

FILM SCORE BLOGS [Blog # 38]

January 1, 2009 at 4:48 pm PDT New Year's Day

ANNOUNCEMENT: 10-Year Anniversary of *Film Score Rundowns* Site

This month marks the tenth anniversary of the creation of this Film Score Rundowns website. I started the blogs in mid-2004. Matt Gear in Australia built the site precisely on January 15, 1999 (Matt also created the esteemed Rozsa Forum/Rozsa Society site). He constructed the site as a complete surprise to me, culled from my skeletal rundowns I had written on Filmus-L during the previous six months on various posts there. From then on I started to expand on the material and include new rundowns. What initially started as a simple rundown of cue titles with minimal specifics ended up as a virtual rundown of the dynamics of each cue, bar-by-bar (in most or many cases).

You conceivably may be able to view several of the old Front Pages from years back. My wife is on the phone speaking to her family back East at this moment, so I cannot test this theory, but it's possible to go to the Way Back Machine archives site and type in my old url addresses. I believe the first one was:

<http://www.geocities.com/Vienna/Opera/2247>

Of course, also insert:

<http://www.filmscorerundowns.net>

Simply paste this to the appropriate locator "take me to the past" field on the internet archives site, and see what happens. I'll test it later... Yes, it works but sometimes the visual images do not come up, especially the very early ones.

<http://www.archive.org/index.php>

Matt is no longer the site web manager/maintainer. Some years back he became very busy and was no longer able to easily have enough free time to take care of the updates in a timely manner, so I found Sarah to take over. But I am eternally grateful for his initiating vision. Perhaps I will continue updating this site with new rundowns, papers, and blogs for the next ten years—but we'll see!

I usually do not plan well in advance what rundown I will do. It is probable that I will do Max Steiner's *Violent Men* since I worked on all of the score, and the dvd is still available as an audio (and visual) reference. Later this month or next month, Warner bros will come out with a new box set of Romance titles, including *Parrish*—so I may rework that old rundown a bit (and include dvd timing locations for the cues). I really enjoy that score. As I stated before, I tend to prefer Steiner's later years works. Generally this means the Fifties overlapping into the early Sixties and the late Forties. The Tribute Classics label tends to prefer the earlier or mid-career works. That's fine but Steiner's works in his later years were far more interesting to me—including the movies. Of course there are classics like *King Kong* and *Casablanca* but I have a guilty pleasure for what I consider mini-classics (film itself and/or its music) of pure entertainment such as *The Lion & the Horse*, *Helen of Troy*, *Parrish*, *Hell on Frisco Bay* (a really fun movie with terrific dialog and cast interactions!), and so on. I'd love to have a print of *Lion & the*

Horse but cannot find it anywhere (so far), even from an obscure collector. And it hasn't been shown on TCM that I know of. I'd really love to see it rerecorded somewhere, but I extremely doubt Tribute or Intrada or any of the other labels will seriously pick it up! I may for the hell of it (even without an audio reference) do a partial rundown of it. I say "partial" because I never worked extensively on that written score.

I read an article in The Economist (Dec 20-Jan 2, 2009 issue) that discusses music. It states that on average 1/8th of waking life is spent listening to music. The writer talks generally about music and music consumption. Its primary value is that it binds people together, and that it has the ability to manipulate emotions (sadness, joy).

[Friday, January 2, 2009 at 6:39 pm] I'm watching Larry King on CNN in the background. Guests and reporters are discussing the escalation of the Gaza bombings (and the Hamas firing missiles at Israel). Israel is poised in bringing the tanks over the border but I suspect it will be a limited engagement.

-Cold day today at work. Also my chest hurt today (and yesterday) after somehow aggravating an old work injury from about a year ago. So I took about three blue Advil. At least my foot injury caused at work on overtime is healing after about a month of my right foot hurting. I'm beginning to feel my age a little bit these days! I'll be off on Sunday and Monday, fortunately, and then during Martin Luther King week (in two weeks). That Tuesday is Obama's inauguration that I'll eagerly look forward to watching in the comfort of my home.

[7:38 pm:] Now: I mentioned (see below in a post from over two months ago) young composer George Shaw's *J'ok'el* score and how he conducted his cue from the movie, "Prayers for the Missing," in that late October film music fest in San Pedro. I also mentioned there that I had purchased his cd in the lobby at Intermission.

The cd has 21 cues from the movie. I do not know if there are actually more cues than that in the film because I never watched it. I'll check again to see if it's available at my local Blockbuster. I asked at one Blockbuster a few months back but that particular store did not have it. In fact the guy went on the computer and stated that it's not even in the "system." Perhaps that has changed since then. I have fear & trembling—not because it's going to be a scary movie but because almost all of the reviews I read on it in the Internet were pretty scary (lousy)! I don't know if I want to waste my time on an awful horror movie from Mexico! If I can get it easily, then I will rent it. Otherwise I'm not going to go out of my way to get it (and I certainly will not buy a copy due to the overwhelming bad word-of-mouth). Too bad young and struggling composers have to put up with lousy films in order to write good music to be heard. I'm almost in the opinion it would be better not to write for inferior films because then your artistic reputation is on the line and/or you are typecast.

Now: I asked George during Intermission if he would be willing to send me his written score to me in case I wanted to do a "rundown" of it on my site. The next day (Sunday) he did indeed send me several cues (I believe six) as an e-mail attachment. That was very kind of him, although it would be insufficient coverage (less than a fifth of the total score) to do a full-fledged rundown analysis. So perhaps I'll do a cue or two *here* in this blog. I'll start with "Prayers for the Missing" because it is very pretty (and pretty

simple as well!). Upon hearing it for the first time, fortunately, you would never suspect that it came from a bad Mexican schlock-horror film. The music deserves a far better association. I would definitely recommend any reader of this blog to go ahead and purchase the cd because this cue is definitely appealing.

Overall (based on the several cues I have) George Shaw's music is overwhelmingly tonal with obvious lyrical/melodic qualities. We hear basically conservative or standard tonal harmonic practices, and the chordal structures are normally consonant intervals of thirds, fourths and fifths. In other words, the tonal relationships are standard, classic—albeit simple—ones. I expect that as he matures musically that his artistic expression will show added new techniques to his basic musical style (that I would probably describe as Modern Romantic). His role model is the esteemed John Williams so this is a good sign. I suspect he'll add more dynamics, counterpoint, (etc.) and expand beyond standard bounds and add variety to his underlying Romantic tonal vocabulary. The music I hear in these cues for *J'ok'el* (especially "Prayers for the Missing") are not very sophisticated and somewhat predictable (in tonal motion)—yet the music is very pleasing and soothing. You will certainly not find a cold & dry & weird serial approach here! Instead you have a warm, softly emotional and romantic/evocative expression. The simple yet effective string combinations and texture, the legato articulating, the easy way of expression all serve to make the listening experience very appealing. In various cues he adds exotic instruments (for example, the Dudek) for added color and interest. I think he shows promise. If he wasn't into film music expression, then I would logically have expected him to go into something akin to "spiritual" or "New Age" type of music besides ethnic/cultural bents.

"Prayers for the Missing" Reel 2M6, 4/4 time, 50 bars, 3:19. There is no tempo-marking on this cue (or any of his other cues I have) although he inserted a metronome marking of quarter note = 60. If he's focused on the classic "Romantic" quality, I think he should start placing descriptive tempo-markings on his cues and sections. Perhaps for this cue *Moderato (con molto espressivo)* would've been appropriate. Or *Moderato e tranquillo*. Or even *Molto triste*. Also I do not see a central or unifying tonality here but the cue starts on E min (E minor or E/G/B). The final tonality is C min (C/Eb/G) to the M3 dyad interval of D/F#. Note: In the computer-generated attachment I got for the cues (whether "Finale" or "Sibelius" or whatever, I do not know), the first two bars are "2" rest duration bars. Apparently his computer has it set up this way in order to make the music compatible with other programs tied to the music finished product. So Bar 3 is actually Bar 1; Bars 4 (as written on the sheet) is really Bar 2 of the actual music (this is rather annoying!)—so I adjusted accordingly to reflect the music that actually starts (my Bar 1 is it's programmed Bar 3, and so forth).

Instrumentation: Bb clarinet (although "1, 2" clarinets are listed) and strings. Shaw did not insert the number of violins I (I), II, violas, VC, CB. I would prefer if the composer/orchestrator give the intended, desired number of players. This is standard practice. Also I see very little crescendo-decrescendo hairpins except especially towards the end of the cue. There are some but I would've expected far more such nuances.

In Bar 1, *muted* violas are temporarily *sol* playing *pp* < *p* Line 1 E whole note tied to whole note next bar. Muted violins I in Bar 2 play *p* Line 1 B whole note while muted violins II play Line 1 G whole note, and cellos (I'll stick with the accustomed

“VC” used by Herrmann) play small octave E whole note *p* (the celli are not indicated as *muted*, nor the double basses). At any rate, we see here (and “hear”) the root position E min (E/G/B) whole note triad in Bar 2.

In Bar 3, *div* (divisi) violins I play (top line) Line 1 G half note up to A half note to (Bar 4, *rall.*) Bb dotted half note tied to 8th note (followed by an 8th rest) while bottom line violins I play Line 1 G whole note tied to dotted half note in Bar 4 and tied to 8th note (followed by an 8th rest). Violins II in Bar 3 play Line 1 Eb whole note tied to dotted half note and 8th note next bar, while violas play middle (Line 1), and VC play small octave C tied notes as indicated. The tonality in bar 3 is C min (C/Eb/G) to passing C min 6 (C/Eb/G/A) to (Bar 4) the fairly consonant C min 7th chord (C/Eb/G/Bb).

After a half and quarter rest in Bar 4, the *solo* clarinet plays *mf* Line 1 F [written G] quarter note [Note: the title page states “Transposed Score”] up to (Bar 5) Line 1 B [written Line 2 C#] half note to A# [written B#] to B quarter notes legato up to (Bar 6) Line 2 E [written F#] dotted quarter note to D [written E] 8th to C [written D] quarter note down to F [written G] quarter note. These eight notes are under the legato phrase curve-arc line. [end session]

[resume Sunday, January 4, 2009 at 11:22 am. Had a bout of intestinal bug or mild food poisoning yesterday (although I managed to go to work), and I was in bed for over 13 hours starting at 6:30 pm last evening! Took a Cipro, had a small salad and tea.]

In Bar 5 (*a tempo*), violins I and II play a series of 8th note figures thru Bar 12. Violins I play *pp* Line 2 G/Line 3 E 8th notes down to Line 2 E/B 8ths back up to G/E down to E/B (these four dyads are connected as a figure by a crossbeams and played under the legato slur). Violins I repeat this figure in the second half of this bar and repeat thru Bar 10 to (Bar 11) Line 2 A#/Line 3 F# 8ths down to F#/Line 3 C# back to A#/F# down to F#/C# (crossbeam connected) and repeated again in the same bar to (Bar 12) Line 2 B/Line 3 F# 8ths down to F#/Line 3 D 8ths back up to B/F# down to F#/D 8ths (crossbeam connected) to B/Line 3 F# dotted quarter notes (followed by an 8th rest).

Back in Bar 5, violins II play *pp* Line 1 B up to Line 2 G down to B up to G legato 8ths (crossbeam connected figure) to another such figure to (Bar 8) Line 2 C up to G down to C up to G 8ths figure played twice. Violins II repeat Bars 5-6 in Bars 7-8 and Bars 9-10. In Bar 11, violins II continue the pattern on Line 2 C# legato up to A# down to C# up to A# 8ths figure played twice to (Bar 12) Line 2 D up to B down to D up to B crossbeam connected 8ths down to D dotted quarter note (followed by an 8th rest).

Back in Bar 5, *div* violas play *pp* small octave G/B whole notes to (Bar 6) G/middle C whole notes (these two bars repeated in Bars 7-8 and Bars 9-10) to (Bar 11) F#/middle C# whole notes.

Back in Bar 5, VC play a rather primary series of notes after the solo clarinets. Celli play *p* Great octave E up to B up to small octave E to F# legato 8ths (crossbeam connected) up to descending 8th notes G-F#-E-Great octave B (crossbeam connected) down to (Bar 6) C up to G up to small octave E to F# legato 8ths (crossbeam connected) to descending 8ths G-F#-E-D. Celli repeat Bar 5 in Bar 7 to (Bar 8) Great octave C up to G up to small octave E to F# 8ths to G-F# 8ths (crossbeam connected) to E quarter note. VC continue in Bar 9 from Great octave E up to B up to small octave E to F# 8ths (crossbeam connected) to G-F# 8ths to E quarter note to (Bar 10) a repeat of Bar 8. In Bar 11, celli continue on Great octave F# up to small octave C# up to F# to A# 8ths

(crossbeam connected) to Line 1 C# down to B 8ths (crossbeam connected) to A# quarter note down to (Bar 12) Great octave B up to small octave F# up to B to Line 1 C# 8ths to D half note.

Back in Bar 5, CB play *pp* small octave E whole note down to (Bar 6) C whole note (repeat these two bars in Bars 7-8 and Bars 9-10) to (Bar 11) small octave F# whole note up to (Bar 12) B whole note.

The clarinet in Bar 7 continues the melody line on Line 1 B [written Line 2 C#] half note to A# to B quarter notes up a m6 interval to (Bar 8) G [written A] dotted quarter note to F# [written G#] 8th to E [written F#] quarter note to D-C [written E-D] 8ths to (Bar 9) Line 1 B [written Line 2 C#] dotted half note. These nine notes are played legato under the phrase umbrella. Then the clarinet continues on A#-B 8ths to (Bar 11) Line 2 C# [written D#] half notes to A# quarter note to B-Line 2 C 8ths to (Bar 12) D dotted half note tied to 8th note (followed by an 8th rest). The clarinet is tacet for the rest of the cue.

The tonality in Bar 5 is E min (E/G/B) although the extended chords temporarily are E min 7 (E/G/B/D) and E min 9 (E/G/B/D/F#). C maj (C/E/G) is the chord in Bar 6. These chords repeat thru Bar 10 to (Bar 11) F\$ maj (F#/A#/C#) to (Bar 12) B min (B/D/F#).

In Bar 13, violins I play *mf* Line 2 G half note to F# to G quarter notes to (Bar 14) A whole note to (Bar 15) G dotted quarter note to F# 8th to E quarter note down to Line 1 B quarter note to (Bar 16) Line 2 C dotted quarter note to D 8th up to G to F# quarter notes to (Bar 17) F# whole note decrescendo hairpin. Back in Bar 13, violins II play *mf* Line 2 D whole note up to (Bar 14) G half note to F# half note to (Bar 15) E half note down a M 6 interval to Line 1 G half note to (Bar 16) F# quarter note to E dotted half note to (Bar 17) F# whole note decrescendo hairpin. Back in Bar 13, violas play *mf* Line 1 B whole note to (Bar 14) Line 2 D whole note down to (Bar 15) Line 1 F# quarter note to E dotted half note down to (Bar 16) C whole note up to (Bar 17) E to D# half notes. Back in Bar 13, VC play *mf* small octave G whole note to (Bar 14) A half note tied to 8th note to B legato up to Line 1 E to D 8ths to (Bar 15) C quarter note down to small octave B half note to B down to E 8ths to (Bar 16) F3 quarter note to G dotted half note to (Bar 17) A whole note. Back in Bar 13, CB play *mf* small octave G dotted half note to F#-E 8ths to (Bar 14) D whole note to (Bar 15) E dotted half note tied to 8th note to D 8th to (Bar 16) C dotted half note up to G up to Line 1 C 8ths to (Bar 17) B whole note. The tonality in Bar 13 is G maj (G/B/D) to (Bar 14) (ending F# maj (D/F#/A), etc.

I think this gives a curious reader (hopefully there is more than just *one* curious reader here!) an idea of the music construction here. Besides, this is a blog and not an official or intended full cue rundown. However, I would like to discuss very briefly the main title cue 1M! “The Legend of LaLlorona, ¾ time, 49 bars, 2:21. Instrumentation: 2 flutes, oboe, duduk, 4 Bb clarinets, 3 horns, 2 trombones and 1 bass trombone, vocal, and strings.

In Bar 1, VC/CB play *p* < Great octave F dotted half note tied to dotted half note next bar *mp* to (Bar 3) F# dotted half note to (Bar 4) F dotted half note crescendo and tied to dotted half note next bar *mf* >. In bar 2, violins I play *mp* middle (Line 1) C dotted half note to (Bar 3) small octave B dotted half note to (Bar 4) middle C dotted half note crescendo and tied to dotted half note next bar *mf* >. Violins II play *mp* small octave Ab dotted half note to (Bar 3) B dotted half note to (Bar 4) Ab dotted half note tied to next bar. Violas in Bar 2 play *mp* small octave F dotted half note down to (Bar 3) D dotted

half note to (Bar 4) F dotted half note tied to next bar. The tonality in Bar 2 is the basic F min chord (F/Ab/C) but if the duduk (more on this Armenian-rooted instrument in a minute) plays a G dotted quarter note, then the chord temporarily becomes the F min/9 (F/Ab/C/G). In Bar 3 we have the B min (B/D/F#) chord and then, in Bars 4-5, the F min (extended to F min/9).

Now: The composer has the unusual woodwind called a duduk playing in Bars 2 to 5. No designation of key is given on the score, so the logical assumption initially is that it is in the normal or standard key of "A" although you can get duduks in various keys, including the American designation of C. I believe I heard the duduk played in the *Battlestar Galatica* series. It was also used in *The Last Temptation of Christ*. It is associated with displaying a rather haunting, lonely sound, somewhat vocal in nature.

As written (whether or not it is in "C" or not), the duduk in Bar 2 plays Line 1 F grace note to G dotted quarter note to Ab-G 16ths to F-Eb 8ths to (Bar 3) D-E-F# quarter notes to (Bar 4) G half note to *bend* of what looks like Ab-G-F 16ths to G quarter note tied to dotted half note next bar.

In Bar 6 in 5/4 time, violins I play *mp* < Line 1 D quarter note to E-F# half notes to (Bar 7 in 4/4 time) G whole note *f* > tied to whole note next bar and tied to (Bar 9 in 3/4 time) dotted half note *accel* and tied to (Bar 10 in 6/8 time) 8th note (followed by rests). Violins II in Bar 6 play small octave B dotted half note tied to half note to (Bar 7) C whole note tied to next bars as given. Violas play small octave D dotted half note tied to half note to (Bar 7) Eb whole note tied to next bars. VC/CB play Great octave F# dotted half note tied to half note to (Bar 7) small octave C whole note tied to next several bars. We have the B min (B/D/F#) tonality in Bar 6 to (Bar 7) C min (C/Eb/G) for the strings. In Bar 7, clarinets play *f* > small octave Eb/Line 1 C/Eb/G [written E/Line 1 D/F/G] whole notes *rinforzando*-marked tied to next three bars as given. The vocal (voice) in Bar 7 plays *mf* ("oh" mournful) Line 2 Eb dotted quarter note to Fb-Eb 16ths to D to C quarter notes to (Bar 8) Line 1 B to Ab half notes to (Bar 9 in 3/4 time) G dotted half note tied to 8th note next bar. The expanded tonality (thanks to the voice) in Bar 8 is C minMaj 7th (C/Eb/G/B) to Ab maj 7th (Ab/C/Eb/G) to (Bar 9) C min again.

After complete music silence in Bars 13-15, strings return in Bar 16. Violins I play *f* Line 1 E dotted half note tied to dotted half note next bar and then (in Bars 16-17) tied F dotted half notes to (Bars 18-19) F# tied dotted half notes. Violins II in Bar 14 play *f* middle C dotted half note tied to dotted half note next bar (repeated next two bars) and then D tied dotted half notes in Bars 18-19. Violas play small octave A tied dotted half notes in Bars 14-15, then Ab tied notes in Bars 16-17, and then B tied half notes in Bars 18-19. VC/CB play Great octave A tied dotted half notes, then F tied notes, then B.

In Bar 14, the bass trombone plays as the VC/CB. All three horns in Bar 14 play *ff* small octave *rinforzando*-marked A [written Line 1 E] dotted half note to (Bar 15) A *rinforzando*-marked quarter note to G# [written D#] 8th tied to 8th note to F# [written C#] quarter note to (Bar 16) F dotted half note. Trombones play exactly the same. So we have the A min (A/C/E) chord in Bar 14 to (Bar 15) expanded to F# half-dim 7th (F#/A/C/E) to (Bar 16) A min (F/Ab/C). Etc.

[Thursday, October 23, 2008 at 2:07 pm PDT]

Being on vacation, I had the opportunity on Tuesday to go to the local Cal State library where I research music books and written scores. Regarding the latter, I noticed that the library finally got a copy of Stravinsky's *Apollo* (Apollon Musagete). I especially made sure that I xeroxed the complete "Pas d' action" section whose opening and ending reminds me a lot of Herrmann's style (something that he would've composed, say, for a *Virginian* or *Alfred Hitchcock Hour* episode for Revue-Universal Studios back in the mid-Sixties).

I am analyzing the music now... (and also listening to Chris Matthews MSNBC show!)...OK. The similarity to Herrmann is first & foremost the orchestral texture with the low strings color and also the moderately slow notes in the first five bars (there is a section change in Bar 6 that is not Herrmann-sounding). The tonality or notes/chords used are unlike Herrmann for the most part—except for the ending that finally settles into a restful and triadic Bb major (Bb/D/F) chord but ending on the Line 1 F whole notes only in end Bar 125. What we predominantly find in this section from Bars 1-5 and Bars 119-125 are augmented chords/intervals.

In Bar 1 in 2/2 time (*Moderato* with the quarter note = 80), and in the key signature of 2 flats (Bb major/G minor), the violas play *mf* play on the down-bow Line 1 G half note (harkening to the possible G minor but remember that the movement ends on a clear Bb major) up to Bb half note trill to A-Bb 16th note after-beats (or grace notes) up to (Bar 2) Db half note plunging down a diminished 7th interval to E half note. VC II (bottom staff) plays the same but two octaves lower register. So they play Great octave G half note up to Bb half note trill, and so forth. G up to Bb is an m3 (minor third) interval, and Bb up to Db is also an m3 interval.

Incidentally the instrumentation shows 8 violins I, 8 violins II, 6 violas, 4 VC I, 4 VC II, and 4 CB.

In Bar 3, VC I plays *poco sf p sub*. Line 1 F rinforzando-marked whole note (followed by a breath mark) and repeated next bar. After a half rest in bar 3, violas play *p* small octave Bb tenuto-marked half note on the up-bow, while VC II play small octave D half note, and CB play small octave F# half note. Obviously this is an ambiguous tonal picture. First we have the Bb aug chord (Bb/D/F#) and also Bb maj (Bb/D/F) thanks to VC I playing the F whole note. But actually it's a mini-mash of tones with the simultaneous playing of F and F# tones. In Bar 4, after a half rest, violas play B tenuto half note on the up-bow, while VC II play Eb, and CB sound F#. Ambiguity once again here. We have, in effect, the B major (B/D#/F#) chord but enharmonically written with the Eb instead of the D# notes. Also we have the B majb5th (B/D#/F) but enharmonic since we have that Eb note (instead of D#). In Bar 5 in 3/2 time, VC I plays Line 1 F dotted whole note rinforzando. After a half rest, violas play middle C tenuto half note on the up-bow legato and decrescendo hairpin to C# quarter note tied to 8th note (followed by an 8th rest). After a half rest, VC II play small octave D half note to Eb quarter note tied to 8th note. CB play small octave G half note tied to quarter and 8th notes (followed by an 8th rest). Definite ambiguity here (in effect atonal) with the C#/Eb/F/G end notes for that bar.

Skipping to the end of Bar 118 in 2/2 time, VC I play *mf* Great octave G quarter note up to (Bar 119 in 3/2 time) Bb up to small octave Db up to E half notes. VC II and CB play the same except for that last note descending down to Great octave E half note (followed all by a breath mark). Violins I play small octave G quarter note up to (Bar 119) Bb half note (followed by a whole rest), while violins II play that G quarter note up to Bb up to Line 1 Db half notes (followed by a half rest). Bar 119 shows the minor third intervals once again. This immediate section is definitely Herrmann-sounding due to the low strings.

In Bar 120 in 2/2 time, VC I plays *sfp* Line 1 F whole note *rinforzando* (repeated next bar). After a half rest, violins II (violins I are silent until Bar 123) play *p* small octave Bb half note, while violas play small octave D half note, and VC II play Great octave Gb half note. Basically this is the augmented major 7th or maj 7#5 (Gb/Bb/D/F). In Bar 121, VC I play the Line 1 F whole note once again. After a half rest, violins II play small octave B tenuto half note (natural glyph in front on the note). Violas play Eb tenuto half note, and VC II play Great octave G half note. Ambivalence again, or least we have the augmented sense strongly here with the basic Eb augmented chord (Eb/G/B) although the F whole note is also intoned. In Bar 122 in 3/2 time, VC I play Line 1 F dotted whole note. After a half rest, violins II play middle C tenuto half note legato to C# half note decrescendo hairpin. Violas play small octave F to Eb half notes. VC II play Ab to A half notes. The first chord is a clear F minor half note triad (F/Ab/C) to the augmented-constructed Dom 7#5 (F/A/C#/Eb) half note chord.

In Bar 123 in 2/2 time, VC I play Line 1 F whole note *rinforzando* tied to whole notes next two end bars. After a half rest, violins I return to pluck *p* pizzicato small octave Bb/Line 1 D quarter notes (followed by a quarter rest), and repeated next bar. Violins II play the same. After a half rest, violas pluck D/Bb/Line 1 D quarter notes (followed by a quarter rest) and repeated in Bar 124 (followed by a whole rest in Bar 125). After a half rest, VC II pluck Great octave Bb/small octave D quarter notes (followed by a quarter rest) and repeated next bar, while CB pluck Great octave Bb quarter note in that rest pattern for two bars. Once again we clearly hear the Bb major tonality that ends the movement with a sense of fulfillment or completeness, restful resolve, perhaps even serenity!

[4:22 pm :] Also at Cal State I xeroxed various section pages of Camille Saint-Saens *Samson and Delilah* full score opera. I needed an audio copy of the music so first I looked on Amazon.com. The list price for the EMI Classics two-cd set (Gorr-Vickers) is \$23.98 but marked down to \$13.97, and that looked reasonable. However, on eBay I found a mint condition copy available for \$9.99 with free shipping. I bid on it (located north in Washington) and won the bid. Actually I was the only one bidding.

I also copied sections of Saint-Saens *Le Carnaval Des Animaux* (Carnival of Animals). I wonder if anyone hears an echo of Herrmann's "The Murder" cue in *Psycho* generated from the No. 8 piece of Saint-Saens *Carnival of Animals* titled *Personnages à longues oreilles* (Characters with Long Ears) or donkeys! You hear the exact same screeching high violins in the Saint-Saens movement but obviously in an isolated fashion (whereas Herrmann has the shrill high register violins playing relentlessly, and as half notes instead of 8th notes). Saint-Saens plays the Line 4 E 8th notes. Herrmann starts off with the Line 4 Eb notes in Bar 1 (continuing thru Bar 8) but in Bar 2 violins II start to

play the same Line 4 E tones (but, once again, not the same notes because he has continuous E half notes in 3/2 time instead of isolated E 8th notes in 3/4 time as in the donkey piece). Maybe some people won't see the connection but I immediately made the association—even though it's probably doubtful that Herrmann was thinking of Saint-Saens piece or subconsciously brought it up in his own creative process.

“Aquarium” is probably the most appealing or famous or recognizable (to me, at least, because many people may prefer *Le Cygne*) of the 14 movements by this French Romantic composer. The composer creates a scintillating piece of music here. The pianos play contrary motion figures (a common device for Herrmann), and the legato high strings are *Sourdine* (muted)—another overwhelmingly common practice in Herrmann's standard bag of tricks.

I also copied the beginning pages of Saint-Saens *Danse Macabre*, a very recognizable piece to many people. Horn I plays *p* middle C [written Line 1 G] dotted half note in 3/4 time tied thru many bars, while the harp plays *f* Line 1 D dotted half note repeated next bars. In Bar 5, divisi violins II play *ppp* Line 1 D/F# dotted half notes tied to next three bars, while violins I play this on A/Line 2 D tied dotted half notes. So we have the D Dom 7th (D/F#/A/C) tonality. Interestingly the piece has the key signature of G min/Bb maj (two flats). If you are more the Stravinsky type of listener, then you may not like Saint-Saens. In fact, he thought Stravinsky was crazy when he heard *The Rite of Spring* in the Spring of 1913! Of course the older (generation) Saint-Saens, a traditionalist, did not much care for Debussy's music.

I xeroxed representative pages/sections of all of Mahler's symphonies. I especially copied much of the first movement of his Third Symphony that I liked. In a Talking Herrmann post not long ago, I spontaneously mentioned how I thought Herrmann overall was a better orchestrator than Mahler. Much of the time I was hummed by the overblown music of Mahler (too excessive and too long) but this movement of the 3rd Symphony caught my attention with the interesting orchestration. Bars 11-14 (:24 in my cd recording I have) is rather Herrmannesque with the low C.Fag, horns, Pos, timp. Bar 11 offers the F maj (F/A/C) tonality, then A minor (A/C/E) in Bar 12, then F# min (F#/A/C#) in Bar 13, and finally A maj (A.C#/E) in Bar 14. Pretty normal traditional triadic tonalities. No Stravinsky here! Or Honegger! Herrmann probably would've included the VC/CB in those bars. Maybe he would've had the F half-diminished 7th (F/Ab/Cb/Eb) played by the trombones. Then in an adjacent bar, perhaps he would Olympic torch a switch to the woodwinds and include the clarinets/bass clarinet to play (with the Fag/C. Fag) the F# half-dim 7th.

Skipping to Bars 122-123 (just before Section 10) the bass clarinet and bassoons play a descending chromatic run of 16th note figures that reminds me a lot of what Max Steiner would do. I believe I heard an example of this in a middle cue of *The Boy from Oklahoma* (I may actually have that written music) when the pacifist marshal and his sidekick (the ex-Marshall's daughter) sneak into the Turlock farm at night.

Skipping slightly to Bar 132 (start of Section 11—or labeled “cue” 2 by Peter Franklin who analyzed this score in 1991), we come to the first presentation of the “Pan Sleeps” half notes theme as played here by the two flutes and two piccolos. In my recording, I initially thought it sounded like the flutter tongue of the flutes, but no fluttering here. Flutes play (5:20 cd) *p* > Line 1 Bb/Line 2 F rinforzando half notes to

D/F# half notes, while piccolos play Line 1 Bb to A half notes, and Fag plays Line 2 D dotted half note. Repeat next bar. Here we have the Bb maj (Bb/D/F) to D maj (D/F#/A) tonalities. Etc. In Bars 148-149 (starting 5:57 my cd) the various high clarinets sound startling (almost like trumpets). Nice effect. Four flutes now play in Bar 225 (9:12 cd) the Pan Sleeps mood theme thru Bar 228, then taken over by the clarinets in the next several bars.

[Friday, October 24 at 1:51 pm] : A local salvage/tow truck place just towed away our old '79 Toyota Corolla two-door that we had in long-term storage in our two-car garage, paying us \$100 for us to sign over the pink slip. Other places I phoned locally wanted only \$50, maybe \$75, so this was the best offer.

Continuing with my Cal State xeroxing: I also copied sections of various Malcolm Arnold symphonies. A few nights ago I noticed a seller on eBay offering for cds of Arnold symphonies, each for \$4.49 starting bid. I put in my bid. They are Conifer Classics releases with Vernon Handley conducting the Royal Phil. Orchestra. One cd has symphonies # 1 & #2; another includes #3 & #4; another has #7 & #8, and the fourth cd has # 2 and also "Concerto for 2 pianos," "Grand, Grand Overture," and "Carnival of Animals." Hopefully nobody else will bid on them before it ends Sunday afternoon (located Washington, D.C.). I am of course aware of his film music works, especially the most famous ones (*Bridge of River Kwai*), but I never really got "into" them. I appreciated the music, liked his style, and in fact recognized several of his common musical mannerisms in scores that I did not know in advance that he scored. I even worked on his *Cowboy in Africa* score at UCLA several years ago. But I never focused on his non-film music. Once I saw that splendid documentary on his life several weeks ago (where they offered snippets of his serious works) I wanted to hear more. So hopefully I'll get most of the symphonies to listen to soon. More on Arnold later when I discuss my xeroxies of book material.

Back to Mahler's Third Symphony: It may be an odd association but when I listen to the opening of the 3rd movement (Comodo/Scherzando) as the solo clarinet plays, I am immediately reminded of the unused "Transformation" cue (6M64) that Rozsa composed for *Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid*. In Bar 3 of Mahler's movement in 2/4 time, the Bb clarinet plays forte Line 2 C [written D] staccato 8th to same C 16th up to Gb 16th down to Db tenuto quarter note (repeated next four bars). At the end of Bar 2 in Rozsa's piece in Cut time, the solo Eb clarinet plays *mf* < "3" triplet value 8ths Line 1 Eb-F-G [written Line 2 C-D-E] but we'll ignore that triplet because the pattern in question or focus is stated in Bar 3. Here we find the clarinet playing *scherzando* (as written by Rozsa) line 1 Ab [written Line 2 F] *rinforzando* 8th (followed by an 8th rest)—although it conceivably could be a staccato quarter note (just as the first note in Mahler's pattern is a staccato 8th but could've very well been a 16th note followed by a 16th rest). Then the E-flat clarinet plays the same Ab staccato 8th up to Eb staccato 8th down to Bb *rinforzando* quarter note. This four-note pattern is not dissimilar to the structure given in the four-note figure composed by Mahler (although Rozsa continues the comic melody line as I may continue shortly). The notation is different; the pitches are different. However, there is a musical

ballpark similarity beyond the sameness of the clarinet solo for both and the *scherzando* mode.

Now: Let's go to a far more interesting and relatable association. Go to the very first movement of Mahler's First Symphony, and go to the very opening bars. If you have the audio, then fetch it, put it in your machine, and listen to the first several seconds before you continue to read what I think it sounds like in association....

Finished? Does it sound rather "spacey" or "other-worldly" to you? What music by another composer does it remind you of? I'll give a hint: it was a famous tv series... Another hint: mid-Sixties... Another hint: sci-fi... Enough hints? OK. The opening of Mahler's 1st symph reminds me of the opening of the original *Star Trek* Main Title composed by Alexander Courage. We have the sustained high strings in 4/4 time quietly playing the tied A whole notes for several bars in the Mahler music. In the *Star Trek* M.T., we have the organ playing "very thin" and quietly *pp* Lines 2 & 3 A whole notes in 4/4 time tied to next several bars. The flutes/piccolo/clarinets also play on relatively high A. The harp starts off on the Line 2 A half note let vibrate, and also the vibe ("motor off"). In Bar 3 of the Mahler movement, the piccolo/oboe/clarinets play A half note down to E half note. Well, in the *Star Trek* Main title we have the vibe/harp playing A down to E half notes initially. The setup is curiosity very similar, and perhaps no coincidence. Perhaps Courage was consciously or subconsciously inspired by the Mahler 1st symphony. Of course there are no horns (and then smooth trumpets) playing a motif in the Mahler movement by the third bar (as given in the signature *Star Trek* theme) but I think the underlying framework of music is nevertheless similar. I was able to hand-copy years ago at the Jerry Goldsmith Collection in the academy library the *Star Trek* Main Title elaborated sketches. It was included along with Jerry's sketches for the first motion picture. It was the 67/68 slightly revised version.

The second movement of this "Titan" symphony is pretty recognizable by many classical music listeners, I would think. The VC/CB play a two-bar ostinato figure in $\frac{3}{4}$ time (key sig of 3 sharps) of A half note down to E staccato quarter note (there's that opening A down to E P4 interval once again that we heard in the 1st movement) up to (Bar 2) A-A staccato quarter notes down to E staccato quarter note. Repeat thru Bar 14. The opening of the third movement should also be recognized by many. The timp sounds an ostinato pattern *pp* in 4/4 time of small octave D down to Great octave A quarter notes back up to D down to A quarter notes. Repeat almost to the end of the movement. Of course Herrmann several times in cues had a cue-duration timp ostinato pattern. This includes a cue in the Ethan Allen pilot television score that's available on cd. In Bar 3 of the third movement, the CB plays *p* Line 1 D to E quarter notes legato to F-E 8ths to D quarter note (repeated next bar) to (Bar 5) F to G quarter notes to A half note (repeated next bar).

Skipping to the 4th movement of the 4th symphony, while this is definitely not a Herrmannesque piece per se, I rather liked the two flutes playing a whimsical lyric in Bars 8-10 (about the :19 point) that sort of reminds me a bit of Herrmann. They play Line 2 E 8th legato to F# back to E staccato 8ths (crossbeam connected) to E tenuto quarter note to a repeat of that four-note pattern to (Bar 9) more "3" triplet value figures of E-F#-G to G-F#-E to D#-E-F# to F#-E-D 8ths, and so forth. That phrase by the flutes

is in the style of how Herrmann would write. The first movement of this symphony reminds me a bit of being Tchaikovskian.

I also xeroxed some of Honegger's symphonies. I believe he was only 63 when he died in 1955 (passing away two years earlier in age than even Herrmann). I understand that he's basically a French Neo-classicist, influenced by Bach's & Beethoven's approaches, but he was part of the famous Les Six I believe (with Debussy, Milhaud especially, etc). His music is rather strange and often atonal but nevertheless interesting. I wouldn't say he was Herrmannesque (he's not that "romantic" of a composer, although he didn't react against German romanticism as others did) but he had a certain dramatic power in his music—sometimes very abrupt! He had a contemporary quality that reminds me a bit of largely tonalist Leonard Bernstein (but not as jazzy—although he enjoyed jazz). He certainly was far, far more into counterpoint or contrapuntal movement than Herrmann, and he had a certain unexpected chaotic suddenness about his music. But it was colorful, weighty music that you can't help but notice. I think Herrmann probably admired his music. I'll have to check to see if he conducted his music on several occasions for CBS...Hmmm. So far I do not see any of his works conducted by Herrmann from the UCSB list I have. Herrmann did Poulenc (*Marches et Intermezzos*), Ravel (*Piano Concerto in G major*), Delius a lot (*A Walk Through Paradise Gardens* especially—that has a few similarities to Herrmann's lyric style), Debussy (*L'Enfant Prodigue*), Milhaud (*Piano Concerto No. 2*), Sibelius (*Symphony # 6*), Liszt symphonic poems, Stravinsky of course, and so on—but no Honegger that I could find so far.

Listening now (8:43 pm) to Honegger's No. 2 symphony ("pour cordes"). It is a fairly slow moving opening. Incidentally the entire symphony is strings soli. I think Herrmann would've liked that gesture. It opens on the F min (F/A/C) half note tonality to, most interestingly, the C half-dim 7th (C/Eb/Gb/Bb) tonality—something Herrmann would've really liked! Then in Bar 2 we have initially four notes playing in effect a M2 (Bb/C) and m2 (F/Gb) mixture—no standard chords. In the second half of Bar 8 we have the ambiguity of both the E min (E/G/B) and Eb aug (Eb/G/B) half note tonalities—something Herrmann did himself now & then in his scores. Then in Bar 9 we have the ambiguity even stronger with the F min (F/Ab/C) with F/Ab/C# (augmented 3rd interval of Ab up to C#). Honegger quickly shifted from normal tonalities to amorphous tonalities, so hang on because it's going to be a strange ride this symphony! It has quickly entered the Twilight Zone. Indeed I think Honegger is a Twilight Zone composer.

The 2nd movement (*Adagio mesto*) is low registered and moody, not unlike Herrmann in certain respects. I think it's more a case of the brooding, coloristic orchestration, but the note/chord structure is often quite different. Herrmann tended to be more consistent in his structure, more the ostinato/repeat type. In the opening of the movement, violins II play *pp* Line 1 Db quarter note legato to C 8th (m2 dissonant interval) while violas play small octave F# to G notes (minor 2nd interval again) followed by an 8th rest and then another such pattern followed by a small octave B half note for the violins and Ab for the violas (A2 interval). VC play Great octave C quarter note up to A 8th. Etc. If you like a lot of dissonance inherent in atonal music, then you'll love this piece! If you only like, say, the highly pictorial music of a tonal European-trained composer such as Max Steiner or Ottorino Respighi, then you probably won't take to Honegger's music very easily!

[Monday, October 27 at 1 pm] : Saturday was a highlight for my vacation as my wife & I went to scenic San Pedro to attend the Golden State Pops Orchestra “Halloween Fright Night 6” concert. We arrived around 3 pm and parked right down the street from the Warner Grand (478 West 6th street). Being a bit hungry we walked to Marcello Tuscany Restaurant across from the Warner Grand at 470 W. 7th street. It was not open for lunch on Saturday (open at 5pm for dinner) so we walked down the street to Whale & Ale British pub & restaurant. Nice pubby ambiance inside. We sat in the middle of the restaurant on stools against a niche in the wall with a small round high table (across from a display case). We bought ordered (or shared) for \$9.85 Eggplant Rarebit (slices of fried eggplant in Welsh Rarebit Cheddar sauce & fresh tomato & lettuce), and shared a bowl of mushroom soup. I ordered a half pint of British beer of some sort (I believe Boddington). After the \$21.92 light lunch we walked right next door to The Grand Emporium gift store at 323 West Seventh. Cozy, decorative place that features (for us, anyway!) a fat black cat with a clipped ear meowing and greeting us right at the door! My wife bought some nice Halloween cards, a small picture in a handsome frame, and other items. Then we went back to 6th street and browsed thru several shops. That included a brief stopover at the San Pedro Brewing Co. where we had a half-pint of some sort of “chocolate” tasting beer. Very interesting stuff. Finally before lunch we stopped at the local Salvation Army and my wife bought some nice items for 50% off on the last Saturday of the month.

Then we arrived at Marcello’s around 6 pm. I had an online coupon I printed for a free lunch or dinner with the purchase of an entrée at regular price (beverage purchase required). The meal was delicious. I had arrabiatta tube pasta with zucchini, and my wife had a crepes meal I believe. Unbeknownst by me at the time, Leith Adams of Warner Bros Archives (corporate) was there with his wife dining at some point. Later in the Warner Grand he told me he spotted me leaving the restaurant before him. Leith was greatly helpful many times in the past pulling Warner Bros. Scores for me to research, starting way back to 1989 I believe (maybe a bit earlier). He also on special request pulled some of the post 1967 scores for me to research that are normally not in the pre-67 Warner Bros. Archives at USC. This included Rozsa scores like *Time After Time* (1979) and *The Green Berets* (1968), and Williams *Harry Potter* first two scores. He informed me on a surprising item: That those post ’67 written scores were moved from Burbank and all shipped to a safe underground storage site in Kansas somewhere. So I was lucky to be able to research at least those several scores while the opportunity was there locally. I understand the site in Burbank was sold and so the Warner Bros staff had to move to Sun Valley where the Warner Bros. Museum is located.

Then around 7:15 pm we walked back to 6th street to the Warner Grand. There was a separate store room next to the theatre where you had to go to get call tickets, etc. It took about fifteen minutes to get our pre-paid tickets on call. Immediately upon entering we saw a display table that had Anna Bonn and others in front of Tribute cds for sale, refrigerator magnets featuring cd album covers, and so forth. I was ready to buy *The Charge of the Light Brigade* but it wasn’t available yet. She (Anna Bonn, not “She” or Hash-A-Mo-Tep!) signed page 6 of the SHE cd booklet where she had wrote notes on the music. My wife had worked in this very theatre in the past on a few shows and suggested that we sit upstairs in the loge front row overlooking the stage. So we then immediately

went up there to claim our good seats. After settling for a short while and enjoying the historic theatre, we trekked back downstairs to see if we can find some people we knew and perhaps meet film music people we know about. The pre-concert talk was about to begin, so we didn't have a much time to mingle! But we did see John Morgan along the middle of the right side aisle, He was busy but he graciously signed the Mysterious island booklet on page 5 where he had written several paragraphs on the music. Then Leith came up and said hello. We talked for several minutes. Then we wanted to go back upstairs to hear the moderator, Linda, interviewing Bill Stromberg, Steve Fox, and Stu Phillips (three conductors performing for tonight). I had brought along my cheap old cassette player but it wasn't recording very well. But I recall Stu Phillips talking about how John Williams back in 1983 wanted him to fill a minute or two on the Twilight Zone music, so Stu arranged a Variations on the Twilight Zone Theme (M. Constant). Later in the concert Stu would playfully come up on the stage, pick up a light saber type baton to conduct his piece. It was very creative—though just a bit wee bit too long for me. Bill Stromberg talked at length about film music, wanting to inspire the younger generation of music enthusiasts to the old masters such as Steiner and Herrmann. He and John had left Naxos (or was it Naxos left them?) and decided with Anna to create the Tribute label to produce their own film music recordings. Responding to a question, Bill stated that in his youth he felt that Max Steiner was his favorite film composer. He was hooked on *King Kong* especially. He had since changed his mind and better appreciates Bernard Herrmann's works so that now Herrmann is his favorite film composer (the audience clapped!). He also stated that *Beneath the 12 Mile Reef* is one of his favorite Herrmann scores (besides *Fahrenheit 451*) but haven't recorded it due to being intimidated by nine harps in the huge orchestration. But someday perhaps! Stu Phillips said that John Williams is his favorite film composer. I do not remember whom Steve Fox selected.

By about 8:20 pm the music started. Steve Fox came out to conduct for most of the first half of the concert before the intermission. The first pieces played were the *King Kong* cues "A Boat in the Fog" and then "Aboriginal Sacrificial Dance" by Max Steiner. The first quiet piece was fine. My wife and I really liked it. But then the Dance piece came on at breakneck speed and so loud that my wife and I really didn't enjoy the experience that well. Also I don't think the orchestra was sufficiently warmed up enough yet to tackle such a difficult piece right at the onset of the concert. If the cue is exactly the same as written (if, for instance, John didn't shorten it a bit for this concert), then Steve Fox's version was an alarming 3:13 hurried rendition, whereas the Stromberg rendition for Marco Polo recorded in 1996 was 3:44 in duration, while Fred Steiner's version was the slowest at 3:57. For me, the Fox version at the concert was just too fast and hectic to be taken in comfortably, although many people enthusiastically clapped after the performance so obviously most people seemed to enjoy it far more than I! I liked the Stromberg version on cd, although I feel the recording "sound" is not as dynamically clear and pristine as some of the other Marco Polo full orchestra cds such as *Sea Hawk* and *She*. Nevertheless it sounds better than the older Fred Steiner version—although I liked the slower pace by Steiner and the nice playing of the strings that seemed more upfront to me. I am now watching the corresponding section of music in the two-disc special edition dvd, starting Chapter 13 in fact. I've got the timer on to see how long the cue is for the Max Steiner version...Ah, exactly as the Marco Polo version—3:44

duration (give or take a second). Interesting. I'll post these results on Talking Herrmann, and include all the rest of my posts on the subject below...

MY POST TO TALKING HERRMANN, Sunday, Oct 26, 2008:

“Just several notes before we go out for lunch and Sunday chores: We had a good time in San Pedro yesterday afternoon and evening, topped off of course by the excellent GSPO concert. First we had a small lunch at Whale & Ale and had Eggplant Rarebit (lightly fried eggplant in Welsh Rarebit Cheddar sauce with tomato & lettuce on the side) plus a British beer. Then next door my wife had a good time shopping at the Grand Emporium (323 West 7th), greeted at the door by the overweight black cat! After shopping and browsing along the curious 6th street shops (and stopping for a chocolate beer at the San Pedro Brewing Co), we had dinner at Marcello Tuscany Restaurant just a block away from the Warner grand. Terrific food--plus their website offered a buy one-get one free coupon.

“By 7:15 we entered the Warner Grand. Getting our tickets next door took a little more time than expected but in 15 minutes we got in. Near the door at the display table, Anna Bonn was there offering handsome Tribute refrigerator magnets (Kentuckian, She, The Charge of the Light Brigade) and of course various Tribute cds (no TCOTLB yet). My wife worked at this theatre in the past on various shows and suggested that we sit upstairs, front-row seating. Beautiful theatre, just a little bit warm inside initially.

“Then my wife & I went downstairs and managed to get a few autographs on various Tribute cd booklets--including John Morgan, Anna Bonn, and Bill Stromberg. I did not know too many other people there by face recognition since I never met them before! But I managed to meet Ford Thaxton, Preston Neal Jones, I believe I saw Ron B., and it was a delight to talk to Leith Adams again after several years since I saw him at Burbank at the old Warner Bros. depository. I learned from him that all of the written scores previously held them ('67 and up) were shipped to Kansas somewhere in underground safety storage!

“Bill Stromberg, Stu Phillips, Steve Fox, and Linda took the stage for awhile discussing film music. I tried to record it on my old cassette recorder but it wasn't working properly. The music event finally started a bit late around 8:20. First off was the Max Steiner KING KONG cues. It started off quietly with "A Boat in the Fog" then went into the bombastic "Aboriginal Sacrifice Dance" cue! It was a little bit too much! probably that was not one of the better presentations offered last evening--but it was certainly loud and hectic! Curiously, when we left the concert at 10:50 or 10:55 pm, I overheard three musicians on the street stating that it was a "rough concert"! I don't think the Steiner piece made things any easier for them!

“Next was the Tarantula suite. Very nice--I liked the performance much better than Kong (that I thought was a bit over the top). Steve Fox did the conducting for these and most of the pre-intermission suites (but he ended the concert with Herrmann's Death Hunt cue--very nice). Then (I believe since I don't have complete notes or perfect memory!), a surprise highlight of the evening was George Shaw's conducting of his "Prayer for the Missing" cue of his Mexican film, J-OK'EL. Strings only. Nice sensitive writing--a terrific break from the heavier music earlier. He is a very promising young composer who I believe has been inspired by the works of John Williams. There was a little hint of Herrmann there as well.

“Then Steve did "Unleashed" based in part of the remake CAPE FEAR movie. I liked it. A singer named Melissa was featured. Then Stu Phillips came in to conduct his creative arrangement of the Twilight Zone themes. Very interesting. My wife especially commented how she liked it. Then Steve Fox returned to play Elfman's Nightmare Before Christmas. Nice lighter fare.

“Intermission. Go down to meet composers/conductors/audience. I talked briefly to George Shaw especially, and bought his Jokel cd for only \$10 (normally \$17). Bill Stromberg was at the display table area signing booklets. My wife noted that his daughter in costume looked like a waitress for an old-fashioned drive-in, while I thought she looked more like some Alpine girl dressed in blue & white about to sell Ricola or strudels or something! Later we found out from her that she was dressed as Alice in Wonderland! There were various people in Halloween costume, by the way. My favorite was Baby Yoda--an actual infant dressed with a green head outfit complete with Yoda ears!

“After the intermission, Bill Stromberg became the principal conductor for most of the rest of the concert. The screen was down to play an ending clip from JASON, and Bill conducted three cues of the skeletons' scenes (including the Scherzo). Everybody had fun with that one, and Bill conducted with emotive energy.

“Then more Universal scores were conducted, including Wolf Man. Steve came back to conduct I believe Joe LoDuca's The Messenger.. But what really impressed me was (Stromberg back) was the next piece: Deadly Mantis by Irving Gertz (the 93 year old composer was in the audience too). Very nicely played, and great music--in fact, I liked this Universal Pictures presentation best of them all offered tonight. Very interesting, balanced music--not anywhere as bombastic as Steiner's Aboriginal dance cue.

“Finally the best was saved for last: Stromberg conducting the Mysterious Island suite. It was definitely the highlight of the evening. Perhaps the orchestra had to get warmed up to it (first struggling with the initial KONG piece). I particularly enjoyed the extra-stereo effect of the placement of the four harps (two placed on the audience floor, in fact) for "Exploration" and "The Bridge." The ending of "Exploration" by the strings were a little weak or off to me, however. I in fact enjoyed listening to this concert performance of the "Prelude" more than listening to the Tribute cd rendition. All of the cues were very well played--although I noticed that the eight horns at times (especially during "The Bird" cue) were off note (but they did better in the "Death Hunt" ending

piece). "The Island" cue was deleted from the originally intended list of cues. I don't remember now if "Earthquake" was there (or completely there) and I believe "Elena" was shortened (not sure at this moment).

“So most definitely the best was saved for last (in effect because Steve came back to do a great rendition of the "Death Hunt" cue).

“I don't know how many people were there in the audience but I would say at least 300, maybe 350. At first (around 7:30 or 7:45 during the pre-concert talk) there were less than 100 people but obviously a bunch came in at the last minute.

“I wonder if a recording was made because I saw what looked like recording equipment there? Or a video recording? I wouldn't mind having a copy. I brought in my old cassette recorder but, as I said earlier, it was recording badly--I need a new machine.

“We really enjoyed the concert, and liked it better than some others we went to--including the film music one held in Long Beach Symphony Pops in 2003 in May that featured John Williams music especially, and Herrmann's N by NW overture, Korngold Captain Blood, and so forth.

“I'll probably go to next year's Sci-Fi concert. Probably some of Herrmann's TZ scores (like "The Lonely") would be better than The Day the Earth Stood Still.”

[Next, later in the evening hours:]

“I would've smiled a big "Hello!" if I knew you were there--and if I knew what you looked like! Unfortunately GSPO did not plan in terms of the audience attending as fans wanting to get to know each other quickly and easily--and so they did not provide name tag blanks for people to pen their names on. Several times I would say "hello" to people but I did not know them or about them (and they did not know me or about me). They were perfect strangers who happen to like film music. Sometimes I would say, "Are you such-and-so?" and they weren't. There was only limited time for greeting. If there were name tags, then I could quickly catch their names and latch on to them as a preying mantis--or avoid them if I didn't want to talk to them!

“ I am a reasonably critical person if only because I have fussy ears! I do not have Yoda ears like Baby Yoda there, but I note flaws and differences. Remember that Herrmann himself was an exceptionally critical conductor, and it was often helpful to sometimes mouth-flame the players to perform a better job ("That wasn't good enough! One more time!" he would say). I do not know if Steve and Bill are "tough" conductors as Herrmann was, because Bill & Steve seem to be very friendly/accepting fellas from what I could tell. I don't know if too many conductors can SCARE the players as much as Herrmann seemed to be able to do--Halloween or any other time!

“Once again, for next year's Sci-Fi themed event, let's NOT do another rendition of TDTEST. That's my vote. "The Lonely" episode of Twilight Zone would be far better

because it's a sensitive score with the exquisite harp playing, scintillating percussion, etc. It would sound terrific in the Warner Grand. And that music is never played in concert that I know of.

"Living Doll" from TZ would also be great. That bass clarinet in yesterday's concert sounded terrific in "The Honeycomb" cue of Mysterious Island--far more distinctive in the live performance than those even four clarinets in unison. Whereas in a manipulated recording environment, and the balancing going on, they would pretty much sound equal in emphasis. The bass clarinet solo in "Living Doll" would sound terrific next year--plus the harps and percussion for that score." "Little Girl Lost" would also be quite terrific. If these three TZ (and maybe even "Eyes of the Beholder") are in the concert next year, then I would definitely go! "Walking distance" is beautiful music but I think it would be out of place here. I prefer "The Lonely" and the others in priority. The Day the Earth Stood Still would not draw me in.

At least one or two of the "Outer Space Suite" would be excellent, especially the previously unrecorded/unreleased cue that was featured in the "Third From the Sun" episode of TZ.

"Yes, I like A & C Meet Frankenstein music--good, relatively lightweight entertainment. The end credits music they played was fun. I place the music in the same character that evening as the Danny Elfman Nightmare Before Xmas performance selections. Nice--but it didn't grab me as much as Mantis, Mysterious Island, and a few others. The Kong selection of the Sacrificial Dance was too bombastic for my ears--and I love Steiner! But it was too much, especially if the orchestra doesn't handle it precisely well. I would've preferred other cues from KONG than that one. Personally if I had to choose a Steiner horror fright score, I certainly would NOT pick KONG because it's far more sci-fi-fantasy than horror. It's illogical, Spock! I would've picked Steiner's Beast With Five Fingers. There's a lot of terrific music in that one--far moodier and not anywhere as over-the-top bombastic.

"I'll have to think more about what Sci-Fi music I personally would like to hear in next year's event involving non-Herrmann music. I'll come up with suggestions soon if anyone cares to listen!"

[Posted by me on Monday the 27th.:]

"Always good to hear from John Morgan offering his insights and POV. It was good to also briefly revisit our acquaintance at the concert along the aisle (where Leith Adams also was). Both are a huge positive force in the film music world.

"As for Herrmann conducting live performances, who knew what he was THINKING as he waved the baton! :)

"My comments are simply feedback from the audience, so to speak. Every individual will have a different set of priorities of what they liked or didn't like as well. It's kind of like a reality test assessment to determine what specifically listeners liked or

not. Except for a one or two gripes (like the KONG sacrificial dance piece), I thought the concert was a thrilling success too. Even my wife commented that the dance music was "ok" but too loud and over-powering. The very beginning Boat in the Fog quiet piece was very nice, however.

“Although most would say that he was not as remarkable a conductor as he had hoped to be, so far in most cases, Herrmann was certainly the best conductor of his OWN music--no offense to Steve, Bill, Broughton, McNeely, and others! Some come exceptionally close (such as, for example, Broughton's JASON rendition, Bill's Fahrenheit 451 rendition and excellent cd recording) but to my ears, Herrmann's own recordings and interpretation are consistently the top standard (perhaps a bit less so in some of the end London LP recordings before his death). But he's not with us anymore, so for producers like Bill/Anna/John/McNeely and others to offer more of Herrmann for listeners to enjoy (including this concert last Saturday) is something to be quite grateful for.

“Oh, while the thought is still in my head: Another suggestion for that Sci-Fi concert next year is Rozsa's TIME AFTER TIME. The full score is available at UCLA. I've discussed it in great detail on my website. Doing that beautiful "Redwoods" cue would be a highlight of the concert. Of course "Prelude," "Taking Off," "Time Travel" "Fifth Victim" would be great as part of the suite.”

[Also later on in the afternoon]:

“I was writing in my newest blog details of the concert. In case anyone is interested, here are the comparisons of timings for the “Aboriginal Sacrificial Dance” cue (assuming all of the performances below used the exact same music--no bars edited, for example):

-3:13 duration --Steve Fox (concert) version
-3:44 duration --Stromberg/Marco Polo version
-3:44 duration --Max Steiner original tracks
-3:57 duration --Fred Steiner version

”Interesting that Max and Bill had the exact same tempo for this music. Of course you can hear the instruments far better and enjoyably on the Marco Polo cd with the modern stereo recording. The Fred Steiner version is slower but good, and I liked the playing by the strings--although the "sound" is not quite as good as that Marco Polo recording. The SHE new recording "sounds" (technically speaking) even better than the old Marco Polo recording in terms of a Steiner score. The Steve Fox version at the concert, as you can see, was performed at a hectic breakneck speed in comparison, so it was a somewhat rushed performance in my opinion.

”But we really enjoyed the rest of the concert conducted by Steve, Bill, Stu, and especially the soothing JOKEL cue by George Shaw, "Prayers for the Missing" for muted strings and solo clarinet. He said that in the rehearsal on October 15 that the performance

sounded better than what was done for the cd recording. Lots of nicely played simple yet effective harmonies--mostly minor chords like the E minor opening. The clarinets when soli, and the solo bass clarinet, in the various performances sounded great in the concert. The horns were sometimes great, sometimes uneven and out of tune. The percussion section was very distinctive, especially during the Twilight Zone performance and Mysterious Island. The harpists were tops. Wished we could hear more of the harps soli--hence the suggestion to include Herrmann's TZ episodes for next year's concert. Once again, our ears really picked up in the Deadly Mantis performance.

"The "Unleashed" performance by Steve was eerie and mysterious in the first long section, very interesting, and became far more active music later on. I believe there was anvil clanging (or similar percussion) in that piece. Of course Melissa's other-worldly voicing helped to create that eerie mood in the quieter sections. Overall a dissonant piece--I assume at least partially atonal.

"The Variations on the Twilight Zone theme was interesting, conducted and arranged by Stu Phillips. It lasted 2:48 duration (if my tape machine was recording properly) with at least 3 (maybe four) sections."

[Tuesday's Talking Herrmann first post]:

"Overall I thought the trumpets and trombones/tuba did fine, the former especially I thought performed distinctly and cleanly during the old Universal music such as Tarantula, and Mysterious Island when they were highlighted. I should note, however, that I recognized either a trumpet or trombone player after the show commenting or agreeing that it was a "rough" concert! A girl not in Halloween costume agreed.

"I did not recognize the players who were NOT in costume anywhere as much as the ones who were--such as the yellow banana man! The sleeky cat woman in the violins section with the long legs in mess hose was very noticeable by me! I really liked the viola player nearby too--she was dressed in a sexy pumpkin candy costume. The woodwind players dressed as nuns and a priest did not impress me as much. The principal 1st violinist who always stood up when the orchestra was tuning up was dressed as Dracula, I believe. The players who were generally NOT in costume tended to make more mistakes (like the horn players) than the ones who were in costume. I wonder if this means something? Perhaps next year EVERYBODY has to be in costume!"

[Tuesday, October 28, 2008 at 9:14 am] : Last week at this time I went to Cal State to xerox music and music books, as I mentioned at the top of my blog.

One section of a book I xeroxed was Chapter XI "Humphrey Searle" in British Composers in Interview (1963 I believe) by Murray Schafer. Although Searle is a serial/atonal composer, he is a "romantic" type of composer, and so I can better enjoy his music. I especially liked his score for the Robert Wise film, *The Haunting*. He was a very bright and knowledgeable man who earlier wrote an esteemed book on Liszt's music (that I also copied in part last week). In the interview, he said, "I tend to think more in terms of joined rather than isolated musical sounds." At the bottom of page 130, he stated, "My first symphony is based on a symmetrical series, the same as that used by

Webern for his string quartet, op. 28. Webern's quartet is extremely classical and austere while my symphony is dramatic and romantic; which shows that one can get very different results from the same series." Regarding his work habits: "Usually I have an idea for a work as a musical whole and I'm anxious to get to work composing it.... I might add that I sketch out a composition very quickly and then go back and fill in the details...I like to have a framework before me and I like to get it erected as quickly as possible. I sketched my third symphony in three weeks; then I went back and spent three months on the details." Later he comments, "All the composer asks for is that his music should make an effect. That might be a purely emotional or an intellectual effect, or better, a combination of them both depending on the listener's special aptitude and desire for musical sounds...I am trying to write music first and use the twelve-note method afterwards. The twelve-note method is just a means to an end, never an end in itself. One should say this of all methods."

On page 135: "I've used classical forms quite extensively, in my first symphony for example. In my second symphony I employed freer forms but even these have some relationship to the past and appear to be comprehensible without difficulty."

Finally in terms of significance for me to quote here: "Music is not a matter of mathematics...The task of selecting and organizing from an infinite number of possibilities is the infinitely stimulating occupation of the composer."

In Serle's 1954 book, The Music of Liszt, he opens in Chapter I "The Early Works" with "Liszt was one of the most prolific of all the great composers." He wrote about 700 works crowded into his varied life, so "his output remains astonishing." Chapter III (starting page 54) is "The Weimar Years (1848-61)" that discusses the period of his greatest productivity that poured from his pen despite being very busy with productions at the Weimar theatre. Starting around page 65 Serle discusses at length the years of "cross-fertilisation" between Liszt & Wagner. "Wagner, a self-centered egotist, found Liszt useful to him, both artistically and financially, and was no doubt grateful to him in his own way; Liszt genuinely admired Wagner's genius, and certainly learnt a good deal from him...Liszt learnt from Wagner a stronger sense of form; he was able to make his music more symphonic and less episodic, and in addition his command of orchestral writing became surer and less amateurish. Liszt's music enriched Wagner's language; it became less conventional, more pictorial and dramatic, and above all showed him bolder methods of handling chromatic harmony." Both composers had tended in the direction of thematic transformation & leitmotiv usage independently for some years but from the RING onwards the leitmotiv technique was fully developed and "that Liszt's methods of thematic transformation provided the impetus for this invention..."

Raff was also helpful; to Liszt from 1849 onwards regarding the symphonic poems especially. Serle then discusses the twelve Symphonic Poems composed by Liszt. He considered *Les Preludes* to be an eminently successful and popular work but "though by no means one of Liszt's greatest achievements." The next one, *Orpheus*, Serle wrote "has a broadness and nobility which place it high among Liszt's creations..." *Mazeppa* is unfortunately not one of Liszt's finest creations; though some of the music is exciting enough in a rather obvious kind of way, the March passage has a distinctly vulgar flavor—it is flat and shallow music, as Mr. Sitwell rightly says." Serle writes: *Herode Funebre* is, in fact, a fine one-movement funeral march of vast proportions, which recalls

the shape and feeling of many movements in Mahler's symphonies." Regarding *Hungaria*: "Unfortunately, in spite of many beautiful and exciting episodes, it suffers from the over-elaboration and inordinate length of many of the works of the Weimar years... The next symphonic poem, *Hamlet*, however, is one of Liszt's masterpieces."

In Chapter IV "The Final Period (1861-86)," Serle discusses how Liszt's "style has become extremely stark and austere, there are long passages in single notes and a considerable use of whole-tone chords, and anything resembling a cadence is avoided; in fact, if a work does end with a common chord it is more often in an inversion than in root position. The result is a curiously indefinite feeling, as if Liszt was launching out into a new world of whose possibilities he was not quite sure." Later Serle writes, "the Wagnerian colossus blew itself up and finally exploded with Strauss and Mahler. Liszt, in spite of his enormous admiration for Wagner, must have seen this; for why else should there have been such a radical change in his style in these years?... It is a style in which the feeling of key is left deliberately vague... One cannot but admire the courage of the ageing Liszt in striking out into new and uncharted ways at a time of life when he could well have rested on his laurels, and, in spite of complete lack of appreciation, taking the path which he knew the music of the future must follow."

Another book I copied from is The Music of Malcolm Arnold: A Catalogue (1986). Hugo Cole wrote on page 15 that "Over 40 years, Arnold's style has undergone no abrupt or disconcerting changes of direction. His music is still, predominantly, tonal, tuneful, traditional in the use of regular metres and in the handling of instruments and voices... Early works reveal his liking for spare textures, clear tone-colours, third-based harmony and relatively simple discords... Sibelian influence is more easily discerned in the First Symphony, in its use of homophonic brass in dramatic gestures; in its long melodic flights for solo woodwind; in the many passages for paired woodwind; in the throwing back and forth of short melodic fragments; in its powerful motivic use of the interval of a fourth..." He wrote on page 17, "Arnold's tunes have a way of fixing themselves firmly in the memory..." He later says that "He is fluent contrapuntist, and skilled in the rare art of writing rapid orchestral counterpoint that is always bright and clear. He considered Arnold "a brilliant and original orchestrator" with an "ability to communicate with a wide, non-specialist audience." He also wrote, "Bar an occasional well-prepared and supported ascent to extreme notes for horns or trumpets, Arnold generally ensures that all solos lie comfortably within the instruments' most expressive ranges."

Another book I xeroxed from is I believe Arthur Honegger (1992) by Harry Halbreich. He wrote in Chapter Eleven "Orchestral Music" on page 300: "Among the essential symphonic gifts that Honegger possessed, first and foremost was that of inventing thematic outlines that were striking and also capable of being elaborated and developed... He was well aware that, for a nontonal theme to engrave itself on the memory, it must compensate for its lack of tonality by other parameters: by rhythm, accentuation, the specific quality of its intervallic structure, or by its harmonic coloring."

Halbreich in page 302 discusses how Mahler reached the outer limits of the traditional symphonic genre including temporal (some works are over an hour and a half!). "As musical language pushed at the borders of tonality, so the thematic working

had reached the ultimate in length and complexity.” Stravinsky at that general period of the early century was “brilliantly revolutionary” with his *The Rite of Spring*—a sort of wakeup call of the breakup of traditional tonality with “the increasing invasion of tonal language by chromaticism...” The author writes that Honegger’s symphonies generally have a tonal center (C for the 1st, D for the 2nd and 5th, and A for the 4th), Honegger made the tonality far more complex and expanded. His symphonies are also relatively short at 20 to 30 minutes, and he also reacted against the gigantic size favored by Mahler and Bruckner. Honegger tended to use the sonata form. He also was not much into percussionist orchestration, absent in the 2nd symphony, for instance. There is a bluntness in Honegger’s works that the author felt was German-Swiss in quality. Regarding the First Symphony, the 1st movement (despite the C tonal center) is the most atonal movement he ever wrote and polyphonically complex. The *Adagio* 2nd movement is not long atonal as the first movement but it is definitely chromatic. Honegger’s chromatic language tends to “complex and dissonant, with a predilection for tritons and minor seconds, in opposition to fourths and fifths. Consonant intervals such as thirds and sixths remain relatively rare” (as in the first movement of the Second Symphony). Regarding the first movement of the Third Symphony, the author wrote, “Although practically atonal, it is vaguely organized around the pivotal note A, the key in which the movement ends.”

As I may have commented earlier, Honegger’s music is definitely interesting and sometimes quite arresting in attention, but it also definitely takes getting used to. It is an acquired taste—and I haven’t quite acquired it yet!

Honegger wrote “I Am a Composer” (1951) that is good to read. He wrote on page 84, “To be fruitful, a working day must not permit of any obligation or possibility of interruption. I am shut up in my studio; I try not to hear the doorbell or the telephone... Sometimes the day and night pass without my writing a note.. I am like a steam engine: I need to be stoked up, it takes me a long time to get ready for genuine work. If I relax for the duration of a month, I need days or weeks to get the machine in motion. This getting started becomes more and more painful with age. Nevertheless, the motor runs true only directly in gear.”

Later he states, “When I am actually at work, I allow myself very few distractions during the day. In the evening I go to the cinema or to the home of some friends. As soon as the composition, strictly speaking, is completed and the orchestration is begun, there is nothing left but the applying of professional know-how—which is as pleasant as painting. The sole difficulty in my profession is to conceive.” Towards the end on page 117 he comments that there is no future for expression in the serial-12-tone method “because its melodic invention is subjected to uncompromising laws which shackle free expression of thought,” and that “the serial principles are presented not as a means but as an end!” Prophetically, I think, he stated that “I strongly fear that the twelve-note fad—we already see its decline—may initiate a reaction towards a too simplistic, too rudimentary music.” This, I think, can be applied to the style of Minimalism. He then states that “Alban Berg was not a twelve-noter, but atonal. On occasion, he permitted himself some vigorous invasions into the accursed realm of tonality, this violating the law of the uncompromising dodecaphonist... The best parts of *Wozzeck* are those where Berg has violated the rule. I shall cite as an example the great orchestral prelude which precedes

the last scene: it is very close to being a passage which a disciple of Wagner might have written.”

Another book is Claude Debussy's *Pelleas et Melisande* edited by Roger Nichols (1989). As I discussed in another blog, I have that cd set and also the written music, and I enjoyed much of the music. I even noted the Herrmannesque passages. Richard Langham Smith in Chapter 4's "Motives and Symbols" on page 79 that "Whatever Debussy said about Wagner, there are strong echoes of the leitmotivic technique in *Pelleas*, but it is rather the 'idea leitmotifs' of the more mature Wagner of *Tristan* than the 'character-leitmotifs' of his earlier music-dramas." Debussy wanted a more subtle approach to the technique. Of course Max Steiner gave himself whole-heartedly to the character leitmotif device, composing a separate melody for each of the principal characters of a movie (such as *Gone With the Wind*. Debussy differed from Wagner's approach because the latter worked with the "constant flow of chromatic harmony" while Debussy went "into modal, whole-tone, diatonic 'white-note', even octatonic areas, creating..a language of extended flexibility..."

Another book –an excellent one, I may add--by Arthur Wenk titled Claude Debussy & 20th Century Music (1983) states on page 38, "For all Debussy's mockery of Wagner's "musical calling cards," *Pelleas et Melisande* remains a leitmotif opera... Yet Debussy's use of motives remains far more discontinuous than Wagner's, forming a symphonic web only in the orchestral interludes." The author discusses on page 43 the "Symbolism of Sonority" that could just as well described Herrmann's music as well as Debussy's. "One of Debussy's most important contributions to 20th century musical thought is the emphasis on sound as a structural element... In *Pelleas et Melisande* Debussy explored the resources of timbre, spacing and registration, and dynamics as elements of dramatic expression." Regarding timbre, "Debussy generally prefers pure instrumental timbres to combinations of orchestral colors, as he explained in an interview in 1908: 'Musicians no longer know how to decompose sound, to give it in its pure state... We've learned too well to mix timbres.'" The author then states, "By preserving the identity of each timbre Debussy establishes a symbolism of instrumental sonorities comparable to the symbolism of melodic motives." For the opera, he contends, the horn had a direct association with Golaud, with the extended association of darkness/death. Pos/tuba is associated there with violent death, whereas the trumpet with peaceful death! The oboe is associated with Melisande and her sadness, while the English horn is tied to her pain and suffering. The harp is associated with water specifically but also renewal, freshness, change. The timpani is associated with darkness specifically but also generally impending disaster and death.

The author writes: "The score of *Pelleas et Melisande* continually demonstrates Debussy's sensitivity not only to the timbre of orchestral sound but also to their placement. Often the placement of sounds corresponds to physical location in the drama" (giving examples next of low registers for being pinned beneath a horse, a crown at the bottom of a pool, and so forth). So "we see Debussy exploring sound as a means of defining musical space." He also comments on Debussy's "preference for soft or muted sounds." Herrmann was the same, especially seen in his overwhelming habit of *sords* for the strings. The author writes, "This reduction of the normal dynamic level enables the composer to exploit nuances of sound that would be lost under ordinary circumstances."

Later on page 69 while discussing *Jeux de vagues* that “Like Stravinsky and Bartok, Debussy sought to revitalize tonality rather than to abandon it. One possibility for renewal lay in tonal relationships based on the tritone rather than the perfect fifth and, more generally, in harmonic structures based on the whole-tone scale rather than the diatonic major scale.”

Chapter 7 (starting page 115) gives an excellent overview of how to measure Debussy’s achievement in music. The author discusses how from roughly 1600 to 1900, “functional tonality served as a fundamental organizing force. The tonal center of a composition provided the reference point for a hierarchical arrangement of triadic harmonies drawn from the major or minor scale based on that center.” But the breakup of the traditional tonal system began before Debussy. Berlioz helped this breakup by increasing the number of temporary tonal centers. “In *Harold in Italy*, for example, Berlioz allows eleven degrees of the chromatic scale, all except the tritone from the tonic, to function as key areas. By increasing the length of tonally ambiguous passages, composers such as Chopin and Liszt and Wagner further weakened the hold of the tonic. ..Chopin’s nontonic beginnings created an aura of uncertainty or mystery at the beginning of a composition by delaying the definition of a tonal center...Finally, by increasing the proportion of chromatic writing, composers such as Liszt and Wagner reduced the influence of the diatonic...Increasingly dissonant chords, originally introduced for expressive purposes as decorations of diatonic harmonies, became accepted as independent structural elements.

“By the first decade of the 20th century the system of functional harmony had been pushed to its furthest limits and composers faced the choice of writing music without a tonal center, the course followed by Schoenberg and his school, or of writing tonal music based on something other than functional harmony, the direction taken by Stravinsky and Bartok.”

So this is where Debussy comes in with his approach to “drown” the tonal center. “Debussy sought to replace the rigidity of functional harmony with something more fluid.” Then the author discusses several methods to weaken harmonic progression. One is to avoid the leading tone by modal harmony or use of special scales (pentatonic and whole-tone especially). Next is to multiply a number of such centers (used in *Pelleas et Melisande*). A third method is to weaken the tonal center by enlarging the chromatic harmony/chords associated with that center. Next is a method that apparently Herrmann was fond of: “A fourth method of avoiding functioning harmony is to employ parallel progressions of chords, either diatonic or chromatic”—Herrmann tended toward chromatic as in parallel seventh chord progressions (evident, say, in *Journey to the Center of the Earth*).

The author continues: “In place of harmonic progression as the principal means of organizing tonality, Debussy employed a number of new procedures: (1) Diatonic saturation: by surrounding a given harmony with all the pitches of a scale or mode, Debussy prolongs the chord statically without invoking harmonic progression.” This can mean using parallel chords. (2) Ostinato: the extended repetition of a tonally centered pattern establishes tonality without progression. [Herrmann tended to use the ostinato technique quite frequently!] (3) Pedal points: ...where pedal points become the principal means of defining tonality, chords come to be used for coloristic rather than harmonic function. Debussy’s 20th century works commonly combine pedal points with parallel

chord progressions...” Of course so did Herrmann in many instances—say, when he has the timp on a constant roll while chords move slowly around.

On page 123, the author describes how Debussy’s sonorities tended to be vague, a veil of tones, evanescent. “Debussy frequently produces a shimmering effect by disposing strings in their highest range, often muted, often divided, either in tremolo on a single pitch or trilling neighboring pitches, so that the harmony itself becomes blurred. Special techniques such as playing at the fingerboard, or with the point of the bow, or trilling very rapidly, contribute to the effect.” Once again, the author might have just as well been discussing Herrmann’s music! [6:23 pm]

[Thursday, October 30 at 1:40 pm] : Another interesting composer interviewed in British Composers in Interview was John Ireland. I am not very familiar with his music so I’ll have to buy a cd or two. He was a late English Romantic type who tended to focus on Celtic material. The interviewer asked him his impressions of Boulez’s *Improvisation sur Mallarme II*. Ireland replied, “Oh, interesting. He makes rather odd sounds. I liked the little clusters of sounds he obtained from the piano, celesta and the other instruments he used.. It was very difficult to make anything of it. I don’t know anything about the twelve-note system you know. It seems to me it destroys the composer’s freedom of choice over his material, but I wouldn’t like to criticize it without understanding it” [also he just already did!].

Soon he adds, “I think music ought to express some kind of emotion... You must remember that when I was young Brahms was the greatest living composer, and in questions of this kind I am always inclined to measure things up against Brahms. Today Stravinsky is a composer of great talent, and I suppose a genius in a way, but I don’t think he has as much to say as Brahms had.” He stated that one of his brief students, Humphrey Searle, was a very “clever and individual” lad. But he was not disappointed that he left to study with Webern in Vienna because “I like to see people develop in the way they feel they must.” He reminisced “I also heard the first performance in this country of Tchaikovsky’s Sixth symphony. We all, students and teachers alike, went mad about it. It was quite different from anything we had heard before.” But later he added, “Sometimes I get bored with the classics. You hear them too often. Harmonically they are limited and you know what is coming next. I can still enjoy them if they are played well, but generally they are not well played these days. There is a tendency to play everything too fast.” Good last point. I hope some of these young or relatively young conductors are reading this what Ireland said! I complained about this myself in my blogs and posts. I really dislike this tendency in effect, “Hurry up and enjoy the music!”

When William Walton was interviewed in this book, he was asked if he felt he was a “Romantic” composer> he replied, “Romantic can mean so many things. If anything, I would say I am a classical composer with a strong feeling for lyricism. I’m probably one of the few composers who dare admit their liking for such unfashionable composers as Brahms and Sibelius.”

The interview with Malcolm Arnold is fun to read. He said regarding the orchestra: “I think the most important thing when dealing with the orchestra is always to think in terms of the sounds the instruments will make...One must always think of one’s material as being played by specific instruments. When I compose the characteristics of the material I have in mind suggest their own instrumentation, and this instrumentation in

turn conditions the material.” Herrmann also gave special attention to timbre in his scores. I was interesting to me when Arnold added in the interview that he never used an English horn in his life. He also stated that it was a good practice for composers to conduct their own works. “It establishes a vital contact between composer and performer. A composer can easily get behind a desk and begin to think of music purely in terms of patterns on paper. But if he comes in contact with people who play his music, and listens to their remarks which are highly illuminating, even if occasionally insulting, he will never lose respect for the performer. Music-making requires the efforts of both composer and performer.”

Regarding film music writing, he stated that we was pulling away from writing film music. “I think you can do too much. It could be a bad thing to be completely submerged in the film music—bad even for your film music—but a certain amount of it can be very good for a young composer.”

Arnold commented, “The greatest single influence in my music has been Sibelius...I think the finest piece of music written in the last fifty years is Sibelius’s Fourth Symphony.” He also said that Walton as also been influential. He commented that “Sibelius makes a habit of letting the strings run up and down in scale-like passages or tremolos while little bits of the principal themes are thrown about among the woodwinds or brass.”

Schaefer asked Arnold: “You prefer to avoid excessive chromaticism and see an eternal value in the diatonic system.” Arnold replied: “A melody must have both strength and weakness if it is to be expressive. To my ear, the diatonic system affords the best opportunity for creating melodic ideas that possess both these features to the maximum degree. The further melody moves away from its tonic, the weaker it becomes, and the more it needs the tonic to complement this weakness. This is what I have against atonal music: it leads to a state of musical meandering. This is of course personal to my ear, and is in no way a criticism of anyone who writes that way.” He stated also that if any other system came along that would help melodic material he would use it, “but all the other systems available today are chromatic, and I cannot feel the poles as clearly with them.” Herrmann (this is my own—Bill’s-- opinion) was a lyric composer but not a melody man per se (!) so he tended more towards the chromatic. But both composers were definitely tonal, both had an emphasis on clear orchestral color, and so forth.

Arnold closes the interview that “When I attend a concert I try to go with an open mind and assess the music as objectively as possible. But so few people want to listen to modern music. The composer has insulated himself to such an extent that he has become incomprehensible to the ordinary musical public. I think this is so, and, as such, I put it as a criticism of modern music, which regards truth as more important than beauty.”

The last few days I have been selecting in methodical (alphabetical) order the composers in the CMC (Canadian Music Centre) site, picking usually the ones who has both audio and written score sample works. Every day they have a “Featured Composer” that includes both music files. Here’s the site:

<http://www.centremusique.ca/home.cfm>

I like the music of Andrew Ager” (liked his sample of “The Solemn Land”), Allan Gordon Bell (“Concerto for Percussion & Orchestra”), and Ka Nin Chan (“Ecstasy,” “The Charmer”). You have to click on the “English” hit if you want to read it in English!

Brian Current’s “For the Time Being” sample is very chaotic despite the repeated rapid figures. Dorothy Chang’s “Beautiful Things” is not so beautiful but quite dissonant (I guess beauty is in the eye of the beholder!). Nicole Carignan’s *Quatuor a cordes* No. 1 clip is a simply piece (opening) but also dissonant, a homage to Bartok’s 100th anniversary. There are so many composers here with many diverse stylisms and methods—and sometimes quite strange manners of notation! John Burke has his own website called labyrinthmusic. He turned more into a New Age sort of composer in terms of the spiritual trip. I liked his clips of “Far Call, Coming, Far!” and “Lament” enough (but not enthusiastically).

John Estacio has a few impressive orchestral clips on the site: “Frenergy” and “Bootlegger’s Tarantella.” You can also order the cd of those two clips. I just may—although it’ll cost me over \$20.

Harry Freedman’s music is dodecaphonic and also into the numerical series but after listening to “Tangents” and “Tableau,” I liked it enough to recommend it enough for even tonal listeners who want to experiment with atonal/serial music. I of course recommend Humphrey Serle’s music in the same context. I think Serle would be quite appreciative of Freedman’s music. I may order the 2-cd set called “Canadian Composers Portraits: Harry Friedman.” The “Spirit Song” cd is also available—and it’s \$5 cheaper than Amazon!

<http://www.centremusique.ca/apps/index.cfm?fuseaction=search.dspItemDetails&buyItemsID=683>

“Overture Burlesque” by George Fiala is traditional (he was born in 1922) tonality and quite fun. The first eight pages of the score are available for download and printing. Also available is a section of “The Kurelek Suite” and “Three Movements.”

“Nucleogame” (1955) by experimentalist Serge Garant reminds me a lot of the Maurius Constant music ultimately used for *The Twilight Zone* theme starting in the second season. I wonder if Constant was aware of this piece, and maybe inspired him?

James Gayfer’s “Suite for Woodwind Quintet” is a delightful traditional piece. It’s included in the cd *Petite Suite Maritime* that you can get slightly cheaper this time at Amazon.

Oskar Morawetz’s works are fine. He’s a very Late or Neo-Romantic in the traditional mode (born January 17, 1917). I liked what I heard of his *Concerto for Harp & Chamber Orchestra*.

The music of Evelyn Stroobach is tentatively interesting to me (I say “tentatively” because I haven’t yet had but a few exposures to her music). Another woman composer, Elizabeth Raum, has a few interesting pieces available online at CMC including “Nation” and “Pantheon.” Alice Ping Yee Ho is someone to investigate more. I found her “Under the Quavering Moon” (1993) of interest, especially with the timbre choices. Barbara

Pentland is another interesting woman composer born 1912 (died 2000). Idiomatically she had a varied musical range of expressiveness. She started off in her early works influenced by the chromatic French late Romantic school of expression (Franck, D'Indy) and then in her mid or late Twenties decided to depart from the 19th century school. She became more Modernistic thanks to Stravinsky and Bartok. Eventually she adopted the serial method. It's funny how a lot of composers abandon tonality! Udo Kasemets (born 1919) is another one. As written online at CMC: "He composed in conventional styles, first strictly tonally, then using more dissonant attitudes and finally adopting the dodecaphonic system." Udo liked Harry Freedman's (1922-2005) music, and it's interesting Freedman's "Tangents" is online and is "interesting" (but not necessarily my heart-core taste preference). Samuel Dolin is another such composer. He has involved himself in atonal/serial/electronic/chance/Messianen methods. Other composers tend to get really out there, such as Andre Cormier. His "Someille" is online, and Cormier's music is into "chaos and gestalt theories, extended micro tunings, variable time structures," and so forth! Brian Cherney is another. His "River of Fire" is online. Also Derek Charke ("Cercle du Nord" is online). Very strange notation compared to traditional tonal works! Dorothy Chang's "Beautiful Things" is quite dissonant (and not so "beautiful" or pleasing to my ears—but "interesting"!). Norma Beecroft's "Elegy and Two Went to Sleep" is also marginally interesting. Actually it *can* be fascinating to wonder where artists are "coming from" stylistically, especially if it's a great departure from one's normal comfort level of listening preferences. Michael Baker's "In Paradisum" shows the musical language of the "pulse and process" style of American minimalists (?). Serge Arcuri's "Chronaxie" that's online is notationally written quite, quite strangely! The departure from traditional music is so vast to me that it might as well come from another planet! But nevertheless it is "interesting" to view it on a mental or intellectual level (though it is not emotionally engaging).

P. Nimmons has an interesting style. His "Plateaus" is available online to read and hear. Marjab Mozetich likes the "repeat" technique a lot, as evident in "Lament in the Trampled Garden," "El Dorado" and "Affairs of the Heart" available online. Rather minimalistic but romantic in character. Apparently he is a very successful composer.

I liked Allan Gillilands clips online.

James McDonald Gayfer is a traditional tonal composer (born 1916; died 1997). He stated, "I am a traditional composer: non-serial, non-aleatoric or electronic. However, I do see great value and significance in all forms of creative expression..." I'd like to get more of his music, as well as tonalist George Fiala, but it's rather slim pickings trying to find their music on cd.

[Sunday, November 9, 2008 at 12:05 pm]:

An excellent site where you can sample every track of every of the 21,000 classical genre albums is ClassicsOnline:

<http://www.classicsonline.com/>

There I discovered a beautiful overture by Auber for the opera, *The Crown Diamonds*. Here's a link for the Naxos Famous French Overtures cd:

<http://www.classicsonline.com/catalogue/product.aspx?pid=2799>

Click on the third track. I already bought that eight minute track online using PayPal for \$1.59. The initial 2:22 duration of the track is the appealing section. There is then a major change of character in the music afterwards (not as appealing!). On this site you can also access many of the Canadian discs I discussed previously (CBC Records). This includes a Mozetich cd:

<http://www.classicsonline.com/catalogue/product.aspx?pid=314484>

[Thursday, December 18, 2008 at 4:03 pm]: I've been busy since making my last entry here. This includes listening to new music, shopping for the holidays (including new music!), attending a cute non-professional Nutcracker ballet in San Pedro last Saturday, and so forth. Real bad winter storm (although it is still very late fall!) yesterday. I had to work in that rainy, freezing, windy weather, doing my appointed rounds. It must've done something to my system because I slept ten hours last night (luckily it happens to be my scheduled day off this week) to recuperate. Next week I'll have Thursday off again because it is Christmas day and also Friday/Saturday/Sunday because that'll be my scheduled days off then—so a nice four-days off!

A week ago I received my shipment from SheetMusicPlus that included the \$30 full score of Auber's *Les Diamants de la Couronne: Overture (The Crown Diamonds)*. I mentioned the music a few paragraphs above. I also have a recording of the opera but it's nothing too impressive. Basically only the Overture is the gem of the piece. The first two minutes and 22 seconds is particularly soothing and pretty, and thereafter the character of the music changes dramatically. Once again, you can click on the link I provided above from ClassicsOnline to hear it.

The instrumentation for the Overture is as follows: flute, petite flute, oboe, 2 clarinets in C (very unusual!); 2 horns in C and 2 horns in G (again, very unusual); cornets in Fa (F); 2 bassoons; 3 trombones; timbales (single-headed drums) in Ut (C); triangle, Cimbales et Grosse Caisse; and strings. The Overture is in 12/8 time with the tempo-marking of *Andante con moto* (dotted quarter note = 69). Violins I play the memorable melody line. They play *p* Line 1 G dotted quarter note tied to 8th note down to E up to A to G up to Line 2 D to C up to F to E up to A 8ths (all 8th notes are crossbeam-connected) to (Bar 2) G dotted half note legato slur down to E quarter note (followed by 8th/quarter/16th rest marks). Then violins I play Line 11 G 16th up to (Bar 3) Line 2 E dotted quarter note tied to quarter note tied to E 32nd note up to G to F to E 32nd notes (all four 32nd notes are connected by three crossbeams) to D quarter note (followed by 8th/quarter/16th rests) down to Line 1 G 16th up to (Bar 4) D dotted quarter note tied to quarter note tied to 32nd note to F-E-F 32nd notes to C quarter note (followed by 8th/quarter/8th rests).

Back in Bar 1, after an 8th rest, violins II pluck *pizz* Line 1 E down to small octave G up to middle C down to G up to Line 1 E 8ths (crossbeam-connected) followed by an

8th rest and then E down to small octave G up to C down to G up to Line 1 E 8ths. Repeat next bar. In Bar 3, after an 8th rest, violins II pluck Line 1 F down to small octave G up to B down to G up to Line 1 F 8ths (repeat pattern in the second half of this bar). In Bar 4, they play the F-G-B-G-F 8ths followed by E-G-C-C-E 8ths. Back in Bar 1, the violas pluck small octave C-E-G-middle C-small octave G-E 8ths (crossbeam connected) followed by another such figure (and repeated in Bar 2). In Bar 3, the violas pluck small octave C-F-G-B-G-F 8ths (repeated again same bar) to (Bar 4) another such figure to the very first figure as given in Bar 1. Back in Bar 1, celli pluck small octave C-E-G-middle C-small octave G-E 8ths figure (repeated again) and repeated in Bar 2. Actually celli are *col* the violas. CB play *p* small octave C dotted whole note in Bar 1 (repeated next three bars).

Back in Bar 1, the clarinets in C (very rarely used, especially in modern days) play *p* small octave E/middle C dotted whole notes tied to next bar to (Bar 3) F/B dotted whole notes tied to (Bar 4) F/B dotted half notes to E/middle C dotted half notes to (Bar 5) Line 1 E/G dotted whole notes, and so forth. Horns in C play middle C dotted whole notes tied to next four bars. Horns in G play small octave and Line 1 G [written Line 1 and Line 2 C] dotted whole notes tied to next three bars. Bassoons play small octave E and Line 1 C dotted whole notes tied to next bar to (Bar 3) F/B dotted whole notes tied to dotted half notes in Bar 4 to E/C dotted half notes. Simple C major tonality initially.

I also purchased Gounod's FAUST ballet music (full score) directly from the publisher (Kalmus) for \$45. The pages run 81 long. Very pretty music. Initial instrumentation (for No. 1) is flute, piccolo, 2 oboes, clarinets in A, bassoons, horns in E and horns in C, cornets in A, trumpets in D, 3 trombones, bass tuba, timpani in A/E, cymbals, bass drum, triangle, harps, and strings. The first piece in $\frac{3}{4}$ time has the tempo-marking of *Allegretto (tempo di Valse)*. The initial tonality (Bar 5) played by the trombones and strings is the B half-diminished seventh (B/D/F/A). "Holy Herrmann, Batman!" The note emphasized is F since the first four bars are only note F and then the VC/CB play small octave F in Bars 5-8). Then we have the key signature of three sharps (A maj/F# min). The tonality in Bar 9 is E Dom 7th (E/G#/B/D). The flute & piccolo play forte Line 3 E quarter note tied to E 8th to E-E-E played 8ths to (Bar 10) E-E-E-E-E-E 8ths to (Bar 11) E quarter note (followed by two quarter rests). Oboes play this pattern on Line 2 D/G# notes, while the clarinets play this on Line 1 E/B [written G/Line 2 D] notes. Then the clarinets/Fags/ "C" horns play this in Bars 11-12, and then Fags/all horns in Bars 13-14), etc. Nice effect. Reminds me slightly of Waxman's opening for *Prince Valiant*.

[6:16 pm] Watching on HBO Family a cute cartoon show, "Classical Baby: The Art Show." A baby conductor conducts famous music (Strauss, Faure, Elgar, etc) to famous art that becomes animated. Too bad famous film music wasn't used as well!

"The Beautiful Blue Danube" waltz by Johann Strauss Jr. is also in the key signature of three sharps. Of course many scifi fans would recognize that music used in Kubricks *2001:A Space Odyssey*. The waltz is in 6/8 time initially and in the tempo-marking of *Andantino*. The tonality is clearly A maj (A/C#/E) since we have the violins bowed trem in Bar 1 on A/C#/E. Violins I play *pp* Line 2 C#/E dotted half notes bowed

trem (repeated thru Bar 4) while violins II are bowed trem on Line 1 A dotted half notes. After a quarter and 8th rest in Bar 2, *solo* horn I plays *p* small octave A [written Line 1 E] up to Line 1 C# [written Line 1 G#] up to E [written B] legato 8ths to (Bar 3) same E dotted half note tied to dotted half note next bar. The tonality follows the fifths (E from root A) in Bar 5 with the E Dom 7th (E/G#/B/D). Etc.

Here is my online review of *The Day the Earth Stood Still* dvd that came out in December that I posted on Talking Herrmann:

Review of TSTEST: Special Edition (released December 2, 2008)

PART ONE

Today was release day for the 2-disc Special Edition of *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (the 1951 original scored by Herrmann). I wanted it today so instead of buying it at the cheapest online price of \$13.99 at Amazon, I simply went to the local Best Buy store and purchased it for the sale price of \$14.99 (the list price is \$19.99). Of course I had to pay \$1.24 extra for the 8.25% sales tax here in California (our action figure Governor wants to raise it to 11% in this county!).

Disc Two includes several new featurettes. The first is Decoding “Klaatu Barada Nikto:” Science Fiction as Metaphor. Duration: 16 minutes. Several commentators (Richard Keenan, Arnold Orgolini, Guy V. Beckwith, etc) onscreen discuss the background and meaning of the film, especially the setup of the cold war mentality at that period of history. At any rate, they soon discuss various aspects of the movie, including the basic idea of there being a sort of United Nations of Interstellar Space! I would call it loosely (in *Star Trek* terms) the Federation of planets—except that if you, a particular planet, misbehaved (instead of adopting an “Ain’t Misbehaving” mentality—or else!), then you were obliterated en masse! Also the featurette discussed briefly the rather subtle (but intended) metaphor of Klaatu being a Christ figure (he was named “Carpenter,” he was giving a message of peace (once again, “Or else!”), he was in effect crucified (killed and then resurrected!), and so forth. So I enjoyed this first featurette.

The second one was a deep ZZZzzzzzzz for me: A Brief History of Flying Saucers that lasted a too-long 33-minute duration! Of course if you happen to be a believer of physical flying saucers visiting earth especially since 1947 in Roswell, New Mexico, then I’m sure you’ll be pleased. While I liked the quality of the movie itself, and enjoyed the score (most of it) by Herrmann, I am not a true believer of this “flying saucer” root belief (i.e., nonsense) that seemed to have captured (in effect, abducted!) the gullible psyche of so many people. In fact, Larry King has had several shows over the years devoted to the subject. At any rate, this featurette is essentially out-of-subject in this TSTEST special edition—despite the editors interjecting several times scenes from the movie as visual fodder while saucer buffs made their off-screen comments. It’s really not anything

about the film itself except obliquely because it happens to involve a visitor from another planet come to pronounce a message of peace (and warning!). This featurette could've just as easily been edited as a special featurette for *Earth vs. the Flying Saucers* by Harryhausen, or some other classic saucer film—perhaps even more so because you see flying saucers all the time in that movie! So, unless you are a believer of flying saucers, don't waste 33 minutes of your life on this documentary.

The next feature is "The Astounding Harry Bate" (lasting 11 minutes). It is mildly interesting because his story was the inspiration for the movie to the screenwriter, but the screenplay is vastly different (and better, in my opinion). Basically it is an anecdotal featurette, not a primary informational featurette on the movie itself. It's somewhat interesting to know but certainly not essential data! You can function without it.

Next is a far more interesting featurette titled "Edmund North: The Man Who Made the Earth Stood Still." This is a documentary on the writer directly involved in the movie, so it makes more sense having it included than the one on Bates. I liked it but I don't know if I'll ever watch it again. The last featurette called "Race to Oblivion" is indirect material (short documentary made in the early Eighties) not involved with the movie itself.

Now: Immediately upon placing Disc One in the player, there was a special sneak peek of the remake of the movie due out in ten days. It's a fairly lengthy sneak peek that lasts just under eight minutes that stars Keanu Reeves as the star playing Klaatu (probably good casting under the circumstances but we shall see). Secret Service men (or types) knock on the door of a femme scientist (played by Jennifer Connelly) telling her she must accompany them to a secret location (alien landing). Soon we see Klaatu (an alien in a human body—ho hum!—a reverse idea in that *Outer Limits* episode titled "Architects of Fear") being revived and then later escorted by robotic Secret Service types again to be polygraphed by a robotic polygraph technician. This in itself is a long sequence where I see flaws already (e.g., the dozen or so S.S. men leave the large stadium room and go into the hallway behind closed doors instead of staying there with the technician to monitor what's happening). Lousy writing so far. Anyway, Klaatu's superior intelligence turns the table on the polygraph man and essentially makes him obey Klaatu's will and answer Klaatu's questions (ho-hum—been there/seen that many times before!) including taking off his conveniently same-sized suit for Klaatu to wear. Then Klaatu dispatches the Secret Service men in the hallway almost by magic, and Klaatu simply walks into the elevator to escape. Then we see lots of CGI effects, especially the alien orbs doing havoc. The Gort version in this movie is far more menacing looking than the Gort in the beloved classic (much bigger!) but we shall see how it plays out when I see the movie.

So far I am interested enough to see the remake but I am not confident it will live up to the classic (most remakes never do live up or exceed the original). I am not eager about the Tyler Bates score, but I'll suspend judgment. I am not too excited about Scott Derrickson directing it (he did *Hellraiser: Inferno* and other just horrid—I mean, horror—films, etc) but perhaps he'll be able to fill Robert Wise's shoes (but I doubt it!). I think, however, it will draw lots of people to the theatres. Reeves will not be the star—it will be Jon Hamm of MAD MEN fame on AMC (he played Don Draper). Lots of gals will probably this time accompany their boyfriends to see this movie if only because of handsome Hamm! I also like very much the casting of Kathy Bates. I believe she plays a Secretary of State type—and kinda reminds me a lot of Hillary Clinton too!

OK. This ends Part One of this review. Now to write Part Two (as a separate post in this same Topic for “space” reasons) on the audio commentary by Morgan/Stromberg/Smith/Redman....

Part Two:

The audio commentary is virtually a non-stop event (The Day the Music Stood Silent since you cannot really hear the music/dialog in the background) of interesting information and insight (and opinions) offered by John Morgan, Bill Stromberg, Steven Smith, and moderator Nick Redman. They were involved in the audio commentary of Herrmann's western score for the movie *Garden of Evil* that I reviewed in Blog # 37:

<http://www.film scorerundowns.net/blogs/37.pdf>

Of course they all pretty much gush over the music, praising Herrmann's decisions on how he approached the project. While I am overall content with the score, I am not particularly happy about it. It is certainly not one of my favorites. For one thing, as I discussed in my rundown of the score, Herrmann misjudged his use of the theremins. As Dirty Harry might say, “A composer's got to know his limits”—and Herrmann just got a bit too carried away with the gimmick. In my opinion, its policy of usage should've been “enough and not too much.” As I wrote:

“My personal feeling is that Herrmann overused the theremins. Theremins are notoriously difficult to control in pitch, and the sound is so dominant that it can easily become intrusive and annoying to hear (listen, for instance, to the horrid use of the theremins in “Panic”). That is partially why Herrmann used Moog synthesizers to substitute theremins in the London label recording a few decades later (not to mention that theremins were a fad effect that quickly lost favor among composers and that very few competent players of the electronic

device could be found; in fact, the second theremin player for this score was simply awful!). Three or four cues featuring the theremins would have sufficed (again, in my opinion) for best effect. Herrmann wanted a science fiction ambience, so theremin use was somewhat “hip” at the time (for example, Tiomkin’s use of it in *The Thing* during that general period).”

Also if a producer wanted to recreate the original intent of the music as composed by Herrmann for a new rerecording, then you will have difficulties because of the theremins. Rerecordings of many of Goldsmith’s scores would present the same problem because many of the odd sounds (including electronic) that he incorporated in his off-beat (non-conventional) scores would be quite difficult decades after that period’s technology went the way of the dinosaurs. Certain synthesizers and their unique sounds would no longer exist in many cases, and so forth.

Morgan responds to Redman’s initial question about the music’s opening by saying that Herrmann plunged listeners into a six-second prelude that is, in effect, an excursion into deep space, then becomes more active as P.O.V. gets closer to earth. He considers the Main Title as having an “unworldly quality” and “very impressionistic” (I wonder if he meant that literally in terms of, say, Debussyian style as distinct from the “Romantic” style?). I particularly liked what Stromberg had to say: As the ship (never seen) rapidly approaches the earth, Herrmann has rapidly playing 16th note figures—but at the same time, he underscores these long linear intense slow-moving chords that to Stromberg conveys the vastness of space as well. Very nice.

There is a brief discussion about the almost documentary “realistic” approach to the movie that the black & white format helps to formulate despite the unrealistic premise of a flying saucer visiting earth! At about the three minute point the discussion turns to the theremin. John at about 4:30 states that Herrmann didn’t use the theremin so much as a solo instrument gimmick but embedded it in the orchestral/harmonic fabric of the score. Stromberg at 8:40 discusses the other instrumentation of the score including electric violin and other electric instruments.

Steve does the Herrmann biographical gig again in this commentary but also adds insights particular for this score. This includes how DTESS was his first film project when he settled in California; how Herrmann’s approach to scoring was far different than the standard “Hollywood” approach (no themes for specific characters, etc), creating mood music between dialog scenes, and so forth. Morgan would add that Herrmann utilized his old radio days habit of using small chamber groupings for much of the music (not too much tutti passages). Stromberg discusses how Herrmann really set up the mood and puts you right at the edge of your seat right after the Main Title with the “Radar” cue with the minimalistic orchestration of two pianos, three vibes, and I believe electric bass. Smith adds (19:39) that many composers would’ve had “bigger” music for that scene and bring out the “big guns” but that Herrmann was smart in his subtlety

and minimalism approach in terms of orchestration for that cue. Morgan adds how Herrmann added the sense of mass in his music for the heavy space ship and big Gort music—the largeness of the scene is better conveyed that has dramatic impact, whereas the fast-paced music of “Radar” perfectly fitted that particular action scene. Morgan added that none could write “weighty chords” like Herrmann—writing for four tubas soli, for instance—but not a tutti placement that tends to drown out the tubas.

At about the 24 point, Steve discusses at length about how the music was given a strong priority back then—not watered down or smothered by sound effects as is common these modern days. Stromberg discusses I believe the “Magnetic Pull” cue when Klaatu actually makes the earth stand still to specify how the music was really given prominence here.

Skipping some here, at the 33 point, Morgan felt that Michael Rennie was perfectly cast in the part of Klaatu. Smith then pursues the topic even more. Soon Redman offers a new topic on the nature of the film itself, about its fable quality, the stature of Robert Wise, etc. Personally I liked Wise’s THE HAUNTING far more than DTESS in terms of mood—and Searle’s score is excellent and “unworldly” in its own way (“ghostly” terms as distinct from “spacey”!). Smith and Redman go back & forth exclusively for a long period on this un-music section (while I assume currently non-participating John & Bill have a cigar or pipe smoke break somewhere!). John finally returns at 44:11 about how the film still is relevant today because the world hasn’t improved much over the years! Considering that we had George Bush as President for eight years, I would have to agree with him!

Smith discusses solo at length about Herrmann: how he was initially worried if the McCarthy mentality back then would hurt his career, and so forth. Definitely Smith takes the podium, so to speak, more than anyone else, then Morgan (or Redman), then Stromberg. Personally I would’ve liked to have heard Stromberg/Morgan talk more because, after all, this commentary is really supposed to be (as I understand it) about the music—not on the film itself, a discussion on Zanick, Lionel Newman, or even Herrmann’s general biographical information. I would’ve liked a more laser-like focus on this particular score, cue by cue. Oh, well. It started off that way then meandered several times into other areas of discussion. I think the problem is that there are too many fishes in this audio commentary pond. Perhaps a separate one of Redman/Smith and one of Morgan/Stromberg would’ve been better. I would’ve appreciated both, and it would be a better use of limited time (1:33 duration only in this film). But I really liked Smith’s solo (at the 1:00:00 point) on Herrmann and Wise, and how Herrmann wanted to score a low-budget project Wise was doing. Very informative. A funny story.

Well, I think that’s enough on this commentary. I don’t want to do a rundown of each & every commentary piece. You’ll need to buy this highly

recommended dvd set. Remember that the isolated track of this score is also available. Overall this isolated track is fine but I was very disappointed with how low or muted the music was in the opening “Outer Space” Main Title. I had to turn up the volume. I wondered what happened here? There’s a special feature in Disc One titled “Main Title Live Performance by Peter Pringle. Because of my feelings on the theremin, I didn’t bite on that particular Pringle! Mercifully it is short. There’s also the feature titled “The Mysterious, Melodious Theremin”—eekkk! Is there a Mothership to take me off this planet where theremins exist! But at least in this featurette you can hear an audio excerpt of Herrmann making a snide remark about linoleum! There’s also a separate trailer of the 2008 remake (not the actual sneak peek in the opening of the dvd). The music provided in this trailer is pretty awful to me! Too rock & rollish, and it doesn’t fit the movie at all.

Once again I recommend this special edition dvd. I liked the insertion of the long sneak peek into the remake put into this set. That’s a smart selling point feature. The audio commentary by Redman & Co. is very nice to have—although I know people who tend to avoid audio commentaries (even if it’s about Herrmann). Since this is the Xmas season, and the economy is now officially in recession, I am sure you will be able to get an excellent price on the dvd set (even below \$13.99). I’ve already gotten great deals online from DeepDiscount.com (normally better than Amazon—although Amazon had a much better price on “Color Honeymooners Vol. 4” that I wanted to give as a gift to someone for Xmas), DVD Empire (eg., Gomer Pyle—Complete Series, normally \$188 that I got for \$104 off), and so forth. I’m really seeing bargains this year. So there’s no need to pay \$19.95 for DTESS.

[January 1, 2009 :] By the way, my wife & I have been enjoying watching several of the color episodes of Gomer Pyle. We especially had fun watching from the Third season, “Love’s Old Sweet Song” that introduced soon-to-be Gomer’s girlfriend, Lou Ann Poovie (Elizabeth MacRae). It was originally aired almost exactly 42 years ago (Dec 28, 1966). Watching her sing so terribly was hilarious! Carter and Duke scheming to get her attention is also very funny because she ends up falling for Gomer!

<http://epguides.com/GomerPyleUSMC/>

The “Changing Partners” episode (December 8, 1967) was also a lot of fun. “Dynamite Diner” was probably the weakest of all the Lou Ann Poovie episodes (very lame script!). Previously she played Festus’ girlfriend, April, in *Gunsmoke* for I believe four episodes. So she graduated from Festus to Gomer! “Hey, Gomer!”

Here is a 1998 Alex Ross article on film music where he praises Herrmann as “the greatest of all.”

http://www.therestisnoise.com/2004/05/oscar_scores.html

Ross wrote the critically acclaimed recent book, The Rest Is Noise. I probably won't buy it, however! I need to be watchful of my spending. This is my New Year's resolution. I need to pay off my credit card debt (currently about \$750 but due to Xmas shopping it'll be more next statement in part because I spent nearly \$500 on my wife for unique jewelry when we went to see the Nutcracker at San Pedro! Plus I'll need to have crown dental work done soon, etc., etc. So discretionary spending will be put to an extreme minimum the next several months. That means no more filmmusic and classical cds for a while—including the soon-to-be-released *Charge of the Light Brigade* cd from Tribute! The Romance classics dvd set has already been ordered last month, so it is not considered a new (2009) purchase:

http://www.amazon.com/Romance-Classics-Collection-Springs-Adventure/dp/B001HSNTKW/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=dvd&qid=1226894007&sr=8-1

My post on Talking Herrmann:

Talking Herrmann: Twisted Nerve / The Bride Wore Black
Reply by: Bill Wrobel ()

I ordered Christmas Carol/Child Is Born in an instant once I became aware of the cd from Kritzerland (and I'm very happy with it). But I think I'll pass on the Twisted Nerve/Bride Wore Black cd. My discretionary money is limited this new year. In fact, I will probably even pass up the far better product coming out from Tribute very soon (Steiner's Charge of the Light Brigade) although it will have the COMPLETE score, newly recorded, huge booklet, and so forth (unlike the mere 28 minutes offered by the Kritzerland cd that was previously released anyway). Even if I had lots of money, I would still seriously debate myself whether I should buy the latest Kritzerland release. If a fan wanted to hear the music, the wiser choice is to buy the dvd if money is limited because then you can hear everything composed by Herrmann for THE BRIDE WORE BLACK (that is, what was not shamelessly cut and altered by F. Truffaut! :) instead of just a few cues on the Kritzerland cd!

I will also limit my dvd purchases also. Fortunately in December (before my lean New Year's resolutions!) I already ordered the Warner Bros Romance Classics dvd set coming out soon. It will include a guilty pleasure of mine, PARRISH (wonderful music by Max Steiner). Although Charge of the Light Brigade is fine music, I tend to prefer Max's music from his later years, and if I had a choice of taking to a desert island CHARGE or PARRISH, I'd take PARRISH in an instant. SUSAN SLADE has wonderful Steiner music as well, and the dvd is included in that set (as well as ROME ADVENTURE).

http://www.amazon.com/Romance-Classics-Collection-Springs-Adventure/dp/B001HSNTKW/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=dvd&qid=1226894007&sr=8-1

[Monday, January 5 at 10:37 am :]

I AM LISTENING TO VARIOUS CDS THAT Markus, the interesting composer (who can be quite Herrmannesque when he wants to be!) in Germany whom I email and exchange music with, gave me for Xmas. First off I listened to Prokofiev's 2nd and 3rd symphonies. I believe I heard them long ago but I do not have audio copies of them. Probably the reason *why* I do not have personal copies to purchase is because I did not really care for the music! Very skilled Russian composer and he had this modernist neoclassical-expressionist style when he composed these two symphonies. But overall I do not like his music. It is more a case of liking certain works but in general his music did not "take" with me. With Herrmann and Steiner and, to some extent, Goldsmith I may not particularly enjoy some works but overall I like their music very much. I may like Lt. Kije by Prokofiev, for instance, but his general oeuvre does not appeal. The first movement (*Allegro ben articolato*) of his 2nd symphony is furious and forte to the max, but it's too much, too excessive—like, "Okay, we get the message already in the first two minutes, so there's no need to drag it on for eleven minutes!" Shostakovich's fierce *Allegro* second movement from his 10th symphony is much better (and shorter!). Fortunately, for balance, he follows with the calming few minutes of the next II movement (*Theme*) that I liked. The 3rd symphony did not appeal to me at all except perhaps for a few isolated, interesting sections.

The opening minute (or less!) of Puccini's *Turandot* opera caught my attention. It *almost* reminded me of Herrmann (the forte sense and drama or general sensibility of *Anna & the King of Siam* for instance) but the singing started within 35 seconds of so. I think it's important for a composer to make a good start to his music (symphony, film score, whatever) so as to make an immediate good and lasting first impression. There was track # 5 that reminded me in flavor somewhat or character to the ending of John Williams CEOTTK. Once again, overall, I do not particularly care for Puccini. I generally hear an amorphous quality to his music, not usually clearly defined in terms of melody construction. Verdi was a far more talented melodist than Puccini. Puccini's Musetta's Waltz is very nice, however, from *La Boheme*, and "O Mio Babbino Caro" from *Gianni Schicchi* is fairly well known. *Madama Butterfly* and *Tosca* never appealed to me. But give me Verdi and I'll find at least a few exceptional pieces in most of his operas. Also give me Wagner anyday! *The Flying Dutchman* is a real rouser! *Siegfried* is terrific, and so forth. Normally, however, I far prefer ballet music over opera—much purer, no excessive singing! I usually don't like much piano music nor much singing—enough and not too much! Anyway, I can live very contently without Puccini and Prokofiev. Of course I haven't heard *every* single piece by Prokofiev so I cannot fairly be "Con-kofiev"! We know that Woody Allen used his music in his very hilarious *Love & Death*. In fact, if I am not mistaken, he used the very opening of P's "Song about Alexander Nevsky" in the very start of the movie after the opening credits. Nice. Of course he uses more of *Alexander Nevsky* later in the movie.

Listening now (11:37 am) to Mossolov's *Iron Foundry*. While it certainly can describe hectic and mammoth foundry operations, the music itself is not something I would give a red hot positive review for! Too much. Too astral. Too worldly. Too loud. Usually with music you want to *get away* from the stresses and strains of the common world! I think I want to take a cold relieving shower after listening to fiery foundry music! Or at least I'll shut out such disturbing music and put on some beautiful and serene sections of Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake*. I like the end of Chapter 14 of my dvd of *Swan lake* (Bolshoi Theatre with Alla Mikhailchenko) of Scene 11 when they introduce Odetta. Not rushed as some recordings. Chapter 18 (V. Pas d' action—Andante) is very beautiful with the harp action. Chapter 19 (IV *Allegro moderato*) is very nicely danced by the four swans. At any rate, if I want to get away from the cares of this often perturbed world, then I can always resort to beautiful music (such as *Swan Lake*). Perhaps I'll someday write a traditional Romantic ballet ala Tchaikovsky/Delibes.

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