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Abstract

For his 1991 remake of J. Lee Thompson’s 1962 film *Cape Fear*, Martin Scorsese had the Bernard Herrmann score of the original adapted by Elmer Bernstein. This article first examines that Herrmann score, before showing how it was effectively ‘re-composed’ for the later film, with Bernstein taking its basic components and redeploying them in often entirely new musical and filmic contexts, while also combining them with his own newly composed music and further pre-existing material from Herrmann’s rejected score for *Torn Curtain* (Hitchcock, 1966). The motivations for the reuse of Herrmann’s music, and issues of interpretation arising from the 1991 score’s compilation status will be considered. The article aims to be relevant not only for scholars of music in moving-image media, but also for those interested in remakes and media intertextuality more generally.

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[p.117]

The twin subjects of this article are the scores for two Hollywood films separated by nearly 30 years and yet with much in common, as Martin Scorsese’s 1991 work is a remake of J. Lee Thompson’s 1962 original. Both are titled *Cape Fear*.

The score for the first film was written by Bernard Herrmann, a composer then held in high regard and especially celebrated for his collaborations with Alfred Hitchcock, on half a dozen films at that point in his career.¹ While no detailed analysis has yet been published for this entry in Herrmann’s *oeuvre*, it is the unusual configuration revealed by the 1991 film’s opening music [p.118] credit – ‘Bernard Herrmann’s original score adapted, arranged &

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¹ *Cape Fear*’s leading man and producer Gregory Peck said of hiring Herrmann for the film, ‘he was one of the top, top composers at the time, and we wanted the best’ (Bouzereau 2001a).

conducted by Elmer Bernstein’ – that provides the main motivation for this dual study: Scorsese’s remake features a ‘remade’ score.

Despite the overwhelming trend of recent years for remakes, reboots, sequels, prequels and spin-offs – a trend not confined to the cinema but also involving television, video games and other media – the wholesale adaptation of a film score for the second *Cape Fear* remains, as far as I am aware, a unique case.² Nevertheless, its study below will touch on issues of broader relevance, not only to the study of music in moving-image media, but also to the study of remakes and media intertextuality more generally, for instance in considering questions of intention and reception in regard to the possible semantic value of elements transferred from one film to another.

1962: Typical Herrmann

The story of Thompson’s 1962 version of *Cape Fear* revolves around the attempts of Max Cady (Robert Mitchum) to exact revenge on upstanding lawyer Sam Bowden (Gregory Peck) and his family, having been released from prison. Sam had been a key witness against Cady in his trial, and for this reason Cady begins a campaign of terror against the Bowdens, while staying firmly within the law in order to avoid arrest. Eventually he is caught red-handed having murdered a police deputy while working towards his ultimate goal: Sam’s pre-teen daughter Nancy (Lori Martin). Though censors ensured that Cady’s motives are not explicitly stated (Bouzereau 2001a), it is clear enough that his threat is a sexual one.

The film – based on John D. MacDonald’s 1957 novel *The Executioners* – is a decidedly Hitchcockian thriller. Robert P. Kolker suggests that it is ‘a Hitchcockian exercise, a film that plays upon *Psycho* [(Hitchcock, 1960)], or, more accurately, the atmosphere of *Psycho* and its reception’, alleging that Thompson’s film even references *Psycho* visually ‘well before the time that allusions were to become prominent in American cinema’ (in a shot looking down a set of stairs as characters walk up, evoking an angle familiar from the interior

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² One other that comes to mind happens to involve another posthumous reuse of a Herrmann score: that for Gus Van Sant’s 1998 *Psycho* remake, with Danny Elfman supervising the music. The peculiar shot-for-shot status of Van Sant’s film – and consequent virtual ‘note-for-note’ reproduction of the score – renders this a different and more straightforward matter to the *Cape Fear* adaptation, however.

of the Bates home), and that its production 'is explicitly connected to Hitchcock' in terms of its using personnel familiar from his works (1998: 40–41). One such contributor was composer Bernard Herrmann,³ then fresh from his most celebrated trio of collaborations with Hitchcock, on *Vertigo* (1958), *North by Northwest* (1959) and indeed *Psycho*.

Herrmann's *Cape Fear* music runs for about 42 minutes, or 40 per cent, of the 105-minute 1962 film. Individual cues are generally short, with the majority being less than one minute in length, and while the instrumentation of four flutes (with piccolo, alto and bass doubling), eight horns and strings is less adventurous than that of some of the composer's other famously self-orchestrated works (recall, for instance, the theremins and electric organs of his score for *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (Wise, 1951)), it still represents a departure from the earlier prominence of the Romantic symphony orchestra in studio-era Hollywood scores. The ensemble is focused, but nevertheless allows for a wide variety of instrumental colour.

In terms of the functions it performs within the film, Herrmann's score follows many of the classical principles identified by Claudia Gorbman (1987). This is unsurprising: Thompson's *Cape Fear* is, after all, a fairly standard Hollywood genre picture, notwithstanding its then-controversial subject matter. The music is well spotted: it is in all of the right places and does all [p.119] of the right things, while never feeling overused. It gives priority to dialogue and other diegetic sound as would be expected, for instance, while one typical purpose it fulfils is that of providing continuity in montage sequences and over spatial and temporal gaps, often in the form of extremely short 'transition' cues of the type frequently used in radio programmes (which Herrmann specialized in scoring for many years).

The stock devices used so often by the classical film composers, such as tremolo strings to create suspense and 'stinger' chords for moments of shock (both of which can be heard in combination in an early scene, as Sam gets into his car and prepares to drive off only to have his keys snatched away by the previously unseen Cady), are all present and correct too, though the 'stinger' chords are something of an exception in one respect: Herrmann's music rarely indicates or corresponds to anything specific in the film's diegesis. The 'Mickey Mousing' of on-screen action is avoided, and there is no evidence of the use of leitmotif, a

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³ Other personnel from *Psycho* alone were actor Martin Balsam (Detective Milton Arbogast in Hitchcock's film; Police Chief Mark Dutton in *Cape Fear*) and editor George Tomasini.

device which the composer himself noted he was ‘not a great believer in’ (Larsen 2007: 135).⁴ The score instead works mostly to convey mood and tempo: music reinforces an early happy family scene, for example, and later lets us know that something is amiss as Nancy waits alone after school, while it also helps to create a sense of urgency in scenes such as the subsequent ‘chase’ through the school and the climactic final sequences.

The opening cue of the score, ‘Prelude’, begins with the first image of the film – the logo of distributor Universal International – and continues for just under two and a half minutes as we see the opening titles superimposed over shots of Cady walking into the courtroom where Sam is working. The music here ‘defines the genre’ of the film and ‘sets a general mood’ as Gorbman (1987: 82) tells us to expect, while also framing the narrative in partnership with the closing cue. The first notes we hear form easily the most recognizable theme (if not the only ‘theme’ as such) in the score:⁵

⁴ He did employ it in rare cases: Smith (1991: 107–08) notes its use in *Jane Eyre* (Stevenson, 1943), which he calls ‘one of Herrmann’s most conventional film scores’.

⁵ As I did not have access to any manuscript scores for this analysis, the musical examples are generated from two sources:

1. Transcription by ear from the DVD soundtracks. A peculiarity to note here is that, on DVDs in PAL format like those I was using, films play at 25 frames per second rather than the 24 at which they were originally projected. This 4 per cent increase in speed results in music sounding almost a semitone higher than it should. All musical examples here are notated at their true original pitch (and indeed at sounding pitch), with tempi (in any case measured inexactly using a metronome) also adjusted to roughly 96 per cent of their PAL value. Note, though, that any timings given are unadjusted from PAL versions of the films.
2. Bill Wrobel’s ‘rundown analysis’ of Herrmann’s score (Wrobel 2008). This is a text description of much of the 1962 score (e.g. ‘In Bar 13 (:51), flute I and flute III (all four flutes have their own staff line) play legato half notes Line 3 E down to Line 2 B to Bb down to E crescendo-decrescendo hairpins ...’). Wrobel’s sources – confirmed in personal communication, January 2009 – are copies he made (by hand and photocopy) of Herrmann’s original autograph score, held at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

This should be something of an indication of Herrmann's amelodic style. Though Lionel Newman's succinct view was that Herrmann 'couldn't write a tune to save his ass' (Smith 1991: 275), his music, with a focus instead on instrumental and harmonic colour that will become more apparent as we look at further examples of it, seems generally designed to be unobtrusive, or 'unheard' as Gorbman (1987) famously put it (though there are certainly degrees to this).

We can also find evidence here of another Herrmann trait: a preference for using short musical units in the construction of his scores. The 'theme' here is not really a three-bar entity, but in fact a single-bar cell heard three times over, with the intervals varied for bar 2 (the motif thus not being defined by precise intervals). Indeed, when it is heard again (and it is heard again only in this opening cue and over the end credits; it is, essentially, the 'title theme' – or 'title motif' – and nothing more), it is in four-bar structures, with different patterns of interval variation. One of the advantages of Herrmann's approach [p.120] is that these short cells serve, in Royal S. Brown's words, 'as a more manipulable building block better suited than a developed theme to the rapidly changing nature of the cinema and its edited flow of images' (1994: 154). A single unit can be repeated several times or not at all, depending on what the filmic situation requires, and yet always retain its own coherence.⁶ (This is not a key attribute in relation to this particular cue, in which the music can maintain its own course fairly autonomously; it seems here more a matter of style than necessity, with its practical benefits observable elsewhere.)

Another type of coherence – one on a larger scale – can be seen when we consider the use of related musical ideas across the score as a whole. Consider bars 4–8 of the 'Prelude':

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⁶ In anticipating the musical strategies often employed in scoring video games, Herrmann's approach could perhaps be termed 'proto-dynamic'.

$\text{♩} = 58$
(+ 8va)

Piccs., Fls. *sf*

(I-IV natural, V-VI stopped)

Hns. *sf*

(+ 8va and 15ma)

Vln., Vla. *sf*

Vlc., D.B. *sf*

Here, a single-bar cell is simply (if not quite exactly) repeated in sequence, clearly demonstrating Herrmann's 'building block' method. What is perhaps more interesting, however, is to compare the musical material within that cell to that in the cell used (again in sequence) in bars 17–20:

$\text{♩} = 58$
(+ 8vb)

Hns. *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f*

(+ 8va)

Vln. *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f*

Vla. *f* *f* *f* *f*

Vlc., D.B. *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f*

[p.121]

Through changes in orchestration, dynamics and – chiefly here – rhythm, these bars have a superficially different character, but in reality the same chromatic movement and resolving dissonances are present.

A cue from the second half of the film – 'The Spyglass' – provides us with further examples of the same material being exploited:

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system is in 5/4 time with a tempo marking of ♩ = 58. It features a Flute staff with a melodic line and a lower staff (likely Flutes or Basses) with a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and rests, marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The second system is in 3/4 time with a tempo marking of ♩ = 66. It features a Viola staff with a melodic line and a lower staff (VC, CB) with a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and rests, marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The score includes various musical notations such as beams, slurs, and dynamic markings.

Aside from the recurrence of melodic and harmonic ideas, the rhythmic quaver ostinato of this example can also be heard at other points in the film (earlier on, for instance, as the police arrive at a property where Cady has just raped a woman), and can even be related back to the horns' rhythm in the previous example (bars 17–20 of the 'Prelude'). Incidentally, Herrmann had used the same 3/4 ostinato in his *Psycho* cue 'The Peephole', heard as we see Norman Bates spying on Marion Crane in her motel room; its use here in *Cape Fear*, as we see Cady spying on the private detective Charlie Sievers (Telly Savalas), is something of a direct parallel. Whether the composer had this in mind is open to question; other appearances of the ostinato in *Cape Fear* do not obviously accompany a similar theme.⁷

There is something of an economy of means in action here, which has both practical (i.e. time-efficient) and aesthetic advantages. Regarding the latter, David Cooper observes that 'Herrmann's approach to form is less reliant on a symphonic model that establishes and resolves tonal conflict, than on the subtle reworking and varying of a relatively small pool of material' (2005: 30–31). Through the variation, expansion, development and combination of ideas like those identified above, the composer can create cues to suit a number of filmic situations, but with the use of the same basic material giving rise to what Graham Bruce

⁷ Bruce (1985: 134) notes the recurrence of the same ostinato in Herrmann's score for *Marnie* (Hitchcock, 1964), though here the alleged parallel to *Psycho* is that 'Marnie is a thief, stealing money from the safes of her employers', much as Marion Crane does.

(1985: 36) – in another general observation of Herrmann’s method – terms ‘a score of organic unity’.

In providing clear examples of various Herrmann tendencies that have been consistently identified elsewhere, the *Cape Fear* score can be seen as a typical example of the composer’s work. It is also representative in terms of its quality, and it would be entirely fair to suggest that it contributes significantly to the esteem in which Thompson’s movie is held.

[p.122]

1991: Herrmann remade

In 1991 a new *Cape Fear*, directed by Scorsese, was released. While this film shares its name and basic concept with the 1962 original, there are significant differences which render it much more than a simple remake: it is, if anything, more of a ‘re-imagination’.⁸ As Andrew Horton and Stewart Y. McDougal note,

[t]o watch Robert Mitchum in the original 1962 *Cape Fear* and Robert De Niro [who plays the same character, Max Cady] in Martin Scorsese’s 1991 version is not just to watch widely differing acting and directorial styles but to experience the historical and cultural changes that have occurred within the twenty-nine years separating these films. (1998: 6)

Most notably, while Thompson’s film is a relatively simple tale of good versus evil, Scorsese’s, which has a new screenplay by Wesley Strick, blurs the distinction between those two sides. Max Cady is still out for revenge on Sam Bowden (Nick Nolte) and his family after serving a prison sentence, but here Sam was not a witness against Cady but in fact his defence lawyer in a rape and battery case some fourteen years previously. It emerges that Sam, based on his own convictions about the case, deliberately withheld evidence that might

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⁸ The opening credits state that the film is ‘[b]ased on a screenplay by James R. Webb [i.e. that of the 1962 film] and *The Executioners*, a novel by John D. MacDonald’. Thus it is technically positioned as a literary adaptation (or readaptation) as well as a remake/re-imagination, though it clearly owes more to the film than to the book, as signalled by its title. (The Cape Fear river – and, more specifically, the Bowdens’ houseboat on it – is the location of the climax of both films, but does not feature in the book.) The novel is, nevertheless, the true ‘original’.

have helped Cady's cause, a fact that Cady has learnt during his time behind bars. Sam therefore does not enjoy the same clear moral high ground as his 1962 counterpart. His family too is not the seemingly perfect unit of Thompson's film: it is clear that Sam has been unfaithful to his wife Leigh (Jessica Lange) in the past, and appears to be on the verge of cheating again during the course of the movie, while their daughter Danielle (Juliette Lewis) is very much a teenage rebel. Cady takes delight in exploiting these issues.

Psychologically, then, Scorsese's *Cape Fear* is a more complex film than the original. It is also a more explicit one, both in terms of its violence and the themes with which it deals. While Thompson's movie was highly controversial for its time, Scorsese took full advantage of the more relaxed attitudes of the 1990s in order to show such gratuities as Cady being set on fire or biting a woman's cheek off, and to specifically explore his sexual designs with regard to Danielle.

In spite of this, the film is still a relatively mainstream work for Scorsese, with Kolker (1998: 39–40) noting that it was 'consciously and eagerly made quickly, cheaply, and with an eye on the box office' in order to repay Universal Pictures 'for the financial and moral support given *The Last Temptation of Christ*', the director's protest-sparking 1988 film. In fact, *Cape Fear* had originally been a Steven Spielberg project, while Scorsese had planned to adapt Thomas Keneally's book *Schindler's Ark* (1982). In the end, after the controversy of his Christ biopic and, to a lesser extent, of *Goodfellas* in 1990, Scorsese decided against making a film about the Holocaust, while Spielberg by his own admission 'wasn't in the mood' to film 'a scary movie about a family being preyed on by a maniac', and so the two directors swapped projects (Maslin 1991).

Miriam Hansen suggests that 'the blockbuster gamble consists of offering something to everyone, of appealing to diverse interests with a diversity of attractions and multiple levels of textuality' (1993: 199). As well as drawing on the star status of De Niro and the reputation of its director (and the [p.123] prospect of yet another Scorsese–De Niro collaboration, their seventh), the later *Cape Fear*'s status as remake situates it as a clear example of such a strategy, appealing both to young audiences and older fans of the original, and beyond casual filmgoers to cinephiles with the promise of layers of reference and allusion. A remake of a fairly minor 29-year-old movie might not be as obvious a commercial prospect as a sequel to a comparatively recent hit (cf. the top-grossing film of 1991 (Box Office Mojo n.d. a), James Cameron's *Terminator 2: Judgment Day* (1991), sequel to *The*

Terminator (Cameron, 1984)), but still fitted Hollywood's then-growing predilection for 'pre-sold' properties.

The aforementioned opening music credit for the movie – 'Bernard Herrmann's original score adapted, arranged & conducted by Elmer Bernstein' – does not actually tell the full story. Though the majority of the score is made up of music from Herrmann's *Cape Fear*, there are two additional sources (as may be expected given that the later film features around seven minutes' more music than Thompson's): new music composed by Bernstein, and material from Herrmann's rejected score for the 1966 Hitchcock film *Torn Curtain*. The reasons for and details of the use of the latter in particular will be considered below; interestingly, it is not even acknowledged in the end credits. All of the Herrmann material was newly recorded, but the adaptation mostly runs much deeper than that; the initial decision to reuse Herrmann's 1962 music was Scorsese's, taken before Bernstein was attached to the project,⁹ but the final score is truly the work of a composer.

Overall, the score runs for just over 49 minutes of the 122-minute film, and therefore about the same proportion (slightly more than 40 per cent) as Herrmann's original. Individual cues are again generally short, with most being less than one minute in length, as in 1962. When Herrmann material is reused, much of his orchestration is kept intact, and where adaptation has taken place Bernstein and his daughter Emilie (who receives the orchestration credit) mostly seem to have worked within the two Herrmann ensembles (that for *Torn Curtain* being different to the 1962 *Cape Fear*'s; its details will be given below), as they have for any newly composed music. There are some exceptions – trumpets, which do not feature in either Herrmann score, can occasionally be heard, for instance in the opening and closing credits – but they are minor; at no point have entire alien orchestral sections brought in to completely change the nature of Herrmann's music.

Herrmann's 1962 'Prelude' finds its way partially intact to a spot a few minutes into the remake. This in fact marks the start of 'the story proper', as prior to this point there has been an abstract opening credit sequence (designed by Saul and Elaine Bass) – music to be considered shortly – and a frame narration: Danielle appears as narrator, introducing her 'reminiscence', an English class project which effectively becomes (or rather recounts) the

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⁹ See, for instance, Bernstein's account of events in Bouzereau (2001b). It is unclear whether Scorsese originally planned to adapt, re-record or simply use the original recordings of the music. His motivations for wishing to reuse Herrmann's score will be discussed later in this article.

film's main narrative. (During the course of that narrative, we see Danielle working on her project.) The cue begins as the film cuts to what is therefore its first event, chronologically speaking: Cady being released from prison. At first the music sounds exactly as it did in the 1962 film, with no noticeable changes in orchestration or tempo, and indeed at one point its volume is cut considerably in order to make way for a short line of dialogue (quite how and when in the production process this was done is hard to tell for certain), hinting at the fact that it was not originally composed with this sequence in mind. Another clue that this is the case can be heard from bar 9, where the tempo – steady in 1962 – is noticeably and suddenly slowed, probably so that bar 13 – a [p.124] convenient place for Bernstein to cut Herrmann's cue short with his own brassy cadence based around the title motif – was reached at the climactic point in the sequence, as Cady exits the prison gates. Because of this curtailment, the cue (which I deem to end with the sequence, before segueing directly into the next cue as we cut to an exterior shot of the Bowden household) is over a minute shorter in 1991 even despite the aforementioned slowing of tempo.

However, at about one minute and fifteen seconds in length it is still one of the longest examples of Herrmann's original score being transplanted into the new film relatively intact (only beaten, in fact, by another use of the 'Prelude' in the build up to the film's final act that carries on for another two bars of its 1962 form, though bars 7 and 8 are also repeated to further increase its length). I will suggest a possible reason for its 'intactness' below, though we can at least note here that its distinctiveness in this respect is probably largely due to a desire to have avoided the synchronization issues that are somewhat part and parcel of using pre-existing music to score a film, and that are alluded to by the volume and tempo changes mentioned above. Elsewhere, Bernstein has tailored the music to the new film by taking full advantage of his predecessor's unit-based approach. Herrmann's method probably makes adapting his music relatively easy: here it has allowed Bernstein to 'pick and mix' short cells and ideas to use in overall cues, often completely changing the contexts in which they are used both musically and filmically, as we will see (though the cadence noted above already provides an example of a Herrmann idea – the title motif – being put to a new use, while the repeated two bars in the later instance of the 'Prelude' also hint at more basic possibilities).

The opening cue of the 1991 film (the music for the opening credits) is something of a special case with regard to the large amount of new music it contains, but does prominently

feature the title motif (heard in a forceful new arrangement) and a passage featuring lines for horns and running strings, beginning as follows:

The image shows a musical score for two staves. The top staff is labeled 'Hns.' (Horns) and the bottom staff is labeled 'Strs.' (Strings). The tempo is marked as $\text{♩} = 72$. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 4/4. The music begins with a double bar line and a repeat sign. The horns play a motif of two eighth notes followed by a quarter note, marked *mf*. The strings play a continuous eighth-note pattern, also marked *mf*. The score consists of two systems, each with two measures. The first system shows the horns and strings playing together. The second system shows the horns playing a different motif while the strings continue their pattern. The score ends with a double bar line.

In the first *Cape Fear*, this music is heard in a sequence following Sievers in a small boat on the titular river, as he makes his way back from the Bowdens' houseboat as part of a plan to lure Cady there and trap him. Herrmann's tempo is much faster: around $\text{minim}=104$ (with plenty of rubato), compared [p.125] to Bernstein's 72. Furthermore, that original passage – with the material continuing in similar fashion, but not in simple sequence – cadences on the downbeat of its 27th bar; Bernstein's cadences on that of its eighteenth. Later on in the 1991 film we hear the same material again – for a scene on the river, paralleling its use in the original (though the watery visuals of the credit sequence also suggest a parallel) – but now at around $\text{minim}=88$ (again with rubato), and cadencing on bar 14, to coincide with the moment Sam drops the anchor of the houseboat. This clearly illustrates both the flexibility of Herrmann's music – which here again can be said to be of a cellular nature – and Bernstein's focus on the needs of the present film, rather than the goal of being absolutely faithful to Herrmann's original intentions.

Another cue presents a more striking example of filmic recontextualization, as well as of musical adaptation. As the private investigator Claude Kersek (Joe Don Baker) sets up a device that will warn him if anyone attempts to enter the Bowden household, the following music is heard:

♩ = 76

8va

Fls.,
Vln.

mp

Vla.,
Vlc.

mp

This material, which is again clearly cellular in construction (with this eight-bar structure itself repeated in sequence directly afterwards), helps to create a sense of panic in the original film as the Bowdens rush to the aid of their poisoned dog, but in the remake is employed as part of a relatively calm and even vaguely humorous scene (the humour deriving from the fact that Kersek's potentially life-saving device is constructed from a teddy bear and some fishing line). The orchestration has not obviously been altered; the music works successfully in this new context thanks to a change in dynamics (1962: *sforzando*; 1991: *mezzo piano*) and, again, a change in tempo: Bernstein's dotted crotchet=76 is significantly slower than Herrmann's 116.

As that scene finishes and another one starts, there is an original but seamless switch between the previous material and the following simple (and, as ever, chromatic) cell, which is gradually elaborated harmonically as it is repeated for over a minute, first on strings and then horns:

♩ = 50

[p.126]

This is briefly followed by a similar cell featuring a four-note chromatically descending line in the bass. Herrmann used the same combination of cells at two different points in his original score: first roughly 35 minutes into the film as Sievers talks to the young woman whom Cady has just raped, and later on (in a slight variation) as Cady sneaks along the riverbank near the Bowdens' houseboat. Both times, however, he took time to develop the second cell sequentially before reverting back to the first, in an ABA fashion.

The first cell appears in several other places in Bernstein's score, much more often in fact than in Herrmann's. Each time (for instance as Cady flirts with Sam's colleague and apparent extra-marital love interest shortly before violently raping her) it seems to signify a

build-up of tension, and indeed its musical properties – in particular the way that it can resolve back to itself infinitely – mean that it lends itself well to this application. The second cell, by contrast, is heard only twice elsewhere in the remake, both times following directly on from the first though never leading back to it.

Another idea used comparatively more frequently in the later score is the title motif. In the 1962 film, as previously discussed, it is heard only in the opening and closing cues. Here, it is similarly employed over both the opening and sparsely scored end credits, but also seems to be used as a leitmotif connected to the character of Max Cady throughout the movie: it is by no means heard every time Cady appears, but outside of the credits is never heard without his presence. Its appearances in the two films are compared in the following diagram:

One telling instance of its use in Scorsese's film has the motif heard in a string orchestration not found in Herrmann's score, as the camera tracks forwards to an airline information desk. (Sam has supposedly just left on a plane for a disbarment hearing, though he is actually trying to trick Cady into thinking he is not at home protecting his family.) As the camera reaches the desk, Cady overtakes it and enters into the shot; the music, however, had effectively already informed the audience of his impending appearance.

The sinister four-note theme is well suited to Cady's character (though the lines of good and evil are somewhat blurred, Cady is still a very obvious 'bad guy' in most respects), and the fact that it is immediately recognizable no matter what orchestration it appears in makes it ideal for use as a leitmotif. [p.127] Perhaps the greatest proof of its suitability for the purpose, though, lies in Alf Clausen's imitation of it in his scores for certain episodes of *The Simpsons*:

Originally appearing in ‘Cape Feare’ (Moore, 1993), a spoof of the two *Cape Fear* films in which Sideshow Bob attempts to kill Bart Simpson, this theme has since been used in other episodes of the show in connection with the same villain.

One of the most interesting aspects of the 1991 score is the use of material from Herrmann’s unused *Torn Curtain* score. It was during that movie’s production that one of the most famous and successful collaborations in cinema history came to an end: Herrmann’s intense and menacing music was rejected by Hitchcock (who, inevitably conscious of the increasing commercial potential of ‘popular’ soundtracks, had requested a score with ‘a beat and a rhythm’), and the professional and personal relationship of the two men immediately ceased (Smith 1991: 268–73).

Music from *Torn Curtain* is used only at the climax of Scorsese’s *Cape Fear*. Giving reasons for its employment, the director simply commented that ‘[w]e sort of ran out of music’ (Bouzereau 2001b), while Bernstein’s opinion was that there was no ‘appropriate music’ from the first *Cape Fear* score that could have been used for the scenes in question (Kögebehn 2003). As in the original film, the final act is set around the Bowdens’ houseboat on the Cape Fear river, but now the added element of a huge storm increases the drama, and it is fair to say that there is little in Herrmann’s *Cape Fear* score that could truly match the intensity of Scorsese’s filmic events. By contrast, the music for *Torn Curtain*, which Herrmann flamboyantly scored for twelve flutes, sixteen horns, nine trombones, two tubas, two sets of timpani, and cellos and basses, seems perfectly suited to them. This is something Bernstein would have known from his experience of recording it with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra fourteen years previously for his ‘Elmer Bernstein’s Film Music Collection’ series; indeed, it was he who suggested its use (Bouzereau 2001b).

It is as Sam ventures outside the boat to check its anchor as the storm begins that the first *Torn Curtain* music is heard, featuring a hunting call-like motif for horn:

This motif is used at various points throughout Herrmann's 1966 score, first in the 'Prelude', and is often extended beyond the portion that Bernstein employs here. In the 1991 score it seems slightly out of place. The *Torn* [p.128] *Curtain* music as a whole is focused on instrumental and harmonic colour to an arguably even greater extent than that of the original *Cape Fear*, and so it is perhaps odd that Bernstein would choose from it such a relatively recognizable melodic theme, and then use that theme only once, accompanying an apparently insignificant point in the narrative.

Nonetheless, *Torn Curtain* material is generally effective in matching the dramatic requirements of these scenes. Further examples are heard in the cues starting as Cady grabs Sam and strangles him into unconsciousness, soon after as Cady is set alight and jumps into the river, only to return minutes later (Kolker describes him as 'a parody of recent unkillable movie monsters' (1998: 42)), and then as Cady drops the gun with which he is trying to shoot Sam, and the boat is gradually destroyed in the stormy waters. Most of the material used in these cues was actually taken from just one *Torn Curtain* cue, 'The Killing', which is itself only around two minutes long. Once again, though, Bernstein's cause was aided by Herrmann's compositional method: this music, like the original *Cape Fear*'s, can be divided up into individual cells to be used as and where necessary.

Scorsese's light-hearted remark that they 'ran out of music' while scoring the remake does not appear to be far from the truth: there is very little of Herrmann's 1962 score that is not used in Bernstein's adaptation. Two notable exceptions are the playful flute-led music of the early 'happy family' scene, and the impressionistic material with which Herrmann scored a dream sequence. Whilst it is true that there are not really any appropriate places in the 1991 film to use these, both would have been almost painfully clichéd examples of film scoring by that time (by virtue of their overuse in association with these types of scenes in previous decades), and so it would be interesting to know if they would have been employed had opportunities presented themselves.

Indeed, even with readily available source material, Bernstein's score tends to steer clear of the obvious devices for suspense and shock present throughout Herrmann's, something which is almost certainly as much a sign of changing tendencies in film scoring as it is of personal preferences. On the other hand, though, the use of a leitmotif – and the mere fact that the title theme recurs within the main part of the film – is a Classical Hollywood gesture incorporated by Bernstein but not Herrmann; this can be seen to point towards Bernstein's status as the generally less experimental composer, as well as to the continuing

influence and validity of certain long-standing conventions. Other than this, Bernstein's score mostly functions in the same ways as Herrmann's, particularly in mainly working to create mood and tempo. The interest here lies in the provenance and recontextualization of the music, then, rather than in any uses of it that are particularly inventive in themselves.

1991: Compilation and coherence

In taking the basic ideas used by Herrmann in the construction of larger forms and employing them in his own ways, Bernstein created a score that does not signal too strongly the nature of its construction: to the 'innocent' perceiver, the music does not obviously sound like it was mostly written for two films in the 1960s, at least at the level of individual cues.

As a compilation of music from different sources, though, the 1991 score is naturally less unified than the earlier *Cape Fear*'s. Herrmann's score achieves unity through the composer's drawing on a select group of musical ideas [p.129] throughout, and though Bernstein's works similarly for the most part through use of the very same 'building blocks', the inclusion of *Torn Curtain* and newly composed material interferes somewhat with the coherence of the later score (and therefore, arguably, film) as a whole.

This would not necessarily be considered problematic from a structural or aesthetic point of view if the score clearly presented itself as a compilation; though not functioning as one for much of the film, however, it does not (and neither is it presented as one by the opening or closing credits, as noted previously). In particular, it is only when we get to the climax of the film that we hear music from *Torn Curtain*, in a section of just over fifteen minutes that is effectively musically separate from the rest due to its reliance on the 1966 score as a source for its cues, as discussed above. The *Torn Curtain* music can be split into cells and ideas (like the 'hunting call') in the same manner as the other Herrmann material, and so could have been used more evenly throughout the film, but is instead heard exclusively – and at the expense of almost any other music that is also employed elsewhere – in this climactic part. The impression of a musical 'island' is further strengthened by the fact that the music in that section is written for extra flutes, extra horns and entirely new sections of trombones, tubas and timpani, though at least some of these are occasionally heard at other points, most notably in the opening and closing credit cues.

Bernstein's score does still present the listener with a kind of superficial unity, though. The key element in this is the stylistic similarity between the score's various component parts, linked in to the fact that most of the music was written by one composer (and then for two films – thrillers – of a reasonably similar dark nature), with that which was not – Bernstein's original material – being consciously written to fit in with Herrmann's. In terms of instrumentation too there are similarities between the two main ensembles heard, most notably in the absence of trumpets and woodwinds other than flutes; Steven C. Smith (1991: 252) even goes as far as to call *Cape Fear*'s orchestration 'a rehearsal' for that of the *Torn Curtain* score. And of course, that these different elements have generally been combined with each other and with the other elements of the film relatively seamlessly means that the musical 'joins' are harder to find, and indeed less likely to be looked for. Realistically, it is only through relatively detailed analysis that a lack of unity in the score will be perceived.

In some ways, then, the 1991 score offers the best of two worlds: the overall coherence of a single-composer score, with the added flexibility of a compilation. The reason for the inclusion of the *Torn Curtain* music was, as previously noted, because none of the music from Herrmann's *Cape Fear* score was suited to the specific dramatic requirements of the climactic scenes in Scorsese's film, while regarding instrumentation Bernstein even noted that he 'felt by the time we get to the latter part of the film, it would be good to have some different color' (Morgan 1992). This can easily be related to Herrmann's being, as Bruce notes, 'fastidious in his efforts to create an orchestral color appropriate to the particular narrative' (1985: 75) of each project he worked on; we are merely dealing here with individual scenes rather than individual films.

Though interesting, the above presents a rather simplistic view of Bernstein's score; there are other issues to consider if we wish to account for the interpretations of perceivers who are at least partly aware of the origins of the music used in the remake. I will attempt to deal with some of these below.

1991: Issues of motivation and interpretation

An obvious question that has yet to be asked is why Scorsese chose to reuse Herrmann's music for his film. One factor could simply have been the director's respect and admiration for the man he worked with on *Taxi Driver* (Scorsese, 1976) (the score to which Herrmann finished recording on the night of his death in 1975), and desire to present his work to a new audience. The inclusion of *Torn Curtain* material might be the strongest attestation to this: Bernstein could surely have written original music that was 'appropriate' and that provided 'some different color' for those river scenes, but the decision was instead made to include more Herrmann (and, at that, Herrmann that had not been widely heard before). (Though the *Torn Curtain* music was initially suggested by Bernstein, the suggestion could have been made with Scorsese's aim of homage in mind.)

Pre-existing music has been used to score films since the silent era. Though the practice has had its detractors (one of whom, predictably, was the ever-opinionated Herrmann, who declared, 'I think it's stupid. What's it got to do with the film? Nothing. Cover it with chocolate ice cream, that's about it!'¹⁰ (Brown 1994: 291)), its prevalence in films of all kinds today suggests that it is now widely accepted as a valid option for filmmakers, with potential motivations for its use not only aesthetic. With the increased horizontal integration of film and music businesses, for instance, pre-existing music can make financial sense in terms of both outlay and return.

Commercial considerations do not seem to have been a major factor here; Herrmann's music will not have been seen either as a huge draw for audiences or as particularly saleable in itself, while the costs associated with its adaptation and re-recording probably negated any possible saving in respect of using material to which Universal would have already owned

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¹⁰ The question asked was 'What do you think about the use of already existing music in a film?' Herrmann's answer should be read in light of his own self-recyclings, for instance in using material from one of his concert works – the *Sinfonietta for Strings* of 1935 – in his score for *Psycho*. This includes the so-called 'madness motif', which Herrmann later also used in *Taxi Driver* to suggest Travis Bickle's still-unstable mental state at the end of the narrative. Interestingly, the opening credits cue of Bernstein's *Cape Fear* score at one point features two motifs in the bass – not hailing from Herrmann's *Cape Fear* or *Torn Curtain* scores – that bear a very close resemblance to the 'madness motif'; if it is an intentional allusion it is certainly apt, hinting at the madness to follow in the rest of the film.

the rights. On a practical level, though, Scorsese has notably used pre-existing music of various styles and genres in many of his films, with some works both pre- and post-*Cape Fear* – such as *Mean Streets* (1973), *Raging Bull* (1980), *Goodfellas* (1990) and *Shutter Island* (2010) – having no original score whatsoever. He was and is certainly a director experienced in its employment – especially in working with long-time editor Thelma Schoonmaker, of whom the same can be said – and no doubt to some extent used to the relatively large amount of control it offers him personally over the musical portion of a film's soundtrack. By deciding to have Herrmann's music adapted, the director would have profited from the 'tailor-made' nature of an original score, while still having a reasonably good idea of what to expect from the finished product at an early stage, as he would when using purely pre-existing material. Tellingly, Scorsese 'already had specific ideas about where he wanted to use [Herrmann's original] music' before Bernstein became involved with the project, according to the composer himself (Bouzereau 2001b), though precisely what those ideas were – and whether they were enacted – is unclear.

Bernstein also admitted to being 'a great admirer of Bernard Herrmann' (Bazelon 1975: 179), a man eleven years his senior who had in fact recommended him to Alfred Newman, then Music Director at Twentieth Century Fox, for *The View from Pompey's Head* (Dunne, 1955), one of his first major assignments (Kögebehn 2003). The two composers were then professional contemporaries, with Bernstein working on *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Mulligan, 1962), starring Gregory Peck, in the same year that the actor played Sam Bowden in the original *Cape Fear*, and then with *Cape Fear*'s director J. Lee [p.131] Thompson on *Kings of the Sun* only one year later, in 1963. It was while working on *The Grifters* (Frears, 1990) that Bernstein first met Scorsese, a producer of that film. The composer later asked Scorsese if he could work on the remake of *Cape Fear*, and when questioned as to why he wanted to (apparently having been told that 'there's not going to be much original music to do') claimed to have replied, 'I was a great disciple of Bernard Herrmann's and I would like the privilege of playing with the music' (Bouzereau 2001b). Notably, the use of pre-existing music is not out of place in the context of Bernstein's output either: consider, for instance, his quoting Brahms's *Academic Festival Overture* in the 'Faber College Theme' of *National Lampoon's Animal House* (Landis, 1978), or the incorporation of elements of Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro* into the score for *Trading Places* (Landis, 1983).

With regard to Scorsese's decision, however, it is clear that – regardless of other factors – the music simply needed to 'work' in the film. Bernstein suggested merely that the

director ‘wanted the atmosphere that that [1962] score provides’ (Bouzereau 2001b), and himself believed that Herrmann’s score was ‘much more appropriate’ for the remake than it was for the original, further saying that the ‘first film was not up to the strength of that score’ (Kögebehn 2003). (Given that the score was, in a sense, ‘not up to the strength’ of the remake – or at least the climactic scenes of it, by Bernstein’s own admission – that latter comment surely needs to be treated with some caution.)

Did Scorsese and Bernstein also intend the music to work at a more complex level? On one hand, the later film functions as a simple modernization of the 1962 original: Scorsese noted that the story is one deserving of being told ‘many different generations from now’, with each generation having ‘its own version’ to reflect inevitable cultural differences (Bouzereau 2001b). But on the other, Herrmann’s music is hardly out of place in the remake among various other overt references to Thompson’s film, such as the cameo appearances of three of the actors who starred in it: Peck, Mitchum and Martin Balsam.

Scorsese evidently intended his *Cape Fear* to be understood in relation to Thompson’s, then, even remarking that ‘I think it’s best if you see my version and the original *Cape Fear* as well, maybe a week apart’ (Christie and Thompson 2003: 174). The pre-existing music (or at least that from the 1962 *Cape Fear*) was meant to be recognized as such. This may be the reason for the relatively faithful reuse of the ‘Prelude’ discussed above: to highlight early on and as clearly as possible the score’s (and film’s) connection to its predecessor, and thus to encourage active perception of Scorsese’s text as a referential one.

To precisely what extent were the intertextual possibilities of the remake form embraced, though? Consider the appearances of Peck and Mitchum: a further layer of reference beyond the simple fact of their having been the main protagonists in the 1962 film can be uncovered through recognition that they effectively ‘swap sides’ for 1991, with Peck the hero now Cady’s lawyer, and villain Mitchum now a police lieutenant. Are there similar layers to be discerned with regard to the employment of Herrmann’s music? It does not seem so: I do not think, for instance, that any meaning or message can realistically be detected in the use of the ‘poisoned dog’ cue from 1962 for the ‘teddy bear trap’ of 1991, and so I would therefore suggest that none was intended.

Then again, the Peck–Mitchum swap may have been more of a happy accident than a deliberate ‘wink’ to the audience: Peck stated that he was offered a choice of three different

roles, the others being an assistant district attorney [p.132] and a judge (Bouzereau 2001b). The point is that authorial intention is often unknown to audiences, while the existing knowledge and range of potential interpretations that individual audience members will have are certainly unknowable to authors. Perceivers cannot be prevented from attempting to relate the dog to the teddy bear, and in fact one could argue that it would be naïve of them not to in the context of an explicitly intertextual remake.

They do first have to recognize the music and recall its original usage, however, and the fact that – aside from the title motif – Herrmann's 1962 score is not particularly memorable (no value judgement intended), at least to a casual audience, will not help there; neither will Bernstein's reworkings. If they do identify something, it is also notable that the music generally connotes mood in Thompson's film, rather than indicating or corresponding to any specific point (such as a character) in the diegesis, for instance through the use of leitmotif. And as for the *Torn Curtain* material, only a small minority of perceivers will be aware of the specific details of its origin, it never having been used in any film before the 1991 *Cape Fear*, and not widely heard elsewhere since.

The pre-developed significations that pre-existing music can bring to a new context are both its key power and a potential pitfall for film-makers. It is true that media music (and, more broadly, music that has been used in media) in particular can often signify very specifically and concretely, and though such relatively secure 'meaning' can be advantageous, it is still troublesome if it is not of the sort that a film-maker wishes to put across: distracting for the perceiver at best, misleading at worst. This is doubtless one reason why the employment of pre-existing music originally composed for (or at least strongly connected with) another media context is fairly unusual, if not part of a specific and deliberate reference to that context. Though Scorsese did intend Herrmann's music as a general 'nod' towards Thompson's *Cape Fear*, the fact remains that there are many differences between the two films (and, more obviously, between *Torn Curtain* and the 1991 film) at a more detailed level, which could overlap problematically if brought to a perceiver's mind by the score unchecked. It is key, then, that the Herrmann material has an undoubted lack of widely understood (or widely understandable) 'meaning': though this would have effectively prevented Scorsese and Bernstein from utilizing more precise musical references (they may not have ever wanted to, of course; for one thing, commercial film-makers perhaps need to be careful of reserving too much information for an 'elite' section of the audience), it also allowed them to recontextualize the music as they pleased, without fear of filling their

film with ambiguous or incongruous significations. The balance seems a good one: the musical redeployments are clever, not confusing.

Conclusion

The recycling of film scores in such a wholesale manner is never likely to become commonplace; the particular combination of artists involved in the process in this case – Scorsese and Bernstein actively, Herrmann through work left behind – was probably the most important factor in allowing an intriguing idea to come to successful fruition. And Bernstein's score is surely to be considered a success: it works both on its own terms and as an exercise in adaptation; for those who do not recognize the pre-existing material, and those who do. It is therefore a significant contribution to a film intended to appeal to different audiences (and which seemingly did so, becoming [p.133] Scorsese's biggest box-office hit up to that point (Box Office Mojo n.d. b)), as well as a significant object for study alongside its primary source: together, the two *Cape Fear* scores have much to reveal about a variety of subjects, from the methods of their composers to more general issues of musical adaptation and recontextualization.

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