

THE WHOLE AS A RESULT OF ITS PARTS: ASSEMBLY IN
AARON COPLAND'S SCORE FOR *THE RED PONY*

William Lawrence McGinney, B.M.

Thesis Prepared for the Degree of
MASTER OF MUSIC

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

May 2003

APPROVED:

John Michael Cooper, Major Professor
Bernardo Illari, Committee Member
Mark McKnight, Committee Member
Margaret Notley, M.M. Committee Chair
Lester Brothers, Chair, Division of Music History, Theory,
and Ethnomusicology
Hildegard Froehlich, Acting Director, Graduate Studies
College of Music
James C. Scott, Dean, College of Music
C. Neal Tate, Dean, Robert B. Toulouse School of
Graduate Studies

McGinney, William Lawrence, The Whole as a Result of Its Parts: Assembly in Aaron Copland's Score for *The Red Pony*, Master of Music (Musicology), May 2003, 178 pp., 60 musical examples, 24 figures, 3 facsimiles, references, 28 titles.

Aaron Copland's music for *The Red Pony* (1948-49), based on John Steinbeck's story collection, is probably the best known of his film scores. The effectiveness of *The Red Pony* score stems from Copland's belief that film music should be subordinate to the film it accompanies. Copland composed *The Red Pony* score using his self-described method of "assembly," augmenting this process with devices to synchronize the music with the picture. Examination of archival sources shows how the score reflects the acknowledged influence of Igor Stravinsky, the needs of the film medium, and the plot of *The Red Pony* specifically. Despite Copland's modern style characteristics, the music functions much like a conventional Hollywood film score.

Copyright 2003

By

William Lawrence McGinney

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to acknowledge the following individuals for their assistance in the production of this study: Mr. James Kendrick and the Aaron Copland Fund for Music for their generous permission allowing me to examine the Copland materials and to reproduce the included score examples; Elizabeth H. Auman of the Library of Congress, Music Division, for all of her enthusiastic assistance and cooperation; Dr. Michael Cooper, my major professor, for his guidance during the course of this undertaking; Drs. Bernardo Illari and Mark McKnight, members of my thesis committee, for their helpful comments and insights; and Dr. Margaret Notley, chair of the departmental thesis committee, for all of her encouragement. I would also like to extend my deepest thanks to my parents for their support, and to my wife, Stacey, for her understanding, patience, and love.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF MUSICAL EXAMPLES	v
LIST OF FIGURES.....	viii
LIST OF FACSIMILES	x
INTRODUCTION	1
 Chapter	
I. GENESIS AND STORY OF <i>THE RED PONY</i>	13
II. SOURCES FOR THE SCORE OF <i>THE RED PONY</i>	23
III. A CLOSE EXAMINATION OF THE CUES PRESENT IN THE FIRST HALF OF <i>THE RED PONY</i>	32
IV. A CLOSE EXAMINATION OF THE CUES PRESENT IN THE SECOND HALF OF <i>THE RED PONY</i>	92
V. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE MUSIC AND THE NARRATIVE IN <i>THE RED PONY</i>	132
VI. REASSEMBLY OF <i>THE RED PONY</i> FOR THE CONCERT STAGE	158
APPENDIX: A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE STEPS IN SCORING A MOTION PICTURE	172
REFERENCE LIST	176

LIST OF MUSICAL EXAMPLES

All musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

Example	Page
3-1. Recurring Themes in <i>The Red Pony</i>	35
3-2. M100 “Prelude and Main Title” mm. 1-5	37
3-3. M100 “Prelude and Main Title” mm. 6-18	38
3-4. M100 “Prelude and Main Title” mm. 26-37	39
3-5. M100 “Prelude and Main Title” mm. 51-59	40
3-6. Melodic Fragments in “Morning on the Ranch”	41
3-7. M101 “Morning on the Ranch” mm. 1-5	43
3-8. M102 “Walk to the Bunkhouse, Pt I” mm. 1-12	46
3-9. M102A “Walk to the Bunkhouse, Pt II” mm. 17-32	46
3-10. M102 “Walk to the Bunkhouse, Pt I” mm 21-23	47
3-11. M201 “March Dream, Pt I” mm. 1-6	49
3-12. M201A “March Dream, Pt II” mm. 1-12	50
3-13. M201A “March Dream, Pt II” mm. 41-46	51
3-14. M201A “March Dream, Pt II” mm. 69-76	52
3-15. M202 “Intro to Circus Dream” mm 6-17	55
3-16. M300 “Circus Music, Pt I” mm. 25-33	55
3-17. M300 “Circus Music, Pt I” mm. 40-48, with overlap to M301A “Circus Music, Pt V”	56

Example

3-18.	M300A “Circus Music, Pt II” mm. 1-18	58
3-19.	M300B “Circus Music, Pt III” mm. 1-42	60
3-20.	M302 “The Boring Dinner” mm. 1-12	62
3-21.	M302 “The Boring Dinner” mm. 23-32	63
3-22.	M400 “The Gift” mm. 1-40	65
3-23.	M400 “The Gift” mm. 55-62	67
3-24.	M400 “The Gift” mm. 67-77	67
3-25.	M400 “The Gift” mm. 82-85	68
3-26.	M401 “Tom’s Friends” mm. 1-17	70
3-27.	M401 “Tom’s Friends” mm. 47-51.	71
3-28.	M401 “Tom’s Friends” mm. 57-68	71
3-29.	M401 “Tom’s Friends” mm. 83-94	73
3-30.	M500 “Grandfather’s Story” mm. 1-13	76
3-31.	M500 “Grandfather’s Story” mm. 30-43	76
3-32.	M603 “Morning Training” mm. 1-9	79
3-33.	M603 “Morning Training” mm. 19-24	79
3-34.	M603 “Morning Training” mm. 27-41	80
3-35.	M603 “Morning Training” mm. 42-48	81
3-36.	M603 “Morning Training” mm. 49-57	82
3-37.	M700 “Prelude to Tom’s Indecision” mm. 1-11	84
3-38.	M701 “Tom’s Indecision” mm. 1-24	85
3-39.	M701 “Tom’s Indecision” mm. 28-38	86

Example

3-40.	M701	“Tom’s Indecision” mm. 46-50	.87
3-41.	M701	“Tom’s Indecision” mm. 54-77	.87
4-1.	M702	“The Sick Pony” mm. 1-9	.95
4-2.	M702	“The Sick Pony” mm. 11-27	.96
4-3.	M800	“The Sick Pony” mm. 1-10	.97
4-4.	M801	“At the Fireside” mm. 1-18	.100
4-5.	M802	“Strangles, Pt I” mm. 1-24	.101
4-6.	M802	“Strangles, Pt I” mm. 36-43	.103
4-7.	M900	“Strangles, Pt II” mm. 1-19	.104
4-8.	M901	“The Operation, Pt I” mm. 1-9	.107
4-9.	M901	“The Operation, Pt I” mm. 14-22	.107
4-10.	M901	“The Operation, Pt I” mm. 23-43	.108
4-11.	M901A	“The Operation, Pt II” mm. 1-5	.109
4-12.		Cell Types in “Buzzard Fight	.111
4-13.	M1001	“Buzzard Fight, Pt I” mm. 40-51	.114
4-14.	M1001A	“Buzzard Fight, Pt II” mm. 46-48	.115
4-15.	M1001B	“Buzzard Fight, Pt III” mm. 1-6	.118
4-16.	M1100	“Tom Readjusted, Pt II” mm. 1-10	.122
4-17.	M1101	“The Promise” mm. 4-20	.123
4-18.	M1102	“End Title” mm. 1-8	.125
4-19.	M1102	“End Title” mm. 21-55	.127

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
3-1. “Prelude and Main Title”	40
3-2. “Morning on the Ranch”	42
3-3. “Walk to the Bunkhouse”	48
3-4. “March Dream, Part II”	52
3-5. “Circus Music”	57
3-6. “The Boring Dinner”	64
3-7. “The Gift”	68
3-8. “Tom’s Friends”	74
3-9. “Grandfather’s Story”	78
3-10. “Morning Training”	82
3-11. “Prelude to Tom’s Indecision/ Tom’s Indecision”	89
4-1. “The Sick Pony”	98
4-2. “At the Fireside”	100
4-3. “Strangles”	105
4-4. “The Operation”	109
4-5. “Buzzard Fight, Part I”	114
4-6. “Pattern Planes in Part II of ‘Buzzard Fight’”	116
4-7. “Cell Planes in Part II of ‘Buzzard Fight’”	117
4-8. “Buzzard Fight, Part III”	119

Figure

4-9.	“Tom Readjusted”	122
4-10.	“The Promise”	124
4-11.	“End Title”	129
5-1.	Comparative Consonance in Successive Cues of <i>The Red Pony</i>	135
5-2.	Strata of Recurring Themes in <i>The Red Pony</i>	154

LIST OF FACSIMILES

All musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder

Facsimile	Page
1. “Circus Music, Part III,” mm. 1-12	34
2. “End Title” mm. 25-35	130
3. Notes for Assembly of “Happy Ending”	165

INTRODUCTION

Over the course of his career, Aaron Copland created memorable music for a wide variety of media including the concert hall, theater, chamber, radio, and cinema. His catalog of film music includes the scores to eight motion pictures: *The City* (1939), *Of Mice and Men* (1939), *Our Town* (1940), *The North Star* (1940), *The Cummington Story* (1945), *The Red Pony* (1948), *The Heiress* (1949), and *Something Wild* (1961). Of these, *The Red Pony*, based on John Steinbeck's collection of short stories published under that name, is probably the best known because of the concert suite Copland extracted from the score. Like French neo-classicists such as Darius Milhaud and Artur Honegger, with whom he had become acquainted during his studies in Paris with Nadia Boulanger in the 1920s, Copland was intrigued by motion-picture music and referred to it as a new art form akin to opera.¹

The music in *The Red Pony* is strongly reminiscent of Copland's other works that suggest the "archetypal sound of the American west," such as his ballets *Billy the Kid* and *Rodeo*.² This score also illustrates a comment quoted in Howard Pollack's biography of Copland: the composer considered his composition to be largely a process of "assemblage."³ This "assemblage" is a style trait likely absorbed from the neo-classical works of Igor Stravinsky from the 1920s, music that was particularly admired by Copland's teacher Nadia Boulanger.

Boulanger passed along to Copland the admiration she felt for Stravinsky's music and for the

¹ Aaron Copland, "Tip to Moviegoers: Take Off Those Ear-Muffs," *New York Times Magazine*, 6 November, 1949, 28.

² Alfred W. Cochran, "The Red Pony," *The Cue Sheet* 11/2 (April 1995): 25.

³ Howard Pollack, *Aaron Copland: The Life and Work of an Uncommon Man* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 11.

music of other French neo-classicists.⁴ Even though the music to *The Red Pony* was produced some twenty-five years after Copland's initial exposure to these French neo-classical influences, some of the characteristics often identified with that style appear prominently in the score. These include the use of diatonic melodies and non-functional harmonies as well as his methods of "assembly" derived from Stravinsky – combining structural blocks consisting of melodic phrase fragments, ostinati, or motivic and rhythmic cells to generate the musical underscore. In the case of *The Red Pony*, these techniques and stylistic elements allowed the score to interact closely with the story told in the film and to enhance the visual impact of certain scenes.

State of Research

To date, little research has been done that focuses on the music of *The Red Pony*. Only two items are devoted solely to this score; these are Lawrence Morton's review of the score in a special issue of *Film Music Notes* (Feb. 1949) and Alfred Cochran's commentary on the score for *The Cue Sheet* (April 1995). Morton's review is perhaps the more comprehensive of the two in that it briefly addresses each of the separate musical episodes, describing in general terms the construction of the music and the accompanying screen action. Morton's review also includes many transcribed excerpts from the score as examples. Cochran's article discusses general stylistic qualities of the score, particularly those that reflect Copland's "archetypal western style." His discussion of these qualities centers around their use in two cues: "Main Title," and "Walk to the Bunkhouse." Cochran's observations regarding these cues are similar to those found in his Ph.D. dissertation, "Style, Structure, and Tonal Organization in the Early Film Scores of Aaron Copland" (1986), in which he discusses Copland's first three film scores, *The City, Of Mice and Men*, and *Our Town*. Cochran emphasizes the similarity of style and structure

⁴ Aaron Copland and Vivian Perlis, *Copland: 1900 through 1942* (New York: St. Martin's, 1984), 62, 72.

among these three scores with respect to tonal and motivic structure, both of which he regards as unifying elements within individual cues of each score. Cochran's examinations also attempt to explain briefly the relationship between musical cues and their corresponding screen action.

Some of the most detailed information concerning the history of the score is found in Howard Pollack's biography of Copland: *Aaron Copland: The Life and Work of an Uncommon Man*. Pollack provides a general chronology of events surrounding the composition of the score as well as his own summary of musical episodes and critical comments. Pollack's bibliography also points to some of the more detailed sources. Pollack's information concerning the history of the score is complemented by that provided by Copland himself in his autobiography, *Copland Since 1943*, co-written with Vivian Perlis.

Copland's thoughts on music for films are articulated in two articles: "Second Thoughts on Hollywood" from the June 1940 issue of *Modern Music* and "Tip to Moviegoers: Take Off Those Ear-Muffs" from the 6 November 1949 issue of *The New York Times Magazine*. In both of these articles, Copland clearly stated that film music ultimately should serve the narrative aspects of the film it accompanies and encouraged composers of such music to remain focused on the goal of supporting the film rather than being overly concerned about the music's ability to stand independently. That said, Copland saw no reason why film music should not use the latest developments in melody, harmony, and other compositional techniques to reinforce a particular film and he openly criticized the essentially formulaic reliance of most film music on idioms derived from the music of the nineteenth century. Finally, Copland encouraged critics and audiences to be more aware of the music accompanying a film, both to increase appreciation for what he regarded as a new medium of expression and to stimulate the growth of a more

sophisticated film audience who could appreciate the use of modern and unconventional musical idioms and techniques in film music.

Two other sources consulted for this study are Claudia Gorbman's *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* and Earle Hagen's *Scoring for Films: A Complete Text*. Within her book, Gorbman looks closely at the relationship between music and the film it accompanies, particularly the ways in which the narrative aspects of the music interact with the narrative nature of the film. She devotes considerable space to the style and methods of Max Steiner, using his techniques to derive an outline of principles of the "classic" film score produced in Hollywood during the period of the 1930s and 1940s. Hagen's book is, as its title suggests, a textbook on the technical aspects of scoring motion pictures. This text is consulted regarding the mechanical aspects of producing film music such as recording and synchronization of the music with the picture. Although published some twenty-three years after the production of the score to *The Red Pony*, Hagen's book remains a relevant source of practical information as the techniques and technology that he describes remained largely unchanged during that time.

The most important sources, which are held in the Aaron Copland Collection at the Library of Congress, are the original composing manuscript, the conducting scores derived from it, and the cue sheets indicating which portions of the film were to be scored. All of this material was in the possession of Aaron Copland; since much of it appears to relate closely to the creation of his concert suite derived from the score, there may be more documents concerning other cues in the possession of the now-defunct Republic Pictures; to date, the location of these materials remains unknown. Additional documents being held at the Library of Congress include sketches showing the first appearance of some of the thematic material and full-score realizations of some of the cues.

Scope and Purpose of This Thesis

Within this study, I concentrate on Copland's original composing score, addressing evidence of Copland's method of composition within each of the individual musical movements. The score to *The Red Pony* is constructed according to methods of "assembly" as Copland described his compositional style and method.⁵ This "assemblage" is apparent at many levels, from the construction of thematic material out of smaller motivic cells to the juxtaposition of larger sections within the formal framework of the musical passages. The use of this method reflects not only the influence of Igor Stravinsky and the French neo-classicists, but also the needs of the film medium in general and the plot of *The Red Pony* specifically. Yet, in spite of Copland's use of these modern style characteristics in his composition, the music functions much as a more traditional Hollywood motion picture score. The effectiveness of *The Red Pony* score ultimately stems from Copland's own belief in the subordinate role played by film music; the primary purpose of music accompanying a film was to serve and reinforce that film, a view shared by composers working in the film industry. Copland's music for *The Red Pony* is specifically tailored to support the unfolding story of the film through the use of his own musical style. His adoption of this approach was significant for its potential to raise the perceived status of film music among the American listening public due to Copland's own reputation as a renowned composer of concert music. His subsequent adaptation of the score into a suite of movements for the concert hall added further legitimacy to the medium of film music.

Terms and Concepts

The Red Pony contains some fifty-two minutes of music divided into several short movements or "cues," which are intended to accompany specific scenes within the film. Because the term "cue" is the term commonly used in the industry to describe such movements

⁵ Pollack, *Aaron Copland*, 11, 325, 352.

in Hollywood, this term will be used in this study to denote complete movements.⁶ Additionally, some of these cues have been further divided into “parts” during the process of composition and recording and will be so described in this study. The detailed discussion of the music will divide the film into two halves, with the cues making up the first half being discussed in detail in Chapter 3 while Chapter 4 will deal with the cues found in the second half. This division coincides with a change of character in the music stemming from the illness of the pony within the story.

In discussing the manner of assembly that Copland employs to create the score, I use the term “stratification” after Edward T. Cone’s use of this term to describe the works of Igor Stravinsky in the article, “Stravinsky: The Progress of a Method.” The similarities of “assemblage” between some of Copland’s works such as *Appalachian Spring* and works of Stravinsky coupled with Stravinsky’s acknowledged influence on Copland make this a reasonable point of comparison.⁷ Cone likens the apparently disjunct series of textural blocks within such works as the *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* to a set of “strata” composed of simultaneous processes that are perceived as continuous even though they are actually heard in successive alternation; Cone uses the analogy of “polyphonic strands of melody.”⁸ His purpose is to explain an otherwise dissociated set of musical materials, and indeed his focus is the way that these materials are gradually transformed and assimilated into other blocks, the final synthesis of these providing the piece’s unity and cogency.⁹ Cone observes that this process is apparent in works as early as *The Rite of Spring* and as late as *Movements*. He notes further that

⁶ This term is used consistently from p. 38 onward in Earl Hagen, *Scoring for Films* (New York: E.D.J. Music, Criterion Music Corp., 1971); Tony Thomas, *Music for the Movies*, 2nd ed. (Los Angeles: Silman-James, 1996), 19.

⁷ Copland and Perlis, *Copland: 1900-1942*, 72-73; Pollack, *Aaron Copland*, 65-66.

⁸ Edward T. Cone, “Stravinsky: The Progress of a Method,” *Perspectives of New Music* 1 (Fall 1962), 19.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 19-20.

this model is equally applicable to works with extramusical considerations, such as stage action in *The Rite of Spring* or textual requirements such as in *Canticum Sacram*.¹⁰

The music within *The Red Pony* can be described similarly in terms of such strata. The score to *The Red Pony* consists of a series of discrete movements that are themselves the results of successive textural blocks or superimposed thematic and melodic layers, many of which recur over the course of the film. Each of these elements contributes to multiple layers of strata. Several of these elements obtain narrative significance through their repeated association with particular ideas or situations on screen. Because of this, there is no “synthesis” or “resolution” of elements as explained in Stravinsky’s works by Cone; the music is not created according to an autonomous process but exists to reinforce the narrative of the film. The implicit continuity of strata within individual cues and across separate cues provides additional coherence to the music and to the film at the same time that the music derives its localized and global structure from the film’s story as it unfolds.

The Established Style of Film Scores Composed at the Time of *The Red Pony*

The most common idiom for a film score produced in Hollywood from the 1930s to the late 1940s and even beyond was based on the Romantic style of the nineteenth-century typified by the music of Wagner and Strauss. The use of this style had become widespread even during production of silent films in the 1910s and 1920s, when existing nineteenth-century Romantic concert works were frequently appropriated and paraphrased for use by silent film accompanists.¹¹ Cinema pianists and organists often used popular classics as the basis of their improvised accompaniments to silent films.¹² By the mid 1920s, compilations of musical

¹⁰ Ibid., 18, 25-26.

¹¹ Royal S. Brown, *Overtones and Undertones: Reading Film Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 50-59, 96.

¹² Ibid., 51.

cues such as Ernő Rapee's *Motion Picture Moods for Pianists and Organists* had appeared; these cues often consisted of literal borrowings from established works of the standard repertory or else original works meant to imitate them.¹³ In addition, large scale films that had custom scores created for them often included established works as part of the score. This was true of D. W. Griffith's massive *Birth of a Nation*, which used a compilation score that made extensive use of music by Richard Wagner among others.¹⁴

Max Steiner has been credited with establishing the prototype of both the style and method of film scores in Hollywood beginning in 1932.¹⁵ He and Erich Wolfgang Korngold, both from Austria, were two of the most popular composers of film music in Hollywood during the 1930s and 1940s. Both had close ties to the tradition of concert music in Europe: Korngold actually began a career as a concert composer and attracted the attention of Richard Strauss, while Steiner studied briefly with Gustav Mahler before turning to arranging and conducting for the Vienna stage.¹⁶ Their early experiences steeped them in the late nineteenth-century Romantic musical style from the beginning. By the time talking pictures came into existence, Steiner had already emigrated to America and began work in Hollywood; his score for the film *King Kong* helped to establish the nineteenth-century idiom as the standard used in scoring sound films.¹⁷ Korngold soon followed Steiner to America and continued this practice in such films as *Captain Blood*, *The Sea Hawk*, and *The Adventures of Robin Hood*.¹⁸

¹³ Brown, *Overtones and Undertones*, 14.

¹⁴ Martin Miller Marks, *Music and the Silent Film: Contexts and Case Studies, 1895-1924* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 145-148.

¹⁵ Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 73; Tony Thomas, *Music for the Movies*, 2nd ed., (Los Angeles: Silman James Press, 1997), 147-148; Gary Marmorstein, *Hollywood Rhapsody* (New York: Schirmer, 1997), 68-71.

¹⁶ Steiner and Korngold are discussed at length in Thomas, *Music for the Movies*, 137-184; Marmorstein, *Hollywood Rhapsody*, 68-83.

¹⁷ Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies*, 74; Thomas, *Music for the Movies*, 147-148; Marmorstein, *Hollywood Rhapsody*, 70-71.

¹⁸ Thomas, *Music for the Movies*, 162-163, 172-173.

Claudia Gorbman used the work of Max Steiner as the basis of her set of observed principles of composing “Classical Film Music”; the “classical films” she uses as the basis of her observations are films produced during the 1930s and 1940s, by which time conventions of narrative storytelling within the sound film had been well established.¹⁹ The seven principles she outlines apply to virtually all “non-diagetic” film music of the period and since, “non-diagetic” referring to the music that exists outside of the frame of the story or “diagesis.” These seven principles are as follows:

1. The source of non-diagetic film music is invisible within the film medium.
2. Non-diagetic is not meant to be heard consciously, and is therefore subordinate to dialogue and the visuals.
3. Music in film is often a signifier of emotion.
4. Music gives referential cues of setting and characters and can illustrate or interpret events.
5. Music provides a formal and rhythmic continuity that aids transitions between scenes and other discontinuities of the medium.
6. Music aids in the formal and narrative unity of the film through repetition and variation of musical materials
7. Any of the above rules may be violated in the service of any of the others.²⁰

Gorbman chose Steiner’s music as representative of Hollywood practice because of his strong influence on Hollywood during this period due to the sheer quantity of his output.²¹ Steiner’s solutions to Gorbman’s third and fourth principles provide some of the aspects of his style and approach that exerted the most influence on Hollywood practice. Steiner often used

¹⁹ Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies*, 73.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

mode as a means of suggesting emotion with his music in a manner consistent with nineteenth-century musical traditions. This enabled Steiner's suggestions of emotion to be readily perceived by the film's audience, who were familiar with those traditions. Steiner went to great lengths to synchronize his music with the screen action, sometimes illustrating even small events so closely that the result was a technique known as "mickey-mousing" (after practices in early cartoon films).²² All of these devices were intended, in his words, "to subordinate myself to the picture."²³ Steiner's opinion was that attempts by composers to produce "clever" music would distract from the film itself. Gorbman notes that Steiner's music often relinquishes its own musical coherence to that of the diegetic narrative; she regards the resulting fragmentary nature of his scores as a product of his "melodramatic spirit," expressing his desire to explicitly inflect all emotions and actions within a given scene.²⁴

In his article "Second Thoughts on Hollywood," published in the journal *Modern Music*, Copland expressed his opinions on the practice in motion picture music of using nineteenth century idioms and, specifically, the leitmotif.²⁵ These views largely correspond to those expressed by the German composer Hanns Eisler in his 1947 book *Composing for the Films*. Eisler singled out many aspects of the standard Hollywood scoring practice as "bad habits," especially the use of leitmotifs, which he saw as unnecessary and redundant.²⁶ Furthermore, Eisler noted that tonal music of the nineteenth century functioned properly under a strict set of conditions governing the relationship between form and harmonic progression. Because the musical underscore to a film ultimately derived its form from the narrative it accompanies, Eisler

²² Ibid., 88.

²³ Ibid., 97.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Aaron Copland, "Second Thoughts on Hollywood," *Modern Music* 17 (June 1940), 143.

²⁶ Hanns Eisler, *Composing for the Films*, (New York: Oxford, 1947), p. 6. Despite Copland's stated aversion to leitmotifs, he admitted to using them in his score to *The Heiress* due to time constraints. Aaron Copland and Vivian Perlis, *Copland Since 1943* (New York: St. Martin's, 1990), 100-101.

reasoned that the underscore did not have the luxury of allowing harmonic progressions to proceed logically; harmonic motion is musically meaningless according to common practice.²⁷

Copland's opinions, while not expressed as strongly as those of Eisler, are essentially in agreement with them. Copland particularly criticized the use of a nineteenth century musical style in scores for films that have nothing to do with that era and generally echoed Eisler's comments on the use of leitmotives as musical "tags" representing characters in the film.²⁸

Eisler's and Copland's aversion to nineteenth century styles and practices and their recognition of the limitations of functional tonal harmony are consistent with much of the music produced from the 1920s to the 1940s by Igor Stravinsky, Darius Milhaud, Artur Honegger, and other composers often labeled "neo-classical." These aesthetics are apparent in the music that Copland composed for *The Red Pony* in its own use of nonfunctional diatonic harmony and in the assembled nature of the cues, which belies any sense of progressive harmonic motion. Still, despite Copland's use of more modern harmonic idioms and structural methods, his organization of the materials within the score as a whole and the relationships that he creates between the narrative of the film and recurring musical material result in a score that fulfills Gorbman's principles of "Classic Film Scoring," rendering it functionally similar to more traditional Hollywood film scores produced by someone like Steiner. In keeping with Gorbman's model, the musical apparatus is certainly inaudible and the score is subordinate to the narrative action, sometimes deriving its structure from specific visual elements and devices. The music provides continuity and unity through its presence within key scenes and through its repetition and variance of musical material in connection with recurring visual and narrative elements.

²⁷ Eisler, *Composing for the Films*, p. 41n.

²⁸ Copland, "Second Thoughts on Hollywood," 143-144.

Copland's use of repeated thematic material is not altogether dissimilar in its net effect from that of Steiner. Copland's application is arguably more subtle, ultimately behaving more like the "leading threads" identified by nineteenth-century music critics as giving coherence to the otherwise formless music dramas of Wagner rather than the practice of using leitmotifs as musical labels indicating characters on the screen. Copland's music even acts as an emotional signifier, although it is here that Copland employs a solution notably different from Steiner and more in keeping with his Stravinsky-influenced style. Rather than relying on the modal polarity of major and minor to indicate scenes of happiness or sadness, Copland instead uses a polarity based on consonance versus dissonance to indicate changes in emotional affect. Dissonance is used to indicate stress, anxiety, fear, or agitation. Consonance, primarily major mode, is used to accompany more straightforward emotions encompassing both ends of the spectrum, from the light, humorous and carefree happiness of the cues "Circus Music" and "Tom's Friends" to the introspective sadness expressed in portions of the cues "The Operation" and "Tom Readjusted."

In composing his music with the intended purpose of supporting the film, Copland inadvertently complied with these same principles that Gorbman has extracted from the works of Max Steiner. Both were forced to address the same problems in creating a motion picture score. Copland's manner of composition by assembly in the manner of Stravinsky enabled him to devise some unique solutions that were as effective as they were individual. Additionally, this manner allowed for added flexibility not only in editing the music to match the film, but also in adapting portions of the music for the concert stage.

CHAPTER I

GENESIS AND STORY OF *THE RED PONY*

The Story of *The Red Pony*

The Red Pony film relates the story of Tom Tiflin, the ten-year-old son of a cattle rancher growing up in the Salinas valley of California during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Tom lives on the ranch with his parents and their cowhand, Billy Buck; in addition, Tom's maternal grandfather visits so frequently that he has his own room within the household. Tom idolizes Billy Buck, and his affection for the ranch hand is a source of resentment for his father Fred Tiflin, whose urban origins (he was born in San Jose) make him uncomfortable with the rural environment and with ranching. The relationship between Tom and Billy causes Fred to question his effectiveness at being a father to his son; indeed, the relationship between Tom and his father is notably distant and formal. Tom's grandfather is a true frontiersman who once led a wagon train westward across the continent, but who now experiences feelings of uselessness, believing that there is no longer a need for men like him now that the frontier is closed. These feelings are exacerbated by the fact that Tom is the only member of the family who still enjoys hearing his stories of crossing the plains and fighting Indians. Tom's rich imagination, typical of boys his age, is portrayed in two fantasy sequences during the film, one in which Tom is leading a column of armored knights and one in which he is a ringmaster directing a team of circus horses.

One day, Tom's father brings home the pony of the title, purchased from a bankrupt circus, and presents it to Tom, telling the child that he can ride the pony the following

Thanksgiving if he trains and cares for it. Tiflin's rather stern admonition that Tom will lose the pony if he fails to care for it indicates that Tiflin intends the pony to be a way of teaching Tom responsibility, but the viewer also wonders if the gift of the pony is a means of obtaining Tom's affection. This question is reinforced by Tiflin's obvious disappointment when Tom immediately announces he will enlist Billy Buck's aid in caring for the pony; Billy, who is oblivious to Tom's father's resentment, is only too happy to help, boasting that he is "half horse himself." Tom's faith in Billy is later shaken, however, when Billy Buck fails to predict the arrival of a thunderstorm and, worse, allows the pony to escape the barn and be soaked by the cold rain. Billy's fallibility is further demonstrated to Tom as Billy's efforts to cure the pony of its subsequent illness are ultimately unsuccessful, even after Billy and the grandfather conduct a rather gruesome operation to insert a tube into the pony's windpipe so that it can breathe. After falling asleep in the barn while tending to the pony, Tom awakes to find that it has gone outside to a nearby pond and died. Frantic with grief and rage, Tom attacks the buzzards that are already feeding on the carcass until he is pulled away by his father.

Billy, who feels guilty about the pony, promises to give Tom the colt being carried by his mare Rosie, but has a dream that the birth of the colt will be difficult and prepares to kill the mare in order to preserve the colt. Tom distracts Billy long enough for the colt to be born naturally, providing a happy ending that has as its epilogue a brief shot of Tom riding the grown colt.

From Short Stories to Cinema

John Steinbeck derived his screenplay for *The Red Pony* from a series of short stories he wrote beginning in 1933. Two of the original stories, "The Gift," and "The Great Mountains," first appeared in *Harper's* monthly magazine in October and November of 1933. "The Gift"

concerns all of the events surrounding Jody's (as he is known in the short stories) acquisition of the pony and its subsequent illness and death. The second story concerns an old *paisano* who returns to his birthplace at the site of the ranch in order to die. Steinbeck chose not to include this story in his screenplay. The third story, "The Promise," concerns Billy Buck's promise of the mare's colt to Jody, although the tone is much more grim than of the film; in the short story, Billy is forced to kill the mare in order to save the colt for Jody. Although presumably written at the same time as the others, this story did not appear in *Harper's* until four years later.¹ The final story, "The Leader of the People," appeared along with the previous stories in a collection of Steinbeck's short fiction entitled *The Long Valley*, released in 1938. This story concerns the old grandfather and his attempts to preserve some sense of the westward drive of the pioneers in his stories of his exploits with the wagon train. Although all four stories appeared in *The Long Valley*, only the first three were collected under the title "The Red Pony." All four stories were finally collected together under this title in a separate volume in 1945.²

Not long after producing his critically acclaimed and successful screen adaptation of Steinbeck's novel *Of Mice and Men*, Lewis Milestone expressed interest to Steinbeck in creating a film based on the stories comprising *The Red Pony*.³ The project was to have begun in earnest in 1940 at RKO studios, which had just released the celebrated *Citizen Kane*, but *The Red Pony* was delayed for some eight years, due largely to fundraising difficulties.⁴ During this time, Steinbeck himself produced the screenplay, rearranging the chronology of events within the three select stories so that they ran concurrently. He also added the plot element into the screenplay of Fred Tiflin's urban origins and the conflicts that they create, culminating in Tiflin's

¹ Warren French, "The Red Pony as Story Cycle and Film," in *The Short Novels of John Steinbeck: Critical Essays with a Checklist to Steinbeck Criticism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), 71.

² Ibid., 72; John Steinbeck, *The Red Pony* (New York: Viking Press, 1945).

³ Jackson J. Benson, *The True Adventures of John Steinbeck, Writer: A Biography* (New York: Viking Press, 1984): 453.

⁴ French, "The Red Pony as Story Cycle," 82.

contemplation of an opportunity to leave the ranch and return to San Jose, becoming a partner in his brother's business.⁵ In the film, Steinbeck also changed the name of the boy from Jody to Tom. This was likely in reference to Steinbeck's own son, Tom, who had been born in August of 1944, although it has been speculated that this change was to avoid conflict with the use of "Jody" as the name of the young protagonist in the MGM film *The Yearling*, which appeared in the 1940s.⁶

Copland became involved with the film through the efforts of his agent in Hollywood, Abe Meyer, who notified him of Milestone's project based on Steinbeck's story collection.⁷ Copland had worked with Milestone on *Of Mice and Men*, as well as the director's controversial wartime film *The North Star*. He had enjoyed working with Milestone on those previous projects, believing that Milestone trusted his use of modern musical idioms when producing a score. Copland was intrigued by Milestone's adaptation of *The Red Pony*; he noted that it lacked the sentiment of most films set in the West and later referred to the film as "moving in a quiet way." Additionally, Milestone's adaptation left Copland opportunities for creating extended musical passages in the score that were longer than the two or three-minute duration typical of most cues.⁸ Despite Copland's interest in the project, it was only after reading Steinbeck's original stories that Copland agreed to produce the music, which was significant for the later compilation of his concert suite.⁹ During February and March 1948, Copland composed the score at the film studio while temporarily residing in the San Fernando Valley.¹⁰

Production on *The Red Pony* had finally started in late 1947 at Republic Pictures, a studio known for producing cheap Westerns and serials through the 1930s and 1940s. Due to contract

⁵ Ibid., 79.

⁶ Ibid., 82.

⁷ Copland and Perlis, *Copland Since 1943* 87-88.

⁸ Copland/ Perlis, *Copland Since 1943*, 88.

⁹ Pollack, *Aaron Copland*, 428; Copland and Perlis, *Copland Since 1943*, 88.

¹⁰ Aaron Copland and Vivian Perlis, *Copland Since 1943*, (New York: St. Martin's, 1989), , 88.

terms with the studio, Republic also handled distribution of the film after its release. Copland noted that the film was not particularly successful financially despite some favorable critical response, including that toward the music.¹¹ Warren French attributes this to the declining fortunes of Republic Pictures, which was not able to offer extensive distribution of the film despite its casting two high-profile stars, Myrna Loy and Robert Mitchum.¹²

Accommodating the Intended Audience for *The Red Pony*

The tone of the film version of *The Red Pony* is noticeably different from that of the original stories. Whereas the printed stories carry as their focus the end of Jody's childhood as he is exposed to death and the realization of human frailty, this change is never apparent in Tom in the film. The level of tragedy is markedly reduced; certainly Tom loses his pony, which is tragic, but this tragedy is not compounded by the violent death of the mare during the birth of Tom's colt. Additionally, the last scene of the film, which shows Tom riding the grown colt, indicates that he has what he really wanted by the end of the story—his own horse to ride. The trouble-free birth of the colt and the fulfillment of Tom's desire both mitigate the tragedy of the pony's death. The impact of the loss of the pony seems further lessened because the actual time passed within the context of the story is not clearly conveyed. It appears that no sooner does Tom start training the pony than it falls ill and dies; the viewer does not get a sense of the time Tom has invested in caring for the pony to then gauge the magnitude of his loss at its death.

Warren French has noted that Steinbeck had become fascinated with Hollywood and the movie-making process after the success of Milestone's adaptation of *Of Mice and Men*, for which Steinbeck had written the screenplay. French has speculated that Steinbeck's newfound awareness of the medium of film may have contributed to the change in tone of the story.

¹¹ Copland/Perlis, *Copland Since 1943*,

¹² French, "The Red Pony as Story Cycle," 83-84.

Steinbeck appears to have intended his audience for the film to be younger than the intended readership of the novella; the film's target audience is children of about Tom's age who may be just dealing with such emotional issues themselves rather than adults reflecting back on their childhoods while reading the story collection.¹³ Steinbeck may even have envisioned the film as a means of illustrating his own life experiences to his children, but in a way that would be more appropriate for youngsters.¹⁴

Copland may have been aware on some level of Steinbeck's interest in producing a work that would appeal to younger children; in 1964, he requested that Steinbeck write a new short narrative to accompany a recording or performance of *The Red Pony* suite that would be specifically geared to children, noting that the music and the action were all from a child's point of view. Although Steinbeck refused, Copland nonetheless subtitled his suite "a suite for children" and commissioned a narrative from Katherine Ross.¹⁵ If Copland was aware at the time of scoring the film of Steinbeck's and, presumably, Milestone's intentions to pitch the film to children, this awareness may have further reinforced Copland's resolve that his music serve the film. He may have purposely created a more overt relationship between the music and the film so as to increase the impact of the story on its younger audience. In some instances, this may have further encouraged Copland to employ a more accessible harmonic and tonal language and more overtly "affective" gestures, some of which differ little from that of standard Hollywood practice. It could also suggest why Copland later wished to subtitle his concert suite as a suite for children.

¹³ French, "The Red Pony as Story Cycle," 78-79.

¹⁴ French, "The Red Pony as Story Cycle," 83.

¹⁵ Pollack, *Aaron Copland*, 433.

Cues Comprising the Score to *The Red Pony*

The resulting score consists of 32 cues or parts of cues. The following is a list of cue numbers and titles in the order that they appear in the film:

1. M100 – Prelude and Main Title

This cue accompanies the initial voice-over and opening credits

2. M101 – Morning on the Ranch

This accompanies the typical morning routines of the Tiflins: Billy Buck brushes Rosy, Alice Tiflin prepares breakfast, Tom winces at washing his face.

3. M102, M102A, M200 – Walk to the Bunkhouse, Pt I, Pt II, Pt III

After breakfast, Tom follows Billy out to Billy's bunkhouse to borrow a newspaper clipping about Billy's prize mare, Rosy. Billy gives evasive answers to Tom's queries about the pictures of saloon girls on the wall and in Billy's trunk.

4. M201, M201A March Dream, Pt. I, Pt. II

While walking to school, Tom fantasizes that he and Billy Buck are knights in armor leading a procession across a medieval countryside. His daydream is interrupted by one of his schoolmates calling to him.

5. M202 Intro to Circus Dream

Tom is performing his afternoon chores. This leads directly to the next set of cues.

9. M300, M300A, M300B, M301, M301A – Circus Dream, Pts. I-V

While feeding chickens, Tom fantasizes that he is ringmaster of a circus, commanding a team of performing horses. This daydream is interrupted by his grandfather, who is returning from one of his excursions.

10. M302 – The Boring Dinner

During the evening meal, the grandfather cannot resist retelling his exploits of leading the settlers across the plains. Tom is interested, Billy and Alice listen politely, and Fred is visibly annoyed. Fred finally excuses himself and directs Tom to join him in the barn.

11. M400 – The Gift

Tom is wide-eyed with surprise as his father presents him with a pony purchased from a bankrupt circus, telling him that he can ride the pony by Thanksgiving. Billy looks on affectionately, boasting of his abilities with horses and agreeing to help Tom train the pony.

12. M401 – Tom’s Friends

Tom invites his school friends over to show them the pony; later, Tom makes his first efforts at trying to train the pony for riding.

13. M500 – Grandfather’s Story

After overhearing Fred expressing his annoyance at the old man’s stories, the grandfather sits dejectedly on the porch, musing to Tom that there can be no more frontiersmen like himself now that the pioneering spirit has left the people.

14. M603 – Morning Training

Tom enlists Billy’s help in further training the pony, having his first success with halter-breaking the pony.

15. M700, M701 – Prelude to Tom’s Indecision, Tom’s Indecision

Tom is concerned before leaving for school that his pony might get caught outside in the rain. Billy assures Tom that it will not rain and that he will ensure that the pony stays in the barn. Tom is later distracted at school by the day’s thunderstorm.

16. M702, M800 – The Sick Pony, Pt I, Pt. II

Tom returns home to find that his pony has escaped from the barn and gotten soaked in the rain. He and Billy bring the pony in the barn and dry it, but it has developed a fever.

17. M801 – At the Fireside

Alice and the grandfather discover Tom leaving the house at night to help Billy care for the pony. The grandfather scolds Tom, but Alice softens and encourages him to tend to the pony.

18. M802, M900 – Strangles, Pt I, Pt II

Tom returns from school to find his father has returned from traveling to Sacramento on business (Alice telegraphed him that the pony was gravely ill). Billy lances an obstruction in the pony's throat to aid its labored breathing, reassuring Tom that the pony will pull through.

19. M901, M901A – The Operation, Pt I, Pt II

The pony's condition worsens; as Tom watches, Billy and the grandfather conduct an operation to insert a metal tube into the pony's windpipe so that it can breathe

20. M1001, M1001A, M1001B – Buzzard Fight, Pt I, Pt II, Pt III

After angrily turning away his school friends who have come to see him ride the pony, Tom continues his vigil in the barn, hoping to help the pony get well. He wakes in the morning and discovers that the pony has gotten out of the barn. Tom tracks the pony to a nearby pond, where he finds the buzzards already feeding on the pony's carcass. Tom grabs one of the buzzards and is about to pummel it with a rock, but is stopped by his father and Billy, who have heard his shouts. Billy carries Tom back to the house, promising that Tom can have the colt being carried by Billy's mare.

21. M1002, M1100 – Tom Readjusted, Pt. I, Pt. II

Tom reaches a decision after being followed around the yard by Billy's mare, Rosy. Tom asserts to Billy that he wants Rosy's colt.

22. M1101 – The Promise

With the birth of the colt impending, Billy, who feels responsible for the loss of the pony, is worried about a dream he has had in which the colt was stillborn. He prepares to kill the mare if necessary to preserve the colt for Tom.

23. M1102 – End Title

The rest of the family rushes out to the barn to prevent Billy from killing the mare. When they arrive at the stable, they are delighted to see that the mare has already given birth to a healthy colt. The final scene is of Tom riding the grown colt into the foreground, followed by the end credits.

In the summer of 1948, before the film's release in 1949, Copland produced his orchestral suite of music from the film consisting of seven movements compiled from several of the cues. This suite was commissioned for the debut of Efrem Kurtz as conductor of the Houston

Symphony Orchestra for its 1948-1949 season.¹⁶ The contents of this suite and its relationship to the original score will be discussed further in Chapter 6.

¹⁶ Pollack, *Aaron Copland*, 430.

CHAPTER II

SOURCES FOR THE SCORE OF *THE RED PONY*

Although the concert suite extracted from Copland's score for *The Red Pony* has been commercially published, the complete motion picture score exists only in manuscript. The composing manuscript currently is housed at the Library of Congress, along with other collected Copland materials. The original composing score is written on three- or four-stave systems, from which orchestral parts and conducting scores were later realized. With few exceptions, each cue or part of a cue begins on a new page. The composing and conducting scores contain numerous markings of standard use in motion picture scoring, most of which involve synchronization between the music and the picture. Key events in the film that the composer and conductor use as reference points (called "hit points") are described in some detail in the film's cue sheets and are indicated with arrows at the appropriate points in the score. Timing indications, to the 1/3 of a second are also indicated in both scores, again as an aid in synchronization. Many of the cues within the score contain notes in the margins indicating the corresponding action on screen. Some cues include "tick marks" which indicate how the meter of a given cue will fall against a click track as a further aid in synchronization (Details of this process are discussed in the Appendix).¹

¹ Aaron Copland, "The Red Pony: original manuscript." Ms. c[1948]. Open score; 171 0.; 33cm. Holograph in pencil. On accompanying folder: "Original Manuscript – January 29-March 28, Aaron Copland Collection (Item no. 63.1, box no. 33), Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (facsimile provided by the Library of Congress).

List and Descriptions of the Source Items

US-Wc, Aaron Copland Collection, Item 63.1.

This source (hereafter Item 63.1) is the original composing score for *The Red Pony*. The manuscript is notated in pencil on sheets of heavy manila or off-white card stock measuring 32.9 cm by 27.1 cm. The sheets comprising each cue are taped together into gatherings with transparent tape; the gathering for each cue is self contained. The leaves are each preprinted on one side with twelve staff lines in one of three ways: staff lines only; staff lines grouped in fours with the bottom three staves of each group connected and containing bass and two treble clefs; and staff lines grouped in fours with a line connecting all staves of a group and featuring one bass and three treble clefs. Each of these sheets bears the legend “Property of Republic Pictures” at the bottom. The leaves appear to have originally been produced as bifolia and have been cut apart into individual sheets at a later stage. Consecutive sheets are typically taped back to back, and these two-sided sheets are then grouped into the gatherings. The music is notated in black pencil, measure numbers are indicated in red pencil, and margin notes such as hit points or clicks are indicated in red, green, or blue pencil. Each leaf contains a handwritten page number indicating its sequence in the cue and a printed page number (likely added by the Library of Congress) indicating its place in the overall sequence; there are 171 total pages.

US-Wc, Aaron Copland Collection, Item 63.2

This score (hereafter, “Item 63.2”) is a bound copy of a piano conducting score for *The Red Pony*. It is an ozalid duplicate of a hand-inked copy of the composing score, produced in three stave groups; the music itself appears to be identical to that in Item 63.1 and follows the same sequence of cues². The binding and pages measure 31.6cm by 23.3 cm. The leaves of Item 63.2 are of similar stock to those of Item 63.1 while the binding is of maroon cloth. The cover features the legend “THE RED PONY COPLAND” in gold Roman style letters, while the first page inside bears the following handwritten inscription in blue ink:

² Ozalid is a trade name for a make of duplicators, similar to Xerox.

“Aaron Copland The Red Pony film score (1948)
based on the story of John Steinbeck
Produced and directed by Lewis Milestone
N. Y. Premier March 8, 1949

The inked systems vary with each page, indicating that they were produced as each page was inked rather than being pre-printed stock sheets as were used in Item 63.1. There are penciled indications of instruments throughout this item as well as other margin notes in colored pencil similar to those in the composing score. The first page of each cue contains the legend “piano conducting score” in addition to “Property of Republic Pictures.” The item was later bound by Copland.

US-Wc Aaron Copland Collection, Item 63.3

This score (hereafter, “Item 63.3”) is a loose copy of the piano conducting score almost identical to Item 63.2. The leaves of Item 63.3 are the same size as those of Item 63.2, but are gathered in the same manner as those of Item 63.1. The principal difference between Items 63.2 and 63.3 is that the indications for instrumental parts which were added to 63.2 have been inked into the original source for 63.3. Item 63.3 is an ozalid duplicate like 63.2, but it is a copy of an intervening duplicate to which the indications for instrumental parts was inked. This item also contains margin notes in colored pencil as in the previous items.

US-Wc Aaron Copland Collection, Item 63.4

This score (hereafter, “Item 63.4”) actually consists of two items, each of which is a complete piano conducting score similar to Item 63.3. The leaves are the same size and are gathered in the same manner as those in Item 63.3. Each of these also contain instrumental assignments as part of the duplicating process, indicating that they were ultimately derived from the same source as Item 63.3. One of these items contains very few margin indications and the other none at all; the second of these may have been an extra copy that was essentially unused during the production process.

US-Wc Aaron Copland Collection, Item 63

This item is rather curious in that it contains three different sources: a set of full score realizations for several of the cues, three sheets of paper containing some notes on deriving the concert suite from the cues, and a set of cue sheets combined with a folder cover that reads “Revised Shooting Script.” The score realizations are on sheets preprinted for an orchestral score with staves grouped according to the different instruments. There are two sheet sizes, the larger measuring 55.8 cm by 32.2 cm and the smaller measuring 48.4 cm by 30.5 cm. Each leaf consists of two pages printed on one side that have been taped together to make one two sided leaf. The leaves contain holes punched for loose-leaf binding; the leaves of many cues are then tied together via these holes. The music is notated in black pencil while measure numbers and meter changes are indicated in red pencil. There are no margin indications in these realizations that describe screen action or dialogue; it could be that these realizations were used simply as a means from which to derive parts and that conducting was done from one of the Items 63.2-63.4. The set of cues is incomplete; there are no realizations for the cues “Buzzard Fight,” “The Sick Pony,” “The Operation,” “Tom’s Indecision,” and “The Promise.”

The cue sheets within Item 63 are all typed onto 8 ½ x 11-inch typing paper. There are several groups within the set of sheets. The first, comprising three sheets, is dated 1-30-1948 and is a list of thirty two scenes that will require music. These thirty two scenes are accompanied by cue numbers and approximate time durations of each scene. The second, dated 2-11-1948, comprises two sheets and contains a list of all cue numbers and cue titles as well as their duration and which cues employ a click track. The third group, dated 3-12-1948, is a revised version of the second. The bulk of the sets of cue sheets are those for the individual cues, with detailed descriptions of each shot within the scene as well as its duration. The notes for each cue begin on a new page.

The three sheets that comprise the remainder of Item 63 are notes pertaining to Copland’s concert suite from the score. Two of these sheets are the same size, and could have come from a notepad. Written in pencil on these sheets is a list of cues to be compiled into the concert suite, listing the cues by

title and number as well as measures to be selected if only a part of the cue was desired. The list of cues on the two sheets reads:

Sheet 1

- I. Ranch Life
- II. Jody and his Friends (this last is crossed out and the phrase “add The Gift” is appended.
- III. The Dream March
- IV. The Walk to the Bunkhouse

Sheet 2

- V. Grandfather’s Story
- VI. Buzzard (in parenthesis, “Circus”)
- VII. Jody’s Consolation
- VIII. (No title, but cue numbers and measures corresponding to “Happy Ending”)

The remaining sheet is 8 ½ x 11 inches and contains instructions in pencil for selecting and rearranging measures within the cue “End Title,” M 1200.

US-LAum Aaron Copland Collection of Motion Picture Music, Collection number 02

This source is listed as part of the special collections of the music library at the University of California, Los Angeles. While I have not examined this source, the description and inventory listed by the library’s site suggests that it is another set of Ozalid copies of conductor scores similar to Items 63.3 and 63.4 above.³

Chronology of Sources

The cue sheets contained in Item 63 were among the earliest items produced, although the sheets bearing the latest dates could have been produced during the later stages of the score production and likely indicate the latest stages of editing the film. The cues in Item 63.1 were produced next or concurrently as these are the earliest realizations of the musical cues themselves. An intervening stage between Items 63.1 and 63.2 is the hand-inked copy of the short-score cues in Item 63.1, of which Item 63.2 is a duplicate. Item 63.2 is the next likely

³ Aaron Copland, *The Red Pony*, conductor’s short scores, Aaron Copland Collection of Motion Picture Music, Collection number 02, Music Library Special Collections, University of California, Los Angeles; available from <http://dynaweb.oac.cdlib.org/dynaweb/ead/ucla/music/copland/>; Internet; accessed 17 March 2003.

stage, as it contains holograph indications for instrumentation penciled onto the ozalid duplicate of the inked score. Items 63.3 and 63.4 are still further stages as they are duplicates of an intervening ozalid onto which the instrumentations in Item 63.2 have been inked.

As mentioned in the item listings, these duplicates of the inked short score bear the designation “piano conductor score” at the base of the first page of each cue. Several of the cues in Items 63.3 and 63.4 contain hit points and other indications of screen action in colored pencil, but the markings are inconsistent from cue to cue within each set. It appears as though the individual cues comprising the original sets have been somewhat haphazardly collected into the current items, suggesting that it might be possible to reassemble all of the cues in these items into their original sets. The presence of these markings and the designation “piano conductor score” on these copies also suggests that one or more of these original sets was used to actually conduct the orchestra when recording the score. Other copies may have been used by the orchestrator(s) and music editor while editing the recording music into the picture. The relative absence of markings on the second set of Item 63.4 suggests that most of these cues belonged to a set that was not used.

The full-score realizations in Item 63 were most likely produced soon after the instrumentations were added to Item 63.2. Unlike the ozalid short score copies contained in Items 63.3 and 63.4, these full score realizations contain no indications of hit points or corresponding screen action. This further suggests that one of the short score copies which bears such indications was used to conduct the orchestra while recording. The purpose of these full-score realizations was most likely as a source for generating instrumental parts. The actual orchestral arrangements differ slightly from the published score dated 1951, three years after the composition of the score and the premier of the suite; the realizations for the film seem as though they might be for a slightly larger ensemble than that called for in the score for the concert suite

published by Boosey and Hawkes. One could speculate that Copland produced this later realization to make the score somewhat “leaner,” an adjective that Pollack uses to describe much of Copland’s music. Perhaps the ensemble that he had at his disposal at Republic was too large and “lush” for his taste.

Missing Sources

In addition to the missing conductor scores that constitute intervening stages between the extant scores mentioned above, the full-score realizations of several cues appear to be missing from Item 63. Virtually all of the cue titles represented in Item 63 contain music that ultimately appeared in Copland’s *Red Pony Suite*. The correlation between these collected full-score realizations and music within the suite suggests that Copland gathered these particular realizations to use in preparing his suite, an idea supported by the loose sheets of handwritten notes collected with these realizations in Item 63 that show early ideas for the sequence of movements within the concert suite. One would reasonably expect to find full-score realizations for all of the cues if they existed for any of them, although it is certainly possible that the orchestrators producing parts worked directly from the annotated conducting scores in orchestrating those cues not represented by the realizations in Item 63. This might be expected for those cues that are relatively short, simple, and do not require a large number of musicians, but it does not explain why realizations exist for one cue, but not another of equal complexity (such as, for example, “Circus Music” and “Buzzard Fight”). It also does not explain why realizations exist for some parts of a cue and not others (such as Parts I and V of “Circus Music” or Part I of “March Dream”). These points, coupled with the existence in Item 63 of realizations for “Strangles, Part I” and “At the Fireside,” perhaps one of the simplest of cues, suggests that full score realizations existed for all of the cues.

Copland's possession of the score materials, which allowed his donation of them to the Library of Congress, is rather unusual.⁴ Typically, such materials are considered the property of the studio, which retains copyright and possession of all scores and recordings; this is evident from the property markings on the score materials themselves. When Copland compiled the orchestral suite for Efrem Kurtz's premiere with the Houston Symphony Orchestra in 1948, he may have recalled some of these score materials from Republic Pictures. For some unknown reason, they were never returned. Perhaps he was allowed to keep them due to his status as a "serious composer," or due to his relationship with Lewis Milestone. It is equally possible that Republic Pictures may have simply forgotten that Copland had them; when studios retain such score materials, they are typically put into storage for indeterminate periods, and sometimes disposed of.

In any case, the realizations that Copland possessed included the cues that formed the basis of his concert suite, indicating that these realizations were key elements in the suite's creation, despite the slight differences in orchestration between the suite and the score. There are indications in some of the conductor scores that also bear a connection with the concert suite, particularly item 63.4, in which the "End Title" cue shows penciled indications for repeats that correspond to repeated bars within the larger ostinato texture of the suite movement "Happy Ending." It is not clear why Copland was in possession of all of these conducting score copies or the cue sheets, as these would seem to be of little use in preparing the concert suite. It is also not clear what happened to the missing realizations of the other cues; even if Copland originally requested only the realizations that he needed to produce his concert piece, it is curious that Republic would not have sent the remaining realizations along with the cue sheets and extra conducting scores that appear extraneous.

⁴ Library of Congress Copland inventory, 1986.

One could speculate that the remaining realizations remained in the possession of Republic Pictures along with other materials such as additional conductor score copies and even the original session recordings. The score copies in the possession of the UCLA library may have originally been part of the Republic archives. Two of the missing sources may have remained archived among these materials: the original inked conducting score copied from Item 63.1 and the ozalid copy with the inked orchestrations that is the stage between items 63.2 and 63.3. The actual location of these materials awaits further investigation.

CHAPTER III
A CLOSE EXAMINATION OF THE CUES
PRESENT IN THE FIRST HALF OF *THE RED PONY*

The influence of French neoclassicism and of Igor Stravinsky in particular is evident throughout the score to *The Red Pony* in two ways. Many of the cues employ a diatonicism that approaches tonal harmony, but is non-functional in the traditional sense due largely to the absence of cadences. The actual process of composing the cues is often one of assembly: small units, either melodic fragments or motives, are grouped successively to form larger strands of music. Forms are often dictated by the action within successive scenes accompanied by a given cue, but where possible, Copland arranges the components of the respective cues into forms that are musically logical as well.

Isolated instances within the score of passages that are crossed out or pages in which not all of the staves are used are further evidence of Copland's use of his self-described method of "assembly" in composing *The Red Pony* score. The first page of the cue number M100, "Prelude and Main Title," contains only the five measures that make up the opening theme, leaving a substantial portion of the page blank. Because the music that proceeds on the following page is of a substantially different character, this suggests that Copland treated his arrangement of the main title theme as a unit that he could use as the beginning of a series of such strata.¹ On page 5 of the same cue, the entire bottom system has been crossed out, yet, the third and fourth

¹ Copland, "Red Pony: original manuscript," Aaron Copland Collection (Item 63.1), 1

measures of this system and the timing indication in the center of this system correspond with the first measure of page 6.² In the end, the passage was shortened by the two measures in the lower left corner of page 5. The first measure of page 6, featuring the return of the opening theme and containing the timing indication 1:22 2/3, is clearly a “goal” that Copland was working toward. In fact, the material on page five serves as a solution that ultimately connects the canonic treatment of the main theme on page four with its formal reprise on page six. Such instances are consistent with Copland’s own recollection of his practice in that he would rarely compose a work from start to finish but might start in the middle or toward the end.³ They show how Copland’s stratified approach is ideal for working in the film medium.

The assembled nature of Copland’s score is particularly apparent in his indication of materials that are to be repeated. Each of the measures within the first two pages of the cue “Circus Dream – Part III” contains a boxed letter, while the fifth and sixth pages consist of blank measures containing only boxed letters that correspond to those of the first two pages; here, Copland is denoting individual measures as units within the cue. In addition to serving as Copland’s means of denoting material to be repeated, this method also allows him to alter the sequence of these units or groups of units during the reprise (see Facsimile 1). Similar shorthand is employed in the “End Title” in mm. 21 to 44 to indicate different combinations of layered ostinati that propel the cue forward when arranged successively.⁴

The cues within the film use some recurring themes that are identified here for convenience in the discussion of the individual cues. The names assigned to the themes relate to their first appearance or their recurring connotation within the context of the story:

1. Main Title Theme – opens the film and introduces the opening credits

² Copland, “Red Pony: original manuscript,” Aaron Copland Collection (Item 63.1), 5-6.

³ Pollack, *Aaron Copland*, 10.

⁴ Copland, “Red Pony: original manuscript,” Aaron Copland Collection (Item 63.1), 52-53, 56-57, 168-169.

ed. _____ Title M-300B-PART III composer _____ 54
Circus Music - 300 B- Arranger _____
Part III XX ④

3.0-8-
 First 1

Shoe 1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8

9 10 11 12

4 110

Property of Remble Productions, Inc.

Facsimile 1. "Circus Music, Part III" mm. 1-12 showing
 Letter Designations for Measures to be Repeated.
 Item 63.1, Aaron Copland Collection, Library of Congress.
 Used by permission of the Aaron Copland Fund For Music,
 copyright holder

2. “Ranch Theme” – first heard in “Morning on the Ranch,” this is a folk-like diatonic melody used during scenes of work around the ranch.
3. “First Billy Buck Theme” – this is more of an accompaniment pattern derived from bass notes on downbeats followed by syncopated chords. The first appearance of this theme is the cue “Walk to the Bunkhouse,” where it is incorporated into an alternating 3 /4 and 2/4 meter.
4. “Second Billy Buck Theme” – this is also first heard in “Walk to the Bunkhouse.” This theme consists of descending thirds in alternating registers.
5. “Tom’s Childhood Theme” – this theme is associated with Tom’s activities as a child, such as interacting with school friends or daydreaming. The theme virtually gushes with exuberance, particularly as it appears in “March Dream, Pt I” and Tom’s Friends.”

In addition to providing musical/narrative references within the score, these themes also participate as various strata within a plane that encompasses the entire score. These relationships will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Five.

Ex. 3-1 Recurring Themes in *The Red Pony*

Ex. 3-1a "Main Title Theme"



Ex. 3-1b "Ranch Theme"



Ex. 3-1c "First Billy Buck Theme"



Ex. 3-1d "Second Billy Buck Theme"



Ex. 3-1e "Tom's Childhood Theme"



Musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

Generally, the following discussion treats all parts contained within a single cue title as one complete movement. This is based on the fact that multiple “parts” of a cue usually work to create one complete movement even if those respective parts are assigned unrelated cue numbers instead of subsets of the same cue number; i.e., “Strangles” Part I and Part II are both discussed under the heading “Strangles” even though the cue numbers of the respective parts, M802 and M900, do not suggest a relationship.

M100 “Prelude and Main Title”

The opening theme of the cue “Main Title” is derived from a melody that first appears in a sketch dated December 10, 1947.⁵ The original melody features a descent of the octave c^2 to c^1 in triple meter with an added *b flat* (Ex. 3-2). This melody is often accompanied by doubling at the fifth which, along with the *b flat*, creates an ambiguity in its inherent harmony that hovers between *C* and *F*. The theme is sounded once in the opening measures and gradually reappears in a series of additional layers before its “triumphant” return in m. 45

Ex. 3-2 “Prelude and Main Title” mm. 1-5.

⁵ Copland, “Red Pony: sketches,” 1948, Aaron Copland Collection (Item 63.5, box 82), Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 5th leaf.

Ex. 3-3 “Prelude and Main Title” mm. 6-18.

Musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

. The intervening material in mm. 6-44 underscores both the introductory voice-over narration and the events on the ranch leading up to and immediately following the dawn. Especially notable among these is the capture of a rabbit by an owl; this sequence foreshadows the story’s theme of death as part of the cycle of life. This passage consists of a series of juxtaposed blocks. The subdued chords in mm. 6-15 reappear in diminution in mm. 18-25 after

an intervening statement of the opening theme (Ex. 3-3). After a brief interlude in mm. 26-31, the opening theme is presented in canon beginning at m. 31, first with pitches only and finally with pitches in rhythm (Ex. 3-4). This canonic treatment of the main theme leads into the reprise of the main theme proper at m. 41.

Ex. 3-4 “Prelude and Main Title” mm. 26-37.

Musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

The second part of the “Main Title,” beginning at m. 51, is much livelier, in a fast duple meter, and is based on the folk-like “Ranch” theme that is the basis of the subsequent cue, “Morning on the Ranch.” This theme accompanies the film’s titles (Ex. 3-5). This theme is restated beginning at m. 69, with the opening theme added as a layer between phrases in the accompaniment. This layering continues through m. 80 at which point the music shifts to a 6/8

meter for the concluding statements of the Main Title theme. In the film, the final notes of this cue are faded out to coincide with the beginning of the next cue, “Morning on the Ranch.”

Ex. 3-5 “Prelude and Main Title” mm. 51-59.

Musical examples reproduced with permission by the Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

Dividing this cue according to Edward T. Cone’s stratified layers results in seven divisions that are shown in Figure 3-1 below:

Figure 3-1 “Prelude and Main Title”

Strata	Opening Theme A			Opening Theme A			Opening Theme A
		Chords B					
			Opening Theme In canon A'			Opening Theme In canon A'	
					“Ranch” Theme C		
Measures	Mm. 1-5	Mm. 6-31	Mm. 31-41	Mm. 41-50	Mm. 51-74	Mm. 74-80	Mm. 80-88

M101 Morning on the Ranch

- 1) “a”—the main “Ranch” theme, which first appears at mm. 1-4 and is the principal fragment of the cue against which all others are set.
- 2) “b” – an “extension” to the Ranch theme, which first appears at mm. 22-26.
- 3) “c” – the first “answer” to the Ranch theme, which appears first at mm. 8-14.
- 4) “d” – the second “answer” to the Ranch theme, which appears first at mm. 27-32.
- 5) “e” – a follow up to one of the answers; this features treble voices in thirds followed by syncopated leaps involving parallel triadic structures.

"a"

The musical notation for the 'a' section is written on a single staff in treble clef with a common time signature (C). The melody begins with a whole rest, followed by a quarter note G4, an eighth note A4, and a quarter note B4. This is followed by a quarter note A4, an eighth note G4, and a quarter note F#4. The melody continues with a quarter note E4, a quarter note D4, and a quarter note C4. The final measure of the 'a' section consists of a quarter note B3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note G3.

Ex. 3-6 (cont.)



Musical examples reproduced with permission by the Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

The phrases are arranged in the cue to produce a three part form, $A A^2 A^3$. The division of sections is determined by repetition of phrases within sections and changes of tonal center.

The form is diagrammed in Figure 2 below.

“Morning on the Ranch”			
Section	A	A^2	A^3
Phrases	aac aab de	$a^2 a^2 b^2$ $c^2 e^2$	$ab d a^3$
Key Center	C	F	C

Figure 3-2

The “A” section establishes *C* as a tonal center through the outlining of a *C* major triad in the Ranch theme and the use of a *C* pedal in the accompanying ostinato (Ex. 3-7). The A^2 and A^3 sections use the same means to establish *F* and *C*, respectively, as centers. The addition of flats within phrase “e” allows for a few measures of harmonic instability that make a change of tonal center possible. This is not achieved by conventional tonal modulation, but by planing, first

from *C* major through *E flat*, *D flat* and *C* minor to *F* major, and later from *F* major through *D flat*, *C flat*, and *B flat* to *C*. The cue does not end with a proper cadence; in fact, it has no conventional ending at all. Instead, it settles into an ostinato based on the “a” segment and simply stops after a specified number of measures. This ostinato would then be faded out on the soundtrack as part of the post-production process.

Ex. 3-7 “Morning on the Ranch” mm. 1-5



Musical examples reproduced with permission by the Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

The purpose of this cue is to reinforce the setting rather than the action, which it accomplishes by instilling a folk-like simplicity in the Ranch theme. The regular phrase structure and diatonic sonorities of the fragments together give the cue the quality of a folk melody, which reinforces the rural setting of the film's action. Indeed, the music here is part of the décor, much like a set piece. In this case, Copland produces a three-part arch form with the central part distinguished by a change in tonal center even though all three parts use the same thematic material. The changes of key center and orchestration provide sufficient contrast to maintain musical interest despite the economy of material, an impression further supported by the fact that

the first two sections of this cue were incorporated virtually intact into the concert suite.⁶ The melody on which the cue is based figures prominently in the score, reappearing in M100 (“Main Title”), M110 (“End Title”), and in the prologue and epilogue to “Circus Dream” (M300 and M301A).

M102, M102A, M200 “Walk To The Bunkhouse” (Parts I, II, and III)

The score of “Walk to the Bunkhouse” divides the cue into three parts. This piece is similar to the previous cue in that its primary purpose is to give the viewer information about the characters and setting – in this case, some sense of the character of Billy Buck as a free-spirited cowhand who is adept with horses as well as with the ladies – rather than directly reflecting or reinforcing the screen action. The exception to this occurs in the second part, where the music pauses briefly to accentuate the humor in Billy’s replies to Tom’s questions regarding the portraits of saloon girls on Billy’s wall and in his trunk. The matching of these pauses to the corresponding key points of dialogue was the likely cause of this cue’s division into three parts. By scoring and recording the cue this way, Copland could focus on synchronizing smaller time units, an easier task than attempting to keep longer cues synchronized over a longer stretch of time. The use of a click track for the second part also ensured that he could properly place the pauses with respect to the dialogue. Copland could focus on fitting the music of Part II to the humorous exchange knowing that the first and third parts would be properly placed and adjusted during editing.

Musically, the complete cue consists of two alternating strata, the first (A) based on an asymmetric accompanimental pattern and the second (B) based on a series of descending triads. The loping character of the accompaniment in the first stratum suggests the galloping of a horse,

⁶See mm. 47-103 of Aaron Copland, *The Red Pony: Film Suite for Orchestra*, Full Score (New York: Boosey and Hawkes, 1951), 10-19

which reinforces this cue's connection with the cowhand Billy Buck; Lawrence Morton identifies this pattern as one of the "horsey" rhythms that characterize Copland's western music similar to those in *Billy the Kid* and *Rodeo*.⁷ This accompaniment pattern constitutes the "First Billy Buck Theme." This pattern accompanies two themes. The first of these ("a"), which appears in Part I, is a soaring melody derived from the c^2 to c^1 octave descent of the film's "Main Title" theme minus the *B-flat* (Ex. 3-8). The second theme ("b"), which acts as a "foil" for the first, is more rhythmically active and proceeds in a series of phrases of irregular length (Ex. 3-9). The pauses for dialogue are inserted between these phrases. The second stratum consists of sustained chords in the strings that begin with a *C*-major triad sounding in alternately high and low registers that move to a *B-flat* triad; this figure constitutes the "Second Billy Buck Theme" (Ex. 3-10). In this stratum's first occurrence, at the end of Part I, the harmony planes to *G flat* and then to *G* major as a prelude to the return of the first stratum at the beginning of Part II (the thirds are represented in Fig. 3-3 as "c" and the planing motion as "d"). At the beginning of Part III, this stratum is considerably lengthened, planing through *B-flat*, *C*, *D-flat*, and *E-flat* dominant sevenths before reprising the alternating chords in *F* major; this leads to a brief reprise in *D flat* followed by planing through *C-flat*, *D-flat*, *D*, and *E* dominant sevenths leading to *F sharp*. The high *A sharp* note sustaining in the strings essentially becomes *B flat* in mm. 11-12 of Part III, allowing the harmony to move through a *B-flat* seventh back to the reprise of the first stratum in *C* major at m. 13.

⁷ Lawrence Morton, "The Red Pony: A Review of Aaron Copland's Score," *Film Music Notes* (Feb 1949), 6.

Ex. 3-8 “Walk to the Bunkhouse” mm. 1-12

Ex. 3-8 “Walk to the Bunkhouse” mm. 1-12

Ex. 3-9 “Walk to the Bunkhouse” Pt II, mm. 17-32

Ex. 3-9 “Walk to the Bunkhouse” Pt II, mm. 17-32

Who's that? That's my cousin

Who's that? That's another cousin.

Ex. 3-9 (cont.)

Musical score for Ex. 3-9 (cont.). The score is written for a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in 3/4 time and features the lyrics "I thought she was your cousin" and "We're a big family...". The piano accompaniment consists of two staves, with the right hand playing a melodic line and the left hand providing harmonic support. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Ex. 3-10 "Walk to the Bunkhouse" Pt I, mm. 21-23

Musical score for Ex. 3-10 "Walk to the Bunkhouse" Pt I, mm. 21-23. The score is written for a piano accompaniment. It features a melodic line in the right hand and a harmonic line in the left hand. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Musical examples reproduced with permission by the Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

As in the previous cue, "Morning on the Ranch," Copland produces an ABAB or quasi-rondo formal structure that owes as much to a sense of form and balance as it does to the scene; this even though the A' section Part II contains music that interacts directly with the scene's dialogue. The first strata appears initially appears with only the soaring melody, whereas the second statement consists of the rhythmic melody followed by the soaring melody and the third statement contains both melodies sounded simultaneously. The first statement of the second strata merely presents the basic idea while the second statement presents the idea considerably more developed. The means by which these elements are assembled to produce the cue is illustrated in Figure 3-3 below:

Figure 3-3 “Walk to the Bunkhouse”

Part	I		II		III	
Strata	A		A ²	A		A ³
		B			B ²	
	a	cd	b	a	cd ² c ² d ³	a+b
Meas.	1-20	21-23	1-29	30-36	1-12	13-23

Despite the planing occurring within the second stratum, the key center remains C major throughout the cue.

M201, M201A “March Dream” (Parts I and II)

The cue “March Dream” is divided into two parts. These parts appear initially to be similar to the multiple parts comprising “Walk to the Bunkhouse,” but in the case of “March Dream” these two parts function more properly as two distinct pieces of music (indeed, as two distinct cues) rather than as parts of a composite whole. This scene is important both in further establishing Tom’s idolizing of Billy Buck and introducing his propensity for daydreaming. The music in the “March Dream” cue aids this scene by functioning much as the previous two cues in providing a musical “setting” to underline the medieval setting within Tom’s imagination, all the while reminding the viewer of its fantastic and whimsical nature with the use of polytonality. The cue also interacts very closely with the action of the film: the beat of the cue is derived from and consistently follows first Tom’s marching feet and then the steady gait of the crusaders, while the flipping flapjacks are consistently mimicked by a suitable musical figure (perhaps the only instance of “mickey-mousing” in the score).

The music in Part I primarily introduces the theme that is the basis of the march dream proper just as Part I accompanies the scene that precedes the dream march sequence in the film. This theme recurs in several subsequent cues and signifies Tom’s childhood experiences and

viewpoint while on the ranch. The theme is diatonic and consists of rapid rhythmic figures, both of which add to its lighthearted, carefree character. Part I of “March Dream” consists simply of two statements of this theme, first in E major in mm. 1-10 and then B major in mm. 11-18 (See Ex. 3-11).

Ex. 3-11 “March Dream” Pt I mm. 1-6



Musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

Part II of “March Dream” comprises the march proper, which is composed and scored to a click track timed to coincide with Tom’s marching and striking his lunchbox in the beginning of the scene. This music accompanies Tom’s fantasy of himself and Billy Buck as knights on horseback leading a column of crusaders through a medieval landscape dominated by a castle. The cue consists of a series of statements of “Tom’s Childhood” theme, all presented over an *E* pedal articulated in the “march” accompaniment in the bass. The key centers implied by the statements themselves alternate between various harmonies, primarily *D* major and *E* major. The resulting polytonality adds a touch of humor to the scene and reminds the viewer that the scene is fantasy (See Ex. 3-12).

Ex. 3-12 “March Dream” Pt II, mm. 1-12



Musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

Measures 40-81 of the cue include several musical gestures intended to accompany events such as Tom’s mother waving to the passing knights and pancakes being flipped by an animated stove.⁸ This part of the scene was edited out of the final picture, so that m. 39 proceeds directly into m. 82 in the finished film (more on this in Chapter 6). Editing of music for reasons of this sort is not uncommon in film music; in this case, the use of a click track coupled with the regular tempo of the march assured that the edited result would still be in time with the marching characters on screen.⁹

The stratification and assembly within the “March Dream” cue takes a different approach than that of the previous cues. Here, the texture is largely unified by the incessant march accompaniment, although there is a brief respite provided by the material at m. 69. The different strata within this piece are the various key centers implied by the successive statements and fragments of the “Tom’s Childhood” theme, with *D* and *E* being the principal strata. The overall

⁸ The action is described in the score and in the corresponding cue sheet for the film. See Items 63 and 63.1, Aaron Copland Collection.

⁹ Hagen, *Scoring for Films*, 11-37.

form is less clearly defined than in previous cues because elements in the music of this cue interact so closely with the gestures on the screen, going so far as to imitate the actions of the pancakes and the stove in mm. 42-48, 64-68, and 69-72 (Ex. 3-13). There does seem to be a three-part form anchored around the full statements of the “Tom’s Childhood” theme at mm. 5, 22, and 73; the first statement introduces the theme quietly and begins a steady rise in activity level, m. 22 features a robust statement of the theme leading into the active fantasy portion of the scene, and m. 73 features an equally robust reprise of the theme followed by a gradual tapering of activity coincident with Tom’s emerging from his daydream.

Ex. 3-13 “March Dream” Pt II, mm. 41-46



Musical examples reproduced with permission by the Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

The polarized harmonies of *D* major and *E* major act as two continuous strata over the course of the cue. Each statement or fragment of the “Childhood” theme is a module or segment;

the cue is assembled simply by arranging these segments sequentially. Within mm. 40-81, these segments are interspersed with gestures indicating flipping flapjacks (mm. 42-48 and mm. 64-68) and a short intermezzo played by a toy trumpet in mm. 69-72 (Ex. 3-14). Figure 3-4 illustrates these successive segments and their respective tonal centers.

Ex. 3-14 “March Dream” Pt II, mm. 69-76



Musical examples reproduced with permission by the Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

Figure 3-4 “March Dream, Part II”

Key												
G												
F#								a^2			$a + a^2$	
E				A(+b)	(b)	A	b					
D	A		a									
C#		$a + a^2$										c(D \flat)
C										d		
B \flat									c			
Meas	5-12	12-17	18-21	22-30	30-34	35-43	42-48	49-50	51-52	53-56	56-58	59-60

“March Dream, Part II” (cont.)

Key												
G												
F#												
E				A	a		a			a		A
D	d	b	e			a			a		a	
C#								a				
C												
B \flat												
Meas	61- 65	64- 68	69- 72	73- 82	83- 85	86- 88	89- 91	93- 96	97- 98	99-106	109-112	113-120

Key to segments

A	“Tom’s Childhood” theme – full statement	
a	“Tom’s Childhood” theme – fragment	
a ²	“fanfare” derived from “Childhood” theme	
b	Flapjack flip gestures	
c	Variation on “Childhood” theme	
d	Harmonic planing	
e	Toy trumpet melody	

M202 “Intro to Circus Dream” and M300, M300A, M300B, M301, M301A “Circus Dream” (Parts I-V)

The “Circus Dream” cue accompanies a brief fantasy sequence in which Tom imagines himself as the ringmaster of a circus. Copland composed an elaborate, multi-part cue for this sequence but, like the sequence accompanied by “March Dream,” much of this action was edited out of the final film. As a result, Parts III and IV of “Circus Dream” do not appear in the film’s soundtrack.¹⁰ Parts II-IV were later transformed into the “Circus Music” portion of Copland’s concert suite.¹¹ Although there are detailed cue sheets indicating the intended shots for this sequence, there are no indications in the score itself of hit points or other screen action, raising

¹⁰ Pollack, *Aaron Copland*, 431.

¹¹ Copland, *The Red Pony: Film Suite*, 63-72

the question of whether or not individual parts were composed to fit the picture or were created freely.¹²

The introduction and Parts I and V of this cue are actually separate pieces from the music that accompanies the circus fantasy itself, much as “March Dream, Part I” is really a separate cue from “March Dream, Part II.” The introduction literally serves as a slow introduction to Part I, while Parts I and V of “Circus Music” act as a frame for the circus music proper, and include a quotation of the “Ranch” theme from “Morning on the Ranch.” This music helps to establish the setting of the scene in which Tom begins his daydream while feeding the chickens and is roused from it by a call from his grandfather. In the film, the ending bars of Part I are faded out as the scene changes to the circus and the opening bars of Part V are faded in as the scene changes back to the ranch.

The introduction itself is in two parts, the first (mm. 1-12) consisting of alternating chords (*D* major seventh alternating with *G* major with an added sixth) and the second (mm. 16-25) consisting of a series of arpeggiated triads (See Ex. 3-15). In the film, this introduction proceeds seamlessly into Part I. Part I contains a statement of the “Ranch” theme in mm. 1-12, a contrasting melody in mm. 13-21, and a reprise of the “Ranch” theme in mm. 21-38 (This reprise is marked by a subtle change in the segment of the “Ranch” theme at m. 30 where the half note *b* replaces the expected quarter notes *b* and *d* from previous hearings; this change is also heard in the statement in Part V; see Ex. 3-17). At m. 38, the scene changes to Tom feeding the chickens, with the change “announced” by a brief “fanfare” in the clarinets. This portion of the cue sees the successive addition of three elements (indicated as x, y, and z in the figure below). The first is a sequence of arpeggios derived from the opening figure of the “Ranch”

¹² Copland, “The Red Pony: cue sheets” (Item 63), “The Red Pony: original manuscript,” (Item 63.1), Aaron Copland Collection.

Ex. 3-15 "Intro to Circus Dream" mm. 6-17

Ex. 3-15 "Intro to Circus Dream" mm. 6-17. The score is in 2/4 time, key of D major (two sharps). It consists of three systems of staves. The first system has three staves: Treble, Treble, and Bass. The second system has three staves: Treble, Treble, and Bass. The third system has three staves: Treble, Treble, and Bass. The music features various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. There are also some tied notes and slurs.

Ex. 3-16 "Circus Music" Pt I, mm. 25-33

Ex. 3-16 "Circus Music" Pt I, mm. 25-33. The score is in common time (C), key of D major (two sharps). It consists of two systems of staves. The first system has three staves: Treble, Treble, and Bass. The second system has three staves: Treble, Treble, and Bass. The music features various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. There are also some tied notes and slurs.

Ex. 3-17 “Circus Music” Pt I, mm. 40-48 showing overlap with M301A “Circus Music” Pt. V

The musical score is presented in 12 staves. The first 10 staves represent 'Circus Music' Pt. I, measures 40-48. The last two staves represent M301A 'Circus Music' Pt. V. The music is in 2/4 time and the key of D major. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, including eighth notes, sixteenth notes, and triplets. The score also features various accidentals and dynamic markings.

Musical examples reproduced with permission by the Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

theme that begin at m. 40. The second is an “undulating” sixteenth-note figure beginning at m. 42 that moves through implied D^7 , B -minor, and G -sharp-minor harmonies. The final element occurs at m. 45 and corresponds to the point where the scene begins dissolving from the “reality” of the ranch to the circus setting in Tom’s mind. This figure consists of a series of parallel

thirds moving up and down in triplets articulating G-flat pentatonic harmony; the effect is one of “skipping up and down the black keys of the piano keyboard.” The resulting polytonality and polyrhythms emphasize both the humor of the scene and confirm its status as fantasy, much as in the “March Dream.” The sonority is faded out in the soundtrack as the circus music of Part II begins. Part V completes the musical “frame” by beginning where Part I leaves off (Ex. 3-17).

The actual circus music of the “Circus Dream” cue, Parts II-IV, uses melodic fragments in the same way as “Morning on the Ranch,” but the resulting structure is more complex, as illustrated in Figure 3-5. The fragments or phrases are combined into larger units, which are then combined into still larger units. Parts II and IV each contain two periods and are essentially the same; Part IV is a modified and extended reprise of part II. Part III is divided into five

Figure 3-5 “Circus Music”

	Part I				Part V	
Sections	A	B			A ²	
Phrases/ Elements	aabdaab ² c x y z				b ² aab ² a ² y	
Key Cent	D				D	
Beg meas	1	38			1 6	
			Part II		Part IV	
Sections			A B		A B	
Phrases/ Elements			aa ² bb ²		aa ² bb ²	
Key Cent			G G		G G	
Beg meas			1 9		1 9	
				Part III		
Sections				A B C A C		
Key Cent				E ^b C C E ^b C		
Beg meas				1 16 35 43 58		

subsections and is an abrupt shift in character from part II; it exhibits a change in key center, meter, and tempo. Taken together, these three parts comprise an ABA' form. Figure 3-5 illustrates the various components and the respective “planes” within which they work.

The character of the cue suggests carousel music, which is in keeping with the circus setting of the fantasy sequence and also plays on the visual image of Tom standing in the center of a circle of ponies. The opening phrases of Part II (and IV) introduce a waltz-like melody that initially appears to have a regular phrase structure. Irregularities appear in the consequent period. Beginning at m. 9, the consequent period contains rather marked diatonic polytonality in the treble lines. The syncopation and extension of the consequent period at mm. 15-16 disrupts the regularity of the melody. These irregularities are not unlike Stravinskian methods of manipulating otherwise predictable structures. The effect of these manipulations is to enhance the humor of the scene and to stress its imaginary quality within the diegesis.

Ex. 3-18 “Circus Dream” Pt. II, mm. 1-18



Ex. 3-18 (cont.)



Musical examples reproduced with permission by the Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

Part III of the cue is not as regular in its construction as parts II and IV, but nonetheless contains clearly marked sections (See Ex. 3-19). The “A” section features prominent polyrhythms juxtaposing an implied 3/8 meter against the written 2/4. The “B” section shifts to the 3/8 meter and features diatonic polytonality in the treble reminiscent of that in the second half of Part II. The “C” section features chromatic polytonality; in this case, an ostinato providing a *C* pedal supports a pentatonic appoggiatura figure implying *G flat*; this figure is very similar to that occurring at m. 45 in Part I and conveys a similar effect. Part III of the cue concludes with a reprise of the “A” and “C” sections.

Harmony is implied in “Circus Dream” either through triads outlined in the melodies or through emphasis on pedal ostinati. Part II opens in a *G* major tonality, with the melody outlining a *G* triad and *G* major implied in the accompaniment. The consequent period reinforces the sense of *G* major by emphasizing *C* (the subdominant) in both the accompaniment and two of the three treble voices. Part II, however, abruptly ends with a *B flat* major triad (this

ending is masked in the film by the cross fade to Part V). The sections of Part III do not bear as close a relationship as those in II or IV. The “A” section is in *E flat*, evident in the melody and the accompaniment. The “B” section is effectively in *C* due to the pedal accompaniment and hints of a *C* triad in the polytonal upper voices. The “C” section also appears to be in *C* due to the accompanying ostinato. Part III ends with a resounding pair of *E flat* major triads before it is followed by Part IV, which echoes the harmonic motion of Part II. Figure 3-5 illustrates the arch relationship between the parts and discontinuity among the planes within which they operate; Part III essentially divides the pairing of Parts II and IV, all of which divides the pairing of parts I and V.

Ex. 3-19 “Circus Dream” Pt III, mm. 1-42

The musical score for "Circus Dream" Part III, measures 1-42, is presented in four systems, each containing two staves. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat), and the time signature is 2/4. The first system (measures 1-8) features a melody in the third staff and a bass line in the fourth staff. The second system (measures 9-16) continues the melody and bass line. The third system (measures 17-24) shows a change in the melody and bass line. The fourth system (measures 25-32) shows a change in the melody and bass line. The fifth system (measures 33-40) shows a change in the melody and bass line. The sixth system (measures 41-42) shows the final measures of the excerpt.

Ex. 3-19 (cont.)

The musical score consists of three systems, each with four staves. The first system shows a complex melodic line in the upper staves and a steady bass line. The second system introduces a key change to B-flat major and a time signature change to 2/4. The third system continues the melody in the new key and time signature, with the bass line providing harmonic support.

Musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

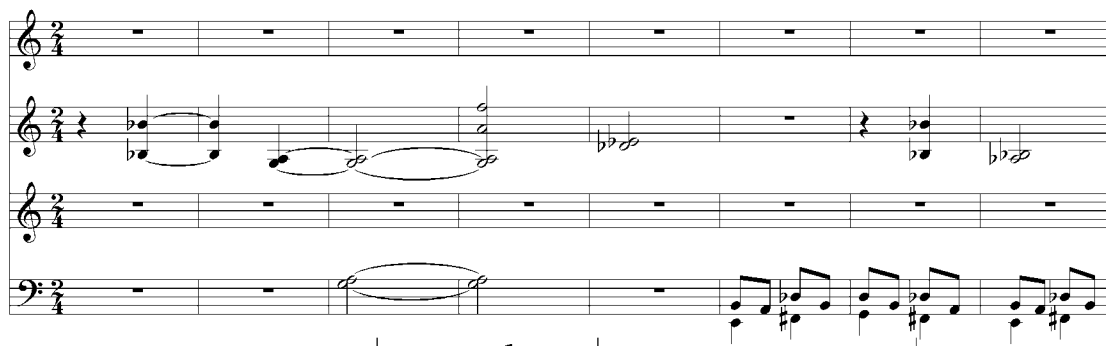
M302 “The Boring Dinner”

The original title of “The Boring Dinner” was “The Unsuccessful Raconteur,” a reference to the interruptions that Tom’s grandfather experiences during the family’s evening meal while attempting to tell one of his tales of his exploits as an Indian fighter. Fred is obviously annoyed at the old man’s stories and is grateful for any such interruption, quickly focusing on a moth circling the light above the table and trying to catch it and take it outside. Tom’s mother, Alice,

and Billy Buck sit and listen politely while Tom, on the other hand, is interested and encourages the old man to continue; this encouragement earns Tom the displeasure of his father. This cue was also composed to a click track in order for Copland to be able to match downbeats in the cue to specific shots and actions on the screen.

“The Boring Dinner” contains three sections based on the same ostinato pattern that goes awry in each section. The “progress” of each of these sections is “distracted” by the beginning of this ostinato, appearing first at m. 9, that continues for three or more measures; this usually coincides with an interruption in the grandfather’s story. Each of his attempts at starting his yarn coincides with the beginning of the four-measure pattern of rising fifths such as at m. 6 (“A” in Fig. 3-6; see Ex. 3-20). At m. 9 and m. 21, the last measure of the previous A section begins its ostinato (“B” in Fig. 3-6). The figure present in the introductory measures, a somewhat dramatic downward sweep from a sixth to a second, often reappears in connection with reprises of the A section. This succession of blocks constitutes the assemblage within this cue. Narratively, “The Boring Dinner” reflects the old grandfather’s tendency to go “on and on and on” with his stories, especially in the eyes of his son-in-law, Fred, and the interruptions that Fred and Billy pursue to keep him from doing so. This is a somewhat subtle way of using the style to reflect the narrative action.

Ex. 3-20 “The Boring Dinner” mm. 1-12



Example 3-21 (cont.)



Measures 13-21 are edited out in the final film; the ostinato at m. 12 merges into m. 23, and a distinct quote of the “Ranch” theme appears at m. 25. The last part of m. 30 is silent, and an extra measure of silence appears to be added between mm. 35 and 36. The modular principle still holds as each of these are discrete sections separated by silence; the ostinato under the ranch theme contributes to this as well.

Ex. 3-21 “The Boring Dinner” mm. 23-32

Musical examples reproduced with permission by the Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

Again, Copland creates a coherent musical structure in the cue that nonetheless supports specific events in the action on the screen. The pauses occurring after the B sections emphasize everyone's ultimate attention on the distraction from the old man's talking, but also reinforces the sense of a three-part structure with parts built on the succession of the sweep gesture preceding the A section, the A section, and the B section.

Figure 3-6 "The Boring Dinner"

Section	Intro			Intro					
		A			A ²		A ³	A ²	A
			B			B			
	Descent, 6 th to 2 nd	Ascending fifths, incl. Intro figure	Incl. Treble ostinato	Intro chords	Extended reprise of A section	Includes Ranch theme		A pattern in reverse	Shortened reprise of A
Meas.	1-5	6-8	9-12	13-15	15-21	21-30	31- 35	36-41	43-45

M400 "The Gift"

"The Gift" is not composed of readily discernible and distinct blocks as many of the previous cues are; instead, it consists of a succession of lush melodies, each flowing seamlessly into the next. The opening chordal figure is repeated and altered over the course of the beginning of the cue. This breaks out into a soaring melody that leads eventually leads to a statement of the "Tom's Childhood" theme. Each of these phrase segments functions like a component of an assembly. "The Gift" as it appears in the film occurs entirely under dialogue. It is somehow ironic that this lush music, being under dialogue, is essentially "unheard"; one

wonders if this could be one reason why Copland added a movement based on this cue to his *Red Pony* concert suite.

“The Gift” begins with three variations on a chordal motive involving strings and vibraphone (“a” in Fig. 3-7), which, after a brief answering interlude (“b”), are followed by two more (See Ex. 3-22). This texture then breaks into a soaring melody in strings at m. 21, followed by a similar melody in strings and then by clarinet at mm. 31 and 35 (“C” in Fig. 3-7). Varied reprises of this melody appear at m. 43 in flutes and m. 55 in octave strings.

Ex. 3-22 “The Gift” mm. 1-40

The musical score for "The Gift" mm. 1-40 is presented in three systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 3/4. The score begins with a series of rests in the treble staff, followed by a melodic line in the bass staff. The first system (mm. 1-8) features a series of chords in the treble staff and a melodic line in the bass staff. The second system (mm. 9-16) continues the melodic line in the bass staff, with the treble staff providing harmonic support. The third system (mm. 17-24) shows a more complex texture with multiple melodic lines in both staves. The score concludes with a final chord in the treble staff and a melodic line in the bass staff.

Ex. 3-22 (cont.)



Musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

The melodies in sections “B” and “C” are both based largely on quartal intervals, “B” with its rise of a fifth and drop of a second and a fourth, and “C”, with its repeated fourths followed by downward scalar motion. Quartal relationships are also emphasized in the tonal centers prominent in the statements of “C”: *C* major is the tonal center in mm. 31-43 and 43-54, although the anchoring fourth of the melody moves from the fourth *D-G* to *G-C* in the successive statements. At m. 55, the tonal center has shifted back to *A* major, although the presence of the note *F sharp* featured prominently with the fourth *E-A* results in slight harmonic ambiguity that also suggests *F-sharp* minor.

Ex. 3-23 “The Gift” mm. 55-62

Ex. 3-24 “The Gift” mm. 67-77

Musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

This melody is composed of a series of successive phrase segments, each with no traditional four-square phrase structure or sense of antecedence/consequence. Each of these segments is a linear component in the assembly of this lush texture. At m. 67, the trumpet comes in with a statement of the “Tom’s Childhood” theme; the last half of the consequent phrase is

repeated in a quasi-ostinato fashion. Measure 82 features a change of tempo, character and idea, being based largely on the “Tom’s Childhood” theme. The theme is stated once, followed by a downward moving melodic ostinato leading to a great sweeping gesture spanning over five octaves in mm. 90-91. After a brief pause, the opening idea is stated once, ending the cue.

In the composing score, m. 81 has been crossed out, and in the film the change in tempo and character at m. 82 occurs immediately after m. 79. Measures 80 and 81 are essentially the same as mm. 78-79 and constitute the fourth reprise of a two-measure ostinato, making their removal inaudible. This demonstrates the ease with which music employing ostinati can be freely adjusted to accommodate slight changes in the running time of a scene.

Ex. 3-25 “The Gift” mm. 82-85



Musical examples reproduced with permission by the Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

Figure 3-7 “The Gift”

Sections	A(aba)							A(a)
		B						
			C	C ²	C ³			
						D		
							E (D ²)	
Key ctrs	A	A	C	C	A/f#	A	A	A
Meas.	1-20	21-31	31-43	43-54	55-67	68-81	82-91	93-94

M401 “Tom’s Friends”

“Tom’s Friends” is a rather interesting cue in that only the second half of it appears in the film; this cue actually picks up at m. 45, with Tom and Billy out in the corral with the pony. The first half, which consists of music built on the “Tom’s Childhood” theme, looks and sounds very similar to the treatment of this theme at the end of “The Gift.” (In the concert suite movement, “The Gift,” this music replaces the music appearing at the end of “The Gift” cue). The timing indications and few written notes of screen actions within this cue match those of the corresponding cue sheets. The dialogue and action in the cue sheet do not match the film, however; the cue sheet states that the music begins as Tom’s friends begin talking to him after Alice leaves the stable. In the film and according to the cue sheet for “The Gift,” Alice is never in the stable, and the kids start talking as the music for “The Gift” ends.¹³ The date of the cue sheet from “Tom’s Friends” is 2/3/48, while that date of the sheet from the previous cue, “The Gift”, bears the date inscription “2/9/48, Revised.”¹⁴ Obviously, the scene was rewritten and the decision made that this music not be used, perhaps because of concerns that its spritely character might mask the dialogue. The resulting scene is rather stark in its lack of music, particularly coming on the heels of “The Gift.”

The first part of “Tom’s Friends” consists of a full statement of the “Tom’s Childhood” theme (Ex. 3-26). The material that follows is a brief contrasting section with a melody based on octave leaps. Measures 12-19 contain altered statements of the first two segments of the “Tom’s Childhood” theme, first in *C*, then in *A flat*. A second full statement of the theme in *B flat* at m. 20 is followed at m. 26 by further varied material from the first part of the “Childhood” theme. The final statement, again in *D*, concludes with a build-up of the texture from ostinati that

¹³ Copland, “The Red Pony: cue sheets” (Item 63), Aaron Copland Collection; *The Red Pony*, prod. and dir. Lewis Milestone, 1949

¹⁴ Copland, “The Red Pony: cue sheets” (Item 63), Aaron Copland Collection.

reaches its peak at m. 42 and gradually decreases in activity until the appearance of the second Billy Buck theme at m. 47.

Measures 47-57 are a reprise of the second Billy Buck theme consisting of thirds in alternating registers, appear as Tom and Billy Buck discuss training the pony (Ex. 3-27). A new ostinato pattern begins at m. 57 that has a character similar to that of the first Billy Buck theme; although its meter is regular rather than asymmetrical, its syncopated accents have a “western” flavor that suggests the accompaniment from the earlier cue. This idea reappears later in the cue “Morning Training” and again at the very end of the film as Tom rides his new colt. Here it is alternated with a “cowboy-style” melody that, like the “Ranch theme,” is made of segments joined successively. These segments are joined into “statements” that play out variations on the theme, as seen at mm. 61-75, mm. 79-82, and mm. 100-103.

Ex. 3-26 “Tom’s Friends” mm. 1-17

Ex. 3-26 (cont.)

Ex. 3-26 (cont.) is a musical score for a four-part setting in D major. The score is written on four staves. The first staff (treble clef) features a vocal line with a melodic line and a sustained note. The second staff (treble clef) features a vocal line with a melodic line and a sustained note. The third staff (treble clef) features a vocal line with a melodic line and a sustained note. The fourth staff (bass clef) features a vocal line with a melodic line and a sustained note. The score is divided into two systems, each containing four measures. The key signature is one sharp (F#).

Ex. 3-27 “Tom’s Friends” mm. 47-51

Ex. 3-27 “Tom’s Friends” mm. 47-51 is a musical score for a three-part setting in C major. The score is written on three staves. The first staff (treble clef) features a vocal line with a melodic line and a sustained note. The second staff (treble clef) features a vocal line with a melodic line and a sustained note. The third staff (bass clef) features a vocal line with a melodic line and a sustained note. The score is divided into two systems, each containing four measures. The key signature is no sharps or flats.

Ex. 3-28 “Tom’s Friends” mm. 57-68

Ex. 3-28 “Tom’s Friends” mm. 57-68 is a musical score for a three-part setting in D major. The score is written on three staves. The first staff (treble clef) features a vocal line with a melodic line and a sustained note. The second staff (treble clef) features a vocal line with a melodic line and a sustained note. The third staff (bass clef) features a vocal line with a melodic line and a sustained note. The score is divided into two systems, each containing four measures. The key signature is one sharp (F#).

Ex. 3-28 (cont.)



Musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

Another varied reference to the first Billy Buck theme occurs at m. 83, this time preserving something of the asymmetrical meter from the theme's original appearance in "Walk to the Bunkhouse" (see ex. 3-29). In this statement, the alternation between the duple and triple portions of the theme is irregular, giving the music a hesitant quality; this may be a means of musically conveying Tom's earliest fumbling attempts to train the pony.

Fig. 3-8 shows the strata within "Tom's Friends" as denoted by thematic material. It is plain from this that the cue can be easily divided into two sections at m. 47 and that each section appears to have a closed form structurally; the two sections could easily stand alone as individual pieces. The first half appears to be a quasi-rondo with its recurrent full statements of the "Tom's Childhood" theme. Of particular note is how few hit points or other indications of the screen action are present in the score; this first part depends primarily on strictly musical organization for its structure. This is not as true of the second half. Its structure is marked by recurrences of material derived from the first Billy Buck theme, indicated as "F" in Fig. 3-9. Each of these

The image displays a musical score for the song "The Rose Tree." The score is written for voice and piano. It is in the key of G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The score is organized into three systems of staves. Each system consists of a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (bass clef). The first system shows the vocal line with a long note and the piano accompaniment with a series of eighth notes. The second system shows the vocal line with a long note and the piano accompaniment with a series of eighth notes. The third system shows the vocal line with a long note and the piano accompaniment with a series of eighth notes. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and bar lines.

recurrences coincides with a new shot of Tom in the corral with the pony. Viewed this way, the first Billy Buck theme at m. 47 serves as an introduction, with the first large scale division beginning with the “F” material at m. 57 and subsequent divisions at m. 76 and m. 83, giving an AA²A³ form, with internal divisions in each section. The internal divisions result from the linear succession of melodic segments that constitute the segments “G” and “H.” The entire cue as written is “assembled” from the juxtaposition of these two otherwise unrelated halves.

Figure 3-8 “Tom’s Friends”

	1 st Section (mm. 1-56)					
Strata	A			A ²		A ³
		B				
			C(A var)			
					D(A var)	
Key ctr	D	D	C/A ^b	B ^b	D/A ^b	D
Measures	1-4	5-11	12-19	20-26	26-33	34-46

		2 nd Section (mm. 57-103)							
Strata	“Intro”	FF				F ² F ² F ²		F ²	
			GG				G ² G ²		
				HH	H ² H ²				H
Key	G>E	C#	C#	A#/F#	D/B ^b	C#	C#	D#/C#	C#
Meas.	47-56	57-60	61-64	65-68	69-75	76-78	79-82	83-99	100-103

M500 “Grandfather’s Story”

“Grandfather’s Story” accompanies Tom’s grandfather as he wistfully muses to Tom that the yearning to cross the frontier has left the people. This is painful for the old man because he considers his leading a band of settlers across the prairie as his proudest achievement, and his family’s lack of interest gives him a sense that his life is no longer meaningful. The cue is essentially in three sections, the third of which is a return of the character and material of the first. The first section (mm. 1-29) accompanies the “set-up” of the scene: shots of Alice, the ranch, and Tom as he comes upon his contemplating grandfather. Measures 30-70 accompany the grandfather’s tale itself, the marching character of the music referring to the crossing of the prairie and the intensity of its contrapuntal melodies increasing as he becomes more agitated and lost in his story. The beginning material returns at m. 71, where the grandfather comes out of his reverie, accepting Tom’s offer of a glass of lemonade. Here, again, Copland uses a standard

three-part structure as a framework for music to accompany a scene. The first and third sections frame the music of the grandfather's story.

There are no immediately obvious thematic references to other cues in this cue, although there are character references such as in the previous cue. The first and third sections of "Grandfather's Story" are pastoral, again reinforcing the daily atmosphere of the ranch; the music in this section sounds somewhat reminiscent of the opening material of "The Gift," although it does not repeat any thematic material directly (Ex. 3-30). The material accompanying the story proper is a mournful fanfare over a somewhat staggering march accompaniment that strongly suggests that of the "March Dream," due to its register and articulation (Ex. 3-31) This cue is the grandfather's "march dream," but it conveys a sense of loss and sadness reflecting the grandfather's brooding over the loss of the frontier spirit and his feeling that he is an anachronism, all in contrast to the whimsical, exuberant march that accompanies Tom's childhood fantasies. The arpeggiated notes beginning the fanfare ("b") almost suggest the arpeggio that opens the "Ranch theme," although the character here is far removed from the pleasantly industrious quality of the "Ranch theme" itself. The polytonality inherent in the contrapuntal fanfares is a reference to the polytonality in the "March Dream" but used to a completely different effect; in the "March Dream," the polytonality provides humor while in the "Grandfather's Story" it conveys hopelessness and futility. The people can no longer cross the frontier, the grandfather muses; they have no one to guide them and the spirit has left them. The grandfather is old and his time is past; soon, he will partake of that last part of the cycle of life and death that is the theme of Steinbeck's novella. This contrasts sharply with the childlike fantasy that accompanies Tom in the earlier stages of that cycle. During the canon of the two trumpets, the two begin sounding two note chords at m. 43. These chords continue

through m. 50, after which this arpeggiated theme is presented in four varied soundings through m. 70. These staggered chords continue throughout this passage.

Ex. 3-30 “Grandfather’s Story” mm. 1-13

This musical score for measures 1-13 of "Grandfather's Story" is written for three staves in G major (one sharp). The first system (measures 1-4) is in common time (C). The melody in the first staff consists of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The second staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords: G4-B4, A4-C5, B4-A4, G4-F#4, E4-D4, C4-B3, B3-A2, G2-F#1. The third staff is a bass line with whole notes: G2, F#1, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1. The second system (measures 5-8) is in 5/4 time. The melody continues with half notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The second staff has chords: G4-B4, A4-C5, B4-A4, G4-F#4, E4-D4, C4-B3, B3-A2, G2-F#1. The third staff has whole notes: G2, F#1, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1. The third system (measures 9-13) is in 5/4 time. The melody continues with half notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The second staff has chords: G4-B4, A4-C5, B4-A4, G4-F#4, E4-D4, C4-B3, B3-A2, G2-F#1. The third staff has whole notes: G2, F#1, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1. The score ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

Ex. 3-31 “Grandfather’s Story” mm. 30-43

This musical score for measures 30-43 of "Grandfather's Story" is written for three staves in G major (one sharp). The first system (measures 30-33) is in common time (C). The melody in the first staff consists of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The second staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords: G4-B4, A4-C5, B4-A4, G4-F#4, E4-D4, C4-B3, B3-A2, G2-F#1. The third staff is a bass line with whole notes: G2, F#1, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1. The second system (measures 34-37) is in 5/4 time. The melody continues with half notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The second staff has chords: G4-B4, A4-C5, B4-A4, G4-F#4, E4-D4, C4-B3, B3-A2, G2-F#1. The third staff has whole notes: G2, F#1, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1. The third system (measures 38-41) is in 5/4 time. The melody continues with half notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The second staff has chords: G4-B4, A4-C5, B4-A4, G4-F#4, E4-D4, C4-B3, B3-A2, G2-F#1. The third staff has whole notes: G2, F#1, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1. The fourth system (measures 42-43) is in 5/4 time. The melody continues with half notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The second staff has chords: G4-B4, A4-C5, B4-A4, G4-F#4, E4-D4, C4-B3, B3-A2, G2-F#1. The third staff has whole notes: G2, F#1, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1. The score ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

Ex. 3-31 (cont.)



Musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

The chordal music that comprises the first section of this cue accompanies the grandfather as he leaves the empty breakfast table after Fred makes his scene about his annoyance at the old Indian fighter's stories. The melancholy mood obviously reflects that of the old man as well as the sympathy for him felt by Alice and Fred and Fred's shame for his speaking out. The first part of his speech, coinciding with the opening trumpet fanfare, is proud; in fact, his tone through most of his musing reveals pride in his spirit and accomplishments. The trumpet and accompaniment begin to dissipate at point in the grandfather's story in which the party of settlers reached the ocean, essentially ending their journey.

The sections are rather sharply divided, particularly from the first to the second. The first section has two successive statements of its theme. The theme itself is made up of two measure segments strung together to form a long melody. The chordal accompaniment to this melody,

with its downward leaps of groups of thirds, is what is suggestive of “The Gift,” as are the downward leaps of a fifth in the melody. The two measure segments form a melodic unit, which is repeated with new orchestration.

Figure 3-9 “Grandfather’s Story”

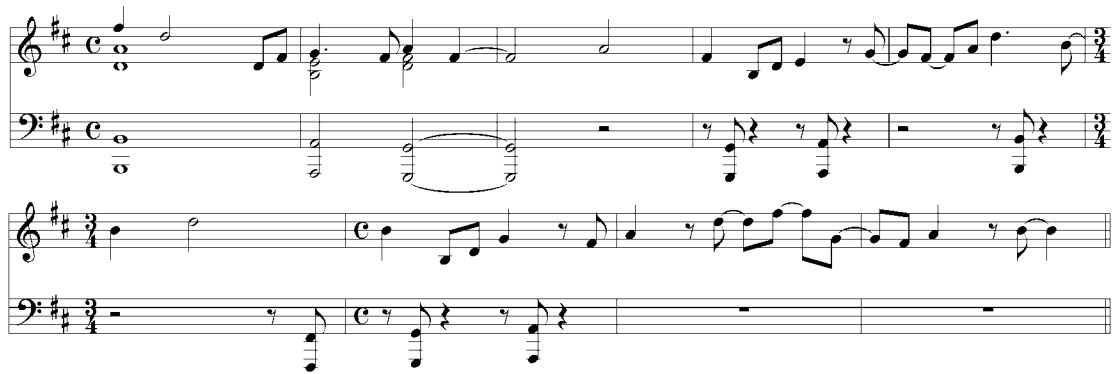
Sect	A A(8ves)	B	A ²
Phrs	a a ²	b(canon) b ² b ³ b ⁴ b ⁵	a ³
Key	D D	B/B>c# D D C C E ped. Eb	
Meas	1 15	30 50 57 63 69	71

M603 “Morning Training”

“Morning Training” is, in many respects, a reprise of the second part of “Tom’s Friends.” Both cues depict Tom trying to train the pony with Billy Buck’s assistance, and both use virtually the same thematic material within very similar structures. “Morning Training” also includes two thematic ideas that are present in the second part of the film.

The cue opens with a soft chordal melody accompanying shots of the farm in early morning just before Tom awakens his grandfather; this melody is similar to one that appears later in the cues “At the Fireside” and “Strangles, Pt. I,” and is one of the few thematic ideas that occurs in the second half of the film (Ex. 3-32). A brief fortissimo at m. 13 underscores the grandfather’s fury at being awakened so early and his subsequent laughter at his blustery threats to Tom.

Ex. 3-32 “Morning Training” mm. 1-9



Musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

The statement at m. 19 of the second Billy Buck theme corresponds to the appearance of the same theme at m. 47 of “Tom’s Friends” (See Ex. 3-33). From these points, the two cues proceed in a very similar fashion. At m. 27, “Morning Training” proceeds with a variant of the first Billy Buck theme seen earlier at m. 57 of “Tom’s Friends” (Ex. 3-34). Here, the variant is notated first in 3/4 meter, followed by 2/4 and 4/4 meters, indirectly recalling the asymmetrical source of the theme in “Walk to the Bunkhouse.”¹⁵ Measures 35-38 and mm. 39-42 of “Morning Training” reprise the thematic ideas presented in mm. 61-64 and mm. 65-75 of “Tom’s Friends.”

Ex. 3-33 “Morning Training” mm. 19-24



¹⁵ The connection between this cue and “Tom’s Friends,” M-401, is made explicit in the score with the indication “as at (2/29) in 401” on p. 4 of “Morning Training” (p. 98 of the composing score). This refers back to m. 76 of “Tom’s Friends,” the point two minutes and twenty-nine seconds into the cue. This indicates that the passage at m. 31 of “Morning Training” is to be realized in the same manner as that at m. 76 of “Tom’s Friends,” probably in terms of orchestration, and articulation. Copland, “The Red Pony: original manuscript, (Item 63.1), Aaron Copland Collection.

Ex. 3-34 “Morning Training” mm. 27-41

Musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

From m. 43, “Morning Training” proceeds with a thematic idea taken from earlier in “Tom’s Friends,” specifically the passage at m. 5-11 of the earlier cue (Ex. 3-35). The change of shot to Billy Buck at m. 49 also corresponds to the resumption of the parallel structures between “Morning Training” and “Tom’s Friends.” This highlights the assembled nature of the themes and cues; within these parallel structures of “Tom’s Friends” and “Morning Training,” an earlier idea from the former cue is inserted into the parallel structure of the latter.

The first Billy Buck theme at m. 49 of “Morning Training” is similar to its first appearance in this cue within its successive settings in 3/4, 2/4, and “Common” meters. From m. 53, this passage is further contrasted with the corresponding passage in “Tom’s Friends” by the addition of a triadic melody that interacts with the accompanimental first Billy Buck theme

(See Ex. 3-26); this interaction along with the rhythm and triadic nature of the melody are not unlike the “Hoedown” from Copland’s ballet *Rodeo* in conveying the sense of “cowboy music,” all of which supports the images of Tom working with the pony as Billy looks on. This melody also appears in the second half of the film, accompanying the sight of Tom riding the grown colt in the “End Title” cue. After a brief interlude derived from the material at m. 35-36 (“D”), this melody repeats at m. 61. The cue closes with a repeat of the “inserted material” (“F”), this time in *C sharp* rather than in *D*.

Ex. 3-35 “Morning Training” mm. 42-48

The musical score for "Morning Training" (mm. 42-48) is written for three staves in D major (two sharps) and common time (C). The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and beams, representing the melody and accompaniment for this segment.

Ex. 3-36 “Morning Training” mm. 49-57

Musical examples reproduced with permission by the Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

Figure 3-10 “Morning Training”

Section	X											
		Y										
			B									
				C				C	C ²		C ²	
					D					D		
						E						
							F					F
Harm.			D ^b	C [#]	C [#]	A [#] /F [#]	D	C [#]	C [#]	C [#]	C [#]	C [#]
Phrase			aa'	bbb'b'	cdcd	efe'f'e'f'		bbb'b'	b''b''	c'd'c'd'	b''b''	
Meas	1-12	13-18	19-26	27-34	35-38	39-42	43-48	49-52	53-56	57-60	61-64	65-72

This “recycling” of material from “Tom’s Friends” is effective because the two scenes are so similar in content and concept. The addition of new elements, particularly the “cowboy melody” accompanying the varied first Billy Buck theme, suggests progress since the last training session of the pony; the notion of progress connected with this theme is further reinforced by its appearance at the end of the film underscoring Tom as he rides the grown colt.

M700, M701 “Prelude to Tom’s Indecision/ Tom’s Indecision”

“Prelude to Tom’s Indecision” accompanies the dawning of a new day on the ranch, while “Tom’s Indecision” accompanies Tom’s reluctance to leave his pony in the face of a possible thunderstorm. Billy Buck predicts that the day will be sunny and assures Tom that he will put the pony in the barn if it does rain. Tom finally trudges off to school, but not before staring with obvious anxiety as the wind whips the barn door closed. The scene shifts to Tom sitting in school distracted by the torrential downpour outside.

The music that accompanies the storm itself is rather remarkable for its melodramatic character, particularly as compared with music of the preceding cues in the film. The agitation preceding the storm builds so quickly, and the addition of bells “tolling” make this cue less subtle than the music that precedes it. The agitated theme that accompanies the appearance of the thunderstorm is carried over into Parts I and II of “The Sick Pony.” Dissonance and agitation increases as the wind builds, the barn door slams, and Tom stands looking confused. It reaches a fevered pitch as the rain clouds are shown, at m. 56.

M-700 is the “Prelude to Tom’s Indecision.” The opening six measures of this cue contain three statements of the Main Title theme as presented in “Walk to the Bunkhouse” (indicated as “a” in Fig. 3-12a; see Ex. 3-37). A six-measure interlude is followed by three more

statements of this melody in triple meter in mm. 13-18, although mm. 13 and 14 appear to be crossed out in the original manuscript. This interlude is reminiscent of the “H” material from the second part of “Tom’s Friends,” coupled with the opening bars of the Main Title theme as it appears in the “Prelude.” A C pedal point sounds throughout all three parts of the cue.

Ex. 3-37 “Prelude to Tom’s Indecision” mm. 1-11



Musical examples reproduced with permission by the Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

M701, the cue “Tom’s Indecision,” picks up just as the “Prelude to Tom’s Indecision” ends (Ex. 3-38). The cue begins with a version of the first Billy Buck theme from “Walk to the Bunkhouse,” here set in a regular 2/2 time rather than the alternating and asymmetrical 3/4-2/4 of the earlier cue (indicated as “a” in Fig. 3-11b). The indicated tempo – “Slowly – gravely” – also stands in sharp contrast to the buoyant tempos of the earlier cues. The variant of the Main Title melody (indicated as “b” in Fig. 3-11b) comes in at m. 7 and the two continue through m. 15. The presence here of the first Billy Buck theme in connection with the Main Title theme both as presented in “Walk to the Bunkhouse,” refers strongly to the interaction between Billy and Tom

in the earlier cue. A new cycle of the Main Title melody without accompaniment begins at m. 16, this time in 3/4 meter.

Ex. 3-38 “Tom’s Indecision” mm. 1-24

Slowly - gravely

Musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

A new element is added in the treble at m. 16: a quasi-ostinato of quarter notes between *C*, *B-flat*, and *A-flat* (“c” in Fig. 3-11b). This element is joined in m. 21 by a similar pattern an octave lower and moving in doubled note values. These two elements sound over the Main Title melody, which begins sounding in the lowest voice at m. 20. The rising fifth from *D flat* to *A flat* (“d” in Fig. 3-11b) occurs in mm. 26-27 and is dissonant and somewhat foreboding; this fifth is echoed at mm. 29-30 after the meter change at m. 28 (See Ex. 3-39). This rising fifth, coupled with the impression of *C* harmony at m. 41, foreshadows the emphasis on the minor second that occurs later in this and subsequent cues, as well as the melody at m. 60 that uses this interval as a springboard.

Ex. 3-39 “Tom’s Indecision” mm. 28-38



Musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

The accompanimental first Billy Buck theme (“a” in Fig. 3-11b) returns in mm. 31-36 and a similar cycle of adding layers is presented. A pattern begins in m. 33-34 of alternating melodic major and minor thirds between *C*, *E*, and *E flat* (“e” in Fig. 3-11b); these recall the motives punctuating Billy’s replies to Tom in “Walk to the Bunkhouse.” Additional emphasis on the *D flat*/ *A flat* leap begins at m. 37. The pattern of alternating thirds is duplicated in halved note values in a higher voice beginning at m. 40; this continues in earnest starting at m. 47. By m. 46, four strata have coalesced out of the texture: the pattern of alternating *E-C* and *E flat-C* thirds in half notes (“e²”), a similar pattern an octave higher with an altered rhythm (eighth notes followed by an eighth tied to a dotted half note, “e” in Fig. 3-11b), dotted half note oscillating between *A flat* and *A* (element “f” in Fig. 3-11b), and alternation between the rising fifth *D flat* – *A flat* and the rising sixth *C-A* (element “d””; see Ex. 3-40). At m. 51, the pattern of thirds becomes more frantic in the highest voice through rhythmic diminution, while the second voice here consists of alternating *E flat* and *C* while the second and third patterns disappear.

An ascending, octatonic/diatonic line in the lowest voice leads into yet another texture at m. 56 (Ex. 3-43). This consists of dissonant reiterated eighth note cells moving in different registers: (*C, D flat, F* to *C, D flat, G flat*); (*F, C, G flat* to *G flat, C, F*); (*C, G flat, F* to *D flat, B flat, E flat*), indicated as “g” in Fig. 3-11b. This texture underscores the beginning of the thunderstorm and introduces a melody at m. 60 that will be used further in the following cue, “The Sick Pony” and alluded to later in the score (“h” in Fig. 3-11b); this melody is foreshadowed at m. 44. The ostinati resulting from these eighth-note cells continue through mm. 69, while the cue ends on a dissonant sforzando chord in m. 70.

Ex. 3-40 “Tom’s Indecision” mm. 46-50

Ex. 3-41 “Tom’s Indecision” mm. 54-77

Ex. 3-41 (cont.)

The musical score consists of two systems of four staves each, all in a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The first system shows a complex texture with multiple voices. The second system continues this texture, with some staves ending in rests or specific rhythmic patterns. The notation includes various note values, rests, and dynamic markings like '8'.

Musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

The various divisions of “Tom’s Indecision” do not result so much from abrupt breaks between textural blocks but more as a result of the successive addition and subtraction of elements within different strata, building the texture to a climax. This layering effect is not unlike that found in the “Dance of the Adolescents” from Stravinsky’s *The Rite of Spring*, with its successive addition of layers leading up to the expansive Russian folk tune that encompasses the entire texture. In “Tom’s Indecision,” the increasing activity and increase in dissonance corresponds to Tom’s growing unease and anxiety over the storm. Unlike the “Dance of the Adolescents,” layers that permeated early stages of the cue gradually drop out to make way for new elements rather than remaining to provide a foundation for later gestures. The loss of elements over the course of the cue is masked by the steadily increasing level of activity within the remaining elements as the cue progresses.

The melody at m. 60 gives the cue its melodramatic character, appearing over an implied dominant of F minor (more on this in Chapter 5). This character is curious in light of the Stravinskian techniques used to derive the texture. The melodramatic character of this melody is a result of its rhythm, which largely mirrors that of the frantic activity surrounding it, and the tension in the implied accompanimental harmony. In any case, this use of melodrama is reminiscent of the practice of Hollywood composers such as Steiner and Korngold and has no real precedent within *The Red Pony* score. Copland's use of melodrama here is also curious in when compared to his music underscoring tension within the second part of the film. Later cues, such as "The Operation," and "Buzzard Fight," to be discussed in the following chapter, convey the inherent tension through the use of quartal dissonance and rapidly shifting textures. The melodramatic quality of this theme for "Worried Tom" does not "sound" like Copland, a fact that causes it to stand out within the score.

Figure 3-11a "Prelude to Tom's Indecision"

Sections	A	B	A
Motives	aaa	"H"	aa aaa
Measures	1-6	7-12	13-18

Figure 3-11b “Tom’s Indecision”

Sect.	A	A ²	A ³	B	B ²	B ³	B ⁴	C	C	C
Accomp.	aaaaa									
Main Th	bb	bbbbb	b ² b ²							
C, Bb, Ab qtrs		ccccc								
Db-Ab 5ths		d d								
E, Eb, C 3rds			ee	e ² e ² e ² ee	e ² e ² e ² e ² e e	e ² e ² e ² e ² e e	e ² e ² e ² e ² e e			
Alt. A/Ab						f f				
								gggggg	ggggg	gggggg
“Theme”									h	h
Meas.	1-15	16-30	31-36	37-42	43-46	47-50	51-55	56-60	60-66	67-70

Conclusions

The cues discussed in this chapter are in large part formally autonomous. While their forms may have been determined to some extent by the structure of the scenes they accompany, these resulting forms are constructed in such a way that they proceed simultaneously with the film action and yet are in large measure independent of it; they reflect the general mood of a scene, but exist as aural equivalents of the setting in non-diegetic space. This is true even of the “March Dream.” Although the cue derives its meter from the pace of Tom’s march to school, and although the original, complete version accompanies the specific shots of flipping pancakes

and an animated stove, these characteristics stand apart from the overall progression of the cue as it builds steadily to its climax immediately preceding the interruption of Tom's daydream and is slowly diminished in dynamic character as Tom reluctantly shifts his attention to his classmates. Similarly, the music of "Walk to the Bunkhouse" seems almost to proceed in parallel with the accompanying scenes of Billy and Tom as much as it reinforces these scenes. This is true despite the brief pauses that punctuate Billy's replies to Tom concerning his collection of photographs. The cue's sense of autonomy is a result of the impression it provides of a regular phrase structure, stemming from its successive and complete statements of the cue's thematic ideas. Such an impression of regular phrase structure also applies to "Morning on the Ranch," and to "Circus Dream" and similarly imbues them with their own musical autonomy.

The nature of the scenes themselves is very episodic; there is little sense that the succession from one scene to the next is immediate and the cues typically accompany one complete scene from beginning to end. The scenes themselves are "rounded," having a strong sense of a beginning, middle and end that is well reinforced by the autonomy of the accompanying cues. This quality changes in the second half of the film; cues and parts of cues are more likely to overlap changes of scene, usually reflecting this with marked changes of texture or figuration that occur linearly but often with no clear sense of conclusion. The closed structure and episodic nature of many of these cues and their accompanying scenes within the first half of the film made them ideal candidates for adaptation into Copland's suite of concert music from the score; this will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER IV
A CLOSE EXAMINATION OF THE CUES IN THE
SECOND HALF OF *THE RED PONY*

The music in the second half of *The Red Pony* shows the same modular construction present in the music of the first half, but this construction is manifested in some different ways. Much of the music in the second part of the film is characterized by formal structures that are less self-determined than cues appearing in the first part. These cues exist less as self-contained musical selections like earlier cues such as “March Dream,” “Circus Music,” and “Walk to the Bunkhouse,” and more as successive thematic and textural blocks that are arranged according to changes of scene or changes within an individual scene; this is evident in “The Sick Pony,” “The Operation,” and most especially “Buzzard Fight.” The cues in this second part contain more overt links to the screen – the whole of “Buzzard Fight” is the most explicit example, but even the pause preceding the embrace between Tom and his father in “The Sick Pony” and the strings signaling Tom’s mother’s softening toward him in “At the Fireside” are linked to the screen much like the pauses in “Walk to the Bunkhouse” only here they accentuate drama rather than humor.

The music in the second half is also more overtly dissonant, much of this dissonant music being used to accompany scenes of the distressed pony and Billy’s attempts to relieve its suffering, first by using a knife to lance the lump in the pony’s throat resulting from its infection and second by conducting an “operation” to insert a breathing tube into the pony’s windpipe. Contrasting with these passages are instances of extended lyrical and irregularly structured

melodies that have an extemporaneous or impromptu quality; these usually accompany scenes of Tom's sadness and concern over his pony. In each case, the music is overtly reflecting the moods and emotions of the characters, either Tom's tension and fear regarding pony's illness and the extreme measures Billy is forced to adopt to try to heal it, or the sadness felt by Tom and his family over the pony's eventual fate.

The music's more overt reliance on the screen action for its structure becomes particularly apparent in "Strangles" and especially "The Operation," where the tone of the music changes according to the tone of the conversation; each time the pony's condition is mentioned or discussed, the music becomes more dissonant, particularly with the use of descending quartal chords coupled with chromatically moving bass lines. This close affinity reaches a climax in the montage of "Buzzard Fight."

As in the first half of the film, there are several recurring thematic ideas within the cues that have narrative connotations. Few of the prominent themes from the first half of the film are explored in the second half. Two of these, the "Ranch Theme" and the "Main Title" theme, make their only appearance in the final cue of the film. Less prominent themes reappear at critical moments, giving them special significance. These include the "Training Theme," first heard at m. 53 of "Morning Training," and a "Parental Sympathy Theme" which, although initially heard during the opening bars of "Morning Training," here are used in connection with Fred's and Alice's sympathy for Tom's anguish. The theme appearing at the end of "Tom's Indecision," which could almost be labeled the "Worried Tom Theme," serves as the basis of several cues, and a new motivic idea based on successive parallel fourths recurs in connection with Billy's treatment of the distressed pony. As in Chapter 3, these thematic designations are used in the following discussion for convenience in identifying recurring ideas. These recurring themes constitute separate strata that will be discussed in Chapter 5.

M702, M800 “The Sick Pony” (Parts I and II)

Parts I and II of “The Sick Pony” illustrate the change in approach to the score in the second part of the film despite the relative homogeneity of the material in the cue itself. The cue is derived largely from the theme and ostinati appearing at the end of “Tom’s Indecision,” and for this reason, it could almost be considered a continuation of that previous cue. Within the film, the music actually begins at m. 16 as Tom is running home, having left school early to check on his pony after the violent thunderstorm. Parts I and II flow together seamlessly once Tom and Billy are in the barn. Presumably, the division of this cue into two parts was to aid in synchronization, particularly to situate the quieter and less active middle portion of Part II with the conversation between Tom and Billy; additionally, many of the “cycles” of the cue’s theme within Part I begin with cuts to Tom, emphasizing its connection with his worry and anxiety.

This tense theme that is the basis of the cue, with its agitated rhythm and prominent leap of a fifth, seems ideally suited for the almost fugal treatment to which it is subjected. This theme (“y” in Fig. 4-1) appears first in conjunction with an ostinato derived from the theme’s opening figure (“a” in Fig. 4-1; see Ex. 4-1). New ostinato elements are added at m. 4; a sixteenth-note ostinato is added in the high register and a middle register ostinato moving in the quarter notes c, d-flat, and c’ appears (“x” in Fig. 4-1).

Ex. 4-1 “The Sick Pony” Pt. I, mm. 1-9

Musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

The theme is sequenced at mm. 5 and 7, pitched successively higher first by a third and then a fourth. The ostinato activity comes to a brief close in mm. 10-11 and is replaced by a new figure beginning at m. 12, accompanying the theme in the bass register (“b” in Fig. 4-1; see Ex. 4-2). Another respite in the ostinato activity occurs at m. 16 and resumes in m. 17, followed by another respite and resume in mm. 18-19 and m. 20; each of these periods of activity coincides with a statement of the theme, first in the soprano register and secondly in the bass. This bass

statement, with its two phrases containing leaps of a fifth and a sixth, differs from previous statements in that it is not simple sequencing. Measures 24-32 consist of successive fragments of the end of the theme over trilled notes providing the activity previously by ostinati. Ostinati return at m. 33 and disappear, to be replaced by trills at m. 38; they make a final appearance in mm. 41-46.

Ex. 4-2 “The Sick Pony” Pt. I mm. 11-27

The musical score for "The Sick Pony" Pt. I, measures 11-27, is written for a string quartet in 4/4 time with a key signature of three flats. The score is divided into two systems. The first system contains measures 11-18, and the second system contains measures 19-27. The music features a mix of melodic lines, trills, and ostinati. Measures 11-18 show a complex interplay of these elements, with the Cello/Double Bass part featuring a prominent trill in measure 11. Measures 19-27 continue the development of these motifs, with the Violin I part featuring a trill in measure 24 and the Cello/Double Bass part featuring a trill in measure 25.

Ex. 4-2 (cont.)



Ex. 4-2 (cont.) is a musical score for five staves. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is common time (C). The first staff has a whole rest followed by a trill (tr.) on a whole note. The second staff contains a continuous sixteenth-note arpeggiated figure. The third staff has a whole rest followed by a trill (tr.) on a whole note. The fourth staff has a whole rest. The fifth staff contains a melodic line with eighth and quarter notes.

Ex. 4-3 “The Sick Pony” Pt. II, mm. 1-10



Ex. 4-3 “The Sick Pony” Pt. II, mm. 1-10 is a musical score for six staves. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is common time (C). The first staff has a whole rest. The second staff contains a melodic line with eighth and quarter notes. The third staff contains a melodic line with eighth and quarter notes. The fourth staff has a whole rest. The fifth staff contains a melodic line with eighth and quarter notes. The sixth staff contains a melodic line with eighth and quarter notes.

Musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

Part II consists largely of layers of overlapping sequences based on the same motivic material from Part I (see Ex. 4-3). Within Part II, ostinati are produced from fragments of the opening gesture of the “Worried Tom” theme, resulting in interplay between four different motivic ideas: the theme itself, the opening turn of the theme, a repeatedly descending major second, and repeatedly ascending semitone. An additional bass ostinato of alternately rising and falling semitones and sevenths contributes to the tension in the music in Part II, which derives from the dissonance inherent in the major and minor seconds; this maintains the tension from Part I while ceasing the frenetic activity of the trilling ostinati from the first part, allowing space for dialogue. The form of the cue coalesces out of statements of the “Worried Tom” theme against the fragmented ostinati. These statements coincide with points within the visual action, resulting in no traditional formal structure within the cue of either of its parts.

Figure 4-1a “The Sick Pony, Part I”

Part I											
Ostinati	a	a			a						
				b			b		b		b
								c		c	
		x			x				x	x	
Theme	y	y		y	y		y	y		y	y
Meas	1-3	4-9	10-11	12-15	16-17	18-19	20-23	24-32	33-37	38-41	41-46

Figure 4-1b “The Sick Pony, Part II”

Part II				
Ostinati	a		a ²	
		b		b ²
Theme	Y		y	
Measures	1-3	4-18	19-21	22-32

M801 “At the Fireside”

“At the Fireside” is derived largely from the ostinato fragments within Part II of “The Sick Pony.” The “Worried Tom” theme and its slower variants in “The Sick Pony” are the sources for the first section of the cue (A in Fig. 4-2). The second section (B in Fig. 4-2) consists of a melody in the strings originally taken from the opening measures of “Morning Training.” Here, the theme in the strings is connected with “Parental Sympathy,” appearing as Alice softens toward Tom, allowing him to care for his pony after the grandfather has chided him for being up so late. This theme carries the same sense of pathos during its appearance in the next cue, “Strangles.”

The first section of this cue consists of ideas from Part II of “The Sick Pony”: the ascending semitone, the descending tone, and the opening fragment of the “Worried Tom” theme (Ex. 4-4). There is also a drop of a minor third in the second measure which foreshadows the “Parental Sympathy” theme introduced in the strings in m. 12. A *C* pedal point in the bass connects the two parts. The “Parental Sympathy” theme that comprises the second section outlines a minor-seventh chord based on *B flat*, occurring over descending thirds in the tenor range beginning on *D flat-F*. Like the “Worried Tom” theme in “Tom’s Indecision” and “The Sick Pony,” the “Parental Sympathy” idea is rather melodramatic, conspicuously more so than much of the rest of the score. This theme is also barred curiously; each phrase seems to last for six beats, yet the melody is set in 4/4.

Ex. 4-4 “At the Fireside” mm. 1-18



Musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

The cue is so short that questions of its form are almost meaningless. Yet, what form the cue contains is derived directly from the film narrative. The two disjunct ideas are combined to support the scene, the first derived from the previous cue and continuing that “thread” while the second idea introduces a new “thread” with Alice’s change of heart and sympathy toward Tom.

“At the Fireside”

Section	A	B
Action	Grandfather chides Tom for being up late	Alice allows Tom to see to his pony
Measures	1-11	12-18

Fig. 4-2

M802, M900 “Strangles” (Parts I and II)

The somber moods of “Strangles” reflect how the pony’s illness has affected the family. Part I of the cue contains four to five thematic ideas illustrating different facets of the characters’ sadness. The sense of hopelessness in the music reinforces that felt by Tom’s parents and which Tom himself is beginning to feel. Some of this is carried over to Part II, where it contrasts with the tense, dissonant music accompanying Billy’s care of the pony.

The opening six measures of Part I underscore the beginning of the scene as Tom’s parents attend silently to menial chores on the ranch, almost in an attempt to force a condition of normalcy (“A” in Fig. 4-3a; see Ex. 4-5). The rhythmic ostinato under the descending modal theme in mm. 1-6 gives the music a mechanical quality that stresses the cheerlessness with which Fred and Alice attend to their work. There is a brief hint of the “Worried Tom” theme from previous cues as Tom appears in m. 5. Measures 7-16 contain a smooth, melancholy, and rhythmically irregular theme accompanying Fred and Tom’s stiffly formal greeting and Fred’s allowing Tom to see to his horse rather than attend to his own chores (“B” in Fig. 4-3a). The implied minor mode is carried over from the opening measures, preserving their sad affect, while the irregular rhythm creates contrast with the mechanical, “working” music of the opening bars.

Ex. 4-5 “Strangles” Pt. I mm. 1-24



Ex. 4-5 (cont.)

The musical score for Ex. 4-5 (cont.) is presented in three systems, each with three staves (treble, alto, and bass clefs). The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The first system is in 4/4 time and contains measures 17-19. The second system is in 4/4 time and contains measures 20-22. The third system is in 4/4 time and contains measures 23-25. The music features a variety of note values, including eighth, quarter, and half notes, as well as rests. There are several ties across measures and systems. The bass line often provides a harmonic foundation with sustained notes and chords, while the upper staves carry the melodic lines. Measure 25 ends with a double bar line.

Musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

Measures 17-23 contain a reprise of the “Parental Sympathy” theme from m. 12 of “At the Fireside,” this time accompanying Fred’s and Tom’s embrace as Tom breaks down with grief over his sick pony; the melody here is pitched up a major second from the previous cue (“C” in Fig. 4-3a). The mechanical, “working” music from the beginning of the cue returns in mm. 24-29 as Fred resumes his repair work on the fence and Tom heads for the barn, rounding out the scene.

Measures 30-39 correspond to a brief scene in the barn between Tom and Billy in which Billy tells Tom of his intent to lance the lump in the pony's throat. Copland scores the scene with an extended chord progression in mm. 30-35 that becomes the accompaniment for the melody sounding in the abbreviated reprise, mm. 36-39. The slow tempo, sparse scoring, and consonant tonality using thirds emphasize the mood of the scene without interfering with the dialogue. Copland uses this same approach in the following scene of Tom moping outside the barn while reflecting over the state of the pony ("E" in Fig. 4-3a). The thematic material in mm. 36-39 is then used as the accompaniment for an extended melody stated twice to underscore the scene, the second statement taken by the first six measures of Part II of the cue ("E" in Fig. 4-3b). This music is fuller in its orchestration and dynamic than the previous episode since it has no dialogue with which to compete. These successively added melodic layers are another example of Copland's method of assembly.

Ex. 4-6 "Strangles" Pt. I, mm. 36-43



Musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

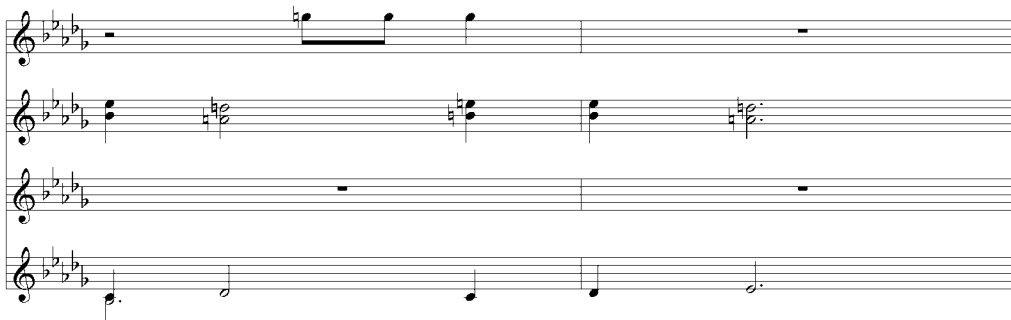
The central portion of Part II contains the most dissonant music of the cue and foreshadows much of the dissonant music in subsequent cues (see Ex. 4-7). The boundaries of

this portion of the cue match the scene in which Billy lances the lump in the pony's throat so that the pony may breathe more easily. Measures 7-10 consist of an irregular melody similar in rhythm and contour to the rhapsodic material in mm. 1-6. This passage differs from the previous material due to its highly chromatic motion and its resulting implied dissonance. Dissonance is intensified by the ostinati within mm. 11-21; these ostinati are based on a series of parallel fourths descending chromatically. Part II ends with an extended reprise of the opening six measures.

Ex. 4-7 "Strangles" Pt. II, mm. 1-19

The musical score is for a string quartet, featuring Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. It is in E-flat major (three flats) and common time. The score consists of 19 measures. Measures 1-6 show a complex, chromatic melody in the Violin I part, with the other parts providing harmonic support. Measures 7-10 continue this chromatic motion. Measures 11-19 feature a series of parallel fourths descending chromatically, creating a dissonant effect. A "Cut to Sick Pony" annotation is placed above the Violin I staff at measure 11. The score ends with a reprise of the opening six measures.

Ex. 4-7 (cont.)



Musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

“Strangles” also illustrates the extent to which the forms of cues in the second part of the film become determined by the screen action itself. Parts I and II of the cue together produce an extended movement with formal divisions corresponding to changes of scene (mm. 1-29, 30-43/1-6, 7-21, 22-31), giving a four-part form with a reprised central section. This is clearly not a “planned” musical form, but rather the result of sequentially arranging a series of melodic blocks to correspond to successive scenes within this part of the film.

Figure 4-3a “Strangles, Part I”

Part I							
Strata	A			A ²			
		B					
			C				
					D	D ²	
							E
Action	Fred fixes fence	Tom greets Fred	Fred embraces Tom	Fred returns to fence	Billy and Tom in barn		Tom in barnyard
Meas.	1-6	7-16	17-23	24-29	30-35	36-39	39-43

Figure 4-3b “Strangles, Part II”

Part II				
Strata	E ²			E ³
		F		
			G	
Action	Tom in barnyard	Billy lances lump		Tom with pony
Measures	1-6	7-10	11-21	22-31

M901, M901A “The Operation” (Parts I and II)

Although “The Operation” begins after an intervening scene from “Strangles,” it carries over much of the character of the previous cue and even contains some of the same thematic material. One could conceive of these cues as containing “inter-cue” planes of similar blocks. As in the previous cue, changes of blocks within this cue are determined by events on the screen; these changes thus determine the form of the cue even though “The Operation” encompasses a single scene rather than multiple scenes as in “Strangles.”

The opening measures of “The Operation” are derived from mm. 7-10 of “Strangles, Part II,” here pitched a tone higher (Ex. 4-8). The quartal ostinati from “Strangles” follow at m. 5; here, the treble chords are pitched up a minor third while the tenor drones are pitched up a major second (“B” in Fig. 4-4). In the previous cue, these chords appear at the point when Billy lances the lump in the pony’s neck. As in the previous cue, the ostinati rise successively by a tone after two statements. Measure 14 presents a respite in the form of an introspective melody similar to those present in “Strangles”; here, the melody appears almost like an inversion of the melody at m. 7 of the previous cue (Ex. 4-9). The material at m. 23, is again derived from the quartal ostinati with altered durations (Ex. 4-10). As this statement proceeds, the parallel fourths are

Ex. 4-8 “The Operation” Pt. I mm. 1-8



Musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

interspersed with isolated sixths. This passage becomes consonant at m. 29 as the descending fourths become major sixths in the treble voice, here suggesting the descending thirds connected with “Second Billy Buck” theme in “Walk to the Bunkhouse” and “Morning Training”; these appear as Tom asks Billy to wait for the grandfather before performing the operation on the pony.

Ex. 4-9 “The Operation” Pt. I, mm. 14-22



Ex. 4-10 “The Operation” Pt. I, mm. 23-43

Musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

The *piu mosso* at m. 34 corresponds to the grandfather’s arrival. This is yet another introspective, lyrical passage, similar to those in the previous cue but also recalling the mood and opening figure of “The Gift.” The dissonance returns at m. 44, where Billy and the grandfather ask Tom if he wishes to stay. Part I “ends” with a pause at m. 48 in anticipation of the operation itself, which is accompanied by Part II

The second part of “The Operation” consists of only five measures (Ex. 4-11). It is derived from the quartal ostinato, comprising three statements of two of the falling chords. It could be thought of as a coda to “The Operation, Part I” due to its brevity, its position following

Part I, and its use of the same motivic material. Part II is scored for an ensemble of bass clarinets, something that Copland points out in his autobiography as being unusual; he may have chosen these instruments to exploit the timbre of their lower registers, which are brighter than cellos or contrabasses but still blend effectively.¹ The effect of the cue is strident and startling, mirroring Tom’s wincing expression as the sounds of cutting and of the pony breathing through the metal tube are heard off-camera.

Ex. 4-11 “The Operation” Pt. II, mm. 1-5



Musical examples reproduced with permission by the Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

Formally, this cue consists of departures from and returns to the dissonant motive of the descending parallel fourths. As in the previous cues, the changes in texture and figuration at m. 5, 14, 23, 34, and 44 correspond to events and changes within the scene.

Figure 4-4 “The Operation”

Part I							Part II
Strata	A						
		B		B'		B'	B''
			C				
					D		
Meas	1-4	5-13	14-22	23-33	34-43	44-48	

M1001, M1001A, M1001B Buzzard Fight (Parts I, II, and III)

The cue “Buzzard Fight” is possibly the most complex cue in the score, deriving its form from the screen action as it unfolds shot by shot. The cue occurs at one of the most climactic

¹ Copland and Perlis, *Copland Since 1943*, .

points in the film, accompanying Tom as he searches the land surrounding the ranch for his runaway pony. After finding his pony dead beside a pond, Tom attempts to strangle one of the buzzards that has landed on it, until his father arrives on the scene to stop him. This cue is notated in three parts, and though each part flows directly into the next, the mood and activity level of the parts are sufficiently different that they can be regarded as components of a three part musical form. Part I, in which the pony runs away while Tom is asleep, acts as an introduction or prologue; Part II is the main body of the cue containing all of the action; and Part III acts as an epilogue during which Billy attempts to console Tom. All three parts draw from the same group of motivic materials.

Lawrence Morton discusses this sequence in his review of the score, noting that “its organization . . . can better be described in terms of screen than in terms of music. Copland uses here the most concise musical ideas, so brief that most of them can be quoted in a space of a few bars. These granitic chunks are the stones with which he builds his seven-and-one-half minute tonal pyramid.”² While Morton includes eight short excerpts illustrating some of these “granitic chunks,” his comments only scratch the surface of Copland’s method of organizing this cue. Like “Morning on the Ranch,” “Buzzard Fight” is made up of a succession of smaller recurring units, but rather than using melodic fragments as the basis of these units, here Copland uses a pool of six rhythmic, motivic, and gestural cells to generate short patterns, typically within the space of two measures. The six cells are listed below (and illustrated in example 4-12):

- 1) The first cell type is essentially a quartal structure coupled with a quick upward leap, usually of a fourth; in a few cases the “base” fourth of this motive is reduced to a third. These usually occur in pairs, with the second of the pair pitched up a major second from the first.

² Morton, “The Red Pony,” 8.

- 2) The second cell type is similar to Cell Type 1, but features a leap of a third reinforced by a more pronounced triad. Type 2 cells typically occur in lower register, although they may be immediately echoed by similar structures in higher octaves.
- 3) The third cell type consists of semitone motion within the space of a major second followed by an upward leap of a tritone. This cell is varied through alternation of duple and triple prolotion.
- 4) The fourth cell type also makes use of two simultaneous figures. The first, a downward leap of a fourth, occurs beneath either an octave leap pitched a semitone away from one of the pitches within the fourth leap, or else beneath an octave to fifth leap pitched a semitone away from the fourth leap.
- 5) The fifth cell type consists of block chords, typically alternating between two pitch combinations.
- 6) The sixth cell type consists of reiterated block chords, similar to Type 5, but usually consisting of repeated chords in the middle register sounding over arhythmically placed chords in the bass.

Ex. 4-12 Cell Types in “Buzzard Fight”

Type 1

Type 2

Ex. 4-12 (cont.)

Type 3

Type 4

Type 5

Type 6

Musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

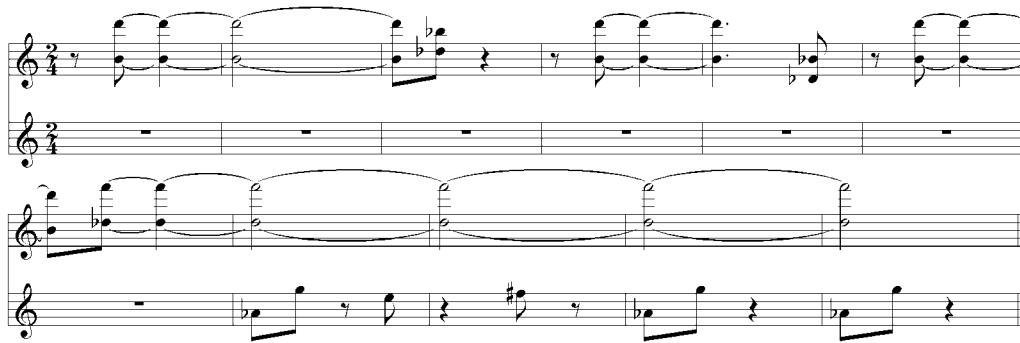
The patterns created from these cells may be subject to variation by means of transposition, change of prolation, or other means. The patterns are then arranged sequentially to generate the cue. Part I uses primarily the Type 1 motive. Part III closes with repetitions of what is essentially a Type 5 motive, used to create a variant of the “First Billy Buck” theme. These two parts frame the action which occurs in Part II, which makes use of all of the different motivic types.

Part I of “Buzzard Fight” uses the first two cell types. Measures 4-15 consist of successive Type 1 cells, here jumping from a minor third. The successive cells sound a major

third down from *B flat* to *G flat* over what is essentially a *B flat* first inversion triad. These cells support two treble voices starting at m. 10 that move from the fourth *E-A* to a unison *G*, then repeats this idea a tone higher. The initial fourth provides a connection to the type 1 cells. From m. 16, the cells jump from fourths, alternating between *B flat* and *C*, while the tenor voices carry parallel cells pitched down a fourth. These cells support a sustained drop of a fourth in the extreme treble voice. The second cell type is introduced in m. 24, its drop in register providing a contrast with the previous passage. Measures 26-27 are a derivation of mm. 24-25, here placed in a higher register; this placement in the higher register emphasizes the similarity between these two cell types. The material following m. 28 is essentially a reprise of mm. 4- 15, although the cells move within the space of a tone rather than a third.

From m. 40 is a passage that breaks with the use of the cells, consisting of sustaining and “clipped” *B flat/D* and *D flat/F* thirds that accompany Tom’s realization that the pony has disappeared (Ex. 4-13). These quite literally create a break in the flow much as Tom’s thoughts are given pause as he tries to get his bearings and determine where the pony is. The alternating notes *A flat* and *G* from m. 48 anticipate the Type 3 cells that begin “Buzzard Fight” Part II, which commences immediately on the conclusion of Part I. The changes in texture in Part I coincide with changes in scene just as they do in Part II; the difference here is that the shots do not change as quickly because the mood has not yet reached the frantic sense of Part II. The reiterated perfect fourths that constitute cell type 1 recall the similar figures based on fourths in “Strangles” and “The Operation,” all of which are connected to the distress of the pony. This connection persists through “Buzzard Fight” and later into “The Promise” and “End Title.”

Ex. 4-13 “Buzzard Fight” Pt I, mm. 40-51



Musical examples reproduced with permission by the Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

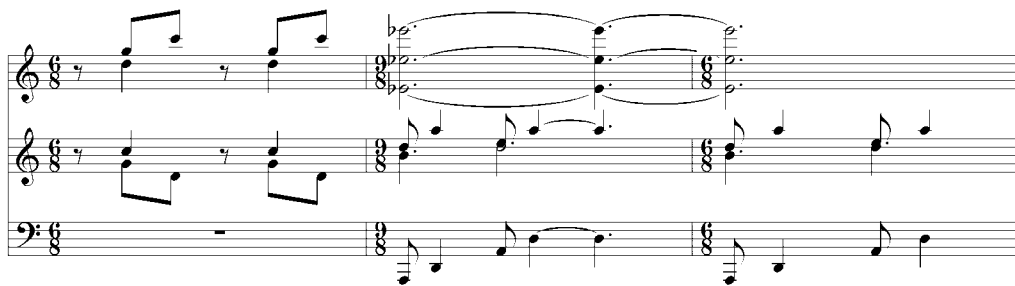
Figure 4-5 “Buzzard Fight Part I”

Meas	1-3	4-15	16-23	24-27	28-39	40-42	43-45	46-51
Strata	(Intro)	A	A'					
				B	B			
						C	C	
								D
Cell types		1	1		1			
				2	2			
Patterns		a	a	b	ab	(x)	(x)	(y)

Figures 4-5b and 4-5c diagram part II of “Buzzard Fight” with respect to these cell types. Figure 4-5b shows the recurrence of cell types over the course of the cue with each of these types essentially being a different plane. Figure 4-5c is more detailed, illustrating the different patterns derived from the cell types. The changes in the patterns occur as a result of changes in specific rhythms, register, implied harmony, instrumentation, or other variations on the principal characteristic of the cell. Many of these cells recur in connection with returns of a particular shot; this quality is indicated in the score itself by the notes describing the accompanying screen action. Cell type 1 occurs at mm. 7, 13, 17, and 25 accompanied by the legend “tracks”

(corresponding to shots of the pony's tracks on the path within the film). In the same manner, cell type 2 occurs at mm. 1, 19, and 27 occur in conjunction with the legend "Tom Running." Within Part II, the cells and patterns are further connected by individual sustaining notes in both the middle and extreme high registers, such as in mm. 1-12, 24-34, in mm. 38-40, 46-48, usually emphasizing the minor third *E flat-C* (Ex. 4-14).

Ex. 4-14 "Buzzard Fight" Pt. II, mm. 46-48



Musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

Perhaps one of the most telling aspects of both of these diagrams is what they do not show; they do not reveal a readily perceptible logical musical structure. Instead, successive patterns appear to alternate locally among two or three cell types. New patterns gradually appear based on these types as earlier patterns disappear. The overall effect is one of a gradual shift from patterns based on cell types 1 and 2 to patterns based on cell types 4 and 5. The changes of pattern correspond to changes of shots within the sequence, with some patterns on a local level reflecting returns to particular shots. This close correspondence between patterns and shots is the culmination of a process that Copland has been developing during the second part of the film in his changing of tempo, texture, and other elements to correspond with a change of scene. This was seen earlier in the film during the cues "Strangles" and "The Operation." In "Buzzard Fight" the pace of change is accelerated, building to the climax of the scene and one of the climactic moments of the story.

Figure 4-6 Cell Planes in Part II of “Buzzard Fight”

Pattern	c	c ²	b	c	b	ab	b	c	d	a ²	b	a ² c	a ³	b	d ²	a ³
Cell type – 1						1				1			1			1
2			2		2	2	2				2			2		
3	3	3		3				3				3				
4									4						4	
5																
6																
Beg meas	1	5	7	10	13	15	17	19	20	24	25	27	34	37	41	42

Pattern	b ²	a ⁴	ab	d ²	d ³	e	d ⁴	d ⁵	f	g	F	g	h	j	h	e ²
Cell type- 1		1	1													
2	2		2													
3																
4				4	4		4	4								
5						5			5	5	5	5				
6													6	6	6	6
Beg meas	46	49	51	54	59	63	66	70	76	82	84	86	93	95	97	99

Pattern	k	e ³	k ²	g ²	k ²	f	h+k ²	f	g ³	k ³	k ⁴	k ³	k ³
Cell type-1													
2													
3													
4													
5	5	5		5		5		5	5	5	5	5	5
6			6		6		6						
Beg meas	100	106	107	109	112	114	116	118	120	125	128	129	131

Figure 4-7 Pattern Planes in Part II of “Buzzard Fight”

Cell type	3	3	2	3	2	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	4	1
Pattern						a				a ²		a ²	a ³	b		a ³
			b		b	b	b				b					
	c	c ²		c				c				c				
									d						d ²	
Beg meas	1	5	7	10	13	15	17	19	20	24	25	27	34	37	41	42

Cell type	2	1	1	4	4	5	4	4	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6
Pattern		a ⁴	a													
	b ²		b													
				d ²	d ³		d ⁴	d ⁵								
						e										e ²
									f		f					
										g		g				
													h		j	
														j		
Beg meas	46	49	51	54	59	63	66	70	76	82	84	86	93	95	97	99

Cell type	5	5	6	5	6	5	6	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Pattern		e ³												
						f		f						
				g ²					g ³					
							h							
	k		k ²		k ²		k ²				k ³	k ⁴	k ³	k ³
Beg meas	100	106	107	109	112	114	116	118	120	125	128	129	131	

Part III of Buzzard Fight consists of variations on the Type 5 cell, which is composed essentially of block chords. These cells are accompanied by an irregular meter and accompaniment meant to refer to the irregular accompaniment from “Walk to the Bunkhouse.” In this scene, Billy Buck tries to console Tom after the death of the pony and first suggests that Tom can have the mare Rosy’s colt once it is born. The accompaniment itself, alternately downward leaps of ninths and tenths (*G flat- A flat/F*) and thirds (*A flat/F*), suggests Cell Type 3, while the alternating meters of 6/8 and 5/8 provide the connection to “Walk to the Bunkhouse” and the relationship between Billy and Tom. The change in the metric relationship from the earlier cue reinforces the change in Tom’s perception of Billy from the beginning of the film, made overt during the pause at m. 27 where Tom blames Billy for the pony’s death. The block chords within these cells successively change subtly by shifting notes up or down a tone; the repetition of particular combinations is indicated in the score by the use of boxed letters to represent particular variants that are then combined sequentially. There is a subtle shift in the use of these cells at m. 26, where the meters alternate 4/4 and 3/4, the bass register rises an octave, and the bass rhythm becomes derived from triplets. Despite the changing cell variations, the texture of the cue remains the same virtually throughout, interrupted only by the slower tempo at m. 26 and the brief treble interjection at m. 28.

Ex. 4-15 “Buzzard Fight” Pt. III, mm. 1-6



Figure 4-8 “Buzzard Fight part III” –(the block letters used are Copland’s, from the composing score).

Part III															
Strata	A		A			A									
		B					B								
				C				C							
					D				D						
										E					
											F				
												G	G		
														H	
															I
Meas	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Part III															
Strata											C'			C'	
	D	D'													
			E												
				F					F'			F'			F'
					G''	G				G''					
							H								
								I							
													pause		
Meas	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30

The “form” of “Buzzard Fight,” such as it is, is defined as much by the cue divisions as by anything, and these are determined by the film sequence. To reiterate, this results in a three-part form consisting of a slow yet anticipatory “introduction” or “prologue,” a primary section that builds in activity level as it progresses, directly reflecting the intensity levels of the screen action, and a slow “epilogue” that serves as a contrasting reflective passage after the furious

excitement of the second part. The use of the ostinato patterns based on motivic cells allows for this rapid change of texture to accompany cross cuts while at the same time maintaining some unity within the music and allowing for a gradual increase in intensity, and the prominence of sonorities based on fourths resulting from the use of fourths in the motivic cells continue the association of this interval with tension and anxiety over the fate of the pony.

The cue pays little attention to functional harmony; what harmony exists in the cue results from the simultaneous sounding of particular motivic cells and their accompaniment. The inherent dissonance of the minor seconds in the variants of the fourth cell type seem intended as a special effect, coming as they do in connection with shots of the buzzards and particularly at m. 41, which accompany Tom's reaction to the sight of the fallen pony.

M1002, M1100 Tom Readjusted (Parts I and II)

"Tom Readjusted" accompanies Tom's decision to accept the colt that Billy's mare is carrying. Part I begins as Tom is reading by the pond and is interrupted by Rosy as she comes to drink. Presumably, some months have passed since the pony's death the previous Thanksgiving as Tom's dress and the sunny pond suggest spring. Part II underscores Tom pondering amid scenes of the ranch during spring before he barges into Billy's bunkhouse announcing that he wants Rosy's colt. The cue ends with a fade out of the barn at evening as Billy is heard calling Rosy to prepare for the birth.

Part I is an introduction that moves seamlessly into Part II. A lyrical recitative prefaces the "theme" of this cue at m. 6-7 of Part I; this is followed immediately by the "reprise" of the theme that begins Part II ("A" in Fig. 4-6). Originally, Part I of this cue began with this theme proper as seen in the crossed-out staves at the top of p. 158; the scoring matches that of the

theme statement at the end of part I, and the scene indication describes Tom at the pond.³

Copland must have decided that the theme needed some sort of prelude, perhaps because it recurs so frequently during the rest of the cue.

The theme itself is essentially strophic in four phrases, providing a folk-like character that resonates with the setting similar to the effect of previous cues (See Ex. 4-16). The cue essentially consists of successive statements of this theme, with each statement concluding with alternate phrase endings (See Fig. 4-6). In this way, these successive statements act as assembled modules that articulate the form. The harmony is strongly diatonic G major. The first full statement of this theme comprises mm. 1-8 of Part II, followed by a contrasting set of three phrases that use the initial part of the theme as a jumping off point. A repeat of the entire theme follows at m. 17. At m. 26, there is an extended melody that preserves the G major tonality but creates a more buoyant character through increased activity in the melody and syncopation in the accompaniment; this material follows Tom's assertion to Billy that he wants Rosy's colt and Billy's agreement to the bargain. The same material is repeated at m. 32, although here transposed up a fourth. The cue ends quietly as the scene changes to Billy readying to deliver the colt. The return of diatonic harmony and folk-like thematic material reinforce the notion of the title of the cue: an attempt by all parties on the ranch to return to the previous state of routine following the sad death of the pony. In so doing, they are completing the circle to which the grandfather had referred during the Thanksgiving meal when he noted that "death and life are all part of the same thing." The return to a musical "normalcy" of folk-like structure and consonant tonality within the cue illustrates this point within the context of the story.

³ Copland, "The Red Pony: original manuscript," (Item 63.1), Aaron Copland Collection, 158.

Ex. 4-16 “Tom Readjusted” Pt. II, mm. 1-10



Musical examples reproduced with permission by the Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

As mentioned above, the form is articulated by the successive statements of the cue's theme, creating a quasi-strophic structure. A different, yet similarly tranquil block is then stated twice to accompany the shot of the stable as evening falls, closing the scene.

Fig. 4-9 “Tom Readjusted”

	Part I		Part II				
Strata	intro	A ²	A	A ³	A		
						B	B ²
Phrase		A	aaab	aa ² c	aaab		
Meas.	1-5	6-7	1-8	9-17	18-26	27-31	32-37

M1101 “The Promise”

“The Promise” accompanies Billy's brooding on his promise to get Tom a colt as he sharpens his knife in anticipation of problems with the birth of Rosy's colt (in Steinbeck's original story, the colt's difficult birth forced Billy to use the knife to cut the colt out of the body

of his mare). There are essentially two ideas in this cue, ascending parallel fourths reminiscent of those in “Strangles” and “The Operation” and a reprise of the melody heard at m. 14 of “The Operation, Part I.” The ascending fourths in this cue are an extension of the melodic motive involving *A flat*, *G*, and *C* that opens the cue (“a” in Fig. 4-7; see Ex. 4-17), with the melodic fragment acting as an embellishment of the upper notes of the successive fourths. This fragment and its accompaniment of ascending minor thirds are repeated twice in mm. 4-7 before proceeding to the ascending fourths beginning at m. 10. The lower voices follow in parallel thirds starting at m. 4. The parallel fourths are punctuated at mm. 9 and 13 with rising arpeggios in the bass. The *piu mosso* melody starts at m. 14, here emphasizing the tonality of *A flat*. This melody ends with a pause at m. 22, allowing space for Tom’s critical remark after Billy’s reassurances: “But the pony died.” The parallel fourths return abruptly to punctuate Tom’s comment, this time rising higher than they had previously.

Ex. 4-17 “The Promise” mm. 4-20

The musical score for "The Promise" mm. 4-20 is presented in three systems. The first system (mm. 4-7) is in common time (C). The second system (mm. 8-13) is in 3/4 time. The third system (mm. 14-20) is in 3/4 time. The music features ascending parallel fourths in the upper voices, a rising arpeggio in the bass at mm. 9 and 13, and a melodic fragment in the bass at mm. 14-17.

Ex. 4-17 (cont.)



Musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

The form of the cue is very simple, essentially repeated and varied statements of the motivic idea based on ascending parallel fourths. It functions primarily as a textural bed underscoring the scene, with the slight but constant level of inherent tension within the motivic material adding to the sense of foreboding within the scene, the only respite coming from the contrasting material at m. 13.

Figure 4-10 “The Promise”

Block	A		A ²		B	A ³
Phrase	a	a ²	a	a ²		a ³
Meas	1-4	4-7	7-9	9-13	13-22	23-27

M1102 “End Title”

The “End Title” cue accompanies the final scenes of the film in addition to the end credits, which are very brief and actually only correspond with the final measures of the cue in which the “Main Title” theme is reprised. The greater part of the cue underscores the family’s running to the barn to prevent Billy Buck from prematurely killing his mare in order to preserve

the colt for Tom. Upon arriving at the stall, Tom and his family see that Rosy has already given birth to a healthy colt and that mother and child are quite well. The scene shifts to a shot of Tom approaching the viewer from afar riding the now grown colt while accompanied by the “Training Theme” and its variant of the “First Billy Buck Theme” presented earlier in “Morning Training.” The “Main Title Theme” immediately follows, underscoring the end credits. The cue can easily be divided into three parts based on the texture and thematic material, all of which also corresponds to changes in the accompanying scene: 1) the family’s rush to the barn, 2) the appearance of the baby colt, and 3) the shot of Tom riding the grown colt followed by the end titles.

The music during the rush to the barn is based on ostinati derived from a series of rising diatonic fourths proceeding over bass figures that descend by step (Ex. 4-18). These fourths are presented in successive “stop and start” groups of three layers which include fourth-based motives simultaneously in parallel motion and as a sequence of upward leaps. The first two phrases, mm. 1-3 and 4-7, are punctuated by fourth- and fifth-based sonorities in the trumpets, while the third phrase proceeds directly into the one that follows; indeed, these two phases could easily be considered one long phrase. The rising pitch level and increasing agitation of these groups reflects the agitation of the characters, who believe that Billy is about to kill his mare.

Ex. 4-18 “End Title” mm. 1-8



Ex. 4-18 (cont.)



Musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

The music accompanying the appearance of the baby colt centers around a series of statements of the “Ranch theme.” Measures 21-32 consist of three phrases built from the “Ranch theme” combined with ostinato gestures placed in different registers (“x,” “y,” and “z” in Fig. 4-8; see Ex. 4-19). With the exception of the “z” ostinato, which remains in the bass after its appearance at m. 26, the theme and ostinati are doubled or shifted in register with each successive phrase. The contrasting phrases in mm. 33-40 are constructed in the same manner, this time based on a similarly contrasting segment of the “Ranch theme” itself (“c” in Fig. 4-8). Measures 41-44 close the section with a reprise of the “Ranch theme” proper. The result is an increase in dynamic by additive means, leading to the final brief scene of Tom with the grown colt.

In notating the music for this section, Copland used a form of shorthand similar to that used in “Circus Music.” He designated specific measures within each cue with boxed letters and then indicated repetition of these passages by simply writing these letter designations within a series of blank measures in the score.⁴ This shorthand and the successive series of these measure

⁴ Copland, “The Red Pony: original manuscript,” (Item 63.1), Aaron Copland Collection,

indications not only emphasize the modular nature of the music itself but also indicate Copland's conception of it as modular in this manner.

Ex. 4-19 "End Title" mm. 21-55

The musical score is divided into four systems, each consisting of four staves. The notation includes various musical symbols such as rests, notes, and letter labels. The first system features a treble clef staff with a series of eighth notes, a bass clef staff with a series of eighth notes, and two middle staves with rests. The second system features a treble clef staff with a series of eighth notes, a bass clef staff with a series of eighth notes, and two middle staves with rests. The third system features a treble clef staff with a series of eighth notes, a bass clef staff with a series of eighth notes, and two middle staves with rests. The fourth system features a treble clef staff with a series of eighth notes, a bass clef staff with a series of eighth notes, and two middle staves with rests. The notation is complex and includes various musical symbols such as rests, notes, and letter labels.

Ex. 4-19 (cont.)

The musical score for Ex. 4-19 (cont.) is presented in three systems, each containing four staves. The notation is as follows:

- System 1:**
 - Staff 1 (Treble): A series of eighth-note chords, primarily triads and dyads, moving in a stepwise fashion.
 - Staff 2 (Treble): A series of eighth-note chords, primarily triads and dyads, moving in a stepwise fashion.
 - Staff 3 (Treble): A series of eighth-note chords, primarily triads and dyads, moving in a stepwise fashion.
 - Staff 4 (Bass): A series of whole rests.
- System 2:**
 - Staff 1 (Treble): A series of eighth-note chords, primarily triads and dyads, moving in a stepwise fashion.
 - Staff 2 (Treble): A series of eighth-note chords, primarily triads and dyads, moving in a stepwise fashion.
 - Staff 3 (Treble): A series of eighth-note chords, primarily triads and dyads, moving in a stepwise fashion.
 - Staff 4 (Bass): A series of eighth-note chords, primarily triads and dyads, moving in a stepwise fashion.
- System 3:**
 - Staff 1 (Treble): A series of eighth-note chords, primarily triads and dyads, moving in a stepwise fashion.
 - Staff 2 (Treble): A series of eighth-note chords, primarily triads and dyads, moving in a stepwise fashion.
 - Staff 3 (Treble): A series of eighth-note chords, primarily triads and dyads, moving in a stepwise fashion.
 - Staff 4 (Bass): A series of eighth-note chords, primarily triads and dyads, moving in a stepwise fashion.

Ex. 4-19 (cont.)



Musical examples reproduced with permission by the
Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

The shot of Tom riding the colt is underscored by a quotation of the material from m. 53 of “Morning Training”; this material, and particularly this theme occurred previously when Tom was successfully teaching the pony to respond to a halter. The return of this material at this point in the story achieves a form of closure; Tom’s desire early in the story was to ride his pony and he is shown riding the colt at the end of the film. The narrative and musical closure is punctuated by the return of the “Main Title” theme under the ending credits, presented much the same as it appears at the end of the “Main Title” cue.

Figure 4-11 “End Title”

Section	A				B						C		
Layers-High					x	x							
Middle							y (8ves)			y			
Bass						z	z			z			
Phrase	a	a ²	a ³	a ⁴	b	b	b	c	c	b	dd	ee	Main Title them reprise
Meas	1- 4	4- 8	9- 12	13- 20	21- 24	25- 28	29-32	33- 36	37- 40	41- 44	45- 48	49- 50	51-59

Fig. 4-8

Prod. 142 Title End Title Composer 3 Arranger

Handwritten musical score for "End Title" mm. 25-35. The score is written on three systems of staves. The first system (mm. 25-27) shows a treble and bass staff with a large 'M' in the treble. Measures 25, 26, and 27 are marked with boxes A, B, and C respectively. The second system (mm. 28-31) shows a treble and bass staff. Measure 28 is marked with a box D and 'f'. Measure 29 is marked with a box A and 'repeat' above it, with a note '(top line vibration) (sole in octave)'. Measures 30 and 31 are marked with boxes B and C respectively. The third system (mm. 32-35) shows a treble and bass staff. Measure 32 is marked with a box D. Measures 33, 34, and 35 are marked with boxes A, B, and C respectively. The score is handwritten and includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Re. 110

Property of Republic Productions, Inc.

Facsimile 2. "End Title" mm. 25-35 Showing Copland's Shorthand for Indicating Repeating Measures. Item 63.1, Aaron Copland Collection, Library of Congress. Used by permission of the Aaron Copland Fund For Music, Inc., copyright holder.

Conclusions

Most of the cues from the second half of the film contain textures that are effective at providing atmosphere for a film but do not exhibit much in the way of “absolute musical structure” or well-developed thematic material. This could explain why little in the concert suite was derived from them. The notable exception is the “End Title,” the first two sections of which are incorporated largely intact into the suite’s final movement, “Happy Ending.” The second section is also featured prominently in the suite’s opening movement.

There are some rather striking melodies, such as the “Parental Sympathy” theme in “At the Fireside” and “Strangles,” and some lushly introspective passages, such as those in “Strangles” and “The Operation.” The structures of some of these cues, particularly those that feature reprised blocks acting either as frames for larger structural blocks or as points of reference for contrasting material, seem as though they could have been the basis for viable concert pieces, not unlike “Circus Music” or even the composite “Morning on the Ranch” from the concert suite. Ultimately, Copland may have decided that the music was not dramatic enough or contained enough contrast within a single cue to make good concert music. Some of this music, such as the “Worried Tom” theme from “Tom’s Indecision” and “The Sick Pony” and the “Parental Sympathy” theme from “At the Fireside” and “Strangles,” almost sound more like the typical product of Hollywood than music associated with Aaron Copland, largely due to the inherent melodrama contained within these passage.

CHAPTER V

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE MUSIC AND THE
NARRATIVE IN *THE RED PONY*

The music of *The Red Pony* fulfills Copland's stated purpose – reinforcing the narrative of the film – in several ways. As discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, the block construction characteristic of most of the cues allows them to align well with particular scenes, sequences, and shots within the film. At the same time, create a set of strata across which the blocks interact and contrast as the film progresses. Aspects of these blocks are often designed to interact with the accompanying scene in some manner, both in the specific ways discussed in the previous chapters and in more general ways to be discussed below. In addition to operating within their own sets of textural strata, the successive cues operate within a larger, overarching set of strata that encompasses all of the cues throughout the film. These strata are somewhat less texturally specific than those in any one cue; they have to do with changes in the harmonic nature of the cues over the course of the film and the reappearance of recognizable thematic ideas, including such themes as the “Ranch Theme” which recur essentially unchanged, and the themes and accompaniments associated with Billy Buck, which undergo transformations during the film.

In discussing Copland's music for earlier films (*The City, Of Mice and Men, Our Town*), Alfred Cochran described each of these scores as having a *grundgestalt* occurring early in the score that recurs throughout the rest of the music or serves as the basis of development of later cues. The *grundgestalten* that he identifies include melodic material from the opening nineteen

measures of the score to *The City* and the emphasis on quartal sonorities and the interval of the fifth in the score to *Of Mice and Men*.¹ The “Main Title” theme and the Billy Buck music perform similar functions within the score to *The Red Pony*.² Both recur thematically during the course of the score, but both also serve as the basis for the music that comes later. The “Main Title” theme sets the precedent for the use of quartal sonorities throughout the score, and the theme’s implied C harmony prefigures that used often by the “Ranch theme,” particularly in the opening minutes of the film. Transformation of the Billy Buck music over the course of the score has narrative implications involving the changing relationship between Tom and Billy Buck as Billy’s fallibility is made more apparent.

The presence of these elements throughout the score effectively gives coherence to the series of cues across the score, helping to instill the sense of a “*grande ligne*,” to use Copland’s phrase, that unifies the music, propels it forward, and gives it a sense of inevitability from beginning to end. The idea of the “*grande ligne*” was a principle that had been instilled in Copland by his teacher, Nadia Boulanger.³

Harmonic Strata

One way that Copland’s music for *The Red Pony* serves the film is as an emotional signifier, fulfilling one of the principles attributed to film music by Claudia Gorbman. Copland’s approach differed from that practiced by many in Hollywood, which frequently conveyed the contraposition between “happiness” and “sadness” within the story using polarities of mode within the music; major mode signified a “happy” affect and minor mode signified something

¹ Alfred Cochran, “Style, Structure, and Tonal Organization in the Early Film Scores of Aaron Copland,” (Ph.D. diss., Catholic University, 1986), 23-25, 140, 292.

² Cochran identifies the opening statement of the “Main Title,” including the three-measure lead-in, as a *grundgestalt*. Cochran, “The Red Pony,” 28.

³ Pollack, *Aaron Copland*, 49; Cochran, “Early Film Scores of Aaron Copland”, ix, x; Copland/Perlis, *Copland: 1900-1942*, 67.

else, usually sadness but also anger or fear; sometimes the music indicating these “negative” emotions might be supplemented by dissonant harmonies such as diminished sevenths. In *The Red Pony* score, Copland used a polarity of consonance and dissonance to accompany scenes of comparative tranquility and agitation. Dissonant music is used to accompany scenes of unease, stress, anguish, and anxiety such as “The Sick Pony,” “The Operation,” and “The Promise,” while consonant music accompanies scenes of both happiness and carefree exuberance such as “March Dream, Part I,” “Tom’s Friends,” and “Morning on the Ranch,” as well as episodes of introspective sadness and grief such as “Tom Readjusted,” the beginning of “Grandfather’s Story,” and portions of “Strangles.” Minor mode is used sparingly; even the introspective and sad passages typically employ major mode, conveying their affect through slower tempos, lyric phrasing, softer dynamics, and often irregular phrase lengths. Tempo and rhythm also contribute to the affect of consonant and dissonant music, with faster tempi being connected with higher levels of excitement, either happy or agitated. This is seen in Part I of “March Dream” and “Tom’s Friends” in connection with Tom’s exuberance and in “Tom’s Indecision,” “The Sick Pony,” and “Buzzard Fight” in connection with Tom’s worry and rage. An exception in the use of dissonance is in the “March Dream” and “Circus Music” cues, where the dissonant polytonality (here a special type of dissonance) conveys humor rather than stress.

The cumulative result of these successive instances of consonant and dissonant episodes is an arc in which the level of dissonance employed increases over the course of the film as the level of tension in the story increases, culminating in the climax resulting from the pony’s death in the “Buzzard Fight.” There is a short return to consonance in “Tom Readjusted” as Tom becomes resolved in his desire for Rosy’s colt, and a brief return of dissonance with Billy’s concern over the birth of the colt in “The Promise” and the beginning of the “End Title.” Consonance is reasserted with the birth of the colt and the return of the “Ranch theme” and

“Main Title” theme, which closes the cue and the film. Figure 5-1 illustrates the progression from consonance to dissonance over the course of the film; the cues that are more dissonant are those accompanying scenes occurring after the pony’s illness:

Fig. 5-1 Comparative Consonance in Successive Cues of *The Red Pony*

Cue Title	Comparative Consonance
1. Prelude and Main Title_____	consonance
2. Morning on the Ranch_____	consonance
3. Walk to the Bunkhouse, Pt I_____	consonance
4. Walk to the Bunkhouse, Pt II	
5. Walk to the Bunkhouse, Pt III	
6. March Dream, Pt. I_____	consonance
7. March Dream, Pt II_____	mild dissonance/ polytonality
8. Intro to Circus Dream_____	consonance
9. Circus Dream, Pt I_____	consonance/brief polytonality
10. Circus Dream, Pt II_____	mild dissonance/ polytonality
11. Circus Dream, Pt III_____	mild dissonance/ polytonality
12. Circus Dream, Pt IV_____	mild dissonance/ polytonality
13. The Boring Dinner_____	mild dissonance/ polytonality
14. The Gift_____	consonance
15. Tom’s Friends_____	consonance
16. Grandfather’s Story_____	dissonant polytonality
17. Morning Training_____	consonance
18. Tom’s Indecision_____	consonance/ unresolved dissonance
19. The Sick Pony, Pt I_____	unresolved dissonance
20. The Sick Pony, Pt II	
21. At the Fireside_____	unresolved dissonance
22. Strangles, Pt I_____	consonance
23. Strangles, Pt I_____	quartal dissonance
24. The Operation, Pt I_____	quartal dissonance
25. The Operation, Pt II_____	quartal dissonance
26. Buzzard Fight, Pt I_____	quartal dissonance
27. Buzzard Fight, Pt II_____	quartal dissonance (most dissonance)
28. Buzzard Fight, Pt III_____	less pronounced dissonance
29. Tom Readjusted, Pt. I_____	consonance
30. Tom Readjusted, Pt II_____	consonance
31. The Promise_____	quartal dissonance
32. End Title_____	quartal dissonance/ consonance

The consonant material provides a base or “norm” against which the dissonant material is contrasted. The consonant material is presented at the beginning of the film in association with the “norm” of activity on the ranch as each day begins, associating consonance with stability, routine, and by extension, “normality.” The simple qualities of the “Ranch theme,” appearing in both the “Main Title” and “Morning on the Ranch” cues, are discussed in Chapter 3 as reflecting the somewhat rustic and simple qualities of life on the ranch, but these same qualities in the music create the sense of repose inherent in the routine of activity on the ranch. This is also conveyed in the repetitive nature of the theme itself, both in its use of repeating broken triads and in the way that phrase fragments are linked together to form a continuously active yet never changing pattern of activity.

An additional “norm” is presented in the brief statement of “Tom’s Childhood” theme in Part I of “March Dream.” Despite the brevity of this portion of the cue, the theme’s exuberance and its association with Tom, seen as he excitedly runs off to school in anticipation of showing his friends the newspaper clipping borrowed from Billy Buck, immediately identifies Tom’s childhood for the viewer as happy and relatively carefree. This characterization fulfills the audience’s preconceptions of a typical ten-year-old and is consistent with Steinbeck’s original conception of the character in his novella. The four-square phrase structure of this theme also conveys the simplicity of childhood and contributes to the folk-like setting much as the implied phrase regularity of the “Ranch theme.”

The Billy Buck music first presented in “Walk to the Bunkhouse” also sets up a consonant “norm” with its implied *C* major harmony that is reinforced by the transformation of the Main Title theme into a version less harmonically ambiguous than at the opening of the film. The material for Billy Buck is the most radically transformed of the recurring material over the

course of the film; all of these transformations are evaluated in comparison to this original version.

These consonant cues occurring toward the beginning of the film set up the harmonic norm of stasis for the ranch that is subsequently disturbed as life there is upset by the appearance of the pony and its illness and death. Throughout the rest of the score, dissonance is employed through two methods usually appearing separately although they sometimes occur together. These two methods are: 1) the use of polytonality and, 2) the use of innately dissonant materials.

Early on, Copland employs polytonality very much in the manner usually connected with Darius Milhaud; that is, the sounding of simultaneous otherwise tonal melodies that each imply different key centers. The most overt example of this is the “March Dream,” in which each of the various implied tonalities is one level of strata defining the structure of the cue. This same form of polytonality occurs in the “Circus Dream,” particularly Parts II through IV. This is seen in the parallel motion in the consequent phrases of Parts II and IV and the “pentatonic/ black key” music of sections “B” and “C” of Part III. In these cases, the dissonance is used to reinforce the humor already present in the scene, either due to the fanciful situation or humorous antics (which, unfortunately, editing prevented the audience from seeing). This polytonal dissonance occurs in the context of a strong or well-established key center (*E major* in the “March Dream”; *G major* in the “Circus Dream,” Parts II and IV; *C major* in the “Circus Dream,” Part III), creating a sense of “wrong-note” music that is, due to its inherent “flaws,” “funny.” This works because the sense of a prominent key center is very strong and remains the same throughout the polytonal passage, sometimes reinforced by unambiguous statements of the prominent key such as with the *E major* fanfares in the “March Dream.”

The importance of a strong key center in a polytonal passage is shown to opposite effect in “Grandfather’s Story,” where the polytonality has a quite different affect resulting from the

lack of a clearly established key center. Here, the fanfares in the trumpets appear in different tonal strata much as they do in the “March Dream.” The difference is that there is no unambiguous key center for these fanfares to play off. The reiterating bass notes center around *E*, but not so clearly as in the “March Dream,” with its implied “I-I-V-I” bass motion. Indeed, the bass notes in “Grandfather’s Story” sound the pitches *E*, *C sharp*, *D*, *F*, and in no order that directly implies a harmonic relationship. Because of the complex, almost staggered rhythm of the bass, the listener cannot always rely on accents of meter to denote a more prominent pitch or harmony. Finally, the bass notes are accompanied by non-harmonic chords in the low register that further blur the sense of a clear tonal center.

The lack of a strongly articulated key center in “Grandfather’s Story” coupled with the more complex rhythmic pattern in the bass causes the polytonal fanfares to induce a sense of unease rather than humor, which is more appropriate to the scene of the grandfather’s recollection. This episode is the first instance in the film in which music accompanies someone who is “unhappy”; consequently, this cue is the first in the score to use dissonance to convey a sense of unhappiness rather than humor.

Polytonality is also used in conveying Tom’s anxiety over the welfare of the pony, evident in the music occurring in “Tom’s Indecision,” “The Sick Pony, Pts. I and II,” and “At the Fireside.” This polytonality almost bridges the gap between the two uses of dissonance in the score. The incessant ostinati based on a minor second (here, *C* and *D flat*) creates the impression of a drone or pedal point (See Ex. 3-42, p.86-87). The tense “Worried Tom theme” that is supported by this sonority begins with a minor second – indeed, there is likely some causal relationship between the two. The theme itself as it unfolds in “Tom’s Indecision” seems to imply a tonality of *A flat*; the principal pitches within the theme are *C*, *D flat*, *A flat*, and *E flat*, equivalent to the scale degrees 3, 4, 1, and 5. The trilling *C – D flat* ostinato almost implies a

dominant of *F minor*, and the *A-flat* diatonic scale degrees of this melody are also diatonic to *F minor*. The prominence of *E flat* within the theme counteracts the impression of *F-minor* tonality, however.

This material is further complicated as the theme goes on: the melody now emphasizes *D flat*, yet with an altered first interval; the *C – D flat* ostinato continues, but the “drone” in the lowest register shifts from *C* to *E*. This presents three “strata” of possible implied harmonies, the persistent *E* reiterated in the lowest voice, *D flat* as implied in the outline of the “Worried Tom” theme, and the implied dominant of *F minor* articulated by the *C* and *D flat* ostinato. None of these is clearly the principal harmony, although *F minor* could be a likely candidate, due to its implied pervasiveness in the trilling ostinato; *E* could arguably be seen as a possible leading tone. If this is so, this situation adds a new import to the implied dominant ostinato that resonates with the unease of the situation on screen – the dominant never resolves. This unresolved dominant creates its own tension within the music that reinforces Tom’s anxiety about the pony. Even when this melody and idea reappears based on “F” in the subsequent cue, “The Sick Pony,” the effect is not one of resolution but of merely transposition to a different key center (implied *B flat minor*) but preserving the same affect. In subsequent cues, such as “At the Fireside” and “Strangles,” the appearance of a prominent minor second recalls this melody, texture, and harmonic relationship, connoting the anxiety experienced in connection with the thunderstorm within this simple interval during later scenes in the film.

The tension in “Tom’s Indecision” is further aided by Copland’s second means of employing dissonance: the use of inherently dissonant material. Copland uses unambiguously dissonant intervals such as seconds and tritones, but he also uses constructions based on fourths or fifths that, unlike those used in the Main Title theme, blur any sense of key center through parallel motion, particularly by semitone, and by supporting the fourth-based constructions with

unrelated notes in the accompaniment. The ostinati at the end of “Tom’s Indecision” revolve around the alternating notes *C – D flat*, but these are supported from m. 56 by the similarly trilling semitone *F – G flat* and, curiously, *D flat – C* (the principal trill in reverse). These resulting dissonant combinations further add to the tension in these scenes.

The dissonance created by the simultaneous minor seconds appears also in “Buzzard Fight, Part III” with the *F* and *G flat* that are reiterated within each of the successive block chords. The reiterated *F*, especially in the bass, creates the impression of a dominant pedal point of *B flat* minor, further suggested by the key signature. The unease in the dissonance provided by the *F-G flat* ninth in the bass and the corresponding *F-G flat* minor seconds in the middle register is complemented by the unresolved dominant pedal throughout the cue, further reinforcing Tom’s shock in the wake of discovering the dead pony (See Ex. 4-15 ,p. 117).

The use of parallel fourths to create a dissonant texture is first seen in “Strangles, Pt. II,” m. 10 (See Ex. 4-7, p.103) The highly chromatic melodic motion centered around seconds that precedes this from m. 6 sets up this part of the cue. Here, the descending parallel fourths starting on *A* are pitted against a sustaining *A flat* in the bass that is doubled by a rising chromatic line from *A flat* to *C flat*. This results in a series of sonorities that have no clear tonal center. This figure is successively transposed upward through m. 20, further increasing the tension in the cue to reflect Tom’s overall worrying and his queasiness as Billy lances the lump in the pony’s throat. This figure is used to achieve the same effect in “The Operation,” and in “The Promise.” (See Ex. 4-8, p. 106, and Ex. 4-17, p. 122)

Dissonance based on parallel fourths is used in the opening part of the “End Titles.” Here again, the lack of an implied key center, parallel motion of the fourths in the upper lines, and resulting dissonances in the counterpoint create tension to mirror that of the family as they run to prevent Billy from killing his mare.

The motives used to assemble the “Buzzard Fight” make use of quartal sonorities and ambiguous key centers to heighten the tension within that scene. Further dissonance is introduced by simultaneous use of quartal combinations a semitone apart (See Ex. 4- 12, p. 111). A stable key center is obscured by the incessant parallel motion within the motives and the rapidly changing nature of the motives themselves, all of which prevents any sort of meaningful reiteration in the bass to provide a key center.

Fourth-based material of this sort in *The Red Pony* is typically connected with scenes of the distressed pony or some character’s anxiety over the pony or the impending colt, usually that of Tom or Billy Buck, and continues to reappear right up to the colt’s arrival at the end of the film. While dissonant parallel fourths function texturally to convey this association in the cells of “Buzzard Fight” and the opening measures of “End Title,” the chromatically descending parallel fourths first heard in “Strangles, Part II,” effectively constitute a theme that is repeated in “The Operation,” and “The Promise.” As such, they can also be discussed further with respect to the thematic strata which operate in accord with the film’s narrative.

Thematic Strata

As discussed in Chapter 3, there are several themes and thematic ideas that recur over the course of the film in connection with characters or settings. Some of these are simple, folk-like tunes that reinforce the rural, post-frontier setting. Others are further developed and transformed over the course of the film, reflecting changes resulting from the events in the story. It must be stressed that the designations used to identify these themes are for convenience in discussing their use within the score. The following discussion demonstrates that these themes function within yet another level of strata that parallels that of the narrative of the film.

“Main Title Theme”

The “Main Title Theme” is heard in its original form immediately preceding the voice-over prologue, during the opening and closing credits and in subtly transformed versions during “Walk to the Bunkhouse” and “Tom’s Indecision.” Lawrence Morton and Alfred Cochran both commented on the “open” nature of the theme due to its use of open fifths; Morton specifically described later versions of the theme as having a “feeling for big outdoor spaces.”⁴ This theme reinforces the setting in what could be called a “large-scale” manner, using its openly spaced, fifth-based chords to situate the ranch into the post-frontier environment of the Salinas Valley. This association, coupled with the theme’s greatest prominence at the beginning and end of the picture, make it function like a frame for the rest of the score.

“Ranch Theme”

The “Ranch Theme,” also heard during the opening credits and during the sequence depicting life on the ranch, reinforces the setting in a more specific manner than the “Main Title,” employing its folk-like character to reinforce aspects of life on the ranch itself, particularly the routines of chores, meals, and preparation for the day’s activities. Its recurrence during these sequences and reappearance at the birth of the baby colt at the end of the film provide a kind of stability, suggesting that these aspects of the ranch are unchanging. The “Ranch Theme” complements the “Main Title” theme with its own inherent western flavor.

“Tom’s Childhood Theme”

Although the theme for “Tom’s Childhood” first appears in Part I of “March Dream” and is the underlying basis of Part II of that cue, it probably receives its most characteristic treatment in “Tom’s Friends” and at the end of “The Gift.” Despite the theme’s four-square phrase structure, it has little of the western character present in the previous two themes. The almost

⁴ Cochran, “The Red Pony,” 28; Morton, “The Red Pony,” 6.

jubilant nature of the theme seems to exude the sense of carefree, happy childhood, appropriate for its use accompanying Tom running off to school and showing his friends his newly acquired pony.⁵ Morton connects this theme more with Tom's schoolmates, likely because of its presence in the aforementioned cue and because of its use during the "March Dream" which occurs during Tom's walk to school.⁶ This theme does not reappear after Tom receives the pony, however, even though there is a key scene before the pony's death when Tom is confronted by his friends who have come to see him ride the pony. The restriction of this theme to these earlier sequences seems to link it more strongly to Tom's state before his experience of the trauma of the pony's illness and death. According to Steinbeck's original novella, these were experiences that shaped one's adulthood from childhood. The theme's prominence during the "March Dream" fantasy sequence, which centers largely on Tom's idolization of Billy Buck as well as his penchant for child-like fantasy, seem to support its connection to these child-like characteristics of Tom.

"First Billy Buck Theme"

This "theme" is more properly an "accompaniment," particularly in its initial presentation in "Walk to the Bunkhouse," yet it undergoes more transformations during the course of the score than any other theme, with its various incarnations appearing in "Tom's Friends," "Morning Training," "Tom's Indecision," "Buzzard Fight, Part III," and "End Title." Its first statement is marked by its asymmetrical combination of 3/4 and 2/4 measures, which help infuse it with some of the "horsey" character attributed by Morton.⁷ Cochran is correct in noting that the change in character between this theme as it appears in "Walk to the Bunkhouse" and its later appearance in "Tom's Indecision" connote Tom's changing perception of Billy Buck as fallible,

⁵ To this listener, the structure of this theme is not unlike portions of the theme to *Dennis the Menace*.

⁶ Morton, "The Red Pony," 6.

⁷ Morton, "The Red Pony," 6. Copland's own legend on the sketch leaf containing this theme reads "Horse Trotting." Copland, "The Red Pony," sketches, Item 63.5, Aaron Copland Collection, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

but this is only one of the ways that this theme works within the film.⁸ The variants of this theme in “Tom’s Friends” and “Morning Training” relate more to Tom’s attempts to train the pony under Billy’s instruction. Here, the first statements at m. 57 of “Tom’s Friends” feature the first Billy Buck theme with its meter changed to a regular 4/4, setting the scene for Tom’s first attempts to “halter break” the pony (See Ex. 3-29, p. 71). The reprise of this theme starting at m. 83 is more metrically irregular than the original statement, the seemingly random meters of 3/4, 2/4, 4/4, and 5/8 give the music the sense of proceeding in fits and starts in conjunction with Tom’s lack of success in his attempts at training (See Ex. 3-30, p. 72). This episode is recalled by the almost identical music beginning at m. 49 of “Morning Training.” Here, Tom first begins to show some success in leading the pony, which is reflected in the music. The theme does not proceed hesitantly as in “Tom’s Friends,” but moves through three measures of 3/4 and one measure of 2/4 before settling into a solid “Common” meter at m. 53, punctuated by the addition of the “training theme” discussed below (See Ex. 3-37, p. 81). The connection of Billy Buck’s signature accompaniment to Tom’s training of the pony refer to Billy’s earlier promise to help Tom and the progression to more regular meters in this context naturally suggests Tom’s growing proficiency with the horse resulting from Billy’s aid.

The appearance of the First Billy Buck theme in “Tom’s Indecision” sets up the situation for Tom’s coming awareness of Billy Buck’s fallibility by quoting the theme and accompaniment from “Walk to the Bunkhouse,” albeit within a more regular 2/2 meter. The slower tempo and more subdued character of this statement contrast with the livelier tempo of previous statements, suggesting that something is amiss, reflecting Tom’s concern over the

⁸ Cochran, “The Red Pony,” 34. Although Cochran states that the altered character of this restatement refers to Tom’s reluctance to leave the pony after it has grown ill, this restatement actually precedes the thunderstorm that results in the pony’s illness. The subdued character of this restatement no doubt suggests that “trouble approaches,” as Cochran states, but the near-verbatim restatement of the theme from “Walk to the Bunkhouse” seems to set up the situation for Tom’s changing perception of Billy Buck rather than suggesting that change itself.

possibility of a coming storm and his need for reassurance from Billy that everything will be fine. This is later referred to by the most pronounced transformation of the first Billy Buck theme, which occurs in “Buzzard Fight, Part III.” The meter now alternates largely between 6/8 and 5/8 measures, with the original “um-pah” rhythm (to use Morton’s term) shifted so that the bass notes and middle register chords are reversed.⁹ The marked change in the first Billy Buck theme resulting from this reversal of elements coupled with the unsettlingly shifting meters and dissonant harmony discussed earlier illustrate not only Tom’s stunned disbelief after finding his dead pony but also stress the fact that Billy’s fallibility has been forcefully brought home to him, evident in the film by his refusal to acknowledge Billy as he talks consolingly of giving Rosy’s colt to Tom.

“Second Billy Buck Theme”

This “theme” appears first as a foil to the first Billy Buck theme in “Walk to the Bunkhouse,” but later appears in “Tom’s Friend’s” and “Morning Training” in conjunction with their respective transformations of the first Billy Buck theme. Its more lyric character and prominent use of thirds is also similar to much of the more lyric music that moves in thirds throughout “Strangles” and “The Operation” in conjunction with Tom’s sadness over the pony’s illness. Additionally, this theme’s use of thirds appears to connect it with some of the brief “cowboy” melodies interpolated within instances of the First Billy Buck theme in “Tom’s Friends” and “Morning Training” (see Ex. 3-29, p. 71). Morton’s characterization of this theme is a good one, equating it with the “quality of friendship between Tom and Billy – its honesty, frankness, and manliness.”¹⁰

⁹ Morton, “The Red Pony,” 6.

¹⁰ Morton, “The Red Pony,” 6.

In addition, there are four other recurring themes that have some narrative significance even though they only appear briefly:

1. “Training Theme” - This theme only appears at two points – “Morning Training,” in which Tom is training the pony, and “End Title” when Tom is seen riding the grown colt. In “Morning Training” this theme appears in conjunction with the “First Billy Buck theme” at the point where Tom is first successful in leading the pony with a halter (See Ex. 3-37, p. 81). In the last shot of the film, Tom is shown riding the grown colt while accompanied by these two themes, fulfilling his desire from earlier in the film of owning and riding a horse. The reappearance of this theme in connection with this shot stresses this fulfillment, and its connection with the “First Billy Buck theme” reflects not only the original statement, but also Billy’s mare which gave birth to the colt and Billy’s instruction which no doubt allowed Tom to train the colt.
2. “Parental Sympathy Theme” – This theme is connected primarily with moments of the sharing of grief between Tom and his parents, first with his mother in “At the Fireside” and second with his father in “Strangles, Part I.” This theme has a melodramatic quality that is striking in comparison to the rest of the score. While this theme is technically in a minor mode, this quality is obscured by its outlining of the mediant triad within its tonality.
3. “Worried Tom Theme” – This theme appears in conjunction with Tom’s anxiety over the thunderstorm and the possibility that the pony will be caught in it and become ill. This theme also seems quite melodramatic and could also be considered in minor mode despite its apparent outlining of the upper six degrees of a major scale. In its appearances in “Tom’s Indecision” and “The Sick Pony,” the surrounding tonality is composed of

implied and unresolved dominants, as described earlier, which also work to obscure its actual mode.

4. “Distressed Pony Theme” – This is the recurring motive of chromatically descending fourths mentioned at the end of the previous section. It appears in conjunction with the two instances of “surgery” that Billy performs on the pony with his knife and razor and also accompanies his sharpening of his knife in anticipation of problems delivering Rosy’s colt.

The close relationship between these themes and their corresponding narrative events makes it tempting to dismiss these relationships as equivalent to the use of themes as musical “tags” not unlike the leitmotifs used by Max Steiner and Eric Wolfgang Korngold as part of traditional Hollywood practice. That said, how is one to square this with Copland’s own comments on the use of leitmotifs in film scores, which he regarded as a “pet Hollywood formula, borrowed from nineteenth-century opera”?¹¹ Copland wrote further on the subject:

I haven’t made up my mind whether the public is conscious of this device or completely oblivious to it, but I can’t see how it [the leitmotif] is appropriate to the movies. Sitting in the last row of the opera house, it may help the spectator to identify the singer who appears from the wings, if the orchestra announces her motif. But that’s hardly necessary on the screen.¹²

This objection is not unlike that voiced by Hanns Eisler in his book *Composing for the Films*:

. . . in the motion picture, which seeks to depict reality, the function of the leitmotive has been reduced to the level of a musical lackey, who announces his master with an important air even though the eminent personage is clearly recognizable to everyone. The effective technique of the past thus becomes a mere duplication, ineffective and uneconomical.¹³

¹¹ Copland, “Second Thoughts on Hollywood,” 143.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Eisler, *Composing for the Films*, 5-6.

Thus Copland, like Eisler, generally regarded leitmotives signifying characters as redundant.

Still, he did not rule out the use of themes to perform some sort of narrative function within the score:

If there must be thematic description I think it would serve better if it were connected with the underlying ideas of a picture. If, for example, a film has to do with loneliness, a theme might be developed to induce sympathy with the idea of being lonely, something broader in feeling than the mere tagging of characters.¹⁴

A reexamination of the narrative associations discussed with the preceding themes shows that they are not merely assigned to characters, but are connected instead to settings or to characters participating in particular events.

In conveying the film's setting, the "Ranch theme" fulfills Claudia Gorbman's principle of film music stipulating that the music provides referential cues for the setting.¹⁵ The theme "Tom's Childhood" is not a theme designating Tom but is exactly what it is called, a theme connected with Tom's state of childhood, portrayed in the film through his fantasies and his receiving a gift of a pony. "Tom's Childhood Theme" appears alongside these events, but is not present after the pony becomes ill and dies, events similar to those children face during the process of moving from childhood to adulthood. The theme is ostensibly no longer appropriate for Tom later in the film because his experience of the illness and death of the pony has brought him further on the path to manhood, which is one of the principal themes of Steinbeck's original stories.

Similarly, the "Billy Buck" themes do not signify the appearance of Billy Buck, but reflect the relationship that exists between Tom and Billy, changing in character as this relationship changes. At the beginning of the film, Tom idolizes Billy, and the warmth of their

¹⁴ Copland, "Second Thoughts on Hollywood," 144.

¹⁵ Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies*, 73.

relationship arguably makes Billy a more influential father figure than Tom's own father, Fred; all of this is conveyed in the music of "Walk to the Bunkhouse." The viewer is reminded of this warmth by recurrences of the "Second Billy Buck Theme" in "Tom's Friends" and "Morning Training." The subtle metric changes to the "First Billy Buck Theme" in the same cues refer more specifically to Tom's abilities to train the horse, having benefited from Billy's instruction. The changes in character to the variants of the "First Billy Buck" theme parallel Tom's disappointment with Billy and Billy's own feelings of inadequacy at being unable to live up to Tom's image of him. The "Training Theme" at the end of the film suggests not just that Tom has trained and can ride the colt, but that the rift between Billy and him has been healed. Thus, these themes carry narrative significance that goes beyond merely announcing the presence of a particular character.

The use of leitmotifs in motion pictures had begun with composers of music for silent films and grew out of their conception of the workings of Wagner's music. One of the early celebrated composers of music for silent films, Joseph Carl Breil, wrote in 1916 of his score for the film *Queen Elizabeth*, "I set to work and wrote a dramatic score built very much upon the motif lines set down by Richard Wagner."¹⁶ The music itself was described thus by the *San Francisco Chronicle*:

Each of the principals in the cast was given a "motive" such as Wagner identified his mythological characters with, and these themes, characteristic of the personages in the drama of the Stuart Queen, The Duke of Essex, The Duchess of Nottingham, Earl of Nottingham, and the rest of the persons [in] the play, including the masculine Queen herself, were woven ingeniously into the texture of Breil's score.¹⁷

¹⁶ Joseph Carl Breil, "Moving Pictures of the Past and Present and the Music Provided by Same," *Metronome* 32, 11 (Nov. 1916), 42. Quoted in Martin Miller Marks, *Music and the Silent Film: Contexts and Case Studies, 1895-1924* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 103.

¹⁷ "Music and 'Movies' Offer New Art Form: Future Wagners Will Develop Dual Appeal to Sense of Sight and Sound," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 12 July 1914, 30. Quoted in Marks, *Music and the Silent Film*, 101-102.

In creating his score for D. W. Griffith's 1915 film *Birth of a Nation*, Breil included newly composed themes along with the material he borrowed to compile the score, referring to these newly composed themes as "leitmotifs."¹⁸ The practice of compilation in producing scores, borrowing material from classical literature and the popular repertory, likely also contributed to the use of musical passages as "labels"; the overt meanings of popular songs or implied meanings behind classical excerpts were often used to reinforce dramatic situations.¹⁹

Royal Brown describes a leitmotif as "a musical motif, often quite brief, that over the course of a music drama (as Wagner called his operas) comes to be associated with a character, a place, a situation, a thing, or what have you. The motive often undergoes variations and modifications determined by the dramatic settings in which it appears."²⁰ Brown and early film composers cite Wagner as the source of the technique of using leitmotives. Brown's definition of the leitmotif refers to an aspect of this device hinted at in the review of Breil's score to *Queen Elizabeth* that was critical to the treatment of thematic ideas in music of the "New German School": the idea of thematic transformation over the course of a work. Viewed in this way, one might argue that the recurring themes in *The Red Pony* score are treated in a manner not dissimilar from Wagner's actual practice.

Thomas Grey describes the leitmotif as a construct that did not begin with Wagner in the form often conceived of today, certainly as conceived by Hollywood.²¹ Grey notes that music critics of the nineteenth-century discussed Wagner's music and that of other composers of the "New German School" in terms of *leitfaden* or "leading threads," – recurring themes and motives that give coherence to a work through their continual presence. These recurring themes

¹⁸ Marks, *Music and the Silent Film*, 108, 151-156.

¹⁹ Marks, *Music and the Silent Film*, 138-139, 142-148.

²⁰ Royal S. Brown, *Overtones and Undertones: Reading Film Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 98.

²¹ Thomas Grey, "wie ein rother Faden: on the Origins of 'Leitmotif' as Critical Construct and Musical Practice," in *Music Theory in the Age of Romanticism*, ed. Ian Bent (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996),

and their various permutations were often the only structural landmarks that listeners could readily grasp in large works such as Wagner's music dramas or the symphonic poems of Liszt or Strauss, which often did not conform to any popular understanding of form or structure. Hans von Wolzogen's guide to motives in the Wagner's *Ring* cycle (*Thematische Leitfaden durch die Musik zum Richard Wagners Festspiel "Der Ring des Nibelungen,"* of 1876) does not contain the term "leitmotif," yet in identifying these motifs as "guiding threads," Wolzogen inadvertently provides verbal and narrative associations of motives with characters, objects, and symbols in an effort to help the listener comprehend the structure of the entire work.²² His early association of these structural motives to specific extramusical objects and symbols no doubt contributed to the popular conception of leitmotifs as musical "labels" for visual elements, principally characters. We have seen that this is how Breil practiced the use of leitmotifs, and this practice was inherited by and proliferated by Steiner and other European expatriates in Hollywood.²³

The principal difference between Hollywood leitmotifs and Wagnerian *leitfaden* is that *leitfaden* exist to give coherence to the textural web of a music drama in the absence of any conventionally recognized formal structure, with any extramusical associations centered in those themes attributed to them largely from the outside. Hollywood leitmotifs, by contrast are conceived from the beginning as representing characters and situations. Eisler recognized this distinction in his critique of the practice, noting that the leitmotif was effective only in the context of a large-scale musical work such as Wagnerian and post-Wagnerian music drama. Cinema, with its constantly changing scenes and short, unconnected musical movements, was incapable of a continuous context appropriate for the development of leitmotifs.²⁴ For Eisler, the

²² Grey, p. 191, 197.

²³ Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies*, 83, 93-96.

²⁴ Eisler, *Composing for the Films*, 5.

musical canvas had to be of such a scope that it could tell its own story if it were to use leitmotifs effectively.

Generally speaking, composers of film music relied on the narrative structure of the film itself as an aid in providing the score with much of its coherence. This is a reasonable choice if the composer assumes that the function of the score is to accompany and enhance the film. Steiner deliberately made the point of totally subsuming his music to the story it accompanied, sometimes going to extreme lengths in illustrating discrete events within certain scenes.²⁵ Copland himself saw his music foremost as serving the picture it accompanied.²⁶ One of the principal ways Copland believed music could serve the picture was to provide it with a sense of continuity, in his words, “tying (sic) together a visual medium which is, by its very nature, continually in danger of falling apart. . . . [T]he use of a unifying musical idea may save the quick flashes of disconnected scenes from seeming merely chaotic.”²⁷ In discussing Copland’s earlier scores for *The City*, *Of Mice and Men*, and *Our Town*, Alfred Cochran identifies Copland’s use of recurring motives and thematic material as a means of providing continuity, coherence, and unity to the individual cues that make up the respective scores.²⁸ This same procedure is at work within the score to *The Red Pony*.

Copland’s comments concerning his dislike for the use of leitmotives clearly refer to Hollywood’s conception of the device, although his reference to the opera house is curious. Early on, Copland had studied Wagner’s scores closely, but later became less enthusiastic about the composer, preferring Verdi to Wagner’s “grandiloquence” and “useless, cluttered doublings”;

²⁵ Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies*, 97.

²⁶ Copland, “Second Thoughts on Hollywood,” 141; See also Copland, “Tip to Moviegoers: Take Off Those Ear-Muffs,” *New York Times Magazine*, 6 November 1949, 29-31.

²⁷ Copland, “Tip to Moviegoers,” 30.

²⁸ Cochran, *Early Scores*, 270, 272, 275, 292, 301-305.

one anecdote notes that Copland made a face whenever Wagner's name was mentioned.²⁹ It is not clear how or if Copland distinguished the Hollywood practice of leitmotives from the structural functions of Wagnerian *leitfaden*. Indeed, Copland would likely ascribe the coherence provided by such *leitfaden* to the principle of the "*grande ligne*," the sense of continuity within a piece of music, instilled in him by Boulanger.³⁰ The two are not mutually exclusive, and the coherence provided to *The Red Pony* by recurring thematic material over the course of the score could easily be attributed to both phenomena. The restriction of the "Ranch theme" and "Tom's Childhood theme" to earlier parts of the score ties these earlier cues and their associated scenes together. In the same manner, cues in the latter half of the film are connected through the use of the "Distressed Pony Theme," the "Parental Sympathy Theme," and the "Worried Tom Theme." These are further unified throughout by the variants on the "First Billy Buck Theme," which appear early in the film during "Walk to the Bunkhouse," "Tom's Friends," and "Morning Training," and later in the film during "Buzzard Fight, Part III," and briefly in "End Title." Fig. 5-1 illustrates the strata resulting from these recurring themes, with the symbols "O" indicating themes presented in their original form and "D" indicating derived or varied versions of themes.

²⁹ Pollack, *Aaron Copland*, 60-61.

³⁰ Pollack, *Aaron Copland*, 49.

Figure 5-2 Strata of Recurring Themes in *The Red Pony*

	Cues									
Themes	Main Title	Morning on the Ranch	Walk to the Bunkhouse	March Dream	Circus Dream	Boring Dinner	The Gift			
Main Title	O		D							
Ranch theme	O	O			O	O				
Tom’s childhood				O			O			
Billy Buck I				O						
Billy Buck II				O						
Training theme										
Pathos theme										
Tense theme										
Distressed theme										
Dissonant quartals										
	Opening credits; set mood	Establish ranch routines	Tom and Billy Buck	Tom fantasizes as a knight	Tom fantasizes as circus master	Grandfather bores family at dinner	Fred and Billy give Tom pony			

Figure 5-2 Strata of Recurring Themes in *The Red Pony* (cont.)

Themes	Cues						
	Tom's Friends	Grandfather's Story	Morning Training	Tom's Indecision	The Sick Pony At the Fireside		Strangles
Main Title				D			
Ranch theme		D					
Tom's childhood	O						
Billy Buck I	D		D/O	O/D			
Billy Buck II	O		O				
Training theme			O				
Pathos theme			O			O	
Tense theme				O	O/d	D	
Distressed theme							O
Dissonant quartals							X
	Tom shows pony; starts to train it	Grandfather muses on close of frontier	Tom begins to train pony	Tom worried about storm and pony	Tom worried about ill pony	Tom up late; Alice allows him to tend to pony	Pony worse; Fred comes home; Billy lances pony's lump

Figure5-2 Strata of Recurring Themes in *The Red Pony* (cont.)

Themes	Cues				
	The Operation	Buzzard Fight	Tom Readjusted	The Promise	End Title
Main Title					o
Ranch theme					O
Tom's childhood					
Billy Buck I		D			D
Billy Buck II					
Training theme					O
Pathos theme					
Tense theme					
Distressed theme	O			D	
Dissonant quartals		X		X	X
	Billy and Grandfather put tube in pony's throat	Tom wakes up, finds pony dead by stock pond, throttles buzzard, carried home by Billy	Tom asks Billy for Rosy's colt	Billy worries about colt for Tom.	Colt is born; Tom rides colt; end credits

Fig. 5-1 (Part 3)

This “*grande ligne*” resulting from these recurring themes is applied at various levels similar to the strata encompassing textural and gestural blocks. As Fig. 5-1 shows, thematic coherence is provided by the use of a select group of themes and ideas within each of the two parts of the film: consonant, sometimes folk-like material using the “Ranch” and “Tom’s Childhood” themes in the first part, more dissonant material using quartal motives and more

“affective” music (such as the “Parental Sympathy” theme) in the second part. The line that runs through the entire film is based on the Billy Buck music and reflects the narrative of the film; Billy Buck’s relationship with Tom is one of the crucial threads of the story.

Recurring material in “The Red Pony” serves both functions of leitmotif and *leitfaden*. It “unites” the score by providing a common thematic source for many of the cues. At the same time, many of these ideas can be easily associated with characters or situations within the story much as Hans von Wolzogen made such associations within Wagner’s music. Copland may have written disparagingly of Hollywood’s practice of using leitmotifs, but this did not prevent him from employing them in the form of *leitfaden*, even if this was not a conscious use. These functional *leitfaden* provide the *grande ligne* of unity and coherence advocated by Boulanger, ironically on behalf of the fervently anti-Wagnerian music of French neo-classicists that provided the foundation of Copland’s style.

CHAPTER VI

REASSEMBLY OF *THE RED PONY* FOR THE CONCERT STAGE

Having completed the score for *The Red Pony* in March of 1948, Copland was commissioned by Efrem Kurtz to produce a world premiere piece for his celebrated debut with the Houston Symphony Orchestra for the 1948-1949 season. Kurtz's appointment brought an end to a long search by the Houston Symphony Society for a new conductor. Kurtz was a theatrical and glamorous figure, having previously led the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, the successor to Sergei Diaghelev's famous company.¹ Additionally, Kurtz was well connected with high society personalities and was often conspicuously present at their gatherings in New York, London, and the Mediterranean, all of which likely impressed and endeared him to the Houston Symphony Society.² During the summer of 1948, Kurtz spent his time in Europe contacting composers in order to commission new works for his repertory for that season; one of the composers he contacted was Aaron Copland.³ In calling on the composer of the popular ballets *Billy the Kid*, *Rodeo*, and *Appalachian Spring*, Kurtz likely knew that he would be commissioning a premiere work by a renowned composer who would undoubtedly produce a work that would be sure to please, or at least attract attention.

Copland wrote in his autobiography that he had suggested the idea of a suite of music drawn from the recently completed score to *The Red Pony*. This idea no doubt came to Copland

¹ Hubert Roussel, *The Houston Symphony Orchestra, 1913-1971* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1971), 115, 125.

² *Ibid.*, 125.

³ *Ibid.*, 126.

from the examples of suites such as those drawn from the scores to *Lieutenant Kije* and *Alexander Nevsky* by Serge Prokofiev, or suites drawn from incidental music for the stage such as Edvard Grieg's suites from *Peer Gynt*.⁴ Elsewhere, Copland had noted that a composer's derivation of a concert suite from a motion picture score was a popular means of having a motion picture score actually heard by an audience, sometimes more successfully than within the film itself, where the resulting mix between dialogue and music sometimes can render the music inaudible.⁵ It is possible that Copland already had been considering a suite of music from *The Red Pony* during the spring of 1948 and saw Kurtz's request as an opportunity to follow through with this idea. He wrote in his accompanying program notes that Milestone had left "room" for musical treatment and may have felt that this "room" resulted in enough memorable music to create a suite based on this one score. Copland's reworking of the score into a suite had precedent in his earlier re-workings of his own pieces, notably his transformation of the ballet *Grohg* (1925) into the *Dance Symphony* (1929), the incorporation of his *Fanfare for the Common Man* (1942) into the last movement of his Third Symphony (1946), and his compilation of movements from his earlier scores to *The City, Of Mice and Men*, and *Our Town* into the suite *Music for the Movies* (1942).⁶

Reassembling *The Red Pony Suite*

The *Red Pony Suite* is a product of further reassembly of cues and parts of cues from the score into the succession of movements that make up the suite. In adapting the music, Copland used many of the same processes of assembly that he used in composing the original score itself. Within the suite, he combined larger blocks often made up of entire cues or large parts of cues and altered some details to accommodate the rearrangements. These details included extended

⁴ Copland, "Tip to Moviegoers," 28, 32.

⁵ Copland, "Tip to Moviegoers," 32.

⁶ Pollack, *Aaron Copland*, 85-86, 327, 347, 411-412.

repetition of some smaller units within these parts and transposition of either short passages within a movement or sometimes even entire cues. Despite this reassembly, Copland still maintained a sense of a “grande ligne” in the suite, relying on the framing effect for the entire suite provided by the “Main Title” music in the first and last movements and paying greater attention to the relationships between the principal tonalities of each movement. The suite also has its own sense of consonance/dissonance interplay over its course similar to that of the original score itself, which further instills a sense of coherence and progression. Additionally, Copland linked the movements with a program that drew on the atmosphere of Steinbeck’s original stories, casting the suite’s movements as reflections of the “unexpressed feelings of daily living” experienced by the characters. This program also influenced Copland’s choices of which cues to use as a starting point for each movement.⁷

To serve as the basis of each movement, Copland chose cues that already had the makings of an autonomous structure. He then made changes – adding material from other cues or rearranging portions of the base cue – that allowed these movements further autonomy in order to better stand apart from the film. While this was ostensibly to make them more effective concert pieces, it was also to support Copland’s new narrative program for the suite. Because of this, virtually no examples from the second half of the film were included, although early notes of possible movements show that he contemplated including “Buzzard Fight.”⁸ The movements of the suite, along with the explanation notes for Copland’s program and a brief description of this derivation from source cues are listed below:

1. “Morning on the Ranch” – This movement was created by merging the first half of M100 (“Prelude and Main Title”) and of M101 (“Morning on the Ranch”). The

⁷ Aaron Copland, program notes to “Children’s Suite from *The Red Pony*” *Houston Symphony Orchestra* program, November 1, 1948,

⁸ Copland, “The Red Pony,” misc notes, Item 63, Aaron Copland Collection, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

second and third sections of M1102 (“End Title”) are used to close the movement, giving it the feel of an overture. Copland’s program notes for this movement read: “Sounds of daybreak. The daily chores begin. A folklike melody suggests the atmosphere of simple country living.”

2. “The Gift” – This movement combines M400 (“The Gift”) virtually intact with the opening forty bars of M401 (“Tom’s Friends), which replace and expand the closing portion of M400 that uses the same thematic material. The movement ends with the closing bars of M400, which recall the cues beginning, giving the movement the sense of a ternary form. Copland’s program for this movement reads: “Jody’s father surprises him with the gift of a red pony. Jody shows off his new acquisition to his school chums who cause quite a commotion about it. ‘Jody was glad when they were gone.’”
3. The two fantasy sequences are treated as two parts of the third movement. According to the program: “Jody has a way of going off into daydreams. Two of them are pictured here. In the first, Jody imagines himself with Billy Buck at the head of an army of knights in silvery armor; in the second, he is whip-cracking ringmaster at the circus.”
 - A. “Dream March” – consists of M201A (“March Dream, Part II”) transposed down a tone to *D* so as to support the tonal plan of the suite.
 - B. “Circus Music” – consists of M300A, M300B, M301 (“Circus Dream, Parts II – IV”) presented intact, with a short, two-bar ending added to conclude the movement in *C*.
4. “Walk to the Bunkhouse” – This movement is slightly expanded from the original cue (composed of M102, M102A, and M200), primarily through the addition of a second

melody line during M102A to fill in the pauses left for dialogue. Copland's program notes read: "Billy Buck 'was a fine hand with horses' and Jody's admiration knew no bounds. This is a scene of the two pals on their walk to the bunkhouse."

5. "Grandfather's Story" – This cue is reproduced virtually intact from M500, with no perceptible changes. Copland's notes mirror this episode from the film: "Jody's grandfather re-tells the story of how he led a wagon train 'clear across the plains to the coast.' But he can't hide his bitterness from the boy; in his opinion, 'Westering has died out of the people. Westering isn't a hunger anymore.'"
6. "Happy Ending" – This movement features the most extensive reassembly, combining music from M100 ("Main Title") that accompanied the opening credits with the first two sections of M1102 ("End Title") before closing with a reprise of the opening title music from M100. Copland's notes essentially describe the structure of this movement: "Some of the title music is incorporated into the final movement. There is a return to the folklike melody of the beginning, this time played with boldness and conviction."⁹

Copland adjusted the tonalities of the six movements to give them a quasi-tonal plan, creating further coherence. Transpositions within the suite create a key scheme between movements as well as allowing rearranged blocks to be better assembled from the source cues into the resulting movements.¹⁰ The most overt of these transpositions was pitching the "March

⁹ Aaron Copland, program notes to "Children's Suite from *The Red Pony*" *Houston Symphony Orchestra* program, November 1, 1948, 13, 19, 21, 23; Aaron Copland, *The Red Pony: Film Suite for Orchestra*, Full Score (New York: Boosey and Hawkes, 1951).

¹⁰ Perhaps the most marked of the transpositions is that of the baby colt music from the "End Title," which is pitched up a fourth in the first and last movements. This makes an effective transition within "*Morning on the Ranch*" and remains seamless in *Happy Ending* despite the jump in tonality. Significant excerpts from "Tom's Friends" that appear in the suite movement *The Gift* are also transposed.

Dream” down a step, making *D*, rather than *E*, the most prominent pitch. The resulting key scheme of the suite is shown in Table 6-1.

Table 6-1

Tonal Plan of Movements in *The Red Pony Suite*

Movement Title	Key Center	Relative Consonance
1. “Morning on the Ranch”	C	– consonant
2. “The Gift”	A	– consonant
3. a. “Dream March”	D	– humorous dissonance
b. “Circus Music”	G	– humorous dissonance
4. “Walk to the Bunkhouse”	C	– consonant
5. “Grandfather’s Story”	G	– consonant/ dissonant/ consonant
6. “Happy Ending”	C	– consonant/ dissonant/ consonant

The consonance/dissonance polarity of the original score is carried through to the suite, resulting in a gradation from consonance to dissonance similar to that within the original score. “Grandfather’s Story” provides the unsettling dissonance within the suite in place of that provided by cues such as “The Sick Pony,” “The Operation,” “Buzzard Fight,” and “The Promise” in the original score. None of these cues was formally autonomous enough to make an effective movement without extensive reworking. Passages containing the “Worried Tom” or “Parental Sympathy” themes were likely left out for similar reasons; additionally, the almost melodramatic character inherent in these themes would have made them somewhat out of place alongside the cues that were chosen. “Grandfather’s Story” was a logical choice for the suite since it possessed a readily perceptible ternary form, marked and unsettling dissonance in its central section, and also because it easily accommodated Copland’s newly devised program.

The tension within “Buzzard Fight” might have provided an effective climax, which could explain why Copland originally considered using it, but this movement was rejected due to its lack of musical autonomy. The recurrences of particular patterns within this cue correspond

so closely to recurring images within successive shots that this movement is quite literally dependent on the screen action for its structure.¹¹ In addition to “Buzzard Fight’s” lack of autonomy, the cue’s reference to specific events within the story rather than impressions of daily living placed it outside the scope of Copland’s program. Both of these conditions made this cue unusable for the concert suite.

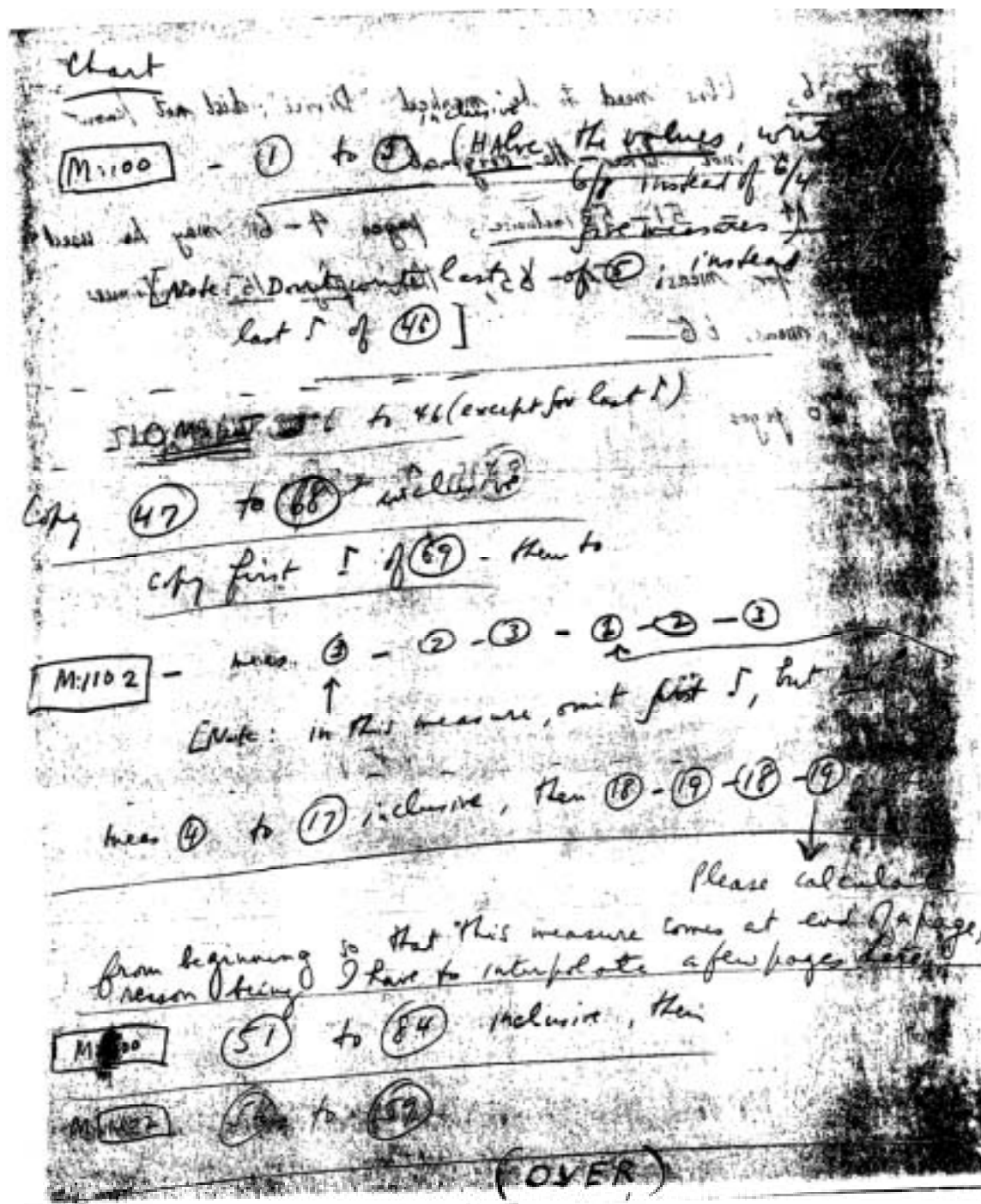
A meticulous examination of each of the suite movements and identification of the source of each passage from within the original score could in itself easily be the subject of another study. Instead, one can focus on the collection of notes showing the detailed reassembly of “Happy Ending” included as part of Item 63 for an illustration of Copland’s process at work (see Facsimile X). Copland provides very detailed indications of which measures from which cues are to be arranged in compiling the final movement of the suite. The significance of these notes is not merely the rearrangement itself (which corresponds virtually measure for measure between the cues and the movement) but the evidence it provides of Copland’s method of assembly. Copland consciously conceived the music in this way. In outlining his process for “assembling materials,” these notes provide a tantalizing set of “assembly instructions,” more detailed than those within some of the original cues of the score showing recurring blocks.¹²

The Red Pony Suite and Steinbeck’s Short Stories

Copland conceived his concert suite more in terms of Steinbeck’s short stories than the film even during the summer of 1948 when he was first compiling the suite. Pollack stated that Copland was ultimately persuaded to score *The Red Pony* by reading Steinbeck’s novella,

¹¹ The list of possible suite movements in the miscellaneous notes of item 63 shows “Buzzard Fight” as one of the movements. Copland, “The Red Pony,” Item 63, Library of Congress. Howard Pollack speculates in his biography of Copland that Copland may not have included this cue in the concert suite because he felt that the form of the cue was too closely tied to the screen action to work on its own; Lawrence Morton supports this opinion that the music relies too strongly on the screen action to be effective on its own. Pollack, *Aaron Copland*, p. 432; Morton, “*The Red Pony*,” 8.

¹² Copland, “The Red Pony: miscellaneous notes” (item 63), Aaron Copland Collection..



Facsimile 3. Notes for Assembly of "Happy Ending" from Cues M100 "Prelude and Main Title" and M1102 "Happy Ending" Item 63, Aaron Copland Collection, Library of Congress. Used by permission of the Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright holder.

although he did have a positive working relationship with Lewis Milestone. Still, as Pollack further points out, Copland was not overly enthusiastic about the film itself; privately, he regarded it as “awfully dull” and his stated characterization of the film as “moving in a quiet way” is not an especially strong endorsement.¹³ Copland may have believed that future audiences of his concert suite would be more likely to have Steinbeck’s stories as their point of reference rather than Milestone’s film. Perhaps the strongest support for this conjecture comes from Copland’s reference to “Steinbeck’s vignettes” in his program notes provided for *The Red Pony Suite* at its premiere, and from Copland’s use of the name “Jody” rather than “Tom,” both in the proposed outline for the suite produced even before the film had been released, and in the suite’s program notes; “Jody” was, of course, the boy’s name in Steinbeck’s stories.¹⁴

Copland’s concept of a series of impressions from a child’s point of view is not dissimilar from Steinbeck’s own conception behind the stories themselves. Unlike the film, Copland’s suite and Steinbeck’s story collection have an episodic quality to them that presents a group of events as a set of “snapshots” against an otherwise continuous and unchanging setting and set of circumstances, whereas the film focuses on key events that lead to a narrative climax. Steinbeck’s story collection was likely a conceptual and even structural model for Copland’s suite.

Some early stages in the presentation of the suite are revealed in the two sheets of notes included in Item 63, which show an projected collection of the cue movements. Two early movements that were later dropped included “Jody Consoled” (presumably “Tom Readjusted”) and, as discussed earlier, “Buzzard Fight.”¹⁵ These cues were too closely connected to the death

¹³ Pollack, *Aaron Copland*, 429; Copland and Perlis, *Copland Since 1943*, 88.

¹⁴ Houston Symphony Orchestra, Nov. 1 1948 program, 19-23; Copland, “The Red Pony: miscellaneous notes” (item 63), Aaron Copland Collection

¹⁵ LOC Item 63. As discussed earlier, “Buzzard Fight” was likely dropped from the suite due to its lack of a recognizably autonomous structure.

of the pony in the original story and consequently distracted from the more impressionistic program of the suite. This was also true of “The Sick Pony,” “Strangles,” and “The Operation,” all of which contained notable music within the film. None of these was a good choice for conveying the sense of “unexpressed feelings of daily living” that was Copland’s goal, because they were so closely connected with specific events.

Copland’s designation of the work as a “suite for children” no doubt reflects Steinbeck’s and Milestone’s intent to pitch the film to children, as discussed in Chapter 1. Copland was apparently very conscious of this intent, stressing in his program notes to the suite that it is meant to convey the moods of the film as experienced from a child’s point of view.¹⁶ The title of the last movement, “Happy Ending,” is ironic when considered against the tragic death of the mare during the birth of the colt, as in Steinbeck’s original stories. This irony is tempered somewhat by the recognition, again, of the target audience for the film. The film becomes less about a boy’s experience turning him into a man, the theme of the original Steinbeck stories, and more about the experiences of a particular ten-year-old boy living in the Salinas Valley before he becomes a man.¹⁷ The original ending would have been too dark for children; the “Happy Ending” is more appropriate in the film, and this characterization is carried over into the suite. Indeed, despite Copland’s apparent use of Steinbeck’s stories as his point of reference for the suite, the program focuses on those aspects of the stories describing Jody’s/Tom’s state of childhood while growing up on the Salinas Valley ranch.

Epilogue

The Red Pony Suite was premiered on November 1, 1948, before the film itself was released. Copland attended the first performance, which was fairly well received; critics of the

¹⁶ Copland, Houston Symphony Orchestra, program notes.

¹⁷ Warren French, “*The Red Pony* as Story Cycle and Film,” 77-79

performance commented more on the orchestra's relative lack of cohesion under Kurtz than on the music.¹⁸ Despite its generally favorable reception, Hubert Roussel notes that the suite was not performed by Kurtz again, rather curious since Kurtz's commission provided the impetus for the creation of the suite in the first place.¹⁹ Subsequently, *The Red Pony Suite* has come to be regarded as one of the most successful adaptations of film music for the concert hall.²⁰

By the time of the release of *The Red Pony* in 1949, Copland had already completed his score for William Wyler's film *The Heiress*. Both scores were nominated for an Academy Award, which *The Heiress* ultimately won. *The Heiress* proved to be Copland's last film produced for Hollywood, although in 1964 he did compose the score for the independently produced film *Something Wild*. The reasons that Copland did not produce another score for a Hollywood film are not entirely clear; Copland himself professed to have no idea.²¹ Some, including Copland himself, have speculated that an incident involving the title music to *The Heiress* may have contributed to Copland's break with Hollywood. Wyler had wanted Copland to rearrange his title music to accommodate a version of the Johann Schwartzendorf–Jean Florian song “Plaisir d’amour,” which was featured in the film; when Copland refused, Wyler simply had Copland's assistant, Nathan Van Cleave, make the changes to the title music. Copland disavowed this version, and it was widely believed that his response alienated him from the Hollywood community, although Wyler later attempted to enlist him to score his film *The Big Country*.²² The fees that Copland requested to score a film likely discouraged many producers from contacting him; for each of his scores to *The Red Pony* and *The Heiress*, Copland received \$15,000, placing him among the company of Max Steiner and Erich Wolfgang

¹⁸ Roussel, *The Houston Symphony Orchestra*, 128.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Pollack, *Aaron Copland*, 430; Thomas, *Music for the Movies*, ; Gary Marmorstein, *Hollywood Rhapsody* (New York: Schirmer, 1997), 299; Morton, “*The Red Pony*,” 8.

²¹ Copland and Perlis, *Copland Since 1943*, 107.

²² Copland, *Copland Since 1943*, 107; Pollack, *Aaron Copland*, 437; Marmorstein, *Hollywood Rhapsody*, 111-112.

Korngold as one of the highest paid composers in Hollywood, and by the early 1950s, Copland's asking fee was \$25,000.²³ This, coupled with his desire to remain based in Manhattan rather than move to California, no doubt curtailed any future opportunities to score feature films.

It is notable that Copland's suite contains the full versions of the cues accompanying the two fantasy sequences that, judging from the cue sheets, were very elaborate but were later edited from the film such that the more fanciful elements were removed. The reasons for the removal of these scenes are not clear. One could speculate that they simply may have caused the scenes to be too long and slowed the pacing of the film. It is also possible that Milestone may have believed that these fantasy sequences may have been confusing to the film's audience. If he truly intended *The Red Pony* to be a film for nine- to twelve-year-olds, he may have been concerned that these sequences might not have been perceived as Tom's daydreams if they interrupted the main storyline for too long a period of time. Milestone may have feared that children might think that these scenes were "really happening" within the diegetic context and be confused.

While there is no information to confirm this, one could further speculate that the decision to cut these scenes, perhaps for the above reasons, may also have come as a result of test screening. There was a long period of time between Copland's completion of the score in the spring of 1948 and the film's release in 1949, a year later. These scenes may not have fared well in test screening and been cut down. Copland had experience with test screening; there is the famous anecdote of his changing his score to *The Heiress* to accommodate one of his unused piano variations as a result of test screening of that film, and Copland notes that test screening was done even on *Of Mice and Men*.²⁴ One could speculate that *The Red Pony* may have been

²³ Pollack, Aaron *Copland*, 91, 438; Marmorstein, *Hollywood Rhapsody*, 110.

²⁴ Pollack, Aaron *Copland*, ;Copland, *Copland Since 1943*, ;Copland, *Copland, 1900-1942*, 299.

test-screened and that the fantasy sequences were edited down as a result. Their inclusion in the concert suite may have been a means for Copland to find a new outlet for this largely unused music as much as it was intended to provide another pair of emotional vignettes within his program.

In both guises, film score and concert suite, Copland's music to *The Red Pony* bears signs of being the result of "assembly of materials" (textures, gestures, or even themes), and yet also shows clear signs of purposeful assembly, through the careful arrangement and succession of these materials, in order to support the film. These materials may be static within themselves, possessing motion through the use of ostinati that does not necessarily imply progression; any sense of forward motion within the music is usually the cumulative result of multiple juxtapositions of these materials as contrasting textural, gestural, and thematic blocks. The resulting strata of elements, each possibly perceived as continuous within its own plane, contribute to the coherence, inevitability, and "*grande ligne*" of the score. Recurrences of textural and gestural blocks referring back to previous statements both within individual cues (the most overt examples being the cells within "Buzzard Fight" which are successively arranged to heighten the climax of the film) and across cue boundaries, seen most readily in the transformations throughout the score of the music associated with Billy Buck.

In addition to these gestural and textural strata, the gradations of consonance and dissonance over the course of the score mirror the changes in the mood of the film. The music shifts from a consonant norm equated with the ordinary life of the ranch to more dissonant music as Tom's pony becomes sick and gets progressively worse, and returns to consonance during both Tom's readjustment after the death of the pony and the birth of the healthy colt. The folk-like diatonicism of many of the themes resonates with the rural surroundings, further solidifying the film's sense of place. More detailed aspects of the film narrative are reinforced by the strata

of recurring themes associated specifically with the ranch setting, with Tom's childhood, and with Tom's relationship to Billy Buck. These themes cut across the disparate cues and further reinforce the coherence or "grande ligne" of the score as a whole, ironically performing much the same function of "leitfaden," or leading threads, described in connection with works of the New German School.

Copland carries this method of assembly over to his suite of movements compiled from the score to support a new, more "impressionistic" narrative, removing and reassembling parts of various cues into larger and more formally autonomous structures. Still, he strives to maintain a "grande ligne" across these movements through a similar gradation of consonance and dissonance across the suite and through selected transposition of passages or even whole movements to create a quasi-tonal plan over the course of the suite. These techniques of assembly are characteristic of Copland's music overall and also characteristic of the music of Igor Stravinsky that served as a major influence on Copland.

The resulting music was well conceived for underscoring details of setting, characterization, and action within the original film, as well as flexible enough to adapt to changes in sequences due to film editing, as seen in the sequences accompanied by "March Dream" and "Circus Music," "Tom's Friends," and "The Sick Pony." The effectiveness of Copland's assembly is particularly apparent in "Buzzard Fight," in which the music is assembled to match the film virtually shot by shot. Clearly the music supports the film, as Copland believed that it should. Yet, the "grande ligne" resulting from the continuous strata maintains a cohesion of the score as a unit rather than as a series of disparate fragments. It is a whole that is simultaneously equal to, and more than, the sum of its parts.

APPENDIX

A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE STEPS IN SCORING MOTION PICTURES

A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE STEPS IN SCORING MOTION PICTURES

The actual steps taken by Aaron Copland and Lewis Milestone in producing the music for *The Red Pony* was the same sequence that had begun with Max Steiner in the early 1930s and, aside from the technology involved, has remained largely unchanged through today. Composers typically were – and continue to be – hired during the latter stages of making a film, after other aspects of production had been finalized, and often after the film had begun shooting. Once shooting was completed and the preliminary editing had begun, the director or music supervisor brought the composer into the “spotting session,” a viewing of the rough-cut film to determine which portions will be accompanied by music. The music supervisor or composer took notes indicating the duration of each of these portions to be accompanied by musical cues, as well as their location within the film. These notes were used to compile a set of “cue sheets” that contained the duration and location of each projected cue, as well as a description of the action on screen that it accompanied. The composer used these to create the music.

The resulting score was essentially a “suite” composed of these short musical cues. In addition to referring to the cue sheets, some composers also used some other form of visual reference to aid in visualizing scenes and composing the music to synchronize with the picture. One method popular among composers before the advent of video was watching a cut of the film on a “Moviola,” a device which allowed the composer to view a mounted reel of film through a small screen; Copland used a Moviola as an aid in composing *The Red Pony* and most of his other scores. Composers typically created a “short score,” consisting of three or four staves,

from which a conducting score was produced that contained a similar number of staves. Full score realizations and parts were derived from this conducting score, most often by assistants to the composer since the extremely short time during which a score is produced does not allow the composer to copy his own orchestrations.

Once the parts were produced, the cues were recorded on a soundstage by whatever ensemble the composer had specified, typically an orchestra. The conductor, usually the composer or music supervisor, often directed the ensemble while viewing a projection of the film so as to synchronize the music with events on the screen. During the final stages of the editing process, the recorded music was cut and spliced into the film itself much like the picture. When the editing was complete, the music, dialogue, and sound effects were mixed and re-recorded into a single composite track of the finished film.

In order to facilitate easier editing of the music or to improve synchronization with the picture, some cues were divided into multiple parts, each of which was recorded separately. The separate parts were then “combined” by splicing the two recordings together, creating the effect of a continuous piece of music. This was especially useful in longer cues, or cues that have distinct mood changes and must synchronize closely with several events in a short space of time.¹ “Walk to the Bunkhouse,” “Circus Music,” and “Buzzard Fight” are all examples of cues from *The Red Pony* that use this technique. The use of this technique may instill a “cut and paste” assembled nature into the music that is derived from the medium itself.

A significant aid to the composer and conductor in the synchronization of music to the picture was – and is – the “click track.” This is a specially produced audio track synchronized with the conductor’s work print of the film containing pops or “clicks” sounding in a predetermined tempo. These clicks act as a metronome for the conductor to follow when

¹ Earl Hagen, *Scoring for Films* (New York: E.D.J. Music, Criterion Music Corp., 1971), 110, 140-141.

conducting the music to the film. The tempo and implied meter of the click track were determined during the composition process to ensure that particular musical events in the score would occur at the appropriate time according to the corresponding events of the film. This device eased the conductor's burden of worrying that his conducted tempo was properly synchronized to the film; he could simply follow the click track and be assured that his direction was properly synchronized with the picture. This technique is useful in situations in which the cue is particularly complex and difficult to perform or has several events within the film to synchronize to, but features no change in mood or texture that could be accommodated by dividing the cue into parts.² "March Dream," which synchronizes to Tom's marching feet, and "Buzzard Fight," which synchronizes to the fast cuts of the scene, both make use of click tracks.

Additionally, the beginnings and endings of cues must often be inconspicuous in order not to draw undue attention to the sudden appearance or absence of music; Copland referred to the task of inserting such music as "stealing the music in."³ The solution is typically to begin a cue softly and gradually increase its dynamic level (either electronically or in performance) or else to synchronize the beginning of a cue with the beginning of dialogue or some other ambient sound that can mask or otherwise divert attention from the music. Similar techniques can mask the endings of cues, but it is often easier to "fade" or gradually diminish the volume of the cue during final mixing. Cues treated in this manner often end with sustained chords or short, harmonically static ostinatos that, when faded, simply trail off into silence. "Morning on the Ranch" is one cue that ends with this technique.⁴

² Hagen, *Scoring for Films*, 11-37.

³ Copland, "Second Thoughts on Hollywood," *Modern Music* (June 1940), 142.

⁴ Hagen, *Scoring for Films*, 140-141.

REFERENCE LIST

Primary Sources

Manuscripts

- Copland, Aaron. "The Red Pony: original manuscript, open score." 1948. Aaron Copland Collection (Item 63.1, box 33). Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
- Copland, Aaron. "The Red Pony: Copyist's MS, Conductor Score." 1948. Aaron Copland Collection (Item 63.2, box 81). Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
- Copland, Aaron. "The Red Pony: Copyist's MS, Conductor Score. "1948. Aaron Copland Collection (Item 63.3, box 81). Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
- Copland, Aaron. "The Red Pony: Copyist's MS, Conductor Scores (2 copies)". 1948. Aaron Copland Collection (Item 63.4, box 82). Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
- Copland, Aaron. "The Red Pony: MS – Full Score, 'Shooting Script' (cue sheets), miscellaneous notes." 1948. Aaron Copland Collection (Item 63, box 114-115). Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
- Copland, Aaron. *The Red Pony*. Conductor's short scores. Aaron Copland Collection of Motion Picture Music, Collection number 02. Music Library Special Collections. University of California, Los Angeles. Available from <http://dynaweb.oac.cdlib.org/dynaweb/ead/ucla/music/copland/>; Internet; accessed 17 March 2003.

Published Scores

- Copland, Aaron. *The Red Pony: Film Suite for Orchestra*. Full Score. New York: Boosey and Hawkes, 1951.

Published Writings

- Copland, Aaron. "Second Thoughts on Hollywood." *Modern Music* 17 (June, 1940): 140-147.
- Copland, Aaron. "Tip to Moviegoers: Take Off Those Ear-Muffs." *New York Times Magazine*, 6 November, 1949, 28-30.
- Copland, Aaron, and Vivian Perlis. *Copland: 1900-1942*. New York: St. Martin's, 1984.

Copland, Aaron, and Vivian Perlis. *Copland Since 1943*. New York: St. Martin's, 1989.

Motion Picture

The Red Pony. Produced and directed by Lewis Milestone. 89 min. Republic Pictures, 1949. Videocassette.

Secondary Sources

Copland Studies

Cochran, Alfred. "Style, Structure, and Tonal Organization in the Early Film Scores of Aaron Copland." Ph.D. diss., Catholic University, 1986.

Cochran, Alfred. "The Red Pony." *The Cue Sheet*, 11, 2 (April 1995): 25-35.

Morton, Lawrence "The Red Pony: A Review of Aaron Copland's Score." *Film Music Notes* Feb. 1949: 2-8.

Pollack, Howard. *Aaron Copland: The Life and Work of an Uncommon Man*. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1999.

Film Music: History and Criticism

Brown, Royal S. *Overtones and Undertones: Reading Film Music*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994.

Eisler, Hanns. *Composing for the Films*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1947.

Gorbman, Claudia. *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music*. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1987.

Hagen, Earle. *Scoring for Films: A Complete Text*. New York: E. D. J. Music, Criterion Music Corp., 1971.

Marks, Martin Miller. *Music and the Silent Film: Contexts and Case Studies, 1895-1924*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Marmorstein, Gary. *Hollywood Rhapsody*. New York: Schirmer, 1997.

Thomas, Tony. *Music for the Movies*, 2nd ed. Los Angeles: Silman James Press, 1997.

The Red Pony: Short Stories and Film Adaptation

Benson, Jackson, J. *The True Adventures of John Steinbeck, Writer: A Biography*. New York: Viking Press, 1984.

French, Warren. “*The Red Pony* as Story Cycle and Film,” in *The Short Novels of John Steinbeck: Critical Essays with a Checklist to Steinbeck Criticism*, ed. Jackson J. Benson. Durham: Duke University Press, 1990.

Steinbeck, John. *The Red Pony*. New York: Viking Press, 1945.

General Scholarship

Grey, Thomas. “*wie ein rother Faden*: On the Origins of ‘Leitmotif’ as Critical Construct and Musical Practice,” in *Music Theory in the Age of Romanticism*, ed. Ian Bent. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Roussel, Hubert. *The Houston Symphony Orchestra: 1913-1971*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1972.