SILENT FILM SOUND

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Music for Films

The industry's campaign to standardize sound was supported by three related developments: larger theaters, longer films, and systematic introduction of a second projector. Large moving picture theaters were not really a novelty. Throughout the nickelodeon period, enterprising exhibitors had seized every opportunity to exploit bankrupt legitimate, melodrama, vaudeville, or burlesque theaters. On Manhattan's Fourteenth Street, William Fox had snapped up every available performance space and even in 1909 built the 2,300-seat City Theater. Not until after the turn of the decade, however, would moving pictures definitively prove their mettle as a worthwhile investment. As industry arbiters argued for standardized film accompaniment, entrepreneurs were sinking funds into the first wave of purpose-built film theaters, where increased entrance prices matched increases in luxury. These new theaters often seated a thousand or more and were equipped to handle the period's increasingly long films. During the aughts, a single reel was the standard, whether made up of just one film, split between two films released together on the same
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reel, or including several shorter films edited together. Employing the era’s bivalent projectors, exhibitors typically alternated between a reel of moving pictures and either illustrated song slides or a vaudeville act. Straight film theaters would have to cover reel changes with a slide announcing that, “The next part will follow in one minute,” while the operator was changing reels. In many early film theaters, the projection booth was simply not large enough to accommodate a second film projector, even if the expense had seemed warranted. Audiences were used to waiting while projectionists spliced breaks, repaired equipment, or changed reels.

Theaters designed for film exhibition created new opportunities for the installation of more sophisticated equipment. In 1907–1908 a few isolated theaters already boasted twin projectors, including the Princess Theater in South Framingham (Mass.), the Theatre Unique on Manhattan’s Fourteenth Street, and the Clement Theatre in Dover (N.H.).¹ When the Isis Theatre was opened in Denver in 1910, it was greeted with much houpla and called an “up-to-date picture house” in a full-page Film Index article. Yet it had only one projector.² In 1911, S. L. (“Roxy”) Rothapfel was dubbed “The Belasco of Motion Picture Presentations” for developing the Lyric Theater in Minneapolis, yet the Lyric’s projection booth boasted only “One machine and a spotlight.”³ Not until multireel films arrived from Europe did the usefulness of “double equipment” become a worthy topic for trade press commentary. When the three-reel Temptations of a Great City arrived from Denmark in 1911, Moving Picture World reported that audiences grew impatient while the reels were being changed. The reviewer’s solution was simple: “We would advise exhibitors to use two machines, if possible, when showing this film.”⁴ Still, exhibitors did not race to install a second projector. At Pittsburgh’s Oakland Theater, James B. Clark claimed that in 1911 he “was one of the first to install two machines to eliminate ‘One minute please, changing reels.’”⁵ In his 1911 Encyclopedia of Motion Picture Work, David Hulfish recommends two projectors, but only for a “Large Exclusive Picture House.”⁶ Not until 1912, in James F. Hodges’ manual on Opening and Operating a Motion Picture Theater, was installation of dual projectors recommended for theaters of all sizes.⁷ During the building boom of the 1912–1915 early feature film years, theaters thus regularly installed twin projectors reconfigured to serve moving pictures alone. In 1912, Fred E. Dever, owner of the new Pastime in Iowa City, added a 1912 Powers No. 6 projector to his 1911 Mutoscope. “We can when necessary take care of immense crowds using both machines and cut out all intermissions,” proclaimed the Pastime’s ads.⁸ When Roxy outfitted New York’s Regent Theatre in 1913, he saw to it that the projection booth would house a pair of Simplex projectors.⁹

In recognition of this general movement, Vitagraph began in 1914 to distribute its prestige multireel Broadway Star Features with a built-in arrangement designed to facilitate smooth transitions. “To accomplish this blending two machines are necessary,” explained the Vitagraph Bulletin to operators not yet fully accustomed to fluid change-overs from one reel to the next.

The last sub-title on the end of a reel is exactly the same as the first sub-title on the beginning of the next reel. This makes it possible to run the entire picture without a break.

As the final sub-title is flashed on the screen, quickly start your projecting machine with the same sub-title. As the second machine flashes this sub-title over the top of the same sub-title being shown by the first machine, immediately shut off the light in the first machine.

In this manner you will have transferred from one reel to the other a continuous display on your screen, with no break in the sub-title and with no waste of time.¹⁰

Previously split between moving pictures and illustrated songs or vaudeville acts, theaters now increasingly hitched their star to multireel films, thereby increasing the importance and difficulty of film accompaniment. With longer programs and larger theaters came higher prices. Gone was the storefront
thirteen illustration of the program of two reels and an illustrated song for a nickel; in its place was a longer program that typically cost a dime or a quarter, and sometimes as much as fifty cents.

To support music's new moving picture role, producers provided a panoply of resources. Discovering a vast new market, music publishers offered compilations of music keying to specific film situations. Some companies hired composers to write special music for their most prestigious releases. Other producers published suggestions of music to be played with each film. In order to assure that their lessons were being properly learned by working musicians, many firms even sent employees on demonstration tours. While no single producer regularly engaged in all four strategies, nearly every production company provided some specific guidance regarding appropriate musical selection. Producers and exhibitors continued to refine their notion of desirable accompaniment, so their recommendations were hardly static and undifferentiated. On the whole, however, their suggestions and examples are strikingly uniform both in general goals and in specific procedures. Always in keeping with the purposes and strategies laid out in the trade press, producers offered a set of related blueprints for upgrading industry music standards.

Early Film Scores

Early film scores must be considered in an unexpected context. Termed "special music," original compositions distributed with films served to market prestigious films selected for special treatment. In studio publicity materials, "special music" was part of a trio that included "special releases" (i.e., out-of-the-ordinary films) and "special cuts" (i.e., unusual newspaper ad copy developed for special films). In 1899, Edison had already experimented with this approach, offering specially composed music with Love and War and The Astor Tramp (and perhaps Tenderloin at Night). Whereas Edison's trio was clearly inspired by the contemporary success of illustrated song slides, the majority of early musical scores offered with films were borrowed directly from operas. In 1904, Méliès distributed Faust and Marguerite, a "New and Magnificent Cinematographic Opera in 20 Motion Tableaux." For $2.50, exhibitors received special piano music drawn from Gounod's Faust. An 850-foot prestige production available hand-colored (more than doubling the $150 black-and-white price tag), Méliès's Faust and Marguerite was soon trumped by Edison's 1,975-foot Parsifal, based on the Wagner opera. The $335 price included a "Complete Illustrated Lecture and Musical Score" for this "Specially Posed and Rehearsed" film, with "Identical Talent, Scenery and Costumes Used in the Original Dramatic Production." So eager to identify the film with staged opera was Edison that the New York Clipper advertisement for the film used as a selling point two current productions of Wagner's opera, one at the New York Theatre on Broadway and the other at the Metropolitan Opera House—productions that under any other circumstances would have been considered competitors.

In one sense, development of multireel films based on stage operas was quite predictable, part of cinema's very reason for being. Edison's 1894 statement had stressed the ability of the new medium to record and present grand opera "without any material change from the original, and with artists and musicians long dead." During the period when Edison was engaged in developing moving pictures, published interviews with the Wizard of Menlo Park repeatedly evoked the possibility of using the new device to present opera. For two decades, films based on operas recalled cinema's highest aspirations. Not only did they add substantially to cinema's prestige, but musical scores for opera and operetta films had the benefit of being virtually ready-made. At the close of 1907, Kalem used this strategy for its release of a film based on Franz Lehar's operetta The Merry Widow. Unable to secure the original Viennese cast (in spite of the company's advertised claims), Kalem was however able to offer "a complete musical score synchronized with the picture." In 1908, Pathé employed a similar strategy to
enhance the prestige of its first Film d’Art releases. Not technically designated as a Film d’Art, but clearly the starting point for the entire upscale series, L’Arlésienne was based on Alphonse Daudet’s famous short story from Lettres de mon moulin and used Georges Bizet’s much-loved music. Opening in France in October 1908 and in the United States just a month later, L’Arlésienne was followed within a matter of weeks by L’Assassinat du Duc de Guise (The Assassination of the Duke of Guise), with music by Camille Saint-Saëns; Le Retour d’Ulysse (The Return of Ulysses), with music by Georges Hére; and L’Empreinte ou la Main Rouge (released in the U.S. as The Red Hand), with music by Fernand Le Borne. Though the special music for these Film d’Art presentations did not follow them to the United States, it was not lost on American producers and exhibitors that special music was an integral part of the European approach to prestige productions.

During the chaotic early days of nickelodeon exhibition, there was still too little agreement about the usefulness and nature of musical accompaniment for films to justify fully composed scores, even for opera films. After The Red Hand, Pathé abandoned its program of carefully fitted scores, even for opera films with readily available music like the 1909 production of Puccini’s Tosca. With its late 1909 version of Faust, Edison offered musical suggestions instead of providing an original score or a precisely timed arrangement of the Gounod opera. “In presenting the incidental music for Faust,” according to the Kinetogram, “we have gone to considerable trouble to specify the exact music from the opera, and it should be played corresponding to the action of the film as indicated.” A total of seventeen separate cues are specified, each for a number from Gounod. Edison’s 1910 version of Carmen, like Biograph’s 1907 version, while benefiting from the
AMANTI DI MUSICA
Non trascurate di andare a vedere le bellissime figure Cinematografiche dei Pathé Frères della famosa opera Italiana,

IL TROVATORE

Dati dalla nuovissima invenzione

FIGURE ALLA LUCE DEL GIORNO

metodo chiaro e bello. Dippiù verranno cantati dei pezzi della stessa opera i numerosi speciali.

Sara questa una figura che rivelerà a tutti coloro non affamati con i cinematografi il trionfo di questi oggigiorno.

AL NICKEL TEATRO
IL 13-14-15 FEBBRAIO 1911

In 1911, Pathè's production "Il Trovatore" was news in several languages.

SCENE FROM PATHÈ'S IL TROVATORE
To be Fused to a specially arranged Music from the Opera.fitting the Picture. Action from Scene to Scene.
obvious accompaniment possibilities offered by Bizet’s music, received no such treatment. Not until Pathé returned with specially prepared music for the Films d’Art Il Trovatore (1910) and Faust (1911) would special piano scores capture the American imagination. Whereas Edison had at best provided suggestions, Pathé prepared full piano versions—27 pages of Verdi for fifty cents or 38 pages of Gounod for seventy-five cents.19 For several years, the preparation of special music remained associated with the distribution of films singled out for privileged marketing treatment. From Europe came a first wave of these favored films, based on operas, employing music from operas, or treating traditional opera topics. These included Milano’s 1911 Dante’s Inferno, with music from Arrigo Boito’s Mefistofele, and several 1912 films: Solax’s Mignon, based on the Ambroise Thomas opera, and Fra Diavolo, based on Daniel Auber’s opera; Pathé’s Camille and Madame Sans-Gène; and Ambrosio’s Siegfried.20

Predictably, American studios retained the European desire to capitalize on culturally acceptable topics, while abandoning opera in favor of more accessible domains, especially history and religion. Functioning less as a source of music and more as a signifier of culture and class (i.e., as a justification for higher prices), the special score became the foundation of the road-show approach to film exhibition. The success of this strategy may be traced back to Adolph Zukor’s decision to import the Film d’Art Queen Elizabeth. Featuring the legendary Sarah Bernhardt and music specially composed for the American release by Joseph Carl Breil, Pathé’s Queen Elizabeth was billed as “a high-class legitimate road attraction.”21 Already employed a few months earlier by Selig’s The Coming of Columbus, with music by none other than S. L. Rothafel, the historical-film road-show strategy would be applied to several prestige productions during the 1912–13 season, each with its own original score: The Miracle (with a score by Ernst Lub for the American production, replacing the Englebert Humperdinck score used in London),22 Historical Pageant of 1912, Cleopatra, The Life of John Bunyan (with music by Modest Altschuler), The Prisoner of Zenda (with a score by Joseph Carl Breil), Hiawatha (with “Ojibway Indian music” composed by John J. Brahms), and the Cines version of Quo Vadis?, exploited in the United States by George Kleine. These successes would be followed up during the 1913–14 season by Eclair’s five-reel Protes; a series of blockbusters distributed by Kleine, including Ambrosio’s Last Days of Pompeii (with Palmer Clark’s score),23 Cines’s Antony and Cleopatra (with music by George Colburn), Ambrosio’s Marriage of Figaro (with Mozart selections), and Pasquali’s Spartacus (with Modest Altschuler’s score); and several films scored by Manuel Klein, musical director of the New York Hippodrome, the anchor venue of the road-show circuit, including Soldiers of Fortune, America, and Pierre of the Plains. With the sole exception of Colburn’s score for Antony and Cleopatra and several of Klein’s scores, the music for these films has not survived. Even in the absence of the music itself, however, advertisements and trade press coverage clearly identify most of these scores as beyond the means of most exhibitors. Far from providing a model for the average theater, these scores served to raise the overall prestige of cinema at a time when both films and theaters were growing in size, targeting more upscale audiences, and increasing ticket prices.

Of potentially greater importance as a model for the average exhibitor were scores distributed by Kalem and Vitagraph. Composed almost exclusively by Walter Cleveland Simon, former pianist for one of Lyman Howe’s troupes, the Kalem scores were offered for a modest fee with some two dozen films released between November 1911 and May 1913.24 With the exception of a few arrangements for small orchestra, Simon’s music was specifically aimed at the piano, with clear consideration for the limited abilities of many house pianists. “Any pianist can play it,” Kalem ads assured.25 “You will find the arrangement is simple and offers no difficulties to your pianist,” claimed the Kalem Kalendar.26 In many ways Simon’s compositions are similar to familiar melo-
drama music and to the many generic film accompaniment pieces published during the early 1910s (treated in detail in the next section). They are typically made up of repeatable short sections, each flowing smoothly to the next. Selections regularly end with the instruction “Repeat until title appears then segue,” clearly revealing the approximate nature of Simon’s synchronization. Like composers of generic film accompaniment music, Simon takes advantage of the short-segment-and-segue approach to achieve general synchronization without the need for scrupulous note-by-note correspondence to the image. Intertitles are systematically employed as a sort of feedback loop to keep the system from going awry; with each new intertitle the pianist is instructed to begin the next piece of music, thus regularly reestablishing synchronization. The unit employed by Simon for his compositions is thus not the broad sweep of a complete scene but the space contained between intertitles. Like most melodrama scores, Simon’s music appears to be composed not as a whole but as a series of separate exercises. As Marks puts it, “the Simon score often seems to stand still, or to move in discontinuous blocks.”  From this standpoint, Simon’s music remains resolutely behind the precepts currently propounded by trade press authors like Clyde Martin, Clarence E. Sinn, and Ernst Luz, all of whom stress intensity and smooth transitions over discrete compositions. Perhaps this is why Simon’s original music appears to have had such limited impact on accompaniment practice. In several cases, columnists actually offered their own musical suggestions for Kalem films that Simon had scored. 

Simon’s scores also adhere to older standards regarding the use of popular tunes. Simon’s first score, for the 1911 Arrah-Na-Pogue, is built around a medley of Irish folk tunes. As such, it concords with Martin’s and Sinn’s acceptance of “those good old tunes such as ‘Silver Threads Among the Gold,’ ‘My Old Kentucky Home,’ ‘Annie Laurie,’ etc.” The next score, for the 1912 A Spartan Mother, is similarly characterized as “a careful blending of patriotic airs.” However, subsequent 1912 films succumb to the trap of using song titles and lyrics as an economical manner of matching music to image, a practice increasingly condemned by the trade press. Captured by Bedouins uses “Sailing, Sailing” to accompany a ship voyage, “The Loveliest Night of the Year” to describe deck-chair comfort, “A Sailor’s Hornpipe” for shipboard antics, and “Just a Song at Twilight” for a scene between the lovers. The cabin in The Siege of Petersburg is described by “There’s No Place Like Home,” while The Soldier Brothers of Susanna begins with a veritable barrage of popular tunes (“He Went to College,” “Way Down South,” “The Dearest Spot Is Home,” “The Little Ones at Home,” “Tapioca,” and “Sue Dear There Never Was a Girl Like You”) and
ends with "Dixie" and "The Vacant Chair." As in the case of "The Railroad Rag" at the start of The Confederate Ironclad, these popular tunes are actually listed by name as they are introduced into Simon's score, replicating a common period practice for dance-medley sheet music. Though they offer an important example of continuous music matched to film details, Simon's scores only partially realize the current trade press ideal.

Just as Kalem was abandoning original scores in the spring of 1913, Vitagraph began to produce its own special music. Since 1910, the Vitagraph Bulletin had been providing musical accompaniment suggestions for all Vitagraph titles. With the move to a weekly multireel release, Vitagraph looked to original scores as an appropriate method of emphasizing the "dignity" of their prestige films. Like other forays into the world of original composition during this period, Vitagraph's "special music" campaign clearly served as a publicity device in support of its multireel films, as revealed by the company's initial announcement of the new service:

**SPECIAL MUSIC**

Beginning with the special release *The Strength of Men*, you can secure special music, piano score, for all the Vitagraph Special two and three part special releases. Price fifteen cents a copy. Address, Publicity Department, Vitagraph Company of America, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Repeating the term "special" five times in just three lines, Vitagraph makes it clear just which part of the company sponsored this press release and the music it announces. As with advertising copy, Vitagraph's film score composers are never identified in the Vitagraph Bulletin. According to Vitagraph, "Now is the time for the exhibitor to give full consideration to his end of it by securing the services of a competent, first-class musician to properly accompany the pictures." To that end the music has been composed so it "can be played by all pianists." Though heavily promoted, the Vitagraph special-music experiment lasted only eight months. From March to November 1913, some thirty scores were advertised for Vitagraph's multireel special releases.

The reasons for Vitagraph's decision to interrupt its score program speak volumes regarding the failure of original scores as a film accompaniment strategy during the industry's campaign to standardize sound. In June 1913 a *Vitagraph Bulletin* article on "Special Music for Special Features" admitted that "The demand for this music has not been as extensive as we had anticipated." Concluding that neither music nor price was at fault, Vitagraph conducted an informal survey. "We have tried," says the Bulletin, "to learn the percentage of theatres that have actual musicians who can read music at sight. Statistics show that they are in the minority. The balance play almost entirely by ear or by the inspiration of the moment." Vitagraph's conclusion came in the form of a challenge: "We shall be pleased to hear the opinions of the exhibitors on this subject. We shall discontinue the special music until we hear from you." Five months later, Vitagraph suspended distribution of original scores. The exhibitors had (not) spoken.

The failure of original scores during this period may be laid to two major considerations: the training of pianists and rapid film turnover. When the score for *II Trovatore* was announced in 1911, Clyde Martin already saw the handwriting on the wall. "I had a feeling of regret," he says, "that the first steps to furnish appropriate music for the picture should be attempted on such a heavy production as *II Trovatore*, and for no other reason than that I had my doubts as to it being possible that such music could be satisfactorily arranged in a way that the average motion picture piano player could do it justice." Upon receiving the music, Martin concluded that he was wrong, asserting that arranger Charles P. Muller "has arranged the music in such a way that there would be no excuse for an amateur not playing the picture properly." Yet only two weeks later Martin found himself forced to publish a letter revealing the true state of American piano culture:
Mr. Clyde Martin, Keokuk, Iowa.

Dear Sir: I notice in The Film Index for this week that you received a copy of the Il Trovatore music and think that any "amateur" would have no excuse for not playing the picture if he had this special music. Now just what do you mean by an amateur? I don’t claim to be any player but I can read a good deal of the popular music, yet I couldn't begin to handle this special music at all. I did not see the music till the day before I was supposed to play it and when I did see it I gave up at once....

This is the reason I have written. Now, if I have to be able to sight-read this kind of music for picture show, I might as well quit at once.

Hoping you will not take offense at this, for I have received many highly valued suggestions from your articles, I remain,

Yours truly,

Lancaster, Ohio.39

Firm in his belief that moving picture theaters should have nothing but competent pianists, Martin responded peremptorily: "I agree with you, if you cannot read such music you had better give it up, for the score for Il Trovatore was only the beginning, the day is near at hand when you will see a score turned out with every film production, then, good-bye amateur." Unfortunately, Martin severely overestimated the sight-reading ability of the average film theater pianist, who might receive a salary, but who in one sense clearly remained an "amateur."

As Eugene A. Ahern noted, "I have some of the music suggested by some of the film producers, and it would take a pretty good-sized artist to play them—they are so difficult, and would require lots of practice and study to interpret the meaning of the composer. Therefore I say it isn’t necessary to get the most difficult music.”40 Specifically, Ahern admitted that, "The pictures that worry me are the more classic ones, like Il Trovatore, The Bride of Lammermoor, etc., as I am not up enough on technic to master some of the movements that are in this grade of music."41 In response to a letter from a reader signing himself “Commentator,” the New York Dramatic Mirror’s columnist known as “The Spectator” spelled things out with utter clarity:

“Commentator” wants the film companies to send out printed lists of appropriate music with each reel, as was done some time ago by Pathé Frères. Perhaps “Commentator” is not aware that the plan was tried by Edison and Vitagraph a year or more ago, but it did not meet with much encouragement. The truth was that too few of the alleged musicians playing for the pictures could play the appropriate music when told what it was. Some of them couldn’t even read music, as Pathé Frères [sic] found out. Still, if the manufacturers would send out music cues it might in time educate the backward house managers up to the point of engaging real musicians.43

Referring to Edison’s 1909–10 musical suggestions in the Kinetogram, the Vitagraph Bulletin’s suggestions as of 1910, and Pathé’s special music for Il Trovatore and Faust, “The Spectator” recognizes all too clearly the deafness of the ears on which these suggestions have fallen. He might have added that even the trade press often ignored the few existing printed scores in their treatment of relevant films.45 A few years later, Vachel Lindsay would reiterate the claim that small-town musicians simply can’t handle the music of their Broadway brethren.46

Pianists’ shortcomings were in turn exacerbated by rapid film turnover, requiring musicians to change music frequently. While many “amateur” musicians could handle original film scores as pieces to be studied and worked up, they were often unable to sight-read them adequately. Yet moving picture programs continued to be changed as often as three times weekly. Whereas Martin, Sinn, and Luz built on pianists’ existing knowledge, concentrating on bridges between pieces already in the pianist’s repertoire, the original-score approach required learning new music with each major film. In the long run, this is not how moving picture pianists would develop their repertoire. Instead of depending on original scores carefully synchronized to individual films, pianists learned new songs from a vibrant publishing
industry. Soon, publishers recognized that a similar solution could also be employed for music specifically dedicated to film accompaniment. Unlike original scores, this music would constitute a reusable repertory, slowly expanding the range of material that moving picture musicians would have at their fingertips.

The First Published Collections of Music for Films

Long before careful film accompaniment became the custom, publishers issued volumes of “cue music” aimed not at moving pictures but at musicians in legitimate, melodrama, or vaudeville theaters. An 1883 Carl Fischer catalog offered twenty-five “New York Theatre Orchestra Melodramatic Music” numbers, from “Rustic” and “Hunting Piece” to “Battle” and “Storm Tempest.” Shortly after the turn of the century, Fischer distributed several “Theatrical Budgets” by L. O. De Witt and an annual Dramatic Music volume with compositions by Theodore Bendix and arrangements by the period’s most prolific descriptive music composer, Theodore Moses-Tobani. In the mid-aughts the same Clarence E. Sinn who would later write Moving Picture World’s “Music for the Picture” column issued an annual set of cue music compositions. Advertised along with Sinn’s musical shorthand course, these original pieces were described as “melo-dramatic” cue music, with Sinn identified as being “of the Criterion Theatre in Chicago.” When the Criterion went over to films, and as Sinn moved increasingly into moving pictures, he simply transferred his compositional and publishing activities to the film world, producing three series entitled Orpheum Collection of Moving Picture Music, first advertised in October 1910 and named after the Chicago theater to which he had moved. Before the turn of the decade these and other collections originally destined for the live theater may have been bent to moving picture purposes.

During the 1909–10 season, publication of music collections specifically aimed at film accompaniment began in earnest. In late 1909, advertisements began to appear in the trade press for Motion Picture Piano Music: Descriptive Music to Fit the Action, Character, or Scene of Moving Pictures, a collection of fifty-one pieces self-published by author Gregg A. Frelinger in the small town of Lafayette (Ind.), first offered for a dollar, then cut to fifty cents. Like the earlier collections produced for melodrama theaters, Frelinger’s selections are labeled for various narrative situations, character types, or source music imitations (bugle call, bagpipes, etc.). Ads stressed the descriptive character of the music, and trade press articles noted the music’s “realistic” effect and its author’s abilities as “one of the best descriptive pianists in America,” thus tying Frelinger’s music to the firmly entrenched American descriptive-music tradition. Several numbers thus attempt imitations of a specific event or gag, e.g., “Drum and Fife Imitation, Departure of Soldiers, Mark-Time Steps, Marching Army” and “Grotesque Marches, Droll or Comic Procession, Elephant Walk, Undertaker’s Stride.” In many cases, however, musical description is replaced by implicit verbal evocations. The number representing “Tramp, Bum, Hobo, Vagrant, Vagabond, Wanderer, etc.” reproduces the first four bars of “How Dry I Am”; the selection for “Drinking Scenes, Intoxicated Persons, Hilarity, etc.” is actually the popular song “I Won’t Come Home Till Morning”; and the tune for “Old Darkey, Aged Colored Man, Old Slave Characters” is “Old Black Joe.” According to Nickelodeon, “The music is very effectively arranged, but not difficult, and any ordinary pianist can properly interpret the pictures with its aid.” In July 1910 the Groene Music Publishing Co. of Cincinnati advertised Emerson Moving Picture Music Folio, “the greatest collection of music for moving picture theatres ever published,” including over 125 pieces for the price of a dollar. Like the original Emerson Moving Picture Music Folio, no copy is known to exist of Sinn’s 1910 Orpheum Collection of Moving Picture Music. Advertisements for later versions, available for small orchestra as well as piano, stress the dramatic character of the music, along with its ability to “bring out” the dramatic
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scenes, thus tying Sinn’s compositions to the melodrama tradition.51

In 1911 a collection of music for film accompaniment was first published by an established New York
publisher, F. B. Haviland’s Moving Picture Pianist’s Album, “containing an assortment of melodies adapted

to every class and style of pictures and dumb acts brilliantly yet simply arranged for piano.”52 Inaugurating a custom that would last as long as silent film accompaniment, the front cover of the collection attributes the arrangements to Eugene

Platzman but associates the volume not with the arranger but with the publisher. Whereas previous

moving picture collections had featured original compositions, the 50-cent Haviland volume offers

simplified arrangements of familiar favorites, including such popular classics as wedding marches

from Mendelssohn’s Midsummer Night’s Dream and Wagner’s Lohengrin, a minuet from Mozart’s Don

Giovanni, and Mendelssohn’s “Spring Song.” In keeping with the ad copy’s promise that, “Nothing in this Collection [is] more difficult than third grade,” several heavy pieces from the same repertory are cut

down to size for beginning pianists, including the

“Priest’s March” from Mendelssohn’s Athaliah oratorio, Chopin’s “Funeral March,” and Rossini’s

“William Tell Galop.” In addition, several selections are included for their descriptive value: Weber’s

“Storm,” Turner’s “Battle of Waterloo,” Harding’s

“Fife and Drum March,” Bohm’s “Charge of the Uhlan,” and Verdi’s “Anvil Chorus.” The volume also

includes familiar songs for their narrative usefulness: “Arkansas Traveler” (dubbed a “Rube Melody”), the

drinking song from Gounod’s Faust, “Sailor’s Hornpipe,” gypsy melodies, representative hymns, national tunes from Stephen Foster to Bizet’s “Toreador Song,” and patriotic melodies for the United States, France, Britain, and Germany. In short, as the ad

copy insists, “the music that every pianist needs in a moving picture house.”53

In 1912 these volumes were joined by the Carl

Fischer Moving Picture Folio, “a new up-to-date folio

of melo-dramatic music, especially composed and

arranged to suit the many demands of moving picture shows, vaudeville houses, etc.”54 Containing

fifty-eight pieces for small orchestra, arranged by several employees, this volume was clearly initiated by a publisher sensitive to the potential of a new market. Expanding slightly on the Haviland collection, it includes “National songs, Waltzes, Mazurkas, Galops, Operatic, Plaintive, Sacred music, Wedding, Concert and Funeral Marches, Indian, Oriental, German, Jewish, Chinese and Spanish music, Dramatic cue music, etc.” As a later ad would put it, this collection contains “everything necessary for any film or vaudeville act, the contents covering positively every conceivable phase of human emotion.”55

In 1913, Cleveland’s Sam Fox Publishing Co. offered, for the now standard price of fifty cents, the first volume of Sam Fox Moving Picture Music, with twenty-three original compositions by J. S.

Zamecnik.56 Born in Cleveland in 1872, John Stepan Zamecnik (pronounced ZAM-ish-nick) returned to his parents’ homeland in 1892 to study at the Prague Conservatory under Antonín Dvořák. Back in the United States, Zamecnik played the violin for several years in Victor Herbert’s Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra before becoming the music director of Cleveland’s Hippodrome Theater, where he composed and conducted operettas and variety spectacles. For the next twenty years, Zamecnik composed and arranged for the silent cinema, culminating in scores for major films like The Wedding March and Wings, winner of the first Academy Award for best picture.57 The selections that make up the slim first volume of Sam Fox Moving Picture Music follow what had by 1913 become an expected pattern, covering all possible film eventualities:


• diverse atmospheres: “Plaintive Music,” “Fairy Music,” “Festival March,” “Storm Scene,” “Church Music,” “Grotesque or Clown Music”
standard narrative situations: "Mysterioso-Burglar Music," "War Scene," "Death Scene," "Funeral March," "Hurry Music" (including separate pieces for struggles, duels, and mob or fire scenes)

Missing from Zamecnik's list are national and folk airs (easily available elsewhere) and compositions aimed specifically at comic situations (for which popular songs were increasingly becoming the standard). Like Walter C. Simon's original scores, Zamecnik's music is composed of small units, easily repeatable and combinable. After a six-bar introduction, "Chinese Music" offers three eight-bar segments, each set up either to repeat or to continue, thus making it easy to maintain a Chinese theme anywhere from ten seconds to multiple minutes. Both "Death Scene" and "Funeral March" are made up of twin eight-measure modules, which can be used either separately or together and repeated as many times as needed. The only relatively expansive selections are...
the two “plaintive Music” numbers, each made up of
two 16-bar sections.
Zamecnik’s key choices reveal that he has volun-
tarily set aside his classical training in order to sim-
plify the pianist’s task, and that he has thought ahead
about the effect of combining several pieces to ac-
company a single film. Key signatures respect the
amateur’s range throughout, with never more than
three flats or a single sharp. Since one of the “Myste-
rious-Burglar Music” compositions and two of the
“Hurry Music” selections (“for Struggles” and “for
Duels”) are in D minor, they flow logically and
seamlessly into either the “Death Scene” or the “Fu-
neral March,” which also begin in D minor. Simi-
larly, the three parts of the “War Scene” begin in a
bright, confident F major, only to fall into the related
D minor key during the heat of the battle. When the
third part ends in D minor, the pianist can either fol-
low Zamecnik’s instructions triumphantly back to
the F major of part two or simply move directly
to the D minor “Death Scene” or “Funeral March” if
the battle turns out less well. Without worrying
about modulations or infelicitous juxtapositions,
even inexperienced pianists can successfully exploit
Zamecnik’s music.
By the 1913 date of Zamecnik’s Sam Fox Moving
Picture Music, several musical techniques had
reached near-cliché status. Indians were signified by
eighth-note drumming of open fifths in the bass.
Chinese ambience was created by high treble grace
notes associated with discords and triplets. Death
scenes were represented by a minor-key melody
played in the left hand.58 War scenes could be evoked
by bugle and cannon imitations. The gait of a cow-
boy’s horse was figured by alternation between quar-
ter and eighth notes in a 6/8 major key. A mysterious
atmosphere could be summoned by the broken,
pizzicato, syncopated selections known as “burglar”
or “sneaky” music, whereas hurry music employed
eighth- or sixteenth-note runs of touching notes
(chromatic or not) against a regular beat of quarter
notes in the bass. Imminent danger could be
signified by a dissonant tremolo in either or both
hands. It is altogether striking that, using nothing
more complex than these stock techniques, Zame-
nek should succeed in producing compositions with
so much character. While some of them evoke clas-
ical pieces (Rodney Sauer calls the “Funeral March”
Chopinesque, while the “Festival March” and second
“plaintive Music” number recall Mendelsohn),
one presents classical complexities.59 Every piece
can easily be sight-read by a pianist of moderate abil-
ities.60 Together, Zamecnik’s numbers can be suc-
cessfully built into a satisfying film accompaniment
with a minimum of effort. Unlike Simon’s scores,
these pieces were made to be reused. Whether com-
mittled to memory or played from the book, Sam Fox
Moving Picture Music complemented trade press rec-
ommendations perfectly, precisely the kind of sup-
port that film accompanists were seeking in the early
 teens.
Once music publishers discovered the new cli-
ten of moving picture musicians, nothing could keep
them from introducing their wares to every budding film accompanist. A 1916 ad headed “Music
for Motion Pictures” repurposes a substantial por-
tion of Jos. W. Stern’s dance music catalog for mov-
ing picture use, featuring four different dance categ-
ories (“minor lento waltzes,” “concert waltzes,”
“light waltzes,” “2/4 intermezzi, trots and society
dance numbers”), not to mention the many fox-trots
included as “excellent numbers for comedy pic-
tures.”61 The trade press’s musical suggestions and
published lists of music useful for moving picture
accompaniment, such as Lyle C. True’s How and
What to Play for Moving Pictures, henceforth always
listed the publisher of recommended selections. Col-
lections of music targeting film accompanists con-
tinued to appear, including Carl Fischer’s Album for
Moving Picture Pianists, featuring eighty-five pieces
compiled by George Smith (1913),62 and Gordon’s
Moving Picture Selections (1914).
Whether composed anew or arranged for moving
picture use, these compositions share several attri-
butes. Because they feature short segments, each of-
fering easy alternatives for repetition, continuation,
MUSIC FOR MOTION PICTURES

BAND PRICES

JOS. W. STERN & CO., 101 W. 36th STREET, NEW YORK

13.5 Jos. W. Stern ad, repurposing the publisher's entire dance catalog for moving picture use
MUSIC FOR FILMS

or full close, pianists were neither forced to fumble for additional music when the scene continued unexpectedly, nor were they obliged to interrupt a piece in the middle when the scene suddenly changed. Never more than a few measures away, a convenient cadence offered a safe haven for pianists incapable of improvising a bridge or modulation. However, even the least of musicians was granted new improvisational powers by the development of a standard musical vocabulary. Should a love scene suddenly be transformed into melodrama by the arrival of a spurned and bitter rival, the most sentimental tune could be made to signify impending tragedy by the simple device of tremolo, even without the chromatic flourishes or modulation to a minor key that more capable pianists might provide. Should a tramp sneak off the train and peer through a window at the lonely telegraph operator, a change of music would probably be called for, but even without new music any pianist could shift to a “sneaky” or “mysterious” treatment, imitating pizzicato strings by alternating a staccato attack with rests. As Moving Picture News writer Eugene A. Ahern put it, when sneaky or mysterious music is required, but “scenes are short and not long enough to change music, play pp, and staccato whatever piece you were playing for the previous scenes.”

In one sense this is just a variation on the “Toning Method” presented by Ernst Luz in his earliest “Picture Music” columns in Moving Picture News. Instead of constantly switching selections, Luz recommends that pianists learn to express emotion by manipulating simple variables such as dynamics.

Arrangers and composers alike went out of their way to minister to the needs of the average pianist. Musicians who once arranged the latest popular song for their own local band now exercised their abilities by compressing orchestral warhorses to keyboard size or by reducing the difficulty level of classical piano compositions. While silent film music is not alone responsible for this development, it is clearly complicitous in the ongoing popular tendency to reduce classical music to a familiar melody.

Just as nickelodeon pianists regularly plundered popular tunes for the title or a single lyric, so early teens arrangers systematically selected only a single movement or theme from a classical piece for simplification and reproduction. Composers voluntarily reduced their resources in a similar manner. Gone are F-sharp key signatures, complex rhythms, and rivers of accidentals. Instead, composers went out of their way to simplify sight-reading and to facilitate transitions. Just as Zamecnik built most of his Sam Fox Moving Picture Music compositions around the related keys of F major and D minor, in 1916 Walter C. Simon published in the Moving Picture World a series of 16-bar phrases together dubbed “The Phototune,” all of which begin and end in either F major or a related minor, D or E. On a single page Simon offers eleven short compositions, identified as Chimes, Egyptian or Turkish, Indian, Hurry/Pizzicato, Allegro, Moderato, Pathos, One Step, Waltz/March, Mexican or Spanish, and Galop. Instructing pianists to begin with the Moderato selection, Simon explained that it is possible at any point “to segue to any other staff when necessary or at discretion of performer.” Simon’s eleven-part composition represents a near-automation and thus something of a reductio ad absurdum of the entire film accompaniment process. All the pianist has to do is slide his attention up or down a few lines each time the on-screen action changes.

It is precisely this level of routine that was sought by industry arbiters. In order to produce a profit, producers had to turn out a dependable product. This is why trade press columnists, moving picture composers, and house arrangers regularly turned to simplification as their modus operandi. During the teens, musical vocabulary thus developed in such a way as to create crystal-clear communication between pianists and their public. Today, this vocabulary appears as so many clichés, but in the early teens it provided a stamp of realism to acting that was often stilted and to scripts that sometimes stretched credibility. If so many of the period’s critics built their aesthetics around realism, it is largely because
The Phototune

Originated and Composed by Walter C. Simon.

"Copyright, 1916 by Walter C. Simon, Times Bldg., New York. All rights reserved."

13-6 Walter C. Simon's "new plan of utilizing vertical ruling to enable the musician to instantly jump from place to place on the sheet as may be desired" (MPW [19 Aug. 1916]: 1248)
film accommodants and film audiences shared the same wavelength. Much about silent film is purely conventional, but as long as the conventions were shared by producers and consumers, the conventional itself could be defined as realistic. In other words, the most important facts about the hundreds of film compositions and arrangements of the early teens lie not in their formal characteristics, but in the communicative values they acquired by virtue of carefully targeted audience education. It is impossible to understand the major film accompaniment changes of the early teens without recognizing the transformation in audience behavior induced by the industry’s campaign to standardize sound.

Musical Suggestions

The film industry employed many different methods of influencing film accompaniment practices during the early 1910s. Trade press columnists offered a steady stream of principles and practices. While they reached relatively few musicians, original scores provided important models for those who used them. Compilations of music specifically designed for film accompaniment required more modest skills and were more easily reusable; achieving wider distribution, they had a greater impact on theatrical practice. Still more influential were the scene-by-scene musical suggestions provided by columnists and producers. Increasingly available throughout the period, these suggestions were identified by several different names. The Edison Kinetogram called them “Music Cues,” Moving Picture News dubbed them “Musical Plots,” while the Vitagraph Bulletin identified them as “Music Suggestions.” Though they offer advice and information similar to that provided on the separately distributed “cue sheets” that became popular later in the decade, musical suggestions of the early 1910s were still informal documents, presented quite differently in the various contexts where they appeared. Later prepared and distributed by music publishers primarily for use by theater orchestras, they were in the early 1910s still collected by the trade press or film producers and aimed at moving picture pianists. Though there is a great deal of diversity in these forerunners to the standardized cue sheet, two areas stand out as consistent influences on film accompaniment practice. More clearly than trade press discourse, industry musical suggestions exemplified appropriate standards for matching music to specific scene types and film genres. Successive waves of musical suggestions also developed the musical repertory brought to bear on film accompaniment.

The vocabulary of Edison’s first Kinetogram musical suggestions at the start of the 1909–10 season was limited to simple musical terminology, with the same terms readily applied to films of widely divergent types. The following selections are suggested for the comic How the Landlord Collected His Rents.

Scene 1—March, brisk.
2—Irish jig.
3—Begin with andante, finish with allegro.
4—Popular air.
5—“”
6—Andante with lively at finish.
7—March (same as No. 1).
8—Plaintive.
9—Andante (use March of No. 1).\(^6\)

Based on scenes from Book I of Victor Hugo’s Les Misérables, Edison’s The Ordeal is a film of a far more tragic nature. As such, its recommended mix of music leans toward the slow and solemn, but the Kinetogram’s terminology varies little:

Scene 1—An andante.
2—An allegro changing to plaintive at end.
3—Plaintive.
4—Adagio or march changing at end to allegro strongly marked.
5—Andante to plaintive, changing to march movement at end.
6—Lively, changing to plaintive at Fantine’s arrest.
7—March with accents to accompany scene finishing with andante.
8—Andante.
9—Allegro, to march at arrest.
10—March, changing to andante at end.
THE CAMPAIGN TO STANDARDIZE SOUND

12—Andante p.p. hurry at action of putting passport, etc. in fire.

13—March p., changing to f.f. at the entrance of Jean Valjean, the Mayor.

14—Andante to Javert’s entrance, then a hurry till the Mayor tears off the piece of iron from the bed. Adagio to end.67

Composed before the trade press had begun its campaign against popular songs, these suggestions treat all music in the same manner—musically. Whatever the source of the andante, allegro, or plaintive number, the Kinetogram gives it equal treatment. In the few cases where specific pieces are suggested, no artificial barrier separates popular tunes from the classical repertory. For example, musicians are instructed to play first Turner’s “Battle of Waterloo” and then the old favorite “A Hot Time in the Old Town To-Night” for the final scene of A Warrior Bold.68

Early musical suggestions commonly mixed folk songs and popular tunes with classical selections. Witness, for example, the Vitaphone Bulletin’s musical suggestions for The Blind Miner. Released at the very start of 1912, The Blind Miner is one of several early teens films built around a blind person’s intensified hearing capacity. The Bulletin tells the story this way:

“Old Tom,” the blind miner, lives with his daughter Mary, who is courted by Martin West, a hard working, industrious miner. On his way to work in a bright morning, Martin stops to see Mary, and steals from her a kiss, which is overheard by Old Tom’s keen ear. He shakes his finger and laughs heartily at the two young people, who no doubt thought the blind man could not see them, forgetting that his hearing was intensified by the loss of his sight.

Martin, with the rest of the miners, descends the shaft and are soon picking into the great black sides of their chamber, when the dull, sickening sound of an explosion is heard. Quick as a flash Martin and his associates beat a hasty retreat, trying to escape from the fatal gases which are fast filling the mine.…

When the townspeople hear of the explosion they know too well what it means. Mary carries the news to her father, “Old Tom,” and he bids her lead him to the mouth of the shaft, where he implores the foreman to allow him to descend, saying: “The blind can hear what the eye cannot see.” His wish is granted and he descends with two miners. They press on and on, led by the blind miner, who feels the way to the famished and near dead men, who are led and dragged to the bottom of the shaft, from which they are lifted and restored to their loved ones. Martin rushes to Mary’s side, followed by “Old Tom,” who is led by the hand. Tom is embraced by his daughter and future son-in-law, while the surrounding townspeople cheer and hurrah.69

Heeding the trade press’s plea to select a small number of pieces carefully matched to the general tenor of the action, the Vitaphone Bulletin offers these suggestions for accompanying music:

During the scene between Tom and Mary, play “Since I Fell in Love With Mary” (Cahill). As the Miners are seen entombed, play “The Traumerie” [sic] (Schuman) [sic], and “Hearts and Flowers.” As the Blind Miner leads the way, play “Show Me the Way, Oh Father” (Rossiter). As he finds the men and they are rescued, play “Pilgrim’s Chorus” (Tanhauser) [sic], as Mary and Tom are reunited in each other’s arms, play “I Love the Name of Mary.”70

Throughout 1912, the Vitaphone Bulletin continues to mix classical and popular music in this way. In January, for Caught in the Rain, “You Are My Harbor of Love, Dear” is to follow hard on Weber’s “The Storm.” In March, suggestions for The Black Wall juxtapose “Mysterious Rag” and “The Traumerei [sic],” while for The Old Silver Watch the Bulletin recommends sandwiching “Nobody’s Little Girlie,” “Beautiful Lady,” and “Mr. Dream Man”—recent Tin Pan Alley hits—between Tosti’s “Goodbye” and Thome’s “Flower Song,” two continental art song favorites.

The Vitaphone Bulletin’s tendency to mix music of various sorts is in part explained by the company’s choice of Bert Ennis to compose its music suggestions. Ennis’s mandate to provide musical suggestions for Vitaphone films was initiated by Vitaphone publicity director Sam Spedon. His major qualification for the job was experience with several different music publishers. “Fearing nothing,” says Ennis, “I undertook the assignment with much enthusiasm and a
loyal heart for the numbers of the publishers for whom I had worked and the songs written by my brother, the late Harry Ennis.” Ironically, Ennis’s methods replicated the techniques of house pianists who had to base their accompaniment on nothing more than a trade press or producer summary. “I didn’t bother to view the various films,” Ennis admitted.

I simply scanned one of Sam Spedon’s synopses of the current flicker, sat down at the typewriter, and with the aid of a good memory, plus the catalogues of Remick, Feist, Von Tilzer, Ted Snyder, Witmark, etc., proceeded to cue the film…. The piano players who received the Ennis system of Vitagraph Music Cues probably felt after a while that there were only a limited number of musical compositions in the world and that Remick and his fellow publishers had the exclusive rights to these compositions.…. We played no favorites. We showed our class by injecting at times the classical and standard numbers—a few of them, anyhow. “Hearts and Flowers,” “Melody in F,” “Träumerei,” “Souvenir,” “Pilgrim’s Chorus,”—they all helped to give helpful audiences a barrage of highbrow music before the present day experts in the writing of music scores for films discovered Debussy, Beethoven, Schubert, Mozart, Wagner and other big leaguers of the classical field.71

Ennis’s background and attitude are quite representative of the film music situation in the early 1910s. Until the 1913 demise of the illustrated song—cinema’s closest connection to the music publishing industry—popular music publishers saw nickel theaters as little more than loss leaders for sheet music sales. Exhibitors were in constant contact with the representatives not of Fischer, Schirmer, and other classical music publishers, but with Chappell, Harris, Remick, Witmark, and other publishers of popular songs. While theater owners knew the Tin Pan Alley world backward and forward, their knowledge of classical music may be determined by a regular tendency to include the popular “Hearts and Flowers” in their list of highbrow music.72

In April 1913 the Vitagraph Bulletin began to designate each film by genre, with nearly all films identified as either comedy or drama (sometimes accompanied by a more specific designator, such as “historical drama” or “western comedy”). With this distinction between basic narrative types came a parallel distinction between popular and classical selections. In February 1914 the Bulletin began to list all recommended numbers in two categories at the head of the “Music Suggestions” rubric: “Comedy, late popular dance pieces and Topical selections” and “Classical, Dramatic and Descriptive.” Increasingly, popular songs were limited to comedies, while classical selections were reserved for drama. Other sources systematically assigned marches to newsreels, an element of growing importance in teens film programs.72 Little by little, class consciousness worked its way into the industry’s treatment of musical sources. At the start of the teens, recent song hits of a relatively staid nature (“Hearts and Flowers,” “The Rosary,” “The Palms”) had been treated on a par with pieces by classical composers. As the decade advanced, however, arbiters of musical taste increasingly associated class and prestige exclusively with European (or European-sounding) music.

Increased pigeon-holing of musical types went hand in hand with a substantial expansion of the overall corpus of musical selections recommended to film pianists. In the 1910–1912 period, the range was extremely limited, with the same titles encountered repeatedly: Gounod’s “Ave Maria,” Mendelssohn’s “Spring Song,” Rubinstein’s “Melody in F,” Schumann’s “Träumerei,” Tosti’s “Goodbye,” Weber’s “The Storm,” and several opera selections, including the “Sextette” from Donizetti’s Lucia di Lammermoor, the “Berceuse” from Godard’s Jocelyn, the “Barcarole” from Offenbach’s Tales from Hoffman, the “Overture” and “Waltz” from Suppé’s The Poet and the Peasant, the “Triumphal March” from Verdi’s Aida, and the “Pilgrim’s Chorus” from Wagner’s Tannhäuser. Outside of traditional wedding and funeral marches by Mendelssohn, Wagner, and Chopin, this is very nearly the totality of the common repertory on which trade press columnists and other musical suggestion compilers felt they could depend. Few moving picture pianists had a range that stretched much beyond current popular song hits. The limits of current mu-
sical culture are clearly figured by incessant mistakes in the spelling of foreign titles and names. While some of these are clearly typos rather than misspellings as such, together they reveal just how unknown these names were. To the garland of "[sic]" in the above Vitagraph Bulletin's suggestions for The Blind Miner, we may add a regular diet of misspellings: "Barcole," "Barcarole," "Massinet," "Liebesstraume," "Humoreske," and many other insults to a broader musical world that film musicians were only beginning to discover. And nowhere an umlaut to be seen.

With the demise of the illustrated song, a more varied vocabulary began to emerge. Musical suggestions using generic terms broadened their range substantially. Instead of the simple adagio/andante/ allegro/hurry terminology of the 1909–10 Kinetogram, the mid-teens Vitagraph Bulletin regularly calls for a wide range of dance music, from classical numbers like the galop, gavotte, and mazurka to modern alternatives like the maxixe, tango, and hesitation waltz. The new author of Vitagraph's music suggestions, whose vocabulary is a far cry from Bert Ennis's Tin Pan Alley lingo, regularly instructs pianists to choose an appropriate caprice, chanson, intermezzo, nocturne, reverie, romance, serenade, song without words, or tone poem—technical terms rarely encountered a few years earlier. Ernst Luz's musical plots evolved similarly during the same period. When Luz first started writing his "Picture Music" column in Moving Picture News, he typically offered simple suggestions like the following recommendations for The Combination of the Safe, a 1912 Kalem release:

1. March.
2. Waltz. (Legato)
3. Dramatic Pizzicato. (Sneaky)
4. March 2/4. (Hurried)
5. Waltz. (Sentimental)
6. Dramatic Pizzicato. (Sneaky)
7. March 2/4. One that can be played very fast.
8. Sentimental number.

Consciously avoiding all but the most familiar language, in 1912 Luz obviously had a relatively low opinion of the knowledge and ability of his readers. Three years later, Luz produced musical plots of an altogether different nature. Insisting that an Edison three-reeler, The Tragedies of the Crystal Globe, affords "exceptional opportunities for the best or classical music, as can be seen by the numbers suggested," Luz suggests the following general types and specific numbers:

1. Gavotte (S. H.) "Amaryllis" (Pub. by Leo Feist)
2. Maritana Selection (Pub. by Carl Fischer)
3. Forosetta Tarantella (Pub. by Carl Fischer)
4. Desc. (H. Ancient) "La[sic] Retour" (Schirmer)
5. Agitate [sic]
6. Melody of Peace (Pub. by Carl Fischer)
7. Egyptian Ballet [sic] No. 1–2, 3–4 (Schirmer)
8. Desc. (H.) "Roses Honeymoon" (Witmark)

Though Luz shared a tendency with Ennis to end a drama that turns our well with a popular tune, by 1915 he had clearly cast his lot with Fischer and Schirmer. His colleague H. S. Fuld obviously worshiped at the same altar, as demonstrated by these proposals for Griffith's Judith of Bethulia:

1. Open with "Maritana" (by Wallace) until Judith in prayer.
2. Then "The Rosary" (by Nevin) until she leaves woman with child.
3. Then back to "Maritana" until "The Army."
4. Then "William Tell" (by Rossini) the last movement. Play this to end of reel.
5. The "Pique Dame" overture (Suppe) all through.
6. Then "Poet and Peasant" overture (Suppe) until "Water and Food Famine."
7. Then "Simple Aye" (Thome) until "The King."
8. Then "Peer Gynt," Suite II, opus 55 (Grieg) until Judith has vision.
9. Then "Woodland Sketches 1 and 2" (Mackaye) until she puts on fine clothes.
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10. Then “Lament of Roses” (Sounakolb) until “The King.”
11. Then “Peer Gynt”—Suite II, opus 55, until end of reel.  

In a few short years, we have come a long way from the march/waltz/pizzicato/“Hearts and Flowers” regime of the early 1910s.

Even before the rise of theater orchestras in the latter half of the decade, the film repertory had grown substantially. New standards included Beethoven’s “Kreutzer Sonata,” Drigo’s “Serenade,” Dvořák’s “Humoresque,” Handel’s “Largo,” Liszt’s third “Liebestraum,” Moszkowski’s “Serenata,” Tchaikovsky’s “Barcarole,” and musical theater selections, including Grieg’s Peer Gynt, Mascagni’s Cavalleria Rusticana, Vincent Wallace’s Maritana, several Verdi and Wagner operas, and recent operettas by Friml, Herbert, and Romberg. Suggestions were increasingly produced by musicians with experience on the classical side of the music publishing industry. Whereas early musical plots had indicated only tempo and general type of music, by 1915 virtually all musical suggestions recommended specific numbers, with designation of the publisher. From the mid-teens to the late twenties, classical music publishers thus experienced a rare boom. Music of all types was exploited as musical suggestion compilers endeavored to lend originality to their musical plots. Theatrical pianists were not always up to the task, however. Their repertory and knowledge grew slowly, as we can glean from the following Moving Picture News insert, responding to a query from a reader unable to locate a sonata by Kreutzer:  

NO!! There is no Sonata by Kreutzer, but there is a “Kreutzer Sonata” written and composed by Beethoven for and dedicated to his friend Kreutzer.

However diligently the trade press enforced new film accompaniment standards, moving picture musicians and audiences required live examples and instruction before they could be expected to carry out the bidding of producers and exhibitors.