

STORMWatch

Issue #3, September 1996 ... 860 Strong!



ERICH!

1997 marks the 100 year anniversary of **ERICH WOLFGANG KORNGOLD**. I urge you to consider the concert work **ERICH!**, my tribute to Korngold. The work is accessible while sounding virtuosic, and reinforces the teaching of tetrachords. There are also versions for Winds & Percussion in Motion, Low Brass Choir & Timpani, and Brass Quartet & Timpani.

Born in Brno, a part of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire on 29 May 1897, Erich Korngold ventured to Hollywood where he gave much of himself. Erich was a child prodigy who, at the age of ten, impressed his teacher, Mahler, as a musical genius.

Just going to the video store and renting *THE SEAHAWK*, or *KINGS ROW*, or *ROBIN HOOD* will illustrate Erich's brilliance.

You can read more about Korngold by reading the John Mauceri's article. This can be found at the *STORMSite* at www.stormworld.com, It is on the Downloads page.

I love Erich Korngold... and so will you! **ERICH!** will appear on the **STORMWORKS... Chapter One CD: Without Warning! Godspeed!**

*"Is it not strange that sheep's guts should
hale souls out of men's bodies?"*
William Shakespeare

Where We Are

In 3 years, Stormworks has reached **860** Conductors, mostly by word-of-mouth. Thank you for taking part in this work and continuing the Message.

The STORMPage!

An individual by the name of Andrew Fritzingler was in attendance when The Indiana Honors Band rendered the piece *Giving*. One day, I was pleasantly surprised to find that he had created a website for me! There is now a *STORMSite* at www.stormworld.com.

The site is a continually updated resource. You will find many useful PDF downloads, online listening to recordings and a host of useful and current information regarding the geometrically expanding body of work called **STORMWORKS**.

**"To be a leader,
the conductor
must turn his back
to the crowd."**

The Conflict Between "Publisher" & Composer

This libretto serves as an illustration. While reading, remember that the lines ascribed to the "publisher" are things I've actually heard!

Composer

Yep, I wrote this great new piece. It's called **DAVID!**

Publisher

David? (*looks at cover*) Oh, you mean the story of David & Goliath. Why not call it that?

Composer

Well, I've purposefully selected a 5-letter name title.

Publisher

Why?

Composer

Well, it draws connection to other works... like **Erich!**... 1997 will be his 100th anniversary, and **Monty!**, and indirectly **The Fountainhead**, since the main character is **Roark**, and the 5 note motif came from his name. Also, I plan on doing another piece called **Teddy!** **Ahab!** was one letter short. Oh well!

Publisher

(*befuddled*) Oh, that's cute, but do you really think people will get all that?

Composer

Some will. Others will read about it in the **STORMWatch**. I do it for them.

Publisher

(*feeling that this will be one of the concessions*) So, the score looks interesting, but it uses **4** synthesizers! On a purely pragmatic matter, do you think that's wise?

Composer

Do I think it's wise that Beethoven utilized Trombones? Do I think it's wise that Wagner utilized Tubas? As I wrote, something inside me called for these sounds. I remained true to that calling and composed from my heart, knowing full well that synthesizers are available to most groups via other sources in the school, or from the home arsenal of band members. I took a chance. I broke even my *own* boundaries on this one.

Publisher

Maybe so, but don't you feel that you're appealing to only a *small* portion of the market. I mean, really... how many directors are going to perform this work?

Composer

(*eyebrows crunched*) What does that matter?

Publisher

Well, shouldn't your work reach the greatest possible number of directors? Doesn't it make sense to create alternate parts, or perhaps rewrite the work so that it doesn't need those electronic things? Many state lists won't even include this work... and then what about your sales? I mean what about the "purists" out there?

Composer

Any Music Educator, teacher or panel member, who prevents his/her kids from exploration is no "purist". He or she is a "stubbornist". The purest act of Music is exploration and creativity. Einstein said, "I'm tired of scientists drilling holes where drilling is easy." He also said, "Unlike the great Lie, Truth does not grow with repetition." You guys need to stop drilling in the softest, often-drilled parts of the board, and take a chance on the sincere.

Publisher

Noble ideas, for sure... but not realistic. The reality of the marketplace is that there are many directors who just want to do something that's instantly playable. Our research shows that...

Composer

Your research is wrong. My instinct, and now my **experience**, is that there are many fine conductors out there, men and women whom you deny by continuously offering the homogenized, the safe and the sterile. **DAVID!**, like all **STORMWorks** is for them, and for their kids. I realize that the work is unique, but the colour and dramatic story-telling is **so** worth the investigation.

Publisher

Well, I'm sure it is... with some slight alteration. You see, by embracing your romantic view of Music... and I'm not putting it down, mind you... in fact, I applaud it... (*clears throat*) you're

limiting the response of many conductors who are right on that line between being truly adventurous and downright pragmatic. It's a logistics issue, not a musical issue. Can't you see that? Only a handful will do **DAVID!** in its current form!

Composer

Then I applaud that handful. Remember this. You guys said no one would play **Stormworks**, or a **Walk in Jurassic Park**... remember?

Publisher

Well, um... we were wrong. That's why we want to offer you the best Publisher/Composer contract ever offered. We'll give you 4-color process ads, worldwide distribution. We'll put the gas in your car, and don't worry, the car will always be yours! And let's not forget about the band directors who have money tied up with the music dealerships. By not going to the dealers, you're being selfish! No, Stephen... you owe it to those fine conductors to be a little less selfish, a little less romantic, a little more pragmatic and a bit more willing to sacrifice your little particulars for the greater good!

Composer

Spoken like a true altruist. You should read **The Fountainhead**. But, I say it plainly... the Music I write **IS** accessible. The Music I write **IS** designed for student musicians, even though it sounds virtuosic sometimes. The Music I write isn't written for the marketplace, or to serve as the band world equivalent of a top 40's hit tune. I write because I **must**. I want to share this... and I know that there are so many fine conductors who really understand.

Epilogue

...and so, **STORMWORKS** came to be. **HABET VIRTUS FINE CORONAM**

Publisher Epilogue

And for God's sake, what is that Latin thing you put on the **DAVID!** score cover?

Storm Epilogue

It means, "**In the end, Truth wears the crown.**"

Personal Thoughts on "Great" Music

Great Music is Timeless. Stripped of its geographical origins, stripped of its creation date in the Timeline of Human History, and... *(there are many soon to cringe)*... stripped of its *vocabulary*, Great Music is that rare, fleeting glimpse of the Eternal which resides in all of us. Great Music is self-restrained in its quest for the One in the infinitely possible. It is therefore much more a *sculpture* than a thing which has been built up and pasted into a preexisting model. Yet, Great Music does something more. And so, my description of Great Music must include something else. *Great Music seems to speak consistently about the otherwise indefinable to the greatest number of individuals anywhere in place or Time.*

There are those who continue to embarrass themselves by using the term "Film-Music" as an invective. "*Oh, that sounds like film music.*" The subtext here is: Well, this isn't *real* Music. It is somehow less because of its vocabulary and in many instances, its intended, often commercial use.

The problem with the "epic" is easily stated. A music writer can borrow the elements of an epic work, large dynamic scope, large orchestral forces and climaxes, while never touching the *truly* epic. Music, or *Abusic*, as I often differentiate it, is so constantly around us, and so consistent in its overuse of the *unearned* elements of the epic, that we have grown habituated to it.

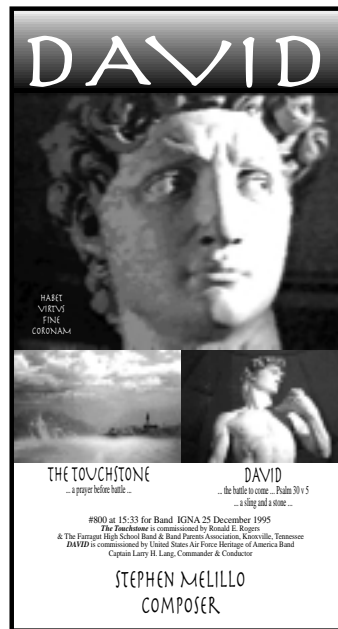
For those individuals who feel Film Music is something less, a feeling most likely generated by the *imitators* of Film Music, I urge you to learn. With **Miklos Rozsa's** death last summer, I cannot help but vent fury for those who have been deaf to the tumultuous throng of Human feeling, and Love and Passion, put forth by the greatest composers of just before our time. Composers like **Erich Korngold**, whom I have attempted to honour with a tribute, Max Steiner, Dimitri Tiomkin, *(Have you ever heard the unedited score for **It's a Wonderful Life?**)*, Bernard Herrman, Franz Waxman, Alex North, Alfred Newman and many others are testaments to Human Passion and Giving, and yet we deride their work with flippant, uneducated statements. The Film Music world is different now, save for the Goldsmiths and the Williams, but I would be honoured to someday earn the right to be counted among those truly great composers of the not-too-distant past.

The composers I've mentioned above are *Great*. They are great because of what they gave, what they poured out from themselves and given to the humble task of "under" score. Music has little to do with the notes or the rhythms or the vocabulary employed. It is a Time Art, the use of various sounds only a necessary commodity. Sound itself can carry no more meaning than that of rest or unrest, stability, or a longing for resolve.

Music is *blood*. It is the Life of a Human Soul. When I listen to Miklos Rozsa's heart and soul, and know that he left this world just **three days** after I finally wrote a letter to him, I cringe in a stinging frustration and hurt. Music is about *Giving*. Some people give us notes and rhythms and dynamic markings and Finale scores. Some people *die* for us. It is this magnificent difference which always startles me. These are the differences the **STORMDirectors** know and honor with their ever continuing efforts to share and teach.

Not all of the Music we bring to our students need be Great... but perhaps we can start with it being real and honest, and from the heart.

*"It is not the critic who counts, not the man who points out where the strong stumbled, or how the doer could have done better. The credit belongs to the man in the arena, his face marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly, who errs and falls short again and again: there is no effort without error. But he who tries, who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, who spends himself in a worthy cause, at best knows the triumph of achievement, and at worst, fails while daring. His place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat." **Teddy Roosevelt***



I T ' S T I M E !

