

ure—the quoted composer.” This applies not only to individual instances but to the whole practice and what it says about film’s relationship with the parent arts. For Keller quotation is a powerful evidence of film’s perpetual adolescence.

As in literature a quotation serves to authorise a wrong statement, so a musical quotation may answer the quoter’s need for parental approbation; he feels that by thus honouring, and identifying himself with, daddy’s holy words, he sanctifies his own. A rose thrown into a midden, however, does not improve the latter’s smell, but rather starts to stink itself.⁶²

For all the strong language, Keller was aware that film music need not be a force of unmusicality. He acknowledges how film has been uniformly successful in smuggling twelve-tonality into public consciousness.⁶³ On “The Function of Feature Music” Keller states that “as long as . . . ‘good music’ . . . is not used for any extraneous and unmusical purpose, or re-scored and ‘arranged’ or ‘varied’ by a composer in search of atmosphere, there is definite if limited scope for the filming of unfilmic [previously composed] music.”⁶⁴

But Keller is not just echoing the intransigent attitude manifest in the previously cited UNESCO catalog. He is interested in more than how film can further musical ends. Although at times his writing betrays a conflict in his own mind, Keller’s best instincts seem to speak for a reconciliation of film and music communities, for the possibility of each edifying the other. Such would mean that “the narrow minded musician would have his eyes opened, the narrow minded film-goer his ears.”⁶⁵

Keller is not just a hostile critic, but a demanding would-be enjoyer of films and film music, if on his own specifically musical terms. Those terms include, as we have seen, a pretty complete intolerance for musical quotation. There is more to this sentiment, though, and to Keller’s film music writing in general than education, expression, and enjoyment, and a jealous regard for classical music’s rightful territory.

As with many of his critical contemporaries with similar backgrounds, Keller is motivated by more weighty matters. He quotes Antony Hopkins on the subject of underqualified film composers. “Who are these people, whose names never seem to appear on