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Hitchcock's Music



Synopsis

For half a century Alfred Hitchcock created films full of gripping and memorable music. Over his long career he presided over more musical styles than any director in history and ultimately changed how we think about film music. This book is the first to fully explore the essential role music played in the movies of Alfred Hitchcock. Based on extensive interviews with composers, writers, and actors, and research in rare archives, Jack Sullivan discusses how Hitchcock used music to influence the atmosphere, characterization, and even storylines of his films. Sullivan examines the director's important relationships with various composers, especially Bernard Herrmann, and tells the stories behind the musical decisions. Covering the whole of the director's career, from the early British works up to *Family Plot*, this engaging look at the work of Alfred Hitchcock offers new insight into his achievement and genius and changes the way we watch and listen to his movies.

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Customer Reviews

"Hitchcock's sophistication about and control of film music is an important aspect of his greatness, and one that separates him from other pantheon directors. This deeply researched and keenly written book fills a void and should be indispensable to passionate Hitchcock scholars and fans." -Patrick McGilligan, author of "Alfred Hitchcock: A Life in Darkness and Light" "Hitchcock was a master of film music as well as cinema suspense, and Sullivan's spirited study lives up to its fascinating topic on every page. A milestone in Hitchcock criticism." --David

Sterritt, author of "The Films of Alfred Hitchcock" "A wonderfully coherent, comprehensive, groundbreaking, and thoroughly engaging study of perhaps the most underexamined important element of Hitchcock's artistry."--Sidney Gottlieb, editor of "Hitchcock on Hitchcock: Selected Writings and Interviews" "A richly evocative study that combines important new scholarship with sparkling sensibility. Sullivan vividly documents Hitchcock's restless eclecticism and bold interweaving of musical styles--popular, classical, avant-garde, and electronic."--Camille Paglia, author of "Sexual Personae "and "The Birds "(BFI Film Classics)"Hitchcock's sophistication about and control of film music is an important aspect of his greatness, and one that separates him from other pantheon directors. This deeply researched and keenly written book fills a void and should be indispensable to passionate Hitchcock scholars--and fans."--Patrick McGilligan, author of "Alfred Hitchcock: A Life in Darkness and Light""Jack Sullivan shows in arresting detail how Hitchcock and his gifted composers used music ingeniously not only to build suspense and punctuate the action but to amplify the whole emotional atmosphere of his films."--Morris Dickstein, CUNY Graduate Center"We might think Hitchcock needed music less than other filmmakers, but Jack Sullivan, in this lovingly researched and articulated book, shows he needed it more. Music said everything Hitchcock couldn't say, even in pictures, and Mr. Sullivan expertly proves that the master's every soundtrack tells an intricate and often romantic story."--Michael Wood, Princeton University

Jack Sullivan is director of American Studies and professor of English at Rider University. He is the author of *New World Symphonies: How American Culture Changed European Music*, published by Yale University Press. He lives in New York City.

Other reviewers have noted a few 'flaws' in the books precision, and those few are indeed there, BUT those mistakes are VERY MINOR, and few and far between - this is a fantastic wild ride read from cover to cover, offering TONS of authentic situations, behind the scene scenarios, and in-depth detailed information. This author KNOWS music and film music (and contemporary music) and he knows Hitchcock, and the resultant fusion is terrific. I teach university film music graduate seminars and I find this book an absolute read for the students.

Jack Sullivan is definitely a good writer, has definitely done worthwhile important and original research here, is definitely passionate about the subject, etc., etc., etc. BUT.....silly errors abound in his study: he quotes "David Raskin"--sorry, Jack it's RAKSIN....He mentions the "The most famous cue in movie history, "The Knife" in Psycho's shower scene"---wrong again Jack, the cue is titled

"The Murder." AND when you dig deeper you find even more disturbing errors, e.g. claiming Hitchcock "hadn't wanted any music in the opening hotel sequence" of Psycho because "evidence comes from the screenplay, which describes only traffic noises." ---Jack, Hitchcock ALMOST NEVER indicated music placement in his screenplays! That's WHY he created separate "Music Notes" for his films! I caught these errors in a casual reading and unfortunately it makes me question how many OTHER mistakes there are in this book. So unfortunately I'd have to give Jack Sullivan an A for effort and a C for results--the study is (albeit unintentionally) seriously flawed.

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