Introduction

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For a decade from 1955, Alfred Hitchcock worked almost exclusively with one composer: Bernard Herrmann. From *The Trouble with Harry* (1955) to the bitter spat surrounding *Torn Curtain* (1966), the partnership gave us some of cinema's most memorable musical moments, taught us to stay out of the shower, away from heights and never to spend time in corn fields. Consequently, fascination with their work and relationship endures fifty years later. This book brings together new work and new perspectives on the relationship between Hitchcock and Herrmann. Featuring chapters by leading scholars of Hitchcock's work, the volume examines the working relationship between the two and the contribution that Herrmann's work brings to Hitchcock's idiom, as well as expanding our understanding of how music fits into that body of work. The goal of these analyses is to explore approaches to sound, music, collaborative authorship and the distinctive contribution that Herrmann brought to Hitchcock's films. Consequently, the book examines these key works, with particular focus on what Elisabeth Weis (1982: 136) called 'the extrasubjective films' – *Vertigo* (1958), *Psycho* (1960), *The Birds* (1963) – and explores Herrmann's palpable role in shaping the sonic and musical landscape of Hitchcock's work, which, the volume argues, has a considerable transformative effect on how we understand Hitchcock's authorship.

The collection examines the significance, meanings, histories and enduring legacies of one of film history's most important partnerships. By engaging with the collaborative work of Hitchcock and Herrmann, the chapters in the collection examine the ways in which film directors and composers collaborate, and how this collaboration is experienced in the films themselves. In addition, the collection addresses the continued hierarchisation of vision over sound in the conceptualisation of cinema and readdresses this balance through the exploration of the work of these two significant figures and their work together during the 1950s and 1960s.

'From his first sound films', Weis remarked, 'Hitchcock has treated sound as a new dimension to cinematic expression' (1982: 14). Music is often fundamental to how we consider Hitchcock's authorship, and he forged a number of partnerships with composers over his career, including Miklós Rózsa, Dimitri Tiomkin, but most notably Herrmann. Jack Sullivan suggests:

> A supremely calculating technician often accused of coldness, Hitchcock needed music more than most movie-makers. Music tapped into the Romanticism beneath

> his classical exterior. Certainly his most dreamlike moments – the ones we never forget – are profoundly connected to music. (2006: 322)

As Donald Spoto argues, Hitchcock and Herrmann united in their romanticism: the pair 'shared a dark, tragic sense of life, a brooding view of human relationships, and a compulsion to explore aesthetically the private world of the romantic fantasy' (Spoto, 1999: 355). A romantic 'in every sense of the word', according to Royal S. Brown (1982: 16), Herrmann's contribution to Hitchcock's oeuvre is ultimately defining. Brown identified in Herrmann's scores what he called 'The Hitchcock chord'. A 'minor major-seventh in which there are two major thirds and one minor' (20), 'the Hitchcock chord' evokes for Brown a Wagnerian motif that he also sees prefigured in Herrmann's score for Orson Welles's *Citizen Kane* (1941), as well as in films produced during the Hitchcock collaboration, such as 'the much less subtle' *The 7th Voyage of Sinbad* (Nathan H. Juran, 1958) (1982: 21), although its most clear appearance is in Hitchcock's canonical films.

Hitchcock's works have a universalism that marks them out as different from most other films. Almost everyone will be familiar with at least one of his films, which were, and are, as gratifying to popular audiences as to those interested in cinema as an art form. He is quite probably the only film director to have achieved this distinction. Not only did Alfred Hitchcock make much of his visual image, making cameo appearances in his films, but he also had his own, instantly recognisable musical theme, Charles Gounod's 'Funeral March of a Marionette', which was used as his musical signature in the *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* television series. During his introduction to one of these episodes, Hitchcock informs the audience that the music is written first, then the images and story are found to fit it. Although a joke, this suggests something of the truth: that Hitchcock prized the possibilities offered to him by film music.

While it is widely accepted that Hitchcock produced perhaps the most outstanding body of films in Anglo-American cinema, the importance he ceded to music has rarely been registered. Hitchcock's interest in film technique and the vocabulary of cinema led directly to a fascination in his films with the expressive, aesthetic and narrative possibilities of both diegetic and non-diegetic music. Indeed, it was far from fortuitous that Hitchcock's most enduring and highly acclaimed films, made between the mid-1950s and the early 1960s, involved the convergence of his career with that of Bernard Herrmann, who arguably remains the single most outstanding composer of music for films.

Hitchcock and Herrmann's first collaboration was on *The Trouble with Harry* (1955). As a comic score, it is a rarity in Herrmann's oeuvre, yet its most prominent moments are either sinister or pastoral. Herrmann reconstituted his score into a concert suite called 'A Portrait of Hitch', evidencing film music's common dual function (working both in and outside film) as well as personifying the film's music precisely *as* its larger-than-life director.

Alfred Hitchcock was famed for his cameo appearances in his own films, yet in the remake of *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (1956) Hitchcock also encouraged

Herrmann to make a cameo appearance. His appearance at the Albert Hall, conducting the London Symphony Orchestra, marked a rare moment when Hitchcock allowed a collaborator to 'do as he did' – almost an admittance of equal status, one might speculate. However, Hitchcock did not allow Herrmann to write a new cantata for the sequence, reusing Arthur Benjamin's 'Storm Clouds' cantata from the 1930s original.

Hitchcock's films include probably the most famous use of music in a film, the stabbing violins used in the shower scene of *Psycho* (1960), and one of the most celebrated romantic scores in the cinema for the stately paced *Vertigo*. In both cases Herrmann was absolutely defining in the final Hitchcock product. A focus on music in films allows us to realise that another strong personality is 'in the text', rather than simply focus on the omnipotent director, writer or producer. It may not be visible – like Hitchcock in his cameos – but in certain cases it is highly identifiable.

Hitchcock was persistent in his interest in music: eight of the central protagonists in his films were supposedly musicians. In the 1930s, Hitchcock had published an article on his views about the use of music in films, and it detailed what he thought should be the primary uses of film music: first, to create 'atmosphere', to create excitement and tension; and second, for 'psychological' effect, to express the unspoken and to work as a counterpoint to the visuals (Hitchcock, 1933–34). Interestingly, his description of musical functions delineates a fertile zone for experimentation, largely through avoiding the more mundane functions of film music, such as providing coherence and continuity, and establishing space and place. Indeed, Hitchcock's interest in style and form arguably led to an indirect interest in the language of film music as an integral element of film. This meant that he allowed and encouraged a degree of experimentation by composers, predominantly within the production context of the dominance of the classical Hollywood style.

With respect to serious writing about film, a significant proportion of it discusses Alfred Hitchcock's films and life. Interestingly, although there is far less published about film music, a significant amount of it pertains to Bernard Herrmann (including Cooper, 2001, 2005; Rosar, 2001; Schneller, 2012; Blim, 2013; Brown, 1994; Larsen, 2005; Wierzbicki, 2008). The dominant status of these two is testified to by the regular publication of the *Hitchcock Annual*, the 'Herrmann Studies' special issue of the *Journal of Film Music*, and the issue of *Popular Music History* on Herrmann's music.[1] Indeed, the history of cinema arguably has not had such a notable pairing of two great authorial figures. While Hitchcock clearly took the lead, Herrmann's input is without doubt imperative, with music expressing what cannot be achieved pictorially (Manvell and Huntley, 1975: 80). Herrmann claimed that 'Hitchcock himself was not a musically sensitive man, but according to Herrmann, he had "the great sensitivity to leave me alone when I am composing"' (Moral, 2002: 136). Indeed, Herrmann claimed that he 'finished the picture 40%' (quoted in Brown, 1994: 14).[2] Hitchcock surely would not have approved such a statement, particularly as he was extremely proprietorial about his films

and even downplayed the contributions of others. Spoto (1999: 495) notes that the Truffaut interviews 'hurt and disappointed just about everybody who had ever worked with Alfred Hitchcock, for the interviews reduced the writers, the designers, the photographers, the composers, and the actors to little else than elves in the master carpenter's workshop'. However, as befits great collaborators, Hitch and Benny Herrmann were great friends during their halcyon period. Norma Shepherd, the third Mrs Herrmann, recalled Herrmann's stories of regular dinners at the Hitchcocks' in the late 1950s:

> Benny used to wash dishes with Hitch, and they'd talk about what they'd do if they weren't in the film business. Benny wanted to run an English pub, until someone told him you actually had to open and close at certain hours. Hitchcock then turned to Benny, his apron folded on his head, and said solemnly, 'a hanging judge'. (Smith, 1991: 193)

Something in the psyches of the two men resonated and the films upon which they collaborated remain over half a century later among the cream of cinematic history.

Hitchcock's partnership with Herrmann ended in acrimony during the scoring (literally) for *Torn Curtain*. As a number of the contributors to this collection attest, Hitchcock's request for a more contemporary-sounding score for the film led to the very public break-up of the collaboration. Elmer Bernstein's rediscovery and subsequent recording of the unused score, just prior to Herrmann's death in 1975 (as Hubai's chapter discusses), ensured it was introduced to the public domain, while the subsequent inclusion of the unused portions of the score on Universal's DVD and Blu-ray releases of the film has reminded viewers of the contribution that Herrmann made to Hitchcock's oeuvre, even though John Addison's more conventional score is retained throughout the film itself (this is discussed in Rawle's chapter about the ways in which the Herrmann–Hitchcock partnership has been reimagined in the digital domain). The partnership cast a long shadow over the two men until the end of their careers. As Steven C. Smith noted, Henry Mancini's score for *Frenzy* (1972) was rejected for being too Herrmannesque – 'If I want Herrmann, I'd *ask* Herrmann' (quoted in Smith, 1991: 293). Mancini later confessed that he didn't understand the comparison and that the score sounded nothing like Herrmann's music.

Herrmann subsequently went on to work with other notable directors, his reputation built on the collaboration with Hitchcock. Following the end of his relationship with Hitchcock, he worked with François Truffaut (*Fahrenheit 451*, 1966),[3] and Martin Scorsese (*Taxi Driver*, 1976), but perhaps most notably with Brian De Palma, for whom Herrmann scored two films, *Sisters* (1973) and *Obsession* (1976). Following Herrmann's death, De Palma drew on the influence of Hitchcock and Herrmann, with what Royal S. Brown (1994: 237) describes as two 'post-Bernard-Herrmann-cum-Italian-bel-canto scores done by Pino Donaggio', *Carrie* (1976) and *Dressed to Kill* (1980). The *Carrie* score liberally interpolates the *Psycho* strings as a motif whenever Carrie's psychokinesis strikes. Prior to the beginning

of their partnership, however, De Palma had never considered Herrmann to score his Hitchcock-inspired thrillers: he simply assumed Herrmann was dead, having not seen a Herrmann-scored film since *The Birds* in 1963. Smith (1991: 320–2) recounts a story about De Palma's first meeting with Herrmann, who he described as 'a short stout man, with silver gray hair plastered down [on] his head, thick glasses [who] carried an ominous-looking walking stick'. De Palma and his editor Paul Hirsch had used the love theme from *Marnie* (1964) as temp music in *Sisters*. With 'unbelievable horror', Herrmann thumped his cane on the ground and demanded they stop the film. 'I don't want to hear *Marnie* when I'm looking at your movie. How can I think about anything new with that playing?' Herrmann asked. De Palma explained that he and Herrmann talked about how the director wanted no title music, something with which the composer disagreed ('they'll walk out', he explained). He explained why De Palma couldn't get away with using Hitchcockian devices:

> 'You are not Hitchcock! He can make his movies as slow as he wants in the beginning! And do you know why?'
>
> [De Palma] shook his head.
>
> 'Because he is Hitchcock and they will wait! They know something terrible is going to happen and they'll wait until it does. They'll watch your movie for ten minutes and then they'll go home to their televisions.'

Herrmann told De Palma he'd write a title cue and had an idea for two Moogs. While Smith argues that the opening sequence is the film's 'most effective', he also criticises the score for being 'Herrmann's most self-derivative … tediously repetitive and overscaled for the low-budget film it accompanies' (1991: 332). The Hitchcock connection was difficult to leave behind, much more so in *Obsession*, a 'free paraphrase of *Vertigo's* Tristan and Isolde story', in Smith's terms, with a score he describes as 'Herrmann's cinema requiem, a summation of his film skills' (341). William Wrobel (2003) has well documented Herrmann's 'self-borrowings' across his work in film, television, radio and his opera. Herrmann's attachment to the Hitchcockian oeuvre goes beyond self-borrowing or the echoes of his work following his death, such as in Elmer Bernstein's recreation of Herrmann's *Cape Fear* (1962) score in Martin Scorsese's 1992 remake, such is the enduring fascination with this decade-long tempestuous creative collaboration and its products.

The book takes a roughly chronological approach to the work of the partnership, examining first the working processes and the relationship between Hitchcock's earlier authorship and his work with Herrmann. Later chapters explore the musicological significance of Herrmann's contribution to Hitchcock's films, although some chapters examine music in the overall context of Hitchcock's body of work. Jack Sullivan's opening chapter sets the context for the working collaboration, utilising the Conradian metaphor of the 'secret sharer' to argue that Herrmann was 'Hitchcock's secret sharer, a catalyst for energies darker and riskier than Hitchcock's cool sensibility normally permitted'. Sullivan, like a number of the contributors, contextualises Hitchcock's fascination with music, and its

significance in his overall style. The ‘secret sharer’ dynamic was, Sullivan argues, what led fatefully to the bitter end of the partnership over *Torn Curtain*. Charles Barr’s chapter takes musicality as a fundamental metaphor for Hitchcock’s work, in particular his approach to editing. Looking across Hitchcock’s oeuvre, from his silents (and the influence of Griffith) through the Herrmann partnership to his final John-Williams-scored *Family Plot* (1976), Barr sees the construction of Hitchcock’s suspense sequences as musical in the precision and patterning of shots, shot lengths and their pacing.

Kevin Clifton’s chapter stretches back into Hitchcock’s work prior to the Herrmann partnership to explore the similarities between the score for *Rope* (1948), Hitchcock’s first colour film, an attempt to give the illusion of being shot in a single take. Clifton argues that we can hear echoes of *Rope*’s score, based largely on Francis Poulenc’s *Mouvement Perpétuel* (1918), in Herrmann’s score for *Vertigo*. The ‘musical ambivalences’ of both scores provide counterpoints for the two film’s narrative complexities. Likewise, Sidney Gottlieb begins with *Vertigo* as a means of tackling the significance of music in Hitchcock’s oeuvre. Gottlieb’s chapter argues that recovery and rehabilitation are at the core of Hitchcock’s thinking about music, with its therapeutic possibilities. Looking predominantly at *Rear Window* (1954) and *Waltzes from Vienna* (1934), an underexplored Hitchcock work also considered by Sullivan’s chapter, as well as Hitchcock’s Herrmann-scored remake of *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (1956), Gottlieb sees the therapeutic power of music as a defining feature of Hitchcock’s thematic use of music, in the Herrmann era but also prior to that.

As the title of his chapter testifies, Royal S. Brown takes a Lacanian approach to Herrmann’s work with Hitchcock. Drawing on Kristeva’s Lacanian pre-Symbolic notion of ‘the specular’, Brown finds Herrmann’s music, not just his film work with Hitchcock, but also his concert and radio music, to demonstrate the full specular potential of the cinema. Drawing on Laura Mulvey’s theories, Brown shows how Herrmann’s deployment of the Hitchcock chord (as referenced above) in *Vertigo* and *Psycho* in particular, removes film’s Symbolic discursive attachments, in a manner similar to atonal or experimental music, and returns it to its specular potential.

Murray Pomerance’s chapter on the ‘neglected’ (by scholars and cinephiles) remake of *The Man Who Knew Too Much* looks at the different role played by Herrmann in orchestrating and organising the film’s music, as well as his appearance in the finale of the film as the orchestra’s conductor in the Albert Hall. Pomerance examines the historical circumstances of the film’s scoring, Herrmann’s cues, as well as his orchestration of Arthur Benjamin’s ‘Storm Clouds’ cantata and the two Jay Livingston/Ray Evans songs, ‘Que Sera, Sera’ and ‘We’ll Love Again’. Continuing in an analytical vein, Pasquale Iannone turns towards *Vertigo* and *Psycho* to explore how the two films share in Herrmann’s music ‘a depiction of troubled, unstable subjectivity’. Looking specifically at an underexplored aspect of Hitchcock’s films, the car journey, Iannone considers two car journeys taken by the protagonists of *Vertigo* and *Psycho*, Scottie and Marion respectively. Arguing

that it would be easy to consider these scenes as having little significant value in terms of narrative action, Iannone asserts that the use of Herrmann's music and internalised sounds adds inestimable value in the ways that it contributes to our understanding of the characters' anxieties and subjectivities. David Cooper also analyses *Vertigo*'s score, albeit for its resonances with theatre and dance, with traces of the waltz, tango and habanera, as well as strong Wagnerian overtones, from his *Tristan und Isolde* opera (1859). Cooper's starting point, however, is Herrmann's later *Echoes* for string quartet and the ways in which it resonates with much of his film music. Additionally, the chapter argues that much of Herrmann's musical contributions can be contextualised in relation to his contemporaries, including Lyn Murray, the composer who suggested Herrmann to Hitchcock following his score for *To Catch a Thief* (1955) and the subsequent influence this had on the Hitchcock–Herrmann partnership.

Richard Allen's chapter on *The Birds* examines its electronic soundtrack. An unconventional mixture of sounds and electronic effects, the Herrmann-supervised soundtrack highlights Hitchcock's embrace of new and innovative technologies. Allen also considers the role of the Mixtur-Trautonium, the electronic instrument devised and played by Oskar Sala. Like Iannone's chapter, Allen's examines the ways in which the soundtrack produces anxiety and expresses internality. Returning to the orchestral, K. J. Donnelly argues that *Marnie*'s score seems retrogressive in its conventionality in comparison with *The Birds*. While Hitchcock considered Herrmann's score to be 'self-plagiarised', Donnelly considers Herrmann's use of conventional film scoring techniques to be novel in Herrmann's scores. A romantic score for an unromantic film, Donnelly argues, is a misdirection, but also a score that later became 'uncoupled' from the film's images on CD and in Herrmann's concert music.

The three chapters that follow all turn toward *Torn Curtain*, the film that brought Herrmann's partnership with Hitchcock to an abrupt end. First, Tomas Williams examines the variations in the different extant scores for the scene in which the East German security officer Gromek is protractedly murdered by Paul Newman's hero. Three different versions exist: Hitchcock's final version, with no music and only diegetic sound (as Hitchcock had also wanted the murder in the shower in *Psycho*); and the two rejected cues by Herrmann and Addison. Williams critiques the three versions, only to side with Hitchcock on which version is most successful. Gergely Hubai then goes on to look at the history of Herrmann's rejected score and later recordings, and their place in a discography. Hubai considers the role of Elmer Bernstein in bringing the score into existence – the first rejected score ever to be recorded and released – and how portions of that music found its way into other films, such as Bernstein's score for Scorsese's *Cape Fear*. William Rosar's 'post-mortem' of the Herrmann–Hitchcock relationship focuses on what occurred between the two men during the fateful sessions in which Hitchcock fired Herrmann when he was dissatisfied with what the composer was developing for *Torn Curtain*. Rosar, however, searches more broadly for reasons why the partnership broke down, including Hitchcock's philosophies about film scoring and

exploring the history of the working relationship between the two men, looking in particular at the process of spotting and scoring *Psycho* that caused such friction and created a precedent for what happened on *Torn Curtain*, albeit with a very different outcome.

Steven Rawle is more concerned with the contemporary framing of the legacy of the partnership in the digital realm. Thinking about how authorship is framed and textualised on the DVD and Blu-ray and in artefacts accompanying CD releases, Rawle argues that, perhaps understandably, mainstream film cultures have difficulty conceiving of authorship as multiple or collective. The paratexts and deep texts of the digital home video releases of *Vertigo*, *North by Northwest* (1959), *Psycho* and *Torn Curtain* offer evidence of the ways in which the Herrmann–Hitchcock partnership is memorialised by the film studios that release Hitchcock's work – Hitchcock remains a palpable draw for viewers, but, as the DVD threatens to recede into history, this also comes at the cost of making the Hitchcockian-Herrmannian (echoing Bazin) unthinkable, as well as threatening to reduce film (again echoing Bazin's worry) to less than the sum of its parts.

Just as Weis and Sullivan argued, music and sound are fundamental to understanding Hitchcock's cinema, while the partnership with Herrmann provided it with many of its most famous and culturally significant moments. The chapters in the collection all contribute to our understanding of this distinctive oeuvre and how it fits more broadly into Hitchcock's overall body of work.

Notes

1 The *Hitchcock Annual* (which has been published every year since 1992); *Journal of Film Music* 1: 2/3, Fall/Winter 2003 (edited by James Wierzbicki); *Popular Music History* 5: 1, 2010 (edited by Edward Green).

2 In different sources the percentage quoted varies, but Brown is a reliable source.

3 Although the film was released subsequent to the fallout between Hitchcock and Herrmann, Truffaut had met with Herrmann to discuss scoring *Fahrenheit 451* prior to his dismissal from *Torn Curtain*. In a letter to Hitchcock from November 1965, Truffaut explains, 'In London I met Bernard Herrmann who will be writing the score for *Fahrenheit 451*. We had a long talk together about you and I feel that, in him, you have a great and genuine friend' (Truffaut, 1988: 290).

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