



New York Cultural Center

The Crossroads of Music and the Movies

**Speakers: Kristi Brown, Musicologist
Anastas Michos, Cinematographer
Gene Stavis, Film Historian
Salvatore Petrosino, Moderator**

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The School of Visual Arts GENE STAVIS THEATER
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**transcript not reviewed by the speakers*

John Touhey: Good evening. On behalf of Crossroads New York Cultural Center, I would like to welcome all of you to tonight's event, "The crossroads of music and movies." Before anything else I would like to take a few seconds to thank the people who made this event possible, above all Gene Stavis and Sal Petrosino. I am going to introduce both of them as members of our panel, but describing them as a "film historian" and the "moderator" of the discussion does not do justice at all to the role they have played in making this possible. Tonight's event is principally the fruit of their passionate love for beauty and of their deep scholarship. They have proposed this fascinating theme, the confluence of music and cinematography. It is a theme that goes back to the very beginning of the history of cinema, when movies were silent and music provided an indispensable emotional support to the images moving on the screen. As technology has evolved, the interaction between music and projected images has not become any less crucial, but rather subtler, deeper and more sophisticated. It has been an ongoing dialogue between two complementary forms of expression, which reinforce each other in highlighting the most important human experiences and striving for truth in its many aspects. To start the evening I would like to introduce the Director of Operations for the School of Visual Arts -Film Department Mr. Salvatore Petrosino .

Petrosino: Good evening and welcome to tonight's *Crossroads of Music and Cinema*. On behalf of the School of Visual Arts Film Department, the chairman Reeves Lehmann, and me, we are happy to be part this very special event.

I am sure everyone here tonight has been moved,---affected, by both the power of music and cinema. For example, how many times has a single musical chord rippled through us emotionally and freed us to laugh or cry, to remember and possibly even to hope. Who

among us hasn't *immediately* been transported back to a specific time in our life simply by listening to a piece of music? What is it about the power of music that has such an effect on us? An effect that touches our soul in such a profound way? That connects our life and experiences?

Our first guest this evening is Ms. Kristi Brown who will help us better understand and appreciate the effect music has on us. Ms. Brown, who visits us all the way from Los Angeles especially to be with us for this event is a doctor of music history and literature at the university of California Berkeley, a well-respected publisher, composer and artist, who has appeared in a variety of operatic performances.

I am happy to introduce Ms. Kristi Brown.

Brown: Good evening. I'm very happy to be here. I'm very honored to be here. I'm having a great time in New York. And we'll have some fun.

I remember when I first began to study about film music, I read this theory that music was introduced to the film experience, the viewing experience, to drown out the sound of the old projector. As a musician I found that very unsatisfying. Somehow... Oh, let's play some music so we don't have to hear that. That's kind of a default value. That goes against everything I know about music history, and why music is valued by the culture, by other artists. I'm certain there was this practical reason of getting rid of the sound, but there were also at least two compelling historical reasons why film makers would have thought to include music. First, music has been combined with drama and visual spectacle for centuries. Obviously opera is one example. Ballet is another. And there's music for theatre works, not that they were specifically opera. They were theatre works with some kind of "entr'acte" music. Even in some ways religious liturgies are spectacle and some kind of drama with music incorporated. So that's the first thing. It's made a good partner to the other arts.

The second thing is that for centuries philosophers and musicians have been talking about music's particular expressive power. It started way back when with Aristotle and Plato talking about the fact that if you played a certain series of notes, which they might call the Dorian mode, not the Medieval Dorian mode, I know you were all thinking that, it was their Dorian mode and it made you robust and brave and powerful. But if you listened to the Frigian mode, you might become a little bit loopy and begin to act in strange ways, and kill people, and so not too much Frigian mode, go light on the Frigian mode. Music had an ethical power, so that when you listened, it would affect your behavior, your mood, your perception of life. So it was a very powerful medium.

In the 17th and 18th Century, they were influenced by the doctrine of effections—effections being kind of catalogued, pure emotions—rage, love, sorrow—and that music, like rhetoric, could pull out of the listener those emotions so that if you did a particular set of rhythms, melodic gestures, form, you could actually make the listener understand this is a rage aria, this is a lament, and they would feel and be moved by that emotion.

And theorists at that time wrote reams of books—basically this is how it works, if you do this, if you play this key, this is what will happen. They were all full of treatises on this.

In the 19th Century, there was more and more value placed on instrumentalism. That is, music not attached to words, or to have a specific meaning. It wasn't the rage aria. But you would be listening and you could feel several things at once. That instrumental music could in fact bring several emotions simultaneously to the experience of the listener. One particular composer whose ideas link up well with the music of film-making was Richard Wagner who like many geniuses was a jerk, but he had some great ideas, and one was that while the narrative of these operas, the part that is spoken, the poetry was the external drama, that which we could see happening in front of us and told us what the story was, the orchestra was responsible for the internal drama, the part that we didn't hear about but that we sensed from the story-telling. So that as you can see is very much kind of a predecessor of music and film from the audience perspective.

So there are at least these two historical factors: First, tradition of providing music for the other arts, second, the concept of music as having this potential power for the listener of communicating meaning which we then internalize even to the point of being a kind of special language.

The early practices of film scoring reflect these ideas. Pretty much from the beginning there was always some kind of musical accompaniment. Musicians, cast and organists began to get some clout. The Edison Company, in 1909, began publishing musical suggestion cues for their movies so that pianists could actually have some idea what to play. Max Winkler was one of the first to assemble a kind of cataloging of film cues that musicians could use. He began to ask film makers if they could let him watch first then he could send out ideas. There are other famous catalogues, one of them being a composer, Erno Rapee, who published a big catalogue. I love the title—*Motion Picture Moods for Pianists and Organists*, and it had these great categories: Battle: 20 suggestions for battle. Love: 20 suggestions for love. China—if you had a scene in China, these are the music things to use. So it gave you an idea that very early on people had ideas of types of music that were appropriate to specific dramatic situations. This is not a new thing; this is really from the inception, and this has been going on right up to the present, in my opinion.

Now that we have more films to watch, we come to the point where listening to different films, they're talking to each other in terms of music, and I'm sure dramatically, and visually....but they begin to talk to each other, so that you hear certain themes have a kind of music. This theme is pretty much going to have this kind of music. They may try to be ironic. The great one is Hannibal Lector tearing ears off with Goldberg variations, right? That's a good one. But otherwise you pretty much....in fact, I'll share something my daughter did for a science fair project. She wasn't influenced at all by me. [Laughter] But she chose to take five clips of movie music and have people listen to them and then they had to describe, write down, their description of what scene they thought was playing. And it was remarkable, even the ones that were difficult, how many similar themes came in.

Let's try an easy one from Katerina's science fair project. This is the first track. It's an audio track. So listen to this and see what kind of scene this would conjure in your mind. [music plays] What do you think? Love? [laughter] You got it right! [laughter] Definitely fear, suspense, menace, terror. It's not the love theme although that would be funny. So that was an easy one. That was actually from *The Sixth Sense*. It was *Suicide Ghost*. The second one is a little harder. Let's do the next track. [music plays] Don't give it away if you know what it is. Discovery, union, calm and romantic with a slight foreboding, returning and reunion. Yes! Well, this is from *Sense and Sensibility*; it is the moment where Eleanor discovers that Edward is not married and that he is in fact in love with her. And so, he has returned. There is discovery; there is union; there is that kind of worry because she's afraid he's going to say, "How are you doing? My life is fine." All of those are there. Now let me tell you, the reason why I did this is because we were hurting for data in the science fair. The partner flaked out and only got one set of responses. My daughter had done her six. We resorted to asking my then three-year-old son. When he heard *The Sixth Sense* he said, "The monster is coming." He knew it instantly. On the next one he said, "He won the race and he brought home the prize." And I thought, how amazing! Three years old and he got this. He understood that there was something triumphant and he won. There was a sense of closure. I love this. We were picking up on these kinds of clues.

So, with that in mind, I'm going to look at a special type of scoring. A lot of the recommended pieces in those early catalogues I was talking about were borrowed from the classical repertory, vogue repertory, popular repertory, but a lot of things from classical orchestral pieces. You'd see Beethoven's Third here, or something from *The Funeral March*, and this is continued. We still have lots of films that are a combination of original scoring and then some borrowed excerpts. I'm very interested in this kind of scoring because I feel like somebody made a decision that they wanted that particular piece, and the associations with a film piece...and they have reasons for choosing that and they really want you to pick up on those things.

Another thing that I love is that potentially all music can be film music, which is not something you think about. Any time the Academy Award is given for Original Score, we don't think that it offers a lot more than just a composer's job of writing original music, but there are other tracks to fit in. We're going to look at some of the things where these associative properties around a particular piece of work, a piece of music, has been carried through and how it changes over about a century. I've chosen one piece. I think we'll listen to the next track. I'm not even going to say the name of it yet. It's one that even if you don't know the name, (this is our third audio track) and even if you don't know the name, I think you'll recognize it. So could we have the next audio? [music plays] So, does anyone know what this piece is? *In the Hall of the Mountain King!* Edvard Grieg from the Peer Gynt suite. It was what he was actually asked to write for Ibsen's play. It is the trolls inside the mountain, and Peer Gynt goes in there. He's followed a troll girl in there who looks really good on the outside of the mountain and really bad once she gets back in. She has a tail and a big snout. It tends to be a problem. So he goes in front of the king of the trolls. Musically you're picking up some cues here.

From the very beginning, what are some things that strike you as you're listening to this piece? There's a march-like....there's a sense that something is approaching. It has a feeling of being almost too simple for its own good. It is a little silly, isn't it? So there is a feeling of scary and funny at the same time. Some cues for that... [She plays part of *In the Hall of the Mountain King* on the keyboard] That slide is creepy. It's also in the minor mode. [She plays and sings *Happy Birthday* in a minor key, laughter and applause] So that's the difference it has, sadness, we associate the minor mode with that. And it's clunky, and it races up. And then it gets higher and it comes back obsessively—18 million times you hear that. Do we have the end ready? Until the end, the two minutes. Mark? [plays end of *In the Hall of the Mountain King*]

Okay, so what do we notice about the end? It's faster than the beginning. And we've been getting faster and faster all the way through. To me it feels a little hysterical at that point. It feels very edgy. What else? Overwhelmed. Yes. It gets louder. The orchestra has expanded. We started very low, in the low range. Now we're up with these hysterical violins in their highest range. Definitely builds panic, and we have these dissonant chords. [she plays keyboard] So that's the dynamic of the piece. I'm not going to play all of it right now. But all of those things come together when he uses this piece with film.

Now I have some film clips spanning from 1915, with *The Birth of a Nation*, which is what we'll start with, to *Rat Race* from 2001. So there's almost a century of music. The first one, *The Birth of a Nation*, it will begin with a scene where the Union soldiers attack Atlanta. This was a very innovative score. Griffith had actually studied some composition, the director, but he worked with a composer—Joseph Carl Breil and they put together a tapestry of cues—over 200 of them actually, 226 is what sticks in my mind—a mixture of classicals, favorites, folk tunes, and some original cues that Breil composed, so when it all came together, it was this huge pastiche of things that they had borrowed. This is the scene, as I said, where these Union soldiers attack at Atlanta. This was one of the first epic films. It's not very popular now for obvious reasons—the original title having been *The Klansman*. [film clip is shown, *In the Hall of the Mountain King* plays] So from Griffith's point of view, it was the Union soldiers who were like the trolls coming into Atlanta. And he plays the entire piece and uses it for a series of scenes, but the pictures are basically....the sophistication of battle scenes was fairly low at this point, but he did use the entire piece, all the way through those thumping chords.

The next, perhaps one of the most famous uses of *In the Hall of the Mountain King*, it's Fritz Lang's *M* from 1931. It's not actually background music, it's what we call diegetic. In the story world there is a pedophilic serial killer, always my favorite head character. [laughter] He had to find the worst thing he could. Actually it's an anti-death penalty film in a lot of ways, and he wanted to find the most horrible crime. What he also does is attach this obsessive tune to the killer who, when he goes through the transformation of a kind of normal guy eating his apple, he sees a little girl and goes through this transformation. You see Peter Lorre during this kind of strange moment, and sweating and sweating, and then [she whistles tune from *In the Hall of the Mountain King*] and he starts chasing the girl, slowly. It was Lang himself who provided the whistling because he wanted it to be out of tune.

Instead I've chosen 1937 *Love from a Stranger*, and let me tell you, to get this film clip here tonight was no easy task. I sent it Monday by Fed Ex overnight, and they lost the package. I sent it by UPS and they missed the package. It's still in the Brooklyn distribution center, but they'll deliver it on Monday. So thank you to Lisa, [applause] for having gone to Kim's Video where you can rent any kind of film, including the 1937 *Love from a Stranger* with Basil Rathbone playing a serial killer who has married many women and then done them in. As opposed to what we just saw, this is interesting because this is not a silent film. This is a film with dialogue. But look what happens in this scene: [clip is shown] Serial killers love dark rooms and photography. Okay, caught by the wife! I love that because it's rather a boring scene. He's just kind of going through...the reason you're scared is because you see where this is going. But I love it. It's so still, and he's so quiet about it. What does it tell you? This is the barbarian internal, right? He's getting more and more worked up about this. He can't wait for that moment. And he's just looking, and still and still, and it's getting creepier and creepier, and then crunch up the picture, and then she comes in and blows the whole thing. And they make it perfectly with the pounding chord at the end. So the music is doing a lot of work there. It's not just background. It's doing a lot of work for us too without which the visuals would be kind of innocuous. Interesting original score written by Benjamin Britten for that film. So the rest of the music was Benjamin Britten.

Between 1937 and our next clip there was not as much use of it. It was used popularly. There was a Peer Gynt film in 1941, a Pied Piper of Hamelin in 1957, obviously when the rats were lead away. But there was lots going on in pop music—both Jazz and Rock—with this piece. Everybody wanted to use this piece. Duke Ellington made a version of this in his Three Suites, Hugo Montenegro, and one of my favorites, The Who, which we'll listen to in just a moment, The Electric Light Orchestra in 1973, Sabotage in their *Prelude to Madness* in 1987, and Rainbow, heavy metal, in 1995. But let's listen to just 30 seconds of The Who playing *In the Hall of the Mountain King*. [music plays] I just love that though. You can just see them saying, "Okay, let's do this...ooooh, ooooh, aaaah, aaaah." A little bit off, slightly flat. It's a great feeling. I think this kind of thing which was happening all over, there were other bands that loved this piece, I think that this kind of stuck to the piece culturally. There was this idea that it could be, in a sense, rock and roll. There was an anti-social, counter-cultural kind of attachment to it as well, people getting wild. And this came forward. I mean, this piece was used a lot.

It was used in *Demons*, *Young Einstein* in a beer laboratory scene, *Kiki's Delivery Service*, but two of my favorites are from *Needful Things*, 1993 and *Rat Race*, 2001. This is where I begin to see there is the kind of horror intensification and also chaotic, everybody going wild, in these two films. All the things that you talked about, that it was kind of silly and chaotic and spinning out of control and overwhelmed, but also scary come out in these two clips. What I also like about these two clips is that the music is deciding the form. This is one of those times where music, in a way, is perfectly on par with visuals, meaning the form of the piece—I believe the director timed the action to kind of work with it because it's almost to the point of Mickey Mousing sometimes certain musical effects. They cut little bits of the music, but it's almost complete. The first one was in a trailer, so that one you can chop up easily. *The Rat Race* will be a

scene. Let's watch the trailer. This is where I love the fact that Max von Sydow comes as the Devil to a small town in Maine as a novelty store owner to wreak havoc. And it intensifies every gesture of the music too. Trailer? [Trailer plays] It's so over the top, it's funny. It's supposed to be horrific. It's so flip in the fact that you have the man who is Jesus in *The Greatest Story Ever Told* now being the Devil. I mean, there's even an irony in that. Explosions timed to the chords. It's a wonderful use of the piece and it shows it's still doing work in film. It's amazing that it's still being pulled out, this old chestnut, and that it's still something new and funny.

Now, my favorite is *Rat Race*, and we'll close with that. The trailer can be cut up and you see that the shots and the cuts come faster as the music speeds up. This one it has to be the action that's what's happening so let's close with this. In this one they really do almost the complete music. Yes, they're all chasing after the treasure. They're in Las Vegas. They're in a competition for 2 million dollars which is in a train station in New Mexico. So they all run after it trying to out-smart each other. Pretty soon you'll see Seth Green and his brother, who has pierced his tongue and can't speak, and they want to find a way to shut down the airport because there are no tickets available for them, so they want to keep everyone from flying out. And that will be coming up in just a second. Almost...[scene from *Rat Race* plays] This is the not-too-smart side of *In the Hall of the Mountain King* troll.

An early film theorist, Eisenstein, talked about "a third something"—if you take two clips of film and you put them together they become something new, a third something. And I think that happens with music, even old music and a piece of film. Once you put those two things together, it's not *In the Hall of the Mountain King*, it's not individuals, it's this third something, Eisenstein's Third Something. And this is what I think is one of the true sources of originality in film music and the reason why this old piece *In the Hall of the Mountain King* continues to appear in film, and more importantly, continues to entertain us. Recognition is part of it, and also, as viewers, we love to see our expectation is going to be met, or crossed, or intensified, and that's the mentality of all film music. It lies in that creative interaction with visual drama—the ability to generate new meanings from familiar language. Thank you very much.

Petrosino: As one of the leading cinematographers in the motion picture industry, Anastos Michos brings a visionary sensibility and distinctive palette to a story. His visual craftsmanship on such films as; *Mona Lisa Smile*, *The Forgotten*, and *Freedom Land*, are just a sampling of his achievement as visual story teller. As cinematographer, it is his responsibility to understand the theme of the story and bring a visual sense of clarity to the subtext of a scene. It is the cinematographer who visually interprets the director's vision, even if the director isn't quite sure what that vision is! The cinematographer understands the movement of drama and explores the emotional crisis of its characters and their relationships.

I am pleased to introduce Mr. Anastos Michos.

Michos: That last presentation was a little hard to top or even get close to, but we'll try to see what we can say about what our craft is.

Cinematography is the art of telling narrative stories in picture. It's what we do, and our film historians here have told us that our craft is 100 years old, as of 10 years ago we had our 100th anniversary, and those of us who have decided to go into the business sort of use music all the time in terms of how we communicate with our fellow craftsmen and our colleagues. I was a musician, failed at that. It's very hard to be a rock and roll player. So I realized early on that maybe I actually had to send my kids to college and do something else with my life instead of playing bar bands. And in cinematography, through theatre actually, one of the things that I always strove to do was tell stories, telling stories visually and through what got to be my medium which was writing. And then when I finally got into feature films, as an ex-musician, rock and roll cat, it became very useful as a means of dialogue between the rest of my colleagues, specifically because when we worked on a big project, such as a film, a film requires so many different elements to get it off the ground, to tell that narrative. I read a script; I take it home; I turn the pages and I get what the plot of the story is and then I have to go talk to a director to find out whether or not we're actually going to make this movie. Do I want to make a movie with this director? What kind of film are we going to make out of it? The easiest and most common language we have as a society is to talk about things in common terms is, even in film, is in music. Is it a drama? Is it a comedy? Is it a thriller? Is it a horror film?—which are the basic genres we start talking about, and then we go into talking about the pace of the film, whether or not it's a fast film or a slow film, what is the color involved in these films? Is it muted? Is it going to be a brassy kind of in-your-face comedy? Is it going to be a moody sort of period piece? It gives us a language to communicate amongst ourselves as craftsmen and as artists as to where we want to go.

The way the film gets made—I'm the guy who does it, so I can go through the steps real quick. What happens in pre-production is we get into a room and me being the director, myself, the production designer, and we start talking about the story, and we have to talk about the story, about where it takes place, the kinds of shots we're going to do. We reference other films and we reference music all the time because, as this exercise so beautifully did is we can each of us, individually, conjure up images, and then be able to communicate to our colleagues. The sad thing about the process is that oddly enough, the editor and the composer don't come on the films until the film is done, wrapped, finished. I've only met the composer on my last ten features as a cinematographer. It started with *Man on the Moon*. This last one's called *Perfect Stranger*—with Halle Berry, James Foley directed it. Literally two weeks after I wrapped, when I went by the production office just to pick up my stuff, and the composer was there. It has to do with our schedules, but it also has to do with just the way films are made. It's a real dilemma.

I'm going to show a couple clips here, and the clips are interesting because our editor...the first clip is from the film I did last year called *Freedom Land* which was directed by Joe Roth with Sam Jackson and Julianne Moore. The reason I liked the title sequence so much is I actually got to talk to the editor about what the title sequence was going to be. Certain decisions get made after I come in—what the score is, what music is

the director thinking about, or sometimes the director's not thinking...and so this was a case where the editor and myself actually sat down and played some Brian Hale pieces and we talked about trying to set up the mood for a police drama. So why don't we hit that first clip real quick? [clip from *Freedom Land* is shown] You might have to wade through some of the material here.

Not only do we use music to communicate what we think the intention of the scene is and how it should be, but I actually think about my lighting and my camera in the same planes. Lighting is about contrast. It's about telling a story in contrapuntal ways. And in lighting, although we might have a light or dark scene, as you can see from the film clip, you notice that it's really about scenes that are very dark and very bright, juxtaposed next to each other. And it's the same thing, I could liken it to musical pieces that have loud and soft passages to it. And so we do talk about that with the production designer in the same sensibility and whether or not the room will be big or small or bright or not bright, or the color of the paint will be of a certain hue. Speaking of color, lighting has warm tones and cold tones. And it's the same with musical qualities, whether something is a brassy sound or a wooden sound. And a warm light harkens back to our days around the camp fire. If you want to make something romantic, stick a candle in it. It's a really simple cinematographer's trick to make it real. And it's also about the texture of the lighting, and as a photographer, light actually does have texture, it's hard or soft. In music, it's the attack of a note—whether or not you're pounding into that piano key or you're just barely tickling it. Also, where the light is placed. Is it low? Is it high? Is it submissive or dominant? What is the intent of the scene? What is the intent of the piece and then where do we go from there? Also in that piece there, there was talk of atonality and harmony, and in cinematography we do the same thing.

I did a piece called *Mona Lisa Smile*, I think I have it on this clip, about an art teacher, graduated Wellesley in 1955, Julia Roberts, Kirsten Dunst and a bevy of other babes. Mike Newell was the director. Mike had directed a number of films from romantic comedies to thrillers to dramas. And one of our decisions was to make what kind of box are we sticking this film into? We, as cinematographers, had different aspect ratios of what we project. In other words, how big of a square are you looking into our window? Is it a tall and skinny square, like television? Is it 1.85 aspect ratio, which is what most classical art is composed of. Or 2.50 anamorphic light speed? One can liken that because it was a classically derived piece, in *Mona Lisa Smile*, much of the score was very classical because it was about an art teacher trying to buck the system, and we decided to go, as well, with the classic frame, with 1.85.

In this last thing that you saw, *Freedom Land*, it was a wide screen, and we were always trying to be contrapuntal to what the story was. The story was a very simple story about a mom who told the police, Sam Jackson, that a member of his community had hijacked her car and ran off with her 4-year-old child. It's an event that happens every month in the United States. It turns out that well over 70% of the kids are kidnapped by their own family members. So rather than being a classical piece, we wanted to turn it into a thriller, and we used a lot of really jarring and jagged music in the scenes we played with. Many times, like that opening sequence, I had heard the piece beforehand, before I

actually shot it, because we had all discussed it, and we really tried to make it as jagged as that guitar when you came in by doing such tricks as I didn't attach the lens to the camera. I just held it in front and I would take it on and off, so all those little jumpy cuts that you see is my finger on the switch of the camera, turning the camera on and off. As I'm rolling I'm taking the lens and putting it on and off. Using Sterno cans in Yonkers in February in a rain storm and sticking them right underneath the lens to get a wavy kind of heat wave. We got the music cranked up, just like a music video, and we were making movies to music which is a rare occasion.

The way the film works is that an editor assembles a rough cut while the director and I shoot. And at the end of our wrap, 7, 12, 14 weeks in, the director goes and he looks at the rough cut and he looks at the music that the editor chose, which is a temp track, and that temp track then follows this film religiously right to the final mix. When a film is first previewed to the audience, it is always previewed with the temp track. It is not previewed with a score by a composer which of course has problems with it. Mainly that with many films I've been on, the complaint that I always hear from composers are the director saying, "Can you make it more like the temp track?" Because everybody's gotten used to that ear. Certain directors will do things like get a temp track of a composer that they know they want to work with and try and use that piece of music, but sometimes that doesn't work because obviously the styles of films are so different that just because he composed a thriller last time doesn't mean he wants to use it in a romantic comedy this time. So it can cause great alarm.

I have to say, and I'm up here just talking as a film guy, the best fun I ever had ever in the film business was watching a film of mine be mixed and scored. I was out in L.A. timing a picture and a buddy of mine, the director, was doing a film so I got to sit in on all the scoring. The composer assembled a 130-piece orchestra in Warner Brothers Studio in this amazing, phenomenal space, and the movie was projected on a screen that was 70 feet wide and he had his guys, and they're all his guys, his 130 special guys, and they'd be like sitting there reading books, and one guy was on his Blackberry, and they gave him a little tap and the film would roll. And what they do now is when the film rolls, it rolls to cues. There are certain symbols that come up on the film that go along with the score. So each musician knows when their part's coming and when they have to come in to their cue because obviously they have to hit the editorial cues that the editor put in. So all those cues that you hear on the explosions, were recorded live to the editorial because the film has already been picture locked, so they're watching it, and they'll be music cues that last anywhere from a 15 second cue to a minute piece, and the greatest thing is to watch your film up there while these people are just madly playing their hearts out. And they record it and you go back into the group and you look at it, and the director will say, "Man, it just seems a little slow on that one cut." And the composer says, "I can fix that!" And he grabs his pen, and his music supervisor comes over and the person who writes the score down on a piece of paper comes down and says, "Okay, we'll take a 32nd note out here, and we'll drop this 16th and let's go out and do it again." And of course they do it, and it's phenomenal to see 130 people just nail it. I mean nail it—bang! And the power that you get when it does line up is just great.

So, we're going to show another piece. We're going to show a piece from *The Forgotten* which is also a Julianne Moore picture—strange enough back to back, and this is like a little science fiction. [A clip from *The Forgotten* is shown] It feels very obvious that those music cues need to be there because that's what we as a culture have grown to expect from films. I am not surprised that your 3-year-old knew exactly what was going on. I bring home my dailies to watch on DVD at home as well as at the theatre or after working in the lab or whatever, and I remember my kid when he was 4, 5 or 6 years old. He could easily see the dailies. The dailies were not a problem for him. Even that particular scene when he was at that point 8 or 7—you know, there was a scary guy, things were blowing up, Julianne Moore was running after a kid, it was all fun and well, and then he saw the premier, and he watched the entire movie through his sweater. He had seen it before, but without a film score, and even to this day, if he can't take the movie, the sound goes down, the score goes down, then he can watch the film because no matter how visceral the images are, unless they are at a point of shocking, what makes us anticipate is our aural sensibility. It brings us back to being alone in the cave, and the crunchiness of the outside that we don't know what it is. But once we see it, we understand it, so our brain can easily understand something and be not afraid of it much quicker than our ears can, and that's why it works so well. We use it all the time even on set. I will constantly say to a director, some more than others, what music do you plan on using with this scene? Some of them actually do know, the Milos Formans, the Mike Newells and the Edward Nortons know exactly where the music will be. Those guys understand the process so well. Other directors, sorry to say, do not know. They don't have at all a sense of where the film is going because they are so tied up in the visual, and I am so aware that my images are going to be put to some sort of sound, and that's what I shoot for always. And even then, in that piece there, it went from these very static shots—that opening scene, a helicopter goes in—there are these driving shots which are very static-y, with an underscore which is not foreboding, just a little bit of melody back there to just cover up the dialogue to smooth out the transition. And then the car crash comes out of no where, and from that moment on we go hand held, and also from that moment on you can hear that the score runs totally atonal and becomes very percussive and very arrhythmic. Contrary to what the editorial process was, or even the shooting processes, because we will use camera moves and think about scores that go with them.

Way back when I was a steadicam operator, and I did a film for Oliver Stone, a couple of them, and what we did was while I was doing the shots, I had a walkman, back then no ipods, and I was actually listening to scores. A steadicam as you know, is a camera device that you strap onto your body, and you push it through space. You, as a cinematographer, normally as a cinematographer, as a camera operator, I have two people that work directly with me—the camera assistant, and the dolly man, the dolly man pushes the camera. The camera assistant keeps it in focus, and I operate it through the pan and tilt. It requires quite a choreography between three people, and you can only imagine once you get on to a crane, there's five people. A steadicam, on the other hand, you wear on your body, the focus is remote to an assistant who keeps it in focus, but every other camera move is intuitive. I move the camera, it moves. I don't have to relay any message to the dolly. So by placing these headsets on, it was much more of a lyrical piece I could ever possibly get than by doing it some other unconventional way.

I didn't bring it, but the sequence was in a film called *Born on the Fourth of July* which was the riot scenes and some of the Vietnam stuff, but it was a real awakening to some of the people on how you can use music on the set because it didn't get played a lot. When the new generation of film makers came out of the music video business, which is what my early roots were, where we had music always going on the set, and we were obviously creating images to music, then when it came out to be the reverse, when we got to the feature world, and we were creating images to narrative rather than to music, we still brought the music with us and we would crank it up on set. Dave Fincher does it all the time. Even guys like Chris Columbus; music is cranked all the time. Guys like M. ("Night") Shamalyan play music all the time on the set because it does give us a place to go.

Mona Lisa Smile, that's next. Something a little more lyrical. This was directed by Mike Newell, with Julia Roberts. [plays clip from *Mona Lisa Smile*] So that's it. That one was in a little bit more classical vein. That one we obviously had on set and I didn't even think about how I was going to light that scene or shoot that scene until we were there. It was one of those scenes that we left to the very end. We were trying to chase it because our location kept on being changes. We did a movie that takes place in Boston in the winter time and we shot it in New York in the summer because the only way you can shoot a film that has to do with a university is to go in the summer time obviously because the students aren't there. So we kept on chasing that space around and we ending up going to the Union Theological Seminary up on 122nd Street and Broadway and we finally got that room the day before. Our sound mixer, Chris Newman, set up a speaker, and it just made sense. It made sense to shoot it in a round track in a dark room where the boyfriend comes and its silhouetted. Sometimes you just make decisions from a visceral point and not an intellectual point at all. You go with the flow. You can't do that often on feature films when there's 80 to 120 million dollars at stake. You just can't say, "I wanna do it because I feel like it." Ms. Roberts wanted to know what time she was going to get done that day. Mr. Newell, our director, wanted to know if he could have tea at four. There's a whole bunch of other requirements that get involved in the creative process. That one there we were able to pull out and just get it done, and get it done quickly.

I don't think there's anything else that I'm going to share with you guys tonight. I enjoyed talking to you.

Petrosino: Our last speaker for the evening is our own film historian, Mr. Gene Stavis. As one of this country's great film historians *and* educators, Mr. Stavis brings over forty years of film experience to share with us. Working with the great Henri Langlois, (France's champion of film preservation), Mr. Stavis has enlightened and educated many toward the importance of film in our lives. What he most importantly introduces, is the connection between the emotional and psychological senses of being a human being and how interconnected they are with to the total experience of watching a film.

I am honored to welcome Mr. Gene Stavis.

Stavis: Good evening. In the 1890s, Thomas Edison, who was largely deaf, and that was one of his things that he carried around with him, became interested in recording sound. Sound had never been recorded prior to that. Whenever you heard a sound in the real world, it was live. And if you wanted to hear something in the past, you had to recreate it. But in the 1880s, Thomas Edison wrapped a piece of aluminum foil around a cylinder and he took a stylus and he had constructed a large horn, and when someone talked or played an instrument into that large horn, a diaphragm would wiggle, and it would cause the needle to wiggle, and it would cause some corresponding lines on the tin foil. If you played that back, you got sound that wasn't live; it was recorded sound. And that's the first time in the history of the world, prior to 1880, that sound had been recorded. Edison did it a little bit for selfish reasons because he wanted to get things over and over again. You remember the famous recording he made first which was *Mary had a little lamb*? Eventually they replaced the aluminum foil in the cylinder with wax. It was a little easier to record, and eventually, of course, they flattened out the cylinder to make a disc, and that was analog sound recording which, until just very recently, was the standard of sound recording. Today it's done very differently. It's not done in a physical way. It's done in an electronic way using 1s and zeroes to create a kind of code. And with that change in technique, the reproduction of sound has become more and more professional and less and less background noise. That was one of the problems with the needle and with impressions in wax is background noise. It's not meant to be there.

In 1893, Edison hired an assistant named William Kennedy Laurie Dickson, a guy who desperately wanted to capture, in the same way Edison had captured sound, wanted to capture pictures, visual imagery, because it hadn't been done at all. Still pictures happened at around 1849, with Daguerre and photography, but motion pictures began to come to about a dozen people around the world at about the same time. At a time when there was no television, no radio, no immediate communication, it seemed to be spontaneous. Someone in Germany discovered it; someone in Russia discovered it; someone in France, someone in America—without talking to each other. It was time for that to happen. Edison didn't want it. He said, "What do we need this for? We've got sound recording. We've got electric light." And Dickson had to talk him into it. In fact, Dickson talked him into it by telling him it would be a natural asset to the sound recording. Might as well have the picture if you've got the sound. So Edison said, "Oh, go ahead, do it." because Edison wasn't a lonely genius. He ran the first invention factory. That's what his company did—produced inventions. So Dickson took a lot of knowledge and put it together, and in 1893 created a machine that Edison called the kinetoscope. It wasn't originally projected; it was in a little peep show that you cranked or ran by an electronic motor and you looked inside. Today you'd see porno, but in those days you saw what a lot of people considered porno, and it was a very dangerous, revolutionary kind of thing, because you could experience things, re-create them, in a way.

Kristi said sound accompanied film from the very first. I would say, not the very first. The first film they probably ran, and they looked at it, and they said, "There's something missing." So the second film obviously had some kind of music to it because music was absolutely necessary. And music and movies had a lot in common when you think about

it. They are both working directly on the emotions in different ways. One of the odd things about the 20th Century is that, from the turn of the century until 1930, we had two great art forms which developed in the 20th Century. One was movies which were silent movies. They had music, of course, but they didn't have recorded sounds synchronized with the picture. And then you had radio, which was the exact opposite. It was sound, but no picture. The wonderful coincidence there is that we had two art forms that became enormously popular. You all remember radio programs—*Green Hornet* and Orson Welles *War of the Worlds*. No pictures. You had to make up the pictures in your mind. And in a way, with film, you did the reverse. You got the pictures, but you had to make up the sounds in your mind. A lot of people feel that the crippling of the medium forced you to go towards the medium, not just let it wash over you. You had to bring something of yourself to it. You had to imagine the pictures with radio; you had to imagine the sound with film.

Film and music are also time-determined art forms. In *Mona Lisa Smile* she said, “Your job is to look at this painting, and when you're finished you can go home.” Someone might look at it for ten seconds, someone might look at it for 2 hours, and someone else might want to stay all night and look at it. Music and movies start on a frame and they start on a note, and they end on a frame and they end on a note. And so both are experiences that you have in a given amount of time. So they're very close cousins both in emotion and in form.

One of the things that struck me when Kristi was talking was she was talking about how the studios used this piece of music *In the Hall of the Mountain King* over and over and over again over the years clearly for the reasons that she said, but there was a reason she left out and that is what? It was public domain. They didn't have to pay for it. If you know anything about the mindset of the movie business, you realize how important that is. And so very often, when sound first came in, Universal, for instance, which started a whole trend of horror films—*Frankenstein*, *Dracula*, *Wolf Man*—they used classical music for it. If you look at *Frankenstein*, it's got *Swan Lake* behind it. Or you look at *Frankenstein* it's got *In the Hall of the Mountain King* behind it. It was lazier and cheaper.

The interesting thing is that silent film is really a misnomer because when you came in we were playing *The Mighty Wurlitzer* and that was what people in big cities heard music in films. It was called “the King of Instruments” because it could mimic any instrument, and it wasn't electronic; it was pipes and blowers, and they were huge. They were 6, 7 stories high and when they played that thing, they played bass notes on that Wurlitzer organ and you were sitting in 5,000 seats with 5,000 people there in the dark; you could feel your organs move around inside of you; it really reverberated, and it really gave you a direct emotional feeling, a kinesthetic feeling. It wasn't just that it triggered something in your mind; your body was moving. In a lot of modern films we have that same thing. With the kind of sophisticated sound we have in theatres today, sound is coming from all over. It's more than emotional. It's literally physical. That wasn't always true in the history of movies.

What I'm going to do is show you three clips today, four really, which illustrate a couple of interesting things. All of these are fairly rare, so I don't think you will have seen them before. We're going to go back to the silent days, 1927, when a bunch of young film makers arrived in Hollywood. They were not part of the industry. They were independent guys. Two of them had come from Europe. The other was a homegrown American guy. The European guy was a guy named Slavko Vorkapich. Slavko Vorkapich invented something called montage editing. Montage is the French word for cutting, editing, and the Russians at that time were experimenting with very fast editing and very intellectual editing. Kristi mentioned the whole notion of shot 1 + shot 2 doesn't equal 1 + 2, it equals 3, a whole new thing because of the interaction. And that's based on the Hegelian dialectic—thesis, antithesis, synthesis. And it was very political, of course, living in Communism and Socialism, and it was overly intellectualized, but anyone who knows film realizes that that is what's happening. You've got one shot, and you've got a second shot, and what's happening in you is not just the sum of the two, but something new. And so this was in the back of the minds of some of these young film makers. Vorkapich was one, Robert Florey was the other. He was a Frenchman who came here to be a cameraman. He was a very good early cameraman. He shot *Frankenstein*, as a matter of fact, and he was a guy I actually got to know towards the end of his life. And the third guy is a name that may be familiar to you if you've read *The New Yorker* this week—Gregg Toland. Gregg Toland who was the great cinematographer, most famous for *Citizen Kane*, and American. But they were penniless. Absolutely penniless. And they decided to make a little film in Slavko Vorkapich's kitchen. And it was a satirical movie about how awful the industry was. You know, they were outsiders, and they were coming into Hollywood and they said, "What a terrible place!" And so they were interested in making their mark by making this critical film and they called it *The Life and Death of a Hollywood Extra*. It is almost always shown with newly composed music or improvised music. But Vorkapich really cut it and edited it to go with a certain piece of music, but he could never afford the rights to it. So it never was shown with that music, although when you look at it, it suggests it. I got this print from Vorkapich, so he had synced the original music that he wanted to play with this film to the print, so it's one of the few examples of ...he had to see this film with its music. The music of course is *Rhapsody in Blue*. And the music, when he put it in the film in 1927, was only two years old. It had only been premiered in New York in 1925, conducted by Paul Whiteman, but he never got to play it with him. So we're going to see a premier of this version and we're going to see a little tiny one-minute clip for a sound film called *Crime without Passion*. The prologue of the film was the Furies flying out of the sky causing evil among men. And this happened before the credit sequence came up. They didn't want to use the music he wanted to use. He wanted to use Brahms. But the studio said, "No, no, we've got our own publishing company; we've got our own musicians." And so they made him change it. But this print has Brahms on it. So we're going to watch *The Life and Death of a Hollywood Extra* and we're going to watch the prologue to *Crime without Passion*, and we're going to actually see it on film, which is nice. So we'll take a look at that first, and then we'll go on. [film plays]

There's a use of a piece of contemporary music, *Rhapsody in Blue*, and it's hard to imagine it without *Rhapsody and Blue*, it's so perfect for that. And the Brahms worked

much better than the one they did in the movie actually. The rest of the movie is nothing like that, by the way. Rather plodding, ordinary, very melodramatic, but the prologue was gorgeous.

When sound finally did come in, a lot of great directors hated the idea of sound, detested it, all the great directors— Murnau, Eisenstein, King Vidor—one of the great American film makers. You were mentioning about music on the set. One of the most famous scenes King Vidor did was troops marching through a forest in World War I in a film called *The Big Parade*, 1925. He was the first director to ever bring an enormous bass drum on the set because he wanted everyone to move in cadence so that visually it would have a rhythm. So he would bang this bass drum and everyone would march to the rhythm of the drum. So music was an enormously important part of films, even when they were being shot.

One of the great early people who experimented with sound was a French director, René Clair. René Clair was the first film maker ever to be elected to the Académie Française, and he had been a silent film director very much in the style of Vorkapich and Florey and Toland, until sound came in. And then he made three feature films which were revolutionary. They showed the way forward how to use film. One of the things that these great film makers were afraid of was that sound, in forcing you to synchronize dialogue and real sound effects, would lose some of the magic and romanticism that silent films had. Silent films could really create a universe in your head, and when you put sound to it it tended to make it much more literal, much more realistic, much less dreamy. So Clair conceived his early silent films. The first one was called *Under the Roofs of Paris*, the second one was called *Le Million* (The Million) about a million dollar lottery ticket, and the third one was called *A Nous la Liberte*, (Liberty for Us). And these were all done in remarkably experimental ways of counterpointing sound with picture—sometimes realistically, sometimes totally unrealistically.

What I'm going to show you now is a five minute interview from television—a very rare interview that someone preserved—of René Clair talking about this process. And then I want to show you a sequence from *Le Million* in which two enormously fat opera singers who detest each other are on stage singing this wonderful love song to each other, and obviously they can't bear each other, but two lovers who are having a fight hide behind the set and there's no dialogue in this scene, but the use of the song sung by the opera singer mirrored what's going on in the head of the young lovers. It is a wonderfully imaginative sequence. And after that we just have one small clip to show you, and then we'll be finished. This is now from a disc of *Le Million* by René Clair and first of all the interview with Clair which he talks about sound. [clip plays]

There's a wonderful tension in that scene which is indicative of a spirit of experiment that was going on in the early 30s when no one had set what sound you could use with what picture. I remember in one of the early sound westerns that I show to my class, a guy hits a guy, and what happens in real life is you don't hear much, just kind of a thump. And so when he hits a guy and he falls over, the audience laughs because they said, "It doesn't look realistic." Although it's ten times more realistic than that stupid sound effect they

put in there when someone hits someone in the face, but we're so used to hearing that sound effect today that if we don't hear it, it's wrong. But Clair and the people who copied him in America and other countries had the balls to experiment with creative uses of sound. And there's such a wonderful tension in that scene between the phony lovers and the real lovers, and the art of the stage, which is such a phony stage, and they do it wonderfully with that mesh curtain and the guy throwing the flowers around, and yet the movie's on this realistic medium, this medium that is the opposite of the theatre, so that it's wonderful, charming, lovely thing goes on in this scene, and unfortunately as sound films progressed and they got much more literal, what Clair and the others feared, happened. I think one of the most profound things Clair says is "Even in today's films, the best scenes are the silent scenes, the scenes where you don't need the dialogue." In so many movies today, you can almost turn the picture off and you get what's going on. It wasn't possible in a film like that.

Now for the final thing, I want to show you the opening scene to a terrific film noir made in 1950 by a great American director named Jules Dassin. Jules Dassin was black-listed and was forced to make films in Europe until his career blossomed again when he married a Greek actress named Melina Mercouri and he made *Never on Sunday* and lots of Greek and French films like *Rififi*, but prior to that he was doing dark films which was the style of the late 40s and 50s. He made a film called *Night and the City*. You may know the title because there was a dreadful Robert DeNiro remake about five years ago that was unspeakable. But the original was wonderful. By a quirk, there were two different scores written for this film—a British score, because it was shot in England, and an American score because the Americans wanted a livelier, bigger orchestra feel for the American audiences, and luckily both of these scores exist. The opening scene only goes three or four minutes long, a very exciting scene, a silent scene, basically where a guy is running away from somebody through the darkened streets of London. If this intrigues you, and I hope it does, I really recommend that you look at the whole film because it's one of the really amazing films of the early 50s, and any other film by Jules Dassin too. The British score was written by a composer named Benjamin Frankel. Oddly enough, both the British composer and the American composer came from within 28 miles of each other in Eastern Europe. One emigrated to Great Britain, the other emigrated to America. The one who emigrated to Great Britain was the man whose score we're going to hear first. And then we're going to hear the American score written by a man named Franz Waxman, one of the great composers of Hollywood's golden age. There were lots of wonderful composers of that era—Dimitri Tiomkin, Lalo Schifrin, Bernard Herrmann, Miklos Rosza—great classically trained composers who very often were trained by the great names in late 19th Century romantic music by Busoni and by Schoenberg and by Mahler. They were all students of people like that and they really continued the romantic late 19th Century tradition of that kind of music into the movies and except for the movies, that kind of music would have disappeared a lot earlier, but it kept going because of these great composers. I remember when Dimitri Tiomkin won the Academy Award, he got up to the microphone and said, "I want to thank Tchaikovsky and Beethoven and Sibelius." And he's right.

Okay, now we're going to take a look at a sequence from *Night and the City*. [film plays]

You can see the difference. Frankel's score is much more a moving score, subjective score, whereas Waxman's score is really key to the editing and to the action. Very different feelings from the very same footage which is of course what all the great directors of the silent era knew that not only the order that you put the shots determine your emotional reaction to it, but also the ancillary things like the music going on could color your appreciation of the film.

Those are all the things that I'm going to show you today. I would simply recommend to you that if any of these things intrigue you from any three of our presentations, you go out and search out and look at films from the point of view of how music affects your feeling. What would *Casablanca* be without *As Time Goes By*? What would *Spellbound* be without Miklos Rosza's *Spellbound Concerto*? And then look at a modern movie and see the 47 songs that they play there and how they plan the editing to get the most play time out of the pop sounds.

There was a renaissance in this world following World War I and extending out to the 1960s. In every art form—music, literature, drama, movies, radio—giants were playing there. And renaissances don't grow on trees. We're not living in the middle of a renaissance now, and so things don't look quite as good, but we are lucky enough to come at the tail end of that, and it was a great time with a wealth of material that I recommend that you take a look at.