COM 494, Spring 2015

NOTES from *Lights! Action! Music!* (2007; D: Dan Lieberstein)

1. Goals/purposes of screen music
   * Invite people in to see the movie
   * “Make them laugh, make them cry, and thrill them” (J.B.) [manipulate emotions]
   * Add something that’s not there already in the film
   * Being able to enter the world of the film; and, each film has a world of its own
   * Melody, harmony, rhythm, and orchestral texture can all be saying something different
   * Music connects directly to our feelings, our souls
   * “The subconscious mind of the piece getting through to the audience” (J.B.)
   * Music puts you into a trance state so you’re ready to absorb the film

2. Early Inspirations
3. Finding the Theme

4. Connecting with the Film—“it starts with the director”...”can smell the characters”...”the composer can come up with a musical expression of the entire movie in just a few notes”

5. War Stories—when directors and producers don’t appreciate the composer’s work...“some of the most beautiful scores weren’t used”

6. The Spotting Session—The composer, the director, the editor, the music editor...decide where music will go, why, and what themes will be placed where...variations on themes

7. Collaboration—Film as the most collaborative art
   Teams:
   * Nino Rota & Federico Fellini (*Fellini’s Roma, The White Sheik, La Strada, La Dolce Vita, 8½, 19 total over 27 years)...Rota also did *The Godfather* with F. F. Coppola
   * Terence Blanchard & Spike Lee (*Jungle Fever, When the Levees Broke, 14 total*)
   * Ennio Morricone & Sergio Leone (*For a Few Dollars More, The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly*)
   [* Ennio Morricone & Quentin Tarantino]
   [* Bernard Herrmann & Alfred Hitchcock]
   [* Angelo Badalmenti & David Lynch]
   [* Danny Elfman & Tim Burton]
   [* Carter Burwell & The Coen Brothers]

8. Film Music Derived from Classical Musical Heritage

9. Orchestration
   * What is the orchestral palette?
   * Instrumentation—each instrument has a different character (e.g., Ang Lee always uses the clarinet for Tobey Maguire!)
   * David Campbell & Gustavo Santolalla
   [* Conrad Pope & John Williams]

10. Silence is Golden
    * “It’s as much a part of the music as the music”

11. Music as Subtext
    * David Shire & F. F. Coppolla and *The Conversation*...the musical theme and the solo piano capture the loneliness and the complexity of the main character
12. Composers appearing in the documentary:
   * Elliot Goldenthal (*Frida, Interview with the Vampire, Heat*)
   ** (the late) John Barry (*Dances with Wolves, Out of Africa, ten James Bond films*)
   * Carter Burwell (*Fargo, Miller’s Crossing, Raising Arizona, The Big Lebowski*)
   * Rachel Portman (*Emma, The Cider House Rules, Chocolat*)
   * David Shire (*Norma Rae, The Taking of Pelham 1-2-3, The Conversation*) [Trivia—was married to Talia Shire, F. F. Coppolla’s sister, so he’s part of the Coppolla dynasty]
   * Gustavo Santolalla (*Babel, Brokeback Mountain*)
   * Terence Blanchard (*Inside Man, Malcolm X*)
   * Marcelo Zarvos (*The Good Shepherd*)
   * Osvaldo Golijov (*Youth Without Youth*)

13. Directors appearing in the documentary:
   * Mira Nair (*Monsoon Wedding, The Namesake*)
   * Spike Lee (*Inside Man, Do the Right Thing, Malcolm X*)
   * Julie Taymor (*Frida, Across the Universe*)
   * Francis Ford Coppola (*The Godfather, Apocalypse Now, The Conversation, Youth Without Youth*)
   * Ang Lee (*Brokeback Mountain, Life of Pi*)

14. Composers mentioned/used as examples:
   ** Jerry Goldsmith (*The Great Train Robbery, Chinatown, Alien*)
   * Pino Donaggio (*Carrie*)
   * John Addison (*Tom Jones, A Bridge Too Far*)
   ** Henry Mancini (*Gaily Gaily, Touch of Evil, The Pink Panther, Breakfast at Tiffany’s*)
   * Bill Conti (*Rocky*)
   ** Elmer Bernstein (*Hawaii, The Ten Commandments, The Magnificent Seven, The Great Escape*)
   * Ry Cooder (*The Long Riders*)
   ** Franz Waxman (*Taras Bulba, Sunset Boulevard, Rear Window*)
   ** Georges Delerue (*Women in Love, Hiroshima Mon Amour, Shoot the Piano Player, Jules and Jim, Contempt, Julia, Platoon*)