INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

FROM STAGE TO SCREEN
DAL PALCO ALLO SCHERMO

Musical Films in Europe and United States (1927-1961)
I film musicali in Europa e Stati Uniti (1927-1961)

16-18 September 2010, Monte San Savino (AR), Italy

organised by
CENTRO STUDI OPERA OMNIA LUIGI BOCCHERINI, LUCCA

under the auspices of
MUNICIPALITY OF MONTE SAN SAVINO

in collaboration with
MAGADIS - International Music Agency

Under the Scientific Direction of
Massimiliano Sala

Scientific Committee
Francesco Attesti, Lorenzo Frassà,
Roberto Illiano, Alika Maffezzoli,
Fulvia Morabito, Luca Sala

Keynote speakers
Prof. Raymond Knapp
University of California at Los Angeles

Prof. Sergio Miceli
University of Florence - University of Rome ‘La Sapienza’
DAL PALCO ALLO SCHERMO

CONFERENZA INTERNAZIONALE
THURSDAY 16 SEPTEMBER

9.00-9.30: Registration – Welcome
9.30-10.00: Opening (Massimiliano Sala)

10.00-11.00: Session 1: Musical Practices and Techniques (I)
(Chair: Sergio Miceli)
- Luca Bandirali: Applicando e disapplicando la musica: il campo sonoro
- Elena Redaelli: Verso la creazione di una continuità drammaturgica: l’influenza del melodrama ottocentesco nella storia del musical

Coffee Break

11.30-12.30: Session 1: Musical Practices and Techniques (II)
(Chair: Massimiliano Sala)
- Emile Wennekes: Daydreaming by Mr. Five by Five: Visualizing Music in Early Soundfilms
- Leanne Wood: Technology, Authenticity, and the Pastoral Ideal: Viewing ‘Oklahoma!’ Through the Lens of Todd-AO

13.00 Lunch

16.00-17.00: Keynote Speaker 1
- Raymond Knapp (University of California at Los Angeles): Getting off the Trolley: Why (and How) Some Film Musicals Stop Being Musicals

Coffee Break

17.30-19.00: Session 2: Composers, Singers and Performers
(Chair: Raymond Knapp)
- Ryan P. Jones: Aaron Copland, Thornton Wilder, and Early American Cinematic Sinergy
- Kate Hext: ‘Somehow This Crazy World Has Taken on a Wonderful Design’: ‘Art pour l’art’ in the Film Aesthetic of Vincente Minnelli
- Cécile Carayol: Bernard Herrmann: Correlation between Concert Works and Film Music

20.00 Dinner
FRIDAY 17 SEPTEMBER

9.30-11.00: Session 3: From Stage to Screen (I)
(Chair: Fulvia Morabito)
• James Deutsch: A Real Nice Clambake: From ‘Liliom’ (1909) to ‘Carousel’ (1956)
• Lauren Acton: Can’t Help Lovin’ Dat Musical: ‘Show Boat’ in Films and Revivals
• Clara Huber: The Country Girl, the Emperor and Some Saltsticks

Coffee Break

11.30-12.30: Session 3: From Stage to Screen (II)
(Chair: Luca Sala)
• Jaume Radigales - Isabel Villanueva: ‘Carmen Jones’: Between Opera and Musical
• Isabelle Le Corff – Cécile Vendramini: Otto Preminger’s “Carmen”: From French Opera to American Swing

13.00 Lunch

16.00-17.00: Keynote Speaker 2
• Sergio Miceli (University of Florence and University of Rome ‘La Sapienza’): WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get). Movie Musical/Film musicale/Film di argomento musicale: è necessario distinguere

Coffee Break

17.30-18.30: Session 4: Political and Sociological Matters (I)
(Chair: Raymond Knapp)
• Jonathan De Souza: Musicals, Media, and the Cinema of Attractions
• Marija Ćirić: Music in Ex-Yugoslav Cinematography 1945-1961: On the Road to Musical

20.00 Dinner
SATURDAY 18 SEPTEMBER

10.00-11.00: Session 5: Political and Sociological Matters (II)
(Chair: Roberto Illiano)
- Alexandra Grabarchuk: *Fairy Tales for Grown-ups: 'Into the Woods' as a Rejection of Utopianism in American Musicals*
- Marida Rizzuti: *'Love Life' e 'Trouble in Tahiti': rappresentazione della famiglia americana*

Coffee Break

11.30-12.30: Session 6: Music in Black-and-White Films in Italy
(Chair: Luca Sala)
- Antonio Caroccia: *Camillo De Nardis e il cinema*
- Beatrice Birardi: *L'opera in musica raccontata nei documentari girati in Italia fra gli anni Trenta e Quaranta*

13.00 Lunch

16.00-17.00: Session 7: Musical and Gender Matters (I)
(Chair: Fulvia Morabito)
- Matilde Olarte: *The Feminine Inner World in the Musical Starring Fred Astaire and Gene Kelly*

Coffee Break

17.30-18.30: Session 7: Musical and Gender Matters (II)
(Chair: Massimiliano Sala)
- Iryna Yaroshchuk: *The Elusive Mary Poppins: Issues of Gender and Class in the Disney Version (1964) and Mosfilm's 'Mary Poppins Goodbye' (1983)*
- Melissa J. de Graaf: *The 'Real Negro Sound': Hall Johnson's Choir From Broadway to Hollywood*

20.00: Dinner
DAL PALCO ALLO SCHERMO

CONFERENZA INTERNAZIONALE
Keynote Speakers

Raymond Knapp (University of California at Los Angeles)

Getting off the Trolley: Why (and How) Some Film Musicals Stop Being Musicals

Film musicals find a variety of ways to avoid the “second-act problem” common to stage musicals, but the most drastic of these — ceasing to be a musical, in some important sense — often seems expressive of the second-act problem in a deeper sense. Film musicals that choose this path — The Wizard of Oz and Meet Me in St. Louis, for example — carry through with a sense of resignation and sometimes wistful acceptance, with the faintest bow toward conventional gestures of (musical) closure. In such instances, it is as if movies, unlike most (but not all) stage musicals, in aspiring to a more full-bodied sense of realism than their stage siblings, must as an expression of that realism acknowledge that the “second-act problem” is something that people have, not just their dramatic artworks. In detailing how such films as these stop being musicals, I will also speculate on why they do so, basing my explanation in the felt incongruity between an historically evolving sense of filmic realism and the cultivated artificialities of the stage musical. Resonance for this kind of explanation will then be sought in other film and stage musicals that show similar tendencies, albeit less drastically realized.

Sergio Miceli (Università di Firenze / Università di Roma ‘La Sapienza’)


La durata approssimativa di lettura è di 35 minuti, con una suddivisione in cinque parti: 1. Introduzione; 2. Genere diverso alias problemi diversi; 3. Il cinema italiano e il musical americano; 4. Due esempi di film musicale; 5. Conclusioni. Il testo è integrato da 6 esempi video per complessivi 25 minuti. Di conseguenza l’intera prolusione occupa 60 minuti circa. Sebbene il tema sia affrontato attraverso un’articolazione unitaria, ecco in forma schematica i principali punti toccati:

• Specificità culturale del movie musical come fenomeno prettamente statunitense e necessità, in Europa, di un ascolto della colonna sonora (ovvero dialoghi, effetti e musica) nella versione originale, con particolare attenzione ai passaggi tra dialoghi e canto (esempio tratto da Top Hat).
• Specificità del movie musical propriamente detto, da analizzare e classificare in base a solidi e collaudati sistemi linguistici; vedi l’equivoco — fin troppo ricorrente, anche negli USA — di The Jazz Singer e simili, considerato erroneamente un movie musical mentre si tratta in realtà di un film di argomento musicale.
• “Corteggiamento” del musical nella produzione italiana di genere convenzionale fra anni ’70 (Il prato dei fratelli Paolo e Vittorio Taviani) e ’90 (Caro diario e Aprile di Nanni Moretti).
Sintesi analitica di due casi di film musicale in Europa come modelli culturali autonomi: Carosello napoletano in Italia e Les parapluies de Cherbourg in Francia.

Sintomi recenti d’apertura del pubblico italiano nei confronti del movie musical e ipotesi sui probabili motivi.

**Contributors**

Lauren Acton (York University, Toronto, Canada)

Can’t Help Lovin’ Dat Musical: Show Boat in Films and Revivals

This paper will explore the dialogue between Broadway and Hollywood in the case of Show Boat (1927) — a classic of theatre and film. Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein II wrote new songs and lyrics and altered the placement of or deleted songs with each new incarnation of their work (Broadway revivals in 1932 and 1946; films in 1936 from Universal and 1951 from MGM). As a result, there is not a definitive version of the show, and more recent Broadway revivals (1983, 1994) have had the task of interpreting the work from varying sources, two enshrined in celluloid. Show Boat is often touted as opening a new era in Broadway musicals; it took an American story encompassing steam boats, theatricality, gambling, love and racial issues and turned it into a hit many times over on both the Great White Way and the Silver Screen.

Luca Bandirali (Università del Salento, Lecce)

Applicando e disapplicando la musica: il campo sonoro

- **Necessità della condivisione del concetto di campo sonoro.**

Il maggior equivoco riguardante la sfera dell’ascolto cinematografico è lo statuto della musica per film, che è musica applicata, non soltanto all’immagine ma a un campo sonoro i cui elementi complementari sono la parola e il rumore. Prendendo una definizione di campo visivo da Jacques Aumont, («la porzione di spazio immaginario a tre dimensioni percepito in un’immagine filmica»), possiamo dire che il campo sonoro sia la porzione di spazio immaginario a tre dimensioni costruito dalla colonna sonora. Questo semplice concetto ci porta direttamente a disambiguare lo statuto della musica per film: essa svolge la propria funzione all’interno di un sistema di relazioni, lo stesso all’interno del quale viene frutta; questo primo sistema di relazioni, che come detto include la parola e il rumore, rappresenta una qualità estetica specifica dei linguaggi audiovisivi rappresentativi.

- **Il campo sonoro come campo di relazioni: il Primo Grande Sistema.**

Ci si pone la domanda: quali suoni? In sostanza, a proposito di un film è abbastanza fuorviante fare strettamente riferimento al suo suono musicale: anzitutto perché tranne in rari passaggi, esso sarà sempre frutto assieme agli altri elementi sonori, in una densa stratificazione che peraltro le recenti tecnologie di registrazione e riproduzione enfatizzano ed esaltano.

- **Il campo sonoro come campo di relazioni: il Secondo Grande Sistema.**

Ci si pone la domanda: in quale mondo? Oltre ad appartenere tecnicamente a un campo sonoro, la musica per film appartiene a un mondo narrativo: vale a dire che essa può essere oggetto della storia, quando è condivisa da personaggi e spettatori, oppure essere funzione del discorso quando è diretta ai soli spettatori. In questo
senso, la musica per film è un testo sonoro impregnato di altri suoni e calato in una storia. All’interno di questa storia, il sound acting comporta il relativo sound reacting, vale a dire una “risposta” del mondo al suono: negli studi sul suono ci si è preoccupati per decenni del posizionamento del suono rispetto allo schermo, mentre ci si è occupati pochissimo del posizionamento dello schermo rispetto al suono.

Beatrice Birardi (Università del Salento, Lecce)

L’opera in musica raccontata nei documentari girati in Italia fra gli anni Trenta e Quaranta

A partire dalla seconda metà degli anni Trenta ha inizio un periodo fortemente positivo per la produzione documentaristica italiana, che, grazie anche alla nascita dell’Incom (1938) in proficua concorrenza con l’Istituto Luce, registra una lunga ascesa qualitativa e quantitativa solo lievemente intaccata dagli anni di guerra. All’interno di una proliferazione di versi e propri ‘generi documentari’, sviluppatisi soprattutto con l’avvento del suono, si intende porre l’attenzione su un corpus non molto ristretto di pellicole prodotte fino alla fine degli anni Quaranta che portano sullo schermo l’opera in musica, soprattutto italiana. Se da un lato quello che potremmo definire con il termine docu-opera viene costruito principalmente sul terreno della finzione, dall’altro non sono estranei elementi di connessione con la realtà storica e il ricorso alle funzioni tipiche del documentario didattico-culturale, da ricercare soprattutto nella presenza del narratore onnisciente che guida la visione e l’ascolto. Gli eventi di questi anni costituiscono probabilmente lo sfondo adatto per questo tipo di operazioni, come mostra anche il coevo successo del film-opera, unitamente al fatto che già durante il periodo fascista il documentario gode di una particolare attenzione da parte delle istituzioni grazie a una specifica e favorevole legislazione. Varie sono le tipologie dei docu-opera: da filmati appositamente girati per lo schermo, a riprese di allestimenti di opere realmente rappresentate nei teatri, fino a messe in scena da burattini. L’Incom, che produce la maggior parte di queste pellicole, recluta figure di primo piano tra registi, scenografi, fotografi, musicisti, tecnici del suono, ecc., molte delle quali già operanti in ambito documentaristico. A rendere più ‘fonogeniche’ le musiche operistiche, con il ricorso a trascrizioni e riduzioni, intervengono specialisti quali Giovanni Fusco e Raffaele Gervasio, tra l’altro i primi compositori italiani a cimentarsi nella scrittura di musiche originali per documentari negli anni Trenta. Alla luce di tutto ciò, l’indagine parte dall’individuazione dei materiali per poi collocarli avviando uno studio dei filmati, delle prassi produttive, dei codici linguistici utilizzati, della ricezione da parte del pubblico e della critica.

Cécile Carayol (Université de Rennes 2)

Bernard Herrmann: Correlation between Concert Works and Film Music

Bernard Herrmann is a prolific film composer with some considerable collaborations (Orson Welles, Alfred Hitchcock, François Truffaut or Brian De Palma) and he has, notably, a propensity for evoking fantastic or science fiction mood in a few pictures, such as *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951) or *Journey to the Center to the Earth* (1959). Furthermore, there is a large concert work as well: *Moby Dick,* a
Cantata for Male Chorus, Soloists and Orchestra, a Symphony (1939-1941), Fantasticks, a choral work (1942), For The Fallen (1943) and his single opera Wuthering Heights (1943-1951), or later, Echoes for String Quartet (1965) and his Clarinet Quintet Souvenirs de voyages, a period when Herrmann's association with Hollywood came to an end, and that for some ten years. The object of this present text is to analyse the correlation between the concert works and film music in Herrmann's scores. The composer sometimes reuses, some of his own concert works in his scores for the movies, scores which have to be readjusted to the film narrative: the Psycho's «Madhouse» theme (1960), for example, was first written for Herrmann's Sinfonietta for Strings (1935). The orchestral interlude in the one-act love duet of Wuthering Heights (1945) reappears almost unaltered as a title sequence of Herrmann's film score for The Ghost and Mrs. Muir (1947) and some Clarinet Quintet motives are evoked in Marnie. The other form of link between Herrmann's concert works and his film music are the implicit references to classical repertory composers, such as Claude Debussy, Maurice Ravel, Richard Wagner, Bela Bartók through some musical language process or musical quotations in some scores of film music like The Ghost and Mrs. Muir, Vertigo, Psycho or Fahrenheit 451.

Antonio Caroccia (Università degli Studi di Perugia)

Camillo De Nardis e il cinema

Camillo De Nardis (1857-1951) è stato l’insegnante di due generazioni di musicisti; la sua profonda conoscenza tecnica e la sua versatilità furono dedicate alla formazione di menti inesperte in un periodo di radicale trasformazione dell'esperienza sonora e del gusto artistico. Egli ebbe la fortuna di essere contemporaneo di Mercadante e Debussy, di Verdi e Stravinskij, di Wagner e di Schönberg. Grazie alla recente donazione degli eredi, di inediti documenti sulla sua vita e sulle sue opere, alla biblioteca del Conservatorio San Pietro a Majella di Napoli, si aprono nuovi spiragli d'indagine anche sulla sua attività di compositore per il cinema. Pertanto, il contributo intende esaminare la collaborazione nata all'inizio degli anni Trenta fra il compositore abruzzese e la Società cinematografica di Stefano Pittaluga, che si tradusse in una felice stagione di composizioni per il mondo cinematografico. Dallo studio di questi materiali emerge un profondo interesse per l’arte sonora intesa non solo come esperienza artistica-cinematografica, ma anche come fenomeno scientifico e di costume, fra tradizione e futuro. Molteplici e notevoli sono, infatti, le interrelazioni strutturali e tipologiche, con la peculiarità delle esigenze narrative che vengono nell’insieme soddisfatte dalla pellicola e dalla relativa colonna sonora.

Marija Ćirić (Drama Department of Radio Belgrade)

Music in Ex-Yugoslav Cinematography 1945-1961: On the Road to Musical

Because of political reasons, the musical genre entered Yugoslav cinematography relatively late: musical was considered to be a product of capitalist systems. The entrance of non-classical genres into the film music of Ex-YU cinematography was brought by adaptations of literary pieces and comedies, where patterns of popular music (firstly jazz, and then rock’n’roll) become introduced; the film narrative was occasionally enriched with separate music numbers and thus the space
for the birth of musical was gradually prepared. Popular music finally became equal with the classical music material with the appearance of music film *On Saturday evenings* (1957), and then with the first Yugoslav musical – *Love and fashion* (1960). Music from the film *Love and fashion* was a turning point in Yugoslav cinematography music because it demonstrated a new model that was applied in equipping a film with music. Composers Kraljic and Adamic found their style paragons in popular models of the West, above all in Italian canzone, which was also the closest to Yugoslavia in geographical terms, as well as in aesthetic criteria of Italian popular film, which spoke of a — final — convergence of Yugoslavia to the West and of an attempt to detach itself from the communist concept of life.

**Melissa J. de Graaf** (University of Miami, FL)

**The ‘Real Negro Sound’: Hall Johnson’s Choir From Broadway to Hollywood**

In the 1920s and early 30s, a number of New York-based African-American choral groups found success on the New York concert stages, in other major U. S. cities, and abroad. Among the most successful of these groups was the Hall Johnson Choir. Audiences greeted them with enthusiasm, and the press, for the most part, commended them for their “unstudied, racial musical spontaneity”. The group won further fame in 1930 through their performance in Marc Connelly’s Pulitzer Prize-winning Broadway hit, *Green Pastures*. So integral were they to the success of the play that they found themselves in Hollywood in 1936 to sing and act in the film version. Yet the rise of a purist movement soon prompted a less receptive, even critical assessment of the group’s performances. Issues of authenticity dominated the critical press throughout the 1930s, punctuated by John Hammond’s censure of the group and his organization of the 1938 “Spirituals to Swing” event, and by Johnson’s defense of their practices.

In this paper I explore the conflicting views of Hall Johnson and his choir’s performances in New York, their participation in the stage version of *Green Pastures*, and the product of their Hollywood sojourn, the film version of *Green Pastures*. I address issues of “authenticity” in their critical reception, and I analyze in their early recordings and in the film those musical elements Johnson himself identified as most crucial in achieving an “authentic Negro sound”. I finally suggest that the transition from stage to screen resulted in exactly the polished, sophisticated sound Johnson and his choir had tried to resist.

**Jonathan De Souza** (University of Chicago, IL)

**Musicals, Media, and the Cinema of Attractions**

Movie musicals have clear connections to the theatre: they often feature backstage plots or adaptations of Broadway shows. But how do these films relate to earlier cinema? How does the medium’s technical and affective potential shape the genre? This paper proposes one answer to such questions, connecting movie musicals and early, non-narrative film — what Tom Gunning theorizes as «the cinema of attractions».

The cinema of attractions is more concerned with stunning effects than realistic stories. As Gunning writes, this is «a cinema that bases itself on […] its ability to show something». Its subjects include speeding trains, bustling street scenes, alluring or grotesque bodies, and visual tricks of stop-motion substitution or multiple exposure. Reflecting thrills
of modernity, these attractions may be seen to amplify a spectacular impulse associated with vaudeville. Indeed, Sergei Eisenstein traces their roots to circus and music hall. Film musicals, I argue, maintain this aesthetic of astonishment — along with many of its means. As an example, consider Rouben Mamoulian’s *Love Me Tonight* (1932). The movie reproduces sights from the cinema of attractions: special effects, looks into the camera, trains, horses, and female bodies on display. Crucially, it also explores new attractional possibilities of synchronized sound: the urban soundscape, the overdubbed voice, and the popular music of Rodgers and Hart. Here and elsewhere, the persistence of an attractional aesthetic shows how the screen is not a neutral medium to which stage conventions might migrate. Rather, film musicals are hybrids; they draw on traditions of musical comedy but also traditions of silent film. Furthermore, conceptualizing film musicals as a cinema of attractions may help us understand the genre as a form of vernacular modernism. Mass producing sensory affect or experiences of Benjaminian “shock”, films like *Love Me Tonight* may fundamentally represent the attractions of modernity.

**James Deutsch** (Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C.)

*A Real Nice Clambake: From Liliom (1909) to Carousel (1956)*

When Ferenc Molnar’s dark drama, *Liliom*, was first produced on stage in Budapest in 1909, few people could have imagined that forty-seven years later this same story would end up on the wide CinemaScope screen as *Carousel*, a bright musical comedy set in the late nineteenth century on the coast of New England. Molnar’s protagonist — a good-looking but menacing carnival barker named Liliom — had been transformed (first by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II, and then by Henry Ephron and Darryl Zanuck at 20th Century-Fox) into a much more pleasant character named Billy Bigelow. This paper examines the fascinating process by which *Liliom* became *Carousel* — including several significant stage versions in New York and London in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s; and three previous film versions: *A Trip to Paradise* (1921); *Liliom* (1930), directed by Frank Borzage; and *Liliom* (1934), directed by Fritz Lang. Believing that many of the most popular plays and films may be seen as representative artifacts of their times, this paper will especially compare and contrast the versions produced during the 1930s Depression with those that emerged during the 1940s and 1950s.

**Alexandra Grabarchuk** (University of California at Los Angeles)

*Fairy Tales for Grown-ups: Into the Woods as a Rejection of Utopianism in American Musicals*

In his seminal essay ‘Entertainment and Utopia’, Richard Dyer posits that utopianism is an essential part of American musical entertainment — although it is not always reflected directly in the dramatic or musical action, it is an important affective quality transmitted to the observer. My paper will provide a selective close reading of Stephen Sondheim’s *Into the Woods*, focusing on specific numbers in the second act in order to demonstrate how the show operates as a successful piece of American musical entertainment outside of the parameters set up by Dyer. By denying the stereotypical paradigm of fairy-tale narration, *Into the Woods* escapes both the strong gravitation toward an affectively utopian message of communal triumph as well
as the conventional isolationism and morally satisfying resolution common to fairy tales. Instead we are treated to a more wistful and realistic ending, which works to undermine the conventional rituals associated with the telling of fairy tale stories. However, despite the show’s resistance to these more traditional treatments of musicals and fairy tales, it functions with great awareness of them and even puns on its own denial of the usual “finality of stories such as these”. Its ad hoc resolution can be read, I argue, as a blatant ironization and deritualization of the utopian sensibilities generally reflected in both the musical as well as the fairy tale genres.

Katy Hext (University of Exeter, UK)

‘Somehow This Crazy World Has Taken on a Wonderful Design’: Art pour l’art in the Film Aesthetic of Vincente Minnelli

Most musicals are about love; Vincente Minnelli’s musicals are about art. More than any other, Minnelli’s MGM musicals embody the motto of their studio: ars gratia artis. Only, his aesthetic owes more to the French rendition of this term — the art pour l’art of nineteenth century aesthetes such as Gautier, Baudelaire, and their English admirers, Pater and Wilde — than to MGM’s neo-Classical appropriation of the term. Reversing the modernist aesthetic that governed the musical of the 1930s, Minnelli is singular in bringing art pour l’art to define his musical films. In part this takes the form of homage, as when the camera pans across several Beardsleyesque satyrs in ‘This Heart of Mine’ (Ziegfeld Follies); or with the use of Impressionist paintings — by Dufy, Manet, Utrillo, Rousseau, Van Gogh and Toulouse-Lautrec — as the visual foundation of the American in Paris ballet. However, it is most interesting when we consider how the vision of art pour l’art shaped Minnelli’s film aesthetic. With this in mind, my paper sets out to answer two central questions: How does Minnelli bring the principles (and tensions) of art for art’s sake to define his musical films? And what makes the film musical a particularly suitable genre to embody these principles? I shall suggest that Minnelli appropriates the visual impressionism, temporal and spatial disjunction, and aesthetic self-referencing of art pour l’art by making full use of the ‘total art’ offered by cinema; and particularly musical cinema of the 1940s and ’50s. This paper considers these facets of Minnelli’s aestheticism in turn, discussing his exploitation of Technicolor to create Wildean ‘spaces of colour’; his use of music and song to catalyse an aestheticised parallel universe, spatially separate and temporally unbounded; and the intertextualisation of arts within these musical interludes to suggest an aesthetic realm that pertains only to itself. My comments will range across Minnelli’s MGM oeuvre with specific examples from The Pirate, An American in Paris and Ziegfeld Follies. In keeping with this conference’s theme, I shall especially consider the role of music in initiating and evoking Minnelli’s aestheticist aspirations.

Clara Huber (University of Vienna)

The Country Girl, the Emperor and Some Saltsticks

The Musical Film “Spring Parade”, Its Affinity to Viennese Operetta and the Changing Contexts of Its Screen Adaptations

Spring Parade, originally written by Ernst Marischka (script) and Robert Stolz (music), was inspired by operetta and Old Vienna. It was adapted for the screen three times and placed within very
different contexts. The story is simple, but charming: A country girl comes to *Fin-de-siècle* Vienna, finds true love and gets to meet the old Emperor Franz Joseph, because she’s baking some sheet music into the monarch’s saltsticks. The setting, Vienna in the last days of the Habsburg monarchy, is some kind of sugar-sweet utopia: “Süße Mädel”, handsome lieutenants, Prater, waltzes, the castle of Schönbrunn and people in love. The first adaptation of “*Frühjahrsparade*” was an Austrian, Hungarian and German co-production directed by Geza von Bolvary in 1934. The social and political environment couldn’t have been more explosive. Germany was already ruled by the Nazis and Austria had a fascist regime and was irritated by a period of civil war in February 1934. The German-speaking film industry was run by a disproportionately high percentage of people with Jewish background. Because of the adverse conditions in Nazi-Germany many creative personalities emigrated from Berlin to Vienna and Budapest, where they continued making movies. The main actress of the film, Franziska Gaal, was Jewish and later emigrated to the USA. In Hollywood 1940 *Spring Parade* was remade, starring the musical star Deanna Durbin and Robert Cummings. The cast and crew were infused by European immigrants like the German born director Henry Koster or the Austrian-Hungarian comedian S. Z. Szakall. At last the original script writer Ernst Marischka filmed the sujet again in 1955 in post-war Austria as *Die Deutschmeister* in colour with Romy Schneider in one of her first roles. This movie was a big success and is still regarded as one of the classics of the genre. These three interpretations of the same material provide a view on different parameters: In which ways are the European and Hollywood musical film styles different? How does Hollywood handle the typical Viennese music and setting? Are there changes in the musical style? Is there a change of songs? What dramatic changes are made? Are there any references to the actual political or social situation? Are there any aspects of modernization, especially regarding gender relations? What different ideologies are presented or propagated?

**Ryan P. Jones** (University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, WI)

**Aaron Copland, Thornton Wilder, and Early American Cinematic Sinergy**

Though Copland wrote prolifically both for and about film, little scholarship has emerged to explore the ways in which his work in this area contributed to the development of an American style in cinema. In Sol Lesser’s 1940 cinematic adaptation of Thornton Wilder’s *Our Town* (1938), Copland’s score treats expressly American characters, familial archetypes, and Wilder’s knack for underscoring tragedy through life cycles within a delicate, introspective fabric of thematic development and internal reference. Despite the stylistic kinship in simplicity apparent between its renowned collaborators, *Our Town* marks Copland’s singular partnership with Wilder and warrants closer scrutiny. Prompted by the drama’s unique approach to narrative and thematic development, Copland allows the play’s didactic rhetoric to guide his own. «*Our Town* was the perfect vehicle», he recalled, «for putting to the test opinions I had… that film music should follow the organic structure of a story. My job was… to reflect the shifts from the real to the fantasy world». As the unassuming “Grover’s Corners” theme recurs throughout the film, Copland’s aural complement to
Wilder’s tragic conceit gradually distorts this motive, helping to elicit in its audience the same awareness of affirmation forced upon the protagonist, Emily Webb, at her death. Triggered by Emily’s impulse to relive a birthday celebration, the most poignant of these returns abruptly restores the “Grover’s Corners” theme, recasting its once carefree music to strike an anguished tone of irony and signify the loss and regret accompanying Emily’s new, instructive perspective on the living. Drawing on music-theoretical and literary analyses as well as publications concerning film music that Copland produced as he composed this score, this study explores the unity in musical procedure exhibited by Copland’s setting as it highlights the special alignment in style and statement resulting from the passing collaboration of these two iconic American artists.

Isabelle Le Corff – Cécile Vendramini (Université de Bretagne Occidentale, France)

Otto Preminger’s Carmen: From French Opera to American Swing
Largely based on the musical Carmen Jones by Oscar Hammerstein II which had been a huge success in Broadway in 1943, Otto Preminger’s musical transposed Carmen’s original story from Spain to the United States during the second world war. It was also highly political in that it was interpreted by black actors and thus conveyed the black Americans’ desires and hopes in the post-war context. However, to what extent did the arrangements by H-B Gilbert and Robert Russel Bennet gratify the French composer’s masterpiece? What remained of the French touch in the film and how had the musical transitions evolve? What was left of Mérimée’s original text? We know that all the actors were dubbed by opera singers. What did it add to the performance and how did it translate in the film? In this paper we will analyse Otto Preminger’s film in its various components, and we will attempt to distinguish between the numerous influences and the final original creation.

Matilde Olarte (Universidad de Salamanca)

The Feminine Inner World in the Musical Starring Fred Astaire and Gene Kelly
In the great musicals of the ’40 to ’60 decades, featuring Fred Astaire and Gene Kelly, we find a clear leading role of the figure of male actor, dancer and conductor of choreographic design for the musical numbers. In most of the arguments of the musicals staged by these two great artists, the overriding value of these male actors, the central argument of these musicals, makes for a shift implicit bias towards the female protagonist and his inner world, which is very interested because of her quality of enriching the male role. This situation contrasts with the nowadays women models for musical films, where we can find the fresh musical approaches of the current giving an unconventional approach on key issues for women (and possibly trivial for many men) and can enjoy dancing even if you are overweight (Hairspray), you want to be super-woman controlling all emotional situations (Mamma Mia), or be a real criminal and using men to laugh at the justice (Chicago). We find, in those films of the 40s, 50s and 60s, several models of submissive women, whose work revolves around making happy or unhappy the male protagonist, performing perfect choreography for the musical numbers, and singing metatextual
songs which explain all their feelings. Why those glamorous women eclipsed currently models of women workers, worried about taking up their family, with many economic problems which can be sorted out, in benefit of these models unrealistic stereotypes of fragile women, who finding sense only around the male figure? This utopia has caused, many times, the rejection of these major productions by the public today. A proper context of these films will give us the key to their analysis, to continue watching the spectacular musical as a genre, with large expressive musical qualities.

Jaume Radigales (Universitat ‘Ramon Llull’, Barcelona) – Isabel Villanueva (Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, Barcelona)

*Carmen Jones: Between Opera and Musical*

Since the beginning of cinema, even during the silent film era, the presence of the opera has been regular in the seventh art. Among the themes and favorite characters in this kind of films, Carmen has always occupied a special place thanks to the identification of the Seville's gypsy girl with the "femme fatale". The film *Carmen Jones* (Otto Preminger, 1954) is a new approach to the myth of Carmen, and is (above all) a very popular musical based on Georges Bizet's opera *Carmen*. The transposition of the original places the action in the context of an air base in the United States among black people. Preminger's film was made in the context of major musical production at the beginning of the end of the era of big Hollywood studios, and was noted for his originality to the jazz treatment of the Bizet's Opera. The analysis of the film can answer various questions: what are the differences between the "film opera" and the musical in a movie like *Carmen Jones*? How the musical films can bring audiences to the opera? Does it make sense to talk about differences between mass culture and high culture when the borders are lost in a hybrid genre? What challenges are and what is the meaning of the film when the roles of the opera are assumed by black people?

Elena Redaelli (Università degli Studi di Milano)

*Verso la creazione di una continuità drammaturgica: l'influenza del melodrama ottocentesco nella storia del musical*

*Happy end:* ecco la parola d’ordine perché un musical-comedy possa definirsi tale. Non solo, ovviamente. Oltre a un finale lieto, nel musical comedy non poteva mancare l’ingrediente che dal romanzo all’operetta da secoli condivideva le trame degli spettacoli di maggior successo: la trama amorosa. Tuttavia se è vero che esso nasce come spettacolo di intrattenimento, è pur vero che nel musical comedy si ricercò una continuità drammaturgica estranea ad altre forme di spettacolo adibite a tal scopo. Ed è da questa esigenza che nasce il musical in senso moderno, ovvero uno spettacolo in cui canto, danza e recitazione sono a servizio della scena al fine di creare una storia che ha i suoi cardini nell’unità e nella coerenza. Nonostante però l’esigenza fosse avvertita già alla fine del xix secolo, si dovranno aspettare i primi decenni del secolo successivo perché trovi una forma nel cosiddetto integrated musical; e non è un caso che questo periodo coincida proprio con gli anni in cui il cinema si preparava ad entrare nell’era del sonoro, come non è una coincidenza che il primo integrated musical (*Show Boat*) uscì nel 1927 firmato da un compositore che fu spesso a cavallo tra queste due forme d’arte: Jerome Kern. Ancor più sorprendente è
che lo strumento con cui si attuò questo passaggio dal musical comedy al musical fosse presente in ambito teatrale da più di un secolo e che oggi sia lo stesso che ci permette di dire che il genere ottocentesco del melodrama sia il precursore della colonna sonora: l’underscore music, ovvero la musica di accompagnamento delle scene recitate, posta ad enfasi, commento o anticipazione di quanto avveniva in scena. Il mio intervento si propone di portare l’attenzione verso l’underscore music in quanto tecnica essenziale nella creazione di una continuità drammaturgica sia in ambito teatrale che cinematografico.

**Marida Rizzuti** (Univeristà IULM, Milano)

*Love Life e Trouble in Tahiti: rappresentazione della famiglia americana*


**Delphine Vincent** (Fribourg University, Switzerland)

«*Lippen schweigen, ’s flüstern Geigen: Hab mich lieb!*» Seduction, Powers Relations and Lubitsch Touch in *The Merry Widow*

In 1934, Ernst Lubitsch adapts for the screen Franz Lehar’s *Die Lustige Witwe* with the legendary couple Jeanette MacDonald and Maurice Chevalier. It is quite clear that the Viennese operetta is a light version of the genre created by Jacques Offenbach, with a less marked critical dimension. I will study how Lubitsch adapts the story, modifying in particular the steps of the seduction process: Sonia (Hanna), the rich widow, becomes one of the Maxim’s girls before marrying Danilo. With this transformation of the plot, Lubitsch explores the position of man and woman in a couple. I will show how the film underlines the fact that the initial inversion of the macho power is against the norm and unmask the male domination. Underlying a few features
in common with the others Lubitsch's movies, I will show how Lubitsch put his touch on this adaptation, associating the seduction with powers relations, as he always does. Eventually, I will think about how Lubitsch's adaptation of Lehar's operetta changes the discourse about seduction and powers relations, but also the critical dimension of the work. For the construction of this discourse, I will also take into account the musical adaptation and the numerous modifications of Lehar's score.

Emile Wennekes (Utrecht University, Dept. Media and Culture Studies)

Daydreaming by Mr. Five by Five: Visualizing Music in Early Soundfims
In the slipstream of The Jazz Singer, Warner Brothers and other companies produced numerous musical shorts — classical and jazz — that display the virtuosity of stage-identified stars. In this paper, a comparison will be made between jazz shorts and early moving pictures of symphony orchestras in performance, a subject only marginally studied to date as an independent phenomenon in both musicology and film studies. This is a proposal for an integrated approach developed through a comparison between scenography, choreography and film direction (e.g. average shot length). While the setting in the classical domain remained ‘classical’ in terms of staging and (re)presenting (as will be demonstrated by musical shorts of Willem Mengelberg conducting the Concertgebouw Orchestra), jazz performances quickly made intrinsic use of the possibilities of the new medium of film by explicitly staging a narrative, including planned camera positions (for Duke Ellington and Count Basie, among others). To qualify this more concretely, a specific classification is now required. If we compare the way classical and jazz musicians ‘play themselves’ for the new medium of film, and thus undertake the theatrics required, at least two levels of quality in ‘performativity’ arise. Within these, the phenomenon of ‘liveness’ plays an intriguing role. This will be analyzed by exploring the tension between the ‘play back’ and the recorded, audial improvisation. I will ultimately argue that musical shorts require a different theoretical treatment than the approaches derived to date from film criticism.

Leanne Wood (Princeton University, NJ)

Technology, Authenticity, and the Pastoral Ideal: Viewing Oklahoma! Through the Lens of Todd-AO
Publicity for the 1955 film adaptation of Rodgers and Hammerstein's Oklahoma! trumpeted the film’s panoramic, deep-screen technology: «When the magic that is Oklahoma! meets the miracle that is Todd-AO, something wonderful happens! Suddenly you're there... in the land that is grand, in the surrey, on the prairie! You live it, you're a part of it... you're in Oklahoma!» Thanks to the wide lens of the newly invented Todd-AO camera, special concave projection surfaces, and surround sound, the new film process provided a unique entertainment experience. The Todd-AO system engulfed viewers and made them feel as though they were participating in the on-screen action. Moreover, the lavish, authentic-looking production offered a kind of visual realism that was simply
unachievable onstage. As advertised, Todd-AO was capable of visually and aurally overwhelming audience members. Whether that was a pleasurable experience or not, however, depended upon the viewer’s ability to reconcile the story’s pastoral elements with its high-tech mode of presentation. Many viewed the film as an eloquent and appropriately spectacular adaptation of the legendary theatrical work. Others felt the big-screen treatment was pompous and that it detracted from the stage musical’s intimate, modest scale; the “bug-eyed” Todd-AO camera in the virgin wilderness seemed a veritable “machine in the garden”— an intrusion of modern technology into a simple, pastoral idyll. Previous commentators have analyzed the film Oklahoma! as an exemplar of the folk musical genre, or have critiqued its deviations from the stage original, but few have addressed the Todd-AO process or its ramifications. This paper explores the complex interrelationships between the technology, production history, and reception of the film Oklahoma! Drawing upon various archival sources, I examine how the film’s blend of realistic sets, wide-open spaces, folksy songs, and cutting-edge technology disrupted the pastoral authenticity of its low-tech stage predecessor.

Iryna Yaroshchuk (University of California at Los Angeles)

The Elusive Mary Poppins: Issues of Gender and Class in the Disney Version (1964) and Mosfilm’s Mary Poppins Goodbye (1983)

This paper aims to give a comparative analysis of the original image and concept of Mary Poppins in P. L. Travers’ books and its counterpart in film adaptations made by Disney studio Mary Poppins” starring Julie Andrews and Soviet Union’s Mosfilm studio’s TV musical film Mary Poppins, Goodbye, starring Natalia Andreychenko (acting) and Tatyana Voronina (singing) as Mary Poppins. I will concentrate on time / space distancing and gender and class issues associated with the character of Mary Poppins; and analyze how the music functions in both stories. Mary Poppins is popular among a range of audiences worldwide and has become a slogan for an idealized woman. The image of Mary Poppins with her umbrella is indelible; but the concept is even stronger, implying a secure childhood and an answer to parental eternal problem — how to balance one’s needs and family demands. Both American and Russian films shift the emphasis to reflect aspects of gender (Disney) and class (Mosfilm) to adapt Mary Poppins to suite their audience, incorporating numerous changes from the original story. Disney’s Mary Poppins is an endearing, tamed and very superficial character who is as disturbing as it is fascinating. Disney emasculates the whole story by making Mr. Banks the main beneficiary of Mary Poppins educational program — the film otherwise could be “Education of Mr. Banks”. As soon as Mr. Banks learns to be a good father to his children, the order is restored in the family and in the whole empire. The Russian film subdues gender and highlights the issue of class, referring to master-servant relationship, aristocratic versus common origin. Mosfilm’s Mary Poppins’ educational program is dispersed over all the characters in the film and concerns tolerance, acceptance, simplicity and faithfulness towards childish dreams.
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