

philistine incomprehension. This is the classical conception of the composer working in the studio era.³⁸

Hans Keller goes on to cite the case of British film in the 1940s and early 1950s, whose fortunate circumstance was to draw upon the enthusiastic contributions of generations of great composers for a wide range of films in a number of genres. Some of those enthusiasms are cited, and yet it also seems that there is some sad head-shaking. Film music defenders such as John Huntley rejoice in the august participation of great composers. For his part, Keller expresses regrets, suggesting in great measure that the Baxes, Blissés, Brittons, Benjamins, Waltons, and Williamses are squandering their talents in a medium unable to bear those talents up. "One cannot have a highly organized unity without having enough to unite."³⁹

Where merit is acknowledged—for example, Walton and his unusual success in using leitmotif in Olivier's *Hamlet*, and tonal coherence in Bax's "Oliver Twist" music—it is likewise treated in auteurist fashion. "Even the best Hollywood composer would just automatically . . ." ⁴⁰ Walton and Bax, of course, do more than this poor Hollywood construct could ever have imagined. Keller's understanding of the issues of author and institution is quite nuanced, but his separation leads very directly to the language and attitudes of the 1970s film music enthusiasts already discussed. There the great composers are sentimentally characterized, genius laboring in its figurative garret, hatching miracles while the unheeding hordes run munching to the exit signs.

This is not to say that talent and genius, or institutional insensitivities to them, are irrelevant. These validated composers are validated for good reason, and much of their film work is doubtless superior to the hack-produced run-of-the-mill. But it is true that notions, or even facts of talent and genius can distract us from real conditions and real affects. This same difficulty is present in the *Grove's* account of American film music.

This account states that "perhaps the finest scores to complete film dramas yet composed are the work of," predictably, Aaron Copland. Referring to *Of Mice and Men* (1939), Mellers valorizes Copland's elaboration of Hanns Eisler's advanced, musico-logically informed film scoring theories. Ironically, the thing most acclaimed is a simple stinger, a dischord accompanying the