

PROGRAM NOTES

Guy Movies

May 15, 2010

Star Trek Through the Years

OK, OK, so technically *Star Trek* is a television show and not a movie, but keep in mind that the short three-year run of the original series spawned four spinoff series and an unprecedented 10 major motion pictures. And the music!—from the original theme by Alexander Courage, right through the amazing contributions by some of Hollywood's greatest composers, including Jerry Goldsmith, Dennis McCarthy, James Horner, Leonard Rosenman, Jay Chattaway, and many others, the music of *Star Trek* is a constant source of joy to all movie music lovers. Here is a short collection of some great moments from the original TV series, *Deep Space Nine*, *The Next Generation*, and *Voyager*, as well as a sample of the seventh *Star Trek* movie, *Generations*, and a reprise of the great Goldsmith theme used in *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*.

The medley begins with a faithful rendition of the original Alexander Courage theme from 1966, a theme so immediately identified with the show that almost every subsequent composer for *Star Trek* felt obliged (and honored) to employ it. Next, notice the ingenious, noble fanfare in the trumpets and horns as used in Dennis McCarthy's main title music from *Deep Space Nine*. This theme is finely melded into a less-heard segment, entitled "The Inner Light," from *Star Trek - The Next Generation*, composed by Jay Chattaway. Dennis McCarthy's music returns in the main title from the seventh *Star Trek* movie, *Generations*, followed by two Jerry Goldsmith scores, *Voyager* and *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*. This medley only scratches the surface of the huge body of great work that comprises the *Star Trek* musical legacy.

Rocketeer, End Title

Certainly one of Hollywood's most versatile composers for the last thirty years has been James Horner. From his haunting scores for *Titanic* and *Field of Dreams* to the huge orchestral landscapes for movies such as *Willow*, Horner has proven his gift for matching the aural with the visual. One of his finest scores is for *Rocketeer* (1991), a great "guy" movie that is often overlooked when speaking of Horner's contributions. The end title music performed this evening is quintessential Horner, with many of his signature musical figures combined with arguably his best melodic writing ever.

Suite from Tombstone

Bruce Broughton is perhaps best known for the movie score to *Silverado*, but this amazing music for an equally amazing movie *Tombstone* (1993), might just be the best Broughton score ever! And talk about your guy movie! Val Kilmer SHOULD have won the Oscar for his portrayal of Doc Holliday...but back to the music. This suite covers several main themes from the film, beginning with the ominous Earp Brothers music, played as they walked toward the famous fight at the OK Corral. The sensuous love theme follows, along with the Coplandesque horse-riding segment, and finally the main title music. This is one of the greatest westerns of all time, and Bruce Broughton's music places you directly in the middle of the action.

Jericho

This is a special arrangement performed by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, which the Desert Chorale was able to acquire for this evening's performance. Sung *a cappella*, this is a masterful arrangement by noted spiritual arranger Moses Hogan. The music describes one of the greatest biblical battles of all time, which could indeed be the root of all guy movies! The Desert Chorale has been a valued member of the Las Vegas arts community for more than 25 years, and we are proud to have the Chorale join us again for this performance!

"Hymn to the Fallen," from Saving Private Ryan

This 2004 classic film starring Tom Hanks features a film score by John Williams that is both understated and memorable. One can watch the movie without even being aware of the music, but when you hear it, the music is moving and solemn, without being morose. The main theme, *Hymn to the Fallen*, is a beautiful example of William's adept application of music to visual art. Note the wordless chorus that accompanies the orchestra, brought to life by the wonderful voices of the Desert Chorale. Sometimes, words are simply not necessary.

This Is America, Armed Forces Day Salute

When this concert was rescheduled for May 15, I realized that we were moving the concert to Armed Forces Day. So, not wanting to pass up an opportunity to say "thank you" to our troops, this wonderful medley spotlights the theme of each branch of the military. Some of these themes might have even appeared in guy movies over the years! Whether they did or not, let's pause for a few moments to salute our men and women in uniform, who sacrifice a great deal for our freedom!

"Gonna Fly Now," from Rocky

Bill Conti's iconic film score to the 1976 Academy Award winner for Best Motion Picture, is pumped up even more in this brilliant arrangement by Jay Chattaway. This arrangement was designed from the outset to feature the talents of the great trumpeter Maynard Ferguson. Tonight, we are pleased to present one of Las Vegas' own, brilliant trumpet artist Tom Ehlen. Tom and Nevada Pops will have all of us ready to take on the world after hearing this exciting rendition of the main title, *Gonna Fly Now*.

Theme from The Pink Panther

No movie music concert would be complete without some music from the master himself, Henry Mancini. One of the most talented songwriters of all time, Mancini was also a gifted film composer. His legacy includes an unprecedented 20 Grammys, four Academy Awards, and a host of other honors and awards. Among his most familiar melodies from the movies is the main title from the *Pink Panther* series of films starring Peter Sellers. This tune has survived to remain one of the most recognizable themes in the history of Hollywood film-making. Even people who have never seen any *Pink Panther* movie know this music. That's the mark of gifted songwriting, and in that realm, Henry Mancini had no peers.

Ride of the Valkyries, from Die Walkure

The late 1970s and early 1980s saw a period during which several Vietnam War movies were produced. One of the most memorable was *Apocalypse Now*, which used music from a variety of pre-existing sources. Rock and Roll tunes like “Let the Good Times Roll” are juxtaposed against the dark action in the film. The helicopter scenes used music from Richard Wagner’s Ring Cycle—specifically *The Ride of the Valkyries*. In the opera *Die Walkure*, the Valkyries were immortal warrior daughters of the supreme god Wotan. The Valkyries would swoop down to Earth on flying horses and attack whoever had offended Wotan or the other gods that day. The use of this music in *Apocalypse Now* is brilliant, because the parallel between the flying Valkyries and the helicopter gunships of Vietnam is obvious.

Music from *Gladiator*

German composer Hans Zimmer has composed many impressive film scores, most recently the music to the blockbuster hit *Avatar*. His earlier films established him quickly as a master film composer who could match music to such diverse films as *Rain Man*, *Crimson Tide*, *The Thin Red Line*, and *Lion King*. His 2000 score to *Gladiator*, starring Russell Crowe, is memorable because it requires very diverse music. The medley in tonight’s performance captures the essence of the movie, from the haunting love theme through the majestic music of Rome to the barbaric battle music which pervades several segments of the film. If you can only hear one Zimmer score, *Gladiator* gives the listener the best overall impression of the depth and scope of the talents of Hans Zimmer.

“Roll Tide,” from *Crimson Tide*

First of all, *Crimson Tide* is the quintessential “guy movie.” Two larger-than-life male leads (Denzel Washington, Gene Hackman) at odds with one another, either of whom might be right or wrong, along with submarines, intrigue, nuclear war...*Crimson Tide* has everything. The music is classic Zimmer, and in keeping with the principal characters, the music is strong, driving and relentless.

End Title from *The Hunt for Red October*

Basil Poledouris will be remembered for such “guy movie” favorites as the *Conan* movies, *Robocop*, *Red Dawn*, and others. But, like so many great musical talents, Poledouris could do much more than simply write action music. He won an Emmy for his 1989 miniseries *Lonsome Dove*, and was at home in virtually all genres of music. The score for the epic film *The Hunt for Red October* (1990) certainly showcases Poledouris’ skills more than any of his other movie projects. The music is at different times ominous, reverent, optimistic, violent, and charismatic. The use of the male chorus in his score, while certainly not unique, is extremely well-written and effective. This is guy movie music at its best!

“Duel of the Fates,” from *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace*

Everyone who liked *Star Wars* eagerly awaited the promised prequels, which would give closure to the epic story. The first installment was the 1999 blockbuster *Star*

Wars, Episode I: The Phantom Menace. While the movie received mixed reviews, no one could argue about the success of three things, the effectiveness of Ewan McGregor as young Obi-Wan Kenobe, the adroit Qui-Gon Jinn played by Liam Neeson, and the amazing film score by John Williams. Certainly the most memorable musical segment from the movie was the entrance of the evil Darth Maul, who challenged Obi-Wan and Qui-Gon with his double-edged light sabre. The music from this scene, *Duel of the Fates*, became an immediate cult classic, and like all great film music, is instantly identified with the scene in the movie. This is simply great music for chorus and orchestra, and the first time that the Desert Chorale has had to learn music in a language NOT from planet Earth!