

LESSON IN LIVING

MAGIC OF MUSIC

Elena Allen Milano

This is a subject I truly feel qualified to write about. Having performed professionally, taught sixty years and operated a retail music business, I can vouch for the "magic of music."

When I lived in Los Angeles, around the movie industry, and knew of the high salaries paid their musicians, I was impressed. They were the "cream of the crop" and actually earned more per hour than their counterparts in the performing end of the industry.

What magic influence did music have on the movies? All one has to do is listen for the romantic theme and know that a love scene will soon be seen. Also, when danger is near, the music provides the appropriate background. Music plays a big role in setting moods. Whether it is nostalgic, stirring, haunting, or romantic, music embellishes it wonderfully.

When I was retailing sheet music, the single most popular piece of sheet music I ever sold was the theme song of the movie, "Dr. Zhivago." No matter how many we ordered, in a few days it was sold out. The haunting love song from that production is still beautiful and in demand these many years later.

A stirring march was from the movie, "Bridge on the River Kwai." One cannot hear this without remembering the bedraggled troops marching along valiantly to its beat.

To me, the most heavenly music in the world is that furnished by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. Directing a choir was also my favorite church job. When one directs singing, it is like painting a beautiful picture. The human voice is still the prime musical instrument.

Different instruments create different sounds. Arrangers are aware of this when they write the scores to their productions. Percussions are stirring, strings are romantic and horns are attention-getters. Harmonicas, accordions and reed instruments sound happy.

When one contemplates on the fact there are only seven notes involved, it is simply amazing: they can be lowered or raised, played quickly or sustained, but basically there are only: A, B, C, D, E, F and G. Think of the thousands of songs that have been composed out of only these seven notes!

TRULY, MUSIC IS MAGIC!

This was written in 2008 when Elena was 88-years-old The entire Lesson in Living series is on lintonmilano.com