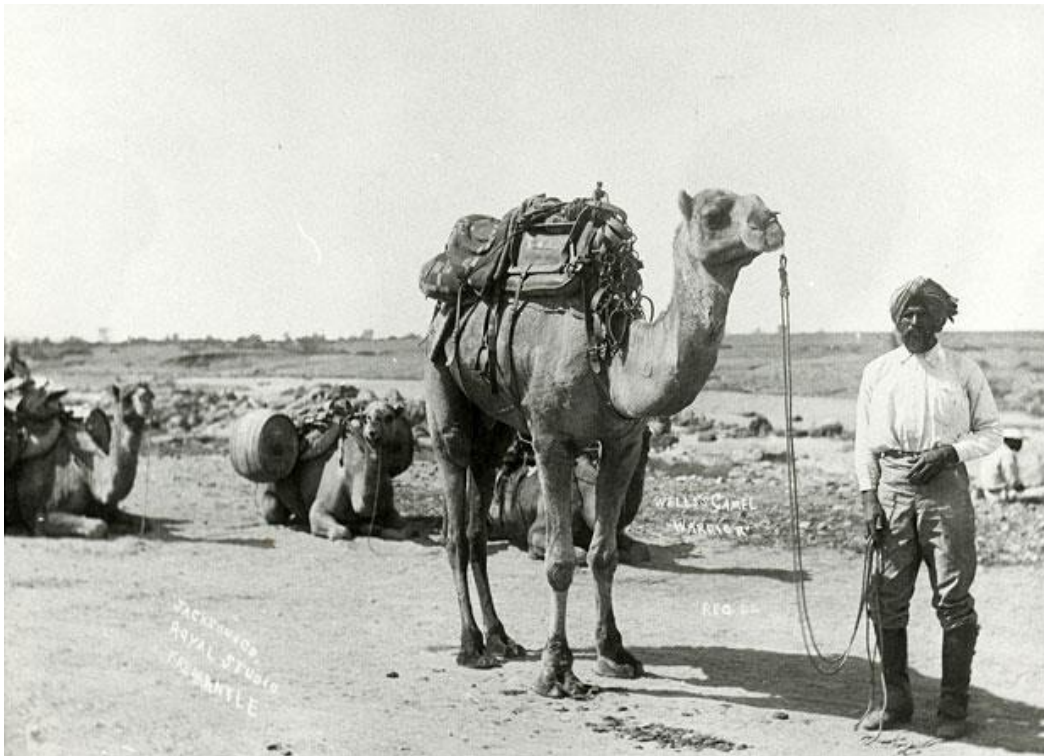


## SOME BRIEF COMMENTS ON JAZZ IN FILM

by Ian Muldoon\*

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Out in western NSW at the beginning of the 20th century my grandfather encountered some Afghan camel drivers and their charges. Pleasantries were exchanged (possibly with some language difficulties) tea drunk and perhaps some food shared. At one point my grandfather assembled his wind-up record player and played a disc of an aria by Enrico Caruso, at which point the camel drivers leapt to their feet, shouting, gasping, gesticulating at the sounds coming from wood, shellac and metal.

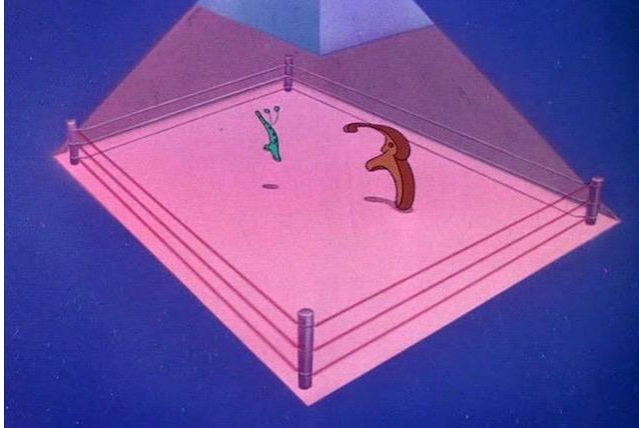


Similar reactions were achieved with a much more sophisticated Parisian audience around the same time with a *silent* film of a train coming toward the audience, causing that audience to scream, jump out of the way and generally behave like Afghan camel drivers when first encountering a record player.

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*\*Ian Muldoon has been a jazz enthusiast since, as a child, he heard his aunt play Fats Waller and Duke Ellington on the household piano. At around ten years of age he was given a windup record player and a modest supply of steel needles, on which he played his record collection, consisting of two 78s, one featuring Dizzy Gillespie and the other Fats Waller. He listened to Eric Child's ABC radio programs in the 1950s and has been a prolific jazz records collector wherever he lived in the world, including Sydney, Kowloon, Winnipeg, New York and Melbourne. He has been a jazz broadcaster on a number of community radio stations in various cities, and now lives in Coffs Harbour.*

A seven-year-old boy in television-free 1946 was taken to the cinema for the first time to see a Walt Disney film, *Make Mine Music*, which was in *colour* and he had a similar but less obvious reaction. There may have been a quiet gasp or yell but most was held inside. Even so it had a huge impact on his feelings, imagination and intelligence.



*From the film "Make Mine Music" (Walt Disney) this still is from the section featuring "After You've Gone". It features a moment when two of the instruments face each other in a wrestling ring as their separate instruments answer each other in the soundtrack.)*

The combination of movement, image, and sound was wondrous (imagine that time of unsaturated uncluttered life where human voices, wind, surf sounds heard three miles distant, pigeons, hens, a low radio broadcast of light music, a rooster at dawn, were all normal suburban sounds and all the sounds there usually were) but then to have Benny Goodman and cohorts deliver *After You've Gone* and *All the Cat's Join In*, the film became a deliriously joyful experience. It is not too much to say that the effect was profound. Such an experience would have been felt by millions of children around the world.



*Benny Goodman Quartet, L-R, Teddy Wilson, Lionel Hampton, Gene Krupa, Goodman: two of the greatest artistic movements of the 20th century - cinema and jazz - coming together...PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN*

The film version of *After You've Gone* transformed Benny Goodman and his Quartet into six anthropomorphic instruments (piano, bass, snare and bass drums, cymbal and clarinet) which paraded through a musical playground, dancing, duelling and chasing one another across the screen. It features a moment when two of the instruments face each other in a wrestling ring as their separate instruments answer each other in the soundtrack.

This was a powerful example of two of the greatest artistic movements of the 20th century - cinema and jazz - coming together. Two great inspirations for musical artists are other artists, including film artists - and the tradition out of which they've grown - and secondly, the environment or landscape or, if you will, nature, the buildings, the machinery, the cotton fields, the rivers, the seasons.

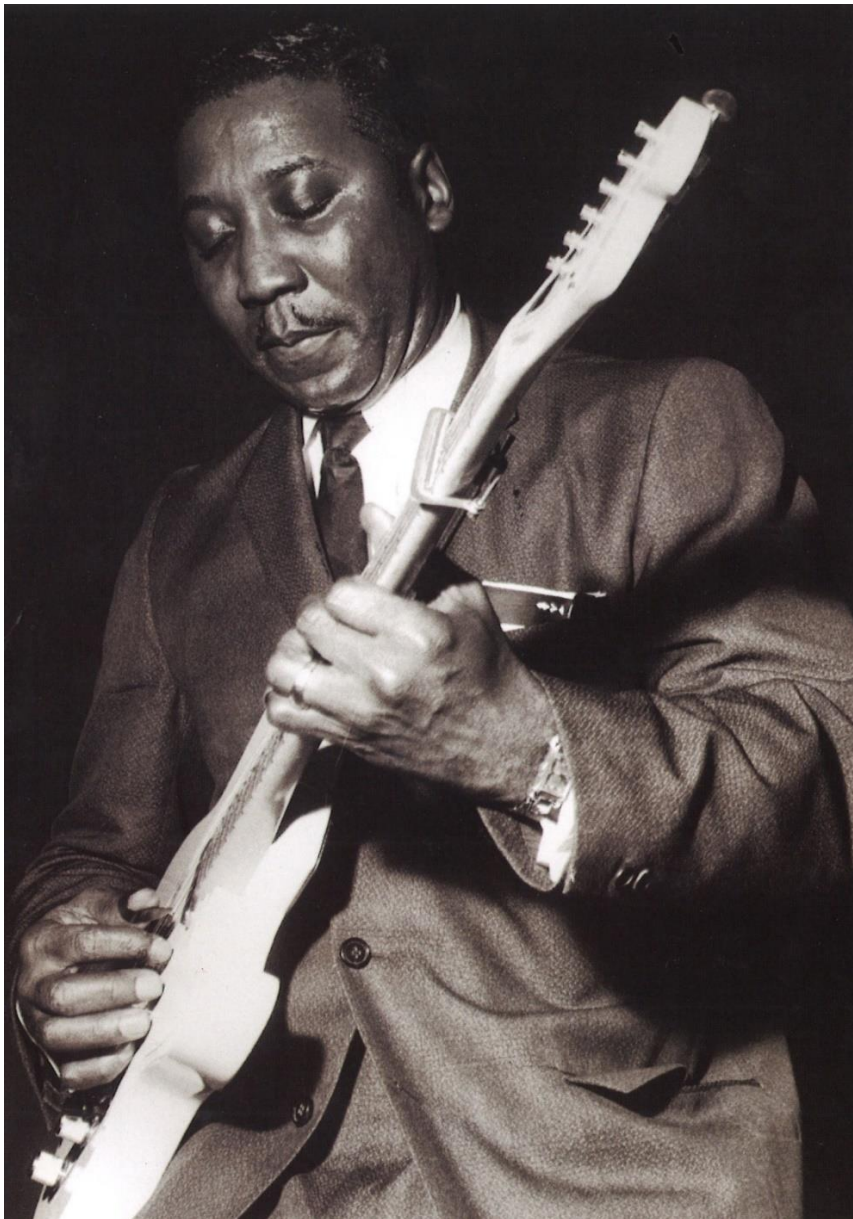
In the first, other performers inspire - Louis Armstrong, Charlie Christian, Charlie Parker, Billie Holiday, Duke Ellington, Miles Davis, Charles Mingus, Thelonious Monk, John Coltrane - and they provide a seemingly endless resource of inspiration for new avenues of exploration (pianist/composer Krzysztof Komeda wrote themes for *Requiem for John Coltrane*, 1967).



*Krzysztof Komeda: he wrote themes for "Requiem for John Coltrane", 1967...*  
PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

But it's not just their performance but also their arrangements and compositions that provide fodder. It's also the sources that they used in turn to inspire, such as the blues and popular song. In this regard, composers like Muddy Waters, B B King, Robert Johnson and Bessie Smith, as well as Irving Berlin, Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart, Harold Arlen, Hoagy Carmichael, George Gershwin, Johnny Green, Jerome Kern, Cole Porter et al, serve the jazz artist.

*I Can't Be Satisfied* by Muddy Waters and *Hoochie Coochie Man* by Willie Dixon, or *Everyday I Have the Blues* by Memphis Slim, are examples of the blues as source.



*Muddy Waters: one of many artists to inspire others... PHOTO COURTESY DEFINITIVE ILLUSTRATED ENCYCLOPEDIA OF JAZZ & BLUES*

Some iconic performances of popular song include Woody Shaw and Bobby Hutcherson on Jerome Kern's *All The Things You Are*, (*Night Music*, 1974) which first appeared in the flop musical *Very Warm For May* (1939). It has been much recorded by jazz artists. The Bad Plus did Hart and Rodgers' *Blue Moon* in 2000 (*Motel*). Cassandra Wilson performed Berlin's *Blue Skies* from her eponymous album (1988). Ahmad Jamal made a huge hit out of the Gershwin Brothers *But Not For Me* (1958). And Coltrane made famous (1960 again) Rodgers and Hammerstein's *My Favorite Things*. These contemporary performances show that popular songs of long ago still inspire. And then there's film.



*John Coltrane: in 1960 he made famous (again) Rodgers and Hammerstein's "My Favorite Things" ... PHOTO COURTESY PINTEREST*

Music accompaniment pre-dated film soundtracks, usually with a pianist watching the film and playing as the film was projected - fast when the chase was on, *forte* and percussive when the villain approached, *piano* when the girl approached and so on. With the coming of sound came the film musical, most famously the MGM musical - overblown, extravagant, occasionally artistic (cf Busby Berkeley) showing off sound, movement, dance and music, with occasional jazz as a curiosity. Music and film developed more interestingly in the *film noir* era (1940-1955) where a desperate, doom-laden, and fatalistic mood was required which culminated, in jazz music, with the French film by Louis Malle *Ascenseur pour l'échafaud* (4/12/57) and the brilliant breakthrough soundtrack by Miles Davis who, like the pianists of old, watched the film as he played, responding to the images and movements.

In the 21st Century there is an Emmy awarded for pop music in film/video as there is an Oscar for the best score for a film. Even so, in 2019 there is an organist matching his live tunes to (silent) film *still*.

“Ben Model is one of a small number of silent-film accompanists in the US. He discovered the field that would become his career when he was a film student. He was sitting in a film-history class, ‘listening to people snore and drink coffee,’ while silent films, faithful to the quiet that names them, blinked on. He volunteered to start playing piano in classes. He sees adding a dramatic score as the key to helping ensure that these old films continue to find audiences (and keep them awake). These days, Model lugs a couple of keyboards, a tangle of wires, pedals, and a laptop—loaded with high-end samples of a real Wurlitzer Theatre Organ—to theatres in New York City and beyond, where he creates live, improvised scores for silent films.”



*Ben Model: one of a small number of silent-film accompanists in the US...*

“Model’s accompaniments constitute a collaboration between the filmmaker, the musician, and the audience. ‘I’m constantly watching the screen for clues, and sculpting and customizing what I’m playing to fit the vibe in the room,’ he says. And so, as a member of the audience, your gurgling guffaw, your stifled cough, become a part of the soundtrack—not only because you are physically there but also because Model is watching and listening as much as he is playing. It’s ‘not so much about . . . my wonderful score,’ the composer says. Model acts as a translator, helping the audience interpret subtle shifts in mood and plot onscreen and drawing the audience into the ongoing creation and re-creation of the art work.

“The combination of extemporaneous performance and pre-existing art form enacts a trust across time and space. In the heyday of silent pictures, filmmakers expected that their movies would be scored by a live musician, and thus silent films have always been a sort of incomplete form, waiting patiently for the act of creation to happen anew each time the film is shown. Much as a confident playwright needn’t clutter her script with too much stage direction, lest the players and the director find the text too stifling to interpret freely, silent filmmakers left room for accompanists like Model to unspool the work as their instruments and audiences see fit. In an era

that seems defined by the outstanding asynchronous communications - unanswered texts and unacknowledged Instagrams - that stream beneath all our moments, it's a challenge to simply be present. But there's a welcome chance to press Pause in the soundless void left by silent filmmakers, where something compelling can happen, in real time".\*

The difference now is that the music is incorporated carefully into the film itself. In this post-war period jazz in film blossomed relative to its involvement hitherto. And there is a distinction between jazz in the film as relief so to speak in a nightclub scene, or as part of the background for a party, or inherent in the film as on a jukebox (cf *Invention for Guitar and Trumpet* [Stan Kenton] to give dramatic background when Glenn Ford is bashed up in *Blackboard Jungle*), and the soundtrack used as integral to the film, much as Bernard Herrmann's music was integral to Alfred Hitchcock.

Jazz is featured in such films as *The Wild One* (1953) - Leith Stevens and Shorty Rogers - and *Blackboard Jungle* (1955), but note these are white musicians and the music is incidental. And it was Elmer Bernstein who did the score for the great *Sweet Smell of Success* 1957 (Alexander MacKendrick) even though Chico Hamilton featured in it and played its most memorable music. Nevertheless Chico Hamilton had his greatest cinematic moment in the soundtrack to the classic film by Roman Polanski *Repulsion* (1965) where Hamilton's music added considerably to the startling horror of the mental deterioration of the protagonist memorably played by Catherine Deneuve.



*In Sweet Smell of Success (1957) Chico Hamilton (pictured above) was featured in it and played its most memorable music...*

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\**New Yorker*, "How Live Accompaniments Make Silent Films Interactive" by S Whitney Holmes, October 31, 2019.

But the great breakthrough in film music after Miles Davis was Duke Ellington and his score for *Anatomy of a Murder* (1959) which was the first Hollywood movie to use an African American composer. One of the first big film scores given over to a fully-fledged jazz musician, *Anatomy of a Murder* not only looks radical but sounds it too, thanks to the musical edge of Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn. 60 years on, it still sounds and feels fresh. Johnny Hodges, Clark Terry and Britt Woodman feature.



*L-R, Otto Preminger, producer & director of “Anatomy of a Murder”, Billy Strayhorn, Duke Ellington: the first Hollywood movie to use an African American composer ...*

In Australia, one of the finest film composers is Lisa Gerrard, a contemporary musician. Her voice has been described as rich, deep, dark, mournful and unique. She is an instrumentalist for much of her work, most prolifically using the yangqin (a Chinese hammered dulcimer). Her films include: *Moon Child* (1989), *Toward the Within* (1994), *The Insider* (1999), *Gladiator* (2000), *Ali* (2001), *Whale Rider* (2002), *Sanctuary* (2006), *Insight* (2011), *Tanna* (2015) and *2:22* (2017). Nick Cave has also co-composed quite moody and atmospheric soundtracks for such films as *The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford* and *The Proposition*.



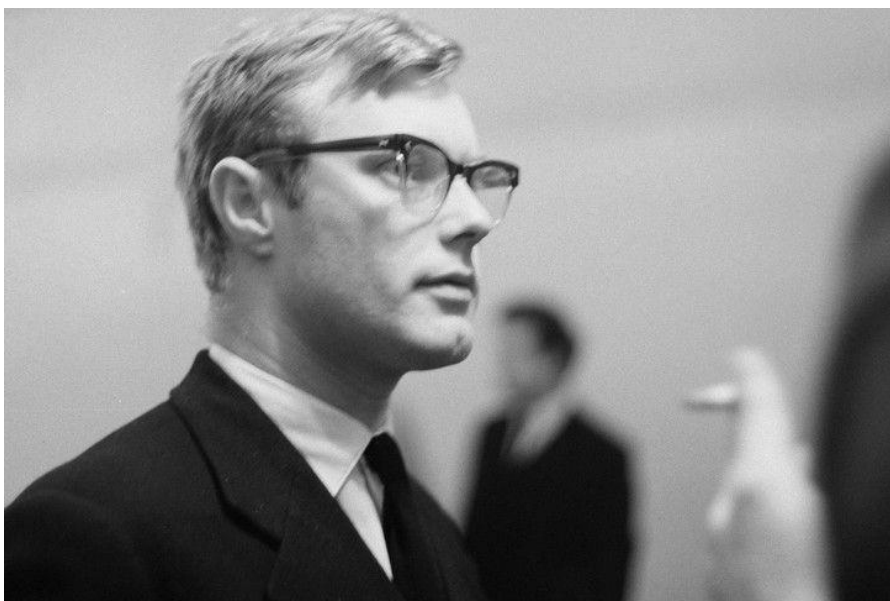
*Lisa Gerrard, a contemporary musician, is one of Australia’s finest film composers...PHOTO COURTESY THE GUARDIAN*





*Paul Grabowsky (above) is the one recognised “jazz” musician who may be our most productive film composer... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN*

Paul Grabowsky, is the one recognised “jazz” musician who may be our most productive film composer of all, with over 40 film and TV credits. Grabowsky, of Polish ancestry, has some Polish countrymen who made some of the greatest jazz in film soundtracks in concert with the rise of New Wave cinema, perhaps inspiring the genesis of ECM records (born 1969). With Krzysztof Komeda European jazz had arrived, and he has had a profound impact on the direction that jazz has taken. His masterpiece *Astigmatic* drew on folk music, romantic symphonic music, and free jazz.



*Krzysztof Komeda (above) has had a profound impact on the direction that jazz has taken... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN*

The genesis for *The Komeda Project* (a CD of 11 tunes recorded by the ABC with arrangements by Andrea Keller and Miroslav Bukovsky) was Polish-born Peter Rechniewski, one of Australia's most important movers (if you will) and most important champions of this great music, and its musicians.



*The ensemble that recorded “The Komeda Project”, back row L-R, Evan Mannell (drums), Erkki Veltheim (violin), Ben Hauptmann (guitar & mandolin), Andrew Robson (alto & baritone saxophones), James Greening (trombone). Front row, L-R, Jonathan Zwartz (double bass), Andrea Keller (piano), Miroslav Bukovsky (trumpet)...PHOTO COURTESY LOUDMOUTH*

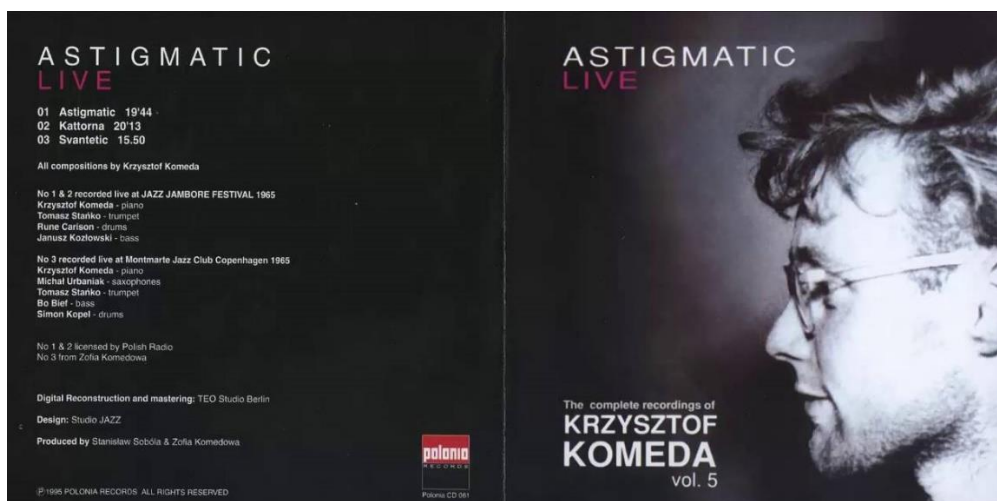
All compositions are by Komeda with six from the film *Le Départ*, directed by Jerzy Skolimowski, with music for the film recorded in 1966 in Paris, featuring Komeda (piano), Don Cherry (trumpet), Rene Urtreger (piano), (Gato Barbieri tenor), Jacques Pelzer (alto sax, flute), Eddy Louiss (organ), Philip Catherine (guitar), Jean Francois Jenny-Clark (bass), Jacques Thollot (drums), Luiz Funtez (trombone) and Christine Legrand (vocal on the title track which was arranged by Francois Rauber).

Noteworthy is the significant appearance of Don Cherry, whose contribution must be seen as an imprimatur to the musicians concerned. Cherry was a major innovator and one of the most influential figures in the “new” jazz movement, having appeared on an album with the most influential musician of the time, John Coltrane (cf *The Avant Garde*, Atlantic LP Don Cherry/John Coltrane 1966). Cherry also collaborated with classical composer Krzysztof Penderecki on the 1971 album *Actions*. In 1973, he co-composed the score for Alejandro Jodorowsky's film *The Holy Mountain*, together with Ronald Frangipane and Jodorowsky.



*Don Cherry (above) whose contribution to Le Départ must be seen as an imprimatur to the musicians concerned... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN*

Krzysztof Komeda was an ear, nose and throat specialist, who was seriously injured in a car accident in California. After returning to Poland he passed away within a year, shortly after his 38th birthday. A serious loss to music. He composed music not only for friend and film director [Roman] Polanski but also for Ingmar Berman, Henning Carlsen et al. His album *Astigmatic* with Komeda (piano), Tomasz Stanko (trumpet), Zbigniew Namysloski (alto sax), Gunter Lenz (bass), and Rune Carlsson (drums) had an impact on European modern jazz in the way another pianist Thelonious Monk had an impact in the USA.



In some serious ways, Polish jazz (so-called) has parallels with the search for freedom by the original African American jazz masters of early 20th century as well as the post WW2 cohort of modern jazz masters like Sonny Rollins and Max Roach around the time of the 1964 Civil Rights Act (2/7/64). When we recall the fact that thousands of African American men and women served in WW2 but on discharge from the military were not allowed in many jurisdictions to use the same water bubbler or toilet etc etc as white Americans, one can understand the rage, and the cries, of creative artists, especially musicians.



*Sonny Rollins (left) and Max Roach in 1956: two of the post-WW2 cohort of modern jazz masters... PHOTO COURTESY PINTEREST*

Similarly, it is hard to replicate now the feeling for cinema-goers, the impact for cinema-goers, of “new” film from Asian and European directors that hit the screens between 1950 and 1970. French (Agnès Varda, Alain Resnais, André Bazin, Jean-Luc Godard, Jacques Demy, François Truffaut, Éric Rohmer, Claude Chabrol, Jacques Rivette) and Czech New Wave ( Miloš Forman, Věra Chytilová, Ivan Passer, Pavel Juráček). Then there was Indian film with Satyajit Ray (*Apu Trilogy* making famous sitar music by Ravi Shankar); Japanese film, (eg, Nagisa Oshima, Masahiro Shinoda and Kiju Yoshida but also Hiroshi Teshigahara (*Woman of the Dunes*); Kaneto Shindo (*Onibaba*) both 1964; Shohei Imamura (*Insect Woman*) 1963; and of course, Swedish film, notably Ingmar Berman (*Wild Strawberries* with its funeral carriage scene etc). It was something like seeing cinema anew. And often in black and white, as if filmmakers had taken lessons from the silent greats such as Eisenstein and Lang, and adapted them to modern themes.



*Roman Polanski, whose first major film was “Knife in the Water”: one of the directors who recognised what a perfect fit modern jazz and modern film was...*

But it was inter alia Roman Polanski and Jerzy Skolimowski and Andrzej Wajda; Jerzy Kawalerowicz and Janusz Morgenstern and Jerzy Stefan Stawinski and Edward Etler who recognised what a perfect fit modern jazz and modern film was. Krzysztof Komeda was happy to oblige. We should note that though *Knife in the Water* was Polanski’s first major film, Komeda had written music for seven films by this stage, and it was his 16th overall.

It’s useful to ponder the reaction of other Polish filmmakers to the work *Knife In The Water*, as Andrzej Wajda asserted: “You can have no idea how liberating an experience *Knife In The Water* was for us in Polish cinema at the time.” This recalls young people’s response to *Make Mine Music* in 1946, or teenagers’ response to *Blackboard Jungle* in 1955. It wasn’t just about the film as film: it was about the film and the liberating impact of the music associated with the film. In Polanski’s case, it was the impact which modern jazz had in enhancing the moods, the tension and the suspense of the film. It was a match made in artistic heaven.

Polanski was thus inspired by Komeda to use jazz in his film; Komeda was inspired by the film to compose as he did; and Andrea Keller and Miroslav Bukovsky have been inspired by the playing and composing of Komeda in turn to give us the wonderful *The Komeda Project* (2014).

One question that may arise is whether music created for film can stand alone as music in the same way as say, Tchaikovsky’s *Swan Lake* music can stand aside from the ballet, as it surely does. And a second question might be, whether the music generates the sensation or feeling risen during screening of the film, or brings to mind images associated with the film. The music of *The Komeda Project*, from Keller/Bukovsky, stands happily on its own merits, but even so brings back memories of the works, such as Keller’s introduction to *Sleep Safe Lullaby*. Komeda’s compositions are used as vehicles for further improvisations by this octet.

The octet consists of Evan Mannell (drum set), Erkki Veltheim (violin), Ben Hauptmann (guitar & mandolin), Andrew Robson (alto & baritone saxophones), James Greening (trombone), Jonathan Zwartz (double bass), Andrea Keller (piano) and Miroslav Bukovsky (trumpet).

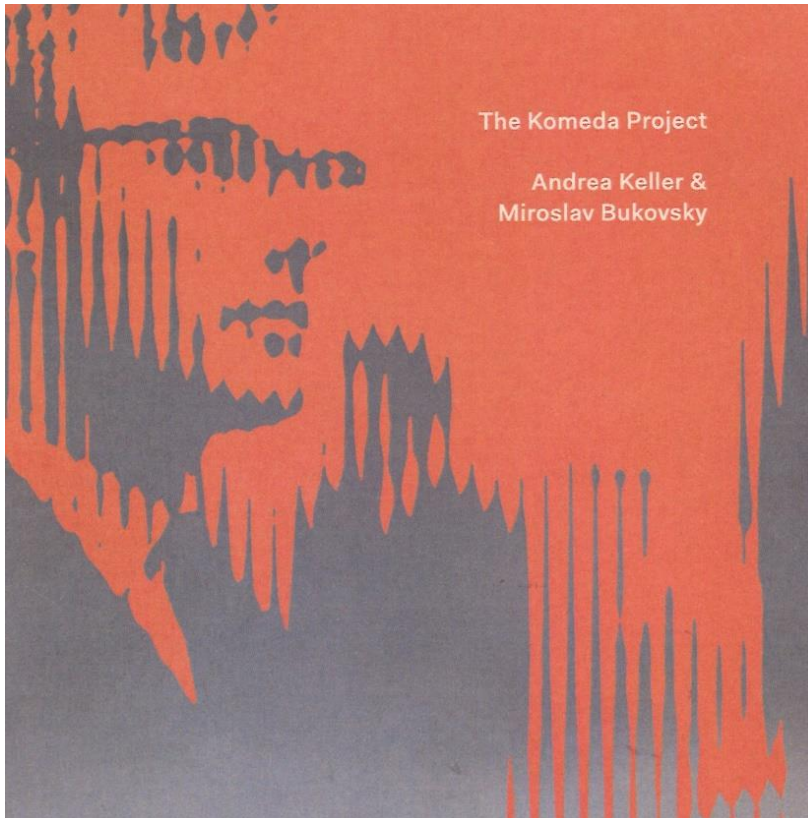
I have to say from the outset that this group of musicians has done an incredible service to Komeda's music. The compositions, the arrangements and the obvious commitment to the musical goals, have created a memorable programme of music worthy of repeated listenings. The contribution of the violinist Erkki Veltheim adds considerably to the power of this music. Note that the violin begins and ends the programme, (on *Sleep Safe Lullaby* it enters immediately following the eerie piano notes made famous in *Rosemary's Baby*). It creates an unsettling, eerie mood in *Lullaby*; on *Bareira*, discordant and unsettling; expressive power and dominance on *Svantetic*; and brilliant unsettling dissonance on *Knife in the Water*. There's also the amazing and deeply satisfying take by the octet on *Alfred Over Rooftops* arranged by Miroslav Bukovsky.



*Erkki Veltheim's violin adds considerably to the power of this music...*

Though the violin may not dominate, it certainly contributes much to the weird atmosphere of this piece, which is ostensibly a comedy albeit "horror/comedy". There is to my ear a definite nod by the violin to Romanian gypsy music, often associated with the journey by the "hero" into the land of Count Dracula. The violin opening of three minutes is underpinned by what I understand to be the drone of an arco bass line. The music may be up-tempo at times, but it has sufficient dissonance to be unsettling. Some highlights also include an angry chaotic baritone sax solo (The Count Dracula?) and a guitar solo that at moments reminds me of the great Sonny Sharrock. This may be programme music, but it is music so brilliant as to stand alone in its variety, atmosphere and the musical art of the participants, who all shine. This track is the highlight for me of the outstanding eleven tracks.

Whomever suggested or decided on the octet format, especially including the brilliant Finnish violin of Veltheim: four cheers.



One track is from Roman Polanski's film *Rosemary's Baby* (1968), one from his *Knife in the Water* (1962) which originally featured musicians Komeda (piano), Roman Dylan (bass), Leszek Dudziak (drums) and Bernt Rosengren (tenor); and one from his film *The Fearless Vampire Killers* (1967). One track, *Wyrok*, is from Jerzy Passendorfer's film *The Verdict* (1962). Three tracks are from the film *Le Départ* by director Jerzy Skolimowski, and three from the director's 1966 film *Bariera* are played as interludes.

Finally, there is one seminal modern jazz composition, and a highlight of the CD, *Svantetic* from Komeda's classic album *Astigmatic* (1965) arranged brilliantly by Bukovsky. Indeed all the arrangements by the trumpet player - *Sleep Safe Lullabye*, *Svantetic*, and *Alfred Over Rooftops* - are an outstanding element of the programme.

The *original* version of *Svantetic* features Komeda (on piano who also composed all three tracks); Tomasz Stanko (trumpet), Zbigniew Namyslowski (alto sax), Gunter Lenz (bass) and Rune Carlsson (drums). Interestingly, the leader was self-taught. *Svantetic* is dedicated to the Swedish poet Svante Forster. The main theme is based on a Polish boy scout song. It is an up-tempo piece opened with a declamatory statement by trumpet and alto sax, broken by a free jazz break by all concerned, followed by a repeat of the theme a number of times, with piano echoing a response, another free jazz break, then a walking bass and long exploratory trumpet solo. A Coltrane-influenced alto sax solo follows and, at around ten minutes, a piano solo, bass solo, and a beautifully paced, structured drum solo, the piano and bass re-enter and there is, as it were, a long coda bookending the theme that opened, including a free jazz break, with a trumpet riding out to the fading end. It's a remarkable work which sounds as fresh today as I imagine it did in 1965.

This may be described as a classic modern jazz (bebop) quintet line-up. It cannot go unremarked that these musicians were young, having been born at the beginning of the Great Depression. They came of age in a country ravished by the greatest war in world history where millions of Poles were put to death because of their religion. They then had their country occupied by the oppressive Stalinist Russians. It is no wonder the “old ways” including the old music ways, had little appeal to them. Freedom was the driver and jazz was an artistic vehicle to give them ways to express that yearning, just as it had for the progenitors of this brilliant music. No wonder either that, in giving creative voice to that yearning, Komeda and the freethinking filmmakers became heroes to the new Poland, and influenced artists throughout the world.

As mentioned Keller and Bukovsky’s response to this magnificent music is to enlarge the musical palette by adding violin, trombone and guitar to make up an octet.



*The response of Andrea Keller (left) and Miroslav Bukovsky (below) to Komeda’s magnificent music is to enlarge the musical palette...BUKOVSKY  
PHOTO CREDIT TOMAS POKORNY*



© Tomas Pokorny



The significance of this music by Komeda and its genesis needs to be borne in mind. Komeda is recognised as one of the great artists in his chosen field of improvised music. Polanski is recognised as one of the greatest filmmakers of all time. *Knife in the Water* was the first Polish film to be nominated for an academy award as Best Foreign Film - it missed out to Fellini's *8 1/2*. The film "has been recognised as one of the most sensuous and uncompromising uses of jazz in cinematic history. Unusually for a score with a good deal of improvisation, it is entirely non-diegetic (meaning the music does not come from sources, whether apparent or real, in the film itself)".\*

The Swedish tenor saxophonist Bernt Rosengren, who played alongside Komeda, bassist Roman Dylan and drummer Leszek Dudziak, on the soundtrack, noted: "We looked at the screen and we played what we felt and left with the best parts... We played just two chords, or something of the sort. It was easy."



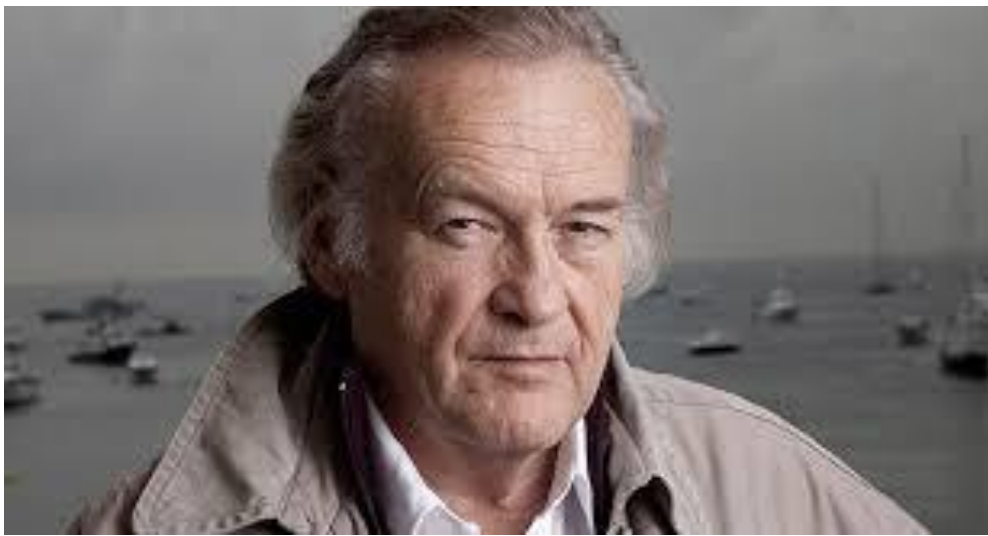
*Swedish tenor saxophonist Bernt Rosengren: we looked at the screen and we played what we felt...PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN*

The recording by Keller/Bukovsky of *Knife in the Water* opens with the unsettling sounds of Veltheim's violin, underpinned by a relentless pushing by the rhythm section, and there are waltz-like moments, swinging, a brilliant guitar solo by Hauptmann backed by an urgent insistent chorus, tempo changes, a slow piano solo, and an urgent unsettling bass solo backed by repetitious, urgent phrases from the chorus of instruments, and ends with a reflecting lone saxophone. In eight minutes the octet traverses the lake breeze, the two men-one woman tension, the unsteadiness of the yacht and its confining nature, the thoughts deduced from the young faces with their revealing bodies pumped through with the sexual desire of youth, and of course the knife. Polanski with his knives, razors, scissors, manicurist's equipment, feature in many of his films.

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\*Selwyn Harris, "Jazz in Polish Cinema: Out of the Underground 1958-1967" (booklet to 4CDs).

The film *Le Départ* was directed by Jerzy Skolimowski and appears to be a coming of age film, with racing cars and young love central to it. Skolimowski treated music as seriously as any other element in his films. He said: "I had sometimes the impression that I wanted to make my first film in order to have Krzysztof write the music, to get closer to him in terms of creativity".\* Komeda had moved in the mid-1960s away from bebop into free jazz and experimental classical music. In *Le Départ* Komeda's music is everywhere present. Skolimowski used the opportunity to see how much music a film can take.



*Polish director Jerzy Skolimowski: he used the opportunity to see how much music a film can take...*

The Keller/Bukovsky recording has the violinist Veltheim do the *Bareira/Le Départ* interlude which he does again up-tempo - unsettling music exploring the range of the instrument; *The Chaque Heure (Every Hour)/Le Départ* piece arranged by Keller, is up-tempo opened by the violin, followed by an insistent pounding figure with trumpet ranging over it with an impressive wide-ranging solo by Bukovsky, and then a growling low-down trombone solo backed by an insistent driving bass creating some atmospheric brilliance. A conversation between the trombone and drums conclude the proceedings.

*Collage/Le Départ* is an up-tempo fun piece leavening the tension with a guitar solo with hints of Spain with Bukovsky in bright, confident, fine form appropriate to the youth of the film. *Bareira/Le Départ* is an interlude given over to Greening's trombone in which it sounds as if the instrument is speaking to the listener. The violin closes the programme on *Le Départ/Main Theme*).

Keller and Bukovsky have dedicated themselves to the overall sound rather than be featured as soloists, though what solos Miroslav Bukovsky does contribute are as good as I've heard him play.

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\*Selwyn Harris, "Jazz in Polish Cinema: Out of the Underground 1958-1967" (booklet to 4CDs).

There are many jazz musicians involved in film now and many films that feature jazz soundtracks compared to yesteryear (cf Terence Blanchard) but Krzysztof Komeda must be considered in the same way as Duke Ellington, Miles Davis and Chico Hamilton are considered in the contributions they have made to film music and film. Indeed Komeda's is groundbreaking in that he was the first to use free jazz in a new wave of filmmaking which in itself was groundbreaking and more "free".

The most emphatic new film jazz of my recollection is the original music composed by Antonio Sánchez for the film *Birdman* (2014) and the series *Get Shorty* (2017- present, Netflix): brilliant percussive improvisations (including kettle drums) which add a lot to these productions.



*Mexican-American drummer/composer Antonio Sánchez: he composed original music for the film "Birdman"... PHOTO CREDIT LEO HOWARD LUBOW*

Beginning perhaps with Miles Davis, Ellington, and then with the New Wave era of films, Komeda has made modern jazz relevant to modern film and it has blossomed. There seems no end to its possibilities. Film and improvised music were made for each other. And Andrea Keller and Miroslav Bukovsky have served this new art brilliantly in their document *The Komeda Project*.

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