

Twelve Significant Composers of Music for Films

Alphabetical List

The following is a short list selected by the author of this paper from a list of many important film composers found under the following web address:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Academy_Award_for_Best_Original_Score

The initial number indicates the number of academy awards won. The number in parentheses, indicates the total number of Academy Award nominations for each composer. The following biographical information is gleaned from twelve Wikipedia websites available on the internet under the composers' names

The Composers



0: Richard Addinsell (40 scores, 0 nominations)



0: Antheil, George (30 scores, 0 nominations)



1: Elmer Bernstein (10)



1: Aaron Copland (4)



1: Richard Hageman (5)



1: Erich Wolfgang Korngold, (3)



9: Alfred Newman (43)



3: Miklós Rózsa (16)



3: Max Steiner (24)



3: Dimitri Tiomkin (14)



2: Franz Waxman (11)



1: Victor Young (17)

Biographical information with Internet links offering examples of the composers' works

1. **Richard Stewart Addinsell** (13 January 1904 – 14 November 1977) was a British composer, best known for film music, primarily his Warsaw Concerto, composed for the 1941 film *Dangerous Moonlight* (also known under the later title *Suicide Squadron*).

“Warsaw Concerto” from Dangerous Moonlight:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=niIE6HmQCXI>

2. **George Antheil** (July 8, 1900 – February 12, 1959) was an American avant-garde composer, pianist, author and inventor whose modernist musical compositions explored the modern sounds – musical, industrial, mechanical – of the early 20th century.

Spectre of the Rose

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vhcl2a_wjHUurce=hp

In a Dark Place

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6GExAB2meHE>

3. **Elmer Bernstein** (April 4, 1922 – August 18, 2004) was an American composer and conductor best known for his many film scores. In a career which spanned fifty years, he composed music for hundreds of film and television productions. His most popular works include the scores to *The Magnificent Seven*, *The Ten Commandments*, *The Great Escape*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Ghostbusters*, *The Black Cauldron*, and *The Rookies*.

Thoroughly Modern Millie (Academy Award)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KVnCLUE87HQ>

4. **Aaron Copland** (November 14, 1900 – December 2, 1990) was an American composer, composition teacher, writer, and later in his career a conductor of his own and other American music [who inforged] a distinctly American style of [in his] composition. In his later years he was often referred to as “the Dean of American Composers.” [He]is best known to the public for the works he wrote in the 1930s and 1940s in a deliberately accessible style often referred to as Populist and which the composer labeled his “vernacular” style. Copland finished the 1940s with two film scores, one for William Wyler’s 1949 film *The Heiress* and one for the film adaptation of John Steinbeck’s novel *The Red Pony*. [He also composed] the notable film [score] *Of Mice and Men* (1939), that earned Copland his first nomination for an Academy Award (he actually received two nominations, one for “best score” and another for “original score.”) As a commentator on film scores, Copland singled out Bernard Herrmann, Miklós Rózsa, Alex North and Erich Wolfgang Korngold as innovative leaders in the field.

Red Pony Suite--circus march

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lc9G2ixwiAY>

5. **Richard Hageman** (9 July 1881 – 6 March 1966) was a Dutch-born American conductor, pianist, composer, and actor. He is known to the film community for his work as an actor and film score composer, most notably for his work on several John Ford films in the late 1930s. He shared an Academy Award for his score to Ford’s 1939 western *Stagecoach*. He also had minor roles in eleven movies, for example as opera conductor in *The Great Caruso*.

Stagecoach

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oMe80_hqX_o

“Do not Go, My Love” (song)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PrUR6jzQ9HA&list=PL5WBJk-k4cFFqUw7e3qiAS-qqByODg3Uo>

“Miranda” (song) [And the fleas that tease in the High Pyrenees]

Richard Hageman’s song Miranda is a setting of Hilaire Belloc’s poem “Tarantella. “ Hageman however gives a false impression of the original text since he omits the final stanza of Belloc’s poem. It is specifically in this envoi where Belloc’s text turns morbid and indeed the title is put in context.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QvD5bAWFNjM>

6. **Erich Wolfgang Korngold** (May 29, 1897 – November 29, 1957) was an American composer of Austro-Hungarian birth. While his late Romantic compositional style was considered well out of vogue at the time he died, his music has more recently undergone a reevaluation and a gradual reawakening of interest. Along with such composers as Max Steiner and Alfred Newman, he is considered one of the founders of film music. Korngold’s 1938 Academy Award for his score to *The Adventures of Robin Hood* marked the first time an Oscar was awarded to the composer rather than the head of the studio music department (as had occurred, for example, with Korngold’s award-winning score to *Anthony Adverse* in 1936).

Sea Hawk Suite

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Phv5mSGcaes>

“Marietta’s Lied” from *Die tote Stadt*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rzym2TOCJRo>

Robin Hood Suite

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uT6dLPfSCL8>

The Sea Hawk

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VxbYAOoXyPE>

7. **Alfred Newman** (March 17, 1901 – February 17, 1970) was an American composer, arranger, and conductor of film music, and was also the head of a family of major Hollywood film composers, among them his brothers Emil and Lionel, his children David, Thomas and Maria, and his nephew Randy. In a career which spanned over forty years, Newman composed music for over 200 films. He was one of the most respected film score composers of his time, and is today regarded as one of the greatest musicians ever to work in film. Along with composers Max Steiner and Dimitri Tiomkin, Newman is considered one of the “three godfathers of film music.” [And he] played a major part in creating the tradition of composing original music for films.

March from *Captain from Castille*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eXVWSAMq6aA>

Anastasia (1956) - Alfred Newman

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fRIYmbQImPg>

8. **Miklós Rózsa** (Hungarian, 18 April 1907 – 27 July 1995) was a Hungarian-born composer trained in Germany (1925–1931), and active in France (1931–1935), England (1935–1940), and the United States (1940–1995), with extensive sojourns in Italy from 1953. Best known for his nearly one hundred film scores, he nevertheless maintained a steadfast allegiance to absolute concert music throughout what he called his “double life.” His notable Hollywood career earned him considerable fame, including Academy Awards for *Spellbound* (1945), *A Double Life* (1947), and *Ben-Hur* (1959), while his concert works were championed by such major artists as Jascha Heifetz, Gregor Piatigorsky, and János Starker.

Thief of Bagdad 1940

I want to be a sailor “ (*Thief of Baghdad*)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V4mw5dUzlyk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B8a5ymBL8DQ>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=spNOHSGKNo0> (suite)

Spellbound Concerto

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JwMoCOFGIPE>

9. **Maximilian Raoul “Max” Steiner** (May 10, 1888 – December 28, 1971) was an Austrian-born American composer of music for theatre and films. He was a child prodigy who conducted his first operetta when he was twelve and became a full-time professional, either composing, arranging, or conducting, when he was fifteen. He worked in England, then Broadway, and moved to Hollywood in 1929 where he became one of the first composers to write music scores for films. Steiner is referred to as “the father of film music” and is considered one of the greatest film score composers in the history of cinema. Along with such composers as Dimitri Tiomkin, Franz Waxman, Erich Wolfgang Korngold, Alfred Newman and Miklós Rózsa, Steiner played a major part in creating the tradition of writing music for films. Steiner composed over 300 film scores with RKO and Warner Brothers, and was nominated for 24 Academy Awards, winning three: *The Informer* (1935), *Now, Voyager* (1942), and *Since You Went Away* (1944)

Gone with the Wind (actual original score, with composer’s notes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6qr25F9t6Es>(24)

10. **Dimitri Zinovievich Tiomkin** (May 10, 1894 – November 11, 1979) was a Russian-born Hollywood film score composer and conductor. Musically trained in Russia, he is best known for his western scores, including *Duel in the Sun*, *High Noon*, *Gunfight at the O.K. Corral*, and *The Alamo*. Tiomkin received twenty-two Academy Award nominations and won four Oscars, three for Best Original Score for *High Noon*, *The High and the Mighty* and *The Old Man and the Sea*, and one for Best Original Song for “The Ballad of High Noon” from the former film. He was the first composer to win in both categories for the same film.(14)

High and Mighty suite

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V-y4m89Z5n4>

11 **Franz Waxman** (24 December 1906 – 24 February 1967) born Franz Wachsmann - was a German-born, Jewish-American composer, known primarily for his work in the film music genre. Waxman was the composer of such film scores as *The Bride of Frankenstein* (1935), *Rebecca* (1940), and *Rear Window* (1954). He also composed concert works, including the oratorio *Joshua* (1959), and *The Song of Terezin* (1965), a work for orchestra, chorus, and children's chorus based upon poetry written by children in the Theresienstadt concentration camp during World War II. Waxman also founded the Los Angeles Music Festival in 1947 with which he conducted a number of West Coast premieres by fellow film composers, and concert composers alike.

Rebecca

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j84ZpU5GgkY>

Humoresque

Isaac Stern's debut on film track playing Waxman's most difficult arrangement of Carmen airs. Stern, still very early in his career, dubbed the playing for John Garfield and served as musical advisor for the 1946 film, *Humoresque*, about a rising young fighter-violinist and his patron, played respectively by John Garfield and Joan Crawford.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=epVklMejXCM>

12 **Victor Young** (August 8, 1900 – November 10, 1956)[1][2] was an American composer, arranger, violinist and conductor. He was born in Chicago. He received 22 Academy Award nominations for his work in film, twice being nominated (four times in a single year), but he did not win during his lifetime. He received his only Oscar posthumously for his score of *Around the World in Eighty Days* (1956). His other scores include *Anything Goes* (1936), *The Big Broadcast of 1937* (1936), *Artists and Models* (1937), *The Gladiator*, *Golden Boy* (1939), *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1943), *The Uninvited* (1944), *Love Letters* (1945), *So Evil My Love* (1948), *The Emperor Waltz* (1948),[5] *The Paleface* (1948),[5] *Samson and Delilah* (1949), *Our Very Own* (1950), *My Favorite Spy* (1951), *Payment on Demand* (1951), *The Quiet Man* (1952), *Scar-amouche* (1952), *Something to Live For* (1952), *Shane* (1953), *The Country Girl* (1954), *A Man Alone* (1955), and *Written on the Wind* (1956).

For Whom the Bell Tolls

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BZFkaLvKXVk>

The Uninvited

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JhpMM24IdTg>