

provides a solution. Early in this chapter we discussed the problems of musical parallelism, and the withering correspondences that it relied upon. I wish to point out, however, that inadequate execution does not necessarily invalidate the idea behind that execution. Béla Balasz identifies a simple, essential truth, allowing for the *musical* communication and proliferation of meaning.

Asynchronous sound has no need to be natural. Its effect is symbolic and it is linked with the things it accompanies through its significance, in the sphere of the mind, not of reality. . . . The similarity of certain sounds may invite comparisons and evoke associations of ideas.⁶⁷

This relates to much more than Beethoven's thunder or Debussy's salt smell. Hans Keller makes a simple point that helps us to understand oppositional "counterpoint," and the way music actually can signify: "Musical irony has to work on established material."⁶⁸ Similarly, Michel Chion observes that "audiovisual counterpoint will be noticed only if it sets up an opposition between sound and image on a precise point of meaning."⁶⁹ As Balasz suggests, after the conceptual collision, the moment of montage, the associations begin to flow.

How does this work? When film music steps up from the paralleling, subservient role so often prescribed for it, it suddenly starts to signify. David Raksin recalls that for *Laura* (1944), "Darryl Zanuck had wanted to throw out about 50 percent of that apartment scene, which is the crucial scene in the picture." This is understandable, since viewed without Raksin's music this famous sequence is not even half finished, or even half comprehensible. The detective investigating the apparent murder appears to be wandering very aimlessly and nearly endlessly through the dead woman's apartment.

Raksin makes good on his promise to "make clear what the detective is feeling," but it is only through music that that clarity, that meaning is achieved.⁷⁰ And how? Through a motif. Tempo and color suggest what music has always successfully suggested: a feeling. But the *association* of the melody with the person anchors that feeling to a referent and context. That tune *equals* Laura, and it is by association, not to mention the collision with the images, that the music is brought out of the subconscious haze into the realm of the rational.