

The Palgrave Handbook of Music in Comedy Cinema

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Editors

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FOREWORD

This handbook is an outstanding addition to literature on comedy and music in film. Or perhaps I should rephrase that. It is the foundational piece of substantial critical and analytical writing on the subject. In publicity for books these days we often are informed that a particular book defines a specific field. Yet in this case it is far from the habitual hyperbole and this handbook actually does set the solid foundations and scope for future scrutiny of the subject. It is no exaggeration to state that there have only been isolated instances of scrutiny of music and film comedy before this, and this volume was sorely needed.

In recent years, scholarship about audiovisual culture arguably has almost reached something close to saturation point. Some areas of it have had so much examination that they have almost broken off into their own subset of research and analysis (e.g., Hitchcock studies, Deleuzian film theory, etc.). The study of comedy in film and television has not had anywhere near the amount of scrutiny that might have been expected. When it comes to addressing music's relationship to audiovisual comedy, the situation becomes even more surprising, as there have been only a handful of isolated instances of attempts to address the subject.

This might seem a curious situation, particularly as comedy remains one of the most perennially popular genres, while during the era of Classical Hollywood perhaps the most popular genre was the film musical, often known as a the 'musical comedy'. Indeed, comedy plays a central role in many musicals, and the comic song, with its long tradition, remains a celebrated aspect of studio-era Hollywood. Yet there is usually a certain register of laughter that was elicited by Classical musicals, one of the lightly raised smile rather than the raucous belly laugh. The politeness of the music confirms this. Indeed, the decorum of Hollywood musicals from the studio era is clear with hindsight, and perhaps slightly surprising with its feed-in from music hall, where bawdy songs were a staple.

Even so, the cultural status of comedy films, musical comedies, and their associated music has not ascended to the level of other Hollywood genres, such

as westerns or film noirs. Indeed, in critical terms they remain almost ‘invisible’, and that is truer of comedies than of musicals. Despite lip service to the contrary, it is difficult to dispel the notion that ‘low culture’ has been thought to deserve little scrutiny from scholars. The sense of cultural value and the shadow of a transcendent notion of ‘art’ still stalks behind much scholarship in recent decades, whereas before it was more explicit (in Europe and America, at least). There is unequivocally more interest in art films (or films that are thought to deserve a higher status), and film music that resembles symphonic music.

Film ‘comedy music’ traditionally has been considered a low-value area of so-called ‘light music’. As Emilio Audissino and Emile Wennekes note in the Introductory Part to this handbook, for scholars music is more often tied to the adjective ‘serious’. I suppose one hears the term ‘serious music’ less these days, which is a good thing. I’ve always had trouble with it and have also never been sure what ‘not serious’ might be. Humorous, perhaps? While still confounding, there is one way that this ‘serious’ thing makes sense to me. Wanting to seem ‘not serious’ can be an excellent way to avoid criticism or censorship. An excellent example of this is the film musical *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* (1952, dir. Stanley Donen), which, through narrative and song, dramatizes abduction and rape and coupling, while questioning the frame of romantic love that was the Hollywood norm of the time. Yet, its sense of being ‘comedic’ and the dominance of music mitigates its effect and has warded off understanding the film as a thorny but potentially complex discussion of sexual politics. Not being signalled as satire, added to the ‘low’ status accorded comedy and ‘light’ songs in musicals, adds up to the film being able to get away with the kind of material that would not be possible in a ‘serious’ drama. Also, critics and moral guardians tend not to even take the slightest notice of such problematic material due to its ‘comic’ and ‘not serious’ framing, let alone its catchy songs.

The audiovisual character of film has allowed for comedy to take place in the space between images depicted and musical accompaniment. Tim Anderson discussed the practice of ‘funning’ or more pejoratively called ‘jackass music’, which, during the silent era, burlesqued the film images through musical commentary or inappropriate accompaniment. The music made the humour, habitually opening up a gap between the emotional and communicative aspects of images and music (Anderson 1997, 12). The instances Anderson recounts show a remarkable (sub)culture of music as a comedy-making element, and yet this has received remarkably little critical evaluation since. Furthermore, it is very likely that comedy was an important staging post on the road to the locking of sound and image together that has dominated culture since the early twentieth century. In early silent films, when music was not conceived as something that should match the dynamics and mood of screen action, the comedy impact or pratfall rapidly demanded a sonic counterpart to its visual effect. Such a crash or a stinger already was well established in the theatre and helped found a sense of music as sound effect and as exaggeration of the ‘reality’ of the

fall, and so likely became a conduit for an increasing sense that accompanying music should become more integrated with screen action.

Such structural aspects can be overlooked and deserve consideration alongside accounting for humour. Conference presentations about comedy films often involve the scholar laughing as part of the process of addressing something funny. In some cases, audiences laugh along but in others I've experienced incredulity and dislocation. Perhaps there is a danger of becoming a mirror of your own analysis, of scholars addressing comedy becoming somehow 'less serious', with a danger of their research being subsumed by 'low-brow' culture. No scholar wants to be considered 'lightweight' purely through dint of the subject of their research. Yet, comedy is a far-from-easy subject to address—it is not straightforward, and indeed laughing sometimes can be highly illogical. We can find things funny that we don't expect and laughing can sometimes be nervous or inappropriate. Conference presentations can also have an uncertainty of tone, where sometimes it is presented in an overtly grim-faced manner or presented as if the comic material retains its funny aspects to enforce something approaching a 'comic' presentation. This can work and be humorous or flop and become highly embarrassing. After all, scholars are often far from a career in professional comedy. Of course, the merest confusion of humour being rendered 'unfunny' is an important defamiliarizing process of analysis, and the ambiguity underlines the difficulty of addressing comedy generally. Furthermore, sometimes culture 'discusses' such issues itself, as a central aspect of the dramatic or comedic process. This is just as well, as the scholarly tradition has been to avoid addressing comedy or humour, perhaps even thinking of it as self-evident and thus impervious to analysis.

Film and television comedy remain associated with unsophisticated and low-value culture, and specialist 'comedy music' has been considered less than worthy of scrutiny despite its sometimes significant and iconic impact. For instance, 1970s and 1980s ITV television comedy *The Benny Hill Show* was one of Britain's greatest ever TV exports. Its consistent sexism and insensitivities to race and ethnicity have not made it last well but give a good indication to British morés of the time. A piece of pre-existing music associated directly with the show was 'Yackety Sax', initially by Boots Randolph and later by Ronnie Aldrich and his orchestra. This 1950s rock'n'roll-style instrumental piece was led by a growling tenor saxophone melody. Intrinsically there is nothing particularly funny about it, I would argue. However, its association with the 'speeded up silent chase' sequences that concluded each episode of *The Benny Hill Show* has cemented its association with humour. For example, a cursory glance on YouTube or TikTok brings up re-edited films rendered comic by speeding up action and adding 'Yackety Sax'. My favourites are Black Metal music videos and *The Shining* (1980, dir. Stanley Kubrick) rendered as comic, with the powers of the music to reorient a selection of its images being most clear. Conversely, it is the serious (or perhaps austere would be a better description) tone of much of *The Shining's* (pre-existing) music that lends the film its grave and disturbing character. In the film's sequence where Wendy (Shelley

Duvall), wielding a baseball bat, backs away from her increasingly threatening husband (Jack), there are mixed cues for the audience. Jack Nicholson's performance is characteristic scenery-chewing, with his dialogue delivered with a sarcastic, often comic tone. It is the musical accompaniment that anchors and announces clearly that this is 'not comedy'. Indeed, Kubrick was well aware of music's ability to confound audience expectation and define how images are read, and vice versa. Another example is the fight with Billyboy's gang in Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), where the violent but heavily choreographed rumble is accompanied by Goachino Rossini's overture to *La Gazza Ladra* (1817). The effect is comedic but far from straightforward, perhaps yielding a kind of 'bittersweet' mixture, emphasizing how far audiovisual comedy is far from a simple equation or knee-jerk reaction.

The complexity of comedy has been neglected by scholars who perhaps were assuming the simplicity of humour. It is prejudices such as these that have militated against complex analysis or even sustained considerations. On occasions, comedy has been addressed by film or music scholars, yet they have bypassed dealing with its central defining aspect of humour. This is similar to some of the studies of film musicals that make nary a mention of the songs. In the case of this handbook, the editors and contributors have endeavoured to build a solid basis for future analysis through careful and 'serious' considerations of the place of music in comedy. They have done a fine job, and may many walk in their footsteps.

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REFERENCE

- Anderson, Tim. 1997. Reforming 'Jackass Music': The Problematic Aesthetics of Early American Film Music Accompaniment, in *Cinema Journal* 37:1 (Fall): 3–22.

PREFACE: ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK—RATIONALE, ORGANISATION, AND CONTENTS

For decades, film music has been disparaged as a venal stepsister of the ‘proper’ art of music composition. Suffice it here to quote Hanns Eisler and Theodor W. Adorno saying that ‘the truth is that no serious composer writes for the motion pictures for any other reason than money...’ (Adorno and Eisler 2007, p. 37). More recently, Carl Dahlhaus trenchantly dismissed film music as ‘stupid’ (Dahlhaus 1984, p. 31). In this respect, film music can be considered to be sharing a similar burden of biases with comedy. Film music and comedy are somewhat kindred spirits in light of the neglect they have experienced throughout their history. This underestimation may have been due to a long-standing prejudice against affording equal consideration in arts criticism and theory to lighter matters, such as comedies, or to functional and subservient forms of composition, such as film music. They both appeared to be too low-brow, disengaged, or commercial to be worthy of the serious scrutiny which dramas and ‘art music’ as well as other ‘high-brow’ works have habitually received. This handbook, taking as a starting point the underdog-like affinity between music and comedy, might also be considered to be a tentative compensation, a mitigation of the aforementioned neglect, and an attempt to elevate the estimation of both.

We have adopted an approach that is not only multidisciplinary—including contributions from musicology, psychology, media and film studies—but also interdisciplinary in its pursuit of a close examination of how music and film can interact in the creation of comedy. Three overarching and interwoven questions are subtended to the handbook’s general design:

1. What cinematic devices produce humour?
2. What musical devices produce humour?
3. In what ways do musical and cinematic devices interact in producing humour within film comedy?

All the contributions here aim, on the whole, to engage with all three elements in their reciprocal interaction, with chapters tackling music theory and

analysis (primarily addressing the second question), and other chapters (more film-studies oriented) addressing the two intertwined questions: What cinematic devices produce humour? How can musical and cinematic devices interact in producing film comedy? The book is divided into four main parts: (1) ‘General Introductions’, (2) ‘Theoretical Approaches and Analysis of Devices’, (3) ‘Music and Comedy within National Cinemas’, and (4) ‘Composers, Styles, and Corpus Studies.’

PART I: GENERAL INTRODUCTIONS

Given the vastness of the historical and theoretical areas inhabited by the three actors in question (music, comedy, cinema), the introduction to this handbook comes in not one, but likewise in three dedicated chapters which discuss general theories on humour in historical perspective and how these are applied to cinema, music, and film music. In Chap. 1, Emilio Audissino provides a general *tour d’horizon* of how humour functions and how—from the Ancient Greeks onward—it was employed and discussed in theatre, literature, and film. Three of the most common theories of humour are introduced: Superiority Theory, Incongruity Theory, and Relief (or Release) Theory. The ethics of humour are also addressed. In Chap. 2, Arthur Asa Berger offers a semiotic approach to comedy and proposes an elaborate taxonomy of comic techniques. In the third introductory chapter, Emile Wennekes discusses the way mirth has been generated within—primarily Western—music and film music.

PART II: THEORETICAL APPROACHES AND ANALYSIS OF DEVICES

In the opening chapter of Part II, Tom Schneller zooms in on parallelism and counterpoint as common strategies for creating musical humour. Each category is related to visual and linguistic models of humour. Parallelism is particularly associated with music for animation and tends to be the most obvious and least sophisticated category of comedy music. The author distinguishes two types of parallelism: synchronized and conceptual. Audiovisual counterpoint on its turn derives its humorous effect from deliberate incongruence with the events on the screen. In Chap. 5, Miguel Mera analyses aspects of audiovisual synchronisation that move beyond a basic understanding of what has traditionally been called mickey-mousing, in order to draw attention to the ways in which the audiovisual ecosystem of rhythm, gesture, punctuation, phrasing, and flow impact comedic effectiveness. Marcel Bouvrie, in Chap. 6, studies the ‘metaleptic’ use of humour in film music. Drawing on Gérard Genette’s notion of analepsis—a transgression of narrative levels—he examines the instances in which a comedy film humorously heightens the self-awareness of its own soundtrack and thus violates traditional film music conventions.

Rebecca Fülöp investigates how gender stereotypes are implicated in a seemingly light-hearted display of gendered musical comedy in Chap. 7, focussing on the humorous idealizations of Cassandra and the Dream Woman from the

1992 comedy film *Wayne's World*. Nick Braae subsequently sheds light on the use of popular and rock music in films of Adam McKay and Will Ferrell in Chap. 8. While not obvious in the film narratives, many of the jokes have a musical bent, either through dialogue references, stylized performances woven into the script, or other performance-oriented references made by the characters.

In Chap. 9, Catherine Haworth explores the use of pre-existing music as a flexible, polysemic tool for comedic expression in *The Big Lebowski*, exploring questions about the construction of musical masculinities in film, the significance of intra- and extra-textual references to audience engagement with, and perception of, pre-existing music and musical humour. Paul Labelle, in Chap. 10, analyses the nature and function of the sign associated with Mozart's music in *Last Action Hero* within a Peircean framework, attempting to understand the comedy it serves in McTiernan's satire of late twentieth-century action films. In Chap. 11, David Ireland addresses dark comedy films which seek to provide humorous and sometimes parodic or satirical representations of serious and potentially taboo subjects, as well as the wider role music plays in dark comedies. Matt Lawson, in Chap. 12, then analyses the use of serious music in *National Lampoon's Animal House*, *Airplane!*, and the *Naked Gun* trilogy, and how it influences the comedic value of specific scenes within the narratives. He discusses how the intentionally humorous visuals and dialogue juxtapose with the intentionally serious music to create a comical filmic whole. Chapter 13, by Andrew Simmons, addresses musical interruptions in film. When silence interrupts film music, it either forces the audio-viewer to reframe the awkwardness of the now-silent scene in the aftermath of music, or provides sonic space to highlight a pithy punchline or narrative event. He suggests that record players are inserted into modern films to interrupt source music and legitimize the use of a record scratch. The part on theoretical approaches is concluded by James Wierzbicki who, in Chap. 14, discusses comic films featuring as their central characters either classical musicians, such as Victor Borge, or persons who act as classical musicians. The author wonders whether these funny films are also funny to filmgoers who are not really familiar with the inter-personal dynamics of a chamber orchestra or with the 'prestige politics' of atonal composition.

PART III: MUSIC AND COMEDY WITHIN NATIONAL CINEMAS

This part brings together a series of case studies from a geographical perspective. It provides an overview of the use of music in national comedy cinemas other than Hollywood, or in interaction with Hollywood aesthetics. In Chap. 15, Mervyn Cooke discusses the thirty *Carry On* films produced by Peter Rogers and directed by Gerald Thomas in the UK between 1958 and 1978. The chapter categorizes and investigates Rogers's various comedic techniques, while also considering broader elements of 'Britishness' perpetuated by both the films and their scores. He examines the fundamental reason why the British

retain such a strong nostalgia for them in spite of their datedness, often cringe-worthy sense of humour, and blatant disregard for modern political correctness. Chapter 16, written by John O’Flynn, explores how music and comedy combine to represent ethnic, racial, and national stereotypes in cinema, while also considering intersections of gender and social class. The chapter’s case study appraises musical-comedic portrayals of Irish ethnicity in British and Hollywood cinema from 1946–1952. It zooms in on adapting and/or creating material based on traditional or pseudo-Irish dance tunes. Furthermore, it interprets associations between, on the one hand, lively expressive character, cyclical and repetitive tune structures, and contained tonalities and metres; and, on the other, essentialist and often gender-specific representations of ethnicity. In Chap. 17, Roberto Calabretto focusses on the relationship between the famous Italian actor Totò (Antonio De Curtis) and music. This is analysed on several levels ranging from the songs he composed to the way in which the actor performed them on the set, and—most importantly—to the moves and gestures which famously accompanied his performances. The chapter contains an audiovisual survey of the most significant scenes of Toto’s movies, to highlight the original functions of music that are unique and can only be found in very few other instances in the cinema of that period.

Ingeborg Zechner’s contribution (Chap. 18) discusses early sound-film in Germany with *Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari* as her central point of focus. The musical referential framework is analysed in order to understand how contemporary audiences must have perceived the comic. This framework was extremely dependent on the manifold intermedial intersections between cabaret, Schlager, opera, operetta, and folk music, and plays with them in a self-referential way. At the same time, *Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari* implicitly reveals the contemporary attitude towards the new sound-film technology in the Weimar Republic. Chapter 19, by Chloé Huvet and Marie-Hélène Chevrier, focusses on France, most notably on the parodic reinterpretation of the espionage genre in Michel Hazanavicius’s two OSS 117 films, *Cairo, Nest of Spies* and *Lost in Rio*. OSS 117 is an American spy character created by the French writer Jean Bruce. The different audiovisual devices implemented in the two films are analysed through, among others, synchronism and empathetic effects, identification of musical *topoi* of classical spy movies, and accentuation of the humorous atmosphere of the sequences. Spanish comedy cinema is discussed in Chap. 20 by Laura Miranda. She argues that films with songs and high doses of humour were the logical and fluid continuation of zarzuela, the national lyrical genre. The importance of lyrical theatre, *sainete*, and folkloric musicals in the configuration of the Spanish comedy is analyzed using key films in Spanish history: *Morena clara*, *Bienvenido Mister Marshall*, and *Mujeres al borde de un ataque de nervios*.

In Chap. 21, Peter Kupfer highlights Soviet film musicals/musical comedies, commencing with *Jolly Fellows*. He traces the American musical and comedic roots of the style of these films and demonstrates how music functioned as comedy both thematically and dramaturgically. In other words: music was both

the subject of humour in the narratives (i.e., in terms of what characters say about music or musicians) as well as the means through which comedic situations were created (i.e., through the musical style or performance practices of specific numbers). Ann-Kristin Wallengren argues in Chap. 22 that comedies do not travel well across national borders because the narratives are too closely connected to society and culture where they are created. This is especially true for Swedish and Scandinavian comedies. The author zooms in on the films of two of the most popular Swedish comedians who are practically unknown outside Sweden: Hans Alfredson and Tage Danielsson, often branded as Hasse & Tage. Their films will be discussed in the context of Swedish and Scandinavian comedies from the 1930s up to the present in a historical and cultural perspective. The author analyses how music, most notably songs, is used to comment on society and culture.

Next, Emile Wennekes brings two highly controversial comedy films from the Netherlands to the table in Chap. 23: *New Kids Turbo* and *New Kids Nitro*. The *New Kids* franchise is downright vulgar, over the top, and candidly crude in all corners, but the soundtrack, drenched in ‘happy hip-hop’, forms a perfect match to the movies. This particular pop musical genre style is discussed against the backdrop of four strata of incongruent musical parody present in the soundtrack. In Chap. 24, Jingyi Zhang discusses Yuan Muzhi’s left-wing film *Scenes of City Life*. It was proclaimed as ‘the first musical comedy’ in Chinese cinematic history and was widely known for its experimentation with sound and image, representing an important creative phase in early experimental Chinese cinema. The author addresses the sophisticated, multi-layered role of sound (broadly construed) in scoring laughs while relating to broader socio-historical concerns of 1930s Shanghai and the undeniable impact of western films on *Scenes of City Life*. Chapter 25, by Emaeyak Peter Sylvanus, offers an overview of how music is used in ‘Nollywood’ comedy films from Nigeria. It explores both the performative (performance style/instrumentation and prefiguring, that is, the use of music to predict dialogue and scenes) and theoretical (form, texture, and melody/harmony) connections between comedy and genres of Nigerian pop music in Nollywood. It is argued that the soundtrack in Nollywood comedy cinema not only goes beyond the ubiquitous humour-evoking function, but that it is also, even more so, texted and/or sung by the composer.

After Nollywood, Gregory D. Booth sheds light on Bollywood’s comedy conventions in Chap. 26. In Indian popular culture, parody is a musical-lyrical practice involving the transformation of an older, usually well-known film song. Most commonly, the original melody and rhyme scheme are retained with modified lyrics and context which create new meanings. The author analyses the interaction of old and new lyrics as well as picturisations in four parody scenes that appeared in conventional Hindi films between 1958 and 1996. Highlighting the actors Kishore Kumar, Om Prakash, Mehmood, and Shakti Kapoor, their careers were all closely tied to comic roles. Alexander Binns turns to Japan in Chap. 27. Japanese comedy cinema is varied but often reshapes and

draws heavily on the historical conventions of Japanese theatrical practice, especially Kabuki, as well as the traditions of Manzai. The author examines how the music in Japanese comedy cinema is productively read through a pair of schematic lenses (subversion and parody). The relationship between Japanese and non-Japanese musical associations is important to Japanese comedy cinema. Illustrated is how a process of musical tension between generic types enables the idea of comedy as a form of subversion to emerge. This section is concluded by Nathan Platte who returns to Hollywood in Chap. 28. He argues that episodes of musical humour abound in dramatic scores of Hollywood's classical era, yet they have received comparatively little reflection in existing literature. Humorous music in dramatic films generally plays an unsubtle, even awkward role: signalling to audiences that a particular sequence is, on some level of the narrative, mirthful. In such cases, music laughs for the audience, more 'fun' than funny. Yet the compositional challenge of managing such heavy-handed levity is precisely where its interest lies. This chapter considers how Max Steiner and Bernard Herrmann offered distinct, instructive approaches to the question of evoking musical humour within dramatic films.

PART IV: COMPOSERS, STYLES, AND CORPUS STUDIES

The final part of the handbook, 'Composers, Styles, and Corpus Studies', focusses on the analysis of exemplary films, composers, or directors. Light will also be shed on the comedic production of composers who are largely known and studied for their dramatic scores. This part opens with Chap. 29 by Beth E. Levy on the use of music by the Marx Brothers. The author studies their use of ironic juxtapositions of style, exaggeration of conventional gestures, incongruous allusions, and harmonic or melodic puns, yet stresses the distinct differences between these types of comic behaviour in terms of pacing, punchlines, and the potential for social critique. This chapter demonstrates that the Marx Brothers' madcap musicality depends on the careful pacing of punchlines, a purposeful mishmash of genre and style, and an adroitness at musical pun. The author shows how their multivalent musical humour, and their punning in particular, draw listeners into the rhythm of the joke, either implicating the audience in the delivery of the punchline or rendering it all the more viscerally surprising when the joke hits home. In Chap. 30, Jim Lochner features Charlie Chaplin. Beginning with *City Lights*, Chaplin took the unprecedented step of composing original scores for all his films, and in the last decade of his life, he wrote new music for earlier silent shorts and features for which he still retained copyright. The author examines comical and musical set pieces from five decades of Chaplin's films, analysing how his choices in melody, accompaniment, and orchestration enhance the characters as well as colouring our viewing of the scenes.

Jacques Tati is the central figure in Chap. 31 by Anna Stoll Knecht. Tati established a unique style of clowning based on cinematic image and sound, influenced by circus clowning, early silent films, and animated features. In all of

Tati's films, the soundtrack is worked out as a musical score, playing with a subtle counterpoint of sound effects added during the post-production phase. This chapter studies how music and sound interact with the visual image to produce a comical effect in *Mon Oncle* and in *Play Time*. Chapter 32, by Paul Mazey, addresses Malcolm Arnold's music for *Hobson's Choice*. The chapter explores how Arnold's score negotiates the film's tonal contrasts and interweaves musical styles that express its dual aspects. On the one side, there is broad comedic music which suggests music-hall performance and, in its use of low brass and percussive wood blocks, conjures up its Northern England setting by evoking the sound of brass bands and clog dancing. On the other, Arnold supplies a tender love theme for the unlikely couple that brings to the fore the film's romantic comedy elements and casts a warm-hearted glow over the unfolding events.

In Chap. 33, Joakim Tillman examines Theodore Shapiro's stature as a composer for comedy films. Since 2001's *Wet Hot American Summer*, he has scored a string of successful comedies such as *Starsky and Hutch*, *The Devil Wears Prada*, *Blades of Glory*, *Tropic Thunder*, and *Captain Underpants*. The author analyses the strategies and devices Shapiro exploits to create humour, and as the films he has scored represent many different subgenres of comedy, a comparative analysis will shed light on similarities and differences in music for different types of comedy. In Chap. 34, Raymond Knapp returns to the classic Hollywood era. He studies several diegetic cues from comedies and comic dramas directed by Howard Hawks that similarly call attention to the performative aspect of musical affect. Of particular interest are the ways in which musical performance allows the mask to slip a bit from characters who routinely flip back and forth between character and actor, a mode of humour Hawks also occasionally indulges in, in non-musical scenes. Chapter 35, by Lindsay Carter, focusses on Polish cinema, more specifically on Zbigniew Preisner's scores for Krzysztof Kieślowski's *Dekalog: Ten*, and *Three Colours: White*. These films are dark comedies and the filmmakers' approach was marked by an aim to provoke contemplation through humour, rather than laughter. Preisner favoured a concept-led approach to filmmaking, using music to add interpretive layers to a film. It results in a degree of reflexivity that, in the case studies included here, is used for comic purposes. In Chap. 36, Michael Baumgartner shifts the perspective to French comedy films starring Louis de Funès. The films' composer, Raymond Lefèvre, is qualified as one of the first comedy film composers in the 1960s who shaped his scores according to the aesthetic premises of self-reflective film music. From various film genres, he borrowed musical tropes invoking stereotypical cinematic moods and situations. Often, Lefèvre's music sets up expectations which remain unfulfilled and contradicted by the on-screen action. The comedic effect in *Le gendarme de St. Tropez*, for example, occurs through the music alluding to stereotyped film-music tropes that clash as an ironic incongruity against the on-screen action.

Chapter 37 features Mel Brooks and composer John Morris. Ron Sadoff examines the creative synergy of Brooks-Morris, buoyed by analyses of scenes

revealing innovative approaches to musical conventions within comedic films: creating anticipation and thwarting expectation; comedic and musical codes, gestures, and idiomatic musical forms; and juxtapositions of cinematic and musical devices. The music of John Morris is evaluated in broad and complex contexts, for example, Brooks's cultural assimilations of Jewish and African-American identities; gender representations; and through outsized means, humiliating Hitler by way of the blues and jive-talk ('I lieb ya baby').

In Chap. 38, James Deaville reviews the prolific career of Henry Mancini as composer and arranger for film comedy, ranging from the early 1950s through the early 1990s. He explores the breadth and variety of Mancini's work in comedy, explaining the musical and biographical contexts of his ongoing cultivation of that particular genre of film composition. The study looks closely at two representative scores in particular, that for *Charade* and for *Silver Streak*. His long-term collaboration with first-rate directors Blake Edwards and Stanley Donen and lyricists Johnny Mercer and Leslie Bricusse contributed to Mancini's success in creating appropriate musical settings for film comedy of all types, from slapstick to droll sophistication. In Chap. 39, Franco Sciannameo focusses on comedic traits detected in the music composed by Ennio Morricone for the 1978 French-Italian film *La cage aux folles* released in Italy as *Il vizietto*. Morricone's subtle 'queering' of some instrumental choices and melodic turns of phrase underscores the film's message with refined sensitivity providing the necessary bond to steadily hold the viewers' empathy for Albin and Renato, their story, and the social issues they raise. Chapter 40, written by Emilio Audissino and Chloé Huvet, stars John Williams. To the wider audience, John Williams is firmly associated with the string of dramas and fantasy/adventure films he scored for Steven Spielberg, or with the fairy tale/sci-fi *Star Wars* saga. Yet, Williams's first landmarks in feature film scoring were in the comedy genre, back in the 1960s. The chapter explores and brings out the comedic side of Williams' music, by individuating which subtle comic devices generate and convey humour, and by establishing the function they perform through their interaction with the images.

In the penultimate Chap. 41, Monty Python takes centre stage. Emile Wennekes contends how music was considered an integral component of their films, actually for the Pythons's general comedic strategy. In this chapter, the various strategies in the employment of music to increase cinematic jocular effects are discussed; how their absurd scenes are regularly framed within musical parody, instrumental pastiches, textual satire, lyrical alterations of stressed syllables, oxymorons, etc. The extensive use of such parody will be illustrated by the theme song of *Life of Brian*: an overt reference to the title song from James Bond's *Goldfinger*, sung and orchestrated fully consistent with the Shirley Bassey and John Barry style. The final chapter of this section is dedicated to Woody Allen. In Chap. 42, Alexander Binns argues that music plays a key role in the production of his comedy, social commentary, and the critiquing of cultural practice, and that Allen's approach to comedy is multi-faceted and socially interrogative. Parody and pastiche form the basis of Allen's

comedy toolbox; they play out musically through his deep interest in the affordances different types of music invoke. The critical lens of postmodernism is used to investigate the ways in which Allen deploys musical types and genres, arguing that music provides a critical (and often oblique) commentary on cultural practice in ways echoing Allen's wider comedy style.

* * *

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