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**Wandering Minds and Anchored Bodies: Music, Gender  
and Emotion in Melodrama and the Woman's Film**

by

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**A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Film  
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Note: The title of this thesis is paraphrased from dialogue in the film *While I Live*

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## Summary

This thesis examines the role of music and cultural conceptions of emotion and 'the feminine' in gendered characterisation in 1940s melodrama and the woman's film.

Music in melodrama and the woman's film predominantly follows the late-19th century Romantic style of composition. Many theorists have discussed this type of music in film as a signifier of emotion and 'the feminine', a capacity in which it is frequently associated with female characters. The full effect of an association with this kind of music on either female or male characterisation, however, has not been examined. This study considers the effects of this association through three stages - cultural-historical precedents, the generic parameters of melodrama and the woman's film and the narrativisation of music in film. The specific study of films involves textual and musical analysis informed by cultural-historical ideas, film music theory and film theory. Since female characters are more commonly associated with music in this context, they form the primary focus of the study. Male musical-emotional characterisation, while of constant concern, comes under particular scrutiny as the final stage of the study.

In conclusion I argue that cultural assumptions combine with the formal representations of film to construct a model of gender based on the idea of 'inherent' emotionality. As a definitive element of this dynamic, music functions as more than just a signifier of emotion. Rather, it takes a crucial role in determining how we actually understand emotion as part of gendered characterisation.

## Introduction

‘A film of the forties is airing on television. Even though you’re in the next room, you are likely to find that a certain kind of music will cue you correctly to the presence of Woman on screen. It is as if the emotional excess of this presence must find its outlet in the euphony of a string orchestra.’ (Gorbman 1987, 80)

Across film in general, female characters are commonly associated with emotion and its representation through music based on the late-19th century Romantic style. As female emotions become a particular focus of the 1940s melodrama and woman’s film, this association reaches what may be considered a natural highpoint. The inevitability of the particular conception which this promotes of both women and what they signify within a narrative is suggested in the opening quote from Claudia Gorbman. This music seems to characterise women less as ‘ordinarily’ emotional than to distinguish them through an association with the ‘excessively’ emotional.

This thesis seeks to investigate the apparently accepted conventions of music, emotion and gender which underlie this association, and to examine how they impact on both female and male characterisation in film. Since it appears to be female characterisation which is predominantly informed by these assumptions, the musical-emotional representation of women will form the initial and most important concern of the thesis. The study will focus on characterisation in the melodrama and the woman’s film since, apart from epitomising the representation of female emotions, the woman’s



film in particular also targets a specifically female audience. The relationship of male characters to music will be addressed to a relevant degree in each chapter, before being re-evaluated according to the findings relating to female characters.

Music is, of course, a defining element of the very term 'melodrama'. It therefore seems natural that nondiegetic music is prevalent in both the melodrama itself and the woman's film as its female-centred variant. The importance of music is also, however, frequently reflected in its actual thematisation. Through the involvement of a character who is a (professional or amateur) musician, the interaction of all the characters with diegetic (but also nondiegetic) music becomes foregrounded. Since it is likely that such interaction may reflect broader conceptions of music in relation to emotion and gender, these films offer an obvious sub-generic point of focus.

A key element of the study must also, however, be concerned with the potential range and balance of emotional functions which music can fulfil in film. In particular, the balance must be addressed between the possibility of music representing a particular character's subjectivity, and its capacity for a more independent interpretation of events or characters. Women in melodrama and the woman's film, for example, are often placed in weak or vulnerable social positions. If the music appears to represent or reflect their emotions as singular characters, however, the implications of such a contradictory strong and privileged *narrative* position must be investigated. This raises the question of how close musical representation functions in relation to emotional 'ownership', self-expression and agency. Close examination will therefore be necessary not only of the meaning which the music appears to carry, but also its relationship to the actions of female characters and their narrative, filmic and generic context.

Music shares a long and complex historical relationship with cultural concepts of women, men, 'femininity', 'masculinity', human emotionality and self-expression. In order to contextualise their specific configuration in film, Chapter One will therefore examine elements of this history. Following the lead of film itself, and its prevalent use of the 19th century style of composition, the primary focus of this survey will be on the cultural tenets of Romanticism and how they relate to women. These will also be contextualised, however, within broader historical conceptions of gender which return to the most ancient archetypes of female musicality, emotionality and sexuality.

A consideration of such historical 'models' and ideas should indicate the various codes and assumptions which may be at work in both film's general association of women and music, and its representation of their involvement with actual musical activity. This will also clarify the parameters of the study. It should be clear that it is not the intention of this survey or indeed the thesis to maintain any inherent connection between women and music, any 'natural' musical mode of expression for either femaleness or femininity, or indeed any 'inescapable' psychological reason why film music affects audiences as it does. Rather, the emphasis will be on how culture has positioned women (and men) in relation to music and emotion, as a result of music's conceptualisation according to prevalent related definitions of 'femininity', 'masculinity' and emotion.

The more refined definition of music and emotion as related to cultural constructions of 'masculinity' and 'femininity' rather than the biological distinctions of 'male' and 'female' which arises within this survey, will re-open questions of both gender and genre. In order to relate such definitions to film melodrama, the survey will also incorporate the generic and musical precedents of theatrical melodrama and ideas



of the melodramatic mode, as well as the representation of female characters in opera. From this I will move on to theories of emotional expression and characterisation in film melodrama, through which I will attempt to establish the broad position in relation to self-expression and narrative agency which female characters appear to occupy. Finally, the survey will consider some of the ways in which film music theory has approached questions of emotion and female characterisation.

Chapter Two will then examine female emotional-musical characterisation in the woman's film in order to ascertain its general position in relation to the codes explored in Chapter One. Before the following chapters focus on the close relationship of the musician character to musical creativity and performance, this chapter will introduce and explore what might be seen as the broader generic parameters. The woman's film will be explored in terms of the dynamic between the representation of the female character's emotions and subjective experience, and her actual (personal and/or social) ability to express herself. Since nondiegetic music can be one of the key ways of conveying unexpressed or inexpressible emotions, the nature of its interaction with diegetic speech and behaviour therefore becomes a crucial means of ascertaining the woman's film's construction of femaleness. As a result, the study of a particular film should suggest not only ways in which music reflects the emotional state and trajectory of the female, but also how women's personal feelings are regarded and placed in relation to their social positioning.

Chapter Two's case study film, *Now, Voyager* (1942), has in fact been suggested as more eloquent in terms of its dialogue than the conventional woman's film (Gledhill 1987, 36). It also combines various sub-genres of the woman's film in a particularly fluid way. Both factors render it eminently appropriate and productive as

an introductory case study. The detail with which the characters express themselves verbally is matched by the eloquence and intricacy of the music which gives voice to both their silences and the real thoughts, memories and emotions which lie behind their words. At the same time the importance of the gendered relationship to the voice and modes of behaviour indicates the necessity of maintaining a study of music as part of both overall soundtrack analysis and a wider textual and narrative analysis.

Chapter Three will consider the first of three narrative configurations of musicians and listeners/audiences as diegetic subject matter, foregrounding the relationship of music to character as part of the wider narrative operation of the film. The first of these will examine the female character reacting to both diegetic music and its male creator or performer, and will consider her positioning as both listener and potential muse. This will also involve examination of the representation of the male musician, his apparent relationship to music and his (conscious or unconscious) role in relation to his female listener.

This will not only develop the ideas of the woman's relationship to her own emotions, voice and (mainly) nondiegetic music suggested in Chapter Two, but will also consider the importance of broader musical and narrative issues to an understanding of this specific scenario. Before the musician and listener can be closely examined, this chapter will therefore consider the possible purposes and effects of including diegetic music within the story, the musician as an object of biographical representation and the wider nature of the performer-audience/listener relationship.

The case study of *Letter from an Unknown Woman* (1948) concentrates mainly on its representation of the female listener. It focuses on the gendered tension between respected ideas of 'Romanticism' pertinent to 19th century music and the related (and



sometimes denigrated) concept of 'romance'. This tension is expressed through a particular and perhaps unique twist on the pattern which appears more conventional to male musician-female listener narratives. It suggests the woman's (notably youthful/immature) capacity for romantic elaboration as entirely responsible for a lifetime of 'errant' perception and action. At the same time as taking a partially critical stance on her point of view, however, it also appears to sympathise with her. It admires the veracity and strength of her emotions and mocks the blandness and pomposity of her 'realistic' alternatives. It therefore provides an excellent text through which to ascertain attitudes towards the woman and her own 'feminine' emotional (and musical) imagination.

Chapters Four and Five, while continuing the examination of the musician character, also provide a contrast through nationality (both case study films are British) and type of musician (both are composers as well as performers). The subject matter of both *Love Story* (1944) and *Dangerous Moonlight* (1941) concerns the relationship of the home front to combat in World War II. The existing social codification of melodrama and gendered characterisation is therefore targeted towards very particular propagandist ends. The extremity of the situations into which this places characters, however, actually seems to highlight the processes of constructing and testing ideas of gender and emotion. At a time when emotions are placed under extraordinary pressure both in reality and fictitious representation, the role of nondiegetic music's 'mute' signification and diegetic music's non-denotative communication becomes particularly fascinating.

In what might be presumed to be an antidote to the male musician-female listener relationship, Chapter Four will turn to the ways in which cinema has attempted

to represent the female musician and/or composer. In particular, this will consider how the female relationship to active creativity is conceptualised, and whether Romantic ideas of the necessary constitution of the artist are still in evidence. It will also balance Chapter Three's consideration of the female as (musical or non-musical) muse with an assessment of the extent to which the Siren survives as a 'model' for active female musicality and related behaviour. As a result, it will consider the apparently problematic nature of representing a positive characterisation of the active female musician. The case study of *Love Story* will examine the measures by which a film may attempt to make possible or even mitigate a respectable but active female musicality. While aspects of the nondiegetic score will be considered, the main focus of this chapter will be on the relationship of its central female protagonist to her own musical performance. This offers the most extreme point at which she is confronted with the musical representation of her own emotions.

Finally, Chapter Five will consider what happens across a range of genres when film represents male characters through a more conventionally 'female' style of music, so raising the question of femininity as a necessary element to the construction of masculinity. The case study of *Dangerous Moonlight* will examine both women and men in relation to music. The account of the female listener in this case will offer a more explicit critique of the female emotional-musical characteristics examined in Chapter Two. The most important focus, however, will be on the effect on male characterisation of foregrounding a relationship to music, creativity and different types of emotion. This will open up the question of music and male characterisation for further discussion, while also continuing to explore the apparent persistence, and perhaps even positive promotion of female musical stereotypes.



In conclusion, I will draw together my findings from each chapter and case study to offer a definition of gendered characterisation based on the interaction of cultural assumptions and cinematic-musical representation. I will argue that the representation of gender in melodrama and the woman's film is still informed by a combination of Romantic conceptions of emotion, music and gender and more ancient archetypes of musical, emotional, sexual and (anti-)social behaviour. Following from this, I will suggest a broad model for gendered characterisation which extends beyond the generic boundaries of the original case study texts. This will reconfigure the representation of gender according to a balance of emotion and control which is formed through a combination of (cultural) expectation and (filmic) evidence. As a result, I will suggest the crucial role of music less as just a signifier of emotion and more as a part of the way in which we actually understand emotion within the constitution of gender.

## Chapter One

### **The Siren and the Muse: Ideas of Gender, Emotion and Subjectivity in Music and Film**

‘Musical performance provides an excellent context for observing and understanding any society’s gender structure because similar notions of power and control often lie at the heart of both gender and musical/social dynamics’ (Austern after Koskoff in Austern 1994, 83).

In her book *Unheard Melodies*, Claudia Gorbman points out that the musical meaning evident in film was by no means ‘invented’ for the exclusive purposes of sound cinema. It already enjoyed a long tradition in other musical-dramatic forms, most recently those of the 19th century (1987, 85). While the influence of the Romantic style of composition on 1940s film music seems to be universally acknowledged, the potential inheritance of related constructions of gender and emotion has not been fully examined.

This chapter will therefore consider the historical relationship of conceptions of music, gender and emotion, particularly as they relate to women. The survey will centre mainly on the ways in which Romanticism conceptualised and gendered ideas of emotion and emotional expression through the related forms of music, melodrama and opera. This will be framed within the broader context of ancient models of female



emotionality, sexuality and music, and will lead to a consideration of the position of women in film melodrama and their emotional representation through its music. As a result of this, I will argue that film in the 1940s burdens many of its female characters with what might be seen as a Romantic relationship to music which carries with it both psychological and physical implications.

The prevalence and frequent diegetic foregrounding of music in those genres centred on the emotional (and even medical) trajectories of women, suggests a degree of conflation of Romantic ideas of the ‘feminine’ and the ‘female’. The apparent inevitability with which the classical film style adopts contemporaneous thinking on gender and music therefore appears to result in a frustratingly restrictive emotional position for both female and male characters. The musical representation of emotion suggests the transcendent nature of the woman’s interiority. At the same time, however, it demonstrates its inevitable frustration or destructive power in the context of contemporary (or historical) social mores or 19th century ideas of the female constitution. The possibility of introducing a feminine aspect to male trajectories, on the other hand, remains for the most part restricted to very specifically and carefully contextualised ‘glimpses’ of what lies beneath the otherwise controlled and socially acceptable exterior.

### **Historical Concepts of Female Creativity and Performance in Music**

There have been a number of prominent female composers and musicians throughout history, and women have been involved in playing music (or singing) in a variety of historical and social contexts. Recent re-examination of musical history and

culture, however, suggests that there has nevertheless always been a problematic element to the relationship of women, emotion and (Western classical) music. The origins of this difficulty have been traced by writers such as Christine Battersby and Charles Segal as far back as the earliest records of Western culture. The narrative patterns which Segal locates in ancient Greek mythology already appear to construct and divide the female character according to a particular configuration of physicality, sexuality, the voice and music. This in turn seems inextricably linked to her place within an ordered patriarchal society (1994, 17-21). Segal suggests that such characterisations may be informed by a fear of female sexuality, or perhaps rather the male fear of his own sexuality and a resultant desire to exercise control over women. Perhaps not surprisingly, therefore, the idea of the musical woman seems immediately linked to the popular mythological figures of the Siren and the Muse.

The terrifyingly strong and irresistible sexuality and musicality of the Siren exist solely for the purpose of seducing and destroying men. The physically subdued Muse dedicates her voice and music to the glory of men, inspiring their hearts and minds with her ethereal and pure beauty. It is not difficult, however restrictive these characterisations may seem, and however clear their ideological purpose may be, to see how they may continue to inform representations of female behaviour. The terms 'siren' and 'muse' are in fact frequently used to describe the social and sexual demeanour of women even without any musical reference. The specificity of their mythological origin, however, emphasises their constitution according to the idea of the indivisibility of vocality and musicality from such behaviour. They are therefore distinguished by both the style and the purpose of their self-expression from such comparative non-musical figures as the 'virgin' and the 'whore'.



Feminist music theorists such as Susan McClary and Marcia J. Citron, following sociological theories of the dynamic interaction of cultural/artistic and social codes, suggest that music acts as a means of rehearsing and negotiating various models of gender construction (McClary 1991, 7-8; Citron 1993, 121). It is therefore possible that musical forms may contribute to a perpetuation of these female 'types' maintaining women, following the definitions of writers such as Reina Lewis (1992), Homi Bhabha, Edward Said (both in *ibid.*, Chapter 1) and Leo Treitler (1993), as 'Other' to respectable male society.

Writers such as Linda Phyllis Austern, Leslie C. Dunn and Arthur Loesser accordingly suggest that during the Renaissance, women's conception as 'siren' or 'muse' was dependent on their use of music according to prevailing (male) social codes. According to Austern, the socially acceptable and desirable woman should not threaten the (apparently vulnerable) self-control of masculinity. She was therefore required to exercise a demure and *proper* use of music purely for her own spiritual edification or consolation. The most notable edict in this respect appears to have been that her musicality should be hidden from men (Austern 1989, 431 & 436). If a woman performed music in front of a man, her embodiment of the most powerful sensual partnership of femininity and music may be too physically exciting, seducing the man into corrupt thoughts and conduct. The choice between these options seems to have lain firmly with the woman, so that any effect on men was considered entirely the result of her conscious intention (*ibid.*, 434).

At the same time as women were apparently capable of exercising such mythical musical power, physiological theory was mobilised to prove that they were both mentally and physically incompatible with the processes of higher artistic

creativity. Women were condemned by a conception of the female constitution which precluded the possibility of intellectual superiority (dependent as this was on the allegedly exclusively male ‘possession’ of rational ‘ingenium’). She was allegedly subject to the biologically-dictated ‘hysteria’ rather than the more masculine and potentially inspirational ‘melancholy’. This therefore rendered her *too* emotional, subjective and, as Battersby points out ‘*too* original’ to be capable of great creativity in contemporaneous terms (1989, 48).

Romanticism’s revaluation of these very qualities made paramount the artist’s subjective, emotional and therefore apparently ‘feminine’ experience of the world. While this should have deified women as ‘natural’ to the processes of creativity, the male prerogative of cultural superiority appears to have dictated otherwise. As a result of significant reconceptualisations of gender construction, writers such as Battersby, McClary and Citron demonstrate how the place of the female was ‘re-denigrated’ in terms of musical/artistic understanding and creativity.

The elevation of a feminine sensibility arose from Romanticism’s concern with encapsulating the verbally indescribable inner ‘essence’ of things, rather than merely their external appearances. Music was perceived able to appeal directly and immediately to the senses, and so to bypass more concrete and denotative forms of representation. It was therefore allowed to be proclaimed ‘the most Romantic of all the arts ... [which] might almost be said to be the sole *purely* Romantic one’ (Hoffmann quoted in Dahlhaus 1989, 22). Instrumental music in particular was seen to epitomise this in the ‘absolute’ music which eschewed “‘extramusical” functions and programs’ to “‘sublimate” or “‘exalt” itself above the boundaries of the finite to an intimation of the infinite’ (Dahlhaus 1989, 60). In this, the Romantics apparently felt they had found



the ideal of aesthetic autonomy. Since a feminine sensibility rendered the artist almost 'at one' with the most basic and powerful forces of nature, however, nothing short of the most masculine strength and virility could allow the individual to withstand its dramatic impact.

There is nothing apparently inherent in such an androgynous model to preclude women from creativity. Cultural and physiological constructions of femininity and the female, however, nevertheless seem to have conspired to once again promote a male monopoly of the arts. The elevation of intuition, emotion and imagination may have feminised the artist's soul but his body, providing his essential supporting strength, remained necessarily male (Battersby 1989, 10). Masculine strength allowed the male artist to experience the most extreme perceptions of a feminine soul. He therefore transcended and sublimated the (denigrated) biology which still bound women inextricably to 'procreative and domestic duties which would take up all their (limited) energy' (ibid., 5 & 8).

The female body, still being conceptualised according to long-outdated medical ideas of the debilitating effects (on women only) of 'the vapours', was considered too physically fragile to withstand the rigours of sublime contemplation. A woman attempting a male level of creativity would therefore be punished by 'madness and disease' (ibid., 130). The male artist's perceived God-like originality allowed him to write music 'for an imaginary public, for the future, and if possible for "eternity"' (Einstein 1947, 16). This appears to be contrasted, in general, with a much more modest female access to artistic creativity.

Perhaps inevitably, the models of creativity available to women hardly seem to have measured up to those presented to men. As Loesser's account of Liszt (1955,

367) and Heinrich Heine's description of Paganini (quoted in Whittall 1987, 45) suggest, the idea of the Romantic male artist appears to find its apotheosis in the mysterious deity that is the 'virtuoso'. This character may have held a particular appeal as an 'inevitable' result of the 19th century's perceived emancipation of the individual (Einstein 1947, 9) and as the ideal of the (male) personality controlling nature. At the same time, however, there was a general growth of interest in music which was 'largely centred around the piano' (Chanan 1994, 27) in both domestic and concert settings. Loesser accordingly suggests that the rising public interest in the piano virtuoso during the early 19th century indicates

[t]he idea of the piano as 'machinery' ... [as a] symbol of liberty, of man's freedom of thought and enterprise; ... [an] overthrow of inhibitions and prohibitions in [the] quest for mastery over nature (1955, 348).

A figure such as Liszt therefore becomes both a personification of contemporaneous ideals and a man of tremendous personal (physical and sexual) power. He '[did] battle with the gods alone, with his two bare hands, leaving an echo of octave thunder and a debris of smashed pianos in his wake' (ibid., 370). He also, by some accounts, left a veritable debris of women. According to historical accounts cited by Loesser, Liszt commonly evoked hysterical reactions from women fans, such as the Princess Christina Belgiojoso. She apparently 'sometimes evinced such overpowering music-inspired emotion that she needed to be carried out' (ibid., 367).



Such powerful personal imagery and charisma was not, however, perhaps so easily available to most aspiring female artists. Apart from any perceived physical constraints, their relationship to creativity appears to have remained mediated, as in the Renaissance, by contemporaneous ideas of feminine propriety. The continuing social perception of the danger and aberration of active female sexuality rendered the ‘loss of identity involved in a passionate experience of the sublime’ too dangerous for a respectable and ‘feminine’ woman (Lewis 1996, 179). Even to perform, particularly as a singer, could call an unseemly amount of attention to the body. Naturally, this would be interpreted in an entirely different way to the impressive physical display of the male virtuoso (Goodwin 1994, 68).

With the 19th century ‘re-allocation’ of active and destructive sexuality to working-class and colonial women came the ideal of a respectable *lack* of middle-class female sexuality (Lewis 1996, 54; Goodwin 1994, 68). This seems appropriately reflected in an idealised role as a partially educated ‘companion’ and Muse-like inspiration to a superior husband (Battersby 1989, 121). Alternatively, restrained self-expression was possible through the delicacy and triviality of those ‘occupations superficially related to the fine arts’ known as ‘accomplishments’ (Loesser 1955, 267).

### **Women, Femininity and Emotion in Musical and Dramatic Representation**

While Romanticism may have played a part in perpetuating the problematisation of certain aspects of women and musicality, it has been suggested that it also inherited a related musical semiotics of gender. This has been traced by Treitler within early developments in Western classical music, and by Austern and McClary as

informing 16th and 17th century music and the *stile rappresentativo* of early opera respectively (Austern 1993; McClary 1991, Chapter 2). According to these writers, this followed cultural gender constructions by coding music as masculine according to qualities such as clarity, reason and strength of purpose in either vigour or sobriety (Treitler 1993, 27). Music was coded feminine if tending to features such as ornamentation, elaboration, improvisation, variation and chromaticism (see, for example, Austern 1993, 351-352).

This musical 'realisation' of the perceived excessive emotionality, sexuality and caprice of femininity apparently gave rise to a style which could inflame the passions even when performed by male actors (Austern 1994, 89). McClary even suggests that it may potentially have precipitated a crisis in gender representation in connection with the first operatic hero (1991, 48). Setting such codes also, however, allowed the demonstration of a controlled state of respectable and socially acceptable femininity through an appropriately controlled style of music (Austern 1994, 91).

Whatever the rigidity and universality of such a methodology for female representation, its influence seems apparent all the way through to 20th century musical ideas of 'proper' and 'improper' femininity. Simplicity, tunefulness and modesty of scale, for example (as well as domestic settings and utility of purpose rather than pretensions to eternity), are suggested by Citron as characteristic preferences of 19th century female composers and listeners (1993, 132). These qualities appear reflected in the musical style accorded to socially acceptable and sexually respectable female operatic characters as identified by both Citron (*ibid.*, 74) and McClary (1991, 57). The expectation of female musical 'delicacy' then only seems confirmed by the suggestion in 1903 that composer Ethyl Smyth had 'successfully



emancipated herself from her sex' through her strident compositional style and full brass orchestration (review of *Der Wald* quoted in Citron 1993, 68).

The elaboration and chromaticism connotative of dangerously 'excessive' femininity, however, seems to be epitomised in a particular kind of female character. According to Sarah Webster Goodwin, the association of female singing with physical and sexual display marginalised professional performers in particular as 'figurative cultural courtesans' (1994, 69). The style and the performer in combination may therefore have proved dangerously close to the archetypal Siren. Whatever forms this may have taken in terms of 'real' performing women, it seems to find its dramatic apotheosis in the figure of the 'powerful' female operatic character. This fictitious woman was so sexually and/or emotionally overdetermined as often to warrant the label of 'madwoman' (McClary 1991, Chapter 4).

The idea of music as the purest communication of emotion or 'essence', particularly in its removal from spoken language, allowed it a very particular kind of dramatic role in both opera and melodrama. In the dynamic relationship between expression and repression or restriction which can be identified in both of these musical-dramatic forms, music can potentially be seen as occupying a quasi-independent position. It is constituted at once as a narrative-thematic element, a non-denotative but highly meaningful language in itself and a stylistic means of inflecting almost every other mode of (visual and verbal) representation. It has the potential to support and deepen, comment upon with irony or even completely contradict the surface appearance, words or actions of the drama.

This indicates numerous and diverse questions which could be raised in relation to the broad operation of music. Both melodrama and opera, however, share to some

extent the suspicion of language as a carrier of complete or genuine meaning.

Furthermore, the woman's film frequently makes the female character's musical-emotional representation coincide with her vocal disempowerment, controlled silence or evidence of the sheer inadequacy of spoken language to her full self-expression.

This suggests that an examination of the earlier dramatic forms in terms of the gendered interaction of music with access to the voice and self-expression may be particularly appropriate. This will be informative in terms of both looking forward to those films conventionally labelled 'melodrama', and in gaining a wider understanding of melodramatic elements across all genres.

Theorists such as Christine Gledhill, Peter Brooks and Thomas Elsaesser suggest that although the inception of melodrama as a particular theatrical form can be traced through specific political, social and cultural circumstances through the 18th and 19th centuries, melodrama as a mode of representation proves less historically specific. Crucial to this timelessness, Gledhill suggests, is the interdependent and continually developing relationship of melodrama and realism. In these terms, melodrama's power comes from its capacity to respond to the idea of the individual as subject to the particular social conditions, restrictions, anxieties and taboos of the time (Gledhill 1987, 32). Consequently,

whether melodrama takes its categories from Victorian morality or modern psychology, its enactment of the continuing struggle of good and evil forces running through social, political and psychic life draws into a public arena desires, fears, values and identities which lie beneath the surface of the publicly acknowledged world (*ibid.*, 33).



By definition, however, the drives of realism and melodrama are radically different. Realism assumes that the world is ‘capable of both adequate explanation and representation’ (ibid., 31). Brooks’ ahistorical conception of the melodramatic mode, on the other hand, leads Gledhill to suggest that it ‘has no such confidence, for it attests to forces, desires, and fears which, though no longer granted metaphysical reality, nevertheless appear to operate in human life independently of rational explanation’ (ibid., 31).

Romanticism reconceptualised the artist as possessing ‘natural’ and ‘Divine’ powers of creation, thus elevating the practice and experience of art to quasi-religious proportions (Citron 1993, 143). Brooks locates the origins of the melodramatic mode in a similar desire for transcendent meaning, particularly in the face of post-Enlightenment crisis over the structural existence of God. The resultant sacrilization of the self, meant that melodrama came to represent ‘both the urge toward resacrilization and the impossibility of conceiving sacrilization other than in personal terms’ (Brooks 1976, 16).

The context for such representations may have been established by 18th century sentimental drama and novels, with their exploration of ‘private feelings and interiorised codes of morality and conscience’ (Elsaesser 1972, 45), and their ‘democratisation’ of structures of moral justice (Gledhill 1987, 17). Brooks claims, however, that such bourgeois forms lacked ‘the heroic dimensions, overt excitement [and] ... cosmic ambitions which melodrama would yield’ (1976, 83). Melodrama went further, therefore, than merely exploring personal emotions. By placing moral impetus within the sphere of human, rather than Divine control, it re-presented the possibility of transcendence ‘in the play of the ethical mind’ (ibid., 22).

Underpinning dramatic representations of realistic social situations, the forces of good and evil were shown to be at play through characters who, rather than being fully individually developed, were invested with broader spiritual and ideological significance. Their every word and gesture thus referred metaphorically to an alternative world of psychic and mythic 'truth'. Even though the genre concerned itself thematically with scenarios of everyday life, in what Brooks (after Diderot) terms 'the *drama of the ordinary*' (ibid., 13), any potential for naturalism was eschewed in favour of 'the exploitation of the dramatics and excitement discoverable within the real' (ibid., 13). The melodramatic mode therefore developed a dual-layered text. It presented the surface of the everyday, while actually seeking to break through that façade in order to reveal the real emotional, ethical and moral 'truth' of the world and its inhabitants.

The suspicion of the potential superficiality and inadequacy of spoken communications is therefore a characteristic of the melodramatic mode. It finds that truth, rather than residing in the concrete meaning of language, is more likely to be understood through the desemanticised 'gesture' of non-denotative signs (ibid., 9-11). These encompass performance style, physical gestures, tone of voice, mise-en-scène and, of course, music. Thomas Elsaesser reconfigures this emphasis on gesture in film melodrama as 'an expressive code, ... a particular form of dramatic mise-en-scène, characterised by a dynamic use of spatial and musical categories, as opposed to intellectual or literary ones' (1972, 51). He also, however, suggests the effect of a generically imposed control on the characters. The overt subjection of melodramatic characters to the pressures and expectations of a specific social context, denies them access to 'strong' gestures. As a result,



[t]he tellingly impotent gesture, the social gaffe, the hysterical outburst replaces any more directly liberating or self-annihilating action, and the cathartic violence of a shoot-out or a chase becomes an inner violence, often one which characters turn against themselves (ibid., 56).

While the ethic of ‘total expressivity’ (Brooks 1976, 11) is definitive of melodrama, this clearly indicates a division between what can be effected within the social world of the diegesis, and the underlying meaning which can only be evident to the audience and perhaps the specific characters involved. As a result of this evidently displaced expressivity, melodrama has been described as a genre or style of the return of the repressed (see, for example, Elsaesser 1972).

Music may initially have been part of the theatrical genre, along with other ‘gestural’ systems such as pantomime and dumb show, as a result of legal restrictions on performance involving speech (Gledhill 1987, 18). Its particular importance in terms of its expressive, narrative and cohesive capacities, however, led to ‘the emerging genre’s appropriation of the French term “mélo-drame”’ (ibid., 19). While obviously not the only desemanticised language at work in melodrama, it does enjoy an obviously definitive role, whether through its actual presence or by infusing other elements with its ‘ineffable’ qualities of ‘[s]tyle, thematic structuring, modulations of tone and rhythm and voice - musical patterning in a metaphorical sense’ (Brooks 1976, 14). Its very particular capacity as a system of sounds which eschews the specificities of concrete language, seems to provide the most stark contrast to the ‘rational’ world of the diegesis and therefore the strongest expression of the urge for personal escape. According to Robert Lang, therefore: ‘In melodrama’s use of music, especially, we

identify an impulse to fly free of the codifications of the symbolic' (quoted in Flinn 1992, 133).

Clearly also, working in physical separation from the 'realities' of the diegetic world, music is particularly adept at proving the existence of Brooks' moral universe, which 'though put into question, ... does exist and can be made to assert its presence and categorical force among men' (1976, 20). Brooks extends this to suggest the operatic aria as the 'natural' outcome of the Romantic melodramatic monologue and the genre's recourse to the 'gestural trope of the inarticulate' (ibid., 49 & 75). This therefore coincides with the idea of operatic music's potential for evidencing the emotional truth behind a façade of words, or giving wider significance to sung statements in a way that even the characters themselves may not comprehend (Abbate 1991, 156).

Opera's use of music to allow more telling representations of character interiority than words alone could achieve, offers a particularly compelling model for later cinematic configurations of gender, emotion and music. Representations of women in opera, as well as through actual music within drama and the description of music within poetry, frequently reveal what McClary terms the 'double framing' of women (1991, 85). Such texts not only present contemporaneous artistic (and social) definitions of femininity, but also internalise and thematicise its patriarchal interpretation, translation and containment (ibid., 85). This structure is dependent on music's melodramatic capacity to secretly reveal more of the woman than she may care or be able to tell, as well as the ability of the musical-dramatic narrative to present 'private' moments of female emotional/musical self-expression which would normally



be considered inappropriate for public display (see, for example, Austern 1994, 84; McClary 1991, 50).

According to McClary, shifts in cultural attitudes towards open emotional expression resulted in a re-marking of the eloquent women of 17th century opera as weak and vulnerable. As a result, female suffering soon became a kind of ‘spectacle’ for the delectation of the patriarchal audience (1991., 50). As the emotions of these women were examined by a male culture of self-control and order, however, with their ‘weak’ tendency to emotional outpourings allowing the revelation of the ‘real’ nature of femininity, they were found to evince a somewhat paradoxical power.

Whether conceptualised as the (sexually titillating) madwoman, or the betrayed female expressing her grief and anger, women were found to be passionate, ‘insubordinate or [socially] threatening’, rather than pleasantly compliant, demure and demonstrably controlled (*ibid.*, 49-50). McClary suggests this as a rehearsal of the real social fear of the growing success, professionalism and resistance of women at the time. The operatic text presented the excesses of the woman in order to demonstrate, in turn, the desirability and necessity of her containment, control and, as Clément demonstrates, even her destruction in death (*ibid.*, 50; Clément 1988).

Appropriately, the musical devices employed to represent such outbursts drew, according to McClary, Citron and Gretchen A. Wheelock, on those elements of music which were simultaneously conceptualised as weak and yet powerfully subversive within musical structures. These included the florid style of what McClary terms the ‘rhetoric of seduction’ (1991, 39), minor tonalities and the excessive ornamentation and elaboration already discussed in relation to ideas of ‘dangerous’ femininity (Citron 1993, 72-73; Wheelock 1994, 211 & 217). This musical treatment of women recalls

Jacques Attali's suggestion that the organised systems of music demonstrate the possibility of ordered society by their containment and control of elements of (social) 'noise' (1985).

In this context, the feminine musical expressions of the overtly emotional or sexual woman place her as 'Other' to the masculine codes of rational clarity. According to Attali's ideas, patriarchal society must take control of subversive elements of femininity in order to define its own superior power. In a similar way, the musical structure exhibits its own 'noise' in order to demonstrate the return and eventual dominance of its own 'patriarchal' masculine codes (ibid.). McClary suggests that this parallel is intensified by the stronger structural drive towards tonal closure which developed during the 18th century. The desire for musical resolution and closure underlines the already salutary social necessity of neutralising the disruptive female (1991, 14).

The coincidence of such 'male' musical framing of women with dramatic representations of patriarchal systems of control, means that their emotional and sexual containment becomes the prerogative of male operatic characters as much as the (male) composer. The musical codes of excessive femininity may allow the composer to indulge in some of his most 'musical' writing (ibid., 102). They also, however, enable the creation of a protective distance between the represented woman and both the audience and the creator himself. This consequently removes the fear of the possible 'contagion' of her madness (ibid., 85-86). It is through male musical codes that the excessively emotional or sexual woman is constructed and therefore distanced from masculinity. Male musical and narrative systems then demonstrate her eventual containment within stronger rational forces.



In a similar way to the operations of dramatic song or Romantic poetry considered by Dunn (1994) and Goodwin (1994) respectively, the artists and characters representative of patriarchal control can therefore segment and reconfigure women's excessive expressivity in order to reduce its horrific social implications. The shifting attitudes towards emotionality in the 19th century which, according to McClary, actually allowed the gradual (and welcome) 'contagion' of the masculine frame by the feminine influence (1991, 66-67), could therefore nevertheless be countered. Perhaps again because of real social fears which conceptualised women's growing ambition and resistance as 'pathological', female characters became more openly threatening and disruptive to the typically victimised male. This therefore necessitated increasingly violent and spurious narrative and tonal closure (ibid., 100).

Opera therefore marked music as both expressive and repressive of female characters in an extremely complex way. In the first place, as McClary points out, it replaced the previous silence of the symptoms of insanity characteristic of the 'madwoman' with an actual (and necessary) musical voice (ibid., 85). The greater access to subjectivity which it offered for female characterisation gave the mark of authenticity to women's emotions and a greater depth to their spoken words. It also suggested a crucial potential to surpass their eventual narrative defeat with the powerfully resonant memory of their disturbingly 'dissonant' voices (Wheelock 1994, 221; Abbate 1991). The independence of musical codes from those of the words and visual elements of the drama, however, nevertheless allowed the potential mobilisation of 'weak' and 'feminine' musical devices to undermine the validity of even the most apparently strong and sincere characterisations and self-professions (Citron 1993, 72).

Although given a voice for her excesses, the woman is therefore represented according to male codes and is subject to validation or undermining at the will of a male composer. As she freely expresses her emotions, her private suffering becomes a public spectacle. At the same time, she is distanced by compositional and narrative devices from the audience for the purposes of their own ‘safety’ in contemplation. Finally, she is seen to require both narrative and musical ‘silencing’, a point which is emphasised all the more violently as her feminine influence begins to seriously threaten or undermine male control.

Christine Gledhill suggests that 19th century melodrama was not seen as a specifically feminine/female genre. She does, however, acknowledge the particular position of the female character in a genre where a certain moral power is accorded to those groups considered socially, economically or physically vulnerable and who therefore ‘command protection’ (1987, 21). Melodrama “‘sides with the powerless’” (Vicinus quoted in *ibid.*, 21), incorporates an ‘intense quality of wish-fulfilment’ (Williams 1984, 301) and concentrates on the social microcosm of home and family. This results in a

domestic sphere where women and children predominate as protagonists whose only power derives from virtuous suffering ... [which] emerges as an important source of specifically female wish-fulfilment (*ibid.*, 301).

Melodrama also, however, highlighted the delicate emotionality of women as significant within a culture which, while valuing sensibility as a mark of virtue, found



its testament through tears to produce ‘contradictions for the ideology of masculinity’ (Gledhill 1987, 34). Female characters therefore became the central locus of the evocation and legitimisation of emotion in the narrative, while ‘Victorian patriarchs could weep publicly over the female victim, in demonstration of renewed feeling and virtue’ (ibid., 34).

Early cinema inherited melodramatic modes almost by default. It seems, however, that the development of sound technology in particular consolidated what was an already pervasive distinction between such nostalgic forms and the new ‘realist’ conception of cinema. At the same time, the previously valued mode of emotional sensibility now became denigrated as ‘mere’ sentimentality. Against the ‘classic’ genres espousing masculine cultural values, the melodrama took on a negative association with ‘the juvenile and the popular, the feminised spheres of the women’s weepie, the romance or family melodrama’ (ibid., 34).

In this light, it is interesting to note the effective reconfiguration of the term ‘romantic’ as it becomes associated with the female/feminised realm. Rather than sublime contemplation and grandiose originality, it tends to suggest a love story. As an all-consuming interest in love seems to become attributed primarily to women, their capacity or compulsion to romanticise appears to become attached to their vision of men and relationships. While this may harness the imaginative potential of the female, it also places her in a difficult position regarding denigrated ideas of emotional sensibility. The degree of love which she experiences and the importance which she accords to her relationship seems somehow to become redolent of a kind of misguidedly *errant* and excessive level of idealisation and expectation. Even outside of the love story as a specific category, the melodramatic woman’s motivation according



to what appears to be the truth and depth of her emotions may mark her, her story and her sympathetic female audience as overly-emotional, even stupidly sentimental and certainly 'unrealistic'.

As this thesis deals with the potential influence of 19th century ideas of the feminine on 20th century female emotional characterisation, such a basic shift in thinking is clearly crucial. As the subsequent case study chapters in fact demonstrate, the distinction between the 'pure' ideas of Romanticism and the denigratory representation of the emotionally 'confused'/overdetermined woman, may even be mobilised as a narrative device in melodrama and the woman's film. In such cases, however, the frequent difficulty in determining the exact distinction between a 'Romantic' and a 'romantic' sensibility can make the correct use of terminology problematic. It is therefore important at the outset to make my use of the terms 'Romantic' and 'romantic' as clear as possible. Following the lead of the reconfiguration itself, the term 'Romantic' will be used only where a clear appeal to the original tenets of 19th century cultural thought or concepts of the artist/musician is suggested. The term 'romantic' will be used in connection with those emotions relating to love, relationships or fantasising about the love object, which are most commonly examined in 1940s melodrama and the woman's film as experienced by female characters towards male characters. Any areas of overlap or confusion between the two terms should then be easier to identify and examine.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This may also imply a related slippage between the 19th century ideas of transcendence and universalism and the use of the term 'transcendent' to describe female emotions in certain filmic and film-musical contexts. As the emotions become denigrated and more specifically associated with perceived female realms such as love and motherhood, so the idea of female emotions as transcendent may adopt a more specific meaning. Rather than transcending normal *human*, i.e. male experience, the representation of female emotions may allow women to transcend the more specific restrictions and propriety of the social/emotional role allowed them within patriarchy. Their emotions therefore transcend everyday 'normality' and become universal in representing the 'pure', unsullied, innate emotionality of the female sex as 'the woman in love' or 'the mother'. While this offers an incredibly



Despite cinema's concern with more contemporary manifestations of morality and personal responsibility, the 'highly ambivalent field' (ibid., 35) which theatrical melodrama had produced for women therefore remained intact. Film melodrama's ultimate valuation of moral and emotional virtue over social standing, and its gendered dynamic of sensibility and control, converged to position the feminine, music and emotion as primarily appropriate to the female realm. At the same time, however, the continuation of (nondiegetic) music's quasi-independent position in relation to other narrative elements highlighted a paradox in the generic desire for the victimised character's resonating moral and emotional superiority.

Such unfortunate protagonists are offered a very particular kind of victory. This is defined by their steadfastness in the face of an insoluble/intolerable situation, their ability to rise above a normal (and even forgivable) level of human selfishness, or even their destruction at the hands of vicious and unjust social structures. This kind of superiority is evidenced through the more essential terms of non-representational gesture. The oppressed character may therefore emerge *morally* victorious even if s/he never gains the right to actual power (or to speech and full verbal self-expression), or indeed even if s/he appears to fail in the face of the immediate social context. In much the same way as Abbate and Wheelock suggest can happen in opera, the emotional/musical 'voice' of the victimised woman in film melodrama may therefore remain resonant and disturbingly memorable, despite her verbal silence and/or ultimate subjugation to patriarchal social structures.

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liberating potential to re-emphasise the real power and virtue of emotion. 20th century attitudes may still mean that moments of such transcendence can sometimes be reframed as the most 'melodramatic', overblown and misguided extremes of fantastical emotional excess.



The reconfiguration of the expressive space of gesture as a kind of textual gap, however, emphasises the fact that the presence of music can, by definition, also signal crucial and decisive failures of communication or misalignments of character recognition (Elsaesser 1972, 66; Neale 1986). While the emotional/musical voice may be powerful, it nevertheless exists in a space conventionally marked by a sense of powerlessness in the 'real' terms of the diegetic world. The film audience is therefore placed in a position of frustratingly impotent omniscience. They share the protagonists' perception of their own restricted situation, while simultaneously realising wider truths to which crucial characters, at least initially, may have no access (Elsaesser 1972, 66).

The female character who is caught, as it were, in this chasm of non-expression, experiencing emotions which are not or cannot be shared or realised by those around her, is therefore marked by a peculiar narrative circularity. Her emotional expression may be strong, resonant and perhaps ultimately victorious in terms of both its ability to engender audience sympathy (or empathy) and its memorability long after the film itself has ended. Her actual person, however, is frequently restricted, subdued and domesticated (see Williams 1984, 299-300 on the final moments of *Stella Dallas* (1937)). As her music evidences the presence of the most extreme levels of sensibility in Romantic terms, her social context restricts and devalues its expression in the real world. The frustration of the woman may therefore be seen to be contained in the dynamic between the diegetic world and the nondiegetic soundtrack.

## Ideas of Emotional Effect, the Feminine and Women in Film Music Theory

Most theories attempting to explain the emotional effects of music both as part of film narrative and in terms of spectatorial engagement, concern themselves with interpretations of the particular significance of music's abstract mode of expression. They may suggest that music returns the subject to an imaginary state of collectivism (Adorno and Eisler 1994, 21), evokes a sense of Romantic nostalgia and universalism (Flinn 1992) or recalls the earliest states of human perception (*ibid.*, 56-64; Gorbman 1987, 61-64). Narratively, music may bestow the story with mythical resonance (Brown 1994, 9-10) or draw on Wagnerian operatic ideals of psychological depth (Prendergast 1992, 40). Whatever the terms of the specific explanation, however, many of these ideas appear to be based on a similar perception. Music offers a connection to something which comes from *within the individual* but which at the same time extends *beyond the individual* in their immediate physical and/or spiritual context.

Psychoanalytic theory in particular seeks to designate this space 'beyond individuality' as feminine, by an evocation of imaginary regression to the 'sonorous omnipotence' of the infant auditory realm and its association with the maternal (Rosolato quoted in Gorbman 1987, 62; Flinn 1992, 56-64 on Kristeva). This may offer an explanation for the 'natural' association of women with the emotional (and irrational) elements of the text (Gorbman 1987, 80-81), or perhaps work within the possibility of a more literal association of the imaginary maternal figure with female characters (see, for example, Flinn 1992, 118-132 on *Detour* (1945)). Its most prevalent focus, however, seems to be music's evocation of pleasure in the audience



and their resultant engagement with the narrative (Gorbman 1987, 60-64), rather than ways in which diegetic characters may be (albeit unwittingly) effected by an association with its invisible presence.

The specific adoption of a late-19th century style of composition suggests that the intention behind the emotional function of music in film may be influenced by Romantic ideas. Music of course fulfils functions of mood, time and culture setting and ‘gelling’ over edits and temporal disphasures (ibid., 89). Its role in illuminating the otherwise concealed emotions of characters, however, seems a clear inheritance of the Romantic (and melodramatic) idea of music expanding and universalising the individual consciousness.

Leonard Meyer has suggested that the relative unpopularity of atonal music was due to the fact that audiences believed it was ‘the product of calculation rather than an aesthetic affective contemplation’ (quoted in Flinn 1992, 31). Following this, Caryl Flinn suggests that the ‘classical paradigm of film music, like [R]omanticism, insists that it bears the marks of a subjectivity, the stamp of a human presence’ (1992, 31). The use of the ‘outdated’ Romantic style of music, therefore, ‘evokes the idea of a lost humanity’ in a classical cinema which ‘displays an almost obsessive concern with establishing the presence of some kind of human agency’ (ibid., 49). Whereas the conventional source of human presence and interiority in concert music would presumably be the composer, however, film must surely transfer this effect onto the characters with whom the music becomes most strongly associated.

Film was obviously not the first artform to confront the challenge of imbuing fictitious characters with a musical representation of interiority. Roy Prendergast therefore suggests that a more specific reason for the appeal to 19th century music

comes from film composers looking back to precedents such as the Wagnerian music-drama (1992, 39-40). Prendergast may go too far in suggesting the absolute indivisibility of opera and film as musical-dramatic artforms (*ibid.*, 39). He does nevertheless coincide with almost every other film music theorist in acknowledging the influence of certain philosophies and techniques promoted by Wagner through both his composition and theory.

Perhaps the most influential of Wagner's techniques was the leitmotiv, which became little short of ubiquitous in 1940s film. This was based on the premise that the music should 'serve the ends of dramatic expression' (Grout 1981, 628) within the general context of a melodramatic division of exteriority and interiority through the contrast of vocal and instrumental music. While Prendergast considers the adoption of this operatic technique into film as a natural dramatic progression (1992, 40), however, Theodor Adorno and Hanns Eisler accuse it of constituting a cheap travesty of the leitmotiv's original mythical role (1994, 5-6). While this criticism leads Robynn Stilwell to question the potential division between Wagner's own intent and actual achievement in this respect, she also points to the problem of its inherent judgements of 'high' and 'low' art (1996, 440).

Adorno and Eisler contended that film scoring reduced the leitmotiv to the status of a 'musical lackey' (1994, 6). However provocative this statement may be, it does highlight a potential problem with the idea of musical subservience which appears to be supported by Wagner's own theories. Flinn points out that Wagner's concept of music as a submissive, 'feminine' element of music-drama hardly seems borne out by its role in his own works (1992, 26). She nevertheless ultimately seems bound to agree with the idea that the motivation of musical development by a dramatic rather than



purely musical impetus, renders the score subservient to the narrative and therefore unable to impart any real meaning of its own (ibid., 26 & 38). While posing the question, in connection with ideas of parallel and contrapuntal functions of film music, of what the music is supposed to be running parallel *to* (ibid., 35), therefore, Flinn stops short of examining the perhaps much more pertinent issue. The question is surely one of how music can be *subservient* to narrative when it is, in fact, a vital and integrated *part of* that narrative (see Stilwell 1997b, 552).

The complete acceptance of music's integral role in film narrative may also be hampered by the question of its conscious or unconscious apprehension by the audience, and its consequent capacity for actively contributing to, rather than just duplicating meaning (see, for example, Smith 1996). Gorbman's idea of 'mutual implication' suggests a dynamic relationship of narrative and music (1987, 15), which Michel Chion qualifies more fully with his concept of 'added value' (1990, 5). This addresses different levels of apprehension and suggests how it is the interactive perception of sound and image which creates complete meaning. Such an approach repudiates many of the negative implications of the perceived 'inaudibility' which arises from particular techniques of composition, orchestration and soundtrack mixing (Gorbman 1987, 76-79; Brown 1994, 59), or the 'redundancy' sometimes considered to follow integration (Adorno and Eisler 1994, 13-14; see also Stilwell's criticism in 1996, 438).

Chion defines 'added value' as

the expressive and informative value with which a sound enriches a given image so as to create the definite impression, in the immediate or

remembered experience one has of it, that this information or expression “naturally” comes from what is seen, and is already contained in the image itself (1990, 5).

Together with theorists such as Gorbman, Stilwell and Rick Altman, Chion therefore seeks to question the generally accepted hierarchy of vision and sound through which ideas of film music are often filtered. The presumed autonomy of the visual image is undermined by a re-emphasis on the interpretative effect of the sounds and music which the audience themselves may not even notice (Gorbman 1987, 15; Stilwell 1997a, 60-61 and 1997b, 552; Altman in Stilwell 1997a, 61). In looking beyond the ways in which narrative typically seeks to mask these effects, the potential contingency of the visual meaning is exposed.

Realising the operation and effect of this kind of interaction does not, however, actually detract from the still *perceived* centrality of the image. Rather than questioning this, the most productive route may be to reconceptualise what is meant by the term ‘image’, since it seems that the purely visual connotations of the term are the real source of the problem. Perhaps it is necessary to acknowledge that, within the context of film at least, the ‘image’ may not just constitute the actual visual events in front of the camera. Rather it is, as Stilwell suggests, a ‘composite’ of visual and aural elements which constantly inflect, interpret and influence each other (1997b, 552). The way in which we understand the visual events may be heavily dependent on musical patterns, just as the way in which we interpret a sound may be contingent upon its visual context.



Both Hollywood and British cinema of the 1940s tend to gender narratives dealing with 'emotional' subject matter according to a conflation of the 'feminine' and the 'female'. Accordingly, even though Gorbman suggests that the connection was already sufficiently strong in early sound cinema to override formal continuity (1987, 80), the specific gendering of music becomes something of an accepted fact. As Gorbman examines music and audience identification in a crucial scene from *Now, Voyager*, for example, she stops short of questioning the extent to which this identification is equally distributed between the two (male and female) characters (ibid., 65-66).

While the generic specificity of this particular film may account for our primary interest being in Charlotte's (Bette Davis') emotional trajectory, it must nevertheless be acknowledged that similar scenes in connection with male characters (in whatever genre) seem comparatively rare. Indeed, in Gorbman's comparison of music and 'epic feeling' in *Mildred Pierce* (1945) and *The Young Mr. Lincoln* (1939), as well as in Royal S. Brown's account of the meaning attached to the 'romantic' theme of *The Sea Hawk* (1940), a possible distinction appears to emerge. This seems to distinguish between an alignment of musically-represented (and universalised) female social/personal/domestic and male social/political/historical emotion (Gorbman 1987, 81-82; Brown 1994, 102-116).

The reflection of this distinction in the employment of particular musical styles is also evident. Brown compares the musical representation of hero Captain Geoffrey Thorpe (Errol Flynn) in *The Sea Hawk* with that which accompanies his meetings with romantic interest Doña Maria (Brenda Marshall). Thorpe is represented by the kind of spirited and strong music (such as fanfare patterns and brass orchestration) designated

as 'masculine' so many centuries ago. The presence of Doña Maria, however, brings with it string orchestration and the 'delicate, frail, high-pitched' use of celesta, harp and vibraphone (1994, 104).

Brown appears to accept this engendering of music without questioning its effect on either the constitution or place of characters within the narrative. Kathryn Kalinak's examination of musical representations of opposing musical constructions of femininity, however, does at least begin to suggest some of their possible ramifications for women. Although she does not refer to the history of such musical 'equivalents', the codes of Kalinak's 'fallen woman and virtuous wife' characterisations (1982) suggest the ancient figures of the Siren and the Muse in their most contemporary manifestations. These demonstrate accordingly how the options for behaviour, action and reaction open to the female character can be delimited through an association with '[c]ertain types of instrumentation, melody, harmony, and rhythm' (ibid., 76).

The musical styles which Kalinak finds aligned with particular types of female character in film reflect, according to the sexual and social implications of the siren/muse dichotomy, codes from opera, dramatic music and earlier ideas of musical 'decency'. She suggests that the classical film score 'frequently encoded otherness through the common denominator of jazz' (1992, 167). The 'fallen woman' (rebellious, not respectable, sexually 'independent') could therefore be characterised through the 'decadent' forms and instrumentation of 'jazz, the blues, honky-tonk, and ragtime' (1982, 76). Her harmonies were chromatic and dissonant and her rhythms syncopated and dotted (ibid., 77). These styles offered a popular equivalent to the meanings evoked through earlier uses of particular 'disruptive' codes in classical music.



The 'virtuous wife' (mother, sister, 'decent' woman) could then be represented in stark contrast by respectable, classical style music

with strong positive associations. Her instrumentation was orchestral, with the violins usually carrying the melody; the harmonies were lush, based on late nineteenth-century models; the rhythms were even and lyrical; and the melodies often had an upward movement, or included upward leaps in the melodic pattern (ibid., 77).

Kalinak's model does move beyond these polar oppositions to make clear that women can be characterised in more complex ways. In so doing, she suggests other interactions and implications which may be in operation between female characters and their styles of music.

The distinctions she draws between women such as Katie and Mary (Margot Grahame and Heather Angel) in *The Informer* (1935) and Scarlet and Melanie (Vivien Leigh and Olivia de Havilland) in *Gone With the Wind* (1939), for example, reveal that their sexuality seems inextricably linked to their strength and fortitude. The personal characteristics of the virtuous Mary in *The Informer*, it seems, 'fall far short of the fallen Katie's ... [so that she] does little more in the film than fall apart in a crisis and wring her hands in an emergency' (ibid., 78). While Katie is depicted as an extremely virtuous character in many ways, however, Kalinak argues that her visual and musical codes condemn her to ultimate judgement according to her sexuality alone. While Mary's theme is typical of the virtuous wife conventions, Katie's features dotted

rhythms, syncopation, minor tonality and ‘low strings, woodwinds, and brasses’ in the instrumentation (ibid., 77).

In a similar way Melanie, as the traditional wife and mother of *Gone With the Wind*, is described by her own husband as ‘frail and gentle’ in contrast to the ‘fine and strong and beautiful’, but also selfish, manipulative and independent Scarlet (ibid., 78). As Kalinak points out, both of these women are respectable in their sexual behaviour, and are therefore not as distinct in that respect as Mary and Katie. Although as a result they are both scored according to the codes of the virtuous woman, however, Scarlet’s less acceptable attributes are still subtly registered in her music. Kalinak argues that the dotted rhythms and chromaticism of her theme suggest the fallen woman codes, even if not completely surrendering her to them (ibid., 78).

Kalinak suggests that in this case, the music ‘makes another distinction based on their sexuality: Scarlet is not a traditionally passive female; Melanie is’ (ibid., 79). It seems possible, therefore, that acceptable sexuality may be considered indivisible in such cases from a more extensive (and perhaps partially negative) sense of emotional passivity, dependence and consequent social submissiveness. A more uncontrolled and dominating sense of sexuality, on the other hand, may in turn suggest a stronger, more independent and perhaps even more resourceful woman.

On examining the related musical and emotional representation of the female character in the melodrama and the woman’s film, the possible permutations of this formulation also need to be taken into account. What seems to be at stake is a socially accepted codification which allocates particular narrative roles and possibilities to women, rather than any essential connection between music and female emotions, sexuality and subjectivity. This should not, however, imply formulaic simplicity.



Kalinak suggests a considerable degree of complexity in the interaction between different styles of music. This is further complicated by the crucial addition of a consideration of the relationship of the female character to her own voice and the ability or right to speak, her narrative agency and her place and movement within male social and familial structures. In order to understand the entire consequences of the relationship of character to music, therefore, the overall narrative dynamic within which that character is placed must be taken into account.

## **Conclusion**

It seems that both cultural ideas of women and their dramatic representation share a common preoccupation with 'over-investing' the female with qualities of the feminine. Women are defined according to their emotions and the effect of the expression of these emotions on themselves, as well as on men and patriarchal society. A respectable and socially desirable woman is capable of both emotional and sexual self-control, while a more dangerous model of femaleness threatens uncontrolled and destructive (but perhaps exciting) emotionality and sexuality.

Particularly as music becomes conceptualised as representative of transcendent levels of 'feminine' emotion, however, its relationship to women is problematised by the perception of their physical weakness in the face of the sublime. Female creativity at the same level as a male artist implies an undesirably 'masculine'/male level of strength and sexuality. The expression of 'excessive' and uncontrolled levels of feminine emotion, however, signals potential insanity. While the perceived excess of

female emotionality becomes a point of curiosity, pathos or danger, women themselves are therefore dissuaded (for their own safety) from its active musical expression.

As this is translated into melodramatic representation in film, the female character becomes subject to a particular dynamic of expression and repression/control in which nondiegetic music plays a defining role. Her musical-emotional representation, reduced to the level of the sentimental and the romantic, demonstrates the dangerous and unrealistic levels of femininity which must be controlled in an ordered society. Perhaps accordingly, she is shown in social situations which demonstrate her enforced silence, control and containment. At the same time, this musical-emotional 'voice' resonates with the sense of a universal emotional and moral 'truth' which surpasses social and historical context. While the music remains at the nondiegetic level, however, such resonances are potentially lost on other characters and known only to the film audience. The female musical-emotional voice is therefore heard in order that the necessity of its control can be demonstrated. The dynamic of music and social context marks the melodramatic female as both the most powerful and the most powerless of characters.

In order to examine more closely the particular dynamic of narrative and social agency, access to self-expression and musical emotionality which appears to characterise the melodramatic female, Chapter Two will therefore focus on the woman's film. This will scrutinise the claim of this female-centred genre to represent female subjectivity, and will consider the interaction of the female character's voice and her (nondiegetic) musical-emotional expression/representation. Through this, the level of expression allowed to feminine emotion, and the degree to which femininity and femaleness are conflated, will become more clear.



## Chapter Two

### Music and the Voice in the Woman's Film

“There's nothing I need to say to him.”

Henriette in *All This and Heaven Too*

“It's the woman's point of view.” “Hmm, the woman's point of view.”

Otto and Andy in *In the Good Old Summertime*

Following Chapter One's examination of the possible positioning of women in film melodrama in terms of music, emotions and the voice, this chapter will begin by placing such arguments within the more specific context of the woman's film. Through an account of existing theory, I will examine the constitution of subjectivity in the woman's film. This will relate ideas of the construction of a visual point of view to the broader melodramatic relationship of speech, mutism/muteness/silence and music, to self-expression, self-control and narrative agency. From this I will suggest certain parameters for the relationship of female behaviour and self-expression to nondiegetic musical-emotional representation. I will then examine the possibility of female self-definition and development through ongoing interaction with personal memories and emotions through a case study of *Now, Voyager*.

## Women, Emotion and Subjectivity in the Woman's Film

It seems impossible to locate a strict distinction between the melodrama and the woman's film or, furthermore, even to identify them as distinct genres in their own right. Feminist critics appear to agree, however, that the 'purest' form of the woman's film is constituted by a narrative constructed according to the desires, experiences and point of view of a main female protagonist, as well as the explicit address of a female audience (see for example Haskell 1987, 154-155; Cook 1983, 14; Kuhn 1984, 339; Doane 1984, 284; Gledhill 1987, 10; LaPlace 1987, 139; Basinger 1993, 5-6).

According to this definition, the woman's film developed as a kind of 'sub-set' of the film melodrama (Gledhill 1987, 10), and seemingly became most popular as the behaviour and changing lifestyles of real women came under particular scrutiny during the 1940s (see also, for example, Place 1978).

Given its apparently sympathetic focus on female psychology, simultaneous with its aim to appeal specifically to female audiences, the woman's film therefore seems to offer the most obvious starting point for examining music and female emotions. The particularly female address may appear to separate this more recent attempt to 'understand' women from the (sometimes less sympathetic) operatic model, so that it seems as if the woman's film *should* herald changes in female emotional-musical characterisation. If cultural precedents are worth considering at all, however, it may also be remembered that the shifts in conceptions of femininity and emotion around the beginning of the 19th century, while extremely promising, nevertheless appeared to have largely failed to deliver appropriate changes in attitudes towards women.



Mary Ann Doane points out that its female address renders the woman's film a crucial means of 'ascertaining the place the woman is assigned as a spectator within patriarchies' (1984, 284). On a broader level, however, it may also offer the most effective cinematic rehearsal of the desired position of women (and their emotions) in 1940s society. Jeanine Basinger suggests that the success of the woman's film in this respect came from the fact that it

worked out of a paradox. It both held women in social bondage and released them into a dream of potency and freedom (1993, 6).

This balance of subversion and restriction therefore allowed the female audience a kind of double identification. They were shown a female character indulging in some fantasy scenario of 'systematic resistance to the symbolic representation of patriarchal capitalist hegemony' (Walker 1987, 204). The exciting alternative offered by this 'Other' world was represented, according to Basinger, by various manifestations of escape and independence as well as romantic and sexual awakening (1993).

At the same time, however, this fantasy can be presented as ultimately unsatisfactory or even dangerous for the female character, so that she comes to regret her initial desire for freedom and independence. In the end, therefore, the female audience may be able to see how, even though it may appear undesirably strict and repressive, accepting their 'rightful' place in patriarchal society is the best and certainly the safest and most realistic option (ibid.). What Flinn terms the 'partial utopias' of the woman's film, may therefore propose 'the beginnings of a difference from the status quo', but stop short of advocating true subversion (1992, 150). Along the way,

nevertheless, they offer a great deal of escapism through vicarious excitement and pleasure.

The mediated access to subjectivity which this demonstration of the potential pitfalls of female agency offers to women, is reflected in the kind of crisis which Doane locates in attempts to represent the visual point of view of the female protagonist. Doane's ideas offer a response to Laura Mulvey's contention (based, as Linda Williams points out, on an examination of male-centred genres (1984, 304), that the classical Hollywood cinema positions the spectatorial gaze as 'male' and objectifying of women (1975). It may therefore be expected that Doane's investigation of a genre focusing so exclusively on female experience and (supposedly) subjectivity would present an effective counter-case.

Following Mulvey's definition of the woman's melodrama, Pam Cook suggests that the emotion and desire central to the construction of the female protagonist's point of view problematises the validity of femininity as a subject position (1983, 16). Doane finds accordingly that the woman's film invests the female gaze with various symptoms of instability, weakness and danger. These undermine its authority and validity through narrative structures which continually evoke the "feminine condition[s]" ... [of] masochism, hysteria, neurosis, [and] paranoia' (1984, 285). In some cases, therefore, the only point of view available to the female character may be a paradoxically passive look *back* at the male gaze (be it individual or institutional), that actively strives to dissect and decipher her (Walker 1987, 209).

According to Doane, a further extension of this is offered through a frequent recourse to what she terms 'medical discourses' based on Freudian models of psychoanalysis (1987, Chapter 2). These narratives manifest the woman's difficulty in



supporting a subjective position as an actual identifiable illness. Such a condition can only be 'cured' by her diagnosis at the hands of the (male) doctor to whom she 'confesses' all and her subsequent return to the 'normal' status of the specularised object of a loving (male) gaze. This formulation therefore continues the idea of the threat of social disgrace and/or physical and psychological illness which threatened 19th century women unable to control or subdue their 'excessive' femininity. The female protagonist of the 'medical discourse' is caught between emotionally 'respectable' behaviour or the 'disease' of excessive emotionality/sexuality.

Janet Walker suggests that

[t]he subject matter of psychoanalysis and femininity promised a pleasurable spectacle which could both bring up fascinating aberrant sexuality and unconscious processes, and also diffuse and regulate issues threatening to get out of hand (ibid., 204).

This may therefore position the woman's film as facilitating a structure surprisingly similar to McClary's double framing operatic text (see Chapter One of this thesis). The emphasis on controlling excesses of femininity is apparently vital in any era to the maintenance of patriarchal control. Now, however, it takes on a historical specificity which at least partially mitigates the re-definition of its audience. Female emotionality, once again positioned as a (perhaps ghoulishly) stimulating spectacle to be enjoyed before being neutralised, is now principally addressed to a female audience who must learn to control *themselves* in the wartime absence of men as well as their post-war return.

## Women and the Voice in the Woman's Film

In a similar way to the operatic texts which McClary considers, this question of self-control raises issues of how the female protagonist of the melodrama and woman's film relates to codes of speech, access to the voice and vocal control. The generic emphasis on (self-) expression highlights the very processes of communication. Just as Chion points out that mutism is the 'corollary and condition of speech' (1982, 98), Brooks has therefore suggested that muteness is the potential 'corresponding sensory deprivation' of melodrama (1976, 57).<sup>1</sup> While, in 19th century theatrical melodrama, this commonly finds a place in features such as silent tableaux encapsulating characters' emotional states, the most extreme manifestation locates the sensory deprivation in one specific character. Developing the idea that the mute gesture represents some kind of 'original' and immediate language, muteness as a feature of characterisation therefore takes on a very particular weight of meaning. Whereas, according to Chion, the mute character in melodrama is rarely a central figure, his/her presence can be key to the drama, and inherently disturbing to the other (speaking) characters (1982, 96-97).

According to both Chion and Kaja Silverman, the central importance of the voice and speech is exacerbated in sound film by its constitution in terms of what Chion calls 'vococentrism' (ibid., 5). As a result of soundtrack construction and 'natural' human processes of listening for comprehension, Chion and Silverman suggest that audiences, rather than being aware of all the sounds on the soundtrack in

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<sup>1</sup> This sentence makes a slippage between the terms 'mutism' and 'muteness'. Whereas, as Chion points out (1982, 96), the first condition is physiological and the second psychological. I feel that in terms of film narrative, the effect in relation to self-expression is sufficiently similar to make the common use of 'muteness' acceptable.



equal proportion, are more perceptive of ‘voices, and then everything else’ (ibid., 5). Inevitably, therefore, the character who is unable to speak occupies a peculiarly pointed role, particularly in relation to the idea of concealed information and hidden secrets. Chion suggests that the very presence of the mute character not only indicates that the text incorporates a secret, but also that this is the real key to the story. The position of ‘knowing the truth’ which this assumes for the mute character is in turn often extended to his/her assignment as the moral conscience of the narrative, the all-seeing arbiter and source of truth next to whom ‘everyone feels guilty’ (ibid., 96).

Perhaps most importantly, according to Chion, the

...cinematic mute brings into play the status of language, speech, and the voice in cinema. A voiceless body, he [sic] refers by inference to his counterpart, the bodiless voice of the *acousmètre*.<sup>2</sup> ... In both cases ... the character ... is taken as more or less all-seeing, all-knowing, often even all-powerful. And in both cases, unveiling either his voice, or his body and face, has the effect of breaking the spell, resigning the character to an ordinary fate, taking away his mythic aura and putative powers (ibid., 100).

When Doane suggests, however, that in the woman’s film, ‘muteness which is characteristic of the woman is in some ways paradigmatic for the genre’ (1987, 66), important questions arise as to the implied gender of Chion’s characterisation.

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<sup>2</sup> Chion’s term for the unseen narrator of a voice-over-led film. The relationship of the female to this mode of narration is more closely examined in Chapter Three of this thesis.

It may be possible to bring to mind examples of male mute characters who exercise something like the kind of power Chion suggests, such as John (Art Smith) in *Letter from an Unknown Woman* and Jimmy (Dickie Moore) in *Out of the Past* (1947). There is, however, no pressure for these characters to (learn to) speak. The curiosity value of how their voices would sound and the threat of such a revelation to their omniscience are therefore not really at issue. As Chapter Five of this thesis will demonstrate, even when a man is compelled to ‘tell’ his story, his privacy within the diegesis can still be protected. In the case of the female mute, however, and particularly in the ‘medical discourse’, the whole narrative tends to centre on the inducement of the woman actually to *speak*, for the very purpose of returning her to a socially-desirable construction of Chion’s ‘ordinary fate’.

The silence of women in the woman’s film seems mainly to be represented as occurring on three levels. Mutism shows the woman as physically unable to speak whatever happens (*Johnny Belinda* (1948)). Muteness renders the woman silent for psychological reasons but allows her to be induced to speak through persuasion, hypnosis, medicine (narcosis) or the advent of absolute life-and-death necessity (*The Seventh Veil* (1945), *Possessed* (1947), *The Spiral Staircase* (1945)). The third possibility, which might be termed ‘selective’ muteness, however, is perhaps the most interesting and complex. This shows a woman who is fully able to speak (and has something to say) consciously choosing to remain silent on a crucial issue.

The first two conditions (particularly the second) seem to emphasise the ‘silencing’ of the woman by various manifestations of social/domestic/emotional oppression. Instances of psychological muteness (as well as the extremely unusual physical mutism) inevitably lead to more ‘specialised’ narrative patterns, usually



placing the woman as the central focus of Doane's 'medical discourse'. In this case, the point of the story often becomes a gendered variation on Chion's 'Debureau effect' (1982, 102), the curiosity to hear the woman's voice in order to understand her story and perhaps thereby to discover the original reason for her muteness. Freeing the woman's voice in this way is, however, a rather more contentious route to establishing her subjectivity than may be imagined.

Doane states that within the medical discourse, the body of the woman bears visible symptoms of an invisible and repressed interiority (1987, 39). The symptom, she further suggests, 'can be seen as manifesting the severity of the repression or the force of the energy attached to the repressed idea which "breaks through" to the surface' (ibid., 44). Since, as Chion recalls, the type of Freudian psychoanalysis popularised in 1940s Hollywood cinema mobilises the curative power of talking (1982, 1), the extremity of rendering a female character mute robs her of the very ability to deal with her own knowledge or memory, at the same time as suggesting that her memory contains some unusually and deeply horrific 'key' (ibid., 97). In order to access this crucial secret, the woman must usually (but not always) be induced to speak. Through techniques ranging from friendly persuasion to hypnosis and (the miraculous) 'truth drug' narcosis, therefore, the conventional doctor figure gives the woman back her voice, and then listens intently to her story in order to diagnose her problem.

Already, this 'female-centred' narrative process appears fraught with difficulty. Most importantly, as Doane points out, the result of the nature of the psychoanalytical narrative process is that the woman's voice becomes the 'gift' of the male doctor (1987, 56). Since she can only talk as freely and as long as she is permitted, her discourse can be segmented, framed and controlled by its division into manageable

chunks. In films such as *Lady in the Dark* (1944), *The Seventh Veil*, *Possessed* and *The Snake Pit* (1948), therefore, intermittent (male) analysis can help to guide the spectator towards a particular diagnostic interpretation of the woman's innocently straightforward storytelling.

In a similar way to McClary and Clément's discussions of the containment and disempowerment of socially or sexually dangerous women in operatic texts, the deviance of the female psyche can thus be 'viewed' from a safe distance, whether for the ends of jealous pleasure, sensuous enjoyment, disgusted horror or scornful disdain. Although this usually limits the female subject largely to flashback narration, films such as *Gaslight* (1940), *The Locket* (1946) and *Caught* (1948) demonstrate in different ways how the woman can be a completely non-complicit, or even a deceptive and resistant 'patient' in the present.

The third condition of conscious 'selective' muteness/silence, however, appears significant for the woman's own choice in the matter. Even if she feels compelled to make her decision as a result of undesirable social pressures or circumstances, this can nevertheless evince a certain kind of power and control (perhaps of the only sort open to her). Since her silence often results in self-sacrifice of one sort or another, the element of conscious choice marks this as a state of simultaneous constraint and incredible strength and self-discipline. This particular kind of silence structures some of the truly definitive moments of women's films. It signifies (apparently) glorious and transcendent moments of self-sacrifice, as well as marking the most extreme points of frustratingly inexplicable character motivation.

Although tragic in affect, the greater good of the innocent other can motivate painful selective silence (or the self-conscious use of 'wrong' words to conceal the



truth). This occurs in maternal melodramas such as *Stella Dallas*, *Madame X* (1937), *Imitation of Life* (1934) and *The Old Maid* (1939) as well as love stories such as *Dark Victory* (1939) and *All This and Heaven Too* (1940). Heroic selective muteness becomes more problematic, however, when those being protected are rather less innocent, such as undeserving daughters (Vida (Ann Blyth) in *Mildred Pierce*) or adulterous men (Walter (John Boles) in *Back Street* (1932)). It becomes annoyingly inexplicable when it can lead to little but misunderstanding and pain (Myra's (Vivien Leigh's) refusal to reveal the reported death of her fiancé and later, her own prostitution in *Waterloo Bridge* (1940) and Lisa's (Joan Fontaine's) secrecy over her child and her own identity in *Letter from an Unknown Woman*).

Non-verbal melodramatic codes may, however, sometimes be allowed to 'speak' the emotions, thoughts and memories of diegetically silent characters. In Chapter One I outlined my suggestion of the basic paradox of the melodramatic representation of the (often female) 'victim'. The woman's film, in concentrating on the female protagonist's social position in the context of her emotional/moral constitution, seems to make some of its most painful and frustrating points about society and femaleness through highlighting the essential oppositions of this 'circular' system of expressivity and non-expressivity. The relationship of female vocality to silence, power to powerlessness and propriety and social expectation to personal desire therefore become primary issues.

## Nondiegetic Music and Emotion in the Woman's Film

The physical 'separation' of nondiegetic music and diegetic speech (or silence) may ordinarily be accounted for as a matter of form. The particular context of the woman's film, however, highlights what is in fact an inherent (and somewhat paradoxical) shift between narration through silence and sound. The predominant association of music with the female character renders our experience of her story distinct from that of all other characters and marks her emotions as particularly important. The separation of music from the diegetic space, however, means that it becomes (as opposed to diegetic music) simultaneously *mute* and *audible*.

This allows the film audience literally to 'hear' (and therefore interpret) what other diegetic characters can only guess at or, in truly melodramatic form, completely fail to understand about the 'mute' woman (see Neale 1986; Elsaesser 1972). Elsaesser's idea of the 'silence made eloquent' (1972, 66) therefore proves a highly evocative description of female expressivity in the woman's film. Making the woman's silence so painfully and audibly eloquent, ultimately serves more than anything else to highlight the reality, and fullest possible social and personal meaning of her silence.

At the same time, however, the essentially symbiotic nature of the music-expression relationship must be noted. While the lack of access to, or refusal of verbal self-expression seems to necessitate music, it is nevertheless the presence of music as part of the film narration which *allows* and *facilitates* this particular kind of female silence. The woman does not need to be able to speak, for us to understand something of what she *might* say if she could. If she consciously *chooses* to withhold her voice, the film may allow the nondiegetic music to speak for her while she remains enigmatic



within the diegetic space. In her most heightened emotional state, as Martin Rubin suggests in relation to *Back Street*, the woman can even return the film to a wholly 'silent' state. She can remove speech altogether to represent 'pure', transcendent emotion through the combination of what Rubin sees as the 'purest of the film's ... voices' - the image and nondiegetic music (1985, 284).

This potential for the explicit representation of the woman's emotional state can also be seen to undermine any attempt the film may make to distance her from the power to narrate. Doane argues that the Hollywood sound film 'oscillates between two poles of realism: that of the psychological (or the interior) and that of the visible (or the exterior)' (1980, 59). As a result of this,

“[k]nowledge” of the interior life of the individual can be grounded more readily in the fullness and spontaneity of his or her speech doubled by the rhetorical strategies of music and sound effects. ... The ideological truth of the sound track covers that excess which escapes the eye, for the ear is precisely that organ which opens onto the interior reality of the individual, not exactly unseeable, but unknowable within the guarantee of the purely visible (ibid., 61).

The woman's film appears to capitalise on the psychological 'realism' of female emotions and their validity as a source of motivation. Whatever the film may do to try to frame the woman's speech can be circumvented by the freedom and veracity of her musical-emotional representation. In certain circumstances, the potential which the music has to subvert the 'official' reading of the woman's actions may even present the

possibility of an 'alternative' film, such as that which Maureen Turim sees behind Louise's (Joan Crawford's) psychoanalysis in *Possessed* (1989, 160).

The woman's film may therefore be attempting to represent a specifically female relationship to femininity. It seems to suggest a very particular idea of subjectivity which, rather than just showing how women feel, actively demonstrates a certain frustration with the inadequacy or impossibility of verbal self-expression. While this frustration can be painful, it can also register the intangible depths of female emotions in more pleasurable situations. As Louise says to David (Van Heflin) in *Possessed*: "‘I love you’ is such an inadequate way of saying ‘I love you’." This apparently (see Chapter Five of this thesis) *specifically female* understanding can then stretch beyond the physical fact of mere vision in films such as *Stella Dallas* (Williams quoted in Flinn 1992, 136) and *Dark Victory* (see *ibid.*, 136), in an attempt to speak to the similar experiences of the (perhaps regretfully) sympathetic female audience.

This may lead to a more specific understanding of how music can work in conjunction with the female character's emotions, at least when it is clearly attached to her individual trajectory. Many writers on the woman's film recognise the importance of music in registering 'the truth of a person, ...[or] ... that which is just beyond the frame' (Doane 1989, 49-50). It has been considered possible that its repetitions may reflect the different rhythm and temporality of female experience (Modleski 1984, 329-330; Elsaesser 1972, 45), or that it connects to the woman's passion (Basinger 1993, 7-8) or sexuality (Lawrence 1991, 88, although this is only in connection with diegetic music). This tends, however, to be as far as any analysis goes in this context. Just as Doane suggests that the visual subjectivity of the female character/spectator requires



closer attention, therefore, this musical-emotional assumption must also demand proper investigation.

In order to ascertain the role which music may play in the construction of female subjectivity, it is therefore necessary to move beyond the idea of the potential powerlessness of the nondiegetic space and the framing of musical-emotional representation within the 'rational' masculine discourses of medicine, psychiatry, respectable love and marriage. If it is possible that a particular sense of female subjectivity may be located in the interaction of meanings conveyed by the woman's words, behaviour and music, then a more specific idea of what this could mean for any individual female character should become apparent through a study of this dynamic.

This may therefore begin to redefine the female protagonist's position in relation to narrative and narration. Since nondiegetic music allows her relationship to the strictures of language, propriety and medical analysis to be mediated, whatever she says (or is made to say, or does not say) must be evaluated in terms of the accompanying music. Her point of view may therefore become apparent through the way in which she actively deals with, or behaves within the context of emotions and desires which she knows to be 'unacceptable' or socially/respectably 'inexpressible'.

### ***Now, Voyager* and the star image of Bette Davis**

*Now, Voyager* is a particularly rich text through which to closely examine the interaction of female emotions, the voice and music. It presents us with a woman who develops from a complete lack of emotional self-control to the conscious ability to either withhold or to most eloquently express her own voice, thoughts and emotions. It

also, however, incorporates the inherent potential for a powerfully subversive representation of womanhood promised by the star image of Bette Davis.

Andrew Britton suggests that Davis' physical and behavioural characteristics are first aligned with the ideological category of the 'wicked' woman or the 'bitch' in *The Cabin in the Cotton* (1932) (1995, 162). *The Old Maid* then later establishes her most typical dramatic setting, encapsulating not only the story of the woman who is unable to marry her lover, but also the 'characteristic generic preoccupation with the contradiction between female desire and the ethical norms and economic structures of patriarchal capitalism' (ibid., 153-154). Within this formulation, 'Davis can play victim, or oppressor, or both. ... [Her] persona raises the issue - what is the meaning of the terms 'good' and 'bad'? What is the social specificity of their conventional meaning?' (ibid., 162).

Britton argues that Davis does not usually play feminist characters, since she does relate to men: she is located within the 'private realm', the traditional sphere of female competence, but is for some reason incompatible with its norms. She repeatedly plays women who wish to be married, but whose marriage is prevented by some external impediment. ... [And w]hen [she] plays a woman who occupies a position of great social power, such as in *The Private Lives of Elizabeth and Essex* or who commits herself to professional self-definition outside of marriage, such as in *The Old Acquaintance* and *All About Eve*, the film invariably stresses the ultimate barrenness of her achievement, its irrelevance to her 'real' needs (ibid., 163-164).



What Britton does not really examine about the casting Davis in such roles, however, is the particular emotional affect of that ever-present ‘bitchy’ capacity which clearly remains a part of most, if not all of her performances in some form. In a similar way to the star image of Margaret Lockwood (see Chapter Four of this thesis), this sense of a very different person within, with strength, dogged resolve and (sometimes) selfish determination, informs even her most apparently ‘girlish’, delicate and/or defeated characters. It may therefore be supposed that audiences, familiar with Davis’ previous roles, would read each new character in the light of this earlier experience.

Some of the sense of unbelievably violent self-constraint in a film like *The Old Maid*, and at the beginning of *Now, Voyager*, for example, must come from knowledge of her ‘true’ sexuality, energy, strength or capacity for selfishness and/or wickedness displayed in films such as *The Cabin in the Cotton*, *Jezebel* (1938), *The Letter* (1940), *The Little Foxes* (1941), *Mr. Skeffington* (1944) and *Beyond the Forest* (1949). Knowing what lies within her, the power required to restrain herself becomes all the more astounding, and her agreement to be subjugated all the more suspect.

It is this monumental inner strength that comes to the fore in *Now, Voyager*, allowing her to come closest, in Britton’s view, to a ‘feminist self-definition’ (ibid., 164). Although crucial to many of her characterisations, it is here that her characteristic portrayal of an (almost) overwhelmingly powerful interiority becomes the issue of the whole story. Her desires are more fully expressed (and either accepted or condemned) in films such as *Cabin in the Cotton*, *The Great Lie* (1941), *Mr. Skeffington* and *Beyond the Forest*, and overtly repressed in others such as *The Old Maid*. *Now, Voyager*, however, challenges her to define herself against a series of equally viable social, sexual and emotional options. The necessity for her to understand

and take control of her own desires results in an unusually intricate dynamic between strongly felt interior and exterior states. This is expressed to a significant degree in the interaction between the diegetic (sound and visual) elements of the ‘image’ and the nondiegetic music.

### **Re-playing the past: Emotion, Memory and Music in *Now, Voyager***

“As long as I can remember that fire has never been lit.”

“High time it was then Lloyd.” (Lloyd and Charlotte in *Now, Voyager*)

*Now, Voyager*, so commonly referenced in terms of both its narrative content and iconic images, seems difficult to contest as a quintessential woman’s film. Notoriously hard to pin down in terms of exactly what it is saying to its female (or indeed male) audience, it pits a dizzying complex of sub-generic narrative patterns against Bette Davis’ powerful star image and famous ability to suggest complex interiority through facial expression, tone of voice and physical gesture. The provocative story and characterisation which result make many others seem simplistic in comparison. Perhaps naturally, therefore, readings are often contradictory, as theorists strive to understand exactly why the heroine acts as she does and where this leaves the other characters and the film audience.

This is a film veritably saturated in music, with rarely a scene which does not contain either diegetic or nondiegetic scoring. What seems amazing about such an intensely scored narrative is the degree to which the nondiegetic music appears to



centre on Charlotte Vale, the main protagonist, and constitutes a comprehensive map of her developing relationship to her own emotions. Perhaps more than any other film, the score of *Now, Voyager* intricately charts the changing dynamic between a woman's emotional life, behaviour, speech and self-expression. It registers the place of memory and imagination in the constitution of her psychology, as well as marking the crucial generic distinction between undesirable repression and conscious self-control.

Davis' star persona, and its dynamic relationship with Charlotte's characterisation, may account to some extent for the film's unusual capacity for concentrating all its themes on one character, and their use in so intimately suggesting the very nature of emotional containment, development and maturity. Despite the apparent association of themes with other characters, particularly Mrs. Vale (Gladys Cooper), Dr. Jacquith (Claude Rains), Jerry (Paul Henreid) and Tina (Janis Wilson), there actually seems to be a rather paradoxical lack of musical relevance to anyone other than Charlotte herself (although the 'closeness' of Charlotte and Tina may somewhat blur this distinction). Ultimately, it appears that the other characters exist largely in the capacity of catalysts for her development, representing various 'issues' in her earlier troubled life and the means of overcoming them. Although, therefore, Charlotte's final situation locates her between the various people who have positively affected her, it is somehow more her relationship to the emotions and memories that constitute her own sense of selfhood that is most at stake.

Despite retaining the vital common element of the influence of others on the self, this focus marks *Now, Voyager* as distinct from other films in related sub-genres identified by Doane as the medical discourse, maternal melodrama and love story (1987). Charlotte's maternal relationship to Tina, for example, is balanced against her



experience with her own mother. It therefore takes on the aura of a more abstract commentary on the nature of motherhood through successive generations specifically, perhaps, as symbolic of a social progression away from Victorianism (ibid., 74), rather than just being about this individual 'mother' and 'daughter'. Maria LaPlace also makes the extremely compelling suggestion that Charlotte's desire for independence supercedes her desire for a husband and children of her own (1987, 164-165).

Remembering also her rejection of the well-meaning but overbearingly 'respectable' Elliot (John Loder), it may therefore be that Jerry acts as barely more than a stepping stone for Charlotte. In order to win the right to dictate her own existence that she really craves, she has therefore to skip over him rather than become dependent on him.

As LaPlace suggests it does seem of paramount importance, after all, that *Jerry* desires *Charlotte* rather than vice versa (although this is clearly also the case) (ibid., 145). Charlotte cannot really make an active choice over her potential romantic/sex life until it is absolutely clear that one is available to her. The real issue seems to be the achievement of the 'state' of desirability, beyond which an actual physical relationship seems almost unnecessary. The extra added bonus in this case is the promise of an almost ethereal 'eternal desirability', thanks to Jerry's permanent commitment and renaming of Tina as "our child". This works even despite the denial of a physical relationship which, as a truly bizarre subtext to the film, seems to persuade characters, audiences and critics alike that there is no 'real' infidelity involved to his wife.

The personal and social progress of Charlotte is reflected in her relationship to her mother, family, psychiatrist, lover and lover's daughter, as well as in her personal expression through her style of dress, appearance and her apparent self-control and sense of her own sexuality. On the surface, this appears to present the straightforward



metamorphosis of the woman - a transformation made successful through the combined efforts of Lisa (Ilka Chase) the benevolent sister-in-law, Dr. Jacquith, Jerry and, unknowingly, Tina - which results in her achieving a kind of fantasy family life without actually being a real wife or mother. By the end of her story, she is desirable, rich and successful, and has reached a position where she can make sophisticated and assertive choices. Even at this level, however, it is apparent that readings of the film interpret the issues and questions raised in subtly different ways. This is exemplified by the fact that the real crux of the film's meaning, offered in its closing scene, becomes the site of some disagreement, not so much as to *what* happens but *why* it happens.

Stanley Cavell poses what is perhaps the basic question of *Now, Voyager* and indeed all similar narratives which seek to 'cure' the woman of whatever ails her, when he questions what it means for a woman in such a compromised situation to be redeemed by a man. He states that:

This demand for education has to do with the woman's sense that she stands in need of creation, or re-creation. Now comes the moral cloud. Does creation from, even by, the man somehow entail creation *for* the man, say for his use and pleasure and pride? If not, how does the woman attain independence; how does she complete, as it were, her creation? (1996, 116).

As Charlotte is taken up and re-created by the narrative, a process which she herself desires as she begs Dr. Jacquith to help her, a crucial problematic arises. This concerns the question of whether she can become a person in her own right, or whether she is

merely transformed into a form of womanhood more acceptable to men in which she herself can also find some degree of pleasure, if not complete happiness.

Cavell considers that Charlotte does achieve her own re-creation, and that this is indicated in her transformed responses to Jerry's inability to free himself from his wife to marry her (ibid., 129). Whereas during their holiday together she expresses tearful gratitude that he would even consider the idea, by the end of the narrative she flies into a fury as he seems unable to comprehend that she could possibly want anything other than a husband. Jerry seals his own redundancy in Charlotte's trajectory, Cavell suggests, when he talks of her self-sacrifice in caring for Tina on her own rather than finding "some man who could make [her] happy" (ibid., 129). In her angry and amazed rebuttal of his "conventional, pretentious, pious" attitude, Charlotte renders Jerry superficial. This denies the possibility that she is sacrificing herself to his world by her very revelation that this is only true in so far as Jerry wishes to believe it (ibid., 129).

As if in vindication of the new strength being exhibited by Charlotte over Jerry at this stage, Cavell also points out the disappearance of Charlotte's nickname 'Camille' from Jerry's speech (ibid., 131). *Now, Voyager* is a text which espouses the power of names to delineate and determine identification. This therefore seems to suggest Jerry's realisation of his loss of power over his ex-lover, the woman whom he once 'instructed' to call him by the shortened name (from Jeremiah) used specifically by his friends.

Lea Jacobs, however, picks up on this very point as an expression of the failings of Charlotte's final narrative moments. Seeing Charlotte as 'alone in her mother's house' and as having to 'repress her desire and live without a man' (1981,



102 - Jacobs presumably sees Charlotte's desire as purely sexual rather than maternal desire or the desire for independence), she views Jerry's place within the couple as replaced by his daughter Tina (ibid., 102). The confirmation of this transfer comes from the slippage in naming which results in both Charlotte and Tina adopting Jerry's nicknames for each other (Tina shortened from Christina, and Camille). They therefore, Jacobs suggests, come to 'speak to each other through his language' (ibid., 102).

Jacobs also contends that Tina and the "stars" of Charlotte's famous closing line are merely 'replacements for the man' (ibid., 103). There is perhaps little doubt that Charlotte's comparison of the stars to the moon does imply some kind of compromise, and something less than absolute happiness or fulfilment. This is also a compromise, however, which she acknowledges they both have to make ("Don't let's ask for the moon, we have the stars"). Charlotte and Jerry are still very much locked together in their trajectory even if it is neither ideal nor a conventional sexual relationship. What seems most important, however, is that it is *Charlotte* who has made the (undoubtedly reluctant) decision over its terms.

Jacobs' seemingly narrow definition of Charlotte's desire therefore seems to prevent her from recognising the sophisticated and subversive degree of active choice which she is clearly exercising. Whether Charlotte likes it or not, she recognises that she cannot have everything if she wants to remain faithful to her own emotions (particularly towards Jerry). Rather than fighting the situation, she chooses what she sees as the most satisfactory way forward and resigns herself to it. Her strength in resisting her own still evident desire for Jerry therefore appears the most crucial point of the final scene. Jacobs' view that it is a 'perverse gesture' that the narrative refuses

to bring Charlotte's desire to fruition seems to miss this important and subtle point, as does her reference to Charlotte's apparent contentment with this situation as 'an even more perverse sub-text' (ibid., 103).

Both Cavell and LaPlace actually seem to see the relationship between Charlotte and Tina as more telling of the film's message than her relationship with Jerry. Charlotte may have claimed some kind of independence, even if she can only exercise it from within the home (LaPlace 1987, 164). Her positive mothering skills, however, nevertheless appear to involve re-creating for Tina the very approach to self-image which Charlotte herself apparently seeks to challenge. Cavell once again poses the vital question about this relationship. He suggests that it is

either the most disturbed or ... the most therapeutic of all we are shown; ... the one in which the conditions of unhappiness in this world are perfectly synthesised and reproduced for another generation, or in which they are specifically relieved, or modified (1996, 142-3).

A difficult question to answer, the apparent advantages of the situation for both females are extremely complex. As LaPlace states, the discovery of Tina constitutes the final stage of Charlotte's voyage of self-discovery. It allows her to achieve mastery of herself and her world (including Jerry) through becoming a good mother to Tina and, through mirroring with her own childhood, a good 'replacement' mother for herself (1987, 164). The repetition of her own physical transformation in Tina, however, happens despite Charlotte's new modern-minded independence. She herself has become much less concerned with the excesses of glamour which preoccupied her



earlier transition from “ugly duckling” to the ideal of ‘everyday’ womanhood that she represents at the end of the film’s ‘how-to-be-beautiful’ consumerist project (ibid., 141, 163-164).

The actual appearance of Charlotte’s transformed Tina, however, also seems to suggest an idea of the potential ugliness of ‘glamour’. Although it is unclear whether this is the film’s intended effect, this idea sits surprisingly comfortably within the text as a whole. While certainly not an unattractive girl in her own right, actress Janis Wilson is made to look like a childish parody of adult female self-adornment in her overly frilly party frock. This seems to emphasise her lack of adult shape, complete with a rather too ‘grown-up’ hairstyle which lends to the strangely awkward appearance of her (usually bespectacled) eyes.

Likewise, the height of Charlotte’s glamour during her holiday cruise seems designed more to express the bad fit between her unconfident state of mind and her ‘sophisticated’ outward appearance. Her clumsily heavy evening gown (seemingly made of the same white chiffon as Tina’s party dress) and cape, lend her an unflatteringly swamped and round-shouldered shapelessness. This stands in sharp contrast to her later stylishly simple and understated outfits which draw attention to her new ‘ideal’ figure and self-confident poise.

This could evoke Cavell’s argument that it is the possibility of having the courage to become ‘the one you are’, rather than just beauty itself, which is the real source of the film’s glamour (1996, 122). In passing through to the other side of ‘standard’ glamour, therefore, a woman can achieve what Charlotte herself would call “a kind of beauty”. It would then be possible to argue that Tina is merely in transition, with a view to ending up as sophisticated and ‘deeply’ beautiful as her surrogate

mother. The fact remains, however, that in terms of the film's structure, her uncomfortably superficial glamour and her new-found 'lovable' selfhood appear, rather worryingly, to coincide as a triumphant conclusion to her own lonely story.

Trying to find a way through this veritable minefield of seemingly contradictory values and ideas leads to perhaps more basic questions of the nature not only of personal 'metamorphosis' but also of happiness. Barbara Creed states that the end of the heroine's story is 'never unconditionally happy', citing Charlotte as a prime example as a woman who relinquishes her dreams of marriage and a family (1978, 28). I cannot wholly agree with Creed's interpretation of Charlotte's final choices. This does, however, throw open the question of whether there is any real meaning behind such a phrase as 'unconditionally happy', particularly in the context of narratives which seek to negotiate the impossibility of woman's social positioning.

Rather than bemoaning the necessity for compromise, a more productive route may be to examine the exact nature of Charlotte's negotiation of narrative and social possibilities. This also opens up the question of what metamorphosis really means in the context of her story. As a result, *Now, Voyager* becomes more like an honest confrontation of what it actually means to live with painful memories and fantasy on a daily basis, and to measure ongoing behaviour against this background. The story therefore goes beyond the potential points of romantic narrative closure with either Jerry or Elliot, and contests Doane's perhaps too simplistic (in this case at least) contention that the woman's health coincides with her transformation into a specular object (1987, 41). Instead, it swiftly bypasses the usual intricacies of the psychoanalytic process to focus on what happens in the long months afterwards. Charlotte's 'cure' continues throughout the film. The search at the heart of the



narrative is not for the original source of her problems, however, with the rather fantastic but surprisingly common idea that this discovery will automatically bring sound mental health. Instead it seeks a way in which she can bring herself forward from what is only the starting point provided by Dr. Jacquith.

Outwardly Charlotte's metamorphosis appears little short of radical. Various constructions in the film, however, including the relationship of her behaviour and voice to the musical score, suggest that she is still negotiating ghosts from different stages of her past. Her later sophisticated clothes, for example, recall the pattern of her original frumpy dress combined with the style of her interim journey into glamour (Dyer 1998, 110-112). The way in which she communicates with Dr. Jacquith is also developed, beginning with her initial inability to look at him while she speaks, together with her sarcastically clipped tone ("Introverted, Doctor").

After a transitional stage, during which she references him more indirectly as a respected source of wisdom (through flashbacks, verbal references and a letter), she becomes able to communicate with him in the most relaxed and familiar way. In the final party scene, most notably, she looks him directly in the eye, asking in an affectionately mocking tone: "What are you looking at, Dr. Owl?". She thus turns the very process of his examination back on him and gently undermines the authority previously signified by his title. At the same time, in recalling their original clinical relationship, she confidently lays bare the real question behind her initial barbed parody of self-analysis.

Charlotte's metamorphosis is therefore emphasised as a re-negotiation with her physical and emotional surroundings and her memories, rather than a miraculous shift between polar opposites. Therapy has not wiped her memory clean, but has given her

the tools to re-fashion herself. Even though she still contains her old self, she is therefore different. Accordingly, her developing interaction with her emotions must be reflected through a new verbal and behavioural relationship to her own musical representation.

The importance of music to such an emotionally and memory-centred narrative is clear. It is through the score that elements of the past, and the various influences which effect Charlotte, can be kept alive and present. At the same time, musical variation can transform the past, and the particular dynamic of music to action and voice can recontextualise memories and influences. It therefore seems impossible to understand the crucial role of interiority in this narrative, and the relationship of interiority to outward behaviour and appearances, without examining the score.

An emphasis on the past and emotional development is indicated in the densely leitmotivic structure of the score. It also seems, however, that the actual musical construction of each theme indicates elements of its narrative bearing, including its significance in relation to the connotations of other themes. The musical themes themselves, through the particularity of their similarities and differences, therefore appear to contain a kind of narrative of their own, establishing and working through inter-related emotional concerns in a way which seems almost independent of the rest of the text. Since the first appearances of most themes precede a full development of the narrative elements with which they are associated, music therefore becomes a vehicle of the characteristic omniscience of the melodramatic spectatorial position. This allows both pain and enjoyment at being able to 'see' what will happen to the characters.



One of the reasons why *Now, Voyager* offers an ideal starting point for understanding the complexity with which emotions can be musically represented, is Max Steiner's characteristic practice of minutely following narrative development (see Gorbman 1987, 91-93). The difficulty of approaching his method through close analysis, however, comes from its own natural consequence. This is the sheer amount of music and number of repetitions of each theme. A full statement-by-statement analysis of *Now, Voyager*'s thematic development would be truly laborious, if nevertheless interesting, and perhaps in any case not completely necessary to understanding the relationship of musical and narrative development.

I have therefore divided the film into four sections. Each of these marks a new stage of Charlotte's progress in terms of the two most important elements of life which she negotiates - the maternal (whether as daughter or mother) and the (potential) marital relationship. The first section deals with the introduction of Charlotte, through both the description and assessment of others and her own self-image. It begins with the main opening titles and ends at the first view of Cascades. The second then examines the effect of Charlotte's holiday romance with Jerry, beginning as she is seen on the cruise ship for the first time and ending when she returns to New York. The third deals with her renegotiation of her relationship to her mother and her new attitude to marriage which concerns both Elliot and Jerry. It begins as she returns home to Boston and ends at her mother's death. The fourth then begins as she meets Tina at Cascades. It focuses on her attempt to correct the mother-daughter relationship as well as her final assertion of her intended relationship with Jerry.

Within each section I will focus on key episodes which crystallise Charlotte's state of mind by (re-)presenting her interaction with various themes and characters.

Her 4-part (re-)positioning to the act of being watched descending stairs, for example, marks her physical transformation, her mother's (physical and metaphorical) fall, and her final reincarnation through her 'daughter'. Similarly, the interaction of musical themes, and their relationship to other textual elements, develops between the sections in ways which may initially seem incongruous. Together (sometimes) with notable changes in the theme itself, however, this actually allows a more sophisticated understanding of the subtle differences in the types of emotion, need and influence which inflect various relationships at different times.

The most notable aspects of each theme's appearance are fully described in the written text of this chapter. The musical illustrations arising from this are, however, presented in distinct sets (with representative images) at the end of the chapter rather than in their overall order of appearance. This is intended to present a condensed version of the developmental narrative role of each theme.

While this means that many music cues are not included in the analysis, this should not imply their irrelevance to the emotional meaning of the text, but merely that every minute nuance in Charlotte's development cannot be recorded here. There are also reasonably long sections of the story where Steiner uses non-thematic music both diegetically and nondiegetically. This fulfils more general place and mood setting functions, most significantly during Charlotte's two holidays. It is my contention that relevant themes are purposefully eschewed on such occasions, in order to allow a sense of time passing and experience being gained through which Charlotte can develop towards her next significant moment. As well as protecting the audience from complete emotional overload, this also lends greater emotional import to those occasions which



are thematically scored. The main exception to this is examined in my analysis of the third section of the film concerning Charlotte's engagement to Elliott Livingstone.

The main themes are introduced in connection with Charlotte herself (henceforth 'Charlotte'), in her mother's view ('Mother'), in connection with Jerry ('Jerry' and the less prevalent 'Jerry1') and finally with Tina ('Tina').<sup>3</sup> The particular way in which each of these themes is constructed strongly suggests both their individual and related narrative connotations. At a very basic level, all the themes incorporate a similar pattern of repeated descending movement between pairs of notes. The 'Mother' and 'Tina' themes move primarily in close stepwise intervals, repeating pairs of notes sequentially with only a limited amount of deviation from this pattern. The 'Charlotte', 'Jerry' and 'Jerry1' themes, however, seem to elaborate the movement between the notes (regardless of the width of the interval between them). The emphasis on the framing notes is retained by accenting and longer note duration (fig. 1).<sup>4</sup>

While this may appear to suggest a relatively restricted emotional palette, it also evokes the idea of the presence of the same personality at the centre of each

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<sup>3</sup> If listed in strict chronological order, the first appearance of the 'Tina' theme actually precedes that of the 'Jerry' theme. It is such an isolated initial statement, however, that I have listed it in this context as later, and placed it later in the series of sets of musical illustrations at the end of the chapter.

<sup>4</sup> A note is required here on the musical quotations included in this chapter, which are taken from a copy of Max Steiner's manuscript short score. Although most of the themes are subject to sequential repetitions particularly in their initial statements, it is hoped that the extracts quoted will give sufficient indication of melodic shape, rhythm and harmony. The soundtrack quality of most video copies of *Now, Voyager* is extremely low, making it difficult to verify with absolute certainty many of the complex chords, or even sometimes elements of the orchestration indications, which appear in the short score. Having checked the contents of quotations as rigorously as possible, I have therefore placed a certain amount of trust in the short score. Most quotations are copied with alterations where discernable and some have had to be reconstructed according to Steiner's instructions to orchestrator Hugo Friedhofer. It is hoped that retaining the format of the short score will give as accurate an indication of elements such as variations in orchestration and texture as possible. I have retained Steiner's practice of eschewing key signatures in favour of (sometimes enharmonic) accidentals. I have also occasionally 'tidied' quotations by leaving out surrounding material.



emotional response. This not only indicates how much density of emotion can be contained within one individual character but also, and perhaps most importantly, the way in which those emotions can be closely related and even inter-dependent. Each emotional state which the central character experiences is not separate from all her other feelings, but is informed and constructed according to them. It is therefore possible that the subtleties of the musical-emotional relationships of the story, and the development of the main character, will be suggested in the dynamic of similarity and difference between all the themes. Before embarking on a more detailed examination of musical and narrative development of each theme, therefore, it is instructive to note how the relationship between the themes may work in more broad terms.

In terms of the basic similarity of movement between pairs of notes, the 'Charlotte', 'Jerry' and 'Jerry1' themes represent more elaborated versions of the 'Mother' and 'Tina' themes. It may be that this elaboration raises the question of movement and the journey between two points as much as the beginning and end points/notes in themselves. If such a musical distinction can be read in narrative terms, it may be possible to say that the basic pair of notes represents the problematic (maternal) issue at the heart of Charlotte's story. The more melodically extended themes then indicate her experience of her own passage through life, and specifically the developments which facilitate her movement between daughterhood, adulthood and motherhood. Although the 'Mother' and 'Tina' themes operate to resolve the original source of all Charlotte's narrative dilemmas, the story is actually framed by the 'Charlotte' and 'Jerry' themes.

Elements of apparent similarity between the 'Mother' and 'Tina' themes (fig. 2) seem to suggest the close proximity of Charlotte's relationships to her mother and



Tina, a relationship which is also echoed in other elements of the text. At the same time, however, pertinent differences between the themes lend them very distinct narrative properties and roles in relation to one another. The pairs of notes in each feature the repeated use of narrow descending intervals (major seconds in the 'mother' theme and alternating major and minor seconds in the 'Tina' theme). The harmonic and rhythmic context of this unit, however, differs in such a way that the 'Tina' theme seems to offer some kind of answer to the 'Mother' theme.

In its initial form, the 'Mother' theme suggests a peculiar feeling of both stasis and instability. The sense of stasis appears to come from the almost monotonous repetition of the melody line and supporting chords. The slight deviation of the melody line as it ascends by the still narrow interval of a minor third seems only to emphasise this by its immediate return to the original note pairing. The melodic notes are tied, however, over the strong beats of the 6/8 metre in anticipation of the (further accented) supporting chords which fall on the stronger first and fourth beats of each bar. The overall rhythm of the theme therefore suggests a slightly unstable 'rocking' or 'undulating' effect. This seems further emphasised by the countering of the melody notes in the inner voices of the chords. As the melody moves from C# to B, these voices respond by moving from B to C#.

This may suggest the restriction and confinement to which Charlotte is subject, as well as the precarious (im)balance of her emotional state. As Charlotte's relationship to her mother is replaced by her relationship to Tina, this instability seems countered by the more stable rhythm and harmonic direction of the 'Tina' theme. This theme seems to offer a more urgent sense of movement and progression. The undulation of the 'Mother' theme's 6/8 rhythm and rhythmically weak, tied melodic notes are



‘steadied’ into a 3/4 metre with rhythmically strong appoggiatura notes.<sup>5</sup> The particular effect of ‘leaning’ into the harmony which these notes offer suggests a yearning for resolution.

The poignancy of this effect is further emphasised by the notes which deviate from the paired pattern (i.e. the C and F notes in fig. 2). These leave the subsequent appoggiatura notes unprepared, which seems to heighten the effect of their dissonance. These notes are resolved, but this seems somewhat undermined by the constant upward chromatic movement of the bassline (which also delays the full resolution of bars 1 and 3 until the D of the third beat) and a frequent resolution onto seventh chords. The whole statement also ends on an unresolved chord which anticipates the theme’s repetition a semitone higher. The possible resolution of this repetition is then itself stymied by the reappearance of the ‘Mother’ theme.

The ‘leaning’ notes of the ‘Tina’ theme seem both to foreground the resolution of dissonance, and to express this through an imitation of the very sound of the girl’s name. The frequent resolution onto seventh chords, however, retains a sense of yearning and a lack of completeness within the repeated promise of a more satisfactory solution. In narrative terms, this seems to encapsulate both the possibilities and the difficulties of seeking to resolve the dissonance of the initial maternal relationship (Charlotte and her mother) through its replacement (Charlotte and Tina). Perhaps what the ‘Tina’ theme indicates most strongly in relation to the ‘Mother’ theme, therefore, is the positive *potential* for change and the correction of past mistakes offered by the representation of Charlotte’s first few steps into motherhood.

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<sup>5</sup> The appoggiatura note is characteristically nonharmonic to the chord with which it sounds, but then resolves by a tone or semitone step to a note consonant with this harmony. The rhythmic stress is from a strong to a weak beat. An appoggiatura is prepared if it is preceded by the same note and unprepared if approached by an intervallic leap.



In a similar way, the 'Jerry' theme may ultimately offer a positive 'antidote' to the 'Charlotte' theme. The 'Jerry1' theme, in this context, acts as a kind of transitory representation of the necessary interim inflation of Charlotte's spirits and self-confidence (or perhaps, the symbolic lifting of her 'vale'). All three themes, in elaborating the movement between notes, seem more concerned with the *way* in which Charlotte travels, as it were, rather than what her voyage is ultimately about. They seem less focused on the maternal issue, referring instead to the broader personal development which must happen in order to enable her transfer from daughter/child to mother/adult.

While it may be possible to say, therefore, that the 'Mother' and 'Tina' themes represent Charlotte as a daughter/mother, the 'Charlotte', 'Jerry' and 'Jerry1' themes refer to her as a person/woman. The salient differences between these latter three themes in this context, may therefore be located in the style of movement between the framing notes. Figure 3 aligns the three themes in order to emphasise the development of similar elements of pattern and structure.

It is tempting to suggest that the statement of the 'Charlotte' theme which accompanies the main titles incorporates something of the emotional trajectory of the whole film in its own extremely compact development. It opens in a style imbued with turbulence, but after a relatively subdued middle section returns to a more harmonically stable version of its own opening material and ends in a major key before segueing into the story itself. It is the first four bars of the theme which may therefore suggest Charlotte's position at the outset of the narrative.

The framing pair of notes in each of the phrases of the theme fall on the (further accented) strong first beats of the bar, giving the theme a definite sense of

shape and movement. A further sense of urgency is added by the tying of the melodic notes at the beginning of bars 1 and 3, so that the underlying chords seem to be forcefully striving to push the melody line forwards. A sense of dramatic tension is created by the musical tension between major and minor tonality. This seems exacerbated by the laboriousness of the semitonal movement of notes between the chords as well as their harmonic complexity. The intervals of the melody are relatively narrow, giving a sense of drama to the suddenly expanded descending interval between the final two notes (more exaggerated in the second phrase). In the introduction of the theme during the main title sequence (see also fig. 5a), the pessimistic turbulence implied in these forceable shifts and complex harmonies seems emphasised by aspects of orchestration and performance.

The full symphonic rendition is heralded by a brass fanfare and a rapidly ascending string glissando. The melody is played in a strong, marked style in the strings and echoed by a similarly accented phrase in the brass and cellos. The first, third and last note of each repeated phrase of the theme is marked by the timpani, and the use of rubato emphasises the weightiness of the movement towards the final descending interval. The second statement of the theme begins at a higher pitch and is once again emphasised by glissando strings, this time ending in a cymbal crash on the first melodic note. The strident style and emphatic use of glissandi and percussion give the sense of a powerfully emotional struggle between potential defeat and the continual striving for something seemingly beyond the limits of the music. Such an emotionally charged and truly melodramatic musical opening somehow seems to match the image of a massive liner in transit.



The 'Jerry1' theme follows a very similar overall pattern, but eschews the turbulence and drama of the 'Charlotte' theme in favour of smoother melodic movement and less complex harmony. The contour of the melody follows a more consistently smooth rise and fall of predominantly stepwise intervals, with a narrower interval between the framing pair of notes. The major tonality, lighter texture and more fluid movement (including the celesta passages which replace the brass and cello line) replace the previous sense of pessimism with a feeling of excitement. This is compounded by the second statement of the theme beginning at the same pitch as the first, but with the passage of notes reaching a minor third higher, and the framing interval being narrowed. The modulation of the theme from Ab major to E major also contributes to a brightening of tone and a sense of the music 'opening out'.

The 'Jerry' theme pares down the detail of the previous themes while retaining their basic overall shape. It maintains the positive tone of the 'Jerry1' theme but further simplifies the melodic line, harmony and texture to produce a more serene and controlled final version. While the idea of the framing pair of notes remains, this is smoothed into a descending line of even narrower intervals than the 'Jerry1' theme. The melodic movement between the framing notes uses a more restricted pitch range and number of notes, and the final note of the first phrase is also sustained to become the first note of the second phrase. Each of the first two phrases ends by emphasising upward rather than downward movement, with an added touch of lightness being given by the dotted rhythm.

Ascending movement is accentuated in the final optimistic rising figure which seems to be a variation on the initial ascent of the 'echoing' phrases of both the 'Charlotte' and 'Jerry1' themes. The eradication of these in between the main melodic

phrases gives the 'Jerry' theme a less complex and more homogenous texture. The seventh chord at the highest point of the ascent, however, yearns for the resolution which only follows from the transition into a new key for the theme's repetition.

The movement from the 'Charlotte' theme to the 'Jerry' theme may therefore suggest that Charlotte's discovery of desirability and romance gives her the capacity to chart a less troubled and turbulent course. The 'Jerry' theme moves with a kind of grace which might be more associated with acceptable, rather than dangerously excessive femininity. It retains a similar overall shape to the 'Charlotte' and 'Jerry1' themes, but eschews their sense of either turbulent drama or fluttering excitement.

The chromaticism and major/minor tension of the 'Charlotte' theme, although eventually 'tamed' within the main title sequence, is more permanently resolved in the more straightforward harmonies and progressions of both the 'Jerry' themes. The 'Charlotte' theme also seems characterised by struggle, where any attempt at upward movement is always eventually defeated by further descent. This is replaced in the 'Jerry' theme by the greater emphasis on ascending movement which suggests in turn both lightness and a perhaps transcendent sense of yearning. Perhaps when Charlotte realises her own desirability, therefore, she achieves a maturity and sense of inner calm which eradicates anything which might be considered extraneous or unnecessarily elaborate in her musical representation.

The two remaining main themes, designated according to their respective narrative associations as 'Cascades' and 'Vale', appear less centred on Charlotte's interiorised response to influences than on the influences themselves. The most important of these seems to be 'Cascades'. Although this is originally associated with Dr. Jacquith and the Cascades institution, it often appears independently of the



mention of either. It therefore appears to become more indicative of the therapeutic influence in a general sense.

In the same way that the story's maternal issue becomes universalised, therefore, the power of recuperation becomes an effect that shifts between characters. This seems to comment as much on the nature of relationships as Charlotte's personal cure. Both these themes, perhaps because of their initial representation of attempts to contradict the flow of Charlotte's life, accentuate ascending movement. It is the strength offered by the ascent of the first theme, which prepares Charlotte for resisting the power of the latter (fig. 4).

The basis of Charlotte's problems, and the relationship to music and sound which initially defines her position in relation to her mother, marriage and her potential cure, are established through the interaction of the three major elements of the first section of the film - the opening titles (described above), Charlotte's current situation in her Boston home and her own view of herself in the past.

The Vale household, in direct opposition to the musical turbulence of the main titles, is a monument to the repressive control of sound, the ultimate mark of the omnipotence exercised by Mrs. Vale. With "ears like a cat" she can monitor other characters without need of sight - Charlotte through a squeaking stair tread, the noise made by party guests and the doorbell, for example, and Dr. Jacquith through the tapping of tobacco from his pipe. The equation of such control with the repression of self-expression seems to be symbolised by the formally measured and functional chiming of the grandfather clock (the first sound heard after the opening title music, which allows Mrs. Vale to know the time without looking). Also, the grand piano in

the drawing room is reduced to nothing more than a piece of furniture and, very unusually, is never played.

Accordingly, as Dr. Jacquith says that he likes (noisy) pipes because they are “messy things”, he becomes representative of Jeanine Basinger’s opposite lifestyle choice for Charlotte (1993). Just as he breaks Mrs. Vale’s regime, so he will free Charlotte’s voice. His influence will present her with the possibility of a life that eschews the symbolic silence of socially sanctioned repression, for a more philosophical embracing of unconventional, disordered and complicated individuality.

Although Charlotte’s condition is introduced through dialogue, the truly horrific extent of her mother’s emotional power only becomes clear through the particular combination of image, sound and music which marks her first actual appearance. As she is called to her mother from her bedroom, the carving on which she has been working is spoiled by her hand slipping. Immediately, the reappearance of the theme from the opening titles constitutes Charlotte as the “Voyager” of the film’s title, while simultaneously registering the emotional impact of her current situation.

The previously strident style is reduced in scale and tempo to a plaintive solo cello line, supported by sparse strings rather than the solid sound of the brass. The use of rubato now gives a feeling of hesitancy and the end of each phrase is no longer marked by the previous strongly accented chords. Instead, the final note of the melodic phrase seems to lead straight into a slow, chromatic rising and falling variation on the original echoing phrase. Despite the higher pitch on which the second phrase begins, the sense of striving of the earlier version is undermined by the feeling of tentative, indecisive, defeated movement.



As if to qualify the weakness suggested by this transformed 'Charlotte' theme, the 'Mother' theme then accompanies Charlotte's first staircase descent. This suggests her mother's definition of her as the root of her problems, linking her visual unattractiveness (the famous shoes and heavy stockings) with her current lack of voice (LaPlace 1987, 142) (fig. 6a). The nature of this relationship is achieved not only through the 'Mother' theme's musical structure, however, but also by a pointed manipulation of the whole soundtrack.

The diegetic sound which accompanies her descent is her mother's voice, amplified into a consistently audible voice-over. This psychologically-motivated volume ignores the changing spatial relation of Charlotte to the actual sound source, seemingly in order to privilege the centrality of her mother's opinion to her identity. The attachment of the chords to each of her footfalls seems to suggest an emotional proscription which pens every physical and metaphorical movement of her plodding, aimless existence within her mother's words and opinions. As she reaches the bottom of the stairs, this is ultimately linked to Dr. Jacquith's implication that Charlotte was an unwanted child.

The construction of this theme as a constricted 'version' of the 'Charlotte' theme, however, already suggests what is later confirmed in her self-defining flashback. Charlotte has always contained and still does contain within her the self-confident, sexually attractive (and active) woman she will become in the future. This therefore proves that her current appearance is neither her true self-image nor indeed her true self. As she is trapped and constrained by her mother, so is the expansiveness of her theme and accordingly, during her flashback, the use of the 'Charlotte' theme reiterates both the contrast and its process of development (fig. 5b).

Charlotte's vision of herself as a young woman begins with a light celesta glissando up to a string and vibraphone statement of the theme. The orchestral texture is lighter, with strings and woodwind replacing the previous brass in the supporting chords and echoing phrase. The performance style is more lyrical and smooth (marked in the score as 'appassionato' and 'expressivo' [sic] as opposed to the opening statement's 'broad'). Together with a lack of the previous heavy accenting, this counters the dramatic tension with which the opening statement imbued the shifts in tonality and final falling intervals.

As Charlotte confronts her mother, however, the negative maternal influence becomes apparent. The 'Charlotte' theme fragments as she is forced to make herself conventionally 'unattractive' by wearing her spectacles, and is denied permission to socialise with other passengers (fig. 5c). Despite the theme's triumphant return as she and Leslie (Charles Drake) defy her mother within the flashback, therefore, the retention of its more negative form as she returns to the present is firmly associated with her imminent nervous breakdown.

Charlotte's flashback establishes what is perhaps the primary contention of the narrative, that is the disjunction of outward appearance and interior emotion. Her silencing and despecularisation are indivisible. In contrast, therefore, to her mother's absolute control of sound, the depth of Charlotte's repressed emotions means that any attempt at their verbal expression overwhelms her and induces a breakdown into angry shouting, tears or further strained silence. The nondiegetic music, evidencing the magnitude of the repression which her mother has effected, emphasises her inability to break productively its associated silence. Her narration of her own flashback,



therefore, describing and representing her rebellious feelings alongside surging music, demonstrates her true emotional as much as physical potential.

The rapid ‘curing’ of her looks returns her to what LaPlace sees as the more reassuring aspects of Davis’ star identity, demonstrating her ‘true’ consumerist potential and preparing for her inevitable transformation (1987, 143-144).

Consequently, however, this allows greater concentration on the longer and more complex process of her inner development. This transformation is represented through the gradual realignment of her speech and behaviour with her musical-emotional representation, and most notably in her progression from ‘being silenced’ to ‘remaining silent’. The temporal disjunction between her physical and emotional correction is expressed visually in the repeated difficulty of characters in recognising her with her transformed appearance. This perhaps accounts for why she herself does not seem to convincingly settle into her new life until the last scene.

As the film establishes Charlotte’s repression by her mother, and contrasts past and present to establish her natural but stymied feelings towards men, so it also presents her escape route. When Dr. Jacquith follows Charlotte upstairs in her flight from the invasive discussion about her mental health in the drawing room, the ‘Mother’ theme reappears. As he refuses to allow her emotional retreat, however, the detachment of the theme from Charlotte’s steps appears to effect a freeing of her movement and expression so that she can break her silence (albeit in a rather clipped manner) for the first time.

The potential that this offers is confirmed by the therapeutic ‘Cascades’ theme, which appears as Dr. Jacquith’s fascination with Charlotte’s ivory craftwork prompts her profession that he is “the least clumsy person [she has] ever met”. The ‘Cascades’

approach to psychoanalysis is therefore represented as a branch of humanity rather than medicine. Dr. Jacquith does not have to force, persuade or drug Charlotte into speaking, but enables her voice and changes her relation to music (emotion) by his genuine benevolent interest. Charlotte's cure can therefore remain in her own control by arising from her own desire for help, allowing her inner 'Bette Davis' to confront the doctor with Charlotte's problems.

Charlotte's second staircase descent begins the next stage of her emotional development, the holiday cruise where she must be "interested in everything ... and everybody." Recalling the scene of her original oppression, she is awaited and watched with equal interest by the other passengers (including the next man in her life). Now, however, her previous unattractiveness has been magically eradicated, with the camera revealing stylishly clad feet and legs before moving up the body of an *apparently* very different Charlotte. The music, following the ascending camera movement, surrounds her in admiration rather than restriction. The 'Mother' theme accompanying her descent is played at a higher pitch and the timbre is lightened by the addition of harp, celesta and vibraphone to the strings. Even though the theme follows the same rhythm as before, it clearly does not coincide with her footfalls (fig. 6b).

The patterns of the past therefore continue in the present, inviting reflection on Charlotte's transformation so far. The nature of her very first descent has been stylistically modified by the effect of her staircase ascent with Dr. Jacquith, which began to loosen the musical/emotional maternal grip. This time we watch Charlotte, rather than just her feet, and the transformation of the music seems to reflect her physical and emotional progress. At the same time, however, there is a suggestion that this 'normal' appearance is still largely façade. She has clearly moved beyond her



previous state. Her hesitation, the doubtful expression on her partially obscured face and the fact that the 'Mother' theme remains with her (even in transformation), however, attest to the memories which still battle to inform her concealed self image.

During the holiday and Charlotte's discovery of romantic love, the 'Charlotte' theme seems to be gradually superceded by the 'Jerry' theme via the 'Jerry1' theme. The score then focuses on the 'traffic' between the 'Mother', 'Jerry' and 'Cascades' themes, and its implications for the passage of Charlotte's emotions and self-definition. Despite therapy, she begins her journey without having moved beyond her mother as a touchstone influence. Her initial moments of independence or defiance therefore take place against this memory. Even when redefined by Jerry's presence as a desirable 'wife', she still remains otherwise defined as a daughter (the imposed eternal child/virgin role, and most obvious sidestepping of motherhood, which underpins her outwardly adult status as spinster "Aunt Charlotte"). Towards the end of her journey, however, the direct link between the 'Jerry' and 'Cascades' themes renders Jerry her new recuperative influence. This shift will give her the strength to face the past in a different way once she returns to Boston.

During Charlotte and Jerry's first conversation, Charlotte recalls the influences of both Dr. Jacquith and her mother. The reminiscence of Dr. Jacquith's advice is accompanied by an ethereal version of the 'Cascades' theme, played in high-pitched strings supported by harp, celesta, piano and vibraphone. The delicate timbre of this orchestration, as well as the smooth melodic line and chordal texture, suggests his continued positive influence. By stark contrast, the recollection of her mother as first seen in her earlier flashback, is accompanied by the same fragmentation (a semitone higher) of the 'Charlotte' theme (fig. 5d). The comparatively shrill sound of the flute



and clarinet triplets, and the chaotic nature of their hasty descent, places her once again in the context of her youthful distortion. Her two basic (musical) influences are now placed in direct conflict for dominance over her behaviour. The transfer of her contemptuous tone of voice (from her original encounter with Dr Jacquith) to her verbal reference to her mother (“I was thinking of my mother”), however, demonstrates her desire to reject the past.

As Jerry shows Charlotte his family photograph after she has helped him buy presents for his daughters, the close juxtaposition of the ‘Tina’ and ‘Mother’ themes suggests both Tina’s future role as resolution to the maternal dilemma and Charlotte’s current unreadiness for the salvation of ‘motherhood’. Mrs. Vale’s future absence from the text is necessitated by Charlotte’s still unrelinquished emotional/musical ‘daughter’ self-image, represented by the ‘Mother’ theme’s appearance as she recognises Tina as an unwanted child through the similarity of their experiences and attitudes. At the same time, before the question arises of a relationship between Charlotte and Jerry, his emotional influence is represented as more paternal, equating her to Tina with a benevolent (seemingly) platonic concern. This allows his later romantic interest to replace Dr. Jacquith in the ‘recuperation cycle’.

When Charlotte later shows Jerry her own family photograph it reveals, just as her earlier holiday photograph and self-account did with Dr. Jacquith, what really lies behind her current disguise. As her memory of her own youthful emotional strength precipitated her breakdown in front of the doctor, so the memories associated with the ‘Mother’ theme now cause her loss of control and confessional self-revelation to Jerry. Her continued daughter (spinster/‘Aunt’) self-image becomes evident, laying bare her limbo state of being neither “the fat lady with the heavy brows and all the hair” nor that



mythical ideal of sophistication “Renée Beauchamp”. This incongruity of themes and exterior appearances then makes sense of the intervening non-thematic holiday music, which serves to withhold the reality of her confusion over her own identity (“He wishes he understood me. He wishes.”). This makes a rather ironic coincidence of Mac’s initial excitement that she might be “the famous Beauchamp ... the one who does all the imitations”.

After Jerry responds sympathetically to her revelation, Charlotte offers a full list of all the kind things he has done, crediting him profusely for making her feel “much better”. The ‘Jerry1’ theme has already suggested Jerry’s dramatically positive effect on her self-image when he gave her an earlier gift of perfume. Now, the delicate string orchestration and lilting rhythm of the ‘Jerry’ theme consolidates this as Charlotte speaks her words of gratitude (fig. 7a). The music at this crucial turning point, however, appears to be introducing Jerry’s benevolent paternal rather than romantic role (so that even when he kisses her as she sleeps later in the story, the ‘Mother’ theme renders him caring rather than threatening).

The turbulent version of the ‘Jerry’ theme in the subsequent montage suggests Charlotte’s restless night of churning identity and desire, which ends with a segue into a ‘calmed’ version of the ‘Mother’ theme as Jerry writes to Tina (fig. 6c). While Charlotte’s personal identity remains in crisis, Jerry is unwittingly forging her destiny. The poignancy of his letter (with music played according to Steiner’s customised ‘schmaltzo’ marking) lies partly in its shared assessment of both Charlotte and Tina. Jerry comes to understand his own daughter more fully as a result of his sympathetic concern for Charlotte. At the same time, a steadier rhythm is effected by more sustained supporting chords, and the theme reaches a harmonic resolution as his letter

ends and the screen fades momentarily to black. This suggests the pre-destination of the mutually beneficial grouping of the three characters.

Jerry's appropriation of the caring role, which shifts the power of recuperation from therapy to love, is finalised as Charlotte responds to his romantic overtures. As they meet on the hotel balcony and Jerry begins his declaration, the 'Jerry' theme represents the effect of his love on Charlotte. As we see that she has started to cry in response to his words, the 'Cascades' theme appears, before being replaced once again by the 'Jerry' theme. The delicacy of the theme's first appearance is developed into fuller 'appassionato' chords and a more insistent tempo as Jerry notices her "tears of gratitude [...] for the crumbs offered" and they kiss (fig. 7b).

Removal from home has therefore allowed Charlotte a rapid, retrogressive 'rehearsal' of the conventional adolescent progression from one kind of love to another which was stymied during her own physical transition into womanhood. The development of Jerry's feelings from friendly through benevolent parental to adult romantic love, therefore moves her further from the past in a way unavailable to Dr. Jacquith. Since Jerry's marital unavailability means that Charlotte is still unable to escape her mother's domestic setting, however, she must instead use her new 'state' of desirability as a source of personal strength with which to confront her past. Returned to the attractive, marriageable state she occupied in her own first flashback, the only remaining obstacle to her full psychological entrance into adulthood is her mother.

Charlotte's return from holiday to Boston marks the third stage of her emotional development. Her growing independence is signified in these episodes through her eventual decision not to marry and have her own family, and particularly through her ultimate self-styled appropriation of the maternal role. The



emotional/musical influences which have altered her relationship to her self and the maternal/parental role while she was away, empower her in direct combat with her mother's attempts to reinstate her oppression. As Mrs. Vale weakens, Charlotte becomes more self-confident.

Her self-assurance with the memory of Dr. Jacquith's advice (and the 'Cascades' theme), does not quite seem to prepare her for withstanding the tirade of abuse with which her mother greets her return. As she wilts after this unpleasant encounter, an exact repetition of the original statement of the 'Mother' theme (marked 'triste' in the score) seems to register her sadness at the threat that things may merely return to their previous state, or at least that her mother may wish them to.

This is countered, however, by the arrival of the camelias which signify the desirable 'Camille' alter-ego which Jerry gave Charlotte during their affair. As she sees the flowers, the 'Jerry' theme reappears for the first time since her holiday ended. Also returned to its original key, orchestration and style, this seems to recall for both Charlotte and the film audience the first time that the full therapeutic effect of Jerry's loving support became clear. All the pain of their separation seems therefore superceded. While he is no longer with her in person, the music and flowers evidence his continued love, so promising the survival of her positive self-image.

When Charlotte finally speaks up against her mother's financial and/or emotional influence, she must initially absent herself in some way from her immediate presence. She hides out of shot to change her clothes or turns her back and fixes herself in the mirror as she speaks. Her underlying emotional development from one speech to the next, however, is registered in their thematic accompaniments. The first speech comes in response to Mrs. Vale's attack after the delivery of the flowers. This

introduces, in the face of obviously waning personal influence, the austere ‘Vale’ theme’s representation of the social and financial power of the family name.

In this instance, the ‘Jerry1’ theme implies the return of Charlotte to the excitement of her interim development through Jerry, and suggests his influence as the strength behind her resistance. Now she stands halfway between her old and new positions with regard to her mother. Her mother then rebukes her once again, specifically expressing her grave disappointment in Charlotte as a daughter. Charlotte manages to resist her, even though an ominous, heavily accented version of the ‘Mother’ theme, marked ‘slow and heavy’ in the score, seems to register the emotional weight of her mother’s comments.

Mrs. Vale’s response to her daughter’s new resilience is her symbolic, self-induced fall down the very staircase which originally signified her oppressive power. The tempo of the already ‘slow and heavy’ version of the ‘Mother’ theme is held back further to prepare for its dramatic culmination in a sustained, dissonant, fortissimo chord (fig. 6d) as Mrs. Vale ‘trips’. The progress of the ‘Mother’ theme faltered during Charlotte’s initial descent of this staircase in response to her mother’s hurtful words. Now it is interrupted to mark the narrative conclusion of that influence.

This enables the final stage of Charlotte’s transformation of the maternal influence. Now as she walks from the stairway into the gaze of yet another group of people including, of course, the next significant man in her life, she does so with her appearance and personality one step closer together. The ultimate success of this first social test on ‘home territory’ then allows her subsequent evangelical realisation, to the accompaniment of the ‘Mother’ theme, that she is “not afraid, mother” (fig. 6e). The



relatively high pitch, light orchestration (strings and celesta) and faster tempo of this version seem to suggest the literal lightening of the burden of maternal tyranny.

The use of the 'Cascades' theme as Dr. Jacquith reads Charlotte's letter telling of her imminent engagement to Elliot, might suggest that marriage and children will supercede Jerry as the final stage of the therapeutic cycle. There is certainly social desirability in marrying Charlotte off to a Livingstone ("I'm only so astonished that you of all the family should bring such a feather to the family cap." ... "Do you imagine there's a Livingstone waiting for you on every corner?"). Both this and her rather abstract desire for the domestic set-up that she believes "almost every woman wants" are, however, ultimately confounded by the pestering memory of the self-hood and love that she discovered on holiday. Painfully, therefore, she must eventually acknowledge her inability to settle for the respectful affection which constitutes the strongest emotion she and Elliot could ever feasibly share.

The hopelessness of their relationship is made clear from the outset by its very representation. In a similar way to the opening section of the film, this makes a stark and dynamic contrast of past potential and present repression through a pointed mobilisation of memory, music and sound. Charlotte's only chance of surviving marriage with Elliot would have rested on her tolerance of leading a double life, contenting herself in her bored repression with the memory of her secret love. Her evident technical ability to conduct such a charade lies in the new relationship to her voice and to music which follows her partial appropriation of her mother's power. This same vocal, emotional and narrative power, however, ultimately allows her face up to and reject her attempt to play at conventionality.

In this instance, sound and music are therefore used to demonstrate emotional distance rather than proximity. Charlotte purposefully manipulates the use of voice and language in order to delineate and control Elliot. Following the non-committal tone of her letter to Dr. Jacquith, references to her fiancé are often framed in a negative light (“[He is] like you [Jerry] in many ways. Oh, not your sense of humour or your sense of fun, but a good man, and the sort of happiness I thought I could never find.”). She is cleverly evasive when questioned about Jerry’s camelias so as to retain her private ‘Camille’ identity. She eventually precipitates their separation by revealing her ‘real’ self through euphemistic reference to a novel about a woman who once “lost her inhibitions”.

Charlotte’s ability to control her speech and language in order to conceal her real emotions may have continued to hide the reality of her proposed marital compromise. An encounter which seems to mimic the function of the earlier, crucial flashbacks, however, disturbs this potential course of action. Since their holiday romance is ostensibly over, and she now lives openly (as far as we are concerned) with the memory of Jerry, it seems that something more than a flashback is required in order to confront her ongoing emotions. Jerry’s melodramatically coincidental appearance at the pre-concert party immediately following Charlotte’s acceptance of Elliot’s proposal, therefore represents a kind of heightened flashback, re-animating the past in the most literal way possible.

Now diegetic music and voice both speak her feelings and enable her deception. A presumably diegetic performance or recording of ‘Night and Day’ plays at the party, the lyrics conveniently missing to avoid conflict with the spoken words of the illicit couple. Everyone then leaves to attend a concert performance of the deeply



passionate Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 6. Both pieces allow the double-registered conversation of the ex-lovers, concealing their private passion beneath a social façade.

The diegetic music during their holiday allowed their emotional and physical proximity through the acceptable conventions of dance. Now, socially 'romantic' music emphasises the inherent anomaly of publically sanctioned representations of essentially private emotions. Preparing for the return of the 'Jerry' theme for Charlotte and Jerry's torrid exchange at the railway station, the public concert and subsequent radio broadcast of the Tchaikovsky Symphony finally confirm what the score suggests from Elliot's very first appearance. In this film, a lack of nondiegetic music, and even a seemingly uninvolved relationship to diegetic music, signifies an unacceptable (if harmless) absence of 'real' emotion.

Charlotte's strength in taking a new stance towards marriage, confirmed by her rejection of both Elliot's actual and Jerry's hypothetical offers, also precipitates her final transformation of the maternal relationship. In response to her mother's renewed contempt at her plans to remain "*Miss Charlotte Vale*", she resolves the circumstances of their very first confrontation, laying bare the hard facts of their relationship against the same musical pattern that accompanied her initial hysterical silence (figs. 8a and 8b). Mrs. Vale therefore appears to die from the shock of Charlotte's very vocality, a complete reversal of the original expression of her mother's power which leaves Charlotte in a position to assume the maternal role.

When Charlotte coincidentally encounters Tina at Cascades, she is once again saved from despair (the result of her mother's posthumous influence) and begins the final stage of her emotional development. The sadness of Tina's broken childhood spirit is emphasised as Charlotte first sees her by the slow rendition of the 'Tina'



theme, with the celesta marked by Steiner to be played like ‘a sad music box - sort of thing’ (fig. 9a). The fluid interaction of the ‘Tina’ and ‘Mother’ themes during their first conversation confirms the emotional veracity of Charlotte’s identification with Tina, as well as finalising the symbiotic collapsing of their lives into the same maternal issue. Charlotte can now relive her childhood, using her doctor/parent role to reverse her own mother’s misdemeanors.

The traffic between themes which previously indicated the therapeutic influence of Dr. Jacquith and Jerry, finally marks Charlotte as both agent and beneficiary of the recuperative process. In a quietly understated iconoclastic stance against Miss Trask’s enactment of maternal oppression, Charlotte takes control in the face of Tina’s own ‘hysterical’ musical pattern (fig. 8c). She has therefore re-enacted Dr. Jacquith’s original role in her own life, and is ‘given’ the ‘Cascades’ theme by Miss Trask as she is advised on how to treat Tina. Charlotte then usurps the authority of both to recreate Jerry’s role in transferring the emphasis of therapy from medicine to love.

The dominant use of the ‘Tina’ theme establishes the forward-looking nature of this new maternal relationship. The ‘Mother’ and ‘Jerry’ themes remain, however, seemingly to register Charlotte’s consciousness of the need to change her relationship to Jerry if she is to help Tina (long before Dr Jacquith could have drawn any parameters for their future behaviour - see Cavell 1996, 135-136; LaPlace 1987, 164). While the ‘Tina’ theme suggests her maternal solicitude as she helps Tina to telephone Jerry, its continuation over the perhaps more obvious choice of the ‘Jerry’ theme as Charlotte listens to their conversation, reveals the meaning behind her visually evident suffering (fig. 9b). Making the ultimate choice between her own love story and maternal melodrama, Charlotte denies herself the emotional/musical connection with



Jerry with a painful strength of resolve. Even in the face of the ‘Jerry’ theme’s appearance during the next telephone call, she resists the vocal link to Jerry that Tina so pressingly offers her (fig. 7c).

The conclusion of Charlotte’s story is represented by filtering the pattern of the film’s opening sequence through Charlotte’s fullest renegotiation and control of space, sound, music, emotion and the behaviour of herself and others. This reverses the original problematic presentation of the Vale household and its oppressed daughter. As Dr. Jacquith arrives at the Boston house with Jerry, he prepares him for its gloom, an image emphasised by the weighty ‘Vale’ theme. Charlotte, however, has made her home into a light bright place. It is full of young people centred around a hearty fire (a reminder of her earlier confrontation with her brother, when he warned her that “As long as [he could] remember that fire [had] never been lit”). Significantly, there is also dance music spilling out into the hall.

Charlotte has taken control of space in the way most contrary to the dictates of her mother. She has given it (and herself) life and ‘fire’ most notably through the negation of its symbolically oppressive silence. Now she can choose her own sound environment, a point most strongly underlined as she later closes the door to speak with Jerry in the library. This blocks out the diegetic music in order to emphasise the later return of nondiegetic scoring.

As Charlotte, Jerry and Tina meet together for the first time, the traffic of themes underlines the shift in power relations. This focuses particularly on the emotional conflict with which Jerry unwittingly confronts Charlotte, but which she is now able to resist and control. The transformed Tina appears at the top of the stairs and is instructed on how to descend without tripping on her dress by Charlotte, a

genuinely caring mother who gives reasons for her directions. Tina walks then runs down the same staircase that saw Charlotte's initial forced, defeated descent and her mother's fall precipitating Charlotte's adult social 'rebirth'. We therefore witness the return to the beginning of Charlotte's story through her own (re-)creation of 'daughterhood'. At the same time, Tina's excited and proud descent from privacy into the public gaze replays the spectacle of Charlotte's first appearance on the cruise ship in junior form, restoring the spirit which it sorely lacked.

Resolving the issues of Charlotte's dystopian youth, Tina now has a loving mother and (sometimes present) father, freedom of movement and the right to enjoy her own appearance and emotions. The 'Tina' theme therefore becomes subject to the same kind of heralding that Charlotte's own theme enjoyed at the beginning of the film. She falls into her father's embrace as a rapidly ascending string glissando leads to a sforzando chord. This is then sustained by tremolando playing until breaking into a fast, light, string and celesta version as she talks excitedly to Jerry (fig. 9c).

The attempt of the theme to consolidate this idyllic 'family reunion' is undermined, however, by both Jerry and Tina's revelation of its inherent incongruity, which Charlotte must face as the final hurdle to her independence. Its bright sound and fast tempo is interrupted when Jerry directs his crucial expression of love for Tina over her shoulder towards Charlotte. This suggests his (generically naïve) belief that the different kinds of feeling that define the love story and maternal melodrama can successfully co-exist. The 'Jerry' theme evidences her continued feelings when this declaration halts her staircase descent (as effectively as her mother's original expression of contempt). Charlotte is able, however, to resist this (im)possibility, even with Tina unwittingly hammering the point home by asking if Jerry may call her



“...Camille?”. With the independence that her unconventional maternal status offers; Charlotte can consent to be re-named without the commitment that Jerry might presume.

The subsequent private meeting between Charlotte and Jerry in the library brings the narrative to closure. With her self-styled re-negotiation of the (apparently incompatible) maternal love, romantic love and independence, Charlotte confronts and controls the uncomprehending Jerry against a musical background of memories and emotions in painful conflict with her decisive actions and words. Despite the misery of denying herself romance, however, her choice between the conflicting desires which offer several potentially ‘correct’ decisions, marks the triumphant culmination of her self-development. Beyond all doubt, she is now in command of her own ‘voice’ whatever the influences, opinions, needs and desires of others.

Jerry’s frustration at Charlotte’s failure to realise that he is not “in tune” with her new outlook on life, as she innocently asks if his antagonism towards her relationship with Tina is “something about us?”, introduces an agitated version of the ‘Jerry’ theme. A direct repeat of the music which followed Charlotte’s earlier pursuit of Jerry to the railway station to explain her engagement to Elliot, this once again signifies a moment of crisis in mutual understanding inevitable in such a clandestine and difficult relationship. Now as then, Charlotte is violently confronted with the disjuncture between her interiority and the effect on Jerry of her apparent detachment from past (and present) emotions. The smooth flow of the theme is therefore interrupted and repeated in ascending sequence almost as obsessively as Charlotte and Tina’s rising hysteria music.

Unfortunately for Jerry, the ‘Mother’ theme’s appearance with his conclusion that Charlotte should be seeking a husband, recalls not only his earlier benevolent (and now somewhat patronising) parental role, but also Mrs Vale’s belief in her daughter’s shameful worthlessness as a spinster (fig. 6f). At last winning her struggle to be defined as something other than a potential wife, and particularly defying her previous submission to Jerry on this issue, Charlotte rallies in the most forcefully vocal way. Confounding his limited view of her, she contemptuously repeats back to him his notion of “some man who will make [her] happy”.

As she has previously done with both Dr. Jacquith and her mother, Charlotte now turns Jerry’s opinion of her back on him in contempt. She thus firmly places his power over her as a thing of the past. The poignancy of this crucial power shift is marked, however, by its accompaniment with the ‘Jerry’ theme, so that she expresses her profound disappointment in Jerry against music which nevertheless recalls her feelings for him. In a reversal of the hotel balcony scene, their mutual emotions are now under Charlotte’s, rather than Jerry’s control. He tries to kiss her in presuming the continuation of their affair. Her repeat of her earlier half-hearted insistence that he “please let [her] go”, however, now emphasises a successful ability to resist his advances that she was previously unable to sustain (fig. 7d).

Despite a continuing mutual attraction, therefore, their behaviour in the face of their own emotions is reversed. Jerry previously kissed the gratefully tearful Charlotte after tempering his declaration of love with the proviso that he could not possibly leave his wife. Now he clamours rather desperately while she exercises complete control over both their fates. She still has tears in her eyes as he tries to kiss her, but they now



attest to what she knows she can have but must resist, rather than her inability to believe what she is hearing.

As Charlotte tells Jerry of Dr. Jacquith's expectations of their relationship, her accompaniment by the 'Cascades' theme finally closes the therapeutic circle of the narrative. Charlotte has at last become the agent of her own recovery. In speaking on behalf of Dr. Jacquith, Charlotte enables the safe continuation of her independently maternal role, thereby ensuring her control over future events as far as possible. As Jerry exercises little more than Hobson's choice in agreeing to her redefinition of their relationship, the 'Jerry' theme returns to triumphantly herald Charlotte's fully assertive and desirable selfhood. She stands confidently alone in the face of love, men and domesticity, and enigmatically withholds her emotions in answer to Jerry's crucial and (in)famous final question (fig. 7e).

## **Conclusion**

This chapter began by considering the constitution of the woman's film as a form of melodrama. It considered ideas of the woman's film as a double form of representation, allowing escapism into 'another life' while also advocating the greater value and safety of the social status quo. This was followed by the question of the representation of female subjectivity as over-emotional and therefore potentially difficult, unreliable or even dangerous. Whereas some narratives include a male character whose primary purpose appears to be the control and analysis of this emotionality, others rely more on the self-control of the female character herself.

The function of the voice and verbal silence was therefore considered as an important way in which the woman's relationship to her emotions could be in some sense measured. If the woman is silent for enforced or self-consciously chosen reasons, the music emerges as a representation of her underlying emotions. It is also, however, one of the narrative factors which facilitates her silence by rendering it so eloquent. This led to the suggestion that the woman's film's construction of female subjectivity and emotionality may be located in the dynamic interaction between voice, behaviour and music.

Although the score of *Now, Voyager* has its own unique qualities, it therefore raises issues which may inform gender-based musical representation in more general terms. The woman's emotional constitution may be partly determined by the relationship between the emotions suggested by her 'own' music and her effective vocality. At the beginning of Charlotte's trajectory, the music appears to have two important connotative functions. It both represents Charlotte's current emotional state, and emphasises the powerful emotions/sexuality which she is being forced to repress. She is, however, unable to communicate her emotions verbally without pushing herself to breaking point.

Charlotte's extreme state therefore seems to suggest the danger of a woman who cannot express herself in a reasonable way in the face of her own (musically-suggested) emotions. Being overwhelmed by the power of her own emotions, the woman is prone to psychological illness. Her degree of effective and 'proper' self-control, no matter how strong her underlying feelings, may therefore be gauged by her level of verbal eloquence (and her behavioural self-restraint) in the face of 'personal' musical accompaniment. The victorious nature of Charlotte's achievement of self-



expression and the control of her feminine interiority therefore seems to override the sadness of the necessity for compromise.

*Now, Voyager* also raises wider questions about the woman's relationship to narration. Since she is so emotionally distressed at the beginning of the film, Charlotte can only 'speak' successfully through recreating her younger self in flashback. While memory is a crucial part of her self-reformation, however, it is mostly accrued throughout her progress in the present, so that its role is relatively subtle and Charlotte's relationship to the narration of her memories remains entirely credible. Since the representation of reliable female subjectivity is subject to so much questioning by theorists, it will be useful to examine the elements of this configuration more closely.

The most obvious way to progress therefore seems to be through narratives which consciously foreground the relationship of women to (necessarily diegetic) music. If a female character is seen to either appreciate or even to perform/create music, then her reactions to that activity, or the reaction of the film to her musical participation, will be informative in this context. Chapter Three will therefore consider the woman listening to/experiencing music (as will Chapter Five), as well as the implications for the female of speaking, or being envisioned, through the filter of her own memories and flashback narration. Chapter Four will then develop the relationship of women to music to the furthest extent through an examination of the characterisation of the female musician herself.

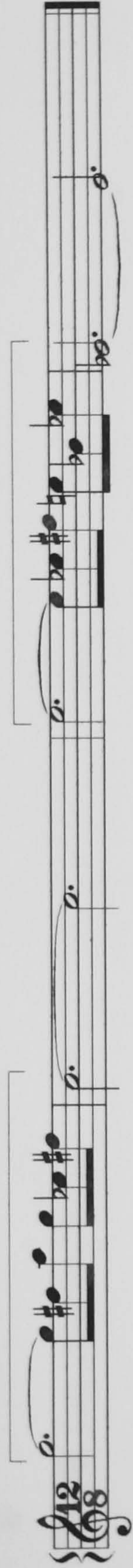


Fig. 1.

*Now, Voyager*: Main themes - with note pairings marked by brackets



'Charlotte'



Main titles



'Mother'



"Is it facts about my daughter you want, or Lisa's fancies?"



Fig. 1 (continued)



'Jerry'

Musical notation for Jerry's first line, showing a treble clef, a key signature of two flats, and a melody with a slur over the first four notes.

"Thank you very much."



'Jerry'

Musical notation for Jerry's second line, showing a treble clef, a 3/4 time signature, and a melody with a slur over the first four notes.

"Much, thanks to you. Oh many many thanks to you."



'Tina'

Musical notation for Tina's line, showing a treble clef, a 3/4 time signature, and a melody with a slur over the first two notes.

"And the sweater for Tina."



Fig. 2. *Now, Voyager*: 'Mother' and 'Tina' themes

'Mother'

Musical score for the 'Mother' theme, written in 6/8 time. The score consists of three staves: a treble clef staff, a grand staff (treble and bass clefs), and a bass clef staff. The melody in the treble clef staff features a series of eighth notes and quarter notes, with some notes beamed together. The grand staff provides harmonic support with chords and single notes. The bass clef staff contains a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

'Tina'

Musical score for the 'Tina' theme, written in 3/4 time. The score consists of three staves: a treble clef staff, a grand staff (treble and bass clefs), and a bass clef staff. The tempo is marked 'Lento' and the performance instruction is 'expressivo'. The melody in the treble clef staff is characterized by long, expressive notes, some with accents. The grand staff provides harmonic support with chords and single notes. The bass clef staff contains a steady eighth-note accompaniment.







Fig. 4.

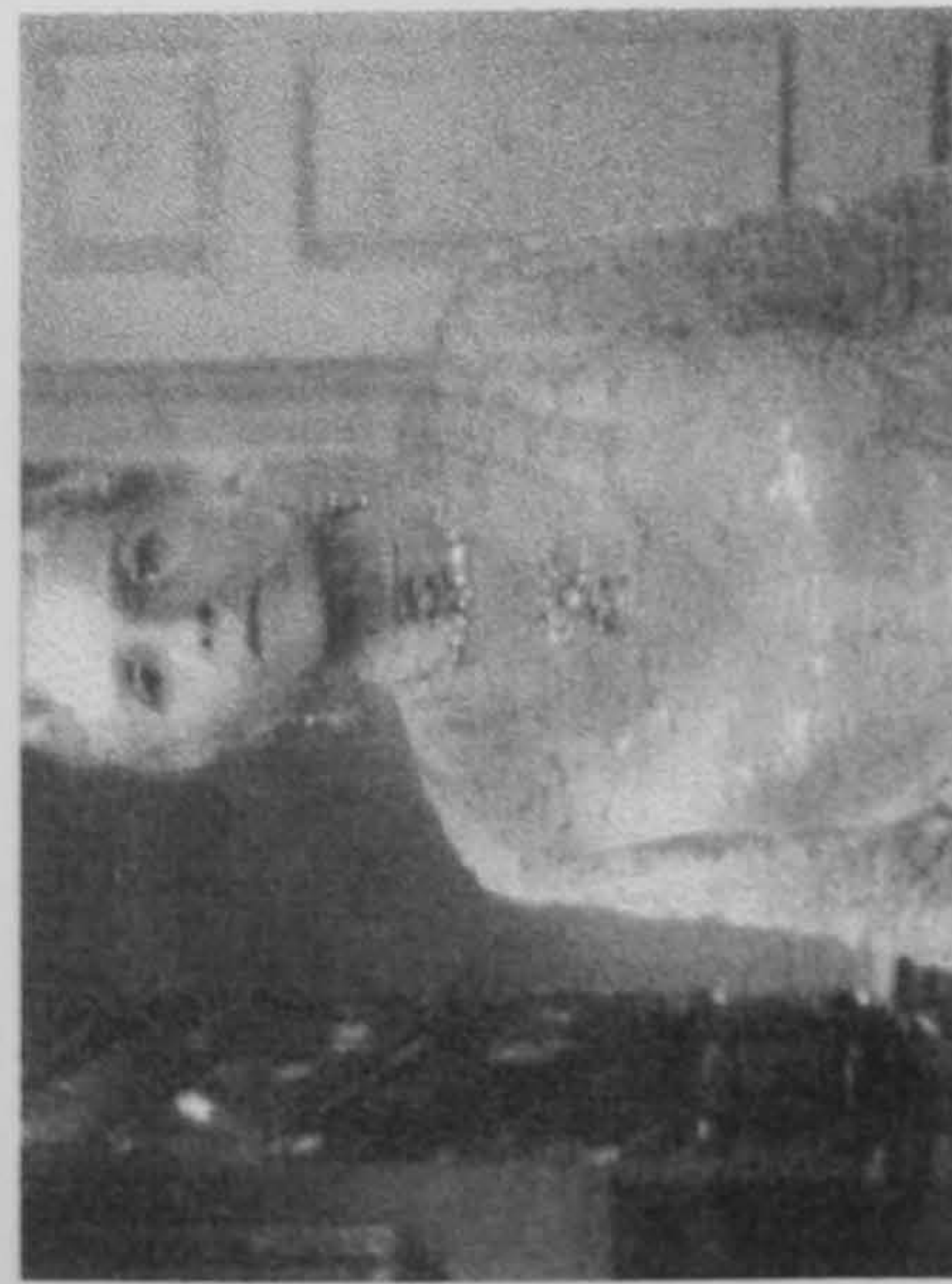
*Now, Voyager*: 'Cascades' and 'Vale' themes - first appearances



'Cascades'



"I have a great admiration for people who are clever with their hands. I was always so clumsy with my own."



'Vale'



"Didn't you understand? I wished someone to sleep on the same floor as me."



Fig. 5.

Now, *Voyager*: 'Charlotte' theme development

5a



Musical score for the 'Charlotte' theme development. The score is written for strings and woodwinds. It features a section marked 'BROAD' with a '7' above it, and a section marked 'RUBATO'. The instrumentation includes Trumpets (Trpts), Celli (Cello), and 4 Horns + Cello + 1 Trumpet. The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics (ff), articulation (accents), and phrasing slurs.

5b



Musical score for the 'Charlotte' theme development. The score is written for strings and woodwinds. It features a section marked 'Expressivo' and 'Appassionato' with a '7' above it. The instrumentation includes Sordini (Mutes), Vibra. (Vibrato), Solo Cello + Oboe, and Str. + Ww. (Strings and Woodwinds). The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics (mf, f), articulation (accents), and phrasing slurs.



Fig. 5 (continued)



5c

Musical score for Fig. 5c, showing staves for Celeste + Flute, Oboe + Flute, and Violas + Cello. The score includes triplets and a section labeled "Race". Dynamics include *ppp* and *pp*.



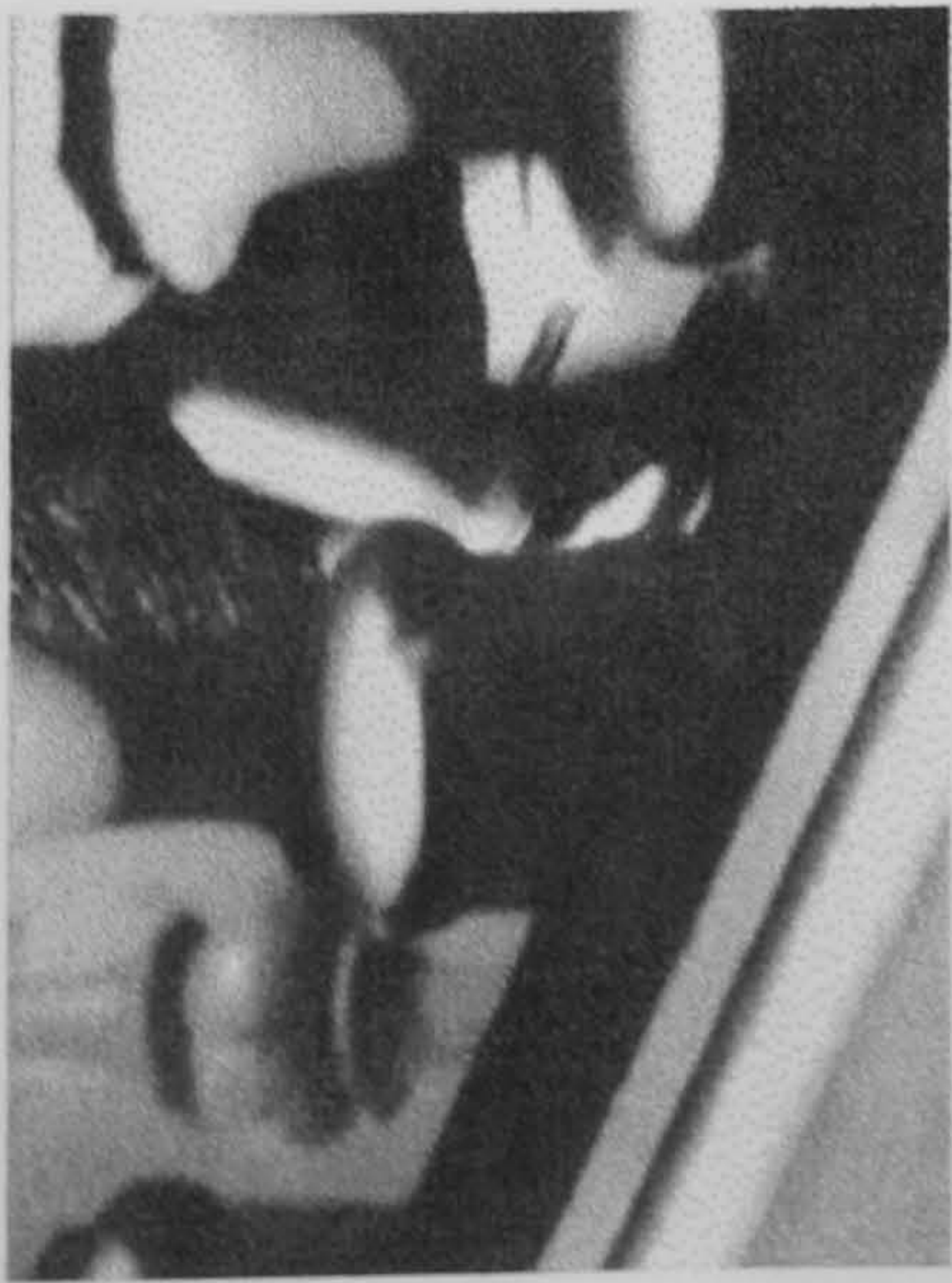
5d

Musical score for Fig. 5d, showing staves for Str. Dvdtd Vibraph. Tremolo, 2 Flts + 1 Clar., 4 Horns muted Violas, and Gong. The score includes triplets and a section labeled "AGITATO". Dynamics include *sf*, *mf*, and *pp*.



Fig. 6.

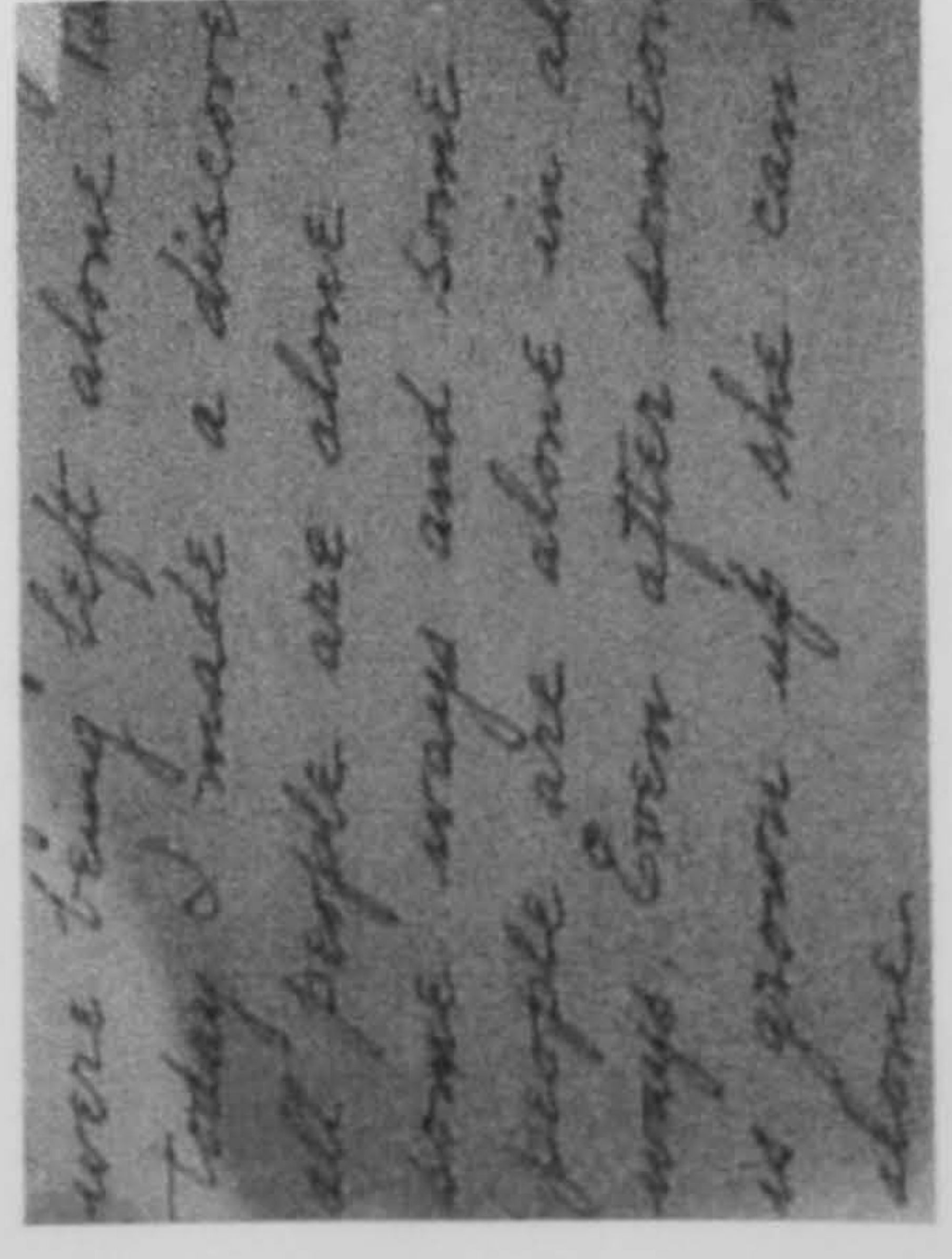
Now, *Voyager*: 'Mother' theme development



6a



6b



6c



Fig. 6 (Continued)



6d

Slow and Heavy

(Mother at stairs)

Ritenuato

cresc.

Tutti

ff

(trps)

Alto 2 Flauto (pedals and loud)

*pp.*

*pp.*

Musical score for measures 6d, featuring piano and strings with various dynamics and performance instructions.



6e

Moderato

Str.

p

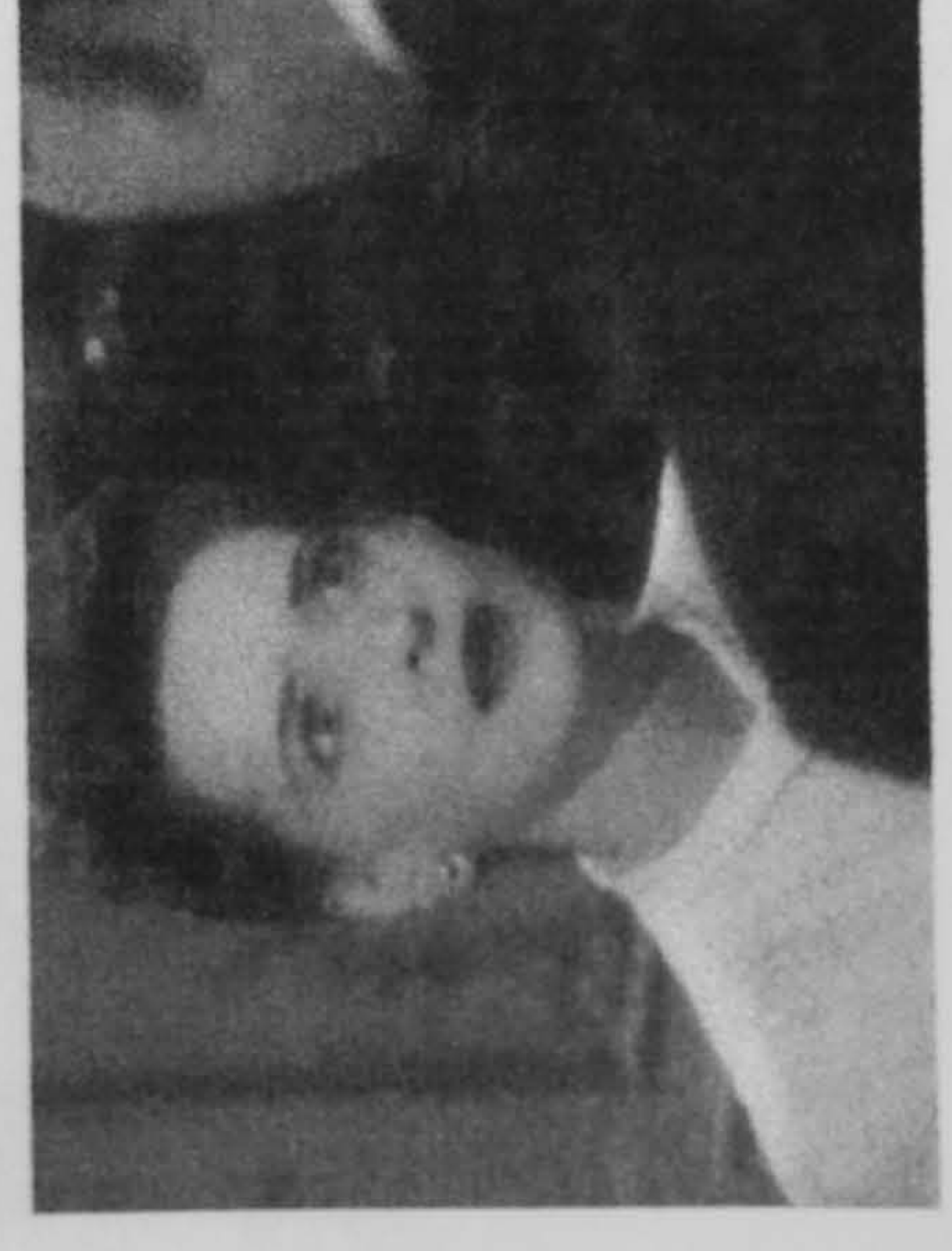
poco accel.

*mf.*

*mf.*

1 Call *p*

Musical score for measures 6e, featuring strings and piano with performance instructions like 'poco accel.' and '1 Call p'.



6f

Meno

Violino

Fl., Bassoon

Stringe

Calli

Clarinetti

Ww, Horns

*sf*

Musical score for measures 6f, featuring a full orchestra with various instruments and dynamics.



Fig. 7.

Now, *Voyager*: 'Jerry' theme development



7a

Tempo di Valse

Sordini

Rubato

Dolce

Vcl., Celesta, Vibra. Divisi

Sordini

Viola

Celli

Harp

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*



7b

Appassionato

Molto Rit.

*sf*

*sf*

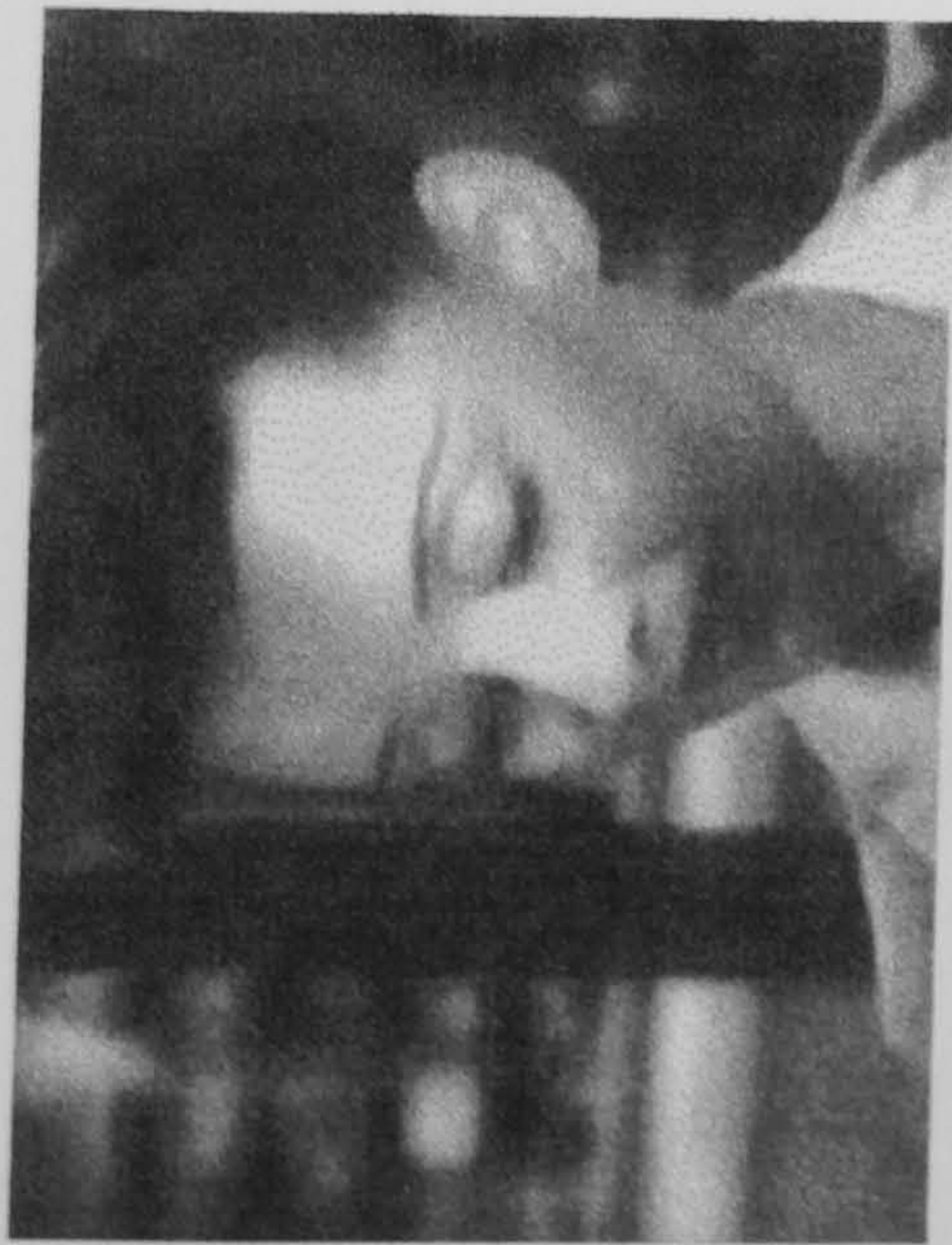
*sf*

*sf*

Vcl. Divisi, Vibra.



Fig. 7 (continued)



7c

A musical score for piano, consisting of four staves. The top staff is the right hand, and the bottom three are the left hand. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. Key markings include 'p' (piano), 'Rit.' (Ritardando), 'pp' (pianissimo), 'Slowly', and 'Delicato'. The key signature has two flats, and the time signature is 4/4.



7d

A musical score for piano, consisting of four staves. The top staff is the right hand, and the bottom three are the left hand. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. A key marking includes 'Accel. e cresc.' (Accelerando e crescendo). The key signature has two flats, and the time signature is 4/4.



Fig. 7 (continued)



7e

Musical score for a string ensemble, consisting of five staves. The score is divided into two main sections. The first section begins with the instruction "BROAD" above the first staff. The second section begins with the instruction "Ritenuito" above the first staff. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like "p" (piano) and "pp" (pianissimo). The word "TUTTI" is written below the first staff in the second section. The notation is dense, with many notes and rests across all staves.



Now, Voyager: 'Hysteria' development

Fig. 8.



8a

Obse  
Fts. + Celasta

Crescendo



8b

Agitato

Obse  
Fts. + Celasta

Crescendo



8c

Agitato

Violas, 2 Clts., 2 Bms., 1 Cell  
Basses, 4 Celli, Piano *mf*

Add Obse







## Chapter Three

### The Female Listener

“A French philosopher once listed three hundred ways of committing suicide, only he left one out - falling in love with an artist.”

Marty in *Humoresque*

“The way she listened was more eloquent than speech.”

Waldo Lydecker in *Laura*

This constitutes the first of three chapters which examine different narrative configurations of musicians and listeners/audiences as diegetic subject matter. It focuses on the female character reacting to both diegetic music and its male creator or performer, and considers her conceptualisation as both listener and potential muse.<sup>1</sup> This will develop Chapter Two's consideration of female characterisation through an interaction between emotions represented by nondiegetic music and diegetic behaviour/self-expression, by examining what happens when the emotional relationship of a woman to music is actually foregrounded.

The chapter will begin by contextualising this more specific subject matter through a consideration of the possible effects of including diegetic music in a film or

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<sup>1</sup> This chapter will use the term 'female listener' to denote the diegetic female character who watches and listens to the male performing musician. This should not be confused with the female cinematic audience.



involving a (real or fictitious) musician as a character. The case study of *Letter from an Unknown Woman* will then examine how this film conceptualises a specifically female comprehension of music and musicality. This will consider the narrativisation of the gendered tension between ideas of 'Romanticism' and 'romance' in relation to the different functions which the score can fulfil in representing, sympathising with and observing the female protagonist.

### **Diegetic Music, Musicians and Listeners**

There are several levels of conscious involvement which a character can have with (diegetic) music in a film. The character who actually creates or performs music may perhaps be seen as the most active, followed by the character who makes a choice about what music will be heard, either by someone else performing or the use of recorded music. A further level is offered, however, in the character who listens to the music which someone else performs or controls, without any authority over its meaning or significance. In this case the actions (and reactions) of the listener are contextualised by music which remains under the control of another character. Given that such characters are in some sense constituted in response to both the musician and music, a study of the listener/audience must necessarily begin with an account of the musician him/herself.

There are many possible explanations for the proliferation of musician characters in Hollywood and British film in the 1940s. As well as fulfilling a useful role in terms of contemporaneous attitudes to classical music in cinema, they seem to have offered an especially attractive model of artistic creativity. What is most interesting



about this characterisation, however, is the way in which it relates to gender, with a clear distinction transpiring between men and women in relation to musical creativity and performance. Without wishing to force the terms of this examination, it does seem that the historical ideas of female musicality and the relationship of music, the emotions and femininity outlined in Chapter One of this thesis may prove informative as a broad framework. In particular, it may be possible to conceptualise the emotional positioning of the woman according to her passivity or activity in relation to the creation and performance of music.

While it seems that the majority of musician characters at this time are male, they are often not the main emotional concern of the narrative. A number of films, leaving the musician himself relatively unexplored, are primarily concerned with representing the effect of his musicianship on surrounding characters, particularly women. The representation of the woman herself as a musician, however, is fraught with difficulty and contradiction. Neither the female listener nor the female musician seem to enjoy an easy relationship to music, and numerous films make a (rather emphatic) point of the potentially disastrous consequences of her involvement. While this is certainly not to suggest that the male relationship to music is uniformly unproblematic, there does appear to be a greater degree of flexibility in characterisation when the musician is a man.

The predicament of the woman positioned as a listener to the male musician often appears to result from his inspirational association of the music with her. Rather than focusing more deeply on the emotions which the woman inspires in the man, however, the narrative of the male musician-female listener seems primarily concerned with the specific emotional effect on the woman of being positioned as a (passive and



relatively powerless) muse. This relationship suggests a Romantic construction of gender in terms of both musicality and emotionality.

A range of film narratives conceptualise this in different ways and to varying degrees. The most extreme examples, however, seem to represent the perceived female tendency to 'romanticise' music and the musician as tantamount to a psychological disorder. This suggests both the Romantic idea of the woman's inability to contain or control her own emotions, as well as the resultant denigrated concept of 'romanticisation' when applied to female ideas of love and men (see Chapter One of this thesis). This excess of irrational 'femininity' may even throw the reliability of the woman's overall subjectivity into question. It must therefore be contained and neutralised by the framing devices of the text.

Naturalising the performance of classical music within the diegesis by including a musician character, may have been the most effective way of dealing with particular concerns in film music during the late 1930s and 1940s. It is hardly surprising that the advent of sound film soon highlighted questions of what constituted the correct attitude to, and method of film music composition. One of the issues which most occupied music directors, composers and critics alike on both sides of the Atlantic, was the balance between the film score's dramatic purpose and its intrinsic worth 'as music'. This opened up the difficult area of the perceived division between film music and 'serious' music, and questioned what sort of composer should be writing for film.

Ernest Irving, for example, as Music Director at Ealing Studios, displays an epic pride in the 'prestige' British film music which resulted primarily from Muir Mathieson's (Music Director at London Films) introduction of various contemporary classical composers to film composition. This unfortunately leads to such uniquely



acerbic articles as the (tellingly titled) ‘British Film Music Outstrips Hollywood - and This is Why’ (1946d). Irving does, however, also question the potentially negative consequences of combining serious and film music composition. In particular, along with others such as film producer John Croydon (in Huntley 1947a, 161), he staunchly criticises composers who write for film with ‘one eye upon subsequent publication and “exploitation”’ (1946a, 12). In this respect he warns that ‘[i]f the score is a concert success, it is bad film music’ (1947/8, 11).

Crucially, Irving, along with others such as Mathieson (1947, 45), Herbert Stothart (1938, 143-144), Max Steiner (1938, 225-226), John Huntley (1947a, 20), Ralph Vaughan Williams (1947, 178) and Louis Levy (Music Director at Gainsborough and Gaumont-British) (Donnelly 1997, 159), strongly advocates film music’s unobtrusiveness. The (ideally) high quality of the music should not obscure the fact that its purpose is ultimately dramatic and narrative rather than just ‘musical’. The composer whose music is noticeable when foregrounding is not the intention has definitely ‘gone wrong’ (Stothart 1938, 144). Sophisticated musical structures, therefore, desirable as they may be in establishing the ‘artistry’ of film music, should only be used where they integrate appropriately into the narrative (see Irving 1947/8, 12-13 on Walton’s score for *The Foreman Went to France* (1941) and Rawsthorne’s score for *The Captive Heart* (1946)).

Despite such reservations, music in film was nevertheless considered to offer a valuable opportunity for developing the musical taste and knowledge of the cinema audience. Both exposure to the work of ‘serious’ contemporary composers writing specifically for film and the use of existing concert repertoire were seen as important in this respect. Stothart claimed, for example, that:



The screen's importance, musically, lies not in developing new song writers, but in its potentialities for furthering the appreciation of good music, and for developing new serious composers (1938, 139).

Ten years later, Mathieson commended the brave forays into 'the realm of serious music' by what he termed 'bolder' film producers (1948a, 93). Reflecting on the influence of such music in film on renewed public interest in concert works, he suggested that 'film mirror[ed] popular taste, yet add[ed] a stimulus of its own' (ibid., 93).

Along with Huntley (1947a, 59), Mathieson believed that experience of serious music through cinema-going resulted in a gradual increase in the music's own (independent) popularity. Cinema by this time, he suggested, was doing 'more for serious music, and therefore for the cultivated taste of more people, than ever before' (1948a, 93). Huntley's comments, however, also highlight a potential problem with the use of existing music. He states that:

The work of popularising serious music through the medium of cinema, ..., is an excellent scheme and provided that the music can *occur naturally* in the picture, it should be developed as a contribution from the art of cinema to the art of good music (1947a, 18) [my italics].

Perhaps one of most effective ways of minimising questions of conflict of interest, and even appropriate skill, while nevertheless retaining musical quality and the potential for



audience 'education', was therefore to foreground music as part of the story (see, for example, Huntley 1947a, 82).

Particularly where existing classical repertoire was concerned, this appears to avoid most of the salient problems. Firstly, audiences will not be distracted by the sound of music with which they may be familiar but either cannot quite remember, or associate with specific personal memories (Steiner 1938, 225; Huntley 1947a, 53). Secondly, it removes the potential conflict of viewing/listening interest experienced by Huntley with *Brief Encounter* (1945). He claimed that he

had to go to the cinema once to see Noel Coward's film and once to listen to the Rachmaninoff Concerto, both of which constituted two separate entertainments (ibid., 82).

Thirdly, it avoids the undesirable necessity of mutilating pieces (particularly in the use of existing classical music) to fit the editing pattern of the film (Steiner 1938, 225; Prendergast 1992, 70). Instead, it allows the pieces to be realistically motivated and sometimes even named (verbally, for example, in *Possessed* and *Humoresque* (1946), or by concert posters/programmes, as in *The Seventh Veil*). As a result, the pieces can be properly heard (even if only in part) and hopefully appreciated 'as music'.

The desire to foreground classical music coincides with the biopic's interest in the lives of entertainers and artists. George Custen points out, in fact, that from 1941 to 1960 the Hollywood biopic was 'dominated by a new kind of elite. The entertainer rather than the political leader became the paradigmatic famous figure' (1992, 84). Although Custen is referring to a much broader field of entertainment than just classical



music, the 1940s are nevertheless populated by a mixture of ‘real’ and fictitious characterisations of classical composers and musicians. Despite the pretension of the composer/musician biopic to represent genuine historical (or contemporary) figures, however, it seems that it may often have had much in common with its surrounding fictitious counterparts.

Custen suggests, for example, that the primary concern of the biopic (whoever it depicts) may actually be an exploration of the general nature of fame and ‘its relation to the ordinary individual’ (ibid., 18). Film producers (Custen refers specifically to the policies of Darryl F. Zanuck in this context) appear often to have felt that only the personal side of the figure would render them comprehensible and sympathetic to the audience. The ‘cinematic great’ was therefore

constructed so we could have it both ways: the viewer could relate to the “normal” aspects of their private life, while venerating their unusual achievements (ibid., 19).

Concentration on the private lives and experiences of real musicians/composers seems in turn to have enabled the elaboration and/or exaggeration of particular areas of interest.

K. J. Donnelly describes, for example, how Gainsborough’s approach to its biopic of Paganini serves both its own characteristic values and the image of its star. In keeping with the studio’s concern with class, he suggests that *The Magic Bow* (1946) sympathetically pits Paganini (Stewart Granger) as an ‘impoverished musician’ against the ‘ignorant ruling classes’ (1997, 166). Unlike many other films featuring classical



music and musicians at the time, it therefore '[does] not equate classical music with the middle classes; rather, it attempt[s] to win back such music for the masses' (ibid., 167). As a result of Paganini's marriage to a noblewoman, therefore, Donnelly suggests that '*The Magic Bow* demonstrates the interest in class mobility that had been articulated by previous costume drama, but doubles this by offering art music to everyone' (ibid., 167).

Donnelly also points out that '[t]he hypermasculine Paganini and his musical virtuosity are a sexual magnet' (ibid., 165). Apart from the popular imagery of the virtuoso and any historical veracity with specific respect to Paganini (see Chapter One of this thesis), this is also conducive to Stewart Granger's own star image (ibid., 165). The appropriately ardent admiration of his diegetic female audiences may therefore reflect as much on the desired response from the cinema audience to the star. During Granger's/Yehudi Menuhin's representations of Paganini's musical performances, Donnelly describes 'numerous reverse shots of adoring women' (ibid., 165). These women are, he suggests, 'mesmerized, in thrall to this pied piper and his musical sorcery' (ibid., 165).

Such angles and devices as these undoubtedly made for a kind of compelling melodrama that the painstaking historical accuracy of events in a biopic like *The Great Mr. Handel* (1942) apparently failed to deliver (Huntley 1947a, 62-67). For some, however, this may also sometimes have impinged to too great an extent upon the 'true' representation of the musician's creativity and relationship to his/her own music.

This was certainly the case to a certain extent in both Hollywood and Britain. Critics who habitually championed foregrounded classical music apparently found the liberties taken with actual historical figures so ridiculous, that the entirely fictitious



counterpart seems to become preferable. Hubert Clifford, for example, following the model of *A Song to Remember* (1944), wryly suggests the potential for a biopic of Mendelssohn starring Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby and Dorothy Lamour entitled *A Song Without Words to Forget* (1945a, 11). Likewise Irving, in response to *The Magic Bow*, offers the opinion that

[t]here is nothing in the slightest degree diabolical about [Stewart] Granger and if he should now take up music seriously I should recommend some lessons on the bass-tuba (1946c, 27).

Many critics including Clifford (1945c, 11), Huntley (1947a, 18 & 78), Mathieson (1948a, 93) and a representative of the National Film Music Council of America (in Huntley 1947a, 78), however, express approval of the maturity, realism and uncontrived motivation of dramatically relevant performances in the entirely fictional *The Seventh Veil*.

The ‘fact’ and ‘fiction’ musician films both tended to focus on the private lives (and loves) of musicians, and made common use of the biographical flashback which Turim suggests habitually blurs the distinction between real biography and fiction (1989, 110). They also seem typically to share several other features. Perhaps most importantly in terms of the musical-emotional relationship of character and text, is the tendency for pieces to ‘serve double duty’ at both the diegetic level and as part of the narrative (nondiegetic) score (Gorbman 1987, 151; Custen 1992, 86).



Gorbman and Irene Kahn Atkins suggest that the diegetic placement of music, particularly when either drawn from the Romantic repertoire or imitative of that style, emphasises its

importance as a statement about the *personality* of the ... composer.

The style of the work is a reflection of his (or her) own emotional life-style, or ideas and aspirations (Atkins 1983, 89-90) [my italics].

Gorbman points out (specifically in relation to *Hangover Square* (1945), the representation of fictitious composer George's (Laird Cregar's) psychological disorder and his more 20th century style of composition), how the transference of such a personal musical statement onto the nondiegetic track 'insistently link[s] the character's subjectivity with the spectator's' (1987, 152). Whether the story is based on a real or purely fictitious musician, his/her music may therefore be used as a means of moving beyond the isolated occasion of composition or performance, in order to imbue the whole story with a very particular subjectivity.

The idea that a character can be allowed (albeit unwittingly) to exert such an influence over the way in which the spectator perceives the narrative seems to suggest that this particular musical transfer may at some level be imitating the function of the embedded first-person voice-over. Not only, it seems, can the emotional point of view of the musician perhaps inform our view of events as the narrative progresses but, as Gorbman points out, the music-related memories of any character can also adopt this 'metadiegetic' function, initiating flashbacks or recalling previous episodes to the present (ibid., 22-23). The significant power of the emotional 'voice' which is



constituted by the diegetic musical performance may therefore recall the configuration of the performer-audience relationship forwarded by Richard Poirier and Edward Said.

Following Poirier's ideas on 'performance' in literary creativity, Said conceptualises the act of live musical performance as an exercise of power and control over the audience. Poirier suggests that performance constitutes a process

at first so furiously *self-consultative*, so even narcissistic, and later so eager for publicity, love, and historical dimension. Out of an accumulation of secretive acts emerges at last a form that presumes to compete with reality itself for control of the minds exposed to it (1971, 87) [my italics].

Said moderates this with an acknowledgement of

the listener's poignant speechlessness as he/she faces an onslaught of such refinement, articulation, and technique as almost to constitute a sadomasochistic experience (1991, 3).

Although Gorbman, Atkins and Poirier focus on the act of composition as the expression of the artist's personality, Said therefore suggests a similar potential for powerful self-projection in the performance of existing repertoire. The mark of personality, in this context, can lie as much in the realisation and interpretation of a piece of music as in its original creation. As a result, the experience of musical performance relies on the balance of the 'performer's interpretative and histrionic



performance fenced in by his or her obligatory muteness' and the audience's 'receptivity, subordination, and paying patience' (ibid., 11).

Placing such a powerful performance within a specifically diegetic context, however, also alters the music's function and capacity for meaning in relation to the conventions of nondiegetic music. Diegetic music can be designed to accommodate the mood of a scene in much the same way as nondiegetic scoring so that, as Gorbman points out, music in a nightclub scene may be expected to reflect the emotions of a film's dancing/courting protagonists (1987, 23). There is no way, however, that this nightclub music could 'know' what was happening between the main couple. Either the music in this case must be seen as purely an aspect of *mise-en-scène* or even a factor which actively (but unknowingly) influences the actions or mood of the characters. The position of omniscient knowledge which nondiegetic music can necessarily imply over character interiority is therefore not realistic as a diegetic device.

Unlike nondiegetic music, therefore, which is 'bound' to the emotional resonances of the narrative events, diegetic music has an infinite potential for independence. This allows the music unparalleled freedom to 'comment' on the situations of characters in a relatively distanced and objectifying way. While this need not necessarily lead to the ironic extremes which Gorbman finds in certain films by Fellini and Hitchcock (ibid., 23-25), it is often used to what Chion and Gorbman describe as 'anempathetic' effect (Chion 1990, 8; Gorbman 1987, 24 & 159-161). In this instance, rather than expressing sympathy with the emotions of a character or situation, the music emphasises its (and therefore the world's) *indifference*. Taking



such a technique to its emotional extreme there is, as Steiner suggests, ‘no greater counterpoint ... than gay music underlying a tragic scene, or vice versa’ (1938, 225).

The power accorded to the effect of the diegetic musical performance may therefore be invested in a potentially dubious event. Although, as with Gorbman’s nightclub example, it *may* concur exactly with the emotions of the characters it involves or affects, this cannot be relied upon to the same degree as nondiegetic music. The position of the performer in this particular context is possibly even more powerful, and the position of the transfixed audience member/listener even more precarious, than Poirier and Said suggest.

Both Poirier and Said seem to leave the question of gender largely open (although most of their exemplary musical performers are male). The cinema, however, appears to rehearse and examine this power relationship most frequently in terms of a female listener to the male musician. The male musician, whether in the biopic or fictional narrative, is often positioned as the object of a kind of female adoration marked by such devotion that, in certain contexts, it can easily transform from admiration into love or even obsession. The source of this slippage often seems to lie, unsurprisingly, in the fluidity of meaning allowed within the diegetic musical performance.

Following a particularly Romantic ethos of the emotional constitution of the musician, the man’s musical ‘voice’ in performance often signifies much more to the woman than merely a talent or profession. The perception of an unusual depth of feeling and sensitivity combined with the potent masculine strength of artistic expression often seems to prove, perhaps unsurprisingly, his most powerful and fascinating attraction.



Such overdetermination during the musical performance can be signalled by the gazes of the listening woman. The ‘mesmerized’ gazes already described in connection with *The Magic Bow* (Donnelly 1997, 165) are typically symptomatic of such overdetermination during performance scenes (see, for example, *Deception* (1947), *Humoresque*, *Dangerous Moonlight*, *Intermezzo* (1939) and *Interlude* (1957)). The simultaneous distance and power of attraction of the man can also be presented more literally, however, through the presentation of the woman’s physical movement and stasis during his performance.

A number of films seem to emphasise the simultaneous sense of distance and magnetism of the man and his music by, in effect, narrativising his power of attraction. While the hypnotic power of the performance may fix the woman in an absolute fascinated stasis, it may also induce her to move towards the performer. Musical (and emotional) attraction therefore appears to translate into a literally ‘magnetic’ physical attraction. The representation of the first diegetic performance in particular, frequently incorporates the idea of music motivating the crossing of a physical and/or emotional distance between the characters. In *Dangerous Moonlight* (within the flashback sequence), *Night Song* (1947), *Humoresque* and, in effect at least *Deception*,<sup>2</sup> the woman is physically (and emotionally) drawn across space by hearing the musician play.

While the man may not *fully* realise the power of his music over the woman, however, he may also not be completely innocent in the creation of its effect. The

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<sup>2</sup>In this case, strictly speaking, Christine (Bette Davis) is heading towards the concert because she has seen it publicised. Although, therefore, she is not actually drawn by the sound of the music, the scene seems to construct her movement towards Karel (Paul Henreid) in this way, and we do not learn of how she actually came to be there until later. The same kind of construction occurs twice more in the film, as Christine returns home to find Karel practising, and later when she visits Alex (Claude Rains) at his request. In all cases, she is obliged after her apparent drawing in by the music, to wait, watch and listen at a respectful distance, until the man has finished playing.



particularly dedicated nature of the woman's attraction to the musician sometimes appears to be at least partly a product of the musical thoughts or creativity which he claims she inspires in him. Regardless of whether or not he is the original composer of the piece, he may therefore claim a crucial ownership over its emotional meaning within the context of the film.

In *Possessed*, for example, Louise's psychological problems seem to derive from the irreconcilability of her apparent capacity to inspire David to play romantic music by Schumann with his subsequent refusal of emotional commitment. In *Dangerous Moonlight*, Carol (Sally Gray) is veritably hypnotised by the intensity of Stefan's (Anton Walbrook's) gaze as he composes the melody of his 'Warsaw Concerto' in response to her. She later makes the rather crucial discovery, however, that she is not the sole source of his inspiration or emotional dedication. In *Intermezzo*, Holger (Leslie Howard) describes Anita (Ingrid Bergman) in terms of a Viennese waltz and in *Interlude*, Tonio (Rossano Brazzi) uses an anecdote about Mozart writing music for a woman he loved as a means of implying the depth of his attachment to Helen (June Allyson). Both men, however, are married and their existing emotional responsibilities must ultimately be honoured (even if it is the beloved woman who makes the noble decision on the man's behalf).

Alternatively, the man's strength may be compromised in such a way that he clearly *needs* the woman to lend him her own strength or support if he is to continue as a musician at all. In this case the woman may be almost as much a part of the creation or performance as the man himself but once again, of course, only insofar as she *enables* his 'genius'. Accordingly, in both *Deception* and *Night Song*, the genuine dedication of the woman is demonstrated by her active self-construction as the man's



life-changing source of support and inspiration. Christine and Cathy (Merle Oberon) respectively put aside or use their own musical ability and knowledge in order to prioritise the nurturing of Karel and Dan's (Dana Andrews') apparently greater or more important talents.

Returning to the effect of transferring such diegetic pieces to the nondiegetic score, this results in an apparently incongruous configuration. The male musician remains the actual source of the music, while his female listener is positioned as the (musically represented) emotional centre of the narrative. Just as the music inspired by 'Mary' in *Night Song* remains with Dan to remind him of what she means to him,<sup>3</sup> therefore, the music which transfers across narrative levels to accompany the 'muse' woman must always *belong* in some sense to the male musician. Although she may have inspired its composition or performance, as an expression of emotion it can only ever exist for her as something 'given'.

Doane suggests that such a formal diegetic involvement with music not only provides a motivating factor for the love story's 'overemphasis' on music, but also mitigates the possible 'feminisation' of the man involved in the genre (1987, 97). She states that:

In the love story, the male undergoes a kind of feminization by contamination - in other words, he is to a certain degree emasculated by his very presence in a feminized genre (ibid., 97).

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<sup>3</sup>Cathy, the rich self-appointed saviour of blind composer Dan, poses as blindwoman 'Mary' in order to gain his trust. After successfully returning him to his composition and, following an operation, his sight, she engineers a relationship with him as her real self, leaving poor 'Mary' behind. The memory of his blind muse is too strong for Dan, however, and he resolves to return to her. Everyone seems happy as he discovers that Cathy and 'Mary' are in fact one and the same.



Making him into an actual musician therefore ‘recoups some of the male’s inevitable losses’ (ibid., 97) by rationalising his involvement with music in any form or at any narrative level. It seems, however, that the sense of masculinity which Doane suggests is returned to the male character by his diegetic musicianship, may not fully account for the extent of its effect. Rather than just being ‘remasculinised’ in himself, the effect and deployment of his music within the narrative may extend to giving him a broader controlling ‘voice’ in the woman’s emotional trajectory. While this may appear similar to the doctor/psychiatrist ‘giving’ the woman access to speech in the medical discourse, however, the very point of the musical exchange often appears to be the couple’s mutual misunderstanding of its actual emotional significance.

The most common misunderstanding seems to centre on the nature of the emotions (apparently or actually) contained in the performance. The woman often either misinterprets the emotional depth which the music implies in the man (*Possessed, Letter from an Unknown Woman*) or overestimates her sole claim on those emotions (*Intermezzo, Dangerous Moonlight, Humoresque*). The man, on the other hand, may fail to recognise the potential problems caused by the depth and sincerity which his music is bound to convey (*Intermezzo, Possessed, Dangerous Moonlight, Letter from an Unknown Woman*). The disjuncture between the woman’s romantic fantasy of what the performance implies, and the (diegetic) reality of its status as a ‘performance’, therefore marks the musician-listener relationship as one of potential misrecognition.

At the nondiegetic level, this music can therefore be invested with a particularly complex conflation of the man’s feelings for the woman, what the woman believes is conveyed by the performance, and what she believes can be understood of the man and



his feelings towards her. Complicating this is the question of whether the performance actually reflects the man's real emotions or whether it is merely a performance of emotion, and to what extent this is acknowledged in the woman's reaction. Most importantly, however, is the idea that the woman's emotions are less a reflection of her own independent personality than of her emotional configuration by the man and her consequent dependence on his continued admiration.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that this music can represent what happens to the female protagonist in a peculiarly ambiguous way. In *Possessed*, for example, the representation of Louise's emotions by various nondiegetic manifestations of the Schumann played by David not only expresses her self-torture as she descends into serious illness, but also appears to take an active part in this psychological downfall. As his music follows her gradual psychological breakdown, particularly her aural and visual hallucinations, it therefore marks her as an emotional 'product' of the man.

The danger of female 'romanticisation' which is suggested by the film therefore seems most violently expressed not through Louise's eventual murder of David, but through the temporary ability of her hallucinations to take over the seemingly objective representation of the film. As both the film audience and Louise believe for a few moments that she has killed Carol (Geraldine Brooks), only to discover this as being purely the product of her crazed imagination, the over-emotional precariousness and consequent unreliability of female subjectivity is made abundantly clear.

The extent to which a female fascination with the man through his music can become a distortion of perception is ultimately encapsulated in the substitution, or confusion, of the human being with their seemingly iconic musical instrument. In *Letter from an Unknown Woman*, Lisa appears to relate to Stefan's (Louis Jourdan's) piano



as if it is the man himself, with this physical manifestation going one step further than his representation through the sound of his music alone. In *Intermezzo*, Margit (Edna Best) walks in on Anita gazing at and caressing Holger's violin, and looks as shocked as if she had discovered them locked in a passionate embrace. Even in the much later *Truly, Madly, Deeply* (1990), Jamie's (Alan Rickman's) cello fulfils a similar role for Nina (Juliet Stevenson). Stilwell points out that Nina 'explicitly associates Jamie's cello with his body', so that her relationship to it depends on her current feelings towards him (1997a, 74). The most extreme expression of this comes when she is asked to lend the cello to her nephew. She responds: "It's all I have left of him. It is him. It's like asking me to give you his body."

Where such extremes of reaction are concerned, there often seems to be no possible conclusion but the destruction or self-annihilation of the woman. In both *Possessed* and *Deception*, although it is actually a male musician who is murdered (in *Deception* to protect the sanctity of her listener relationship to another male musician), the real importance appears to lie with the denial of a future which this bequeaths to Louise and Christine respectively. Anita in *Intermezzo* and Helen in *Interlude* sacrifice themselves emotionally by insisting that Holger and Tonio return to the greater need of their wives and families. Helen commits suicide in *Humoresque* and Lisa in *Letter from an Unknown Woman* conveniently dies of typhus at the point where Stefan's rejection is finally clear. *Night Song*, in which the couple are eventually united, seems to achieve this only as a result of the film's bizarre doubling of Cathy/'Mary', which allows each woman to be partially rejected in their combined creation of Dan's ideal woman.

Films such as *Possessed* and *Letter from an Unknown Woman* (and even to some extent *Brief Encounter*, although the stimulus to narrate here is a gramophone



record) place this issue under the closest possible scrutiny by actually allowing the woman to narrate her own view of events. The question of female subjectivity can therefore be highlighted not only by her accompaniment by the man's music, but also through the particular type of voice to which the woman is given access.

### **Female Narration and Male Music**

Sarah Kozloff points out that although women appear as third-person narrators in various non-fictional formats, their narration in the fiction film is largely restricted to the first-person mode (1988, 99). One reason for this, which she suggests along with Kaja Silverman, may lie with a problem in granting the female the kind of authority which the more traditionally male third-person narrator (Chion's 'acousmètre' in Chapter Two of this thesis) enjoys. By only allowing the woman to tell a story in which she also appears as a character, the narrative film therefore restricts women to relating only their personal memories and experiences (ibid., 100).

Particularly when this voice-over is embedded within the overall framework of the film, 'embodying' her within what Silverman terms a 'hyperbolically diegetic context' (1988, 45), the woman seems to be returned to the kind of double operatic framework described by McClary and Clément. The targeted use of other elements of narrative representation within her flashback such as *mise-en-scène* and music allow the film itself the possibility of commenting on her point of view and undermining the reliability of her subjectivity. It can also, of course, give diegetic male voices (usually doctors or psychiatrists) the 'clarifying' and authoritative right of interpretation (see, for example, *Possessed*, *Caught*, *The Snake Pit*, *The Seventh Veil* and the later *Marnie*



(1964)). Further to this, however, the containment of the woman's fantasy through the retrospective emphasis on the error of her romantic ways offered by the introduction and framing of her flashback also allows the film audience to carry out its own assessment as the narrative progresses.

Both Custen (1992, 183) and Turim (1989, 130) suggest that the individual subjectivity stressed by the flashback format can never operate independently of its 'present-day' contextualisation. Indeed one of its primary functions, which has already been noted in connection with Charlotte's flashbacks in *Now, Voyager* (see Chapter Two of this thesis), is to

retell history from the vantage point of a particular narrator. This privilege allows the narrator to frame the life not just in terms of the order and content of events, but to frame its significance (Custen 1992, 183).

The (auto)biographical flashback, which is typical of the embedded narrator's confessional or reflective mode (Kozloff 1988, 50), may therefore allow a reading of the woman's life to targeted ideological ends.

In particular, by demonstrating some kind of emotional/behavioural deviance which has ultimately been unsuccessful and has compromised her in the present, the narrative can serve a double purpose. The content of the flashback may go so far as to suggest a



potential “other” film of [the woman’s] subjective experience - more a functioning of the subconscious, more of the social circumstances that limit a woman’s options to deviant behaviour. It exposes some of what might possess a female psyche to strike out with violence (Turim 1989, 160).

Its structural status, however, demonstrates the containment and regulation of such impulses. As a result, the woman’s past can be safely presented in a salutary light, while the female audience can nevertheless enjoy the vicarious experience of (temporarily) living a socially forbidden, but perhaps desirable, alternative life (Basinger 1993).

This particular present-day contextualisation therefore allows the flashback to undermine the woman’s vision of her own past through her evident inability to perceive ‘reality’ (so that she has ended up, for example, an errant wife/mother, a psychiatric patient, or a rejected lover). Interventions of ‘objectivity’ and ‘reality’ in whatever form, therefore reveal the woman’s view as *excessively* (and so dangerously) subjective, a point highlighted by her own frequent confusion over the events she recalls and the images she sees, so that she makes the false connections of Virginia (Olivia de Havilland) in *The Snake Pit*, or suffers the extensive hallucinatory episodes of Louise in *Possessed*. She may even, like Nancy (Laraine Day) in *The Locket* (1946), wilfully resist the accurate narration of her own story, until the greater power of filmic devices bombards her with unwelcome and ultimately overwhelming memories, eventually proving her psychological illness against the (initially questionable) sanity of the film’s multiple male narrators (Doane 1987, 58-59).



Indeed as Kozloff points out, the very constitution of the first-person narrator means that s/he can never be the sole narrating voice of the text (1988, 43-44). Despite any attempts to position her as the primary storyteller, the female character will always be framed by the wider voice of the film itself and therefore subject to interpretation by other levels of narrative (*ibid.*, 45). The particular case of the musician-listener narrative, however, seems to add its own peculiar twist to this formulation. As long as the woman's memories are accompanied by the man's music, her emotions must be informed as much by his attitude as by her own. This seems to recall Edward Branigan's idea of 'hyperdiegetic' narration, where a number of contexts may be relevant to the interpretation of a given image (1992, 189-190). Whether or not the woman is fully aware of the man's feelings, these remain a part of the narration. While she narrates her story, he 'narrates' through either the woman's, or the film's constant recollection of his attitude to both the music and her.

Ultimately, however, the identification with the woman's point of view encouraged by the voice-over and flashback (Kozloff 1988, 41), as well as her accompaniment by nondiegetic music, make it difficult to condemn her for her misunderstanding. Particularly considering the melodramatic role of nondiegetic music in representing genuine rather than deceptive, qualified or compromised emotion, it is impossible not to respect the depth and veracity of the woman's feelings. While the man's 'rational' diegetic music seems a minefield of potential misunderstanding or overdetermination for her romantic sensibilities, her 'irrational' emotions are at the very least pure, genuine and unadulterated. Any thoughts or actions based on such genuine emotions seem to be lent an interesting and persuasive credence.



*Letter from an Unknown Woman* offers perhaps the most complex and fascinating representation of the male musician-female listener narrative. Its use of the conventions of voice-over narration to comment on the subjectivity of its female protagonist are obtrusive, but at the same time surprisingly subtle in effect. It therefore eschews a position of absolute judgement in favour of a more gently objective and even sympathetic contextualisation of the woman's emotions, thoughts and actions. The film's most striking quality, however, comes from its presentation of the origins of the woman's point of view. Rather than allow the male musician to assign an association with music to her, *Letter from an Unknown Woman* observes the woman as she does this for herself. Unbeknown to the musician, therefore, she becomes a unique combination of his dedicated listener and self-styled muse, creating an attachment to an imaginary ideal which can only be properly reciprocated after her death.



“Are You Crazy?”: *Letter from an Unknown Woman*

4



“Tell me, when you climb up a mountain, what then?” “Well you come down again.”

Lisa and Stefan in *Letter from an Unknown Woman*

The story of *Letter from an Unknown Woman* charts Lisa Berndle’s life of dedication to concert pianist Stefan Brand, of whom she constructs a romantic vision during adolescence by listening to him practise and gazing at his possessions. The piece which she associates with him, Liszt’s Concert Study in Db, becomes the main source material of the nondiegetic score. The very presence of music in this narrative, and particularly the exact way in which it initially bonds Lisa to Stefan, is integral not only to the creation of its essential dynamic between objective reality and romantic fantasy, but also the continually ambiguous attitude to both of its main characters. Most importantly, perhaps, it predicts the impossibility of romance in anything other than the realms of, in the end, either Lisa or Stefan’s imagination.

Music therefore plays a significant role in setting the terms of the narrative and the parameters within which the characters can operate, as well as offering a certain logic for its enigmatic closing moments. The ability of the score to encompass such conflicting meanings lies in its presentation of three points of view on the narrative,

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<sup>4</sup>The opening bars of the Liszt Concert Study in Db (‘Un Sospiro’) published in Leipzig in 1849. All direct quotations from this piece are sourced from the Revised Augener Edition. © 1991, Stainer and Bell Ltd.



simultaneously viewing events through the opposing filters of blind emotional fantasy and objective reality, as well as the eventually more persuasive power of subjective emotional truth.

Much of the existing writing on *Letter from an Unknown Woman* centres on the articulation of the difference between the narrating position of Lisa and the broader narrational 'voice' of the film. In a similar way to Laura (Celia Johnson) in *Brief Encounter*, Lisa is never subject to the obvious prying eyes of diegetic medical analysis, leaving her apparently free to tell her story more or less interrupted. The questioning disruption of her romantic vision is, however, 'concealed' within the images which purport to represent her own narration. No matter how much inducement there is to believe that Lisa's letter/voice-over is the source of the images, we are therefore constantly recalled to the more knowledgeable view of the film itself (Kozloff 1988, 48; Wood 1976, 231; 1993, 6). In this way, as Robin Wood points out, while Lisa's narration is allowed integrity and respect and is, 'as far as it goes, "the truth" ... it is *her* truth, not [the film's]' (1993, 6).

The number of levels at which this dynamic operates and the subtle sophistication of the film's commentary on Lisa's subjectivity are positively dizzying. Theorists such as Victor Perkins, Robin Wood, Andrew Sarris, Tania Modleski and Virginia Wright Wexman suggest that even at the broad structural level the narrative incorporates an objective view of events of which Lisa could never be aware (and therefore could not describe in her letter). Above all, it seems, the rhythms which imbue the film offer a fatalistic commentary on the inescapable passing of time in the lives of all the characters. Lisa operates within a time system dictated by the emotional significance of events, a framework also reflected in the structure of the musical score.



Stefan, on the other hand, is represented as more random, spontaneous and above all free.

This crucial temporal distinction is expressed at the broadest level of the film's framework, through the simultaneous expansion and compression of time offered by the letter itself. The flashback structure presenting its contents allows

the counterpoint of the passing years of Lisa's narrative with the passing hours of Stefan reading her letter, with the two time schemes at last converging as Stefan finishes the letter and the carriages arrive to bear him to the duel with Johann (Wood 1976, 235).

As Lisa focuses Stefan on the idea of her life (and therefore also *his* life) as being "measured" by certain events (see Perkins 1982, 62), she therefore confronts him with the necessity of acknowledging a relationship to time which is alien to his own. Bringing him into line with her vision of life in this way then also both precipitates and necessitates his death.

Stefan enjoys a relationship to time dictated by the perceived 'freedom' of the (male) artist (Wood 1993, 8; Perkins 1982, 71). According to Wright Wexman, his association is with the 'chronotope of the street, a multidirectional space where time is governed by chance' (1986, 6). He therefore lives

in an evanescent temporality in which his feeling of the moment is all that exists. ... [He occupies] an atmosphere of random temporality, giving up the piano after a concert "*like all the others,*" when he



*“happened”* to look into the mirror and saw that he was no longer young (ibid., 6).

Lisa, in contrast to this strong sense of movement, is locked within a time system of ‘echoes and near repetitions’ tantamount to temporal ‘stasis’ (Wood 1976, 225; 1993, 5-6; see also, for example, Perkins 1982, 71; Wright Wexman 1986, 11; Doane 1989, 108; Modleski 1984, 329; Wilson 1986, 104).

Lisa therefore represents a reflective time of living memory where the past exists in the present as much as it will in the future, while Stefan’s less active attention to past events is particularly notable in his inability to recognise or remember her. Her appearances in his life, culminating in the fateful arrival of her letter as he is about to flee from probable death in a duel, therefore constitute ‘diversions’ which ‘cut across and distract him from some other action or intention’ (Perkins 1982, 64). These distractions seem almost literally to depict Stefan’s evocation of “all the clocks in the world hav[ing] stopped”, until reaching their apotheosis in the ‘arrest’ of death (Wood 1976, 235). Although, therefore, it may appear primarily to be Lisa who is caught in the film’s inescapable ‘trap of time’, this is a net that actually extends around all the characters (Sarris 1968, 219; Wood 1976, 225-226).

The difference in mode of presentation, however, marks the distinction between Lisa’s experience of repetition and the film’s more objective view of destiny and of history repeating itself. Just as extensive tracking-shots and long takes catalogue the relentless linearity of time (Sarris 1968, 219), the whole narrative resounds with a higher level of echoes, rhymes and ironies of which Lisa and the other characters remain completely unaware (Perkins 1982; Wilson 1986, 105-106; Wood



1993, 6). Many critics note, for example, the twinning of shots which frames Lisa's return home with Stefan for their one night of passion within the context of her earlier adolescent observation of his return with another (unknown) woman (see, for example, Wood 1976, 233). Similarly, Perkins points out the specific placement of two phrases which contrast Stefan's freedom with Lisa's lack of freedom as a framing device for her recounting of her life in Linz. Although Lisa speaks both phrases in her voice-over ("You who have always lived so freely" and "I told him I wasn't free"), it is the film which constructs and reveals their ironic correspondence (1982, 71).

Lisa's imperviousness to such resonances seems literalised in aspects of both the presentation and content of story elements which are clearly intended for the sole view of the film audience. As Robin Wood suggests, her attribution of the beginning of her 'conscious life' to Stefan's arrival in her apartment building raises the question of those things of which she is *not* conscious (1993, 7-8). Apart from the visual obstacles placed between both her and Stefan, and between the camera and its representation of her story (see, for example, Wood 1976, 224; Wilson 1986, 108), this appears most strikingly manifested through those scenarios which Lisa literally could not have seen (and therefore could not have written about). These represent the working-class support mechanisms of upper class entertainment, and hence the very unromantic conditions which qualify the possible scenarios of romance. This constitutes an element of reality which uniformly eludes Lisa (see, for example, Perkins 1982, 65-66; Wright Wexman 1986, 14).

The only diegetic character who does seem aware of such filmic devices, at least at some level, is Stefan's servant John. As a suggested representative of the director within the film (Wilson 1986, 125), John also represents a perfect example of



the power accorded to the mute character in melodrama by Chion (see Chapter Two of this thesis). Most intriguingly, he appears to know Lisa's story, her identity and Stefan's response before her (in any case unsigned) letter has even been opened (Wood 1993, 14). Accordingly, he not only allows Lisa's narration to envelope Stefan by failing to carry out his master's escape plan by calling a cab and packing his belongings, but also provides him with the name (and face) which gives meaning to his forthcoming death. As Lisa's decision to remain mute over the birth of their son determines the lack of involvement with his own family which will lead to Stefan's downfall, so John's 'silence' also signifies his role in determining his master's fate.

Perhaps the most pertinent commentary which the film encompasses as far as this thesis is concerned, however, is that which involves music. Diegetic music fulfils a particularly ironic function, in terms not only of its direct correspondence with simultaneous visual events but also, and undoubtedly most poignantly, in terms of its reflection on Lisa's excessively romantic interpretation of Stefan's playing. While the implications of Lisa's (mis-)understanding of music will be amplified in the close case study of the film's score, this will be better understood if contextualised within the broad conventions of musical significance which the film constructs.

The romantic significance of Vienna, in the particular terms of what it represents for Lisa, is marked in part by its musical contrast with Linz. As both Perkins (1982) and Wright Wexman (1986, 5) point out, the music of Linz is entirely public and diegetic and therefore cannot be associated with the intimate realm within which Lisa sees Stefan. It seems to act, however, in the manner of a powerful sanction of social regulation and controlled emotion, with Leopold's (John Good's) unwelcome and extremely unromantic proposal appearing virtually choreographed to its



overbearing (physical and musical) presence. Lisa's stubborn fidelity to her romantic ideal therefore dictates that she must reject such socially conditioned and conditioning music, forcing her to break through the boundary of the military music parade to escape back to her idealised Vienna (Perkins 1982, 65-66).

If Lisa overestimates the 'feminine' qualities of Stefan's musicality, then the military musicians of Linz certainly seem to overstate the very unromantic quotidian aspects of a working relationship to music (see also Wright Wexman 1986, 13). The 'unsmiling grunts' and laborious approach (Perkins 1982, 65) of the pompous bandmaster seem to counter or mock any romance or emotion in the Wagnerian love song (see also Perkins unpublished typescript on the ironies and political resonances of this particular choice of song). Lisa's tendency to ignore anything in music but the romantic prevents her from realising the implications of this alternative 'underside' of music. As with all the other manifestations of work which she apparently fails to see, therefore, the idea of Stefan's playing as the routine practising of a professional completely eludes her (see Perkins 1982, 66). As he abandons this task in petulant frustration (in an early scene which we can see but she cannot), it therefore seems one of the film's supreme ironies that it is the male musician's lack of serious musical commitment which is (apparently, according to Lisa's physical response) misread as an expression of the deepest emotional turmoil.

It is this misunderstanding which George Wilson suggests is the basis for Lisa's erroneous contention that her will is ruled by Stefan (1986, 118). Since Lisa is convinced that her deeply emotional responses emanate not from within herself, but from Stefan's music and therefore from Stefan himself, she must be compelled to see herself as dependent upon him. This identification with his playing, however, appears



to develop into a desire for his equal artistic/emotional dependence. Her greatest point of romantic hope is therefore offered when he considers that she appears to understand him better than he does himself and that, consequently, “[she] may be able to help [him].” What Wood terms her ‘fantasy of vicarious empowerment’ (1993, 10) therefore seems to constitute her, in the terms of this thesis, as a self-constructed muse.

Stefan’s related lack of emotional commitment seems most clearly manifested through the diegetic use of Papageno’s aria ‘Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen’ from Mozart’s *The Magic Flute* during Stefan and Lisa’s meeting outside the Vienna Opera House. Following the emphasis on theatricality suggested by a calling for the diegetic audience to return for the “Second Act”, Stefan’s words in particular seem almost to ‘sing along’ with the lovelorn bird-catcher’s contemplation of ‘companionship’ with a (any?) ‘Girl or Woman’ (see Wood 1976, 231). This offers a biting commentary on the true nature of Lisa and Stefan’s relationship. At the same time, however, Papageno’s energetic joyfulness also creates a further ironic statement on Stefan himself, through its direct juxtaposition with his sadly desperate and somewhat tired seduction routine (see Perkins unpublished typescript, 7).

The relationship of a romantic sensibility to the more mundane aspects of harsh reality are yet further exposed in the dynamic of music, dialogue and sound effects. Lisa’s romanticising over Stefan, his music or his possessions is frequently interrupted by discordant and disruptive noise and, during her adolescent adoration, by the distinctly unromantic voice of her mother. She must, we assume, be as aware of the actuality of these disruptions as she is of the obstacles which obscure her ability to see Stefan. She seems, however, similarly immune to their commentary either during their initial appearances or indeed as they become relevant again at later points in the story.



She evidently sees no irony, for example, in the particular nature of the interruptions to her inquisitive reveries over Stefan's possessions caused by his own harp (see Wood 1993, 6). Firstly, its discordant noise while being unloaded from the removal van belies its musical delicacy and secondly, its (actually) large and ungainly physicality counters its exquisite beauty as it obstructs her illicit movement through his apartment.

Eventually, however, it may be that the film's ultimate irony is at the expense of the viewer, rather than Lisa. As Stefan reaches the end of Lisa's letter and finally (although not unaided) realises her identity, he rather dramatically chooses to accept the reframing of his own life that she has offered. Perhaps suggesting a radical re-reading of his lifetime of promiscuity as a dedicated but futile search for his elusive "goddess" (see Wood 1976, 231), Lisa's letter seems to give his life, even in its current depleted state, the significance it has always lacked. Stefan displays as much romantic idealism as Lisa, so that her letter 'generat[es] ... the crucial vision of the person loved' (Wilson 1986, 110), re-presenting her as his 'ideal woman' in much the same way as his music suggested him as her ideal man (ibid., 123). At the same time as this 'reclaim[s him] to natural emotion and moral sentiment' (ibid., 121), Lisa's romantic schoolgirl crush is redeemed to the heights of a Romantic man's transcendent vision (Wood 1976, 236).

In an attempt to chart both the nature and development of the relationship between Lisa's status as listener to Stefan, and her (self-)constitution as his muse, my analysis of the score of *Letter from an Unknown Woman* will focus primarily on selected musical elements of four sections of the film. The first, which runs from the opening of the film to the point immediately before her departure for Linz, begins by detailing *how* her image of Stefan is initially formed. It then shows the process by



which her romantic fixation causes the appropriation of the diegetic music onto the nondiegetic track, and her attendant self-constitution as Stefan's (unrecognised) muse. As she craves any kind of contact with Stefan, the nondiegetic score locks particular patterns in the music to her desire, and begins to suggest the more objective musical codes by which it will comment on, or even condemn her emotions.

The nature of her quest is therefore slightly altered by the time of the second section, which runs from their meeting in the street outside his apartment building to their embrace at the end of the evening. Now, she has actual adult contact with him, so that under normal circumstances a relationship might be considered feasible. Her vision of their mutually-dependent destiny is so idealised, however, that Lisa needs Stefan to move beyond simple attraction. In order to fulfil her all-or-nothing view of their love, he must truly *recognise* her unique sympathy with his (presumed) interiority, and thereby realise and acknowledge her crucial role in his (musical and emotional) life. The musical patterns introduced within the first section, therefore, now measure the intensity of her excitement over the possibility of this recognition and all that it would entail.

The third section begins with Lisa seeking out Stefan after their unexpected meeting outside the opera house and ends as she flees his apartment. This episode offers Lisa a second opportunity for believing that Stefan may be ready to recognise her, a chance for which she is willing to give up everything she has achieved in her life so far. Her increasingly obvious obsession with attaining his recognition is first reflected in the intensification of the musical patterns associated with her desire. As she finally accepts (albeit temporarily) his hopeless *lack* of recognition, however, the musical weight of the score seems to descend upon her, combining all those signals



which may have predicted her downfall. The final, very brief section then considers Stefan's response to both her story and her death, beginning as her final act of writing is seen and running to the end of the film.

The film is divided into a series of flashbacks, motivated by Stefan reading the eponymous letter which informs him of his previously unrealised history with Lisa. In the first of these flashbacks, Lisa tells of the basis of her attachment to Stefan after he moves into a neighbouring apartment. The only knowledge she has of him initially comes from gazing at his possessions and, most notably, from the sound of his piano playing. The key to her very subjective reading of this is made clear through her own account of her thoughts and words.

As we first see her in the act of listening, it is apparent that Lisa is already in a fascinated state. Within her narrated account, our first view of Stefan is also determined primarily by his music, with the first shot showing his hands as he practises the Liszt Concert Study in D $\flat$  Major. Seeing his hands before his face suggests that we are being offered a re-presentation of Stefan according to Lisa's belief that he can be determined and identified through his music. It is nevertheless true that we have already seen Stefan in the present-day opening of the film, and therefore possess knowledge of his flippant and dishonourable demeanor that Lisa does not have at this stage. The direct juxtaposition of these scenes therefore presents the two conflicting views of Stefan central to the project of the film.

Lisa's romantic idyll is also contextualised, however, by the representation of her obscured vision. Her point of view shots of the outside wall of Stefan's apartment and the uselessly high and partially obscured window, make it clear that she cannot share our more mundane view of what is happening within. While we witness that



Stefan seems to see practice as rather strenuous and even irritable labour, Lisa hears an emotional depth to his personality which will later lead her to tell him that:

“Sometimes, I felt when you were playing that, that you haven’t quite found, I don’t know what it is, what you’re looking for.” Her remoteness from the actuality of the work of music therefore allows her to deify the process. For her, music contains the key to an intimate understanding of Stefan that she undoubtedly believes (probably rightly) passes other women by. She is not in love with Stefan as he actually is, or at least appears to be, but rather with the man whose secret inner voice she thinks she hears within her own response to his musical performance.

As she listens, her movement already being dictated by the rhythm of the music to which she glides back and forth on a swing in the yard, she is also joined by her friend Marie (Carol Yorke) who clearly does not share Lisa’s developing fantasy. Like a last voice of reality before Lisa is lost forever to her romantic reverie, Marie places herself physically in the way of Lisa’s gaze and serves to remind her of the cruder aspects of life and love. After denigrating his playing as mere “noise”, she interrupts Lisa’s listening with her noisy eating and a very down-to-earth account of her relationship with a local boy. As she reaches the point of implying that this relationship is becoming more physical than might be proper, however, Stefan’s playing breaks down. An opposition is thereby set up between Lisa and Stefan’s narrative and Marie’s story through a curious association of the two males’ hands (an association also noted in Wilson 1986, 109).

Marie talks of the boy being unable to keep his hands to himself and possibly having to “do something about it”, which is followed firstly by a musical disruption and then a shot of Stefan’s hands stumbling on the keyboard (fig. 10a). Since Lisa relates



to Stefan as more of an ideal than an actual man, it seems appropriate that when confronted with the everyday reality of sexual relations, the imaginary auditory bond on which her fantasy is based breaks down. At the same time, however, this exchange between the two girls also acts as a precursor to what will turn out to be Stefan's behaviour with women, based on his own inability to 'keep his hands to himself', and Lisa's apparent power to 'do something about it' by bringing about his eventual death.

Already, the film has presented the parameters of Lisa and Stefan's trajectory in the most concise and tragic way possible. It has also indicated the hopelessness of the situation both by the interplay of music and 'noise', and the otherwise inexplicably knowing smile with which Marie responds to Lisa's shock when Stefan's playing suddenly stops. Lisa can neither 'see' nor 'hear' reality, and Stefan is completely unaware of her presence, let alone her feelings. His performance is not intended to be public, and so Lisa eavesdrops on a private musical moment more concerned with self-referential artistic interpretation than a personal communication to an ardent admirer.

The future of this mutual misrecognition is predicted in the repetitive pattern of the short section of music used, the incessant, imitative motion of Lisa's swing and the way in which the music ends. Both the musical phrases and the swing suggest the idea of a certain futility of movement and an impression of progress which actually constitutes stasis. In a film replete with repeated visual motifs and narrative patterns, the relentless repetition of this musical segment continually restates that no musical progression signifies no real emotional or narrative progression. At the same time, the violent disruption of the music mirrors the idea of its interruption by the sound or 'noise' of reality.



The nondiegetic score is based almost entirely on material from the first forty bars of the Liszt Concert Study. Just as the piece never reaches its own end, the point at which Lisa's fantasy is initially disrupted, and at which it finds its perfect expression in the following scene, is the point at which her story will effectively end. Her fantasy and her emotional state of mind are frozen in one adolescent moment in time, with each repetition of the music pulling the story back to this initial episode. Using the music which inspires the fantasy to chart its progression, without any significant musical development, serves to condemn it as redundant.

The silence of the nondiegetic track when Lisa subsequently sees Stefan for the first time evidences not only his indifference to her, but also her current lack of emotional-musical representation. It is also crucial to understanding the following transferral of music between the characters. As Lisa's fantasy develops, the film removes Stefan's music from his own diegetic level to the nondiegetic realm which seems (at least initially) to belong to Lisa alone. At the same time as she repositions herself as the emotional instigator of his performance, however, it also encourages a more sympathetic complicity with her fantasy, by denying our previously privileged view of music in practice.

In the first stage of the transfer, Lisa gets out of bed and creeps through her apartment, in order to be able to hear Stefan's playing more clearly. This is the first opportunity for her uninterrupted fantasy, as she tells him that she imagined he was playing "just for [her]" and that he was giving her "some of the happiest hours of [her] life". As she reaches the closest point to the source of the music, and opens the transom window to hear as clearly as possible, the music reaches the exact passage that her friend's story previously disrupted (fig. 10b). Now, with Lisa uninterrupted by any



suggestion of real human relations, and the film audience undisturbed by the sight of Stefan's efforts to play the piece correctly, night-time privacy allows the metaphorical parallel between his successful performance and the imaginary fulfilment of her fantasy.

Although Lisa clearly reacts emotionally to Stefan's music, its continuing status as diegetic denies it the role of representing her interiority. As the next stage of the transfer begins to associate Lisa with the music in a more personal way, its exact connection to the nature of her fantasy and future becomes closely linked to the actual construction of the piece. Although as a professional pianist it must be assumed she would have heard him practising a much wider repertoire, Lisa only ever recounts Stefan as playing this one Liszt Concert Study. From this the film score makes use primarily of the theme stated and repeated in bars three to twelve (fig. 11a).<sup>5</sup>

In terms of following Lisa's emotional trajectory, the narrative mobilises the musical capacity of this theme to express anticipation and resolution by dividing it into two four-note motifs. The first half (henceforth the 'anticipation' motif) ends suspended at a high-point of non-resolution, with the second half (the 'resolution' motif) providing the balancing resolution. This patterning becomes relevant in reflecting the idea of narrative anticipation and resolution as the story develops between Lisa and Stefan.

The new flexibility of the music to Lisa's feelings, and the first suggestion of its connection to her desire for Stefan, begins as she steals into Stefan's apartment. As she first enters the apartment, we hear Marie's off-screen voice asking "Are you crazy?".

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<sup>5</sup> The musical quotation in fig. 11a follows the basic rhythm of the Liszt Study, but without the accompanying arpeggios, and 'smoothed out' into crotchets. It actually appears in the piece as a series of quavers and quaver rests.



This is the final question she asks before disappearing completely from the film and, it could be argued, taking with her Lisa's last reasonable chance of facing reality.

As Lisa walks through the apartment, three versions of Stefan's piece play successively on the nondiegetic track. Firstly, the whole theme is played in the original key over a pedal note accompaniment, keeping it relatively close to the memory of Stefan's performance despite its variation and string orchestration. The second statement of the theme continues the pedal note pattern and begins to fragment the melody line. This fragmentation suggests the new flexibility of the music more conventionally associated with nondiegetic scoring. This begins to reflect the gradual removal of the music from the world of Stefan's rehearsed and controlled performance to that of Lisa's private feelings, as well as from self-referential interpretation to an emotional focus on the other. The omission of the expansive arpeggios surrounding the melody notes in the original piece also negates the idea of public display and (masculine) technical prowess. This leaves Lisa with a kind of simple musical essence which reflects her concentration on a personal construction of Stefan from within the notes.

The final statement of the theme is delayed until Lisa is actually in the room with the piano which represents the most important icon of Stefan. At this point, the grounding of the music through the use of the pedal note develops into the use of more sustained chords, enabling the freeing of the melody line for the improvisatory style of the solo violin as Lisa looks around the space of the piano (fig. 11b).<sup>6</sup> This elaboration of the melody and the extraction of an individual musical voice suggests the

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<sup>6</sup> All quotations taken from the nondiegetic score, rather than the original Liszt Concert Study, have been transcribed from a video copy of the film. Given the difficulties inherent in such a process, the quotations are as accurate as possible, although only sufficient detail is shown to illustrate the basic melodic variation and development of the main theme.



development of Lisa's fantasy as she sees more of the content of Stefan's world. In keeping with this, the visual sources which she has to feed her fantasy are public representations of Stefan and his lifestyle rather than anything personal. The piano, standing as the main symbol, is surrounded by concert posters, instruments, piles of sheet music and pictures of composers.

The theme is varied, however, in an extremely precise way. While the 'anticipation' motif is virtually unchanged from the original, the 'resolution' motif is extended and elaborated beyond the point where it might be expected to end. It is then left sharply incomplete as Lisa's reverie is brought to an abrupt and unresolved halt by the fall of a pile of sheet music onto the floor. This begins to suggest that the resolution of Lisa's fantasy anticipation of a relationship with Stefan will be problematic. The music is removed from the self-contained structure of Stefan's performance and is reflecting Lisa's flight from reality. Her fantasising, improvisatory line is disrupted, however, by a final reminder of Stefan's actual relationship to his music.

The printed music falling to the floor with an unmusical crash presents music as a concrete physical entity. This paper is only a representation of what music really entails, paralleling Stefan's diegetic and real working relationship to it, as opposed to Lisa's more romantic (over-)involvement. It is possible that Stefan and his music have little more than a technical and relatively superficial connection, which nevertheless translates in performance (particularly without sight of the performance) into a kind of passion and emotional depth which in reality, he appears not to have. While Stefan is likely to be quite aware of his place in the equation, Lisa chooses to believe what she thinks she hears.



The theme next returns as Lisa runs in desperation from the railway station before she must leave with her family for Linz, her voice-over confirming her intention to both confess and offer herself to Stefan. As she reaches the apartment building and runs up the stairs to his door, an introductory phrase leads to the return of the ‘anticipation’ motif. After its first two repetitions, however, its intervals are constricted from two sets of whole tones to two sets of semitones, emphasising her frantically heightening expectation. Each of these short phrases is ‘answered’ by a similarly rising figure in the brass, and it is alongside the last of these that Lisa realises Stefan is not at home (fig. 11c).

The string and brass phrases are kept separate, and while the brass instrumentation appears to have supported Lisa’s increasing excitement, it also underscores her first experience of the difficulty of a workable resolution. As she then makes her way to Stefan’s back door, two woodwind solo passages introduce a slightly dotted rhythm, which seems temporarily to lighten the mood despite Lisa’s sad defeat. The ‘realistic’ function which this introduces in association with non-string orchestration will be very strongly verified in the subsequent Linz sequence. There, the weightiness of brass band music indicates the socially desirable, but personally abhorrent prospect of conforming with her family’s matrimonial expectations.

In order to assure Lisa’s inescapable bond to Stefan and the past, and therefore to prepare for her abrupt refusal of Leopold’s proposal in Linz, the music which accompanies her return to her old apartment encapsulates her emotional trajectory so far. In a musical fusion of both the earliest and latest stages of the score, it confirms the continuing development as well as the inherent circularity (and ultimate hopelessness) of her romantic fantasy. The sound of the piano returns, playing bars



three to eight of the original piece. Since Stefan is not at home, and the music is treated with a slight echo-effect which conventionally signifies it as existing in a character's imagination, we may assume that we hear the piece because, as her voice-over suggests, Lisa is remembering it.

The sound of the piano outside the confines of diegetic performance distinguishes this restatement of the theme as the fullest possible return to the original moment of fantasy (a musical device which will be used only once more at the very end of the film as Lisa pledges her unchanging love despite all that has happened). A soft, nondiegetic string accompaniment to the piano, however, re-establishes the element of fantasy in the face of the reality recently suggested by the brass and woodwind. It also marks the first time that elements of both Stefan's and Lisa's versions of the piece have been heard together.

Although this mirrors the earlier scene when she left her bed to listen to him playing, she now controls the appearance of the music and appropriates it in her own space. She has therefore appointed herself the (imaginary) instigator of Stefan's music and therefore in effect, the muse who inspires his playing. As Stefan returns with yet another woman, however, a series of sustained string notes once again stymie the musical fulfilment of the fantasy, just as the advent of reality prevents Lisa from confronting Stefan.

The transfer that has occurred between the two characters now, ironically, leaves them equally bereft of direct access to emotional-musical representation. Stefan remains the technical source of the music, but has been distanced from his ownership by the transfer of the piece out of the (masculine and logical) diegetic space into the (feminine) level of emotional excess. This has also removed the masculine control and



power signified by solo self-containment, the total mastery of the execution and interpretation of written music and virtuoso display. When he is accompanied by its nondiegetic version, its strong re-association with Lisa means that it can only serve the purpose of gradually encompassing him in her emotional vision as he reads the letter. It is significant, therefore, that he will never be seen to play this piece again.

Lisa, on the other hand, is represented by music which has been appropriated from Stefan. Since she has effectively constructed herself as the inspiration for his playing, she not only believes that Stefan is a man of great emotional depth, but that his music expresses an emotional response to her which only she can fully understand. The fact that this refers all her emotions back to him, therefore reflects her conviction over the pre-destination of their togetherness. Although she fails to realise it, however, the music also contains evidence of the narrative's more objective contextualisation of her fantasy. Firstly, its second-hand status means that it must always carry the marks of what we might call the real Stefan, the professional musician and habitual womaniser who is completely unaware of Lisa. Secondly, the specific location of Lisa's misrecognition as a feature of her youth condemns her to an eternally adolescent psychology.

The diegetic band music in Linz reflects Lisa's unsuccessful removal from Stefan and her private fantasy world. When she returns to Vienna and engineers their meeting for the only whole evening they spend together, it therefore seems fittingly ironic that the feasibility of her fantasy is undermined by a predominance of diegetic music. As their relationship appears to come closest to constituting a matter of fact, therefore, the musical-emotional void of their very first encounter is recalled. An almost constant succession of relatively frivolous diegetic pieces in workplace or



commercial contexts suggests the continued construction of Stefan as a link between music, work, the social and the superficial. As this is emphasised with particular irony as their evening comes to a close, it prepares for the subsequent ruin of Lisa's ultimate emotional moment.

As the couple end the evening dancing in a small café, the bombastic bandmaster of Linz and his stiff military musicians are parodied in the humourless and tightly-uniformed all-female musical ensemble. The only female musicians in the film, which makes its main protagonist such a slave to the Romantic sensibilities of music, are therefore unromantic in the worst possible sense. They gulp pints of beer, chomp on huge mouthfuls of food, complain bitterly about their economic conditions and express sour disdain for the loving (but, they rightly assume, unmarried) couple. As soon as they leave, Stefan goes to the out-of-tune piano at Lisa's request, and perfectly reproduces the waltz the band has just played complete with the extra style, rubato, dynamic contrast and elaboration which marks him for Lisa as the only 'real' source of music.

Her transition from listener to muse is, thanks to her own machinations, finally complete. Stefan now really is playing "just for [her]" as she always imagined. She is therefore returned to the height of a little girl, sitting on the floor at one end of the keyboard and watching his hands more than his face as if she still believes that this is where his true emotions lie. The nondiegetic continuation of the music in the piano and orchestra as they return to his apartment then recalls the music which accompanied her lonely night of reminiscence and waiting for Stefan before her reluctant departure for Linz.



This may suggest that this episode will offer a resolution to the ultimate unsuccessfulness of that night, so that Lisa has finally achieved the object of her fantasy. Stefan, however, has turned the musical tables on her in his swift appropriation of the waltz from the female musicians. Although it becomes nondiegetic as they arrive at his apartment, it is nevertheless the *wrong* music. It therefore confirms Stefan's (perhaps unwittingly) false adoption of the romantic associations of music as part of a relatively standard and extremely real seduction routine. As they embrace, it therefore seems inevitable that the last-minute re-appearance of Lisa's nondiegetic music is suddenly suspended at a point of jarring incompleteness, making its affect abrupt and dramatic rather than romantic and triumphant. Consequently, the narrative resolution which, according to Lisa's fantasy, should be offered by this long-awaited moment is completely denied.

After almost ten years of harsh reality to inform her perception of life, including no contact with Stefan, it becomes almost depressingly (while at the same time strangely affirmatively) fatalistic that her desire for her ideal destiny still prevails over all musical and narrative warnings. Although her affections and her fantasy music are now transferred to the rather more compliantly adoring figure of her son, Stefan Junior (Leo B. Pessin), his status as a mere temporary replacement for his father is clear. Not only does he show great musical promise at school, but his fate can be effectively disregarded as soon as Lisa detects the prospect of a reunion with Stefan Senior. Significantly, Lisa is still not in a position to realise, as we do, the ominous significance of diegetic music which returns once again to warn her off her proposed course of action. This is recalled not only in the accompaniment of her re-acquaintance with the now rather dilapidated lothario by the strains of Mozart's comic opera, but also in the



subsequent (non- or metadiegetic) recollection of the street singers' diegetic melody which heralded the beginning of their first, ultimately disastrous encounter.

As the story moves towards its ultimate point of no return, the musical-narrative dynamic between romantic fantasy and reality is thrown into ever-sharpening relief. Lisa's actions therefore appear, despite her own oblivious emotional trajectory, increasingly irrational, futile and destructive. As she searches for Stefan, eventually finding herself outside his apartment and seeing that his light is on, the now nondiegetic instrumental version of the street singers' music is replaced by her fantasy music. The 'anticipation' motif plays complete, but the 'resolution' motif halts halfway through before leading into a complete statement of the whole theme an octave higher. The higher pitch of the repetition combines with its interruption of the first statement of the theme to intensify the sense of excited expectation (fig. 11d).

Emphasising her eternally optimistic faith in destiny against the film's memory of her earlier crushing disappointment in Stefan, this final approach mirrors her earlier flight back from her family at the railway station. The possible negative connotations of this rhyme are overridden, however, by the different effect of the musical intensification. This replaces the previous rising frantic tension with her excited joy at believing that all misunderstanding is now in the past. This time Stefan is at home and this time, she believes, he knows who she is and is equally desperate for their long-overdue reunion.

The resolution of the second statement of the theme, however, is undermined. The melody suddenly ends on a sustained note in the strings, which is held under Lisa's dialogue with the flower seller. At the same time, the 'realism' of non-string instrumentation is recalled in a repeated descending flute figure, subsequently



constricted to a descending semitone in the darker sounding clarinet. This music strikes an ethereal and ominous tone and, ending with a repeated wide descending interval in the strings, it gives a negative inflection to Lisa's imitation of Stefan's purchase of a white rose during the evening they spent together.

Reflecting the movement of the narrative for better or worse towards some kind of resolution, this descending musical pattern begins to counter the usually prevalent 'anticipation' motif. Lisa meanwhile misses the final opportunity offered by the film to realise the pitfalls of confusing fantasy and reality. Like her childhood friend Marie, the flower-seller is placed in Lisa's very path. He disturbs her magnetised movement towards Stefan's apartment with a pointed reminder of the tawdry reality of what is now her own bitter experience of the reality of sexual relationships. Instead of being shocked from her reverie by the irony of the coincidence, however, she actively chooses to buy the same type of flowers that Stefan bought her.

Her faith in the imminent resolution of her fantasy is represented by the overturning of this musical-narrative warning by a full rendition of the main theme and further material from the original Liszt piano piece which presents a more elaborate version of the basic anticipation-resolution pattern (fig. 11e). This extended extract of the Liszt Study which she heard during her nights of secret eavesdropping is returning her to the adolescent state of her complete fantasy. The time has come for Stefan to answer the questions Lisa felt only he could as she awaited his return before she left for Linz, ("These rooms where I had lived had been filled with your music. Now they were empty. Would they ever come to life again? Would I?").

The music therefore moves beyond the end-point of that earlier 'waiting' episode to include the more extended passage for the first time on the nondiegetic



track. Ending this statement on a sudden unresolved chord at the exact point when she rings at the door of the apartment building, however, once again undercuts her heady optimism. It seems to predict not only her own dire fate but also, in leading to a chromatic variation of the extended resolution pattern as the camera moves to reveal his furious watching face, Stefan's future at the hands of Lisa's cuckolded husband, Johann (Marcel Journet).

As Lisa climbs the stairs to Stefan's apartment, the rhythmic compounding of the 'anticipation' motif echoes the gradually constricted musical pattern of her earlier pre-Linz ascent. The removal of rests or sustained notes between the (three) statements of the 'anticipation' motif means that the first note of the second statement coincides with the last note of the first statement. The third statement then follows immediately after the second. This seems to increase the intensity of Lisa's excited anticipation still further. The final repetition plays into the 'resolution' motif, but eschews resolution by stopping midway through the descent. A variation on the extended resolution (see fig. 11e) then begins but is also stopped before completion on a sustained unresolved chord as Lisa rings the apartment bell (fig. 11f).

The suspension of this line recalls the musical point at which Lisa knocked the music off the shelf as she stole around Stefan's apartment as a child. As Stefan's servant John discovered her then, so he now answers the door and, where she previously ran out on seeing him, he now admits her entrance. Instead of the intact theme representing her complete adolescent fantasy, however, the predominance of the 'anticipation' motif, eventually compressed into a rising sequential scale pattern, now emphasises her near-hysterical, last-chance anticipation. Resolution is still stymied, however, by a solo violin line (different to that of the previous episode) as she gazes at



the piano. This time it seems to suggest more immediately the idea of resolution by only comprising a variation of the second extended theme. Harmonic resolution is delayed, however, until a full rendition of the ‘anticipation’ and ‘resolution’ motifs heralds Stefan’s arrival.

The score in this scene indicates Lisa’s return to her illicit, fantasising ‘visit’ to the apartment. Since Stefan’s speech is initially more or less conducive to her fantasy, if a little vague, the music begins by following the same gradually fragmenting pattern of the ‘anticipation’ and ‘resolution’ motifs. The dialogue moves unstoppably, however, towards the words which finally begin to alert Lisa to reality, when Stefan asks John to fetch “the usual things” for a supper during the evening which she believed was a unique moment of fate. At this point, the music can only reveal once more the ultimate hopelessness of her situation. As the second repetition of the two motifs ends with an octave descent of the supporting pedal note, the mood darkens until dissonant and unresolved chords register Lisa’s shocked response to Stefan’s clumsily unwitting self-revelation.

After he later lifts her veil with the otherwise promising words “I knew last night, didn’t you?” and kisses her, the score places rising anticipatory figures over a gradually descending bassline. Lisa’s awareness of the already tentative nature of her fantasy is reflected in the skeletal, rhythmically hesitant and irregular string variation of the ‘anticipation’ and ‘resolution’ motifs as she tries to tell him about their son. Her speech is interrupted by Stefan and her music is fragmented, making this effort to talk seem like her last attempt to rescue the situation before its irretrievable collapse.

Stefan goes to fetch champagne and changes the topic of conversation back to himself. As the camera returns to a close-up of Lisa’s face as he talks, the strings are



joined by a solo flute which plays a descending, dotted rhythm chromatic pattern with a light, frivolous tone. Alongside her own string instrumentation, this recalls the ‘comment’ of the earlier woodwind and brass passages, thereby contrasting Stefan’s buoyant, self-congratulatory mood with the increasingly desperate futility of Lisa’s emotional dedication. Recalling the pattern of bars thirty-eight and thirty-nine from the Liszt Study, where Stefan’s hands first stumbled and Lisa’s fantasy later became secretly complete (see figs. 10a and 10b), as well as the ‘resolution’ motif, this predominantly descending passage finally fulfils the promise of the restricted extract of music and all the score’s previous warnings. Her fantasy is therefore brought to an end, rather than a resolution (fig. 10c).

The descending chromatic pattern continues (although in an altered rhythm) as Stefan’s question about Lisa’s travel experience (a prominent subject during their evening together ten years earlier) means that she can no longer deny his ignorance of her identity. The music reflects her confused emotional state through a pointed fusion of selected material from the past. As the camera focuses in close-up on Lisa’s face the solo cello, a ‘darker’ and more tragic version of her earlier light and improvisatory solo violin, plays a 4-note figure. This suggests both the pivotal notes between the ‘anticipation’ and ‘resolution’ motifs (thereby evoking her transitional state) and a minor version of the beginning of the café waltz music.

The final matching of the fantasy music of Lisa’s imagination to the reality of her lifetime with Stefan culminates as she leaves the apartment. Firstly, the descending chromatic scale and the ‘anticipation’ and ‘resolution’ motifs pursue her down the stairs. Secondly, a full orchestral statement of the extended anticipation-resolution pattern (see fig. 11e) appears in response to the crude proposition by a drunken soldier



on the street, which finally appears to alert Lisa to the real nature of her relationship with Stefan.

What remains truly astonishing about Lisa, however, is that even after such a bitter defeat, she still remains fixated on her original conception of Stefan. If she cannot have her fantasy in the real world, then her only recourse is to bemoan its impossibility. She blames it on Stefan's inability to recognise destiny as clearly as she always could, and so absolves herself of any responsibility, even for the death of their son. As she is subsequently seen writing the last part of her letter, ending her life in the classic woman's film sentiment of "if only", the original Liszt piece returns at the nondiegetic level. As she expresses her still unchanged love for Stefan, the same fusion of piano and strings that accompanied her earlier pre-Linz 'waiting' scene suggests her continuing adolescent confusion of fantasy and reality.

Accordingly, as John reveals her name to the still mystified Stefan, he completes the film's succession of 'voices of reality'. He names her not by her current married or previous family surname, but as Lisa Berndle, her eternal and inescapable childhood incarnation. In the same way that the piano in this final arrangement relinquishes its solo line to the violin, however, it now becomes clear that Stefan has lost his independence from Lisa, and has been absorbed into her idea of their mutual destiny. As Lisa's voice has told their story, Stefan's independent relationship to music has been gradually lost, until at their final meeting he admits that he no longer plays and does not even have the key to his own (locked) piano.

Just as Stefan turned the musical-emotional tables on Lisa in order to seduce her, she has now 'used' his own music to subject him to her rather more unusual will, and to force him to adopt her view of the emotional significance of his own



performance. As Stefan remembers her through a series of images of their past liaisons, the café waltz melody transforms momentarily into the melody of the Liszt Concert Study. As he subsequently plunges his horrified face into his hands, the delicacy of the waltz's resolution is destroyed by a suddenly loud and dissonant chord.

While Lisa, like Charlotte in *Now, Voyager*, has moved between different relationships to self-silencing and self-expression, the effect on her and those around her is quite different. She is first silenced by her own shyness and then by her romantic idealism. She controls her own voice in order to allow Stefan to 'speak'. She waits in vain, however, and her controlled silence having failed, she channels her voice through the indirect medium of her letter. Her emotionally-driven choice of self-silencing and control of her own words therefore renders her a positive danger to all around her. Had she articulated her feelings at the outset, there would undoubtedly be no fateful letter.

The Lisa who claims that she has "no will but [Stefan's]", has in fact created the end of Stefan's story (and his life) before her storytelling even starts. Although he is clearly not normally a moral man, and he could still avoid the duel even though the letter has cost him valuable escape time, he chooses to submit to almost certain death at the hands of Lisa's wronged husband. Rather than dismiss her story as nonsense, he is seduced by both the vision of romantic destiny which matches his own alleged lifetime search for his equally mythical "goddess", and his central role in its potential realisation. In submitting to death, he accepts the responsibility that Lisa sets before him and allows her to give their lives a shared tragic significance. Stefan and Lisa each fulfil their romantic fantasies, in death if not in life, and any last vestige of reality against which to set this excessively emotional conclusion is as remote as Linz.



## Conclusion

This chapter has explored ways in which the characterisation of the female listener can signal the potential danger of a woman's diegetic involvement with music. It began by considering the general role of diegetic music and musicians as characters. This focused particularly on the placing of the woman as a listener or muse to the male musician and the potential currency of the slippage between a (male) Romantic sensibility and female romanticism in melodramatic love stories. According to the conventions of melodrama, the woman's (nondiegetic) music signifies those extreme degrees of emotion which must remain unspoken or otherwise unexpressed. The specific way in which the female listener is constructed therefore acts as a means of containing the representation of her emotions to some extent, while nevertheless offering a glimpse of just how profound, excessive or dangerous they might be.

This woman is distanced from the origination of the music, so that it can never become a pure reflection of her emotions in quite the same way as a nondiegetic theme. The transfer of the man's diegetic music to her nondiegetic level, however, means that he may always influence both the woman's emotions and the film audience's understanding of her trajectory. Furthermore, the (dangerous) power of her emotions can be highlighted by their foundation in an overdetermination or misunderstanding of the man and/or his music. Without the full (or even partial) complicity of the man in her emotions, the woman's behaviour is thrown into sharp relief.

The relationship of the female listener to the male musician may therefore offer some kind of foregrounding of the conventional relationship of the



melodramatic/woman's film protagonist to the nondiegetic score. Narrativising her related understanding of music and emotion highlights the processes of her emotional constitution. The diegetic music gives the female listener a representation for her emotions. It also, however, frames our understanding of those emotions in a particular way. She may not be clearly one of Kalinak's 'types', but her representation is still delineated to some degree by her reaction to or influence on the man. Whether or not she can actually speak in the face of her emotions and the music that represents them, the music itself both facilitates and controls, expresses and represses her own self-expression.

For whatever reason, the ultimate renunciation or destruction of the female listener usually signals the difficulty (if not impossibility) of living life successfully according to her understanding of the music and the musician. Her romanticism is too ideal and too prone to ignoring the manifestations of reality that obscure her vision. While the ultimate and inevitable force of this reality strikes her hard, however, it also renders her cinematic representation safe. Such a careful construction therefore demands an investigation of what happens when the woman *is* allowed a more active diegetic relationship to music, either through the secondary means of recordings or requests, or even as a composer or performer herself. The following chapter will therefore examine the consequences of attempting to remove the distance between the woman and musical production.



Fig. 10.

*Letter from an Unknown Woman*: The musical 'end' of the fantasy



10a

Stefan's hands stumble



10b

Lisa opens the transom window



Fig. 10 (continued)



10c

flute (solo)

strings (tremolando)

"Do you travel a great deal?"



Letter from an Unknown Woman: The 'anticipation' - 'resolution' pattern

Fig. 11.

11a



11b



11c





Fig. 11 (continued)

11d



'anticipation' 'resolution' 'anticipation' 'resolution' (single note)

*End of 'street singers' music*

11e



(extended resolution)

11f



rit. (Lisa rings apartment bell)



## Chapter Four

### The Female Musician

“Miss Julia, you’re standing on the edge of a precipice.”

Nehemiah in *While I Live*

“Are you a big strong muscular girl?” “No.” “Thank heavens for that.”

Kit and Lissa in *Love Story*

In films such as *Letter from an Unknown Woman* and *Possessed* the characterisation of the male musician is largely evaded in order to throw the emphasis of narrative problems onto the female listener. This means that the emotional force of the film can still lie with the female character despite, or perhaps because of, her distance from the music at the diegetic level. The female listener does not fully recognise the possible implications of the man’s musical performance, and the potentially deceptive emotional message which this may convey. Such emotions may therefore become very real and intensely felt by her, a process signalled by the transfer of the music to the nondiegetic level, and into the traditionally female domain.

Whereas this should be regarded as a strong narrative move on behalf of the female character, placing her emotions clearly at the centre of the narrative, this is not usually the effect of the transfer, which often contrasts those emotions to what is seen as the more objective reality of the diegetic world. Because of the frequent disjuncture



between the emotions of the male and female characters, the delimiting of female emotional subjectivity through the diegetic sources and themes of the nondiegetic music can signal the woman's unhealthy obsession with the man, predicting and charting the course of her eventual destruction.

It may be logical to expect the characterisation of the female musician to counter these trends, through her taking on some of the standard traits of the Romantic artist and reversing the patterns of the female listener film. The possibility of using her own diegetic music at the nondiegetic level should also negate the difficulties of the emotional proscription of the female listener. In practice, however, things do not seem so straightforward. This chapter will therefore begin by examining the ways in which film has approached this characterisation, some of the models on which this appears to draw and the effect on the female character.<sup>1</sup>

To a certain extent, it seems that if an active association with music is not to constitute women as siren-esque femme fatales, their expressivity or creativity must be couched in clearly mitigating circumstances. If female characters cannot be distanced as secondary facilitators of music, there may therefore be a focus on what a direct

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted at this point that the difficulty evident in film with the representation of the female musician has a broad cultural and historical context. The requirement noted in Chapter One of this thesis that women musicians remove themselves from the possible view of men, was extended throughout history to a number of practices which only allowed female performance if concealed behind visual barriers. The idea of female performance as unseemly and dangerous because of its sensuous connotations has had far reaching consequences in terms of general representations of the female musician. As a result, even in the 20th and 21st centuries, no real model of female musical performance has developed which counters the ancient models of the Siren and the Muse. Contention over prejudice against female orchestral musicians is countered by modern orchestras through anonymous, screened auditions. Visual and media representations of female solo musicians, on the other hand, frequently promote the idea of either sexual overdetermination (Vanessa Mae, Offra Harnoy, Lesley Garrett) or delicacy and sweetness (Evelyn Glennie) rather than musical power, control and excellence. Within this context, it is hardly surprising that 1940s film had no framework for representing a female musician whose music, rather than her sexuality/emotionality, was most central to her identity.



involvement in music entails in terms of their dangerous lack or excess of 'feminine' emotional attributes.

In this context it is hardly surprising that the idea of the serious female classical musician/composer appears to prove a problematic characterisation. This opening survey will therefore include an examination of the ways in which the perceived excessive emotionality of the female musician can be mobilised to differentiate her from her male counterpart. This will focus on the particular ways in which performance may be represented, as well as the potential physiological and apparent physical consequences of female musicality. The case study of *Love Story* will then demonstrate ways in which a female involvement in the creation and performance of classical music is allowed and even celebrated within the particularly conducive context of musical life and the place of female musicians in 1930s and 1940s Britain. At the same time, however, it examines how this creative ability is still mitigated and marked as potentially dangerous (to the musician herself).

### **Issues in Characterising Female Musicality and Performance: The Siren; the Indirect Musical Voice; the Classical Musician and the Romantic Model**

Possibly the most obvious example of a cinematic 'take' on the archetypal siren is the noir femme fatale. Janey Place points out how women in film noir are, as in many other contexts, defined primarily by their sexuality and its effect on men. While this is one of the few sites where female sexuality becomes actively expressed, its equation with intelligence and power seems inevitably associated with the destruction of male characters (1978, 47). While the experience of such dangerous sexual aggression may



be exciting and sensuous, it must nevertheless be neutralised by the eventual destruction of the woman herself (ibid., 48). The clear traces of the operatic double frame which such a characterisation and structure exhibit, however, may still be unable to contain completely the force of their subject/object. Just as Abbate and Wheelock find the operatic female voice resonating beyond her narrative constriction, Place suggests that ‘it is not [the femme fatale’s] inevitable demise we remember but rather [her] strong, dangerous, and exciting sexuality’ (ibid., 48).

Place’s examination of the construction of such a powerful characterisation is largely restricted to narrative structure and visual style. She therefore fails to examine the striking frequency which Adrienne McLean notes of the femme fatale’s association with music, particularly in the form of diegetic song (1993). Recalling Kalinak’s ideas on the association of jazz idioms with female sexuality (see Chapter One of this thesis), it hardly seems surprising that the ‘spider woman’ of film noir (ibid., 47) should spin her destructive web at least partly through the strong sexual connotations of popular song. In this case, rather than being ‘regarded’ by the nondiegetic score or subject to the comment of mise-en-scène and editing, she actively and self-consciously adopts the powerful position of the performer suggested by Poirier and Said (see Chapter Three of this thesis).

The singing woman specifies the nature of the performance and its archetypal resonances not only through the style of music and perhaps even the lyrics, but also the ‘personal’ mode of singing. This leaves her unmediated and unencumbered by any musical ‘instrument’ other than the (dangerous) body itself. When the woman, and particularly the femme fatale sings (*The Glass Key* (1942), *Detour* (1945), *The Big Sleep* (1946), *Gilda* (1946), *Dead Reckoning* (1947), *Night and the City* (1950)), she



actively seeks the male attention to her body which otherwise plagues female singers and performers (see Chapter One of this thesis). Even when she only facilitates or requests music to convey her message, the lyrics may still explicitly state the seductive (and physical) nature of her mission ('As Time Goes By' in *Casablanca* (1942), 'My Melancholy Baby' in *Scarlet Street* (1945)). The man, in an appropriate response to the ancient lure of the siren, is often helplessly attracted and (potentially) completely disempowered (see Chapter Five of this thesis).

As part of a manifestation of male fears of female sexuality, a woman taking control of her own musical voice is an obvious sign of danger. Those films which seek to represent women through an involvement with diegetic music without evoking such condemnatory connotations, must therefore find ways of mitigating this threat. The siren's performance appears to be marked by the directness of its communication of both sexual awareness and self-possession. This places her in absolute opposition to the female listener, whose indirect access to music marks her emotional dependence on the man and, as a result, her relative powerlessness.

Perhaps it is possible, therefore, that more subtle degrees of control may create a continuum between these two extremes, giving the woman access to musical expression, but without the stark directness of the siren. Maintaining the 'innocence' of a woman's musical self-expression may be possible by distancing her either from the actual site of musical production and meaning or from the sight of an audience. Her direct musical 'voice', being partially mediated, therefore becomes illusory.

A possible example of such a contrast may be seen in the two female musicians vying for the attentions of the male composer in *Hangover Square*. Gorbman describes how pianist Barbara (Linda Darnell) and singer Netta (Fay Marlowe) act



predominantly as musical and sexual reflections of the different sides of George (1987, 152). Netta is a classic siren singer who seduces the innocent composer emotionally and musically. Showing little more than contempt for his 'serious' music, she saps his strength and resolve with the constant promise of her affections and thus precipitates his ultimate self-destruction. Barbara, despite being a musician herself, is removed from having her own musical voice by her greater concern with encouraging George's career. Like Christine in *Deception* and Cathy in *Night Song* she places her own ability in the service of the man as his respectable muse. Unlike these other women, however, she manages to survive intact as *both* a woman and a performing musician by playing only in private contexts or as a substitute for George, and by exclusively focusing her talent on promoting *his* musical voice.

Despite actually being a performer, Barbara's position in relation to music is therefore similar in some ways to that of non-performing women in films such as *Laura* (1944) and *Penny Serenade* (1941). The first of these films bases its monothematic score around a tune which is mooted by the male friends of the 'late' Laura as being her favourite. While it may therefore represent her own taste and personality, Brown suggests that it actually appears to operate in the service of her construction from various male points of view (1994, 87-90). Whatever meaning it may connote in terms of Laura's sexuality (see also Kalinak 1982, and 1992, Chapter 7) therefore appears less directly relevant to her than it is to Waldo (Clifton Webb), Shelby (Vincent Price) or Mark (Dana Andrews).

Although Julie (Irene Dunne) in *Penny Serenade* actually takes the position of (unspeaking) narrator through her visual flashbacks, Flinn points out that the active controlling position which this suggests is somewhat mitigated by their musical



catalyst. Julie's courtship, marriage, motherhood, bereavement and marital separation are recalled by her listening to a succession of records from a set entitled 'The Story of a Happy Marriage'. While it is Julie who puts the records on the gramophone and reminisces, however, the actual expression of her thoughts and feelings is designated to the voices of the singers on those records (Flinn 1992, 145). Although allowed within the diegetic space, rather than being exiled to the nondiegetic level, Julie's emotional 'voice' is therefore nevertheless simultaneously silenced and represented. Her apparently active relationship to 'her' music actually constitutes one of facilitation and response.

The problem of characterising the female as a serious classical musician therefore stems from the implicit need for her to be musically active and yet emotionally and sexually controlled. The difficulty with realising this combination appears to result from the fact that the female musician characterisation refuses to reconsider the gender prejudice of its Romantic model. Rather than reconfiguring the woman according to the concept of the (male) artist, her behaviour is dictated by the 'inevitability' of her excess femininity. The female musician film therefore appears to be trying to characterise the impossible paradox of the woman overwhelmed by the emotions of music and in some way unable to control them, but who is nevertheless a creative and/or performing musician. *Hangover Square* deals with Barbara by offsetting her musicality against her relationship to the composer whose music she plays. She 'imitates' his voice, in effect, seemingly adding nothing with her own interpretation. The absence of a male composer as a character therefore highlights the musicality of the woman, either through her interpretative voice as a performer or her creative voice as a composer.



Whereas it does not seem to make any real difference whether the male musician is a performer or composer, in the case of the female musician the difference is significant. In Hollywood in and around the 1940s, there appear to be no characterisations of a female composer, despite the appearance of women in other creative careers such as designing and writing. The nearest example seems to be Christine in *Deception* who, according to her lover/husband Karel used to compose, but has apparently stopped since being taken under the benevolent wing of male composer Alex. She hardly even plays anymore, and her one performance within the film is visually framed between the dual (and duelling) presence of these two men. Alex eventually interrupts her performance, effectively silencing her musical voice for the remainder of the film. After this removal of her own musical ability, Christine takes on more of the character of the female listener to the male musicians.

There is a paucity of both Hollywood and British films at this time across which trends in characterising the female composer can be discerned. In order to locate a reasonable range of comparisons, I have therefore chosen to look further afield in terms both of nationality and production date. Even then, examples of female composers as characters remain rare, and are found mostly in more contemporary film. *The Piano* (1993) and *Three Colours Blue* (1993) each characterise female composers, one using an improvisatory, self-expressive style in the most interiorised Romantic sense, and the latter keeping her identity as a composer secret. In many ways, both women share a similar relationship to their own music as that between women and music in female listener films and other women's films. At the same time, however, there is also a strong sense in which these films demonstrate self-consciousness about the codes they are using.



A 'knowing' attitude towards the relationship between female characters, access to the voice and music, places these films in a double-edged position in relation to the earlier examples. Their self-conscious exploration of the association of woman, voice and music may problematise a straightforward comparison with earlier texts. At the same time, however, making an issue of this connection highlights aspects which often remain implicit in the 1940s texts. Even if the contemporary films do not reverse earlier trends in representing the female musician, they may therefore help to expose its difficulties and paradoxes.

Damage to or mutilation of the hands is a case in point. The relationship between Ada (Holly Hunter) and her eponymous instrument in *The Piano* is so strong that it recalls the link usually found in female listener films between the woman and the man's music/musical instrument (see Chapter Three of this thesis). In this case, however, the instrument appears to constitute a self-reflecting icon, representing Ada's own interiority primarily for herself. The combination of her musical composition and performance with her verbal muteness therefore represent an extension of the difficulty of a female appropriation of the voice. Ada chooses to be vocally silent, but at the same time takes an active control of the music representing her emotions. Faced with the intransigence of her self-possession, her husband retaliates with the tragically appropriate punishment of cutting off one of her fingers.

The dilemma facing Julie (Juliet Binoche) in *Three Colours Blue* over whether she can make her own musical voice publicly known leads to equally dramatic manifestations of silencing. Her damage of her own hand by purposefully dragging it along a wall seems to function as a violent physical reflection of her self-imposed creative silence. Such an act of self-punishment indicates her knowledge of what her



hands are capable of achieving. In revealing herself as a composer, she could destroy the professional reputation of both her late husband and his assistant. The poignancy of her silence and mutilation therefore arises from the fact that she is compelled to inflict it upon herself. While *The Piano* and *Three Colours Blue* make an overtly violent issue of such mutilation, it is nevertheless evident in various forms of actual or feared damage across several other female musician films. It provides the key problem of *The Seventh Veil*, operates as an incidental storyline in *The Lamp Still Burns* (1943) and can be traced through gender and generation displacement in the later *Madame Sousatzka* (1988).<sup>2</sup>

The idea of (perhaps imaginary) vulnerability that this suggests is further extended to an association of the female musician with (emotional or physical) collapse, illness and death. This seems to find its most extreme manifestation in the gloriously overwrought *While I Live* (1947). After its woman composer sleep-walks to unwitting suicide while haunted by a piece which she cannot complete, this film focuses on the legacy of hysterical (and exclusively female) obsession and mental breakdown caused by her death. *Love Story* condemns its composer heroine with a fatal heart condition in order (partially) to explain her difficulty in withstanding the emotional and physical rigours of performing her own music. The pianist of *The Seventh Veil* is both suicidal and mute as the result of an over-emotional response to superficial hand injuries, and has already been unable to complete her first concert appearance without fainting on stage.

This trend also continues in more recent films. *The Double Life of Veronique* (1991) condemns its female singer to sudden on-stage death. Nina in *Truly, Madly,*

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<sup>2</sup> Although it is the injury of a young male pianist that is at stake here, the *anxiety* about such injury falls to the eponymous female piano teacher.



*Deeply* experiences one of her most poignant moments of emotional collapse when she finds herself unable to continue playing the music alone which she used to play with her late lover. The inability to play music without emotional and/or physical breakdown seems to link all these women broadly to the Romantic notion of the ‘impossibility’ of the female musician. The woman is too purely ‘feminine’ to be able to effectively control herself in the face of music, and the excess offered by her own musical performance therefore overwhelms her.

The diegetic performance holds another very important, although less violent key to the distinction between male and female musicians. This is the only scenario which is bound to be common to both categories of film, as well as being the point at which character meets music in the most direct way. It also seems to be the case that both Hollywood and British films in and around the 1940s exercise a distinction in representation which suggests a gendered approach to the narrative possibilities of the musical performance. It may therefore be reasonable to suppose that the attitude which the film displays towards musicality in practice could inform a reading of emotional characterisation within the text as a whole. While this may support a straightforwardly gendered construction of the artist, it could also make greater sense of characterisations which appear to attempt a more subtle balance of masculinity and femininity.

It is important to note from the outset that this division of definitions of emotion should be seen purely as a device of film narrative. It would be both unreasonable and unnecessary to attempt to make the case that such a stark distinction exists in real musical life and performance. The most important distinction seems to lie between the musical performance as ‘performance’ or work, and as an expression of



genuine and private emotion specific to the performer. This is obviously not a clear distinction, and requires careful definition in this particular context if not to be misunderstood. In any musical performance, the performer may strive to convey the emotions that s/he finds implied within the text of the music. It therefore seems fair to assume that the performer will experience these feelings at some level in order to be able to communicate them. The distinction which the films seem to construct lies between this level of emotional involvement and the specific personal memories and feelings of the performer relating to distinct diegetic events.

The capacity for visual evidence to demonstrate these emotions allows a kind of separation of the emotions of the piece from the emotions of the performer. It may not necessarily be this specific music which causes the emotional reaction of the player, but the presence of music and more specifically the act of performing per se. While in conventional performance there is therefore the possibility of the performer evoking emotional states in a relatively abstract or 'detached' manner, in this circumstance the relationship is reversed. Now, the music becomes abstracted as an agent of whatever emotion the performer is experiencing as a result of other non-musical diegetic circumstances. Whether this shift in emotional focus impacts on the performance itself is left to each individual performance.

While concise terminology in such a case is certainly problematic, it is nevertheless necessary to identify a way in which to differentiate between the two types of filmed performance. It is impossible to define exactly the divide between a performance which conveys emotions which may be implied by the piece and one which evokes particularly personal resonances in the performer. In order, however, to



attempt to indicate the different nature of these involvements, I will use the terms ‘conventional performance’ and ‘personal performance’.

The diegetic context of the performance determines its possible categorisation in these terms. It is then left to the particular way in which the performance itself is filmed to demonstrate how the character reacts to that potential, and what we can understand of his/her emotionality as a result. Importantly, the development of character achieved through these scenes is almost exclusively reserved for the eyes of the film audience. In the particular case of the personal performance, the performer must (usually) continue playing whatever s/he feels. It is only the film audience that is party to the inner conflict experienced and the resultant struggle to continue (unless this ends in all-too-visible failure). Only we, therefore, understand the private thoughts and fears that the music brings to the foreground of the performer’s thoughts. As far as the diegetic audience is concerned, it is a conventional performance like any other.

At the heart of this distinction is the articulation of the particular dynamic between the musician and their instrument. In a conventional performance, the active relationship of the character to the instrument is central. The instrument generally remains in the frame and there is a focus on shots demonstrating the performer’s technical musical prowess, notably through views of their hands on the keyboard or fingerboard. The performer tends to demonstrate attention to the music and their own part in it, with their gaze remaining on the instrument, the musical score or conductor if appropriate. Performances of this type include Stefan’s practising of the Liszt Concert Study in *Letter from an Unknown Woman*, Francesca’s (Ann Todd’s) performance of the Rachmaninov Piano Concerto No. 2 in *The Seventh Veil*,



Christine's performance of the Beethoven 'Appassionata' Sonata and all of Karel's cello performances in *Deception* and Paul's various recitals in *Humoresque*.

The personal performance, however, removes attention from potentially distracting musical technicalities. The musician is gradually isolated from the physical presence of their instrument through techniques of framing. This both represents and allows their private emotional removal from the public communication of conventional performance. The music may then appear to reflect their facial expressions or physical gestures, creating an intimate effect which suggests the more usual individual and interior potential of nondiegetic music.

A defining characteristic of the personal performance seems to be the musician's fixed, apparently unseeing stare into the middle distance. Even with the instrument still visible, this indicates a certain level of detachment from the technicalities of playing and a concentration on otherwise concealed emotions. As the performance progresses, the instrument is typically eradicated from the frame, with the camera focusing on increasingly close shots of the performer's face as their emotion reaches its greatest excess. Although at some level, therefore, we are still aware of the performance event, the source of music is obscured and the performer has apparently become oblivious to the physical task in which s/he is actually engaged.

The gender implications of degrees of proximity to music and the emotions which this stylistic distinction embodies, appear to be used in the female musician film to reflect the broader characterisation of the woman. *The Great Lie*, *The Seventh Veil* and *Deception*, as well as films featuring isolated performances by characters not otherwise known as musicians such as *Madonna of the Seven Moons* (1944) and *The*



*Wicked Lady* (1945), show women as capable of both performance types. There is, however, a clear alignment of the styles to specific points of characterisation.

In *The Seventh Veil*, for example, Francesca's gradual hardening of heart is marked in the difference between her first and last concerto performances. During her debut concert, thanks to the careless words of an old friend immediately beforehand, she remembers an early musical failure following a caning on her hands at school. Despite the outward power of the performance, we are painfully aware through visual signals of her extreme difficulty in continuing, a point emphasised by her fainting as soon as it ends. By her last public appearance, however, she is able to give a commensurate conventional performance, giving nothing private away to either the diegetic or film audience. She has become so much more cynical and self-possessed at the hands of her overbearing guardian, that she is able to keep her excitement and strong feelings about what she intends to do immediately after the concert under cool control, even in the face of the most famously emotional music.

In male musician films, moments of personal performance seem less common and tend to indicate an unusual and specific vulnerability which may also only be temporary. While this issue will be covered in greater detail in Chapter Five, particularly through the case study of *Dangerous Moonlight*, there is an interesting point to be made at this stage. In films such as *Dangerous Moonlight* and *Hangover Square* the male protagonists are, in a sense, threatened with de-masculinisation through their lack of control over their own emotions or rationality. The personal performance is carefully used in this instance as a means of representing their state of mind at a specific point in time. *The Enchanted Cottage* (1945) and *Night Song*, which mark their male musician protagonists as potentially vulnerable through blindness, are



difficult to encompass within this formulation due to the entirely different ways of ‘looking’ exercised by the blind musician.

The difficulty of characterising the female musician, particularly in the face of her own performance, appears to lead to representations which deny the woman as a musician and/or as a ‘woman’. *Deception* not only conceals Christine’s musical ability and professional status, but also designates her as cold and mercenary towards Alex, dangerously neurotic and ultimately murderous. In *The Great Lie*, Sandra (Mary Astor) is characterised as monstrously selfish and unfeminine, devoid of humility, sympathy and, most heinous of all, the maternal instinct. To ensure that this is absolutely clear, she is pitted against the non-musical Maggie (Bette Davis) who is sympathetic, patient, devoted and of course, deeply and unselfishly maternal. *Intermezzo*’s Anita is initially presented as both musically and personally impressive in her own right. Her solo ability is, however, immediately appropriated by the male violinist, who honours her with both musical and social subjugation as his accompanist and mistress.

In a similar way to the male musician (see Chapter Three of this thesis), the fictitious female musician therefore appears to share many qualities with her ‘real’ biopic counterpart. George Custen observes that female biopics most commonly depict singers (or perhaps tellingly ‘paramours’), suggesting the attraction of examining the trajectory of the ‘actual’ siren. He also finds that

[w]here a male famous figure is ruled by the destiny of his talent, a woman is dominated by the alleged biological demands of her gender.

The difference between male and female careers is striking ... men are



defined by their gift, women by their gender, or their gendered use of their gift (1992, 106).

The female entertainer is therefore often destined either to give up her profession for love and domesticity, or to suffer the tragic consequences of trying to maintain her career (ibid., 105).

Selecting a case study through which to examine the characterisation of the female musician is no straightforward task. In 1940s Hollywood, *The Great Lie* presents one of the few autonomous professional female musicians. The film makes little attempt, however, to treat her in the same way as a male performer in terms of the effect of her music on the narrative. In the male musician or female listener narrative, even the man who is only a performer is allowed to dominate the soundtrack. The different relationship of the female musician to her male listener, however, means that the music tends not to transfer between the diegetic and nondiegetic levels in the same way or to the same effect. Sandra in *The Great Lie* is therefore designated from the outset as romantically (and musically) subordinate to her non-musical rival. Her diegetic performances, furthermore, are presented as acts of strenuous labour, defeminisation (if not a parody of masculinisation) and as representative of her active choice of work over romance.

The musical and home front context of 1940s Britain, however, offered a more promising context for the fictitious representation of the female musician. Sophie Fuller has pointed out that early 20th century attitudes to both American and British women composers and musicians were still often resonant of 19th century prejudices (1994). In Britain, however, an increasing number of women composers were



becoming prominent during this time, finding their way into the classical music establishment, mainstream performances, broadcasting and even film music composition (ibid.).<sup>3</sup> The relatively high profile of women in music seems to be both represented and enhanced during World War II by the frequent use of female pianists such as Eileen Joyce and Harriet Cohen on feature film soundtracks. It is perhaps epitomised, however, in the figure of Myra Hess.

Hess was an established figure in classical music long before the outbreak of World War II, having been awarded the C.B.E. in 1936 (Huntley 1944, 207). Having been further honoured in 1941 as Dame Myra Hess she seems, in documentaries such as *Listen to Britain* (1941) and *A Diary for Timothy*, to represent the very cultural spirit and fortitude of the British nation. The series of National Gallery lunchtime concerts with which she was closely associated (ibid., 207), seems to encapsulate a very particular determination that life will not be destroyed by war, but that the nation will go on and remain 'human' whatever happens. As an evidently strong-willed woman insistently directing her talents at protecting the cultural life of Britain, she may therefore have provided a useful figurehead for the myriad other female musicians working in performance, music education and composition at the time, contributing to a more positive public conceptualisation of female musicianship. Indeed, it may be a testament to her popularity and national importance that spare material from *A Diary for Timothy* was used to make the short performance film *Myra Hess* in 1945.

It is therefore perhaps not surprising that it is a British film, *Love Story*, which seems to offer one of the most generous and courageous attempts to characterise a

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<sup>3</sup> Grace Williams started composing for the Strand Film Company at the instigation of Benjamin Britten in 1936, and Elisabeth Lutyens scored her first film, *Jungle Mariners*, for the Crown Film Unit in 1944 (Fuller 1994).



female musician during this period. Its central musician, Lissa Campbell, is placed firmly in the context of being a musician in contemporary wartime Britain, even to the extent that her opening concert is represented as part of Dame Myra Hess' National Gallery series. Given this strong supporting context, the film can take the remarkable step of characterising Lissa not only as a composer (which is unusual enough) but also a performer, and most specifically the performer of her own music. Her composition of the 'Cornish Rhapsody' lies at the centre of the story, although it has to contend with other themes before becoming dominant. It is encouraging that her relationship to her male listener does actually take on something of what would usually be the male musician/female listener configuration. While this suggests a more positive characterisation, however, it still seems rather disappointingly countered by the contingency of her ambitious characterisation on the extreme social and political conditions of the time.

### **Female Musicians in Gainsborough Melodrama**

As a home front film in wartime Britain, *Love Story* also takes on a particular function in relation to the representation of the woman's required role in wartime society. In particular, therefore, it must be contextualised firstly as a product of Gainsborough Studios' specifically melodramatic output and secondly according to how this relates to the possible social symbolism of the female musician. Christine Gledhill suggests that:



For many during the war, realism became central to British cinematic identity, opposing Hollywood as a marker both of national experience and of 'high' cultural value (1996, 213).

Melodrama, by contrast, was considered a 'transgressive, anti-realist mode' (ibid., 214). As Gledhill's arguments suggested in Chapter One of this thesis, however, the relationship between realism and melodrama cannot necessarily be polarised in this way. Certainly in the case of the home front film, she suggests a strong argument for their close relationship (ibid., 214-215).

The traditional domestic context of the melodrama is characteristically disrupted by war. Most specifically, as Gledhill points out:

If women are drawn out of the home, an image of 'woman' must be refound which reties female desire to nation and redirects male endeavour to the defence of a national rather than private home (ibid., 219).

While Sue Harper finds a range of gender types and codes, however, she nevertheless suggests that these are aimed primarily at renegotiating the position of women in relation to male power and desire (1988, 169). She therefore claims that many films favoured the portrayal of inspirational women such as Celia (Patricia Roc) in *Millions Like Us* (1943). Supported by the MOI, *Millions Like Us* was intended to revitalise a desirable attitude and morale in the female workforce. According to Harper, its heroine has two fantasies. The first of these is submission to a man resulting in marriage, and



the second is suicide as a result of male unkindness (ibid., 175). It must be added, however, that Celia ultimately seems to find support in adversity from her new-found female community (Gledhill 1996, 221).

According to Harper, the typical MOI predilection for representations of women opposed the familial/sacrificial 'type' with the overtly sexual woman. The latter was dangerous and risky, most specifically, to national security. She must therefore be marginalised or rejected by society (1996). The Gainsborough melodramas, however, presented women who were 'flamboyant and aggressive' (ibid., 205) in a space made 'for the release of the unsocialised, personal demands of female desire' (Gledhill 1996, 223). It is therefore interesting that Harper suggests Gainsborough as the only studio to develop an 'explicitly gender-specific audience response' with *Love Story* director Leslie Arliss apparently welcoming his designation as 'a woman's director' (1996, 198).

Gainsborough's female 'waywardness' or 'wilfulness' came in many forms and with many mitigations (ibid., 206-210). Harper sees female musical activity as one such means. Rather than giving its female protagonists the right to free behaviour or speech through membership of the aristocracy or the working-classes, this offered a bohemian notion of artist freedom (ibid., 208). This particular conception entails 'that the creative force should be allowed free play regardless of the gender or class of its possessor, and that its repression is fatal' (ibid., 208). Citing examples such as *Love Story*, *The Seventh Veil*, *Madonna of the Seven Moons* and *I'll Be Your Sweetheart* (1945), Harper deduces that 'artistic virtuosity gives ... [women] ... the confidence to seek love in the unlikeliest places' (ibid., 208).



Such confidence does not just impact on the woman's sexuality. Harper also suggests the powerful symbolism of the female musician in countering the apparent advocacy of submission to male control. Although music bears a relationship to the woman's emotions and desire, it also allows her some independence of thought and *self-satisfaction*. Harper suggests that in *Love Story* and *The Seventh Veil* the heroines'

musical performance permits the expression of autonomy and [that] both films should be celebrated as texts which, on one level, celebrate female creativity and energy in the face of insuperable difficulties (1988, 186).

Women, in other words, are shown to be potentially as involved in their own abilities as they are in their feelings towards others (particularly men).

In *Love Story*, however, such potential independence is partially mitigated by what seems to be a purpose in the woman's music of which even she is not fully aware. Lissa (Margaret Lockwood) appears to be musically and emotionally empowered on a personal level for the specific wartime purpose of re-injecting a patriotic fighting spirit into a flagging nation. She therefore enjoys a rather complex, paradoxical and perhaps only temporary musical dominance. On one level, she does eventually dominate the emotional life of her male listener and the effect of her music is certainly extremely powerful. Her exercise of such power only seems permissible, however, because she does it on behalf of a 'greater' national cause. Presumably in order to avoid becoming a siren, there must be a clear alternative and respectable 'reason' for her musical voice.



In order to allow this duality, the representation of her act of composition actually works to some extent against the idea of her own active and original creativity.

### ***Love Story* and the ‘mobilisation’ of music**

*Love Story* follows the fate of Lissa, a famous concert pianist, who is removed by terminal illness from London to Cornwall, in order that she may unwittingly recuperate ex-fighter pilot Kit (Stewart Granger). The music which she composes there carries the full weight of her own difficult emotional situation. This seems to encompass

her love of Kit, her feeling of freedom underneath the Cornish skies, the emotion inspired in her by the grandeur of the rocky coast and the sea, [and] the sadness that her life may be ended just as she has found love (Huntley 1947, 69-70).

Donnelly thus suggests that her music represents the ‘association of female desire with elemental natural forces’ (1997, 165). Since such a powerful feminine connection may appear dangerous if unchecked, however, Lissa’s desire is purposefully directed to clearly altruistic ends. Throughout the film, her personal success with Kit is inextricably interwoven with her success as a patriotic ‘messenger’. Her ‘elemental’ emotional strength eventually returns the defeated man to an optimistic outlook, allowing him to restart his life in terms of romance, proper self-control and combat.



Lissa is characterised in many ways as a combination of the male musician and the female listener, sometimes taking on more of the characteristics of the latter. Kit, as the male non-musician character, also adopts many of the usual features of the male musician. This allows the film at once to demonstrate and celebrate Lissa's ability to compose and perform music, while simultaneously apologising for and displaying the dangers of female creativity.

The intended function of the music in this film, according to Huntley, was therefore to 'become not so much a quiet, pleasant background, as an integral part of the development of the characters themselves' (1947, 69). Hubert Bath's 'Cornish Rhapsody' provided the film with the appropriate means for such an end. Donnelly suggests that the popularity of the so-called 'tabloid concerto' in 1940s film was inspired by the unprecedented success of the 'Warsaw Concerto' written at the beginning of the decade for *Dangerous Moonlight* (see Chapter Five of this thesis) (1997, 164). Conceived according to Huntley as a 'second *Warsaw Concerto*' (1947, 69), the 'Cornish Rhapsody' was hailed alongside its predecessor as having created 'an entirely new standard of film music' (Levy in Donnelly 1997, 164). Integrating the very composition, performance and reception of this central 'concerto' into the subject matter of the narrative, also allowed it to impact on the definition of all the principal characters.

The music has apparently remained so popular that it is, according to Donnelly, the only example of a Gainsborough underscore still available as a recording (*ibid.*, 164). The film, on the other hand, has invited criticism. Perkins suggests that a range of inexplicable actions (and choices of inaction) in the story indicate that the film is 'oppressive and dishonest in pursuit of propagandist goals' (1989, 201). He points in



particular to the ‘pivotal contrivance’ of the lovers’ silences and acts of concealment. Kit’s revelation of his illness, for example, fails to extract the parallel confession from Lissa which may have enabled their love, his cure and his return to the war. Furthermore, a certain lack of consistency allows Lissa to proclaim significantly that she is no longer afraid when, as Perkins points out, she has never actually appeared to be so (ibid., 203).

It is certainly true that the film employs some peculiar and seemingly unnecessary devices, and similarly unexplained actions and ellipses will be found to perhaps an even more confusing extent in Chapter Five’s case study of *Dangerous Moonlight*. As in that case study, therefore, I will not be attempting to offer a comprehensive explanation for the machinations of *Love Story*. Instead, I will focus on how music contributes to a certain narrative coherence, which offers at least one possibility as to how the film may work beyond the level of its actual dialogue and events. It may be, however, that questions of passivity and activity in relation to gendered models of musicality will coincide with some of the character traits and inconsistencies which Perkins describes.

The film’s contradictory attitudes towards musical creativity are demonstrated through the way in which Lissa and Kit are each introduced in relation to music, their subsequent interaction with (both diegetic and nondiegetic) music and the framing and editing of performance sequences. My analysis will therefore be broadly divided into two sections. The first will deal with Lissa’s diegetic relationship to composition and performance, primarily through her fictitious creation of the ‘Cornish Rhapsody’. This will allow an examination of the most important question of this chapter, which is the way in which a film may attempt a characterisation of the female musician which



allows her to be both creative and emotional and yet still feminine and ‘respectable’. The second section will look at issues arising from the transfer of her music to the nondiegetic level. This will also include a consideration of the man’s related musical role and the way in which the dynamic interaction of both their musics reflects their shared emotional trajectory.

A distinction is drawn between the insincere façade with which Kit tries to protect himself and others from the truth of his impending disability, and Lissa’s sense of time ebbing away and a determination to enjoy life while it lasts. Despite her own tragedy, Lissa still has the courage to face the future and the capacity to love. Kit, on the other hand, tries to deny the inevitability of the future by closing himself off from emotion and commitment. The film demonstrates the power of Lissa’s emotions in two ways. Firstly, they are dangerously overwhelming for her when not required. Secondly they are successful both in recuperative and romantic terms when Kit reciprocates her feelings. The strength of her love not only returns his capacity for commitment, but enables his physical cure and return to war.

The association of music, emotion and gender in the narrative, and in particular the effect of Lissa and her music on other characters, mobilises a particular combination of a Romantic ethos and a conventional wartime message. Both of these centre on a specific construction of femininity. As the story between Lissa and Kit progresses, the contrast between their respective musical themes emerges as a key to understanding the workings of the narrative. When Lissa’s music eventually becomes dominant, the story appears to have reached a logical conclusion.

In the context of Margaret Lockwood’s other starring roles for Gainsborough, particularly as Hesther in *The Man in Grey* (1943) and later as Barbara in *The Wicked*



*Lady*, Lissa seems a relatively restrained character. Antonia Lant details audience responses to screenings of *Love Story* at the time of its release, which support her assertion that the transformation of Lockwood's image in some way represented the studio's acknowledgement of clothing austerity measures (1997, 74). Given the popularity of *The Man in Grey* and its establishment of Lockwood's star status, however, it is difficult to imagine that the audience would not nevertheless willingly invest Lissa's character with some of Hesther's spirit. It seems unlikely, furthermore, that this would be significantly affected by any specific mode of dress or circumstances of characterisation and narrative. Indeed, as Lant suggests, Lissa's illness allows her to digress from austerity measures to express an extremely strong, rather than frail sense of underlying sexuality, which undoubtedly has more to do with Lockwood than Lissa (ibid., 74).

Lockwood's star image places Lissa in an intriguing position with regard to the peaceful and extremely rural surroundings of Cornwall. Lant refers to *Love Story* as containing two opposing types of femininity, with Lissa representing frailty and sexual beauty and Judy (Patricia Roc) being stronger and more energetic (ibid., 73). As the major star of the film, Lockwood will win the man and must be expected to be the main focus of visual attention. What Sarah Street terms the 'sparkle' (1997, 59), and Sue Harper refers to as the 'energy and *hubris*' of her acting style (1988, 194), however, also works against the idea of weakness of any sort. This remains unaffected no matter what lines she speaks or how many times she (rather energetically) faints. Perhaps it is this quality which allows Lissa to become a strong character through the discovery of her own weakness, giving the sense of urgency to her quest for fulfilment that Perkins detects in the text (1992, 199). It may also be this which helps to



predetermine the audience's acceptance of what her character eventually comes to stand for.

One aspect of femininity which does not appear to have been explored in this film is the relationship of the women to their surrounding environment. It is this, however, which immediately distinguishes Lissa as the most important artist in the narrative, despite Judy's equally active involvement in the theatre. Each woman represents a different personal and symbolic relationship to the coastline and the sea. Judy is more practically linked to the wartime strengthening of national identity, while Lissa's Romantic relationship achieves a more allegorical and emotionally patriotic end.

Jeffrey Richards has pointed out how British wartime cinema effectively redefined the entirety of the United Kingdom as England. In many cases, this was even further specified as rural, rather than urban England (1988, 44). Geographical and cultural signifiers of the nation became a vital means of reinforcing a sense of national identity and security, creating the kind of 'geographical space' of war described by Paul Virilio (1984, Chapter 6; see also Lant 1991, 32). This is defined by a narrative and visual emphasis on, for example, borders and coastlines, as well as cultural references such as Shakespeare and Chaucer (Virilio 1984, Chapter 6; Richards 1988, 43). Richards reinforces this by pointing to the number of film titles derived from Shakespeare plays, such as *The Demi-Paradise* (1943), *This England* (1941) and *This Happy Breed* (1944) (1988, 43), a list which could also include the Shakespeare adaptation *Henry V* (1944). *A Canterbury Tale* (1944) also evidences the perhaps not quite so pervasive influence of Chaucer.



The particular meaning invested in this creation of rural England needs to be examined in order to understand how *Love Story* constructs the idea of Cornwall. An investigation must then follow of the integration of the three principal melodramatic characters into this idea and their function as expressions of the environment. It should then be possible to see how music, emotion and the unique capacity of feminine creativity are mobilised to determine the relationship between environment, character and war.

Both Richards and Lant refer to the value of rural England in offering a picture of the nation as continuous and indestructible (Richards 1988, 46; Lant 1997, 49). It allows a removal from the real sites of blitzes and bombing, emphasising instead an unchanging geography. Where the town or city inevitably becomes associated with a tragic sense of impermanence and the immediate, the countryside can be redolent of the stable and eternal. Home front films such as *Tawny Pipit* (1944) and *This England*, therefore, do not merely propagate a Romantic myth of the 'real' and wholesome nature of rural life. They use the rural landscape as a means of allegorising the wartime ethos of the transcendence of the immediacy of urban destruction and the ever-present and random spectre of death. Both writers also refer to the logical extension of this allegory, which accords transforming and recuperative powers to the countryside. In particular, it often appears as a site where disparate people can be united in a common cause, before being sent away improved in some crucial sense by their contact with nature.

Like many of its fellow home front films such as *The Demi-Paradise*, *A Canterbury Tale*, *Millions Like Us*, *This Above All* and *Tawny Pipit*, *Love Story* contains a plethora of geographical and cultural indicators. Lant makes the point that it



is the particular use of distinctive geographical features of the landscape which mark the continued political existence of the nation (1997, 49). These features can be inland, such as the Pilgrim's Road and the hills overlooking the city in *A Canterbury Tale*, or the tiny village and surrounding hills and fields of *Tawny Pipit*. *Millions Like Us* and *Diary for Timothy* (1945) show the wartime transformation of the British holidaymakers' beaches, while *The Demi-Paradise* represents the coast through the shipyard and dockside. *Love Story*, however, is located on a stretch of coastline apparently largely unaffected by the war. Leaving aside the absence of anything industrial, the sands are also seemingly free of the barbed wire and landmines common to other narratives which reference beaches.

The Cornish mine, with the attendant discussion of metals needed for the manufacture of munitions, is the sole representative of wartime industry. It remains, however, remote from the actual coast. It stands away from the cliffs, is hardly ever seen apart from during the rather isolated mining disaster episode, and is characterised as something dark, dangerous and frightening. It also motivates the presence of Tom (Tom Walls), the omniscient and multifunctional Yorkshireman. Tom seems to represent a regional variation on rural Romanticism, and a nod to mobilisation which perhaps ironically suggests a lack of mining expertise in Cornwall itself. He is also a foil to the otherwise middle-class accents, and a pivotal point between the principal characters and the 'ordinary' (in this case near-monosyllabic/imbecile) local folk.

The stereotypical common sense and 'straight talk' of Yorkshire regionality, however, lends a particular significance to Tom's omniscience. He not only 'sees all', but is quite willing to take action to ensure the correct course of events. Amongst his many roles as a narrative catalyst, he manages (thanks to Huddersfield musicality) to



tune the piano and orchestrate (no pun intended) Kit and Lissa's movements, so that Lissa can begin to weave her musical magic.

The concentration of the film on the very edges of the cliffs, and therefore the absolute border of the nation, is largely provided by the two principal women. Lant has proposed a pattern to the distribution of space in wartime cinema, which offers the freedom and power of the skies to the male characters, while the women's feet remain firmly planted on the ground (1997, 52). Through this formulation, the women on the ground become the support for the men in the air. Harper emphasises this point by underlining the connection between those films which received official support and the representation of predictably supportive woman (for example in *The Way to the Stars* (1945), *In Which We Serve* (1942) and *The Way Ahead* (1944)) (1988, 190).

Lissa and Judy may therefore exist at the very edges of the nation, but they nevertheless remain land-bound. Even when Lissa travels overseas on an ENSA tour, she is seen being escorted and transported by male soldiers, with the emphasis remaining on the rigours and exhaustion of touring over land rather than flying. Kit, on the other hand, accords perfectly with Lant's formulation of the young, temporarily injured man who has the potential to regain his apparently lost masculinity and who yearns, in this case with eventual success, for a return to the skies (1997, 52). In *Love Story*, however, the role of the female is more than just to support. She must actively recuperate and return the man to his desired realm.

Judy and Lissa are overtly opposed to one another in this sense. Judy wishes above all else to keep Kit on the land, eventually displaying an almost pathological resolve to sacrifice him for her own selfish reasons. Lissa sympathises with the pain he suffers at the thought of this fate and will do anything, including (reluctantly)



sacrificing her own romantic desire, to save him from it. The different attitudes and roles of the two women are directly related to their relationship to the land and what it signifies. I will examine Lissa's relationship to the coast in the detailed analysis of the film, but Judy's relative position is an important defining factor in Lissa's narrative capabilities.

Judy's activities place the ultimate cultural capital of England at the extremities of its geography. She is managing, directing and acting in a professional production of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* in an amphitheatre cut into the very cliff edge. The back of the stage area is literally a sheer drop to the sea, and the audience watch the action with the water in the background. Borrowing a phrase from Lant she is, in the most literal way possible, 'spreading culture to the edges of the national boundary' (1997, 48). Her project is largely represented, however, as a commercial rather than aesthetic venture. It is defined by references to finances, sponsorship, box-office potential, tourism and (rather tellingly) even the falsification and manipulation of natural sounds. The play itself is also only ever seen in rehearsal, rather than as a final, polished performance. Apart from watching Kit and Lissa swimming, Judy seems to take relatively little notice of her surroundings and never comments on them.

While Judy is represented as being sincerely in love with Kit, the manifestation of her love is directly opposed to a desirable wartime attitude. Judy has waited for Kit all her life, and sees his impending blindness as a perfect opportunity to secure him. Particularly in comparison to Lissa, Judy's lack of spiritual connection to the land, and her unpatriotic and selfish attitude towards Kit, seem to become one and the same thing. She represents a female resistance to a correct and respectable moral stance. This must ultimately be overcome through submission to both the inevitable power of



the greater star, and the tremendous emotional force of patriotism which that star's character represents. The principal difference between Judy's and Lissa's artistry, and hence their national and emotional characterisation, therefore comes from the land itself. Lissa, in opposition to Judy, is allowed as a female composer to experience a very particular relationship to nature.

As is conventional in films featuring musicians as characters, the opening titles of *Love Story* are underscored with the music which will become the main piece associated with the musician. The subsequent introduction of the music within the diegesis usually comes relatively early in the film, often with a focus on the technicalities of playing through shots of the musician's hands. In its quest to create a very particular configuration of music, national identity, patriotism, emotion and gender, however, this film begins by overturning this convention to establish an entirely distinct set of representational parameters.

It is not unusual that Lissa does not appear as a performer during the opening titles. In fact, if she were to appear in the same way as Sandra does in *The Great Lie*, her subsequent characterisation might be problematised. The opening titles actually show the landscape of Cornwall, which will provide the main backdrop of the film as well as a significant inspiration for the music's diegetic composition. The music is restricted to a purely orchestral arrangement with no piano, so that Lissa's performance is not yet even an issue. This allows the film to begin to prioritise the place of inspiration over technical musical prowess, already associating music with imagination and rural Romanticism rather than performance. The potential problems of the gender of the musician are further avoided in the subsequent episodes which present, respectively, Lissa's first performance and the initial composition of her piece.



Lissa's intended final concert, which opens the film, follows the codes of the conventional performance. She is identified very clearly as a renowned professional musician, sufficiently famous to be performing to a packed London venue. Inside the concert hall she is seen in long shot, framed by the two sides of the concert audience, and with the piano in full view. She is therefore rendered as only one element of the whole concert experience despite being the actual performer. The camera moves towards her, reaching the front row of the audience just as she finishes playing. We do not see Lissa's facial expression while she plays and in any case, we know nothing about her at this point that would contextualise anything so personal.

Our first experience of Lissa as a musician is therefore a distanced one, which bears little relevance to the opening titles. We do not see her in close-up, there are no shots of her hands on the keyboard and she is not playing the piece which opened the film. This performance therefore delays the connection between Lissa and her own music as well as our knowledge of her as a character. While denying many of the conventions of the musician film, however, this introduction of Lissa also opens up the space which will allow her later and much more crucial musical creativity.

The opening concert creates an important link between Lissa's public face as a musician, her place within an urban environment, the conventional style of performance and the playing of existing concert repertoire. She is introduced by a concert poster and is playing Chopin's *Fantasia Impromptu*. She is presented as only one element of the concert and the piano is always in full shot. This emphasises the physical presence of her performance rather than any personal emotional aspects. Like the Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 1 played by Sandra in *The Great Lie*, this piece is also passionate



in a rather forthright way. It therefore eschews the more sentimental style of the conventional film (love) theme usually deemed appropriate to the female character.

The avoidance of a closer view of Lissa as she plays somehow also denies the idea that she can be understood purely in terms of her professional musicianship. Despite the conventional style of performance, which in the context of other films often connotes the characterisation of the musician through their music, it is significant that we have been denied the usual disembodied hands-on-keyboard shot. We therefore see Lissa as a performer, but without a heightened emphasis on technical virtuosity. The distance makes the performance seem strangely neutral in meaning, suggesting that it is not through this format - the public concert of established repertoire - that we will really come to understand her. Even if Lissa is a musician, there is more to her than just her professional musicality. At the same time, while some kind of deeper complexity may be signalled, particularly given that the musician is played by Margaret Lockwood, it must nevertheless remain uncertain at this point whether this greater depth can be realised through music. In films such as *While I Live*, *The Great Lie* and *Deception* this does, after all, seem to prove a difficult prospect.

This doubt is furthered by the news immediately after the performance that Lissa is giving up her music to take on war work. Taking an exemplary wartime stand and demonstrating the necessity of women entering the male work domain, she exhibits her view of the world as outward and dutiful rather than inward. Her career in music does not blind her to real life and its obligations or make her wilfully self-centred like Sandra. The rather drastic force of fate that follows, however, will render her unable to follow through these socially-responsible and practical intentions. As a result, she can become justifiably representative of something more transcendent and symbolic.



The distance from personal expression suggested by the first performance is continued by the fact that it is her manager Ray (Walter Hudd) who makes the announcement after the concert, with Lissa shown as unable to stop him. She does not speak to the audience in her own defence, choosing instead just to exit the stage as they applaud Ray's resistant sentiments. Her power and voice within the text seem to be even further diminished in the following scenes. She prattles inanely while being examined by the doctor, only to be refused information about her medical condition and denied entry to the WAAFs. Her diegetic silence is protracted once again after she has visited her own doctor, before she finally reveals the news to Ray that she is going to die.

Lissa's lack of control over her own life and music is summed up in her first fully eloquent speech. She silences Ray and tells him about her years as a musician, referring to the endless time he made her spend practising rather than being outside experiencing life. Like Francesca in *The Seventh Veil*, Olwen (Audrey Fildes) in *While I Live* and perhaps to some extent Christine in *Deception*, Lissa's life as a professional musician has been signified by work, repression by a Svengali figure and a distance from real life and people. Now she will travel away from the urban environment to a rural space where she can experience life at its most raw, natural and eternal. This recalls the inspiration of the opening titles and prepares for her role as its narrative conduit.

Her personal connection to music is still delayed, however, by the place-setting use of 'The Cornish Floral Dance' for the introduction of her time in Cornwall. This piece firmly establishes her new environment in terms of the folk ethic through one of the traditional cultural codes which Richards might attribute to the Romantic Left



(1988, 44). This new designation for music breaks with the formal London concert. It also prepares the ground for the most important break with the conventional presentation of the musician character. This comes as Lissa closes the gap between herself and the opening titles by beginning to compose the main piece.

Through a series of episodes, the music moves from the metadiegetic of Lissa's imagination, through the diegetic to the nondiegetic level. This proves a crucial reversal of the pattern conventionally relating to the male musician and his female listener, which transfers the initially diegetic piece to the metadiegetic and nondiegetic levels.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, the male composer usually first presents his work-in-progress through diegetic playing, with no representation of its place in his imagination before this point.<sup>5</sup> It is this reconfiguration of music and character which allows Lissa to be identified as a musician in an entirely different way to the first concert sequence. This not only manipulates the conventional associations of each level of the text, but also establishes a particular pattern of editing and framing which will transfigure future performances.

After her arrival in Cornwall, Lissa hires a donkey trap to see the scenery. At the edge of the cliffs overlooking the sea, she meets Kit. While finding him interesting, she resists his overly charming advances and breaks away, running up to a higher part of the cliff. She stands right at the edge and gazes far out to sea in a moment prolonged by a reverse shot of Kit watching her. It is at this point that her composition begins.

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<sup>4</sup> The term 'metadiegetic' is used with reference to Claudia Gorbman's definition (1987, 23) as detailed in Chapter Three of this thesis.

<sup>5</sup> An example of an exception to this is provided by the later *Amadeus* (1984) when the delirious and dying Mozart (Tom Hulce) hears his own composition in his head as he dictates it to Salieri (F. Murray Abraham).



As she hears the waves crashing on the rocks below, she looks offscreen right (fig. 12a), and hears orchestral strings merging with the diegetic sound simultaneously with a shot, from her point of view, of the waves. Next she looks offscreen left in response to the sound of seagulls, which are then replaced with an imitative figure in the flutes (fig. 13a). Both these musical figures are clearly linked to concrete diegetic elements demonstrated by Lissa's gaze, her point-of-view shots and the diegetic sound effects. The third element of the composition, however, comes in response to no such specific diegetic stimulus. Lissa stares apparently unseeing into the middle distance. Not only is her gaze rather vague, but there is no reverse shot of what she sees. She then begins to conduct the music that she 'hears' with her finger (fig. 14a). As she composes this melody, she is completely self-absorbed, and is obviously annoyed when Kit interrupts her, saying that he has made her lose the theme (fig. 15a).

This third theme is the most important key to understanding Lissa's allegorical role as part of the film's philosophy of women, musical creativity and nature. In contrast to the first two motifs, this melody is not imitative of any specific source. It seems to be purely the product of her imagination in response to the general surroundings. But the direction of her gaze and the way the music comes to her is important. The first two motifs have set the precedent of Lissa looking at the element which is inspiring her composition. For the main melody, she adopts a far-reaching unseeing gaze across the sea and sky. The music which appears seems more like a voice in her head over which she has no control, so that she merely monitors it as it progresses of its own volition. She seems not to compose it, so much as hear it. It is almost as if the music is coming to her from the elements, rather than her creating it in



response to them. The act of composition therefore ceases to be the result of work and experimentation, becoming instead an act of listening to nature and hearing its voice.

The pattern of the music which originates in this episode recalls the repetitive ebb and flow of waves and the idea of constancy and regeneration. The main theme comprises four phrases following an AABA structure. The first phrase establishes a pattern of constant rising and falling, which is emphasised by the second phrase beginning a semitone higher. The contrasting section comprises a rising and falling four-note phrase which is immediately repeated with an elaborating triplet figure around the second note. The theme then ends (and simultaneously prepares for its own elaborated repetition in the final piece) with a variation on the opening phrase which begins a further semitone higher. This compresses the opening four-note motif into three notes by accenting and extending the length of the first note, before emphasising the following descending chords with the addition of elaborating notes (fig. 16).<sup>6</sup>

Fig. 16. *Love Story*: The 'Cornish Rhapsody' main theme



This pattern seems to suggest a constant yearning towards resolution which is eschewed in favour of further repetitions of the basic ascending and descending

<sup>6</sup> The second half of the theme is quoted in octaves. This is because the theme tends to alternate between an emphasis on the higher or lower octave throughout its diegetic and nondiegetic appearances.



pattern. The poignancy of this striving seems increased as the first note of each statement of the opening phrase is raised by a semitone. There is also a constant pull between major and minor tonality and a frequent accenting of either nonharmonic or rhythmically weak notes. In particular, the melody line tends to begin its phrases on the second beat of the bar. Throwing the melody off the beat in this way seems to give it a sense of being almost 'too late' while also desperately 'pushing' forward.

The theme therefore seems to encapsulate Lissa's sadness in time ebbing away, her hope in recapturing what life there is left to her and her capacity for self-regeneration, strength and resolve in emotional adversity. At the same time, it resonates with Richards' idea of the rural landscape, and in this case the sea in particular, as eternal, timeless, self-renewing and indestructible (1988, 46). It therefore appears to construct a parallel between female emotions and the eternal, powerful forces of nature. Like 'The Dream of Olwen' in *While I Live*, Lissa's music comes from the wild (in both cases Cornish) environment and in turn seems to be part of it.

This crucial link grants Lissa's feelings and love an eternal and unchanging universal quality which is perhaps the only thing that could transcend the immediate horrors and tragedies of war. Through composing and performing the piece Lissa therefore seems to become the voice of the land and sea, the conduit through which its message can be carried to Kit. Her personal strength and optimism in the face of tragedy can therefore be transferred to him. Following the formulations of Richards and Lant, she becomes a voice for the eternal spirit of the nation. So in her role as catalyst for Kit's recovery, she stands as a goddess-like symbol of the recuperative powers of female love for war-damaged men. The contrast of this to Kit's music, which appears later, is striking.



The use of the metadiegetic level for the first appearance of the theme is unusual. It allows the music to appear in Lissa's imagination simultaneously with our first hearing of it, and seems to suggest the Romantic idea of composition as a kind of divine inspiration. This woman therefore appears to combine a 'feminine' proximity to nature with the 'masculine' strength required to channel and contain its powerful voice. There is no doubt, as her later determination and self-sacrifice shows, that Lissa is far stronger and self-possessed emotionally than almost any other character. Whereas performance should not be a problem for such a woman, the physical weakness of her heart provides a reason for her later breakdowns. As a kind of actualisation of Romantic philosophy, her illness means that her body is literally not capable of supporting the strength of her emotions.

The fact that it is Kit (as a man) who interrupts the initial flow of sensibility from the skies to her ears predicts both the problem with the consummation of their relationship and the necessary eventual balance for her creativity. Despite her successful completion of the composition it is ultimately not Lissa who provides the necessary masculine control of the music but Kit, by his acceptance of the message that it carries. Without this acceptance and support, Lissa is so overwhelmed by the emotion contained in the music that she can barely survive her own performances and indeed on one occasion faints mid-piece. Kit therefore holds the key to Lissa's successful emotional trajectory in personal, patriotic and cultural terms. It therefore seems a little cruel that the timing of the success of her recuperative 'mission' means that she never gets to perform the Rhapsody in a contented frame of mind.

Lissa's inability to exercise control over her own emotions and music is visualised during the various composition and performance sequences of the piece,



which continually recall the shot construction of the original cliff-top episode. The first of these occurs as Lissa transfers her music to the diegetic level through realising her musical thoughts at the piano. At this stage, the piece undergoes a certain amount of alteration which recollects the process of musical ‘gendering’ apparent in *Letter from an Unknown Woman*. Most importantly, the significance of Lissa’s ‘imagined’ melody (fig. 14a) is refined in order to link it more strongly to Kit, before it is appropriately singled out to become the principal theme of the composition.

As she reconstructs the imitative wave and seagull figures of the composition, the shot pattern of the cliff-top episode is repeated, although the actual direction of her gaze is altered (figs. 12b and 13b). The redefinition of the ‘imagined’ theme comes after she has played the seagull motif. Lissa remains looking offscreen, with the piano in the shot, and rehearses Kit’s voice simultaneously with the solo violin restatement of the theme (fig. 14b). After this stops, she turns to face over the top of the piano with the editing following her movement. She is now seen in a shot almost identical to fig. 14a, with the piano excluded from the shot and her gaze reaching once again into the middle distance as she transfers the melody to the piano (fig. 14c).

The effect of this particular pattern of editing is to separate the first two motifs from the main melody. The first two are still linked to her new environment in a very concrete way by imitating real noises. Accordingly, the act of creation comes to the fore, with the piano in sight and an emphasis on Lissa’s hands at the keyboard. For the third theme, however, she is divorced from her immediate surroundings and placed in the same abstracted image as on the cliff-top. The framing therefore allows a focus on her emotions while she plays, rather than her actual playing.



Perhaps because of the restrained physical style of Margaret Lockwood's miming at the piano, it would be easy to forget what she is actually doing and see this as a straightforward long shot showing the emotions that Lissa's music represents. The music which she plays seems to become effectively non-diegetic, reinforcing the (too) close link between the female composer's music and her own imagination and emotions. This is a uniquely solipsistic moment by the standards of any male or female composer film, whereby the musician is simultaneously feeling his/her own emotions, giving them representation through music and providing the only diegetic response to this music.

Kit's (still unwitting) intervention in the composition process at this point works in a similar way to his interruption of Lissa's original inspiration. This seems predicted by the disruption of her composition and a repeat of her earlier disturbed facial expression as she plays what she apparently considers 'wrong' harmony (fig. 15b). Her creativity is thus halted just before Kit's first appearance in a series of cutaway shots which show his gradual progress towards the Summer House where Lissa is playing. The resultant punctuation of the piece allows a shift in its musical focus, eliding the wave and seagull motifs in favour of constant and increasingly elaborate repetitions of the main theme. The theme already associated with Kit therefore becomes the musical means by which the film draws him towards Lissa. After a full chordal version finally heralds his discovery of her crucial secret identity, this theme can therefore take its appropriately meaningful place on the nondiegetic track.

Kit's discovery of Lissa at the piano takes the conventional form of a male musician-female listener scene. As he appears in the doorway, apparently deaf to the loud music until this exact moment, he is literally stopped in his tracks by what he



finds. He moves silently through the room to take a seat behind her. Like the male musician with his female admirer at a distance, Lissa does not even notice he is there until he applauds after she stops playing. In their subsequent conversation Lissa tells him that the main theme represents “some of the emotions [she] felt at the time” of their first meeting. In response to his question about what sort of emotions these are she replies, significantly: “If I could express them in words, I wouldn’t have to write music.” From being a profession by which she could not be adequately defined, and which she intended to leave behind (for whatever reason), music has now become her explicitly personal emotional voice. This voice, whether she knows it or not, speaks for the whole nation.

Lissa’s music represents a spirit which is both part of, and something other than herself, as well as having an object in Kit. His role in making the music necessary is registered when Lissa continues to explain her composition to him:

Kit: “Please go on. Or am I stopping the inspiration?”

Lissa: “On the contrary, you’re part of it. Well, in a way.”

Kit’s compromised status as a muse for Lissa’s music is important. He is only a partial muse, and of course at the crucial point of composition (fig. 14b) he is also a disembodied muse. The fact that he only ‘appears’ to Lissa through her memory of his voice, means that we avoid actually having to *see* him through Lissa’s inspired eyes. Rather than seeing his face as she sees/imagines it, we see *her* face in response to this memory. This continues the **emphasis** on Lissa’s extremely close involvement with the music while nevertheless giving it an exterior motivation. At the same time, it signals a



distance between Kit and music which proves essential as a contextualisation for the later appearance of his own theme.

Despite the similarities between this scene and many comparable male musician-female listener scenes, Lissa still seems very different from a male composer. Even though she admits that Kit is part of the inspiration behind the piece, she keeps the emotions behind the music secret. Music is not a means of seduction for this female composer, but something much more personal (and genuine). The emotions it contains cannot be summed up as a relatively quantifiable response to another person, but really do express what words cannot.

Lissa is now demonstrably capable of both the conventional and personal styles of performance, and the dynamic between these possibilities becomes the point of her subsequent performances. In particular, as the story involves her in a situation of increasing emotional complexity, each performance becomes imbued with the tension of whether she can survive until the end of the piece. This occurs explicitly during the next diegetic performance, which shows her trying to play the 'Cornish Rhapsody' in front of an audience for the first time. The emotional context for this performance is fully understood only by herself and the film audience, and is set with the news that Kit is simultaneously undergoing his (potentially life-threatening) eye operation. Although she might have chosen to play any piece, she nevertheless puts herself to the test by playing the music which was (at least partly) inspired by Kit. She must then sustain the performance in the knowledge that he may be dying as a result of her own actions in persuading him to undergo such dangerous surgery.

Initially, the performance follows the original cliff-top pattern. Lissa looks offscreen over the edge of the cliffs as she plays the waves motif, and then turns to



look offscreen towards the sky while playing the seagull motif (figs. 12c and 13c). As the main theme begins she is seen from over the top of the piano, framed by its body, lid and lid stand. This shot then takes its place in a series, alternating with the audience's point of view and views from the cliff side of the piano. Throughout all these shots, Lissa's performance as a musical event is emphasised by the retention of the piano in the frame. This pattern is only broken as the end of the fourth phrase of the melody is reached, when Lissa is seen in medium close-up without the piano.

Immediately following this, the scene cuts to Tom and Judy backstage as Lissa begins a variation on the main melody with a quiet, nondiegetic orchestral accompaniment. Since neither the volume nor sound quality of the music are changed over this cut, the music seems to become momentarily nondiegetic, despite our knowledge of its continued source. The dialogue between Tom and Judy allows Tom to draw attention away from Judy's distress to Lissa's, by him asking her the explicit question: "Remember Lissa out there playing, what do you suppose she's thinking?" The immediate cut back to Lissa marks a move to a new pattern in the editing and framing. This answers Tom's question by replacing the conventional public performance with a representation of Lissa's increasingly uncontrollable personal emotions.

As the visual style of the performance changes, so does the tone of the music. It shifts from the sentimental style of the main melody to a non-melodic, gradually sequentially rising pattern with no orchestral accompaniment. As the pitch of the music rises, there is an increasing predominance of shots which show only Lissa's face, obliterating the piano from the frame altogether. Her gaze moves away from the piano



keyboard and adopts the stare into the middle distance familiar from previous shots connecting music and her emotions.

This time, however, her expression reveals a growing distress which seems to build from the earlier moments of discontent (figs. 15a and 15b). From a repeat of the earlier view framing her within the piano's body and lid, we cut to a closer shot without the piano (fig. 15c), and then a close-up of her face as she reaches the highest point of the rising musical pattern (fig. 15d). An immediate cut to a longer shot of both her and the piano in profile and the audience in the background, then coincides with her physical collapse and the resultant dissonant crash of the keyboard. Repositioning Lissa at this precise moment as part of a whole performance event seems to emphasise the incompatibility of her interior and exterior worlds. Her private failure becomes a salutary public humiliation.

This marks a very particular height of emotional excess, made possible only by the most direct conflation of the woman and her music. Judy, despite her love for Kit and her distress at his dangerous operation, is given no more elaborate expression of her emotions than a brief scene of crying and a refusal to take the stage as scheduled. The course of Lissa's emotions, on the other hand, becomes the motivating factor for the editing of her performance scene. This brings the visuals and the diegetic music into violently direct correlation, and makes her complete physical and mental collapse appear the only possible conclusion to the scene. Judy's feminine excess can be calmed and controlled by the quietly masculine Tom. Lissa's emotions, on the other hand, can only be made more excessive by her being compelled to play and hear music which marks the very absence of the male. In the end, her emotions and her music together prove to be more than she can bear.



The final concert features an entire performance of the Rhapsody. This constitutes both the epitome of Lissa's professional career and, as Ray suggests, a final chance to "make [her] playing tell them all [she] want[s] to say." Her conversation with Tom immediately before the concert reveals her continuing distress about losing Kit, particularly since she has heard of his impending marriage to Judy. Since this renders the emotional context of this performance very similar to that of the earlier open air theatre performance, the question naturally arises as to whether she will survive playing the whole piece. In formal terms, it may be supposed that a successful performance is necessary both to balance the earlier failure and to allow Lissa a triumphant end to her career. Furthermore, the demands of the educational 'project' of film music also dictate the necessity of a full performance of this specially composed 'tabloid' concerto. Given the conventional format and avowed musical potential of the composer/musician film, and the status of the 'Cornish Rhapsody' as an 'answer' to the 'Warsaw Concerto', it would be positively perverse for the piece to remain only in fragments.

Throughout the majority of the piece, particularly until the final moments, the editing is governed primarily by the structure and rhythm of the music. As is the case with the main concert sequences of many musician films, it becomes something more like documentary footage. It incorporates multiple audience and orchestra point of view shots and isolates various instrumental groups as they become pertinent within the piece. There are occasional shots of Lissa across the top of the piano, either framed by its body and lid or removing it from the shot. While these shots recall Lissa's emotional investment in the music, they show her initially at least to be absorbed in her performance rather than any notably personal response.



This emphasis is completely reversed when she reaches the point in the piece which heralded her earlier collapse. As in the earlier performance, this shift is conveyed by a change in the visual style, with a dramatic increase in the pace of editing and extremely jarring camera angles. Lissa is seen at the piano from an extreme low angle, followed by a head-on shot of the trombones, before an extreme high angle shot of Lissa necessitates her tipping her head backwards in order to make her face visible. There is the greatest concentration at this point of shots which focus on Lissa's face to the exclusion of the piano, and a repeat of her distressed expression as she plays (15e). As the piece ends, we can see only Lissa's face, staring fixedly over the top of the piano in obvious (but still private) distress (fig. 15f).

At the nondiegetic level, the music derived from Lissa's piece seems to work in a relatively conventional way. It represents her emotions and functions as the love theme to her romance with Kit. At the same time, however, it still embodies the eternal elements of national identity which Kit finds difficult to accept. Its transfer to the nondiegetic level therefore allows the next stage of the recuperation process after he realises the implied emotional content of Lissa's composition. The conflation of their romantic love with his physical and moral regeneration becomes inextricably linked to patriotism and his return to the air. As with the diegetic performances of the piece, however, the disruption of Lissa's theme represents the stymieing of her 'corrective' emotions by his stubborn non-co-operation.

Her music is, however, not allowed to dominate the score in the same way as Stefan's does in *Letter from an Unknown Woman*. Although Kit initially seems to return Lissa's feelings, his fear of his impending blindness leads to an 'incorrect' resistance to wartime regeneration. Rather than give in to the feelings her music



represents, he therefore introduces music of his own which represents denial of not only his emotions for Lissa but also his emotions in general. By pretending not to care, he hopes to avoid facing reality. The interaction of Lissa's and Kit's themes as the film progresses therefore becomes equally important in understanding how the musician-listener configuration can be redistributed across the characters when the woman is a musician.

The transfer of Lissa's music to the nondiegetic level confirms the focus on the main theme suggested by her process of composition in the Summer House. As in *Letter from an Unknown Woman*, however, this movement is also marked by a change in instrumentation. Lissa's nondiegetic music does not remain a piano piece, but is orchestrated for string and woodwind instruments. As the couple kiss for the first time by the wishing well, the strings become more prominent. A solo violin line is then extracted specifically in conjunction with a shot of Lissa's face and her speaking of Kit's name. This recalls a particular connection between Lissa and music by evoking her original moment of metadiegetic composition. The suggestion of the solo violin as representative of her deepest emotional voice (an association which also occurs in both *Now, Voyager* and *Letter from an Unknown Woman*) therefore seems to distance this moment from her professional musical activity.

Given the complex function of the piece both within and outside the film, it may in fact be appropriate for her music to exist in several forms. The piano appears to be cast as her public means of expression, with the version of her music for piano and orchestra constituting the publicly respectable (and externally marketable) translation of what her feelings represent. The solo violin enters the nondiegetic and metadiegetic score as a contrasting representation of her private emotional state known only to her



and the film audience. Even when Kit tells Judy that he will make sure Lissa does not get hurt, the use of the solo violin foregrounds the idea of her emotions rather than his.

Once removed from its diegetic source, the theme becomes more flexible to its romantic motivation. Up to and during the couple's first kiss, for example, the increasing intensity of the moment appears to be reflected in its rising volume and pattern of sequential ascent. While it may seem that this reflects the characters' mutual feelings, however, the music then suggests that the kiss is neither a triumphant moment in itself nor the unproblematic beginning of a new relationship. In a similar way to the long-awaited embrace in *Letter from an Unknown Woman*, Kit and Lissa's kiss ends accompanied by unresolved harmony and, in this particular case, a solo violin melody line that diminishes into nothing. It therefore places doubt over the success of the moment, suggesting that their situation is far from resolved. Unlike *Letter from an Unknown Woman*, however, both Kit's refusal of involvement and Lissa's upset response is made immediately clear.

The subsequent introduction of Kit's theme directly contradicts the ethos of Lissa's theme by providing a logical development of the distance he is trying to create from Lissa's music. In a move which is perhaps marked by being *too* masculine in terms of the conscious exercise of control, this theme represents Kit's attempt to construct a defence against any real emotional involvement or expression. The ostensible emotional-musical voice which this gives him is therefore used in the service of his desire for protection from emotion, rather than its expression. As in numerous films which characterise musicians and their listeners, this raises the issue of emotional (in)dependence, and how the particular allocation of the emotional-musical voices of the characters indicates their (gendered) narrative positioning.



The power of Lissa's musicality to entrance her male listener and eventually seal his fate in loving her seems to be demonstrated early in the film. The growing strength of her emotional hold over him is indicated by the role of her music in accompanying their relationship. Her obvious allure and her own emotional involvement are, however, perceived as a threat. No matter how innocent and unwitting her siren song, it must be countered by a self-conscious musical assertion of independence which defends against submission to the feelings she inspires. Lissa's theme is therefore delayed in recuperating Kit by its motivation of this counter-theme.

Kit is the only character who takes full control of the appearance of his own music. He introduces it purposefully into the conversation as a way of representing his pretended emotions, placing it in direct opposition to the unexpected way in which Lissa's theme comes to her. Lissa's music offers the possibility of both a nondiegetic and diegetic emotional voice, inner strength and a constructive depth of emotion. Kit's theme, on the other hand, attempts to control and silence both his own and her diegetic voices. He uses it as a shorthand way of preventing dialogue about his lack of involvement in the war, and Lissa is compelled always to obey his diegetic musical command. It demonstrates, in both narrative and musical terms, a superficial attempt to force an emotional independence from Lissa and the world in general which he clearly does not actually feel.

As the couple ride away in the donkey trap from their disastrous first kiss, Kit explains his apparent philosophy on life. He likens himself to the Miller of Dee and, in another reference to the cultural appeal of Richards' *Romantic Left* (1988, 44), encapsulates this through the character's song (fig. 17).



Fig. 17. *Love Story*: 'The Miller of Dee'

I care for no- bo- dy no not I and  
no- bo- dy cares for me.

Although the lyrics are only used in the first appearance of the theme, they nevertheless establish the meaning which Kit wants his music to retain for all subsequent appearances. The tune, which he sings unaccompanied, is light and jaunty. The compound time signature and use of dotted rhythms lend it the feel of a folk dance. At the same time, however, the conventional implication of sadness connoted by its minor modality detracts from this apparent sense of lightness and happiness.

Kit's philosophy therefore seems a little superficial. He may wish to appear happy in his independent and carefree state, but there are darker feelings underlying his façade. He is trying to pin down the dangerously intangible qualities of music through his choice of a clear, concise song form with self-descriptive lyrics. The capacity of the minor modality to undermine the tone of the melody line, however, is tellingly developed in the following episode.

Lissa and Kit make a bargain to have a completely uncommitted relationship, sealing the beginning of this agreement with a kiss. The instrumental version of Kit's theme which accompanies this scene reflects their avowed lack of commitment to each other. Although it reaches a resolving cadence, it is still in the minor mode. According to the conventions of musical connotation, this cannot present their arrangement in



anything other than a negative light. Furthermore, although the purely woodwind orchestration seems to connote the song's basis in folk music, it also presents a telling opposition to Lissa's earlier heartfelt string scoring. They may have resolved on a feasible way forward together, but the music undermines their now mutual pretence.

As their relationship progresses, the two themes effectively stand in opposition to each other. Kit's theme (whether diegetic or nondiegetic) always suggests the resistance of seriousness, emotional commitment or personal discussion. Lissa's alternates between emphasising her personal feelings and the national spirit. As the couple row towards the cave under the cliffs, for example, Lissa apologises for talking seriously about the war when Kit sings his song to remind her of their bargain. As they subsequently reach the shore, however, the melody of the Rhapsody accompanies the cheerful documentary-style montage of the fishermen at work. After Kit has refused Tom's offer of important mine work, Lissa's protests are once again stymied by his song. The timely appearance of wounded servicemen during their subsequent trap ride then seems almost to take the place of her music's message, and at least renders her unable to continue with their pretence. Kit's resistance to her emotional truth, however, dictates that their separation is underscored by another instrumental version of his song.

Only when Lissa discovers the truth about Kit's condition can her music truly supercede his. After his theme underlies his confession and embarrassed expression of grief, Lissa's theme floods over their embrace and declaration of love. Only his actual mention of the song, or his new self-denial in his later engagement to Judy, can cause the return of 'The Miller of Dee' after this point. The power of Lissa's music and emotions is therefore represented as benign and romantic. It is still, however, her



music. When she confesses to Judy about her illness and is later forced to leave Kit, the theme therefore appears more representative of the prevention of the proper realisation of her emotions.

Judy refuses a compromise which would allow Lissa to spend her last few months with Kit. As her intransigence becomes absolutely clear, the theme is interrupted and then ended mid-phrase as Lissa is left alone to dissolve into tears. As she subsequently pretends to Kit that she no longer cares, the return of the solo violin with her main melody emphasises the continuation of her original emotions despite her words to the contrary. Now it is not Kit who disrupts the emotional purpose of the music, however, but Lissa herself. Like Charlotte in *Now, Voyager* she is taking a strong and active control of her own emotions and voice for what she believes is a higher purpose. There can be no doubt in this case, however, that the concealment of her emotions is wrong for herself, Kit and, ultimately, even Judy. As she leaves Kit's hospital room and is replaced in the frame by her rather regretful-looking rival, her theme is played in a minor key with a melodramatic use of rubato, accented notes and full orchestration.

Kit is never represented through Lissa's music in her absence. The strength of his obvious and conscious romantic fixation on her is therefore represented through the music with which he tries to defend himself against her influence. No matter how hard he tries, however, he is unable to resist her. Lissa is effectively blackmailed into leaving Kit so that Judy can draw him into the relationship she always wanted. Although they become engaged, the timely appearance of Lissa's playing and voice on the radio reminds both Kit and Judy of where his feelings really lie. Judy's only magnanimous action in the film is, as a result of this, to engineer their reunion. When the couple are



back together, particularly as the film draws to a close, the romantic power of Lissa's nondiegetic music is once again evident. The purpose which it has suggested throughout the film of enabling the transcendence of the everyday wartime fear of death and loss can finally be realised. Kit and Lissa's embrace therefore encapsulates a courageous and eternal stand against adversity.

The subsequent consummation of their relationship in marriage represents the ultimate selflessness necessary in war. It returns Lissa to her soul sister environment of Cornwall and Kit to the socially responsible and respectably masculine role of fighter pilot. It also, however, emphasises the heroism of their readiness to be separated rather than being allowed to enjoy what Perkins refers to as 'selfish intimacy' (1992, 202). The glorious self-sacrifice of their willing resignation to what may be permanent separation, is appropriately heralded by a triumphant statement of Lissa's theme, concluding with an emphatic cadence in a triumphantly positive major key.

In many ways, *Love Story* structures a gendered divide through the music in much the same way as a female listener film, except that the basic configuration is reversed. In films which consider the position of the female listener such as *Possessed*, *Interlude* and *Dangerous Moonlight* (as well as *Letter from an Unknown Woman* by default), the man appears to give a certain amount of concrete meaning to the music through his words and/or actions during its performance. As a result, the music seems to be brought under some kind of control, perhaps to fulfil the function of seducing or charming the female listener or to convey the absolute depth of the musician's emotions. The woman can then become emotionally represented through the music of the man, which becomes flexible to follow her particular moods and situations. This attempt to imbue the music with concrete meaning becomes part of the downfall of the



woman, although she also gives the music back its capacity for less tangible and more excessive emotion.

In Kit's case, the intended function of the music is extremely self-conscious. It is meant to deny emotion and, by extension, national identity, rather than simulate or indicate its presence. Lissa, instead of coming under the spell of Kit's charisma and music, adopts his pretended philosophy of non-commitment because she wants to enjoy her last few months of life and believes that this will be harmless. She therefore consciously *tries* to become emotionally defined by him. Kit uses diegetic reference to his song in order to prevent her overstepping the agreed boundaries of their 'no-questions-asked' relationship and she usually, if sometimes grudgingly, obeys his musical command. Ultimately, however, in true melodramatic form, neither Lissa nor the film can be dictated by insincere or denied emotions.

Kit's attempt to take control of both his own and Lissa's emotional trajectories therefore fails when she finds herself unable to continue with the façade. Her emotions are strong and sincere, and if it is her female lack of masculine control which prevents her from concealing them to order, this is actually presented as a good thing. In a similar way to Charlotte in *Now, Voyager* and Lisa in *Letter from an Unknown Woman*, the very integrity of the emotions represented by Lissa's music means that they cannot be easily denied or undermined. Her musical-emotional voice therefore proves to be the more significant and certainly the stronger of the two, so that it can eventually overpower Kit's resistance. The combination of her national symbolism, her personal illness and her self-sacrifice in the face of Judy's intransigence, however, allows her this eventual dominance without jeopardising her essential femininity.



*Love Story* therefore raises many questions about the constitution of both the female musician, the female listener and the male listener. Although Kit has a tangible reason for not wanting to get involved with Lissa, the narrative nevertheless seems to rehearse the scenario of the defenceless man fighting to resist the siren-esque draw of the female musician. It is only when we see him witness her playing the piano for the first time that we can be sure of the greater depth of his feelings and his anger at the challenge she poses to his emotional independence. But Lissa is not an intentional siren. She is not writing and performing music in an attempt to attract or impress Kit, but to express genuine emotion sanctioned by her patriotic spirit.

Her characterisation is therefore dualistic. Whereas she does attract a man by her performance, she is not in full control of the power contained in her own musical message. Rather like a female listener, she is also overpowered and even physically endangered by the emotions implied by the music. Her musicality is allowed by the inner strength aligned to patriotic dedication and, perhaps most importantly, her absolute selflessness. This enables both her innocence of her musical-emotional power and her ultimately feminine victory. Despite her apparently active narrative agency she therefore remains, unlike the would-be femme fatale Judy, a sympathetic character whose attractiveness is both understandable and desirable.

By contrast, Kit attempts to use music in the manner of a male musician rather than a listener. He not only tries to convey an emotional picture of himself and his relationship to Lissa through his choice of music, but then attempts to mould her in this (false) image. His more genuine position as a muse to Lissa, however, means that no matter how hard he may try to the contrary, it must be him who answers to her musical voice. Her music enjoys the more omniscient narrative position of 'knowing' what Kit



really wants and forcing him to realise this himself. As we know, for example, from poor Elliot's fate in *Now, Voyager* and perhaps also Stefan's final resignation in *Letter from an Unknown Woman*, the integrity of nondiegetic music tends to overcome those whose relationship to music is in any way detached.

Neither Kit nor Lissa are, therefore, solely designated as the musician or the listener in their characterisations. Although all the usual qualities of both characters are present, they are redistributed between the man and woman in order that more conventional gender attributes can be taken into account. Being a musician is therefore not a threat to Lissa's femininity, and being her muse does not compromise Kit's masculinity, but returns him to it in its fullest sense.

## Conclusion

*Love Story* offers an extremely informative example of the problems of characterising the female musician. As the introductory section of this chapter suggested, the figure of the femme fatale seems to suggest that one of the most prevalent role models for the active female musician may still be the siren. The idea of the woman self-consciously and/or self-confidently giving a voice to her emotions or sexuality through music therefore appears to remain problematic.

Chapters Two and Three suggest that the woman's relationship to emotion (and music) may be rendered respectable and even safe by the creation of a certain distance from her actual words and actions. The characterisation of a woman who enjoys a close and active relationship to music as a reflection of her own personality, but is nevertheless not intended to be 'dangerous' to men, society or herself is



therefore problematic. Female musicality of this type therefore often seems to come with some kind of ‘mitigation’. The woman may, for example, be subject to physical and/or psychological damage or destruction or, if she is represented as strong in these respects, her very femininity may be put into question. The particular social role which *Love Story* gives its heroine, however, allows her the capacity for original creativity and acceptable femininity by turning her musicality to a muse-like purpose. Lissa may be a musician and composer, and may also be concerned with her own future. Her most important function within the narrative, however, is to empower and inspire Kit.

The diegetic performances of *Love Story*, however, also mobilise the distinction between the conventional and personal performance styles in order to effect a certain relationship between Lissa and her music. As she is visually separated from the piano, it becomes clear that the focus shifts from her conventional musicality to the emotions she is experiencing while she plays. Together with Kit’s relationship to music, this raises the possibility of a fluid use of conventional and personal approaches to music to highlight crucially different nuances of the same personality.

Although the characterisation of the female musician seems particularly problematic, there appears to be no reason why this fluidity cannot also be extended to the man. The relatively contained and controlled male musician of the female listener narrative may therefore not be a sufficient picture of male musicality. As a final stage in investigating the relationship of music to emotional characterisation, Chapter Five will therefore examine films which focus more specifically on the actual personality of the male musician himself. Placed within the wider context of masculinity and music across a range of genres, this will consider how the balance of masculinity and femininity is



maintained when a display of emotion is necessary but excessive outburst is not a viable option.



Figs. 12 and 13.

*Love Story*: Lissa's musical link to concrete elements of the environment

Fig. 12. The Waves

12a



Fig. 13. The Seagulls

13a



12b



13b



12c



13c





Fig. 14.

*Love Story*: The composition of Lissa's 'imagined' theme - linking female desire to the elements

14a



Solo violin

"Keep still can't you."

14b



Solo violin

"What's your name? Mine's Kit. You're going straight into my box of special memories."

14c



Piano



Fig. 15.

*Love Story*: Lissa's musical interruptions and distress during performances of the 'Cornish Rhapsody'

15a



Kit: "Keep still can't you."

15b



Playing the 'wrong' harmony.

The cliff-top concert

15c



15d



The Albert Hall concert

15e



15f





## Chapter Five

### The Male Musician

“There are so many things I would like to say, but I can’t.”

Captain Hasek in *The Captive Heart*

“Careless talk costs lives.”

MOI propaganda slogan

Considering the number of films depicting such figures, the character of the male musician is surprisingly elusive. As Chapter Three suggested, films which feature male musicians often make the female listener and/or muse the real object of their investigation. While this woman’s psychology or emotions become the central focus of the film, the man may remain comparatively enigmatic. His character and particularly his music act more as catalysts for her behaviour than anything else. Perhaps because of this, it remains possible for the narrative to portray the gendered relationship as a Romantic configuration, which throws the weight of emotional excess and loss of control onto the woman. The films therefore sit comfortably within the body of women’s films, concentrating on female psychology and emotional problems.

This chapter will therefore seek to redress the balance by examining the characterisation of the male musician himself. In order to contextualise this specific characterisation, the chapter will begin with a thumbnail sketch of ways in which male



characters in general in and around the 1940s appear to be represented in relation to a more conventionally 'female' style of music. From this the possibility will emerge of constructing and testing masculinity in relation to carefully contextualised 'glimpses' of the (musical) femininity which lies beneath the social façade. This will prepare for the case study of *Dangerous Moonlight*. This film witnesses both the bravery and resilience of men in combat, and the potential conflict between love of country and romantic love. It therefore places its male composer/musician in circumstances which test his masculine strength and feminine depth of emotion to the full.

Focusing on the personality of the male musician raises certain problems and issues. If the Romantic formula is to remain consistent, such films would have to find a way of allowing music to reveal both the inner femininity, sensibility and perhaps even the emotional vulnerability of the man, as well as his overriding controlling masculinity. The difficulty of such a complex characterisation, particularly at the crucially emotional point of musical performance, may be hinted at by the fact that male musician narratives often show the creative man as psychologically disturbed (*A Bill of Divorcement* (1932), *Dangerous Moonlight*, *Hangover Square*, *Deception*). In many ways, their mentality may be as fragile in these contexts as those of their female listeners, or indeed their counterpart female musicians.

The use of the personal performance style in diegetic concert sequences distinguishes musicians like George in *Hangover Square* and Stefan in *Dangerous Moonlight* from their male counterparts in the female listener films. Like so many female musicians and listeners, these men are ultimately unable to find an unproblematic place in society, or even in life. Hilary (John Barrymore) in *A Bill of Divorcement* is confined to a life of mental illness with only the company of his



daughter and his music, while George in *Hangover Square* and Alex in *Deception* must both die. *Dangerous Moonlight*, however, attempts to find a way of reconciling the man and his music. The idealised Romantic model is redefined through drawing on the conventions of wartime narratives, the codes of the woman's film and a certain conception of masculine identity. The resulting characterisation may enable the distinct address of both female and male cinema audiences, as well as fulfilling a particular wartime function.

Before considering how these films approach this characterisation, however, it seems necessary to question my own and others' basic assumption that music belongs mainly with female characters. A proper comparative study of the musical time given to each gender would constitute a thesis in its own right. It is still possible to say here with some certainty, however, that men are more commonly and complexly represented through music than seems generally acknowledged. In order to put the case study of *Dangerous Moonlight* into context, therefore, I will briefly consider the broader relationship of masculinity and music in film. While striving not to slip into unhelpful generalisations and acknowledging that this must remain a somewhat thumbnail sketch, I will nevertheless attempt to make some broad tentative comments on the particular contexts and situations where music takes a notable role in the representation of men.

### **Music, Men and Masculinity in Film**

It seems that male characters during this period are usually only explicitly represented through music in very particular narrative situations. No doubt because of



the different gender implications of the revelation of interiority, there appears to be more at stake in the individualised representation of a man with his own theme than there is in the equivalent treatment of a woman. This is indicated by the various narrative justifications for male characters who enjoy (or suffer) an unusual proximity to music. These range from men specifically associated with a nondiegetic theme, through those who obviously hear music or experience it in a particular way inside their own heads, to male musicians and composers.

In most cases, there seem to be very specific conditions which allow the presence of music. In the Western and the combat film, for example, the otherwise ultra-masculine circumstances in which the characters are placed seem to enable a surprisingly liberal, if not overly-effusive association of emotion and music. In film noir, the transfer of music from the female to the male character can signal the man's emotional entrapment. In psychological dramas, the distortion of music at any narrative level can be used to make an issue of the character's relationship to music, with the music itself sometimes becoming the agent of chaos in that character's life.

Before examining this question more closely, a certain qualification must also be made about the specific type of music and emotion that is under examination here. It is certainly true that in any kind of film involving characteristically 'male' action during this period, be that a battle scene, a car chase or fighting in a bar, there is likely to be music. It would be wrong to suggest that this music did not represent some kind of emotional aspect to the situation, and that such emotion may not be felt by some or all of the characters involved. The kind of music which this often seems to involve, however, tends to be fast-paced and/or strongly rhythmic in style, often incorporating brass and percussion rather than strings (if not jazz idioms and instrumentation). This



seems primarily designed to increase the pulse rate and adrenaline levels of the cinema audience and to involve them in the visceral enjoyment and even empowerment of action and violence.

What seems to be more pertinent in an interrogation of the Romantic application of music to men, are those occasions when the sentimental or painful feelings of male characters are accompanied by a more 'feminine'/female, lyrical style of music. Whereas this may represent heartfelt emotional depth, it may also indicate an interiority which is anything but powerful, autonomous or pleasurable. In these cases, however, it seems that an important distinction is made which seems to distinguish male emotions from those of women. Rather than being constituted in the music itself, this often appears to be evoked in the relationship of the character to the music.

The sense of interiority usually associated with the female character comes from her specific connection with a theme which can vary to her emotional states with some degree of intimacy, and the frequent combination of statements of this theme with extended close-up shots of the woman's face. It seems that the increasingly familiar and developing music, in a concentrated convergence with the facial expression, allows us to believe that we understand the woman's thoughts and psychology to an intimate degree. This particular configuration often seems to be avoided in the emotional representation of men. They seem rarely associated with such intimate leitmotifs, or to be shot in close-up to the accompaniment of such themes.

Although, therefore, *isolated* emotional moments may be recorded through the combination of a close-up and sentimental music, its lack of thematic relevance may register the emotion at a rather more general 'exterior' level than tends to be the case with female characters. While it is also likely that emotional responses to characters



will be based to some extent on the gender of the audience, it may nevertheless be possible to consider some kind of distinction between the two. Perhaps, in *very* general terms, we may be asked to witness and sympathise with male emotion whereas our drawing into the woman's trajectory offers the sense of experiencing female emotion.

This pattern is broken, however, in certain circumstances. Films which deal with male psychological problems provide some of the most prevalent instances of the musical representation of male emotions. These films offer an interesting comparison with their female counterparts in terms of narrative structure and motivation. They also raise important questions about music's role in indicating the real nature of the threat of excessive feminine emotion.

Mary Ann Doane points out that films which deal with the psychological problems of men define the mental conditions of their characters in very different ways to female patients. The woman patient typically suffers from a condition which implicates her whole being in her illness, marking it as the result of the very essence of her character (Doane 1987, 39). As was suggested in Chapter Two of this thesis, in the most extreme instances, the woman can be crippled to the point of muteness, amnesia or even catatonia by her condition. In such cases she requires the help of a male authority figure, typically a doctor or psychiatrist, to effect her (sometimes enforced) cure. Once she is given back her voice through this process, she can embark on what Doane terms the 'talking cure' which provides the structure of the film (*ibid.*, 47). As she speaks, the doctor can in turn interpret her memories. This gives other diegetic characters and the film audience both clear diagnostic reasons for her behaviour and an eventual cure. The latter, according to theorists such as Doane and Jeanine Basinger,



inevitably returns her to the acceptable female position in society which was badly in need of reinforcement in times of wartime upheaval (ibid., 46).

Male patients, however, belong within a somewhat different scenario. Rather than being a product of their very selves, Doane contends that men's psychological problems are severely restricted and localised, very often by their connection to war trauma (ibid., 46). At the root of such trauma, not unlike the original childhood incident affecting the women patients of films such as *The Locket*, *The Seventh Veil* and *Lady in the Dark*, lies a war-related episode or problem which must be discovered and faced to free the man from his torment. Films such as *Mine Own Executioner* (1947), *This Above All* (1942) and the later *The Manchurian Candidate* (1962) structure their narratives around this discovery and the man's response to it. *The Blue Dahlia* (1946) confuses the effects of Buzz's (William Bendix's) war injury with his memory of more recent events, and *The Small Back Room* (1949) suggests Sammy's (David Farrar's) physical and psychological war injury as the reason for his alcoholism.

Contrary to Doane's suggestion, however, it is certainly true even during the 1940s that men and madness do co-exist without this historically-localised motivation. *Spellbound* (1945) uses the same talking cure structure as the women's films, but bypasses the war in order to return John (Gregory Peck) to a childhood-based guilt complex over his brother's death. *Strangers on a Train* (1951) seems, although never explicitly, to link Bruno's (Robert Walker's) murderous psychosis with his difficult relationship with his father. *Laura*, like the later *Vertigo* (1958), suggests the possibility of male madness as the result of romantic obsession with an apparently dead woman who is later 'reincarnated'. Despite the seeming extremity of such a situation these men are, in formal terms, not far removed from women such as Louise in



*Possessed*, Lisa in *Letter from an Unknown Woman* and Helen (Joan Crawford) in *Humoresque*. In a rather cruel twist, however, it seems that the possibility of unrequited love being suffered by a man is only possible if the object of his affection is (apparently) dead. Even then, in both *Laura* and *Vertigo* the 'reincarnated' woman does come to return the man's love.

Particularly as the aftermath of war subsides, an increasing number of films appear to emerge which locate the problems of masculine psychology in different sources. Childhood trauma or unhappiness, or problematic relationships with parents, motivate amnesia, psychological disturbance or even psychosis. Such is the case, for example, with many of the main male protagonists of 'adolescence' films of the 1950s such as *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955), *East of Eden* (1955), *The Cobweb* (1955), *Tea and Sympathy* (1956), *The Young Stranger* (1957) and *Home from the Hill* (1960). This tendency continues through psychological horror films such as *Peeping Tom* (1959) and *Psycho* (1960), towards such contemporary films as *Funny Bones* (1995) and *Nil By Mouth* (1997).

As a counterbalance to the lush symphonic scores of the 1940s women's films, it is interesting to note the extent to which the style of composition sometimes appears to differ in films about male psychology. It must be acknowledged that film music has been a constantly developing artform and that different composers also, of course, tend towards different styles. Notwithstanding this, it does seem that particular stylistic devices suggest an important difference in the attitude of the films to their characters' conditions.

Where women such as Charlotte in *Now, Voyager* are concerned, the music may surge and overtake the dialogue and wash over huge expanses of hysterical



diegetic silence. It will rarely, however, leave the safe overall 'control' of the tonal system or the pleasurable familiarity of the symphonic sound. The use of chromaticism seems to remain within the (generous) boundaries of the late Romantic idiom, without too much evidence of the developments into atonalism which had long since happened in the classical music world. This is certainly not to suggest, of course, that dissonance and 'distortion' are never used in relation to women, but that such techniques seem to be restricted only to more extreme moments of disturbance.

Music which is less melodic, more dissonant or somehow distorted appears relatively common, however, in both contemporaneous and later films dealing with male trauma, whether war-related or as a result of medical conditions or addictions. The very particular sound of the theremin is used in *Spellbound*, *The Lost Weekend* (1945) and *The Small Back Room*. Through its own wavering movement between notes, it seems to evoke a sense of the character's tenuous relationship to control. Electronic distortion signals the psychological disturbance or removal from reality of Buzz in *The Blue Dahlia*, Bruno in *Strangers on a Train* and Mark in *Laura*. *Vertigo* contrasts its lushly melodic love theme with the dissonant habañera music of Scotty's (James Stewart's) nightmare arising from his fatal 'addiction' to Madeline (Kim Novak). George's piano concerto in *Hangover Square*, which eventually signals the final onset of his psychosis, is placed in equally stark stylistic contrast to the music hall songs that he draws out of it for Netta. Interestingly, these contrasts find a telling parallel in *The Two Mrs. Carrolls* (1945), where the psychotic disturbance of Geoffrey (Humphrey Bogart) can be similarly traced through the different styles of painting he employs for portraits of his wives.



The troubled male adolescents of the 1950s seem often to be represented through music which seems to progress further away from melody and tonality towards dissonance and even atonalism. In the case of *East of Eden*, it actually seems to be the boy's eventual settling into a romantic relationship with a caring woman that returns the score to tonality. In this context, tonal music seems to be recodified as 'normal' and desirable (female) emotion, with dissonance and atonalism representing a level of tortured (male) emotion excessive to this. In comparison to women's films, however, this suggests that women's psychological problems are being conceptualised in some sense as more containable and less threatening after all, being perhaps inevitable given women's characters in general. Men with problems, however, are a different matter. If men are representative of social order, their illness is synonymous with social chaos. The fear which this poses seems mirrored in the disruption of the music's tonal system.

This recalls Attali's contention that the structure and process of music demonstrates the possibility of the organisation of society out of the potential chaos of noise (1985). More specifically, it may draw on Said's related suggestion that atonalism constitutes 'a negation, a blotting-out of the society that gave rise to it' (1991, 48). In between these contentions, as it were, seems to lie McClary's equation of chromaticism with a brand of femininity which threatens the borders of the synonymous systems of society and tonality (1991).

The significance of the chromaticism or particular rhythms of her operatic 'madwomen's' arias seems to lie principally in their contrast (and return) to a diatonic, rhythmically regular standard. Atonalism, however, claims to eschew any reference to or dependence on the tonal system. The musical system suggested by McClary and



others such as Clément and Kalinak therefore reflects the attempts at narrative containment and neutralisation of female characters. Their difficulty in escaping definition through ostensibly masculine systems stands in stark contrast to the sense of chaotic panic elicited by the rootless dissonance and atonalism of those boys who cannot or will not conform.

Films which deal with the testing of male power, strength and control such as westerns, war films and even detective thrillers, often seem to use music's capacity to reveal the inner vulnerability of men. Although this tendency operates in varying degrees between films, I would nevertheless identify it as a 'glimpse' of femininity that ultimately defines the necessary resilience of masculinity. Since there is, after all, no power in control if there is actually nothing to control, for a man to be proven masculine there must be evidence that there are alternative aspects to his personality which he keeps in restraint. Expressing this through nondiegetic music, however, and often reserving the man's expression solely for the camera, enables the character to retain his otherwise masculine identity within the diegesis by emphasising the absolute privacy of the moment. Other characters do not need to appreciate what the film audience has seen.

It seems as if the more conventionally masculine the pursuits of the male characters, the more safely these momentary feminine aspects can be revealed. In the context of male suffering, a greater sympathy seems possible towards such revelations, since the way in which the character subsequently deals with those feelings demonstrates his complex personal sacrifice as well as his higher sense of cultural and social duty. A 'real' man has room for emotions. This can only make him appear more sympathetically human rather than weak, because his ability to be masculine when



necessary cannot possibly be in doubt. It is only when the balance of masculine and feminine attributes weighs in the opposite direction that the man becomes 'feminine'. These films therefore play out the dynamic of the masculine construction. They measure the strength of the man by his control over his own interiority, evidenced by his ability to allow its occasional display.

This recalls the representation of manhood examined by Jane Tompkins in the Western. Tompkins suggests that the pain of the Western hero is part of the pleasure of viewing (or reading), with the detailed depiction of physicality and suffering guaranteeing that the viewer is witnessing something 'real' (1992, 3). Tompkins frequently returns to ideas of the suppression of feeling and interiority in the genre, the typical taciturnity of the hero and the outlet for obviously subjugated emotions in physical activity such as fighting and killing (*ibid.*, 38-39). She fails to note, however, the role that music takes in marking the equivalently genuine nature of these concealed sensibilities. Music seems particularly important in what she describes as the genre's tendency to collapse the very oppositions which it tries to construct, notably that between independence and connection. She notes other signs, such as awkwardness around women and an inability to dance, as superficial social flaws which actually prove manhood (*ibid.*, 54), but ignores the presence of music in films such as *Red River* (1948) and *The Searchers* (1956) which constantly attests to the vulnerable reality of the emotional life beneath the rough exterior.

Given Tompkins' emphasis on the male-male relationships of the Western, and even her noting of the men's singing in the novel of *The Virginian* (*ibid.*, 64), it seems strange that she misses the nondiegetic use of male-only choirs in certain scores, especially when they are singing songs about men. This seems to point to a generic



drive to make the experience of emotion an acceptable part of masculinity, although simultaneously generalising it by avoiding the explicit linking of music to only one character. Men's nondiegetic singing voices seem to fill in for their diegetic taciturnity, allowing emotion by equating it with the mutuality and universality of male understanding. As will be seen later in the examination of the war film, only men can really understand the struggle to be masculine.

More personalised connections between male characters and music are found, perhaps not surprisingly, in those genres which pit a single man against his (often hostile) surroundings. This is notable in the detective thriller and film noir, with the latter in particular demonstrating the delicate balance of the masculine/feminine dynamic through its entrapment and disempowerment of the man in the musical-emotional influence of the femme fatale. As long as the overall control of the man seems unquestionable, moments approaching the typically female combination of leitmotiv and close-up are clearly permissible. The partial mitigation of this may lie in the frequent linking of musical themes to a male-female relationship, with the nature of that relationship defining the influence of the glimpse of femininity on the man's characterisation and narrative position.

Bannion (Glenn Ford) in *The Big Heat* (1953), for example, can be seen in an emotional, musically-accompanied close-up as he leaves the house where he lived with his (now murdered) wife and daughter. The music is not his own theme as such, but was associated with his relationship to these two specific females, a distinction underlined by the notable lack of music during his association with Debbie (Gloria Grahame). The love between Bannion and his wife justifies the intensity of this moment, while its very isolation ensures that he can at least appear to regain control



despite his continuing pain. In this man's world there is clearly a time for sentimentality and a time for justice.

As the masculine grip on power slips, however, so the music of the female character seems to become more prevalent. As was discussed in Chapter Four of this thesis, it is certainly no coincidence that detective thrillers and film noirs constantly present women as the diegetic source of music. Even if the woman does not actually sing/perform, an explicit control over or association with diegetic music can signal a similarly powerful function (for example in *Laura*, *Casablanca* and *Out of the Past* (1947)). The transfer of the music from the diegetic to nondiegetic level in this context seems almost an antidote to the conscious or unconscious appropriation of the man's music undertaken by the female listener. As the noir hero is pursued by the musically-signified female influence, he risks increasing weakness and compromise.

Only by resisting this latter day siren song can he emerge intact in his masculinity, in the way of Rick (Humphrey Bogart) in *Casablanca* and Rip (Humphrey Bogart) in *Dead Reckoning*. Otherwise, he may succumb to the tragically unending slavishness of Jeff (Robert Mitchum) in *Out of the Past* or, ultimately, become the completely feminised Chris (Edward G. Robinson) in *Scarlet Street*. Chris not only displays his unusual imagination through painting, but is also surrounded and destroyed by the literal enticement of Kitty's (Joan Bennett's) apparently favourite song '(Come to Me), My Melancholy Baby'.

Of all the genres presenting masculinity (and femininity) under pressure, the wartime combat and home front films respectively must be among the most extreme. In these genres the battle to control the appalling emotional situations being faced in reality takes on the very real propagandist aspect. The location of an ideal balance



between emotionalism and control therefore becomes a crucial motivating factor. Like most other male characters, of course, the man in combat is unable to speak about much of what he feels. The importance of acknowledging hidden emotions, however, is of the utmost importance.

Particularly in films made during the war they depict, characters must be seen to experience the same personal struggles as the film audience. In most wartime films, whether focusing on combat or the home front, speech on certain issues is proscribed. Rather than completely denying the possibility of emotional verbal expression, however, this tends to channel it in specific propagandist directions. Regardless of gender, any character may be excessively emotional, complete with soaring nondiegetic music, on the subject of patriotism. Stefan's relatively understated allegiance to Poland in *Dangerous Moonlight*, for example, rather wanes in the face of Pru's (Joan Fontaine's) rabble-rousing tirade on the virtues of England in *This Above All*. It is preferable, however, that personal grief should not give rise to such outbursts. Scenes of supreme self-control in the face of emotional devastation are therefore made infinitely more moving by their unbearably staunch containment. The restraint of characters such as Toddy (Rosamund John) in *The Way to the Stars*, Dai (Mervyn Johns) in *The Captive Heart*, Celia in *Millions Like Us* and Walter (Bernard Miles) in *In Which We Serve* (1942) in fact seems definitive of cinema at this time.

By showing traces of 'femininity', men forced into the ultra-masculine combat role demonstrate the sacrifice of putting their own personalities on hold for greater patriotic purposes. They also maintain a continued sense of humanity in resisting transformation into cold-blooded, Nazi-esque murderers. When the issue of masculinity is at a premium, therefore, glimpses of the vulnerability of characters are



crucial. They define the even greater possible resilience of masculine strength against the reassuring humanity beneath. While this is inseparable from issues of national and historical behaviour, the combat film puts particular strain on the more universal concern with the stability of 'manliness' which is evident in other genres. It is out of this extreme pressure that the British World War II film in particular, produces what might be termed the 'art' of self-restraint.

This specific historical and social circumstance therefore seems to offer a counter-definition to the Romantic idea of the gendered basis of artistic expression. For wartime men such as David (Michael Redgrave) in *The Way to the Stars*, Stefan in *Dangerous Moonlight* and even to some extent Clive (Tyrone Power) in *This Above All* (actually a US production but set in England), artistic expression may be a way to cope with and bypass the inability to speak. Rather than the Romantic model promoting the male as superior in his natural control, this re-presents the masculine construction as externally-imposed and problematic, not least for the men who have to live it. While this seems to suggest that men exist under similar general social constraints to women, it must also be acknowledged that the active balance of control and emotionality may bring very different gender connotations (see Conclusion of this thesis). The war's representation of masculinity under such extreme pressure from the demands of femininity, however, renders these films an especially rich point at which to examine the strained interplay of gender.



### ***Dangerous Moonlight* and the 'Warsaw Concerto'**

*Dangerous Moonlight* offers a particularly interesting case study for several reasons. Perhaps most importantly in narrative terms, it presents the male musician in an unusually wide variety of emotional and performance contexts. Not only does this mean that his interaction with music becomes a central part of the film's subject matter, but the different aspects of his personality come to be largely represented through distinct pieces of music. As his interiority is represented in this way, he transcends communication through speech. Depending on whether this transcendence is facilitated in a purposeful and self-conscious way, or achieved at a less controlled level, it fulfils very specific functions. This representation is also indivisible from that of his female listener/muse. Their central disagreement and conflict over issues of patriotism and personal loyalty are presented as indivisible from their mutual (mis)understanding of musical meaning.

The film is perhaps most remarkable, however, in purely musical terms. Although it also incorporates other pieces of music, it centres on the 'Warsaw Concerto' which is supposedly composed by the male musician within the film. Considering the relatively mundane quality of the film itself, it may not be too excessive to suggest that *Dangerous Moonlight*, along with others such as *Love Story* and *While I Live*, offers an example of a film better remembered for its music than anything else. The 'Warsaw Concerto' in fact appears to have long transcended its original source and taken on an entirely independent (and undoubtedly more successful) life.



As John Huntley points out, the difficulty with using a concerto from the existing repertoire to represent the work of the film's fictitious composer, was the required specificity of its meaning (1947, 53). The piece is meant to reflect and recall (at least partly) the Polish composer's feelings for his home country. Any extraneous personal memories or meanings which the film audience might bring to an existing piece of music would only obscure this intent. Richard Addinsell was therefore commissioned to write a short concerto which would suggest the style of a Romantic composer. Its designation as a 'concerto' inevitably caused problems for those concerned with the effects of its transition to the concert platform (see, for example, Irving 1946, 12; Irving 1947/8, 11; Huntley 1947, 55). Even Ernest Irving's accusation that it constituted a 'classic example of what the low-brows erroneously consider high-brow music' (1947/8, 11), however, could not negate its phenomenal popularity with the public.

When the film was first released, the lack of foresight as to the audience response meant that there was no gramophone recording or sheet music of the piece available (Huntley 1947, 54). Addinsell's own attitude to the work included, according to Victor Davis, relatively off-hand references to it as 'cod-Rachmaninov' (1999, 75). Whereas Huntley attributes pianist Louis Kentner's lack of screen credit to the conventions of the time, Davis also suggests that Kentner had refused to be credited following Yehudi Menuhin's advice that an association with such a work could only harm his reputation (*ibid.*, 75). The 'scores of people' telephoning the cinema every day to ask for details of the music, however, soon changed this situation (Huntley 1947, 54). The subsequently released record and sheet music meant that by the end of the war the piece had, according to Davis, netted Addinsell approximately £100,000



(over £4,000,000 in current terms) (1999, 75-76). The exiled Polish government in London had also awarded him the Silver Cross of Merit “for outstanding service to Poland in the field of music” (ibid., 76).

### ***Dangerous Moonlight: Men and the Art of Self-Restraint***

The main difficulty with making a close case study of *Dangerous Moonlight* seems to arise from the very reason which makes it an interesting film to examine in the first place. It mobilises many classic issues of the British World War II combat and home front genres, the international love story, the male musician-female listener narrative and the talking cure psychological drama. Its hybrid status, however, results not only in a story which seems to contain more than its fair share of implausible and/or contrived situations, but which also leaves its most important issues bewilderingly unresolved. While there is much about the film that is appealing and useful for study, therefore, it can hardly be denied that, hanging together fairly loosely in places, and with important character decisions and actions going completely unexplained, its ultimate *raison d'être* seems unclear.

It is for this reason that I will not attempt to make a coherent, all-encompassing interpretation of the narrative in this analysis. Since so many important factors are left to the viewer's own imagination, it seems a futile exercise to force the film and its music into any one possible reading. Instead, I will consider the gendered roles of music, silence and dialogue in their own narrative contexts, resisting the temptation to



pull all these threads together by claiming to have found one coherent meaning throughout the text as a whole.

This film focuses on the wartime conflict between patriotic and romantic love, strongly opposing the relationship between man and woman to that between man and country. The film remains equivocal, however, as to which is ultimately stronger or more important. This disappointing, although perhaps unintentional ambiguity, may be made more acceptable by the distancing effect created by the non-British nationalities of the principal characters.<sup>1</sup> What Marcia Landy sees as the film's move to internationalise the issue of war (1991, 157), may therefore also allow a more extreme polarisation of the film's melodramatic conflicts, which leads the film to ask more questions than it can answer.

Landy suggests that the film seeks to mediate its gendered opposition through the affective identification represented by music (*ibid.*, 157). It is certainly true that the most prevalent motif of the narrative seems to be the musically-motivated crossing of physical and emotional divides. What Landy does not address, however, is the way in which such apparent mediation bypasses, rather than solves, the basic emotional opposition of the narrative. In fact, even the meaning accumulated in the music itself, and the characterisation of the musician which seems to equate the self-control of a man in wartime to the Romantic duality of a composer, denies the score the possibility of such an uncomplicated role.

On the contrary, the almost equal focus of the narrative on both the male musician and his female muse/listener, enables a full (if unresolved) investigation of the

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<sup>1</sup> Stefan's best friend Mike (Derrick de Marney) is actually Irish, but is clearly set up as opposed to the English in any situation other than a world war. This, together with his status as a 'freelance' soldier, therefore separates him completely from the conventional British soldier.



complex meanings and potential misunderstandings of the composer/performer-listener musical transfer. Music is revealed as a deceptively divisive element, so that the film's apparent insistence that the melodramatic conflicts embodied within the characters can be neutralised simply by their mutual attraction is undermined. Even when the couple appear reconciled, an uncomfortable lack of resolution is maintained through either the meaning of the music itself or its overt inability to gloss over narrative problems.

The representation of Stefan's emotionalism, particularly in terms of music, is clearly divided between his romance with Carol, and his patriotism for Poland which finds a kind of personification in his friendship with Mike. In his relationship with Carol, the film effects a transfer of the emotional signification of Stefan's music similar to that in *Letter from an Unknown Woman* and *Possessed*. His response to it is replaced by Carol's, so that while she is given a musical subjectivity of sorts, her emotional life must always reference Stefan and *his* interpretation of what the music means.

Carol is also objectified by the music, however, so that she appears effectively to be held permanently in Stefan's gaze. While the music plays, we can therefore see her both as a woman feeling love towards her husband, and a woman as seen through her husband's loving eyes. Perhaps even more than Lisa or Louise, Carol is inescapably surrounded by Stefan's music. The music seems simultaneously to draw Carol to Stefan and yet to distance her through objectification. Its use in her accompaniment will therefore always be more complicated than the way in which Stefan Brand's or David's music operates.

Her compromised position in relation to the love theme is further compounded when she learns that her husband attaches a very different meaning to it, which denies



her presupposed autonomous claim to his affections. Once she learns that he also expresses his patriotic emotions through playing a particular Chopin piece, she finds herself in a position where Stefan can use his final concert to demonstrate his ability to distance himself emotionally from her through musical performance alone. Only where patriotism and Mike are concerned is Stefan apparently unable to exercise such manipulation. Whereas his emotions for Carol seem somewhat tempered by romantic convention, albeit spiced by what he himself calls his “continental charm”, his feelings for Poland and Mike are almost beyond his own understanding.

*Dangerous Moonlight* mobilises the structure of Doane’s talking cure narrative, rather paradoxically, to tell a story which emphasises the virtue and potentially greater expressivity of not talking. The actual verbal silence of the cure itself acts as the framing device of the story, thus validating this kind of self-restraint. This recalls Silverman’s problematising of the incongruity of male subjectivity and the embodied voice-over as a means of narration. She suggests that

Hollywood dictates that the closer a voice is to the “inside” of the narrative, the more remote it is from the “outside,” i.e., from that space fictionally inscribed by the disembodied voice-over, but which is in fact synonymous with the cinematic apparatus. In other words, it equates diegetic interiority with discursive impotence and lack of control, therefore rendering that situation culturally unacceptable for the “normal” male subject (1988, 53-54).



Even though this appears to justify the use of first-person narration in the case of a war-traumatised man (or a noir hero), it nevertheless fails to acknowledge the difference between spoken, 'thought', frame and embedded narration.

Silverman acknowledges that male characters are often subject to similar narrational devices as female characters in 1940s and early 1950s cinema (ibid., 52). She stops short, however, of examining an important distinction which within the diegesis at least, often gives the woman's story more of a quality of 'public property'. By defining the more characteristically male internal 'thought' monologue as 'involuntary speech' (ibid., 53), she conflates a story told 'privately' to the film audience with the self-revelation of the woman compelled to make her story audible within the diegetic space. A similar level of diegetic privacy can be seen in operation with the (male or female) frame narrator who while appearing within their own story, often tells their story to the film audience alone. While recognising certain differences between the male and female autobiographical narrator, therefore, it may be that she stops short of examining the full extent of their effective distinction. Even though men often narrate through the embodied voice-over, they are rarely framed and constrained in quite the same disempowering way as what Silverman terms the 'doubly diegeticised' woman (ibid., 56).

*Dangerous Moonlight's* gendered divide also singles out the female act of talking within the flashback as indicative of the destructive indulgence of self-interested emotions, as opposed to more private and/or interiorised methods of expression. The latter are represented as more meaningful, comparatively selfless, mature and dignified, easier to sympathise with and in this context, male. Drawing on the national experience of suffering, the repression of words signifies both those things which should not be



said and those which do not require saying in order to be understood. The psychoanalytical (and in wartime perhaps luxurious) question of the negativity of emotional self-repression cannot surface, understandably, until peace has returned. Accordingly, the verbally unrestrained woman is upheld as socially and indeed personally undesirable. To gaze at her physically may still be a source of pleasure, but to gaze at the character beneath the surface is not so satisfying.

At the opening of the film, Stefan bears many of the marks of the heroine of the clinical discourse. He is suffering from amnesia and is in an almost catatonic state, unable to speak and unresponsive to the voices of others. He can move, at least enough to be able to play at the piano keyboard, if not actually to produce anything other than noise. He is already in hospital, under the care of two doctors and the watchful eye of his wife Carol. It is at this point, however, that his similarity to a female patient ends, and the crucial signs of difference in his clinical discourse begin to become apparent.

Stefan is initially seen with Carol, who is trying to encourage him to respond to her sung snippets of what is later found to be his own composition. Stefan has been given a very large hospital room to himself, and Carol is able to instruct the nurse not to put up the blackout screens. From the conversation of the nurses, we also find that Stefan has been allowed to disturb the hospital with his playing for some time. The nurses remove some of the usual mystery around the mute patient by making it clear that his trauma is war-related, rendering him masculine not only in Doane's psychoanalytical terms, but also with the more specific knowledge of his status as a fighter pilot. The feminising potential of his musicality is thereby countered by confirming his restriction to the land as accidental and temporary, his chosen location



being the male domain of the skies (see Chapter Four). Together with the more detailed subsequent conversation of the doctors, this enables Stefan to become partly known without having to speak on his own behalf.

It is the tolerance of Stefan's silence which initially distinguishes him from the conventional (male or female) psychological patient. There is no need for Stefan to reveal the basic details of his identity, since he comes to the hospital as a known celebrity which obviously gives him a certain status within the institution. It is unclear whether the nurses actually know who he is, but we are left in no doubt that the more learned and sensitive doctors fully understand his cultural and therefore national importance. Both know his work, and one already owns a recording of the 'Warsaw Concerto' which Stefan's wife is currently humming to him. Stefan's treatment is likened to giving traumatised children their old toys to play with. While the comparison may seem trivialising of his musical talent, it actually puts him in control of his own recuperation. He has been allowed to play at the piano for three days, but has still remained resistant to treatment. The doctors nevertheless decide to give him more time to himself.

Unlike a conventional patient, this emphasises the importance of self-healing in Stefan's case. His music is recognised as something which can make him well again, rather than potentially furthering his traumatised state. This marks him as different from most female musicians. In *Love Story*, Lissa's music causes her the greatest trauma of all. Francesca in *The Seventh Veil* collapses as a result of her memories throughout one performance, and encounters a persistent mental block during a piece which recalls a particularly violent episode with her guardian. Olwen in *While I Live* is driven to (accidentally suicidal) distraction by her own process of composition. Even



non-musician women such as Helen in *Humoresque* and Louise in *Possessed*, are disturbed and/or destroyed by the presence of music rather than cured by it.

If Stefan, on the other hand, can recall what his music signifies, he will be able to understand his own condition and therefore cure himself. Importantly, this seems to assume that he will be able to cope with whatever the music contains (a dangerous assumption given the consequences of George's final 'self-realisation' in *Hangover Square*). So the female, whether musician or listener, must be cured of whatever music does to her or suffer the consequences. The male musician, however, can potentially be cured through the understanding of his inner self that his own music brings. The doctors correctly sense that Stefan does not need them - all he requires is the right environment in which to 'find' himself.

In discussion of his cure, therefore, more concern is expressed over his inability to produce music than to speak. This thematicises the dynamic between self-expression and meaning through speech and music found in melodramas and women's films. As such, there seems to be a surprising degree of similarity between Stefan's relationship to his music and Charlotte's (unconscious) interaction with nondiegetic music in *Now, Voyager*. This not only seems to suggest that music constitutes the route to Stefan's true voice, but also makes him iconic of all damaged artists in wartime. He will express his feelings through playing the piano and keep his exact thoughts to himself. This combination of silence and music will both demonstrate and bypass accepted codes of masculine control.

Unable to express emotion in an everyday way without risking a 'feminising' loss of control, the man can channel his feelings through some kind of conduit. Music, poetry, painting or literary quotations represent, in an acceptable form, what he is



culturally disabled from simply saying or doing. The male understanding that this performance must be upheld, means that Stefan's behaviour is respected in turn by his doctors, the men of the RAF Polish regiment and his Commanding Officer (John Laurie). The latter consoles Stefan after Mike's death with the line: "We British don't say much, but we feel things the same as most people." The statement clearly contrasts British reserve with Stefan's recent display of Polish emotionalism. Although not specific about gender, within the context of this film there is also neither an example of a female who restrains herself from speech nor, for that matter, any woman who is even British. It is specifically the men in this film, most literally in Stefan's case, who make an artform out of self-restraint.

The tolerance of verbal silence, and the resistance towards forcing speech, remove much of the potential threat to Stefan's masculinity posed by the process of psychoanalysis. The methods of the doctors are extremely non-invasive and their respect for their patient is obvious. This is not some anonymous woman who merely provides an interesting example of a particular illness, but a symbol of national importance, as the dialogue of the doctors indicates:

"If we could get him better, I should feel that we'd done something for the world. Something for ... well, you know what I mean."

"Well if you feel like that too, we'll get him better alright, even if it takes a miracle or an act of God. I just don't like the thought of another great artist finishing up in a home."



Stefan's cure is part of the war effort, as well as signifying something for world culture. Accordingly, the doctors are more concerned with seeing him cured than with prying into his private thoughts. It is interesting to note how less central the idea of a cure is for Lissa in *Love Story*. She is a comparable international figure, has a vital role to play in maintaining the morale of both the troops and the home front audience and is, of course, British. Her illness, however, seems merely to be accepted, with no suggestion of eminent surgeons risking cutting-edge techniques to save *her* for posterity.

As Stefan finally begins to play his concerto, the doctors leave their room to watch him from a concealed distance. This once again counters the potential femininity of his condition by giving him autonomous control over his flashback narration. Even at this stage, they choose not to interfere with his cure, but merely wonder at his mental processes:

“Perhaps that music will bring back a lot of things.”

“I hope so.”

“I'd like to know what he's thinking about now.”

This dialogue and their extended admiring gaze motivate a tracking movement towards Stefan. This gradually removes him from his immediate environment and begins the flashback which will constitute almost the entire remainder of the narrative. Since Stefan still does not speak, as far as the doctors and Carol are concerned, the entire length of the film must consist of Stefan playing his concerto in a hospital room. The story that we see occurs only in Stefan's memory, despite the inclusion of scenes which



he could not actually have witnessed. This allows Stefan to become a 'known' character, without the objectifying indignity of medical diagnosis so common to female (and sometimes even male) psychological dramas. He is, as a result both known and unknown, revelatory and secretive, vulnerable and in control, feminine and masculine.

This framework therefore indicates the dual gendering of Stefan's character. He is Landy's 'ultimate war hero' fighter pilot (1991, 157) but also a concert pianist. He is patriotic but exotically Polish rather than British. He is emotional but self-contained and controlled. In Doane's terms, he may almost be the perfect male hero of a love story (see Doane 1987, 116), if it were not for his other love. Embodying within himself the polarities of the film's melodramatic content, his heart is divided between the land and the air. His dilemma is largely caused by his American wife's very 'un-British' resistance to his patriotism, which she selfishly sees as tantamount to a romantic rival. The conflict between these two characters, the woman on the home front and the very human, vulnerable fighting man, seems to give rise to the nearest thing to a coherent message within the film, even if its ultimate consequences are still annoyingly opaque.

Alongside the depictions in wartime films of women who, through what was considered sexual promiscuity, appear to threaten national morality and the well-being of the fighting man, Carol is representative of another type of woman perhaps just as dangerous. Whether through a wilful refusal to accept the reality of the national situation, or through unthinking naïvety, women who fail to give full emotional support to fighting men are often represented as a source of acute individual pain and communal disruption. Miss Winterton (Joyce Carey) in *The Way to the Stars* gives a more specifically wartime slant to the backbiting older women in *Love Story* when she



complains about the airmen enjoying themselves in the bar, refusing to acknowledge how much they deserve their fun. In a cruel extension of this, reminiscent of the interrupted final parting of Laura and Alec (Trevor Howard) in *Brief Encounter*, she barges in on what will turn out to be the last goodbye of David and Toddy, denying them this important moment for the sake of a petty complaint.

The naïve expectation that the behaviour of lovers will not be changed by the war clouds the judgement of both Iris (Renée Asherson) in the same film and Caroline (Jane Barrett) in *The Captive Heart*. Iris fails to detect the real reason why Peter (John Mills) cannot continue his relationship with her after David's death. Caroline, unable to comprehend the emotional vulnerability of Steven's (Derek Bond's) situation in the prison camp, blames him for believing the poisonous and self-interested contents of Beryl's (Meriel Forbes') letter, which claims Caroline's infidelity. In both cases, however, the inevitability of eventual happy reunion is assured by the basing of the women's reactions on sincerely hurt feelings rather than malice. A less pleasant conclusion comes from Carol's selfish refusal to accept Stefan's patriotic drive to fight. Her intransigence forces him to leave her and undergo the pain of trying to forget her in England. It is his resultant closed state of mind, however, that leads to his disastrously fatal row with Mike.

The emotional vulnerability of the fighting man is clearly revealed in narratives dealing with injured men during or after the war, such as Kit in *Love Story*, Adam (Kieron Moore) in *Mine Own Executioner* and Sammy in *The Small Back Room*, or those in captivity such as Steven and David (Gordon Jackson) in *The Captive Heart*. The man actively involved in combat, however, can still be badly affected by his own vulnerability, notably if his concentration is divided between his duty and emotional or



superstitious concerns. David in *The Way to the Stars* almost seems to have died as a direct result of being without his lucky talisman cigarette lighter. In *Dangerous Moonlight* the Commanding Officer actually emphasises this point, after Mike has failed to survive combat under the influence of his row with Stefan about Carol. This then appears, in combination with Stefan reading Carol's letter to Mike, to lead directly to Stefan's over-emotional suicide dive during his own subsequent dogfight. Combining both themes, this film seems to state quite clearly that Carol, as representative of the unsupportive woman, can be effectively as lethal in the skies as an enemy fighter plane. The man, revealed as deeply sensitive beneath his strong masculine façade, literally cannot survive without the full emotional and moral backing of the home front.

The unsympathetic light in which *Dangerous Moonlight* views Carol, and indeed in which all the films mentioned above see their demonised females, is only part of the narrative's broader project in representing wartime masculinity. From the embarrassed but mutually-understood exchanges of the doctors, through the affectionate banter and forgiving relationship between Stefan and Mike, to the silent regimental sympathy for Stefan's grief after Mike's death, the film claims and reclaims the sensitivity of men. Despite their wartime roles and the pressures put upon them to act like men, they still have emotions. Within the context of the film, however, only men seem fully able to understand this. Only men can really perceive the mental torture of other men having to leave the people they love to defend the country they love. The male-only spaces of the film are therefore rife with expressions of camaraderie. In a similar way to the Western and the scenes described by Gledhill as hinting at 'the



hidden person beneath the armour of masculinity' (1995, 80) in the later *The Deer Hunter*, such revelations of emotion would be impossible in the presence of women.

It is certainly not unusual for war films like *The Way to the Stars* and *The Captive Heart*, or indeed films dealing with post-war trauma such as *The Best Years of Our Lives* (1946), *The Blue Dahlia* and *The Men* (1950) to openly represent close friendship and strong sympathy between men, as well as their pain at the loss of comrades. The particular expression of this emotion through music and performance, however, makes a much greater issue of self-control and the lack of *need* for speech in certain circumstances, while also adding a more obviously vulnerable depth to male characterisation. Carol, as the sole representative of women in *Dangerous Moonlight*, is forced to appear by contrast as hard-hearted, selfish and *extremely* vocal about her feelings.

Apparently independently-minded and wilful, Carol initially appears to represent the classic literary romantic heroine described by Janice Radway as being tamed by the stronger hero in countless love stories (1984, 123). She refuses to understand Stefan's point-of-view and fails to perceive the subtleties of enforced models of masculinity. She constantly runs to her father (who, torn between paternal love and his own masculinity, is equally sympathetic to everyone's point-of-view) for verification of her childishness. Through Stefan's refusal to force Carol into submission, however, the film espouses the inappropriateness of wasting time on such romantic individuality in wartime. Carol's final move towards conciliation is therefore of her own accord. Her presence in the hospital may appear in some ways a personification of America's decision to join the allied forces, perhaps taking her one



step further than being the 'oblique commentary on American neutrality' suggested by Landy (1991, 157).

Stefan's relationship to music, and his emotional control in Carol's presence, are apparent from their very first meeting during an air-raid in Warsaw. In the way of a typical female listener, Carol is repeatedly drawn across space towards Stefan by his music, a pattern first seen when she hears the sound of his playing coming from a bombed out house. Stefan reveals his masculine duality during their few moments together. He counters his brief willingness to admit fear about the war with a firm establishment of personal power over Carol through his playing, his charming manner (which includes equating her voice with music) and his obvious pleasure in remaining secretive about his musical renown.

The limit of his capacity for emotional expression is revealed, however, when Carol challenges him about not being in combat. He leaves the piano, standing in medium long-shot with his back to the room while he tells her of the depleted state of the Polish airforce. Rather than witnessing his own facial expression while he speaks so emotionally, we see Carol's response to his words. Even when he turns to speak directly to her, his face is half obscured by shadow. The closest shot, although still only a medium close-up, comes after this as he speaks his final sarcastic line: "they'll pay you well". The correlation of Stefan's face, his music and his emotions, is therefore marked as problematic, particularly in front of a woman. To be able express himself fully in words, he must stop playing the piano and turn away from his female listener.

Despite their flirtatious conversation, there is no real emotional bond between the couple until Stefan's music draws Carol towards him in a manner which equates the crossing of physical space with the closing of an emotional distance. Stefan stops



playing the piano as he reaches the point where he claims his composition currently ends. He then stares fixedly at Carol, and through the following series of reverse-shots the camera tracks slowly towards each of their staring faces. Apparently discomforted by this intensity, Carol breaks the mutual gaze. Stefan protests, however, saying that she has given him “something lovely”.

He plays the music she has inspired, which is the melody that will become the most lyrical theme of his concerto as well as the ‘love’ theme of the film. As he plays she walks slowly towards him as if being drawn in, hypnotised, by his unblinking gaze. When she reaches his side, he trails off from playing without ending the melody. Immediately, a bomb falls so close-by that they both dive for cover under the piano, a move that ends with their embrace. The lack of resolution of the love theme’s first diegetic appearance, however, suggests that the couple’s involvement will not end simply with the emotions discovered during this romantic moment. The very specific interruption of their mutual gaze by the explosion, makes it apparent that the war will come between them in some way.

Stefan has already claimed that he has just had the idea for the beginning of this music, which later becomes part of the aptly-named ‘Warsaw Concerto’, presumably in response to the immediate situation. Even though the love theme is inspired by a person, therefore, that fact that it nevertheless becomes part of the same concerto makes its meaning more complex. In a later episode, Stefan describes this music as an account of him and Carol in Warsaw and New York. In his musical imagination, their relationship is always associated with a place, and by extension with the international political situation. For this reason he claims he cannot finish the piece because he does not know where they will be in the future. The theme, and perhaps the whole concerto,



therefore seems to suggest the possibility of the indivisibility of romantic love and love of country. The couple are not just Stefan and Carol, but Stefan and Carol in Warsaw.

Since this connection only exists for Stefan, however, at least until he makes it clear to Carol during their honeymoon, each character reads the significance of the theme in a quite different way. Once again the typical female listener, Carol fails to understand the real meaning of Stefan's music, believing that it represents an all-consuming love for her. Stefan, on the other hand, understands the music as representing two loves which for him must be allowed to survive together. This division in understanding is central to their very different views of the place of their romance next to wartime events. The containment of this double meaning within the same piece of music, however, may point to an attempt by the film to demonstrate that the two kinds of emotion can co-exist. Sadly, this is the very message which *Dangerous Moonlight* seems unable to convey.

The disjunction in personal and musical understanding is emphasised in the move to the following scene, which locates Stefan back at his Polish airbase. The interrupted love theme is now replaced by a mechanically-reproduced and repeated phrase from Chopin's Polonaise in A Major which, the Commanding Officer reminds the men, represents the continued stand of Poland against the Germans. This reflects the opening title sequence's direct juxtaposition of the concerto's love theme with the Polish National Anthem. It also foreshadows Stefan's later reference to being "like a man who is riding two horses" as his visual memories of war-torn Poland interrupt the nondiegetic love theme during the montage of his American concert tour.

Continuing the distance between music and personal emotion that Stefan's relationship to his own composition suggested, the Chopin Polonaise carries a clear



association with patriotism and community rather than romantic individualism. The difficulties of the love-war dichotomy therefore find expression in a similar way to *The Way to the Stars*, which states the problem in no uncertain terms during the wedding reception of David and Toddy. Tiny (Basil Radford), giving his Best Man's speech, turns to Toddy with the words, "And to the bride, I would say only this...". At this point the air-raid whistle sounds, the nondiegetic music which is reserved in this film primarily for male-female relationships stops, and the reception must disband. A clearer message to war brides, one could not hope to find.

The significance of the Chopin Polonaise draws not only on its own identity as a piece of established concert music outside of the film, but also on its narrative association with the people of Warsaw standing together in the face of obvious adversity. In this sense it recalls the popular use of shared diegetic music in British wartime cinema to emphasise communal solidarity against individualism. The seminal example of this must surely be the final scene of *Millions Like Us*, which sees Celia supported after the loss of her airman husband through encouragement by her friend to join in the communal singing of 'Waiting at the Church'.

The robust style of the Chopin Polonaise seems to bravely emphasise strength in adversity, rather than tragedy. The agony of the individual-community, love-war opposition, and the dual emotions of Celia's situation in particular, are highlighted in a similar fashion. The song opposes what should be a rather sad lyrical content with upbeat music (similar to the musical-lyrical contrast of 'The Miller of Dee' in *Love Story*). It also recalls the memory that this song was sung earlier at her wedding reception. Hearing it is the first thing which appears to jerk her from her stunned and silent grief but nevertheless, as she starts to sing, she smiles.



*Dangerous Moonlight* emphasises this crucial opposition through the different styles of the Concerto's love theme and the Polonaise, particularly in its original piano version heard later in the film. The simplicity of the Concerto's love theme emerges like an oasis of romantic calm in its otherwise rather turbulent dramaticism. Its rhythmically simple melody line is accompanied by endlessly fluid rising and falling arpeggiated chords in quavers and triplet quavers. The theme conveys a sense of simple yearning which seems to come from its particular dynamic of ascent and descent and its constant delay of harmonic resolution through the use of seventh chords.

The overall downward direction of the first half of the theme is contrasted with the short ascending motifs (whether or not they end in a final ascending or descending interval) which it also contains. The second half of the theme constricts the melodic intervals and seems to fight the previous overall descent of the melody line. It repeats the same main melodic note over two bars, firstly as a seventh note requiring resolution and secondly as a fully resolved tonic note. It then delays final harmonic resolution through an appoggiatura chord (fig. 18).<sup>2</sup>

Fig. 18. *Dangerous Moonlight*: The 'Warsaw Concerto' love theme



<sup>2</sup> The quote of the 'Warsaw Concerto' love theme in fig. 18 is sourced from the 'Warsaw Concerto' Piano Solo (arr. Henry Geehl), but has been transposed into the key in which it is actually heard in the film.



The theme therefore seems to be pensive and wistful but nevertheless, perhaps, quietly determined in its resistance to defeat. It creates tensions and resolves them in a way which appears sad and yet somehow optimistic. As a result, it seems to encapsulate the emotional dilemma of Stefan and Carol's relationship, as well as hinting at an ultimately optimistic conclusion.

In opposition to this, however, the movement of the Polonaise is unremittingly ascending, with a militaristic sense of determination and aggressively forceful energy. The fluid legato of the love theme is replaced by brisk staccato quavers, semiquavers and triplet semiquavers. Its moderate tempo and gentle rubato is replaced by the loud 'allegro con brio' of the Polonaise (fig. 19).<sup>3</sup>

Fig. 19. *Dangerous Moonlight*: Chopin Polonaise in A Major



The next time Stefan and Carol meet, at a press conference in New York, Stefan does not recognise her. Even after her repetition of the significant "It's not safe to be out alone when the moon is so bright", there is no music to reflect his realisation of her identity. The love theme does not reappear until their date the next evening when it seems clear, however, that it reflects listener/muse Carol's response to the situation more than Stefan's. Firstly, and most tangibly, the juxtaposition of the music

<sup>3</sup> This quote of the Polonaise is sourced from Volume VIII of the Fryderyk Chopin Complete Works, edited by Ignacy J. Paderewski.



with their dialogue and the particular way in which the scene is shot, seems to link the music explicitly with Carol's emotional refusal of reality. We will also find later, however, that Stefan has forgotten the theme, and remembers it only during their subsequent honeymoon. There is no evidence of whether Carol remembers the melody either, and I certainly do not wish to suggest that the music is actually meant to be heard in the heads of either of the characters. This does raise the question, however, of whether music which Stefan wrote but has forgotten, could really be used to reflect his emotions, even at the nondiegetic level.

The theme makes two appearances during Carol and Stefan's date, the second and most notable of which comes after Stefan is flippant about the possibility of future meetings. The subsequent appearance of the theme accompanies a focus on Carol's distressed face as she expresses her fear that they may not see each other again. As she speaks, the camera tracks round to bring Stefan back into the shot and as he appears, the love theme gives way to non-thematic music. This non-thematic music continues as they kiss and Stefan tells Carol how he feels about her. During this dialogue, the camera remains focused on Stefan's face, making Carol's expression invisible to the viewer. Stefan is therefore expressing his emotions at close range, but without the accompaniment of the music which he wrote as his first response to Carol.

After he proposes, the love theme reappears for Carol's positive response. They kiss, and as Stefan asks how soon they can get married, Carol laughs about him being in such a hurry. They embrace again, turning slightly so that the focus moves to Carol's face rather than Stefan's for his final line: "We have to be, there's a war on". The love theme, being stated in the solo cello, now follows Carol's reaction intimately, continuing slowly for a few notes while her expression freezes momentarily, before she



fixes into a worried, unhappy expression just as the cello line is disrupted to end mid-phrase on a note alien to the usual melody, and with the harmony unresolved (fig. 20a). Stefan speaks this line cheerfully, still laughing from his successful proposal. Since we are unable to see his face, his tone of voice must act as evidence that he does not share Carol's jarring change of emotion.

The music's intricate reflection of Carol's response puts the score out of step with Stefan, so that his own music seems to represent less his feelings and response to Carol, and more her reaction to him. Like Lisa in *Letter from an Unknown Woman*, Carol has been given a musical expression for her emotions by Stefan. Although this is obviously not comparable in terms of the conscious appropriation of the man's music it is true that it is Carol, rather than Stefan himself, who dwells most on the significance of Stefan's musical talents. Later in the film, in a rather implausible scene, she impresses upon him the importance of his creativity and the way in which this places him apart from other people. This seems to have escaped Stefan's attention despite his international renown. Although this could just be seen as part of her attempt to prevent him from rejoining the airforce, it may also suggest that it is his musical ability that has made her fall in love with him. After all, as she herself admits, she knows little else about him when they marry. Her priority on the day that she has apparently set out to get him to propose, has also been to have a grand piano delivered to her family's "shack" in the country, ready for their arrival later that evening.

When Stefan and Carol arrive at the shack, Stefan makes straight for the piano. Even at this stage, however, he plays established classical repertoire rather than his own music. It is not until later in their honeymoon, and in the middle of the night, that he remembers the love theme. Carol is woken by hearing him play the piano, and is



once again drawn across space to his side, this time by the melody that she inspired in him. Leaving the bedroom, she appears in the landing doorway as if seen from Stefan's point-of-view, although we have not yet seen Stefan and can only assume this from subsequent shots and the memory of the location of the piano. She hesitates in the doorway as the melody draws to its close, waiting, as if choreographed, for the final note to step forward. As she walks along the landing and hesitates at the top of the stairs, held in long shot as she watches Stefan playing, she is accompanied by a series of trill figures which lead into the next statement of the melody. This also underlies the first of her point-of-view shots of Stefan, who watches her begin to walk down the stairs, towards a waiting area of key light.

At the exact moment that she steps into this light, the music settles on a chord which reintroduces the love theme, so that it goes on to accompany her slow, now highly lit descent (fig. 20b). As we watch Carol watching Stefan as she continues this descent, the camera tracks towards her so that we are removed from Stefan's point-of-view to a much better vantage point from which to see her expression (fig. 20c). The reverse shot of Stefan, however, marked by the final chord of the first statement of the melody, still reflects Carol's actual position and we do not see Stefan's view of her again after this point (fig. 20d). Instead, the camera concentrates on her movement towards him, until she takes her place at his side and they begin to talk.

Stefan now stares blankly ahead, rather than looking at Carol, as he plays and speaks. Stefan's unseeing gaze offers a variation on the stare into the middle distance of the personal performance style. It not only suggests this as a moment of interiority which induces him to be rather brutally honest, but also means that he remains absolutely unaware of the effect of his words on Carol. It is therefore the negative



aspect of such self-absorption that is emphasised by the stare in this case. Despite the fact that he is speaking to her, there remains a complete lack of mutually meaningful communication.

The first full statement of the theme ends as Carol reaches Stefan's side at the piano, and a second begins using fuller chords as he pays her romantic compliments. He tells her that this music is hers because she gave it to him, and that he will never play it again without thinking of her. She asks him how it will end, to which he replies: "Happily, I hope". At this point the melody draws to a close and the music, while still from the concerto, makes use of different material. His explanation of this comment, that he cannot finish the piece without knowing where they will be in the future, upsets Carol. Although he does not seem to realise that she has responded in this way, she frowns, pulls away from him and tries to change the subject (figs. 21a and 21b). Despite the fact that the theme does reach a resolution at this important point in the dialogue, therefore, it is clear that this does not reflect a similar sense of comfort in their relationship.

On the contrary, it is at this point that Carol begins to realise Stefan's alternative understanding of the music, which is so germane to their (at least temporary) incompatibility. This marks an important turning point in the musical-narrative relationship. The film seems to remain insistent that the use of the theme, at least at the nondiegetic level, continues to unite the couple in love despite all the obstacles of reality. The narrative-emotional disjunction between the characters, however, is now clearly contained within the music itself. As a result, its use in the subsequent "star and following star" dialogue, for example, seems rather ironically to emphasise their separation as much as their togetherness.



The shot structure and dialogue of this episode, rhyming very obviously with the opening sequence of the couple's story, only add to the theme's already complex accumulation of meaning. Although the melody represents both Carol's feelings about Stefan and his emotions towards her, there is a marked difference in how these are represented and the result of this for each character. Stefan has written the music but states that Carol gave the melody to him, so that the theme represents Carol's muse-like influence on Stefan. The shot structure of the performance sequence, however, does not emphasise Stefan's response to his wife.

We are denied any really detailed shots of his face as he looks at her, being given instead a very intimate portrait of Carol, both in terms of Stefan's view of her and her secret responses to his words. The effect of the music representing how Stefan feels about Carol is therefore, in a way, displaced onto an encouragement to us to see Carol as he sees her, hence the extended staircase sequence, and the 'idealised' version of Stefan's point-of-view as the camera moves closer to Carol. At the same time of course, any suggestion that the music reflects Carol's feelings for Stefan must be tempered by the knowledge that the music actually originated with him.

By the time Stefan and Carol reach their final conflict, the love theme and the Chopin Polonaise have accumulated a complex of meanings. Both individually and in relation to each other, they can now give full meaning to Stefan's profession to Mike during his concert tour that the musical notes he writes "can say more than [he] ever can in words". As Carol is about to discover, Stefan's ability to say more in music will give him, as it were, the final word on their ongoing dispute. He has decided, unbeknown to her, to cancel his touring commitments and travel to England to join the Polish RAF squadron. As Carol enters their hotel room, she is visibly disturbed to find



Stefan playing the Chopin Polonaise. While she complains that it reminds her of the last days in Warsaw, Stefan argues that this is exactly why he plays it. As if to suggest that his primary (musical) emotions are no longer concerned with Carol, he ignores her objections by starting to play the piece again. When he stops to tell her his plans, she retaliates with a divorce threat. He storms in silence from the room, and the couple do not see each other again until he walks out onto the concert platform later in the evening.

As Stefan acknowledges the applause of the audience before the concert begins, he looks up at Carol with a defiant expression. The performance of the ‘Warsaw Concerto’, shot in the familiar documentary style typical in films of this type, then finds him locked into the conventional performance mode. He exhibits total concentration, looking at either the keyboard or the conductor and displaying very little emotion. As the love theme appears, however, the camera moves to focus on Carol’s response, showing her face in medium close-up profile. As she looks lovingly at Stefan in a highly-lit, soft focus, extended shot, the camera tracks closer to her and the duality of the music is once again recalled (fig. 22a).

We see what Carol feels for Stefan. We are also, however, bound to remember what he at least used to feel for her, and to see her as he sees (or saw) her, particularly since during their honeymoon he told her that he would never again play this melody without thinking of her. The music is, he says: “you and me”. The reverse shot of Stefan at the piano, however, from the general direction of Carol’s point-of-view, shows that he keeps his eyes steadfastly on the keyboard as he plays the theme. He clearly refuses to make the visual link with Carol that she expects, which would acknowledge his continued understanding of its personalised emotional meaning (fig.



22b). To break this musical link is to sever their most private and romantic connection. Carol's reaction shot testifies to her understanding of this. She looks crestfallen, glancing towards her father in a slightly embarrassed way as if he might have witnessed what is, in effect, a public rejection.

This exertion of musical-emotional power is, however, by no means Stefan's final statement to Carol. He returns to the stage to play an encore, introducing the Chopin Polonaise as the piece which "told the world that Poland was still alive, and tonight it still is". He then stares pointedly and aggressively up at Carol as he sits down at the piano. A series of reverse shots while he plays shows the couple locked into an angry exchange of glares very different to their usually enraptured gaze, which ends with Carol leaving the concert hall (figs. 22c and 22d).

Stefan's decision to target Carol in this way overturns the entire history of their communication through music. He uses the privately-understood meanings of the two pieces in order to silence her once and for all. He eschews the romantic intimacy of their love theme in favour of its conflicting alternative meaning, attacking her with the strength of his patriotism by transferring the idea of the gaze to the Polonaise. After such a musical statement there is no further need, or indeed space, for words. Carol is placed at a distance from both the man and the means of expression, which renders her completely helpless and vulnerable. This position is further emphasised during the following taxi ride, where she finds herself effectively pursued by Stefan's message through the live radio broadcast of his performance. The gaze that once held her with love now turns on her and drives her away in contempt.

The poignancy of the loss of the mutual gaze in conjunction with the love theme is underlined by the subsequent nondiegetic statements of the theme. The



version which accompanies her at her father's house indicates the continuation of her emotions for Stefan, with the omission of the piano from the orchestration suddenly appearing significant in emphasising their separation. The theme next appears at the shack when Carol finally seems to give up hope of finding Stefan to resolve their argument. Now the music's greater nondiegetic connection to her emotions seems confirmed by Stefan's actual physical absence from the narrative. Although it is nondiegetic, the love theme nevertheless appears to draw her for the third time across space to its previous diegetic source.

As she walks down the same stairs on which Stefan watched her during their honeymoon, however, her expression is one of growing distress rather than romantic fixation. The point of view shot of her which previously belonged to Stefan now has no source except the piano itself and the empty piano stool. Accordingly, as at her father's house, the melody appears in the flute and solo violin rather than the piano. In the absence of Stefan, we witness Carol's complete hopelessness as a woman removed from the man she loves but still identified, as if it could never be any other way, through his (musical) vision of her. Like so many of her fellow female listeners she seeks solace in the iconic piano, sitting where Stefan once played and crying onto the keyboard.

Since the rest of the flashback concerns Stefan in England, the love theme makes no reappearance until his return to the present. It is through this diversion into his friendship with Mike and specifically Mike's death, however, that Stefan's deepest vulnerability is revealed. Apparently unable to discuss his loss with the other men, it is a diegetic musical performance, intended to be private, which testifies to the deep



emotions underlying his verbal silence. It is not his own composition that allows this glimpse of femininity, however, but music which has been given to him by Mike.

The melody that Stefan plays and which later appears on the nondiegetic track represents Mike's earlier self-characterisation. This is as tied to national identity and personality as the Chopin Polonaise is for Stefan. In playing it at the piano, Stefan appropriates it for his own use in remembering Mike in the same wordless way as he expressed his various feelings to Carol. In an unconventional move for a male musician, his emotions are therefore finding expression through borrowed music. The effect of musical appropriation and communication at least during diegetic performance is, however, quite different in this case, as is the reaction of his diegetic audience.

Stefan's appropriation of Mike's music places him in a position reminiscent of the female listener. He appears to be relating to the object of his affection through the man's own music, so that he is bound to repeat this music in order to express his emotions towards him. Unlike the female listener, however, Stefan can also evidently experience and express emotions which are independent of his feelings for Mike. His overwhelming grief therefore remains only one of various emotions and Mike only one of his emotional referents. His appropriation of Mike's music does place him at the mercy, however, of the nondiegetic score.

For the majority of the narrative, Stefan and Mike enjoy a close relationship which is completely unaccompanied by nondiegetic music. Evidence of their mutual affection comes instead from the familiarity and humour of their banter, their shared past and the transcendent quality of their friendship. Their eventual musical link is created gradually through Mike's humming of his favourite Irish song 'The Rose of



Tralee'. Rather than lingering on its original pensive quality, he changes the rhythm of the melody and never sings the words. It therefore sounds more like a jaunty and cheerful ditty than the romantic love song that it actually is (fig. 23a).<sup>4</sup> Although he calls it "the finest song to come out of Ireland", therefore, he must alter it to suit the carefree personality he exudes despite his deeper level of emotionalism. What lies beneath the surface in this case is his loyalty to England, his professed love for Carol and his barely-contained anger at the breakdown of his friends' marriage.

Mike's death is indicated by the direct transference of his last hummed version of the song as he flies into battle into a much slower, more sombre piano version in the Officers' Mess later in the day. The initial focus is on a group of flyers discussing Mike's apparently inexplicable action in battle which has led to his death. One of the men notices the music and we are reminded that it was Mike's tune. The flyers turn and walk slowly towards the music, being drawn to Stefan as Carol was, until he is seen at the piano in the back of the shot, caught in the collective gaze of the silent men. He is then seen in medium close-up, locked into the mode of the personal performance. He stares into the middle distance as he plays, completely oblivious to his audience. A slow track towards him removes the piano from the frame, leaving only his face paralysed with grief, his eyes brimming with tears (fig. 23b). Again we see the men watching, but Stefan has still not noticed their presence. As he plays on, however, he suddenly becomes aware of his comrades, looks surprised and embarrassed and stops playing (fig. 23c). The men continue to watch him in silence as he walks between them out of the room.

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<sup>4</sup> The version of 'The Rose of Tralee' (Glover- Spencer) that I am using as a reference point for the song's original form is the piano and voice arrangement by Horatio Nicholls, published in 1939. This offers a relatively steady rhythm, and indicates that the song should be played/sung 'Slowly (with feeling)'.



The emotional power of this scene derives at least partly from the extended combination of the close-up of Stefan's tearful face, his obvious, disempowered unawareness of being watched in what he believes to be a private moment and his accompaniment by sentimental music. Furthermore, this music is specifically a love song which he has returned to something nearer its original musical state. He is the producer of this music and is therefore setting its mood to suit himself. The usual sense of control over the emotions associated with the male performer, however, seems countered by his very evident loss of self-consciousness in the face of the feelings underlying the performance. The 'performance' is being stripped away, laying bare the personal significance of the music. At least on this occasion, therefore, Stefan shares Francesca's experience of the Grieg Piano Concerto in *The Seventh Veil*, Lissa's of her 'Cornish Rhapsody' in *Love Story* and even Lisa's of the Liszt Concert Study in *Letter from an Unknown Woman*.

This is the second time within the flashback that Stefan has adopted the personal style of performance. The first time represented his lack of awareness of Carol's emotions and his ability to exercise a degree of control over the emotions implied by the performance. In this second case, however, his focus seems to be entirely on his own emotional reaction to the music he is playing. Any former sense of distance is collapsed, making him as much the listener as the performer. Like the female musician overcome by the emotions invoked by her own playing, Stefan is now stunned into a fixed, unblinking silence reminiscent of his traumatised expression as he first began his flashback to the bombing of Warsaw.

What distinguishes Stefan's moment of personal performance from the examples of *The Seventh Veil* and *Love Story*; however, is the recognition of the



diegetic audience. Only the film audience comprehends the full extent of the torture that Francesca and Lissa undergo during their performances. Even though Tom raises the question of Lissa's suffering during her cliff-top concert, there is no corresponding diegetic point of view shot. Contrary to this, *Dangerous Moonlight* seems to place almost as much emphasis on the sympathy of the audience as it does on the pain of the performer. While the female listener can so easily misrecognise the emotional capacity of the male musician or misread the feelings communicated through the music, these male listeners appear to realise the exact meaning of the performance.

This comprehension, in truly wartime style, is demonstrated not through effusive words and dramatic actions but absolute silence and contemplative stasis. What is usually solely a moment of intense personal interiority therefore becomes extended to symbolise the universality of male suffering in wartime. Each man recognises and respects the depth of emotion which can underlie masculinity. The necessary art of self-restraint, therefore, whether the poetry of *The Way to the Stars* or the music of *Dangerous Moonlight*, bonds them together beyond the understanding of all but the most sympathetic women.

Accordingly, it is not the love theme that accompanies Stefan's reading of Carol's letter as he realises his own responsibility for what has happened to Mike. Instead, his reaction to seeing his wife's writing and learning that she will soon arrive in England is accompanied by a nondiegetic, sentimental, string orchestral version of Mike's song. Rather than the letter freeing him from his grief to remember how he feels about Carol, this transfer of Mike's music to the nondiegetic level reflects the knowledge that Stefan would undoubtedly prefer not to have. By their separation, he and Carol have brought about his best friend's death. With the tenuous sense of



control that diegetic performance gave him now removed, he reaches the ultimately feminine position combining his closely-shot, soft-focus, crying face with painful music that is beyond his diegetic control (fig. 23d).

Stefan's return to the present is perhaps the most enigmatic of all the film's scenes. It is only through accident that he has been removed from combat and we might assume that he would wish to continue fighting once he has recovered. His response to the news of Carol's imminent arrival in England was also by no means positive, and Carol's letter to Mike was certainly not clear about whether she had come to Stefan's way of thinking. With so many loose ends still waiting to be tied up, it therefore comes as something of a surprise that this final scene does nothing to resolve these narrative tensions. Instead, it chooses simply to gloss over them with the romantic and almost wordless reunion of the couple. Not even the music or the structure of the scene seems to give any real clue as to what is happening, since both only repeat the film's motivic scene of drawing the couple together in the way which has been proven so woefully temporary in the past.

Stefan is pulled violently from his reverie through the recollection of his aeroplane crash. He begins to play the love theme but stops halfway through. As he slumps at the keyboard it appears that his 'therapy' has come to nothing. The camera follows Carol's distressed response as she walks away in silence unable, consequently, to see that he has woken from his trance. By the time she hears him whisper her name she is on the other side of the room. The large space between them echoes their earlier scenes of physical (and emotional) distance. Returning their relationship to the very beginning of the film, he indicates his recognition of Carol not through playing their love theme, but through those fateful words: "It's not safe to be out alone when the



moon is so bright". The only difference this time, is that it is Stefan who crosses the space to Carol for their final kiss to the nondiegetic accompaniment of the love theme.

Considering the impossible task of personal reconciliation and the complexity of meaning with which the film invests its various pieces of music, it seems almost inevitable that resolution will be impossible. The capitulation of either character is highly unlikely, and the music which is supposed to unite them despite everything is so imbued with their mutual misunderstanding that it can no longer convincingly suggest an all-conquering love. What seems to mitigate this failing, as I stated at the beginning of the analysis, is the film's demonstration of the sheer complexity of music, which is unfortunately more than it can actually handle.

Perhaps by relying too much on music's expressive capacity, it becomes a kind of showcase which while not strong in terms of a coherent narrative, pays dividends in examining the representation of different kinds of emotion in relation to masculinity. This not only offers a vital point of comparison for the different uses of silence in gendered characterisation, but also suggests an important distinction between associations with music across all genres, which may begin to go beyond the assertion that music is chiefly representative of female emotions.

## **Conclusion**

While male characters may not be so typically associated with music, its use does have a very particular effect on their gendered constitution. As this chapter has hopefully shown, male characters can be represented by the 'feminine' style of music more typically associated with female characters and sentimentally emotional



situations. In fact, it actually seems that the more masculine the man, the more acceptable such an association might be. The glimpse of femininity offered by a carefully contextualised and/or limited interaction of music and, depending on the context, either emotional or restrained behaviour, appears to serve a dual purpose. It evidences control as an element of the man's characterisation and proves the strength of that control. It also, however, prevents that control from being too 'inhuman'.

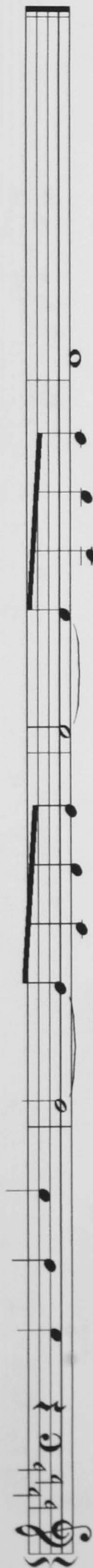
Acceptable masculinity therefore seems to become as much a balanced construction as acceptable femininity. While both deal in a pointed dynamic of emotional expression and repression/control, however, the resultant effect is not the same. The musical revelation of femininity may therefore be a more fluid aspect of character than at first appears evident. In the following conclusion, I will attempt to summarise some of the points which appear to mark the similarities and differences of gender relationships to music, and to suggest ways in which cultural codes of gender 'allow' and 'disallow' certain musical-emotional implications.



Fig. 20. *Dangerous Moonlight*: The Relationship of the love theme to Carol



20a



“We have to be, there’s a war on.”



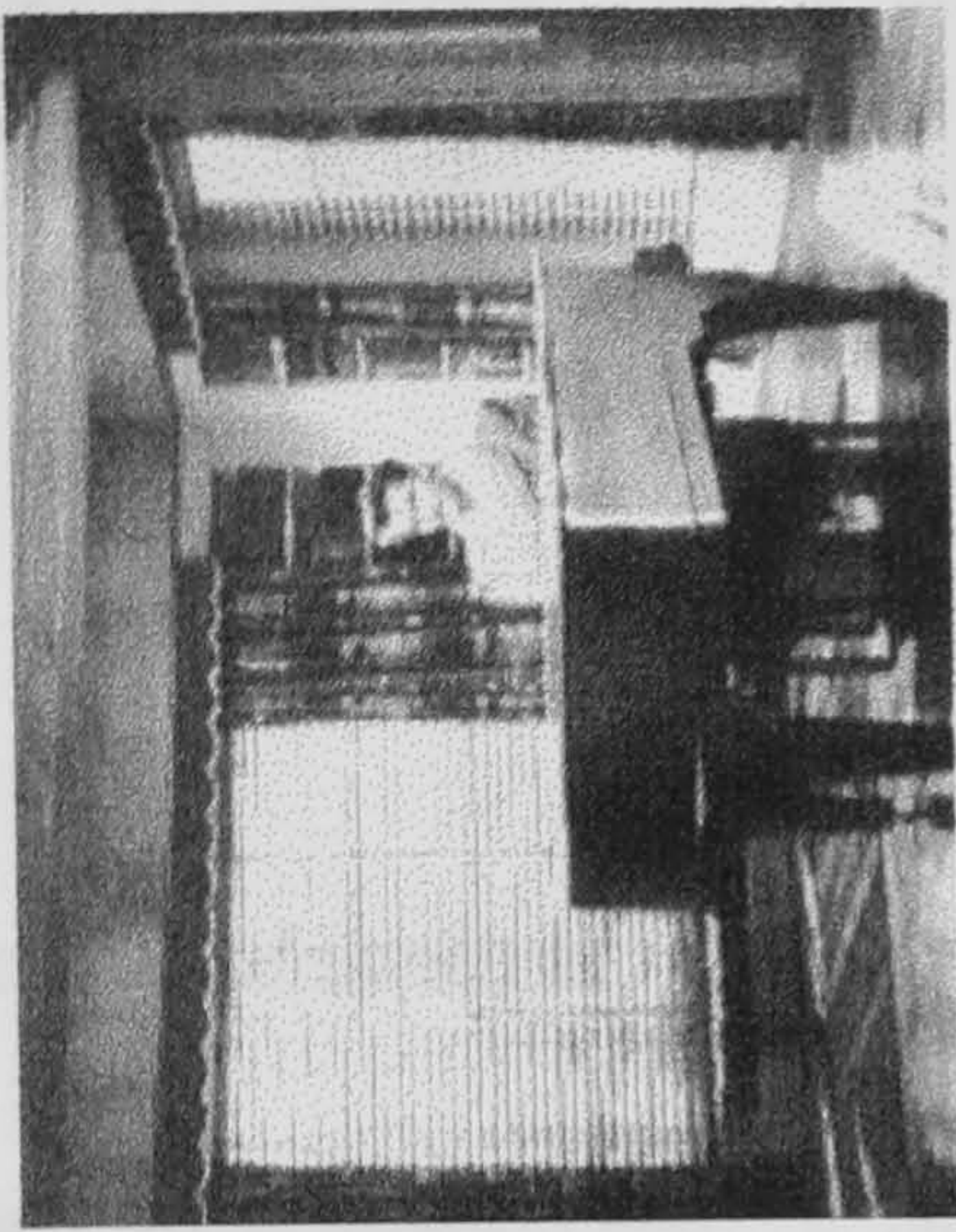
Fig. 20 (continued)



20b



20c

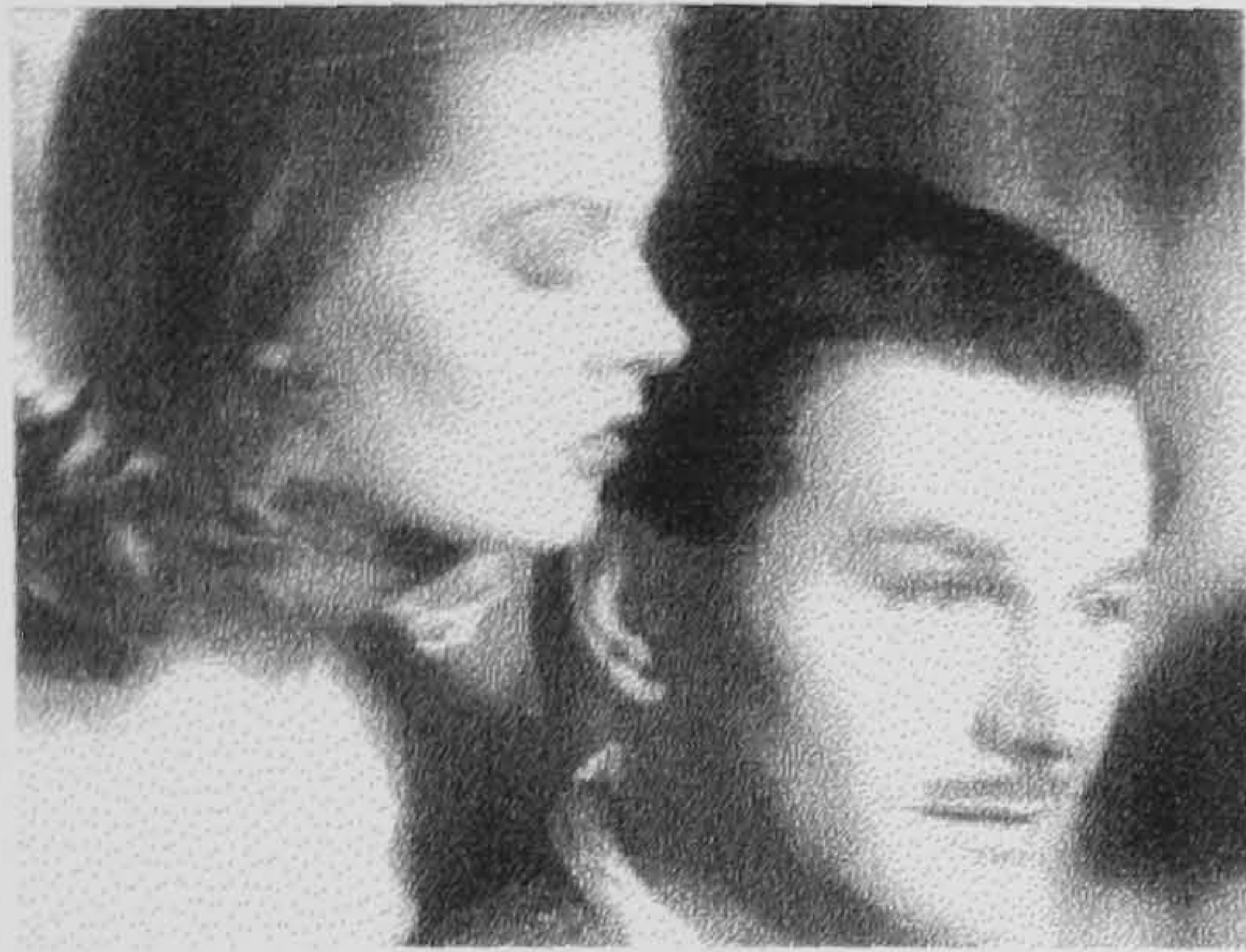


A musical score for piano and voice. The score is written on two staves: a vocal line on the top staff and a piano accompaniment on the bottom staff. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The vocal line begins with a fermata over a whole note, followed by a series of eighth and sixteenth notes. The piano accompaniment consists of chords and moving lines in both hands.



Fig. 21. *Dangerous Moonlight*: Stefan's gaze into the middle distance

21a



21b



Fig. 22. *Dangerous Moonlight*: Stefan breaks the musical-emotional link with Carol

22a



22b



22c



22d





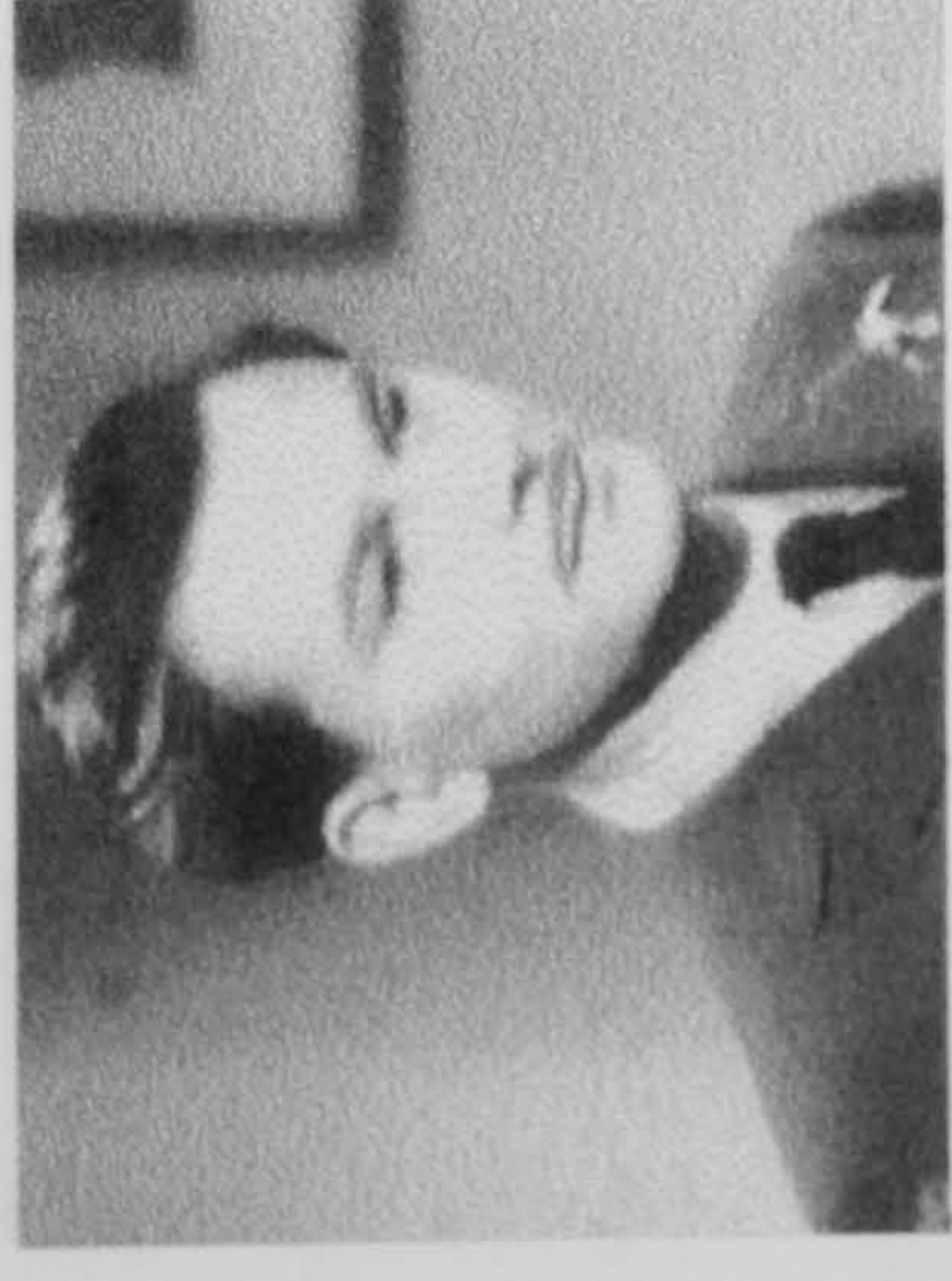
Fig. 23. *Dangerous Moonlight*: Stefan and the transfer of Mike's song



23a



Mike hums the melody and alters the rhythm



23b



Stefan plays the melody at the piano and is lost in its emotional significance ...







## Chapter Six

### Conclusion

This thesis has offered an investigation into the effect of a predominant association of music, femininity and emotion on characterisation in 1940s melodrama and the woman's film. Although the areas of theory and the films involved have been diverse, they share a common concern with various manifestations of the link between emotion as part of gender construction, and music as a representation of that emotion. While striving to avoid a rigid or closed picture of this relationship, I will attempt in conclusion to draw together elements of each chapter to suggest a reading of musical gender construction based on a combination of cultural assumptions and formal representation. It is hoped that this will offer a historically-specific basis against which further investigation of more recent films may take place.

The style of composition used in this context, particularly in the representation of the 'good' woman as described by Claudia Gorbman (1987, 80), is derived from the late-19th century Romantic idiom. I therefore began by considering the ways in which Romanticism itself may have imbued music with gendered definitions. This involved a survey of readings of both the broader cultural history of women and music, and musical representations of women in literary and theatrical contexts. The issues which this raised about self-expression, narrative agency and control then informed an examination of the broad relationship of women, music and the voice in the woman's film.



The initial case study analysis of *Now, Voyager* raised two further important issues for the consideration of the woman's relationship to emotions and music. The first centred around the exact and subtle meaning which can accrue to a particular musical theme, either in itself or in relation to other themes. Musical patterns and techniques may reflect on the specifically personal significance of broader narrative concerns to the individual character. They interact with other elements of storytelling to predict and recall important connections between events and characters. They may therefore inflect the text with an emotional resonance which lies beyond the full understanding of the characters. A theme's meaning may also involve traffic or interaction between characters rather than merely signalling the distinct characteristics or outlook of a given individual. A theme can, for instance, 'hold' one character in another's gaze, so that it reflects less on the represented character her/himself than on the perhaps influential opinion of someone else. Even at the most apparently simple level of 'character + theme', therefore, the creation of meaning can be extremely complex.

Secondly, it becomes clear that there is limited scope in considering music's role in characterisation in isolation from a myriad other representational elements. It is in the dynamic between diegetic behaviour and (diegetic or nondiegetic) music, rather than solely in the music in itself, that the character's relationship to their own emotions can be traced. It is also the divide between audible (vocal) expression and mute (nondiegetic musical) expression which registers the crucial (im)possibilities and (in)adequacies of verbal self-expression and communication. The way in which words, silence, actions, behaviour or aspects of mise-en-scène appear to interact with the implied meaning of the music must therefore be considered.



In order to interrogate the implications of this introductory analysis more closely, I focused on women characters experiencing a conscious relationship to music within the diegesis. The narratives of both the female listener (*Letter from an Unknown Woman*) and the female musician (*Love Story*) foreground issues of gender and emotion through their explicit concern with the relationship between the woman's psychology and 'her' music. This led to two principal conclusions. First of all, it seemed possible to suggest the continued influence of the ancient models of female emotionality and musicality offered by the Siren and the Muse. Furthermore, both male and female musical-emotional characterisation appeared consistent with the ideas of Romanticism. As a 'test case', the following chapter therefore considered the broad relationship of male characters and music. The closer study of the male musician in *Dangerous Moonlight* offered a final contrast to the earlier studies of women.

This study began by considering the apparently established association of *women* and music in both film and film music theory. It was immediately clear from the historical debates of Chapter One, however, that the relationship between women and music is more specifically a product of constructing female characters according to a particular concept of *femininity*. The emotional characteristics labelled 'feminine' since Romanticism are not, however, in themselves connected to the female body. On the contrary, Romantic thinking itself demonstrated that the male body was perfectly capable of encompassing feminine sensibilities. As Chapter Five in particular also demonstrated, the issue of gendered emotional constitution centres at least to some extent around balance.

A man may possess a feminine soul because the possession of a male body is conflated with the balancing psychologically and emotionally masculine qualities of



strength, rigour and virility. Neither the woman's body nor her 'correct' social/sexual behaviour, however, offer her any such obvious contrast. If a woman proves able to control her inherent femininity too effectively, she may therefore be seen to be invested with an undesirable level of masculine qualities (i.e. male physical drives). Feminine and masculine qualities are essentially abstract formulations which can float relatively freely between the sexes. Cultural and social codes dictate, however, that each is *essential* to only one sex. While women are inherently feminine, men are inherently masculine. Since the feminine is associated with the emotions, women are deemed *essentially* emotional in constitution.

Such cultural prejudices of the inherent characteristics of men and women become extremely informative in considering music's role in gendered characterisation in film. There is certainly nothing new in pointing out that music signifies the emotional implications of the narrative either for the character, the film audience, or both. What I wish to suggest, however, is that the film audience's perception of the more complex emotional nuances of gender arise from assumptions of essential characteristics. The balance of music, vocality and behaviour may signify whether or not a character's emotions are important to the narrative. It is their combination with these cultural assumptions, however, that informs the particular way in which the film audience may interpret the represented balance.

At the broadest level, all characters who appear in a film may be presumed to have what might be deemed 'ordinary' emotions whether or not they are ever represented by music. Any character may also exhibit an openly emotional response to events without the help of musical accompaniment. Pinpointing a particular character through musical-emotional representation does not single them out as being the only



emotional figure, or mark their musical moments as their only instances of emotion. Rather, it suggests that their emotions are in some sense ‘extraordinary’ within the narrative context. Either their emotions are the most important within the narrative, or they personify or represent the influence of a particular emotion. The amount of musical accompaniment, or the degree to which music is foregrounded in relation to a character, gives some indication of how important an issue this emotion is to the narrative as a whole.

The different context of each of the case study chapters demonstrates, however, that the musical suggestion of emotion does not exist in the abstract. Exactly how we understand and interpret the emotions of a particular character depends on how that character interacts with diegetic or nondiegetic music. Having traced the potential influence of Romantic ideas through the series of case studies, I would like to suggest a broad formulation for musical-emotional gender construction. This is constructed according to a balance of what I will call the ‘given characteristic’ and the ‘issue’. It suggests that the filmic representation of gender through music during the 1940s reveals the palpable influence of the Romantic confusion of cultural gender codes and biological sex. This conflation of ideas also perpetuates more ancient fears of the female musical-emotional-sexual voice, which explains the still echoing voices of the Siren and the Muse.

Even remembering the distinctions between styles of composition and types of emotion, it still seems possible to say that the predominant association of women with music suggests a slippage which ‘naturally’ conflates women and emotion. The apparent continuation of confusion between the feminine and the female therefore seems to offer emotion as the ‘given characteristic’ of the woman. Melodrama and the



woman's film of the 1940s do not invent this important generic link, but rather incorporate and maximise on an association which is already culturally pervasive. Since these genres often seem to present female characters as *inherently* emotional, the 'issue' of the narrative often becomes the way in which these emotions are channelled or brought under control. Such channelling or control may be self- or externally imposed, to the ends of respectable socialisation or selfishly evil intent. The balance of the motivating 'given characteristic' and the resultant 'issue' therefore gives rise to a whole variety of narrative patterns which examine the different possibilities and effects of controlling female emotionality.

The lack of close musical accompaniment for male characters, however, seems to suggest an opposing version of this formulation. Although men may clearly be emotional in all sorts of ways, their musical 'silence' seems to imply a very masculine level of self-control over certain sentimental and 'weaker' emotions. The 'given characteristic' of the male may therefore be strength of control, so that the 'issue' of the man can centre around the nature, depth and veracity of the emotion he contains. The woman's film may have the generic mitigation of being more concerned with female emotions, despite Doane's contention that the genre's ideal man often exhibits qualities which mirror the woman (1987, 116). A denial, disregard or fear of certain kinds of emotion can, however, exclude the feminine style of music from some male-centred films altogether.

This is certainly a very generalising observation, and the distinction between male and female construction may seem subtle and slippery. It does, however, appear to offer some explanation for the way in which music operates in relation to our reading of gender. If all characters are assumed to be emotional to some implicitly



ordinary level, the balance of emotion and control can hardly be a foregrounded issue. As soon as music becomes involved in characterisation, however, it raises questions of depth and excess which cannot be avoided. Emotion which may otherwise be explicitly displayed through acting, costume, mise-en-scène and dialogue takes on a particular intensity. As I suggested in Chapter One, although music may or may not be connected to a particular character, its expression or representation of emotion can gain it a certain independence. Once given this particular manifestation, its interaction with other elements defines the more specific nature of its function.

There is, therefore, hardly a more effective way of foregrounding the emotional *construction* of a character than through the use of music. A witting or unwitting relationship with music inevitably places a character in a more dynamic emotional position, so that they are understood more fully according to the balance between their actions and words and their musical-emotional context. As I have suggested, a more complete reading of the gender implications of the music-behaviour-dialogue dynamic then arises from its combination with assumptions about what we take to be the biologically-based 'given characteristics' of characters.

For a female character, emotion and control have both benefits and pitfalls. If a woman is insufficiently self-possessed to take control of her own emotions, it seems that she can easily fall into the kind of hysteria which determines Charlotte at the beginning of *Now, Voyager*, Louise in *Possessed* and most of the female protagonists of Doane's 'medical' and 'paranoid' narratives (ibid., Chapters 2 and 5). Along with numerous other women's film protagonists, Charlotte therefore requires the controlling voice of an authoritative man to rescue her from complete breakdown (or indeed to return her to sanity after a breakdown). Alternatively, Lisa and her fellow female



listeners demonstrate a different kind of uncontrolled emotion. In somehow investing the man they admire with their own emotional responses, they exhibit a level of emotional overdetermination, dependence and potentially destructive self-delusion.

While there are certainly ways in which a woman can be seen to exercise positive and desirable self-control, this often seems to carry the implication of *super-human* effort. When Charlotte prioritises the welfare of Tina and their precious mother-daughter relationship, she denies herself romantic love with her painfully forceful physical and mental resistance of Jerry. Other women such as Stella Dallas (Barbara Stanwyck), Anita (*Intermezzo*), Helen (*Interlude*), Myra (*Waterloo Bridge*), Ray (Irene Dunne) (*Back Street*), Celia (*Millions Like Us*) and Toddy (*The Way to the Stars*) make similarly extreme efforts of self-possession for the sake of personal integrity, selfless love, social propriety and the war effort. For whatever reason, the victory of a woman who exercises such control seems tantamount to a victory over the very 'nature' of womanhood.

The degree of such super-human effort is often, of course, registered by the force of the music which evidences the control. In exactly the same way as I suggested in connection with the men of Chapter Five, the strength of control being exercised by a female character can only be measured by knowledge of what there is to be controlled. Music plays perhaps the most prominent part in giving a voice to such containment and evidencing the potentially independent power of the feelings being brought under control. By virtue of its 'mute' voice and its independence it can also, of course, offer the melodramatic victory of those emotions which we may feel are subdued or stymied for all the wrong reasons.



As the model of the siren implies, however, too much emotional (and sexual) self-possession and control in a woman can be a dangerous matter. The woman who shows the capacity to control her own musical performance or the appearance of music around her evidences, in Romantic terms, too great a level of masculine sexuality. In the case of the femme fatale, perhaps the most obvious translation of the siren onto the screen, this manifests itself in an appropriately predatory and destructive sexual targetting of the man. Alternatively, as a female musician, she may become disturbingly masculine (*The Great Lie*) or criminal (*Deception*). It may even be considered that what Andrew Britton terms Charlotte's 'feminist self-definition' (1995, 164) in *Now, Voyager*, offers an example of female self-control subverting social codes and negating the 'proper' level of subjugation to the man. If this self-assertion is exercised to more selfish ends, the woman can easily become as dangerously petulant and destructive as Carol in *Dangerous Moonlight*.

Control or ability in musical creativity or performance seems possible if mitigated by the extreme cruelty of a Svengali figure (*The Seventh Veil*). It may also be allowed if subsequently punished by (possibly self-induced) injury, such as in *The Seventh Veil* and *The Lamp Still Burns* (as well as the later *The Piano* and *Three Colours Blue*). Otherwise, it seems as if the constant exposure to the excesses of her own femininity offered by musical performance can only monitor the nearness of illness and death (*Love Story, While I Live* and the later *The Double Life of Veronique*).

Since male characters start from the different cultural 'given' of control, however, their relationship to music (and emotion) is bound to be different. Whereas we seem almost conditioned to expect that the woman will be unable to control her emotions, we seem equally conditioned to presume that the man *will* control his. His



limited association with music therefore becomes a means of reinforcing the behaviour we expect and consider 'natural' to a man. There are therefore myriad ways in which a man's emotions can be carefully revealed and confirmed without jeopardising his essential masculinity. While the combination of music and controlled behaviour suggests the super-human in women, it therefore becomes a way to positively emphasise and reinforce the existing (if painful) masculine constitution of the man (*Dangerous Moonlight, The Captive Heart, Red River, The Searchers*).

The man's control over his relationship to music therefore places his very masculinity at stake. If he loses his controlling position in relation to the signification of the music, he may lose his emotional self-possession and suffer as a result. The social extremity and undesirability of such a threat seems evident through the causes of the man's potential downfall. Although there are clearly exceptions, Doane's claim of the frequent war-localised nature of men's psychological problems does account for many male protagonists during this period (1987, 46). Other medical conditions are often marked as temporary (*Night Song, The Lost Weekend*) or are 'cured' under the control of the man himself (*Dangerous Moonlight, Hangover Square*). Relationships with women, sentimental emotions and sexual feelings seem less often the direct cause of illness in men than in women except, of course, for the extreme example of the femme fatale.

As the female listener demonstrates, however, the control of the male musician can be so powerful as to extend far beyond his actual knowledge, intention or presence. If the woman becomes associated with his music, all her emotional responses must relate back to him in some way. The influence of the man's music within the text may therefore negate the woman's emotional voice, making her dependent upon his



thoughts or his idea/image of her for her own representation. The actual presence of a musician within the text therefore thematicises the issue of complex musical meaning involving traffic between characters. The possible designation of the woman as the muse-like influence for the music only compounds the powerless circularity of her dependence. The male musician can therefore become tantamount to an unwitting voice-over narrator, inflecting scenes, characters and trajectories with his emotional/psychological point of view without even realising it.

The strength of the woman's emotional response to this influence often comes from her romanticisation of the music's meaning in relation to the musician. In more extreme cases, instead of realising her feelings as purely her own, she reinvests them in the man. Her feelings for him therefore become confused with his feelings for her, so that her emotional response to the music may lend him personal qualities which he does not actually possess. If the man proves incapable of living up to the woman's romantic ideal, and yet she refuses to release him from his presumed obligation, the extremity of her emotions may even return to destroy him either physically (*Letter from an Unknown Woman, Possessed*) or psychologically (*Humoresque*).

Seen as part of the whole dynamic of the film, music therefore becomes less just a signifier of emotion and more a part of the way in which we understand emotion as part of gendered constitution. The predilection of film for defining women and men according to cultural prejudices of femininity and masculinity respectively means that nondiegetic music becomes primarily associated with women. Its actual use is more fluid, however, than is often acknowledged. The meaning of the association also changes depending on gender and narrative circumstances, so that representation



through (diegetic or nondiegetic) music can constitute a site of emotional strength or weakness, dependence or independence.

Returning to the representation of women, however, an apparently inherent and inescapable circularity seems to distinguish their relationship to music from that of men. Their marking by nondiegetic music in particular suggests that their words and actions are suffused with an emotional depth and veracity which men often seem to find difficult to match. Their emotional profundity removes them in some sense from the social restrictions and codes which dictate their actions, so that they achieve a kind of transcendence which universalises their experience. At the same time, however, the musical realisation of their potential for such transcendent emotion highlights its very inexpressibility in the diegetic world. This seems to rue the impossibility accorded by the inadequacies of language or society to the woman's full expressive capacity. The eloquence of her silence is thus enabled and regretted by the dynamic of her musical and diegetic representation.

It is undoubtedly true that the social conditions under which 1940s cinema operated determine its gender representation and issues to a huge extent. It is hardly surprising, for example, that films at this time work towards reinforcing very particular images of the correct behaviour and social roles of both men and women. It is for this very reason, however, that an examination of 1940s film music codes offer an ideal ground from which to examine more recent developments in gender representation. According to the theories outlined in Chapter One, there certainly has been some degree of sympathy in the past between cultural theories and artistic/musical representations of gender. The case study chapters suggest that this exchange was still active in 1940s society and film. It should perhaps follow, therefore, that as social



expectations and codes regarding sex and gender change, the representational role of film music will both reflect and play a part in these developments.



## Filmography

Note: Every effort has been made to include as complete a record as possible of music credits, diegetic music and source music in each film listed. It is recognised, however, that due to difficulties in obtaining such information, details on some films are incomplete.

### Case Study Films

#### *Now, Voyager (Untold Want for Songs of Parting)*

Country: US

Year: 1942

Director: Irving Rapper

Producer(s): Warner (Hal B. Wallis)

Writer(s): Casey Robinson

Based on the novel by: Olive Higgins Prouty

Director of Photography: Sol Polito

Music: Max Steiner

Music Director: Leo F. Forbstein

Orchestrator: Hugo Friedhofer

Sound: Robert B. Lee

Cast: <i>Charlotte Vale</i>	Bette Davis
<i>Jerry Durrance</i>	Paul Henreid
<i>Dr. Jacquith</i>	Claude Rains
<i>Mrs. Vale</i>	Gladys Cooper
<i>June Vale</i>	Bonita Granville
<i>Elliot Livingstone</i>	John Loder
<i>Lisa Vale</i>	Ilka Chase
<i>Miss Trask</i>	Katherine Alexander
<i>'Mac' McIntyre</i>	James Rennie
<i>Tina Durrance</i>	Janice Wilson
<i>Leslie Trotter</i>	Charles Drake

Diegetic Music/Songs:

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74 ('Pathétique')

'Night and Day' (Porter)

'Perfidia' (Dominguez)

Source Music/Songs used in nondiegetic score:

'Yankee Doodle Dandy' (Cohan)

#### *Letter from an Unknown Woman*

Country: US

Year: 1948

Director: Max Ophuls

Producer(s): Universal/Rampart (John Houseman)



Writer(s): Howard Koch

Based on the novel by Stefan Zweig

Director of Photography: Franz Planer

Music: Daniele Amfitheatrof

Orchestrator: David Tamkin

Sound: Leslie I. Carey, Glen E. Anderson

Cast: <i>Lisa Berndle</i>	Joan Fontaine
<i>Stefan Brand</i>	Louis Jourdan
<i>Frau Berndle</i>	Mady Christians
<i>Leopold</i>	John Good
<i>Johann Stauffer</i>	Marcel Journet
<i>John</i>	Art Smith
<i>Marie</i>	Carol Yorke
<i>Stefan Jr.</i>	Leo B. Pessin

Diegetic Music:

Liszt: Concert Study in Db ('Un Sospiro')

Mozart: 'Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen' from *The Magic Flute*, K620  
Symphony No. 39 in Eb, K543

Wagner: 'Song to the Evening Star' from *Tannhäuser*

J. Strauss I: 'Radetzky March'

Ziehrer: Waltz

Also music by Strauss and Schubert

### *Love Story (A Lady Surrenders)*

Country: UK

Year: 1944

Director: Leslie Arliss

Producer(s): GFD/Gainsborough (Harold Huth)

Writer(s): Leslie Arliss, Doreen Montgomery, Rodney Ackland

Based on the novel by: J. W. Drawbell

Director of Photography: Bernard Knowles

Music: Hubert Bath

Music Director: Louis Levy

Orchestra: National Symphony Orchestra

Conductor: Sidney Beer

Solo Piano: Harriet Cohen

Sound Supervisor: B. C. Sewell

Cast: <i>Lissa Campbell</i>	Margaret Lockwood
<i>Kit Firth</i>	Stewart Granger
<i>Judy</i>	Patricia Roc
<i>Tom Tanner</i>	Tom Walls
<i>Ray</i>	Walter Hudd

Diegetic Music/Songs:

Bath: 'Cornish Rhapsody'

Chopin: Fantasie-Improptu

'The Cornish Floral Dance' (Moss)

'The Miller of Dee' (18th century traditional)

'Take Me Back to Dear Old Blighty' (Mills-Godfrey-Scott)



***Dangerous Moonlight (Suicide Squadron)***

Country: UK

Year: 1941

Director: Brian Desmond Hurst

Producer(s): RKO (William Siström)

Writer(s): Shaun Terence Young, Brian Desmond Hurst, Rodney Ackland

Directors of Photography: Georges Périnal, Ronald Neame

Music: Richard Addinsell

Music Director: Muir Mathieson

Orchestra: London Symphony Orchestra

Solo Piano: Louis Kentner

Cast:	<i>Stefan Radetsky</i>	Anton Walbrook
	<i>Carol Peters</i>	Sally Gray
	<i>Mike Carroll</i>	Derrick de Marney
	<i>Doctor</i>	Cecil Parker
	<i>Doctor</i>	J. H. Roberts
	<i>Bill Peters</i>	Percy Parsons
	<i>British Commander</i>	John Laurie

Diegetic Music/Songs:

Addinsell: 'Warsaw Concerto'

Chopin: Polonaise in A Major, Op. 40 No. 1

'The Rose of Tralee' (Glover-Spencer)

Source Music used in nondiegetic score:

Polish National Anthem

**Remaining Films*****All About Eve***

Country: US

Year: 1950

Director/Writer: Joseph L. Mankiewicz

Producer(s): TCF (Darryl F. Zanuck)

Music: Alfred Newman

Cast:	Bette Davis
	George Sanders
	Anne Baxter
	Celeste Holm

***All This and Heaven Too***

Country: US

Year: 1940

Director: Anatole Litvak

Producer(s): Warner (Jack L. Warner, Hal B. Wallis)

Writer(s): Casey Robinson

Music: Max Steiner



Cast: Charles Boyer  
Bette Davis

***Amadeus***

Country: US

Year: 1984

Director: Milos Forman

Producer(s): Saul Zaentz

Writer(s): Peter Shaffer

Music Director: Neville Marriner

Cast: F. Murray Abraham

Tom Hulce

Diegetic music:

Mozart: *The Magic Flute*, K620

Requiem Mass in D Minor (unfinished), K626

***Back Street***

Country: US

Year: 1932

Director: John M. Stahl

Producer(s): Universal (Carl Laemmle Jr.)

Writer(s): Gladys Lehman, Lynn Starling

Cast: Irene Dunne

John Boles

***The Best Years of Our Lives***

Country: US

Year: 1946

Director: William Wyler

Producer(s): Samuel Goldwyn

Writer(s): Robert Sherwood

Music: Hugo Friedhofer

Music Director: Emil Newman

Cast: Frederic March

Myrna Loy

Dana Andrews

Hoagy Carmichael

Harold Russell

Diegetic Songs:

'Up a Lazy River' (Carmichael-Arodin)

'Among My Souvenirs' (Nicholls-Leslie)

'Toot, Toot, Tootsie, Goodbye' (Russo-Kahn-Erdman)

***Beyond the Forest***

Country: US

Year: 1949

Director: King Vidor

Producer(s): Warner (Henry Blanke)

Writer(s): Leonore Coffee



Music: Max Steiner  
 Cast: Bette Davis  
       Joseph Cotten  
 Source Music used in Nondiegetic Score:  
 'Chicago' (Kahn)

***The Big Heat***

Country: US  
 Year: 1953  
 Director: Fritz Lang  
 Producer(s): Columbia (Robert Arthur)  
 Writer(s): Sydney Boehm  
 Music: Arthur Morton  
 Music Director: Mischa Bakaleinikoff  
 Cast: Glenn Ford  
       Gloria Grahame  
       Jocelyn Brando  
       Jeanette Nolan

***The Big Sleep***

Country: US  
 Year: 1946  
 Director: Howard Hawks  
 Producer(s): Warner (Howard Hawks)  
 Writer(s): William Faulkner  
 Music: Max Steiner  
 Music Director: Leo F. Forbstein  
 Orchestrator: Simon Bucharoff  
 Cast: Humphrey Bogart  
       Lauren Bacall  
 Diegetic Songs:  
 'And Her Tears Flowed Like Wine' (Kenton-Lawrence-Greene)  
 'Sad Sister'

***A Bill of Divorcement***

Country: US  
 Year: 1932  
 Director: George Cukor  
 Producer(s): RKO/David O. Selznick  
 Writer(s): Howard Estabrook, Harry Wagstaff Gribble  
 Music Director: Max Steiner  
 Cast: John Barrymore  
       Katharine Hepburn  
       Billie Burke  
 Diegetic Music:  
 W. Franke Harling: Piano Concerto

***The Blue Dahlia***

Country: US



Year: 1946  
 Director: George Marshall  
 Producer(s): Paramount (John Houseman)  
 Writer(s): Raymond Chandler  
 Music Director: Victor Young  
 Cast: Alan Ladd  
       Veronica Lake  
       William Bendix

***Brief Encounter***

Country: UK  
 Year: 1945  
 Director: David Lean  
 Producer(s): Eagle-Lion/Cineguild (Anthony Havelock-Allan, Ronald Neame)  
 Writer(s): Noël Coward, David Lean, Ronald Neame, Anthony Havelock-Allan  
 Music Director: Muir Mathieson  
 Cast: Celia Johnson  
       Trevor Howard  
       Stanley Holloway  
       Joyce Carey  
 Diegetic Music:  
 Rachmaninov: Piano Concerto No. 2 in C Minor, Op. 18

***The Cabin in the Cotton***

Country: US  
 Year: 1932  
 Director: Michael Curtiz  
 Producer(s): Warner (Hal B. Wallis)  
 Writer(s): Paul Green  
 Cast: Richard Barthelmess  
       Dorothy Jordan  
       Bette Davis

***A Canterbury Tale***

Country: UK  
 Year: 1944  
 Director/Writer: Michael Powell, Emeric Pressburger  
 Producer(s): Rank/Archers (Michael Powell, Emeric Pressburger)  
 Music: Allan Gray  
 Music Director: Walter Goehr  
 Cast: Eric Portman  
       Sheila Sim  
       John Sweet  
       Dennis Price  
 Diegetic Music:  
 J. S. Bach: Toccata and Fugue in D Minor (BWV565)

***The Captive Heart (Lover's Meeting)***

Country: UK



Year: 1946  
 Director: Basil Dearden  
 Producer(s): Ealing (Michael Relph)  
 Writer(s): Angus MacPhail  
 Music: Alan Rawsthorne  
 Cast: Michael Redgrave  
       Jack Warner  
       Basil Radford  
       Mervyn Johns  
       Jimmy Hanley  
       Gordon Jackson  
       Derek Bond  
       Guy Middleton  
       Meriel Forbes

***Casablanca***

Country: US  
 Year: 1942  
 Director: Michael Curtiz  
 Producer(s): Warner (Hal B. Wallis)  
 Writer(s): Julius J. Epstein  
 Music: Max Steiner  
 Music Director: Leo F. Forbstein  
 Orchestrator: Hugo Friedhofer  
 Cast: Humphrey Bogart  
       Ingrid Bergman  
       Paul Henreid  
       Claude Rains  
 Diegetic Music/Songs:  
 'La Marseillaise' (Rouget de l'Isle)  
 'As Time Goes By' (Hupfeld)  
 'Knock on Wood' (Jerome-Scholl)  
 'That's What Noah Done' (Jerome)  
 'Muse's Call'

***Caught***

Country: US  
 Year: 1948  
 Director: Max Ophuls  
 Producer(s): Enterprise (Wolfgang Reinhardt)  
 Writer(s): Arthur Laurents  
 Music: Frederick Hollander  
 Music Director: Rudolph Polk  
 Cast: James Mason  
       Robert Ryan  
       Barbara Bel Geddes

***The Cobweb***

Country: US



Year: 1955  
 Director: Vincente Minnelli  
 Producer(s): MGM (John Houseman)  
 Writer(s): John Paxton  
 Music: Leonard Rosenman  
 Cast: Richard Widmark  
       Lauren Bacall  
       Charles Boyer  
       Lillian Gish

***Dark Victory***

Country: US  
 Year: 1939  
 Director: Edmund Goulding  
 Producer(s): Warner (David Lewis)  
 Writer(s): Casey Robinson  
 Music: Max Steiner  
 Music Director: Leo F. Forbstein  
 Orchestrator: Hugo Friedhofer  
 Cast: Bette Davis  
       George Brent  
       Humphrey Bogart  
       Ronald Reagan  
 Diegetic Songs:  
 'Oh, Give Me Time for Tenderness' (Goulding-Janis)

***Dead Reckoning***

Country: US  
 Year: 1947  
 Director: John Cromwell  
 Producer(s): Columbia (Sidney Biddell)  
 Writer(s): Oliver H. P. Garrett, Steve Fisher  
 Music: Marlin Skiles  
 Music Director: Morris W. Stoloff  
 Cast: Humphrey Bogart  
       Lizabeth Scott  
 Diegetic Songs:  
 'Either it's Love or it Isn't' (Roberts-Fisher)

***Deception***

Country: US  
 Year: 1947  
 Director: Irving Rapper  
 Producer(s): Warner (Henry Blank)  
 Writer(s): John Collier  
 Music: Erich Wolfgang Korngold  
 Cast: Bette Davis  
       Claude Rains  
       Paul Henreid



Diegetic Music:

Korngold: Cello Concerto in C Major, Op. 37

Beethoven: Piano Sonata No. 23 in F Minor, Op. 57 ('Appassionata')

***The Deer Hunter***

Country: US

Year: 1978

Director: Michael Cimino

Producer(s): Universal/EMI (Barry Spikings, Michael Deeley, Michael Cimino, John Peverall)

Writer(s): Deric Washburn

Music: Stanley Myers

Cast: Robert DeNiro

John Cazale

John Savage

Christopher Walken

Meryl Streep

Diegetic Songs:

'Can't Take My Eyes Off You' (Crewe-Gaudio)

***The Demi-Paradise (Adventure for Two)***

Country: UK

Year: 1943

Director: Anthony Asquith

Producer(s): Two Cities (Anatole de Grunwald)

Writer(s): Anatole de Grunwald

Music: Nicholas Brodsky

Music Director: Muir Mathieson

Cast: Laurence Olivier

Penelope Dudley Ward

Margaret Rutherford

***Detour***

Country: US

Year: 1945

Director: Edgar G. Ulmer

Producer(s): PRC (Leo Fromkess)

Writer(s): Martin Goldsmith

Music Director: Leo Erdody

Cast: Tom Neal

Ann Savage

Claudia Drake

Diegetic Music/Songs:

Brahms: 'Lullaby'

Waltz in A Major

Chopin: Waltz in C# Minor

Fantasie-Impromptu in C# Minor

'I Can't Believe that You're in Love With Me' (McHugh-Gaskill)



***A Diary for Timothy***

Country: UK

Year: 1945

Director: Humphrey Jennings

Producer(s): Basil Wright/Crown Film Unit

Writer(s): E. M. Forster

Music: Richard Addinsell

Narrator: Michael Redgrave

Featured Artist: Myra Hess

***The Double Life of Veronique (La double vie de Véronique)***

Country: France/Poland

Year: 1991

Director: Krzysztof Kieslowski

Producer(s): Gala/Sidéral/Canal Plus/TOR/Norsk Film (Leonardo de la Fuente)

Writer(s): Krzysztof Kieslowski, Krzysztof Piesiewicz

Music: Zbigniew Preisner

Cast: Irène Jacob

Halina Gryglaszewska

***East of Eden***

Country: US

Year: 1955

Director: Elia Kazan

Producer(s): Warner (Elia Kazan)

Writer(s): Paul Osborn

Music: Leonard Rosenman

Cast: Raymond Massey

James Dean

Julie Harris

Jo Van Fleet

***The Enchanted Cottage***

Country: US

Year: 1945

Director: John Cromwell

Producer(s): RKO (Harriet Parsons)

Writer(s): De Witt Bodeen, Herman J. Mankiewicz

Music: Roy Webb

Cast: Dorothy McGuire

Robert Young

Herbert Marshall

***The Foreman Went to France (Somewhere in France)***

Country: UK

Year: 1941

Director: Charles Frend

Producer(s): Ealing (Alberto Cavalcanti)



Writer(s): John Dighton, Angus Macphail, Leslie Arliss, Roger Macdougall, Diana Morgan

Music: William Walton

Music Director: Ernest Irving

Cast: Tommy Trinder

Constance Cummings

***Funny Bones***

Country: UK

Year: 1995

Director: Peter Chelsom

Producer(s): Buena Vista/Hollywood Pictures (Simon Fields, Peter Chelsom)

Writer(s): Peter Chelsom

Music: John Altman

Cast: Oliver Platt

Lee Evans

Richard Griffiths

Oliver Reed

***Gaslight (Angel Street, A Strange Case of Murder)***

Country: UK

Year: 1940

Director: Thorold Dickinson

Producer(s): British National (John Corfield)

Writer(s): A. R. Rawlinson, Bridget Boland

Music: Richard Addinsell

Music Director: Muir Mathieson

Cast: Anton Walbrook

Diana Wynyard

***Gilda***

Country: US

Year: 1946

Director: Charles Vidor

Producer(s): Columbia (Virginia Van Upp)

Writer(s): Marion Parsonnet

Music: Hugo Friedhofer

Music Director: Morris W. Stoloff, Marlin Skiles

Cast: Rita Hayworth

Glenn Ford

Diegetic Songs:

'Put the Blame on Mame' (Fisher-Roberts)

***The Glass Key***

Country: US

Year: 1942

Director: Stuart Heisler

Producer(s): Paramount (Fred Kohlmar)

Writer(s): Jonathan Latimer



Music: Victor Young  
 Cast: Brian Donlevy  
       Alan Ladd  
       Veronica Lake

***Gone With the Wind***

Country: US  
 Year: 1939  
 Director: Victor Fleming (and George Cukor, Sam Wood)  
 Producer(s): MGM/Selznick International (David O. Selznick)  
 Writer(s): Sidney Howard (and others)  
 Music: Max Steiner  
 Cast: Clark Gable  
       Vivien Leigh  
       Olivia de Havilland  
       Leslie Howard  
 Source Music/Songs used in nondiegetic score:  
 'Dixieland' (Emmett)

***The Great Lie***

Country: US  
 Year: 1941  
 Director: Edmund Goulding  
 Producer(s): Warner (Hal B. Wallis, Henry Blanke)  
 Writer(s): Lenore Coffee  
 Score: Max Steiner  
 Music Director: Leo F. Forbstein  
 Orchestrator: Hugo Friedhofer, Ray Heindorf  
 Cast: Bette Davis  
       Mary Astor  
       George Brent  
 Diegetic Music:  
 Tchaikovsky: Piano Concerto No. 1 in Bb Minor, Op. 23

***The Great Mr. Handel***

Country: UK  
 Year: 1942  
 Director: Norman Walker  
 Producer(s): Rank/GHW (James B. Sloan)  
 Writer(s): Gerald Elliott, Victor MacClure  
 Music Director: Ernest Irving  
 Cast: Wilfred Lawson  
       Elizabeth Allan  
 Diegetic Music:  
 Handel: *Messiah*  
       Music for Royal Fireworks  
       *Xerxes*  
       *Berenice*  
       Water Music



Also music by Buononcini and traditional street cry based on Gibbons Motet

***Hangover Square***

Country: US

Year: 1945

Director: John Brahm

Producer(s): TCF (Robert Bassler)

Writer(s): Barre Lyndon

Music: Bernard Herrmann

Cast: Laird Cregar

Linda Darnell

George Sanders

Faye Marlowe

Diegetic Music/Songs:

Herrmann: 'Concerto Macabre'

'Have You Seen Joe'

'All for You'

***Henry V***

Country: UK

Year: 1944

Director: Laurence Olivier

Producer(s): Rank/Two Cities (Laurence Olivier)

Writer(s): Laurence Olivier, Alan Dent

Music: William Walton

Music Director: Muir Mathieson

Cast: Laurence Olivier

Robert Newton

***Home from the Hill***

Country: US

Year: 1960

Director: Vincente Minnelli

Producer(s): MGM/Sol C. Siegel (Edmund Grainger)

Writer(s): Irving Ravetch, Harriet Frank

Music: Bronislau Kaper

Cast: Robert Mitchum

George Hamilton

George Peppard

***Humoresque***

Country: US

Year: 1946

Director: Jean Negulesco

Producer(s): Warner (Jerry Wald)

Writer(s): Clifford Odets, Zachary Gold

Music Director: Franz Waxman

Cast: Joan Crawford

John Garfield



Oscar Levant

Diegetic Music/Songs:

Dvorak: Humoresque No. 7 (arr. for solo violin from 8 Humoresques for piano, Op. 101)

Waxman: 'Carmen Fantasia' (arr. from Bizet's *Carmen*)

Waxman: 'Tristan Fantasia' (arr. of *Liebestod* from Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*)

Rimsky-Korsakov: 'The Flight of the Bumble Bee' (solo violin arr. of orchestral interlude from opera *The Legend of Tsar Saltan*)

'I Guess I'll Have to Change My Plans' (Schwartz-Dietz)

'You Do Something To Me' (Porter)

'What is this Thing Called Love?' (Porter)

### ***I'll Be Your Sweetheart***

Country: UK

Year: 1945

Director: Val Guest

Producer(s): Gainsborough (Louis Levy)

Writer(s): Val Guest, Val Valentine

Music Director: Louis Levy

Orchestrators: Bob Busby, Benjamin Frankel

Cast: Margaret Lockwood

Michael Rennie

Diegetic Songs:

'Liza Johnson' (Bateman-Le Brunn)

'The Honeysuckle and the Bee' (Penn-Fitz)

'Little Wooden Hut' (Mellar-Collins)

'I'll Be Your Sweetheart' (Dacre)

'Oh Mr. Porter' (Le-Brunn-Le Brunn)

Three additional songs by Manning Sherman and Val Guest

### ***Imitation of Life***

Country: US

Year: 1934

Director: John Stahl

Producer(s): Universal (John M. Stahl)

Writer(s): William Hurlbut

Music: Heinz Roemheld

Cast: Claudette Colbert

Louise Beavers

### ***The Informer***

Country: US

Year: 1935

Director: John Ford

Producer(s): RKO (Cliff Reid)

Writer(s): Dudley Nichols

Music: Max Steiner

Cast: Victor McLagen

Heather Angel



Margot Grahame

Una O'Connor

***Interlude***

Country: US

Year: 1957

Director: Douglas Sirk

Producer(s): U-I (Ross Hunter)

Writer(s): Daniel Fuchs, Franklin Coen

Music: Frank Skinner

Music Supervisor: Joseph Gerschenson

Cast: Rossano Brazzi

June Allyson

Diegetic Music/Songs:

Music by Beethoven, Mozart, Wagner, Brahms, Liszt, Schumann

'Interlude' (Skinner-Webster)

Source Music used in nondiegetic score:

J. Strauss II: 'Blue Danube' Waltz

***Intermezzo (Intermezzo: A Love Story; Escape to Happiness)***

Country: US

Year: 1939

Director: Gregory Ratoff

Producer(s): David O. Selznick

Writer(s): George O'Neil

Music: Lou Forbes

Solo Violin: Jascha Heifetz

Cast: Leslie Howard

Ingrid Bergman

Edna Best

Diegetic Music:

Robert Henning and Heinz Provost: 'Intermezzo'

Grieg: Piano Concerto in A Minor, Op. 16

***In the Good Old Summertime***

Country: US

Year: 1949

Director: Robert Z. Leonard

Producer(s): MGM (Joe Pasternak)

Writer(s): Albert Hackett, Frances Goodrich, Ivan Tors

Music Director: George Stoll

Vocal Orchestrations: Conrad Salinger

Cast: Judy Garland

Van Johnson

S. Z. Sakall

Diegetic Music/Songs:

'Put Your Arms Around Me Honey' (Tilzer-McCree)

'In the Good Old Summertime' (Evans-Shields)

'Beautiful Dreamer' (Foster)

'Wait 'til the Sun Shines Nelly'



'I Don't Care'

'Meet Me Tonight in Dreamland'

Beethoven: Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67

Source Music used in nondiegetic score:

'Chicago' (Kahn)

***In Which We Serve***

Country: UK

Year: 1942

Directors: Noël Coward, David Lean

Producer(s): Rank/Two Cities (Noël Coward)

Writer(s): Noël Coward

Music: Noël Coward

Cast: Noël Coward  
Bernard Miles  
John Mills  
Celia Johnson

***Jezebel***

Country: US

Year: 1938

Director: William Wyler

Producer(s): Warner (Henry Blanke)

Writer(s): Clements Ripley, Abem Finkel, John Huston

Music: Max Steiner

Cast: Bette Davis  
Henry Fonda  
George Brent

Diegetic Songs:

'Beautiful Dreamer' (Foster)

***Johnny Belinda***

Country: US

Year: 1948

Director: Jean Negulesco

Producer(s): Warner (Jerry Wald)

Writer(s): Irmgard von Cube, Allen Vincent

Music: Max Steiner

Music Director: Leo F. Forbstein

Cast: Jane Wyman  
Lew Ayres

***Lady in the Dark***

Country: US

Year: 1944

Director: Mitchell Leisen

Producer(s): Paramount (Richard Blumenthal)

Writer(s): Frances Goodrich, Albert Hackett

Music: Kurt Weill (Lyrics: Ira Gershwin)



Music Director: Robert Emmett Dolan  
 Vocal Arrangements: Joseph J. Lilley  
 Orchestral Arrangements: Robert Russell Bennett  
 Music Associate: Arthur Franklin  
 Cast: Ginger Rogers  
       Warner Baxter  
       Ray Milland  
 Diegetic Songs:  
 'Dream Lover' (Schertzing-Grey)

***The Lamp Still Burns***

Country: UK  
 Year: 1943  
 Director: Maurice Elvey  
 Producer(s): GFD/Two Cities (Leslie Howard)  
 Writer(s): Elizabeth Baron, Roland Pertwee  
 Cast: Rosamund John  
       Stewart Granger

***Laura***

Country: US  
 Year: 1944  
 Director: Otto Preminger  
 Producer(s): TCF (Otto Preminger)  
 Writer(s): Jay Dratler, Samuel Hoffenstein, Betty Reinhardt  
 Music: David Raksin  
 Music Director: Emil Newman  
 Cast: Dana Andrews  
       Clifton Webb  
       Gene Tierney  
       Vincent Price

***The Letter***

Country: US  
 Year: 1940  
 Director: William Wyler  
 Producer(s): Warner (Robert Lord)  
 Writer(s): Howard Koch  
 Music: Max Steiner  
 Music Director: Leo F. Forbstein  
 Orchestrator: Hugo Friedhofer  
 Cast: Bette Davis  
       Herbert Marshall

***Listen to Britain***

Country: UK  
 Year: 1941  
 Director: Humphrey Jennings  
 Producer(s): Ministry of Information (Crown Film Unit)



Featured Artists: Myra Hess  
 R.A.F. Orchestra  
 Flanagon and Allen

Diegetic Music/Songs:  
 Mozart: Concerto in G Major, K. 453  
 'Just Strollin''

***The Little Foxes***

Country: US  
 Year: 1941  
 Director: William Wyler  
 Producer(s): Samuel Goldwyn  
 Writer(s): Lillian Hellman  
 Music: Meredith Willson  
 Cast: Bette Davis  
 Herbert Marshall

***The Locket***

Country: US  
 Year: 1946  
 Director: John Brahm  
 Producer(s): RKO (Bert Granet)  
 Writer(s): Sheridan Gibney  
 Music: Roy Webb  
 Cast: Laraine Day  
 Robert Mitchum  
 Brian Aherne  
 Gene Raymond

***The Lost Weekend***

Country: US  
 Year: 1945  
 Director: Billy Wilder  
 Producer(s): Paramount (Charles Brackett)  
 Writer(s): Charles Brackett, Billy Wilder  
 Music: Miklos Rosza  
 Cast: Ray Milland  
 Jane Wyman

***Mr. Skeffington***

Country: US  
 Year: 1944  
 Director: Vincent Sherman  
 Producer(s): Warner (Julius J. and Philip G. Epstein)  
 Writer(s): Julius J. and Philip G. Epstein  
 Music: Franz Waxman  
 Cast: Bette Davis  
 Claude Rains



***Madame Sousatzka***

Country: UK

Year: 1988

Director: John Schlesinger

Producer(s): Curzon/Sousatzka Productions (Robin Dalton)

Writer(s): Ruth Prawer Jhabvala

Music: Gerald Gouriet

Music Supervisor: Yonty Solomon

Cast: Shirley MacLaine

Peggy Ashcroft

Twiggy

Shabana Azmi

Diegetic Music/Songs:

Mouret: Bourrees (Arr. Tim Murray)

Schubert: Impromptu No. 4 in Ab, D899

Fantasie in F Minor for 4 Hands, D940

Scriabin: Etude in D# Minor No. 12

Chopin: C Minor Prelude

Polonaise in Ab Major

Etude in Ab Major

Mendelssohn: 'Spinning Song' from 'Songs Without Words'

Schumann: Carnaval, Op. 9

'Träumerei', No. 7 from 'Scenes from Childhood', Op. 15

Piano Concerto in A Minor, Op. 54

Melodie de Gluck from *Orpheus and Euridice* (transcribed for Piano by Sgambati)

Beethoven: Sonata in C Major

Sonata in F Minor, No. 23, Op. 57 ('Appassionata')

Brahms: Piano Concerto No. 1 in D Minor, Op. 15

String Quartet in A Minor, Op. 51, No. 2

Liszt: 'Waldesrauschen'

Mozart: *Marriage of Figaro*, K492

Handel: 'The Arrival of the Queen of Sheba' (Arr. for Saxophone Quartet by John Brown)

Improvisational Indian Music (played by Ismail Sheikh and Punjita Gupta)

Beethoven to Boogie Sequence - Yonty Soloman

'Hiding from the Eyes of Love' (Skarbek-Smit)

'Feel the Motion' (Smit-Skarbek)

***Madame X***

Country: US

Year: 1937

Director: Sam Wood

Producer(s): MGM (James K. McGuinness)

Writer(s): John Meehan

Music: David Snell

Cast: Gladys George

John Beal

***Madonna of the Seven Moons***



Country: UK  
 Year: 1944  
 Director: Arthur Crabtree  
 Producer(s): GFD/Gainsborough (R. J. Minney)  
 Writer(s): Roland Pertwee, Brock Williams  
 Music: Hans May  
 Music Director: Louis Levy  
 Cast: Phyllis Calvert  
       Stewart Granger  
       Patricia Roc  
 Diegetic Songs:  
 May: 'Rosanna'

***The Magic Bow***

Country: UK  
 Year: 1946  
 Director: Bernard Knowles  
 Producer(s): GFD/Gainsborough (R. J. Minney)  
 Writer(s): Norman Ginsburg, Roland Pertwee  
 Incidental Score: Henry Geehl  
 Music Director: Louis Levy  
 Solo Violin: Yehudi Menuhin  
 Cast: Stewart Granger  
       Jean Kent  
       Phyllis Calvert  
 Diegetic Music:  
 Paganini: 'Campanella'  
       Violin Concerto No. 1 in Eb  
       Caprice No. 20  
       'Nel cor pui nom mi senti'  
 Brazzini: 'La Ronde des lutins'  
 Beethoven: Violin Concerto in D, Op. 61  
 Tartini: 'The Devil's Trill' Sonata in G Minor  
 Phil Green: 'Romance' (based on theme from Paganini Concerto No. 6 in E Minor)

***The Manchurian Candidate***

Country: US  
 Year: 1962  
 Director: John Frankenheimer  
 Producer(s): UA/MC (Howard W. Koch)  
 Writer(s): George Axelrod  
 Music: David Amram  
 Cast: Frank Sinatra  
       Laurence Harvey  
       Janet Leigh

***The Man in Grey***

Country: UK



Year: 1943  
 Director: Leslie Arliss  
 Producer(s): GFD/Gainsborough (Edward Black)  
 Writer(s): Margaret Kennedy  
 Music: Cedric Mallabey  
 Music Director: Louis Levy  
 Cast: James Mason  
       Margaret Lockwood  
       Phyllis Calvert  
       Stewart Granger

***Marnie***

Country: US  
 Year: 1964  
 Director: Alfred Hitchcock  
 Producer(s): Universal/Geoffrey Stanley Inc (Alfred Hitchcock)  
 Writer(s): Jay Presson Allen  
 Music: Bernard Herrmann  
 Cast: Tippi Hedren  
       Sean Connery

***The Men***

Country: US  
 Year: 1950  
 Director: Fred Zinnemann  
 Producer(s): Stanley Kramer  
 Writer(s): Carl Foreman  
 Music/Conductor: Dimitri Tiomkin  
 Cast: Marlon Brando  
       Teresa Wright

***Mildred Pierce***

Country: US  
 Year: 1945  
 Director: Michael Curtiz  
 Producer(s): Warner (Jerry Wald)  
 Writer(s): Ranald MacDougall, Catherine Turney  
 Music: Max Steiner  
 Cast: Joan Crawford  
       Ann Blyth

***Millions Like Us***

Country: UK  
 Year: 1943  
 Director(s): Frank Launder, Sidney Gilliat  
 Producer(s): GFD/Gainsborough (Edward Black)  
 Writer(s): Frank Launder, Sidney Gilliat  
 Music Director: Louis Levy  
 Cast: Patricia Roc



Gordon Jackson

Diegetic Songs:

'Waiting at the Church' (Pether-Leigh)

Source Music used in nondiegetic score:

Beethoven: Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67

***Mine Own Executioner***

Country: UK

Year: 1947

Director: Anthony Kimmins

Producer(s): London Films (Anthony Kimmins, Jack Kitchin)

Writer(s): Nigel Balchin

Music: Benjamin Frankel

Cast: Burgess Meredith

Kieron Moore

Dulcie Gray

Barbara White

***Myra Hess***

Country: UK

Year: 1945

Director: John Trumper (using spare footage from Jennings' *A Diary for Timothy*)

Producer(s): Ministry of Information (Crown Film Unit)

Featured Artist: Myra Hess

Diegetic Music:

Beethoven: Sonata in F Minor, Op. 57 ('Appassionata')

***Night and the City***

Country: UK

Year: 1950

Director: Jules Dassin

Producer(s): TCF (Samuel G. Engel)

Writer(s): Jo Eisinger

Music: Benjamin Frankel (U.S. version: Franz Waxman)

Music Director: Muir Mathieson

Orchestrator: (U.S. version: Edward B. Powell)

Cast: Richard Widmark

Gene Tierney

Googie Withers

***Night Song (Memory of Love)***

Country: US

Year: 1947

Director: John Cromwell

Producer(s): RKO (Harriet Parsons)

Writer(s): Frank Fenton, Irving Hyland, De Witt Bodeen

Music: Leith Stevens

Music Director: C. Bakaleinikoff

Cast: Dana Andrews



Merle Oberon  
Hoagy Carmichael

Diegetic Music/Songs:  
Leith Stevens: Piano Concerto  
'Who Killed 'Er'

***Nil By Mouth***

Country: UK  
Year: 1997  
Director: Gary Oldman  
Producer(s): TCF/SE8 (Luc Besson, Douglas Urbanski, Gary Oldman)  
Writer(s): Gary Oldman  
Music: Eric Clapton  
Cast: Ray Winstone  
Kathy Burke

***Old Acquaintance***

Country: US  
Year: 1943  
Director: Vincent Sherman  
Producer(s): Warner (Henry Blanke)  
Writer(s): John Van Druten, Lenore Coffee  
Music: Franz Waxman  
Cast: Bette Davis  
Miriam Hopkins

***The Old Maid***

Country: US  
Year: 1939  
Director: Edmund Goulding  
Producer(s): Warner (Henry Blanke)  
Writer(s): Casey Robinson  
Music: Max Steiner  
Music Director: Leo F. Forbstein  
Cast: Bette Davis  
Miriam Hopkins  
George Brent

***Out of the Past (Build My Gallows High)***

Country: US  
Year: 1947  
Director: Jacques Tourneur  
Producer(s): RKO (Warren Duff)  
Writer(s): Geoffrey Homes  
Music: Roy Webb  
Music Director: C. Bakaleinikoff  
Cast: Robert Mitchum  
Jane Greer  
Kirk Douglas



Dickie Moore

Diegetic Music/Songs:

'The First Time I Saw You' (Shilkret-Wrubel)

***Peeping Tom***

Country: UK

Year: 1959

Director: Michael Powell

Producer(s): Anglo Amalgamated/Michael Powell

Writer(s): Leo Marks

Music/Music: Brian Easdale

Percussion number: Wally Stott

Cast: Carl Boehm

Moira Shearer

Anna Massey

***Penny Serenade***

Country: US

Year: 1941

Director: George Stevens

Producer(s): Columbia (Fred Guiol)

Writer(s): Morrie Ryskind

Music: W. Franke Harling

Music Director: Morris W. Stoloff

Cast: Cary Grant

Irene Dunne

Diegetic Songs:

'You Were Meant For Me' (Brown-Freed)

'My Blue Heaven' (Donaldson-Whiting)

'Just a Memory' (DeSylva-Brown-Henderson)

'Moonlight and Roses' (Moret-Black)

'Together' (DeSylva-Brown-Henderson)

Source Music used in nondiegetic score:

Edward MacDowell: 'To a Wild Rose', No. 1 of '10 Woodland Sketches'

***The Piano***

Country: Australia

Year: 1993

Director: Jane Campion

Producer(s): Entertainment/CIBY 2000/Jan Chapman

Writer(s): Jane Campion

Music: Michael Nyman

Cast: Holly Hunter

Harvey Keitel

Sam Neill

Anna Paquin

***Possessed***

Country: US



Year: 1947  
 Director: Curtis Bernhardt  
 Producer(s): Warner (Jerry Wald)  
 Writer(s): Silvia Richards, Ranald MacDougall  
 Music: Franz Waxman  
 Music Director: Leo F. Forbstein  
 Cast: Joan Crawford  
       Van Heflin  
       Geraldine Brooks  
 Diegetic Music:  
 Schumann: 'Carnaval', Op. 9

***The Private Lives of Elizabeth and Essex***

Country: US  
 Year: 1939  
 Director: Michael Curtiz  
 Producer(s): Warner (Robert Lord)  
 Writer(s): Norman Reilly Raine, Aeneas Mackenzie  
 Music: Erich Wolfgang Korngold  
 Music Director: Leo F. Forbstein  
 Orchestrator: Hugo Friedhofer, Milan Roder  
 Cast: Bette Davis  
       Errol Flynn

***Psycho***

Country: US  
 Year: 1960  
 Director: Alfred Hitchcock  
 Producer(s): Shamley/Alfred Hitchcock  
 Writer(s): Joseph Stefano  
 Music: Bernard Herrmann  
 Cast: Anthony Perkins  
       Vera Miles  
       Janet Leigh

***Rebel Without a Cause***

Country: US  
 Year: 1955  
 Director: Nicholas Ray  
 Producer(s): Warner (David Weisbart)  
 Writer(s): Stewart Stern  
 Music: Leonard Rosenman  
 Cast: James Dean  
       Natalie Wood

***Red River***

Country: US  
 Year: 1948  
 Director: Howard Hawks  
 Producer(s): UA/Monterey (Howard Hawks)



Writer(s): Borden Chase, Charles Schnee  
 Music: Dimitri Tiomkin  
 Cast: John Wayne  
       Montgomery Clift  
 Source Music/Songs used in nondiegetic score:  
 'Red River Valley' (traditional)  
 'Coming 'Round the Mountain'

***Scarlet Street***

Country: US  
 Year: 1945  
 Director: Fritz Lang  
 Producer(s): (Universal) Walter Wanger (Fritz Lang)  
 Writer(s): Dudley Nichols  
 Music: Hans J. Salter  
 Cast: Edward G. Robinson  
       Joan Bennett  
 Diegetic Songs:  
 'My Melancholy Baby' (Burnett-Norton-Watson)

***The Sea Hawk***

Country: US  
 Year: 1940  
 Director: Michael Curtiz  
 Producer(s): Warner (Hal B. Wallis, Henry Blanke)  
 Writer(s): Seton I. Miller, Howard Koch  
 Music: Erich Wolfgang Korngold  
 Music Director: Leo F. Forbstein  
 Orchestrators: Hugo Friedhofer, Milan Roder, Ray Heindorf, Simon Bucharoff  
 Cast: Errol Flynn  
       Flora Robson  
       Brenda Marshall

***The Searchers***

Country: US  
 Year: 1956  
 Director: John Ford  
 Producer(s): Warner/C. V. Whitney (Merian C. Cooper)  
 Writer(s): Frank S. Nugent  
 Music: Max Steiner  
 Cast: John Wayne  
       Jeffrey Hunter  
       Natalie Wood  
 Source Music/Songs used in nondiegetic score:  
 'The Searchers (Ride Away)' (Jones)

***The Seventh Veil***

Country: UK  
 Year: 1945



Director: Compton Bennett  
 Producer(s): Theatrecraft/Sydney Box/Ortus  
 Writer(s): Muriel and Sydney Box  
 Music: Benjamin Frankel  
 Cast: Ann Todd  
       James Mason  
       Herbert Lom  
       Albert Lieven  
       Hugh McDermott

Diegetic Music:

Chopin: Piano Prelude No. 7  
 Beethoven: Piano Sonata No. 8 in C Minor, Op. 13 ('Pathétique')  
 Grieg: Piano Concerto in A Minor, Op. 16  
 Mozart: Piano Sonata in C Major  
 Nicolai: Overture *Merry Wives of Windsor*  
 Rachmaninov: Piano Concerto No. 2 in C Minor, Op. 18  
 Frankel: 'Seventh Veil Waltz'

***The Small Back Room***

Country: UK  
 Year: 1949  
 Director: Michael Powell, Emeric Pressburger  
 Producer(s): London Films/The Archers  
 Writer(s): Michael Powell, Emeric Pressburger  
 Music: Brian Easdale  
 Night Club Scene Music: Ted Heath's Kenny Baker Swing Group, Fred Lewis  
 Cast: David Farrar  
       Kathleen Byron

***The Snake Pit***

Country: US  
 Year: 1948  
 Director: Anatole Litvak  
 Producer(s): TCF (Anatole Litvak, Robert Bassler)  
 Writer(s): Frank Partos, Millen Brand  
 Music: Alfred Newman  
 Cast: Olivia de Havilland

***A Song to Remember (The Song That Lived Forever, The Love of Madame Sand)***

Country: US  
 Year: 1944  
 Director: Charles Vidor  
 Producer(s): Columbia (Louis F. Edelman)  
 Writer(s): Sidney Buchman  
 Music Director: Miklos Rosza, Morris Stoloff  
 Cast: Cornel Wilde  
       Merle Oberon  
 Diegetic Music:  
 Various Chopin



***Spellbound (The House of Doctor Edwardes)***

Country: US

Year: 1945

Director: Alfred Hitchcock

Producer(s): David O. Selznick

Writer(s): Ben Hecht, Angus MacPhail

Music: Miklos Rosza

Orchestrator: Eugene Zador

Cast: Ingrid Bergman

Gregory Peck

***The Spiral Staircase***

Country: US

Year: 1945

Director: Robert Siodmak

Producer(s): RKO (Dore Schary)

Writer(s): Mel Dinelli

Music: Roy Webb

Music Director: C. Bakaleinikoff

Cast: Dorothy McGuire

***Stella Dallas***

Country: US

Year: 1937

Director: King Vidor

Producer(s): Samuel Goldwyn

Writer(s): Victor Heerman, Sarah Y. Mason

Music: Alfred Newman

Cast: Barbara Stanwyck

John Boles

***Strangers on a Train***

Country: US

Year: 1951

Director: Alfred Hitchcock

Producer(s): Warner (Alfred Hitchcock)

Writer(s): Raymond Chandler, Czenzi Ormonde

Music: Dimitri Tiomkin

Music Director: Ray Heindorf

Cast: Farley Granger

Robert Walker

Diegetic Songs:

'The Band Played On' (Ward-Palmer)

***Tawny Pipit***

Country: UK

Year: 1944



Director: Bernard Miles  
 Producer(s): GFD/Two Cities (Bernard Miles)  
 Writer(s): Bernard Miles  
 Music: Noel Mewton-Wood  
 Music Director: Muir Mathieson  
 Cast: Bernard Miles  
       Rosamund John

***Tea and Sympathy***

Country: US  
 Year: 1956  
 Director: Vincente Minnelli  
 Producer(s): MGM (Pandro S. Berman)  
 Writer(s): Robert Anderson (and the Hays Office)  
 Music: Adolph Deutsch  
 Cast: Deborah Kerr  
       John Kerr

***This Above All***

Country: US  
 Year: 1942  
 Director: Anatole Litvak  
 Producer(s): TCF (Darryl F. Zanuck)  
 Writer(s): R. C. Sherriff  
 Music: Alfred Newman  
 Cast: Tyrone Power  
       Joan Fontaine

***This England (Our Heritage)***

Country: UK  
 Year: 1941  
 Director: David MacDonald  
 Producer(s): British National  
 Writer(s): Emlyn Williams  
 Cast: John Clements  
       Emlyn Williams

***This Happy Breed***

Country: UK  
 Year: 1944  
 Director: David Lean  
 Producer(s): GFD/Two Cities/Cineguild (Noël Coward, Anthony Havelock-Allan)  
 Writer(s): David Lean, Ronald Neame, Anthony Havelock-Allan  
 Cast: Robert Newton  
       Celia Johnson

***Three Colours Blue (Trois couleurs bleu)***

Country: France  
 Year: 1993



Director: Krzysztof Kieslowski  
 Producer(s): Artifical Eye/MK2/CED/France 3/CAB/TOR/Canal (Marin Karmitz)  
 Writer(s): Krzysztof Pisiewicz  
 Music: Zbigniew Preisner  
 Cast: Juliette Binoche  
       Benoît Régent

***Truly, Madly, Deeply (Cello)***

Country: UK  
 Year: 1990  
 Director: Anthony Minghella  
 Producer(s): Samuel Goldwyn Company/Winston/BBC/Lionheart (Robert Cooper)  
 Writer(s): Anthony Minghella  
 Music: Barrington Pheloung  
 Cast: Juliet Stevenson  
       Alan Rickman  
 Diegetic Music/Songs:  
 J. S. Bach: Cello Sonata No. 3 in G Minor (BWV 1029)  
       Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 in G Major  
       Keyboard Concerto in G Minor (S 1058)  
       Sarabande for solo cello in C Minor  
 'A Case of You' (Mitchell)  
 'Tangled Up in Blue' (Dylan)  
 'Raining in My Heart' (Bryant-Bryant)  
 'Sun Ain't Gonna Shine Anymore' (Crewe-Gaudio)

***The Two Mrs. Carrolls***

Country: US  
 Year: 1945 (released 1947)  
 Director: Peter Godfrey  
 Producer(s): Warner (Mark Hellinger)  
 Writer(s): Thomas Job  
 Music: Franz Waxman  
 Orchestrator: Leonid Raab  
 Cast: Barbara Stanwyck  
       Humphrey Bogart

***Vertigo***

Country: US  
 Year: 1958  
 Director: Alfred Hitchcock  
 Producer(s): Paramount (Alfred Hitchcock)  
 Writer(s): Alec Coppel, Samuel Taylor  
 Music: Bernard Herrmann  
 Cast: James Stewart  
       Kim Novak

***Waterloo Bridge***

Country: US



Year: 1940  
 Director: Mervyn LeRoy  
 Producer(s): MGM (Sidney Franklin)  
 Writer(s): S. N. Behrman, Hans Rameau, George Froeschel  
 Music: Herbert Stothart  
 Cast: Vivien Leigh  
       Robert Taylor

***The Way Ahead***

Country: UK  
 Year: 1944  
 Director: Carol Reed  
 Producer(s): GFD/Two Cities (John Sutro, Norman Walker)  
 Writer(s): Eric Ambler, Peter Ustinov  
 Music: William Alwyn  
 Music Director: Muir Mathieson  
 Cast: David Niven  
       Stanley Holloway

***The Way to the Stars (Johnny in the Clouds; Rendezvous)***

Country: UK  
 Year: 1945  
 Director: Anthony Asquith  
 Producer(s): Two Cities (Anatole de Grunwald)  
 Writer(s): Terence Rattigan, Anatole de Grunwald  
 Poem: John Pudney  
 Music: Nicholas Brodszky  
 Music Director: Charles Williams  
 Cast: John Mills  
       Rosamund John  
       Michael Redgrave  
       Joyce Carey  
       Renée Asherson

Diegetic Songs:  
 'How Long?'

***While I Live (The Dream of Olwen)***

Country: UK  
 Year: 1947  
 Director: John Harlow  
 Producer(s): Edward Dryhurst  
 Writer(s): John Harlow, Doreen Montgomery  
 Music: Charles Williams  
 Cast: Tom Walls  
       Sonia Dresdel  
       Audrey Fildes

Diegetic Music:  
 Williams: 'The Dream of Olwen'



***The Wicked Lady***

Country: UK

Year: 1945

Director: Leslie Arliss

Producer(s): GFD/Gainsborough (R. J. Minney)

Writer(s): Leslie Arliss

Music: Hans May

Music Director: Louis Levy

Cast: Margaret Lockwood  
James Mason

Diegetic Songs:

May: 'Love Steals Your Heart'

***The Young Mr. Lincoln***

Country: US

Year: 1939

Director: John Ford

Producer(s): TCF (Kenneth MacGowan)

Writer(s): Lamar Trotti

Music: Alfred Newman

Cast: Henry Fonda  
Alice Brady***The Young Stranger***

Country: US

Year: 1957

Director: John Frankenheimer

Producer(s): RKO (Stuart Millar)

Writer(s): Robert Dozier

Music: Leonard Rosenman

Cast: James MacArthur  
Kim Hunter



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