



Overtones and Undertones: Reading Film Music

Royal S. Brown

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Since the days of silent films, music has been integral to the cinematic experience, serving, variously, to allay audiences' fears of the dark and to heighten a film's emotional impact. Yet viewers are often unaware of its presence. In this bold, insightful book, film and music scholar and critic Royal S. Brown invites readers not only to "hear" the film score, but to understand it in relation to what they "see."

Unlike earlier books, which offered historical, technical, and sociopolitical analyses, *Overtones and Undertones* draws on film, music, and narrative theory to provide the first comprehensive aesthetics of film music. Focusing on how the film/score interaction influences our response to cinematic situations, Brown traces the history of film music from its beginnings, covering both American and European cinema. At the heart of his book are close readings of several of the best film/score interactions, including *Psycho*, *Laura*, *The Sea Hawk*, *Double Indemnity*, and *Pierrot le Fou*. In revealing interviews with Bernard Herrmann, Miklós Rózsa, Henry Mancini, and others, Brown also allows the composers to speak for themselves. A complete discography and bibliography conclude the volume.

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