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**Music in the Horror Film: Listening to Fear**  
*Edited by Neil Lerner*

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# Music in the Horror Film

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Listening to Fear

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## Notes

- 1 Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Dictionnaire de musique* (New York: Johnson Reprint Corp, 1969), 277.
- 2 Johann Mattheson, *Der vollkommene Capellmeister*, translated by Ernest C. Harriss (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press), 149. I am indebted to Melanie Lowe for locating these first two citations.
- 3 Michel Chion, *The Voice in Cinema*, translated by Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press), 61.
- 4 Kaja Silverman, *The Acoustic Mirror: The Female Voice in Psychoanalysis and Cinema* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1988), 72–100. Silverman gives a detailed reading of the maternal voice dealing explicitly and critically with Chion's "umbilical web."
- 5 Lucy Fisher, "Birth Traumas: Parturition and Horror in *Rosemary's Baby*," in *The Dread of Difference*, edited by Barry Keith Grant (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1996). Fisher refracts the spectrum of birth-related themes into "false labor," "multiple births," "hysterical pregnancy," "afterbirth," and so on.
- 6 Julia Kristeva, *The Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982). The reader will also find useful Barbara Creed, "Horror and the Monstrous-Feminine: An Imaginary Abjection," *Screen* 27, 1 (1986): 44–70.
- 7 Silverman, *The Acoustic Mirror*, 73.
- 8 Noël Carroll, *The Philosophy of Horror or Paradoxes of the Heart* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 32.
- 9 Michel Chion, *Audio Vision*, translated by Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 8.
- 10 *Ibid.*, 9.
- 11 Stanley Cavell, *The World Viewed*, enlarged edition (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979), 26.
- 12 *Ibid.*, 41.
- 13 *Ibid.*, 40.
- 14 *Ibid.*, 160.
- 15 David J. Skal, *The Monster Show: A Cultural History of Horror* (New York: Faber and Faber, 1993), 287–305. In particular, Skal gives a useful outline of the ways in which horror films of the 1960s and 1970s reflected shifts in attitudes toward pregnancy and birth.
- 16 Jacques Attali, *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*, translated by Brian Massumi (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), 11.
- 17 *Ibid.*, 4.
- 18 Howard P. Chudacoff, *Children at Play: an American History* (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 20.

## Chapter 4

## The Strange Case of Rouben Mamoulian's Sound Stew

### The Uncanny Soundtrack in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1931)

Neil Lerner<sup>1</sup>

From a vantage point in the twenty-first century it may be difficult to imagine a horror film soundtrack without the dissonances and narrative telegraphing that have been a characteristic part of the horror genre for several decades; yet an archeology of the soundtracks of early horror films has only recently begun, even though the rise of this particular genre seems to have been intimately tied to the drastic advances connected to sound reproduction technologies (as well as having been a genre that was and is simultaneously profitable and disreputable). Robert Spadoni argues convincingly of the link between the coming of sound film and the rise of horror as a genre in 1931, positing that the strangeness of the synchronized soundtrack would resonate especially well in *Dracula* (Browning, 1931) and *Frankenstein* (Whale, 1931), two films whose transgressive stories complicated notions of life and death just as the technical advances of the new sound cinema confused reality and artifice for its shocked audiences.<sup>2</sup> Spadoni's understandable emphasis on *Dracula* and *Frankenstein*—Universal Pictures' important building blocks of the horror cycle that Spadoni has ending in 1936<sup>3</sup>—overlooks (and underhears?) Rouben Mamoulian's remarkable version of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, released in the US only five-and-a-half weeks after *Frankenstein*, at the end of 1931. The occasionally epistolary nature of Robert Louis Stevenson's 1886 novella, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, which gradually reveals (in the manner of a mystery) the connection between Jekyll and Hyde, provides another reason to link *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* together with *Frankenstein* and *Dracula*, two works that also unfold their stories in part through letters written by characters in the novels. Numerous stage versions (most famously those starring Richard Mansfield) preceded the early films based on Stevenson's novella, with the 1920 rendition featuring John Barrymore generally regarded as the most distinguished cinematic version before Paramount Pictures returned to the story in 1931.<sup>4</sup> With Mamoulian's version of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, sound design and music took on an enhanced role in the film's creation of dread and revulsion for the audience, as the soundtrack

worked together with the point-of-view shots to form a groundbreaking sense of embodied subjectivity; elements of sound and music help to put the audience eye to eye (and ear to heart, as will become clear) with their own mortality.<sup>5</sup>

While the 1920s saw remarkable uses of live, continuous music at many of the large movie palaces in urban areas, those traditions ground to a halt in the late 1920s. The 1931 horror films that preceded *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, *Dracula* and *Frankenstein*, made sparse use of music, as was typical at that time. In the early sound films, music often found itself relegated to opening and closing credits along with scenes that showed music-making or dancing; the use of music as underscore only gradually picked up momentum through the first part of the 1930s (perhaps most notably with Steiner's score for 1933's *King Kong*). *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* follows those conventions of rather sparse use of music with two important exceptions: during the first transformation scene of Jekyll into Hyde, Mamoulian accompanies the visual special effects with a groundbreaking sound collage that Irwin Bazelon described as "pre-musique concrète," and when Jekyll breaks up with Muriel, a non-diegetic version of a waltz from earlier in the film reappears.<sup>6</sup> Production records show that "music and sound effects" accounted for \$3,405.00 of the \$557,000 estimated budget; the largest part of the \$3,405 went to "musicians' salaries on score" (\$1,608.34).<sup>7</sup> George Turner identifies Nathaniel W. Finston as the musical director for the film, and he also names Sigmund Krungold as the performer of the organ solos that in the film are attributed to Fredric March's Dr. Jekyll character; neither Finston nor Krungold received a screen credit (typical before 1936 at Paramount, according to Clifford McCarty) nor are they named in the production records, and McCarty attributes the main and end titles (arrangements of music by J. S. Bach) to Herman Hand.<sup>8</sup> A cue sheet from the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) lists, in addition to Hand, Rudolph G. Kopp, John M. Leipold, and Ralph Ranger as additional composers and arrangers who worked on the film, although presumably the only composing that happened was for stock music such as "Old English Ditty #4." The organ solos constitute but one of several moments in the film where music performing occurs by on-screen characters; the other appearances are an orchestra accompanying dancing, some singing and instrumental music in a music hall, and a piano played in a parlor. In each instance the musical selections resonate with the broader theme of imminent mortality running throughout film, and rereading the film with the ear together with the eye opens up the possibility for understanding the entire narrative as the organist's dream.

Stevenson's novella says nothing about the possibility of Henry Jekyll as a musician, and while it seems likely that the idea of having Jekyll play organ may have originated with screenwriters Percy Heath

and Samuel Hoffenstein, the early versions of their screenplay do not specify particular works, apart from describing that the opening credits are to be accompanied by a Bach prelude played on an organ.<sup>9</sup> The opening credits as ultimately realized in the film open with Bach, but instead of the requested prelude, it opens with the famous Toccata from the Toccata and Fugue in D Minor (BWV 565), and instead of sounding from an organ, Herman Hand's orchestrated version stabs out the stinger-like mordent and descending figures of the opening measures.<sup>10</sup> Even later versions of the screenplay contain general requests for types of music (e.g. a Strauss waltz is requested for the dance scenes), and Mamoulian's own shooting continuity script calls for "Organ: Air for G String Bach," although a Chorale Prelude ("Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ," BWV 639) is actually what Jekyll plays.<sup>11</sup> Mamoulian, Heath, and Hoffenstein's calculated introduction of music to Stevenson's narrative taps into a wealth of existing codes and meanings; the characters' involvement with music in the film deepens the audience's sense of shared interiority with on-screen characters while also bringing a dream-like quality to the film.

Mamoulian—who as a director achieved his first successes on stage and on Broadway, most famously with his 1927 version of Dorothy and Du Bose Heyward's *Porgy*, which ran for 367 performances for the Theatre Guild in New York City—saw Stevenson's original story as one of good versus evil and morality versus immorality, but he preferred the exploration of the tension between lofty spirituality and base animalism:<sup>12</sup>

We have animalistic, fleshy desires, basic instincts; and we also have higher instincts. So I thought if the conflict were Dr. Jekyll's trying to liberate the good and free it from the animalistic, to control the baser instincts, that he would really give man freedom. . . . And that's what he's trying to do. Actually, some people refer to *Jekyll and Hyde* as a horror film. It isn't because there is no monster; he is the primeval man. Actually in his make-up we tried to duplicate as much as we could the Neanderthal man, who is our common ancestor. So he's just a primitive man. And the whole struggle is between the spiritual and the animalistic instincts. And also it elevates the motivation of Hyde; it makes him more interesting. At least, after all, his goal is high; his purpose, the purpose for the film, is a noble one. But he fails. He does not achieve it. And therein is his tragedy.<sup>13</sup>

Mamoulian often complained that the film was not a horror film, but his argument stems more from the perceived illegitimacy of horror as a genre rather than any proof that Hyde is not a monster: "It is not a horror story because I think it's more legitimate, it's based on a very valid psychology, a very valid human condition."<sup>14</sup> By introducing two female romantic interests for Jekyll, as had happened beginning with the staged

versions of the story in the late nineteenth century (the novella does not specify any particular women in Hyde's life), the film balances Mamoulian's notions of the spiritual and the animalistic on libido: Jekyll's frustrated sexual desire for Muriel Carew, which leads him to unleash Hyde's sadistic domination, presumed rape, and eventual murder of Ivy, a prostitute. Ultimately the question of sexual desire becomes subsumed under the larger conundrum of human mortality, something that both S. S. Praver and Virginia Wright Wexman explore in their astute readings of the film.<sup>15</sup> Like its more iconic partners *Dracula* and *Frankenstein, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* powers its sense of dread through continual reminders of death. As Hyde says to Ivy in the film, "but pleasure is brief in this world," an exclamation that fits with the various shots of the skeleton hanging in Jekyll's laboratory: each serve as a *memento mori*.

### A Cinematic Reverie for Organist, or, "Was it a Vision, or a Waking Dream?"

As the practices for incorporating music in film were just beginning to move towards standardization in the early 1930s, the choices of personnel now known usually to be responsible for making musical decisions (such as music editors, composers, and musical directors, along with, of course, directors and producers) cannot be known with much certainty. None of the individuals documented to have worked on music for the film (Nathaniel Finston, Sigmund Krumbgold, Herman Hand, Rudolph G. Kopp, John M. Leipold, and Ralph Rainger) received any screen credit. With Mamoulian, two further things complicate the picture: his propensity to claim credit for group innovations (Mamoulian and cinematographer Karl Struss, for instance, differ on who came up with the technique to produce the edit-less transformation) together with his exceptional background in opera and theater. No documents have yet surfaced that demonstrate with any clarity just who made particular musical decisions for the soundtrack in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. While Heath and Hoffenstein's later drafts begin to request generalized musical accompaniments (as in the request in the Second White Script that a "Bach prelude played on a pipe-organ by a skilled performer" should accompany the main title credits), there is no documentation to explain how a Bach prelude became the now infamous—through its overuse in horror films—Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor.<sup>16</sup> Evidence exists that suggests Mamoulian may well have played a key role in choosing particular pieces. In 1937 Mamoulian was quoted by Bruno David Ussher on the topic of choosing music for a film:

Aside from the caliber of music used, R. M. is very particular as to when music should be heard, how loudly, or when the spoken voice alone suffices. In principle he believes that music's chief function in

pictures is to "tell" what the human language, the human tongue cannot convey. "From there on music must voice and portend what the author wishes to convey at this moment," he said one day. He helps with the script and often rewrites entire portions "because music, and particularly songs, must be originally part of the action."<sup>17</sup>

Mamoulian also liked to tell the story of how, when directing *City Streets* (1931), he requested that the music department provide him with some Wagner (the *Meistersinger* Overture), but was told that even better music could be originally composed for him; he insisted on having Wagner instead.<sup>18</sup> Mamoulian relayed a sense of frustration with the way music was used in films coming out of the 1920s—that "fitting" or "synchronizing" of music that James Lastra discusses in connection to the emergence of cinema "sound"—and Mamoulian explained that "most of the music in the studio at the time was in small labeled boxes, as in a pharmacy; fire music, moonlight music, and so on. Different bits from hackneyed themes, mostly."<sup>19</sup>

Mamoulian's background in theater and, especially, opera, had prepared him well for his work in film. He was sometimes involved with the commissioning of new music, such as when he had Otto Luening compose an original score for a 1926 version of Maeterlinck's *Sister Beatrice* that Mamoulian directed in Rochester, New York.<sup>20</sup> Mamoulian was also part of a New York production of Arnold Schönberg's *Die Glückliche Hand*, sponsored by the League of Composers and conducted by Stokowski, which took place in 1930.<sup>21</sup> Whether it was Mamoulian, musical director Nathaniel Finston, or screenwriters Heath and Hoffenstein, someone made a series of subtle and informed musical choices for *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (see Table 4.1).

The music follows normative 1920s practices in the ways that it is used to situate time, place, and mood and also in the close connection between action on screen and the musical borrowing. In addition to the Bach organ works, the soundtrack makes use of two nineteenth-century waltzes (*Abendsterne* by Joseph Lanner and *Il Bacio* by Luigi Arditi), several nineteenth-century music hall songs ("Champagne Charley" becomes "Champagne Ivy" in the film), and a piano piece by Robert Schumann ("Aufschwung" from *Fantasiestücke*). Furthermore, three of the four major characters perform music: Jekyll plays the organ, Ivy sings, and Muriel plays the piano. That Hyde does not create music himself may be read as another way, together with make-up, that the film positions him as a kind of alien apart from or not yet fully human.

Hyde's lack of his own musical impulse (along with many other things) sets him in strong contrast to Jekyll, whose opening moments of organ playing in the film immediately bond the audience with his character through the famous point-of-view shots that open with hands playing

Table 4.1 Music used in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

Timing	Title	Composer	Diegetic	Comments
0:00–1:07	Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor (BWV 564)	J. S. Bach	no	orchestra; mm. 1–3, 12–19, 29–30
1:07–2:09	Chorale Prelude “Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ” (BWV 639)	Bach	yes	organ played by Jekyll; transposed down a minor third; mm. 2–8
10:16–12:07	<i>Abendsterne</i> (op. 180)	Joseph Lanner; the script specifies “Strauss waltz”	yes	
12:19–15:45	<i>Il Bacio (The Kiss)</i>	Luigi Arditi	yes	instrumental only
38:12–40:00	several music hall pieces (works like “Old English Ditty #1, 3, & 4,” or “I’ll Strike You with a Leather,” all of which are mentioned on the cue sheet)	Kopp, Leopold, Lloyd, Rainger	yes	
40:02–45:02	“Champagne Ivy”	adapted from “Champagne Charley” by H. J. Whymark (words) and Alfred Lee (music)	yes	sung by Ivy
52:26–52:39	“Champagne Ivy”	same as above	yes	sung by Ivy
59:52–1:00:15	Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor	Bach	yes	organ played by Jekyll; mm. 121–27
1:21:44–1:23:11	“Aufschwung” (from <i>Fantasiestücke</i> , op. 12)	Robert Schumann	yes	piano played by Muriel; mm. 1–55
1:24:22–1:25:00 1:26:07–1:26:39 1:27:04–1:27:19	<i>Il Bacio (The Kiss)</i>	Arditi	no	
1:35:13–1:35:25	Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor	Bach	no	orchestra; mm. 142–44
1:35:26–1:35:50	“Shipyard Music”	Bernard Kaun	no	

the organ. An orchestral arrangement of the Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor runs through the opening title cards, transitioning directly into Bach’s Chorale Prelude “Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ.” In order to move even more discretely from the D minor cadence at the end of the Tocatta into the Chorale Prelude, someone (presumably Herman Hand, who is credited on the cue sheet with arranging the main title music) transposed it from its original F minor into D minor. That raises the question of why they did not simply choose a work in D minor. Perhaps the words implied in the prelude, from the hymn tune borrowed by Bach, possess some meaning relevant to the film?

Figure 4.1 shows the transposed melodic line from the prelude, along with the words that would have accompanied this part of the melody in its original version as a sung hymn: “I beg, hear my complaint; the true faith, Lord, I aspire to, which you wish to give me.”<sup>22</sup> The film positions Jekyll, after all, as a saintly figure who works medical miracles in the “free wards,” and the narrative conceit of splitting one’s evil nature from the good one demands a certain piety on the part of Jekyll, something the Protestant church music and this particular hymn provide. Towards the end of the film, after Hyde has murdered Ivy and Jekyll has promised Lanyon that he will break off his relationship with Muriel, Jekyll grasps a book (presumably a bible) and gazes upward in prayer: “Oh god, this I did not intend. I saw a light, and I did not see where it was leading.” Here Jekyll makes overt through his dialogue the religious conviction implied with the opening organ music.

Music naturally accompanies the early dance sequence in the Carews’ drawing room, and we see a small dance orchestra performing waltzes. According to Mamoulian’s Shooting Continuity script, the scene should have a “Strauss waltz played by small orchestra,” but in fact the waltzes that occur in the soundtrack are by Joseph Lanner (*Abendsterne*, op. 180, 1841) and Luigi Arditi (*Il Bacio*, 1860).<sup>23</sup> Besides being appropriate for the time and setting, their extra-musical associations suggest that these particular waltzes were chosen for their allusive potential.<sup>24</sup> The argument works less well for *Abendsterne*, or “Evening Star,” because the music here occurs indoors, without any mention of the evening or of stars in the dialogue. Yet in an earlier version of the screenplay, an unused scene has Jekyll referring to Muriel as a star (“Because I want so to be alone with you—because I couldn’t have endured seeing you shining like a star among



Figure 4.1 Excerpt (main melody only) from “Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ,” as heard in the soundtrack (transposed down a minor third), and with the words implied by the original hymn tune

your father's stuffy friends and not plucking you out of your heaven").<sup>25</sup> Perhaps then Muriel's earlier description as a star, and the role that metaphor was to play in her relationship with Jekyll, might have motivated the decision to use Lanner's *Abendsterne*.

Arditi's famous waltz-song *Il Bacio* ("The Kiss") leaves little question as to why it was used, as it accompanies a sequence between Muriel and Jekyll as they kiss in a garden. Given that Mamoulian's motivation for using his heartbeat in the first transformation scene was spontaneous (at least according to his accounts), it may simply be a coincidence that *Il Bacio* has a line that refers directly to heartbeats: "Ed i palpiti udirei/Che rispondo no al mio cor," or "And the heartbeats you feel/That answer to my heart."<sup>26</sup> Regardless, it provides yet more evidence in the text of the film itself that hearts and heartbeats constitute an important thematic motif. That the music begins not with *Il Bacio*'s introduction but rather starts right at the part, when sung, that contains repeated urgings to kiss may demonstrate that this specific piece was chosen for its overt meanings in the words. *Il Bacio* functions in the score similarly to how a theme song would work in a 1920s film accompanied by music: as a musical theme that is meant to indicate the romance of two characters, and that returns at appropriate moments. *Il Bacio* returns later in the film, in a manner reminiscent of the visual dissolves (e.g. the lingering dissolve of Ivy's swinging leg and Jekyll's departure from her apartment, a dissolve meant to indicate Jekyll's obsession on that image; and the lingering dissolve as Jekyll looks up in prayer and Muriel begins to play piano), and it recurs three times non-diegetically in the scene where Jekyll tells Muriel that he must leave her. Such non-diegetic uses of music were still uncommon at that time, yet here Mamoulian does even more than simply not providing an on-screen source for the music. Mamoulian explained his fondness for generating ironic effects with music:

I find myself using either the terms of painting or the terms of music. For instance, I love the use of counterpoint. The orthodox way of scoring any motion picture is that a happy scene has happy music, a tragic scene has sad music. I don't think this is as dramatically expressive as using the music in counterpoint to the scene. When Jekyll comes and tells Muriel that he is going to give her up, a completely tragic scene, the music heard is the waltz when they were happy, waltzing around the room. The music goes against the mood which, of course, makes the despair much more poignant.<sup>27</sup>

To the already powerful counterpoint created just by the return of such peppy, major music during an emotionally grinding scene, someone cleverly decided to transpose the melody up a step for each of the three times it occurs. Each use of the waltz uses the same "kiss me, come and kiss me"

part of the waltz, with it first sounding in D major, then E major, and finally F-sharp major. Presenting the melody in successively higher keys serves to ratchet up the suspense in a scene, even when done in such a subtle manner.<sup>28</sup>

The music performed by the two main female characters also establishes setting, locale, and social class. When Hyde goes to the Variety Music Hall in search of Ivy, he first notices her when she sings a short song, "Champagne Ivy," which is based on a nineteenth-century music hall song, "Champagne Charlie." In a later scene in Ivy's apartment, Hyde sadistically forces Ivy to sing "Champagne Ivy" for him, and she complies. While a music hall song efficiently defines Ivy's social stature for the audience, so too does piano playing by Muriel in her father's house. Muriel performs Robert Schumann's "Aufschwung" from his *Fantasiestücke*, op. 12. Often translated as "soaring," the title literally means "upswing," and again, Mamoulian (if indeed he made that decision) has set music that cuts against the grain of the scene, for we know Jekyll is about to end their relationship as she plays, and the joyousness of the emotion in not merely the title but especially as suggested in the music itself resonates in painful counterpoint with the break-up that is just about to happen. An even more subtle connection might be drawn between the title ("upswing") and the fact that it had been Ivy's swinging leg that had proved to be so distracting for Jekyll; Muriel also swings, but within the confines of her domestic gender role and the controlled upswinging of playing Schumann at the parlor piano. Mamoulian alerts us to Jekyll's fixation on Ivy through an extended dissolve of her leg, and just as that superimposition soon after finds the release of Hyde (and Jekyll's libido), this final superimposition of Jekyll and a woman (here, Muriel and her upswinging piano playing, as seen in Figure 4.2) marks Jekyll's final, albeit unsuccessful, attempt to tamp down his sexual and romantic desire by terminating his relationship with Muriel. That Robert Schumann was himself involved in a protracted struggle with a father over the right to marry a daughter—to say nothing of Robert's propensity for imagining different personalities within himself—brings yet more significance to the presence of Schumann's music in this scene.

The simplest explanation for all of these musical choices may be that the works were selected merely for their chronological proximity to the time period of the film, and so their presence works to support an illusion of realism just as period authentic costumes or scenery do. Yet the film's richness in intertextual allusions works against that possibility, given the complexity behind the literary and artistic quotations. One of the more striking uses of an existing work of visual sculpture occurs in the scene when Hyde murders Ivy. Here, Mamoulian adroitly moves the camera away from Hyde's violent actions, settling it instead on a copy of Antonio Canova's *Cupid and Psyche* in Ivy's room; as Mamoulian explains, "these

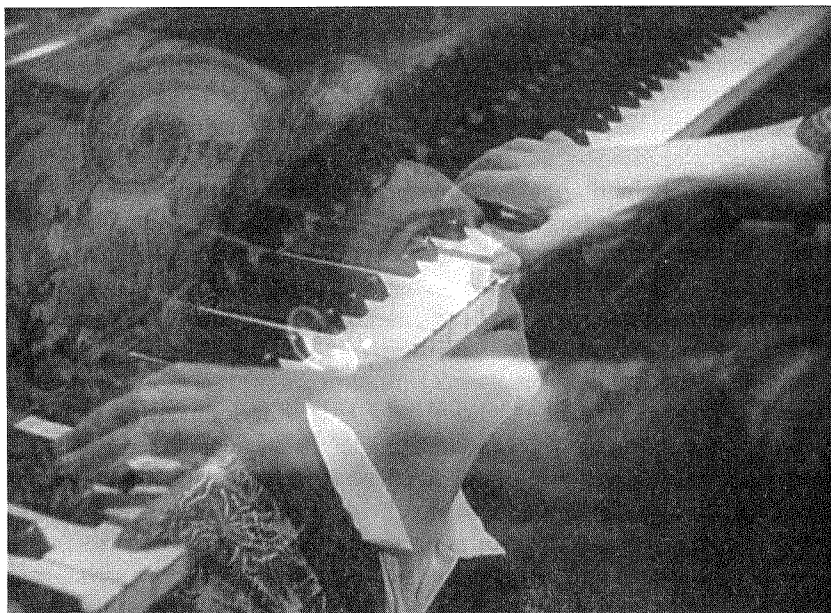


Figure 4.2 Jekyll prays as Muriel plays

things sharpen the situation and make it much more interesting.”<sup>29</sup> In an earlier scene, Jekyll expresses his joy at being granted permission to marry Muriel by playing organ at his home. He announces, “if music be the food of love, play on,” directly quoting the opening line of Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night*. Duke Orsino’s exclamation, comparing as it does appetites, vomiting, and music, bears interesting connections to Jekyll’s situation here and his continuous struggle to be in control of his emotional impulses. Most directly, Jekyll here feeds his romantic impulse with the organ music, allowing himself an unmeasured moment of emotional exuberance, even though quite soon the music will become “not so sweet now as it was before” (I.i.8).

Another tangled intertextual web forms around Jekyll’s utterance of lines from Keats’s “Ode to a Nightingale.” On his way to the Carews’, Jekyll pauses to sit in a park, whereupon he listens to a nightingale and pronounces that “thou wast not born for death, immortal bird, no hungry generations tread thee down, thou wast not born for death.” Jekyll then watches in horror as a cat creeps along the tree’s limb and kills the bird, despite his protests.<sup>30</sup> Upon repeating “thou wast not born for death” with a sneer, Jekyll finds himself spontaneously transforming into Hyde, and the line of Keats, together with the cat’s murder of the songbird, both provide ominous foreshadowing for Ivy’s imminent death. Keats’s

poem explores profound questions of mortality, and thus it fits well with the overall emphasis on life’s fragility in the film. An unused bit of dialogue, typed on a blue piece of paper glued to the back of one of the pages of the Second White Script, has Jekyll speaking even more lines of the seventh stanza in Keats’s ode (ll. 68–70: “The same that oft-times hath/Charm’d magic casements, opening on the foam/Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.”).<sup>31</sup> Set in a “Devon garden by the seas,” listening to the song of a nightingale, Jekyll follows his recitation of the poem with the lines “Weren’t we right not to wait, my love? This beauty is ours—ours—this beauty . . . beauty that must die, and Joy, whose hand is ever at his lip bidding adieu . . . adieu . . .” The five lines in the middle of Keats’s seventh stanza that were not used in this draft of the screenplay include a brief discussion of the biblical Ruth, a character whose widowed fidelity to her in-laws has a certain resonance with Muriel.

Particularly relevant for this film, however, are the last two lines of the poem: “Was it a vision, or a waking dream?/Fled is that music:—Do I wake or sleep?” Beyond functioning as a metaphor for life and death, probing the boundaries between being awake and asleep connects directly with the medium of film and its ability to entrance us with dreams and—as is the case here—nightmares. Bringing these Keatsian questions (of waking or sleeping) into this film comes back to the film’s music in two important ways. First, the poem grants special status to song (here, that of the nightingale) in ways similar to the function of music in the film; the three main characters who perform music do so as an expression not simply of their emotions but of their life. Second, the closing question of the “Ode to a Nightingale,” together with the particular parts of the Bach Toccata and Fugue that get used in the film, open the possibility of reading the entire film as a dream. The film opens with measures 1–3, then 12–19, and finally 29–30 of the Toccata, arranged for orchestra. After Jekyll has been granted permission to marry Muriel and returns to his home to tell Poole, his butler, he launches into an exuberant performance of measures 121–27 of the Fugue. After Hyde’s death, and his posthumous transformation back into Jekyll, the orchestra returns to play the final three measures from Bach’s organ work. The film quotes from the beginning, middle, and end of the piece, matching those parts of the music with the beginning, middle, and end of the film. Such a subtle reading of the film, triggered by unspoken words of a poem and a rigorous attention to the organ music, may well rest on evidence too slight to be immediately persuasive, but it may become more difficult to dismiss when considering another Hollywood film that might similarly be confusing the narrative arc through the implication of a shift to a character’s dream: *Laura* (1944). In that film, the titular murder victim unexpectedly shows up after the detective who had been investigating her death—and who seems to be falling in love with her—falls asleep to

the accompaniment of a dolly shot and David Raksin's haunting score, shifting the film from that point forward into (at least possibly) the point of view of his dream.<sup>32</sup> That the film never clarifies when or even if that dream ends makes it, according to Kristin Thompson, "extremely transgressive in relation to the tradition of classical Hollywood cinema."<sup>33</sup> Considerable documentation exists that demonstrates that at least some of those involved in making *Laura* knew they were branching the narrative into one character's dream.<sup>34</sup> No such documentation has surfaced for *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, apart from two important threads connecting the two films: Rouben Mamoulian, who originally was *Laura's* director, and Samuel Hoffenstein, who co-wrote the screenplay. Even if the only organist's reverie that the film gives us is Jekyll's blissful eruption in the middle of the film, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* nonetheless executes a remarkable blending of poetry, art, and music that does more than simply drop names or suggest shallow connections. By employing the organist as a central conceit in the film, the creators of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* pulled out all the stops to demonstrate that even a commercial horror film could wrestle with serious topics in complicated ways that extended and developed the ideas of earlier poets, sculptors, and musicians.

### The Dreadful Heartbeat: Examining the Ingredients in Mamoulian's Sound Stew

Erika Greber argues that with Mamoulian's version of the story, *Jekyll and Hyde* was from that point onward a movie and no longer a literary work; the astonishing visual and acoustic special effects bring the audience into the experience of a transformation from Jekyll to Hyde in a far more visceral way than was possible with words on a page.<sup>35</sup> The film offers seven transformation scenes—five from Jekyll to Hyde, two from Hyde to Jekyll—and with each successive metamorphosis into Hyde, the make-up becomes more grotesque. The exterior here signals the interior, with a frightening face meant to parallel an ugly or at least animalistic personality. Paramount sought to capitalize on the shock value of the Hyde make-up in the press book that accompanied the film's 1931 release, with one entire section titled "March Develops Seven Distinct Character Types"; that information surfaced in later newspaper stories such as the one in the *Fort Wayne News-Sentinel* of October 27, 1931, with the elaboration that "[March's] final appearance as Mr. Hyde is enough to make chills run up and down the spine of a polar bear."<sup>36</sup> Several early reviews noted the power of the make-up to distress an audience. Clark Rodenbach, in the *Chicago News*, wrote that:

Paramount out-horrored its competitors in making a picture of this kind, but at the expense of good taste . . . the horrors of the Stevenson

story may make you a little sick at your stomach. If they hadn't made Hyde such a hideous, revolting creation they'd have a swell picture.<sup>37</sup>

Carol Frink, writing in the *Chicago Herald-Examiner*, found similar fault with Hyde's presentation:

The handsome Fredric March turns from a debonair, clean-cut scientist to a hideous, snarling, buck-toothed, hair-faced Neanderthaler before your outraged eyes, not once but time and again. It is like being hit with a hammer—it does feel good when it stops.<sup>38</sup>

Some reviewers, however, gave hints that not all audiences responded with fear:

To be concrete about it, the dialogue lines placed in Mr. Hyde's evil-looking jaws and some of the incidents didn't often always impress as they were undoubtedly intended. The audience at the Rivoli the night the picture was caught must have felt partially the same way because, while the unwarranted titter of laughs that ripple through the house might have been hysterical, we don't believe they were.<sup>39</sup>

Carroll Carroll described in verse another instance of laughing instead of screaming: "Too bad the love scenes rang so hollow/The audience I sat with laughed./(Perhaps they simply couldn't follow/Such trains of thought—or just went daft)."<sup>40</sup>

Those complaints notwithstanding, a consensus quickly emerged that the special effects in the film were indeed remarkable and pushed the medium of cinema into new territory. Mamoulian carefully guarded the secret to the visual transformation for decades. The first metamorphosis occurs without an edit, with Jekyll looking into a mirror in a point-of-view shot that works to situate the audience squarely in Jekyll's perspective. Without even so much as a dissolve, March's hands and face darken in what was a true milestone of cinematic fantasy. Cinematographer Karl Struss claimed to have had the idea to use a technique he had used earlier:

So that's what we used back in Culver City on the healing of the lepers in *Ben-Hur*, and it was a simple thing to think of doing when I had the situation of changing Fredric March from Dr. Jekyll to Mr. Hyde in the 1931 Paramount film with Rouben Mamoulian. Nobody else had any ideas on the subject—I seemed to be the only one. It was done by using a red filter on strong red makeup, so that when you photographed red with a red filter the object was white. In front



of the lens you put a two-inch square red "A" filter that had the same speed as a green "B" filter so that when you went from one exposure to the other, the density remained the same. The filters were gelatins hooked together in a little holder with the red on top and the green below. They were done as close to the 2-inch focal length lens as you could get them. When the transition started it would slowly change and with the green filter you could see the image, the face, become quite dark, with lines and so forth, depending on how much makeup we had put on in the first place. I controlled the makeup with the makeup man.<sup>41</sup>

Interestingly, while guarding the secret to the visual aspects of the transformation, Mamoulian (and even Paramount) began talking about the sound as soon as the film was first released. The Paramount press packet contained a section titled "March's Heart-Beats Heard in Tense Scene," and it makes clear the importance of sound and in particular the sound of the heartbeat in the promotion of the film:

The beat of the human heart recently was recorded in Hollywood for talking pictures for the first time.

The sound effect was secured by Rouben Mamoulian, Paramount director, for a scene in "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," in which Fredric March plays the dual personality role and Miriam Hopkins and Rose Hobart have the leading feminine roles. This remarkable picture dramatization of Robert Louis Stevenson's weird story is the feature picture at the . . . theatre for . . . days the . . . part of next week.

To obtain the "boom, boom" of the heart-pump, the microphone was held over March's heart. The sensitiveness of the instrument boosted the sound past that which one naturally hears while holding an ear over a heart to the quality attained by listening through a stethoscope.

The heart-beat was conceived by Mamoulian as one of his novel effects in the Stevenson story; by use of this, the director will obtain the sensation of one's own heart pounding in one's ears as he chronicles the experiences of Jekyll in transforming for the first time into Hyde.<sup>42</sup>

Paramount's hyping of the heartbeat went further than just pointing to the novelty of hearing a heartbeat, as it reached into the discourses of science and medicine to advise exhibitors to use amplified heartbeat sounds (having a "doctor, scientist, or electrical genius to give it dignity" or "an interne [sic], doctor, or medical student could be assigned to your lobby for the run of the attraction") as ballyhoo to draw patrons into the theater: "Invite and intrigue them with some such copy as: 'Is your heart in good shape? Have it examined, hear it beat before you see 'Dr. Jekyll

and Mr. Hyde,' the biggest thrill classic of all time.'"<sup>43</sup> The heartbeat motif was clearly thought to be an important component to what made this film tick, as becomes clear when seeing how it returned in the 1941 MGM version directed by Victor Fleming (and MGM had purchased the rights to Paramount's version so as to monopolize the Jekyll and Hyde market): Daniele Amfitheatrof's music that accompanies Spencer Tracy's Jekyll as he first transforms into Hyde contains musical gestures that simulate heartbeat sounds, as orchestral instruments attempt to simulate what Mamoulian achieved through non-orchestral means.<sup>44</sup>

Mamoulian accompanies the change with images of the room rapidly spinning around before presenting a series of dissolves that feature characters speaking lines of dialogue, most of which we have already heard in the film, but some of which we either were not privy to hearing or which Jekyll has imagined (see Table 4.2).<sup>45</sup> These spoken words all refer back in some way to Jekyll's state of chastisement, sexual frustration, and hostility.<sup>46</sup> As we watch the transformation through Jekyll's eyes, we begin to hear a heartbeat, and the scene is set up to be heard and read as Jekyll's heartbeat becoming our heartbeat before becoming Hyde's heartbeat.<sup>47</sup> Yet other sounds occur during this pivotal scene: mysterious,

Table 4.2 Description of the first transformation scene

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26:41	We (audience/Jekyll) look at glass with the potion
26:44	We move closer to the mirror
26:53	We drink
26:59	Clutching throat, start to gasp
27:05	Transformation becomes visibly obvious
27:10	Heartbeat begins
27:17	Drop to floor
27:18	High-pitched metallic sound as room starts to spin
27:28	Jekyll and Muriel in the garden: "Marry me now. I can't wait any longer."
27:33	General Carew: "Positively indecent!"
27:35	Ivy's hand pointing to the garter on her leg: "Look where he kicked me."
27:37	Lanyon: "Your conduct was disgusting!"
27:38	General Carew: "It isn't done. It isn't done!"
27:40	Jekyll in top hat: "I could strangle him. Strangle him!"
27:43	General Carew: "Indecent. Indecent."
27:46	Jekyll: "Can a man dying of thirst forget water?"
27:50	Lanyon: "Disgusting. You're mad. Mad."
27:53	Ivy: "Come back soon, won't you? Come back. Come back. Come back. Come back."
28:04	Dissolve away from Ivy's leg back to spinning
28:09	Room stops spinning
28:17	High-pitched metallic sound stops
28:24	Heartbeats stop
28:25	Return to mirror and see yourself as Hyde

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high-pitched, metallic sounds that resist verbal description. The overall sound collage here has an uncanny quality, in part because of the vaguely familiar yet unidentifiable sounds. Mamoulian frequently discussed what went into the sound mix in this scene, although there are variations in his story that leave some ambiguity as to just what went into it. As he told Thomas R. Atkins in a 1973 interview:

With such a fantastic transformation what sound do you use? Do you put music in here? God, it's coming out of your ears, the scoring. I thought the only way to match the event and create this incredible reality would be to concoct a *mélange* of sounds that do not exist in nature, that a human ear cannot hear. I said, "Let's photograph light." We photographed the light of a candle in various frequencies of intensity directly transforming light into sound. Then I said, "Let's record the beat of a gong, cut off the impact, run it backwards." And we recorded other things like that. But when we ran it, the whole thing lacked rhythm. I'm a great believer in the importance of rhythm. I said, "We need some kind of a beat." So they brought in all sorts of drums, a bass drum, a snare drum, a Hawaiian drum, Indian tomtoms. But no matter what we used, it always sounded like what it was—a drum. Finally in exasperation I got this wonderful idea. I ran up and down the stairway for a few minutes, and then I put a microphone to my heart and said, "Record it." And that's what is used as the basic rhythm in the scene—the thumping noise which is like no drum on earth because it's the heartbeat, my own heartbeat. So when I say my heart is in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, I mean it literally.<sup>48</sup>

He singles out three elements here that resurface in nearly all of the various explanations: first, candlelight photographed directly to the soundtrack; second, the sound of a gong's reverberations (and not its initial attack), played in reverse; and third, his own heartbeat. In a nearly identical interview with Raymond Rohauer from 1968, he adds that "this aural concoction became known in the studio as 'Mamoulian's sound stew.'"<sup>49</sup> The recipe for his stew stays consistent except for one interview from 1961, where Mamoulian changed the action of photographing candlelight directly onto the soundtrack into "we painted on the sound track."<sup>50</sup> Tom Milne's monograph on Mamoulian copied the description from the Robinson interview, and a series of sources then quote Milne.<sup>51</sup> While it may be possible that this single outlier description is correct, it may also be possible—if not probable—that it was a single slip of the tongue that has gone unnoticed. Regardless of whether or not the sound was created by photographing candlelight or by drawing directly onto the film, Mervyn Cooke rightly observes that "with commendable restraint,

Mamoulian used this extraordinary effect only once in the film."<sup>52</sup> None of the other six transformation sequences employ those sounds, using instead heavy breathing, gasping, and grunting—or nothing at all, in the case of the last metamorphosis, right after Hyde has been shot dead, and his corpse reverts back to Jekyll.<sup>53</sup>

Besides putting his heart into his film, Mamoulian's innovative sound design in the first transformation scene draws the audience into a more visceral connection with the film and the character. Finding such a link between sounds and an audience's perception of a kind of embodiment lends support to K. J. Donnelly's argument that:

music in horror films often attempts a direct engagement with the physical: for example, through the use of the very high (like the stabbing strings in the shower scene in *Psycho*) or the low (deep stingers or drones). These are not merely extremes of pitch, but are also tied to the intrinsic sounds of the human body: the high buzz of the nervous system and the deep throb of the bloodstream and heart.<sup>54</sup>

That dichotomy, of the high and low, echoes John Cage's oft-repeated description of his 1951 encounter with an anechoic chamber:

I entered [an anechoic chamber] at Harvard University several years ago and heard two sounds, one high and one low. When I described them to the engineer in charge, he informed me that the high one was my nervous system in operation, the low one my blood in circulation. Until I die there will be sounds. And they will continue following my death. One need not fear about the future of music.<sup>55</sup>

In two important ways, then, Mamoulian's sound stew looked ahead to Cage's activities in the 1950s. First, his non-traditional use of sound for its intrinsic qualities, his openness to experimenting with recording techniques, with using the recording studio as a compositional resource, may be seen as a pre-figuring of the sorts of compositional experimentation associated with Cage and others (such as Pierre Schaeffer and Pierre Henry) by mid-century. In 1931, in the early days still of sound film, deploying such an imaginative use of sound to underscore an important scene (instead of more predictably accompanying it with some sort of melodramatic music) bears a resemblance to the reconfiguring of ambient sounds into music that Cage engineered with *4'33"*. Second, Cage's epiphany of the ubiquitous high and low sounds resulting from being alive may match those of a viewer of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* in the ways that, like Cage's sudden realization of the bodily origin of some ambient sounds, the audience may (likely) not be initially aware that Mamoulian

has brought into his sound stew both high buzzes (Jekyll's nervous system) and low, throbbing heartbeats. Hollywood's early sound films were beginning to find ways to bring verisimilitude to the experience of what it meant for a character (and an audience) to be alive in a film, an important technological and industry advance, to be sure, but also a key thematic element in a film that stakes so much of its horror in the fragility of life.<sup>56</sup>

Finally, Donnelly has also pointed to the tradition in horror films of music and sound effects being more holistically connected than in other genres:

the horror film is often seen as a coherent atmospheric package that embraces both music and sound effects. In many cases, horror film music follows less the traditional leitmotif symphonic structure of the classical film score than creates a sound architecture combining a concern for ambience with intermittent shock effects.<sup>57</sup>

Those vague boundaries between music and sound effect come sharply into focus in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Mamoulian's sound design for the first transformation scene marks a watershed moment in the history of horror film music, experimenting as it does with acoustic materials in a radically different way from contemporaneous horror films such as *Dracula* or *Frankenstein*, which are characterized far more by their large chunks of silence and lack of non-diegetic music than by any imaginative uses of sound. Could it be possible that the sound stew suffers from being too far ahead of its own time, appearing decades before electronic music and the manipulation of sound in a studio became a merit badge for the mid-century avant-garde composer in the university and concert hall?

### **Conclusion: The Uncanny Subjectivity of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde's* Soundtrack**

Sigmund Freud famously discussed the idea of the uncanny in a 1919 essay; Freud observes the disturbing quality that *Doppelgänger*s can cause.<sup>58</sup> Such doublings, and their concomitant ambiguities, can generate feelings of uncanny dread by confusing the status of being alive and being dead. Mamoulian's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* creates a feeling of the uncanny in numerous ways, not the least being through its unsettling blending of wakefulness and dreaming, but also through its numerous allusions that each has a certain familiarity that can be disguised through their recontextualizations. Hyde's physical appearance, meant to be reminiscent of an earlier species of human, provides one instance of something that appears vaguely familiar. Inanimate objects appearing to be alive were uncanny to Freud, and in *Jekyll and Hyde*, the mechanized illusion of

motion, the film, gets imbued with a living quality through the addition of the heartbeat sounds. The first transformation scene, with its accompanying "sound stew," creates a central encounter with the uncanny through its hauntingly familiar sounds, its curious mix of heartbeats, gongs, and candlelight. In other contexts, and without the sonic manipulation, these things would be banal and unremarkable, but in connection to the metamorphosis they assume the qualities of the kind of uncanniness that Freud defines as "that species of the frightening that goes back to what was once well known and had long been familiar."<sup>59</sup> Despite the greater attention given to *Dracula* and *Frankenstein* as the progenitors of the horror genre in Hollywood, the elaborate and layered use of sound and music in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* highlighted and opened up the possibilities of the soundtrack for creating fear and dread in the horror film.<sup>60</sup>

### **Notes**

- 1 This essay benefitted tremendously from the assistance of Jim Buhler, Frank Dominguez, Daniel Goldmark, Burkhard Henke, Carole Kruger, and Andrew Oster.
- 2 Robert Spadoni, *Uncanny Bodies: The Coming of Sound Film and the Origins of the Horror Genre* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007).
- 3 *Ibid.*, 2.
- 4 For a broad history of various performative versions of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, see *The Definitive Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde Companion*, edited by Harry M. Geduld (New York and London: Garland, 1983), especially Pau Wilstach's "Richard Mansfield and Jekyll and Hyde," 159–61. A careful study of the adaptations of the story into stage, film, radio, and television appears in Brian A. Rose's *Jekyll and Hyde Adapted* (Westport, CT and London: Greenwood, 1996). The question of whether or not the work's genre falls within the category of horror versus science fiction gets careful treatment in Donald Lawler, "Reframing *Jekyll and Hyde*: Robert Louis Stevenson and the Strange Case of Gothic Science Fiction," in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde After One Hundred Years*, edited by William Veeder and Gordon Hirsch (Chicago, IL and London: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 247–61.
- 5 Robert Winning notes the technical innovations of Mamoulian's film, drawing a connection between the extended subjective cinematography at the opening of the film and the later use of the similar effect in John Carpenter's *Halloween* (1978) as well as pointing to the "early example of a complex sound mix" in "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," in *International Dictionary of Films and Filmmakers*, edited by Sara Pendergast and Tom Pendergast, vol. 1 (Detroit, MI: St James Press, 2001), 332.
- 6 Irwin Bazelon, *Knowing the Score: Notes on Film Music* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1975), 147.
- 7 From the production records for Paramount Pictures kept at the Margaret Herrick Library, Beverly Hills, CA. The six expenses constituting the "music and sound effects" line were "compilation of score," "musicians' salaries on score," "musicians' salaries on sets," "mechanical sound effects," "music dept. supervision salaries," and "distribution idle time permanent musicians."
- 8 George Turner, "Two-faced Treachery," *American Cinematographer* 80/3 (March 1999): 196. Clifford McCarty, *Film Composers in America: A*

*Filmography, 1911–1970* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 12, 127.

- 9 In the first draft of the script by Heath and Hoffenstein, dated June 23, 1931, the film opens not with Jekyll at the organ but with two men talking in the street outside a hospital. (These scripts are part of the Paramount Collection at the Margaret Herrick Library.) The August 3, 1931 version (called the “Second Script”) opens with the organ. Among the other things initially in early drafts but not included in the final filmed version are two instances of Hyde’s cruelty: first, an encounter Hyde has with a kitten (he hears it stuck on a high bridge, rescues it, then drops it into the river below) and second, an incident involving a blind beggar (Hyde offers to help the man cross the street, but midway through, Hyde jerks away his cane and leaves him stranded).
- 10 See Julie Brown’s essay in this collection for further discussion of the organ music in this film.
- 11 In the folder “Shooting Continuity, ca. 1931,” part of the Rouben Mamoulian collection at the Library of Congress (henceforth LC-M).
- 12 Mamoulian’s direction of *Porgy* included a famous effect known as the “Symphony of Noises,” a building up of naturalistic sounds into a highly stylized and rhythmical whole:

The curtain rose on Catfish Row in the early morning. All silent. Then you hear the Boum! of a street gang repairing the road. That is the first beat; then beat 2 is silent; beat 3 is a snore—zzz!—from a negro who’s asleep; beat 4 silent again. Then a woman starts sweeping the steps—whish!—and she takes up beats 2 and 4, so you have: Boum!—Whish!—zzz!—Whish! and so on. A knife-sharpener, a shoemaker, a woman beating rugs and so on, all join in. Then the rhythm changes: 4/4 to 2/4; then to 6/8; and syncopated and Charleston rhythms. It all had to be conducted like an orchestra.

As recounted by Mamoulian to David Robinson in “Rouben Mamoulian: Painting the Leaves Black,” *Sight & Sound* (Summer 1961): 124. See also Mark Spergel, *Reinventing Reality: The Art and Life of Rouben Mamoulian* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1993), 55–68. Mamoulian revisits this idea in the opening of *Love Me Tonight* (1932), with the awakening of Paris.

- 13 Harry A. Hargrave, “Interview with Rouben Mamoulian,” *Literature Film Quarterly* 10/4 (1982), 263–4. Mamoulian makes similar claims in an earlier interview: “I didn’t want Hyde to be a monster. Hyde is not evil, he is the primitive, the animal in us, whereas Jekyll is a cultured man, representing the intellect. Hyde is the Neanderthal man, and March’s makeup was designed as such.” From *The Celluloid Muse: Hollywood Directors Speak*, edited by Charles Higham and Joel Greenberg (Chicago, IL: Henry Regnery, 1969), 134.
- 14 Bill Thomas, “Mamoulian on His *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*,” *Cinefantastique* (Summer 1971), 38.
- 15 See S. S. Prawer, “Book into Film I: Mamoulian’s *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*,” in *Caligari’s Children: The Film as Tale of Terror* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), 85–107, and Virginia Wright Wexman, “Horror of the Body: Hollywood’s Discourse on Beauty and Rouben Mamoulian’s *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*,” in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde: After One Hundred Years*, edited by William Veeder and Gordon Hirsch (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 283–307. Both Prawer and Wexman recognize the racialized aspects to Hyde’s make-up. Prawer sees it as “the stereotype of the black rapist” (95) while Wexman brings in the contemporary prohibitions in the Motion Picture Production Code of 1930, which among

other things forbade miscegenation, as she points to the ways Hyde is portrayed as a particular threat of primitive bestiality against “white womanhood.” (289)

- 16 Peter Williams provocatively questioned the authenticity of this work in “BWV 565: A Toccata in D Minor for Organ by J. S. Bach?” *Early Music* 9/3 (July 1981): 330–7.
- 17 From a document titled “Bruno David Ussher Asks: Have you Met Mr. Mamoulian,” dated June 1937, from the “Music in Film” folder (LC-M). Ussher, trained by German musicologists Arnold Schering and Hugo Riemann, was a Los Angeles music critic; see Catherine Parsons Smith, *Making Music in Los Angeles: Transforming the Popular* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007), 188. Further proof of Mamoulian’s keen sensitivity to the music in Hollywood films can be found in some handwritten notes Mamoulian prepared for a talk on film music; while undated, it is clear that he was well informed about the film composers active in the 1930s. After a list of Hollywood composers (“Al Newman, Max Steiner, Korngold, Stothart, V. Young, Waxman, Kurt Veil [sic], Rosza [sic]”) he has, in parentheses, “style of Rich[ard] Strauss, Debussy, Ravel & Scriabin.” Then there are three French composers listed (“Milhaud, Honegger, Auric”). A third list has what seem to be the more experimental composers in Hollywood at the time (“A. Copland, G. Antheil, Bernard Herrmann, Al Tansman, Ernst Toch”), while a final list gets a title (“Documentaries”) and has the names Copland, Thomson, Blitzstein, and Eisler. From the “Music in Film” folder (LC-M).
- 18 Among other places, see Spergel, *Reinventing Reality*, 115–16.
- 19 James Lastra, *Sound Technology and the American Cinema: Perception, Representation, Modernity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 111–18. The Mamoulian quote appears in Higham and Greenberg, *The Celluloid Muse*, 133–4.
- 20 See Otto Luening, *The Odyssey of an American Composer: The Autobiography of Otto Luening* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1980), 271–3.
- 21 See Carol J. Oja, *Making Music Modern: New York in the 1920s* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 188, and Claire R. Reis, *Composers, Conductors, and Critics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1955), 94–5. According to Reis, Mamoulian declared Schönberg’s work not to be an opera, but “a whimsey” (95).
- 22 Peter Williams discusses this work as well as provides this translation of the hymn in *The Organ Music of J. S. Bach*, second edition (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 307.
- 23 The ASCAP cue sheet lists another Lanner waltz (*Die Vorstädter*); none of the waltz titles has a composer or arranger name following it, leaving it unclear who actually made the arrangements heard in the film. The Shooting Continuity script is part of LC-M.
- 24 In this respect, the use of these waltzes both follows and deviates from the admonitions given by George W. Beynon in *Music Presentation of Motion Pictures* (New York and Boston: Schirmer, 1921). Beynon on the one hand encourages the use of waltzes, stating that “waltzes are pleasing to the lay ear and are, at present, better understood by the picture patrons than some of the heavier forms of music” (27), while at the same time he strongly exhorted against musical puns, writing that “a chronic joker is loved by few, and the musician who thinks it clever to show his musical erudition by inflicting upon the public piece after piece linked to scenes by means of titles, only becomes offensive” (57).

- 25 From the Second White Script (August 7, 1931), pages E-2 and E-3 (LC-M).
- 26 I am grateful to Greg Snyder for assistance with this translation.
- 27 Thomas R. Atkins, "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde: An Interview with Rouben Mamoulian," *The Film Journal* 2/2 (January-March 1973): 36-44; this quote is from page 42. He also revealed his musical conception of film in the 1982 Hargrave interview: "In fact I find myself always in working on a film using musical terms because they apply. As you know music is made out of rhythm and measures. And I feel a film should have a strict structure: a measure, a flow, a harmony—counterpoint as music has" (Hargrave, "Interview with Rouben Mamoulian," 259).
- 28 Donnelly has noted the efficacy of "tension of rising pitch (transposition by sequence—simply moving the whole repeated unit of music up a semitone in pitch)" in horror film soundtracks, and the technique (e.g. an augmented triad rising by half steps) also gets used in other genres where building suspense is required. See K. J. Donnelly, *The Spectre of Sound: Music in Film and Television* (London: British Film Institute, 2005), 100.
- 29 Atkins, "An Interview with Rouben Mamoulian," 42.
- 30 After failing to find an actual nightingale to provide the birdsong, Mamoulian's assistant brought him an English woman whose whistling provides the nightingale's song on the film's soundtrack (Atkins, "An Interview with Rouben Mamoulian," 43).
- 31 In the Second White Script, LC-M. The other blue additions to this script are also marked in red as "special" and appear to have been planned for use in dissolve shots (the lines of dialogue that appear in Jekyll's first transformation, indeed more than were ultimately used, occur as "special" additions in this script).
- 32 Kathryn Kalinak argues for the significance of Raksin's score in the creation of the dream effect in *Settling the Score: Music and the Classical Hollywood Film* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 159-83. The process of "Len-A-Toning" that Kalinak discusses (181) (and which occurs at a pivotal moment indicating the dream) bears a similarity to the way the gong sound was treated in Mamoulian's sound stew; both involved the removal of the sound's initial attack.
- 33 Kristin Thompson, "Closure Within a Dream: Point-of-View in *Laura*," *Film Reader* 3 (1978): 90.
- 34 Besides Kalinak and Thompson, Chris Fujiwara discusses the production history of *Laura* in *The World and Its Double: The Life and Work of Otto Preminger* (New York: Faber & Faber, 2008), 35-54.
- 35 Erika Greber, "Mediendoppelgängerien: Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde verwandeln sich in Film," *Poetica: Zeitschrift für Sprach- und Literaturwissenschaft* 36/3-4 (2004), 429-52:

Mamoulians Opus ging es als ein Meisterwerk des frühen Horrorfilms in die Geschichte ein und stiftete einen Kinomythos: von nun an war "Jekyll und Hyde" ein Movie. Erstmals hatte die Tricktechnik die Verwandlung sinnlich audiovisuell erlebbar gemacht. Zu den für damlige Verhältnisse verblüffenden Verwandlungsszenen kamen innovative Toneffekte und eine außergewöhnliche Kameraführung hinzu (gleich anfangs subjektive Kamera; schwindelnde 360-Drehungen und Herztöne begleiten die erste Metamorphose). (435) [Mamoulian's work became a masterpiece of early horror film and laid the foundation for a cinematic myth: from that point onward, "Jekyll and Hyde" was a movie. Thanks

to its special effects, viewers were able, for the first time, to experience the transformation audio-visually with their senses. Not enough that the transformation scenes alone were astonishing for their time, Mamoulian added innovative sound effects and extraordinary camera work to boot (subjective shots from the very beginning, dizzying 360 turns, and heartbeats accompany the first metamorphosis).]

I am grateful to Burkhard Henke for his assistance in this translation.

- 36 The press packet is in the folder "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Miscellany, ca. 1932-1934, 1968" (LC-M) while the newspaper clipping comes from "Scrapbook 1931" (LC-M).
- 37 Clark Rodenbach, "Critic Says Horror Film, 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,' Shows Birth of Bathtub Gin," December 30, 1931, from "Scrapbook 1931" (LC-M).
- 38 Carol Frink, "'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde' in New and Lavish Film," December 26, 1931, from "Scrapbook 1931" (LC-M).
- 39 No author or title given, *Motion Picture Daily*, January 6, 1932, from "Scrapbook 1931" (LC-M). Especially provocative among these varying receptions across the country is this reminder that even in 1932, live music was still connected to the screening of motion pictures, as becomes clear in the announcement of a famous jazz band and live organists who would be at the Brooklyn Paramount Theatre: "Duke Ellington and his band pep things up on the stage. Merle Clark and Elsie Thompson continue to please at the twin consoles. Paramount Sound News features Santiago 'quake flashes and several shorts round out the bill." From "The Screen" by B. R. in the *Brooklyn Times*, February 6, 1932, from "Scrapbook 1931" (LC-M).
- 40 Carroll Carroll, "Cine-Metric Reviews," *New York Sun*, January 14, 1932, from "Scrapbook 1931" (LC-M).
- 41 From an interview transcribed in *Karl Struss: Man with a Camera*, edited by Susan Harvith and John Harvith (Bloomfield Hills, MI: Cranbrook Academy of Art/Museum, 1976), 13.
- 42 From the folder "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Miscellany, ca. 1932-1934, 1968" (LC-M); this excerpt appears on page 8. In all further discussions on the topic, Mamoulian asserts that the heartbeat recorded on the soundtrack was his own, and not March's.
- 43 Titled "Heartbeats in Amplified Ballyhoo: Attendant and Loud Speaker Used," this article comes from the folder "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Miscellany, ca. 1932-1934, 1968" (LC-M); this excerpt appears on page 15. The heart as a central thematic element can also be discerned in Hyde's vicious pun to Ivy, right before he murders her, as he asks, "Isn't Hyde a lover after your own heart?"
- 44 Cue sheets and a conductor's score at the Franz Waxman Papers in the Syracuse University special collections department reveal that, although neither was credited, both Amfitheatrof and Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco contributed cues to *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Amfitheatrof wrote cues titled "Evil Montage, Parts 1 & 2," "Sex Montage" (these cues accompany the first transformation scene) and "Ivy Alone," while Castelnuovo-Tedesco collaborated with Waxman on "The Missing Key."
- 45 *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, DVD, directed by Rouben Mamoulian (1931; Burbank, CA: Warner Home Video, 2004).
- 46 At one point as the film was being produced, other lines were going to be added and repeated in this scene. For instance, Lanyon was to have repeated the line "There are bounds beyond which one should not go" five times as well as to repeat the word "control" several times, according to blue pages

- with the word “special” in red glued to the script (the Second White Script, dated August 7, 1931, LC-M).
- 47 Ben Winters astutely argues that heartbeat sounds in a number of film scores help audiences experience a kind of fear in “Corporeality, Musical Heartbeats, and Cinematic Emotion,” *Music, Sound, and the Moving Image 2/1* (Spring 2008): 3–25.
- 48 Atkins, “An Interview with Rouben Mamoulian,” 42–4.
- 49 On a page titled “National Film Theatre Programme Notes,” from an interview with Rohauer that “is taken from the Gallery of Modern Art programme schedule on their Mamoulian Season,” in the folder “Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde Miscellany, ca. 1932–1934, 1968” (LC-M). Mamoulian took several pages of notes after his meetings with Rohauer in 1967 (see the folder “Speeches & Writings Screenings Film Festivals 1967” (LC-M).
- 50 David Robinson, “Rouben Mamoulian: Painting the Leaves Black,” *Sight & Sound* (Summer 1961): 123–7; this phrase appears on page 125. Among the numerous sources that describe the stew without graphic animation, see the following two from the “Scrapbook 1931” folder at LC-M: Philip K. Scheuer, “A Town Called Hollywood,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 3, 1932; Florabel Muir, “Megaphoner Puts His Heart Beats Into Jekyll-Hyde,” *New York News*, January 4, 1932. The “Press miscellaneous” folder at LC-M has an untitled French interview titled “Un conte de fées sur l’écran” from *L’intransigeant*, September 3, 1932. Arthur Knight has Mamoulian photographing light and not drawing in *The Liveliest Art: A Panoramic History of the Movies* (New York: Mentor Books, 1957), 158, as do Charles Higham and Joel Greenberg in *The Celluloid Muse: Hollywood Directors Speak* (Chicago, IL: Henry Regnery, 1969), 135 (this interview specifies, as several do, that the light was coming from a candle). Another statement by Mamoulian, this time a transcription of a seminar at the Center for Advanced Film Studies held in 1970, clearly states that part of his process was to “light the candle and photograph the light—high frequencies, low frequencies, directly from light into sound.” (From the folder “Misc. talks,” LC-M, 31.)
- 51 Tom Milne, *Rouben Mamoulian* (Bloomington, IN and London: Indiana University Press, 1969), 49. Royal S. Brown cites the excerpt from the Robinson interview via Milne in *Overtones and Undertones: Reading Film Music* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994), 182, and Mervyn Cooke, without pointing to a particular source, states that Mamoulian used “animated sound” in *A History of Film Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 60 and in “Film Music,” *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, at [www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/09647](http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/09647) (accessed January 14, 2009).
- 52 Cooke, *A History of Film Music*, 60.
- 53 Heavy breathing and gasping accompanies the first transformation together with the sound stew, and it is important to consider, as Barbara Flueckiger does, that “breathing and heartbeats also have a symbolic dimension. They represent automatic bodily functions, without which no life is possible. They thus indicate not only nearness but, especially in the extremely threatening contexts in which they are most frequently used, life as a value to be protected and as the opposite to death.” From “Sound Effects: Strategies for Sound Effects in Films,” in *Sound and Music in Film and Visual Media: An Overview*, edited by Graeme Harper, Ruth Doughty, and Jochen Eisentraut (New York and London: Continuum, 2009), 176. In providing an audible (if subtle) marker of life, these sound effects help to set up the stakes for the meditation on mortality that will follow in the film.

- 54 Donnelly, *The Spectre of Sound*, 105.
- 55 From John Cage, “Experimental Music” (1957), in *Silence* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1961), 8.
- 56 As Mary Ann Doane has observed, “sound itself is often described as adding life to the picture. And the life which sound gives is presented as one of natural and uncodified flow.” See “Ideology and the Practice of Sound Editing and Mixing,” in *Film Sound: Theory and Practice*, edited by Elisabeth Weis and John Belton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 57.
- 57 Donnelly, *The Spectre of Sound*, 94.
- 58 Sigmund Freud, *The Uncanny*, translated by David McLintock (New York: Penguin Books, 2003), 123–61.
- 59 Freud, “The Uncanny,” 124. Originally, it was “das Unheimliche sei jene Art des Schreckhaften, welche auf das Altbekannte, Längstvertraute zurückgeht.” From Sigmund Freud, *Gesammelte Werke*, volume 12 (London: Imago, 1947), 231.
- 60 *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* nonetheless became a conventional trope with the genre as demonstrated by the myriad adaptations of Stevenson’s story, with a reach that extends deep into the twentieth century. For example, the television series *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* makes frequent use of stock conventions from horror—from vampires, Frankensteinian creations, werewolves, demons, mummies, zombies, and so forth to even relatively obscure horror tropes such as the disembodied hand—and numerous stories that involve characters split into good and evil, or strong and weak, selves (see Tanya Krzywinska’s “Hubble-Bubble, Herbs, and Grimoires: Magic, Manichaeism, and Witchcraft in *Buffy*,” in *Fighting the Forces: What’s at Stake in Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, edited by Rhonda V. Wilcox and David Lavery [Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002], 179). In the episode called “The Replacement,” (2000, written by Jane Espenson) the character Xander finds himself divided into two selves, one comprised of his strong qualities, the other of his weak ones. In the *Star Trek* original series episode called “Mirror, Mirror” (1967, written by Jerome Bixby), a fluke accident creates an encounter with the characters’ parallel, but barbaric, doubles. At the end of the episode, a line spoken by the character Mr. Spock (“May I point out that I had an opportunity to observe your counterparts here quite closely. They were brutal, savage, unprincipled, uncivilized, treacherous—in every way splendid examples of homo sapiens, the very flower of humanity.”) suggests a direct homage back to Heath and Hoffenstein’s 1931 screenplay, as Spock’s wording reflects a line uttered by March’s Mr. Hyde in his first meeting with Ivy: “I’ll grant you I’m no beauty, but under this exterior you’ll find the very flower of humanity.”