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In the 1918 film *Stella Maris*, movie star Mary Pickford was double cast as wealthy, bed-ridden Stella Maris and hapless orphan Unity Blake. Decades later, Pickford was still moved by one of the film's central scenes, recalling that "I can never forget the emotion when Unity stares at herself forlornly in the mirror...tears stream down that homely little face, and Unity buries her head in her hands. I could cry now when I think of that girl."<sup>1</sup> Here is the scene Pickford

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remembered with such emotion: (Clip). The music you heard—Massenet's "Élegie"—was **NOT** music used during this film's **exhibition**. Rather, the "Élegie" was performed **on set** while Pickford **filmed** this scene. Such music was ubiquitous during the 1910s and '20s. Far from

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"silent," motion picture sets reverberated with music during production. Off-camera and unheard by eventual movie audiences, mood musicians nonetheless shaped gestural vocabularies, coordinated crowd and dance scenes, and coaxed credible tears from stars.<sup>2</sup> While the *presence* of musicians on early film sets is widely known, the principles, economics, and functions of this vital practice have received almost no critical attention—musicological scholarship on early film has largely focused on post-production elements, particularly the rich variety of musics used during film **exhibition**. The individuals who played these musics are likewise almost entirely absent from film histories. Scouring newspapers and trade journals for traces of their presence and practices, my paper today highlights both the **labor** of set musicians and the various **functions** of on-set music in the 1910s and '20s, functions which not only **broadly re-situate** our understanding of music's use in early film but also reveal set music's roles in constructing and perpetuating stereotypes about national identity, race, and gender.

I. Set music begin to emerge around 1915;<sup>3</sup> in that year studios on both coasts used music to coordinate dance scenes such as Maud Allan's *Salome* sequences in *The Rug-Maker's*

*Daughter*;<sup>4</sup> Geraldine Farrar asked Melville Ellis to play Bizet's music on the set of DeMille's *Carmen*,<sup>5</sup> and Harry McCoy played piano on the set of Mack Sennett comedies.<sup>6</sup> Though rarely covered in newspaper or trade journals, by the late 1910s music on film sets was ubiquitous.<sup>7</sup> A 1922 directing treatise deemed mood musicians "almost as vital in picture making as the cameraman or the actors—at the studios in the morning [there are] almost as many men carrying violin cases as there are with makeup boxes." One source estimated over 300 musicians worked on Hollywood sets in the 1920s.<sup>8</sup> These workers generally labored long hours for union wages, though pay improved as demand for music exceeded supply—veteran set musicians Jack and Jim Brennan joked that by the mid-1920s the weekly salary might tempt someone "to give up bootlegging and take lessons in harmony."<sup>9</sup> Various kept on retainer by studios, partnered with specific directors, or working as a personal musician for a particular actor,<sup>10</sup> most set musicians were little-known performers who had previously worked in vaudeville and theater. Having laboriously gleaned a few details about individual set musicians, I'd like to offer a couple of biographical vignettes. These particular vignettes focus on women and people of color in order to connect the literally-invisible labor of set musicians with likewise overlooked and marginalized individuals who worked in this prolific yet peripheral profession.

**5** Born in Chicago around 1886, violinist Ruth Dickey's family was deeply involved in film and theater. Her brother Paul Dickey collaborated on several well-known plays with Charles W. Goddard, who Ruth married in 1914.<sup>11</sup> By the mid-1910s the Dickey siblings were moving in the orbit of Jesse Lasky and Cecil B. DeMille; DeMille had directed a version of Paul's play *The Ghost Breakers* in 1914 and Paul worked for Lasky starting in 1916.<sup>12</sup>

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Ruth Dickey was playing violin on Hollywood film sets by the 1920s, primarily for DeMille. She was not the only mood musician to have a longterm partnership with a particular director; the McCarger string quartet, for example, was under contract to Mickey Neilan for more than seven years.<sup>13</sup> Ruth is pictured on the set of DeMille's film *The Affairs of Anatol* (1921),<sup>14</sup> and is described as a "morale maker" leading a "camp orchestra" of about ten musicians during the famous location shoot for *The Ten Commandments* (1923).<sup>15</sup> Though she was involved in DeMille's 1924 films *Triumph* and *Feet of Clay*, I have as of yet found no evidence of Ruth Dickey's work after the mid-1920s.

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Born to Basque immigrants to southern California, violinist Dolores Ordoqui was a first-generation Angeleno and started working as a set musician sometime between 1918 and 1922.<sup>16</sup> Ordoqui had a longstanding partnership with organist Roy Bush; the pair worked for several studios during this period, including B.P. Schulberg's studio in 1923 and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer from 1924-1925.<sup>17</sup> Around 1927, she and the organist Eddie Frazier started a long association with actor Richard Dix—the press deemed them "Dix's own studio orchestra."<sup>18</sup>

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Very unusually, Ordoqui continued playing set music *into* the sound era—Richard Dix and Marion Davies continued to use set music in the 1930s and both actors refused to work with musicians other than Ordoqui and Frazier.<sup>19</sup> In a fascinating interview from 1939, Ordoqui—then playing set music for Carole Lombard's RKO film *Vigil in the Night*—noted the new skills requisite for playing on sound stages. Yet she and her accompanist were also referred to as "mood music's two last survivors;" in 1939, Ordoqui opened the "Casa Dolores" restaurant on Ventura Boulevard and seems to have faded from the musical scene by the 1940s.<sup>20</sup>

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Born in 1897, by 1915 Babe Egan was billed as a “ragtime violinist” playing in Portland, OR theaters.”<sup>21</sup> Having headed to Hollywood sometime in the late 1910s, Babe worked specifically with director James Cruze circa 1920-1924.<sup>22</sup> Cruze noted that Egan carefully studied his likes and dislikes and tended to play music appropriate to *his* mood.<sup>23</sup> For Egan, this film work gave her the capital for greater visibility and autonomy; in 1924 she left to start the all-

9 female syncopated dance band the Hollywood Redheads. The wildly successful band played throughout the United States and Europe for almost a decade.<sup>24</sup> Yet by the 1940s, Egan seems to have retired from the music industry.

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Finally, as a testament to the particular difficulties of researching multiply-marginalized musicians, musicians of color *did* play on Hollywood sets in the 1910s and 1920s. A few musicians—such as Sol Ho‘opi‘i, who played lap-steel guitar on the set of the 1924 film *Idle Tongues*—became celebrities beyond the scope of a typical mood musician. Yet the more common narrative was precisely the double-bind of hypervisibility and (in)visibility frequently experienced by people of color in the US.<sup>25</sup> In the early 1920s, for example, actor Harry Carey preferred to work with a group of 4-5 Black jazz musicians.<sup>26</sup> Instead of individual names mentioned in press reports, they were collectively referred to as “Harry Carey’s Jazz Musicians,” “Harry Carey’s Colored Jazz Band,” or “Harry Carey’s Colored Melody Hounds”—potentially a marketing ploy but also a disconcerting display of power through these possessive titles. This lack of naming perpetuates historical erasures by making it all the more difficult to ascertain any information on these individuals through already-sparse records on mood musicians.<sup>27</sup>

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II. Having established the tiniest sense of *who* some of these musicians were, I’d like to offer a bit more information on *how* set music worked. Though occasionally phonographs were

used on set, **live** music was standard. Styles and forces ranged widely, but a typical ensemble was a small chamber group of 2-4 players, often including a folding reed organ and violin.<sup>28</sup> The job demanded a working memory of hundreds of tunes—ranging from nineteenth century melodies such as Massenet’s “Elégie” to early twentieth century popular songs. Musicians had to switch between this large mental library seamlessly.<sup>29</sup> Mood music was played both in studios and on location shoots—which could be dangerous, judging by anecdotes of musicians perilously clinging to pack mules with one hand while clutching instruments with another.<sup>30</sup> Not just tasked with an occasional request, set musicians might play almost continuously during shooting—one player described it as “virtual scoring of the entire picture.”<sup>31</sup>

Judging by contemporary commentary, music making on set served **at least six** different functions.<sup>32</sup> In addition to assisting with crowd control—loud sounds are helpful in coordinating large group movements—and helping establish overall rhythm and tempo, music also served as a kind of sonic veil, helping mask the bangs of construction, the whispering and talking of other actors, and (to some extent) the grinding of the camera.<sup>33</sup> Set music helped construct a simulated realness, a sonic reassurance that a studio set of a church, for example, was actually a “real” place. The first generation of movie stars, nearly all with roots in other types of stage work, testified that *set music* was particularly useful in bridging the “**great gap**” between “live” and filmed performance; music, that is, somehow stood in for the missing audience.<sup>34</sup> We might think of how Philip Auslander has theorized the development of liveness— not an “ontologically defined condition but as a *historically variable* effect of mediatization”—in considering how set music offered an aura and *illusion of immediacy* for film actors, a vestige of the real in the midst of the noisy deadness of the film set.<sup>35</sup> Finally, set music provided entertainment. Musicians used

14 melodies as comedic meta-commentaries; while filming 1924's *The Shooting of Dan McGrew*, for example, Dolores Ordoqui and Roy Bush "kidded" the actors by playing "Please Go Away and Let Me Sleep" in the scene where Lew Cody lies dying on the floor after being shot by Percy Marmont.<sup>36</sup> Proponents of set music noted it fostered camaraderie and relaxed or invigorated cast and crew during long shifts.

15 III. In each the five functions I've discussed so far, analyzing set music reveals a sonic practice strongly implicated in constructing and perpetuating ideas about race, ethnicity, and gender—I'd like to take the rest of the time today to unpack a few of these aspects. Rhetoric about mood music for crowds—often described as a "universal language" able to "communicate wordlessly" with large multi-ethnic casts—re-inscribed racist stereotypes. In his 1922 directing treatise, Peter Milne noted that once "stirred to the very depth of their souls by the familiar notes of some ancient folk song or dance... 'Latin and Slavic' people would forget their surroundings and break into abandoned actions."<sup>37</sup> Describing the crowd scene in DeMille's 1924 film *Feet of Clay*, an article in *Motion Picture Magazine* uses racist language to characterize the extras, with a nod to eugenics in the line about "every grade of intelligence." The author asserts that set musician Ruth Dickey's use of "Song of the Volga Boatman"—described as "weird, low, penetrating chords—"unconsciously" affected these "othered" individuals."<sup>38</sup> The article's next paragraph similarly alleges that during the making of the 1923 Western *A Covered Wagon*, Babe Egan's jazz somehow magically defused an altercation between the filmmakers and the Arapaho, Shoshone, and Bannock extras.<sup>39</sup> These bigoted descriptions demonstrate the ways set music—and a perceived vulnerability to emotional excess and control—intertwined messily with contemporary ideas about race and ethnicity.

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Discourse over mood music and set noises likewise reveals how sound, to paraphrase Jennifer Stoeber's recent work, is a "critical modality through which subjects" may "(re)produce, and apprehend...racial identities and structures of racist violence."<sup>40</sup> Before soundproofing,

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mood music from adjacent sets—here often called out described as noise rather than music—ruined countless takes.<sup>41</sup> Noise complaints often *singled out* jazz; despite enthusiasm for this genre, the predominately white filmmaking milieu responded affectively to these musics in markedly racialized ways.<sup>42</sup> Indeed, director William De Mille forbid the use of jazz on his sets, deploying uplift rhetoric that only the "best" (i.e. classical) music would help films "attain their best artistic achievements."<sup>43</sup>

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Despite claims of verisimilitude, set music generally did **not** match diegetic film soundscapes.<sup>44</sup> There were occasional attempts at more "authentic" aural local color; the orchestra leader for Douglas Fairbanks, for example, purchased \$75 worth of "Oriental" sheet music to play on the set of *The Thief of Baghdad* (1924)—but director Raoul Walsh insisted on Irish tunes instead.<sup>45</sup> Racist sonic fantasies abounded, such as the snare drum, cymbals, and bass drum used to produce "**strange**" combinations "typical of Arabia and Persia" on the set of *Ali*

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*Baba and the Forty Thieves* in 1918.<sup>46</sup> In an interview about the 1928 film *West of Zanzibar*, actor Lon Chaney clearly connects "uncivilized, savage" emotions with the "uncanny terror" of what he imagined were uncivilized African sounds, giving us a terrifying glimpse of the ways sound is implicated in perceptions of danger by white listeners (relevant today).<sup>47</sup>

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Even the helpful "comedic" outlet of set music was caught up in racist discourse, often connected minstrelsy. Jazz numbers were sometimes described as intrinsically funny. Harry Carey's discourse about the Black jazz musicians he employed on Western films overtly reveals

these connections to minstrelsy. He noted that he got “as much inspiration from the swaying of the musicians’ bodies as from the music itself,” he described the musicians as “natural comedians”....to have them with us is like carrying a full vaudeville.”<sup>48</sup>

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For the last part of this paper, I’d like to turn to the sixth function of set music—the one I’ve been resolutely ignoring up to this point—to take a slightly deeper dive into the role set music played in generating *emotion* for actors. Eliciting emotion was perhaps **the** most essential job of set players, often deemed “mood musicians.” Music was typically played *first* to set a mood, *then* the cameras rolled—actor Conrad Nagel commented this made it easier to jump into the emotional “*climax*...without any gradual working up to it.”<sup>49</sup> Sometimes directors selected mood music, other times musicians picked the numbers, but most frequently, it was *actors* who forged personal “playlists” of preferred pieces.<sup>50</sup> These “playlists” bridged the personal and professional, the private and the public, the past and the present. Indeed, the most successful mood music selections were connected to *personal*, off-stage memories.<sup>51</sup> It is particularly haunting to hear stars recount how certain tunes triggered memories of traumatic events, from the pain of immigration and exile to the recent agonies of World War I.<sup>52</sup> Given that stars often specifically requested such melodies in workplace environments, these accounts prompt provocative questions about the line between *performed* and *real* emotion, and music’s role in prompting repetitive affective responses.<sup>53</sup>

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Just as exploring the other functions of mood music revealed structures of racial violence, analyzing mood music and emotion reveals a great deal about contemporary *gender* ideologies. Some period discourse claimed that numerous groups—from children to animals to actors from outside of Western Europe or the United States—were especially “susceptible” to music’s impact

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on the emotions, re-inscribing toxic stereotypes conflating control with white masculinity and hysteria or excess with “Others.”<sup>54</sup> Yet *women* were perhaps the film stars most commonly impacted by the intersection of social constructs and emotion. An article entitled “You Have to Weep to Be a Star” noted “as a rule, it is left for **women** to do the crying.”<sup>55</sup> Indeed, film tears were crucial—*real* tears, not artificial ones from glycerine drops.<sup>56</sup> Male directors employed a spectrum of tactics to obtain this visual evidence of emotion—from coercion to verbal and physical abuse. Some lied to their actresses, screamed or browbeat them, even withheld food or sleep; once the performer finally “cracked,” the director gazed upon the actress—and cameras rolled—as the fetishized tears trickled down women’s faces.

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Because mood music so readily prompted tears, set musicians were critical participants in this nexus of gendered emotion and directorial power. Women directors such as Elsie Jane Wilson, perhaps less abusive, still used music to elicit female emotion.<sup>57</sup> Tears caused by tunes **must** have seemed preferable in comparison with **some** directorial approaches; we might note contemporary commentary about directors who didn’t use music much, such as Edward Sloman’s comment that Mary Philbin always “craved” music, but “*hard-riding* direction did her more good than all the music she ever listened to.” D.W. Griffith was noted for relying “*less* on music than others,” instead getting desired emotions by “sheer mental domination...almost hypnotism.”<sup>58</sup> On the hand, mood musicians themselves could be emotionally manipulative. Ruth Dickey recalled once having trouble getting Betty Compson to cry; knowing that Compson mourned the death of [director] George Tucker, Dickey remembered “playing one of his favorite old melodies—and Betty broke down and wept like a baby. We have to be cruel at times, we musicians.”<sup>59</sup>

This complex early twentieth-century intersection of music, emotion, race, and gender was never stable, due to music's unpredictable affective power. Spilling over walls and drifting over distances, set music impacted crew, extras, stars, and directors.<sup>60</sup> A few men [perhaps falsely?] protested mood music didn't affect them—a 1926 article noted “House Peters, one of the rugged he-men of the screen, pays little attention to what music is played.”<sup>61</sup> On the other hand, Cecil B. DeMille sometimes stuffed cotton in his ears, lest he feel his own eyes fill with tears and Percy Marmont admitted mood music could prompt an emotional overflow.<sup>62</sup> Clearly music was immensely powerful, yet its affective unruliness and anxiety-inducing ability to destabilize control of gendered and racialized hierarchies rendered music a continual source of anxiety as well.<sup>63</sup>

In conclusion, I'd like to return to our central conceit of the “hidden figures” of screen music. I've briefly spent time illuminating some of the mechanisms of the marginalized profession of set musician, uncovered the traces of a few individuals, and discussed how even this work on the periphery is strongly disciplined by structures of race and gender. Yet I'd also like to suggest that these figures, though literally off-screen and disciplinarily discounted, nonetheless remain with us today in some shadowy form. When we watch films of the 1910s and 1920s, what we are watching—those smiles, tears, dance steps, and gestures—is the **visual** residue of a vanished sonic past. A period film fiddler even called attention to this, explaining that when watching a completed film, “you can *see* the results, but cannot *hear* how **I** worked to get the desired effect.”

<sup>1</sup> Pickford noted that she carried herself differently as Unity than as Stella—"Unity Blake would probably have one shoulder dropped and one hip high from having carried younger children on the other hip in her formative years... As Unity, I also plastered my hair with Vaseline in order to take out the curls, and make it look dark and scraggly in contrast to Stella's curls." Pickford, *Sunshine and Shadow*, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1954, p. 148. Calling Pickford's performance "one of the most vivid, imaginative and intelligent performances ever witnessed on the screen," *The Dramatic Mirror of Motion Pictures and the Stage* described the "infinite pathos" of the role(s), and a corresponding emotional response on the part of motion picture audiences, writing that "indeed, there were few dry eyes at the Strand, where a large audience sat enthralled by the compelling portrayal of little Unity Blake."

<sup>2</sup> Indeed, a 1926 NY Times article argued the musician behind the camera was "the soul of the picture." The quote continues: "the motif, the allegro, the crescendo of every little scene that goes to make up a feature film." The piece was written by an anonymous "film fiddler."

<sup>3</sup> There is a story that circulated that D.W. Griffith as the first person to use set music, perhaps in the 1914 movie *Judith of Bethulia*, but Gillian Anderson feels this is false. The Griffith idea is repeated in "What Makes Them Cry." Several other notes suggest that Griffith may have done this several years earlier, around 1909 at Biograph. These accounts are not easy to verify, but it's possible Griffith was using set music that early. None of the *Judith of Bethulia* accounts are easily verifiable; Brownlow notes "*Judith of Bethulia* (1913) is acknowledged as the first to employ an orchestra on set. D.W. Griffith, the historians allege, used it to help Blanche Sweet through some emotional scenes. But Blanche Sweet could not remember musicians being present at any stage of the production. As she pointed out, Griffith used music less than practically any director. He once said he would never employ a player "who could not feel the role enough to weep at rehearsals." A much later recollection comes from Lillian Gish in Stuart Oderman's text: "Lillian remembered that some of the music that accompanied the showings of *Judith of Bethulia* was hummed by Mr. Griffith during the actual shooting of the film: 'Mr. Griffith would talk/direct us through out actions and movements, and then sometimes gesture with his arms and start to sing or hum a phrase of music. It was never a distraction, because we had become used to his work habits, and his humming gave an added emotion to the scene. Nowadays, everyone can hear classical music on the radio or television, or go to concerts, but we were working before phonograph records were so common to find in every home. You couldn't take this sort of luxury for granted in those days. Culture was something only for the very wealthy or educated.' (Stuart Oderman, *Lillian Gish: A Life on Stage on Screen*. —the footnote notes the original source is Lillian Gish, a conversation with Oderman in March 1963.

<sup>4</sup> In his 1922 treatise on acting, Peter Milne also notes that (without providing specifics) that "a large ballroom scene was being photographed at the old Thanhouse studio in New Rochelle. Invitations were sent to members of the press to attend and watch the work. A rare innovation was promised. The innovation turned out to be the fact that the ballroom dancers actually danced to the strains of an orchestra! Previously picture dancers had been forced to rely on their own sense of rhythm." Milne, *Motion Picture Directing: The Facts and Theories of the Newest Art*. New York: Falk Publishing Co., 1922.

Maud Allan's film (dir. Oscar Apfel) was released in July 1915. See "When Maud Allan Danced" from *Picture-Play Weekly*, 21 August 1915.

*Heart Beats* was directed by John G. Adolphi, and a reported anecdote involving him asking for German music on set. See *Picture-Play Magazine*, April 1915.

<sup>5</sup> On the set of *Carmen* in the summer of 1915, Geraldine Farrar asked Cecil B. DeMille for music. "I was so accustomed to orchestral accompaniment for certain tempi and phrasings," Farrar recalled, "I felt I could better pantomime the rhythm of the effects." A piano was brought on the set, and Melville Ellis played while Farrar acted. "I was so accustomed to orchestral accompaniment for certain tempi and phrasings, I felt I could better pantomime the rhythm of the effects. A little piano was hastily wheeled on set, and Melville Ellis inspired all my scenes with his impromptu playing." Geraldine Farrar, *Such Sweet Compulsion: The Autobiography of Geraldine Farrar*. New York: Da Capo press, 1970 (originally 1938). The participation of Ellis was also widely reported in press coverage of *Carmen*; see, for example, *The Evening World* (14 July 1915), *The Sun* (1 Aug 1915), *Photoplay* (November 1915).

<sup>6</sup> The informal reports of Harry McCoy's piano playing likely come from the memory of Carole Lombard; see Robbins Coons, "Hollywood Sights and Sounds," *The Greenwood Commonwealth*, 31 October 1939. "The practically extinct art—killed by talkies which made silence during shooting essential—originated by chance one day when Harry McCoy, a Sennett comedian, sat down at a set piano and began playing. His friends all laughed, not at his performance but because gay music is likely to have that effect. Music brought cheer, and cheer pumped up the morale, and pretty soon the word—and the music—got around to other stages." Also see, Philip K. Scheuer, "Town Called Hollywood," *Los Angeles Times*, 24 December 1939. "Salon, or mood, music was a commonplace in 'silent' days, spurring the actors on to greater emotion or soothing them in their vicarious sorrows. Scarcely a top-rank star would expose himself to the camera without the spiritual prop of a throbbing off-scene accompaniment. Carol Lombard, who is in 'Vigil in the Night,' said she guess it all started in 1915, when one Harry McCoy, a Sennett comic, sat down to play one day and nobody—including Miss Lombard—then a Sennett bathing beauty—laughed. Soon, soulful music was an indispensable as the camera."

<sup>7</sup> Ernest A. Dench's 1915 monograph *Making the Movies* noted the recent initiative of a big film producing company who "regularly employs an orchestra of several pieces to dispense appropriate music in such dramas." Dench, Ernest A. *Making the Movies*. New York: the Macmillan Company, 1915. Dench asked other companies to follow suit. It's difficult to state the exact date this practice becomes widespread—may be as early as 1916, but seems like 1918 is more likely. Many of the accounts are a little retrospective and come from the 1920s. Apparently visitors to the studios found musicians on set quite intriguing.

<sup>8</sup> Stated verbatim in "A Tune for a Tear" in 1924. Allan Dwan referred to music as "a little luxury" in "A Tune for a Tear." There were a few holdouts (could name them). See Peter Milne, *Motion Picture Directing: The Facts and Theories of the Newest Art* (New York: Falk Publishing Co., 1922.[ Includes selection on "Music in Picture Production"].

The 300 ballpark comes from a later estimate by Dolores Ordoqui. See Philip K. Scheuer, "Town Called Hollywood," *Los Angeles Times*, 24 December 1939. "Miss Ordoqui has been fiddling so many years around studios that she can remember when she had 300 musical competitors. Now she has none."

<sup>9</sup> The *NY Times* 1926 article by a film fiddler mentions "all-day work on a union wage and 'no hope of glory.'" See also *Picture Play* Mar-July 1929, which notes: "The Midas touch of film land is being extended to many new people since the advent of sound. What, for instance, do you suppose the musicians receive who play for the orchestras that furnish accompaniment? Just the neat little sum of thirty dollars an hour each. Fiddlers, 'cellists, bass drummers and e'en the often despised saxophonist have emitted a cheer over the result. However, the cheer isn't one of unmitigated joy. The hours are terrifically hard, for one thing, and we know of a case where the harpist plucked some strings so vigorously that the ends of their fingers were all but cut raw."

These brothers sometimes worked for Eric von Stroheim. See "A Tune for a Tear."

<sup>10</sup> Fairbanks had a small orchestra led by "Miss Douglas," a violinist, and Tina Marinelli worked for Adams. Bernard Browne's trio played for Irene Rich for several years.

<sup>11</sup> Ruth was born 21 or 22 November 1886, likely the youngest of four children. Her brother Basil Dickey (1880-1958) was a screenwriter, writing over a 100 films from the 1910s to the mid-1950s. Paul Dickey (1883-1933) is specifically noted as her brother in *The Oakland Tribune*, 19 August 1923. See *The Washington Herald* 18 October 1914, "Charles W. Goddard and Paul Dickey, who wrote 'The Misleading Lady,' are brothers-in-law as well as co-authors and comrades. Goddard married Dickey's sister, whom he met while they were writing 'The Ghost Breaker.'" The marriage is a little mysterious, since Dickey seems to have kept her name (and been referred to as Miss) during her career. The marriage does not seem to have resulted in children, as far as I can tell. Did they divorce?

<sup>12</sup> *The Moving Picture World* 27, p. 65. Describes Paul Dickey as playwright, actor, and director, has joined the producing staff of the Jesse L. Lasky Feature Play Company. In 1916 both William and Cecil DeMille are also directors for Lasky.

<sup>13</sup> Check pronunciation of Neilan's name. It is probably Kneel-in.

I have listed the directors I've come across who used this: list includes Commodore Blackton, Herbert Brenon, Edwin Carew, Harry Carey, James Cruze, Allan Dwan, J. Gordon Edwards, D.W. Griffith, Rupert Hughes, Rex Ingram, Rupert Julian, Adolphe Menjou, Cecil B. DeMille, William De Mille, Marshall Neilan, Eric von Stroheim, King Vidor.

As far as set musicians, we could also include Babe Egan in this list (favorite violinist of James Cruze), or Efreim Zimbalist, Sr., who worked for William de Mille.

<sup>14</sup> She probably played several other DeMille vehicles in the early 1920s as well, perhaps Thomas Meighan's *Manslaughter* in 1921 or Conrad Neigel's *Forbidden Fruit* (1921) or *Fools Paradise* or *Saturday Night*.

<sup>15</sup> *Los Angeles Evening Express*, 9 Feb 1924. "Miss Dickey" is again noted to be sister of Paul Dickey. The article also notes the famous singing of the 250 Orthodox Jews on the location shoot, writing "The 250 Orthodox Jews who took part were moved by the enactment of their ancestral history to sing the ancient chants and psalms of Israel. The beautiful music of the Hebrew temples was heard over the desert spaces, and tears mingled with joy in the thanksgiving of the Egyptian deliverance.

It's possible Dickey's orchestra was only used in the camp, as it is also mentioned that Rudolphe Berliner's orchestras was playing music on the set.

<sup>16</sup> Her parents came to southern California in the 1870s and '80s. There was likewise a family connection to Hollywood as her brother Tony was a longtime prop man for MGM. Dolores Ordoqui was gigging in LA as early as the 1910s, often referred to as "Senorita" Ordoqui; see notices from 15 September 1910 where she played the Mexican colony centennial celebration of independence, as well as a 1920 LA organ recital.

<sup>17</sup> *The Baltimore Sun* 9 March 1924 notes that "Mr. Bush and Miss Ordoqui are considered the star side-line musicians of Hollywood, having supplied music for many productions of importance during the past two years." Conversely, *The Caspar Star Tribune* 14 October 1924 said "The Bush-Dolores combination has been playing for pictures for the past six years." Some studios kept specific musicians on long-term retainer, such as Max Fisher (violinist at Lasky) or Bernadine Whalen (violinist at Triangle).

For the Schulberg references, see *LA Times* 11 March 1923 and *New York Daily News* 15 April 1923. *LA Times* 8 June 1923 notes the two working on Miriam Cooper's *The Girl Who Came Back*, which is still Schulberg. By March of the next year they are working for Metro Pictures/MGM, see *The Baltimore Sun* 9 March 1924. For other MGM movies mentioned, see *Caspar Star-Tribune* 14 October 1924 (King Vidor's *His Hour*) and *Independent Record* (Helena, Montana) 28 February 1926 (*Bright Lights*, Robert Z. Leonard) and *Mawatu Times* 18 August 1926 (*Exchange of Wives*, Hobart Henley).

<sup>18</sup> For the 1927 date, see *The South Amboy Citizen* 29 May 1936, which discusses how long most of Dix's crew had remained with him.

I am not super sure when Eddie Frazier started playing with Ordoqui, but the article notes that Frazier had been with Dix almost as long as Ordoqui.

Eddie Frazier may have been born in 1898 in Connecticut and died in 1972. See IMDB, which credits him as an accompanist and music supervisor in the 1940s and 1950s. Eddie Frazier may have also been involved with Eddie Frazier and His Plantation Orchestra: this was a band based in Hollywood in the mid-1920s. Perhaps the Plantation orchestra refers to the Plantation Café in Culver City (Washington Boulevard at Elenda Street). They cut some records in LA in the mid to late 1920s. [https://web.archive.org/web/20171222031039fw\\_/http://www.redhotjazz.com/frazier.html](https://web.archive.org/web/20171222031039fw_/http://www.redhotjazz.com/frazier.html) I'd like to do a little more research on this at some point but am hitting a wall as of now. where is this picture from? <https://looking-for-mabel.webs.com/kneear1925.htm>

For the comment on "Dix's own studio orchestra," see 13 February 1933.

<sup>19</sup> Early film sets were noisy, bombastic places which marked a generation of actors, directors, and technical personnel. Indeed, many in the business were confounded by the switch to “talkies” at the end of the 1920s; actor Ben Lyon stated that producing sound films in “‘complete silence’ left us at a loss; it took a long time to get used to it.” Huge numbers of accounts stress this. For a secondary source, see Douglas Fairbanks (Jeffrey Vance, p. 274). Rest of the Ben Lyon quote: “In silent pictures, you’d hear the grinding of the camera quite loud through the music. For the final rehearsal we sometimes asked the cameraman, ‘Will you give us the camera’ No film—but it was an inspiration to hear that grinding. And the music was a great help. If I had a scene that required me to be emotional, I always had them play ‘My Buddy,’ ye gods, it was effective!” Then suddenly talkies came in and everything was soundproofed—everything was silent. The camera was sealed in a soundproofed booth and everybody kept absolutely silent until the end of take.”

See *The Courier News* (Bridgewater NJ), 12 January 1933—this article is in reference to Dix’s RKO film *The Conquerors*.

In terms of Davies, the *Nassau Daily Review Star* on 2 April 1937 noted Ordoqui playing on Davies’ film *Ever Since Eve* (Warner Bros, 1937, Davies’ final film).

For the comment on working in silence rather than with other musicians, see 23 March 1936.

A few others likewise still wanted mood music in the sound era, such as director Herbert Brenon.

<sup>20</sup> For the quote about “mood music’s last two survivors,” see *Los Angeles Times* 24 December 1939, “Town Called Hollywood,” by Philip K. Scheuer. Scheuer writes “a precious means of livelihood—which is why she recently opened the Casa Dolores out on Ventura Boulevard. Now she doesn’t know which is the sideline—music or enchiladas.” See also *San Fernando Valley times*, 9 November 1939 which also mentions Casa Dolores.

<sup>21</sup> Babe’s given name was Mary Florence Cecilia Egan. Many newspapers noted she was of Irish descent, though usually in discussion of her hair color. See 14 February 1915 the *Oregon Daily Journal*.

<sup>22</sup> I haven’t found any direct evidence of when Egan got to Hollywood. An article (perhaps correct, perhaps not) mentions that she had played in Hollywood for 7 years (presumably 1917-1924). See 31 October 1926, *Wisconsin State Journal*.

Several documents mention Egan’s connection with Cruze. Films named that she played on include *The Covered Wagon* (1923) and *Merton of the Movies* (1924).

<sup>23</sup> “James Cruze likes light, snappy music. Being something of a wag himself, always full of gaiety and good humor, he wants to maintain the same atmosphere in his pictures. No mournful Hearts and Flowers for Mr. Cruze! He has one favorite musician, Babe Egan, who has studied his likes and dislikes until she can fit her tunes exactly into his moods and never play a false note. Mr. Cruze often sings in with her, especially when things threaten to go low, or often improvises with words of his own, and something always comes of it.”—Doris Denbo, “A Tune for a Tear,” *Motion Picture Magazine* Nov-Dec 1924.

<sup>24</sup> This band was originally called Babe Egan’s Syncopators in August 1924 and then the Syncopating Six; they were the Redheads by August 1925.

<sup>25</sup> Here I’m drawing on the work by Isis H. Settles, NiCole T. Buchanan, Kristie Dotson, “Scrutinized but not recognized: (In)visibility and hyper visibility experiences of faculty of color.” *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 2018.

<sup>26</sup> See *The Boston Globe*, 29 November 1922. “When Harry Carey wants music to aid him in his work he does not call for a violin, a cello, or even a small-sized symphony orchestra. He insists upon a negro jazz orchestra, comprising an organ, cornet, saxophone, and banjo.”

<sup>27</sup> See *Los Angeles Times*, 10 July 1921, *Santa Ana Register* 28 August 1922, and *Motion Picture Magazine* 28, p. 62.

<sup>28</sup> Phonograph recordings were particularly used during wartime labor shortages in 1918. Alice Guy may have used a phonograph on set as early as 1906's *La vie du Christ* (although I haven't verified this particular source). D.W. Griffith also used the phonograph in rehearsal. See "What Makes Them Cry" (1918) for reports on Griffith and other phonograph use on set.

Constance Talmadge allegedly irritated the live musicians by *only* crying to phonograph records (instead of live music).

The *NY Times* 1926 article noted that Thomas Meighan's favorite combination was reed organ, 2 violins, and a cello, with strings muted.

Some photos and sources mention a portable harmonium instead of organ: I believe reed organ/pump organ, harmonium, and melodeon are all basically the same. Millions of these were made in US and Canada in late 19th and early 20th century: Estey Organ and Mason & Hamlin were major manufacturers. Obviously the portability is the main attraction here. By the sound era, the few musicians still playing on sets were now playing electric organ, such as Hammond.

Set violins were sometimes joined by other strings such as cello, double bass, or harp.

<sup>29</sup> The *NY Times* 1926 article noted "they have to be versatile and alert, so that at a signal from the director they can change from Wagner to jazz and play from memory."

<sup>30</sup> "A Tune for a Tear." See also *Musical America* for images of McCargar quartet. There is also a funny anecdote about "hiding" musicians off-camera, sometimes requiring contorted performance positions (one anecdote even claimed the musicians were hidden in a bathtub!). See "A Tune for a Tear" for the bathtub anecdote.

<sup>31</sup> According to Frank Bahr in *NY Times* 1926. "To What Music do the Stars Emote" noted that music changed from one old-time melody to another constantly during all her acting." See *NY Times* 1926 for discussion of "virtual scoring." In isolated instances, a piece played on the set might make it into the music used for exhibition of the film as well; one example of this is the use of the "Marseillaise" on the set of Geraldine Farrar's *Joan* and Mary Pickford's *The Little American*.

<sup>32</sup> Note: I removed the other one I used to have here (a 7th) on unity of action cues. I can't find my notes on this, so I've removed it temporarily because it makes things more clear....

<sup>33</sup> See Norma Talmadge in "What Makes Them Cry," Billie Burke, Alice Terry, and Madame Nazimova in "A Tune for a Tear." Terry noted music covers up the sound of whispering or talking behind the lights and helps one concentrate, but I do not like to be conscious of the music itself—it must only be background."

<sup>34</sup> I'm defining this precise historical moment as the 1910s and 1920s, actors who hadn't always coexisted with films.

George Beban, a Broadway star who began acting on film in 1915, noted music helped him "get into it," because as a stage actor he always "had music." See Beban's anecdote in "What Makes Them Cry" (1918). See also "A Tune for a Tear," which describes music as "filling in the great gap in pictures—the lack of the audience, which one has on the stage, to give back their reaction to your interpretation of a character."

<sup>35</sup> See Philip Auslander, "Digital Liveness: A Historico-Philosophical Perspective," *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art*, 34, no. 3 (September 2012): 3-11. Auslander notes that the earliest forms of sound recording, such as Edison's cylinder, were intended to serve as secondary adjuncts to live performance by preserving it. The ways early sound recording was used respected and reinforced the primacy of existing modes of performance. Live and recorded performances thus coexisted clearly as discrete, complementary experiences, necessitating no particular to distinguish them (until radio). See also Peggy Phelan's 1993 book *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance* and also an essay by Daniel Meyer-Dinkgräfe called "Liveness: Phelan, Auslander, And After" See Dench's 1915 acting manual, which noted the "legitimate stage actor has a real human audience in front of him to stir him on—but the photo player has only the cold clicking camera and the loud-voiced, businesslike director."

<sup>36</sup> See *The Baltimore Sun* 21 March 1924, “Musicians Kid Players.” The tune is a 1902 one by Cecil Mack. Or when on-set arguments arose between husband-and-wife director and actor Mickey Neilan and Blanche Sweet, for example, the house ensemble would launch into the 1923 fox-trot “Mamma Love Papa, Papa Loves Mama.” Reported in Brownlow, although he doesn’t get the title quite right. The tune, by Cliff Friend and Abel Baer and published by Leo Feist, became a Dixieland standard thereafter. The McCargar quartet was especially adept at comedy; they assigned musical “themes” to each actor, creating a musical meta-commentary throughout a shoot. See “A Tune for a Tear.” Some of these anecdotes are very funny; see, for example, the quartet playing a funeral march whenever Mary Pickford’s mother would arrive on set.

<sup>37</sup> Milne, 1922.

<sup>38</sup> In *The Ten Commandments*, director DeMille allegedly was “able to sway them [the thousands of Hebrew extras] perfectly to his desires by the use of a 12-piece orchestra which played their own Hebrew music—music which instilled in them the mood he wishes them to interpret.” See “A Tune for a Tear” See “What Makes Them Cry,” which mentions D.W. Griffith and *Intolerance*.

<sup>39</sup> “At length Colonel McCoy came rushing over to us. ‘They’ve got beyond me!’ he cried. I can’t stop them; they are killing mad over some imaginary offense. What shall we do? Suddenly I remembered how they loved American jazz. So we hastily organized the orchestra, and with fingers so cold we could scarcely pluck the strings, made such gay and lively music as we had never made before. And within fifteen minutes, old chief Standing Bear was appeased and all his tribe were standing around crying for more music.” See “A Tune for a Tear”

<sup>40</sup> Stoevever obviously also discusses sonic resistance, less cogent to my point here. See Jennifer Lynn Stoevever, *The Sonic Color Line: Race and the Cultural Politics of Listening*, New York, NYU Press, 2016, 4.

<sup>41</sup> For example, poignant music played for actress Doris Kean’s tragic scene, only to be ruined by a saxophone blaring on the adjacent set.

<sup>42</sup> A solemn wedding scene, accompanied by melodeon, struggling to ignore the din of as a cabaret scene, accompanied by a 10-piece jazz band, filmed on the adjacent set.

Some primary sources that deal with this issue: See *Photoplay Magazine*’s 1920 piece on Doris Keane, “who is making one picture for the screen, certainly turned things topsy-turvy at the eastern studio where she worked...she had an orchestra playing sad music all through her own personal sets. An adjoining set had to make so many scenes one morning—and a jazz band was imported to play. It was a Y.M.C.A. hut “over there”. But the star, after one moan of the saxophone, threw up her hands and announced that either her orchestra or the jazz band would have to cease playing.”

Allan Dwan notes in “A Tune for a Tear” that four scenes were being made in the studio, each with its own bit of music.”

Peter Milne’s 1922 acting manual notes: “In a studio where two or three companies are working at the same time it must be confessed that the effect of the various orchestras is more or less confusing...I was in a large studio in the west only recently when a cabaret scene was being filmed on one set to the wildest of jazz tunes. Immediately to one side of it there was a subduedly lighted church scene, wherein hero and heroine were, for purposes of pictures, going through the marriage ceremony. The man who was playing the melodeon for this scene was having a furious time trying to make himself heard above the ten-piece jazz band only a few feet away.

<sup>43</sup> “A Tune for a Tear.” Hungarian actress Maria Korda allegedly prejudiced against jazz and asked for classical music as well. *Photoplay* magazine 1927, as was Norma Talmadge.

Many musicians, however, preferred jazz for comedy. Milne, “there are comedians, too, who employ musical inspiration. However, when they are playing a burlesque scene they often call for the slow, tearful music that is used for the serious scene. It gives them a better slant on the burlesque element in the scene” *Motion Picture Directing* (New York, 1922).

*Photoplay* magazine in 1927 claimed jazz was the best fit for modern comedy.

<sup>44</sup> There *is* an anecdote that during the Babylonian scenes of D.W. Griffith's film *Intolerance*, for example, a brass band played Sousa marches and "It's a Long Way to Tipperary" outside the walls of Babylon. Gillan Anderson doubts this, however.

"What Makes Them Cry." The music on the Griffith set may have been primarily used for crowd control. As another case study, the "Egyptian chant" played on the set of *Cleopatra* (1917) was actually by 19th-century French composer Jean Gabriel-Marie (1852-1928), a piece called "la Cinquaine" as an air in the ancient style. A periodical report on *Cleopatra* noted "an Egyptian chant dug up in an Oriental tomb along the Nile. But a musician one day claimed this was actually Gabriel-Marie's 'La Cinquaine.' See "What Makes Them Cry."

<sup>45</sup> "After I had thoroughly familiarized myself with the script of *The Thief of Baghdad*," said Miss Douglas, "I bought seventy-five dollars worth of Oriental music—tunes full of the poetry and romance of the mystic East, yet with plenty of vigor and vim to appeal to Doug. But no sooner would my orchestra swing into this music than Raoul Walsh would come over sauntering over and say, 'Now play "My Wild Irish Rose" or let's have "Mother Machree" or "Macushla. It was perfectly remarkable how his face would light up and how dreamy his look would become at the sound of some beloved Irish melody, such as "When Irish eyes are smiling." So if there is a bit of blarney in *The Thief of Baghdad*, you will understand why. You will also understand how tactfully I had to shift from Oriental to Celtic tunes to keep both the star and director happy. See "A Tune for a Tear"

<sup>46</sup> For the Robertson film, there was a Spanish string orchestra, the Cuban orchestra, and a theater orchestra for theater shots. *Zaza* was the version was directed by Allan Dwan (there are earlier versions of this Belasco drama). For other "French" music, see the lost 1917 film *Madame Du Barry* used a minuet, but the 1887 one by Paderewski—note that this film was the Theda Bara one (not the Pola Negri version). *Ali Baba*, see 1918 "What Makes Them Cry."

<sup>47</sup> Sam and Jack Feinberg, the brother musicians who worked with Chaney, were with him throughout his career and even played his funeral. They also played on Mr. Wu for Anna May Wong in 1928.

<sup>48</sup> "These darkies of mine are a bunch of comedians themselves, and to have them with us is like carrying a full vaudeville." The previous paragraph is also clearly racially inflected: "Harry Carey's colored jazz orchestra follows his camera as faithfully as the cub follows the old bear. Harry is quite certain he could not make a Western picture without them. 'It isn't only that I like jazz myself,' he explains, 'but my pictures have action as their key-note. The music helps to give it.'" See "A Tune for a Tear," part III. Also see *The Boston Globe*, 29 November 1922.

<sup>49</sup> See *NY Times* 1926 and "A Tune for a Tear" *NY Times* 1926. Director and musician Victor L. Schertzinger created a book of 50 themes a year to be used in pictures. "A Tune for a Tear." Some mood music descriptions created typologies of moods and mood musics; one example mentioned sad, dramatic, or joyous as three examples.

Mood music also helped with rapid emotional shifts; this example was given by *NY Times* 1926: "it is often necessary to change the character of the music in the middle of the scene. For instance, we may be playing a soft, dreamy air for a love scene when the heroine suddenly sees a child in danger of being struck by an automobile and screams to her companion to save the youngster." "A tune for a tear" also notes how in *The Lost World*, the expression had to change immediately from calm investigation to transfixed terror."

Conrad Nagel, "A Tune for a Tear"—he uses the words headfirst.

Director Allan Dwan concurred that since actors had to plunge into an emotion "headfirst," "a mournful tune helps a lot." Longer quote by Dwan, "Camera acting is a spasmodic affair at best. The artist is not permitted to work up into a climax gradually, nor has he the inspiration of an audience to throw him into the mood. He must simply plunge into it head-first. He arrives of a sunny morning, feeling very much in tune with the world, and I say 'do the death scene.' Register the agony of a soul in torment. We can't take time for him to go out on the lot and gradually work himself up into a fine frenzy of emotion. He has to show it on the spot. A mournful tune helps a lot."

<sup>50</sup> Gladys Brockwell, Fox actress, "believes music is almost a necessity in dramatic scenes but has no preferences. She leaves it to the musicians just so that the tempo of the action is maintained. "What Makes Them Cry." J. Gordon Edwards as director 'would never suggest what music to play; he would say to an assistant, 'Ask Miss Blythe if she wants a change.'" (Brownlow). Theda Bara had strong feelings and would make specific suggestions.

<sup>51</sup> Actor Monte Blue noted that certain songs were “indissolubly connected with dramatic moments of my own life—hearing these will bring back all the haunting memories of those moments.”

Although its resonance with her life is unclear, Geraldine Farrar was typical in choosing melodies from earlier eras, such as Charles Gardner’s 1880s tune “The Lilac.” Other related references include Bill Hart: Perhaps it is some memory of his youth that makes him particularly susceptible to “Sweet Bunch of Daisies” (“What Makes Them Cry” 1918) Constance Talmadge, who couldn’t cry to live music, remembered that she had run across an old talking machine and a few old records popular in her childhood days.

See also “A Tune for a Tear.” Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford were known for hiring set musicians to come play parties at their mansion.

Norma Talmadge: “When I was a little girl, a young friend very dear to me died. I went to the funeral, and at the same time I must have heard “Ben Bolt,” for whenever I hear this old piece all my sorrow at the time comes vividly back to me. It was my very first experience with death, and everything seemed very mysterious and terrible to me and my grief was deep and sincere.” (A Tune for a Tear”)

<sup>52</sup> “There is one little Polish song, “The last Sigh,” which never fails to bring sincere grief to Pola Negri. When she was leaving her home in Poland, leaving the great tragedy of her life behind and starting forth without a friend upon the career she felt rightfully was hers, she heard this folk song played in a peasant’s cottage. “it seemed to me then,” Miss Negri said recently, “as if it were the end of everything. I had been bowed in grief, in great sorrow, and starting off with that lilting tune. “The Last Sigh,” coming from a lowly cottage, seemed to portend something. I knew not what.” (“To What Music do the Stars Emote?”). This is also mentioned nearly word-for-word in “A Tune for a Tear”). Pola Negri mostly preferred Russian classics on set.

<sup>53</sup> Early film actors argued music provided “authenticity and sincerity,” provocative statements given the the semi-public nature of filming and the repetitiveness of mood music. “A Tune for a Tear.” While we are far from the noisy sets of early film, questions about music’s role in mood and affect remain essential. I’m also thinking of music to drown out noise—a very contentious issue in contemporary culture, where we are both plagued by omnipresent sonic pollution yet also acknowledge the existence of music that is specifically marketed as “study aids,” or other background sounds which potentially aid the creation of a “mood” of concentration. Today’s streaming services such as Apple Music and Spotify are packed with playlists aimed at matching preexistent emotional states, prolonging emotion, or prompting a cathartic release of tears. These playlists bridge the public/private divide in new ways, yet force us to confront recurrent questions about performance, repetition, music, and emotion.

Perhaps these online playlists lack the aura of liveness generated by set musics in the 20th century, as well as the communal aspect? But they do \*have\* a communal aspect, and of course we understand liveness much differently today than in the 1910s and 1920s.

<sup>54</sup> A 1918 Photoplay article noted children were “more responsive...than most adults;” commenting particularly on music’s impact on child star Jackie Coogan. “What Makes Them Cry 1918,” which mentions “Fox Kiddies” specifically. Jackie Coogan (1914-1984) appeared in Chaplin’s *The Kid* (1921) among many others.

Oddly, other reports claimed mood music had a strong affect on animals. Conway Tearle believed the song “Pony Boy” put his horse in a better mood; other stories noted the famous dog “Keystone Teddy’s” reactions.

Conway Tearle noted “finally, in desperation I had the musicians play “Pony Boy” and the atmosphere was great! By the twentieth bar I was usually on top of the animal’s back. The music seemed to put the long-suffering animal in better spirits, too. So now we are the best of friends, and I mount with a jaunty air to the strains of “Pony Boy.” “A Tune for a Tear.” Other accounts cited music’s influence on Tony “the Wonder Horse.” Tony was associated with actor Tom Mix, and starred in around 34 silent and sound films. Teddy was an early dog actor (allegedly a Great Dane) who appeared in many Mack Sennet comedies for Paramount.

In a dubious anecdote, Hollywood’s lions allegedly “became as playful as kittens and as docile as lambs” while ‘under the influence’ of mood music. This may have been in reference to a specific Harry Langdon film, but I have not been able to locate the reference. The music which calmed the lions was specifically violin and piano music. See “A Tune without a Tear.”

Upon hearing the tune “Macushla,” for example, sources noted Irish actor Thomas Meighan’s face would “involuntarily” “light up.”

“Macushla” was an Irish song copyrighted in 1910; Meighan evidently also liked “My Wild Irish Rose” and “When Irish Eyes are Smiling.” See “A Tune for a Tear.”

There are many additional examples; actress Lya de Putti, for example, preferred Hungarian music.

For other sources on national identity, see *NY Times* 1926 and “To What do the Stars Emote?”

<sup>55</sup> “In most cases screen acting has developed to a point where actresses have teardrops, real ones, at their command. At least, it takes only a little coaxing by a proficient director to conjure these forth. Such directors are often successful even in making men register sorrowful emotions—although, as a rule, it is left for women to do the crying. (“You Have to Weep to Be a Star”).

“What Makes them Cry” notes that Mickey Neilan’s studio ensemble could elicit tears, no matter how reluctant, from almost any actress’s—and some actors’—eyes.” Without him [the musician] tears would not flow so easily from the beautiful eyes of the fascinating star, and there would, of course, be a perceptible slump in the dramatic action. (NYT June 1923) There is likewise lots on this in “A Tune for a Tear.”

<sup>56</sup> Throughout the period, glycerine is mentioned as a bad way to cry and even likened to counterfeit money. See “What Makes Them Cry,” among others.

<sup>57</sup> For a description of Elsie Jane Wilson, see *Photoplay Magazine* April to June 1918: “Lights! Camera! Quiet! Ready! Shoot! By Frances Denton. Article on woman director Elsie Jane Wilson. Really fascinating article about whether directing is women’s work. “Leaving her set, I walked down the big stage, past a child’s blue and white bedroom, a log-cabin room, a ballroom, and a New York tenement-room, until the strains of a slow waltz led me to a living room exquisitely furnished in red and gold. Three very blasé-looking musicians were playing this sad music while a young woman with big blue eyes, very fair skin, and very red hair, was directing some “sob stuff.”....[this is E.J. Wilson]. “A little sad music here, please,” said Director Wilson. Then to her company, “All ready, everybody? Music, camera, GO!”

<sup>58</sup> Quoted in Brownlow. Probably in reference to the 1927 film *Surrender*. The rest of the quote is “The fallacy of music on the set was proved, of course, by the untalented or unexperienced actors. To my mind they were just kidding themselves. I tolerated it only because I didn’t like to see the musicians lose their happy jobs.” “What Makes Them Cry” 1918. Note that these directorial tactics were not *limited* to women. In the 1919 film *The Miracle Man*, Thomas Meighan found it “unmanly” to cry and was only able to summon tears through having his nerves worn down by director George Loane Tucker. Meighan went on a walk with the director. No music was used, but Tucker did keep Meighan from sleeping or eating for almost two days or nights (according to Tucker). See “What Makes Them Cry,” 1923

<sup>59</sup> “A Tune for a Tear.” The article misstates Tucker’s name. He had died in June 1921 at the age of 49. Compson was trained as a violinist and married director James Cruze in 1925. She had likely met Tucker in 1919 when they both worked on *The Miracle Man*.

<sup>60</sup> A lot of the concern seemed to center on whether this was subconscious or anti-intellectual (emotional, also gendered).

A 1918 article noted “even the stage hands passing in the vicinity ‘got it’ and went about on tiptoe like ushers at a fashionable funeral. See “What Makes Them Cry”

NY Times “Film Fiddler”, noting that in this state, “you can easily understand what a discordant note will do!”

Madame Nazimova also claimed her own musical experience meant that a missed note would distract her.

For Betty Compson: “I cannot explain what there is about “Susannah” which appeals to me so strongly, I only know that no matter where I hear that melody, something grips my heart and I experience a multitude of emotions.

Perhaps, in my subconscious mind I connect it with the heroic struggles of men and women who crossed the great country by the Oregon Trail. Whenever I have a strong scene to do which requires unusual concentration, I always ask for “Susannah” to be played.” See “A Tune for a Tear”

<sup>61</sup> “To What Music do the Stars Emote?” *Picture Play Magazine* 1926. Director Allan Dwan also claimed he was no longer affected by music, due to its ubiquity on set.

<sup>62</sup> DeMille: “DeMille does admit that music so plays upon his emotions that in strong scenes he has had to stuff his ears with cotton to concentrate on his directing. ‘Music helps everyone but the director, he aid, noting his own eyes fill with tears and that may not be helpful.”

Marmont (1883-1977) (also an English film actor) noted “there is a danger than the music might make you feel more emotion than the actual situation demands.” See “A Tune for a Tear.”

<sup>63</sup> This obviously harkens back to extremely old discourse in the West; I’m thinking of Judith Peraino’s work here.