



NAXOS

FILM MUSIC CLASSICS



Erich Wolfgang Korngold

the adventures of  
**ROBIN**  
**hood**

Moscow Symphony Orchestra • William Stromberg



## Welcome to Sherwood!

Few motion pictures have ever matched the 1938 Warner Bros. production of *The Adventures of Robin Hood* for sheer entertainment. Even today this film ranks high on any list of all-time favourites.

Warner Bros. first considered filming *The Adventures of Robin Hood* in 1935 with contract star James Cagney slated for the title role. But in November of that year Cagney, in a contractual dispute, walked off the lot and did not return for two years. One month later the studio presented newcomer Errol Flynn in *Captain Blood*. After that film's extraordinary impact, *The Adventures of Robin Hood* was tailored for Flynn and given a budget of \$1,600,000 – the largest sum allotted to a Warner film up to that time. (The cost eventually reached \$2,000,000.)

Although almost non-stop action was the keynote of *The Adventures of Robin Hood*, there was also above average dialogue, spirited performances, and impressive spectacle. An important element was the excellent casting, including the premier swashbuckler Errol Flynn, who at 29 was at his peak and perfect for the role, with just enough seasoning. He was “hero” personified. Olivia de Havilland was by now his ideal screen romantic interest, having been paired effectively with Flynn in *Captain Blood* (1935) and *The Charge of the Light Brigade* (1936). Their romantic scenes in *Robin Hood* were played with believable ardor, grace, and more than a touch of humour. The only other person Warners considered for the role of Maid Marian was contract player Anita Louise.

In addition to all the other ingredients, Warner Bros. used the then-new three-strip Technicolor process. It was a wise decision, as the legendary subject with its many lush forest scenes, costumes, and pageantry was ideal for full colour.

The studio shot most of the Sherwood Forest sequences in Bidwell Park, 475 miles northwest of Los Angeles in the town of Chico. A natural park filled with giant oaks, sycamores, and a wide creek, it was a lovely and fresh setting for the film.

Some of the favourite incidents of the Robin Hood legend were used on the screen for the first time: the bout with quarterstaves between Robin and Little John (Alan Hale) on a log spanning a stream, Robin's first meeting

with Friar Tuck (Eugene Pallette) and his forcing the rotund cleric to carry him piggyback across the stream, and the King (Ian Hunter) coming to Sherwood disguised as a monk. Finally, all the various archery contests described in the many legendary versions were amalgamated into one major archery tournament, wherein Robin splits his opponent's arrow (actually accomplished by archery champion Howard Hill) and wins the Golden Arrow prize.

The archery tournament was photographed at the old Busch Gardens in Pasadena – long since gone. It was during this period, after the company had returned from Chico, that director William Keighley was replaced by Michael Curtiz, who shot most of the interiors, back-lot, Warner Ranch footage, and embellished a good deal of the material made earlier by Keighley.

Robin and Sir Guy of Gisbourne (Basil Rathbone), chief conspirer under Prince John (Claude Rains), become rivals for Lady Marian (Olivia de Havilland), a Norman ward of King Richard the Lion Heart. This triangle, not present in any of the old ballads, originated in the popular De Koven-Smith light opera version of *Robin Hood* in 1891 and was used again in the Douglas Fairbanks 1922 silent *Robin Hood*.

Since there was a little something suggested from all sources, Flynn (or occasionally a stunt double) was required to engage in some lithe leaping, wall-scaling, vaulting, vine-swinging – and, of course, swordplay – to take into account the Douglas Fairbanks heritage.

Audiences then and now loved the movie, many people going back to see it time and again. In 1948, ten years after its first release, Warner reissued the film in theatres everywhere with new Technicolor prints, treating it in the manner of one of their big, fresh attractions. The public flocked once again; the picture performing better than most new films at the box office and certainly better than the usual revival of an old movie. It was reissued another time – but in black and white only and on a more limited basis – just before being sold to television in the late 1950s, where it has been a perennial favourite. In a poll taken in 1977 for *TV Guide* magazine, programme directors of television stations throughout the country were asked to name the ten most popular, most often shown movies in their markets.

*Robin Hood* was number five, preceded by – in order of popularity – *Casablanca*, *King Kong*, *The Magnificent Seven*, and *The Maltese Falcon*.

*The Adventures of Robin Hood* avoids the pitfalls that plague so many other films in the historical romance genre. The subject had been extraordinarily popular for over 600 years and Warner Bros. had the good sense not to alter the material drastically or to make it seem considerably more than it was. All the elements are handled in a relatively straightforward manner. The dialogue is not too flowery or archaic in an attempt to be faithful to the period; vigour and pace always offset the pomp and ceremony, and nothing tedious mars the proceedings. Rather than lasting two hours or longer, as so many costume adventure films do, *Robin Hood* runs its course in a brisk one hour and forty-two minutes. During that time, the film is crammed with incident and action – all of it pointed and imaginatively staged. There is a prevailing humour, not forced or awkward, but light-hearted, impudent, and indigenous.

Many other film productions of the Robin Hood legend followed. But MGM's adaptation of the De Koven-Smith 1891 operetta to star Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy, that had been scheduled to follow in late 1939-early 1940, was abandoned after the extraordinary success of the Warner version.

The definitive *Robin Hood* for most people is the 1938 version, wherein many elements of popular entertainment are beautifully fused: fairy-tale romance, spectacle, colour, action, pageantry, humour, the triumph of right over might, the exultation of the Free Spirit, the lure of the greenwood, and a vague nostalgia for a partly mythical age of chivalry.

Relatively little about the picture dates, except in a charming way. The characters, costumes, castle, and forest are idealized, but then the film is not a document of medieval life; rather, it is a fairy tale illustrated by Technicolor. The "love interest," often perfunctory and arbitrary in costume adventure films, is here properly motivated and nicely woven into the plot fabric. And the rich Erich Wolfgang Korngold Academy Award-winning score serves as marvellous connective tissue, sweeping the film along and providing a splendid added dimension.

When this writer was a boy, one of the first original dramatic film scores I remember humming after leaving the theatre was Korngold's music for *The Prince and the*

*Pauper* in 1937. Then came the composer's score for *The Adventures of Robin Hood* and I was humming that a lot. The trouble was, in those days one was limited to humming, whistling, or singing portions of the music (in my case, I'm sure I was frequently off-key with a slightly variant melodic line) because, of course, there were virtually no recordings of film scores, no videos, not even TV to catch the film once it left the first run, then the neighborhood theatres, and finally what we used to call in San Francisco "the flea houses."

Incredibly, it was not until August, 1961, that *any* music from *Robin Hood* was commercially produced for records. Selections (total time, 9:20) were recorded by conductor Lionel Newman and producer George Korngold in Munich, Germany, based on the original orchestrations, for an excellent Warner Bros. compilation album, *Music by Erich Wolfgang Korngold*. Actually Kurt Graunke conducted the unidentified sixty-piece Munich orchestra for two of the three *Robin Hood* selections, *Robin and Maid Marian* and *Epilogue*, Newman being exhausted from conducting the remainder of the forty-minute album in a day and a half (including rehearsals)!

On New Year's Eve, 1961, George Korngold presented me with an advance copy of the Warner Bros. LP. I remember going home after the New Year's party and staying up until dawn playing the record over and over again while I listened and shed some tears. Unless you were around in the 1930s and '40s, and a film music buff, I'm sure it is difficult to imagine what it was like not to be able, for the most part, to hear favourite scores except in a movie theatre.

In 1972 Charles Gerhardt conducted four minutes of a *Robin Hood* excerpt with the National Philharmonic Orchestra (in England) for the initial record in RCA's Classic Film Score series, *The Sea Hawk: The Classic Film Scores of Erich Wolfgang Korngold*. In 1975, for a follow-up RCA album, *Captain Blood: Classic Film Scores for Errol Flynn*, Gerhardt and producer George Korngold included a total of 12:20 of music from *Robin Hood*.

Excerpts from the original optical music tracks were edited by George Korngold into a fifteen-minute suite for a portion of Warner Bros.' *50 Years of Film Music* LP album, released in 1973; a good deal of material being presented for the first time on commercially available records. Other recordings of selections – or of the official *Robin Hood*

published suite (approximately fifteen minutes) put together by Erich Korngold for concert performances – followed over the years.

The 1983 Varese Sarabande recording with Varujan Kojian conducting the Utah Symphony Orchestra gave us the most generous amount of the *Robin Hood* score up to that time. But because that recording was designed originally for LP (later put on CD), 43 minutes are all that could be properly accommodated on one disc, so it was

thirty minutes short of the entire score. But now in this new recording of the original score and orchestrations we are able to hear all 73 minutes composed for the film – plus some bonus material – in glorious sound!

**Rudy Behlmer**

author of *Behind the Scenes: The Making Of . . . , Inside Warner Bros. (1935-1951)*, co-author of *The Films of Errol Flynn*, etc.

## **Korngold and *The Adventures of Robin Hood* A Masterpiece of Film Scoring**

Of the eighteen films scored by Erich Wolfgang Korngold, three are regarded today as outstanding masterpieces of the genre: *Kings Row*, *The Sea Hawk* and *The Adventures of Robin Hood*. The musical form established by Korngold in the mid 1930s – the symphonic film score – saw its greatest examples in these films, and *Robin Hood* in particular, the earliest of the three, remains one of the most inspired of all this composer's works, either for the screen or the concert hall.

The film itself remains as fresh and popular today as in the year it was made, and in spite of numerous later films and television series on the subject, it is still widely regarded as the *definitive* version of the legendary story. With the coming of cable, satellite TV, video and DVD, countless millions throughout the world now know this classic motion picture. Indeed there can scarcely be a time of day when this film is not being shown somewhere on the planet. For Korngold, who once remarked that a 'film composer's immortality lasts all the way from the soundstage to the dubbing room' this would be a revelation. He could not have envisaged that the music he composed under such duress in 1938 would become one of his most frequently performed and beloved works.

By the time he came to write *Robin Hood* he was already esteemed as one of the leading composers in Hollywood, following his groundbreaking work on such films as *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Captain Blood* and *Anthony Adverse* – the latter winning him an Academy Award in 1936. He was not yet under long-term contract to Warner Brothers but worked as a freelance, on a picture-by-picture basis. Following his introduction to motion pictures by

legendary producer Max Reinhardt, who had insisted on him being assigned for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 1934, Korngold was also tenuously attached to Reinhardt's future screen assignments. Reinhardt had a three-picture deal with Warners, and Korngold returned to Hollywood in October 1936 ostensibly to work on *Danton*, a large-scale historical epic being planned as Reinhardt's follow up to *Dream*. In any event, the film was postponed (it was never made) and Korngold scored *Another Dawn* and *The Prince and the Pauper* instead.

At the beginning of May 1937, after completing the score for *The Prince and the Pauper*, Erich Wolfgang Korngold left Hollywood to return to Vienna to spend the summer finishing the orchestration of his fifth opera *Die Kathrin*, which was scheduled for its world première at the State Opera that autumn. From surviving correspondence, it seems that he already knew that his next film assignment would be the lavish, Technicolor spectacular *The Adventures of Robin Hood* – by then already in the advanced pre-production stage. Letters from the period between Korngold, his father (esteemed music critic Dr Julius Korngold) and his publisher Schott, confirm that he spent considerable time researching the Robin Hood legend in the main libraries in Vienna, in order to understand the narrative and the characters, no script being yet available.

Preparation was essential because Korngold knew that once he returned to America, time would be of the essence in scoring the film and the more he could achieve before scoring began in earnest, the better. Normally, he would have to wait until he saw a finished script before any composing could begin. With *Robin Hood*, the characters



and story incidentals were already well-established folklore and he seized the advantage.

We can assume therefore that some of the memorable themes contained in this most beloved score were conceived months before filming began. In addition, Korngold's father advised his son that one of his earlier concert works could provide ideal material for the score. This was *Sursum Corda* – a large-scale symphonic overture with a wonderfully heroic trumpet theme. It was composed in 1919, much in the manner of a tone poem by Korngold's mentor Richard Strauss (to whom, incidentally, the score was dedicated) yet had never been successful. It provides the core thematic material in *Robin Hood* and undoubtedly contributed to its unique flavour.

The events surrounding Korngold's return to Hollywood for *Robin Hood* are the stuff of legend, yet there are still unanswered questions. Unusually, no return date seems to have been agreed with Korngold, and no written agreement had been reached. In previous years, he had usually returned in October to spend the winter months in California (to benefit his younger son George, who had suffered a tubercular infection) but the impending premiere of *Die Kathrin* clearly ruled this out. Korngold had written the lead tenor role in the opera for Jan Kiepura and was disappointed when the handsome singer eventually declined the part, owing to his having signed a contract with the Metropolitan Opera in New York.

Korngold's intensely romantic opera needed a star tenor to partner soprano Jarmila Novotna (singing the role of the eponymous heroine) and after various options were pursued, Richard Tauber was finally chosen. Tauber was a close friend of Korngold, and had scored a triumph in the role of Paul in Korngold's most famous opera *Die tote Stadt* in the 1920s. He had recently married an English actress, Diana Napier, and was living much of the time in London. He had agreed in principle to star in Korngold's opera and Bruno Walter had agreed to conduct. Production plans for the opera moved slowly. Tauber was on his way back from America, following a successful series of concerts at Carnegie Hall.

Meanwhile, shooting had already begun on *Robin Hood* in September of 1937 but following poor weather hampering the location photography, a subsequent change of director, script revisions and the decision to enhance the film into a

super-production, it was not to be completed until 22nd January, 1938.

Back in Vienna, Christmas 1937 passed quietly. Tauber was scheduled to make a film in England (*Land Without Music*, with Jimmy Durante), but had agreed to look at the score of Korngold's opera. The premiere date was the only question, and this depended on Tauber finishing his film by March. Then, fate stepped in.

On 22nd January, a young Austrian pianist, Robert Kohner, was participating in a concert in Vienna and had decided to perform Korngold's *Piano Sonata No. 3*. Korngold and his wife Luzi were invited guests and decided to attend. Luzi recalled the dramatic day in her memoirs:

"I was alone in the house when a telegram arrived: 'Can you be in Hollywood in ten days time to write the music for *Robin Hood*?'"

"I took the telegram with me to the concert. Erich was late; finally I saw him enter the room and take a seat at the back. I raised the telegram in my hand to show him but he didn't understand – we had to wait for the end of the concert when, in my agitated state, I could share the news. He looked at me, astounded and said 'This is an omen'. Then he rang the Director of the Staatsoper right there from the Concert Hall and told him of the Warner Brothers contract ... Dr Eckmann said word for word on the telephone 'Professor Korngold, take this as an omen and go! I promise you a first class premiere in October with Bruno Walter conducting and starring Jarmila Novotna and Richard Tauber (who will be free then). I'll make sure we write to you and confirm it.' It was late in the evening. Erich looked at me with uncertainty and suggested we go to the Imperial Hotel to find out what ships were sailing in the next five days. If it were not one of the big liners, he would not travel in winter. The ship due to sail was the *Normandie* (then the largest passenger ship afloat). On the spot, Erich reserved two cabins, because we would at least have to take Schurli [son George] with us. We had only a day to pack our things, make arrangements for the house and say our goodbyes to family and friends. We had to leave our older son Ernst with my mother and sister so as not to interrupt his schooling ..."

A letter from producer Henry Blanke arrived the next day announcing that he had already ordered the script to be available for their arrival in New York, and outlined the main characters. Blanke compared the love story between Robin

Hood and Maid Marian to that in Captain Blood. On 23rd January Korngold sent the following reply to Blanke:

"Accept in principle hoping that one further picture possible. Take *Normandie* 29th to Hollywood February 7th. Cable if picture already cut and how many weeks available for scoring. Confirm contract."

Hal Wallis, Warners' production chief, replied in an overnight wire on the 23rd:

"Satisfactory arrive Hollywood February 7th. Terms OK as wired Friday. Should score picture about four weeks as release date April. Wilk has script for you. Picture cut by 7th. Regards, Wallis."

The die was cast. The dates of the wires indicate the speed with which the decision was taken. The Korngolds left by car, for Le Havre, on 25th January. The journey was a tortuous one. Icy roads and a blinding snowstorm made driving through the bitterly cold weather extremely hazardous. At every border, they were stopped and questioned or even sent back for some trivial documentation to be re-stamped.

Korngold spent the journey contemplating the film. At Le Havre, just before finally boarding the ship, a postcard from Julius Korngold arrived containing the telling phrase "Don't forget my idea to use *Sursum Corda* for the chief theme of the Captain of the Brigands!" In fact, Korngold had already decided to take his father's advice and had written to his publisher Schott before he left Vienna asking permission to use portions of the earlier score. A telegram from Willy Strecker, the senior partner at Schott, was waiting at Le Havre granting Korngold permission.

The *Normandie* sailed for New York on 29th January. According to his son George, Korngold constantly paced the decks humming to himself throughout the difficult voyage, composing in his head and making notes, then improvising on the piano in his stateroom as the ship was beset with mountainous seas – apparently the worst ever crossing for this great liner. He thus was able to add to the sketches he had already made in Vienna for the principal themes of the main characters. The ship arrived in New York on 3rd February and the Korngolds left immediately for the West Coast on the *Santa Fe Chief*. Even then, their adventures were far from over. The train collided with an automobile just before arriving in Pasadena on 7th February, where, much shaken but in reasonable spirits they were met by Max

Reinhardt's wife, the actress Helene Thimig. They arranged to rent a house near to Warner Brothers in the picturesque Toluca Lake district, which was ten minutes walk from the studio. The next day, they were driven to the screening of *Robin Hood*. Korngold watched with great attention, and became increasingly worried as the fast-paced, action-filled adventure film unfolded.

He looked continually at Luzi, shaking his head with concern. Later, his desperation exploded. "I can't ... I can't do it" he shouted. Luzi, trying to calm him, said "Then don't!" Finally, he left to see Hal Wallis, with a carefully constructed letter of rejection, which survives in the Warner files:

"Dear Mr Wallis,

"I am sincerely sorry to have to bother you once more. I do appreciate deeply your kindness and courtesy toward me, and I am aware of the fact that you have made all concessions possible to facilitate my work.

"But please believe a desperate man who has to be true to himself and to you, a man who knows what he can do and what he cannot do. *Robin Hood* is no picture for me. I have no relation to it and therefore, cannot produce any music for it. I am a musician of the heart, of passions and psychology; I am not a musical illustrator for a 90% action picture. Being a conscientious person, I cannot take the responsibility for a job which, as I already know, would leave me artistically completely dissatisfied and which, therefore, I would have to drop even after several weeks of work on it, and after several weeks of salary.

"Therefore let me say 'no' definitely, and let me say it today when no time has been lost for you as yet, since the work print will not be ready until tomorrow.

"And please do not try to make me change my mind; my resolve is unshakeable. I implore you not to be angry with me and not to deprive me of your friendship. For it is I who suffers mentally and financially. I ask you to weigh the pictures for which I composed the music, such as *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Captain Blood*, *Anthony Adverse*, *Prince and the Pauper*, against the one I could not make *Robin Hood*. And if during the next few weeks you should have a job for me to do, you need not cable all the way to Vienna.

"With best regards,

"Erich Wolfgang Korngold"

Wallis had little option but to accept, and Korngold, delighted at this painless outcome, returned home. The

events of the days that followed are worthy of a film script in themselves. As Luzi recalled:

“... it was the 12th of February – I got a call from Helene Thimig. I picked up the phone upstairs while Erich, curious as ever, lifted the receiver down below. ‘Luzi’ said Helene with uncertainty, ‘it’s all over. Schuschnigg (the Austrian Chancellor) is in Berchtesgaden (meeting with Hitler)’. At that very moment, the doorbell rang and Mr Forbstein, head of music at Warner Brothers, entered the house with the words ‘Korngold, you *have* to do it!’ Erich tried to explain that he had already officially declined, and in writing. ‘That doesn’t matter’, said Forbstein with a dismissive gesture. Under the crucifying influence of the news we had just received on the telephone, Erich began to reflect on the matter. Finally he promised Forbstein that he would at least try to write the music for *Robin Hood*. He didn’t want a contract. His conditions were ‘work from week to week, paid from week to week’. ‘If I find that it’s not working out, I can give up with a clear conscience; the music I have written up until then will belong to you’ he explained ... The following evening, he was already at work in the rehearsal room ...”

Whatever Korngold privately felt about his obligations, an inter-office memo from Walter MacEwen, Hal Wallis’ executive assistant, to the contracts department, dated 14th February, was unequivocal about the result of these discussions:

“Korngold is now definitely set to do the music on ROBIN HOOD”

Korngold, feeling he was under no obligation, worked fluently and at speed. Luzi, writing years later, was at a loss to explain why they took no steps to rescue their other son and family from the dangerous situation in Vienna. Naive, trusting, they clearly presumed that things would calm down. As she wryly remarked:

“And of course we had a high opinion of our countrymen

and would never have thought that what had happened in Germany could ever happen in ‘our country’ ...”

Then, it was announced that elections were to be held in Austria on 10th March. Luzi was innocently convinced that Austria would resist the grip of Hitler. But Korngold finally woke up to the reality of the crisis. He knew with terrible certainty what lay ahead. ‘He must invade! Don’t you see? Hitler could never risk an election in Austria ...’

Indeed, there was no election and on 13th March, Hitler marched into Austria. The Korngolds immediately cabled Luzi’s sister asking that their eldest son Ernst be included on her passport. They received no reply. Transatlantic telephone calls had to be booked in advance in those days, and several anxious hours passed until they could speak to Vienna direct. Julius Korngold who had already included the boy on his passport, had in fact cunningly procured a holiday visa to America some months earlier (having realized the danger long before the rest of his family) and indeed, was about to leave within a few hours. The whole family actually left Vienna on the last unrestricted train and managed to cross the border into Switzerland on the very last day that this was possible. Once he was assured that his family was safe, Korngold threw himself into completing the complex score for *Robin Hood*.

The release date was moved to 12th May, but even so, Korngold had only seven weeks to write it, supervise the orchestration (by Hugo Friedhofer, Milan Roder and – for two short sequences – an assistant, Reginald Basset) and then record the finished score to the film. His son George later recalled the agony of those weeks:

“... My father was on the verge of stopping several times. I shall never forget his anguished protestations of ‘I just can’t do it’ which I overheard in the middle of the night through my bedroom wall. He was suffering, and at the same time producing one of his finest scores ...”

## The Score

The structure of Korngold’s score is helped considerably by the dramatic construction of the film, where the intimacy of the human story was offset by a series of tremendous set-pieces – the Banquet, the Attack on the Sir Guy’s Party, the Archery Tournament, Robin’s Execution and Escape and the climactic Coronation Procession, Battle and Finale.

These sequences underpinned the film and required exceptionally vivid musical accompaniment. Korngold rose magnificently to the occasion with a score that, even today, is regarded as one of the finest examples of marrying music with the moving image.

As previously, Korngold applied operatic technique to



his composition. Each character is clothed in a wonderfully apt theme, from the harsh tones of Sir Guy of Gisbourne to the yearning romance of Lady Marian's 'heartsong' as Korngold described it in his score.

There is no vocal music of any kind (unlike other historical film subjects which Korngold composed) and this was owing to a contractual obligation between Warners and MGM, who planned a film version of an operetta based on the Robin Hood legend for Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy in 1939 (it was never made). But for that, I am fairly certain Korngold would have composed an 'old English ballad' for the film. No matter – his music sings eloquently throughout.

Viewed as a whole, the score contains fifteen primary themes:

- I. The March of the Merry Men
- II. Richard the Lionheart
- III. Prince John and the Normans' Supremacy (Fanfare)
- IV. The Oppression of the Saxons
- V. Sir Guy of Gisbourne
- VI. Robin Hood
- VII. Lady Marian's Heartsong
- VIII. Old England
- IX. The Norman Banquet (Processional)
- X. The Chase of Robin Hood
- XI. Friar Tuck (The Fish)
- XII. The Flirt
- XIII. The Archery Tournament
- XIV. The Gallows
- XV. The Love Music

There are at least another six secondary motifs, and Korngold constantly derives subsidiary variations on all of his material, often combining themes as and when characters appear on screen. He also adopts his usual practice of assigning different, appropriate solo instruments to individual characters in underscoring dialogue.

Before I turn to the score in sequence, as it appears on this recording, a word about Korngold's sources and method.

As noted, the brilliant trumpet motif from *Sursum Corda* became Robin Hood's theme and Korngold treats it to an astonishing degree of variation, development and embellishment, finding endless possibilities within its complex rhythm. A secondary theme from *Sursum Corda*

forms the basis for the love music between Robin and Marian, while large portions of the central development section and the climax of this earlier score were lifted entirely for key scenes.

The rapid fanfare that concludes the **Main Title** and which appears throughout the film to mark the supremacy of the Normans and more specifically, Prince John, originally appeared (slightly varied) in Act One of Korngold's opera *Die Kathrin* (composed almost contemporaneously) while the famous *March of the Merry Men* which opens the film and later accompanies the celebrated *Attack on the Treasure Wagon* is actually based on a waltz theme Korngold composed for an operetta adaptation from 1928 – *Rosen aus Florida* (Roses from Florida) – which is a partial completion of a work by Leo Fall! We shall never know just why Korngold identified Robin Hood's merry men with this little waltz, but it proved to be enormously effective and one of his most popular themes.

One further sequence utilised music he had composed earlier – **The Gallows**, where Robin is taken to be executed. This is a much elaborated rescoring of a sequence from *Anthony Adverse* of a tortuous journey by coach through the Swiss Alps. The swirling, rising arpeggios are here combined with Robin's trumpet theme to great effect.

As was his practice, Korngold composed the score at the piano, in a method unique to him. Prior to starting work, I am certain he already knew the overall shape and structure of his score. Only finite details, matters of timing and pacing needed to be fixed. His anxiety at the initial screening was doubtless caused by so much spectacular action he had not envisaged when he was back at home in Vienna.

Nevertheless, he worked quickly as reels of the film were run for him, over and over again in a projection room equipped with an upright piano, while he improvised his music in time to the film, occasionally stopping to make notes. Later, he would prepare a detailed piano sketch for each sequence and gradually the entire score took shape. Because he composed the music as a whole rather than in individual chunks, the separate cues flow one from the other, with key relationships observed, even when scenes *without* music are placed between. In this way, much of the score can be performed sequentially, end to end, with little editing required. Among his contemporaries, Korngold was unique in this respect.



The time pressure was immense and to ensure that the lengthy score could be orchestrated and the orchestral materials produced, Korngold worked to a punishing schedule with his preferred orchestrator Hugo Friedhofer who (given the scope of the score) was assisted by Milan Roder. Meeting in the early evening, he would play each sequence to Friedhofer, on the piano, calling out instructions, indicating instrumental colours and any special requirements, while Friedhofer scribbled copious notes.

## A Listening Guide to the Score

Korngold's sweeping **Main Title** [1] opens with the famous *March of the Merry Men*, which deftly bridges to the noble, heroic theme for *Richard the Lionheart* before concluding with the brisk fanfare that symbolises *Norman Supremacy*. It is interesting that Robin's heroic trumpet theme is not heard as yet.

After the proclamation in Nottingham that King Richard has been captured and held for ransom, the scene dissolves to Nottingham Castle where, accompanied by a muted version of the fanfare, Prince John (Claude Rains) and Sir Guy of Gisbourne (Basil Rathbone) are plotting to bleed the hapless Saxons of every penny in extra taxes.

Pouring red wine to drink a toast to their evil plans, Prince John upsets his goblet and as the red wine spills like blood onto the floor, [**Sir Guy and Robin Hood**] [2] we hear a sinuous clarinet figure (matching the dripping wine) as it dissolves into the music of the Saxon Oppression. A montage unfolds of various acts of cruelty, before the scene changes to Sherwood Forest where Sir Guy of Gisbourne (note his brutal, warlike theme) is preparing to arrest Much the Miller's Son (Herbert Mundin) for poaching. As the brilliant trumpet theme from *Sursum Corda* rings out [**The Meeting**] [3], we get our first glimpse of Robin Hood (Errol Flynn), or rather Sir Robin of Locksley – he has not taken his new name as yet. Riding with his friend Will Scarlet (Patric Knowles) Robin confronts Sir Guy. Muted winds accompany the tense exchange as Robin needles Sir Guy, who rides away in a fury; Robin agrees to take Much as his servant.

A title card proclaims **The Banquet** [4] and Korngold creates a stately procession with a pure trumpet solo supported by elegant and elaborate string accompaniment and archaic cadences to suggest the pomp and grace of a

Following these meetings, Friedhofer would return home to begin the orchestration, which would then be turned over to copyists led by Art Grier and Albert Glasser whose job it was to prepare the instrumental parts for the scoring sessions the next day, often working through the night. In this way, the huge job of producing conductor scores and instrumental parts for over 75 minutes of complex music for a 65-piece orchestra was accomplished within the tight deadline.

medieval court. The *Normans' Fanfare* sounds as the assembled nobles toast Prince John, and Korngold underscores the flirtatious dialogue between the Prince and Maid Marian (Olivia de Havilland) by transforming the Banquet Processional into a minuet! Then we hear the melting strains of a theme Korngold called 'Old England' and the sequence ends.

Suddenly, a commotion is heard as we see **Robin Hood Outside** [5]; this is a subtle, robust variation on Robin's trumpet tune, which becomes a swaggering march as he struts into the hall [**Robin Hood's Entrance**] carrying a deer over his shoulders, before flinging it onto the Banquet table in front of an astonished Prince John. After a tense exchange, a spear pierces Robin's chair and a spectacular battle scene commences [**The Fight**] which is lifted almost entirely from the exposition section of *Sursum Corda* and is one of the most difficult sequences in this score, largely because of the tempo Korngold demands.

Considering the music was actually written in 1919, it is remarkable how well it fits the images on screen and one wonders if Korngold influenced the cutting of this scene to fit the film, as he had in previous films.

Robin escapes from the castle and **The Chase of Robin Hood** begins with Sir Guy's brutal theme, as he commands his troops to pursue Robin. A marvellous night ride through the forest follows, with every detail caught in the music, Robin's trumpet tune punctuating the melodic line as the arrows fly.

A typical Michael Curtiz shot – a silhouette of the corpses of dead Norman soldiers, while priests intone Latin prayers – is underscored by a sombre, held chord. [**The Victims**].

Next, [Robin Hood Meets Little John] [6] it is a spring day in Sherwood Forest as Robin and Will take a morning stroll. A bucolic pastorate based on Robin's trumpet tune makes it almost sound like a new theme, so lyrical and romantic has it become. They encounter Little John, who is whistling an old English song (*Sumer is Icumen In*). The whistle was dubbed separately later and there were many takes during the sessions as can be heard on the surviving optical tracks. Korngold was a perfectionist and worked with the un-named 'whistler' until it was just right.

The encounter between Little John and Robin [Robin Hood Fights with Little John] with quarterstaves on the log is a humorous, good natured variation on Robin's theme with a solo bassoon embellished with pizzicato strings to suggest Will Scarlet playing his lute nearby ( Little John to Will: 'Hey there pretty fellow...play me a tune I can make this puny rascal dance to ...!') The sequence entitled **Jolly Friendship** which concludes the scene is the first time we hear the *March of the Merry Men* since the main titles – for, with Little John being invited to join Robin, the Merry Men are finally coming together.

**The Oath** and **The Black Arrow** [7] is an extended scene where, following the oath of allegiance (poignantly underscored by the Lionheart theme) as the Saxons who have formed Robin's Merry Men swear to fight for the King, we hear again the Oppression theme; there is a gradual build up of tension through a montage of further cruel acts perpetrated by the Normans. As each Black Arrow is fired by Robin to avenge them, we hear his trumpet theme ring out as they strike.

The music effortlessly bridges, one might almost say dissolves, to the wonderfully luminous theme for Friar Tuck (Eugene Palette) [entitled **The Fish** [8] on the score] as he sits dozing by the stream, waiting for a catch. The scene opens on the wriggling fish, which has been caught on his rod, and the music, with its flute and vibraphone flourishes, has a translucent, magical sound, complete with bell-like, monastic effects.

**Robin's Fight with Friar Tuck** which immediately follows is yet another delightful variation on Robin's theme, as he duels with Tuck in the stream. All ends happily and once again, Korngold makes humorous use of the bassoon [A New Companion] [9] to mimic Tuck's rumbling tummy at the promise of 'a venison pastie and the biggest you ever

ate... boar's head, beef, casks of ale...'. We hear the gentle strain of the *March of the Merry Men* once more, as another key member joins the band.

**Robin Hood Attacks Sir Guy's Party** [10] is one of the best-remembered scenes in the film and thanks to the brilliant direction of Michael Curtiz and William Keighley, one of the most exciting. A gradual build up is matched by Korngold's effective and carefully structured scoring. *The March of the Merry Men* is now transformed into an orchestral tour-de-force.

As the camera cuts away from the outlaws preparing to attack Sir Guy's party, Korngold transforms Sir Guy's aggressive theme into an almost lyrical accompaniment, befitting his attempt to befriend Lady Marian riding alongside. When the attack comes [The Attack], it is simply marvellous how the music mirrors the action on screen, as the Merry Men swoop down from the trees onto the unsuspecting Norman soldiers. Robin's trumpet theme dominates, as Sir Guy's troop is routed and the treasure seized.

**The Flirt** [11], as the captives are led away to Robin's camp, is deliciously Viennese to match the delightful banter between Robin and Marian. It caused one member of the Warner Orchestra to dub Korngold's score "Robin Hood in the Vienna Woods". Arriving at Robin's camp, the **Feast** begins, wherein the *March of the Merry Men* is recast in a boisterous 2/2 time.

As Robin sits with Lady Marian, Korngold now introduces a new theme that he called 'Lady Marian's Heartsong' on the original sketch, which will become increasingly important as the romance develops in the story. Here it is given a jaunty swing and provided with a syncopated bass that perfectly complements the teasing dialogue. When Robin reveals the tax money that has been seized – a chest brimful of gold coins and precious jewels – the music fairly glistens accordingly [Gold] and, on being accused by Marian of planning to keep his ill-gotten gains, he leaps up to ask his men what he should do with it. Their passionate declaration to save it for King Richard, allows the Lionheart theme to burst forth – a memorable moment.

Immediately following, Robin shows Marian the **Poor People** [12] – peasants who have been mistreated or injured by Sir Guy's brutal forces. Appropriately, it is the theme of Norman Oppression that we hear, but here transformed



into a sombre elegy. This highly effective *patetico* treatment then softly bridges to the first, tentative appearance of the Love Music, as Marian starts to realise her true feelings for Robin. This new theme, which appears almost bashfully here, is also from *Sursum Corda* and with some ravishing key changes, it leads to a lovely solo cello statement of the Lionheart theme, as Robin tries to explain to Marian the reasons for his campaign against the Normans.

As they walk back to the camp and her love begins to dawn for him, the lilting strains of *Old England* follow them. After an altercation with Sir Guy and some slapstick between Little John and Friar Tuck (a rare example of Korngold using the 'Mickey Mouse' technique to match on-screen action) the **Flirt** reappears, as Marian waves goodbye from her horse to Robin – one of the most touching moments in the film.

Next – **The Tournament** [13] – another marvellous set piece, rather like the curtain up on Act 2, with rich heraldic fanfares based on Korngold's beloved motto theme of rising fourths (The Motif of the Cheerful Heart), which he had used in all of his major works since his childhood, most especially in his early *Sinfonietta*.

The archery tournament has been arranged by Sir Guy to trap Robin, and with Robin's appearance on the field (accompanied by his men in disguise) we naturally hear a muted version of the *March of the Merry Men*. The orchestration is superb. When Robin's arrow leaves his bow, we don't need to see it – we can hear its 'whoosh' in Korngold's music, as the trumpet theme sings out. When the camera cuts away to Sir Guy, as he plots with Prince John, a strange discordant motif based on Robin's march-like theme heard earlier when he entered the Banquet, is continued by a new, threatening version of the oppression theme effectively building the tension. **Robin Hood Starts to Shoot** accompanies the final contest between Robin and the master archer Phillip of Arras. Naturally, Robin wins the tournament as the fanfares ring out, over and over again. The **Arrest of Robin Hood** [14] is a partial reworking of material from *Sursum Corda* while the **Tribunal** and **Jail** [15] scenes, which immediately follow, depend on still further development of the *Norman Oppression Theme*. Korngold's intermeshing of individual motifs is a perfect counterpoint to the action on screen and is done with exceptional skill. As Robin is manacled in his cell, the scene dissolves to Maid

Marian (*Old England* now heard in the minor key) as she frets over Robin's fate. (A brief scene follows this, where she meets the Merry Men to offer a rescue plan but it is not scored).

**The Gallows** [16] is another striking musical canvas, borrowing (as noted) a motif from Korngold's earlier score for *Anthony Adverse* (1936) but now re-orchestrated and embellished. Swirling rising arpeggios are crowned by Robin's trumpet theme, as he is brought to the scaffold. **The Flight of Robin Hood**, as he escapes the noose just in the nick of time, is a thrilling adaptation of the last section of *Sursum Corda* – in particular, matching the Fairbanks-like stunt of Robin swinging up Nottingham Gate by rope. Bar for bar, it is fitted to the film like a hand in a glove.

Finally, we come to the big **Love Scene** [17] – the emotional heart of the score, wherein Robin climbs, like Romeo, to Lady Marian's balcony. Given the size of Nottingham Castle, this is no mean feat. The music begins with a gently undulating *misterioso* based on Robin's trumpet call but here in the minor key, supported by harp and piano arpeggios.

Inside, Lady Marian talks to her maid Bess (a wonderful performance by Una O'Connor) of her love for Robin and we hear again 'Lady Marian's Heartsong' – now, no longer shy or teasing but a lyrical outpouring, exquisitely orchestrated, with celeste and vibraphone providing the most luxurious, erotic colouring. Robin arrives and the structure of the sequence, which follows, is purely operatic. Once the two have declared their love and as they kiss for the first time, Korngold provides a sweeping climax with a full, rich statement of the ravishing love theme first heard in the forest earlier.

When Robin speaks, a cello intones the Lionheart theme. When Marian responds, it is the violins which answer for her. The musical sequence ends with its usual coda – the *Old England* theme. Korngold's description of his film scores as 'operas without singing' is especially apt here.

At this point in the film, Korngold's music stops. Scenes depicting Richard the Lion Heart arriving incognito at an Inn and a subsequent meeting between Prince John, Sir Guy and the Bishop of the Black Canons (Montagu Love) where they plot Richard's murder and the coronation of John as King, are played without underscoring. Korngold instinctively knew *where* to place music in his films and

these scenes required none. However, as Lady Marian has overheard the plot, Korngold's score resumes with her **Arrest** [18] – a reprise of the oppression theme, for Marian is herself now one of the oppressed.

A long, held chord maintains the suspense of the Court of Execution when she is condemned to death, before one of the most unusual musical sequences in the score; **Much: The Knife Fight** [19]. Much the Miller, warned by Bess, goes to overtake Sir Guy's assassin, Dickon (Harry Cording) to save King Richard. In the music, after a sinister prelude of biting, dissonant minor seconds, we hear Much drop from the tree onto Dickon and as the fight ensues, to match the brutality and sharp blows, Korngold liberally spices the score with sharp intervals, and a strange, discordant treatment of Robin's theme.

As the fight reaches its climax, the scene (and the music) dissolves into the radiant major key and onto Richard himself (Ian Hunter) [**Richard Meets Robin Hood**] [20] and his lovely theme, played rapidly. He encounters Robin and the Merry Men and as they walk to the camp, Will Scarlet (having discovered the injured Much) arrives with him. This scene was edited and shortened before release but for this recording, the full musical sequence has been restored. A lovely pastoral statement of the Lion Heart theme [**Richard the Lion Heart**] as he reveals his identity to Robin and his men, closes the scene.

**The Procession** [21] marks the beginning of the grand finale to this wonderful film. The March of the Merry Men is now sinister and stately, embellished with tolling bells and muted trumpet flourishes, as the outlaws disguised as monks make their way to Nottingham Castle, where Prince John, assuming his brother has been killed, is about to proclaim himself King. The scene changes to the robing room where he is dressing. As he admires himself in a pier glass, the Sheriff of Nottingham (Melville Cooper) says 'We are ready for the ceremony – your *Majesty*!' and the music swells. A new grandiose treatment of *Old England* is heard, as the Great Hall of Nottingham Castle is finally revealed, bedecked in coloured flags and tapers as the camera pulls back on the resplendent scene.

Brilliant fanfares ring out – and the music they play is an extraordinary transformation of the March of the Merry Men into a thrilling 'Pomp and Circumstance'. The music becomes ever more elaborate, with harps, tolling bells and

extra fanfares building to the emphatic climax. For this extended sequence, Korngold added extra brass, for antiphonal fanfares, which were recorded separately and then mixed over the main orchestral part. This was necessary because of the limited monaural recording process then available. Yet Korngold was already clearly thinking in stereo long before it was possible.

A fanfare announces **Prince John** [22]. Then, as the monks file in, the *Norman Fanfare of Supremacy* is heard, but now in sinister muted form. The ceremony is interrupted by Richard and Robin revealing themselves, and once again, *Sursum Corda* rings out, adapted and restructured. We now move swiftly into **The Battle** [23]. The last section of *Sursum Corda* fits the action perfectly, but soon, Robin and Sir Guy break away for **The Duel**. Korngold here unites the themes for both characters in contrapuntal interplay. As they duel on screen, their themes duel in the orchestra. Korngold reused some of this music later in a similar duel in *The Sea Hawk*.

Sir Guy's dispatch and fall to his death are superbly captured in the music, before the Battle finally reaches its climax with **The Victory**, and as Robin rescues Marian from her prison cell, a grand rendition of the Love theme is heard, richly scored for additional brass, answered by the second half of the Lion Heart theme; the clear message from the composer is that Love has triumphed and the rightful King restored.

As King Richard knights Robin Hood with the instruction: 'My first command to you my Lord Earl is to take in marriage the hand of the Lady Marian'. The **Epilogue** [24] sees Robin's trumpet theme undergo its final transformation, into a yearning, romantic, completely lyrical melody for divided strings.

The music fairly glows, as it sweeps up to a wistfully nostalgic descending phrase, as Robin – making a discreet exit with Marian – delivers the final line of the film: 'May I obey all your commands with equal pleasure, Sire' and the great doors of the castle close behind them. Robin's theme thunders out, with the Lion Heart theme building to a huge crescendo. A brisk reprise of the *March of the Merry Men* accompanies the **End Cast** [25] bringing this masterpiece of film scoring to its conclusion.

Bonus track: **Original Trailer Music** [26]. This music was arranged by Korngold to accompany the original trailer. It is



sort of an Overture, featuring the fanfare, a bit of the love theme, some underscoring bits and ends with exciting action music. There is little new music, but Korngold

composed little transitions to get from section to section and has a more elaborate ending than the actual film.

## Postscript

Korngold finished the lengthy recording sessions and post-production work in early April 1938. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, I was fortunate enough to meet and interview several of the surviving members of the Warner orchestra, most especially Teddy Krise, chief clarinetist, who had vivid memories of the sessions:

"*Robin Hood* was one of the toughest jobs I think we ever did back then, on account of how difficult the music was. The time was so short because of the release date, that there was hardly any rehearsal and we had to mostly play the stuff 'at sight'. But even so there were very few retakes as I recall. Some of the boys were allowed to take stuff home with them, which was unusual. I remember Larry Sullivan, our principal trumpet doing that because he had these really tricky solos. Our concertmaster Dan Lube had some really juicy stuff too. I did all the wind solos, even the saxophone in the big love scene, which was an unusual colour. I remember that Korngold wanted that to be played 'straight', with no vibrato at all ... but, it was all just glorious music – nothing of that quality had been done before in Hollywood and the guys really appreciated it."

Teddy Krise was also an amateur photographer and took photographs of Korngold actually working on the sound stage. He subsequently gave them to me and they are among my most treasured possessions.

On 25th April, a gala preview of the film took place at Warner's Hollywood Theatre. Special vellum scrolls with elaborate lettering in full colour were produced as invitations for the star-studded audience, which of course included Korngold. The film had already been sneak-previewed in theatres in Pomona and downtown Los Angeles and the reaction and responses from audiences had been remarkable.

*The Adventures of Robin Hood* was to be officially released on 14th May. Normally, films were 'trailed' on radio but Warner Brothers, recognizing that Korngold's score was extraordinary, took the unusual step of mounting a special radio broadcast of virtually all the major sequences of the

score with Korngold conducting the Warner Brothers Studio Orchestra and Basil Rathbone narrating the story. This took place at the studios of KFVB on 11th May, and was broadcast live, coast-to-coast across the NBC Blue Network.

Teddy Krise vividly remembered this occasion also:

"We got paid extra for the broadcast which was very popular with the fellahs but, boy, it was a tough job. I recall we rehearsed for most of the afternoon. The live broadcast was at 7.30 in the evening. Rathbone only came at the end of rehearsal because the studio wouldn't release him from filming. The actual performance was much harder than the scoring sessions because we only had to perform individual cues for the picture, whereas on the radio, we really played whole sequences like a concert and you know, Korngold wouldn't compromise on tempos at all."

Albert Glasser was in attendance to make any necessary changes to the orchestral parts. Both he and Krise took photos of the occasion, which are now also preserved in my collection. In the closing announcements, special thanks from Korngold to Friedhofer and Milan Roder were read at his insistence by Ken Niles, the radio announcer. Korngold was a generous artist.

Miraculously, this historic radio performance is preserved on records for, originally, it was Warners' intention to issue it commercially. However, only eight shellac sets were ever made (for Korngold and the chief executives at the studio) of which only three are known to have survived. The release was subsequently abandoned as being too 'uncommercial', and it was not until 1942 and Miklós Rózsa's *The Jungle Book* that a film score was to be substantially issued on gramophone records.

*The Adventures of Robin Hood* achieved exemplary critical notices on release, and several major articles were devoted to the music. The music critic Bruno David Ussher writing in the *Hollywood Spectator* said:

"Korngold's music is ideal foreground music. An orchestral score for an opera isn't called 'background music' even if the orchestral writing were entirely apart, thematically

... from the vocal line ... Fortunately, there was no *viva voce* in *Robin Hood*. All the 'singing' occurs in the eminently songful music of Korngold ... One love scene contains pages of music that could well live on as concert music ..."

Prophetic words. In June, Korngold was invited to conduct concerts of his own music in Oakland and San Francisco featuring the Bay Region Symphony Orchestra and he decided to include a short suite from *Robin Hood*, which he assembled especially.

The Suite is still performed in concerts today and comprises four movements: *The Banquet: March of the Merry Men: Love Scene: Fight, Victory and Epilogue*. It was

always Korngold's intention that the music he composed for the cinema would, as he put it, "still be music, away from the screen".

On 23rd February, 1939, to the surprise of absolutely no one, Korngold won his second Oscar for *Robin Hood* at the glittering Academy Awards ceremony at the Biltmore Hotel when Jerome Kern presented him with the award. The film also won for its superb art direction and editing. Hal Wallis, who with Henry Blanke produced *Robin Hood*, was given the Irving G. Thalberg Award for 'consistently high quality of production'.

**Brendan G Carroll** March 2003

Brendan G Carroll is President of the International Korngold Society and author of *The Last Prodigy*, the definitive biography of the composer.

## Restoring Robin Hood's Music

Growing up in the fifties was a great time for a budding film buff. Most of the classic films of the thirties and forties played constantly on local television. Although I did not realize it at the time, both my film and music tastes were being shaped by these wonderful films and their scores. Warner Bros. was my favourite studio for a number of reasons; not the least, the music. I remember the first time I saw *The Adventures of Robin Hood* and what an impact it made on me. The music became a part of my reel-to-reel library of scores I taped directly from the television set with my little Webcor tape recorder. Never in his dreams did that twelve-year-old kid realize he would be preparing this music for a complete recording many years later.

Gathering the physical materials for this first-ever *complete* re-recording of Erich Wolfgang Korngold's *The Adventures of Robin Hood* was both exhilarating and frustrating. After getting Warner Bros.' blessing to record this music, I had every page of surviving scores, instrumental parts, and conductor books photocopied to begin the restoration process. To my initial disappointment, I discovered many of the key sequences were missing – both in full score and individual parts. I then located the official *Robin Hood* Suite, which contained some of the missing music.

My excitement was then a bit muted when I discovered

that the music in the Suite was edited both for time considerations, with bars of music taken out, and somewhat reorchestrated for a standard orchestra by eliminating extra woodwind and brass parts, reducing the percussion from five to three players, combining the piano and celeste parts into one, and integrating two harp parts to one. Apparently Korngold "borrowed" the scores and parts for these key sequences shortly after the film was released for use in live performances. He made cuts in the music and combined cues to present the music in a concise fifteen-minute length. All the orchestrations were revised to accommodate this "standard" orchestra and new score and parts were prepared. The original film orchestrations for these sections are now lost. Despite this, I was determined to present this music as heard in the film, with all the connecting cues intact as well as the much-recorded sections restored to their original orchestration and length. Evidently we are the first to do this, as a study of every re-recording (beginning with the famous Lionel Newman 1961 version) makes it obvious that the Suite versions were used for these recordings.

Fortunately, Korngold's original recording of the entire score survived on audio tape, made from the optical nitrate stems. This was invaluable as it afforded us the music without dialogue and sound effects and made the



restoration more reliable and authentic. Although the original recording of this score in 1938 was state of the art for its time, trying to hear the interior detail and instrumental colour was difficult as this music was written as precisely as a Richard Strauss tone poem. One example that particularly delights me is the opening of the **Love Scene** where we put back in the magical flutes flutter-tonguing that has been missing for all subsequent recordings of this music.

Even cues that were never previously recorded but survived in full score were problematic. Missing pages of score had to be reconstructed for our performance. Many of the original parts were so marked-up by revisions Korngold made from the podium on the scoring stage that they were unreadable and had to be recopied. Where we felt it was musically appropriate, bars of music were restored here and there that were taken out of the original when the composer felt the music needed altering to match comfortably the screen action on the scoring stage. An example of this is in **Robin Hood Fights with Little John** where we restored a delightful four-bar syncopated phrase that has never been heard before. Conductor Bill Stromberg reconstructed the missing sections of the Sir Guy forest battle while I orchestrated the **Main Title** from a surviving violin part. Finally, after weeks of work, we felt the music was in good enough shape to head to Moscow for the recording you now hold in your hands.

The original Warner Bros. orchestra for *The Adventures of Robin Hood* was a large one, especially by 1938 standards. The woodwinds consisted of three flutes (one doubling piccolo), two oboes (one doubling cor anglais), three clarinets (third also playing bass clarinet), and two bassoons (with the second bassoon doubling on contra bassoon), and occasionally two saxophones. The brass included four French horns, four trumpets, four trombones and tuba. Additionally, two harps, one piano and one celeste were utilized along with five percussionists playing

normal battery. Two acoustic guitars peppered several cues and the normal (for film recording) complement of strings made up the Robin Hood orchestra. **The Procession** was the largest orchestral complement, requiring seven trumpets, six trombones and eight percussion players, including two vibraphones. For this recording we have enlarged the string section considerably in order better to balance the sound.

Korngold preferred conducting from the full scores rather than the conductor scores, which was customary. The composer went through the scores and made his own short-hand notations for changing tempos, time signatures, and rhythmic complexities. The extraordinarily fast-paced music would often necessitate turning a page every two seconds. Hugo Friedhofer and Milan Roder shared orchestration duties for most of the score. On several of the longer cues, Friedhofer would start and when the music moved to a very “notey” fast section, Roder would then complete the cue. No doubt Friedhofer was also very busy servicing Max Steiner at Warners and would be orchestrating more than one score concurrently. However, Friedhofer did orchestrate the **Duel**, which was anything but slow, and wrote a note to Korngold on the last page of score: “*FINE. LAUS DEO!*” [End. Praise God!].

Listening to the music in sequence and in complete renditions gives added context and perspective to even the familiar cues. Korngold had an amazing ability of making his cues sound as natural as through-composed music. Even when he musically caught screen action, one feels a certain “rightness” and structure housed in the very nature of his music. It is our hope that this recording will not only please the many fans of *The Adventures of Robin Hood* and its music, but will also be a satisfying musical experience on its own.

**John Morgan**

### ***Special thanks to***

Danny Gould, Keith Zajic (Warner Bros. Music) • Randi Hokett, Noelle Carter (Warner Bros. Archive, USC)  
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## **Moscow Symphony Orchestra**

The Moscow Symphony Orchestra was established in 1989. During the following years the orchestra not only survived the period of economic difficulties, but strengthened its position and became one of the top Russian orchestras. Since 1996, under the general sponsorship of Nestlé, the MSO has performed an annual series of concerts in the Grand Hall of the Moscow Conservatory. Famous Russian and foreign conductors of the orchestra include Vladimir Ziva, Sergey Stadler and Arnold Katz, and it has performed with outstanding soloists such as Yuri Bashmet, Victor Tretyakov, Vadim Repin, Alexander Knyazev and Alexander Rudin. Apart from its educational work and its extensive concert programmes the orchestra has been widely acclaimed for its outstanding recordings, with over a hundred since 1994, principally for Naxos and Marco Polo. International awards for its recordings include CD of the Month by the American magazine *CD Review*, the prestigious French Diapason d'Or and the Chairman's Choice at the Cannes Classical Awards. *The Economist* voted the orchestra's recording of film music by Bernard Herrmann [Marco Polo 8.225168 / Naxos 8.570186] one of the ten best records of the year. It has also recorded music tracks for several Hollywood films. The Orchestra has toured in the United States, Japan, South Korea and Western Europe. Its chief conductor and artistic director is Arthur Arnold. [www.moscowsymphony.ru/en](http://www.moscowsymphony.ru/en)

## **William Stromberg**

Born in 1964, William Stromberg was introduced to the world of classical music at a very early age. His filmmaker father filled the house with the sounds of classic film scores by such great composers as Erich Korngold, Bernard Herrmann and Max Steiner. Through the constant study of the classical scores that inspired these film composers, he developed a passion for music that laid the foundation for his career. A native Californian, Stromberg moved to Hollywood when he was eighteen to study privately under the tutelage of film-composer John Morgan. He soon began conducting his own film scores and garnered a well-respected reputation as a gifted composer and conductor. He has scored more than a dozen feature films including the thriller *Other Voices*, the documentary *Trinity and Beyond*, *Killing Streets*, *Edge of Honor* and *Starship Troopers 2*. His devotion to classic film scores cultivated several joint ventures with John Morgan in reconstructing and recording the works of such composers as Max Steiner, Erich Wolfgang Korngold, Alfred Newman, Philip Sainton, Adolph Deutsch, Hans J. Salter, Victor Young and Sir Malcolm Arnold, available on the Naxos and Marco Polo labels. He has also conducted several much-praised Naxos albums devoted to concert works by American composers, including two albums of music by Ferde Grofé. In 2008, he led the Moscow Symphony Orchestra in a massive re-recording of Bernard Herrmann's *Mysterious Island* for his and John Morgan's own label Tribute Film Classics. Stromberg is much in demand among Hollywood composers as a conductor of film music and sound-track recordings, as well as undertaking engagements to conduct renowned European orchestras.

## **John Morgan**

Widely regarded in film-music circles as a master colourist with a keen insight into orchestration and the power of music, Los Angeles-based composer John Morgan began his career working as an orchestrator alongside such composers as Alex North, Bruce Broughton and Fred Steiner before embarking on his own composing assignments. Among other projects, he co-composed the richly dramatic score for the cult-documentary film *Trinity and Beyond*, described by one critic as "an atomic-age *Fantasia*, thanks to its spectacular nuclear explosions and powerhouse music." In addition, Morgan has won acclaim for efforts to rescue, restore and re-record lost film scores from the past, including Hans J. Salter's spooky *House of Frankenstein*, Hugo Friedhofer's moving *The Rains of Ranchipur*, Roy Webb's *Cat People* and Max Steiner's *The Most Dangerous Game*. More recently, Morgan and conductor William Stromberg with the Moscow Symphony Orchestra recorded Bernard Herrmann's *Fahrenheit 451* and *Walking Distance* for their own Tribute Film Classics label.

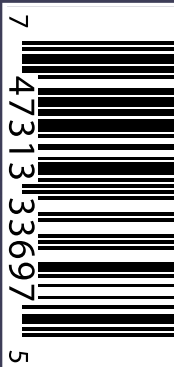




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# FILM MUSIC CLASSICS

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**ERICH WOLFGANG  
KORNGOLD (1897–1957)**

## **The Adventures of Robin Hood (1938)**

Score restorations by John Morgan  
Moscow Symphony Orchestra  
conducted by William Stromberg

<b>1</b> Main Title–Muted Fanfare	1:51
<b>2</b> Sir Guy and Robin Hood	1:49
<b>3</b> The Meeting	1:11
<b>4</b> The Banquet	2:14
<b>5</b> Robin Hood Outside–Robin Hood's Entrance–The Fight–The Chase of Robin Hood–The Victims	6:13
<b>6</b> Robin Hood Meets Little John– Robin Hood Fights with Little John– Jolly Friendship	3:56
<b>7</b> The Oath and The Black Arrow	1:58
<b>8</b> The Fish–Robin Hood's Fight with Friar Tuck	3:29

<b>9</b> A New Companion (Friar Tuck)	0:56
<b>10</b> Robin Hood Attacks Sir Guy's Party– The Attack	5:12
<b>11</b> Flirt–Feast–Poor People's Feast–Gold	5:59
<b>12</b> The Poor People	4:19
<b>13</b> The Tournament–Robin Hood's Appearance at the Archery Field– Preparation for the Archery Contest– Robin Hood Starts to Shoot–Finale of the Archery Contest	6:38
<b>14</b> Arrest of Robin Hood	0:47
<b>15</b> Tribunal–The Jail	2:27
<b>16</b> The Gallows–The Flight of Robin Hood	4:40
<b>17</b> Love Scene	6:25
<b>18</b> Arrest of Lady Marian	0:45
<b>19</b> Much: The Knife Fight	1:10
<b>20</b> Richard Meets Robin Hood–Richard the Lion-Heart	4:03
<b>21</b> The Procession	3:09
<b>22</b> Prince John	1:33
<b>23</b> The Battle–The Duel–The Victory	5:36
<b>24</b> Epilogue	1:33
<b>25</b> End Cast	0:33
<b>26</b> Original Theatrical Trailer Music	4:17

On its first appearance on the Marco Polo label, this recording was acclaimed as 'a model of what these things should be' (*Fanfare*) and that no release on the label was 'better or more important than this' (*ClassicsToday.com*). It presents a definitive restoration of Korngold's music for the 1938 Warner Bros.' production of *The Adventures of Robin Hood*, starring the ultimate swashbuckler, Errol Flynn, and still one of the most-loved of all motion pictures. Throughout—and to an unprecedented degree—Korngold captures its lavish spectacle, romance, colour, pageantry and humour in his magnificent score. Also included is the Original Theatre Trailer Music, not previously available on CD.

Recorded at the Mosfilm Studio, Moscow in February 2003 • Producer: Betta International  
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