total of fifty-five are played from Tiomkin’s densest cue, “The Great Wave”; the passage in which *Sirènes* and the First Arabesque were to be played simultaneously is not included. Altogether, Tiomkin

¹⁵⁷ “JENNIE, MUSIC NOTES,” 2 October 1948, DTC 49, 2.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹⁵⁹ Dimitri Tiomkin, “The Great Wave,” mm. 35–40.

¹⁶⁰ “Explanatory Data to accompany screening of clips of pictures nominated for the SPECIAL EFFECTS AWARD,” undated, p. 3, *Portrait of Jennie* clippings file, Margaret Herrick Library, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Beverly Hills, California.

composed 282 measures of storm music, of which only thirty-two are heard in the film. Adding insult to Tiomkin's injury, portions of Herrmann's song *are* heard during the sequence, inserted against the composer's wishes.¹⁶¹ While the severe cuts recall the slashing of musical passages from Tiomkin's climactic "Duel Transfiguration" cue from *Duel in the Sun*, the extreme musical discontinuity in *Portrait* furthers the aural chaos. Splutters of orchestral music are heard for seconds at a time, then washed away by growling waves, only to reemerge briefly before another wall of water strikes. From a purely musical angle, the effect is frustrating. Even if a spectator is oblivious to the swaths of music cut from the sequence, it is obvious from the ragged editing that the music is not being heard in its entirety.

It is only fair to judge the sequence as a cinematic whole; to focus on the music to the exclusion of all else misses the point. In actuality, the musical discontinuities are consistent with the overall effect of the film. Some of the musical breaks were even planned by Selznick:

...[start music] before sight of Jennie's boat, anticipating her entrance. [Use] "APRES MIDI" not too weird.

Stop score again as Eben runs down from lighthouse and calls. On next shot, of empty rocks, use "APRES MIDI".

Repeat above pattern three times: no score as Eben calls, score empty shot with "APRES MIDI" for feeling of Jennie's nearness.¹⁶²

Selznick's idea of a faltering musical texture to suggest Jennie's "nearness" but not absolute presence is in keeping with the previously discussed portrait painting scene in

¹⁶¹ When Selznick had Bernard Herrmann's version of "Jennie's Song" reinserted into the film's score, Tiomkin complained: "It seems that Jenny (sic) song and repeaters did not click at preview.... This song is...definitely conflicting with the unique immortal style of Debussy." See memo from Tiomkin to DOS, 14 December 1948, HRC 569:11.

¹⁶² "JENNIE, MUSIC NOTES," 2 October 1948, p. 3, DTC 49.

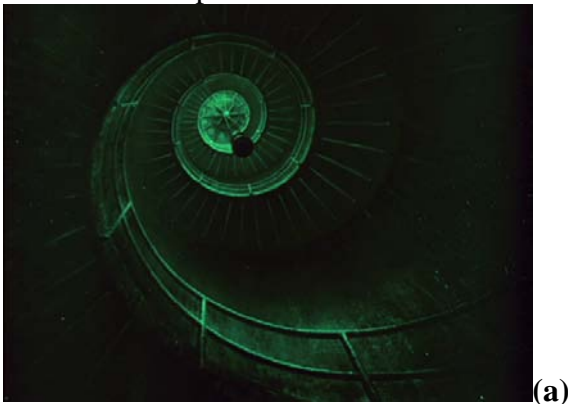
which Jennie falls asleep and the music seemingly falls asleep with her. Also akin to this earlier scene is the seeming breakdown of the visual image during the storm. In the painting sequence, this is accomplished simply and powerfully through an unanticipated freeze-frame. In the hurricane sequence, the entire visual style changes, with jarring close-ups and disorienting editing, all of which are heightened by the sudden shift to green tinting and an enlarged screen (see figure 6.27).

Figure 6.27 Stills of Adams in the hurricane. Adams winces as salt water peppers his face in an uncomfortable and blurry close-up (a). The second image (b) does not appear unusual as a still, but in the context of the film, the jump to this extreme low-angle shot is jarring.



David Thomson explains the choppy editing as a consequence of Selznick's firing of Hal Kern, his longtime and talented editor, who left amidst postproduction.¹⁶³ This may well have been a factor, as Selznick placed great emphasis on seamless continuity editing, and the hurricane sequence's rough and ragged visuals are atypical. On the other hand, the entire scene is atypical, with sound as well as visuals being unrealistically manipulated. When Adams ventures inside the lighthouse, for example, an unnatural quiet blots out the storm sounds. Ghostly strains of Herrmann's song are heard softly as the visuals feature extreme low and high camera angles with an upwardly tracking camera motion that may well have inspired Hitchcock's famous "vertigo" shot from *Vertigo* (1958) (see figure 6.28).¹⁶⁴

Figure 6.28 Stills from the lighthouse. The first still is an extreme low-angle shot of the spiral staircase in the lighthouse (a). In the second still (b), Adams races up the stairs past an open window, just as Scottie (Jimmy Stewart) does in *Vertigo*. In the third still (c), Adams looks up at the camera in an extreme high-angle shot.



¹⁶³ Thomson, 501.

¹⁶⁴ In *Vertigo*, Hitchcock's "vertigo" shot featured a high angle view of a staircase which Hitchcock destabilized by tracking the camera *away* while zooming *in* with the lens. Adams's ascent of the lighthouse staircase is shot in a manner very similar to Scottie's urgent ascent of the mission staircase in *Vertigo*. David Thomson insightfully remarks that "if *Portrait* had not been attempted, then its onlooker, Alfred Hitchcock, might never have begun to think of *Vertigo*. For *Vertigo* is the eventual realization of *Portrait of Jennie*...." (Thomson, 494–495.) *Vertigo*'s score would be composed by Bernard Herrmann.



(b)



(c)

When all the elements are considered together—the disorienting visuals, the non-realistic sound, the shredded wisps of music, it becomes clear that the entire scene represents in filmic terms that which is happening in the narrative. As Adams’s world and Jennie’s past are forcibly united, then torn asunder, the cinematic elements conveying the story similarly begin to rip apart. The hurricane, as it were, is not contained within the story; its havoc spreads outward, threatening the coherence of the film itself. Thus, while the efforts of Tiomkin and his orchestrators are grievously misrepresented in this crucial sequence, the sacrifice serves the themes of the film and arguably helped sound editor James G. Stewart to win the third and final Oscar of his career and the only Oscar *Portrait* received.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁵ *Portrait* received the 1949 Oscar for “Best Effects, Special Effects.” Stewart was nominated for an Academy Award nine times and won for *This Land is Mine* (1943), *Bells of St. Mary’s* (1945), and *Portrait of Jennie*.

“The year’s most unusual entry”: *Portrait*’s Reception

While the Debussy estate granted permission to arrange Debussy’s music for *Portrait*, it placed severe strictures on the score’s dissemination. Tiomkin’s arrangements were not to be heard outside of the film. Releasing an album of Tiomkin’s arrangements was completely out of the question, even though Selznick wanted to promote the music separately from the film as he had with all of his previous films of the decade.¹⁶⁶ In addition, the *Portrait* score did not fall under the category of “original” composition and could not be considered for an Academy Award. With such limitations placed upon the score’s exposure, the reviews of critics and journalists commenting on the film become especially important for gauging the music’s reception. In the end, Selznick and Tiomkin’s lengthy and expensive efforts did not go unnoticed in the press. The music received considerable coverage in film reviews and blurbs focused specifically on the film’s score. While attention devoted to the film’s score was unusual, so too was the considerable gap in opinion—both for the film and its score. While nearly all reviewers acknowledged that *Portrait* was anything but standard Hollywood fare, there was considerable disagreement, even ambivalence, over whether the film’s outsider status was

¹⁶⁶ Instead of a soundtrack for the film, Selznick had to settle for recordings of Debussy’s music that would be cross promoted with the film. As Robert Dann informed Selznick, “The Debussy heirs will not permit commercial phonograph recordings of Tiomkin’s arrangements of the Debussy music, so that any thought of putting out a special album of the musical score of the Picture [*sic*] itself is out.” Robert Dann to DOS, 17 September 1948, HRC 3377:7.

United Music Publishers Limited of London did publish a sheet music collection of the six Debussy works featured in the film for solo piano, with the famous portrait of Jennie set prominently on the cover. Yet even this product threatened to become a liability when the film score was deemed unsatisfactory by Durand & Cie, one of the publishers who owned the rights to Debussy’s works. As the Paris correspondent explained to the Selznick studio, “had [Durand] seen the film before, they certainly would not have allowed the United British Publishing Company to print the Album” (Alix Boissard to Mr. Downing, 25 January 1950, HRC 944:5).

a plus. As Hollywood gossip columnist Hedda Hopper marveled, perhaps too earnestly, "...it's different, it's beautiful, it makes you think. It's un-Hollywood."¹⁶⁷

Variety similarly named the film as "the year's most unusual entry," praising *Portrait* as a "tender, poetic study" in which "performances are among this year's best."¹⁶⁸ In particular, the reviewer singled out Tiomkin's "spellbinding" music and returned to the score in his concluding paragraph: "Tiomkin rates the highest plaudits... for this thrilling score, based on Debussy themes. The effect when loudspeakers scattered through the Picwood theatre at the premiere let loose with earsplitting chords during the hurricane was electrifying."¹⁶⁹ Ironically, the bulk of Tiomkin's music for the hurricane sequence had been cut. The *Hollywood Reporter* reviewer was much more ambivalent about the film as a whole, but considered Tiomkin's "superlative musical accompaniment" one of the film's redeeming features.¹⁷⁰

Others were less charmed. *The New Yorker's* reviewer titled his devastating critique "Culture with a Capital 'K'" and proceeded to ridicule every element of the production, including "the heavenly choirs."¹⁷¹ In the eyes of the reviewer, Selznick had made the mistake of "blowing up what might have been an entertaining trifle into the proportions of a Macy balloon."¹⁷² The hurricane sequence that had thrilled *Variety* was the central object of this reviewer's disdain: "Realism is all well and good, but I don't think it's necessary to make the customers duck down in their seats just to prove your love for authenticity."¹⁷³ Similarly, Bosley Crowther of the *New York Times* lamented the

¹⁶⁷ Hedda Hopper, "Looking at Hollywood," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 31 December 1948, 14.

¹⁶⁸ *Daily Variety*, 24 December 1948.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁰ *Hollywood Reporter*, 24 December 1948.

¹⁷¹ "Culture with a Capital 'K,'" *The New Yorker*, 2 April 1949.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

“howling hurricane that will blast you out of your seat” and recommended that moviegoers “have some cotton ready to stuff in your ears.”¹⁷⁴ Crowther largely dismissed the film and its “soggy and saccharine” score,¹⁷⁵ acknowledging that it would only appeal to “those who go for tearful romance, with the Vox Hollywood open full blast.”¹⁷⁶ Mae Tinee of the *Chicago Daily Tribune* was thoroughly annoyed, noting that

the entire treatment is heavy handed and self-conscious, and the musical score hinders rather than helps. Debussy’s delicate melodies form its basis, but the fragile “Girl with the Flaxen Hair” loses its charm when repeated constantly by full orchestra, by one of those heavenly choirs...and even clanged out by convent bells.¹⁷⁷

Philip K. Scheuer’s offered the most insightful critiques in his *Los Angeles Times* review. Scheuer understood what few others seem to have consciously recognized, that the makers of *Portrait* had sought to convey grandeur and drama through classic, even antiquated, means:

Not only in story, but also in filmic conception, “Portrait of Jennie” is a throwback in time. It belongs to the era of the late, great D. W. Griffith, whose vacant niche David O. Selznick seems to feel it is his bounden duty to fill.¹⁷⁸

Indeed, the film is enshrouded in the trappings of silent era glory, featuring silent era stars, a silent era cameraman, tinted and toned film stock reminiscent of silent films,¹⁷⁹ and special effects intended to provide—in Selznick’s words—“a real D.W. Griffith

¹⁷⁴ Bosley Crowther, “Selznick’s ‘Portrait of Jennie’ with Cotten and Jennifer Jones, Opens at Rivoli,” *New York Times*, 30 March 1949, 31.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Bosley Crowther, “Films for Easter,” *New York Times*, 17 April 1949, X1.

¹⁷⁷ Mae Tinee, “Movie ‘Portrait of Jennie’ Falls Flat in Fantasy,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 31 May 1949, A4.

¹⁷⁸ Philip K. Scheuer, “Sentiment, Showmanship Unusual Blend in ‘Jennie,’” *Los Angeles Times*, 27 December 1948, 15.

¹⁷⁹ In his book on Technicolor, Scott Higgins notes that “common estimates hold that between 80 and 90 percent of all prints were tinted or toned by the early 1920s” (Scott Higgins, *Harnessing the Technicolor Rainbow: Color Design in the 1930s* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007), 2).

effect... that will have tremendous dramatic power and enormous spectacular value.”¹⁸⁰ Even the enlarged screen for the hurricane sequence was inspired by Selznick’s memories of earlier cinematic practices.¹⁸¹ Scheuer’s review is neither ecstatic nor dismissive, but acknowledges that the film will impress some with its technical innovations (the enlarged screen and advanced sound system) while bothering others when the “troubled tranquility... so painstakingly created” is shattered by the maelstrom. Scheuer also draws attention to the film score, which he assesses as effective, if not as groundbreaking as touted: “Debussy’s music—‘lifted’ by Hollywood for years, now openly acknowledged—becomes another shimmering Hollywood score ‘written and conducted’ by Dimitri Tiomkin, celestial chorus and all. It will heighten the popular response to this strange and beautiful ‘portrait.’”¹⁸²

While film reviewers’ opinions of the music differed, they all agreed that the Debussy-Tiomkin score was a noticeable and crucial element of the film’s success—or failure. Other press items even focused solely on the musical score. The article “Movie Music Makes Progress: ‘Hearts and Flowers’ to Debussy” withholds nothing in lavishing praise upon the use of Debussy in *Portrait*. The article barely mentions the film, Dimitri Tiomkin, or any specifics of the score itself. Instead, the article offers a briefly sketched history of Hollywood film music, with producer David Selznick at the helm of its progress. The author reminds readers that Selznick pioneered the use of lengthy orchestral scores in sound films and that the producer also promulgated the music from his films through radio and early soundtracks, thereby exulting film music as an art to be

¹⁸⁰ Memo from DOS to Ernest Scanlon, 17 May 1947. Reprinted in Thomson, 501.

¹⁸¹ James G. Stewart later recalled that “Selznick had an idea, as the [hurricane] sequence was being shot. He said, ‘We should revive the old big-screen technique. Look into it.’” Interview of James G. Stewart by Irene Kahn Atkins, 307.

¹⁸² Ibid.

appreciated and consumed away from the film. The use of Debussy's music in *Portrait*, the reviewer concludes, represents a pinnacle in motion picture music development through the successful marriage of a great composer's music with a great producer's film: "Some films have been made using portions of works from famous composers, but none has ever been released with a score based on the works of one master of Debussy's stature."¹⁸³ While the simple inaccuracy of this statement has already been detailed, the intention of the assertion—to celebrate Selznick as a trailblazer for film music—is clear. The article's pronounced pro-Selznick bias reveals it as a product of the studio's publicity department. Yet even Selznick found some of the content objectionable:

I thought the piece on the Debussy score in yesterday's TIMES was excellent, but it will undoubtedly invoke some complaints that will be heard throughout the land from Mr. Tiomkin and possibly justifiably so, as will perhaps some squawks from the Debussy fans, if in these stories we do not make clear that the music is based on themes from Debussy rather than being "Debussy throughout," and that it has been adapted by Tiomkin. In fact, we may even get in trouble with the Debussy Estate.¹⁸⁴

Selznick's concerns were well-founded and anticipated the critical backlash that eventually hit.¹⁸⁵ In particular, the author's depiction of Selznick's musical efforts as teleological—progressing from "Hearts and Flowers" to Debussy—would prove especially misguided and vulnerable to critics. As Scheuer noted, *Portrait* better represented a return to the silent era, and the same might be said for the music.

This is exactly the point music critic Lawrence Morton drove home in his review of the score, though he viewed the decision as an egregious error:

¹⁸³ "Movie Music Makes Progress: 'Hearts and Flowers' to Debussy," *Washington Post*, 9 January 1949, L3.

¹⁸⁴ DOS to Mervin Houser, 21 December 1948, HRC 357:4.

¹⁸⁵ Selznick had good reason to consider Tiomkin's reaction to such publicity: "Dear Mr. Selznick, May I ask your consideration of using my name as the composer of the musical score based on themes of Debussy in your advertisements and ads since unless my name is mentioned in conjunction with Debussy I will have no chance of nomination for [an] Academy Award..." (Tiomkin to DOS, undated, HRC 569:11).

Now comes Mr. Selznick, at this late date, with a revival of the musical techniques of the theatre organist of the 'twenties. The score for *Portrait of Jennie* is the kind we used to hear in a hundred Bijou Theatres on a hundred Main Streets across the nation. It is a potpourri, a pasticcio, a hodgepodge, a patchwork, a grab-bag, a paste-and-scissors job. All that differentiates it from its ancestors is its slick pretentiousness.¹⁸⁶

Whether or not Morton read the article "Movie Music Makes Progress," he acknowledges and refutes various bits of publicity that claim the music in *Portrait* represents a "first."

Even more devoted to the teleology of film music than the previous author, Morton adamantly believed the future of film music was *not* high-end compilation scores but, rather, original "underscoring like Copland's and [Hugo] Friedhofer's and [David] Raksin's."¹⁸⁷ For this perceived transgression, Morton unleashes a stream of invective:

Here are some of the specific tortures that Mr. Selznick has caused to be inflicted: the piano pieces used in the score have been put on the rack of orchestration in the most execrable taste. The orchestral pieces have been subjected to flagellation; that is, they have been reorchestrated, with results such as one would expect if Norman Rockwell were to retouch Boticelli's *Venus*.¹⁸⁸

There is something lacking in Morton's assessment—namely, a degree of critical distance. Morton, an author who pioneered the field of film music criticism with many balanced, insightful articles, goes overboard.¹⁸⁹ His hyperbole is so unrelenting that his own excesses as critic rival those of his subject. Morton's contempt for the score even spilled into a private correspondence written years later, in which he described the score

¹⁸⁶ Lawrence Morton, "Music: Mr. Selznick's Debussy," *Rob Wagner's Script*, March 1949: 36.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.* Interestingly, Morton took the reverse view when appraising Igor Stravinsky's arrangements of Pyotr Tchaikovsky's music in *La Baiser de la fée*: "Stravinsky closes his eyes—his ears, rather—to Tchaikovsky's faults; and he corrects his virtues. Necessarily, he ignores the bulk of the music." Perhaps it is less the concept of radical adaptation that Morton objects to than the arranger in question. See Lawrence Morton, "Stravinsky and Tchaikovsky: *La Baiser de la fée*," *Musical Quarterly* 48, no. 3 (July 1962): 326.

¹⁸⁹ See especially Lawrence Morton, "The Music of *Objective Burma!*," *Hollywood Quarterly* 1, no. 4 (July 1946): 378–395.

as “the all-time low in motion picture music.”¹⁹⁰ Clearly, *Portrait* touched a nerve that earlier adaptations missed. Morton had praised, after all, Miklós Rózsa’s arrangements of Chopin for *A Song to Remember* (1945), but in that film the Chopin-based underscoring was secondary to the performances of actual Chopin compositions in the narrative.¹⁹¹ In *Portrait*, Debussy’s music is never heard in its original form, and this obscuring of the master’s true voice was an indignity Morton would not tolerate: “Let the public not be deceived. Throughout the score not even one of Debussy’s compositions is performed in its entirety as the composer wrote it. Not even the fragments are played as Debussy wrote them.”¹⁹² Whether or not one finds Morton’s indignation compelling is largely beside the point. Morton’s critique has little to do with Tiomkin’s work as arranger and much to do with the (misplaced) power of a producer and the decision to alter classical compositions for a Hollywood film score. The important lesson of Morton’s column is that the score warranted comment—a great deal of it. Morton would not have bothered if he had not feared that the score would be praised and taken seriously by many. Morton’s review also shows that he understood who was responsible for this atrocity—not the arranger or even director but, rather, the producer, David O. Selznick.¹⁹³

¹⁹⁰ In a 1951 letter, Morton warned Clifford McCarty not to discuss the music from *Portrait of Jennie* in a projected book on film music: “You will earn no less scorn from me [if you are] obliged to include in your listings the Debussy-Tiomkin music for PORTRAIT OF JENNY, the all-time low in motion picture music.” Letter from Lawrence Morton to Clifford McCarty, 29 July 1951, Clifford McCarty Papers, Margaret Herrick Library.

¹⁹¹ Lawrence Morton, “Chopin’s New Audience,” *Hollywood Quarterly* 1, no. 1, October 1945, 33

¹⁹² Morton, “Mr. Selznick’s Debussy.”

¹⁹³ Tiomkin does not escape some degree of blame in Morton’s review: “I would not neglect Mr. Selznick’s accomplices in this unhappy affair—his musical director, Dimitri Tiomkin, and his staff of orchestrators. They probably had little choice in the business, for they did what they were hired to do, only a little too brown.... It is to be hoped, but against well founded fears to the contrary, that Mr. Tiomkin and his assistants found their task revolting, that they contritely burned candles before Debussy’s picture for the duration of their jobs, and that they purged their souls by playing a solemn plagal cadence every night after prayers.” After Tiomkin won an Academy Award for his score for *The High and the Mighty*, Morton would dedicate a full column to expressing his contempt for Tiomkin, whom he does not even deign to identify by name in the column. See Morton, “Confession,” *Frontier*, May 1955.

In the end, the music in *Portrait* received substantial attention and comment, as did Selznick's musical involvement and influence. From this perspective, Selznick succeeded in engineering a score both noteworthy and intrinsically linked to his creative persona. Most importantly, certain critics recognized that the film's peculiar qualities, such as music, evoked styles and conventions of the silent cinema (for better and worse). It may be purely coincidental that Selznick's early RKO films with substantial scoring—*Symphony of Six Million*, *Bird of Paradise*, and *King Kong*—also reminded reviewers of successful films of the silent era.¹⁹⁴ Perhaps though, Selznick's cinematic aesthetic never completely left the fundamentals of moving picture showmanship he had learned in the 1920s; music was one way in which he perpetuated the feel, prestige, and sound of these earlier times. In *Portrait*, a film in which the past is uncannily if temporarily present, Selznick enshrouded this otherworldly experience in music and appropriately used musical techniques and repertoire associated with memories—his and the audience's—of cinema's past.

In recent years, much of the attention given to *Portrait of Jennie* has been directed at its musical score. In 2001 Sarah Reichardt presented a carefully researched paper at the conference *The Hollywood Musical and Music in Hollywood* (University of Colorado), in which she considered the film's expressions of timelessness as they relate to love, art, and—commodity. Noting that Dimitri Tiomkin's heavily orchestrated arrangements of Debussy's music resulted in a "liquidation of most everything distinctive in Debussy's music,"¹⁹⁵ Reichardt argued that this radical revision negates the timeless, "irreducible"

¹⁹⁴ Reference to Chapter 2.

¹⁹⁵ Sarah Reichardt, "Commodity vs. Artwork: Timelessness and Temporality in the Music for *Portrait of Jennie*," in *The Hollywood Musical and Music in Hollywood* (Boulder, Colorado: 2001), 4. I am especially grateful for Reichardt's generous sharing of her paper with me.

element of Debussy's art and the cultural capital that had presumably attracted Selznick to Debussy in the first place. Reconceived as it is in the film, Debussy's music becomes a commodity, an expression of "Kitsch *par excellence*."¹⁹⁶ This critique in many ways parallels Morton's exasperation with the film's music; like Morton, Reichardt fairly points out that Selznick's claims of a score *by* Debussy is misleading. Anyone who watches *Portrait* to hear the music of Debussy will be disappointed by the liberties taken.¹⁹⁷ Even the selection of *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* for Jennie's appearances seems of questionable taste when the programmatic associations of the original work are applied to the new cinematic context, with a grown man confronting a young girl alone in the park. Thomas DeMary's article on the *Portrait* score mainly focuses on Herrmann's involvement in the project, but his portrayal of Tiomkin's contributions is similarly critical. Citing Morton's venomous review at length (and none of the positive reviews), DeMary concludes by noting that Tiomkin did not relish arranging the music of others.¹⁹⁸

Selznick and Tiomkin, however, were not aiming to win the approval of music critics and musicologists. The prestige and showmanship effects they sought and largely obtained were of a different quality altogether. Success for them did not reside in diligent faithfulness to a "great" composer but, rather, a creative and flexible application of Debussy's musical ideas that would resonate sympathetically with the film's narrative themes. For Tiomkin and Selznick, there was no ideological conflict between respecting

¹⁹⁶ Reichardt, 8.

¹⁹⁷ Durand & Cie and Jobert, the two French publishers who granted Selznick permission to adapt Debussy's music for *Portrait*, were pointedly disappointed with the results. See Alix Boisnard to Mr. Downing, 25 January 1950, HRC 944:5. In particular, Durand & Cie refused to publicize the film and explained that they were "profoundly surprised and shocked" by the music and felt Tiomkin had taken "excessive liberties." See Messrs. Durand and Cie, 23 January 1950, HRC 944:5.

¹⁹⁸ DeMary, 177–178.

“great” music and changing that music to fit a new context. This rather accommodating view was bound to stir up rancor among seriously minded music critics and scholars. Only recently, in fact, have musicologists begun to adopt a less condemning view of classical music in Hollywood films. Jeongwon Joe, for example, points out that many past criticisms regarding the fragmentation of Mozart’s music in *Amadeus* (1984) expressed typical high-brow prejudices yet failed to appreciate the artful selection, positioning, and tailoring of these musical excerpts to comment meaningfully on the film’s narrative.¹⁹⁹ Lawrence Kramer also argues that the compression and adaptation of classical music in film offers rich opportunities to gain new musical insights on familiar works:

The filmic instances [of classical music] also make it plain that the emotional or semantic richness of a musical performance does not depend on its completeness. Performances are often adaptive or fragmentary in both life and art and are none the less authentic for it. They may not give all the music, but whatever they give is all there. I can be as moved by humming a melody or overhearing a snatch of opera on the radio as I am by listening absorbedly to a whole work or attending a performance at the opera house. Sometimes I'm even more moved by the fragment or adaptation. Film counts heavily on this power of classical performance to remain—to become—numinous when compressed.²⁰⁰

While Kramer is more focused on the original work than the labors (and fresh contributions) of a particular arranger, William Rosar brings the issue of adapting classical music for film full circle when he addresses Tiomkin’s arranging efforts in

Portrait:

In the final analysis, Debussy’s music was so completely Tiomkinized, that except for the thematic material, Tiomkin might as well have just written a completely original score, because even the Debussy “themes” are often unrecognizable as such. In his critique [Lawrence] Morton neglected to notice that

¹⁹⁹ Jeongwon Joes, “Reconsidering *Amadeus*: Mozart as Film Music,” in *Changing Tunes: The Use of Pre-Existing Music in Film*, ed. Phil Powrie and Robynn Stilwell (Burlington: Ashgate, 2006), 57–73.

²⁰⁰ Lawrence Kramer, *Why Classical Music Still Matters* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 88–89.

the screen credit reads, “based on the *themes* [italics added] of Debussy,” which perhaps was intended to be as much a disclaimer as assigning credit where it was due. In fact, some of the most interesting moments musically, and even those most effective dramatically, are where Tiomkin completely transformed the original Debussy musical material in a creative way....²⁰¹

As Rosar rightly observes, Tiomkin’s adaptation of Debussy’s work is so thorough that it blurs the distinction between arranging and original composition. Rosar also argues that the passages in which Tiomkin introduces the most radical adaptations yield some of the most interesting passages of the film’s score, an observation that rises above the complaint that Tiomkin violated Debussy’s original work by noting—in a manner akin to Jeongwon Joe’s argument—that adaptations need to be assessed on their own terms and not hidebound to the originals on which they are based. In many respects, this chapter has argued the same point on a much broader scale by also considering the input of Selznick and the additional “arranging” of Lind, both of whose contributions aided, foiled, and irrevocably influenced Tiomkin’s compositional treatment of Debussy’s themes.

The score for *Portrait of Jennie* represents a complex tapestry of interwoven creative threads. While the attribution of a Hollywood film score to a single author almost always signals an oversight or simplification of the scoring process, it is *especially* misleading in the case of *Portrait*, which does not represent a single individual’s perspective but features music that has been inspired, directed, filtered, adapted, and revised by multiple hands. The preceding pages of this chapter show that this multilayered process resulted in a score that is most fruitfully analyzed when one considers the individual threads—and most importantly those of Selznick, Tiomkin, Stewart, and Lind—that constitute its fabric. Rather than depicting their work as a shared

²⁰¹ William Rosar’s observations are from a personal communication with Thomas DeMary and are quoted at length in DeMary, 177.

vision realized through happy collaboration, which would involve glossing over their differences in creative skills and means for implementing their ideas, I mainly focused on each individual's efforts apart from the others, to highlight the different methods by which producer, composer, and editor contributed to the final shape and function of the score.

There is no question that creative negotiations enacted between Selznick, Tiomkin, Stewart, and, one might add, Debussy, occasionally fell flat. The sheer number of excised measures from Tiomkin's score reveals gross inefficiencies and wasted time in the scoring process and also illuminates the degree to which Tiomkin's music was compromised and abbreviated in the film. (Debussy was not the only slighted composer in *Portrait*.) Yet with shortcomings such as these, there are as many passages that prove the possibilities of effective collaboration—moments when Selznick's instructions brought forth remarkable results from Tiomkin or when Stewart's editing illuminated musical-visual relationships neither Tiomkin nor Selznick had foreseen or planned. While it is true that Tiomkin admitted to preferring original composition over adaptation and arranging, it is worth noting that for a composer who produced many adaptation-based scores (including his first full score, *Resurrection* (1931), and his last, *Tchaikovsky* (1969)), *Portrait* stands out as his strongest work, far surpassing his more roughly hewn pastiche scores for Frank Capra made in the preceding years.²⁰² Somewhat ironically, Tiomkin's colorful orchestrations of Debussy's music would receive a veiled and likely

²⁰²“When you have thought in terms of music as long as I have it is *easier* to write original music than to bother recalling appropriate bars of music written in the past. After all, scenes and even sequences change so swiftly on the screen very often there isn't time for more than a couple of measures. It is really *simpler and more effective* to compose than to rummage around in classical music to find something that expresses the idea.” Dimitri Tiomkin, “Composing for Films,” *Films in Review* 2, no. 9 (1951) 18; quoted in DeMary, 177.

unintended compliment from Bernard Herrmann, the composer whose song for Jennie replaced Tiomkin's. In his score for *The Kentuckian* (1955), Herrmann imitates Tiomkin's sparkling woodwind-and-bells orchestration of the Second Arabesque heard during "Tea Sequence" and "Skating Sequence" in his own cue, "Victory."²⁰³ It is admittedly a limited line of influence, but a logical one, as Herrmann had kept an eye on *Portrait*'s music and purportedly "hated the results" of Tiomkin's work.²⁰⁴

Portrait was not the last occasion in which Tiomkin would be faced with the music of Debussy in a film score. While at work on George Stevens's Texan epic, *Giant* (1956), a film assignment Tiomkin might never had received if it were not for Selznick's selection of Tiomkin for *Duel in the Sun* (another Texan epic), Tiomkin was asked to replace his title theme in one scene with Debussy's "Clair de Lune." The request brought back haunting memories of *Portrait*, and he resisted. As Tiomkin later explained,

I proposed that we listen to the two pieces with the picture in mind, and make our decision. [George Stevens] agreed.

[My secretary] Malavski would play them for us; I explained to him the purpose. I said we must be fair and have both played without prejudice. So pretty soon George Stevens and I were sitting and listening to Malavski at the piano.

My Texas tune came first, built up with resonant musical devices, and Malavski played it well, no complaint. I knew he didn't like it, Malavski was an honorable man, like Caesar. George listened attentively, nodded and approved.

"Fine," he said, "but now let's hear 'Clair de Lune.'"

That was according to agreement, and I told Malavski to play it.

You should have seen him. Debussy! He straightened his coat sleeves in a fastidious way, as if his hands were about to approach something sacred. He sat at the keyboard for a moment of silent rapture. He had played my music with straightforward competence, but now he was the virtuoso. He was the concert pianist he had dreamed of being. He had the grand manner as he struck the first

²⁰³ While Tiomkin's arrangements were not recorded because of legal restrictions imposed by the Debussy estate, the *Portrait*-inspired cue by Herrmann is part of a symphonic suite of *The Kentuckian* score recorded by Fred Steiner and the National Philharmonic Orchestra, *Bernard Herrmann: The Kentuckian*, Preamble 1777 Stereo.

²⁰⁴ Steven C. Smith, *A Heart at Fire's Center: The Life and Music of Bernard Herrmann* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 148.

chords. This was music. He threw his head back with ecstasy as he fingered the impressionistic notes. He played “Clair de Lune” superbly, with inspiration.

George Stevens listened and murmured: “Beautiful, beautiful.”

When Malavski was through, I jumped up and yelled: “You’re fired.” George doubled up laughing.

But Malavski was not fired. He had simply been overcome by his virtuoso’s dream, and “Clair de Lune” went into the picture.²⁰⁵

Meanwhile, Tiomkin and Selznick’s relationship remained strong. When Selznick considered producing a stage musical of *Gone with the Wind* in the late 1950s, the producer approached Dimitri Tiomkin to write the music.²⁰⁶ Later, Selznick gave Tiomkin a glowing recommendation for a film in which Jennifer Jones would star, *Tender is the Night* (1961):

The difficulty is that most of the better composers of scores are not necessarily equally talented at composing popular songs. A notable exception is Dimitri Tiomkin, who of course has done many of the great scores of the better pictures for many years, and whose principal themes for these pictures have been converted by him into hugely successful songs in a great many cases. I think Tiomkin should be seriously considered by the studio [Twentieth Century-Fox] and by Henry King and yourself, not only for these reasons, but also because he is so thoroughly knowledgeable about music of the twenties, and of course, it is *essential* that whoever does both the score and song should be steeped in the rhythms and moods and tempos of the twenties. If you want Tiomkin, you are undoubtedly going to have to move fast, because he is always booked up well ahead...²⁰⁷

Selznick, after all, had good reason to be pleased with Tiomkin’s past work. Tiomkin was not only compositionally skilled, but he was also willing and able to realize the musical concepts of a producer who lacking formal training. *Portrait* was a testament to both of their achievements; the score represented Selznick’s most detailed and invested musical efforts and Tiomkin’s arrangements had encapsulated—as much as any single score

²⁰⁵ Tiomkin, *Please Don’t Have Me*, 189–190.

²⁰⁶ See Hedda Hopper, “‘Gone with the Wind’ May Be a Broadway Musical,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 2 December 1957, B20. This project lagged on into the 1960s where it quietly fizzled out. According to David Thomson, Selznick later approached Richard Rodgers, Leroy Anderson, and even Stephen Sondheim (Thomson, 644).

²⁰⁷ DOS to Henry Weinstein, 14 February 1961, reprinted in *Memo*, 477.

could—the ideals of film music that Selznick had fashioned, championed, and honed from the 1930s on. Considering that *Portrait* would be Selznick's final film produced in Hollywood, its score represented a fitting farewell.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

Beyond Hollywood

Portrait of Jennie was not David O. Selznick's final film, but it was his last American production. His next four projects would proceed in Europe and for three of the films Selznick shared credit and power with coproducers. Scoring for all four films took place in Europe. The distance diminished Selznick's influence. Coproduced with Alexander Korda, directed by the eminent British director Carol Reed, and written by novelist Graham Greene, *The Third Man* (1949) neither looks nor sounds like a Selznick picture. The only noticeable carryover is the prime casting of Selznick's contract players Joseph Cotten and Alida Valli. Dark, quirky, and visually mesmerizing, *The Third Man* was set (and filmed on location) in cloudy, bombed-out Vienna, a city plagued by black market activity. Nothing is as it seems and the frequent canted framing¹ conveys a world gone awry. Amidst fine and decimated architecture, American visitor Holly Martins (Joseph Cotten) bumbles against criminals and frustrated foreign occupiers, looking for his friend Harry Lime (Orson Welles) who may or may not be: 1. dead. 2. the worst racketeer of them all.

Selznick influenced the script in some important respects, making Holly Martins an American instead of an Englishman and altering the film's conclusion. Many of his

¹ A canted shot is made by setting the camera not level with the ground. The effect can be disorienting, with floors, stairs, and doorways seeming to lean and pitch at unfamiliar angles.

suggestions, however, went unheeded—to the picture’s benefit. As David Thomson argues, “[Selznick] could not have made it himself; he would have spoiled it, given the chance. Yet he knew what it was. In later years, he conceded both that it was a triumph and that he had done ‘nothing that contributed greatly to its success.’”² If the film’s visual style was idiosyncratic, so too was its music. Composed, improvised, and performed exclusively on solo zither by Anton Karas, the score was a wildly successful novelty. The filmmakers even incorporated the instrument into the visuals by projecting opening credits over a backdrop of vibrating zither strings, synchronized to Karas’s performance of the score’s central “Harry Lime” theme.

As Charles Drazin recounts in his detailed study of the film, Karas was lucky to be playing at the film crew’s welcome party in Vienna.³ (The party’s host, Karl Hartl, did not even know his name.) Karas’s music intrigued director Carol Reed, who made plans to include some of it in the film. As work on the film proceeded, Reed had the sound crew dub in temporary tracks of Karas’s zither music, which had been recorded in a hotel room for trial purposes. Reed’s enthusiasm for Karas’s work continued to grow; he finally decided the score would be exclusively Karas’s zither. The decision annoyed music director Hubert Clifford, who had intended to record with an orchestra, or, at the very least, a high profile zither player of *his* choosing. Reed did not budge and instead hosted Karas at his own place when the zither player came to London to record the final score.

Recordings of the “Harry Lime Theme,” which were released after the film’s premiere, sold at a rapid rate (500,000 in the first month), sheet music sales blossomed,

² David Thomson, *Showman: The Life of David O. Selznick* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), 539.

³ Charles Drazin, *In Search of The Third Man* (New York: Proscenium Publishers, 2000), 95–109.

and bands scrambled to make covers. In 1950, *Billboard* recognized Karas's record as the third most popular release in America. The fourth most popular was Guy Lombardo's cover of the same melody. A successful concert tour in England and America topped off Karas's time in the international spotlight. Afterwards, the much celebrated "fourth man" of *The Third Man* was grateful to return to his family and a relatively quieter life in Vienna.⁴

It is hard to imagine Selznick pursuing anything so recklessly unconventional as a solo zither score,⁵ but the musical parallels with previous Selznick films are worth noting: the showcasing of an unconventional instrument that captures audience interest (like the theremin in *Spellbound*, a similarity noted by Lawrence Morton⁶), the use of a musical theme to represent the spirit of a physically absent character (*Rebecca* and *The Paradine Case*), and the featuring of music apart from the film to sell film music as music and increase box office sales. Like *Spellbound* and *Portrait of Jennie*, *The Third Man* also received similarly divided critical responses, with movie reviewers and mainstream audiences reacting ecstatically as film music critics sniffed. The contrast is palpable between Bosley Crother's *New York Times* review, which begins and ends with accolades for Karas's music, and Hans Keller's and Lawrence Morton's analyses, which

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ An anecdote from director Michael Powell indicates Selznick was excited about the zither score before the film's release, or at least excited about Carol Reed's excitement. The anecdote also reveals Selznick's relative remove from the production and its score. Powell recalled: "David O. told us, giggling self-consciously, '[Reed] rings me up at all hours of the day and night to play the zither to me.' 'The what?' 'The zither.' 'Oh, that Hungarian thing.' 'I guess so. Carol says it's the sound of black-market Vienna. Everywhere you go they have these zither players in all the clubs. Carol wants to use it as a theme tune all the way through the film.' 'Sounds like a good idea.' 'I guess so. He calls it the Harry Lime theme'" (Michael Powell, *Million-Dollar Movie: The Second Volume of His Life in Movies* (London: Heinemann, 1992), 45–46.

⁶ Arguing that the triteness of Karas's score "mirrored the pigmy moral sense of Harry Lime," Morton goes on: "Set [the Harry Lime theme], played by the same zither, in the context of a modern-sounding orchestral score, and it might have done for Harry Lime what the theremin has done for psychiatry" (Lawrence Morton, "Film Music of the Quarter," *Hollywood Quarterly* 5, no. 1 (Autumn, 1950), 50).

damn with faint praise, then deliver oh-so-arch critiques highlighting the score's limited expressivity, trite—albeit infectious—melodic material, and astonishing musico-dramatic naïveté.⁷ Between the latter two, Morton is more readable and disdainful:

Although the music for *The Third Man* is bad from beginning to end, it cannot be dismissed with contempt; for it is an honest score, and this much cannot be said for many cleverer ones.... [But] compare the naive seriousness of the score with the extreme sophistication of Graham Greene's script, the virtuosity of Carol Reed's direction, the highly stylized acting, the "arty" symbolism, the distorted camera angles, and the melodramatic lighting, and it becomes apparent that nobody thought of the music on the same plane of intellectuality that worked in all other departments.⁸

Though often critical adversaries, Keller and Morton were similarly invested in helping film music evolve in emotional and technical complexity. Though neither expected it to mimic the structures and sounds of modern concert music, they hoped it would follow a similarly enlightened and aesthetically nuanced path. Digressions into Debussy medleys (*Portrait of Jennie*) or tuneful zither extravaganzas were to be discouraged—all the more so when they received praise and approval from others.

Karas's score was so novel that it discouraged imitation. There was not—to Morton's and Keller's relief—a proliferation of zither scores in the wake of *The Third Man*, though Karas did try to bank on his sudden international fame by opening a "Third Man" inn in Vienna's environs.⁹ Nevertheless, the success of *The Third Man* score

⁷ Bosley Crowther's review begins: "The haunting music of a zither, the ring of Vienna's cobbled streets, and a ghostly Graham Greene story, about a man-hunt in that seamy capital flow smoothly and beautifully together...." Crowther's review concludes with an adulatory paragraph on Karas's "eerie and mesmerizing" music (Bosley Crowther, "The Screen in Review," *New York Times*, 3 February 1950). Another movie reviewer, Richard Coe, remarked: "I found it quite a diverting novelty but it just goes to show how numbed we all are by background music when a mere zither can send you reeling into the streets." (Richard L. Coe, *The Washington Post*, 15 March 1950). Hans Keller's discussion of Karas's work—"almost all popular hits seem vulgar, but since not all vulgarity is popular, the success of the tune asks for an explanation"—is reprinted in Hans Keller, *Film Music and Beyond: Writings on Music and the Screen, 1946–1959*, edited by Christopher Wintle (Rochester: Plumbago Books, 2006), 146–148.

⁸ Lawrence Morton, "Film Music of the Quarter," *Hollywood Quarterly* 5, no. 1 (Autumn, 1950), 49–50.

⁹ "'Third Man' One Too Many," *Manchester Guardian*, 5 February 1954.

portended things to come in the following years, when Hollywood producers and directors sought alternatives to the symphonic norm in the hopes of striking gold with a hot-selling musical novelty, be it a softly crooned theme song over the main titles (*High Noon*, 1952, which spawned a series of imitators), rock-and-roll (*Blackboard Jungle*, 1954), jazz big band (*Anatomy of a Murder*, 1958), or even electronic bleeps and bloops (*Forbidden Planet*, 1956).¹⁰

Meanwhile, the grumbling of curmudgeonly specialists over Karas's zither did not trouble the filmmakers; Karas, Reed, and Selznick could cry all the way to the bank. Though much more removed from the scoring process than he had been on his other films, Selznick still thrilled to see the music take off, bolstered in part by a marketing scheme and growing demand for film music he had fostered earlier in the decade. From England, Selznick gushed to Daniel O'Shea:

CANNOT COMMENCE TO TELL YOU SENSATION CAUSED BY KARAS'S ZITHER MUSIC IN "THIRD MAN." IT IS RAGE OF ENGLAND...ADS HERE USE "HEAR HARRY LIME THEME," ETC. IN TYPE DWARFING ALL OTHER BILLING. IT IS ONE OF THOSE UNPREDICTABLE, TREMENDOUS SENSATIONS...ENTIRELY UNRELATED NEWSPAPER ARTICLES AND EDITORIALS, EVEN ON POLITICS, CONTINUALLY REFER TO IT...THIS SUCCESS WILL BE REPEATED IN AMERICA IF WE ARE PREPARED FOR IT. WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO MAKE FORTUNE OUT OF THIS MUSIC.¹¹

In addition to film soundtracks featuring Karas's music, another gimmick turned out to be quite profitable: Third Man Junior Zithers. Jennifer Jones's two sons (from her previous

¹⁰ James Wierzbicki convincingly argues that "the move toward extra-diegetic music that sounded 'new' and 'different' was largely prodded by the same spur that urged Hollywood in the direction of 3-D and CinemaScope" (Wierzbicki, 167). In other words, musical novelty—like visual novelty—was utilized to differentiate Hollywood's offerings from those that could be gained through television, Hollywood's chief competitor.

¹¹ DOS to Daniel O'Shea, 25 November 1949, reprinted in *Memo from David O. Selznick*, ed. Rudy Behlmer (New York: The Viking Press, 1972), 406.

marriage to Robert Walker) each received one from Selznick the following Christmas.¹² By then, the Harbet Company had sold nearly 15,000.¹³

For *Gone to Earth* (1950) and *Terminal Station* (1953), Selznick was again less involved in production and exercised little control over the music. The films and their scores were produced in Europe and Selznick's occasional visits hardly matched his investment in the earlier American productions. Like Carol Reed on *The Third Man*, the British directors Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger chaffed at Selznick's interventions on *Gone to Earth*. As Powell drolly recalled:

[Selznick] wrote these memos to all his directors. He wrote them to me. I never read them. They accumulated in some pigeon-hole until Bill Paton cleared out the mess. I reasoned that David O. wouldn't expect an answer once he had got them off his chest, and if I read them I would only be annoyed. Emeric [Pressburger] read them, and then went back to reading *Time* and *Life*.¹⁴

His attempts to ignore or deflect most of Selznick's instructions elicited serious repercussions, however, when the producer took charge of the film's American release.

For the American release of *The Third Man*, Selznick had lightly retouched the film. As Charles Drazin shows, the changes Selznick initiated were meant to appease American audiences and clear up potential points of confusion that a preview audience had raised. Most of the changes are minute, such as excising a disparaging line about the American protagonist made by a British officer. Nevertheless, the alterations introduce continuity errors and mar some of the film's strongest sequences, including Carol Reed's

¹² DOS to Mr. Stone, 29 December 1950, HRC 992:8. In the memo, Selznick admits that he had ordered the zithers without realizing they were specifically tied in with the film: "Imagine my surprise and chagrin when I found that two zithers, which we had ordered for additional Christmas gifts for Jennifer's two boys, turned out to be 'Third Man Zithers'! I now learn that these zithers are selling like hot-cakes. Didn't we have any arrangements to get royalties on these, and if so, when do we get them?" Selznick's company had in fact made arrangements, receiving \$.02 per unit.

¹³ H. A. Bruce (of the Harbet Company) to Selznick Releasing Organization, 20 December 1950, HRC 992:8. At the date of the memo, the company had sold 14,800 zithers.

¹⁴ Powell, 82.

smartly delivered narration at the opening. The changes dilute the film's power, but they pale in comparison to Selznick's intervention with *Gone to Earth*. Two years after its release in England, Selznick ordered new shots made. Cast members and costumes had to be shipped from England to the United States. He also aggressively edited the film, removing half an hour of footage from a film originally 110 minutes in length.¹⁵

According to biographer David Thomson, the reedited version, now titled *The Wild Heart*, "did no better commercially than in England, but David's shorter film had lost the power of Jennifer [Jones's] performance for [director] Powell."¹⁶ The original *Gone to Earth* features a score by British composer Brian Easdale, who collaborated with director Powell on other films, including *The Red Shoes* (1948), a film Selznick admired and the recipient of the Academy Award for Best Music.

Present unavailability of *The Wild Heart* prevents comparison of the presentation of Easdale's score in the two versions of the film, but this is not the case for Selznick's following picture, *Terminal Station* (*Stazione Termini*), shot in Rome and directed by Vittorio De Sica. Here again, Selznick stepped in for the American release, cutting nearly half an hour from a film originally only eighty-nine minutes in length. Released in America as *Indiscretion of an American Wife* (1954), the newly abridged version had an addition: a short featuring "Autumn in Rome" and "Indiscretion," two songs based on themes from Alessandro Cicognini's score for the feature film and written by Paul Weston and Sammy Cahn. Performed by Patti Page and directed by William Cameron Menzies (production designer for *Gone with the Wind*), the performance is a shameless attempt to add length to *Indiscretion's* meager hour of entertainment. While an awkward

¹⁵ Thomson, 577.

¹⁶ Ibid.

addition, the short at least furthers Selznick's mission of film music promotion. The songs sell Cicognini's score just before the film begins, giving audiences an opportunity to internalize the most important thematic material, which is aided by lyrics appropriate to each theme's extra-musical associations.

Selznick's reediting project for *Indiscretion* also involved hiring back two company veterans: audio engineer James G. Stewart and music editor Audray Granville (both receive screen credit, Granville's first for a Selznick production). While critics generally favor De Sica's visually rambling *Terminal Station* over Selznick's tunnel-visioned *Indiscretion*, one can be grateful to Selznick for hiring appropriate talent for the soundtrack. Though some might find the sloppy synchronization of wild lines (lines dubbed in after the film has been shot) and the tinny score in *Terminal* more "true" to the sound of Italian cinema at that time, the polish, aural nuance, and depth of tone that Stewart and Granville bring to the soundtrack brighten *Indiscretion's* otherwise drab revision of *Terminal*. Their work also improves Cicognini's score, which sounds suppler and more present in *Indiscretion*. In *Terminal* it does not blend well with the other sound elements on the soundtrack and woodwind passages distort terribly, with the treble reeling out of control. (The disparity in soundtrack quality is exacerbated by the superior preservation of *Indiscretion's* source print for the Criterion DVD.¹⁷)

In addition to restoring sound quality, Granville resumed her job of cutting and pasting music, much as she had done in *Spellbound*. For *Indiscretion*, Granville once again performed musical surgery, stitching together music as scenes were shortened by Selznick's excisions. The biggest change to the soundtrack is the removal of portions of

¹⁷ Vittorio De Sica's *Indiscretion of an American Wife & Terminal Station* (Criterion Collection DVD, CC1592D, 2003).

Cicognini's bustling *agitato* music, which conveyed the train terminal's hubbub, energy, and life as it teems around the film's indiscreet lovers, Mary and Giovanni (Jennifer Jones and Montgomery Clift). In the footage of *Indiscretion* directly following Mary and Giovanni's first meeting, Granville removes Cicognini's anxious *ostinati*, allowing the viewer to focus more intimately on Mary and Giovanni's first scene together and less on the hurried people who keep brushing by them. In another scene, Cicognini's churning textures are replaced by the placid folksong-like melody representing Mary's memory of her daughter. Here again, the change in music helps shift spectator attention *away* from the surrounding action in the train station and redirect it back to the film's central stars and their personal plight. As David Kehr notes,

[Director] De Sica populates his train station with a wide cross-section of types and classes...[while] the Selznick version almost completely eliminates these small character asides, insisting that Jones and Clift are the only people really worth paying attention to in the entire station. ...Jones' unseen daughter is far more present in Selznick's version, through visual and verbal references.¹⁸

Though Kehr does not acknowledge Audray Granville's changes to Cicognini's score, these too play a vital role in effecting the shift in narrative focus.

For his final film, *A Farewell to Arms* (1957), Selznick assumed control of the entire production, but continued working primarily in Europe, this time Italy.¹⁹

Somewhat like *Portrait of Jennie*, *Farewell* was a troubled production every step of the way. One columnist, reveling in the mayhem, wrote:

The people who have said farewell to *A Farewell to Arms* now number in the hundreds and include one director, John Huston, one chief of photography who

¹⁸ David Kehr, "Indiscretion of an American Producer," *Vittorio De Sica's Indiscretion of an American Wife & Terminal Station* (Criterion Collection DVD, CC1592D, 2003).

¹⁹ Postwar legislation in many European countries prevented American filmmakers from transferring all their profits from overseas sales back to the United States. Producers with funds locked in foreign countries now had good reason to shoot films "on location" while simultaneously taking advantage of lower labor costs.

quit two weeks ago, three art directors, a film editor, a special effects director, four chauffeurs, and the entire staff of the villa where Mr. and Mrs. Selznick were staying.²⁰

When director Huston fled after futilely trying to argue his ideas against Selznick's, the producer reportedly grouched: "In Mr. Huston, I asked for a first violinist and instead got a soloist." When the replacement director Charles Vidor also found Selznick's stream of directives confining, he complained that "David wanted not a first violinist as a director, but a piccolo player."²¹ The musical metaphor could all too easily be applied to Selznick's treatment of the composer hired for the film, Mario Nascimbene. Nascimbene had been scoring Italian feature films since the early 1940s (he would work on some 300 features in his career) and had previously composed the score for other Hollywood features filmed in Italy, including *The Barefoot Contessa* (1954). With composition and recording of the score taking place in Rome and Selznick in Hollywood, lengthy verbal exchanges between producer and composer were simply not feasible. Consequently, Selznick's suggestions for and reactions to Nascimbene's work had to be mailed or cabled, resulting in an even wider paper trail from the producer than for many of his Hollywood productions.

Selznick's initial messages to Nascimbene are cordial, but chock full of instructions. One early letter features eight pages of single spaced musings expressing Selznick's scoring ideas, both in general and for *Farewell* in particular. The notes reveal that Selznick's concept of film music had not changed greatly since he last outlined it in 1937 for Walter Damrosch:

To generalize: 95% of the time I don't like music that tells word for word what the dialogue tells or what the scene tells. I don't think you have to tell the same

²⁰ Art Buchwald, quoted in Bob Thomas, *Selznick* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1970), 280.

²¹ Thomas, 280.

story twice. I think that music should establish and aid and abet the general mood, rather than try to tell story.

If the audience is conscious of the music, it means that the music is unsuccessful. It should be no more conscious of the music than it is conscious of sets or photography or lighting, except in those cases where we want the audience to be aware of a very striking set, something that would generate a reaction of “Isn’t that beautiful?” But if they are conscious of music during a scene, I think that’s very bad.

These are generalities which are probably banalities to you, but I did want you to know my feelings about them.²²

Following this are Selznick’s comments for the *Farewell* score, which are detailed, but scattered, with the superfluous diluting genuine insight:

The music overall should have, to a degree, an Italian flavor, except that it must be remembered that we are dealing with an American boy and an English girl and that it is primarily a love story. The Italian part of it should not be obtruse (*sic*) in its Italian flavor...

Secondly, there is the death theme, which should be a little short phrase that is the rain and that is death and that is her premonition of death, which should be reverberated in a distant theme, something like Menotti’s “Mother, Mother Are You There?” from *THE MEDIUM* [1946]²³—that kind of weird little discordant note, very short, just one phrase which you can just bring up when Henry walks out in the hall after her labor (Scene 253, page 153) and looks out the window at the rain. We must use our death theme here and make our audience shudder that he is afraid for her....

Love Theme: As to the love story, we have, to an extent that has never before been done, an extraordinary number of love scenes between two people. The dangers of repetitiousness can be reduced or aggravated by the music. If the music is only the one theme, it will mean that it will become monotonous and repetitious. If, on the other hand, we can devise their theme as not a theme really but almost a symphony of Frederic and Catherine, that has two or three

²² DOS to Mario Nascimbene, 11 April 1957, HRC 2274:3.

²³ When Francis Brennan recommended that Selznick consider the music of Debussy for *Portrait of Jennie*, he also recommended Gian Carlo Menotti’s work. Menotti was briefly considered as a composer for *Jennie* and Selznick studied some of Menotti’s music, as evinced in this letter and in another memo related to *Jennie*: “When next I am with Tiomkin, please be sure to have me discuss with him the treatment of the music and the call to Jennie in various places of the picture, with the vocoder or its equivalent used, and with the music written for the [that?] purpose, perhaps something in the manner of not only Debussy but also what was done by Menotti. Perhaps you should have the Menotti records available. I don’t mean of course to copy any of this music but merely do what I spoke of so early in the game, establishing a Jennie phrase that will in effect be a call to her” (DOS to James G. Stewart, 14 September 1948, HRC 3377:2).

movements, this danger of repetitiousness can be overcome. Their love theme should have its lighter, gay, romantic moments...and also its sad moments for their serious, more dramatic theme.

When we get to Switzerland, there is still another nationality we have to introduce into the music. We must forget Italy. It will require different orchestration.²⁴

As with Alexandre Tansman on *Since You Went Away*, Selznick also wanted to make sure Nascimbene understood the Selznick legacy and musical standard he would be expected to meet: “When you come to Hollywood, we shall run for you *Gone with the Wind*, *Rebecca*, *Portrait of Jennie*, and *Duel in the Sun* so that you may hear the scores of these films.”²⁵ Selznick also pressured Nascimbene into composing from the script and notes instead of completed footage:

You have received a complete and revised script. I shall work on the notes for the score on the boat and send you from New York complete notes, sequence by sequence, for your temporary score.

...After preview I shall do the final editing of the picture, and work with you on the final score, discussing the values of each scene as we go along.²⁶

In a postscript, Selznick included another paragraph of additional ideas he had for Catherine’s theme. For Nascimbene, it could not have been easy to read. There is already a pervasive tone in the form, content, and language of the letter that Selznick did not trust Nascimbene’s abilities—hence a voluminous letter with the promise of more voluminous letters to follow. Problems and disappointments were inevitable. Not surprisingly, Selznick was unhappy with Nascimbene’s initial work, and sent a lengthy cable outlining his grievances (some self-conflicting) and his plan to rectify the situation:

OUR PROBLEMS ARE GIGANTIC GROWING OUT OF FIRSTLY WHAT ALL EXPERTS AGREE IS INSUFFICIENT NUMBER MUSICIANS PLAYING PARTICULARLY BUT NOT ONLY STRING SECTION WHICH IN

²⁴ DOS to Mario Nascimbene, 11 April 1957, HRC 2274:3.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

MANY CASES SOUNDS LIKE TINY HANDFUL BADLY CONDUCTED
STOP SECONDLY MONOTONOUS OVERUSE OF MAJOR THEME STOP
THIRDLY INSUFFICIENT MELODY AND INSUFFICIENT LENGTH
SECONDARY LOVE THEME WHICH NOT GOOD ENOUGH USE AS
SUBSTITUTE FOR MAJOR THEME THEREBY COMPLICATING OUR
PROBLEMS...FOURTHLY COMPLETE LACK [OF] UNDERSTANDING OF
NECESSITIES AVOIDING ARPEGGIOS TRILLS AND OTHER
COLORATION AND PARAPHRASING WITH INDIVIDUAL
INSTRUMENTS THAT CONSTITUTE IMPOSSIBLE DISTRACTION TO
SCENES TO FAR GREATER EXTENT THAN HAD EVEN THOUGHT
POSSIBLE...FIFTHLY EQUAL LACK UNDERSTANDING NECESSITIES
OF GREATEST POSSIBLE VARIETY IN ORCHESTRATION AND TEMPO
OF THEMES TO OBTAIN THEIR REPETITIOUSNESS AND
DESTRUCTIVE NATURE OF ORCHESTRATION...SOME LIGHT AND
SOME ROMANTIC SCENES TREATED MUSICALLY IN IMPOSSIBLY
LUGUBRIOUS FASHION STOP...TO OVERCOME THESE PROBLEMS WE
FACED WITH ENORMOUS EXPENSE SENDING TO ROME BEST MUSIC
MIXER IN HOLLYWOOD [Mr. Earl Mounce]...PLUS AUDRAY
GRANVILLE MUSIC EDITOR ABOUT WHOM NASCIMBENE [IS]
PROPERLY ENTHUSIASTIC PLUS IMPORTANTLY TWO OUTSTANDING
ORCHESTRATORS WHO UNDER AUDRAYS SUPERVISION WILL
ENSURE INSTRUCTION AND DESIRES THIS TIME BEING CARRIED
OUT...²⁷

Audray Granville and orchestrators Leo Shuken and Jack Hayes made tracks to Rome, creating a news headline in the *Hollywood Reporter* that bothered Nascimbene's agent: "[Selznick] Re-doing Farewell Score—Apparently dissatisfied with the Italian score on his 'A Farewell to Arms.'"²⁸ Selznick rightly suspected the orchestrators of inadvertently spilling dirt, so Shuken and Hayes wired back from Italy:

PLEASE MAKE PUBLIC FOLLOWING STATEMENT CAME TO ROME
ONLY TO ORCHESTRATE ADDED MUSIC MADE NECESSARY BY TIME
ELEMENTS CONSIDER PRIVILEGE AND FIND MUSIC INSPIRING AS
PUBLIC WILL SOON FIND OUT²⁹

Meanwhile, Selznick assured director Charles Vidor that everything would soon be under control and that Granville could be trusted to save the day:

²⁷ DOS to Delgiudice Brunger (Nascimbene's representative), 8 November 1957, HRC 224:1.

²⁸ Arabella Lemaitre to DOS, 13 November 1957, HRC 224:1.

²⁹ Leo Shuken and Jack Hayes to DOS, 23 November 1957, HRC 224:1.

Because of the worry you expressed to me concerning the score, and so that you will know how much of my time and attention this has been getting, I send you herewith a set of my latest notes—I think this is the third or fourth set, and the others have been equally long—to Nascimbene and to Audray Granville on the subject.... I know from past experience that we can count upon Audray to do miracles with [the music] we presently have available.³⁰

Despite the note of optimism, scoring *Farewell* was a stressful mess. Nascimbene pleaded for more time and patience. Selznick replied with venomous cables threatening to fire him. This left Granville to mend fences and piece together a coherent score that would appease Selznick. The final results, though purportedly an improvement, are not overwhelming. *A Farewell to Arms* is a decent picture with some memorable, on-location scenery, but is otherwise overly long and unexceptional, with a rather indistinctive score to match. In many respects, the film and its music suffer most pointedly in those sequences when Selznick attempted to recreate memorable musical effects from previous films. For one scene in which Catherine (Jennifer Jones) and Frederick (Rock Hudson) playfully sing “Little Brown Jug,” Selznick requested that the nondiegetic score subtly meld with the diegetic singing, “in the manner of what we did with ‘[My Darling] Clementine’ in *Since You Went Away*.”³¹ For scenes in which Catherine suffers premonitions of her own death, Selznick had requested a “death” theme that would function similar to Tiomkin’s setting of *Sirènes* in *Portrait of Jennie*. For the film’s opening titles “A Farewell to Arms” scrolls across the screen from right to left, just as the words “Gone with the Wind” had done in Selznick’s most famous film. Nascimbene’s main title music is no match to *Gone with the Wind*’s in this forced comparison. Selznick had used music in earlier productions to convey or evoke reminiscences in audiences, but in *Farewell* the technique backfires. The self-conscious allusions have the deleterious

³⁰ DOS to Charles Vidor, 4 November 8, HRC 224:1.

³¹ DOS to Audray Granville, 7 November 1957, HRC 224:1.

effect of pointing out *Farewell*'s inferiority to earlier, better executed Selznick productions.

Final Thoughts, Further Possibilities

Student : A producer's touch is discernible, don't you think?

*Mr. Selznick: I think a producer's quality is discernible, yes. I think [Irving] Thalberg's was.*³²

Though films like *Indiscretion* and *Farewell* mark a somewhat dissatisfying conclusion to a remarkable career (future scholars may judge Selznick's "late period" more sympathetically), their scores provide important clues for elucidating Selznick's film music aesthetics. If a producer's touch or quality is discernable, as Selznick clearly believed it was, how is Selznick's touch evinced in the music in his films? This is especially pertinent when one considers the number of films Selznick made, the various composers who worked for him and their individual musical voices, and the fact that his oeuvre covered a broad range of film genres not matched by many auteur directors, such as Hitchcock. Unlike auteurs who sought to distinguish themselves by developing identifiable narrative preoccupations or cinematic idiosyncrasies, Selznick did need seek to break down the mainstream model of Hollywood filmmaking that he had helped build. For this reason, Selznick's "touch" is not always immediately evident on the surface, a fact that partially explains why his films have received little scholarly attention despite their popular acclaim. In a recent article on Victor Fleming, an overlooked director who collaborated with Selznick on *Gone with the Wind*, David Denby notes:

³² Transcript of questions and responses following Selznick's lecture on filmmaking at Columbia University, 1 November 1937, HRC 165:15.

[Fleming's] absence from the list of the blessed suggests a flaw auteur theory and not in Fleming—a prejudice against the generalists, the non-obsessed, the “chameleons,” as Steven Spielberg called them, who re-created themselves for each project and made good movies in many different styles.³³

Denby's argument is equally pertinent to Selznick, though it still leaves the question of critical appraisal and aesthetic delineation open. Nevertheless, Denby's point encourages further consideration of those whose exceptional work never left or challenged Hollywood's mainstream.

Consequently, any characterization of Selznick's musical aesthetics must recognize that his tastes were conservative and often conventional. When Selznick encouraged the use of background music in film in the early 1930s, his seemingly bold innovation was born from a subtle reconfiguring of silent cinema musical practices. In the years that followed, Selznick and his composers helped lay the foundation for music's standard role within Hollywood's classical era.³⁴ For this reason, Selznick's notes perpetuate, rather than undermine, central tenets of the style: namely, music's role in furthering continuity, its subordinate relationship to narrative, and its reliance upon recurrent, associative themes. Ironically, these are the very “prejudices and bad habits” that Hanns Eisler and Theodor Adorno identified as repulsively cliché by 1947: the “leitmotif...reduced to the level of a musical lackey,” “unobstrusiveness...[achieved] by the use of banal music,” and “the incessant use of a limited number of worn-out musical

³³ David Denby, “The Real Rhett Butler,” *The New Yorker* 85, no. 15 (25 May 2009): 78.

³⁴ “Classical” here refers to the group style identified and described most famously by David Bordwell, Janet Staiger, and Kristin Thompson in *The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style & Mode of Production to 1960*. Put very simply, the authors argue that American films made from 1917 through 1960—a period that roughly aligns with Selznick's career in films—participate in the formation of an “excessively obvious” cinema whose successful standardization renders it invisible or transparent. (David Bordwell, Janet Staiger, and Kristin Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style & Mode of Production to 1960* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 3–12.)

pieces that are associated with the given screen situations.”³⁵ Hardly a complimentary tribute, but Eisler’s and Adorno’s annoyance is acknowledgement that such devices, however uncritically or banally they might be applied by some, were in wide circulation.

Eisler’s and Adorno’s argument in *Composing for Films* is notoriously polemic. They decry music’s smooth integration into the classical film, but they are not interested in locating finer distinctions within the classical style itself. Selznick’s collaboration with composers offers one such positive strain. Selznick may have preferred unobtrusive music in some scenes, but this did not mean he desired meaningless, forgettable, sonic backdrop. On the contrary, dialogue-heavy scenes requiring soft musical accompaniment, such as the picnic at Twelve Oaks in *Gone with the Wind* (1939) or Tony’s visit in *Since You Went Away* (1944), receive extended commentary from Selznick, who argued that thematic content and musical pacing would critically affect these scenes’ reception. On this account, Selznick differed from musically attentive directors like Hitchcock and Ford, who voiced preferences for less underscore. Their restraint is praised by commentators as a virtue,³⁶ but such arguments inevitably cast those who preferred more music in a negative light.³⁷ Selznick fell in this latter camp, but the seeming musical excess of his films, whether in length, orchestration, or thematic content, aligns with his prestige-oriented style of filmmaking, which consistently championed broad, grandiose gestures over calculated understatement. As Jack Sullivan notes in his study of Hitchcock and music, ubiquitous underscore sometimes “amplifies the expansiveness” of visuals.³⁸

³⁵ Hanns Eisler and Theodor Adorno, *Composing for Films* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947), 3–20.

³⁶ See Kalinak, *How the West Was Sung*, 14 and 88; Sullivan, 144–148.

³⁷ Kalinak grows especially impatient with producer Darryl Zanuck’s insertions of additional music in John Ford’s *My Darling Clementine* (Kalinak, *How the West Was Sung*, 86–88).

³⁸ Sullivan, 148.

Music in Selznick's films does exactly this, giving visual and narrative sweep a distinctly orchestral depth.

Gauging musical "excess" is a subjective endeavor, but comparison of Miklós Rózsa's music for *Spellbound* with his contemporaneous scores for other producers reveals telling differences. *Double Indemnity* (1944), *Dark Waters* (1944), *The Lost Weekend* (1945), and *The Killers* (1946) feature scenes of suspense, psychological imbalance, romantic obsession, and murder, yet unlike *Spellbound*, Rózsa's music for these films is confined to short cues and two or three themes. (One might recall John B. Currie's critique, quoted in Chapter One, that Rózsa's music for *The Killers* was thematically impoverished.) In *Spellbound*, Rózsa's music plays for over half the film, with lengthy cues providing time for Rózsa to introduce and develop an entire matrix of thematic material associated with characters and specific emotional contexts. In large part, this reflected Selznick's involvement. The producer, for example, had asked for more music in the film than Hitchcock had originally specified. Selznick had also prescribed a limited number of associative themes. Selznick's notes, however, hardly account for all of Rózsa's thematic invention, prompting one to wonder whether Rózsa's industry arose from a desire to *exceed* Selznick's musical commentary and thus make a musico-cinematic contribution beyond what the producer had already envisioned. If so, Rózsa was not alone. Passages in Steiner's, Waxman's, and Tiomkin's scores for Selznick evince similar efforts to match, then surpass, the producer's instructions. In this respect, Selznick's intense collaboration paid off even more than expected. His instructions presented a challenge to composers; they responded by overachieving.

If Selznick's cinematic style and working methods with composers tended to produce lengthy musical scores deliberately designed to overwhelm viewers (not to mention producer), there are other characteristics of Selznick's musical aesthetic that can be seen to change over time. Selznick's films of the 1930s show a persistent interest in musical binaries that emphasize (and occasionally bridge) divides among characters and narrative spaces. Thus, the contrast between nondiegetic scoring and silence in *Symphony of Six Million*, *Bird of Paradise*, *The Most Dangerous Game*, *King Kong*, and *Little Lord Fauntleroy* serve to differentiate truth from falsity, familiar from exotic, and good from villainous. In the case of sentimental and comedic musical cues in *The Young in Heart* and the use of diegetic and nondiegetic scoring to initially contrast Scarlett and Melanie in *Gone with the Wind*, music spotting establishes dichotomies for the sole purpose of bridging them—if only temporarily. With *Rebecca* (1940) and later films, Selznick's musical concerns become overtly psychological. Music becomes a means of expressing internalized, often repressed, fears and anxieties. The clear cut oppositions of the 1930s scores that contrast people and places are now sublimated within single individuals or relationships. Selznick's films and scores are by no means the only 1940s films to play with this theme. Dana Polan notes that music in 1940s films frequently signals the “obsessive return of the repressed,” but for Selznick this issue recurs in film after film, even across genres.³⁹ A telling example is Selznick's war film, *Since You Went Away* (1944). Rather than making a combat feature with clearly defined foreign villains, Selznick selects the homefront as his theater to depict solidarity and division within American society. Steiner's score emphasizes the latticework of social connections (and,

³⁹ Dana Polan, *Power and Paranoia: History, Narrative, and the American Cinema, 1940–1950* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 305.

by implication, disconnections) through themes that pair characters together. (In *I'll Be Seeing You* (1944), a film produced by Dore Schary under Selznick's supervision, the effects of war are confined and focused even further to the inner turmoil of a single shell-shocked soldier on leave in America.) In the 1950s, the changes wrought to the *Indiscretion* score and Selznick's input on *Farewell* show the producer continuing to reserve music for expressing the psychological preoccupations of the central characters. The restriction of musical material in *Indiscretion* elevates Mary's unspoken guilt over her daughter (expressed through a folk melody used more in *Indiscretion* than *Stazione Termini*) and her strange, bifurcated relationship with Giovanni. In *Farewell*, Catherine's fear of death and its association with the rain is emphasized through a simple, recurring figure that directly mimics Tiomkin's use of *Sirènes* in *Portrait of Jennie* to convey Jennie's own premonition of death at sea.

In part, Selznick's reluctance to move beyond these techniques in his 1950s films explains why these films and their music were deemed less interesting by critics and audiences. In very general terms, 1950s film music was less concerned with the devils of the psyche and more focused on invasive external forces that threaten autonomy—visitors from another planet (*The Day the Earth Stood Still*), the approaching train (*High Noon*), parents, kids (*Rebel Without a Cause*, 1955), the Roman empire (*Ben-Hur*, 1959), crooked unions (*On the Waterfront*, 1954), or whatever other guise the Communists might take. The scores for these films were also different, though they drew together ideas and sounds previously championed by Selznick. Music was often reserved for the outsider (as in *Bird of Paradise* and *King Kong*) and often this music broke from symphonic norms, much like the novachord in *Rebecca*, the theremin in *Spellbound*, and

the eerie wailing of women's voices in *Portrait of Jennie*. Thus, Rózsa's theremin from *Spellbound* became the calling card of extraterrestrial intruders (*The Day the Earth Stood Still* and *The Thing* (1951) are two classic examples), while jazz and rock & roll became the music for forces of social deviance. This is not to say that film music of the 1950s wholly ceased to depict the inner turmoil and psychological abnormalities of characters (that tradition is alive and well in Alex North's jazz-inflected score for *Streetcar Named Desire* (1951) and Dimitri Tiomkin's music for *Strangers on a Train* (1951)), but rather that this tendency did not represent the mainstream, let alone cutting edge, of film music. It was one, somewhat dated, musico-cinematic device among many, and Cicognini's and Nascimbene's rather generic symphonic efforts did not capture the same notice or attention that contemporary scores (like those mentioned above) received.⁴⁰

In the broad view of Selznick's career, however, these weaker efforts hardly diminish Selznick's accomplishments with film music and film composers. For one, the producer featured music as a distinguishing facet of the Selznick experience. Selznick accomplished this through many means, ranging from his penchant for reusing of melodies across multiple films to his promotion of film music beyond the film itself. For the premiere of *Gone with the Wind*, Selznick planned to feature a twenty-minute medley of orchestral selections from previous Selznick productions.⁴¹ Legal complications forced him to drop the project, but the producer's idea of taking music by different composers from different films made at different studios and assembling it into a retrospective

⁴⁰ Many of the ideas presented in this paragraph dovetail into the central argument of Anthony Bushard's dissertation, "Fear and Loathing in Hollywood: Representations of Fear, Paranoia, and Individuality vs. Conformity in Selected Film Music of the 1950s" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kansas, 2006). Bushard's study focuses on Bernard Herrmann's score for *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, Dimitri Tiomkin's score for *High Noon*, and Leonard Bernstein's score for *On the Waterfront*.

⁴¹ DOS to John Whitney and Lowell Calvert, 17 November 1939, HRC 1237:3.

overture speaks volumes about Selznick's desire to have music characterize and recall films he had produced. Selznick fulfilled this goal through other means and consequently gave film music unprecedented public exposure. While promoting music from his films, Selznick helped transform the symphonic soundtrack from an unmarketable novelty to an intensively lucrative commodity. In 1939, Selznick's wish to release a soundtrack for *Gone with the Wind* was rejected because record companies feared not enough people would buy it. A decade later, Selznick had made significant headway, with radio broadcasts of the music from his films regularly featured on New York's WQXR film music program.⁴² By the time the soundtrack to *A Farewell to Arms* came out in early 1958, promo ads had to jostle for reader attention with numerous other recently released soundtracks announced in the pages of *Variety*.⁴³

Selznick's films also helped the careers of film composers who worked for him. It is no coincidence that Max Steiner, Herbert Stothart, Franz Waxman, Miklós Rózsa, and Dimitri Tiomkin enjoyed greater prominence and better assignments after their time with Selznick. As Katherine Daubney notes, Selznick's influence on Steiner was critical:

Selznick's role was perhaps the most significant in gradually drawing Steiner into composition and away from musical direction. As Steiner did not come to Hollywood as a composer, it was largely circumstance that provided him with opportunities to compose, yet it took Selznick's vision to create film projects which were inspiring to interpret in music.⁴⁴

Stothart's work as a serious film composer similarly developed in Selznick's films at M-G-M. Franz Waxman had enjoyed some recognition for his colorful score in *Bride of*

⁴² WQXR programmed movie scores on Saturday afternoons, beginning at 3:05. Beginning with the October-November 1948 issue, *Film Music Notes* prints these schedules, which indicate between one and three Selznick film scores were featured each month.

⁴³ Full page ad for Capitol Records's *Farewell to Arms* soundtrack, *Variety*, 8 January 1958, 67.

⁴⁴ Katherine Daubney, "View from the Piano: A critical evaluation and contextualisation of the film scores of Max Steiner, 1939-1945" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Leeds, 1996), 83.

Frankenstein (1935) at Universal but was consigned to minor pictures at M-G-M until Selznick's *The Young in Heart* and *Rebecca* showed off his talents and raised his cachet. Even Rózsa, who had nothing positive to say about Selznick in his memoirs, had to admit that "after the success of *Spellbound* and *The Lost Weekend* offers began to pour in and I found myself in the position of being able to choose exactly what I wanted."⁴⁵

Tiomkin got more from Selznick than all the others. His score for Selznick's *Duel in the Sun* made Tiomkin the first choice for many big-budget westerns following in *Duel*'s wake, including *Red River* (1948), *High Noon*, *Giant* (1956), *Gunfight at the OK Corral* (1957), *Rio Bravo* (1959), and *The Alamo* (1960). In addition, Tiomkin appreciated and absorbed Selznick's lessons in self-promotion and showmanship. As Tiomkin noted to one journalist, his music for *Duel* continued to be played in performances and broadcasts because Selznick had sent the suite to orchestras for publicity. Meanwhile his music for other films, like *Lost Horizon* (1937), *Red River*, and *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* (1939), languished in obscurity.⁴⁶ In the late 1950s, Tiomkin became the first Hollywood composer to hire a publicist and campaign openly for Academy Awards. Colleagues looked on disdainfully, but the composer got more mentions in the press than any film composer previously and took home the Academy Award for his music in *The Old Man and the Sea* (1959). His heavy Russian accent, easy sense of humor, and refusal to speak plain English endeared "Dimi" to journalists, who enjoyed quoting his irreverent and grammatically idiosyncratic quips. His autobiography,

⁴⁵ Miklós Rózsa, *Double Life* (New York: Wynwood Press, 1982),150.

⁴⁶ "Tiomkin Wants to Even (Sic!) Score," *Variety*, 10 March 1965.

Please Don't Hate Me (1959), was the first book-length memoir by a Hollywood composer, and increased his popularity still further.⁴⁷

If Tiomkin had never worked for Selznick, would all of that have happened anyway? Perhaps, but working for Selznick helped, and even those who disliked his involvement reaped rewards. Not only were Selznick's films highly publicized productions with advertised scores, they were films that gave space for music to enjoy a prominent role. Even Selznick's lack of departmental infrastructure worked to composers' advantage, occasionally giving them more flexibility in time and financial resources to work.

Selznick's greatest influence on Hollywood film scoring grew from his background in silent films. As Hugo Friedhofer, an orchestrator who worked on many of Selznick's films attested, this was a palpable influence among certain producers:

The producers had an idea...that a big, important picture needed a big, important, expensive-sounding score. Of course, that is particularly the case with producers who grew up in the days of silent film and the big movie palaces which had large-sized orchestras in San Francisco, in Chicago, in Los Angeles, and New York. So they were used to that sound as an accompaniment for silent films.⁴⁸

Selznick was not the only producer "used to that sound," but his work to perpetuate certain aspects of it take on coherence absent in the work of producers less musically interested, including Irving Thalberg and Darryl F. Zanuck. Even director John Ford, whose "musical aesthetic was born in the silent era," expressed no interest in creating a nondiegetic score reminiscent of this period.⁴⁹ Selznick's films were already imbued with

⁴⁷ Dimitri Tiomkin and Prosper Buranelli, *Please Don't Hate Me* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1959).

⁴⁸ Hugo Friedhofer, interviewed by Irene Atkins, April 1974, *Hugo Friedhofer: The Best Years of His Life*, edited by Linda Danly (Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 1999), 62.

⁴⁹ Kathryn Kalinak, *How the West Was Sung: Music in the Westerns of John Ford* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 16. On the contrary, Ford was not in favor of extensive nondiegetic accompaniment: "Ford liked music simply orchestrated and sparingly used" (Kalinak, 17).

stories, imagery, and cast members who carried strong associations of silent era prestige; Selznick enriched this aura further through music. The intent was not to recreate silent film in the sound era as Charlie Chaplin did in *City Lights* (1931), but rather to resuscitate elements that had worked successfully in the past and had lapsed into disuse. “I think silent pictures were marvelous entertainment,” Selznick explained to an interviewer, “extraordinarily creative, and a wonderful medium that we’ve lost. There have been instances of its use and influence in sound pictures, and of course that influence continues.”⁵⁰ For the producer, that influence moved through music: the bringing back of symphonic accompaniment through underscore in *Symphony of Six Million*, the inclusion and reuse of familiar melodies in generic situations, the construction of an entire score based on the works of a single classical composer, and yes, even the preference for “big, important, expensive-sounding” music. Selznick helped serve as torchbearer, carrying these traits from silent film scores into sound film and into prestige pictures in particular. The now intuitive expectation that epic films need full symphonic scores to sustain their grandeur, whether it is *Gone with the Wind*, *Ben-Hur*, *Star Wars* (1977), *Lord of the Rings* (2001–2003), or even *King Kong* (1933 and 2007), can be traced back to Selznick’s conviction that the pinnacle of silent film showmanship could enliven sound film as well

Though Selznick operated independently from the major studios, his career in films barely outlived the disintegration of the studio system⁵¹ and its music departments

⁵⁰ David Selznick’s recollections as recorded by Kevin Brownlow in *The Parade’s Gone By* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1968), 431.

⁵¹ It should be noted that it was not the studios themselves but, rather, the studio *system*—a vertically integrated industry that included the systematic production and exhibition of a studio’s titles—that broke apart in the 1950s through antitrust rulings, diminishing audience numbers, and competition from television. Many of the major studios continued to survive as media entities, though their methods of producing and releasing movies changed radically. See Thomas Schatz, “The New Hollywood,” *Film Theory Goes to the Movies*, edited by Jim Collins, Hilary Radner, and Ava Preacher Collins (New York: Routledge, 1993), 8–36.

in the late 1950s.⁵² Selznick continued to mull over potential projects and advise on films involving his wife, Jennifer Jones, but no Selznick productions followed *A Farewell to Arms*. His filmmaking methods and musical aesthetics, however, proved resilient. Selznick's specialization in prestige pictures anticipated and partially overlapped with what would become known as the "blockbuster" phenomenon. Studio historian Thomas Schatz notes:

The key to Hollywood's survival and the one abiding aspect of its postwar transformation has been the steady rise of the movie blockbuster. In terms of budgets, production values, and market strategy, Hollywood has been increasingly hit-driven since the early 1950s. This marks a significant departure from the classical era, when the studios turned out a few "prestige" pictures each year and relished the occasional runaway box office hit, but relied primarily on routine A-class features to generate revenues. The exceptional became the rule in postwar Hollywood, as the occasional hit gave way to the calculated blockbuster.⁵³

Selznick, of course, had been calculating his prestige pictures since becoming an independent producer in 1935. It is not surprising, therefore, that his consistent use of music to evoke sonic grandeur served as one model for producers and directors of the new blockbusters. As James Wierzbicki notes, musical accompaniment differentiated blockbusters from less overtly ambitious efforts:

Along with brand new musicals and full-color, wide-screen, star-studded adaptations of Broadway shows, epically proportioned and visually spectacular films...were, in a way, typical of the period. ...That they succeeded handsomely at the box-office owes in no small part to their accompanying music, composed along familiar norms, to be sure, but now writ larger than ever. ..."Excessively obvious" symphonic music of the sort long associated with the classical-style film became more important than ever as Hollywood, in the throes of its depression, struggled to regain its audience.⁵⁴

⁵² See Wierzbicki, 183–186 for details on the labor strife in 1958 that played a large part in dissolving the studio's respective house orchestras.

⁵³ Schatz, "The New Hollywood," 8–9.

⁵⁴ Wierzbicki, 166.

In the past several decades, the association between blockbuster and sweeping orchestral accompaniment has remained strong, even as the style of orchestral writing has changed to embrace rhythms and harmonic structures of popular and world music.⁵⁵ Like Selznick, many of the most renowned directors and producers making blockbusters in recent decades have sought to brand their work with distinctive musical signatures, often working with a single composer across multiple productions: Steven Spielberg and George Lucas work with John Williams (*Indiana Jones* series, 1981–2008; *Schindler's List*, 1993; *Star Wars* sextet, 1977–2005); Tim Burton, with Danny Elfman (*Batman*, 1989; *Planet of the Apes*, 2001); J. J. Abrams, with Michael Giacchino (*Mission Impossible III*, 2006; *Star Trek*, 2009). Future research on the collaborative dynamics of these partnerships will better contextualize Selznick's working methods and the impact of his legacy. More importantly, they will shed further light on how the process of film scoring affects musical content and music's relationship to visuals, dialogue, and sound effects in post-classical Hollywood.

Whatever Selznick's impact on later and present day filmmakers and composers, it is important to emphasize that his accomplishments, like the films bearing his name, rest on many shoulders. As producer, he was only as strong as his collaborators. Importantly, Selznick's collaboration with music staff did not represent the norm in studio-era Hollywood, but instead offered something rarer and more intimate. As this dissertation has shown, Selznick's enthusiastic involvement and prolific memos did not always elicit reciprocal excitement from composers, but it did ensure that musical accompaniment was developed and distilled through a series of collaborative

⁵⁵ Consider, for example, the driving rock rhythms integrated into the scores of Danny Elfman (*Batman*, 1989), Hans Zimmer (*Gladiator*, 2000), and Klaus Badelt (*Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curses of the Black Pearl*, 2003).

relationships, resulting in music that conveys—sometimes simultaneously—the creative priorities of multiple individuals. And this, I believe, is where the story gets interesting. Not in championing the unflinching vision of one producer or composer but, rather, in unraveling the delectable mess that results when individuals work together, inspiring, frustrating, guiding, and restraining each other.

When we view a film and hear a score, we receive it as a cohesive whole and base our observations on that seemingly unified entity. Yet the process of constructing this whole, with the web of ideas spanning from multiple individuals, reveals an internal structure at times quite different from the perceived whole. This collaborative effort is by no means unique to Selznick's films or even film music in general, but it is an understudied and undervalued aspect of the creative process. Imposing the one composer-one piece paradigm of Western classical music onto these scores risks misrepresenting their content and misinterpreting their significance. Studying the process of film scoring also entails acknowledging moments of positive collaboration along with moments of friction and apparent failure. New insights are gained not only in instances when ideas reinforce one another gracefully but also when conflicting impulses remain unresolved, permanently suspended in the accommodating structure of film. But what does this vision of a score's fractured architecture tell us? Namely, that a film score is a mosaic to which contributors bring pieces. We can study the larger picture, but the building of the mosaic is itself an interesting story. With the rich documentation from Selznick's films, the scholar has a rare opportunity to consider both.

Appendix A

David O. Selznick's Filmography

Early Films

Will He Conquer Dempsey (1923)

Rudolph Valentino and His 88 American Beauties (1923)

Roulette (1924, Aetna Pictures, released by Selznick Distributing)

M-G-M

Spoilers of the West (1928)

Wyoming (1928)

Paramount

Forgotten Faces (1928)

Chinatown Nights (1929)

Betrayal (1929)

The Man I Love (1929)

The Four Feathers (1929)

The Dance of Life (1929)

Street of Chance (1930)

Sarah and Son (1930)

Honey (1930)

The Texan (1930)

For the Defense (1930)

Manslaughter (1930)

Laughter (1930)

RKO

The Lost Squadron (1932)

Girl Crazy (1932)

Young Bride (1932)

Symphony of Six Million (1932)

The Roadhouse Murder (1932)

State's Attorney (1932)

Westward Passage (1932)

Is My Face Red? (1932)

What Price Hollywood (1932)

Roar of the Dragon (1932)

Beyond the Rockies (1932)

Bird of Paradise (1932)

The Age of Consent (1932)
Thirteen Women (1932)
The Most Dangerous Game (1932)
Hold'em Jail (1932)
Hell's Highway (1932)
A Bill of Divorcement (1932)
The Phantom of Crestwood (1932)
Little Orphan Annie (1932)
The Sport Parade (1932)
The Conquerors (1932)
Rockabye (1932)
Renegades of the West (1932)
Men of America (1932)
Secrets of the French Police (1932)
Penguin Pool Murder (1932)
The Half Naked Truth (1932)
The Animal Kingdom (1932)
No Other Woman (1933)
The Past of Mary Holmes (1933)
The Cheyenne Kid (1933)
Lucky Devils (1933)
Topaze (1933)
The Great Jasper (1933)
Our Betters (1933)
King Kong (1933)
Christopher Strong (1933)
Scarlet River (1933)
Sweepings (1933)
The Monkey's Paw (1933)
Little Women (1933) (uncredited, left during production)

M-G-M

Dinner at Eight (1933)
Night Flight (1933)
Meet the Baron (1933)
Dancing Lady (1933)
Viva Villa! (1934)
Manhattan Melodrama (1934)
David Copperfield (1935)
Vanessa: Her Love Story (1935)
Reckless (1935)
Anna Karenina (1935)
A Tale of Two Cities (1935)

Selznick International Pictures

Little Lord Fauntleroy (1936)
The Garden of Allah (1936)
A Star is Born (1937)
The Prisoner of Zenda (1937)
Nothing Sacred (1937)
The Adventures of Tom Sawyer (1938)
The Young in Heart (1938)
Made for Each Other (1939)
Intermezzo (1939)
Gone with the Wind (1939)
Rebecca (1940)
Since You Went Away (1944)
I'll Be Seeing You (1944)
Spellbound (1945)
Duel in the Sun (1946)
The Paradine Case (1947)
Portrait of Jennie (1948)

Later Films

The Third Man (1949, London Films/Selznick Releasing Organization)
Gone to Earth (1950, London Films/Vanguard)
(reedited and released as *The Wild Heart* (1952, RKO))
Stazione Termini (1953)
(reedited and released as *Indiscretion of an American Wife* (1954, Columbia))
A Farewell to Arms (1957, Twentieth Century-Fox)

Appendix B

Miklós Rózsa, *Spellbound*, “First Meeting” (Original Version)

The following cue has been directly transcribed from the piano-conductor part, a copyist’s realization of Rózsa’s pencil draft. The timing markings and occasional comments, such as “Edwards enters” are in Rózsa’s original draft. They were then transferred to the piano-conductor part, and have been faithfully reproduced here. To aid the reader, stills from the scene have been added to the score and correspond to Rózsa’s timing markings.



Moderato

Allegretto

strings :07

mf

mp
scherzando

p

5



7 *rit.* :19 *a tempo*



Edwardes Enters [m. 12]

9 :31 *dolce*



C.U. Constance_[m.16]

13 *fl. solo* :45



21



23 *rit.* 1:12 *a tempo*

23

25

25



27 1:25



C.U. J.B.

30 1:34 cel.

14 nova[chord]-strs trem. ponticelli

sf

Theremin-vibra-harp harm.

32

14



End_of_dial[ogue]_[m._34]

“Forgive_me”

33

14

1:43

Colla Parte

Nova

1:50

Theremin-vibra-harp harmon.

36

36

36

36

rit.

vln.



Insert_tablecloth

2:02 *Meno mosso*

39 Vln. *dolce*

2:09 Nova.

Cl.



42

2:19

Appendix C

Debussy Meets *Mary Rose*: Further Considerations on Musical Influences in *Portrait of Jennie*

Although there were no Hollywood biopics devoted to the life of Debussy in the 1930s or 1940s, the composer's music had been incorporated into several scores before *Portrait*.¹ The earliest known use of Debussy's music in a Hollywood sound film occurs in *Death Takes a Holiday* (Paramount, 1934), which features his string quartet.² After this isolated incident, Debussy's music returned in several notable scores of the mid-1940s, including *Attack! The Battle for New Britain* (1944), *The Secret Heart* (1946), and *Frenchman's Creek* (1944), a seventeenth-century romantic piece featuring an unlikely affair between a British lady and French pirate. While the use of Debussy's "Clair de lune" in this context was unabashedly anachronistic, its inclusion thrilled one critic:

The music and scoring of Victor Young lends added richness as with its enveloping loveliness we enter a world apart: he has adapted Debussy so that it seems absolutely to belong to the period and the French sea chanteys...providing a novel and diverse touch. The entrance music with horns and trumpets—signal to adventure—ends on a questing note: suddenly the theme (a compound of Clair-de-lune and En Bateau) enters and is beautifully and deftly treated throughout. Nothing could better fit the atmosphere of mystery, romance and glamour. The initial notes are perfect for the whistling signal [of the French Pirate]: the mood can be detached, sensuous or passionate according to the situation.³

¹ The only film on Debussy that approaches biopic status is Ken Russell's *The Debussy Film*, a film that details the making of a fictional film about Debussy. The film was broadcast by the BBC in 1965. See Charles P. Mitchell, *The Great Composers Portrayed on Film, 1913 through 2002*, Jefferson (McFarland & Company, Inc., 2004).

² DeMary, 174, footnote 146.

³ "Reviews of Current Motion Pictures from the Viewpoint of Music Interest," *Film Music Notes* 4, no. 2, (November, 1944): no page number.

While Debussy's music only comprised a portion of the score, the flexible treatment of his thematic material, which encompassed a spectrum of moods ranging from the "detached" to "passionate" anticipated Tiomkin's setting of Debussy's music in *Portrait*, which would include altering the French composer's delicate scoring to accompany scenes of heightened emotional duress.

The featuring of Debussy's music in *Frenchman's Creek* extended beyond the limited circle of film music critics. The front page of the 14 October 1944 *Motion Picture Herald*, featured a blurb by the trade paper's editor, Terry Ramsaye, which praised the incorporation of "Clair de lune" in *Frenchman's Creek* as fitting "with an exceeding romantic prettiness." Continuing on, Ramsaye argued that this particular instance demonstrated that "Hollywood has music to sell," despite being ignored by many in the industry: "[Hollywood] has many of the ablest musicians in the world. It has the best sound recording that can be achieved. But it is substantially a secret."⁴ Selznick, of course, was the exception to this rule; he was one of the few producers active in the artistic and commercial promotion of film music in 1930s and 1940s. Ramsaye's call for more attention to music—and preexistent music in particular—would have affirmed Selznick's own efforts and supported the producer's conviction that the "practically untouched library of the world's music" was "a gold mine for emotional effect" in pictures.⁵

As Debussy's music was receiving attention and praise in Hollywood journals and papers, the sounds of Debussy's music were already aurally coloring Selznick's films. In October of 1944 (mere weeks after the New York premiere of *Frenchman's Creek*),

⁴ Terry Ramsaye, "Clair de Lune," *Motion Picture Herald* 157, no. 2 (14 October 1944): 1.

⁵ *Memo*, 122.

Selznick included an uncharacteristic musical detail in his notes for *Spellbound*, suggesting that Miklós Rózsa score a particular passage “like Debussy,” to which the composer complied.⁶ Four years earlier, Alfred Hitchcock indirectly broached the aural qualities of Debussy’s music when he recommended to Selznick that Norma O’Neill’s music for the stage play *Mary Rose* be used in *Rebecca*. In particular, Hitchcock was impressed by O’Neill’s use of a musical saw, which suggested—in the words of the director—“celestial voices, like Debussy’s *Sirènes*.”⁷ Although O’Neil’s music was not used in the film, its Debussy-infused ambience may have provided a model for Franz Waxman, the film’s composer: “Mr. Hitchcock agrees,” wrote Selznick to music director Lou Forbes, “that the ‘Mary Rose’ music might be useful to Waxman in indicating what we are after for the ‘Rebecca theme.’”⁸ As Joseph McBride has noted, the music and story of *Mary Rose* influenced Hitchcock throughout his American career, but the same can be said of Selznick, who recalled Hitchcock’s suggestion when working on *Portrait*.⁹ In part, Selznick’s association between *Portrait* and *Mary Rose* may have stemmed from a shared mystical quality. In both stories, the heroine’s aging is dissociated from the passage of time. In *Mary Rose*, the heroine stays young while her husband and son age; in *Portrait*, Jennie ages rapidly from childhood to womanhood in a matter of months. As early as June of 1947, a month before writer Francis Brennan suggested the use of Debussy in *Portrait*, Selznick considered the music of *Mary Rose*, “which has a haunting

⁶ “SPELLBOUND Music Notes,” 3 October 1944, HRC 1117:8.

⁷ Hitchcock as quoted in Joseph McBride, “Alfred Hitchcock’s *Mary Rose*: An Old Master’s Unheard *Cri de Coeur*,” *Cineaste* 26, no. 2 (March 2001), 25.

⁸ DOS to Lou Forbes, 28 November 1939, quoted in Sullivan, 66.

⁹ See Joseph McBride, “Alfred Hitchcock’s *Mary Rose*: An Old Master’s Unheard *Cri de Coeur*,” *Cineaste* 26, no. 2 (March 2001), 24–28.

quality,” exemplary for the musical quality he wanted in *Portrait*.¹⁰ Selznick was still considering *Mary Rose* during initial negotiations with Tiomkin and instructed James Stewart to “go over with Tiomkin the Mary Rose score...before I meet with him.”¹¹ Although *Mary Rose* was soon replaced by the music of Debussy, the colorful orchestration of O’Neill’s music and its “haunting quality” served to articulate to others the timbral qualities that Selznick was seeking. Debussy, whose music was more widely known and admired, fit this description in part because O’Neill’s work was influenced by the French composer’s evocative orchestral scoring. Interestingly, a trace of O’Neill may have reflected back on Debussy’s music through Tiomkin’s setting of *L’après-midi d’un faune*, which Tiomkin originally scored for novachord, theremin, and violin harmonics, creating an otherworldly sound reminiscent of O’Neill’s musical saw.¹²

¹⁰ “Music Note,” 17 June 1947, HRC 1123:14. This note precedes Selznick’s other music notes for *Portrait* by more than a year; it is possible that Selznick wanted *Mary Rose* to be used for the preview track.

¹¹ Selznick to James Stewart, 27 July 1948, HRC 1151:9, quoted in DeMary, 172. There is a discrepancy in DeMary’s dates. In the text, he states that this memo was sent on July 24; in his footnote the memo is dated July 27.

¹² Tiomkin ultimately cut the theremin from the texture and it is not heard on the film’s soundtrack.

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