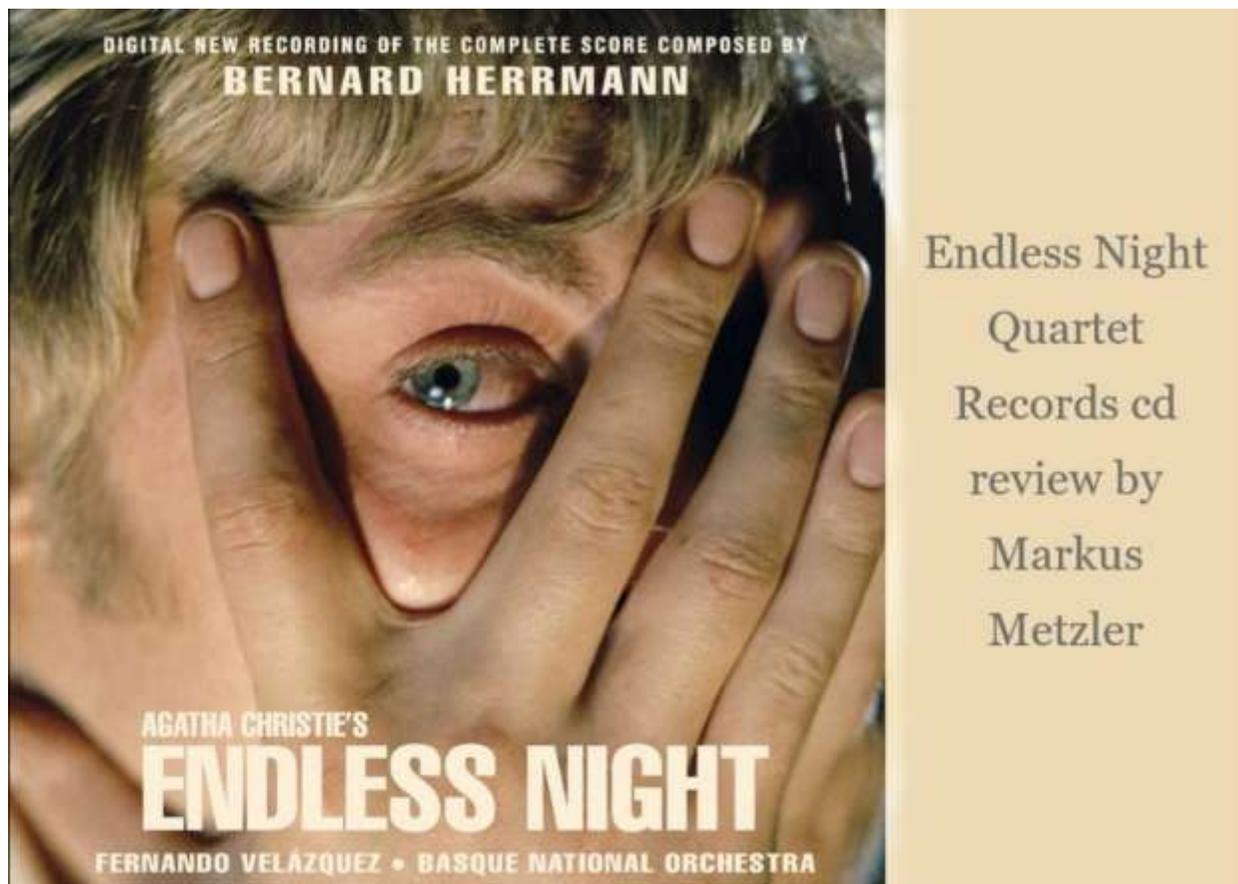


ENDLESS NIGHT Quartet Records cd Review

By Markus Metzler



I was born at a time that was favorable for me in terms of Bernard Herrmann's music. When I got to know his music at the beginning of the 90s at a young age, CDs of his music were released at regular intervals. This was always an extremely great pleasure for me. However, there was one Herrmann score that never came onto the market: *Endless Night*. I couldn't understand this because I thought this music was extremely varied. It had romantic & lyrical passages, was mysterious in places, often very melodic but also extremely dissonant and aggressive at times. That's why I should have jumped for joy when Quartet Records announced that they wanted to record *Endless Night* when Herrmann's *The Bride Wore Black* was released by them.

Unfortunately, however, my anticipation was weakened when I heard the large number of deviations in the re-recording of *The Bride Wore Black* and of what Bernard Herrmann had written down in his score. Because of this, I wrote a review about that recording, hopeful that more attention will be paid to the written score of *Endless Night*. The reaction to my review was rather angry and incomprehensible. So I feared the worst for this new recording of *Endless Night* but hoped for the best.

Unfortunately, this hope was not fulfilled. The re-recording of *Endless Night* also has a lot of deviations and changes to what Herrmann prescribed in his score.

Some will say that a re-recording doesn't have to sound like the original soundtrack. But that's not the point! I myself have a very large collection of recordings from the classical repertoire (operas, concerts, symphonies, oratorios, etc.) and I have several recordings of the same works because I find it enriching when you can hear a work in different interpretations. So I don't mind at all if the interpretation of *Endless Night* deviates from Herrmann's own recording - and in the case of *Endless Night* I even have the impression that they tried to orientate themselves on the original soundtrack.

The reason why I cannot fully enjoy this new recording is due to the large number of wrong notes, wrong chords, instruments that pause in places of the music that shouldn't, wrong rhythms, wrong instruments, etc. These deviations are FACTS that I will go into in detail in this review and which are verifiable.

When I criticized the recording of *The Bride Wore Black*, it was said that these deviations could not be right because the music sounds exactly as one knows it from the original film. I can say that even a recording that is faulty, it still *sounds* like Herrmann but these deviations & mistakes are not necessarily clear when listening superficially (especially if you do not have the handwritten score in front of you) and if you do not know the original soundtrack that well.

Since we all react very strongly to visual images, I would like to use a painting as an analogy to make it clear what I found annoying with the new recordings of *The Bride Wore Black* and *Endless Night*. Suppose you order a reprint of the famous *Mona Lisa* painting. When it arrives, it turns out that Mona Lisa's hair is not auburn but blonde. Her eyes are blue instead of brown. The water in the left half of the picture is greenish instead of blue. Although the right horizon in the background in the original picture is higher than the left horizon, the right horizon is now at the same height. Also the back of the chair on which she lays her arms is only half as thick in the reprint as in the original.

Just as you can still hear in the re-recording that it is still Herrmann's recognizable music in *Endless Night* (despite the deviations from Herrmann's score), you can also see, despite the deviations in the painting, that it is clearly Mona Lisa (but just not painted as Leonardo da Vinci intended). Similarly, the re-recording of *Endless Night* is not, in many cases, the music how Herrmann composed it. The only difference is that these changes are more noticeable and potentially annoying in a famous painting than they are in music since music is much more abstract. If you get an incorrect reprint of the Mona Lisa, you can get a different replacement more faithful to the Da Vinci original, whereas with Bernard Herrmann's *Endless Night* it is only available in this one new recording.

It is very likely that some readers will now be annoyed that I am so critical of the new recording of *Endless Night*. I can understand this to a certain extent. The CD already gives me the impression that Quartet Records has tried to please the lovers of Bernard Herrmann's music with a recording that will be as good as possible. For example, things have been adopted that can only be heard in the original soundtrack of the film (for example a piano glissando before the start of the wild couch music) although Herrmann did not write for a piano in his score. So Quartet Records wanted to be close to what the listeners are used to from watching the film. They even recorded a version of the song with a

mandolin because this is also the case in the film, and got a harpsichord for the song.

Perhaps the sound of the Moog could have been easily imitated with other sound libraries or synthesizers these days, but Quartet Records hired an original Moog. The same goes for Nuria Rial, with whom they found a professional singer. So Quartet Records wanted to do their thing as well as possible and I can understand that some readers don't like being critical instead of appreciating the efforts of Quartet Records.

Maybe I'm also being accused of undue negativity, which I could understand if the recording had only a few deviations from what Herrmann wrote and if I intended to make a mountain out of a molehill, so to speak. Unfortunately, the case is: Deviations from Herrmann's composition in this re-recording are not the exception, but rather the rule! Believe me, like everyone else, I have waited a long time for a new recording of *Endless Night* and I wish so much I could be happy about the result and could only find words of praise! Unfortunately, I can't be happy about this recording because it has so many errors.

For me Herrmann's music has the same status as works from the classical repertoire and, for example, with symphonic music, recordings are often discussed very negatively, even though they have been recorded without errors as far as the correct reproduction of the musical text is concerned. So I am absolutely certain: If Quartet Records had recorded a CD of Dvorak's *Symphony from the New World* on the market that contained a similar number of deviations as the new recording of *Endless Night*, that recording would have been ripped apart up by the classical music critics.

Should one evaluate the new recording of *Endless Night* with different standards just because it is a film score? I think that all music deserves to be recorded flawlessly, especially when it comes to studio productions!

Yes, Quartet Records did a very good job in their preparation but even the strongest chain is only as strong as its weakest link. For me, that weak link is the conductor. The conductor is responsible for ensuring that everything is played correctly. For this he must be able to recognize and correct errors such as wrong notes. Unfortunately, this is not the case with Fernando Velasquez.

In the past it was written several times that I am only writing this because I would have liked to have conducted this recording myself and am therefore jealous of Fernando Velasquez. This belief was supported by the fact that reviewer Bill Wrobel had once expressed the wish that I should conduct this because he knew I was intimately familiar with the score.

I can emphasize once again that I don't care who conducts film music. The only thing that matters to me is that a recording is as good as possible! I wish every conductor the best of luck and I keep my fingers crossed for them. I am not at all jealous and I was never jealous with the other conductors of Herrmann recordings (Stromberg, McNeely, etc.).

One more thing before I go into the details of this recording. In response to my criticism of *The Bride Wore Black* recording, it was written that more important people than me had praised the recording. That is true and certainly it applies also to the new recording. I myself am not known at all nor "important." So if a particular reader believes that a review is only relevant if the author is known and/or important, perhaps it is best for that reader not to bother reading any further...

First of all, let's just point out what it means when I discuss "mistakes" in a new recording of film music. For instance, I consider it a mistake if something can be heard in a new recording that differs from

the written score (such as wrong notes). These are facts that can be verified.

For example, the Moog in bar 46 [1:17] of the “Prelude” plays a B quarter note instead of a Bb (B-flat). However, one can understandably be doubtful as to whether it is actually a mistake since Herrmann *himself* wrote a B quarter note instead of a Bb in the appropriate place. Nevertheless, I am convinced that the B quarter note, as heard in the new recording, is wrong, since Herrmann lets the note Bb play in his own recording, repeating bar 45. Herrmann forgot to put the flat symbol in front of the note when composing. It is normal for a composer to make such typographical errors. That is why I am of the opinion that, when making a new recording, the composer's original recording must be consulted in order to detect such typographical errors on score paper by the composer.

The point is simply avoiding errors in the new recording that were caused by writing mistakes or unclear music glyphs on the music manuscript. But even if you don't know Herrmann's original recording, the B-flat note is more logical at this point, as it corresponds to the previous two-bar phrase that is a whole-tone interval, repeated accordingly in this phrase.

Herrmann himself changed his instrumentation during his recording session. On page 8 of the score he wrote that the horns should play the ascending phrase from the third measure (bar 59 starting at 1:38) up to the beginning of page 9 as stopped (+) notes. In his own recording, however, he lets them play *open* (not stopped, although he wrote them as such). Due to the open style of playing, the horns come through better and thus supported the melody in the Moog more significantly.

In my opinion, the conductor should have done this too because when a composer hears his music playing for the first time, he may decide to make last minute changes. Many famous composers did it. In

this case, Herrmann improved his instrumentation and this change (in the recording session) should therefore also be taken into account with subsequent new recordings and performances. It's similar with his opera *Wuthering Height*. He lets the opening fanfare in the brass section play open in his own recording, although he writes in his score that they should play with mutes. Obviously he had the sound of the muted brass in mind but noticed during the recording that they didn't have enough punch and therefore let them play open.

For this reason, it would be important to note in the score that Herrmann lets the brass play open. In my opinion, it is a mistake to ignore Herrmann's last word in how he refined his own music.

I also don't hear the harp glissandi on page 8 in bars 61-62 [1:41 - 1:44] and on page 9 in bars 65-66 [1:48 - 1: 51]. Herrmann even prescribes *ff* for these glissandi, so they should definitely be audible! But since you can hear the harp again shortly afterwards in the other prescribed places, I assume that the harp does not play at all in the places mentioned. In my opinion, a conductor should be able to notice and correct this, when an instrument, which should play *ff*, is inaudible.

As for the *interpretation* of how the “Prelude” was conducted, listeners can of course be divided in opinion (in contrast to the clearly verifiable mistakes). So I can only speak for myself regarding the issue of “interpretation.”

I think the tempo of the “Prelude” is very well chosen. But the stand-alone sixteenth lead notes of the horns heard in bar 1 (and also bar 3) just before the sustained chords [Note: the same pattern is later repeated in bars 5 and 7 by the clarinets] seem indistinct to me. In my opinion, these short notes before the sustained chords should have been worked out better. You can hear these quick lead notes very clearly in the “Breakdown” track, so it's pity that this wasn't as clearly heard in the “Prelude”.

What bothers me a lot more about the "Prelude" is the issue of balance. While I still like the balance very much at the beginning of the "Prelude" I unfortunately no longer found it favorable as the track progresses. You can hear the Moog and the strings consistently well, but especially the accompanying harmonies in the sustained chords don't always sound balanced to me. In particular, the held horn chords are too weak for me in relation to the clarinet chords.

Apart from the wrong tone the Moog in bar 46, these errors are not particularly noticeable for most people, so I can understand it if fans are satisfied with this track. For me, Herrmann's compositions are just as significant as compositions of the classic repertoire, and there you have such high quality standards that you wouldn't allow yourself to make mistakes with a new recording. I think Herrmann's music should be regarded with the same quality-standard, so reviewers should be allowed to point out errors in new recordings.

After the stirring prelude, the idyllic and gentle introduction of the cue "The Opening" works particularly well. Personally, however, I would have liked it if this idyllic mood had lasted a little longer before the Moog set in. Herrmann even composed an additional bar (bar 6) in the idyllic mood, which was deleted from his score and therefore not recorded by Quartet Records.

As far as deletions are concerned, I'm not sure myself whether one should record every canceled bar on a new recording. It would be interesting to investigate whether Herrmann himself took into account deleted bars in his own re-recordings. For me, the decisive factor is whether deleted bars should be recorded, whether they were simply left out because the music would otherwise have become too long for the sequence to be set to music, or whether Herrmann cut the bars because he musically didn't like them. So this has to be weighed before a recording: Whether the omitted music is musically meaningful or just a

gap filler. As far as "The Opening" is concerned, my opinion is that one should definitely have recorded the canceled bar because it keeps the listener musically a little longer in the beautiful, idyllic mood.

Furthermore, it seems clear to me that Herrmann did not shorten this measure for musical reasons but solely because the length of the music would not have suited the film sequence. That is why it makes absolutely no sense to me why this deleted bar was not also recorded in the new recording. One of the advantages of re-recording is precisely that it is not dependent on the limitations of the film.

Now, as to the recording itself: I like the first five recorded bars very much but starting from Bar 7 [0:23] --Bar 6 was not used or recorded here--there are, unfortunately, several errors again. The Moog can withstand the high C# (C-sharp) note for far too long, so that this note can be heard for a long time in the following bar, although it should pause completely there. In bar 7, according to the written score, the violins should play a dotted quarter note with a subsequent eighth note (this rhythm repeated on the third beat). When repeating, however, the violins in this track erroneously enter an eighth note too late. In the same bar, the accompanying parts (violas, cellos, harp) play a wrong note. Instead of the prescribed F quarter note at the end of the bar, the instruments play the note F# (F-sharp). Herrmann himself had originally made a mistake and actually notated F#, but subsequently he notated a correction by writing a natural sign over those violas & celli notes with a thick pen (but neglected to do so with the harp). Even if you don't know the written score, you should be able to hear that the F# tone does not fit into the harmony. Clarinet I clearly plays the F natural half notes.

From the point of view of the interpretation, I find the *sff* in the horns and the snare drum in bar 8 not convincing. Instead of a *sff*, in my opinion they just play a simple *f*.

In track #3 "The Balcony" the instruments don't come together at the beginning (the second clarinet comes a little too late) and when I

listen to it, I hear a little-out-of-time in bar 4 [from 0:15] because the solo clarinet somehow sticks on its first note.

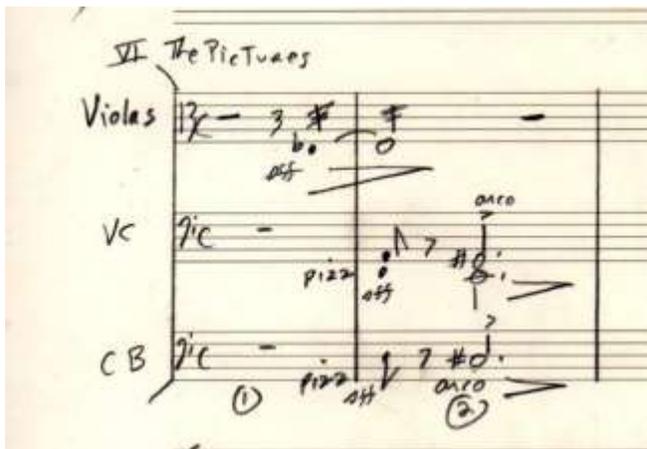
In bar 10, the accompanying chord in the clarinets & bass clarinets sound wrong. From bottom to top, as written by Herrmann, bass clarinets should play F/B-flat, clarinets on D/Ab/C but I hear bass clarinet II playing in this track the A-flat tone so the bottom note sounds wrong to me.

The interpretation itself is good, the tempo and dynamics are well chosen, but Herrmann prescribes a “rallentando” in bars 3 and 6, which is not implemented in the recording.

Track #4 “Gypsy Acre” has been implemented well in my opinion. Perhaps the accompanying voices could have been more delicate and reserved at the beginning. They seem a bit too dominant in relation to the melody part in the high violins (especially the English horn can be heard very strongly here), but that is a matter of opinion. As in the previous cue, however, I think that the rallentandi prescribed by Herrmann (bars 3 and 6) should have been observed better. Bar 8 was deleted by Herrmann in his score and his original recording. Here is my personal opinion that you can do without this deleted bar because the deletion also makes sense musically to me.

Herrmann composes a sequence of three bars, which is repeated in bars 4-6 with slight variation in a lower register. Without the deletion, these three bars would have been repeated again in bars 7-9 in a lower register. By deleting bar 8, however, there is now a change and a new harmonic twist from bar 7 to bar 9, which brings a little variety to the music that would otherwise have been rather schematic. In this respect, my personal opinion is, that the decision not to consider this bar in the re-recording makes sense.

As far as interpretation is concerned, it seems to me to be particularly successful when a conductor is able to convincingly work out the special features of the music and *at the same time* implement the composer's intentions. In my opinion, the conductor fails in the track “Flashback” because instead of implementing Herrmann's intention, he brings too much his own taste into the interpretation. As Herrmann wrote this cue, it reminds me of the *even* (steady beat) mechanical ticking of a clock (and time plays a decisive role at this point in the story). Instead of conducting mechanical, steady emotionless music that I believe Herrmann intended for the scene, Fernando Valesquez does exactly the opposite. He changes the tempo in the middle by accelerating and then slowing down again and adjusts the volume accordingly. So why does he change these parameters even though Herrmann doesn't ask for it, while in other places he ignores the tempo changes (rallentando!) prescribed by Herrmann? I don't mind if a conductor takes certain liberties in terms of interpretation (typical of Leonard Bernstein, for example), but such interpretations should be musically logical and not arbitrary. To incorporate changes in tempo and volume on Herrmann's music that was deliberately conceived in a mechanical steady-beat & volume fashion for this scene in the movie doesn't seem to make sense to me.



<https://i.postimg.cc/qRm8HG4S/Pictures-Bars-1-2-strings.jpg>

In the next track, “The Pictures,” notes that Herrmann prescribed are missing at the beginning of the re-recording (see image immediately above). In the second bar [at 0:02], according to Herrmann's score, the deep strings first play a plucked D minor chord, followed by a C sharp minor chord (played *arco*). With the C-sharp minor chord I only hear the double bass playing the C-sharp, but what about the two upper notes of the chord [E/G-sharp] that the cellos should play? I don't hear them...

As far as the interpretation is concerned (here you can of course be divided again), I find the tempo not steady enough. This can be heard particularly in the eighth notes movement of the harp that does not always play at a steady tempo. The harp in bar 13 [: 32] plays the descending eighth notes faster than it was in the previous bar. It almost sounds as if an eighth has been "swallowed," so to speak. As a result, the music does not seem as calm to me as Herrmann prescribed it in his score. In my opinion it would have been important to keep a persistent pace.

The next track #7 (“Ellie”) was realized well in the new recording. The only thing that bothers me a little is that there are short pauses in two places so that the transitions to the following bars are not organic but rather appear separate from each other. There is a short break from bar 3 to bar 4 [:12] and there is a short break from bar 10 to bar 11 [at :43]. In addition, the strings hold out the final chord in bar 7 so long that it can be still heard briefly when the clarinets start again in the following bar. In my opinion, these are small details that could have been avoided but not particularly impair the enjoyment of this cue.

The next track is “Encounter.” It contains very melodic and romantic music. The first five notes of the tune are a slow repetition of the fast sixteenth-note arpeggios that one can already hear in the first violins at the end of the previous cue ("Ellie"). This extremely beautiful music is deliberately kept plain and simple and one would think that not

much can go wrong here. But not with this conductor who overlooked several mistakes in this piece.

In bar 5, the first bass clarinet holds out the middle of the three quarter notes (D-E-D) a little too long, which means that the third quarter note comes too late and is therefore not together with the second clarinet.

The string chord held in bar 14 [from 0:52] sounds wrong, which is a harmony with the notes E-G-Bb-D that Herrmann frequently uses. Somehow, however, note Ab snuck in there that makes the chord sound quite dissonant.

At the end of bar 16 to bar 17 the first clarinet [from 1:03] plays an octave too high. In the same bar 17 the horn plays completely wrong notes. Instead of repeating the closing notes of the clarinet solo E-D at 1:06, as Herrmann demands in his score, the horn plays the notes C-A. In bar 18 wrong notes are played again by the horn. Herrmann wrote the notes E-D there [at 1:10] but the horn plays the notes B-G. In bar 19 the horn plays the notes G-F # specified by Herrmann [at 1:14], but played so unclear that the first note G is too high and Ab almost sounds. And that's not all: Apart from the unclear way of playing, the horn starts a beat too late in bars 19 and 20.

And there is another mistake: In bar 9 [at 0:31] the violins hold their final note far too short. Herrmann prescribes a half note, while in the re-recording it is only held a quarter note duration that makes the final note of the melody a bit brusque.

In my opinion, if a conductor is unable to hear and correct these simple mistakes in music (thus marring intended beautiful music), he should not be offended towards listeners who cannot really enjoy the recording. I would like to emphasize once again that all of these errors are verifiable, so they are facts.

When it comes to interpretation, however, one can be divided. For myself, I find the tempo well-chosen but I feel that this music could be played with a little more inner sympathy. Here a young couple meets for the first time in a wonderful landscape and feels affection for one another. In my opinion, this feeling should have been heard to its best advantage in the music interpretation.



<https://i.postimg.cc/B6bkMt5S/IX-Bars-1-6.jpg>

Right at the beginning of the following track # 9 (“Warning” QR title but Herrmann actually did not title it), there are several mistakes. The Moog plays a three-tone figure per bar, the last tone of which should be sustained for half a note. In *all* four bars, however, the Moog cannot sustain a half note at the end of the motif, but only plays a quarter note. This creates a pause on the fourth beat in every bar that Herrmann did not ask for at all and that clearly separates the individual bars from one another. See image above.

In addition, the clarinet parts play wrong notes in the accompaniment. In the first bar, the clarinets, bass clarinets and the double bass clarinet play the tone Bb in their respective registers [all written middle or Line 1 C]. However, I can't hear the deep Bb of the double bass clarinet. Did that player actually perform the note? In the second bar, the clarinets should all play note E in their respective registers, but the clarinets incorrectly play the note Bb instead of the lower note E (and it sounds as if the note F # is still weakly sounding)! Bars 3-4 repeat bars 1-2. In the third bar, one should hear the Bb note again in unison. In this re-recording, the clarinets also play the note E there.

In the fourth bar (repeating bar 2), notes are played that were already wrong in the second bar. Instead of different tones, Herrmann wrote *only* one tone (sounding E or written F#] that should sound in the different octaves of the respective clarinet family. How can it be that there are so many mistakes in music that is kept so simple by Herrmann, and how can it be that a conductor does not hear and correct them? In each of the first four bars, quarter notes D-Ab-Gb are played by the Moog, accompanied by the clarinet family on unison whole notes Bb to E (bars 1-2) then Bb to E again in bars 3-4. This is music that is not particularly complex, so how can there be a multitude of mistakes in this track?

Unfortunately, it goes even further, because in bar 5 you can hear the tritone interval Bb-E in the bass clarinets at 0:20, although Herrmann *only* specifies note Bb in the bass clarinet and double bass clarinet in his score. How can a conductor *not* hear that, *not* hear just the required single tone when suddenly two different tones sound?

At 0:41 the Moog again plays a three-tone motif, the closing tone of which (as at the beginning) is kept too short, so that there are short pauses between the bars that Herrmann does not ask for at all. At 1:00 the double bass clarinet enters a little late.

With different notes being played in the respective clarinet family at the beginning of this track (although Herrmann only wrote unison notes), at the end of this cue exactly the opposite is the case. So we find the clarinets, bass clarinets & double bass clarinets play chords held according to Herrmann's score. So in bar 21, the notes Bb-Cb (enharmonic B)-Eb-Gb-Bb should be heard. But in the QR recording, you only hear the bass clarinet playing note C-flat (enharmonic B) at this point [1:40]. Where are the other clarinet parts at this point that would have been necessary to play the chord Herrmann wanted? In the penultimate bar 22, the chord in the respective clarinets moves up a semitone, so that at the beginning of bar 22 the notes B-C-E-G-B should sound. But what can you hear at this point in the re-recording? Only the note E in the bass clarinet [at 1:45]. This is wrong in two ways. On the one hand, you only hear one note, where a whole chord should be heard. On the other hand, note E does *not* appear anywhere in this chord that you nevertheless hear in this track. See image immediately below.

The image shows a handwritten musical score for three clarinet parts and a Horns part. The parts are labeled as follows:

- 3 m 2 Gtr.:** Handwritten annotation at the top left.
- Clars (C.B.):** Clarinet parts, with sub-labels '1-2' and '3'.
- Bass Cl (C.B.):** Bass Clarinet part.
- C.B. Clarinet (C.B.):** Another Clarinet part.
- Horns (C.B.):** Horns part, with sub-labels '1-2' and '3-4'.

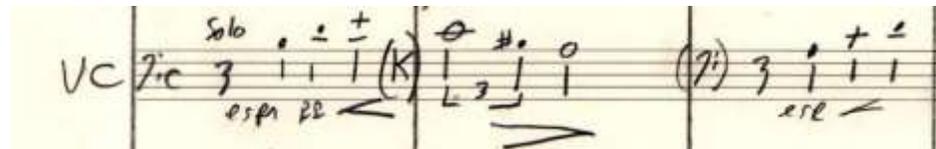
The score is divided into three measures, labeled (21), (22), and (23) at the bottom. The time signature is 4/4. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. Handwritten annotations include '1:40' in a box, 'IX', 'B. Herrmann', and '1:52'. The Horns part has a large 'V' marking in measure 23.

<https://i.postimg.cc/8CMmDG1R/IX-Bars-21-23.jpg>

How so many mistakes can be in such a simple cue is a mystery to me. This is a pity because otherwise the interpretation would have been good. In terms of balance, the double bass clarinet could have been stronger in relation to the other clarinets. But especially at the beginning of this cue, I don't even hear it...

I noticed three mistakes in the “Duo” Track #10:

The ascending eighth note triplets in the cellos in bar 3 [at 0:05] do not correspond to the notes A-E-F#-A-C-E-F# prescribed by Herrmann; instead, the notes A-C-E-F#-C-E-F# are played. The harp, which was supposed to double the cello tones, cannot be heard in bar 3 (does it play in this bar?).



<https://i.postimg.cc/t4P85BjX/Duo-X-Bars-9-11solo-cello.jpg>

The second thing concerns the solo cello in bar 10 [0:31]. See image immediately above. Here the cello plays a wrong rhythm because after the normal three-quarters start of the previous bar, Herrmann prescribes a “3” quarter-triplet duration value in this bar, consisting of the notes G half note (two quarter-triplets held) and the final third triplet on the note F#. The final note E is then held for a normal half note value. In the re-recording, however, this bar is played as if it were a normal half note on G with two subsequent normal quarter note values on F# and E.

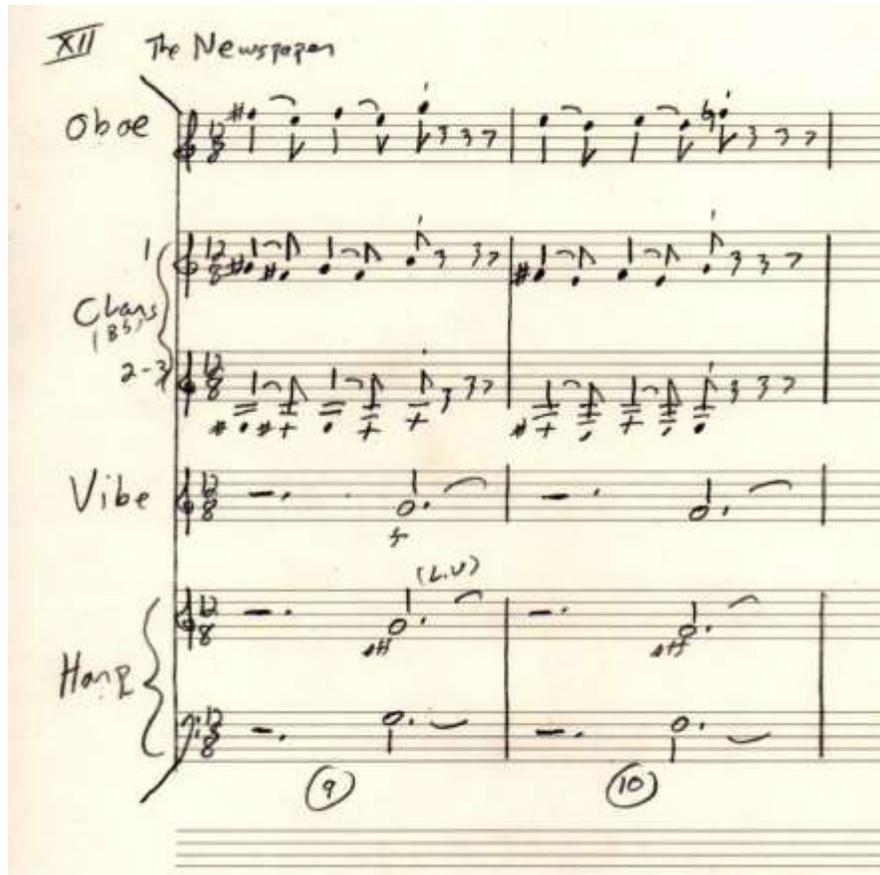
In bar 13, the string chord held is sustained much too short in the accompaniment. Herrmann writes a dotted half note chord at this point [0:43], but the string chord is held only as a dotted quarter note duration.

In terms of balance, I have already written that the harp can hardly be heard (or not at all in places). If you don't know Herrmann's handwritten score, these mistakes are hardly noticeable. But if you have the same claim to a new recording as is the case with a recording from the classical repertoire (and this really should be the case for the compositions by Bernard Herrmann also) you cannot be satisfied with a faulty recording, even if these errors may appear insignificant (especially if you know that these errors could have been avoided!),

The first part of the following track “The Cats” is good. The only thing that strikes me here is that the held (tied) notes of the 3rd and 4th horns (F/Ab) cannot be heard in bar 9 [0:27]. Apparently the two horns no longer play here, although Herrmann asked for it. Otherwise everything is fine until this point. Unfortunately, it can be heard very clearly that the violas in bar 13 [at 0:41] play wrong notes in the ascending eighth notes. Herrmann writes the notes Ab-Eb-Gb-Ab, but the notes Ab-Db-Eb-Gb are played. For me these wrong notes can be heard so clearly that I ask myself again how it can be that the conductor did not strike his baton immediately. Unfortunately, these wrong notes ruin the extremely lyrical music. Moreover, it does not stop with these mistakes that the conductor did not recognize and correct because the first bass clarinet also plays incorrectly in bar 17 [0:58], because it plays G-D-F# - G instead of G-D-E-G!

With the cue “The Newspaper,” I have comments that relate primarily to balance; otherwise, there are hardly any errors. But in Bar 9, the vibraphone plays note B instead of G [0:31]. It is completely absent in bar 10 in this recording (although it should have played note Line 1 F on the third beat along with the harp). By the way, here at 0:34 in Bar

10, I can only hear the F dotted half note by the harp, but only the f [small octave F]. The higher f' [Line 1 F], which the harp should also have played, is missing. See image below.



<https://i.postimg.cc/HkYzR3G0/Newspaper-Bars-9-10.jpg>

Overall, this cue with its regular three eighth figures reflects the tripping of Ellie's high-heeled shoes as she runs to Mike. The recording is too uneven for this steady tripping, because one can hear the eighth note movements at different volumes and once [at 0:18] a plucked note from the strings stands out louder.

As for balance, the plucked strings are a bit too loud in relation to the eighth figures of the clarinets. In the first bar, the clarinets always play eighth notes in staccato on the second and third beat in 12/8 time. These eighth-note figures are taken over by the harp in the next bar

[0:04], which one hears too softly here. In bar 4, too, the eighth-note figures of the clarinets from bar 3 are taken over by the harp, but here also too softly. The dynamics of the respective accompanying instruments, which *all* are supposed to play *pp*, are not adjusted.

What I don't hear in the beginning bars are the tones of the vibraphone. Except for the last three bars of this piece, Herrmann prescribes in every bar that the vibraphone should support the highest notes of the melody on the third beat (count the 12/8 as 4/4). At the beginning of this cue, however, nothing of this can be heard. If the vibraphone played along here, you should hear it too.



<https://i.postimg.cc/c4SgFfXM/Marriage-Bar-8.jpg>

In the following track #13 “Marriage” there are again several errors. In bar 6 [at 0:17] the bass clarinets with their ascending accompanying figures suddenly start an eighth note too early, while the cellos correctly execute the same sequence of notes. Why a conductor cannot hear that something is wrong here is a mystery to me. It was also not noticed that the first bass clarinet in bar 8 [0:24] plays a C at the beginning instead of the note A specified by Herrmann (see image

immediately above). In bars 16 and 17 [from 0:58] a chord sequence is played that is repeated in bar 18 and 19. With the second chord (in bar 17 and bar 19) Herrmann demands that it be held as a dotted half. In the re-recording, however, it is held out for a shorter time (only half a time), which makes the subsequent pause too long.

As for the interpretation, I don't understand why the conductor inserted a general pause between bars 10 and 11 [0:36] since it was not prescribed by Herrmann.

The following cue “Greta” is an extremely beautiful, romantic and varied cue that, in my opinion, is ruined by the numerous mistakes in the re-recording. But I find good Quartet Records' decision to try to record this cue in two versions; first, the version as Herrmann originally first wrote in his score, and then the film version that he changed at the beginning. However, only the changed first four bars seem to have been re-recorded for the film version; for the rest of this cue, the already recorded version of the original cue was used, which would not be a problem if it hadn't the same errors in the already recorded cue, which I will now talk about.

The strings play a tremolo at the beginning, although Herrmann does not require a tremolo in the written version. In bar 5 [0:14], the first clarinet starts clearly too late. As prescribed by Herrmann, the first clarinet plays the notes Ab and Bb in bar 5, which should repeat in bar 6. But here [0:19] I don't hear the clarinet's Bb on the third beat. At 0:31 in bar 10, the cellos do not play the C prescribed by Herrmann and only start again at the third beat with the Bb. And where are the two bass clarinets at 1:13 in bar 23? According to the score, you should have the clarinets playing D and G dotted half notes here. At least the first bass clarinet joins the following bar 24; the second bass clarinet, however, which should actually play the note A here, is still missing. Only a few

instruments play here and the music is very simple and clear. Is it really that hard to hear and correct these mistakes (apparently so for this conductor)?

Herrmann wrote a wrong note in bar 24 because in his own recording the clarinets play an A minor chord. The D dotted half note [written E] of the first bass clarinet should therefore be an E [written F#] that clarinet II actually plays. So you can actually hear how this harmony with the wrong note D sounds strange in the re-recording. In bar 25 [at 1:19] the second bass clarinet is finally there again but starts too late with its low F. But it leaves us again shortly afterwards, because although it should be heard in bars 27 and 28 [from 1:26] with its low E, it pauses again here. The slow part of the strings that begins shortly afterwards is well done but unfortunately it doesn't take long before the next errors occur in bars 34 and 35. There the clarinets play a completely wrong harmony that is caused by the fact that the first clarinet plays a D in the first two beats instead of the D# prescribed by Herrmann [at 2:04]. Herrmann's desired harmonies sounds much darker than the false harmonies of this re-recording. Once again I have to emphasize that the deficiencies described are clearly demonstrable deviations from what Herrmann wrote in his score (facts that anyone can check).

The next track #15 “Seasons” is almost perfect regarding the reproduction what Herrmann has written in his score (no wrong notes). However, in bar 35, the harp with its downward figures in the eighth notes (Eb-C-Bb-A) does not start on the third beat, as Herrmann requested, but rather earlier. However, you don't hear the harp very well in this cue, and that's the main problem for me. So the balance between the instruments is just unsatisfactory for me.

Herrmann prescribes *pp* for *all* instruments (except for the melody instrument) and it is clear that some instruments can perform a *pp* better than others. That is why you have to make sure that the volume of the instruments is equal to each other and that the desired overall

sound results from the combination of all instruments. But in the re-recording you can hardly hear anything of the tremolos in the strings in the first part and the harp is also very much in the background. In relation to this, the clarinets are too loud. In bar 22 [at 0:46], the harp is even notated in *ff* throughout (here with its arpeggios it is basically a solo), while the other instruments go back to a piano. But does the harp really play the fortissimo desired by Herrmann at this point? At best I hear a forte. The chord held above does not sound balanced either because the first clarinet stands out much too loud with its high G#. It's a pity that this music couldn't be better balanced!

The cue "Broken Glass" is composed by Herrmann in two parts: A very fast part section (*Vivo*) of four bars followed by a very slow part of 8 bars. Just as Herrmann composed the music in the fast part, the music should sound very shrill and dissonant, prescribing *sff* for all instruments. Several keys meet here (similar to Herrmann's famous "Vertigo"-chord and actually you would have to flinch when you hear this music if you are not prepared for it. In the re-recording, however, this passage sounds to me as if they were afraid that the music had too much dissonance and therefore they smoothed out it a bit. While the Moog can be heard very well, many instruments are too much in the background. The high woodwinds should sound shrill and screaming, but they are too soft for that and you can hear primarily only the Moog at the beginning "scream." Also the glissandi of the harp, typical for Herrmann, can hardly be heard, although Herrmann prescribed *sff* for it.

In the slow final section, the chords in the clarinets are not executed correctly because the low E of the double bass clarinet is missing for the entire sound, which should be heard from bar 5 to the end (interrupted by a pause in bar 8). One would think that a conductor should notice this if the sound of the double bass clarinet is missing for several bars.

The cue "Miss T." is musically kept very simple because it only consists of two chord progressions for the clarinets, to which the two bass clarinets sound towards the end. Personally, I might have chosen a slightly slower pace, but that is of course a matter of taste. However, it is not a matter of opinion that the three clarinets at the beginning of this cue [at 0:38] do not sound balanced, because the second clarinet in the middle stands out a little compared to the other clarinets (all clarinets are supposed to play *sub-tone pp*).

The next cue "The Ice" should begin with *sff*, similar to the cue "Broken Glass". Unfortunately, the snare drum starts too early in the re-recording. The way Herrmann's music was written, one should flinch at its abrupt use. Unfortunately, this does not work if the snare drum starts too early.

The balance is also unsatisfactory because, although all instruments should play *sff*, you can primarily hear the horns (which play openly here, although Herrmann prescribes mutes!) and the snare drum. In relation to this, the sustained chord of the clarinets, bass clarinet and double bass clarinet is far too quiet.

The re-recording of the cue "School Play" deviates so much from what Bernard Herrmann noted in his score that Quartet Records should have stated that this is actually the conductor's version of Herrmann's music (although strictly speaking this applies almost to the entire CD). Right at the beginning the horns play a wrong rhythm. Herrmann notates a half note in bar 2 tied to a "3" eighth note triplet figure to a final quarter note. In the re-recording, however, the horns [at 0:03] play the triplets more slowly so that they become normal eighths.

The descending harp arpeggio in measure two should be heard directly on the first beat, but under this conductor's direction the harp starts two beats too late; in addition, its volume is quieter for me than the *ff* (very loud) prescribed by Herrmann.

In Bar 3 [0:06] do the strings play the F sharp major bowed tremolo chord as *ponticello* effect (that Herrmann prescribed)? Doesn't sound like that to me.

There is complete chaos in bars 10 and 11 [0:22]. To the music that could already be heard in the bars before, all the strings should accompany here with chord progressions sustained on half notes. The strings are completely lost here. Instead of a string sound, you actually only hear the double bass, which starts too late and is therefore not in time at all. In the next beat [at 0:28] the vibraphone starts one beat too early. The same error happens in the following cycle. Herrmann also demands that the vibraphone should vibrate here (*L.V.*), but this cannot be clearly heard. In the last bar [at 0:33] the vibraphone should play a seventh chord consisting of the notes C-E-G-B as the only instrument that can still be heard, but in the re-recording you can hear the previously played chord with the notes Ab-Cb-Eb-Fb , so a completely different sound.

I absolutely cannot understand all of these deviations from what Herrmann wrote, especially since the music is kept simple. As a conductor, you should hear and correct the deviations immediately. As this piece was recorded, the music sounds to me as if it had played through the orchestra for the very first time. As far as balance is concerned, the vibraphone chords from bar 6 [0:13] could be a bit stronger for me. Herrmann demands the same volume (*p*) for this as for the harp, but the vibraphone is too weak in relation to this.

With “The Gift” track segment, it finally succeeded in that I have nothing to complain about here.

Unfortunately, right at the beginning of the next track #18 segment of “The Ride” cue, an avoidable mistake happens (see image immediately below). The bass clarinet is missing in the first two bars [at 0:23]. I can only shake my head in disbelief, because it is so obvious that the bass clarinet is missing, meant to play the deep notes that not only the conductor should have noticed, but also the people in the control room. An absolute "no-go" for me!

The image shows a handwritten musical score for 'XXI (The Ride)'. It features three staves: Clarinet (B \flat), Bass Clarinet (B \flat), and Bass Clarinet (B \flat). The tempo is marked 'Lento' and 'Allegro'. The key signature is 6 flats. The score includes notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'mf'. There are also some annotations like 'D \flat /F/A \flat → C/E/G' and circled numbers 1 and 2. The bass clarinet part is notably missing in the first two bars.

<https://i.postimg.cc/9Q2fLkR1/Ride-Bars-1-2.jpg>

Fortunately, the subsequent Allegro section is well done, but at the beginning of bar 19 [at 0:57] in the first violins I do not hear the notes B-G-E prescribed by Herrmann in the quick eighth note movements, but the notes A-G-E, so the first violins start a little too deep at the beginning. The same error occurs when it is repeated.

In the extremely dissonant subsequent bar 21 [at 1:05] (one of the most dissonant chords that Herrmann wrote!) the bass and contrabass clarinets are the only instruments to play on the first beat, sounding

lowest E [written F#] whole note *sff*. Except for the horns, all other instruments should only start on the second beat. After a dotted 8th rest, the horns are supposed to sound B/D/Gb/Bb [written F#/A/Db/F] 16ths to dotted half notes but that sixteenth note suggestion cannot be heard here. The vibraphone sounds too early from that intended second beat, and the other instruments do not start cleanly on beat two, but rather unevenly.

In bar 23 the vibraphone has a solo and plays three chords there [at 1:09]. The first chord is somewhat lost in the re-recording, however, because it is already struck at the end of the tutti in the previous chord and the entry is thus covered by the other instruments.

As far as the interpretation is concerned, the *rallentando* at [1:02] is probably the conductor's artistic freedom, because Herrmann does not prescribe a *rallentando* here (strangely enough, the conductor often ignores Herrmann's *rallentando* (*Rall.*) information, while at this point where it isn't required, he makes a *rallentando*).

Although I prefer to stick to what is written in the written score, I don't mind if a conductor take liberties, as long as these are musically thought out and make sense. Since the extremely dissonant final part occurs very suddenly on the *Allegro* part, I also think that you can prepare for this new part by slowing down the tempo a little beforehand. However, in the way this conductor does it, I find the *rallentando* too exaggerated. Is the horse euthanized at this point in the film? No, it's just frightening, insofar as I would always keep the film content in mind when interpreting the music for which the music was written.

In "The Garden" cue, Herrmann conjures up a very mysterious nighttime mood with his music, whereby he (typically) does this with very economical musical means. The re-recording of this cue turned out well, although the music is not always performed accurately. At bar 17 [at 1:02] the accompanying string chords start a little too early and can

already be heard during the rapidly rising harp glissando , although they should still pause here. At the beginning I can hardly hear the vibraphone, otherwise I think the recording of this music is good.

The short unused cue “The Statue” would also be good, but like Bill Wrobel is his own review of this cd, I don't like the sound of the Moog at this point because it has too much vibrato for me. I would have preferred a “simpler” and “even” sound.

The cue "Duo II" was recorded almost flawlessly. I think the decision to record the entire cue is absolutely correct, but the fermata in bar 8 [0:42] makes no sense.

In terms of interpretation, the conductor slows down the tempo a little too much from bar 4. On the other hand, it gives the music a wistful character, as if it already knows that the couple will soon no longer be together.

The track #21 recording of the "Endless Night" song - used as source music in the film - turned out well. The only thing I don't like that much is that the song is interrupted too much in the middle by a long general pause. At this point Herrmann writes a fermata above and below the bar line, but a shorter caesura would not have torn the two stanzas so apart.

As far as the accompaniment is concerned, Herrmann only writes an arpeggio sign in front of the chord to be played in the two introductory bars (which, however, are not followed in the recording at this point). The musician uses the arpeggios' playing style in the further

accompaniment of the song almost “ad libitum” although not specified by Herrmann, which I personally don't find disturbing in the song accompaniment. The strict accompanying figures are loosened up slightly and I think that's okay.

What is not at all okay, however, is that in the cue “Devotion” from the fourth bar [0:13] onwards only one solo violin plays the melody, whereas *all* first violins should play tutti there. That's what it says in the score and that's how you can hear it in Herrmann's own recording. The fact that a conductor is unable to differentiate between a tutti and a solo instrument is roughly equivalent to a doctor who cannot distinguish between liver and kidney!

Bill Wrobel in his review suspects that the instruction for the first violins to play *sul D* (on the D string) may have been confused with the instruction *solo*. When I look at Herrmann's instructions, it clearly reads *sul D* to me, not *solo*.

But I go one step further: Even if Herrmann had actually written “solo” here, you can hear very clearly from his recording that *all* first violins are playing there, so for me there is no excuse that they changed the instrumentation. This also makes no sense from musical logic because the music increases slightly towards the middle (when Ellie and Mike hug), but then suddenly the tutti breaks off and you can only hear one solo instrument is like an anti-climax.

For me there is no excuse for that. I had already expressed my disappointment about the realization of this cue in a comment on Facebook, whereupon some people reacted angrily at me. But is it not understandable that as a lover of this music one is disappointed when it is incorrectly recorded? Are you also annoyed with the news anchor when he predicts bad weather? Be annoyed, if at all, about the bad weather, not about whoever announced it. So here in my review I am

only mentioning clearly verifiable facts, deviations in the music that do not match what Herrmann wrote and wanted in his score.

The second part of this cue is in 9/8 time (*Allegretto*), but the abbreviations of the original soundtrack have been adopted, so that the music only starts in bar 11 instead of bar 7. Since the shortening was probably only made to fit the length of the film scene, I would have liked it if the re-recording had done without these restrictions imposed by the film and had recorded the complete bars. The vibraphone can hardly be heard in this second part, but Herrmann only prescribes *ppp* for the vibraphone.

The next cue ("Binoculars") has been implemented well. The only comment I have relates to the dissonant chord of bar 3 [0:46]. Herrmann writes a *sff* for all instruments involved (except for the Moog). Do the instruments follow these dynamic instructions? For me, the pizzicato tones of the lower strings in particular sound much weaker than *sff*. Otherwise everything is right here.

If you listen to the next cue "Farewell", you might think it was a composition for oboe and orchestra. Although the complete violins play the melody and are only supported by one oboe, you can hear the oboe very clearly over the entire first four bars, but the sound of the oboe should rather merge with the sound of the violins. In the penultimate bar 7, all the strings play a wrong note. The last three descending eighth notes [at 0:26] are the notes D-B-A as written by Herrmann, but notes C-B-A are played in this recording. Herrmann wrote the required notes in all of the string parts, so how can it happen that all strings consistently play the wrong note?

Towards the end of this cue, individual notes of the oboe stand out again. In the final bar [at 0:28] the chord held is not balanced because you can hear the oboe's Eb note louder than the other notes. It also sounds like this end note is still being played at the Line 1 register (that should actually be played an octave higher register).

Anyone who can clearly hear the five descending notes of the harp in the final bar (notated by Herrmann as forte and decrescendo) has very good ears! Actually the volume is less than forte.

In terms of interpretation, the music sounds very nice but it lacks inner sympathy. This music accompanies the scene in which the two main actors see each other for the last time. To that extent it is a final farewell, and if you know that as a musician, then the music should sound more intense and less nice. Herrmann writes the melody for all string groups except the contrabasses, so the sound should be lush and animated. However, the strings don't sound full enough in the re-recording, and as already mentioned, even a single oboe competes with the strings.

In the "The Yellow Pill" track it is noticeable that the Moog plays a very peculiar tone sequence consisting of downward and upward movements. What Herrmann wanted was very simple and can be found in his score: a sequence of notes that runs straight down from the high Bb via glissando until the lowest B note is reached.

At the beginning of this piece, a chord is built up in layers. Unfortunately, wrong or unclear notes are played in the re-recording. The third note that starts in the first bar in the third clarinet [at 0:03] should be a D (so it says the score) but it becomes too high intoned so that it is actually an E-flat. The following fourth note in the second clarinet [at: 0:04] is also wrong. An E is played, but an octave higher

than Herrmann demands in his score. The first clarinet note starting in bar 2 A-flat) also sounds too high and almost sounds like an A. Did the players forget to tune the instruments before this recording?

At the beginning of the fourth bar (where the Moog begins), the vibraphone and harp play a very dissonant chord together. Since you can hardly hear the harp in the re-recording in contrast to the vibraphone, this chord sounds less dissonant than it should actually be. The vibraphone (together with the harp) should play the chord again at the beginning of bar 5 but it starts too early and already at the end of bar 4. Again nothing can be heard from the harp, although it was supposed to be playing *sff*. Of course you can hear a vibraphone that plays *ff* a little louder than a harp that plays *ff*, so the conductor should have tried to adjust the dynamics.

At the end of the piece [at 0:20] Herrmann prescribes the note B [written Line 1 C-sharp] played by the bass clarinet and double bass clarinet (the contra bass clarinet sounds this tone an octave lower). While the double bass clarinet plays the right note, I hear the note F (#) instead of a B by the bass clarinet.

In the next “Death” track #25, it is noticeable that the conductor lets the fast string figures play rhythmically differently from what Herrmann prescribes in his score. These small figures each consist of an eighth note (with an accent) with an attached sixteenth note (see image immediately below). In this recording, the eighth notes sound too short and therefore more like lead-notes. Can this fall under the term “interpretational freedom”? In any case, it does not correspond at all to what Herrmann wrote down in his score.



<https://i.postimg.cc/vHvh66hY/Death-Bars-1-2.jpg>

From bar 11 [0:19] the long notes are not sustained according to their tone duration, so that the vibraphone kicks in too quickly in bars 12 and 14. In general, I have the impression in this passage that Fernando Velasquez does not give himself enough time and tends to go on too quickly. This is particularly noticeable in bars 19 and 20 [from 0:36], in which Velasquez halves the note durations because the two chords in the strings should sound much longer (based on what Herrmann wrote down). Also in the subsequent *Lento* part [from 0:51] starting bar 27, I would have preferred a slower pace, although this is related to the interpretation and is a matter of opinion.

However, it is not a matter of opinion that one can hardly hear the deep harp notes in bar 27 in all the other numerous passages in the sequence (as is so often the case in this recording, the harp is too much in the background). Fortunately, you can hear the harp-solo at the end of this track [at 1:15]. However, after the ascending four sixteenths, the target tone (the E) of the following bar (bar 39) is missing.

The following cue “The Return” cannot be heard in the film because cue IX “The Warning” was used again for this scene. In this respect, the recording by Quartet Records is a premiere, which unfortunately is not free of errors. Already relatively at the beginning, namely in bar 6 [at 0:17], the second bass clarinet is missing, which would have supported the harmony with the note E at this point. In bar 15 [at 0:38] the two solo violins play the three eighth notes on the notes Bb-D-Bb, but Herrmann prescribes the notes A-C-A here. The same mistake happens a little later in bar 19. Herrmann wrote notes G-B-G in the solo violins, but in the re-recording you actually hear notes Ab-C-Ab.

In bar 23 there is a general pause during which one can still hear the reverberating notes of the harp, which have not been muted.

In bar 28 [at 1:03] you can hear the English horn playing a short motif on the notes D-E-D. If you can see how Herrmann wrote the final note of this motif, it could also be a written B [sounding E]. I would even like this musically better, but it is not a mistake to play the D at the end because the way the note was written is not clear (but E end note makes more musical sense since clarinet II and bass clarinet II also play E). See image immediately below.

[Endless Night] XXX The Return

Allegro moderato
♩ = 95

Eng Horn
Clars
Bass Clarinet

<https://i.postimg.cc/6533Xk89/Return-Bars-24-28-TOP.jpg>

In the following course of this cue it was decided not only not to play the bars that Herrmann had cut, but also not to play bar 30, which was not cut by Herrmann. Here I would have found it nicer to record all bars.

After bar 28, the re-recording jumps directly to bar 34. Here [at 1:06] the violins play a wrong rhythm. See image below that starts with the violins followed in the next bar by the horns. Herrmann writes two quarter notes and two eighth notes, with a quarter added to the second eighth note. This is how it is played by the horns and clarinets in the following two bars. The violins, on the other hand, play a rhythm consisting of an eighth note, quarter note and eighth note (i.e. a syncopated rhythm) to which a half note (not quarter note) is attached.



<https://i.postimg.cc/Z56htHxb/Return-Bars-34-35.jpg>

Unfortunately, bars 34 to 36 are also wrong in terms of the tone because in all these bars you should hear a third consisting of the tones D# and F# on the third beat - this is how Herrmann clearly stipulates it in *all* these bars. In the re-recording, however, you can hear a third with the notes D -F# at these points, so the lowest interval is too deep. Even if this error had happened while copying the notes in one bar, I wonder how it can be that in *all* three bars the D# clearly written by Herrmann was turned into a D. If this was done on purpose to smooth out the harmony, I find this decision annoying because when you record Bernard Herrmann's music you should do it the way he wanted the music to be!

In this respect, due to all the deviations from what Herrmann wrote, this cue is unfortunately not a world premiere of Herrmann's music but rather a premiere of the conductor's and Quartet Records' version of it.

As far as the interpretation is concerned, the passage immediately after the general pause in bar 24 [at 0:54] is not loud enough for me. The instruments to be played here should all use *sff* and *ff*. For me personally, in the re-recording that's just *f* (forte), but of course you can be divided again because it is a matter of interpretation.

When Agatha Christie watched the film *Endless Night*, it is said that she complained that there was too much sex in the film. There is in fact only one “sex scene” (“The Couch”) at the end of the film but this scene is anything but offensive even for the standards of the time. For example, in this scene you don't see any parts of the body that should have been covered and the areas of skin that are shown can also be seen when you go to the swimming pool. So did Bernard Herrmann's music for this scene give Agatha Christie the impression that she had seen something that took place in her imagination rather than on the screen? This could be, because Herrmann's music is wild and impetuous and thus supports the animalism of the two characters when they grasp each other.

This track #27 sounds good on the surface but unfortunately there are errors again. While you can hear the fast harp arpeggios almost without exception, I miss them in bars 13-16 [from 0:17]. See image below. Here the harp should have played eight fast falling 32nd arpeggio notes on the first beat of these bars. In the re-recording you don't hear anything here. In bars 15 and 16 [0:19] the main motif (the 6 eighth notes) would have sounded quite massive if the low horns had started at this point with fortissimo. Unfortunately they cannot be heard in this recording. As in an earlier cue, Herrmann decided on his own recording to let the horns play open in bar 18 [0:23] and bar 20 [0:25] and not stopped (+) as he originally wrote it. As I already wrote about the other cue in question, I would have found it better if this had been adopted, because this change in the original recording was Herrmann's last word regarding the instrumentation. But even if the horns play stopped effect

in the re-recording, I should be able to hear them clearly in bar 18 [at 0:23] (they are at least notated with *sf*), but in the recording I don't hear them at this point.



<https://i.postimg.cc/xCbLwY94/Couch-Bars-14-16.jpg>

In the last bar, the strings hold out the chord (maybe not long enough) but the top first violins stop too early, so that you can no longer hear the top note (B-flat) of the held chord at the end. I think the interpretation itself is good, the tempo is chosen appropriately and the eighth note motifs are not played too broadly. However, I don't find the balance optimal because when the horns play the main motifs, you hear them too weakly in relation to the other instruments.

Track #28 "Flashback II" turned out okay but the harp should have dampened its first note (D-flat) of the fifth bar better because it sounds a little too long into the new harmony. Otherwise this cue turned out well.

However, “The Fight” is exactly the opposite of that. Here I ignore the beginning where the very faulty QR take of “School Play” was used. In the movie, “School Play” (cue XIX) returned to precede the cue “The Fight.” The actual “The Fight” music starts in the recording of *Quartet Records* at [0:27]. Its recording of this cue is complete chaos. Just because Herrmann's music here has a chaotic character, it does not become clear to superficial listening what kind of mess has been made here in the new recording. If you have the score written by Herrmann available, you can see that almost nothing is right about this re-recording. In spite of all the deliberately composed chaos, Herrmann's music has structure. The accompaniment consists primarily of soaring dissonant scales in the complete strings and clarinets. Only the oboe plays a slower downward scale, but it accelerates more and more towards the end. To these fast scales (which can be seen as

XXXIII (The fight)

WJE 6702-211

Handwritten musical score for "XXXIII (The fight)". The score includes staves for Oboe, Clarinet (B♭), Bassoon (B♭), Horns (F), Timpani, Harp, Violins I & II, Viola, Violoncello (VC), and Contrabass (CB). The music is written in a complex, rhythmic style with many accidentals and dynamic markings. The score is divided into measures, with some measures marked with circled numbers 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and performance instructions such as "Tutti" and "Tutti".

<https://i.postimg.cc/gjTpPkxh/Fight-Bars-9-13.jpg>

accompanying figures) the horns always play dissonant chords in high register that seem like screams at the beginning of each bar, with each chord start being supported by thunderous drum beats. The harp joins these horn chords and timpani beats with quick glissandi. The dissonances intensify more and more, so the upwardly fasting accompanying figures are later also led downwards and while the horns have played one chord per measure in the first eight bars, towards the end (beginning of bar 9) they play an ascending chord progression from four tones that in bars 11 and 12 are repeated again.

This may sound too abstract if one can't see the notes (so look at the hand-copied image above) and here make a simplified observation of the structure: Strings and woodwinds play dissonant scales to which the oboe makes a countermovement. The horns play a high register chord per measure, supported by the thundering kettledrum and harp glissandi.

But these things are not audible at all in the recording conducted by Fernando Velasquez because the re-recording is a complete mess. Horn chords should be clearly audible in the high register, all the more if they are required to play *sff*. In the re-recording, however, all of this is very diffuse. Every now and then you can hear one or more horns (but only in every second measure, whereas they should play clearly audible chords in every bar). Especially in the last two bars in which they should play very audibly, you hear nothing from them. The timpani should play thundering tones at the beginning of *each* bar. In the re-recording you can hear it right at the beginning but further on it loses its intensity. The scales are best played in the high strings, but the other instruments seem pretty disoriented to me on this recording.

Overall, at the time of recording, the orchestra was not able to perform this music correctly (they needed more rehearsal time). But how is a conductor supposed to deal with all the shortcomings in this complex piece if he is not able to recognize and correct mistakes even in very simple and manageable passages with only a few instruments?

The beginning of the track #29 segment “The Song” turned out well but starting from bar 17 [at 1:14] the horns play the chords open instead with a mute (*sords* as requested by Herrmann). This is strange because in several other places in previous cues Herrmann lets the horns play open, which is not followed in the re-recording here. Now comes a point where the horns should play with mutes but in the re-recording they are played open. This is pity because Herrmann does not use the mutes to reduce the volume but to create a narrower and somewhat more incisive sound that, together with the image of the corpse lying in the water, is more disturbing.

The new section begins after the song with bar 17 but it starts much too early because the end of the song overlaps with the new section (where you hear the horn chords for the first time).

(cont.) Song

Roll ————— Allo.

Clarinet I
B \flat f

Clarinet II
B \flat

Bass Clarinet I
C \sharp

Bass Clarinet II

The image shows a handwritten musical score on yellowed paper. It features four staves. The top two staves are for Clarinet I (B \flat) and Clarinet II (B \flat). The bottom two staves are for Bass Clarinet I (C \sharp) and Bass Clarinet II. The score is marked with 'Roll' and 'Allo.' above the staves. Dynamics include 'f' for Clarinet I. The notation includes various notes, rests, and articulation marks.

<https://i.postimg.cc/hvfl9ZD9/Song-Bars-25-29-TOP.jpg>

The next mistake is unfortunately not long in coming (see image immediately above). In bars 25-26 [at 1:32] after the clarinet chord, two bass clarinets should play the descending tone sequence (similar to what was played in the previous bars). Here, however, you don't hear them, and neither did the conductor who should have noticed their absence.

<https://i.postimg.cc/4xdKLLjM/Song-Bars-27-29.jpg>

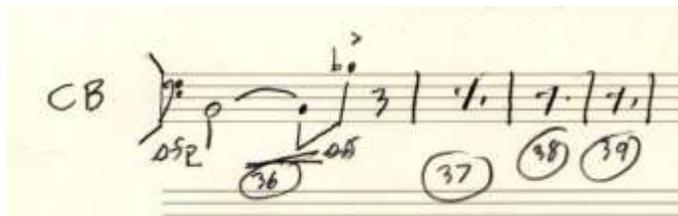
From bar 27 [at 1:36] a newer part begins (see image above) that is based on a theme consisting of nine whole notes (descending Ab-Eb-Bb to ascending B-D-A-B to descending G, E) played by the Moog thru bar 35. I can imagine this is a nursery rhyme that Herrmann quotes here (because Michael remembers a crucial experience from his childhood). From bar 36 this theme becomes very dissonant, as it starts from bar 36 [at 1:53] quasi canonically. On the first beat in the vibraphone, on the second beat in the 1st and 2nd horn, on the third beat in the 3rd and 4th horn and on the 4th beat in the oboe. For all these staggered inserts, the Moog plays the first four notes of this theme in full notes.

When recording this part, you should make sure that this structure comes into its own and when you hear the result, it turned out

good, but unfortunately not without errors. So the vibraphone plays in bar 33 [at 1:49] and in the following places a different chord than Herrmann asked for. When using the vibraphone, Herrmann writes a chord on the fourth beat in bar 33 that consists of the notes Gb-Bb-C, but in the re-recording I hear the notes Gb-Bb-Db (!).

In the four bars with the different beginnings of the theme [from 1:53] an even better balance would have been good to make the shifted themes in the respective instruments clearer. In the re-recording I can hear the first two horns and the oboe (that starts later at the end of bar 36), but the staggered inserts between the first and second horn groups are not so clear. Apart from the instruments that play the theme, instruments get lost in the accompaniment. In each of these four bars, the harp should be clearly audible (incidentally, the only instrument notated here *ff!*) that plays rapidly ascending sixteenth notes over the entire bar. You can hear them but far too weakly.

The double bass has an interesting syncopated figure in each of these bars (with an accent on the beat “three-and”) that however, cannot be heard in the re-recording. See image immediately below.



<https://i.postimg.cc/nLRFgnff/Song-Bars-36-39.jpg>

When the clarinet chord starts in measure 40 [at 2:00] you can still hear the moog, which should pause here.

In terms of interpretation, the Moog could be a little quieter from bar 27 [1:36]. Herrmann only notates it with *pp*. In contrast, the

vibraphone should be a little stronger because Herrmann prescribes *p* for this (and not *pp*!).

The conductor clearly prepares the forte part from bar 36 by making a clear crescendo two bars beforehand [at 1:50] but nothing of this can be seen in Herrmann's score. As he wrote it, the music should suddenly break out from bar 36 into the forte. In this respect, I don't know whether the clear crescendo is a little too much interpretative freedom.

In contrast to previous cues, you finally noticed Herrmann's change that he made during his recording. According to the written score, the horns should actually play with mutes from bar 36. Herrmann, however, let it play openly at the recording session, so it is right that the horns also play without mutes in the re-recording at this point. It's a pity that this was not followed in the other cues.

With the penultimate piece “Breakdown” I can well imagine that Bernard Herrmann had a lot of fun during this composition, shocking the audience with deliberately dissonant and crazy music and making it clear that the main actor is completely disturbed. Different keys meet here and indicate a split personality, which accordingly has different facets. Together with Michael's screams and the crazy music, you are aware at this point at the end that you have not seen a typical Agatha Christie film.

This cue was implemented well in the re-recording by Quartet Records but it is a pity that the Moog is played an entire octave higher than Bernard Herrmann intended for the entire first half. Otherwise I don't hear any errors in this cue.

The balance is also good, although you can't hear the harp quite as well as you can hear it at the beginning. The dissonant chords in the

woodwinds can be heard very well. They have an interplay with the horns but from bar 9 [from 0:15] the horns unfortunately become a little weaker compared to the woodwinds. At the beginning the sixteenth lead in the horns was played excellently (it is pity that this was not done as well in the Prelude). From bar 9 this is unfortunately no longer so clearly the case. Towards the end of the piece, however, this becomes good. In bars 17-19 [from 0:29] the horns perform an upward chord-glissando several times, which results in an almost animal-like screaming effect. The horns of the orchestra do this well but personally I would have liked to hear these horn glissandi even louder because after all the dissonant sounds of the previous music in this cue, this is in the end another "highlight" or climax of dissonance!

For this film, Herrmann was given the opportunity to compose music for the end titles, something he rarely had the opportunity to do. I wonder what music he would have composed for today's end titles, as these are often several minutes long. Would he have put together a potpourri from the previous tracks, or would he have composed separate music for it?

The "End Title" was also recorded well by Quartet Records. However, for my taste, the high strings in bar 3 [at 0:04] start a little too softly, so that you can only hear them properly in the following bar. In bars 5 and 6, as well as bars 9 and 10, the cellos have an upward movement consisting of several tones, of which the last three quarter notes are more or less soloistic (since the other instruments only hold notes here). I would have liked it here if these tones could be heard a little better. However, none of these are faults. They are a matter of personal taste.

Bill Wrobel in his review wrote that he did not like the sound of the Moog at the end of this piece, which I can understand. According to Bernard Herrmann, the Moog should actually play fortissimo at the end, but if a very intrusive sound is selected, as in the recording, I personally

find this too much. But these are only minor details, otherwise I think the "End Title" is a success.

Quartet Records offers the listeners of "Endless Night" a bonus section. This cannot be taken for granted but useful if there is still enough space on the CD.

I personally do not find most of the bonus tracks on this CD necessary. I even find the alternative version of the cue "Encounter" questionable because I don't know whether this music will be done a favor by making it heard in such a tired and listless way. I would rather have found it interesting to play this music a little faster and more passionately than slower.

I think it is very good that the attempt was made to reconstruct the film version of "Greta" because it is an alternative version, written by Bernard Herrmann himself.

I think it's a pity that cues were not recorded for the Bonus Tracks that had bars cut out from the film so that the unused music can now be heard.

Lots of people were very excited about this recording. Maybe they don't hear all the mistakes or they don't care that much. I envy these people for their joy with this recording because the recording for me has too many mistakes to be really happy about it. And I very much suspect that Bernard Herrmann would not have liked this recording himself. It is very likely that he would have been annoyed by all the mistakes and openly expressed his displeasure (as was typical for him). He made derogatory comments about the original *Vertigo* recording that he himself was unable to conduct because of a musicians strike, although this recording does not contain any noticeable errors. And he did not allowed his beloved opera performed when only small changes were requested. So he was very strict about the correct playing

of his works. He said he enjoyed different interpretations, but the music itself had to be flawless.

That's why I think it's very likely that neither the recording of *The Bride Wore Black* and *Endless Night* would have received his approval.

The tragic thing is that it is unlikely that there will be further new recordings of these two works in the near future. William Stromberg had stated that he wanted to record these two film scores but then he knew nothing about Quartet Records' plan. With Stromberg as conductor, I am sure that they would have been excellent recordings because in the past he has already proven several times what a good Herrmann interpreter he is.

Perhaps there is the possibility of organizing and financing further new recordings through fundraising. This would be particularly desirable for *Endless Night* as the music is now only available in this one recording from Quartet Records. But as long as the vast majority are satisfied with the recording of Quartet Records, the willingness to participate in a fundraising campaign is certainly rather low. For me one thing is certain: Neither *The Bride Wore Black* and *Endless Night* have yet been released in adequate form.

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